

‘On that day I am born ...’

The experience of refugees resettled to Brighton
and Hove under the Gateway Protection Programme
October 2006 to October 2007

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The logo of the University of Sussex, consisting of the letters 'US' in a stylized, serif font.

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Brighton & Hove

'On that day I am born ... when I come to this house'

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December 2007

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Contents

Summary	5
1 Introduction	8
2 International and Historical Contexts	11
2.1 The International Context to Resettlement	11
2.1.1 UNHCR and 'Resettlement Strategy'	11
2.1.2 Evidence from Resettlement Destinations: A Lack of Comparative Research	12
2.2 The Fall and Future Rise of Resettlement to Europe	16
2.3 The Gateway Protection Programme	17
2.3.1 The Gateway Protection Programme in Brighton and Hove	21
2.4 Methodology of the Study	23
3 Before Departure	26
3.1 Ethiopian History	27
3.1.1 The Oromo	28
3.2 Refugees in Kenya	30
3.3 Pre-Departure Process	32
4 A Year in Brighton and Hove	35
4.1 Initial Impressions of the UK	36
4.2 Caseworker Support	37
4.3 Accessing Services	40
4.3.1 Housing	41
4.3.2 Language Instruction	42
4.3.3 Education	43
4.3.4 Benefits	44
4.4 Employment	45
4.5 Social Networks	47
4.5.1 Distant Social Networks	47
4.5.2 Community Cohesion and Political Organisation	50
4.5.3 Local Social Networks	51
4.6 Future Plans	51
5 Learning from Brighton and Hove	54
References	57

Tables

Table 1:	<i>Main Countries of Resettlement in 2006</i>	13
Table 2:	<i>Number of Refugees Resettled under the GPP 2003–2006</i>	18
Table 3:	<i>Organisations Involved in Administering the GPP</i>	18
Table 4:	<i>Details of all Refugees Resettled under the GPP 2003–2007</i>	19
Table 5:	<i>Sex of Refugees Resettled to Brighton and Hove</i>	21
Table 6:	<i>Age of Refugees Resettled to Brighton and Hove</i>	22
Table 7:	<i>Ethnicity of Refugees Resettled to Brighton and Hove as Initially Reported by the Home Office</i>	22
Table 8:	<i>Nationalities and Number of Refugees in Kenya in 2006</i>	30

Figures

Figure 1:	<i>Unemployment Rates of Refugees by Sex and Year of Arrival in the US</i>	15
Figure 2:	<i>Resettlement in the UK, EU and Europe from 1980 to 1999</i>	17

Summary

In September and October 2006, 79 refugees, originally from Ethiopia, arrived in Brighton and Hove under the Home Office sponsored Gateway Protection Program (GPP). Over the next 12 months, they were supported by a project run in partnership between Brighton and Hove City Council and Migrant Helpline.

1. **This research has focused on the experience of refugees throughout this year.** It is not primarily an evaluation exercise as it has not focused principally on aspects of service delivery but is based on continuous observation of the entire process, from refugees' arrival to the end of dedicated support services a year later. All refugees who gave their consent were interviewed. Research on the GPP is limited. Indeed research on resettlement internationally is focused mostly on individual projects in particular locations with little basis for comparison.
2. **Resettlement has made a tremendous difference to the lives of refugees.** The title of the report, 'on that day I am born' is a direct quote from a refugee, describing the day they came to Brighton and indicates the dramatic life changes that resettlement has produced. It is extremely important that the Home Office receives the necessary support to allow it to fulfil its objective of extending and expanding the Gateway scheme to ensure that more refugees are able to benefit.
3. Compared to resettlement schemes operating elsewhere, **the developing resettlement system in the UK provides an extremely high level of support.** However this comes at a significant per capita cost. If the tremendous benefits of resettlement are to be extended to larger numbers, solutions will have to be found to focus the available resources at the most urgent needs or most vulnerable individuals, and finding alternative solutions from those who are able to cope alone.
4. **The system of caseworker support has enabled refugees to access all necessary services, regardless of language ability.** Experiences of services in Brighton and Hove have generally been extremely positive. This is particularly the case for education. All families with children emphasised the tremendous importance of education and the ease with which the children had been accepted into local schools. Similarly health problems had not produced any unnecessary anxiety among refugees. Refugees requiring treatment for both acute and chronic conditions reported receiving the necessary treatment promptly and efficiently.
5. Refugees are still struggling in some areas. **Unemployment amongst refugees remains high and refugees face continuing difficulties with English.** One year into the scheme 94 percent of those refugees

participating in the labour market were without a job. Although refugees' English language ability has improved significantly over the year many are still anxious about their capacity to express themselves and fulfil basic tasks.

6. **Recent research on both sides of the Atlantic highlights the significance of social networks** in contributing to refugees' involvement in their new society. Broad based social networks have been shown to be particularly important in supporting language development and job searches, the two major difficulties still faced by refugees in Brighton and Hove. Yet contacts between refugees and other residents of Brighton and Hove are generally limited and very few refugees have regular contacts with non-refugees.
7. **The mentoring scheme offers an ideal way to establish links between refugees and wider British society.** Many refugees have formed strong relationships with their mentors that will endure after dedicated support services have come to an end. Where refugees had regular contacts with British citizens this was most likely to be through the mentoring scheme. Mentors are able to initiate the construction of social networks that are essential to the success and fulfilment of all individuals in society, yet which refugees initially have no access to. Migrant Helpline established a separate system to link refugees speaking less English with 'conversation partners'. This system has also been very widely appreciated.
8. **Refugees have suffered very few incidences of overt racism.** Much fewer than was initially expected and fewer than they were prepared to expect in their preparation in Nairobi. Most refugees consider the people of Brighton and Hove to have been warm and welcoming. This suggests that the detailed planning and consideration given to ways of reducing potential hostility have been successful.
9. **Social networks amongst refugees and with distant family members are also vitally important.** These networks are more likely to provide the emotional resources required by refugees, reducing the feelings of isolation and loneliness which can be appreciated by anyone who finds themselves in a strange place with few friends. Refugees continue to draw on each other for social support. They also feel tremendous obligations to friends and family in Ethiopia or Kenya. Policies of family reunion should be clarified so that refugees understand whether they can bring family members to join them and how to go about it if it is possible.
10. Although caseworkers have been universally appreciated by refugees in this programme, **it is not clear that a system based around caseworker support is always in the best interests of refugees.** For the most vulnerable individuals, caseworkers are the only way in which services can be delivered and they should remain an essential component of resettlement programmes. However, this research suggests that for refugees who are better able to cope alone, a caseworker system may inhibit the development of more sustainable social networks. Information is not available to clearly distinguish the situations in which caseworkers are necessary from those in which refugees may benefit more from other forms of support. This should be a priority for future research.



1 Introduction

In September and October 2006, 79 refugees, originally from Ethiopia, arrived in Brighton and Hove under the Home Office sponsored Gateway Protection Program (GPP). They travelled directly from Nairobi and had been living in Kenya for varying lengths of time. Migrant Helpline and Brighton and Hove City Council were responsible for assisting them through the initial process of resettlement in the UK with a 12 month programme of support which came to an end in October 2007. This report is the result of a research project which followed the refugees throughout this 12 month period. It is not intended to be an evaluation of this programme. Rather, it set out to capture the changing experiences of refugees throughout the year with the aim of initiating a process of ongoing participatory research.

Resettlement programmes have formed part of a coordinated international response to particularly acute refugee situations since the early 20th century (Colville 2000). The UNHCR has its origins in attempts to resolve mass population displacements around Europe immediately following the Second World War in which resettlement played an important role. International responses often focused on individual countries or regions, such as the comprehensive plan of action for Vietnamese refugees in the late 1970s. Over this period, a variety of groups were resettled to the UK, beginning with Polish soldiers who remained in the UK after the war. It is also argued that the internationally coordinated temporary protection programmes established for Bosnians and Kosovans during the 1990s also amount to resettlement schemes (Robinson 2003). Until the GPP, all of the significant UK programmes have resettled people originating in a single country, for whom separate legislation and administrative apparatus was established on each occasion.

Since 2000 there has been significant flux in international refugee resettlement. In 2006, sixteen countries accepted resettled refugees (Table 1). Ten are considered as 'traditional' resettlement destinations with established programmes going back to at least the 1980s. Since 2000 a further nine countries began to accept resettled refugees, some on an ad hoc basis, with no annual commitment but others, such as the UK, established long term programmes. Over this period UNHCR has sponsored several initiatives to examine the international refugee regime more generally, culminating with Convention Plus in 2003, which placed resettlement amongst its central concerns. The European Commission has also been discussing ways of organising resettlement at a European level since 2000; the publication of the

Green paper on future asylum systems in June 2007 (EC 2007) brings this a stage closer.

Even the more established systems of some of the 'traditional' resettlement countries seem to be in flux. David Martin's recent study for the US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration is subtitled *Reforms for a new era of refugee resettlement*. Martin argues that, in the future 'refugee admissions will be characterized by the combination of many smaller-scale resettlement programs, mostly originating in difficult locations that will shift from year to year, each presenting significant and distinct policy challenges.' (Martin 2005:v).

Martin's characterisation of the future of the US scheme also applies to the first three years of operation of the GPP in the UK. Since March 2004 when the first refugees arrived, small groups of Sudanese, Liberians, Congolese, Burmese and Ethiopians have been resettled. The only research published so far on the GPP provides a detailed evaluation of the relatively complex institutional arrangements established to manage the varied nature of these schemes (Cramb and Hudek 2005). In contrast, the present report is not the product of an evaluation and is not based on systematic work with service providers but rather focuses on the experience of refugees. To the extent that refugees commented on institutions, this research supports Cramb and Hudek's findings that so far the GPP has been well resourced, effectively managed and is widely appreciated by refugees who have so far benefited.

Nevertheless, research with refugees highlights a number of issues which mostly fall outside the current remit of the institutions managing the project, but which may be addressed by the GPP in future. These appear more clearly in the context of Martin's 'significant and distinct policy challenges' that arise from work with small, regularly changing groups of refugees from difficult locations. These challenges can best be met by expanding the institutional focus of service delivery to consider refugees in the variety of social contexts in which they are located; their country of origin, country of first asylum and country of resettlement.

From research with refugees elsewhere we know that all of these contexts continue to inform the priorities of refugees and the relationships they form long after resettlement. Theoretical perspectives derived from transnationalism highlight how refugees' lives are effectively split across a number of locations in which family and friends are living (Collyer 2005). The GPP, however, sees refugees as primarily located in their UK context and even then it is most attentive to refugees' links with particular service providers. Recent research for the Refugee Council on refugees experience in the UK emphasises the importance of social capital in shaping refugees' experience (Atfield et al 2007). The GPP could learn from this work, paying attention not only to refugees' interactions with service providers, which are mostly extremely successful, but also to their relationship with other refugees and with the broader UK society.

The report falls into five sections, including this introduction. The following section examines relevant background information on resettlement programmes internationally and historically, highlighting the rarity of comparative empirical research. Section three focuses on the pre-departure situation for the refugees who arrived in Brighton and Hove. Refugees were only asked directly about their experiences on the GPP so background on the human rights context in Ethiopia and refugee camps in Kenya is mostly from secondary sources. The fourth section presents the bulk of the empirical material, detailing refugees' perspectives of the GPP and related experiences during the year that they have lived in Brighton and Hove. The final section examines what can be learned from this local example for the development of resettlement schemes more generally.



2 International and Historical Contexts

The long history of resettlement has generated a considerable breadth of experience in questions of programme design. In preparing the GPP, the Home Office deliberately drew on academic analyses of the history of earlier programmes in the UK and other schemes operating internationally. This section provides international and historical context in preparation for a consideration of the GPP itself. It finds very little comparative research on resettlement from either an international or a historical perspective. It therefore draws on broader research to identify key issues in assessing resettlement programmes. Social networks emerge as a key concern, from both US focused research and recent investigations into refugee perceptions of integration in the UK. The section ends with a brief overview of the methodology used for this study.

2.1 The International Context to Resettlement

2.1.1 UNHCR and 'Resettlement Strategy'

Resettlement is one of the three 'durable solutions' to refugee movement recognised by UNHCR, the others being voluntary repatriation and local integration. Resettlement is not usually considered to be the preferred durable solution by UNHCR, at least not since the mid 1980s (Chimni 2004). However, in some cases it is the only option for refugees and thus represents a crucial aspect of international humanitarian protection. UNHCR identifies four key reasons for resettlement (UNHCR 1997: 86):

- Protection: an option for refugees who are not safe in their country of first asylum and are not able to return home.
- Protection: an opportunity for refugees with special needs which cannot be met in the country of first asylum.
- Durable solution: an alternative for refugees who are not and will never be able to integrate into their country of first asylum.
- Solidarity: A burden-sharing approach where states can multilaterally share the burden of refugees.

