



Refugees as Re-BuildersTM Curriculum



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1 Introduction



1.1 Aims

The aims of the Refugees as Re-Builders™ (RRB) training programme are as follows:

- a)** To provide space for people of different backgrounds to build trust across the divides of ethnicity, class and religion in order to develop values-based leadership attitudes and skills.
- b)** To empower settled refugees to contribute to their countries of origin and diaspora communities by facilitating access to knowledge and skills participants may not otherwise receive through academic studies or work experience.
- c)** To strengthen the capability and expertise participants already possess and provide the resources and practical tools needed to design and facilitate workshops within their diaspora communities and countries of origin.
- d)** To provide participants with opportunities to explore, share, discuss and reflect on their own experience.
- e)** To provide an innovative, meaningful and relevant learning opportunity which is rooted in the articulated aspirations and needs of the participants undertaking the course.

1.2 Background

The Refugees as Re-Builders™ programme came about as a culmination of training courses for diaspora leaders and professionals, originating in the wider Horn of Africa, which the Agenda for Reconciliation Programme (AfR) has run since 2013. The most recent of these courses was a Training of Trainers (ToT) which focused on developing skills in Dialogue Facilitation for Reconciliation and in which 15 people took part between October 2014 to April 2015. Many of the alumni put the skills they had learnt into action soon after they completed the course. Some embarked on a scoping mission to facilitate dialogue skills training workshops for local communities in Somalia. Other alumni combined efforts to offer training within their diaspora communities in the UK. In their evaluation of the course, former participants expressed the vision that dialogue facilitation training could be offered more widely and focus on the practical factors that can undermine or enhance stability in countries affected by war and/or by institutional fragility.

These global issues have been at the core of the content design, along with the vision that the knowledge, skills and perspectives of refugees are essential in rebuilding their home countries, if, or when, an opportunity presents itself.

Milestones of Refugees as Re-Builders™

2014



ToT in Dialogue Facilitation

The predecessor of the current Refugees as Re-Builders™ training ran 6 months from October 2014 to April 15 2015 professional settled refugees originating in the Horn of Africa were trained.

2015



Evaluation and Sharing Experience of ToT

2016



Pilot Year 1

1st cohort participants consisting of 17 settled Refugees, all originating in fragile and conflict-affected countries began the course training on its modules; Dialogue for Social Cohesion, Ethical Leadership and Sustainable Livelihood.

Pilot Year 2

2nd cohort participants consisting of 15 settled Refugees were selected for the same process learning process as Yr 1. This cohort and previous one were combined to continue the course



2017

Pilot summary

Final phase of the two Pilot courses. A total of 16 participants completed the whole of the learning content of the course. The Course was then officially launched in Parliament.

The first year of formation of Refugees as Re-Builders™ Faculty and the start of the Curriculum write up for the content of the course.



2018

1st Non-Pilot

Two consecutive Courses of Foundation Level Training from February to March and May to June. Each lasting seven weeks of 1day/week training. 34 participants of settled Refugees enrolled.



2019

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In April 2016 the new Refugees as Re-Builders™ programme, incorporating the vision, core values and principles of Initiatives of Change (IofC) UK was launched. The training delivered key knowledge and skills in three interconnected modules:



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Dialogue for Social Cohesion

Dialogue is not just a prerequisite for social change, but enhances the process and makes it more effective. We can all engage in 'relational activism' as a form of trust-building across the world's divides.

This module promotes opportunities for listening in everyday encounters as well as story-sharing in more structured contexts. Participants share from their own experience of being part of interpersonal, community and issue-based dialogues, with an emphasis on the importance of teamwork, accountability and community-building.

The module explores the definitions of facilitation within different languages and cultures, using case examples to ensure relevance and minimise unconscious bias. It considers the motivations and disciplines that facilitators need to adopt in order to be ethical and trustworthy practitioners.

The module begins with listening to understand, as this is the primary tool for any dialogue. Then it explores speaking as a means to be understood. Participants articulate indicators of social cohesion within communities and map assets that can act as building blocks, such as community spaces, hospitality and cultural values.

Participants are offered theoretical models that help them codify some of their own experiences. These include the spectrum of conflict handling mechanisms, e.g. mediation as a form of dialogue in fragile states, and other relevant frameworks such as the pillars of positive peace.



