



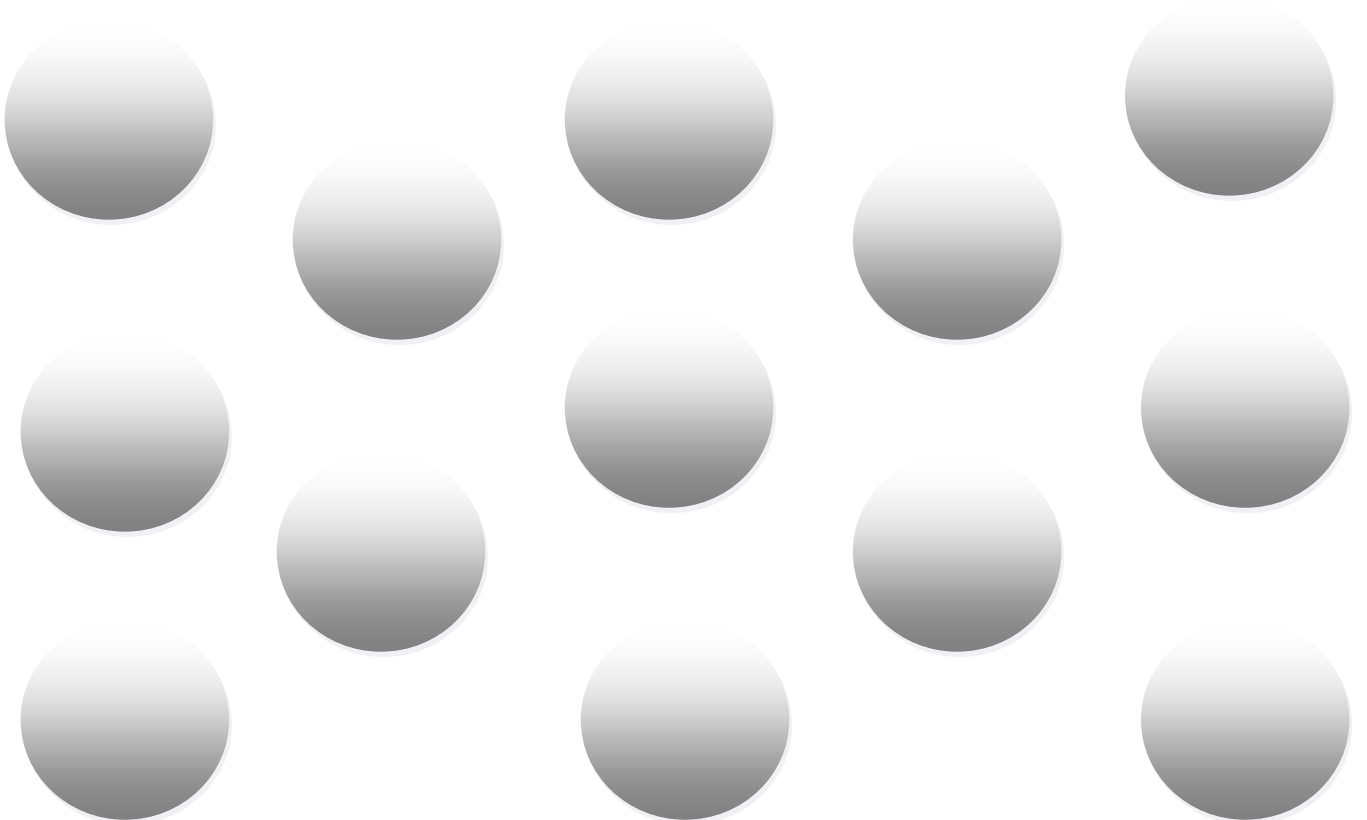
Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees

Refugee Rights and Responsibilities in the UK

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ICAR does not have a Centre view. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author.

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About the Rights and Responsibilities project

ICAR's Refugee Rights and Responsibilities research and consultation project explores some fundamental questions about the place of refugees in contemporary British society and, in particular, how the experiences and legal status of refugees shapes their understanding and perceptions of important social changes that are at the heart of current political debates. The project focuses generally on issues related to citizenship, identity, multiculturalism, migration and integration, and specifically on rights and responsibilities as the cornerstones of new citizenship and current refugee integration policy.

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Executive Summary

This report details the findings of ICAR's research into refugees' own understandings of their rights and responsibilities in the UK. It argues that refugees manage complex responsibilities and obligations in a pragmatic and ordered way that is not inevitably in conflict with integrating into UK society. It also finds that citizenship and integration policy needs to focus equally on the rights and responsibilities of refugees to facilitate their journey to becoming full social, political and economic actors in the UK.

Key findings

- ❖ Refugees demonstrated a set of *complex responsibilities* in terms of type, socio-cultural, political, economic and legal, and in terms of the 'geometry' of these responsibilities, to the UK, to their country of origin and the transnational. Responsibilities are often formed by a range of uncertain relationships with 'the state' and put additional demands on limited resources such as time, money, knowledge and information.
- ❖ Responsibilities are managed by a process of *incremental participation* in UK society. Participants distinctly ordered responsibilities with immediate family a common priority, moving through concentric circles of own community, UK society and country of origin. There was a general feeling that one should not attempt to fulfil responsibilities and participate at a 'higher' level until existing responsibilities were satisfied. Factors affecting this process include varied forms of capital, time, propensity to return and experience of integration.
- ❖ There is a diversity of attitudes towards British citizenship, characterised by *three types of 'refugee-citizen'*: the 'indifferent' took British citizenship for only practical reasons and experienced only practical benefits; the 'pragmatic' took citizenship for only practical reasons but experienced practical and emotional benefits; the 'contented' took citizenship for both practical and emotional reasons and experiences both practical and emotional benefits.
- ❖ Implicit and explicit linkages between rights and responsibilities were identified. There was an acceptance of certain aspects of the government's 'earned citizenship' agenda, but also acknowledgment that refugees must be given the opportunities to 'earn' through relevant support mechanisms.
- ❖ The research concludes that in order for refugees to fully integrate into British society as citizens, there are a number of responsibility stages that they must go through. At each of these stages refugees will need assistance from the state, but the majority fully acknowledge that they must give back

to UK society, at the basic level by respecting the law and order and at a higher level by participating in community activities.

- ❖ The proposed 2009 Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill makes active participation in UK society a requirement for any refugee who wishes to become a citizen. This means that refugees will have to negotiate a greater range of responsibilities which may be detrimental to their full integration. Whilst the majority of refugees already acknowledged the part that they can play in UK society and in their home society, they often had few resources in terms of time and money to do so.

Findings from this project have been presented in papers at various stages of the project and more information on all these resources is available at:

<http://www.icar.org.uk/rightsandresponsibilities>

Chapter 1: Introduction

“With rights come responsibilities, and those responsibilities must first be demonstrated, ensuring that the benefits of British citizenship are earned. This is at the heart of the Government’s firm-but-fair system.” (Lord West of Spithead, Hansard February 11th 2009)

The quote above comes from a comment made by Lord West of Spithead, the Parliamentary under Secretary of State for the Home Office, at a second reading of the proposed 2009 Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill, currently being read in the House of Commons. If passed through parliament, the bill will introduce new requirements for those seeking to gain UK citizenship, including greater timescales for the granting of permanent status and an onus on the applicant to be ‘integrated’ into their community taking on responsibilities as ‘good’ citizens before they gain the right to full UK Citizenship. This process will take a number of years to complete and requirements such as community voluntary work add to the set of new responsibilities for those wishing to stay. In the same reading of the Bill, Lord West of Spithead also stated: *“This Government believe that migration brings benefits to our nation but we understand that the British public rightly demand that we have robust systems in place to control those coming here. We will ensure that those who want to stay earn the right to do so, learn to speak English and play by the rules. Those who do not do so will not be allowed to become citizens.” (Hansard 11th February 2009).* The philosophy that underpins the government’s thinking represents a shift to communitarian ideals asking newcomers to earn their citizenship and refugees to not only be afforded rights but also fulfil responsibilities.

Refugees occupy a distinct space in this debate. Their relationship with the UK state, their local community, the Diaspora and their country of origin is different to UK citizens or to other migrants.

This research project aims to shed some light on what refugees themselves consider their responsibilities to be, how their ability or willingness to fulfil certain responsibilities is linked to the protection of what they see as their most important rights, and the attitudes of refugees towards British citizenship.

The rationale for this project emerged from a concern that while policy was shifting to emphasise responsibilities alongside rights, little research existed on refugee’s responsibilities as transnational actors in the UK.

The objectives of the research were to:

- improve our knowledge of refugees’ understanding of rights and responsibilities;
- give refugees a voice in broader debates around citizenship and integration in the UK;

- address the question of whether refugees offer a specific insight into rights and responsibilities, integration and citizenship that may be informative for the wider debates taking place on these issues; and
- contribute to national conceptual debates around earned citizenship by exploring the links between rights and responsibilities of refugees.

In order to fulfil these aims a series of online consultations were conducted on the ICAR website and discussions held at formal and informal meetings and refugee forums. This went on to inform two literature reviews, the first on nationally bound discussions of citizenship and multiculturalism (Morrell 2008a) and the second on wider issues of globalisation and transnationalism (Morrell 2008b). Both of these stages informed the design of qualitative research with refugees in London, which is the basis for this report.

The first section of this report reviews the relevant theoretical debates around citizenship and transnationalism, with the following section reviewing the recent policy context in this area focusing on the rise of the communitarian discourse of earned citizenship. The third section explains the research design and methodology and the fourth section describes key findings of the research. Finally, the report offers some conclusions from the research and related policy implications.

The theoretical context

In order to explore refugees' understandings of their own rights and responsibilities, it is necessary to establish a broad theoretical basis in which the terms can be understood. Rights and responsibilities hold relevance at various social levels, from inter-personal relationships to relations between institutions and relations between all social actors and the rule of law. In the modern era, deliberations regarding the balance of rights and responsibilities in these relationships have taken place predominantly at a national level. More recent changes in the global economy, human mobility and cultural exchange have had a real and perceived impact on nationally-bound understanding of governance, law, belonging and, consequently, rights and responsibilities.

Rights, responsibilities and citizenship

Forming a philosophical basis for determining the provision of rights and responsibilities essentially forces governments to ask questions about the fundamentals of human nature. Answers to these questions hold implications for the effective governance of social structures through the administering of rights and determining of responsibilities. To set up the parameters of the policy discourse in the UK and this research study, it is useful to briefly examine two ostensibly opposing approaches to these questions, the libertarian and the communitarian.

Libertarian theory argues that there are aspects of human nature that are universal and that the individual self comes above any other social agent or unit. As a consequence of this reading of human nature, libertarian theory argues for the adoption of an abstract set of rights and assumptions based on universal social

norms and values (Delanty 2007). Social structures following these principles stress the rights of the individual and individual liberty over group rights, with a vertical relationship between governance and the governed. The Human Rights Act in the UK is an illustration of this theory practically applied as universal rights flow directly from the state to the individual. The libertarian principles of human rights often come into conflict with maintaining a respect for group rights, characterized by the debate around multiculturalism in the UK. Critics of multiculturalism suggest that by privileging the rights of certain cultural or religious groups, the rights of the individual are either diluted, in the case of free speech, or go unprotected with respect to inequalities and discrimination that may exist within these groups (Morrell 2008a).