Resettlement is considered in the context of an immediate need for protection, the failure of other durable solutions, and a degree of solidarity with countries of first asylum, which also tend to be amongst the world's poorest countries

and have always received a disproportionately large share of the world's refugees.

All resettlement countries take referrals from UNHCR, though some also accept private sponsorship. Refugees apply for resettlement to UNHCR which refers their cases on to third countries for resettlement. Upon referral from UNHCR, countries agree to resettle certain groups or quotas of individuals and typically send selection missions to interview principle applicants on an individual basis. It is at the discretion of the country to accept or refuse resettlement for each individual. This process is similar for all resettlement countries, though each national program has unique aspects.

UNHCR has made it clear for some time that the need for resettlement exceeds the capacity for referral. As of June 30, 2006, 4.4 million refugees were directly assisted by or through UNHCR, the majority in UNHCR refugee camps. The global refugee population was 6.2 million and a total of 20.8 million people fell under UNHCR's mandate of protection, defined as people 'of concern' to UNHCR (UNHCR 2006). During 2006, 71,830 refugees were resettled, a fraction of a percent of the total population of concern and barely more than one percent of all refugees directly assisted by UNHCR (UNHCR 2007). Even with a very substantial increase, resettlement does not have the potential to provide a durable solution for a significant proportion of refugees. UNHCR is therefore keen to use resettlement strategically to provide protection for the most vulnerable groups and to impact on the wider context of displacement in particular countries of first asylum.

UNHCR's involvement in the resettlement process is essential since it ensures that resettlement is linked to the international protection regime. It also allows UNHCR to develop strategies for resettlement, beyond the role of individual countries. The meetings of the Tripartite Commission provide an important focus for this strategising. They have occurred annually since 1995 to bring together UNHCR with NGOs and governments. All governments working on resettlement as well as others thinking of introducing resettlement schemes are invited to attend these meetings, so they also provide the possibility for development of comparative discussions of particular resettlement practices in the various resettlement destinations.

2.1.2 Evidence from Resettlement Destinations: A Lack of Comparative Research

In 2006, 16 countries accepted resettled refugees (Table 1). Three countries (United States, Australia, and Canada) hosted over 91 percent, whereas the European Union hosted only six percent. Norway and New Zealand accounted for just over one percent each and the final fraction of a percent was contributed by developing resettlement systems in Latin America. As these statistics may suggest, North America and Europe provide protection in very different ways (Noll and van Selm 2003). Most refugees in Europe arrived spontaneously through the asylum system rather than as part of a planned resettlement process, whereas the three principle resettlement destinations have very limited asylum systems. All countries have sought to restrict

spontaneous arrivals through the asylum system in recent years. However, European countries and particularly the EU have made it clear that new resettlement schemes will not come at the cost of downgrading asylum.

Table 1: *Main Countries of Resettlement in 2006*

Country	Resettlement numbers	Share of total (%)
United States	41,300	57.86
Australia	13,400	18.66
Canada	10,700	14.90
Sweden	2,400	3.34
Norway	1,000	1.39
New Zealand	750	1.04
Finland	550	0.77
Denmark	530	0.74
Netherlands	500	0.70
United Kingdom	380	0.53
Ireland	200	0.28
Brazil	50	0.07
Chile	40	0.06
Argentina	20	0.03
Mexico	10	0.01
Total	71,830	100.00

Source: UNHCR (2007).

In addition to serving different functions in the protection systems of different resettlement countries, resettlement also operates in different ways. The main difference between the major three resettlement countries and the rest is the cost of resettlement to the state. Part of the resettlement program in Canada, the United States, and Australia is conducted through private sponsorship, rather than direct government assistance. In the United States refugees are not provided with welfare support, or even the cost of their flight by the state; welfare support is provided by voluntary agencies, through the state, for a period of four to eight months; flights are paid for by a loan from IOM, which refugees must eventually repay.

Private or voluntary agencies play an important role in the main resettlement destinations. In the US, refugees are introduced to services and assisted in their search for work either by NGOs contracted by the government, or by voluntary groups involved in resettlement, such as church congregations. Canada and Australia offer slightly more state support, in the form of direct welfare payments, but only for government assisted refugees. Refugees arriving through the private system must be entirely supported by their sponsor. The proportion of government assisted to privately sponsored refugees varies from year to year (Van Selm et al. 2003).

In contrast, European systems typically provide support directly from the state for flight, housing and full welfare provisions. In addition, direct support services are more often professionalized through dedicated caseworker provision. Although caseworker systems exist in North America they are supplemented by the substantial contribution made by the voluntary sector. Volunteers play only a marginal role in European systems and rarely figure in the broad strategic planning of particular programmes.

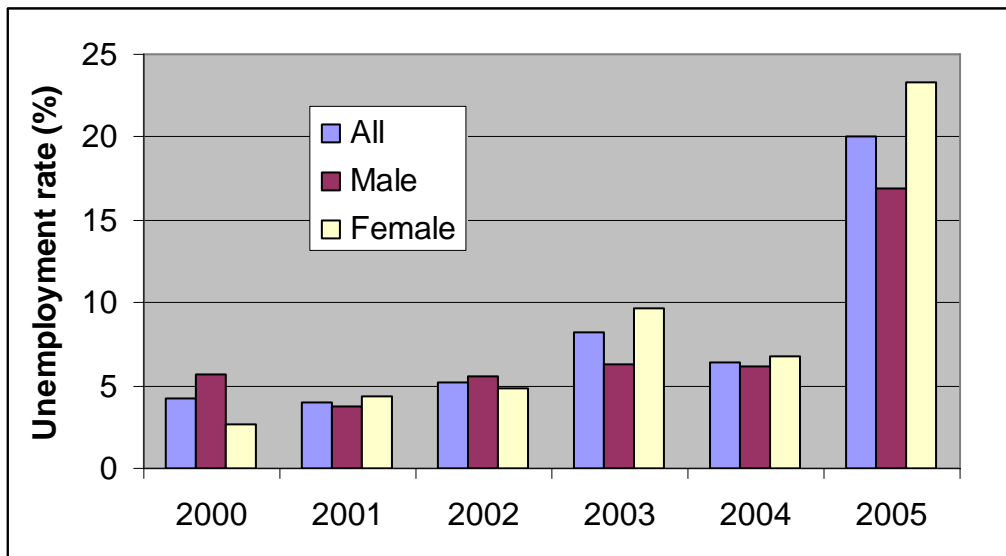
The length of targeted welfare provision for resettled refugees varies between European countries. Norway provides full welfare support for up to two years, or whenever refugees are able to find a job. In Sweden, a resettled refugee is not expected to find gainful employment until after two and half years in the country. In Finland it is three years (Noll and Van Selm, 2003). The GPP in the UK offers one year of dedicated support delivered principally through caseworkers with the aim of preparing refugees to use mainstream welfare and housing services from one year on.

Given the obvious contrast in these various systems of providing support to resettled refugees, it is surprising that we were unable to find any empirically based international comparisons of the results of these different approaches. There is therefore no basis to judge whether the increased per capita cost of European systems reflects a superior experience for resettled refugees, in terms of ease of involvement and minimum stress in their attempts to gradually come to terms with their new societies.

Integration of any kind is of course extremely difficult to measure. Particularly outside of a tailored empirical approach few indicators are available. Housing is widely recognised as a key indicator. Local studies in Calgary in Canada, where housing is increasingly expensive, highlight the impact of marginalisation of immigrant and refugee groups in the cities housing sector. Immigrants taken as a group, of whom refugees form a large proportion in Calgary, spent more of their income on housing and are far more likely to live in cramped conditions than non-migrant citizens.

Unemployment statistics are collected in the US by the Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) *Annual Report to Congress*. The 2005 report, the most recent available at the time of writing, provides unemployment statistics for refugees who had arrived in the previous six years (ORR 2006). These show that unemployment rates for the year of survey were relatively high, at 20 percent for all refugees. However, for refugees who had been in the country for one year or more the unemployment rate fell gradually with increasing time in the country, reaching five percent for the 2002 cohort, which was the prevailing national unemployment level at the time of the survey (Figure 1).

Figure 1: *Unemployment Rates of Refugees by Sex and Year of Arrival in the US*



Source: ORR (2006)

Note: Survey was conducted in 2005.

The US resettlement scheme places an extremely high priority on economic integration and given the limited welfare payments offered to them, refugees have little choice but to find a job, so it is perhaps not surprising that refugees have high levels of involvement in the US job market. European systems, on the other hand, focus more on social and cultural integration (Noll and Van Selm, 2003) which cannot be evaluated so easily. Recent research for the Refugee Council in the UK has reinforced ideas of the importance of social networks in refugees' own perceptions of integration (Atfield et al 2007).

Social research usually distinguishes two types of social capital, 'bonded' social capital that typically unites people from national or language groups and 'bridging' social capital that provides links to the wider society. Both types of social capital are important for refugees, since they provide different benefits. The strength of links within a cohort of resettled refugees and between refugees and broader society may provide an important measure of the success of resettlement programmes from a social and cultural perspective.

The few comparative studies of the benefits of private focused versus public focused resettlement strategy all come from within the US, where the overall significance of resettlement has encouraged more research. Even so, little has been published recently. One of the classic studies concerns a group of refugees originally from Ethiopia who resettled to California in the late 1980s. Lucia-Ann McSpadden interviewed 59 of these refugees; 30 of them had been resettled privately and supported by the government through NGOs, the remaining 29 had been sponsored, usually by a church congregation.

McSpadden found important differences between the government and private sponsored groups. The government sponsored refugees received support from the various NGOs through a dedicated caseworker whereas the privately

sponsored refugees relied on voluntary support (McSpadden 1987). McSpadden found that the volunteer/congregation supported refugees had active social networks that included Americans. This provided a window into American culture and led to various sources of information and opportunity. In contrast, agency/caseworker supported refugees have very few personal contacts with Americans other than their teachers and agency personnel. These results are supported by the small number of other comparative studies of government/private sponsorship schemes in the US (eg Sargent et al 1999).

It may be that the apparently more successful development of social networks amongst the volunteer/congregation supported group is a result of necessity rather than choice, in a similar way to the high labour market participation of refugees who were denied welfare support. Virtually any measure of social, economic or cultural integration is open to criticism of confusing the developments individuals selected with those they were obliged to accept. Nevertheless, it is important that both labour market participation and social networks have been identified by refugees themselves as significant. They may provide a basis on which to consider the success of the GPP but will need to be supplemented by more detailed considerations of the perspective of refugees than is provided by the limited information available on different resettlement practices.

2.2 The Fall and Future Rise of Resettlement to Europe

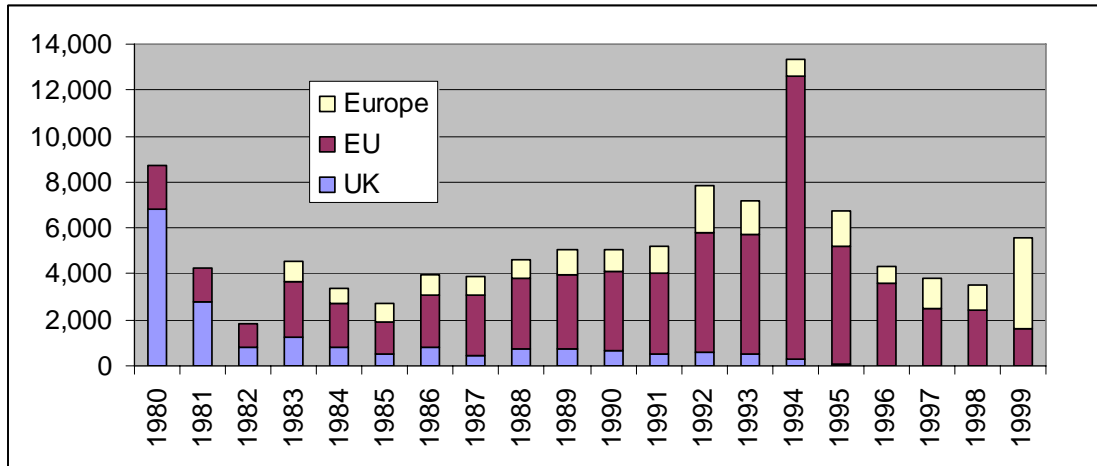
Just as there is little comparative research between countries which operate resettlement, so there is little systematic comparison of different resettlement programmes which have operated at different times within Europe and even within the UK (Robinson 2003). However, the long history of resettlement in Europe provides legitimacy for the recent reinvigoration of resettlement programmes, including the GPP.

