

No Recourse North East Partnership report to NESAF

19th June 2024

1. Some good news to start- the *NRPF Tackling and preventing destitution* Project has been awarded funding from the Fairer Aberdeen Fund for a third (and final) year. So our training offer is available until at least March 2025. We are starting to plan for alternative funding to continue the project after that date.
2. We held a **Full Partnership meeting** on 14th May and the key points raised were:
 - Unfortunately the British Red Cross Scottish Crisis Fund ceased in March. We had a guest speaker from Positive Action in Housing to talk about their **Emergency Relief Fund**, which is available even if housing assistance is not required. Please email Susan if you need further information. Some more information here: <https://www.paih.org/what-we-do/emergency-relief-fund>
 - **E-visas** – The UKVI are replacing physical documents with an online record of people’s immigration status by the end of 2024. Please see this page to receive the latest updates: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/online-immigration-status-evisa>
 - We have organised some ‘Words Matter’ training to be delivered online by the Migrants Rights Network on 9th July from 9am to 12midday. We have had 59 people sign up already, but a limited number of spaces are still available. Register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/w9QTtfVJf>

Workshop breakdown:

- Based on the principles of popular education, participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of how systems of oppression, identity and colonialism form the foundation of migration narratives.
- Laying the foundations: understanding intersectionality, and unpacking power and privilege.
- How to ensure we are not replicating power structures and exploitative practices in our work.
- Decolonising in practice: beyond the buzzword and the role of imperialism in contemporary migration discourse.
- Unpacking the concept of the ‘good migrant’: deserving vs. undeserving, Whiteness and migratisation.
- Breakout groups and exercises including analysis of media extracts on migration.
- We will also consider how to embed the insights of the workshop into a support service framework.

3. The **NRPF and GBV** sub-group held a meeting on the 15th May at which we explained the changes which came in with the new MVDAC (Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse Concession) using a presentation from Rights of Women. Their information flyer is here: <https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice/immigration-asylum-law-information/> (scroll down to ‘Applying for the migrant victims of domestic abuse concession (‘MVDAC’)’)

4. The **NRPF and International Students sub-group** meeting took place on the 10th May. A letter has been drafted to the Scottish government asking about the criteria for eligibility for the International Students Emergency Fund (ISEF) which is extremely restrictive and

international students on a 'normal student visa' are not eligible to apply. This fund is only available to those who have applied to the Home Office to reside or extend their stay in the UK. As a result, a large proportion of the available funding in Aberdeen is returned to SAAS, as there are no students who meet these narrow criteria, and yet there are several students on normal visas who are in desperate situations due to having 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) as a condition of their student visa.

5. We have had two further meetings of our **Lived Experience of NRPF group** and the first was to re-set our aims as the group has been growing bigger, to make sure that we are still responding to the needs of the group. We used some material from the Migrants Organise Workbook to help set goals:

<https://www.migrantsorganise.org/new-solidarity-knows-no-borders-organising-workbook/>

On 10th June we visited the **shmu** offices and studios to have a first look at the facilities there with a view to making a video on the subject of lived experience of NRPF, ready for the Challenge Poverty Week event in October.

There are now eight members in the group, but we would welcome two more - please email sbains@grec.co.uk for details.

6. **The NRPF and Asylum sub-group** had two further meetings.

The impact of the Safety of Rwanda Act (which became law on 25th April) has had a negative impact on the mental health of the people seeking asylum especially as there was a period of people being detained in early May, but deportations to Rwanda have now been put on hold until after the General Election. The Labour opposition stance is to cancel the Rwanda Plan if they come into Government, so we are in waiting mode.

We have provided links to information on the NRNE website here:

<https://nrnepartnership.org/asylum-detention-and-rwanda/>

7. **EUSS Updates -**

EUSS Clinics are still being run monthly with Iona, Vikki and Laura. The next one is **Saturday 20th July 2024**. These clinics will be held at the Turning Point Scotland Office, 27 Holburn St. from 10am to 2pm. Please remember that these clinics are **by appointment only** - email EUSSreferralsaberdeen@outlook.com to make an appointment. Thank you.

8. **Free training** is still available to any groups within the city - updated sessions on *An introduction to NRPF* and *The Asylum process and NRPF*. Please contact Susan via email for any questions about the Partnership or to request free training on sbains@grec.co.uk or look at our website at nrnepartnership.org for more information.