

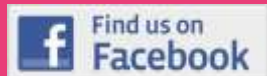
RST is a small volunteer-led charity that provides grants to asylum seekers and refugees living in Scotland.

These grants either alleviate poverty and destitution, or help refugees and asylum seekers to overcome obstacles in accessing educational and employment opportunities.

RST uses the information and experience gained from providing these grants to lobby for improved conditions for asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland.

Please read this newsletter and pass it on to spread the word about our work.

Keep in touch – sign up to our Facebook page



21 Months Later

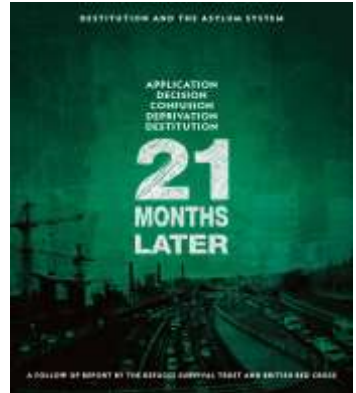
New report on progress tackling destitution

At our AGM in September, members were given a special preview of *21 Months Later*, our progress report on efforts to prevent destitution since the publication of *21 Days Later*, our joint report with British Red Cross on refugee and asylum seeker destitution.

21 Days Later revealed how the system and administrative errors make people destitute and recommended practical steps to tackle this. The new joint report produced with the British Red Cross examines progress in achieving these steps.

Key successes highlighted include strong partnership working between agencies and improvements in the delivery of emergency support tokens.

Further actions which are



identified include allowing all applicants to claim asylum in Scotland; identifying and tackling problems with Application Registration Cards; and improving communications with detention centres to ensure immediate support on release.

RST and British Red Cross are committed to working with partners to ensure action is taken and we will update members on progress.

Copies of the report will be distributed to members and available on our website in January

AGM: Thanks to long-standing trustees and welcome to new members

Our 2010 AGM took place in September in Edinburgh City Chambers. We were welcomed by Baillie Alistair Paisley on behalf of the Lord Provost.

The meeting noted with regret the resignations of longstanding Board members Laurie Naumann and Marion Goldsmith due to completion of their term of office. However we were pleased to receive **the membership's** approval for recommendations for four new Board members – Kaliani Lyle (rejoining us after a period of absence), Philippa

Bonella, Rosemarie McIlwhan and Shafiq Mohammed.

This brings our new Board up to nine directors. A special resolution to give us the flexibility to appoint up to twelve directors, if appropriate, was presented and agreed.

Presentations followed, including a preview of 21 Months Later (see page 1) by Board Member Janet Price.

Kaliani Lyle then thanked outgoing Chair Laurie Naumann and Board Member Marion Goldsmith for their vision, hard work and

commitment over the past decade or so. They leave RST in a sound state.

It had been thought in the early days of RST that the work would be short-lived, but the need has grown rather than diminished. The quality of applications in our recent recruitment exercise for new Board members, the developing co-operation with other stake holders, both statutory and voluntary, and the recruitment of a new Development Manager, all bear witness to both our success and the huge ongoing need for our work.

Funding Success: New Development Manager



After 18 months without a paid member of staff, we have secured a grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to employ a new Development Manager.

Michelle Lowe has a background in human rights and social justice work and comes to RST from Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust where she co-ordinated a network of violence against women prevention agencies. She started work at the beginning of December and will be working three days a week. The funding covers her post for two years. You can contact her on michelle@rst.org.uk

Who has RST helped?

Since April 2010 RST has supported 438 destitute people, including 30 children. Here are the stories of some of the people we have helped...



Kathleen was bewildered when she got an eviction notice saying she must leave her asylum accommodation and her support money was stopped as she should

return to her home country. She had heard that no one could be returned to Zimbabwe as it was not a safe country. After 'sofa-surfing' for two weeks she accepted advice to go to Scottish Refugee Council and applied for emergency Section 4 accommodation and support.

RST made her a small grant for food and essentials to tide her over. 8 months later she is still staying with friends and getting support from voluntary projects while she tries to get a hearing to say Zimbabwe is not a safe place to return to.

Jimmy had been staying with friends for 4 years, with no asylum support, but reporting regularly to the Home Office in Glasgow. He went to Scottish Refugee Council and got an RST grant to travel to Liverpool to make a fresh claim.



Six months later he is still waiting as the Home Office is dealing with supported asylum seekers first. Not allowed to work, he is depressed and losing weight.

Jimmy and Kathleen are typical of the several hundred single asylum seekers in Glasgow who have been waiting over four years for their cases to be concluded.

A Chinese woman whose application for asylum had been refused was given £70. She was 7 months pregnant and had been abandoned by her boyfriend. She was homeless and destitute until a decision was made about her application for Section 4 support.

