

# Voices and visibility

The inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in decision-making processes

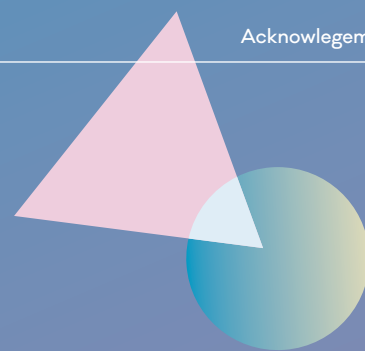


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# Acknowledgements



**Special thanks to all of the people who have contributed to this research as peer researchers, participant recruitment officers, research participants, and data analysts. Below are those contributors named along with their roles and organisations.**

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21 anonymous participants in the refugee survey, Glasgow City

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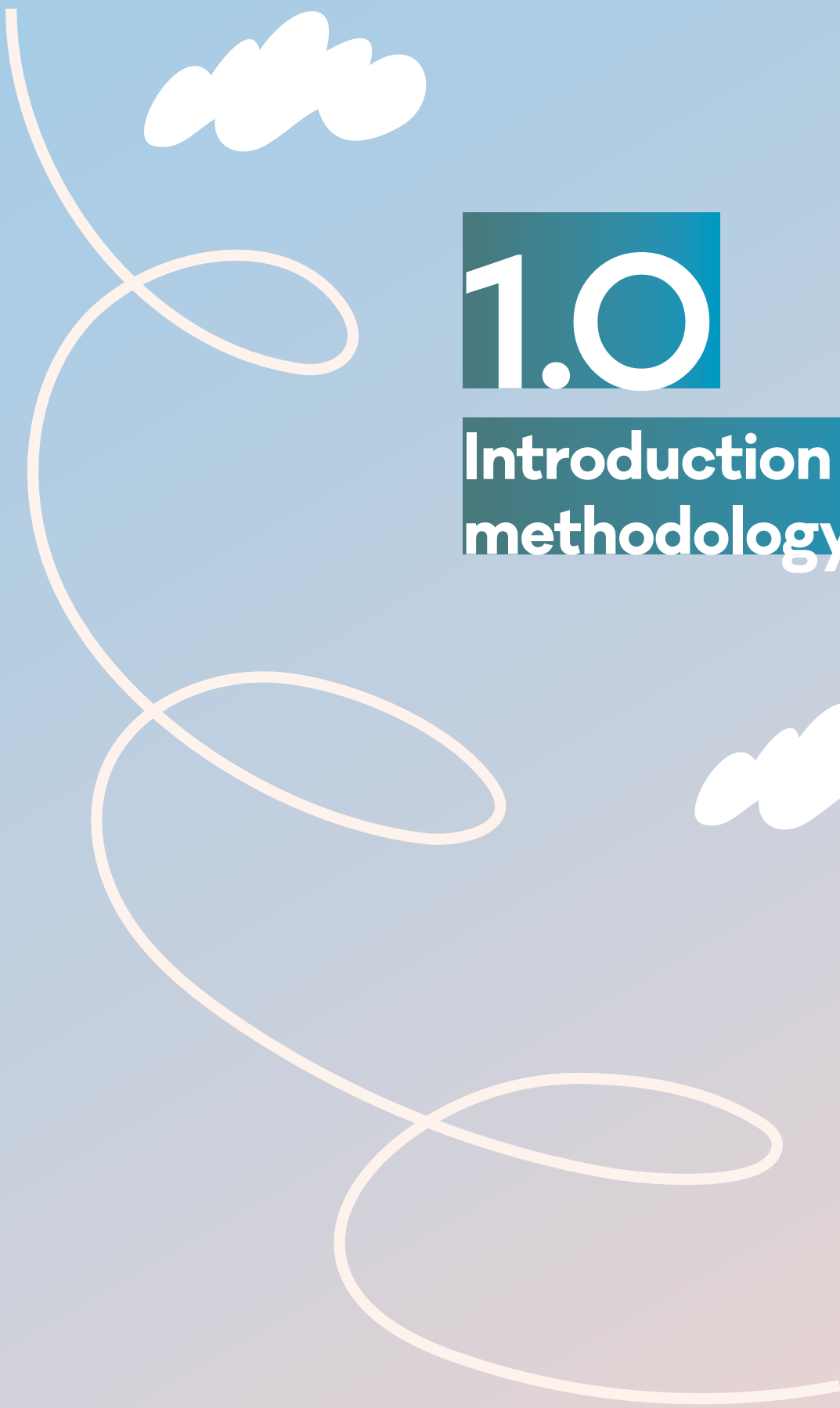
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**1.0**

**Introduction and  
methodology**

# 1.0 Introduction and methodology

## 1.1 Background

The Mental Health Foundation (MHF) has worked with refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland for over 10 years. During this time a number of successful mental health initiatives have been implemented, including 'Sawti' and 'Musawa'. MHF has strengthened its connections with the refugee and asylum seeker communities as well as organisations working with these communities.

This research study is part of a new project 'Voice and Visibility'. The aim is to gain insight into the barriers to civic participation by refugees and asylum seekers as well as the best approaches to enable greater civic participation. In particular within decision making processes of Parent Councils (PCs) and Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) forums.

Further, the World Health Organisation has identified community empowerment as the first track to promote health and wellbeing, being 'the process of enabling communities to increase control over their lives' (WHO, 2009b)<sup>1</sup>. MHF recognises the importance of communities having control over their lives and the role this plays in the preventative approach the organisation takes to support and promote mental health.



## 1.2 Voice and Visibility Project

**Glasgow - Voice and Visibility, The New Scots** is a new initiative funded by Glasgow City Council (GCC), aiming to increase the representation of people from refugee backgrounds on civic forums (decision-making and consultation forums) in Glasgow. Specifically, to progress previous work by building the confidence, skills and knowledge of refugee communities, providing training to existing PC and HSCP forums on inclusion strategies to support refugee communities and by directly linking refugees<sup>2</sup> with PC and HSCP forums across Glasgow. The key aim of the project is to

develop recommendations on how refugee communities can actively participate on civic forums and other decision-making structures. This is “a response to the existing under-representation of refugees in public life across Scotland” (MHF, 2017). For this and since 2017, MHF has been working with refugees and asylum seekers to support their mental health using a range of approaches, at its heart has been the ‘voices’ of the refugee communities. Previous project evaluation indicates that “when people feel linked into their local communities, whether that be a school, housing association or community group, it has a positive impact on wellbeing” (MHF, 2017).

