

Annual Impact Report 2019/20

scottish
refugee
council



Welcome

Before COVID-19 changed all our lives in March, we had just completed a process of considering our values as an organisation, with a focus on those which really sum up who we are and what we are seeking to achieve. The value that stands out the most for me is “resilience.”

We see resilience among all the people we work with. It takes resilience to keep going, to leave your home and your everyday life and seek safety for yourself and your children in a new, unknown country. It takes resilience to keep going when confronted with the hostile environment in the UK, the faceless bureaucracy and discriminatory legislation that makes it incredibly difficult to put down roots and start life over again.

Then there is the resilience of Scottish Refugee Council itself. Continuing to provide advice, support, a listening ear by phone and video call as we all work from home and manage our own anxieties about the pandemic. But never giving up, always continuing to turn up and be there, side by side with people seeking sanctuary.

So I thank everyone at Scottish Refugee Council for their resilience right now. And I thank all those we serve for their patience and adaptability. I also thank our friends and supporters and funders who continue to support our work.

It has been a difficult year for everyone. The COVID-19 pandemic affects us all but it presents real challenges for those seeking protection and those who have just begun their journey of integration within our communities. The crisis brings home the hardships refugees face on a daily basis such as isolation, loss, family separation and living with uncertainty and fear.

At Scottish Refugee Council, we have been inspired by the ‘revolution in generosity’ of so many organisations, groups, and individuals trying to support people seeking sanctuary in these unprecedented times. The love and solidarity expressed across Scotland is legendary. I have observed many great acts of kindness that make me even prouder as a relatively New Scot!

One of the greatest legacies of this crisis will be the way in which communities came together to help one another.

We are proud to work with others across the sector to advocate for more humane and just asylum policies. Working with you, we have been able to push for substantial reforms in the UK’s asylum system both in response to COVID-19 and in the longer term. Change is possible and we will continue to work with you and others to advocate for this.

We can get through this crisis if we work together and ensure no-one is left behind. Together we can build a more welcoming, just and fair Scotland for all.



“The value that stands out the most for me is “resilience.”

Peter Lloyd
Chair of the Board of Directors



“One of the greatest legacies of this crisis will be the ways in which communities came together to help one another.”

Sabir Zazai
Chief Executive

About us

Scottish Refugee Council – supporting refugees in Scotland since 1985.

We are an independent charity dedicated to supporting people in need of refugee protection.

The people we work with have fled horrific situations around the world and come from countries where conflict is rife and human rights abuses common. When people arrive in Scotland, a new journey begins. The UK's asylum system is tough and takes its toll on individuals and families. Settling into a foreign country and a whole new system can be extremely disorientating and challenging.

We are here for people at a difficult time in their lives.

Through our direct services we provide practical support, advice and a listening ear to help people rebuild their lives in a sustainable way. We work with communities and community groups to develop a collective voice and to help people settle and make new friends and connections. We speak out against an unjust asylum system and campaign for policy changes that make a positive difference to people's lives.

Our work to support people rebuilding their lives here unites us with a movement of people across Scotland and beyond who believe in the importance of solidarity with people forced to flee their homes.

We are proud to stand with people seeking protection and proud of the many way Scotland's refugee communities have enriched Scottish culture and society.

Join us

Help us make Scotland a more welcoming place for people in need of protection.

Donate

To make a donation and help make a difference, visit:
www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/donate

Volunteer

You only need a few spare hours a week to make a difference. To find out more, email us at:
volunteering@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Fundraise

For more information about fundraising for Scottish Refugee Council or to talk over your ideas, email our Fundraising team at:
funding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Campaign

Visit: www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/working-for-change/campaigns-appeals/ to add your voice to our campaigns.

Membership

Become a member of Scottish Refugee Council and have a positive impact on refugee issues in Scotland. Not only can you support our work, you can have a say in what we do. Visit:
www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-member



We support people to rebuild their lives in Scotland

Our advisers work one-to-one with individuals and families to identify people's unique needs and hopes and to help people develop a personal plan for the future.

Anas' story

Anas is from Morocco, where they studied philosophy and psychology. Since receiving refugee status in 2019, they have been supported by our employability team to gain interview experience and find work.

"I feel more confident for interviews or anything jobs-related now. I have good experience, references and confidence for the future. I want to achieve my dream for the future of working in psychology research."



129

129 people came to our employability training sessions for help with jobseeking and preparing for work.

Samar's story

Samar and her two children were resettled in Scotland from Syria. She has been supported by our team in Dundee to settle in to her new home.

"I like Dundee, it is a nice small city and I would like to settle here. I want to set up my own business – maybe a sewing project, or a beauty salon. I love Scotland and have found Scottish people to be very welcoming. Without Scottish Refugee Council's help and support we would not have been able to integrate so well in Dundee."



