

REFUGEE WEEK

17-23 JUNE 2013

CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF REFUGEES TO OUR HISTORY
AND HERITAGE

REFUGEEWEEK.ORG.UK

EVALUATION REPORT – Summary

*“ It was great to see so many people discussing refugee issues and trying to find out more about how to engage with refugee issues on a local level” ~ Jake Westlake,
Refugee Week Wales Co-ordinator*

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Introduction

This year Refugee Week ran from 17th June to 23rd June 2013. Across the week, approximately 350 events took place, attended by over 70,000 people. Other key developments this year included a 100% increase in our media presence; international development with South Korea joining the Refugee Week movement; some brilliant events organised by supporters across the refugee, arts, community, education and social services, including various museums and archives; the creation of a new time-line resource; improved collaboration within the Refugee Week partnership. We were also delighted that Maurice Wren became new Chair of Refugee Week (as well as the new CEO at Refugee Council), taking over from our interim Chair, Nick Scott-Flynn (Head of Refugee Services, British Red Cross), who majestically guided Refugee Week through the transition period.

Our new time-line and 'living archive' (www.refugeeweektimeline.org.uk) was created in response to this year's theme and acknowledges the contributions of refugees to our history and heritage. It aims to share a far more inclusive and accurate history of the United Kingdom, taking in to consideration the contributions of refugees. The resource will be developed to become an important space to learn, share and exchange memories and personal stories about refugee experiences, local histories and neighbourhoods. We have already had good response from individuals, heritage trusts and community groups and this input of individual perspectives will keep changing and improving the archive, reflecting a real history of the UK. We aim to work with key partners to use the Refugee Week time-line and archive to support schools to deliver this work in the next academic year.

The Refugee Week UK Partnership also conducted a survey this year (May/June 2013) to explore "refugee contributions in our history and heritage". It was interesting to see that 94% of the survey participants agreed that we need to ensure that our future generations are more aware of this shared history. This would enable the UK to continue to uphold our culture of welcome and be a place of sanctuary to those who are forced to flee their homes. It would also allow us to better understand different cultures and traditions and acknowledge the fantastic part they have played in making Britain the exciting place it is today.

Summary

Key Findings and Developments

Events

- Approximately 350 Refugee Week events took place this year across the UK
- Over 75,000 people attended this Refugee Week activity
- Events were organised by around 300 groups and organisations

Promotional Materials & Marketing

- We distributed a range of materials this year again, including banners, t-shirts, balloons, badges and a range of printed materials
- Around 1,800 posters and 8,300 postcard flyers marking this year's RW theme were distributed to over 300 organisations & partners across the UK
- The illustrated designs received great feedback, leading us to consider producing limited edition prints as well as new materials such as mugs and canvas bags
- English Pen and Tricycle Theatre worked on a new 'June to June' Refugee Week diary with a group of newly arrived young writers this year, which is still available from the Refugee Week Central Team (via the website) and aims to generate interest amongst new audiences
- Refugee Week newsletters went out to over 2,000 subscribers

Media

- Over 200 pieces of media coverage were recorded in our media monitoring report (conducted by The Children's Society) during Refugee Week, which were reported to reach approximately 35,754,908 people
- This was a 100% increase in media coverage from last year's reach of 17,361,664
- Additionally, Scottish Refugee Week reported 110 pieces of media coverage (*please note that 32 pieces of media coverage were recorded through The Children's Society media report and there may be some cross-over here*)
- Refugee Week achieved national coverage in The Guardian, The i (the paper for today), The Metro, The Independent, The Express, Daily Mail online and two BBC Online news pieces (BBC News: In Pictures), reaching 8,983,697 readers
- This year Refugee Week had an improved presence on broadcast (TV and radio). Approximately 13,802,500 people tuned in to broadcasts on the

Andrew Marr Show and ITV news (online), Radio2, BBC Radio Manchester and community radio channels

Social media

- A social media schedule and programmed tweets for Twitter allowed us to engage with wider networks more regularly
- From 1st June 2013- 26th June 2013, Refugee Week UK recorded 319 new followers on Twitter ([#RefugeeWeek](#)) and 1,376 visits to the Facebook site ([facebook/RefugeeWeek](#)), including unique visits and 244 new followers (likes) to the page)
- Refugee Week now has 3,260 twitter followers. Additionally across Refugee Week we reach over 216,255 people who follow the Refugee Week partner networks on *Twitter*

Website

- 14,623 people visited the Refugee Week website from 1st June 2013 to 30th June 2013, reaching a total of 18,431 visits to the site across the month. Approximately 26,744 people have visited the site from 1st January 2013- 30th June 2013
- We responded to over 200 emails of enquiries about Refugee Week or via the website email submission form, as well as providing telephone support

