



**Embargoed until 00.01 17th September 2007
Media Release 14 September 2007**

Launch of report highlighting skills of refugees in Wales

The first Refugee Skills Audit report in Wales will be launched in a conference on Refugee Employment and Inclusion on Monday 17th September in Future Inn Cardiff Bay.

The report, the first of its kind in Wales, shows that of the refugees that took part in the audit:

- 60% have a further or higher education qualification
- 78% were working for employers, were self employed or working in a family business before they were forced to flee their country of origin
- 64% are currently unemployed

Speakers at the Refugee Employment and Inclusion conference arranged by the Welsh Refugee Council Equal project, which is part-funded by the European Union's Equal programme through the Welsh Assembly Government, include Eluned Morgan MEP, and The Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Councillor Gill Bird.

Conference delegates, including Plaid Cymru Assembly Members Mohammad Asghar and Bethan Jenkins, will also have the chance to hear the accounts of refugees who have found employment or work experience in Wales through the Welsh Refugee Council Equal project.

Chief Executive of the Welsh Refugee Council, Mike Lewis said:

“This report is the first of its kind in Wales and demonstrates that refugees have a huge amount to offer the labour market here and across the UK. It is ironic therefore that it is our aim to break down the barriers identified in the report, such as the lack of ESOL classes and non-recognition of overseas qualifications and experience, which make it so difficult for refugees to re-enter the world of work here in Wales.”

Eid Ali Ahmed, Deputy Chief Executive of Welsh Refugee Council who is part of the Equal project said:

“WRC Equal project is an innovative action research project aimed at improving the up-skilling and employability of refugees. The findings reveal disturbing levels of unemployment amongst refugee communities in Wales, despite their being relatively highly qualified. We now need to work together to reverse this trend if our communities are to be truly inclusive and cohesive.”

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Note to editors:

- The conference has been organised by the Welsh Refugee Council Equal Project which is funded by the European Union's Equal programme
- Interviews can be arranged upon request
- For further information on the conference contact Kate Richards, Communications Officer on 029 2043 2996 or 0789 669 0070 or e-mail: kate.richards@welshrefugeecouncil.org
- For further information on the Welsh Refugee Council visit www.welshrefugeecouncil.org