The key legacy of the International Refugee Organization, the predecessor to UNHCR, was the resettlement of over a million refugees within and outside of Europe from 1947 to 1951, when UNHCR was established (Stoessinger 2000). Resettlement was also implemented for Hungarians fleeing Soviet occupation in 1957, Ugandan Asians expelled from Uganda in 1972, and Chilean victims of the regime of General Pinochet from 1974 onwards. The Vietnamese resettlement operation from 1979 onwards resettled over 700,000 refugees, over 100,000 of them in Europe, representing the largest single resettlement programme (Robinson 1993).

In 1980, the number of refugees resettled to Europe peaked at 8,750 (Figure 2). With the exception of 1994 this figure has never been exceeded, and the 1994 figure is largely explained by the inclusion of Bosnians given temporary protection in the statistics from Denmark and Sweden, which was technically not a resettlement programme (UNHCR 2000). Resettlement to Europe as a whole fluctuated considerably over this period, though the overall trend is downwards. The downward trend is even clearer for the EU, which accounts for a smaller and smaller share of resettlement to Europe as a whole

throughout this period, although the EU grew from 9 members in 1980 to 15 in 1999.

Figure 2: Resettlement in the UK, EU and Europe from 1980 to 1999



Source: UNHCR (2000).

Note: Data for the UK are case, whereas all others are individuals.

At the global level resettlement to Europe has always been small. It was rarely more than five percent of a global total averaging over 130,000 a year for this entire period, though global resettlement also declined from 277,440 individuals in 1980 to 92,790 in 1997, recovering slightly in the following two years (UNHCR 2000). Chimni dates the shift in emphasis from resettlement to repatriation to 1983 and argues that it can be explained by rising numbers of asylum seekers and changing economic conditions which resulted in less demand for labour (Chimni 2004). Both of these developments occurred most clearly in Europe.

The decline in resettlement from 1980 onwards is clearest of all in the UK (Figure 1). 1980 was the peak of resettlement to the UK, at 6,850 cases and it never recovered, reaching just 20 cases in 1996 and stopping altogether from 1997 onwards. It is significant that the figure for the UK represents the number of cases, which may include a number of individuals, whereas all other data refers only to the number of individuals, so to be truly comparable the UK share of almost 80 percent of total resettlement to Europe in 1980 should actually be increased, probably quite substantially. The UK continued to operate two other resettlement schemes, the Mandate Refugee scheme and the '10 or More scheme, but numbers are very small and they are not included in UNHCR resettlement statistics. Resettlement began again in March 2004, when the first refugees arrived on the Gateway Protection Programme.

2.3 The Gateway Protection Programme

The Gateway Protection Programme was introduced in the White Paper on Nationality, Immigration, and Asylum, published on 7 February 2002. A quota for the number of refugees accepted on the programme is fixed annually. Since its inception in 2003 this has been fixed at 500 a year. Though it has not

yet reached this number the total resettled has increased each year (Table 2). All indications suggest that 2007 will be the first year to meet the quota. The difficulty of reaching agreement with appropriate local authorities has been one of the most significant factors limiting numbers. This is further complicated by the separate operation of the GPP and the established asylum system. In some local authority areas groups of 50 to 100 recognised asylum seekers may enter local authority provision, create a degree of uncertainty, particularly in the local housing market.

Table 2: *Number of Refugees Resettled under the GPP 2003–2006*

Year	Number of refugees resettled
2003	0
2004	150
2005	175
2006	380

The initial selection of refugees for the programme is based on referrals from UNHCR. Final decisions are made following an interview with a UK government official and a medical examination. Interviews are intended to confirm that applicants are refugees in the sense of the 1951 Convention and that return or local integration are unlikely. Beyond these criteria it is the Home Office's intention to resettle the most vulnerable individuals (Home Office 2007a). Applicants are informed of the decision by letter.

Selected refugees follow an orientation programme before travelling to the UK. Orientation has so far been organised by either the International Rescue Committee or the International Organisation for Migration. Flights are paid by the UK government. On arrival in the UK refugees are met by Migrant Helpline and taken to accommodation near the airport. They stay at the hotel for three days to rest, acclimatise and follow further orientation classes before travelling to their final destination.

Table 3: *Organisations Involved in Administering the GPP*

Type of organisation	Name
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Office • Department for Work and Pensions • Department for Health • Department for Education • Local authorities • Other departments and agencies where appropriate
Inter-governmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees • International Organization for Migration
Non-governmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Red Cross • International Rescue Committee

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrant Helpline • Refugee Action • Refugee Arrivals Project • Refugee Housing Association • Scottish Refugee Council • Community organisations
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Source: RIAP (2004).

Within the UK, a partnership has been established between the Home Office, local authorities, the voluntary sector, and Job Centre Plus (Home Office 2007a). Eight voluntary sector organisations involved in the programme have formed the Resettlement Inter-Agency Partnership (RIAP 2004). A wide variety of UK governmental and non-governmental institutions are involved in the program (Table 3). The nature of the partnership varies locally but it usually involves a combination of the relevant local government authority and an NGO. Together, in cooperation with other relevant institutions, they deliver a 12 month package of support, initially through a caseworker scheme.

Only eight local authorities in the UK have been involved in the GPP so far (Table 4). The difficulty in persuading local authorities to accept resettled refugees undoubtedly represents the major barrier towards further development of the programme. The Home Office recognises that 'ultimately the success of the GPP depends on local commitment' (2006: 6). GPP documents also describe the significance of 'local integration' capacity in selecting local authorities and in dictating the total number of refugees who can be accommodated in any particular year. Home Office documents are not specific about how this 'integration capacity' will be evaluated but on the basis of the experience in Brighton and Hove, the major factor is the availability of suitable housing.

Table 4: *Details of all Refugees Resettled under the GPP 2003–2007*

Date of arrival	Country of origin	Country of first asylum	Number of refugees	Destination in the UK	Source of information
March 2004	Congo	Uganda	69	Sheffield	Home Office (2006)
Oct–Dec 04	Liberia	Sierra Leone	81	Bolton	Home Office (2007a)
May 2005	Burma	Thailand	51	Sheffield	Home Office (2006)
Nov 2005	Sudan	?	84	Bolton/Bury	Home Office (2006)
June 2005	Congo	Zambia	115	Hull/Rochdale	Home Office (2006; 2007c)
June 2006	Burma	Thailand	75	Sheffield	Home Office (2007c)
Sept–Oct 06	Ethiopia	Kenya	79	Brighton/Hove	Research
Sept–Oct 06	Ethiopia	Kenya	51	Bolton	Home Office (2007c)
Dec 06–Jan 07	Congo	Zambia	60	Norwich	Norfolk County Council (2007)
February 2007	Congo	Zambia	80	Motherwell	Home Office (2007b)

Note: There is no single source for this information and different sources typically report different information, particularly concerning numbers of refugees. Please report errors and omissions in this table to the authors.

Once local authorities have been selected, refugees are resettled in groups of between 60 and 80 individuals, typically in several smaller groups a few weeks apart. According to the Home Office, groups of this size 'are considered optimal to ensure there is sufficient support within the group (Home Office 2006: 8). This suggests an explicit calculation based on the intra-group solidarity with the aim of developing 'bonding social capital', in the design of the programme. Lessons have been learned from previous resettlement schemes, notably the Vietnamese resettlement which dispersed refugees around the country in extremely small groups of only a few individuals, resulting in very significant further migration (Robinson 2003).

The second key element of social capital identified in the recent Refugee Council study is 'bridging social capital' (Atfield et al 2007). The Refugee Council study highlights the positive impact of such capital on refugees' lives and identifies four barriers to developing it, all of which apply to refugees who had arrived through the asylum system, the focus of the study. The first, insecure immigration status, does not concern resettled refugees who are granted legal permanent status on arrival. The second, lack of choice in the location of service provision, also applies to the GPP but does not affect resettled refugees in the same way as dispersed asylum seekers. The remaining two barriers may apply equally to resettled refugees: limited access to employment and the related problem of limited material resources. This reinforces findings of US studies of the significance of labour market integration.

Since the GPP is still relatively new there is very little research published to allow any kind of assessment of how significant these potential problems have been or what other issues refugees are facing that may be important to build into its ongoing development. Most of the material available consists of official documents published by the Home Office or the various NGOs involved in the scheme, particularly through the RIAP, though the Immigration Research and Statistics Service (IRSS) of the Home Office is conducting ongoing research with resettled refugees in Sheffield, who were the first to arrive under the GPP.

The only study of the GPP that has been published so far set out to evaluate the programme from a service provider's perspective (Cramb and Hudek 2005). It was, of necessity, conducted in a relatively short space of time. While this was quite sufficient to assess the effectiveness of the operational relationships established between the various agencies involved it was not long enough to develop trust or confidence between researchers and refugees. Although researchers spoke to refugees resettled to Bolton in the course of the research, the refugees' perspective is inevitably limited and forms a relatively small section of the final report.

There seems to be genuine interest in making the GPP work and even in expanding it. Cramb and Hudek's (2005) study is very positive about the generous resources devoted to the programme. Home Office publications describe it in bold and positive terms; the Secretary of State responsible for overseeing the programme expresses the hope that 'we can work towards a growing refugee resettlement programme of which we can be proud' (Home

Office 2006: 5). Given the perceived unpopularity of any measures which may be associated with increasing immigration to the UK this kind of language is unusual.

This language suggests a real government commitment to making the programme work, particularly considering the resources that have been devoted to it. This fits in with the relatively optimistic mood suggested by the slow development of a pan-European position on resettlement. It is also appropriate that Europe continues to contribute to the international protection regime by expanding resettlement, particularly given the recent decline in asylum applications. It is the ambition of this study to provide the evidence necessary to contribute to this debate, through a focus on the local experience in Brighton and Hove.

2.3.1 The Gateway Protection Programme in Brighton and Hove

The 79 refugees from Ethiopia resettled to Brighton and Hove under the GPP arrived in three groups at the end of September and beginning of October 2006. Before resettlement, most of them were based permanently in Kakuma refugee camp in North West Kenya, though a few had previously lived in Nairobi and others travelled to Nairobi on occasions. They all received their cultural orientation from IOM Nairobi and they travelled to the UK from there. On arrival in the UK they were met by representatives of Migrant Helpline and taken to a hotel near the airport for three days before travelling to Brighton and Hove where they were met by council officials and members of the support team at Hove town hall.

Brighton and Hove is the only council in the south to have accepted resettled refugees under the GPP. Since the south, and particularly the south east of the UK suffers from an acute housing shortage, local councils in this part of the country face greater difficulty in accepting resettled refugees than councils in the north, where there is less pressure on housing. Brighton and Hove experimented with a slightly different system of service delivery than that previously established for the GPP. Rather than providing services through an NGO or, in the case of Rochdale, directly from the local council, refugees arriving in Brighton and Hove were supported by a joint team, led by Migrant Helpline but involving significant coordination with the City Council, through the Council's policy development coordinator for asylum seekers and refugees.

Table 5: *Sex of Refugees Resettled to Brighton and Hove*

Sex	N	%
Male	39	49.4
Female	40	50.6
Total	79	100.0

The group was split equally between males and females (Table 5) and almost half of the refugees were under 18 (Table 6). This profile is significantly different from refugees from Ethiopia in Kenya as a whole. According to UNHCR statistics only 33 percent of refugees of Ethiopian origin in Kenya are

female and 24 percent are under 18 (UNHCR 2007). Women and children are therefore significantly over represented amongst those refugees resettled to Brighton and Hove, illustrating the deliberate attempt made by the Home Office to focus on children and women as the most likely to suffer from continued residence in Kakuma.

Table 6: *Age of Refugees Resettled to Brighton and Hove*

Age	N	%
Under 10	24	30.4
11 to 17	15	19.0
18 to 25	6	7.6
26 to 35	18	22.8
36 to 45	13	16.5
46 and over	3	3.8
Total	79	100.0

There are over 80 recognised ethnic groups in Ethiopia. The majority of the refugees in Brighton and Hove were defined as Oromo in documents supplied by the Home Office, there are a smaller group of Amharic refugees and 13 others who were defined either as mixed Oromo/Amharic, or whose ethnicity was not reported (Table 7). Since the 1960s, social scientists have recognised that such categorisations are flexible and largely socially constructed (Barth 1969).

Table 7: *Ethnicity of Refugees Resettled to Brighton and Hove as Initially Reported by the Home Office*

Reported ethnicity	N	%
Oromo	56	70.9
Amhara	10	12.7
Other/Not recorded	13	16.5
Total	79	100.0

In Ethiopia, ethnic identity is partially territorially defined to the extent that certain groups are more associated with particular areas of the country, but due to centuries of significant mobility, geographical origin within Ethiopia is not necessarily any indication of an individual’s ethnicity. Similarly, names may be important in allowing others to judge ethnic origin, but they are obviously even more flexible. In her research with Ethiopian refugees in California, McSpadden (1987) asked participants what language their mother spoke at home, whether their father spoke the same language and what language they grew up speaking as a basis on which to record their ethnicity. But even language is not an entirely reliable indicator and people may plausibly claim to be originally part of an ethnic group even if they do not speak the associated language.