Simple Acts, Education & Learning

- In response to this year's theme, Refugee Week created the new online resource www.refugeeweektimeline.org.uk. This time-line and 'living archive' acknowledges and records the significant contributions that refugees have made to our history and heritage
- The number of submitted **Simple Acts** for this Refugee Week is 3,137 and the total of completed Acts is estimated at around 8,000. This number includes some wonderful submissions by individual supporters as well as those carried out in Simple Acts workshops, schools assemblies and other various workshops
- Refugee Week and Simple Acts promoted a handful of Acts which complimented the theme particularly well; *Do a quiz on refugees; Find out who you REALLY are; Define the word "Refugee"; Find an object that tells a story about migration*

Other Activity & Developments

- Maurice Wren became Chair of Refugee Week, taking over from the fantastic work that Nick Scott-Flynn (Head of Refugee Services, British Red Cross) has

done for Refugee Week as Interim Chair. Maurice Wren steps in to this role alongside his new post as Chief-Executive at Refugee Council

- This year South Korea has joined the Refugee Week movement, adopting our logo and time-frame for creating their first programme of events. Our intention is to continue to build on this partnership and explore other ways of working together, including through online media activities
- Our 7th Refugee Week annual conference was held in February this year, which was attended by 100 people from the refugee sector as well as the arts, education, social, health and community sectors
- Refugee Week appointed five new Regional Co-ordinators this year: Patricia Willie (Refugee Week Yorkshire & Humberside); NERS (Refugee Week North East); Kerry Tuhill and Mukhtar Ghebirrebbi (Refugee Week North West, hosted by Action Factory); Jake Westlake came in to post as Interim Welsh Refugee Week Co-ordinator (Refugee Council Wales)

General Recommendations

Events

- Promote Refugee Week from as early as possible, with a theme in place, in order to encourage new partners, groups and individuals to organise events
- Continue to explore different ways of encouraging event organisers to record their events on the www.refugeeweek.org.uk website calendar
- Continue to broker new partnerships with groups and organisations across the year – offering them support so that more people can be involved with Refugee Week

Promotional Materials & Marketing

- Produce promotional material in a time-frame which allows event organisers to order and disseminate resources
- Promote the materials more widely so that more people know about and use them
- Continue to develop engaging materials in order to raise interest and increase sales
- Due to ongoing financial constraints Refugee Week UK may need to start asking for greater contributions towards post & packaging of promotional materials and shop items from those ordering materials
- Start using the Refugee Week newsletter and mailing network more regularly so that our subscribers are more engaged, involved and grow in numbers
- Invite Refugee Week partners to support this work by disseminating materials, inputting on the website and newsletters as well as ensuring that the Refugee Week 'brand' (key message, logo etc.) is used where appropriate

- Think of new ways to market Refugee Week on a national and local level, for e.g. through school networks or local community networks

Media

- It will be important to build on 2013's success in working with an external media consultant and expanding our media plan, from as early-a stage as possible
- Develop a joint media strategy which shares a key media message and activity amongst partners, allowing enough space for them to create their own interpretations of this strategy
- Another key focus will be on attempting to secure a high profile media and broadcast achievements, where possible with the support of a celebrity figure

Social media

- Develop our knowledge and use of social media in order to have a stronger social media presence across the year, for e.g. think of ways to engage through interactive images and regular links to relevant news
- Continue to build the growing **#RefugeeWeek** networks which not only promote Refugee Week programme but stimulate important debate and information sharing – aiming for a 15% increase in followers in 2014

Website

- Re-energise the website so that it is fresh and up-to-date in order to maintain the interest of existing supporters and increase the number of new visitors to the website
- Ensure that social media channels help to promote the website and signpost people to it
- Encourage regional coordinators to generate content for regional pages and share links with their local networks

Simple Acts, Education & Learning

- Increase the number of people aware of and participating in Simple Acts, for e.g. use our partner networks
- Strengthen and sustain the Refugee Week and Simple Acts partnership in order to support the growth of Simple Acts and Refugee Week; produce useful learning resources for school and community groups which also act as promotional materials for our work and key aims
- Use the new www.refugeeweektimeline.org.uk website and project to acknowledge and record the significant contributions that refugees have made to our history and heritage – engaging with a far higher number of

refugee individuals and communities, local museums, archives, heritage trusts and school groups to join forces and contribute

Other Activity & Developments

- Support all Refugee Week regional co-ordinators and particularly those new to post in order for the regions and the national project to be as supportive and effective as possible. This might include exploring ways to assign additional support for regions to widen networks and allow co-ordinators to share the workload

Conclusion

Refugee Week 2013 took place in a context marked by the growing anti-immigrant sentiment and serious financial and related challenges that have had huge impact on possibly every single service provider, community group, arts organisation or individual working with refugees and asylum seekers. All this has obviously and very directly affected their capacity to engage in Refugee Week, resulting in a smaller programme of events that attracted less people than in the last few year.