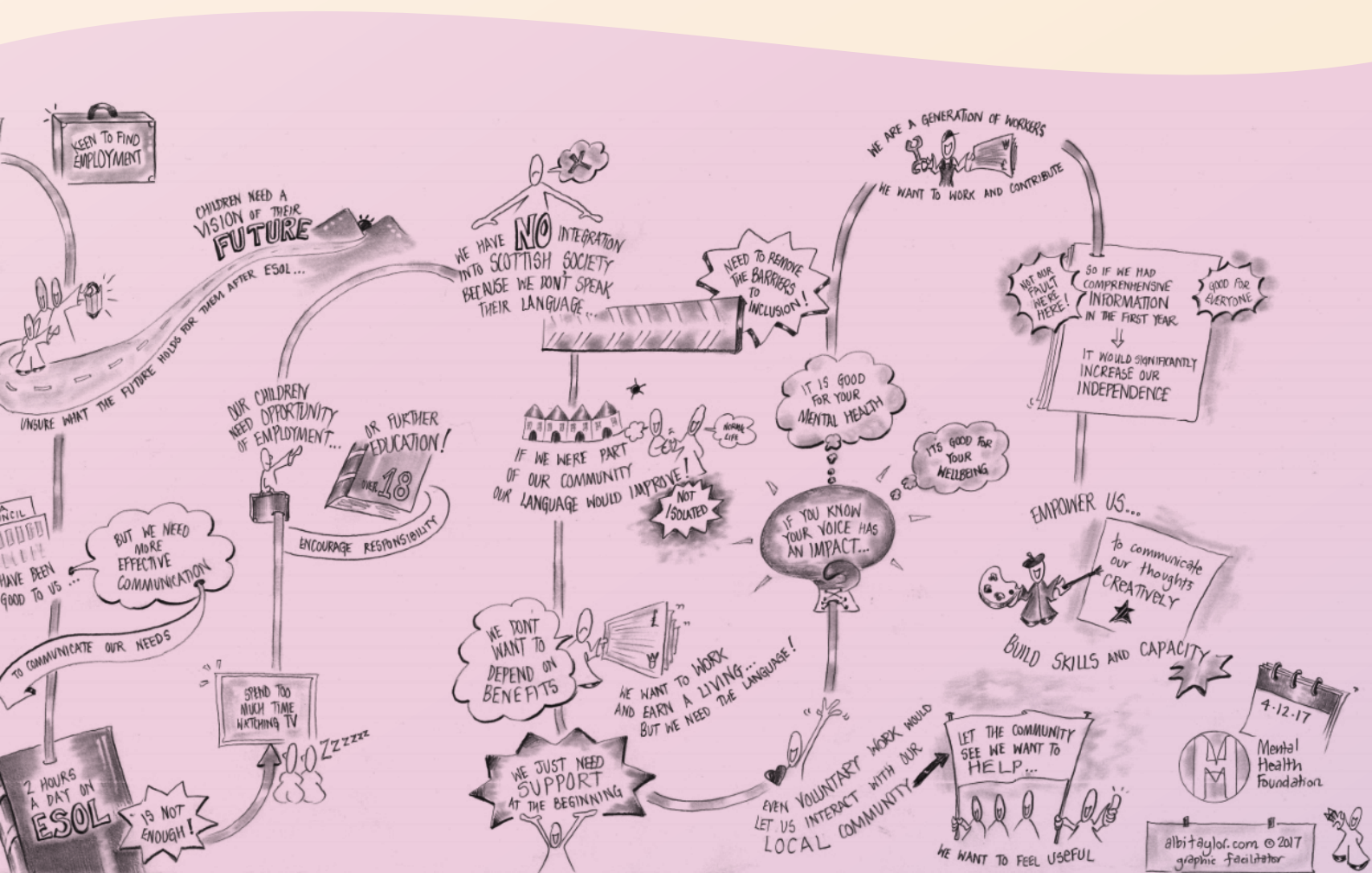


Figure 1: Struggles and challenges experienced by Syrian refugees arriving into Scotland, (MHF, 2017)

The Voice and Visibility project is built on the core principles of the New Scots Strategy which are (MHF, 2019)<sup>3</sup>:

- Integration from day one
- A rights-based approach
- Strong refugee involvement
- Inclusive societies where everyone is enabled to be active citizens
- Working together in strong partnerships

In order to deliver these, MHF established the Refugee Health Policy and Strategy Action Group in July 2017. The origins of the Refugee Health Policy and Strategy Action Group began with MHF receiving one-year funding from the Scottish Government to work with Syrian refugees resettled in Scotland through the Vulnerable Person Scheme. This project was called Musawa (which means Equality in Arabic) and was delivered in partnership with Freedom from Torture. It aimed to

increase the visibility and voice of refugees in health forums at a policy and strategic level across Scotland<sup>4</sup>. The project also supported the development of relationships with a number of local authorities and voluntary organisations (MHF, 2019).

**The Refugee Health Policy and Strategy Action Group is exploring ways asylum seekers and refugees can become more active participants in New Scots structures to ensure they continue to inform policy at a strategic level (MHF, 2019).**

MHF is now looking to build on its work on civic forums developed by Glasgow based volunteers<sup>5</sup> and take an evidence-informed approach focusing on the engagement of refugees with parent councils, and with HSCPs.



## 1.3 Voice and Visibility research objectives

1. What connection (if any) is there between mental health and participating in decision-making structures and forums (including for the refugee communities)?

2. What are the barriers for refugee communities participating on civic forums (or other decision-making processes)?

- From the point of view of refugee communities (taking a gendered approach).
- From the point of view of institutions/ decision-making structures (including PCs and HSCPs).

## 1.4 Method of research

**This research study took a participatory and action-based peer-research approach.**

This incorporated a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods with 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' data collection taking place. This was to:

- allow real insight into refugees' experiences in engaging with civic forums
- help to arrive at more reflective participant-led research findings and recommendations
- provide a mechanism for proactively promoting awareness of opportunities for public participation as part of action research.

The findings within this report are based on:

- **10 semi-structured Interviews** with professionals/representatives from Parent and Teacher Councils (PCs) (n=7) and Health and Social Care Partners (HSCPs) forums (n=3)
- **Two focus group interviews** with refugees and asylum seeker communities - one with 11 women refugee participants and another with 7 men refugee participants. This was supported by follow up online workshops with participants to support **analysis and result verification and recommendation co-design workshops.** The latter enabled refugee participants the opportunity to discuss and co-design possible actions and solutions to make their engagement in PCs and HSCPs more efficient and meaningful.
- **Two online surveys.** The parent council survey had 30 responses and was supported and distributed by the Glasgow City Parents Group (GCPG). The refugees online dual language survey (English and Arabic) had 21 responses and was supported and distributed by the Scottish Refugee Council.