65

This year, our resettlement support team helped 65 families settled into life in Dundee, Angus and Perth and Kinross.



We support people through extreme poverty and destitution

Many people experience homelessness and extreme poverty when seeking refugee protection in the UK. Our service provides practical advice and support to people at a very difficult time in their lives.

Hervin's story

Hervin is from Honduras. He has been in Glasgow for almost five years.

"I have been very concerned about my home and my case, but my advisor has been very helpful and has never stopped working to support me. She calls every week to check up and I am in awe of this level of support. I am very happy to be in this country, it is a very safe country and the people are very friendly. I don't know how to thank the Scottish Refugee Council for all they have done for me."



409

This year, our destitution support service helped 409 people to access emergency financial support and legal advice.

We changed the law!

We believe that everyone in Scotland should have a say in how the country is run. That's why we campaigned throughout 2019 and 2020 for people with refugee protection to be able to vote in Scottish elections.

We worked with Maryhill Integration Network, Voices Network and other campaigners to push for parliament to support this call for action. We met with MSPs and policymakers and made sure people's voices were heard at Holyrood and other seats of power.

Our voices were heard.

On 20 February 2020 the Scottish Parliament passed the Scottish Elections (Franchise & Representation) Act. This new law means that everyone with leave to remain in Scotland, including people with refugee status, will now be able to vote in Scottish parliament and council elections.

Why does it matter?

The right to vote is an important part of citizenship. Decisions made by councils and the Scottish Parliament affect all aspects of our lives. The new law means that people with refugee protection can now formally take part in these decision making processes.

Mahad, supported by our Scottish Guardianship Service

What next?

We believe people seeking asylum should have the same voting rights as other residents in Scotland. We'll continue to campaign and fight for this.

Join us!

Our year in numbers

138 

Community Development

120 groups have joined our online map of community services in Scotland.

138 community groups are networking with each other as part of our New Scots Connect project.

430 

Training

430 people came to our training sessions on asylum and refugee rights.

129 people came to our employability training sessions for help with jobseeking and preparing for work.

320 

Children and Young People

Our Scottish Guardianship Service, in partnership with Aberlour, helped 320 young people who have been separated from their families, feel safer, more sure of the future and more at home in Scotland. 166 of these young people arrived here last year.

46% have experienced trafficking and other forms of exploitation.

131 

Fundraising

25 people hosted their birthday fundraiser on Facebook, raising £4,371.

131 groups and individuals donated to our Destitution Appeal, helping us provide vital support to hundreds of vulnerable people.

51 people set up a new regular donation this year, helping to make a positive and sustainable impact on the lives of refugees in Scotland.

115 

Volunteering

115 volunteers supported our work in Glasgow and Dundee.

Around 400 people came to our info sessions to find out about volunteering with organisations across Glasgow.

45K 

Online

45,000 people followed us on social media.

90,500 visitors checked our website for info and updates.

1,266 

Helpline

We answered 1,266 calls for advice and support via our helpline.

409 

Destitution

Our support service helped 409 people who were enduring destitution.

667 

Refugee Integration Service

We helped 667 households from 47 countries find their feet after receiving refugee status in Scotland.

We helped 635 people apply for essential financial support.

157 people took part in our housing information sessions, to learn about their housing rights.

105 

Families

Our family support service helped 105 families and 183 children build a happier, more secure life in Scotland.

50 

Resettlement

We helped 50 families resettle and put down roots in Dundee and 15 families across Angus and Perth and Kinross.

2019/20

Our response to COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on our work and on the wellbeing of the people we support.

Since March 2020 all our staff have been working from home. Our advisers are providing essential support to families and individuals by phone and video calls.

There's been a lot of change in a short space of time but we are proud of how swiftly we adapted to this new way of working. And we are very proud of our team's commitment to helping people in difficult times under challenging circumstances for us all.

During lockdown, calls to our helpline increased 140%

Lockdown measures and the wider impact of the pandemic have been very tough on people seeking refugee protection. Social isolation, poverty and existing health concerns have all been exacerbated.

We asked people seeking asylum how their mental health was during lockdown: 40% of people told us their mental health was very poor. 70% told us that not having enough money for food was a serious problem.

Alongside our advice and support services we've been pushing for changes to the asylum system to make it more fair and less traumatic for people. And we've been working with community groups across Scotland to support their work to make the country more welcoming for everyone.

We don't know when the pandemic will end but we will continue to provide advice, support and a listening ear no matter what circumstances we find ourselves in.

In March we launched our COVID-19 Refugee Support Fund to help protect those most at risk during this challenging time.

The response from our supporters has been overwhelming and we are immensely grateful to the individuals, groups and organisations who have contributed to the appeal.

