



Employability Forum

Welsh Refugee Council



Press Release

5<sup>th</sup> September 2005

## **New plan for helping refugees into work**

A conference is being held in Cardiff on 6th September to consider how refugees in Wales can make more effective use of the skills and experience that they bring with them to the UK. The event has been organised by the Employability Forum in partnership with the Welsh Refugee Council, the Welsh Local Authorities Consortium for Refugees and Asylum Seekers and Refugee Voice Wales, and is being held at the Wales Millennium Centre.

Jane Hutt AM, Business Minister for the Welsh Assembly Government, will explain how new plans are being developed to make sure that refugees and other migrants are included in the labour market.

David Farnsworth, Chief Executive of the Welsh Refugee Council, welcomes the opportunity to work more closely with Job Centres and other organisations who provide training and advice for refugee jobseekers. "Refugees in Wales are often well-educated and bring valuable skills with them. These people want to contribute fully to the Welsh economy and we need to enable them to do so. This conference is an excellent opportunity to take this work forward for the benefit of those individuals, Wales and the UK".

Delegates will consider the situation in Wales and will review the new strategy published by the UK Government earlier in the year - Working to Rebuild Lives which sets out the plans for a new partnership between Jobcentre Plus and the voluntary sector to tackle the high level of underemployment and unemployment in refugee communities throughout the UK.

Other contributors include Dr Debebe Legesse, Chair of the Cymru Refugee and Asylum Seeker Council and Roger Dinham, Business Development Manager for Jobcentre Plus in Wales.

### **Case studies of Refugees:**

- Themba Moyo, a refugee from Zimbabwe arrived in Wales three and a half years ago. In Zimbabwe Themba worked as a leading Public Relations Consultant and music promoter for the countries leading

musicians and performers. Since arriving in Wales Themba has taken a leading role in helping to establish a community organisation for his fellow country people, helped to establish Refugee Voice Wales a network for Refugee Community organisations and has served as a trustee for several organisations. His outstanding contribution to the community has been recognised when he was awarded Wales's top volunteer award.

- Moses Bushiri is a refugee from Burundi and has lived in Wales since 2001. In his country of origin he was a banker and since gaining refugee status he has faced problems in recognition of his overseas qualifications and skills. Since living in Wales he has helped establish the Central African Association which aims to assist French speaking refugees in Cardiff. An amazing challenge since he spoke no English when he arrived in Cardiff.
- Dr Debebe, a refugee for two years in Wales has an academic background and has taught in Universities across Europe for more than ten years. He has faced many barriers to employment in the UK in his chosen field though he has sought employment with a charity helping refugees. Dr Debebe is a founding member and chair of Cymru Refugee and Asylum Seekers Academic Council, this organization has come together to help refugee academics rebuild their academic careers in Wales and are working to champion the cause of refugee academics.

**Notes for Editors:**

1. The Employability Forum is an independent organisation which promotes good practice in the employment of refugees and migrants and leads the work of the National Refugee Integration Forum on employment.

2. The Welsh Refugee Council advises, supports and provides information to help asylum seekers and refugees. They work with refugees to build thriving refugee communities in Wales and campaign and lobby for refugee rights as enshrined under international humanitarian law.

3. The Welsh Local Authorities Consortium works strategically with partners in the development of strategic policies and initiatives for asylum support and refugee integration in Wales.

4. Refugee Voice Wales is an umbrella group of Refugee Community Organisations whose aims is to strengthen the voice of refugees in Wales

5. Working to Rebuild Lives was published by the Department for Work & Pensions in March 2005 and is available on [www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2005/emp\\_guide\\_summary.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2005/emp_guide_summary.pdf)

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