A young Iraqi asylum seeker was given £35 while social work support was sought to help him. He has mental health problems which makes it difficult for him to retain information and he does not understand the UKBA support system.

An Eritrean man who had been granted refugee status was given £35. He was due to receive Section 95 payments from UKBA for a further four weeks before moving on to Job Seekers' Allowance but had not received any support for four weeks prior to this grant.

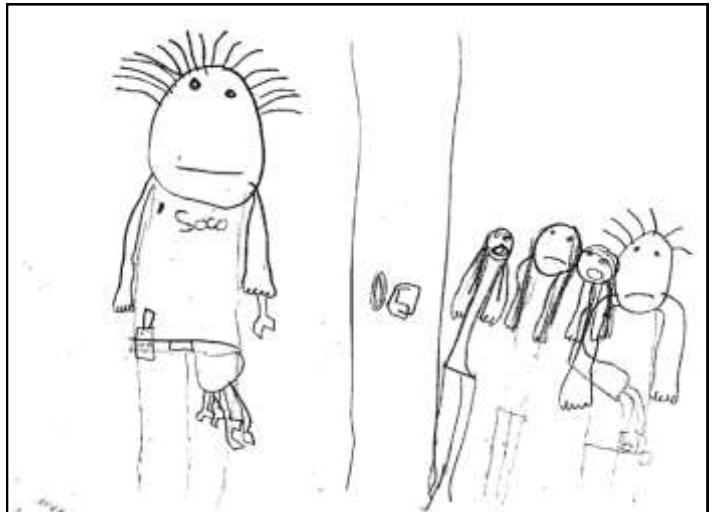
How and when will the Coalition Government fulfil its promise to end child detention?

Johanna Holtan reports

The detention of children in UK immigration removal centres has been in the news since the practice was branded **'state sponsored cruelty'** by Nick Clegg during the election campaign and one of the Coalition **Government's first** pledges was to abolish the practice.

Seven months later, however, children are still being detained and comments by Immigration Minister Damien Green have led to press accusations of a **'climb down'**. Campaigners are trying to hold the Government to its commitment and press for an immediate end to child detention.

Last year over 1,065 children were detained in 11 facilities across the UK. This can happen at any stage of their asylum claim – on their arrival, with appeals outstanding



Drawing by a girl who was detained in Yarl's Wood from the Medical Justice report 'State Sponsored Cruelty'

and prior to removal. Conditions in removal centres have been repeatedly criticised, with detainees reporting abuse, poor living conditions and, overall, inhuman treatment.

In September, the charity Medical Justice published a UK-wide investigation into the cases of 141 children detained between 2004 and 2010. Out of the group, 92 had

suffered physical harm, often developing fevers and vomiting, while 50 children received inadequate medical care. More than half had been psychologically harmed and went on to suffer nightmares, insomnia or became deeply fearful of being locked up again. Almost 50 had witnessed violence in detention while 13 had been injured, notably several children hurt during the

break-up of a hunger strike at Yarl's Wood, the detention centre in Bedfordshire.

There have been several high-profile cases of detained asylum-seeking children across the UK, but the story of Precious Mhango has perhaps been the biggest in Scotland. Her story emerged after her journals of her time spent in Dungavel and Yarl's Wood were revealed. The ten-year old and her mother Florence are originally from Malawi and have lived in Cranhill, Glasgow for the past seven years.

Precious and Florence were held in Dungavel last year before moving to Yarl's Wood, awaiting their deportation and were granted a last-minute reprieve. Precious faces the threat of female genital mutilation if she is returned to Malawi.

After high-profile support from First Minister Alex Salmond, Cardinal Keith O'Brien and Rt Reverend John Christie, the pair

Our fear is that they will never end detention of children. To say they will only detain children for a short period is the same as what we had before."

Medical Justice
spokeswoman
Emma Ginn

were released from detention. According to various campaign websites, supporters secured and funded a judicial review of the Home Office's decision in the hope it would be forced to reconsider, on the grounds of Article 8 of the European Human Rights Convention – a child has the right to a secure family life.

However, London Deputy High Court Judge Christopher Symons QC, who carried out the review, recently concluded that the Home Office is justified in its decision to deport the family and rejected the Article 8 argument. To

date, the small family's status is still unknown, but their support continues to grow.

How and when the Government will fulfill its commitment to end child detention remains to be seen. The closure of the family unit at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre has been announced and some other changes are being piloted, but at the time of going to press no clear plan has been released to end the practice entirely. Over the coming months it will be crucial for Government, UKBA, and the NGO community to work together to see that the practice is ended and to ensure that other humane alternatives are in place.



Take action

Add your voice to the campaign to end child detention

www.outcrycampaign.org.uk



Further info

Read the Medical Justice report

www.medicaljustice.org.uk

Access Education & Employment Grants

Evaluation report shows positive results

Since 2006 RST has provided 331 asylum seekers and refugees with small grants to support them in accessing education and employment.