To date they have helped raise over £15,000.

40%

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70%

70% told us that not having enough money for food was a serious problem.



We support young people who have arrived in Scotland alone

The Scottish Guardianship Service, which we run in partnership with Aberlour Children's Charity, supports children and young people who arrive in Scotland alone and separated from their families.

Tati's story

Tati, from Angola, was supported by his guardians to navigate the UK's complicated asylum and legal systems, and to make new friends.

"My guardians told me, 'Don't be afraid. You're not on your own. We're here to support you.' That made me feel stronger. I wouldn't be me without them. I wouldn't be where I am right now without them. That's how much they mean to me."



320

Our Scottish Guardianship Service helped 320 young people feel safer in Scotland.

Fartun, from Somalia, was one of the first young people the Scottish Guardianship Service supported back in 2010



Our fundraising heroes

This year our incredible supporters raised over **£197,000** for refugees in Scotland.

Together their energy and dedication has helped make Scotland a more welcoming place for people in need of protection, and we'd like to say a huge **Thank You** to each and every one. Here are just a few of our fundraising heroes from this year...



Team SRC love a challenge and this year our walkers, runners and climbers raised an impressive **£5,610** for refugees in Scotland.

"Meeting some young refugees resettled here in Scotland, and seeing first-hand the support Scottish Refugee Council provides, inspired me to donate and support the important work they do."
Victoria, member and supporter



With classical, jazz and afro-punk music nights, uplifting community choirs, and the amazing annual Love Glasgow Hate Racism gig - our musically gifted supporters raised a whopping **£7,713** this year.

"It was such a privilege to play to such a welcoming audience and to use our skill-set and profession to support such a worthy cause like Scottish Refugee Council"
Aisling, musician and fundraiser

Foodie Fundraising Summer 2019

A massive thank you to the restaurants, cafes and bars who supported our Tastes from Home fundraising campaign. Their delicious menus and brilliant customers raised over **£9,000!**

"We're incredibly proud to be part of Scottish Refugee Council's fundraising campaign. Their work helping people start new lives here is inspiring, and we're glad to be able to support them."
Joanne, Restaurant owner / fundraiser



Finances

Income 2019/20

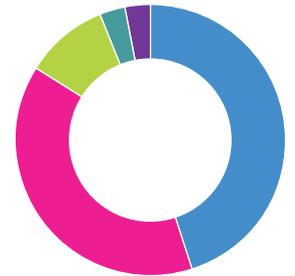
European Union	33%	1,025,616
Scottish Govt Strategic	17%	534,000
Scottish Govt - Projects	16%	497,878
Local Authorities	11%	325,564
Charitable Trusts and Foundations	8%	252,535
Donations & Memberships	7%	197,359
Grants from Other Bodies	5%	151,078
Training, events and publications	3%	80,911
Investment income	0%	8,414

Total 3,073,355

Expenditure 2019/20

Refugee and Asylum Services	45%	1,463,686
Integration support for refugees	39%	1,253,234
Research, advocacy and campaigning	10%	325,423
Governance	3%	109,094
Cost of raising voluntary income	3%	91,568

Total 3,243,005



Thank you

We are extremely grateful to the following organisations and funders for all the support they have given us this year:

Scottish Government
AMIF Asylum Migration and Integration Fund
BBC Children in Need
Creative Scotland
National Lottery
Community Fund Scotland
Glasgow City Council
Dundee City Council
Angus and Perth & Kinross Council
North Lanarkshire Council
OAK Foundation

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
Glasgow Clyde Education Foundation
Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Legal Education Foundation
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
AB charitable Trust
Craignish Trust
The Martin Connell Charitable Trust
Wheatley Foundation

Network for Social Change Charitable Trust
The Rosamunde Pilcher Charitable Trust
The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)
Seattle International Foundation
Baillie Gifford
Lennox Partnership
Celtic FC Foundation
Shawbrook Bank
Steel Charitable Trust
Foundation Scotland

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Scottish Refugee Council is an independent charity dedicated to providing support to people seeking sanctuary in Scotland.

We have been campaigning for refugee rights since 1985.

Scottish Refugee Council

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 facebook.com/scottishrefugeecouncil

 twitter.com/scotrefcouncil

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OISC reference number: N200100084

Thank you to our wonderful ambassadors and board members who give up so much of their time to support our work.

Our board in 2019/20:

Rona Alexander
Monish Bhatia
Julia Brown
Jayne Forbes
Ian Fulton
Janine Hunt
Louise Hunter
Peter Lloyd - Chair
Stella Olugbire
Mohamed Omar
Aaliya Seyal
Joti Singh

Our ambassadors in 2019/20:

Amal Azzudin
Ayman Jarjour
Alison Phipps
Jim Snedden



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