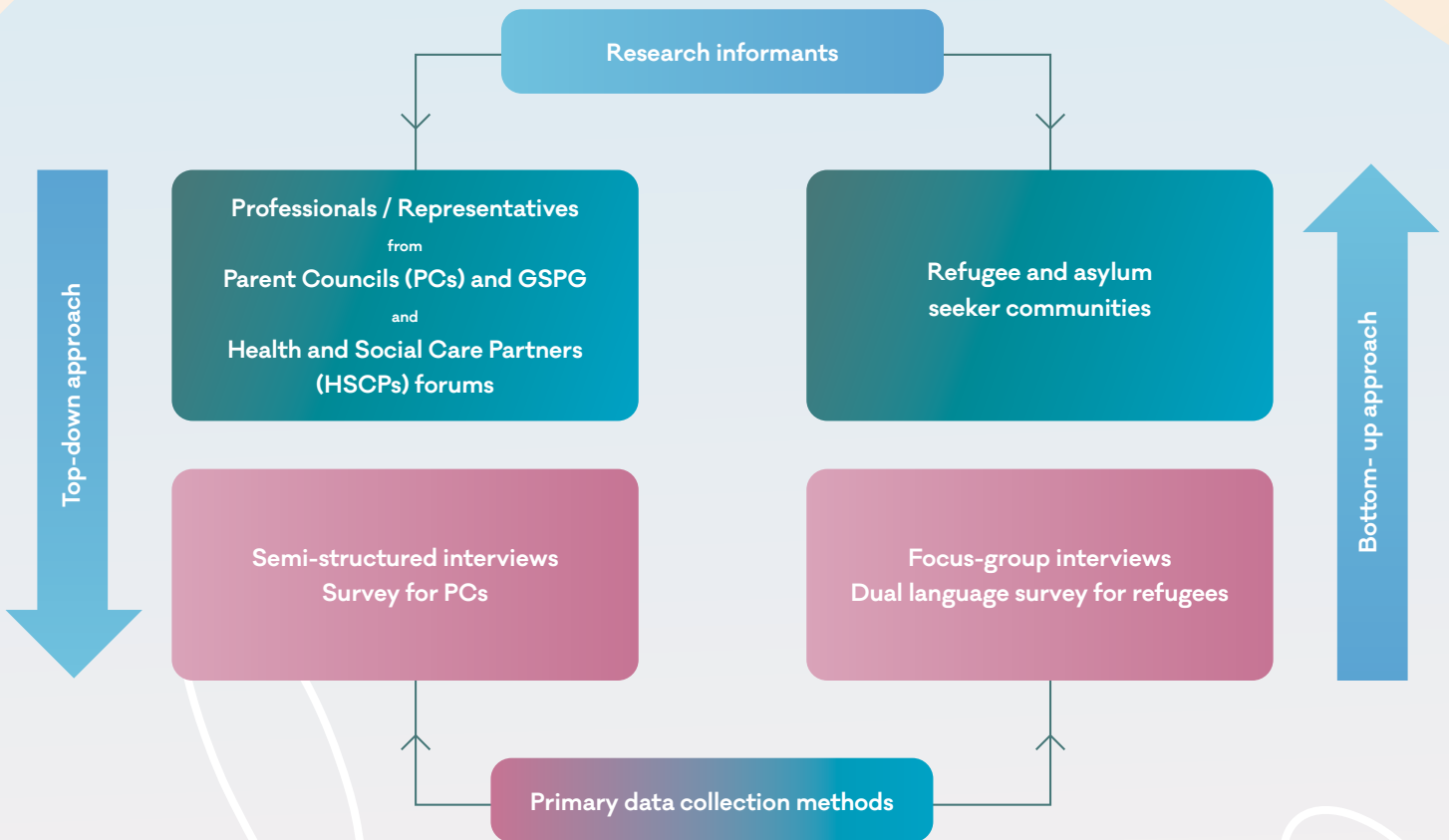
The above primary research was supported by a literature review that aimed to identify what connection (if any) there is between mental health and participating in decision-making structures and forums (including for the refugee communities). Also, what good practice models exist on the participation of refugee communities on civic forums. What

can we learn from these and the potential application of these models in a Scottish/ Glasgow context?

An approval to carry out this research was sought from Heriot Watt University on 11 May 2021 after providing details on how

social research ethical considerations will be carefully observed to maintain anonymity and confidentiality for the participants. This was shared with MHF, as commissioner of this research.

Figure 2: Research informants and data collection methods



## 1.5 Limitations

Despite the variety and value of perspectives gained using questionnaires and interviews, the partiality of this research data and its findings must be acknowledged. This includes:

- Limited response to online survey.
- Limited time available for this research project which makes its findings and recommendations, although highly effective and valuable, to be considered as insights that could benefit from recruiting a wider sample of participants to arrive at more concrete findings and, thus, recommendations.
- Delayed participation from the health sector causing the number of participants to be smaller compared to those from the education sector. However, this input has been of great value and of a high level of professionalism to inform the research.
- Lack of awareness of the nature and merits of the forums among refugee and asylum seeker participants: One of the strengths of this research was that it was action research, thus the participants learnt about the PCs and HSCPs during this research process. Consequently, this caused data collection time to be prolonged to allow explanation of terms and concepts used in the interview questions. This lack of awareness has further caused data coding and analysis to be challenging due to participants' answers often missed or diverted from the purpose of the questions or discussions raised during the focus group meetings.

**2.0**

**Participant-  
based findings**



## 2.0 Participant-based findings

This research emphasises the proactive, participant-led approach in its data collection, analysis and design of recommendations. The analysis of the data identifies five key themes which are derived from the objectives of this research. These were the areas of discussion of the semi-structured interviews and the focus groups held with the research participants. The themes are:

- The main barriers to refugees' engagement in PC and HSCP forums
- The effect of refugees' experiences on their mental health
- The key benefits refugees can have by engaging with PCs and HSCPs.
- The current experience of refugee engagement in their local areas and their representation in PC and HSCP decision-making forums.
- Approaches to promote a more efficient engagement experience for refugee communities with PCs and HSCPs.

### 2.1 Key benefits of refugees' engagement

#### *Improved knowledge, understanding and ability to influence education/ service design*

The key area of benefit refugee participants felt engagement with PCs would bring was gaining better knowledge and awareness of the education system in Scotland. In addition, helping to inform schools about different cultures and needs of pupils from diverse backgrounds. Parents also spoke about the racism their children experienced. For HSCPs, the discussion focused on the importance of shaping the design of services and tackling structural racism.

*"I don't know anything about the curriculum... My major concern is I don't know about their curriculum and the subjects and topics my daughter is learning"*

Refugee Participant 1

*"...I must say that what I experienced mostly in the schools is the racial treatment on the children. There is a lot of racial inequality... I discovered that a lot of people with my colour have also encountered similar issues. We have young children. Children would not know anything. Children are just growing up, developing a sense of identity... discrimination is really present in the schools, and it's something that really has to be looked into because they are damaging the lives of a lot of children who are not white."*

Refugee Participant 2



### ***Emotional and mental wellbeing***

Engagement could potentially enhance feelings of self-worth and mental wellbeing within refugee communities due to having the opportunities to be heard, their needs considered in service provision, and increased feelings of belongingness. This will further reduce feelings of uncertainty and will support both their confidence and awareness of their local societal practices.

*"...their [refugees] involvement brings a different perspective, so I think that is kind of important too, and making sure that their children feel comfortable and welcome in the school... having a voice is incredibly important as well... having a voice is good for mental health as having your voice heard allows your perspective to be heard and acknowledged, so to be heard is incredibly important. People need to have their voice heard and I think if that's not been experienced before, people need to know that what they've got to say is valuable... Asylum seekers, refugees and people from marginalised groups are hugely important, just as much if not even more than it is for any Scottish person in poverty and stuff like that..."*

Parent Council Participant

## Social circles

Engagement will reduce feelings of alienation and isolation and will help refugees build relationships with other individuals and groups from their community or with other communities who share their interests and concerns. This will allow refugees better access to other societal practices and opportunities.

