



RIGHTS OF WOMEN

imkaan

Joint event: Imkaan & Rights of Women

Rights for all?

Strategies to protect all women with 'no recourse to public funds' from violence

Thursday 8 July 2010

3.00pm – 4.30pm

BSG House, 226-236 City Road, London EC1V 2TT

About the event

A free seminar and debate on the rights of women subject to the 'no recourse to public funds rule' and the impact of the Sojourner Project pilot.

Under current law and policy, women with an insecure immigration status are restricted from accessing welfare benefits or certain community care services under the 'no recourse to public funds' rule. This rule fails to protect many women with 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) from violence.

This unacceptable situation exposes women to a greater risk of violence, compounds their experience of inequality and must be changed urgently.

The Sojourner Project, a Home Office funded pilot run by Eaves, provides limited but essential support to women with NRPF who entered the UK on a spousal or partner visa, and are eligible to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) under the Domestic Violence Rule. The pilot, scheduled to finish at the end of July 2010, provides or funds accommodation and support to women while their ILR applications are submitted and processed, for a maximum of 8 weeks. Despite its strict eligibility criteria, the pilot represents a welcome shift in policy towards protecting women with an insecure immigration status from violence.

We invite you to engage with a panel of leading practitioners and campaigners working on this issue to analyse the successes and challenges of the Sojourner project, and strategies to extend protection to all women experiencing violence, regardless of immigration status.

This seminar and debate will:

- Provide an overview of the current legal framework related to access to financial and other support for women with 'no recourse to public funds' who are experiencing violence.
- Examine the experiences and barriers for women with no recourse to public funds, facing violence and abuse.
- Explore the successes and challenges of running the Sojourner Project.
- Highlight the impact of the Sojourner project on women and organisations supporting them.
- Consider the strategic importance of the Sojourner Project and how to take this project forward to ensure that protection is extended to all women experiencing violence, regardless of immigration status.

Panellists include:

Catherine Briddick, Senior Legal Officer, Rights of Women • Marai Larasi, Director, Imkaan • Rahni K. Binjie, Project Manager, Roshni Nottingham Asian Women's Aid • Frances Brodrick, Director of Services, Eaves Housing • Davina James-Hanman, Director, Against Violence and Abuse •

Who should attend?

Representatives of voluntary or statutory sector organisations, with an interest in initiatives to support women with 'no recourse to public funds' facing violence or abuse.

Booking information

The seminar is **free of charge** and places are available on a first come, first serve basis. To book a place, please contact Lia Latchford at admin@imkaan.org.uk or call Imkaan on 02072503933. Please let us know if you have any special requirements.