In opposition to libertarian principles, communitarian theory argues that human nature is not essentially universal but largely determined by the particularities of time and space, local context and emergent traditions, norms and values. Communitarians oppose what they argue is the atomistic view of society presented by libertarian theory and reproduced by associated practices. As a consequence of this communitarian principles require that rights are conditional on associated responsibilities. In many instances this translates into access to certain rights being conditional on the demonstration of certain responsibilities. Unlike the libertarian approach, therefore, rights are not universal but particular on the basis either of responsibility or membership. One example of this is the UK Welfare State. Although the Welfare State aimed to provide free healthcare to all, it was established on the premise of contribution, that the right to free healthcare was dependent upon paying in to a 'common pot'.

There are other interpretations and nuances of these two polar theories for balancing rights and responsibilities (see Zvesper 2007). However, as represented above, they provide the parameters for understanding the development of citizenship theory and practice. The dichotomy of *peoplehood* vs. *personhood* (Delanty 2007) has determined the parameters of citizenship, namely access to membership, geographical coverage, and setting rights and responsibilities (Morrell 2008a). British citizenship demonstrated many of these libertarian traits exclusively until the break-up of the Empire but has since experienced a slow but steady incorporation of more communitarian aspects of citizenship.

Transnationalism, Diaspora and social networks

It is important also to consider responsibilities that are not derived from formal legislation or from prevailing social norms but are in fact derived from inter-personal relations, social connections and moral or religious beliefs. Refugees, like other migrants, draw on a number of socio-cultural reference points to express identity in different social settings. It is the transnational nature of these sources of identity that add an extra dimension to understanding the responsibilities of refugees in the UK. Consequently, it is necessary to review the evidence that exists on the nature of transnational engagement.

Increasing mobility and advances in communication technology are considered as contributing factors facilitating a more disparate and less localised understanding of community, weakening traditional communitarian social bonds (Morrell 2008b). Transnationalism attempts to conceptualise and determine the parameters and types of this increasing global interconnectedness. It encompasses transnational social spaces, fields, formations and networks (Morrell 2008b). In order to be considered transnational it is argued that connections and engagements must be sustained between actors in two or more national spaces, though their structure ranges from weakly to strongly institutionalised. Transmigrants, including refugees, are the individual agents of transnationalism, depending upon multiple sources of association and identity, embedded and reproduced in multiple locations.

An extraordinary diversity of type, direction and intensity of engagement exists amongst transnational families, organisations and societies. The literature identifies three distinct but interrelated spheres in which transnational engagement takes place.

1. The *socio-cultural sphere*, notably through telephone and electronic communications, frequent travel between locations and the reproduction of cultural events, practices and traditions is facilitated by immediate and extended family structures and more formal community organisations.
2. *Political engagement* amongst transmigrants can be directed towards the homeland, immigrant politics or 'translocal' politics (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003) and occur with varying intensity for different groups.
3. Finally, transnational engagement in the *economic sphere* occurs primarily through remittances, direct investment and emerging industries that facilitate transnational living such as community-specific money transfer, trade and communication services.

These forms of engagement in each of the three spheres allow transmigrants to call on multiple sources of identity and produce multiple layers of resources to negotiate. They create support networks that facilitate integration into the host country and contribute to the development of their countries of origin. Some negative consequences of transnational engagement have also been identified by the literature, notably the pressures of maintaining transnational relationships, exporting political differences that divide communities in host countries and the potential for dependency on remittances of those remaining in the country of origin (Morrell 2008b).

There are a number of factors that affect the ability and willingness of an individual to engage in many of the transnational practices identified above. Research on the political activity of migrants in Europe suggests that those more successfully integrated into their host society, with secure employment and housing and perhaps with family embedded in the education system, are more likely to have the capacity to be involved in homeland politics (Koopmans and Statham 2001; Ostergaard and

Neilsen 2003). This may not be the same for economic engagement through remittances, as research amongst the Somali community in the UK and US suggests that pressure to send money to struggling family at home can actually hinder integration (See Hammond 2007). For refugee communities, an additional complicating factor is the uncertain relationship they are likely to have with their country of origin (Koser 2007). Research on traditional Diaspora communities suggests that while there is a desire to return home, it is an idealised vision of home rather than the complications of a post-conflict situation that refugees long for (Safran 1991). In some cases, united social networks may be difficult to forge for refugee communities recently fleeing bitter conflict, while in others concern for the political situation at home may affect the ability or willingness of an individual to engage in other social networks and activities in the host country. The uncertain and evolving nature of the refugee's relationship with the state is likely to have a significant impact on understandings of their own rights and responsibilities and the capital and networks they are able to call upon to access rights and fulfil responsibilities.

Contemporary policy discourse in the UK

The current discourse around citizenship is epitomised by the communitarian language of earning citizenship that forms the basis for the 2009 proposed Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill. This represents a shift from the historically abstract, libertarian principles of British citizenship and has emerged out of a struggle in the centre-left of British politics around rights and responsibilities. The Bill proposes that certain civil, political and social rights should be conditional on demonstrated responsibility. The accompanying community cohesion discourse, a response to public concerns about the impact of migration and other forces on traditional communitarian bonds, focuses on providing a cohesive set of rights and responsibilities to foster cross-community engagement and participation. The shift marks a move away from multiculturalism that some fear may restrict the rights of social groups and impinge on fundamental human rights of newcomers to the UK. Refugees are one group of concern, as advocates argue that the universality of refugee protection will be challenged by placing additional obstacles in the way of refugees looking for sanctuary and settlement in the UK.

Citizenship history and context

The history of British citizenship is one of piecemeal adjustment to both internal and external circumstances, with the result a functional but confused set of relations between residents, subjects and citizens and British law. Karatani (2003) describes British citizenship as 'wholly a creature of statute'. From its origins in feudal England through to 19th Century industrial Britain, legislation and policy only made marginal changes to citizenship. British citizenship has never had to be formally established, defended or revolutionised. There has been no event like the storming of the Bastille out of which values of citizenship emerged, no Australia Day on which those values could be celebrated or confirmed and no single constitutional document such as the American Declaration of Independence to form a single legal basis for citizenship.

As a consequence of this lack of formal grounding Ceserani argues that British citizenship is 'vulnerable to the instability of change' (Ceserani 1997:57). The relationship of citizenship with Empire and post-Empire immigration is illustrative of this claim. While the Empire continued to function, citizenship was used primarily as a form of control and membership, a powerful posturing symbol of the reach of Britain's rule. Although membership was widely administered, citizens or 'subjects' were largely passive outside of the UK.

This changed significantly in the context of post-Empire migration, when large numbers of those given some form of citizen status in the Empire began exercise their right to move to the UK. Consequently, efforts to re-classify statuses and to limit potential immigration have meant that since the 1950s citizenship policy has been bound up with immigration policy. Hansen (2000) argues that while there was concern amongst elite politicians about the 'illiberal' nature of some of these measures, the communitarian voices of a public concerned to protect their lot after the devastation of the war saw a confused compromise of rights and entitlements depending on a series of circumstances relating to individuals' previous status, place of birth and family heritage. Even thirty years later in an attempt to clarify citizenship, the 1981 Citizenship Act still created six statuses (Hansen 2000). Consequently, in research conducted in the early 1990s, Spencer (1994) found a situation in which citizens, migrants, denizens and so on were covered by a patchwork of different rights.

Communitarian discourse and 'earning' citizenship

This brief history describes a citizenship developed primarily on the premise of *personhood* not *peoplehood* and largely absent in any formal sense of discussions of nationhood or substantive elements of rights and responsibilities. In the 21st Century, challenges of global transformation and uncertainty that British citizenship adapted to in only a piecemeal fashion in previous centuries are exacerbated in the context of the mobility and interconnectedness associated with transnationalism. At the same time as external pressures that appear to challenge the nationally-bound basis of citizenship, it is argued that internal pressures have weakened communitarian bonds, such as working and housing patterns, the decline of traditional industries and an increasingly mobile labour market. An additional factor affecting perceptions of the efficacy of British citizenship has been changes in governance structures. Devolution of political power to Scotland, Wales and, latterly, Northern Ireland was a flagship policy of the New Labour government that took office in 1997. While considered a fillip for cohesion, confidence and identity in the devolved areas, this change in pattern of governance, alongside the imposition of supra-national governance at the EU level has dented confidence in the viability of Britain and its citizenship, exposing insecurities in England in particular (Ethnos 2006).

In this context, New Labour has since been keen to reinvigorate British citizenship and the common social bonds associated with it. Despite devolution, communitarian pronouncements such as 'no rights without responsibilities' and proposals for a new

social contract or a British Bill of Rights and Responsibilities have punctuated the New Labour discourse since 1997. An influential pamphlet by David Goodhart crystallised this new 'centre-left' thinking and set out the idea of Progressive Nationalism. Goodhart (2006) focused on ways newcomers *and* new citizens (i.e. those turning 18) could earn their citizenship, proposing a clear statement of who gets what, how and why, in order to challenge perceptions of unfairness and free-riding. In order to pursue progressive policies such as the redistribution of wealth, he argued, the UK needed new 'social glue' and a more clearly defined and meaningful citizenship could provide this. Much of this was controversial and unappealing to large sections of the Labour Party that were uncomfortable discussing particularities of nationhood and responsibilities in place of universal globalism and human rights. Furthermore, it was seemingly contradictory to other policies, such as the universality of the Human Rights Act, incorporating the European Convention on Human Rights into British law and the aforementioned devolution.

Aware of the potential divisiveness of the new communitarian discourse, the government embarked on a period of consultation and review. The final report of the Commission for Integration and Cohesion (2006) expressed a need for a model of rights and responsibilities nationally and locally. Lord Goldsmith's citizenship review in 2008, 'Citizenship: Our Common Bond', called for a clear statement of rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship. Goldsmith argued that there was a need for a national debate about the substantive elements of citizenship and ways to formalise them to enhance the bond of citizenship. There were specific elements of this review that discussed engaging newcomers but it was not the focus of the report, which attempted to change the emphasis of citizenship from a marker of difference between 'us and them' to a positive institution for all.¹

Julian Baggini (2008) has argued that there is a perception in the UK that the libertarian aspects of citizenship have been dominating the communitarian aspects, the specificity of peoplehood. Popular opposition to specific human rights rulings and to the imposition of EU directives on UK national law is illustrative of this. Certain aspects of modern life have had real and perceived impacts upon traditional communitarian bonds of social life in the UK, as noted above. At the same time, the liberal elements of governance and citizenship, progressive policies on human rights, equality and freedom of choice have continued to develop within the more certain and rigid structures of the law. Inevitably, it is often migration and the part of newcomers in the dilution of communitarian bonds that is considered to capture this imbalance between libertarian and communitarian or between liberal and democratic. Baggini argues that this is the new dividing line of British politics and also suggests that it divides the elite and the masses: while the elite hold fast to liberal universality, in the street, the public are more prepared to pronounce their feeling in communitarian language. It is this feeling that New Labour have seized upon to further develop the evolution of their communitarian thinking. The proposed Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill 2009 is based on the communitarian language of earning, deserving and privilege.