*"It's almost like an easy way to try and make some social circles and try to make some connections in your community because straight away you have a topic to discuss... you will get to know the teachers a lot more too which is another kind of connection for you. If you have got concerns about your child and their education, once you start making that connection, you may be more inclined to call them up and speak to them about it."*

Parent Council Participant

## Active citizenship

Participation would create a sense of citizenship within refugee communities by building their confidence, increasing their independence, and empowering ownership over local services, turning them from service receivers to contributors towards local hosting communities and local services..

*"I think first of all, it gives [refugees and asylum seekers] an opportunity to let policy makers, and service designers, or people who design services know what their needs are, experiences are, and let them know what's important to them... It allows us to inform how we design and deliver services, and it's also it, you know, widens the pool of people that you engage with... I think it means that services are able to better meet the needs of everybody."*

Public Health Specialist Participant

## Reduce inequalities

Active and meaningful engagement will create opportunities for open dialogue between diverse communities as well as with decision makers. Understanding the needs of diverse communities, together with co-produced strategies to tackle inequalities would help create and promote a more equitable and sustainable service provision in the city.

*"...there's a rounded positive affect to being involved in your Parent Council - you get a lot out of it; your child gets a lot out of it; your school benefits from it as well; and then your wider community... [Otherwise] who's speaking up for your community on the Parent Council? At least if we could get one or two members that maybe feel a bit more confident and are happy to be involved, then they can be the spokesperson for that community. We might not take into account certain aspects of their viewpoint because we're not thinking from a refugee and asylum-seeking family point of view but if we had at least one or two parents with that experience, then you'll be able to hear their views."*

Parent Council Member

## Tackle discrimination

Refugees' engagement supports the opportunity to create communication platforms at different levels which are free from discrimination, for example starting at the early stages of service design, then delivery and finally access. This would support social cohesion and acceptance and, thus nurture diversity and alleviate stereotypes and myths about the refugee communities.

*"Maybe there is racism in the background [at] the school level, [at] the education level, because they know we are asylum seekers... I feel there is a... lack of, you know, acceptance!"*

Refugee Participant

*"...stigma mostly, refugees and asylum seekers communities becoming more stigmatised because of... stereotyping prejudices and discrimination. Those challenges would impact on their own, our, day-to-day... mental condition."*

Refugee Participant

*"...we have the same problem. We are strong if we go to any site to speak about this problem. We are strong if we are like 10 parents or twelve. We speak about the same problem."*

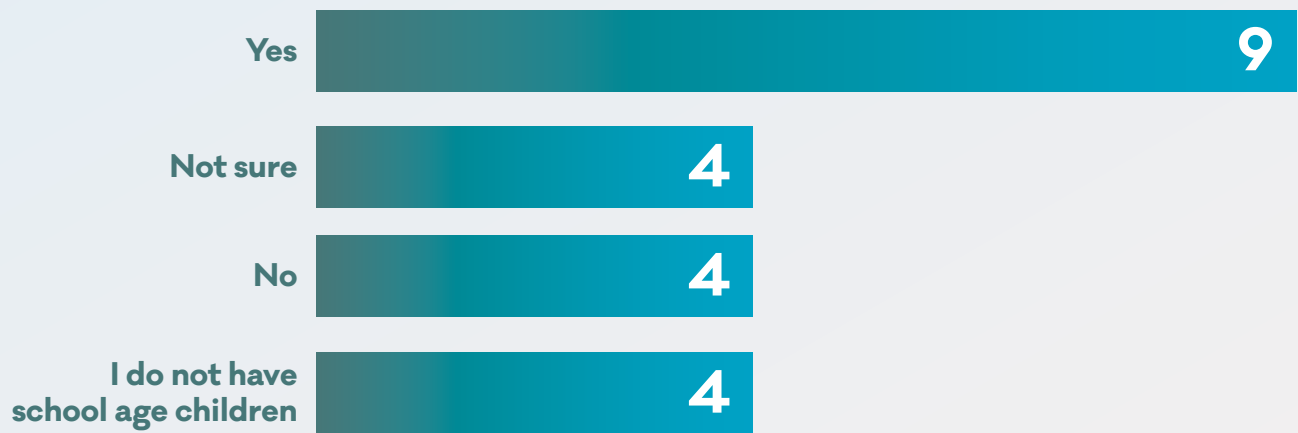
Refugee Participant



## 2.2 Current experience of refugees' engagement in PCs and HSCP forums



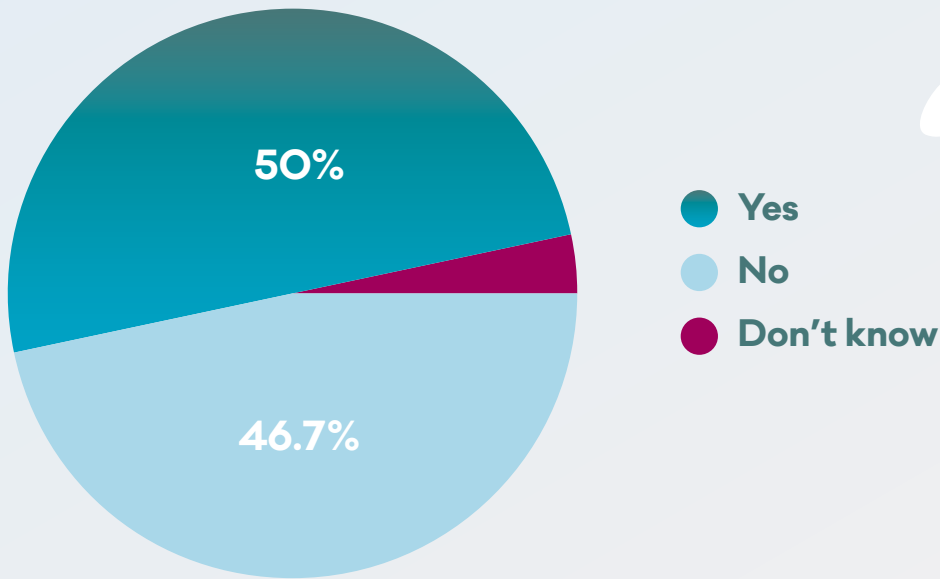
Do you know about the parent council in your child's school?