These are never fixed groups and ultimately it is up to individuals to define themselves. How they do so may change depending on the situation. For example, anecdotal evidence among the refugees who arrived in Brighton and Hove suggests that from time to time, refugees in Kakuma reported that they were Oromo during their resettlement interviews even when this was not their public identity in Kakuma, in the perception that this may increase their chances of resettlement. This was typically described as individuals *misreporting* their ethnicity. Much as anywhere else then, ethnicity in Ethiopia is flexible and is apparently used flexibly but it is widely perceived as fixed and immutable.

2.4 Methodology of the Study

Given the limited information on refugees' perspectives available in published work on the GPP, the involvement of refugees was the key objective in this research. Recently resettled refugees may be unfamiliar with the practice of social research and are likely to have very different associations with interviews. Single interviews with refugees are insufficient to overcome these barriers and are likely to produce only formulaic, superficial and relatively obvious responses. Confidence building measures in order to ensure that refugees understand the aims of the research are therefore of particular importance if refugees are to be genuinely involved in the process.

Building confidence and trust obviously take time. From the beginning this project therefore set out with a deliberately long term perspective. Initial research was established and funded to last for the duration of the 12 month Home Office funded programme but our intention is to continue research beyond this. The first stage of the research involved participant observation, beginning with the arrival of the third group of refugees in early October 2006. For the first six months of the programme research followed the pattern of group meetings and house visits with Migrant Helpline caseworkers. A small number of refugees were met informally for social trips around town. This stage of research was intended to familiarise refugees with the research process and to familiarise researchers with the daily realities and concerns of refugees in preparation for more formal interview based research in the second stage.

Interviews began in March 2007, marking the second stage of research. Refugees were interviewed in household units, that is husbands and wives were interviewed together, with children present where possible and single people were interviewed on their own. Refugees arrived in 24 household units but during the initial 12 months several family break-ups occurred and there were 28 households by the end of the research period. Four individuals chose not to be interviewed formally, all of them defined as households. Interviews were conducted with 24 of the final 28 household groups, representing 75 of the 79 individuals. Of these interviews, a total of 16 were conducted in English, and 8 were conducted with the assistance of translators.

The interviews were conducted in refugees' homes from March to June 2007. Researchers had met all refugees personally by the beginning of this stage of

research, most of them on multiple occasions. All but three of the Initial interviews were recorded but all households who participated were contacted again on subsequent occasions and follow up interviews were rarely recorded. Recorded interviews were fully transcribed allowing direct quotes to be used. Direct quotes from refugees have been used exactly as they were spoken. Grammatical mistakes in English have not been corrected as in most cases this could not have been done without distorting the meaning of the expressions. We have not followed the usual convention of providing the sex and age of refugees with quotations since on that basis the small number of refugees would make it relatively easy to guess which individual was responsible for the quote, breaching undertakings of confidentiality.

Initial interviews were semi-structured, following a pre-established set of questions but extending beyond these as appropriate. Questions focused only on refugees' experience under the GPP. Refugees were not asked about the circumstances of their flight from Ethiopia or any details of their lives before leaving, since it was felt that this had no bearing on the purposes of research and would be unnecessarily disturbing for refugees. At the beginning of each interview, the purpose of the research was explained to refugees and they were given the opportunity of refusing. They were told that participation in the interview would not affect them in any way, but that there was hope that the information gathered would help refugees coming to the UK on the Gateway program in the future.

The third stage of research focused on the preparation of a final dissemination event in September 2007. A draft of this report was discussed with a small group of refugees and service providers as a way of ensuring the report reflected their concerns as accurately as possible. An initial summary of this report was presented at the meeting at the University of Sussex on September 6th. Representatives of the Brighton and Hove City Council, Migrant Helpline and the refugee community spoke at that event, which was attended by more than half of the group of resettled refugees. Photos illustrating this report come from that event.



3 Before Departure

This section reviews information on refugees' country of origin, Ethiopia, and country of first asylum, Kenya. Most refugees still have family and friends resident in one or both of those places, but even otherwise, relationships with both places are of fundamental ongoing importance in refugees' lives in the UK. Insights from theoretical work on transnational communities highlight the importance of these ongoing relationships, even as individuals become more and more involved in their new country (eg Cheran 2006). Continuing engagement with distant places poses no conflict to gradual integration into the UK economy and society. Initial work with transnational migrant communities focused principally on economic migrants but it is now well established that ongoing relationships and exchanges are at least as important for refugees.

In the course of research, direct questions about refugees' situation before resettlement were intentionally avoided, particularly during the interview process. This section is therefore mostly based on secondary sources, though refugees occasionally offered insights into their lives before resettlement voluntarily, which are cited when they shed some light on the resettlement context. A longer historical perspective is relevant to the forms of political and social mobilisation in which refugees have been involved in Brighton and Hove. Diaspora organisation has provided an opportunity for particular retellings of history, especially for groups whose history has been marginalised in official nationalist versions.

Exile has provided this kind of opportunity for Oromo refugees around the world. Since the 1970s a variety of organisations have developed around an Oromo identity consciously separate from Ethiopia, though the desire for such a separate identity is by no means universal amongst those who identify as Oromo. The freedom to meet and organise as Oromo has been enthusiastically welcomed by refugees in Brighton and Hove who identify as Oromo, though it has contributed towards the isolation of other, smaller groups within the refugee community. This section begins with a brief overview of Ethiopian history, with a particular focus on Oromo retellings of that history. It then turns to the situation of refugees in Kenya and finally reports on refugees' experience of the pre-departure cultural orientation in Nairobi.

3.1 Ethiopian History

Ethiopia is one of the few African countries which was never colonised by Europeans. With the exception of the Italian-Ethiopian war of 1937-41, it was ruled by a monarchy until 1974, when a military coup established a socialist state. In 1974, the Ethiopian Revolution, as it is widely known, was rooted in a popular uprising against political and religious persecution, war, forced conscription and labour with broadly based support not associated with any particular ethnic minority. The revolution brought the 'Derg' regime to power which claimed to be socialist but was essentially totalitarian and highly militarised. Mengitsu Haile Mariam led the government through a brutal period of indiscriminate killings and human rights abuse on a massive scale known as the 'red terror'.

Mengitsu's regime was overthrown in July 1991 by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Party (EPRDP), a consortium of ethnically-based groups. A transitional government was formed in 1992 and Eritrea separated from Ethiopia in 1993. In 1994, Ethiopia's Constitution was established and the first elections were held the following year. Tensions with Eritrea erupted into war from 1998 until the signing of a peace treaty in 2000 and tensions along the border remain extremely high.

The most recent elections were held in 2005. Meles Zenawi was re-elected as prime minister and Lieutenant Girma Woldegiorgis as President. The preparations for these elections generated widespread hope of political change, particularly associated with the Coalition for Union and Democracy (CUD), founded in 2004. The CUD represents a consortium of various ethnic groups, including Amarha, Oromo, and Ogaden. These hopes were quickly undermined. The elections were widely considered to have been rigged, and police fired on opposition supporters protesting against the results, though even the official results revealed very significant support for opposition parties. The CUD received the largest share of opposition votes and took 109 seats of the 527 seat parliament.

The elections were followed by increased repression of the opposition. Thousands of people were arrested and imprisoned for months without trial. A series of exaggerated charges of treason and genocide were made against a number of opposition leaders. Many were arrested and 71 were only freed from prison in July 2007. Some CUD representatives refused to take their seats and formed a new diaspora based group, the Alliance for Freedom and Democracy in May 2006, which is loosely affiliated with the OLF.

International human rights organisations report ongoing human rights violations in Ethiopia. Political dissent is not tolerated, arbitrary detentions are considered to be widespread, torture and excessive use of force by police and soldiers have been reported, and the administration of justice is rare and unreliable (Amnesty International 2007). Press freedom is extremely limited, independent newspapers have come under constant harassment and the printing of 'false' information is now a criminal offence (Human Rights Watch 2006). Internet sites that are critical of the government's policies have been

blocked and any form of dissent provokes violent repression from the various agents of the state (Human Rights Watch 2006).

In August 2007, reports of a potential genocide committed by the Ethiopian government in the Ogaden region began to emerge (Porteous 2007). The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) has been fighting for self-determination for years. The Ethiopian military has attacked and burned villages, destroyed livestock, and imposed a partial trade blockage on the region. Civilians are fleeing to Kenya or Somalia, in the latest significant refugee movement. Western governments have been extremely hesitant to become involved in the internal affairs of Ethiopia. Since the high profile US support of the Ethiopian intervention in Somalia international criticism appears to be even less likely.

3.1.1 The Oromo

People whose first language is Oromo, account for at least 40 percent and possibly more than half of Ethiopia's population. There are also small groups of Oromo living in neighbouring countries of Somalia and Kenya. Of the 79 refugees resettled to Brighton and Hove, 65 consider themselves as Oromo, as members of the newly established Brighton Oromo Community. The establishment of this association resulted from a long process of discussion which culminated in their rejection of the label 'Ethiopian'. Oromo organisations are now common around the world (Gow 2002; Kumsa 2006). The diaspora context has provided a degree of freedom that has not only resulted in the expression of a particularly Oromo identity but also the formulation and development of that identity, which has been repressed in Ethiopia itself more or less continually since the Ethiopian state was established in 1896.

The development of a specifically Oromo identity has occurred gradually since the late 1960s. The foundation of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in 1973 provided a focus for this identity formulation but it has really flourished since 1990. John Sorenson argues that even in the early 1990s many Oromo in the US had no problems identifying as Ethiopians (Sorenson 1996). In the diaspora there is a strong intellectual current to the growing awareness of a distinct Oromo identity. The Oromo Studies Association was founded in North America in 1993 and continues to hold regular meetings and publish the *Journal of Oromo Studies* annually (OSA 2007). Oromo nationalist histories are now relatively widespread (Melbaa 1999, Bulcha 2002; Baissa 1992). Western scholars have traditionally supported the Ethiopian historical narrative, focused around the experience of the Amhara, but Oromo historians argue for a different interpretation which is now much more widely accepted amongst international observers.

Oromo historians identify the origins of persecution of the Oromo in the process of colonial expansion of the Ethiopian state. The Oromo come from the richest area of Ethiopia in terms of agricultural land and natural resources yet they did not achieve any role in the Ethiopian state until 1991 and many still dispute authenticity of the only Oromo party in the government. The

colonial nature this process is not acknowledged in official Ethiopian historiography. The Oromo have a long history of conflict with the Abyssinian Empire that was ruled by the present day Amhara of Ethiopia. Oromia was conquered and absorbed into the Abyssinian Empire in the nineteenth century (Melbaa 1999). With the exception of the 1937-41 Italian-Ethiopian war Oromo were not permitted to display any manifestations of their culture or language, enter politics or educate their children, until 1991 (Bulcha 2002). Although official policies changed in 1991, Meles Zenawi's government has continued to commit human rights violations against the Oromo people (Bulcha 2002).

The first significant international movement of refugees was provoked by the 1974 Ethiopian revolution. The OLF was founded shortly before the revolution with the aim of establishing an independent state of Oromia in southern Ethiopia. The Revolution, however, did little for the Oromo people and Oromo were the most significant victims of the 'Red Terror' of the 'Derg' regime from 1977 onwards. This led to another mass exodus of refugees from Ethiopia. Throughout the 1970's and 1980's the Derg exploited and killed thousands of people. The Oromo suffered disproportionately and refugee movements continued. They were forcibly enrolled into the Derg army, which was more than 70% Oromo (Bulcha 2002) and peasants' taxes were increased to fund the war. The use of Oromo was outlawed and people from other parts of the country were resettled to Oromo lands provoking further large scale displacement of the Oromo. In an attempt to isolate the OLF, the Derg resettled large areas under the 'villageisation' scheme which forced the Oromo to live in guarded villages.

In 1991, the Derg regime was overthrown by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a rough collective of ethnic based organisations, led by the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in which the OLF initially played a role. However, the OLF's objective of creating an independent nation was not compatible with other groups. The EPRDF created an alternative Oromo party, the Oromo People's Democratic Organisation (OPDO), which became part of the ruling coalition after the OLF withdrew from the first regional democratic elections in 1992. The OPDO were initially less popular than the OLF and many consider them to be a puppet creation (Jalata 1995). They have attracted a large share of the votes, particularly from the Oromo region at subsequent elections in 1995, 2000 and 2005. They remain part of the ruling EPRDF coalition, led by Meles Zenawi, who has been Prime Minister since 1995. The human rights situation in the country remains extremely poor. Membership or support for the OLF is forbidden, and anyone suspected of involvement with the OLF is arrested, detained, or 'disappeared' (Amnesty International 2007).

