

"WHERE ARE THEY NOW?"



# STORY OF THE PROJECT

SWANSEA CITY OF SANCTUARY SECURED FUNDING IN 2021 TO CONDUCT A SHORT-TERM RESEARCH PROJECT ENTITLED 'WHERE ARE THEY NOW?'

THE PROJECT WAS A PART OF SWANSEA CITY OF SANCTUARY'S TEN-YEAR CELEBRATIONS WHICH INCLUDED CONFERENCES, AN ONLINE CELEBRATION AND THE TRAVELLING EXHIBITION.

"WHERE ARE THEY NOW?" AIMED TO OBTAIN AND RECORD A SMALL NUMBER OF STORIES BASED ON INTERVIEWS WITH REFUGEES, AND HOPED THAT PEOPLE WOULD BE PREPARED TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES OF EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING. THE PROJECT WAS SPECIFICALLY AIMED AT HIGHLIGHTING ANY DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED OR OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPORT IN RELATION TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESSION IN EMPLOYMENT. PEOPLE WERE ASKED WHAT THEY HAD EXPERIENCED SINCE RECEIVING LEAVE TO REMAIN. THE PROJECT INCLUDED INTERVIEWING PEOPLE WHO HAD RECEIVED LEAVE TO REMAIN FOR LONGER AND SHORTER PERIODS.

THOSE SEEKING SANCTUARY IN THE UK  
BRING A HUGE VARIETY OF SKILLS,  
EXPERIENCES AND ABILITIES AND HAVE  
GREAT POTENTIAL BOTH FOR PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND FOR CONTRIBUTING  
TO THEIR NEW HOST SOCIETY AND  
ECONOMY. HOWEVER, THERE ARE A GREAT  
MANY BARRIERS TO BE OVERCOME FOR  
THEM TO REALISE THIS POTENTIAL

THE PROJECT WAS SUCCESSFUL IN  
IDENTIFYING PEOPLE WHO WERE  
WILLING TO SHARE THEIR STORIES  
ABOUT THEIR EDUCATIONAL AND  
EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES IN ORDER TO  
HELP NEW ARRIVALS AND INSPIRE  
OTHER SANCTUARY SEEKERS.

THE PURPOSE OF SHARING  
THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THOSE WHO  
HAVE MET AND, IN MANY CASES,  
OVERCOME THESE BARRIERS, WAS ALSO  
TO INCREASE AWARENESS AMONG THE  
PUBLIC, TO GENERATE SUPPORT FOR  
SANCTUARY, AND TO INFORM  
POLICY DEBATE.



# STORY OF THE PEOPLE

THE "WHERE ARE THEY NOW?" PROJECT INTERVIEWS RAN FROM APRIL-AUGUST 2021 AND ALSO AIMED TO IDENTIFY SANCTUARY SEEKERS WHO WERE HAPPY TO DISCUSS THEIR EXPERIENCES AT SEVERAL ORGANISED EVENTS AND WOULD BE WILLING TO HAVE THEIR STORY SHARED AS PART OF A TRAVELLING EXHIBITION. THESE EVENTS WERE FOCUSED ON EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT FROM ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES.

THE INTERVIEWS AND STORIES WERE COLLECTED FROM SIX PEOPLE RANGING FROM TWENTY-THREE TO FORTY-NINE YEARS OLD AND THESE PEOPLE HAD ARRIVED IN THE UK FROM BOSNIA, SUDAN AND ZIMBABWE. THE GROUP OF INTERVIEWEES CONSISTED OF FOUR MEN AND TWO WOMEN WHO HAD BEEN RESIDING IN THE UK FOR BETWEEN SIX AND THIRTY YEARS. EVERY STORYTELLER WAS KIND ENOUGH TO SHARE THEIR STORIES IN THE HOPE THEY CAN PROVIDE SOMEONE ELSE IN THE SAME SITUATION, WITH INSPIRATION.