¹ The review can be accessed at: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/docs/citizenship-report-full.pdf>

The Bill itself contains a number of aspects related to immigration control and refugee protection, but the most relevant provisions here are around routes and conditions for newcomers wanting to become a British citizen. The emphasis is primarily on newcomers earning citizenship, not necessarily strengthening the bond of citizenship more generally. This does not account for much of the policy discourse described above which argued that there was a need to reinvigorate citizenship for all citizens, addressing internal as well as external challenges to the efficacy of British citizenship as a tool of cohesion. The Bill provides three immigration routes into the UK and onto the first of a three-step journey to citizenship.

Entry can take place through the work-based points system, family reunion, or a demonstrated need for protection. Having taken one of these routes newcomers, including refugees, are given the status of temporary resident. After five years temporary residents are able to apply for probationary citizenship on satisfying conditions related to proficiency in English language and economic contribution and non-dependency on state benefits. These individuals then spend a further one to five years on 'probation' dependent upon their commitment to 'active citizenship', which effectively translates to volunteering and obeying the law.

The stated aim of this legislation is for clarity and simplification of the many immigration and residency statuses that currently exist and to create an overarching system that replaces all existing legislation. The legislation also appears to represent an attempt to reassure core Labour voters that new citizens have earned the right to citizenship, those voters perhaps disproportionately impacted upon by the real and perceived effects of an increasingly mobile labour market and temporary migration. The legislation has received criticism in a number of areas.² Firstly, many respondents to the official consultation on the Bill felt that the new system does not sufficiently simplify the process and statuses and will particularly create confusion with respect to individuals already in the system. With respect to the position of refugees, advocacy groups showed concern about the requirement of refugees to become economically self-sufficient, suggesting that such a demand runs contrary to the principle of humanitarian protection. The proposed legislation would also add one to five years on to the length of time between a refugee receiving some form of leave to remain in the UK and gaining full British citizenship. More generally, the proposal that volunteering can speed up the path to citizenship is considered problematic. Concerns include the impact on the resources of the voluntary sector in administering these volunteering positions, particularly small migrant-run organisations and how the proposals will effect people's motivations for voluntary work. It is also suggested that if newcomers are being asked to volunteer, then the UK-born population should also be expected to do so. Despite these criticisms of the bill, public consultation suggested that there was support for the principles of the bill with respect to expectations over English language, economic contribution and

² See Refugee Council Briefing available at <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/Resources/Refugee%20Council/downloads/briefings/ICBill2008briefing2.pdf>

obeying the law. This backs up Baggini's suggestion that the public articulates its concerns in communitarian rather than libertarian language.

Refugee support and integration policy

The trends that have been driving citizenship policy are also reflected in recent changes to the infrastructure and strategy of refugee integration policy. In the past four years four significant changes have taken place that illustrate the importance of rights and responsibilities and their interaction in New Labour's policy-making.

Firstly, the National Refugee Integration Forum, a body set-up to develop and advise on integration policy and support, was disbanded in 2005. In the same year, the Home Office introduced the five-year protection review, at which those given refugee status in the UK would be required to prove their need for continued protection.³ The principle behind this measure would appear to be that a refugee's right to remain in the UK is dependent only upon the need for protection, and without that need the UK government has no responsibility to provide protection or any of the other services that flow from this need. Prior to this ruling, people given refugee status were immediately considered permanent residents, though they had to wait five years to apply for citizenship. It appears that the proposed Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill may embed this five year review to run along parallel with the temporary residence of new migrants. If this is the case, then refugees may be required to satisfy an additional condition to other temporary residents wishing to become probationary citizens, that is the continued need of protection. It is not clear exactly how this will work in practice as the policy has not yet been in place for five years and was not applied retrospectively.

Despite this, since its introduction, the policy has attracted significant criticism from refugee advocacy groups that suggest the uncertainty introduced by this review severely hampers an individual's ability and willingness to integrate.⁴ It is argued that refugees are unlikely to invest time in education and training or participating more widely in British society if they are uncertain that they will be able to stay in the country in five years time. Furthermore, with reference to anecdotal evidence it is argued that employers and educational institutions are also less likely to be willing to invest in individuals that may be returned to their country of origin.

It is in the context of these two changes that the more recent development of a refugee strategy needs to be understood. In 2005, the Home Office released a new integration strategy for refugees that focused primarily on access to services but also suggested that an integrated refugee was able to exercise their rights and fulfil their

³ Home Office (2004): <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/cons-strat-refugee-201004/strat-refugee-integrate-201004?view=Binary>

⁴ Refugee Council Briefing on the New Asylum Model. Available at: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/Resources/Refugee%20Council/downloads/briefings/Newasylummodel.pdf>

responsibilities. The strategy entitled 'Integration matters' defines integration as 'the process that takes place when refugees are empowered to achieve their full potential as members of British society, to contribute to the community, and to become fully able to exercise the rights and responsibilities that they share with other residents. (Home Office 2005, p.5). A practical intervention of the new strategy was the commencement of the Sunrise Programme. This entailed the development of individualised integration programmes for refugees and was piloted in areas of London, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester and Scotland. It aimed, through independent organisations in these areas, to offer locally specific support and advice on services, volunteering opportunities, mentoring, family reunion and links to local groups. The lessons learned from these pilot projects have informed the development of the Refugee Integration and Employment service which began operation in the UK in October 2008,⁵ guaranteeing a 12-month plan for all those given refugee status or humanitarian protection. However, the idea of a refugee integration strategy that operates for temporary residents appears contradictory. It is not clear, observing this strategy and the forthcoming 2009 Bill whether the government sees citizenship as a tool to facilitate the integration of newcomers or as a confirmation of their integration. The difference is crucial given the extended time periods proposed for refugees to become citizens.

These strategic and practical changes also represent the wider shift in policy on who deserves support and who the government has a responsibility to help integrate. Alongside these reforms to refugee integration services, those awaiting the outcome of their asylum claim receive no integration support. The most conspicuous illustration of this was the removal of free English language classes whilst asylum seekers continued to be deprived of the right to work for the first six months of their claim. The government rationale for this is that the New Asylum Model.⁶ is resulting in quicker decisions: in combination with the discourse on deserving, they argue that if an individual is found to have no right to remain in the UK, then the state has no responsibilities to that individual beyond basic human rights. Until this is determined, through an asylum claim, the government is unwilling to provide integration support to these individuals particularly as more cases are rejected than accepted.

⁵ See

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/workingwithus/workingwithasylum/integration/ries/>

⁶ See <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy/briefings/2007/nam.htm> for an explanation of the model.

Chapter 2: Research design and methodology

This has been a multi-method project, which has allowed the research to avoid being steadfastly attached to any prior assumptions and which allows constant reflection and review. An initial stage of stakeholder consultation was followed by reviews of literature, policy and research on relevant issues. These preliminary stages informed the design of original research involving in-depth face to face interviews with three refugee populations in London. A thematic framework approach was used to analyse data retrieved from the in-depth interviews. Initial and interim findings were presented at conferences and seminars.

Consultation and review

An important justification for the project was to add the voice of refugees to the changing policy discourse, particularly with respect to understandings of their own responsibilities. With little research previously conducted in this area, the project engaged in a period of consultation, using two distinct methods.

1. Firstly, an online consultation was set-up on ICAR's website comprising a series of forums looking at distinct issues related to rights and responsibilities. Each forum was launched by a short discussion piece from an expert in the field. Users of the site were invited to post their own ideas and responses online to generate an interactive discussion.
2. Simultaneously, project researchers visited refugee forums in London to discuss the same issue with members. Some of these responses were then collated and posted on the interactive forums. Respondents to the online forums were contacted separately and asked to provide some personal details.

Aggregating the online responses, those with whom the material was discussed at refugee forums and those who provided personal correspondence to the researchers, a total of 51 people were consulted or made substantive comments, 21 people working with refugees, 18 refugees or asylum seekers, 6 academics, 4 policy makers and 2 members of the general public.

A literature and policy review was conducted, the focus of which was driven in part by the responses to the consultation. This was considered as a necessary 'ground-clearing' preparatory stage that reviews relevant academic and policy literature on the wider context of citizenship and multiculturalism, and globalisation, transnationalism and Diaspora. It was decided that the scope of the review was too wide to communicate through one written output. Two literature reviews were published online in the summer of 2008, the first on citizenship and multiculturalism in the specific context of the UK and the second on globalisation and transnationalism. (Morrell 2008 a, and 2005 b).

The learning from both these stages of the project has informed the design of the qualitative research with respect to the sample, the interview schedule and theoretical framework adopted for the data analysis.

Sampling framework and data collection

Table 1 sets out the factors that the research explored, grouped into the following sectors: country of origin factors (Homeland), migration factors and UK factors (Host country); and the individual factors. This is a recognition that different factors impact upon the experiences of refugees at different stages of flight, migration and settlement.

Table 1 – factors affecting understandings of rights and responsibilities

HOMELAND	MIGRATION	HOST COUNTRY
Type of conflict	Route	Predominant legal status
Domestic political structures	Intensity and reach of Diaspora	Cohesive/disparate community
Socio-cultural norms	Type of entry to the UK	Socio-economic performance
International involvement	Mechanism - fled or financed	Socio-cultural norms

Assessing the impact of all the individual factors mentioned above, in addition to a cross-national comparison, was beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, the sampling has been structured to limit the number of comparative variables to the following:

- Demographics: gender and age
- Socio-economic (class): education and employment in home and host country
- Circumstantial: time spent in UK and legal status

The interviews were semi-structured and in-depth. This approach allowed the research to retain its focus while also allowing flexibility for participants to develop linked or interrelated themes or experiences that were not originally considered as part of the research design. All the interviews were tape recorded, transcribed and analysed following consent from each participant.

Interviews were conducted with a roughly equal number of men and women from each country of origin that satisfy the following criteria:

- Lived in their country of origin for 18 years or more
- Have spent over five years in the UK
- Have had refugee status (or some form of leave to remain)

Participants were drawn in roughly equal number from three refugee populations, Somalis, Tamils and Colombians. A detailed context of these groups in the UK is

provided in Chapter 3. Interviewees were only selected if they arrived in the UK after the age of 25 in order to assume that the interviewees had the capacity to be politically mature over a number of years prior to arriving in the UK and develop numerous and competing political and social responsibilities in their country of origin (See Bek-Pedersen and Montgomery 2006). Furthermore, the participants had all been given refugee status and spent five years in the UK. This ensured that the participants were able to be reflective about their time in the UK. All interviews were conducted in English. The interviewees were recruited from the Greater London area and are likely to generate data that is pertinent to the refugees living in all areas of the UK and highlight general themes about refugees' perceptions of their rights and responsibilities within their immediate communities.