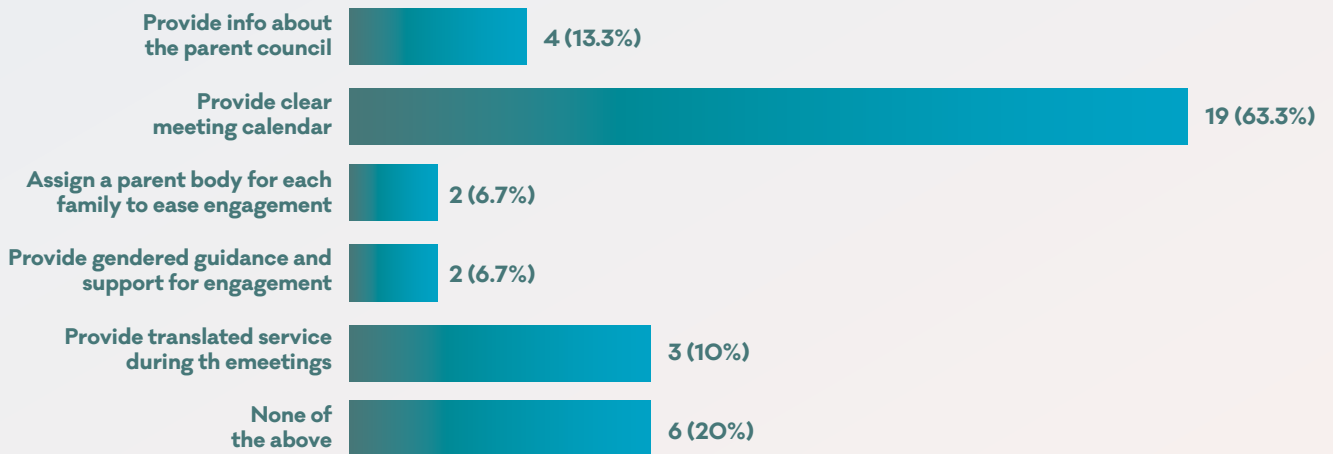
Do you know what the Health and Social Care Partner is?



**Are refugees and asylum seeker parents represented in the council?** (30 responses)



**What does the parent council currently do to encourage refugee and asylum seeker families' engagement?** (30 responses)



## Representation

Refugees' presence on decision-making boards is low despite an overwhelming openness among refugee participants to engage in these structures. This is mainly due to lack/absence of appropriate communication methods to reach these groups, and thus their lack of awareness of the forums and their activities. The lack of refugee role models on these structures could make those who wish to attend feel overwhelmed, anxious, and alienated..

*"...a lot of parents don't know that there's a Parents Council. They're supposed to create an awareness for the parents like myself. I didn't know."*

Refugee Participant

*"I would say the first two months of me being in the Parents Council... I did not understand anything at all. I didn't understand the language and the terminology... when they started talking about the curriculum, the policies, and all that all that was new to me. I didn't understand it, so intense!"*

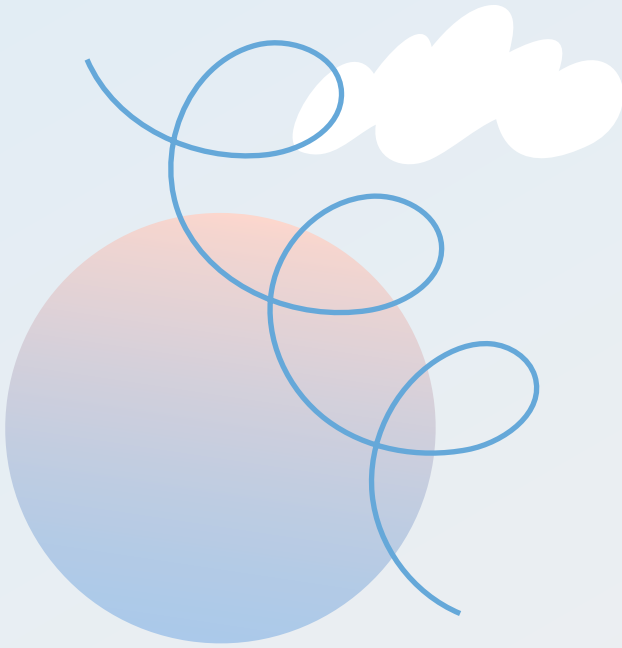
Refugee Participant

*"...we did have an opportunity with the HSCP; we were once given a chance to say our worth and what we want... What is it that we can change? And we did voice a lot of things which, in my own case I was helped, and I didn't know that. OK, that was the first time and because I was voicing out so much, the ladies that came, they were like [quoting the engagement team] 'OK [name of participant.], can we get your name? We need to fix this'... in less than 48 hours the matter was resolved. Things will change... It was changed immediately just like that, and I was like. We need to break the silence."*

Refugee Participant

*"We do have refugee families in school and none of them are on the Parent Council but all of them have the opportunity to be part of the school and we ask them all the time, and you're absolutely right, the school belongs to them."*

Education Sector Participant



### **Cultural practices to encourage engagement**

Although not common place some good practice examples emerged around the use of interpretation, single gendered opportunities, and family friendly approaches to facilitate engagement.

*"I work in public schools; 95% percent of their families have their heritage elsewhere.... we're a Catholic school, but most of our parents are Muslims, so we've had to live with different culture and language and all what comes with that. So, for example, our Parent Council are women, we don't say it has to be women, but it kind of does have to be for some of the women to feel comfortable enough to get their voice heard, yeah?"*

Education Sector Participant

### **Informal relationships**

A successful approach followed by some PCs was investing in relaxed, in and out of school hours activities to build informal relationships with parents, especially from marginalised and underrepresented groups, including refugees, in order to enhance feelings of assurance and trust.

*"...I'm thinking about one primary in the south of the city when they were able to meet, had a lot of involvement by a very diverse community. COVID stopped it all but a lot of that was that parents did a lot around food and I think food is a great leveller... the parents could see that they had something that they could contribute when they were having a summer fair and everybody was contributing the dish that they had, you know, from their own cultural backgrounds so they could see that they could raise money for the school so they felt valued - what their culture could offer was being valued."*

Education Sector Participant

*"...one of our programmes was a family café; there were things like play along maths. Some of the head teachers came together with the community at the weekend. For example, the family activity that runs on a Saturday*

*was outwith school times, but some of the head teachers came along to meet the families at the weekend. It was informal but that made a key difference to the relationship building."*