# STORY OF THE PEOPLE

THE PROJECT WAS COORDINATED BY  
ZOE MURPHY WHO WAS ADVISED BY  
TRACEY MAEGUSUKU-HEWETT AND  
SUPPORTED BY A RESEARCH  
VOLUNTEER AND INTERVIEWEES WERE  
INTERVIEWED BETWEEN MAY AND  
EARLY AUGUST 2021 IN PERSON AND  
ONLINE.

WHILE THESE INTERVIEWS HAD  
STRUCTURED QUESTIONS, ALL  
CONVERSATIONS WERE VERY  
INFORMAL AND HAVE NOW BEEN  
COLLATED AND MADE INTO SHORT  
EXCERPTS.







BINA



BINA ARRIVED IN THE UK IN THE 1990'S AND HAS LIVED HERE FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS. SHE IS ORIGINALLY FROM THE BALKAN COUNTRIES- SPECIFICALLY FROM A TOWN ON THE BOSNIAN AND SERBIAN BORDER. BINA SETTLED IN SWANSEA AFTER LIVING IN LONDON AND HAS UNDERTAKEN VARIOUS ROLES AS AN EMPLOYEE AT A COFFEE SHOP, AN AU PAIR AND A ESOL TEACHER. SHE HAS ONE SON AND HAS TAUGHT ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE FOR TWELVE YEARS. BINA HAS SAID THAT SHE CONSIDERS HERSELF FORTUNATE AS SHE FEELS THE SANCTUARY SEEKER PROCESS WAS EASIER FOR HER AND SHE HAD STRONG FAMILIAL SUPPORT VIA HER UNCLE. SHE STUDIED FOR HER A-LEVELS AND ALSO BECAME A TRANSLATOR FOR AN ORGANISATION CALLED EMLAS. BINA HAS SAID THAT BECOMING A TRANSLATOR ALSO HELPED HER LEARN ENGLISH AND WAS BENEFICIAL TO HER OWN LEARNING. AFTER COMPLETING HER DEGREE, BINA BECAME AN ESOL TEACHER AND FEELS SHE HAD SUPPORTIVE TEACHERS AND THAT JOB OPPORTUNITIES WERE PLENTIFUL. HOWEVER, SHE FEELS LIKE THE PROCESS NOW IS A LOT HARDER AND SHE HAS SEEN A LOT OF HER STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH THE RESTRICTIONS.



BINA

"THE ONLY BARRIER THAT I REMEMBER HAVING IS THE MONEY, YOU KNOW SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO PAY FOR SOME COURSES LIKE PGCE. I WAS VERY LUCKY HONESTLY. I ALWAYS SEE MYSELF AS VERY BLESSED IN A WAY, BECAUSE AT THAT TIME THEY WERE LOOKING FOR TEACHERS AND, I DON'T KNOW YOU'RE PROBABLY TOO YOUNG TO REMEMBER THAT, BUT THEY WERE ON THE TV ALL THE TIME ADVERTISING TEACHING POSITIONS. LIKE LITERALLY BEGGING YOU, "PLEASE COME" AND NOBODY WANTS TO BE A TEACHER, ESPECIALLY AMONG SECONDARY AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS, THERE WAS A LACK OF TEACHERS AT THAT TIME, AND I THOUGHT "MAYBE IT'S A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.'

"NUMBER 1, HAVE PATIENCE. EDUCATE YOURSELF, IF YOU HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN ENGLISH, MAKE SURE YOU LEARN ENGLISH. AND SECOND ONE, PROBABLY GO TO COLLEGE. IF YOU HAVE A CHANCE, IF YOU CAN, EDUCATE YOURSELF, AT THE END, EVERYTHING IS ABOUT EDUCATION, EDUCATE YOURSELF. LEARN ABOUT THE CULTURE, LEARN ABOUT THE PEOPLE, DON'T BE PREJUDICED. YOU HAVE TO BE EDUCATED; SOME PEOPLE ARE I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS...I DON'T WANT TO DO THAT...BUT YOU HAVE SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES. JUST GRAB IT AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT. AND IN THIS COUNTRY IT IS NEVER TOO LATE. THAT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT THIS COUNTRY. IN MY COUNTRY, IF YOU ARE OVER TWENTY, THIRTY, YOU CANNOT GO BACK TO EDUCATION OR UNIVERSITY. IT'S A SHAME."