Ethical Leadership for Just Governance

When people hear the word leadership, they often imagine politicians or business owners. These leaders may be the ones making large-scale changes in our society; however, each and every one of us can quietly carry the skills and values of good leadership into our families, communities and wider society to create positive change.

This module allows participants to explore leadership in different contexts to ensure a holistic approach to the rebuilding process in conflict-affected countries. It focuses on what it means to be an ethical leader, with a set of personal values guiding decisions and goals. Participants explore different leadership and communication styles, enabling authentic and productive interpersonal relationships, as well as creating the positive ripples of good leadership.

The module also encourages participants to explore different structures of community and businesses, with a focus on requirements for safeguarding the ethical operations of these organisations. Participants get to discuss examples of ethical dilemmas, practice developing organisational values, and applying them to initiatives they may be involved in.

Finally, the module looks at international governance procedures related to issues in conflict-affected countries. Participants look at models for violent conflict prevention, peacebuilding and human rights, while critically analysing the balance between governance mechanisms and community participation for creating trust.



Sustainable Livelihood for Resilience

The Sustainable Livelihood module presents a framework for a resilience-based approach that is applicable to both urban and rural environments. Participants learn potential routes for economic and environmental sustainability, inspiring them to turn their personal vision into action to create livelihood initiatives.

The module recognises that feelings of abandonment, disillusionment, resentment and jealousy arise from the declining livelihoods (poverty and social abandonment) of vulnerable people marginalised by global society.

The module addresses the complex situation of rural livelihoods by examining the social, economic and environmental factors driving land degradation and social deprivation. It contextualises the experience of people in conflict-affected countries while giving a holistic approach to transformation. The focus on peoples' well-being in parallel with environmental regeneration also benefits global goods and services such as the mitigation of climate change.

In relation to urban livelihood systems, the module enables enterprise development in building sustainable jobs and income generation opportunities. It supports the triple bottom line model (people, planet and profit). It recognises the need for financial sustainability while providing a structured approach to innovation and micro-industry enterprises.



Values

Peace
Resilience
Breaking barriers
Trust building and bridge building
Harnessing community
Capability
Hope

Foundation

Intermediate

Refugees as Re-Builders™

Advanced



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The topics contained within the modules were chosen to make connections and align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically the following:



The intention is that the content of the three modules contribute to a global framework of support to ensure the SDGs are realised.

The newly developed programme rolled out a pilot phase that ran for two consecutive years (2016/17 and 2017/18). The participants were settled (diaspora) refugees from fragile countries affected by local or regional wars and/or other conflicts; including strife over resource-sharing, systemic and internecine violence. New content for the course was put together and tested. It was regularly assessed for relevance in relation to participants' feedback. Evaluations were carried out at the end of each year and also at the end of each of the programme's three levels, Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced [formerly known as Training of Trainers (ToT)].

The recommendations that came out of the two-year pilot phase were as follows:


- To set up the Refugees as Re-Builders™ Faculty consisting of Trainers and a Management and Administration Team to oversee the consolidation of learning and experiential outcomes of the programme and to ensure the replicability and sustainability of the training.
- To conduct an impact evaluation of the Community of Practice (CoPrac) level of the training after the completion of its pilot phase in Spring 2019.
- To create a mentoring framework to facilitate self-development and agency.
- To develop a Curriculum to frame the purpose, objectives and learning methodology of the RRB training programme.
- To write a prospectus for each of the levels to accompany all future calls for enrolment.
- To ensure adequate funding to run the course every year for at least three complete cycles to develop and put into action the RRB curriculum.


One of the pilot project's key recommendations highlighted the need to develop a coherent, cohesive schema. In response, a curriculum writing project was initiated by the RRB Programme Manager and developed alongside the RRB Faculty with input from an education and training consultant.




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The curriculum document sets out the resulting framework. The three interconnecting modules – Dialogue for Social Cohesion, Ethical Leadership for Just Governance and Sustainable Livelihood for Resilience – map horizontally and progress vertically through the following three Levels:

 **Foundation** prepares participants to engage with the three discipline areas by presenting relevant knowledge and skills. The focus is on the individual as the starting point for change. It encourages participants to examine and explore the qualities and skills they already have in order to identify how they might develop their leadership capacity over time.

 **Intermediate** equips participants with the skills to develop personal competencies and enhance understanding of concepts, theories, methods and strategies in order to identify, design, deliver and evaluate appropriate development projects for their respective communities.

 **Advanced** provides participants with practical opportunities to critically analyse rebuilding projects they are currently involved in and to consider how what they have learned and practised might apply to future activities.