Recruitment and ethics

ICAR has extensive links and contacts with other refugee organisations. These links were utilised in order to identify a small number of community organisations (some of them Refugee Community Organisations, RCOs) for each nationality from which to recruit potential interviewees. The identified organisations acted as research partners throughout the project, not only recruiting participants for the interviews and discussion groups but also advising on cross-cultural differences that might arise throughout the research process, commenting on the research design and interview topic guides as well as piloting interviews.

Information about the project, including the role of ICAR and the researchers, the aims of the research and impact it intends to have, was provided to potential interviewees through the community organisations mentioned. In recognition of the time that all participants gave up for the research a £10 voucher was provided. The project satisfied City University's ethical guidelines through successful application to the Senate Ethics Committee.

Data analysis

The data was analysed using N-vivo software in combination with the Framework Approach (Ritchie, Spencer, and O'Connor 2003). Researchers familiarised themselves with a portion of transcripts and developed an index of key themes or issues raised by each interview, sub-divided into relevant sections. Transcripts were then labelled or 'coded' according to this index and each participant's thoughts on particular themes or issues summarised in a series of thematic charts. Each column in each chart was then further summarised and researchers began to identify elements, classes and categories, noting connections and recurrence. Analysis began after the first batch of interviews had taken place and continued alongside further interviewing. The index and thematic charts were reviewed and revised throughout this process.

Chapter 3: Context of Somali, Tamil and Colombian Refugees in the UK.

Despite proposing that there is something distinct about the experiences of refugees, this project does not assume a homogenous refugee experience. The essence of the project is in uncovering the diversity of experience that is often hidden by the predominance of a common legal status. This diversity is generated by refugees' exposition to different structural constraints, many of which are determined by their place of origin. Consequently, the interviewees for this research were drawn from three different places of origin, Sri Lankan Tamils, Somalis and Colombians. This strategy will provide an insight into the impact of structures specific to certain contexts on their understandings and perceptions of their rights and responsibilities in the UK and elsewhere. The following provides some background to the countries, Diasporas and UK-based communities in question as well as discussion of personal factors that may affect the research findings.

Country of origin context

There has been considerable research conducted on transnational activities of Diasporas and the effect of this on countries of origin. The most notable example is the body of work on remittances (Guarnizo 2003; Horst 2004; ODI 2007), but there has also been research on transnational political engagement (Ostergaard 2003), social and cultural networks (Layton Henry 2002) and the impact of Diaspora on development (Bloch 2005; Van Hear 2004; Erdal and Stokke 2007). Research on Somalis in the UK has primarily focused on exploring socio-economic and political 'exclusion', while remittances are the main focus of most Somali Diaspora research; Colombians in the UK have not been the subject of many research reports but their political transnationalism has been studied; Tamils are also the subject of a great deal of research, notably the nature of the Diaspora and political involvement and financing of home affairs. ICAR's Researching Asylum in London⁷ project recorded all research carried out on asylum and refugee issues in the capital since 2000. As of February 2009, Somalis featured significantly in 78 pieces of research, Tamils in 12 pieces and Colombians in just 3.

There is less evidence on the impact of this transnational activity on the relationship between refugees and their host country (with the notable exception of Lindley 2007). It is this under-researched area that this project will explore.

Somalia and the Somali Diaspora

Since opposition clans overthrew the communist Somali government in 1991, there have been numerous failed attempts to reach a power sharing agreement among competing elements of Somali society. For more than a decade, Somalia was the

⁷ <http://www.researchasylum.org.uk>

only functioning country in the world without a government (Horst 2004). The war that preceded the 1991 collapse and the ensuing violence generated huge flows of refugees to neighbouring countries and, by the mid-1990s, to Western Europe; asylum applications in the UK from Somalis peaked in 1999 (ICAR 2007).

In 2004, a President of Somalia was appointed following a compromise between major politicians and warlords and, having survived rebellions by Islamist militias, now faces a daunting challenge of developing Somalia's governmental apparatus. Despite this, the situation remains delicately balanced and continues to generate internal displacement and refugees. Somalia remains top of the 'failed states' list for 2008 (The Fund for Peace 2008) and recent reports suggest that fear and violence are rife on the streets of its capital, Mogadishu (See for example, Sheikh and Ahmed 2009). In the first quarter of 2009 Somalis remained in the top ten nationalities lodging asylum claims in the UK. (Home Office 2009). These asylum seekers, some of whom may be granted refugee status, join an existing Somali community comprising refugees from the late 1980s and 1990s, secondary migrants with EU citizenship, and the remnants of economic migrants that arrived from Somalia as seaman prior to the 1980s.

As a consequence of the diverse forms of migration to the UK, Somalis may represent an exile community yet not all have legal refugee status. Somalis in the UK remain a disparate group often reproducing clan and other divisions from the homeland. A ramification of the retention of these social structures has been a lack of 'pan-Somali' organisations offering support and service, particularly in diverse London boroughs. Additionally, Somalis are considered politically invisible and struggle to obtain any positive media coverage (Griffiths 2000; Harris 2004). Somalis also perform comparatively poorly in education (Harris 2004) and find it difficult to gain full-time employment in the formal economy despite often holding qualifications from Somalia (Bloch and Atfield 2002). It has been frequently commented that their experiences in the UK were also under-researched and that little was known about Somalis in the UK. A report for ICAR by Hermione Harris (Harris 2004) provided a challenge to this assertion, while the Researching Asylum in London (RAL) project has shown that in London, this is certainly not the case; in fact, the opposite is true as compared with other national groups research on Somalis is extensive. This means there is an opportunity to add to and learn from existing literature on Somalis in London.

Somali society is made up of a number of clans. These traditional nomadic groups illustrate one aspect of the heterogeneity of the Somalis, a diversity that is retained amongst Somalis in the UK and the Diaspora. This tradition has also generated an expansive and influential Somali Diaspora stretching from the Middle East through Europe to the United States. The influence of the Diaspora is not only financial through remittances (Horst 2004; Lindley 2007) but also political; a disproportionate number of refugees across the last twenty years are middle class professionals and intellectuals wielding a heavy influence on domestic Somali politics ([BBC online 2007a](#), [BBC Online 2008](#)). The Somali Diaspora is truly transnational and its engagement takes many forms (economic, social, political and cultural) and

geometries (host country to home country, host country to third country, transit country to home). As a consequence of the complex structure of the Somali Diaspora, individuals within it look to multiple sources to define their rights and responsibilities (Horst 2004).

Colombia and complex forced migration

Colombia's history is littered with partisan fighting that has divided society and held back economic progress. The most infamous period of internal conflict was the 1940s, named *La Violencia*. In the aftermath of this period, influenced by the Cuban Revolution, a number of left-wing guerrilla groups were formed and are in constant conflict with the state. Aspirations of peace were further punctured by the emergence of the drug-trade and the violent private armies and corruption that it entails. All these actors, including right-wing paramilitaries, have been involved in a war since the 1980s that has caused gross human rights violations generating extensive internal displacement and significant refugee flows (Bermudez Torres 2003).

Current attempts at peace are experiencing mixed fortunes. While right-wing paramilitary groups are currently in the process of disarming as part of the peace process, talks between the government and FARC, a left-wing guerrilla group, collapsed in 2002 and the group continues a campaign of violence. The protracted and complex conflict has stunted economic growth and left millions in poverty, despite a recent recovery. Displacement, therefore, has been driven by a number of factors, not only human rights violations and violence. Consequently, internal displacement dwarfs Colombian refugee flows with up to four million people thought to be currently displaced (IDMC 2008). Most cross-border movement from Colombia has been for economic reasons and those displaced tend to end up in bordering countries such as Venezuela or further afield to the US (Bermudez Torres 2006). Colombians do migrate to Europe, primarily and more recently Spain, seeking asylum or as economic migrants. Those displaced inside and outside of Colombia tend to be from rural communities and poor, often experiencing multiple displacements through camps and shanty towns (Ibid.). This reflects the highly stratified Colombian society, though the picture becomes more complex for Colombians further from their homeland.

Colombians came to the UK in the 1970s, primarily as migrant workers, but were followed from the mid-1980s by an increasing number seeking asylum (Bermudez Torres 2003). Asylum applications peaked in 1997 and again in 1999 before remaining stable around 400 per year until recent years when the number fell once more (Home Office 2007). In total, accounting for all forms of migrants, the Colombian consul estimates that as many as 100,000 Colombian may live in the UK; most of these reside in London and a significant proportion may be irregular migrants (Bermudez Torres 2006). The Colombian community in London reflects the varied forms of migration mentioned above, though many live in refugee-like situations and are from urban backgrounds with little or no qualifications. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of Colombians in the UK are *mestizos* (mixed

race). A minority of mainly white European middle-class Colombians also exists, but does not tend to associate with anything that could be called a Colombian 'community' (Bermudez Torres 2003). Concentrations of Colombians do exist in some boroughs, including Islington, Lambeth and Southwark (McIlwaine 2005). The entire Colombian population in the UK is relatively small and information about the profile of the individuals concerned is sparse.

There is greater evidence on the extent of the Colombian Diaspora through Spain and the United States. The primary mode of transnational engagement appears to be political, a consequence of extra-territorial voting procedures (Bermudez-Torres 2006). This attempt by the Colombian government to 'recognise Colombian émigrés as part of the nation' may have some interesting implications for the perceptions of rights and responsibilities of Colombians in the UK. Research also suggests that there are growing transnational links between exiled Colombian communities (Guarnizo 2003). Remittances are also an important mode of transnational engagement for Colombians, with many in the homeland dependent upon these payments. Groups have been set-up in both Spain and the UK to facilitate and exploit these links.

Sri Lankan Tamils: an asylum Diaspora

Civil war in Sri Lanka has generated internal displacement and international refugee movements since the 1950s. Despite maintaining a democratic system of government, Sri Lanka's political institutions failed to prevent these rising inter-ethnic tensions: Tamils in the north-east began pushing for self-representation in the 1970s (Sriskandarajah 2005). Rioting and violence escalated to civil war from 1983 with the Liberation Tigers for Tamil Elam (LTTE) and Sri Lankan government forces as central protagonists, a situation from which the country is yet to fully emerge. The ensuing crisis of internal displacement and forced migration represents a 'paradigmatic case' for the international humanitarian and asylum regimes (Van Hear and Rajasingham-Senanayake 2006).

The scale and impact of displacement amongst Sri Lankan Tamils cannot be underestimated, with one in two having been displaced and one in four now living outside the country (Sriskandarajah 2005). Displacement has generated movement within the north east of the island, to neighbouring Tamil-Nadu in India, and since the 1980s mass asylum-migration to the West, developing sizeable communities in Canada, Switzerland and the UK. Despite a peace deal brokered by the Norwegian government in 2002, tension, violence and displacement continues with hundreds killed in fighting in 2006, and the more recent fighting in 2009 which has displaced thousands ([BBC News Online 2009](#)). Consequently, Sri Lankans continue to consistently feature in the top ten of nationalities applying for asylum in the UK (Home Office 2009), of which Tamils are likely to make up the overwhelming majority if not the entire number in some quarters. Asylum-migration has increasingly become a strategy of middle-class Tamil families with the capacity to fund payments to agents and travel tickets to leave Sri Lanka (McDowell 1996; Van Hear 2002).