"I SAY PATIENT, PATIENT, CALM DOWN. DON'T RUSH, DON'T RUN. YOU HAVE TO WALK FIRST AND THEN RUN.'





ABDU



ABDU ARRIVED IN THE UK IN 2015 AND IS ORIGINALLY FROM SUDAN. HE VOLUNTEERED FOR THE BRITISH RED CROSS FOR ONE YEAR BEFORE MOVING TO WALES AND AFTER A PERIOD OF ILLNESS, BEGAN TO WORK AT AMAZON BEFORE ENROLLING ON A FOUNDATION DEGREE. ABDU HAD BEEN STUDYING GEOGRAPHY IN SUDAN BUT DID NOT COMPLETE HIS COURSE AS HE LEFT HIS COUNTRY DUE TO THE CONFLICT. HOWEVER, HE WAS EXTREMELY KEEN TO RE-START HIS EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY AND BEGAN BY LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH COMMUNITY SETTINGS AND COLLEGE. HE THEN DECIDED TO APPLY FOR UNIVERSITY AND FOUND SUPPORT FROM CAREERS WALES, AND AS HE HAD BEEN WORKING IN A CAR GARAGE PRIOR TO LEAVING HIS COUNTRY, HE DECIDED TO PURSUE MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID. ABDU HAS RECENTLY COMPLETED HIS FOUNDATION YEAR AND WANTS TO CONTINUE STUDYING FOR A DEGREE. HE IS VERY KEEN TO BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR AND WOULD LIKE TO EVENTUALLY CREATE HIS OWN BUSINESS. ABDU SAID HE FEELS A LOT OF APPRECIATION FOR THE COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS THAT HELPED AND SUPPORTED HIM WHEN HE ARRIVED IN SWANSEA AND FELT THAT THEY PROVIDED HIM WITH A LOT OF POSITIVITY AND GUIDANCE.

ABDU







"AND WHAT I'M SAYING IS THERE'S NOTHING IMPOSSIBLE UNDER THE SUN, WHEN YOU ARE WORKING HARD, YOU CAN ACHIEVE EVERYTHING YOU WANT.

...EDUCATION IS ONLY GOING TO EQUALISE BETWEEN PEOPLE, NO MATTER WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE. IF YOU'RE WELL EDUCATED AND YOUR MIND WORKS WELL, YOU CAN SOLVE, AND IT'LL BE EASY TO BE RECOGNISED BY OTHERS AND YOU CAN, YOU KNOW, IMPACT ON THE, YOU KNOW, GLOBAL SYSTEM TODAY.

I GAINED A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE, WHICH I LOST, FOR YEARS SINCE I LEFT MY COUNTRY, SUCH AS MATH. AND PHYSICS, AT LEAST, I DIDN'T GET MY SCIENCE... YOU KNOW, I HAD TO RE-LEARN IT AND THAT WAS VERY HELPFUL IN THE WAY OF TRAINING... THE WELSH GOVERNMENT, THEY SUPPORTED US WHILE WE STUDY AND THIS IS REALLY GOOD... THEY TEACH US ABOUT UNIVERSITY, THEY ARE REALLY GOOD AT RESPONDING AND GIVING US ADVICE."