The majority of refugees who arrived in Brighton and Hove had spent years in Kakuma and, like most others in refugee camps, they had been cut off from the details of Ethiopian politics, with far more pressing immediate concerns. This has now changed and the establishment of an Oromo community association links them into the global Oromo nationalist movement. As part of the small minority of refugees who have been resettled they have been quickly politicised. For the first three months the entire refugee group in Brighton and

Hove met weekly and there was little discussion of Oromo representation. However, they were quickly informed of the political background by visitors from the organisation the 'Oromo Community in the UK', although the focus around an Oromo identity would probably have developed without the influence of existing diaspora networks. This development has isolated the small number of non-Oromo refugees who lack a collective voice on issues of importance to them. For the Oromo, the new association is focusing on improving their situation in the UK but political campaigning linked to other Oromo groups and Ethiopia is also a central concern.

Most refugees from Ethiopia are living in the Horn of Africa, in neighbouring countries, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan, and Djibouti. Ethiopian troops have occasionally raided refugee camps, particularly those close to the border in an attempt to repress activities by banned organisations, such as the Oromo Liberation Front. Individual refugees have been killed in these incursions (Bulcha 2002) which, according to the Ethiopian government are to prevent cross border raids into Ethiopia by the OLF, the ONLF and similar organisations. The prevailing political climate in Ethiopia and ongoing human rights abuses of particular groups, such as the Oromo means that return is not an option. The following situation considers the situation for refugees in Kenya, the country of first asylum for all refugees in Brighton and Hove, which illustrates that local integration is just as problematic as return.

3.2 Refugees in Kenya

In 2006 there were 272,500 refugees in Kenya from eight countries assisted by UNHCR, as well as 11,400 asylum seekers (UNHCR 2007b) (Table 10). Kenya's first refugee legislation, the Refugee Act 2006, entered into force in May 2007. In October 2007 Kenya's representative at the UNHCR reported that there were still many barriers to implementation (UNHCR 2007c: 7). The policy of encampment remains unchanged. All refugees living outside of the two major camps or the UNHCR's small protection compound in Nairobi are considered illegal by the Government of Kenya and are at risk of being arrested, jailed, and returned to the camps. Kenya is a signatory to both the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees and the 1969 Organization for African Unity (OAU) Convention (Verdirame 1999). At this time, however, Kenya's treatment of refugees does not adhere to the policies of either Convention.

Table 8: *Nationalities and Numbers of Refugees in Kenya in 2006*

Country of Origin	Number of refugees
Somalia	173,700
Sudan	73,000
Ethiopia	16,400
Uganda	2,800
DRC	2,400
Rwanda	2,300
Burundi	1,200
Eritrea	700
Total	272,500

Source: UNHCR (2007b).

There are four separate refugee camps around the town of Dadaab in the west of Kenya, near the border with Somalia and one at Kakuma in the north east, approximately 150 kilometres from the Ethiopian border. All refugees from Ethiopia should officially live in Kakuma camp, though a number of refugees in Brighton and Hove had lived in Nairobi before resettlement. At the end of 2006 there were 35,007 refugees registered in Nairobi, 90,457 refugees in Kakuma and 147,036 refugees in the camps around Dadaab (UNHCR 2007c). UNHCR run the refugee camps in partnership with NGO's that work under their leadership. The camps are located on Kenyan soil and according to international refugee law should be administered by the Government of Kenya, but the Government of Kenya has transferred all responsibilities for the camps to UNHCR. The camps have become a space 'beyond the rule of law' where customary practices and humanitarian organisations' rules regulate life (Verdirame and Harrell-Bond 2005: 15).

There are numerous accounts of the miserable conditions in Kenya's refugee camps (Aukot 2003; Verdirame and Harrell Bond 2005; Crisp 2000; Jamal 2000; Napier-Moore 2005; Horst 2006a; Verdirame 1999). Rape is widespread and incidents involving death or serious injury take place on a daily basis (Crisp 2000: 601). Encampment fosters insecurity, abuse, depression, disease, malnutrition and violence. Kakuma is located in a particularly arid part of the country. There is no agricultural land available and water is scarce (IRIN 2007). There are no livelihood opportunities available to the refugees and they are entirely dependent on aid with few options to improve their situation. Racial tensions within the camp are high and conflict between refugees and the local Turkana population is frequent (Aukot 2003). Despite continuing efforts by UNHCR to improve the situation since the mid-1990's, little has changed.

Refugees in Brighton and Hove who had spent time in Kakuma emphasised the intolerable conditions of the camp. Some of them had lived there from soon after it opened in 1992 until their resettlement in 2006. They highlighted the constant violence '*day and night, just hear the bullet*' and the lack of free movement, '*no difference than cell the refugee camp*'. The experience was

summarised by one individual as simply *'nightmare to live there'*. Local integration of refugees is not an option. For refugees who are unlikely to be able to return in the near future, such as all those from Ethiopia, resettlement offers the only possibility of a durable solution to their displacement. This is happening slowly. The population of Kakuma has fallen by more than ten percent over the last decade. In 2006, 6,200 refugees from Kenya were resettled, including the 79 people who came to Brighton and Hove.

3.3 Pre-Departure Process

The refugees in Kakuma were flown to Nairobi for pre-arrival orientation sessions operated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The purpose of these sessions is to 'manage expectations and give refugees a clear understanding of the resettlement process' (RIAP 2004: 17). The information presented in these sessions concerns UK culture, geography, politics, history, and climate, budgeting, housing, employment, health care, education, rights and responsibilities, and cultural adjustment.

All the refugees found the orientation in Nairobi very helpful. People described how they felt prepared for coming to the UK. Refugees mentioned particular practical advice, which they had found useful, such as use of a public telephone or ways of paying bills. They were also prepared for significant culture shocks that were anticipated; given Brighton's significance as a centre for gay culture this included explanations of public acts of homosexuality, *'We were told that men with men is OK here and not to be shy or look away if you see men kissing or holding hands in the street'*. Such preparation would probably not be necessary for refugees going to Hull or Motherwell. There is then, an element of local cultural knowledge built into these programmes, which are tailored not only to the UK, but to the particular area of the UK where refugees will be living.

The goal of managing expectation is a central aim of these sessions and this is the only area where there was some evidence that things could be done differently. The hope of resettlement is so great amongst residents in refugee camps that it has its own word, *buufis*, a Somali word identified by Cindy Horst (2006b), but one that was immediately recognised by refugees who had spent time in Kakuma. The term describes the all consuming desire for resettlement that characterises the lives of many refugees in camps and suggests how discussion and dreams of resettlement occupy a significant place in the lives of refugees in camps. It is easy for these dreams to colour people's impression of the cultural orientation and there was some confusion between what people felt they were told in orientation and the reality of what happened when they arrived in Brighton. Most of this confusion concerned housing. For example, one person mentioned that they were told they would be supplied with everything they would need once they arrived, which they interpreted as including a TV, phone, and washing machine. They felt disappointed when none of these items were provided with the house they received.

In another instance, the individual stated that

Told house is ours, that is how we were informed...But when come here caseworkers told us the house, the rent is paid by the council, the government pays our rent, and water, gas, electricity we are going to pay ourselves. But, what we didn't find out, what we didn't expect was that the government is paying the rent...So found out living in rented house.

These statements highlight that the pre-departure process is key to setting the expectations of the individuals for when they come to the UK. Simply stating things once or twice is unlikely to overcome what for many is years of dreaming about what resettlement will be like.

After the completion of the pre-arrival orientation sessions, IOM brought the refugees to the airport and a representative flew with them to London Heathrow. They came in three groups, two weeks apart.

When they told us we were coming to UK, we didn't believe first because of the experience before, what happened in where we came. There people have taken us to different places, we didn't totally trust what they said, we didn't trust or actually believe that they would bring us to UK. Until came to UK, arrived in London, and see the country where we arrived in, we thought we were being taken to Ethiopia.

At the airport they were greeted by Migrant Helpline's Refugee Arrivals Project (RAP) and taken to a hotel close to the airport to rest. For the first group of arrivals in Brighton and Hove, the caseworkers went to the hotel to greet their clients. This was not possible for the second and third arrivals group. Upon arrival at the hotel, the refugees were given phone cards and a small sum of money. After three days the refugees were taken by bus to Brighton. They were greeted by the City of Brighton and Hove representatives, and the Migrant Helpline Brighton and Hove team. Refugees were introduced to their caseworkers and then taken to their houses.



4 A Year in Brighton and Hove

Everything is beyond, did not expect it could be so good. Like being reunited with your family after 35 years, that is how it felt to come to the UK.

The overwhelming impression of refugees' perceptions of the resettlement process provided by this research is one of extreme satisfaction. Despite the challenges which most refugees have faced, it is essential to emphasize the gratitude that was expressed by every single person interviewed to the UK government, to Brighton and Hove Council, to Migrant Helpline and to the range of other service providers who have eased their way into their new lives in Brighton. Indeed most refugees specifically requested that their gratitude to all of these groups was formally put on record. People described the experience of coming to the UK as being reborn or being given the opportunity for a new life. Some could simply not put their emotions into words. For many these expressions of gratitude were immediately followed by requests that the UK government assists more refugees from Kenya to come to the UK and some stated that they would like to assist others and share with them what they have learned about the UK.

The dominant impression of happiness and gratitude initially made research quite problematic. Our attempts to investigate if refugees considered any elements of the programme to be redundant or if they would have preferred support to be focused on different areas were rebuffed in initial interviews. There were of course very good reasons for this, expressed succinctly by one refugee:

Q: What have you found most difficult about your move to the UK?

A: What can I tell you? I'm happy to come to UK. Nothing was difficult because house was ready [...] All of ready I don't pay any money, In Nairobi 18 days I had sleeping place, I eat [...] I'm happy then. I'm from the airport bringing me to the lodge. I'm sleep and sleep there. I'm happy in lodge, from there taking me in bus. I think I'm born that night. Because 16 years I stay in refugee camp. Now we are sleeping in this room [...] we are sleeping here, after that we are cooking another place food, we are eating here, we have supermarket, we buy mattress, we buy clothes. You understand? Just now we are happy. Nothing is difficult.

Others who had spent years living in the cramped, dangerous, violent confines of Kakuma refugee camp or coping with the insecurity of refugee life in Nairobi were similarly bemused by questions about what they found difficult about life in the UK. From their perspective, certainly soon after they arrived, nothing could have been better. Further questioning sometimes highlighted some relatively minor difficulty but little of significance was raised in initial interviews. However, as the year progressed and the initial euphoria began to fade, refugees began to realise that their new life held other challenges and though these were not comparable to the difficulties they had had to overcome on a daily basis in Kenya, they nonetheless presented barriers to their full involvement in life in the UK.

This section considers the time that refugees have spent in Brighton and Hove so far, covering the entire twelve months of organised programme support from October 2006 to October 2007. This falls into six sub-sections; initial impressions of the UK, caseworker support, accessing basic services, employment, social networks and finally future plans. The initial good impression that most refugees had of the support they had received from Migrant Helpline and Brighton and Hove Council remained throughout the year, although towards the end many refugees expressed a growing concern about what they would do when the programme ended. This was always going to be a difficult time and in many ways the most important time for refugees is from November 2007 onwards, immediately following the period covered by this report.

Ideally, the skills and understanding (human capital), relationships and contacts (social capital) that refugees developed in this first year of life in the UK will have enabled them to deal with these ongoing challenges. This section highlights the many successes of the programme offered to them this year, particularly in terms of comprehensive service delivery, and the positive involvement of refugees in local life. But it also identifies the areas where some refugees are still struggling. In some cases refugees lack the human and social capital necessary to become fully involved in life in Brighton and Hove. This section considers where and why this might be, in preparation for a consideration of possible remedies in the conclusion.

4.1 Initial Impressions of the UK

For some time, British NGOs have promoted the argument that refugees are survivors who play an active role in shaping their surroundings and improving their lives rather than passive victims awaiting assistance as they are often consciously or unconsciously portrayed in the media. Even before the refugees arrived in Brighton and Hove, the council and Migrant Helpline had developed a deliberate media strategy which emphasised this point. This resulted in a number of positive articles in the local press and radio which undoubtedly helped with refugees' reception.

There is a related risk that reports such as this one, focused on assessing service delivery often fall into, which is to generate an impression that refugees are machines for consuming resources that must be efficiently

delivered. The bulk of this section focuses on refugees experiences of the various services which they required. Such services are vital to the comfort of their life in the UK, so they are worth focusing on; they also fall within the limited range of things which service providers are able to control. However, refugees' experience of resettlement in the UK is much broader than the services they have used. This initial section focuses on some of the expressions of surprise, bewilderment or amusement that anyone experiencing a foreign country for the first time can appreciate. These were most frequently commented on in the initial stages, soon after their arrival.