However, our evaluation research and feedback received from various partners and stakeholders; the massive increase in media coverage; improved social media presence; on-going demand for our marketing materials; growing presence of our brand and approach internationally; continuous support and working together of our brilliant partner agencies; the contagious enthusiasm and creativity of RW activists and event organisers across the UK all suggest that Refugee Week 2013 was another great success, further amplified by the very challenges and context against which it was achieved.

Having been inspired by this year's achievements and the work of our supporters, we are clear how important it is for us to keep developing our work further, looking for new ways of engaging audiences and motivating and supporting our activists, partners, co-ordinators and volunteers.

We believe that Refugee Week as a creative space and platform continues to have a crucial role in opening spaces for people to talk across differences, to inspire community participation and foster a more humane society. While many our partners use policy and advocacy work to secure crucial rights and entitlements for refugees and migrants, we believe that the creative arts (as the main aspect of Refugee Week), is a uniquely potent medium able to raise awareness and humanize the other by opening a window into their life experiences.

On a more practical level, we are clear about the importance of being on hand as a central team for facilitating the work of the partnership, promoting Refugee Week inter/nationally and supporting the community and other groups working locally. Our strategic approach to celebrate and value the contributions of refugees living in the UK today seems to be almost universally appreciated within local communities and organising groups and forms the focal point of much activity. We are also keen to

continue improving our media work and marketing approaches and to continue looking for new strategic partnerships.

In order to build on our work and previous successes, we will now have to go back to securing funding and planning for next year's activities. This will be only possible with the ongoing support and involvement of our current partners.

“it was great to see so many people discussing refugee issues and trying to find out more about how to engage with refugee issues on a local level“ ~ Jake Westlake, Refugee Week Wales Co-ordinator

“Love the new postcards!” ~ Refugee Week supporter

“Wow! The materials look beautiful! Well done!” ~ Refugee Week supporter

“We had a very busy and successful Refugee Week in Devon and the South West... (with) plenty of media coverage (TV, radio, newspaper and magazines)... Events ran throughout the week, bookended by the family fun day with football tournament and the international fashion show!” ~ British Red Cross Plymouth

“The event went really well ... We had lots of families attending ... and they really enjoyed exploring the Museum and making artwork about what they found and about themselves.” ~ Sophie Martin, Family Outreach Programme Manager, Museum of London

“ This event (CSL Southbank) opened my eyes up a little more” ~ Event attendee

“We had great week!... Very busy but worth it! Every individual who participated in our events gave positive feedback. Our colleagues in Blackburn agreed that we had the very best refugee week event ever!” ~ Mukhtar Ghebirrebbi, Refugee Week North West Regional Co-ordinator

Appendix

A full evaluation report can be found on the Refugee Week website – or click [here](#)

Partnership Background

Refugee Week is a multi-agency project comprised of a broad range of partner organisations representing the refugee, development and human rights sectors. Representatives from these member agencies form the UK Steering and Operation Groups for Refugee Week, and sub-groups are made up of individuals from the Steering Group, other staff within the partner organisations and invited experts (where appropriate).

The governance of Refugee Week is the responsibility of the UK Strategic Steering Group. This group is made up of Chief Executives and relevant senior representatives of the major UK agencies working on refugee and related issues. It agrees and oversees the delivery of the Refugee Week business plan, and the work of the UK Operations group, which is responsible for delivering Refugee Week across the UK.

The RW central team work closely with Regional Coordinators in each region in England.- Regional Coordinators are people who dedicate their time, often completely voluntarily or as an add-on to their main job, to ensuring Refugee Week continues to grow and become an important part of the yearly calendar around the UK. Different regions, areas and towns throughout the UK also have their own Refugee Week Steering and Operational Groups which manage and co-ordinate Refugee Week activities in their areas.

Refugee Week is currently supported by the following organisations on the national level:

1. Amnesty International UK
2. British Red Cross
3. British Refugee Council
4. British Future
5. The Children's Society
6. City of Sanctuary
7. Counterpoints Arts (hosting agency)
8. Freedom from Torture
9. Refugee Action
10. Scottish Refugee Council
11. Student Action for Refugees
12. UNHCR
13. Welsh Refugee Council