Education Sector Participant

### *Third sector partnerships*

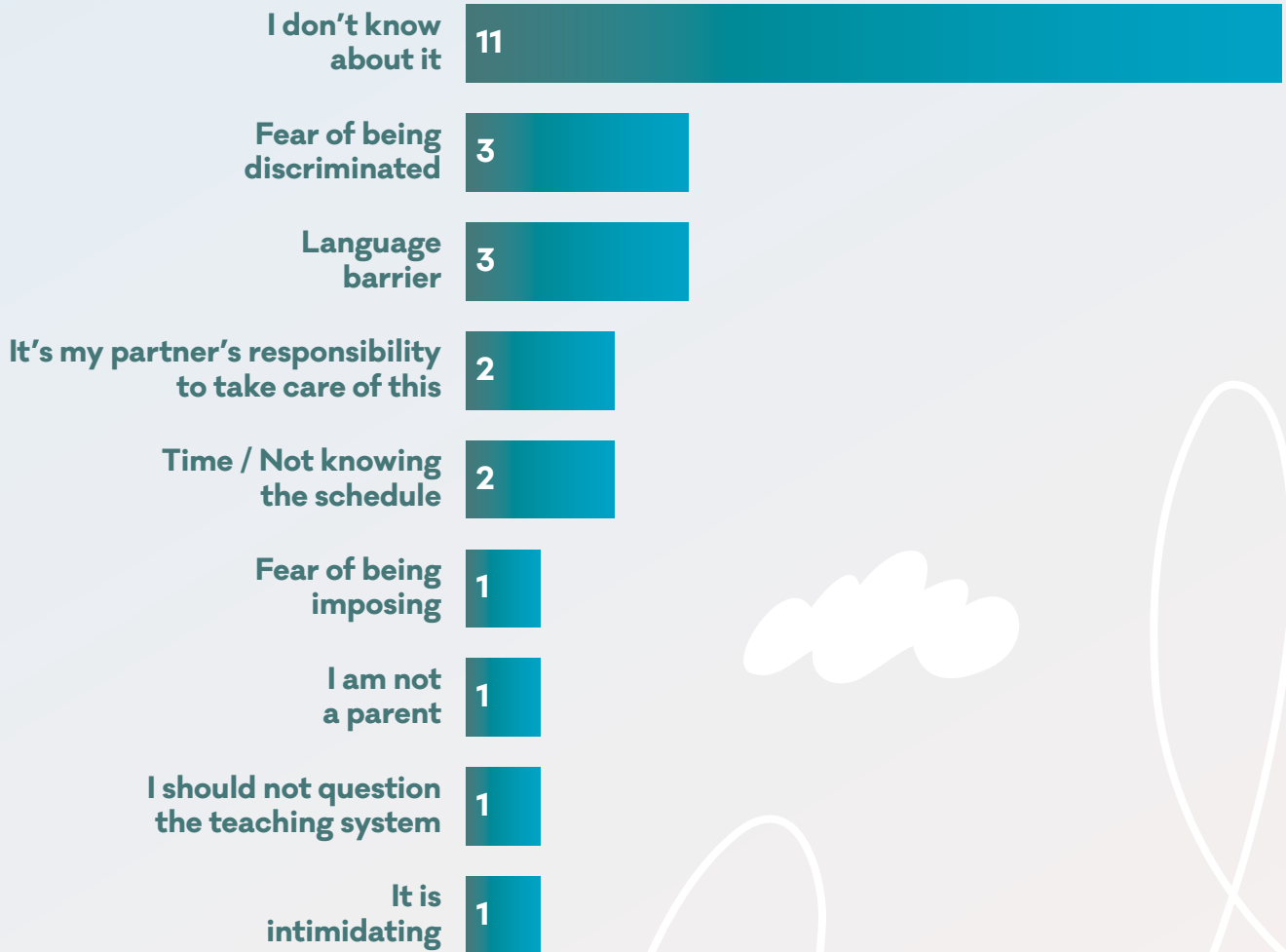
Most engagement with refugee communities happens via third sector organisations who work with/for these groups. This however is on an ad hoc basis rather than an embedded process. In addition, overlapping/repetition of effort and information often takes place due to lack of consistency, coordination and transparent communication between different organisations involved in the decision-making process, and within the different departments in the same organisation.

*"[before seeking to engage directly with communities, or when trying to determine what information to seek] I would reach out to voluntary and third sector organisations that already have existing relationship with those communities... because ... those third sector organisations already have that information... [This is to avoid doing] the same things over and over again, and nothing changes... We don't want to [overstep others] ground, so, we would definitely go to the organisations that work with communities, that have a good relationship with them, and that you know there's trust between both parties. They could then deliver the work on our behalf."*

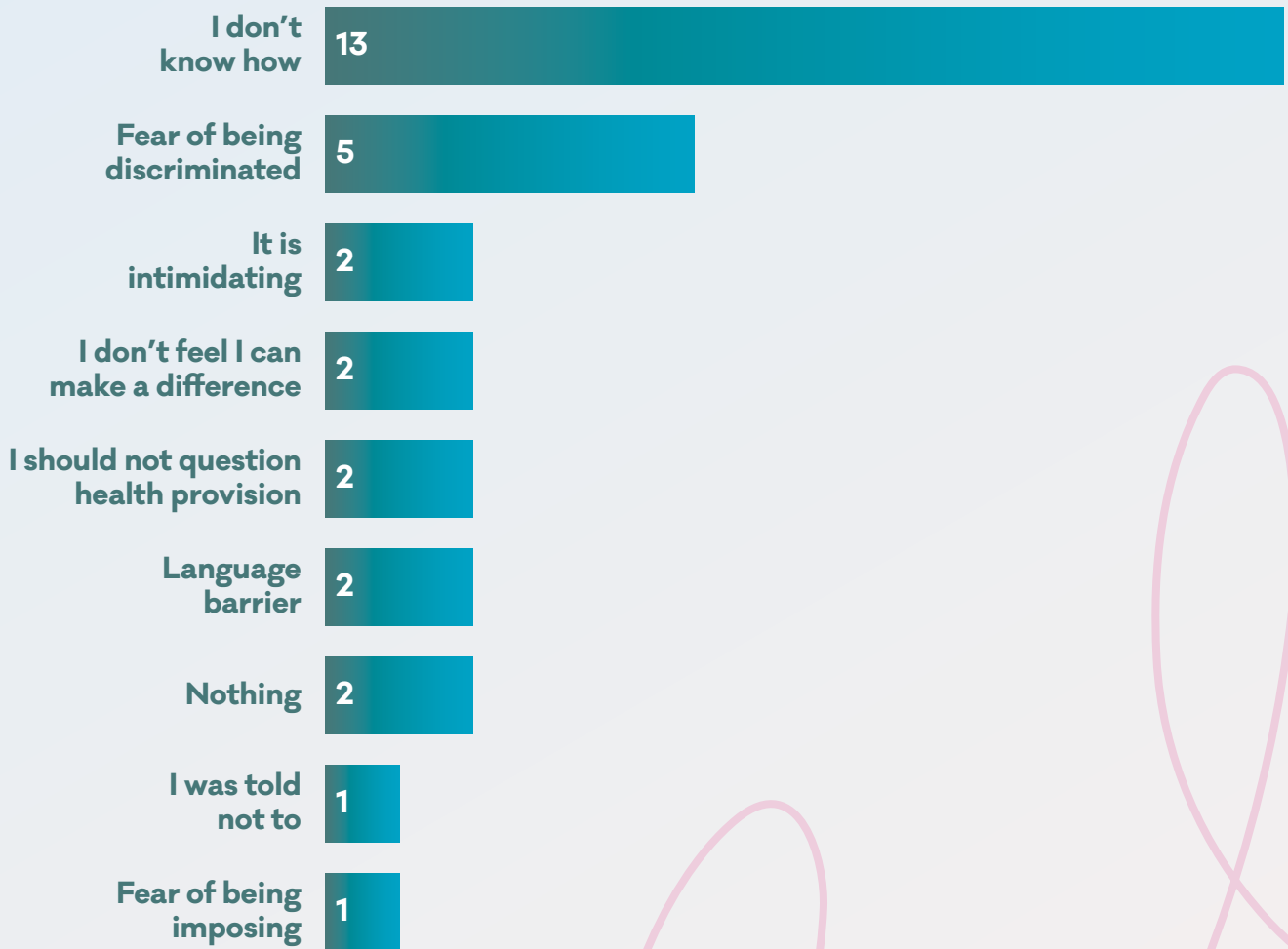
Public Sector Participant

## 2.3 Key barriers to refugees' engagement with PCs and HSCPs

### What prevents you from engagement in the parent council?



### What is the barrier to you contributing your views to health services provision?



## Barriers

The biggest barrier was not knowing about the decision-making structures and how to participate on these structures. A lack of understanding and knowledge about Scottish systems can mean refugees (alongside the wider communities), feel excluded due to the terminology and specialised language that is used.