The refugees were very impressed with the UK upon their arrival, and continue to be impressed and happy with UK society. Words such as 'advanced', 'respectful', 'free', and 'kind' were commonly used to explain how they perceived the UK. Some initial difficulties included struggles with the money system. Individual bank notes were potentially of such high value compared to what they were used to dealing with that this also caused some anxiety. Despite this, there was no indication that refugees were calculating the costs of items compared to what they were used to paying for similar items in Kenya or Ethiopia. When the topic arose no one questioned even knew the exchange rate. They were simply learning a new range of prices.

The greatest topic of conversation initially was the weather, particularly the strange nature of the sun, which people commented worked very differently in the UK, compared to Kenya; clear blue skies and sunshine did not necessarily mean that it was a hot day. People continually mentioned that the cold was very difficult. Seasons were also widely commented on, one person mentioned that *'when we first arrived the trees had leaves, then only after a few months all the leaves gone, only the trees, that is surprising...never seen that before.'* Refugees quickly became fond of the sea front, which was also a novelty; several people mentioned that they had never seen the water like in Brighton before, which made a real impression. Many people had never seen the sea at all before coming to the UK.

Refugees' housing was relatively dispersed across the city so they have relied very heavily on the bus system to get around, from the moment they arrived. Many of their insights into UK life and culture are therefore derived from observations on the buses. Buses *'with upstairs and downstairs'* indicated the wealth of the country. One interviewee mentioned how impressed they were that the bus had a place for the elderly and for pregnant women, and how this illustrated how respectful society was in the UK. *'In Africa, people fight to get on the bus'* there is no queue and no special seats for people. The systems of queuing and discretionary seats were rarely linked directly with the cost of the buses (more than a hundred times the cost of a bus in Kenya, in absolute terms) but rather associated with positive characteristics of the population.

4.2 Caseworker Support

Caseworkers, all of whom were employed by Migrant Helpline, provided the main point of contact for refugees with all necessary aspects of UK society, at least initially. This was a vital role, particularly for those refugees who were

unable to speak English and refugees were extremely appreciative of the support that they received from their caseworkers.

The caseworkers help us, from that day [arrival] to now, if we are feeling something, if we don't know something, if we don't know about beliefs or money. If alone, I don't know how to talk they give us moral support. If don't know to go anywhere they take us to the shops, to the hospital, this shopping is good they tell us, take us to the school, the school people help us, just now they help us to get bus ticket of children. We are happy to get bus for children [...] it's good to learn.

Migrant Helpline employed two interpreters, three full time caseworkers, a part time intern and a coordinator for the group of refugees in Brighton and Hove; six full time members of staff, plus some additional support, for the 79 refugees, which indicates the resource intensity of this approach. As is often the case with such systems, work with or associated with a small number of refugees took up the bulk of caseworkers' time and other refugees saw their caseworker more infrequently.

The lack of time that caseworkers had available was the most commonly expressed reason for dissatisfaction with this system: *'not enough for the number of people they have been given... They are busy, we do not see much of them.'* In other cases disillusionment arose because of delays in providing support or caseworkers' eventual inability to solve the problems refugees presented them with. There are likely to have been specific reasons for these difficulties but these did not appear to have been communicated effectively to the refugees in all cases. Where appropriate, researchers passed on concerns raised during the research process to caseworkers or directly to Migrant Helpline.

Refugees were aware that they had the possibility of making complaints directly to Migrant Helpline but there was considerable resistance to do this because they did not want to get their caseworker into trouble. Typically, of course, caseworkers would have been happy to hear about these problems since they were frequently the result of a misunderstanding or oversight, which would have been relatively easy to rectify once it had been identified, so this reluctance to complain was unfortunate.

Refugees who had to change caseworker always found this to be a difficult process, re-building the trust in the relationship that they had with their initial caseworker. Comments on the ideal relationship with caseworkers varied widely from one household to another. One family stated: *'[the new] Caseworker asking us a lot of things, which is making us very threatened. Because [...] is always calling, asking us.'* In contrast, another family stated that their old caseworker would call and see how they were doing, but the new caseworker never called and they did not feel comfortable calling them and asking for things because they did not know yet know them.

In most cases, the lack of time provided by caseworkers was part of a deliberate strategy of withdrawal from those households who were judged best

able to cope, with the aim of increasing their self reliance. Most families who complained about lack of contact with their caseworker were able to speak good English and were not facing any serious problems. A degree of dependency on their caseworker had developed very quickly, given the particularly vulnerable position they were in when they arrived in the country and this also provoked concern at the eventual total withdrawal of caseworker support.

Caseworkers' strategies for overcoming dependency amongst refugees were sometimes made more difficult by the lack of information that the refugees had absorbed about UK norms and systems, particularly around housing and tenancy agreements. For example, six months into the year refugees with good English were still contacting caseworkers to report minor faults with their houses when it had been explained to them that they needed to contact Brighton & Hove's Housing Department with whom they held tenancy agreements. Equally many of the refugees may have been able to repair those minor faults if they had been taught simple home maintenance techniques. Strategies to overcome dependency on caseworkers need to be incorporated into the programme from the beginning.

It is extremely difficult to strike the right balance in a caseworker system between providing security and guidance in an unfamiliar environment and empowering refugees towards a necessary self-reliance. If the system falls too much to one side or the other at the wrong times it becomes either paternalistic or ineffective. Two key lessons from the Brighton and Hove experience appear to be regular and continual communication between refugees and caseworkers and free time spent together in ways that are not necessarily problem orientated.

Both effective communication and free time end up taking more time out of caseworkers schedules. The goal of communication should be to enable refugees to understand the steps that are being taken on their behalf, so on future occasions they would have an idea of what to do in the absence of the caseworker. Lack of time has encouraged caseworkers to solve problems by themselves without necessarily involving the refugees, which has enhanced feelings of dependency and increased concerns about what will happen when the casework support is withdrawn. These worries were typically expressed in terms of disempowerment:

We are worried what Migrant Helpline are doing about us. We have no information...After 6 months we have finished everything after 1 year, now 6 months, after 6 months everything will be finished, that's why we are worried...Before they had a meeting every Friday, it was nice, you could ask how you are doing, what do you do about... but now nobody meets with them so if we need something we call the caseworker and the caseworker comes and we ask them.

For the first three months of their time in the UK all refugees and all Migrant Helpline staff met every Friday. Gathering all the refugees from their relatively dispersed locations proved to be a significant logistical exercise and was

relatively costly for the refugees who had to pay for their own bus tickets. Nevertheless, most refugees got a lot out of these weekly meetings and were unhappy when they were stopped. There was the impression that the weekly meetings were a good way to receive and share information and to be able to ask questions.

Refugees were asked if there were areas where they had not received support where they felt it would have been helpful. The most commonly reported areas concerned travel cards and transport. The Home Office identity cards that all refugees are automatically issued with are not recognised as a valid form of identification by banks or other institutions that they need access to. The more official Home Office travel documents, essentially a passport for refugees until they are able to qualify for a UK passport, are required for most identification purposes. They have to pay 42 pounds for this travel document, a significant part of their monthly income. It was not initially clear to the refugees how important the travel document would be for them; *'Government should have provided us with this document. If it is something very important someone should have told us that immediately'*.

The cost of transport within the city has also been a key issue. Most parents have to take the bus everyday to take their children to school;

For children given bus ID, but those children, they are not going alone... We go and take from school...Bolton they give them by the month, why they cannot assist for the bus for one year?

Refugees in Brighton and Hove were in regular contact with co-nationals resettled to Bolton and were therefore aware that in Bolton they had received monthly bus passes, whereas in Brighton and Hove they had not. Where there are differences in provision between groups these should be communicated and explained to refugees through the caseworker system as there are usually good reasons behind them, such as the greater expense of a bus pass in Brighton and Hove.

4.3 Accessing Services

Caseworkers provided the information and the organisation to ensure that refugees received the support they required but other services were provided by specialist organisations. Most essential services such as education, housing services and some aspects of health provision were provided through various departments of the council and were coordinated through the local Gateway team, led by the council's Policy Development Coordinator for Asylum Seekers and Refugees. Education services were provided through the Services for English as an Additional Language, within the Local Education Authority. A dedicated health visitor was employed by the South Downs Health Trust for two days a week, funded directly by the Home Office. This section considers housing, language instruction, benefits and education.

4.3.1 Housing

The provision of adequate housing is the major difficulty for Local Councils to overcome before accepting refugees under the GPP. Refugees arriving in Brighton and Hove did not present any unusual housing requirements. Of the 24 households who initially arrived, 18 of them had children, with either one or both parents. There were a total of 40 children, an average of just over two per family, so families were not large. Housing is extremely limited in Brighton and Hove and finding the necessary vacant housing units presented a significant challenge, with some of them coming available only days before refugees arrived. Nevertheless, all refugees were accommodated in their own houses on arrival in Brighton and Hove. This provided extremely valuable stability to the refugees and represents one of the real successes of the programme.

As noted above, by the end of the first year the initial 24 households had grown to 28, due to various break-ups within family and household units who had arrived together. Finding the additional housing to accommodate these changes presented a further challenge and occupied a significant amount of caseworkers' time. In some situations refugees who wished to separate from the households they initially arrived in had to be accommodated in Bed and Breakfasts, sometimes for extended periods. This is not ideal, but was not perceived as a significant problem, or even as unusual, by the refugees concerned. All changes in household structures were eventually accommodated in time, with the growth mainly in accommodation for single people.

Due to the extremely high demands on the Council's and Housing Association's housing stock, it was not possible to allocate any of this accommodation to the refugees. All the accommodation therefore had to be procured from the private sector, mainly through existing relationships with landlords and agents. This had inevitable consequences for rental costs and most of the households were accommodated in properties that would generally be unaffordable to people on benefits or low incomes. The Home Office agreed to subsidise rental costs over and above Housing Benefit rates for the first year of the programme and this arrangement will continue - with the council paying this subsidy - for a further year.

Until the end of Year Two, therefore, the refugees are being treated as council tenants for the purposes of the calculation of their rental costs, which should make low paid work more viable for them, financially. However, it took some time for the refugees (and many of the agencies working with them such as the Job Centre) to understand the above arrangement and give the refugees sound advice about finding work. At the end of Year Two, many of the refugees will need to move to more affordable housing – hopefully having found work and with better knowledge and support networks than they had when they first arrived

I am worried about house, house benefits, so it is better if council found us very cheap house. Otherwise, we cannot afford to live.

The cost of maintaining a house was one of the greatest concerns expressed by the refugees and a common cause of confusion and depression. They expressed great shock at the cost of housing and the cost of the bills for the house. Some reported that their inability to pay meant that receiving bills made them feel very depressed. They were not initially informed of the rental cost of their houses and it took several months before they realised the real cost of bills for rental and heating. The Council's housing department reported that a small number of households were damaged due to inappropriate use of the facilities, which again suggests that more targeted preparation would have been beneficial. Some refugees also felt that in their training programmes they had been encouraged to use the heating whenever necessary, without the financial implications of this being made clear:

Told there we can use heater however we want if we feel cold, and because the teacher was telling us that it is very cold, you have to put on this, put on like gloves and everything, like boots, and jacket. We ask her what about inside the house, she said there is something in the wall which makes the house very warm, like there in Nairobi, and then you use that one. And we come here and have to put jacket on in house because of bill. [...] We can not use heater like that because bill is very, very high.

One suggestion was that the council should have placed more people together in shared houses, so that then they would at least be in a situation to pay the bills together. However, the Council's experience of a small number of family and household breakdowns amongst households who did arrive and were placed in housing together has made it wary of creating new shared housing arrangements. It proved very difficult to procure additional housing of the right size in addition to managing the expectations of the refugees who wanted their own accommodation and didn't want to share. Many of the refugees, particularly having spoken to compatriots placed in the North of England, have expressed the desire to get a council house so that they will be able to afford the rent in the long term.

The council, as mentioned above, is enabling the refugees to remain in their current accommodation for a further year as de facto council tenants if they want to, allowing them more time to find employment and become self-sufficient in housing. Given the political sensitivity, the shortage of affordable housing in the city and the very high demands for accommodation, the council cannot prioritise refugees who arrived on the Gateway Protection Programme over households on the Housing Register who may be in more urgent need of accommodation. Despite the initial successes of housing provision the ongoing housing conditions of refugees will be one of the real tests of the sustainability of the programme.

4.3.2 Language Instruction

On arrival more than half of the refugee households required a translator for any conversation in English. By the time interviews for this project were conducted, beginning six months later, only a third of refugees requested

translation, so refugees' ability in English was apparently progressing. Even so, refugees were aware of the significance of ability in English and they were keen to learn much faster. In answer to the question 'What advice would you give to someone preparing to come on a resettlement programme like this one?' the most common response was 'learn English'. Given the importance of language, many reported that they were not given enough support to learn.