SIBUSISIVE



SIBU MOVED TO THE UK IN 2000 AFTER ARRIVING FROM ZIMBABWE AND HAS LIVED HERE FOR TWENTY-ONE YEARS. SHE IS CURRENTLY THE GENERAL MANAGER AT A WELL-ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY ORGANISATION AND IS ALSO AN ENTREPRENEUR, A LIFE COACH AND A MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER. SIBU WAS AN EXPERIENCED ADMINISTRATOR BEFORE ARRIVING IN THE UK AND VOLUNTEERED FOR AN ORGANISATION FOR SEVERAL YEARS WHEN SHE SETTLED IN WALES. THIS ORGANISATION WAS FOCUSED ON SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE, FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, FORCED MARRIAGE AND TRAFFICKING. SHE HAS SAID THAT SHE LIKE WHAT THE ORGANISATION STOOD FOR AND THEIR ETHOS AND WHILE SHE STARTED AS A RECEPTIONIST, SHE WORKED HER WAY UP MANAGEMENT AND BECAME A SUPPORT WORKER FOR THE ORGANISATION. SIBU THEN ENROLLED ONTO A DEGREE IN HEALTH MANAGEMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID AND WENT ON TO STUDY FOR HER PGCE (PCET) WHICH SHE SAYS HAS HELPED HER IN HER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK ALSO. SHE ALSO CONTINUES TO FOCUS ON HER ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS AND IS DEVELOPING HER ZUMBA BUSINESS.



SIBU



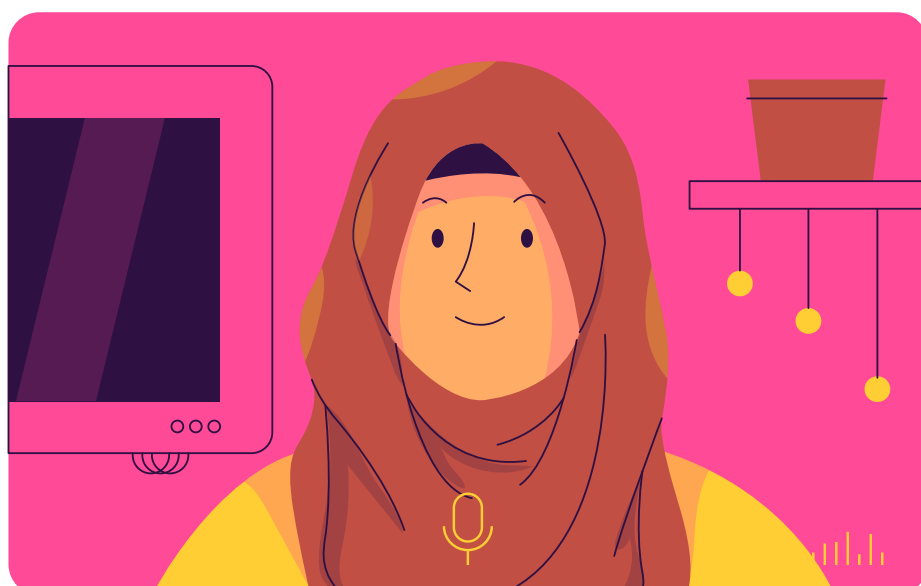
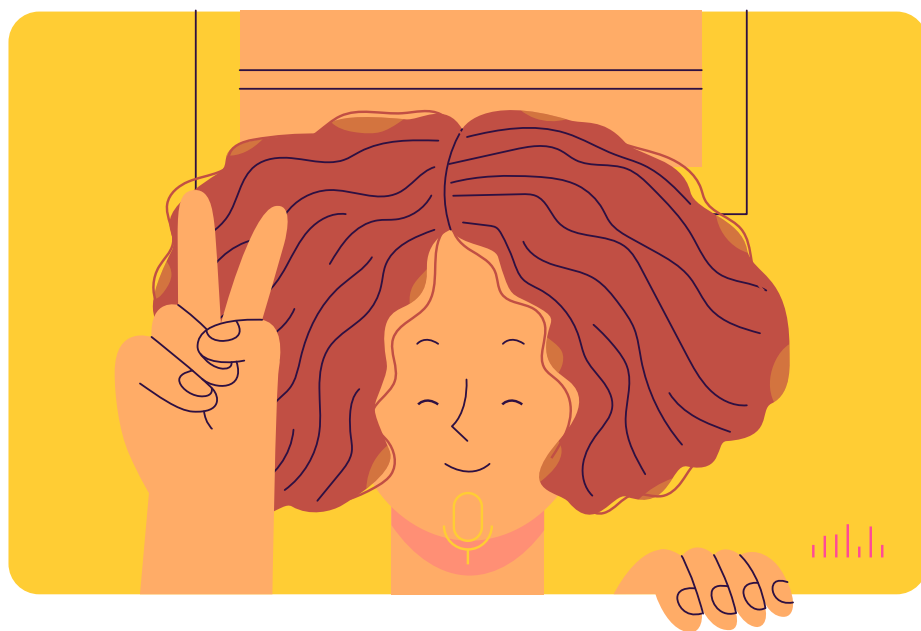