The gatekeeping culture and fear of power delegation by decision makers was also raised. With the importance of moving power from central to local and from 'expert' to 'community-based' decision making. The feeling that mainstream services often aren't culturally sensitive in terms of their decision making systems.

*"There's not a lot of [refugee parents] so they don't have an interpreter to help with other parents who don't understand... They showed me that it's not really easy for them to have an interpreter for just one parent when you have 200 students in the school because there's not many of us."*

Refugee Participant

The lack of funding and time available to those organising forums and councils can make it difficult for them to be as inclusive as they would like. This includes time for appropriate equality and diversity training among staff.

*"...the Parents Councils and the Health and Social Care Partnership, especially in this difficult time, are unable to reach out to everyone in their area because of the [pandemic]. Yeah, but still the information needs to be available online or like posts, especially [for] asylum seekers - their family is struggling to get information and contact with people. They [PCs and HSCPs] have no/any specific places or time they are available."*

Refugee Participant

*"The bigotry of race is paramount and, uh, it affects all of us... so perhaps if that will be at the top of, you know, [the list of barriers]... I need to go to a school, and I go into office, and I find [name of a participant] standing there with her hijab, proudly, and I'll be like 'Oh my God, I'm at home! Hello!' and I can have a smile. You know what I mean? We need to attack the bigotry on race... All sectors, we need diversity."*

Refugee Participant



## ***Societal barriers***

Barriers that exist within society as a whole, and are much wider than representation on forums, were raised. This includes experienced racism or fear of racism, and the existence of structural racism. Also, stigma and preconceived perceptions about asylum seekers and refugees. Much of which is reinforced by media.

*"Maybe there is racism in the background [at] the school level, [at] the education level, because they know we are asylum seekers so they cannot promote us in the high level. They [could] just accept our family and our kids to involve in different ways, but they [do] not promote us in higher levels because we [should not] get the position... I feel there is a... lack of, you know, acceptance!"*

Refugee Participant

## 2.4 Effects on mental health

The wider context of lives for refugees was raised as a barrier to participation, particularly the mental health challenges that this brings. It was raised particularly if they are within the asylum system where there is significant mental stress and worry about being vocal within a decision-making forum. Many people who are asylum seekers or refugees experience low self-esteem and feel isolated. This can make it difficult to engage in decision making structures. The lack of power and control is felt by many when compared to non-

asylum seeking communities. This can result in feeling scared of engagement, as a result of concern about potential and perceived repercussions.

The participants from all three sectors (refugees, education, health) identified a range of elements that could affect the mental health and wellbeing of refugee individuals and groups according to the status of their engagement in civic forums. These are summarised in the figure below in a form of comparison between the cases of engagement and non-engagement.

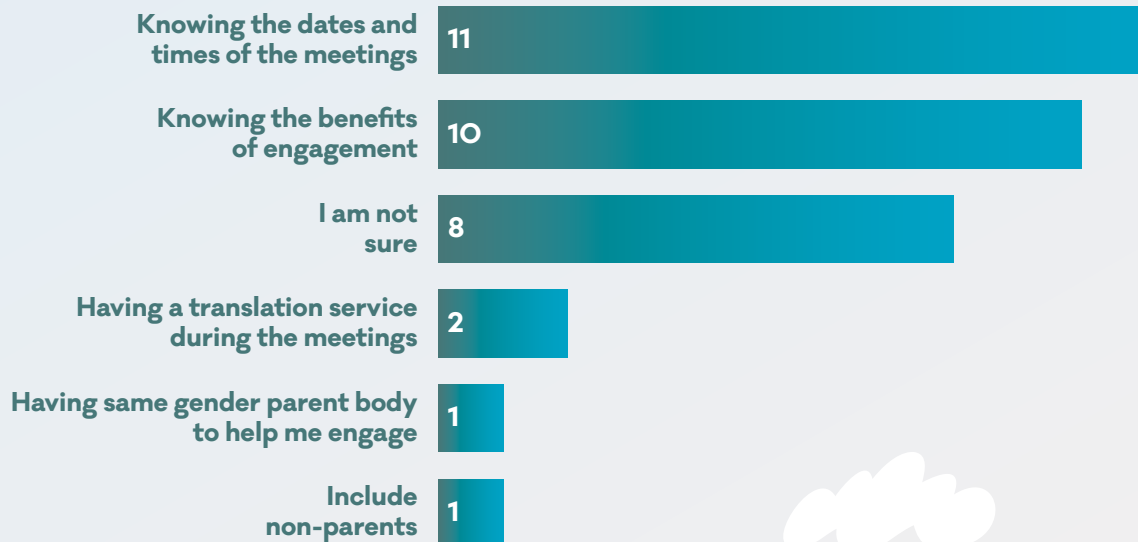
### Without engagement



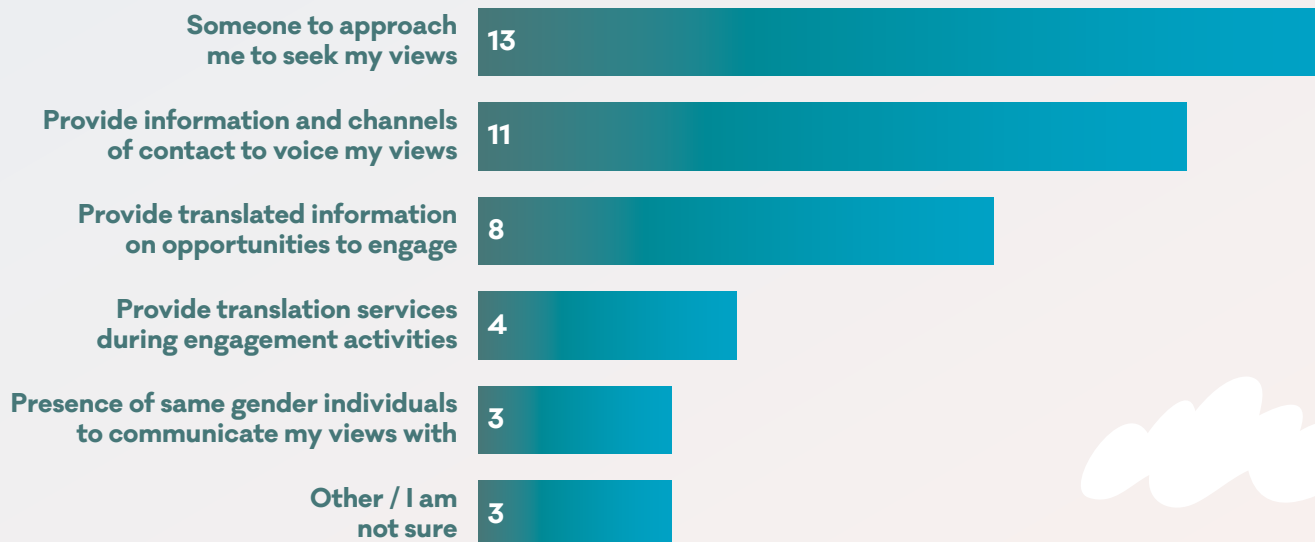
Figure 5: The impact of refugees’ engagement on their mental health as addressed by the research participants from the three sectors; refugee groups, the education sector, and the health sector

## 2.5 Key initiatives towards more efficient and meaningful refugee engagement

### What do you think can help you engage in the parent council?



### What can be improved to support you contributing your views to health services provision?



Across the interviews and focus groups a number of suggestions were given on ways to improve engagement and overall representation of refugees and asylum

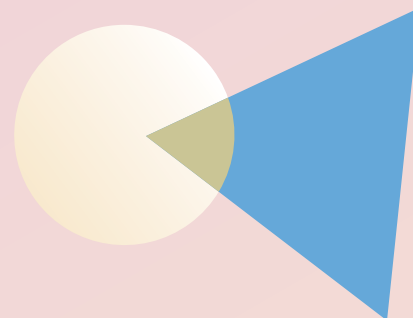
seekers within decision making groups. These suggestions have been incorporated within the recommendations and actions in the next section.