Tamils (and Sri Lankans in general) arrived in the UK in a professional capacity following independence and other searching employment opportunities in the 1960s. Yet, as described above, the Tamil community in the UK is largely composed of people fleeing the civil war in Sri Lanka. In 2002 it was estimated that the Sri Lankan community in the UK numbered almost 110,000, 60,000 of these estimated as (most likely Tamil) refugees. Community leaders believe the figure to be closer to 150,000 including second generation dependants and those arriving through family reunion (Lindley and Van Hear 2007). The overwhelming majority of Sri Lankans are likely to be of Tamil origin due to the asylum route most commonly used. A BBC report from 2007 suggests that in the Greater London area there is a Tamil community of almost 100,000 (BBC 2007b). While there is a geographical spread of Tamils across the city, there are some significant concentrations of Tamils in East Ham and Walthamstow, Wembley and Ealing, Croydon, and the borough of Merton. It is in these areas of concentration that tight-knit Tamil communities exist, with Tamil specific Temples, shops and travel agents common in many of the areas mentioned above.

The Tamil Diaspora is particularly well connected, with political organisations based in Sri Lanka playing a significant role in engaging emigrants, refugees or other migrants, in the affairs of the homeland. Research has illuminated varying levels of political activism within the Tamil Diaspora mediated through LTTE-affiliated organisations, such as propaganda and fund-raising activities (McDowell 1996; Erdal and Stokke 2007). The mechanisms of political engagement can often be linked to transnational social engagement such as setting up Tamil schools and cultural awareness programmes – this social and cultural reproduction of the Tamil identity through the Diaspora has been shown to have a significant political element (Erdal and Stokke 2007). There is also evidence of a diverse use of remittances through the Tamil Diaspora. Money sent back to north eastern Sri Lanka by Tamils abroad is received by families and local community organisations as well as the LTTE and is used to maintain livelihoods, fund further migration, build local infrastructure and fund direct political and military activities (Van Hear 2002; Sriskandarajah 2005).

Individual characteristics and agency

Despite the relevance of these country of origin related factors, the above is not an assertion that there is homogeneity of experience within each group of refugees mentioned. It is essential, therefore, for this research to also explore personal characteristics and experiences within the wider framework set out above. These include:

- gender
- age
- length of settlement in the UK
- class (education and employment in country of origin and UK)
- religion
- family
- previous political affiliation/activism

Significant research has been conducted on the potential impact of some of these factors on refugee experiences. In recent years, extensive research has illustrated the gendered experience of refugees during asylum-migration and in the UK. This body of work suggests that the global asylum regime that emerged to protect predominantly male political exiles often made the specific plight and needs of women invisible (Dumper 2004). Contemporary asylum flows are roughly an equal mix of gender, with more women refugees responsible for dependants throughout the migration process than men. There is also evidence that more women enter the UK as dependants or family members of refugees so have not been through the asylum process as lead applicant but have also left a conflict setting (Ibid.). Other circumstances are specific to men, notably the relative loss of social standing for those refugees that in the homeland were the primary breadwinner but struggle to find employment in the UK. Responsibilities themselves can also be gendered, with women often focusing on their responsibility for family members in the UK and abroad and men seeing their primary responsibility as contributing to the rebuilding of the homeland in a more abstract political sense (Fink-Nielsen et al 2004).

Research has also been conducted on the impact of age and, in particular, length of settlement in the experiences of refugees. Most notably, there is considerable research that has identified the particular experiences of child refugees (either leaving their homeland as children, seeking asylum as a child or both) in comparison with adult refugees. With relevance to this research, there is some evidence to suggest that stories of the past and the effects on children's attachment to home are largely mediated through the family structure rather than any wider social or political understanding of belonging or obligation (Bek-Pedersen and Montgomery 2006). This is not to suggest that exposure to violence as a child does not have a significant impact on the outlook of a refugee maturing in a country but it does suggest that it may have a different affect upon their understandings of rights and responsibilities when compared with refugees that arrived as adults. Furthermore, some evidence suggests that some Diaspora communities are keenly aware of the identity of '1.5' and second generation members of their community and often attempt to maintain and reproduce aspects of the culture of the homeland through education and cultural programmes (see Erdal and Stokke 2007 for the activity of Tamils in Norway).

There is also a body of research emerging that suggests that class, meaning level of education and employment in the country of origin and the host country, has a significant bearing on migration and integration experiences. Class defined in this way can refer to different forms of capital all of which can determine an individual's capacity to migrate and ability to make choices with more freedom en route. Van Hear (2004) has argued this point in relation to the Somali and Tamil communities, suggesting that different forms of capital will become increasingly important in shaping 'forms, patterns and impacts of movement' against the backdrop of an increasingly restrictive global asylum regime. It is important for this research to attempt to explore the role of different forms of capital in managing transnational obligations and integration.

Chapter 4: Key findings

The research established five key findings which will be explored below.

1. Participants discussed a diverse set of obligations and responsibilities. These varied according to different spheres of life such as family or work and whether the refugee was thinking of their home country or the UK.
2. Participants explicitly identified paying taxes and being or becoming economically self-sufficient as a responsibility of theirs in the UK. They did not want to rely on the British welfare system.
3. Refugees adapt to a process of incremental participation when they balance their complex responsibilities.
4. Three types of refugee citizens were identified among the participants; indifferent, pragmatic and contented.
5. The ways in which the participants linked their rights and responsibilities in the UK was directly related to their experiences and attitudes, both in the UK and outside.

Complex refugee responsibilities

As anticipated by some of the contributions to the online consultation phase of this project, the participants displayed a diverse set of obligations and a complex sense of responsibility. This complexity is generated by two factors as displayed in Table 2, spheres and ‘geometries’⁸ of responsibility.

In what can be described as the socio-cultural sphere, participants clearly expressed responsibilities to family along each of the noted geometries, either to support immediate or extended family back in the country of origin, in the UK or in a more transnational manner, such as facilitating family reunion or responsibilities to family elsewhere in Europe or North America. Responsibilities to family in the UK, predominantly to children, included not only to feed, clothe and educate but also to ‘bring up correctly’ and to teach ‘how to be a good citizen’.

⁸ The term ‘geometries’ is used by Lindley (2007) to distinguish different remittance relationships and is suited here to distinguish the different geographical focus of refugee responsibilities.

Table 2 – Typology of refugee responsibilities

	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	UK	TRANSNATIONAL
socio-cultural	Family	Family Co-ethnic/national community Local community	Family Maintaining cultural practices Diaspora
political	Opposition to repressive government	Voting Unions political parties	Embassy protests Lobbying UK government
economic	Land/business interests	Paying taxes Self-sufficiency	Remittances Fundraising

Other interpersonal responsibilities were generated by a sense of community, most notably amongst fellow co-ethnics/nationals in the UK. The importance of these social networks to new arrivals to the UK is well documented (Atfield et al 2007) and this research backed up the extensive evidence on the subject. One Tamil participant stated what it was like to have the help of their family and friends when they first arrived:

“Without them I would have found things more difficult – I wouldn’t have known where to go for things, but also I would have been more upset waiting for status if I was on my own – it’s the uncertain times. I was found accommodation by them and other people they knew, they were able to guide about what goes on in the country...so yes, the family helped me a lot”.

It was also found however, that the formal and informal support received by participants through these networks itself generated a sense of responsibility. Participants from each of the three communities sampled displayed an empathy with people experiencing problems and concern similar to their own on arrival in the UK and a subsequent responsibility to help these new arrivals. One respondent stated:

“I was ready to really go into my design work at one stage, but what forced me to stay working in schools and with local governments was when I see poor Somalis coming into the UK and they cannot speak the language and they have so much problems at home, that is the decision I made to help”.

A number of participants from each population had been involved professionally or voluntarily with organisations providing support specifically for their community. In addition to this specific responsibility to co-ethnic/national communities, some

participants also demonstrated a sense of responsibility to their local community or local area either out of sense of responsibility to integrate or pragmatically accepting that life is made easier for everyone if people are responsible to each other. This was more prevalent amongst the Tamil and to a lesser extent Somali population. Tamils, particularly in Newham, spoke frequently of a sense of local belonging and familiarity. Somalis in Tower Hamlets and Haringey made similar suggestions but with less enthusiasm. The Colombian participants did not mention any sense of local belonging; participants actually made specific reference to the lack of involvement with their local community. This perhaps reflects the concentration of the different populations in these London boroughs and the value of the co-ethnic/national communities not just as ‘bonding’ capital but also as ‘bridging’ capital to the wider community⁹. Tamils in Newham and Somalis in Tower Hamlets are concentrated in significant numbers with all the community resources that emerge out of such a concentration, whereas Colombians tend to be spread across London and are more likely to experience the ‘discongruity of belonging’ identified by other research (Rutter 2007). One Somali stated this in the following way:

“You know there have been Somalis here in Tower Hamlets before, since the First World War the Somalis came here”.

Finally in the socio-cultural sphere, participants also revealed transnational responsibilities, notably to maintain certain aspects of their ‘traditional culture’ not only for themselves but also to provide their children with a rich sense of heritage. Contributing to the organisation of cultural events and teaching traditional artistic techniques were cited as specific examples of this. An example of this specific to the Somali community was the chewing of the Khat plant in designated cafes for Somalis and occasionally other east Africans.¹⁰ However, while some extolled the social importance of ‘chewing’ as an activity that breaks down barriers of class and clan between Somalis, with one participant stating: *“For Somali people it is a social thing, sometimes when you go to a meeting it is put out and you can be talking for seven, eight hours”*, others warned of its negative impacts on individuals and the community.

For the Tamil community the maintenance of cultural heritage was directed largely through religious activity, either through the local Temples for Hindus or local churches for Catholics. For the Colombian participants, religion was considered more of a personal issue; they were more likely to cite other social activities such as arts and performances and vehicle to maintain ‘Colombian culture’.

Political responsibilities were less widely held along each of the three geometries and showed the most divergence amongst the three populations sampled. Apart from participants originally from Somaliland¹¹, all participants expressed opposition

⁹ See Putnam 2000 for an explanation of ‘bonding and bridging’ social capital.

¹⁰ Khat is a stimulant plant originating in East Africa, see Patel (2008) for a recent study on attitudes and impacts of khat among Somalis in the UK.

¹¹ Somaliland is a state independent of Somalia to the south, though is not recognised by international bodies. See Appendix 2 for more detail.

to aspects of the ruling political regime or administration in their country of origin. Equally, the same participants commonly expressed a mixture of frustration and acceptance of their inability to affect the situation back home as a result of either a lack of resources or dangers associated with getting involved in country of origin politics. Transnational political involvement, such as lobbying the UK government to influence politics in the country of origin was also advocated for the same reasons.

In the UK, there was only a limited sense of political responsibility and this often translated into little more than voting in elections, a typical response being;

“Well, as an individual I am responsible for doing what all other people do, we have the same responsibilities. As a person I need to observe my responsibilities with the community, with Government, you know voting and helping people”.