“WELL TO START OFF WITH, IT’S FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO GO TO THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW THESE COMMUNITIES, WHO UNDERSTAND THEM, AND THAT IS THE THIRD SECTOR. SO, WORK VERY CLOSELY TO THE THIRD SECTOR. BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT DON'T KNOW IT ALL. THE THIRD SECTOR DOES KNOW IT, BECAUSE THEY'RE THE ONES WHO ARE ON THE GROUND, THE GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS, WE'RE WORKING WITH THESE SANCTUARY SEEKERS DAY IN DAY OUT. YEAH. AND THEY UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES, THE BARRIERS THEY FACE. AND WHAT THEY WOULD WANT TO ACHIEVE AND HOW THEY WANT TO PROGRESS. SO DO CONSULTATIONS WITH THE THIRD SECTOR, AND NOT JUST BE LIKE A TICK BOX EXERCISE, BUT REALLY PUT LIKE, STRATEGIES IN PLACE, IN TO NAVIGATE.”



“I WOULD ADVISE SOMEBODY TO BE VERY PROACTIVE BECAUSE IT’S A TWO-WAY THING. ORGANISATIONS ARE THERE BUT THEY WOULDN’T KNOW WHAT YOUR NEEDS ARE WHEN YOU’RE SITTING IN THE HOUSE. SO, BEING PROACTIVE IN LOOKING FOR THESE ORGANISATIONS...YOU KNOW, KNOW YOURSELF, WHAT DO I WANT TO DO? WHAT ARE MY ASPIRATIONS, WHAT ARE MY GOALS? WHO CAN I GO TO WHO CAN SHOW ME THE ROPES IF I DON’T KNOW HOW TO USE COMPUTERS MYSELF OR LOOK FOR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY THEN...I WILL ASK AROUND WITHIN MY COMMUNITY...”

“DON’T FOCUS ON THINGS WHICH YOU DON’T HAVE INFLUENCE OVER, FOCUS ON THE THINGS WHICH YOU CAN CONTROL. YOU KNOW, GOING TO COLLEGE, ENHANCING YOUR SKILLS. LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY. THOSE ARE THE THINGS WITHIN YOUR REMIT WHICH YOU ARE ABLE TO CONTROL. SO, FOCUS ON THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE WITHIN YOUR REMIT AND THEN DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM.”







MAGDY





MAGDY CAME TO THE UK FROM SUDAN IN 2014 AND LIVES IN SWANSEA WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN. HE CLAIMED ASYLUM AND WAS GRANTED A FIVE-YEAR RESIDENCY. MAGDY DECIDED HE REALLY WANTED TO ATTEND COLLEGE AND HE STUDIED AT COLLEGE LEVEL FOR TWO YEARS BEFORE EMBARKING ON A ROLE AT AMAZON WHERE HE CONTINUED TO WORK FOR FOUR YEARS. HE THEN DECIDED HE WANTED TO ATTEND UNIVERSITY AS IT WAS IMPORTANT TO HIM TO GET AN EDUCATION. MAGDY HAD ALREADY ACHIEVED A CERTIFICATE IN ESOL AND HAD GAINED CERTIFICATES IN MATHS AND SCIENCE WHEN HE LIVED IN SUDAN. AFTER TWENTY DAYS, HE WAS INFORMED THAT HIS APPLICATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL, AND HE CHOSE TO STUDY FOR A FOUNDATION DEGREE IN NETWORK ENGINEERING AND CYBER SECURITY. HE REDUCED HIS HOURS IN AMAZON TO PART TIME AND BEGAN HIS COURSE. HE WAS ADVISED THAT HE COULD CHANGE HIS UNIVERSITY, BUT HE DECIDED TO CONTINUE AT UWTSD AS HE WAS HAPPY. MAGDY IS CURRENTLY IN HIS SECOND YEAR OF STUDY AND HAS SAID HE IS VERY HAPPY AT UWTSD.