Each level includes ongoing assessment and evaluation culminating in a graduation ceremony and progression into the RRB Community of Practice to sustain, support and motivate existing graduates, as well as to inform and encourage future applicants.

1.3 Methodology

Throughout the Refugees as Re-Builders™ programme, participants will learn to design and implement solutions which contribute to the rebuilding of their countries of origin. The programme is innovative and dynamic and uses interactive and participatory teaching and learning methods. The underpinning philosophical ethos is in keeping with the values and vision of lofC UK and grounded in adult learning principles.

The lofC vision is of a just, peaceful and sustainable world to which everyone responding to the call of conscience makes their unique contribution. Its mission is to inspire, equip and connect people to play their part in rebuilding a better society. Its values are honesty, unselfishness, love and purity of heart as practical tests for motives and daily actions. Its core practice is listening in silence to divine inspiration, or the inner voice (quiet time) as a source of truth and renewal.

The Refugees as Re-Builders™ programme actively promotes this organisational mission and reflects the understanding that adults learn better when:

- **in an informal, non-threatening environment.**
- **participants need or want to learn something.**
- **their individual learning styles are met.**
- **their previous experience, knowledge and skills are valued and utilised and participants have an opportunity to articulate their own guiding principles and values which inform decision-making and behaviour.**
- **participants have some choice and control over the learning content and activities.**
- **mental and physical participation in the learning space is encouraged.**
- **participants are given opportunities to understand, practise and apply their learning.**
- **enough time is given for the assimilation of new information, the practice of new skills and the development of new attitudes and behaviour.**
- **learning is focused on relevant and realistic issues.**
- **guidance and a measure of progress towards goals are given.**



1.4 Inclusion

In accordance with good practice and the adult learning principles stated in 1.3 the Refugees as Re-Builders™ Faculty is committed to providing a learning experience that is relevant and responsive to refugees' aspirations and learning needs. The overall purpose of the programme is to meet the needs of the greatest number of participants in acknowledgement that diversity is the norm, not the exception, and to support the overcoming of learning barriers.

By utilising flexible instructional materials, techniques and strategies, facilitators aim to meet those needs by taking account of the different abilities, learning styles, backgrounds and preferences of the learners. The modules and levels provide multiple ways of accessing knowledge and enable the development and practice of skills through a variety of activities. The sessions aim to encourage participation, increase confidence in leadership skills and to enhance engagement and expression.

Regular opportunities are provided for the participants to evaluate their own progress and to comment on, and thereby actively contribute to, the programme iteration cycle. The evaluation process is regularly reviewed by the Faculty members and appropriate pedagogic action taken accordingly. The process is dynamic and continuous. Programme development is informed by the feedback received from current participants, members of the Faculty and the wider Refugees as Re-Builders™ community with a view to ensuring the training is adaptable, takes account of the learner's voice (co-created), results in skills transfer and is ultimately sustainable.



1.5 Support

Participants on Refugees as Re-Builders™ training are supported throughout the course by the RRB Programme Manager, the RRB Administration Team and by the Module Facilitators. Support is provided 1:1 or in small groups as required. Any reasonable requests for support are accommodated by an appropriate member of the RRB Faculty in confidence, and as soon as is practically possible.

The RRB programme is additionally supported by the lofC UK staff at Greencoat Place where the programme is hosted and by the patronage of Dr Nagi Giamma Barakat, Consultant Paediatrician and Neurologist, and Associate Professor Joanna Lewis, Department of International History, London School of Economics (LSE).

1.6 Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the members of the Refugee as Re-Builders™ Faculty for their contribution, commitment and teamwork in making the vision of having a dynamic curriculum for the programme a reality. My deep thanks to Amanda Clements, the RRB Curriculum Developer, who, in collaboration with the Faculty, pulled the contents of the modules together to create this curriculum. I appreciate her diligence and enthusiasm in helping the Faculty grow and fully engage in the development of this milestone document. Without the support and commitment of lofC UK and its Trustees, this curriculum would not have come to light. I would like to thank them for encouraging the Refugees as Re-Builders™ programme to thrive and live up to its potential. I would also like to thank the management and catering staff of lofC UK's London centre for their caring hospitality in hosting the training sessions, mostly during weekends.

Finally, I wish to express gratitude to the Eva Reckitt Trust for their financial support and to Lewis Wallis for his generous gifts over the years.



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