A number of reasons were cited for this political apathy, including a lack of relevant political representation for the community, an inability to distinguish between the ideas of the main local and national parties and an attitude that political involvement is futile and efforts should be focused on grass-roots community work. Despite these barriers, some participants viewed political participation as important and actively encouraged other members of their community to get involved. This group, which tended to be older and professionally involved in community work, acknowledged some of the aforementioned barriers to participation and added that a lack of time and resources also prevented people from getting involved; yet it was articulated that there was need to break out of the cycle of lack of representation and apathy. For some participants, this was beginning to happen in campaigning on isolated issues, such as through unions for workers’ rights, rather than on a more strategic basis.

The economic responsibilities or obligation of refugees is a relatively understudied area, despite some significant recent studies on remittances (Lindley 2007; Hammond 2007). This is partly a result of the disciplinary separation of migration studies and refugee studies, with the former concentrating on socio-economic dimensions and the latter in socio-political dimensions. Despite this artificial separation, more recent research suggests that refugees cannot help but also become economic actors and their experiences and agency has implications for the study of the integration and transnational engagement (Van Hear 2004; Koser 2007). The findings of this study echo those sentiments, with refugees displaying a varied set of financial responsibilities that often had a significant impact on their ability to fulfill other responsibilities. As Table 1 illustrates these responsibilities occur along all three geometries.

Participants explicitly identified paying taxes and being or becoming economically self-sufficient as a responsibility of their’s in the UK. While there was clear acknowledgement of and concern at some of the barriers to achieving this placed in front of refugees, there was a clear desire to not be dependent upon the state. One participant stated:

"I am 67 and still I am not on benefits, never have been on benefits, in this country for 24 years, never benefits for me or my family. Even my brothers son came here, he came as a refugee but I took him in...I said to him you don't need to claim benefits, you have things with us...you get a lot of people trying to claim the welfare, but you can't...it is not right unless you really need it."

This was often articulated in reference to challenging the perception of refugees (and more specifically, asylum seekers) as 'scroungers' or 'welfare cheats' but also in reference to others in their community that it was believed had at best not taken advantage of training and education opportunities available or at worst had made an active decision to rely on benefits. This demonstrates not only the desire of refugees to become economic actors but also a moral responsibility to do so.

Economic responsibilities to the homeland overlap with transnational responsibilities. For participants that had family remaining in the country of origin, all sent home money when possible. Participants with steady employment were more likely to reveal a set monthly amount set aside for remittances, while others sent what they could, when they could, with Somalis and Tamils in particular intimating that a small amount would go a long way back home. Participants sent money home primarily to cover basic subsistence costs of their family:

"at least I am getting £22,000 a year so I can send some money back to my family to do something for themselves".

Though for others the money was attached to more specific objectives such as facilitating migration or education, for example one Somali stated:

"Well, I come from quite an extensive family, my Dad had 11 brothers and 5 sisters and so I have certain obligations to see that some of them at least can improve their wealth. They won't have similar opportunities as me, but at least I can give them something back to make sure they are educated so that they can stand on their own feet".

In the former case money was largely being sent to elderly parents that participants felt would be unable to join them in the UK as they would find it difficult to adapt to life in the UK; the latter cases were sending money to siblings or the children of siblings in the hope that the money or the education could be utilised to engineer emigration from the country. The sense of responsibility to remit predominantly derived from the participants feeling that they were the 'lucky ones' to manage to escape the conflict or conditions of the country of origin. Some participants also linked remitting to their own happiness and future, suggesting that if their family members are unable to survive back home then they are unable to continue with their own lives in the UK.

Similar motivations also determined participants' responsibility to contribute to fundraising or development projects originating in the UK with a focus on social transformation in the country of origin. Organised fundraising initiatives to build

hospitals and universities were cited by participants from Somaliland that felt a responsibility, but not a pressure, to contribute what they could. There were some dissenting voices to the use of this money, suggesting more basic services were required before 'empty universities and hospitals' but there was a common sense that there was a responsibility to contribute where possible. Colombian participants that expressed a responsibility in this area were more likely to be actively involved in developing grass-roots projects for marginalised minorities rather than fundraising activities for larger-scale projects. Tamil participants expressed a desire to be able to fulfill this kind of responsibility to the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka, yet were frustrated by the barriers erected by the Sri Lankan government. It was suggested that not only is money raised often seized by the government, but that in fact it could put individuals or their family in danger to be seen to be contributing to fundraising of groups like the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) in London. This represents a more general finding across all communities that responsibility to the 'homeland' derives more from obligations to the people still back there and an idealized version of home rather than to the existing political system or an abstract notion of the nation.

The process of 'incremental participation'

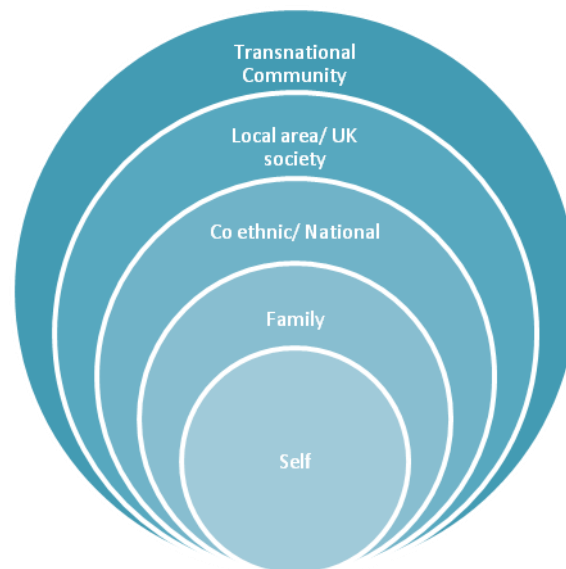
This illustration of the complexity of refugee responsibilities in the UK raises two questions: Is there conflict or competition between them? How do refugees manage these responsibilities? In answer to the first question, the research suggests that there is competition amongst the diverse responsibilities refugees have, but that it is a question of competition for resources rather than a conflict of interest. This complex set of responsibilities stretches the limited resources of refugees in terms of time and finances. Most refugees earn below the average wage in London if they earn anything at all. As noted above some of the participants of this research have struggled to find a job or find employment only in jobs that do not reflect their education, skills and experience. Other research has pointed to this situation of underemployment and a lack of recognition of refugees' qualifications, particularly in educational and health professions.

Consequently, some of the participants work long hours or in a couple of cases, more than one job in order to meet the costs of living in London. The financial pressures of supporting a family are exacerbated in the Somali and Tamil community as some female participants felt that it was wrong to go back to work before their children were in full-time education as it was their responsibility to be a full-time mother. Trying to manage these financial constraints also puts additional demands on refugees' time having to work more than one job or long hours and travel long distances between these locations. Many of the participants also expressed a difficulty adapting to the pace and pressures of London life, particularly having to travel long distances and the individualistic approach to life they perceived many Londoners to have. Conversely, it should be noted that participants also mentioned positive aspects of living in London such as diversity, equality and the respect for individual difference.

All of the participants described a series of sacrifices that they have been forced to make in order to manage their responsibilities. Each of the refugees interviewed had a number of responsibilities illustrated in Table 2, yet the majority was clear about how these are prioritised and ordered and which ones could be sacrificed in order to facilitate the fulfillment of higher priorities. The most common ordering saw family as priority, followed by fellow community members, the local community, British society and finally the country of origin. This prioritisation manifested itself in a process of *incremental participation* illustrated by Figure 1, although there were variations as to how participants moved through these circles.

Incremental participation suggests that refugees start on the central circles and move gradually outwards, making a conscious choice to sacrifice some responsibilities associated with the outer circles until the responsibilities to the inner circles have been satisfied. It is argued here that it is the fulfillment of responsibilities at these different levels that determines a refugee's ability and willingness to participate at the 'higher layer' of social interaction.

Figure 1- Concentric circles of incremental participation



The participants all saw their core responsibility as themselves or their family, dependent upon whether their immediate family was also in the UK. For those who did not have immediate family in the UK, their focus was on looking after themselves and achieving a level of self-sufficiency that would allow their family to join them.

For those refugees that had their families with them this was always the primary consideration. The predominant responsibility of this group was to provide for and look after their children, for which all other responsibilities would be sacrificed as expressed by this Somali respondent:

“When I say home, personally I see the next five years or ten years I could be going to help in Somalia as that is my original home, you know in retirement and the later stages of my life and career. But now, my development is in the UK, this is where I am now, this is where all my resources are, this is where I have settled. I don’t think I am ever going to be completely leaving the UK, even if I wanted to because having the kids here and establishing here, this is where my children’s home is here”

Only once this responsibility could be comfortably fulfilled would the participants consider moving to the next concentric circle: the responsibility to help fellow members of their community. The individuals most likely to actively seek to fulfill responsibilities to their local community or to the UK were those more formally involved in helping the community, either professionally or through providing volunteering or advisory support. These individuals saw the value of fulfilling a responsibility to participate locally and in cross-community events as well as to engage with British society. This manifested itself in formal involvement in community wide voluntary sector organisations, clubs and teams to informal interaction with neighbours, other parents or work colleagues. Many of these individuals retained, throughout this process, a desire to fulfill the responsibilities they felt to the homeland, yet refused to jeopardise the situation and security of their family in the process.

Even with respect to remittances, while money was sent home, even by those who could only be considered to be operating within the core circles above, the amount was such that it did not hinder the ability to provide for themselves or their family. The experience of moving sequentially through the circles represented in Figure 1 is backed up by other research that suggests it is those migrants that are considered to be ‘integrated’ in terms of employment and settlement that are more likely to engage in homeland politics (Koopmans and Statham 2001; Ostergaard and Neilsen 2003).

It is important to note that the above characterisation represents a sequential route through the complex responsibilities of the refugees interviewed for this study. Representing this process with concentric circles is not to suggest that movement through these stages is clear-cut or exclusively in that order. There is obviously overlap between the layers of responsibility. It is clear that the focus of responsibility followed by the interviewees in this study was the path set out above and that this would not progress until existing responsibilities were satisfied. Other routes through the circles were described, for example, by those without children of their own would often express their priorities as their own education and employment to be followed by either their community in the UK or their community in the country of origin.

Other participants saw their priorities in a different order and were likely to skip stages three and/or four if they had struggled to find suitable support and opportunities to progress in the UK. These individuals felt that while protected in the UK their life consisted of little else as they found it difficult to find meaningful social interaction, employment or education. Consequently, what time and resources they

had tended to be focused on trying to influence events in the country of origin in such a way that would bring about a change in conditions that would allow their return. Some Colombians and Somalis passed over their responsibilities to their own community, represented by the third circle in Figure 1. These individuals either felt frustrated by internal division within the community that had been exported from social and political division in the homeland or were making a conscious decision to not be associated with the community and the negative impression they perceived the behaviour of some of their community made on wider society. This was expressed by one Colombian respondent;

“Well, we tried to set up an organized group and all the Colombian organizations tried to set up a meeting for a Colombian solidarity organization just to try to get everyone in one place fighting for one thing. And so there was a meeting and everyone came, but there were some interests. When I saw that I decided just to stay aside of that and continue working”

It is clear therefore, that moving through the concentric circles is not always sequential or clear-cut, yet what movement does take place tends to be determined by three interrelated factors

- forms of capital;
- time in the UK; and
- propensity to return home.