The sums are modest (maximum £150) but have been crucial in **improving clients'** chances of finding suitable employment by allowing them to take advantage of opportunities to enhance their existing skills and learn new ones.

The grants have been

used for study materials, equivalence certificates for existing qualifications, travel to classes or volunteer placements, to upgrade driving skills or buy home computers.

A recent grant from Oxfam enabled us to establish a more robust evaluation scheme for the grants. Our new report includes formal feedback from 28 clients, six months after receiving their money.

It clearly shows that clients derived strong personal development

advantages from the grants as shown by the results in the table below.

These benefits helped recipients to become more employable and better able to seek and secure appropriate work. We know that many continue further, higher or vocational training while working part time.



Further info

Download the report

www.rst.org.uk/knowledge/research/

Some of the people we have helped:

Charles: Over past three years a young Sudanese applicant has been given three grants to help with text books and travel costs. He has completed an HND course and is now going a Business Studies degree at University.

Sarah: A Rwandan woman who has been an asylum seeker for 8 years has been given two grants for equipment for her course. She is now in the third year of a B of Nursing degree course.

Benefits to grant recipients

Accessed new opportunities	22
Overcame barriers	22
Became more employable	18
Found employment	2
Became more independent	5
Ended dependence on benefits	9
Reduced isolation	22
Improved language skills	20
Improved confidence	22

Fun and Funds for RST...

Rosie Newman.

Running: A total of over £2,000 has been raised by individuals who have set up sponsorship pages through the website Justgiving and taken on challenges like the Great Scottish Run, the Islay Half Marathon and 10K runs.

A huge thank you to the brave runners (Claire Fuller, Mary Kate Dickie,



©Ceilidh Collective

Dancing: This autumn over 300 people danced the night away at three fundraising ceilidhs which raised a total of £600 for RST. Two of the events were in Edinburgh, organised by the Ceilidh Collective, which raises funds for environmental, social and grassroots organisations. The third took place in an orchard in Fife and was organised by Ceilidh Collective volunteer

Julie Robertson, Jason Bergen, Chris Young and Sandy Small) and all the dedicated Ceilidh Collective volunteers.

For more information about Ceilidh Collective: www.ceilidhcollective.org.uk.

What you can do: 4 easy ways to support us

Could you help to fundraise and spread the word? RST is a volunteer-led organisation and we rely on the support of committed individuals. Here are a few simple ideas:

- 1 Join us: **if you're not a member, or ask a friend** to join us if you are. Sign up online or using the form overleaf.
- 2 Fundraise: organise an event or a raffle, get your friends to sponsor you to run, dance, jump or any other creative activity... You can make a free online fundraising page in minutes at www.justgiving.com/refugeesurvivaltrust
- 3 Take action: **support the SRC's campaign** for cash support for asylum seekers http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/support-us/campaign/azure_card
- 4 Pass on this newsletter: take it into work or give it to a potential new RST supporter.

If you've got a fundraising idea contact us and we will do what we can to support you:

info@rst.org.uk

Refugee Survival Trust
The Melting Pot
5 Rose Street
Edinburgh
EH2 2PR

0131 243 2660



The Refugee Survival Trust only exists thanks to the generosity, help and support given by people in Scotland— individuals, churches, clubs, companies and schools. It is thanks to you that we are able to prevent so many vulnerable people from being destitute on the streets of Scotland. However, as harsh legislation and an often ineffective asylum system forces more and more people to rely on RST funding to survive, we need your help more than ever.

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The Melting Pot
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EH2 2PR
Charity no: SCO24328

Phone:
0131 243 2660
Email: info@rst.org.uk

Visit our website:
www.rst.org.uk

Please pass on this newsletter to friends, family and colleagues, and encourage them to support us—ask them to show their support by becoming a member or regular donor. You can also donate online: www.rst.org.uk

Please make a donation:

Last year, RST made grants of over £50,000 to prevent the destitution of asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland. RST only has limited funds, and desperately needs to raise more if it is to continue. Without RST, asylum seekers, refugees and their children would be left with no money for food, and often no accommodation. Please make a donation now to help us continue this essential work. Thank you!

Title: **Mr / Mrs / Ms / Other**
Full Name:
Full address:
..... Postcode:

- I would like to make a donation of £ and enclose a cheque/postal order payable to the Refugee Survival Trust for this amount.
- I am a UK Taxpayer and would like the Refugee Survival Trust to reclaim tax on this and all donations hereafter (*please tick*)

NB This only applies if you currently pay tax on income or any savings you have. You must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax we reclaim on your donations in the tax year.

Please return to: The Refugee Survival Trust, The Melting Pot, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PR