

Chapter 6

Models and Best Practice

Several interesting models have been identified. Four examples are mentioned here.

6.1 Refugee Law Project, Uganda

The Refugee Law Project (RLP) is affiliated to the Faculty of Law at Makerere University. It acts as a hub where many urban refugees meet. The RLP hosts a service called the Legal Aid Clinic, for clients who want either to gain refugee status or to deal with other problems, in particular medical, employment or security issues.

The RLP Legal Aid Clinic provides free legal services to refugees and asylum-seekers. It has represented more than 1,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in Uganda. It is the only legal aid clinic in Uganda concentrating efforts specifically on the refugee community. The Legal Aid Clinic continues to push for reform of existing laws, policies and practices that adversely affect refugees.

Their training courses – specifically courses in English – are available to all refugees who want them. They are not, however, of a standard that would convert a teacher from, say, French- to English-medium; rather an effort, familiar in the field, to provide the refugee with the ability to survive in an English-using environment.

The overall aim of the department is to ensure that the rights of refugees, asylum-seekers, deportees and other refugees in Uganda, as specified under national and international law, are respected and implemented.

There is assistance in the area of counselling, and referrals for clinical and mental health issues. The Psychosocial Counselling Unit aims at assisting refugees and asylum-seekers to become mentally prepared and empowered to face the challenges of displacement. Both individual and group counselling are undertaken.

6.2 Refugee Rights Unit, Cape Town University, South Africa

The University of Cape Town's Faculty of Law has produced a booklet called *Refugee Rights Unit* that guides individuals through the refugee and asylum-seeking process in South Africa (University of Cape Town undated). From this handbook, a refugee can learn about the numerous organisations assisting refugees and asylum-seekers with language and skills training in order to better integrate into communities.

The authors feel that this is an excellent model to follow, with the usual caveat that any such brochure needs to be kept up-to-date. The authors did not find anything similar for the Gauteng area.

Recommendation 15: Information brochures in hard copy and on-line (and in various languages, such as Swahili, Somali, French and Portuguese) could be prepared to disseminate what refugee rights and responsibilities are. This is a role for advocacy bodies with the relevant government departments.

6.3 Scalabrini Centre, Cape Town, South Africa

The Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the assistance of refugees and asylum-seekers. The centre runs a number of programmes aimed at the integration of refugees into South African communities. Apart from its language courses, it has several programmes linked under the ‘Employment Access Programme’. Among these are:

- The Litigation Programme, which takes up test cases. Currently staff members are working on the issue of why the province is refusing to allow qualified refugees to teach when the national government policy is to allow them to work on temporary contracts.
- The Foreign Educator Internship Programme (FEIP), which is part of the Foreign Educator Skills Training and Placement Programme, provides experienced qualified foreign teachers with three months' experience in a South African school. It is reported that a good proportion of the teachers then are accepted in the school where they are placed. The FEIP has received a lot of support from schools in Western Cape, as it helps to ease the challenges faced by local schools due to teacher shortages.
- Sometimes a well-intentioned measure has side-effects. Zimbabweans were granted a right to remain under the Zimbabwean Dispensation Project – but unfortunately this was granted on application by applicants' current employers, and related to the work they were doing at the time without talking their qualifications into account. Thus a teacher working as a house-maid was granted a dispensation as a house-maid. The Scalabrini Centre and others are now working to allow the nature of the job to be changed *post facto*. They are succeeding.

6.4 Windle Trust Kenya

Dr Marangu, Executive Director of Windle Trust Kenya, notes that Windle Trust ‘provides, promotes and co-ordinates quality education and training for refugees in Kenya and for needy Kenyans, so as to transform both their lives and that of their communities’ (personal communication).

He further notes that many refugees who teach in refugee camps or settlements (such as Kakuma and Dadaab, see Figure 4.1) were not trained as teachers, but they taught in camp schools and were paid ‘incentives’ by NGOs. Some have undergone a series of short training courses.

In 2006, Windle Trust started to offer teacher education certificates for refugees, and now plan a diploma level programme. (Note that Windle Trust has no mandate to find employment for refugees.)

The Teacher Education Certificate for Refugees (TECR Primary Teaching) was instituted and implemented in 2006. Technically, the certificate obtained from this training should enable the holder to apply for higher education in any institute in any part of the world to study for a diploma. The certificate is also recognised by the Government of South Sudan. It worked successfully for Sudanese refugees in Kenya, who at that time had strong expectations of returning home. This was achieved through Windle Trust, the Kenya government (Ministry of Education) and the South Sudan government (Ministry of Education) entering into negotiations and agreeing a solution. The South Sudan government (which was not yet fully independent) agreed that it would recognise the certificate obtained in Kenya. A course was started. The tutors were from teacher training institutions in Kenya, in conjunction with the Kenya Ministry of Education. In 2006–2007, more than 300 refugees sat examinations for the training for the Teacher Education Certificate for Primary Teachers, with the majority being Sudanese. A good number of refugees who graduated from the training repatriated through the Government of Sudan with the hope that they were assured of a job ‘teaching’, but as noted elsewhere in this report job expectations were not always met.

There is a further prospect for a diploma-level qualification entitled Borderless Higher Education for Refugees.¹ This is a five-year project awaiting funding. The teacher training will specifically be for a Diploma in Education for secondary teacher refugees in the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps.

Note

1 More information available at: <http://crs.yorku.ca/bher> (accessed 5 August 2012).

Reference

University of Cape Town (undated), *Refugee Rights Unit Booklet (3rd Edition)*, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, available at: [www.refugeerights.uct.ac.za/usr/refugee/Information_Sources/Refugee_Rights_Unit_Booklet_\(3rd_ed\).pdf](http://www.refugeerights.uct.ac.za/usr/refugee/Information_Sources/Refugee_Rights_Unit_Booklet_(3rd_ed).pdf) (accessed 7 January 2013).