

# COMMUNITY WORK WITH MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

This page intentionally left blank

# COMMUNITY WORK WITH MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

'Insiders' and 'Outsiders' in  
Research and Practice

AUTHORED BY

**NAOMI THOMPSON**

*Goldsmiths, University of London, UK*

With

**RABIA NASIMI**

*University of Cambridge, UK*

**MARINA ROVA**

*Goldsmiths, University of London, UK*

And

**ANDY TURNER**

*Goldsmiths, University of London, UK*



**emerald**  
**PUBLISHING**

United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India  
Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited  
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2022

Copyright © 2022 Naomi Thompson, Rabia Nasimi, Marina Rova and Andy Turner.  
Published under exclusive licence by Emerald Publishing Limited.

**Reprints and permissions service**

Contact: [permissions@emeraldinsight.com](mailto:permissions@emeraldinsight.com)

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80117-479-4 (Print)  
ISBN: 978-1-80117-478-7 (Online)  
ISBN: 978-1-80117-480-0 (Epub)



ISOQAR certified  
Management System,  
awarded to Emerald  
for adherence to  
Environmental  
standard  
ISO 14001:2004.

Certificate Number 1985  
ISO 14001



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*While we were finishing this manuscript in summer 2021, the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan.*

*One of the authors of this book was a child refugee; her parents fled the Taliban in 1999 and arrived in the UK in a refrigerated container with their young children.*

*This book is dedicated to all the women who have had to live in fear, surrender their freedom, or flee their homes and countries – to those who stayed and those who escaped, to those who survived and those who tragically did not.*

This page intentionally left blank

# CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	ix
<i>About the Authors</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
1. Introduction – Intersectionality, Integration and Empowerment	1
2. Insiders and Outsiders in Research with Refugee and Migrant Women	15
3. Migrants and Refugees: An ‘Outsider’ Group?	29
4. Community Development with Migrant and Refugee Women	43
5. From Isolation to Aspiration	55
6. From Aspiration towards Integration	71
7. Stories of Empowerment and Change	93
8. Trauma-Informed Practice with Migrant and Refugee Women	109
9. Conclusions and Implications – Developing Policy, Practice and Research with and for Migrant and Refugee Women	129
<i>Bibliography</i>	139
<i>Index</i>	153

This page intentionally left blank

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	The Number of Children the Women Attending the Women's Project had in Year Two.	38
Figure 2.	The Women's Project 'Journey of Change'.	103
Figure 3.	Model of Long-Term Empowerment for Marginalised Groups.	133

This page intentionally left blank

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Naomi Thompson** is a Senior Lecturer in Community and Youth Work at Goldsmiths, University of London. She is a sociologist of community, faith and inclusion. She is an applied researcher with a focus on co-production and on ensuring the voices of marginalised and excluded communities are heard.

**Rabia Nasimi** is a former Afghan refugee who fled Afghanistan in 1999. Whilst studying Sociology, she was extensively involved in running a refugee community organisation, a charity founded by her father to support refugee integration in the UK.

**Marina Rova** is a dance movement psychotherapist and lecturer. She is programme convenor for the MA Dance Movement Psychotherapy programme at Goldsmiths, University of London.

**Andy Turner** has worked for over three decades in community and youth work, living and working in some of the poorest parts of England as a practitioner, manager, researcher, trainer and activist. He is a lecturer and programme convener for the BA Social and Community Work at Goldsmiths, University of London.

This page intentionally left blank

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all at Emerald involved in the commissioning, publishing and editing process – Iram, Kim, Kirsty, Amber, Brindha, Hayley, Gabriella, Helen, Shanmathi and David – and others behind the scenes whose names we may not have heard.

We owe thanks to the Pilgrim Trust who funded the women's project and the accompanying research over three years.

We are very grateful to the director, staff and volunteers who were part of the community organisation in which the research that underpins this book took place. We are not listing names in order to help protect the anonymity of the women's project and the women who engaged with it – but we are immensely thankful to all in the charity who supported the project and the research study over the three years, of which there are many. Thank you also for your tireless work supporting our refugee and migrant communities in London and beyond.

Naomi would also like to thank all the family, friends and colleagues who have supported and encouraged her to complete this book – of which there are too many to name them all. She would particularly like to thank her partner, Steve, and son, Dylan, for their constant love, support and encouragement. She is also very grateful to the women in her life who have taught her about inequality and courage and who have informed and shaped her own understandings – including, among many others, Rachel McRobbie, Funke Abimbola, Dawn Bowman, Vicki Waddingham, Lara Pereira, Charlie Porter-Baker and Živilė Stanton.

Thanks from Rabia: I would like to give a thank you to my family for their love and support. I am eternally grateful for the opportunity my family and I have been given to migrate to the UK for a better life, and the love and support we have received whilst living here.

Marina would like to thank the women who attended the creative workshops for their generosity of spirit in sharing their stories and supporting others during the process. Marina is also indebted to the women who have shared in her own story of becoming, as a cultural nomad and immigrant to the UK, and wishes to thank her DMP sisters Davina Holmes and Nanette

Hoy and her ArtsMinded sisters Claire Burrell and Marika Cohen for being a constant support and source of inspiration.

Thanks from Andy: For Eve, Millie, Jess and Rach – my clan who bring adventure and love. For mum – a counsellor at Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre working with refugees and asylum seekers in areas of torture, loss and bereavement – for all your work, inspiration and love.

Finally and most importantly, we would all like to offer our gratitude and admiration to all the women who shared their stories – without you this book would not exist.