**3.0**

**Recommendations  
and action points**

## 3.0 Recommendations and action points



The asylum process adds to the many challenges experienced by the refugee and asylum seeker communities. Additional issues such as adapting to a new environment, climate, housing and being away from family and friends no doubt exacerbate their circumstances. The participants talked about issues such as reforming the asylum process to make it easier to manage, and MHF recognises how important this is to the lives of asylum seekers and refugees as well as the fact that the asylum process itself can be a barrier to participation. For the purposes of this report, the focus of the recommendations outlined below extend to the civic forums only.

This section includes recommendations and action points which emerged from the initial focus groups and interviews with the research participants and also from the consultant's follow-up meetings with the refugee communities. The purpose of the follow-up meetings was specifically to explore recommendations from the issues emerging from the findings.

### 3.1 Improve communication (PCs and HSCPs)

- Employ the benefits of 'chain communication' and 'branched network of communication' where members of PCs and forums can be proactive and inform wider circles of parents and community members of forthcoming activities and meetings, and be points of support for potential new members.
- Invest in the provision of clear and visually friendly guidance on civic forums and mechanisms and methods of engagement, including the benefits of doing so.
- Use imagery which is inclusive, avoiding language and images which are 'triggering' for refugees
- Provide opportunities for training and context-based language education to create accessible and confidence enhancing environments and communications.
- Where relevant, provide interpretation during engagement activities and translation of digital or printed information.
- Create informal opportunities to meet with refugee communities in familiar settings, to communicate information about civic forums and the benefits.

- Feedback to the refugee communities about any outcomes from consultations and research they are involved in
- Invest in the skilling up of refugees and asylum seekers as 'community connectors' who would act as communication 'bridges' between civic forums and the refugee communities

### Action Point

Invest in a befriending/mentoring programme within civic forums between refugees and existing members of the forums to allow the following;

- Facilitate communication and good relations between the host communities and refugees
- Support access to public engagement forums and demystify these forums for refugee communities to increase participation

## 3.2 Capacity building initiatives

### 3.2.1 For public participation forums

- Education/training for forums to reduce prototyping/stereotyping and discrimination against refugee communities
- Consider the added special characteristics refugees might have; unaccompanied children, children in families, asylum seekers and refugees who are disabled, older refugees, refugee women, refugee LGBTQ, and other groups that have been identified as vulnerable.
- Target schools, social work and health services with awareness programmes on refugees and their challenges and needs, to reduce negative experiences and discrimination, including racism against the refugee communities.
- Share good practices in relation to working with refugees, across different localities and organisations.
- Set up, implement and promote robust inclusion, equality and anti-discriminatory policies for civic forums and ensure all forum members are aware and commit to these.
- Gather and collate demographic information about the civic forum members and disaggregate data to gain insight into the diversity of public forums and take appropriate action to tackle under-representation
- Maintain, build links and partner with third sector organisations as a gateway to connecting with the refugee and asylum seeker communities

### Action Point

**Map and deliver training to PCs and HSCPs with the support of third sector organisations and people with lived refugee experience. This training should support the reduction of stigma and arrive at a better informed and a more inclusive and targeted outreach process of public engagement.**

### 3.2.2 For refugees

- Reduce digital inequalities to promote participation
- Build on the skills and assets of the refugee communities, recognising and acknowledging their life experiences albeit in a different country
- Raise awareness among refugee groups of forums using a range of creative and engaging methods e.g. theatre forum, 'taster' sessions on forums without committing.
- Capacity building training including confidence building, an understanding of power and how it operates in society and how decision-making structures operate and can be influenced. Human rights and equalities training should also be covered.
- Identify entry points at a national level for strategic and operational discussions and participation of refugee communities
- Refugees who are participating on decision-making forums/structures should be promoted as role models in their communities and also supported to be a point of contact for people from refugee backgrounds so that another communication avenue is set up for refugee voices to be heard
- Make refugee groups aware of the advantages of becoming formally constituted as a group, allowing opportunities to apply for funding, self govern and connect with civic forums on a more equal level.

#### Action Point

Recognise and understand that the complexity of cultural, political and social backgrounds of people can shape people's participation in decision-making and civic forums; A 'one size fits all' approach must be avoided.



### 3.4 Institutional and cultural changes

- Change the culture of engagement and move away from the expert-led and gatekeeping practices of power over decision-making and support the delegation of authority and power to communities for a more balanced power division and a fairer recognition of their input.
- Recognise that the presence of refugees on civic forums is a starting point and the importance of monitoring levels of participation, group dynamics and how power operates within the groups, help to assess genuine inclusion
- Recognise and act upon differentials of power within civic forums and decision-making structures e.g. by elevating the voices of communities who tend to remain silent
- Actively shift perceptions of refugee communities as 'needy' to positive contributors to society with diverse skills, experience and knowledge

#### Action Point

**Breakdown stereotypes and preconceptions about asylum seekers and refugees by utilizing opportunities to highlight their strengths, skills, aspirations, contributions and the commonalities with the host communities.**

## References

1. World Health Organisation WHO. (2009b). 7th Global Conference on Health Promotion: Track themes - Track 1: Community empowerment. Retrieved from Health Promotion: <https://www.who.int/teams/health-promotion/enhanced-wellbeing/seventh-global-conference/community-empowerment>
2. A refugee is a person who 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country'. (1951, United Nations Refugee Convention). This report will use the term 'refugee' to include both refugees and asylum seekers, unless a distinction is required to be made between refugees and asylum seekers.
3. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-scots-refugee-integration-strategy-2018-2022/>
4. The Musawa project (equality in Arabic) and Refugee Health Policy and Strategy Action Group are two separate but related projects. Musawa was a 1-year funded project working with and exclusively with newly resettled Syrians. This was in partnership with Freedom from Torture. Refugee Health Policy and Strategy Action Group, was initially a 3-year funded project based on volunteers from refugee background developing local initiatives. This project was open to both asylum seekers and refugees.
5. Voice and Visibility – The New Scots Awareness Video link is [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWwNleh7\\_8O&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWwNleh7_8O&t=1s). The video sheds light on the mental health problems that refugees and asylum seekers may experience and explains why it is vital that they are given a voice and how The New Scots aims to do this.



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