Forms of capital incorporate financial capital, human capital and social capital. Those participants that have been able to most smoothly and quickly through this process of incremental participation are those that arrived in the UK with significant capital; human capital such as English language skills or social capital such as family networks in the UK. Others have amassed capital since arriving and sped up their movement and those struggling to take advantage of the opportunities or fully access their rights in the UK are often those without significant resources.

Time spent in the UK is a obviously a mediating factor here as is the propensity to return as both affect an individuals ability and willingness participate more widely.

The idea of incremental participation therefore is not a rigid attempt to simplify or homogenise our understanding of refugee’s experiences. Rather, it is a heuristic tool to help explain how individual refugees with complex responsibilities, different access to resources and capital, might negotiate their way through participating in various social spaces.

Three types of ‘refugee-citizen’

Having established the types, sources and priorities of refugee responsibilities, the research also aimed to assess the impact of refugee’s understandings of rights and responsibilities on their attitudes towards citizenship. Given the criteria of the sample the majority, 26 of 32, were already British citizens, four awaiting the outcome of their application and two were yet to apply but intended to. The

participants were asked about their attitudes to citizenship in two ways: why they did or would choose to apply for British citizenship; and how they have or expected to benefit from it. Table 3 below illustrates the responses, split into practical and emotional reasons and benefits of obtaining citizenship.

Table 3 – Typology of attitudes towards British citizenship

	PRACTICAL	EMOTIONAL
Reasons for taking British citizenship	need ID	feels like home
	to stay in Britain	disowned home
	provide for family	gratitude to UK
	no choice	belonging
	peace here	duty/right thing to do
	respect for British ‘norms’	deserve it
	to fulfill other responsibilities	time in UK
Experienced benefits of British citizenship	opportunities for family/self	pride
	education	feel belonging
	employment	feel home
	health/support	feel same as everyone else
	entitlements	confidence and independence
	mobility	bond of allegiance
	security and protection	‘fresh start’
	gives independence	justified changing priorities
	better treatment by officials	

Attitudes towards applying for citizenship can be further distinguished between positive and negative reasons. There were participants that explained their motivation as a positive desire to remain in the UK, citing the opportunities for their family, the positive climate of respect for and tolerance of difference. One participant stated:

“It [citizenship] will help for me with my education and maybe also my employment – I have more opportunities with this. But also it is some other satisfactions, a security, to belong here really you know, I can say ‘I am one of them’”

The other side of this coin saw participants express their motivation more as unwillingness or inability to return so they had no choice but to take British citizenship. Others explained their reasons for applying for citizenship as the need for identification, revealing that this would be their first formal ID document, one participant stated that citizenship:

“..gives you identity as well, a picture of ID. What else do I have like this? I have nothing. I have to have a passport and I need to show them something with a picture”.

Tying all these practical reasons together, refugees were more able to fulfil their core responsibilities if they had gained citizenship such as finding it easier to gain employment and education therefore furthering their ability to earn money. Some participants also mentioned emotional reasons alongside practical reasons for taking citizenship. Positive emotional reasons ranged from Britain ‘feeling like home’, a sense of gratitude to Britain, that it felt the right thing to do and that two individuals felt they deserved it. (There were Somali and Tamil participants that expressed their motivation through negative emotional accounts of their country of origin, suggesting that they had disowned their country because of the events that had taken place or that it was no longer their country because there was no longer any freedom.

The benefits received or experienced through citizenship are often linked to the motivations participants expressed for taking citizenship in the first place. This is particularly the case with respect to the practical benefits. For example, all participants suggested that holding British citizenship had or would provide themselves and their families with better opportunities with respect to education, employment and other support and services. Some of the participants suggested that citizenship not only formally provided better entitlements but also led to better treatment by officials or staff administering those services. Other individuals, while agreeing that citizenship had provided opportunities, felt that other barriers had precluded them from actually taking advantage of those opportunities. Participants also mentioned freedom of mobility as a clear practical benefit of citizenship allowing them, when possible, to visit their country of origin safely but also to travel to see family elsewhere or merely take holidays outside of the UK with the security of a British passport. Equally significant as a benefit of citizenship was security. This links back to the motivation for taking citizenship of being able to stay in the UK, as one participant stated:

“I’m secure here, you can’t send me back. It gives you security, it is not for going outside the country because I am not going anywhere, but it is for when you need a passport for in a bank or somewhere, you have it”

Some participants claimed to have experienced emotional benefits of citizenship alongside the practical ones, often derived directly from experiencing some of the practical benefits. For example, the practical opportunities associated with citizenship gave a number of participants a feeling of confidence and independence when interacting with mainstream organisations or people outside of their own community. Some of these individuals made an explicit reference to citizenship making them ‘feel the same as everyone else’. Participants also expressed emotional benefits from the very fact that they had become British citizens, such as pride in the achievement and the sense of belonging, allegiance and attachment it had fostered.

Conversely, for other participants citizenship did contribute to an emotional break with their country of origin, though it must be noted that others had made the emotional break before they became citizens.

As Table 3 shows, there is some overlap between what people considered as reasons for applying for citizenship and the subsequent benefits they experienced. While all participants identified practical reasons for taking citizenship and practical benefits for citizenship, only some mentioned emotional factors. Responses can be grouped into three loose types: those who emphasized only practical elements for both, those that emphasized only practical reasons for taking it but some emotional benefits, and those that emphasised emotional reasons and benefits. The characteristics of these groups are displayed in Table 4. This table indicates that the refugees in these three groups exhibited a combination, not all, of the listed characteristics.

Table 4 – Characteristics of types of ‘refugee-citizen’

	REASONS FOR	BENEFITS OF	INTEGRATED	HOME IN THE FUTURE	FAMILY SITUATION
<i>‘indifferent’</i>	practical	practical	less	elsewhere	not focused on UK
<i>‘pragmatic’</i>	practical	practical and emotional	less	both/either	in UK
<i>‘contented’</i>	practical and emotional	practical and emotional	more	in UK	in UK

The first group was made up of participants with an *indifferent* attitude to the value of citizenship based on a number of different factors. Some felt that they had been unable to make most of opportunities in UK and felt partly let down by the system with respect to the recognition of employment qualification or entitlements to housing for single males. These participants may be considered the less integrated individuals who longed for a return to an idealised version of home. With respect to the concentric circles of incremental participation they had jumped from either the first or second to the outer circle. Other factors exhibited by this group were that they had only received citizenship very recently and the group actually contained the individuals that had been in the UK the shortest time. Also, the Colombian participants that did not have children of their own and saw themselves more as global citizens, seeing nothing particularly communitarian about British citizenship, one example is a respondent who stated:

“I don’t really believe this thing, you get something in British but you are not British, all the other people don’t need these things. All the time I am living here there is the problems in my country but if it changed and the people and the land and the rights, I would go back”

The Somalis in this group could not be considered as less integrated but retained a realistic desire to return home to Somaliland in the medium-term and felt that citizenship represented only a practical tool for them until they left the UK. The common element of all these characteristics appears to be an absence of any reasons to develop an emotional attachment or make a conscious emotional investment to Britain through citizenship. It should be mentioned that the members of this group saw themselves as either global citizens or displayed some emotional attachment to London and its opportunity and diversity.

The second group adopted what can be called a *pragmatic* attitude towards citizenship. This group emphasised only practical motivations for taking citizenship, but acknowledged both practical and emotional benefits. This group contained more shared characteristics than the previous group and each of them had experienced significant difficulties on arrival to the UK, with the language, finding suitable support networks and suffering from feelings of isolation and depression. While this is similar to some of the members of the indifferent group, these individuals displayed two crucial differences.

Firstly, their experiences since the uptake of citizenship are more positive. Participants citing the confidence gained from considering themselves and being considered ‘the same as everyone else’ were all from this group. It can be said that this group had been more able to take advantage of the practical opportunities and benefits that citizenship has provided for them. Others expressed pride at the achievement of being granted citizenship and the feeling of belonging or being British that becoming a citizen had engendered.

A second crucial difference to the indifferent group is that all of the participants in the pragmatic group saw their medium-term future in the UK. This was predominantly because of their responsibilities to their children but also a consequence for some of the conditions in their country of origin. Consequently, in contrast with the indifferent group these participants had clear reasons to make a pragmatic and conscious decision to make an emotional investment in Britain, though for some this emerged from the fact that their children had either been born in the UK or spent a larger proportion of their life here and subsequently were British.

The third group can be considered as the *contented* citizen. This group contained participants that emphasized both practical and emotional motivations for taking citizenship and the experienced benefits. A number of characteristics define members of this group and distinguish them from the two groups already described. Firstly, the group has a higher average age (49 years against 43 for the entire sample) and, to a lesser extent, has spent longer in the UK than other groups (16 years

compared to 14). It is difficult to speculate on the relevance of these two factors; though when combined with the fact that his group also tended to arrive in the UK with more resources they have more relevance. Each member of this group arrived speaking some conversational form of English, with some even having used the language in a professional capacity in their own country. In addition to this crucial human capital, others in the group had family or close friends in the UK that helped them settle or provided information and accommodation when they arrived in the UK. These two factors may have contributed to these individuals being able to become professionally involved in community activities with three participants in this group actually involved in setting-up organisations or networks to support people arriving from their own community.

In addition to being able to call on a greater wealth of resources, another crucial difference between this group and the participants in other groups was that they saw their future in the long-term as in Britain and nowhere else. This was irrespective of any change in conditions in their country of origin. While the indifferent citizens saw their future away from the UK and mostly, hopefully, in their country of origin and the pragmatic were unsure about their long-term future this group saw the rest of their life in the UK. While the pragmatic expressed a belonging, a feeling of home and a sense of equality deriving *from* citizenship, the contented were more likely to express this as a motivation for applying for citizenship. One of the Tamil respondents stated how she felt about arriving in the UK and settling:

"I am in a foreign place, I never felt, maybe at the start, but I never felt this, people, my sister, took care of our daughter and our family. We had places to visit, my religion and my relatives are here so it never felt like a foreign place. We always had places to go; ethnic shops have been here for a long time, Tamil churches. We have everything"

Another Colombian respondent stated how proud he will be when his citizenship is granted:

"Very proud. Yes, I will be very proud. Because I have spent ten years here and I couldn't get the jobs, you know. But I have got other dreams, I could study here – my degree before was to study English – I can do that here and the music and the people..... I always tell my friends, London, England is the city, is my city and there are many, many communities"

Considering these characteristics it could be suggested that the contented 'refugee-citizen' viewed citizenship as a confirmation of their integration rather than as tool facilitating it.

These three groups representing distinct attitudes towards citizenship are also likely to represent different routes through the circles of incremental participation. The indifferent group are those most likely to skip stages of participation, most notably stages three and four. This is most likely to be as a result of lacking the necessary forms or capital or the access to suitable support to take advantage of some of the

opportunities available in the UK. These represent significant barriers to integration for refugees that not even citizenship can enable an individual to overcome in all cases.

The pragmatic citizens are likely to move through the circles in order, though some appeared to skip the third stage and delay the fourth stage due to limited resources and the fact that the benefits of citizenship that they experienced were more related to enabling participation in wider UK society than their own community.