This year only learn two days [per week]. In a month we learn 8 days, in a year 96 days. 96 days is 3 months and 6 days. In just 3 months and 6 days, we people who have come from nothing, how can we learn in this period? English is very difficult to us.

Insufficiency of language classes was the most commonly reported problem with the GPP, a similar finding to Crumb and Hudek's research in Bolton (2005). This was a key concern, due to the urgency to reach a level of proficiency in time for the withdrawal of support services. Most people felt that classes 5 days a week, like the children have, would be best. In addition to the limited duration of lessons, refugees also expressed dissatisfaction with the number of levels of language classes offered, arguing that classes were going either too fast or too slowly for them. In fact, refugees were offered six levels of language class which is not far off the nine separate levels offered at most British Council English schools and many EFL schools in Brighton. They were initially assessed and offered a place in a class at a suitable level and refugees' frustration with this process reflects their difficulties with language learning.

4.3.3 Education

It is in the field of education that the dramatic difference made in refugees' lives through the resettlement scheme is most apparent. Services for English as an Additional Language (SEAL), a department within the Local Education Authority (LEA), ensured that children were going to school within weeks of arriving. A key success for the parents in their move to Brighton was the education and safety of their children. Parents were surprised and happy to say that their children liked school and were up at 6:00am asking their parents to take them. The LEA and the children's schools seem to have surpassed the expectations of the parents.

The school where they come from in the camp is sort of school children didn't like going to school, because they beat them and we had to force them to go to school. They came here, they went to school and they like the school and they are getting up every morning at 6:00 and asking us to take them to school. The kids are very happy, very happy about the school.

Two of the parents interviewed mentioned that their children had received excellence awards from their schools. The parents were very proud and excited for their children's futures. Reports directly from SEAL support the fact that the majority of children have progressed extremely well in school, but, like most service providers, the vast majority of their efforts are focused on a small

number of children have faced greater difficulties. The picture is not entirely positive, but from the point of view of refugee families education has been a real success.

4.3.4 Benefits

Refugees face all of the challenges faced by other low income groups in the UK, but they do not always have the relevant experience to cope with limited resources and they face an additional array of barriers such as language. They are also in a different situation to other low income groups, living in relatively expensive houses. The high cost of the rents of the houses where they are living, the difficulties they are facing finding employment and the additional pressures to send money back to Kenya, which few of them have been able to do, reinforce the impression that money is much tighter than it should be. They are extremely thankful for the support from the UK government and everything that they are receiving but with benefits alone, they struggle to pay for everything they have to pay for. This situation is a cause of serious stress.

Refugees were interviewed for purposes of assessing benefits very soon after arriving and they were receiving support through standard benefit systems within weeks. However, the benefits and tax credit system is also extremely confusing. This is particularly the case when individuals change status, such as a woman becoming pregnant who is considered under a different benefit scheme. In some cases it took a very long time for benefits to be processed and paid to the refugees, meaning that the system appears iniquitous. This was particularly the case with child tax credits which were partially delayed and were initially received by some families with children and not others:

Some people who haven't got child tax benefit yet. People who have received it, who have got it are very happy. Those who have not received it yet are not happy. We don't know if there are people who should, there are certain people who should get or certain people who shouldn't get it. If there is some sort of reason for that that is good to know, but there are just these things happening now, some of them are receiving, some are not receiving. They don't know. It isn't clear.

This situation seems unfair to the refugees and is one of the aspects of the benefits system that is particularly difficult to understand. The problems with this system are not specific to refugees and child tax credits are perceived as confusing and iniquitous amongst a much wider section of UK society.

Some refugees reported a degree of pressure put on them to find a job during their Job Centre interviews, even though the Job Centre staff had been asked to give them some leeway during the first year. Since refugees already feel that they are doing all they can to get a job, such additional pressure only makes them increasingly anxious.

Sometimes job centre offices they may even saying you have to find work and you are somebody with no qualification of UK [...] and

everything is quite strange for you and you have to go and to find a job and you don't know how to find and even that feeling of going and asking is not there because you have no experience of even going and even moving freely in a city is not there and its quite fast and need a bit of training at least.

4.4 Employment

Despite continuing efforts, refugees in Brighton and Hove have had very limited success in finding employment. Forty refugees are over the age of 18 and 37 of them are keen to find work, though one year after they have arrived, only two of them had found a job. This is equivalent to an unemployment rate of 94 percent. Such statistics hold little meaning with such a small group, but they do offer an indication for comparing refugees on the GPP with refugees resettled to the US, where unemployment for those who had arrived within the year was 20 percent in 2005 (ORR 2006).

There is a great deal of frustration and confusion in the face of not being able to find paid employment in the UK. Many refugees reported that they had expected that it would be easy to get a job and earn an income, and that this would happen quickly. These expectations were largely based on experiences of friends, relatives or just information circulating from others who had been resettled to the United States or Canada and had encouraged friends and relatives in Kenya to believe that they faced few problems in finding work. The reality of the process of looking for work in the UK has led to disappointment that has been very difficult for people to deal with: *'I tried Tomorrow's People, Working Links. Still have no change. Have not seen any change. It is seven months. Seven months is long for my age...Damage your morale...'*

Many refugees expected UK authorities to assist in finding people jobs. One person noted that the letter they received in Kenya said that the Home Office would help them to find a job, and interpreted this to mean that the Home Office would give them a job if they could not find one elsewhere. In Ethiopia and Kenya government remains the employer of last resort and it is expected that suitably qualified individuals will be found work within state bureaucracies. It is not surprising that refugees have transferred this expectation. Several refugees suggested that the government or the Council should give people menial jobs in various office support or cleaning roles, if they were unable to find a job in the private sector. Understanding the current arrangement of social provision and employment arrangements in the UK requires a complete reassessment of previously held ideas about the role of the state in public life. Refugees' experience with organizations such as Tomorrow's People was generally very positive and several refugees reported help with basic job search skills such as writing CVs. Yet few people connected these organizations explicitly with the state.

Refugees' lack of success in finding work is difficult to explain, since the job market in Brighton and Hove appears to be relatively buoyant and local unemployment rates are low, less than five percent. Recent research by the council suggests that the labour market is far more complex than it appears:

high skilled occupations are over represented and there is relatively little low skilled labour available. There is significant competition for low skilled work from graduates from the city's two universities, 30 percent of whom remain after graduation, from migrants from the rest of the European Union, particularly Eastern Europe, and from foreign students. Until those refugees with qualifications are able to have them recognised in the UK, they will be competing in this highly crowded part of the local labour market. Many refugees had also taken up voluntary positions that Migrant Helpline had linked them up with in the local YMCA or second hand shops run by charities such as Oxfam, which provide them with recent work experience.

One explanation for refugees' difficulties in the job market may be that refugees have not yet mastered strategies for searching for a job, which are very different in the UK from the situations that they are used to. A number of dedicated local support organisations, such as Tomorrow's People and Working Links, have provided assistance with developing job search skills, writing CVs or advice on attending interviews. Despite the assistance available, some refugees remained unfamiliar with the characteristics of the UK job market, even six months into their stay in the UK.

It appears that support organisations are assuming a degree of familiarity with the UK labour market that refugees do not have. Some refugees reported they had initially gone round shops and cafes asking for work, rather than looking for advertised vacancies. Many were also unclear about realistic chances of success and some reported feeling disheartened having received only four or five rejections, which they took very seriously. Finally, there was uncertainty around acceptable procedures for employers in the case of rejection, one refugee expressed hurt that following a number of applications they had received no replies at all, not even refusals, though this is common practice amongst employers.

As the year progressed and refugees became more familiar with the process of finding a job the supply side explanation of refugees' unfamiliarity with the process began to look less and less likely. Alternative, demand side explanations need to be sought with local employers. Refugees everywhere are frequently affected by long gaps in their employment history and the occasionally substantial differences between their experience and the experience required.

Some refugees in Brighton and Hove are highly qualified professionals and they include one former High Court Judge, but others worked as farmers in Oromia before fleeing in the early 1990s. Someone whose last recorded employment was subsistence farming in southern Ethiopia 15 years ago requires a sympathetic employer to give them a chance if they are to enter the UK labour market. It appears that such sympathetic employers are lacking in Brighton and Hove, though it may be possible to generate awareness of refugees' skills amongst employers. It is also possible that some rejections are simply motivated by racism. Refugees reported very few incidents of blatant racism during the year but their difficulties in finding a job may be a more subtle manifestation.

Expectations of finding work should be managed from the pre-arrival orientation sessions onwards so that people are informed of the reality of the difficulties of finding employment, particularly for those with no UK qualifications and limited ability in English. The comparison with the success of refugees in the US labour market is perhaps not entirely fair, since they have little choice but to find work, but it does indicate that more can be done within the GPP.

Difficulties experienced by refugees in the UK can be tackled either through improving the training or through working with employers to find entry points in the labour market for refugees. Both of these strategies have already been incorporated into the programme, through organisations such as Tomorrow's People or through voluntary work with local organisations. A further explanation may be found in developing refugees' social networks. Research in the US found that social networks provide a key resource in finding employment, particularly for resettled refugees (McSpadden 1987), and recent work in the UK has reinforced this (Atfield et al 2007).

4.5 Social Networks

Three distinct groups of people are significant in forming refugees' experiences of the UK: friends and family in Kenya and Ethiopia, their community of co-nationals in the UK, including the refugees with whom they arrived, and members of the wider UK society, particularly in their local area. As academic work on social capital suggests, relationships with these groups may fulfil either a 'bonding' function, ensuring emotional well being, amongst other things, or a 'bridging' function, providing access to important information sources.

These contrasting functions of social capital are likely to be associated with different groups, so friends and family overseas are likely to remain an important source of 'bonding' social capital, though this may also be sought amongst others who share their experiences, initially mostly co-nationals. Social networks in the local area are also important but initially this is likely to be for more practical, pragmatic reasons associated with 'bridging' social capital. Although it is beyond the capacity of any resettlement programme to ensure that these needs are met, elements of the programme design will inevitably have an impact on refugees' ability or opportunities to engage with each of these different groups. This section considers them in turn.

4.5.1 Distant Social Networks

Ongoing contacts with friends and family who remained either in Kenya or Ethiopia is both an obligation and a source of emotional support for refugees. This is recognised in the GPP planning and soon after arrival refugees are provided with telephone cards to enable them to call home. These contacts are ongoing. In the 1960s and 1970s international migration was viewed as a move from one social world to another with little ongoing connection between the two. Since the 1990s this view has been challenged by research into

transnational networks maintained by migrants and more recently by refugees (Cheran 2006). This new understanding of transnational lives identifies migration more as an expansion of social space so that people live with the benefits and pressures of two different environments simultaneously.

Refugees in Brighton and Hove were acutely aware of the sorts of expectations their move to the UK generated amongst friends and family stuck in refugee camps in Kenya. Despite their difficult financial circumstances, many people had been able to send at least some money back. Yet their inability to find work meant that this was a continual struggle and when they could send money at all, it was not as much as they knew was expected or needed. They had experienced this situation from the other side many times, but it was only once they arrived in the UK that they began to see that others may have been in similar circumstances, though even this was confused by the fact that people who had left earlier had typically been resettled to the US or Canada.

In Kenya, now some of, most of refugees who are there are supported by their people who are abroad. So, always we are thinking, these people who are sending money are living a good life and they are just getting a good amount of money. That's why they are support us. So, if you go there I will be like them...And I think there is a difference when I was in Kenya, no one was in UK, system of UK, before that did not know there was resettlement here in UK. So for that reason there is no information about UK, but people who flee to America or to Canada after a week give you a call and tell that 'Oh hi, I just started a job, and I got so much money'... Just in an amount of time will start to send you money. That is the difference. While we were there, we did not know how long it will take us to get job or get money. I think this is really something, should be, maybe, if this program is continued, a second program in the future, I think this should be clearly informed to the beneficiaries who are coming on this program. I think this is good and helpful. Because if you are aware of something you may not feel confused.

Similar feelings are commonly reported amongst resettled refugees, including those resettled to the US or Canada (eg Shandy 2006) but the explanation here was sought in the unfamiliarity of the UK as a resettlement destination, rather than the fact that sending money following resettlement was just much harder than people in Kakuma imagine it to be. Either way, the problems of being separated from people for whom refugees feel responsibility and wish to be in close contact with poses an additional burden on their gradual involvement in UK society.

Both of these problems related to distant social networks would be at least partially solved by family reunion. In the case of resettled refugees, the Home Office is reportedly willing to be flexible about its usually very strict guidelines around who may qualify for family reunification (Refugee Council 2004). The Home Office has yet to issue clear guidelines on family reunion for resettled refugees.

Family reunion is a highly emotional issue, also identified by Crumb and Hudek (2005) as significant from their research in Bolton. At least six of the original 24 households in Brighton and Hove were awaiting the opportunity to bring core family members to the UK. In some cases they reported that they had only discovered that these family members were still alive after they arrived in the UK. Crumb and Hudek identified a practice amongst refugees in Bolton of initially misreporting their family in the belief that large families are less likely to be accepted for resettlement and additional members can be brought later.