The final group were also more likely to move through the circles sequentially, yet may have been initially more likely to spend a greater amount of time focusing on their co-ethnic/national community due to feeling an obligation to help given their additional capacity to do so. Despite this, due to this additional resource capacity this group all identified responsibilities to wider UK society and expressed little pressure or competition in fulfilling all of these responsibilities. Apart from age and length of time in the UK, other demographic characteristics such as gender, employment type or level of education did not correlate to a specific set of attitudes towards citizenship. With respect to age and time in the UK, it is difficult to make too many claims about the relevance of this factor with this sample; tracing changing attitudes over time with the same cohort of 'refugee-citizens' would achieve more robust results in this area.

Linking rights and responsibilities

A final key finding of this research relates to the ways in which participants' experiences and attitudes linked rights and responsibilities. There was an interaction between rights and responsibilities illustrated implicitly by refugees' experiences in the UK and explicitly through their attitudes towards citizenship and where responsibilities come from.

The participants made explicit acknowledgement of the vertical relationship between the rights and responsibilities of themselves as refugees or citizens and the UK state. This was articulated as identification that the rights afforded to individuals came with responsibilities but also that certain rights or specific support was required in order to fulfill certain responsibilities. A related issue was a feeling of gratitude to the UK for the protection, if not always additional opportunities, that it had provided for the participants when they needed it. This was often articulated with specific comparative reference to the situation either in their country of origin, refugee camps or other intermediate countries. Responsibilities appeared to flow from this sense of gratitude for being provided with protection, responsibilities to the UK the local community. This was a feeling that was identified across nationality and gender, but one held less strongly than the 'indifferent' citizen.

More specifically, a number of findings can be extrapolated in reference to the four central aspects of earning citizenship contained in the proposed 2009 Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill: obeying the law, learning English, economic contribution and 'active' citizenship. With respect to each of these elements there

was a sense among the participants that was a desire to be seen to be ‘contributing’ in all of these ways and in some cases a sense that it was a responsibility. Participants mentioned that a primary responsibility to become or to be a citizen was to obey the law, for example:

“well, now I am a citizen, so I know I have to respect this country, the law and order and I believe in that”

Some participants displayed disappointment with members of their own community, though this was a feeling complimented by the view that those involved in criminal activity are often the most vulnerable and have not been provided with suitable support. Some felt that the responsibility here lay with the individual and some with the government though most appeared to suggest that parents or the community were most at fault. It was argued by a number of Tamil and Somali women that they find it more difficult to raise their children in the UK due to the fractured sense of community, greater peer pressure and opportunities for ‘misbehaving’. This was compounded by the fact that these individuals also felt unable to discipline their children in traditional ways, suggesting that they were fearful of social services turning their child against them;

“Because when we came here first, we have the social services and if you slap your child here to stop them, then they will take them away from you. So every mother is scared to say these things, they don’t want to lose their child ... they make for the children an enemy of the parents. When you are an enemy of the parents, you will be an enemy of the teacher, you will see enemy in the streets, you will be a drug taker”

All participants perhaps unsurprisingly saw the value of speaking English and the confidence and independence that this could bring. It was also suggested that it was a responsibility to learn the language, not only for yourself but for your community and for your family. There was particular concern that some Somalis are not accessing the support that is out there and becoming dependent upon translation. At the same time however, other participants expressed concern about the removal of English classes or gratitude for being able to access free English classes when they arrived. It was generally accepted that individuals need to be pointed in the right direction on arrival to suitable classes and that targeting of ‘hard to reach’ groups would also be useful.

It was also indicated that a responsibility was to be economically self-sufficient, personally and for their family. There was a keen desire to become or develop further as an economic agent. More substantively though, there was a keen sense across all nationalities that refugees have a responsibility not to be dependent upon state benefits. Once again, this was articulated with specific reference to other members of their community that were dependent upon benefits, though this number was considered to be small.

Despite this, there were examples among the sample of underemployment. Some of those working or seeking work were employed at a level below their skills and

experience or could not find work that matched their skills and experience. This suggests that there remains a problem of refugees, particularly professionals, not having their qualifications recognised in the UK.

Finally, with respect to volunteering, a number of participants had been involved in, or were seeking, opportunities for volunteering. Volunteering was considered as both personally empowering, as for many this had led directly to their current employment, but also as a responsibility to help those most in need, with groups such as the elderly, the disabled and those with mental health problems cited by participants. There was concern however, that there were not always suitable opportunities to volunteer; this was particularly the case for the participants who were seeking opportunities to volunteer with organisations outside of their own community groups. Participants that had engaged in voluntary work did so primarily within their own community organisations or churches or temples. While this is obviously invaluable support for those organisations and a representation of the third level of 'incremental participation', it is not clear that this is what the government has in mind for its 'active citizenship' programme.

What the attitudes of refugees to each of these elements of the Bill suggest is that refugees are not against the communitarian idea of earning citizenship and, in fact, in many cases there is an explicit desire to show commitment in these ways, to 'give something back' and empower themselves. Yet the qualifying factor in this is that there are fundamental rights, what we might call the libertarian ideals: that is to freedom of speech, equal treatment in the labour market, access to training and education, for example. All participants suggested that these should be available to all, only on the condition of obeying the law. Without these core rights and support mechanisms, many felt or would feel unable to fulfill the responsibilities articulated in the Bill. The vertical relationship between the state and the refugee or citizen, therefore, contains rights and responsibilities on both sides.

Participants also acknowledged the importance of horizontal relationships amongst citizens at various levels. This can be related back to the process of incremental participation identified previously. Initially all participants sought out individuals from their country of origin as a pragmatic response to entering a new country that may have offered insufficient or unsuitable initial support. This created important bonding capital (Putnam 2000) for these individuals, but of more relevance here is that it also generated obligations for this support to be reciprocated. It was clear that for a number of participants the responsibility to provide help or volunteering support to others arriving from the country of origin was out empathy for their position and their own ability to help. In this way, the supported often became the support as illustrated by one respondent who stated:

"I think first about the other people that come in desperation, people like me when I came, I want to guide them, I want to help them. Many people are going through the same things as I was...I feel responsibility to help"

In this instance responsibilities were generated from these practical and emotional ties that enabled an individual to access their rights. In addition to this, there was a realisation that this support cannot continue in isolation. Firstly, these community organizations find it difficult to access funding for activities encouraging wider involvement (Griffiths, Sigona and Zetter 2006); secondly as an individual living, working and protected in the UK there are responsibilities to wider local community.

It is relevant here to view the attitudes and experiences of the three types of 'refugee-citizen';

1. For the *contented* citizen this feeling of responsibility to the wider community emerged out of gratitude not only for protection but also for the respect the majority of inhabitants in the UK showed to their gender, religion or ethnicity, particularly as persecution on these grounds had forced some to migrate in the first place.
2. Similarly for the *pragmatic* citizen, they had all made a conscious decision to 'pick up and run' with some of the formal concepts of equality and respecting diversity, particularly those exposed to professional community organisations where such technical language is used. But also half of this group also acknowledged that it is important as human beings help each other out on a daily basis, 'it makes everyone's life easier'.
3. For the *indifferent* citizen, however, wider responsibilities were displayed less strongly because they felt that they have either been let down by the system and/or that their future lies elsewhere. Consequently they are either unable to fulfill their core responsibilities or have skipped some of the stages of incremental participation and are focusing on returning to the country of origin. The latter was strongly emphasized by Somalis from Somaliland, where the conditions on the ground allowed at least a peaceful return.

Each of these instances illustrates a link between rights and responsibilities, either through refugee's attitudes towards specifics of their relationship with the state and associated services or through their experiences generated horizontal bonds within and across communities.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and policy implications

The findings of this research suggest that government policy aiming to provide durable settlement solutions for refugees needs to reflect the attitudes and experiences of refugees by emphasising both sides of three related dichotomies or dualities:

- the theoretical dichotomy of libertarian and communitarian,
- the practical dichotomy of rights and responsibilities; and
- the dual outcomes of citizenship and integration.

This research does suggest that the government may be correct to emphasise in some areas the need for communitarian bonds, to focus to some extent on the responsibilities of newcomers and to encourage the uptake of citizenship amongst refugees. It also illustrates, however, the need for fundamental libertarian values, the protection of refugee rights and the provision of suitable and effective integration support to compliment and facilitate the responsibilities associated with a more communitarian approach to citizenship.

In theoretical terms the findings from this research with refugees suggests that, like the general population, communitarian bonds are important for refugees in terms of ordering their lives. Refugees acknowledged that with rights come certain responsibilities and this was acknowledged at a number of levels, with responsibilities to the state, their own community and the local community more widely. There was particular support for certain aspects of practical communitarian demands of newcomers to become new citizens. With this expression of communitarian principles however, came three caveats: one, that this remains backed by the protection of fundamental basic human rights; two, that refugees are given support to empower them to fulfil responsibilities; and three, that there is clarity and formalisation of demands of all new citizens not just newcomers such as refugees. These sentiments reflect much of what the government consultation and other research has found amongst the population more generally; there is nothing necessarily to fear from communitarian ideals within the parameters of liberal fundamentals.

At a more practical level, this translates as a need for equal emphasis in policy on rights *and* responsibilities. This research has shown that refugees constantly manage complex responsibilities, often making sacrifices to sustain a life in the UK. They are also able to order their priorities and not move onto the next step until the closest commitments are satisfied. There is some support amongst refugees for an opportunity to earn citizenship and many acknowledge the responsibilities that are elements of the proposed legislation. Yet in order to fulfil all these responsibilities, refugees require the protection of certain fundamental rights and access to suitable support that is empowering and that does not promote dependency. It is important for policy discourse and actual legislation to be more explicit about how this balancing of rights and responsibilities works in practice, acknowledging the role of both the state and the citizen and emphasising the support that will be given to ensure that refugees in particular have the opportunity to earn their citizenship. It is perhaps a concern for refugees that under the proposed 2009 Bill the specificity of

refugee experiences may be lost as they become conflated with other migrants under the term 'newcomers' and that the specific support they require might become diluted. It is not clear exactly how this legislation will impact upon the Refugee Integration and Employment Service. The key question for policy, with respect to rights, responsibilities and citizenship is how to design a way of effectively sequencing these elements so the interdependence between rights and responsibilities is facilitated.

Finally, this research suggests that citizenship can be seen as either facilitating or confirming integration. The types of refugee citizen identified show that the additional opportunities and freedoms provided by citizenship can enable an individual to become 'more integrated', whether with respect to employment, political participation or simply improving confidence in interactions with other citizens. At the same time, citizenship can also serve as a confirmation of integration, where individuals choose to take citizenship upon the realisation that they feel at home in the UK now and for the future.

This research shows, however, that in some cases citizenship is not a necessary condition of integration but a consequence of it; in these cases sufficient forms of capital provided adequate conditions for integration. Alternatively, the attitudes and experiences of the *indifferent* citizen also suggest that without these forms of capital citizenship is also not a sufficient condition of integration. Therefore, while citizenship can play a part in an individual's integration, specific support for integration needs to continue alongside encouraging newcomers to take citizenship.

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