All refugees in Brighton and Hove who had knowingly left family members behind reportedly informed the Home Office of this in their initial interviews. During research, people stated that family reunion was raised at the interview stage they 'were promised' by either the UNHCR or the UK officials in Kenya that when they came to the UK they could bring their families over through family reunion. They report that they were advised to speak to their caseworker once they arrived. This is, admittedly, unlikely and Crumb and Hudek's explanation that they withheld this information in the hope of increasing their chances of resettlement may be closer to the truth, but if it is true, it is significant that refugees were not prepared to acknowledge such strategic behaviour.

Family reunion has progressed slowly. When interviews started in March 2007, only one family had been to see a solicitor to start the process for family reunification. Other families were waiting to see a solicitor and often felt that the wait was too long. Still others had asked their caseworker about the issue, but had not received a clear reply and were unsure of how to proceed.

Don't know where to apply...I told several times [caseworker] but, nothing...I report to embassy and UNHCR. During my interview with embassy they told me when I arrive here I have to tell my caseworker. They promised me to help me, to help me.

It does not appear that refugees have a clear understanding of the amount of time family reunion may take and they expected family members to be granted entry clearance soon after the request was made. In many cases their experiences are also conditioned by what they know of the US or Canadian system where laws of family reunification are much broader and include relatives who are normally excluded in the UK, such as major siblings. Family reunion was the dominant subject in several research interviews and appears to be one of the greatest sources of stress for those concerned. During the research presentation in September 2007, several refugees reported that progress was being made. Some family members had reportedly had interviews with British officials in Kenya and it was hoped that they would be able to travel to the UK soon.

4.5.2 Community Cohesion and Political Organisation

In the absence of key social networks, refugees formed an important support network for each other. The weekly Friday meetings provided an ideal opportunity for this, and once these ended, three months into the programme, refugees continued to meet regularly and to speak on the phone. One of the points of discussion at these meetings was the nature of organised representation that should be established. A recognised organisation would enable the group to seek public funding for community events or regular support projects and Migrant Helpline encouraged the formation of such an organisation.

An organisation has now been successfully formed and registered as the Brighton Oromo Community. Funding applications have already resulted in some public financing of the organisation, principally to support regular meetings. This is the source of considerable pride amongst the majority who identify as Oromo but it has resulted in isolation for others. Non-Oromos argue that an ethnic based organisation was not inevitable and a more inclusive formula could have been found. Initially when the refugees arrived they were one group and there were no ethnic questions. Many felt that ethnic divisions began to arise within the community only after several months in the country. Some suggested that pressure from groups in London to join their organizations amplified the divisions.

For 3 months, Oromo and Ethiopians were one community, there was no ethnic question. We could say we don't call it Ethiopian, we don't call it Oromo, just one community and together we have power. Together we will have power for everything.

The first meeting of the Brighton Oromo Community was held in April 2007. The organisation has 65 members, including children. The remaining members of the group of refugees have been invited to join but as the organisation is rooted in ethnicity, the other members of the community have not accepted this invitation. Meetings are held regularly and self support methods have been developed. They have already developed a community insurance project; all families contribute five pounds to the community, which is saved to assist a family in a time of financial need or for a member to remit to family members in need. Other projects, such as language classes, are planned and the organisation hopes to develop more capacity.

In addition to such local support initiatives the organisation has transnational political objectives, principally focused on raising awareness around the plight of Oromo refugees in Kenya and the situation of the Oromo in Ethiopia. The Brighton Oromo Community forms part of an active network of diaspora groups working on these issues worldwide. At a local level they are working closely with Oromo organisations in London. This has not resulted in any significant disputes within the group of resettled refugees and relations between all refugees are still friendly, but the nature of the all important 'bonding' social capital has been changed.

4.5.3 Local Social Networks

Refugees' experience of UK society has, with very few exceptions, been extremely positive. One person commented that in their orientation they had received warnings of possible racism in the UK but they were happy to find that this was not the case and everyone was very respectful. Refugees are sadly no strangers to racism and the terrible shortage of basic resources in refugee camps exacerbates tensions between ethnic groups which are frequently expressed as vocal or even violent racism. One refugee stated, *'In camp there is great fear of racism- not here really'*. Although reports of racism in Brighton and Hove were regrettably not completely absent, they were certainly extremely limited and most refugees were pleasantly surprised.

Beyond casual contacts in the street or other public places, refugees have extremely limited contact with UK citizens. The Refugee Advice Project has implemented the Refugee Mentoring Project, an extremely successful mentoring scheme which many refugees had benefited enormously from. Some had very regular contact with their mentors and had been on trips up to London or other local attractions. A smaller number of refugees with an interest in entering higher education have become involved in the Refugee Mentoring and Support into Higher Education (REMAS HE) project and again results have been extremely positive. One refugee has qualified for a three year degree course but all refugees involved established more contacts with local society through the course. Mentoring is only appropriate for those refugees with a reasonable grasp of English to begin with so not all refugees had been linked to mentors. Migrant Helpline established a system of language partners, introducing refugees to a local volunteer solely for the purpose of language development and in some cases this has developed into other areas.

These social networks are vitally important. Research in the US has highlighted how contacts between refugees and the local community have positive impacts on refugees' language development and success in finding employment, the two outstanding areas of difficulty faced by the refugees. However, with only one or two exceptions refugees have no regular contact with any UK citizens apart from their mentor or in some cases language partner. One year after arrival this indicates a relatively high degree of isolation. It can be explained largely by the high unemployment levels amongst refugees, since broader contact with UK society is likely to follow entry into the labour market.

4.6 Future Plans

In October 2007, the support services that have been provided to the refugees since their arrival came to an end. Brighton & Hove City Council is continuing the current arrangements with housing for a further year, so the refugees will potentially continue to hold tenancies with the council until October 2008. At the time of interviews, none of the refugees anticipated that they would be self-sufficient by October 2007; however the experience of other GPP projects

elsewhere in the UK suggests that refugees continue to do well after the removal of support services.

Refugees' ambitions for their future all focused around similar objectives: to acquire skills or qualifications so that they could get a job, keep their house, and support their families. For some, this meant learning English, for others, trying to get admission to a relevant course, such as a driving course to become a bus driver, and for others it meant trying to get their existing qualifications certified in the UK in order for them to be able to practice their professions.

Those with existing qualifications have had problems receiving their certification in the UK. At the time of interview, one interviewee who had been a professional driver was waiting for his license to be accepted by the UK authorities and returned.

My plans for the future is, if God help me, this professional licence come here, I will be the driver of the bus in the day time, and after that I get the money, I will buy my own taxi. So, in the day time I will drive this bus and in the night time I can do my own private work.

Some of the refugees had found places on professional courses such as caregiver courses, to work with children or access courses for getting into university as well as general education courses. A small number of the refugees have been working with REMAS HE (Refugee Education Mentoring and Support into Higher Education) assists refugees in accessing higher education. As a result of working with REMAS one of the refugees was able to start a 3 year midwifery course at Brighton University in October 2007.

The majority of refugees, however, were still focused on learning English and gaining access to entry level courses or employment: '*For the future to work hard, to learn English. Learn language... I want to drive big car- trailer, lorry.*' Refugees were concerned about the opportunities that would be available to them. Although most of them liked Brighton and wanted to stay, they were concerned that there were not any jobs in Brighton. Some of them argued that in future they may have to go where they can find employment, which mostly meant to London.

All refugees included family and friends elsewhere amongst their future plans. Support those still living in the Horn of Africa through remittances was of great importance. Inability to fulfil this role to the extent that they would wish is difficult for the refugees and they feel a real burden at not being able to help them more. All of the refugees wished to thank the UK Government for helping them, but emphasised the need to help more refugees through resettlement.



5 Learning from Brighton and Hove

The vast majority of empirical studies of refugee resettlement look at only one programme, in one location. This makes comparative understandings between different programmes or different locations within the same programme difficult. This report also falls into this trap, though it is intended as the beginning of a research process, rather than the end. Despite this limitation, there are a number of lessons which may be drawn from the Brighton and Hove experience which are of more general relevance. These are particularly significant given how new the GPP is, the Home Office's stated intention to expand the programme and its current high per capita cost.

This research supports findings from the limited research available so far, that the resources put into the GPP have resulted in a very high quality of service delivery that is universally appreciated by refugees. The caseworker system has resulted in the involvement of all refugees, regardless of language ability. Basic services such as housing, health care and particularly education were praised very highly by all refugees in the programme. The fact that everything was in place for the refugees' arrival is testament to the preparation and coordination of the main implementing partners. There are a number of areas where refugees are still struggling, particularly as a result of limited provision for language training and some confusion around access to child benefit. Both of these may be improved with relatively minor adjustments to the programme.

The major difficulty faced by refugees concerns employment. There is limited scope for altering the programme to improve their chances in the labour market. Existing efforts to train refugees through organisations such as Tomorrow's People can be intensified. This should improve refugees' skills and understanding of the means of securing employment in the UK so that from the beginning they have a realistic understanding of strategies for looking for work. They can also be prepared for the difficulty of finding employment from the cultural orientation onwards, so that they do not arrive with the impression that finding a job will be easy.

Ultimately, however, the problem appears to lie with the demand side of the labour market. This should be carefully observed to ensure that racism plays no part in employers' apparent unwillingness to hire resettled refugees, but there are a number of more legitimate reasons why people with no UK employment record may find it difficult to get a job. Refugees find themselves in the same kind of catch 22 situation as other groups entering the labour

market for the first time; that it is difficult to get a job without proven experience but it is difficult to get the experience without getting a job. Gaining relevant professional qualifications, as some are beginning to do, will provide a way around this, as will obtaining accreditation for the qualifications they already have. Otherwise they will have to persevere with the strategy of entering the labour market through voluntary work, which is proving to be a lengthy process.

Finally, this research raises a number of more fundamental questions about the design of the programme around a pure caseworker model. Migrant Helpline's caseworkers were very widely appreciated by refugees and it is impossible to imagine how services could be delivered to refugees who did not speak English without the involvement of caseworkers, at least to some extent. However, the limited research comparing caseworker systems with more volunteer based approaches, all of it from the US, suggests that refugees assisted by groups of volunteers are more successful in the employment market and have a better grasp of English. These are exactly the areas where refugees in Brighton and Hove are struggling and it is possible that these results may be applicable to the UK too.

The social capital analysis referred to throughout this report and highlighted in recent Refugee Council research on this topic provides a possible explanation for the poorer performance of refugees under a caseworker system. The logic of the caseworker system is that they provide the necessary link between resettled refugees and the outside world. For some refugees, particularly the most vulnerable or those lacking ability in English this link is vital and they would suffer without it. For others it is easy to become dependent on caseworkers and channelling all of their practical contact with society through a single person inhibits the development of the broadly based social networks that are essential to function in UK society.

The difficulty is in knowing which refugees require higher levels of support and who is more likely to thrive in a less professionalized system. Longitudinal research and experience from ongoing resettlement will help in this process. Many refugees wanted caseworkers to stay for longer and in some European countries, particularly Scandinavian countries this is the case, but even there a caseworker system is not sustainable and refugees will still feel the anxiety of their departure, when they leave. The mentoring scheme, in contrast, has generally worked extremely well, and it is continuing. If each caseworker were responsible for recruiting, training and coordinating a team of volunteers in place of all or part of their direct involvement with the refugees, more broadly based and more sustainable networks of support could be established.

Addressing social capital directly in this way would also respond to refugees' more holistic needs, the uncertainties and isolation felt by anyone who finds themselves in an unfamiliar place with few friends. All aspects of refugees' social networks need to be considered. The GPP explicitly recognises the importance of the relationships within the refugee group and the size of resettlement groups has been chosen with this in mind. It would obviously not be desirable for refugee groups to be mono-ethnic but sensitivity to potential

conflicts or divides within resettlement groups at the selection process will help ensure that the potential for intra-group solidarity is fully realised.

Clear guidelines on family reunion should be communicated to all refugees as early as possible in the resettlement process. Where such reunion is not a possibility, refugees should understand this as quickly as possible and where absent family members can be brought to the UK this should also be facilitated without delay. Where these relationships remain transnational refugees efforts to support distant family members should be supported wherever possible by government initiatives, particularly where refugees' activities help further government aims of resolving protracted refugee situations.

Finally, all efforts should be directed to fulfilling and expanding Home Office resettlement quotas. Only a small minority of refugees are ever likely to be able to benefit from resettlement but the positive impact on their lives is immense. Where it is managed efficiently in coordination with UNHCR's pre-agreed resettlement strategies, even relatively small numbers may contribute towards a resolving the range of protracted refugee situations around the world.

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