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MAGDY



“WHEN I PASSED MY FOUNDATION YEAR, THEY TOLD ME, IT’S UP TO ME IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE YOUR UNIVERSITY, IT’S FREE NOW. I SAID NO, I WANT TO CONTINUE IN THIS UNIVERSITY, I REALLY LIKE IT. GOOD STAFF, GOOD CLASSMATES, GOOD PEOPLE AND THEY RESPECT ME. I AM HAPPY AT THIS UNIVERSITY, THAT’S WHY I WANT TO CONTINUE MY JOURNEY AT THE SAME UNIVERSITY.

I WANT TO GRADUATE AND WORK IN THIS COUNTRY. WHEN I GRADUATE, I WANT TO DO MY MASTERS, I WANT TO DO A COURSE IN MY FIELD AND AFTER I WANT TO GO TO WORK IN THE SAME OCCUPATION IN THIS COUNTRY. I DON’T WANT TO LEAVE; THIS IS MY SECOND COUNTRY. I FEEL LIKE IN MY FIRST COUNTRY... I FOUND SOMETHING HERE THAT I DON’T FIND IN MY COUNTRY. I FIND MANY THINGS TO HELP ME MORE THAN I GET IN MY COUNTRY. THAT’S WHY I WANT TO STAY HERE, I WANT TO LIVE MY LIFE...

EDUCATION IS THE FIRST ONE. THE FIRST GOOD THING. EDUCATION IS THE LIGHT FOR LIFE REALLY. EDUCATION IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR ME AND FOR EVERYBODY.”



MAGDY





HAROON



HAROON ARRIVED IN THE UK FROM SUDAN IN 2015 AFTER FLEEING CONFLICT AND SEEKING SOMEWHERE SAFE TO LIVE AND TO PROTECT HIS FUTURE. H HAS SAID HE ENDURED A VERY ARDUOUS JOURNEY, AND IT TOOK HIM THREE YEARS TO GET TO THE UK FROM SUDAN. HE HAD ALREADY GRADUATED IN SUDAN, FROM SUDAN UNIVERSITY, AND OBTAINED A QUALIFICATION IN MANAGEMENT. HAROON HAS SAID THAT WHEN HE ARRIVED IN THE UK, HE COULD NOT SPEAK ANY ENGLISH, HE COULD SPEAK ARABIC AND HE WAS ALSO FLUENT IN HIS MOTHER TONGUE, BUT HE HAD NO ENGLISH LANGUAGE UNDERSTANDING. THE HOME OFFICE MOVED HE TO SWANSEA FROM CARDIFF WHERE HE DID MANAGE TO SECURE EMPLOYMENT AND HIS LEAVE TO REMAIN WITHIN SIX MONTHS. WHILE AT AMAZON, HAROON HAS SAID THAT HE DECIDED HE HAD AMBITIONS TO DO SOMETHING ELSE AND DECIDED HE DID NOT WANT TO CONTINUE WORKING AT AMAZON AND HE WANTED TO PURSUE A COURSE OF STUDY. H HAS SAID THAT HE WAS REALLY ENCOURAGED BY WORK COLLEAGUES, SO HE BEGAN TO LEARN ENGLISH AND THEN APPLIED TO THREE UNIVERSITIES BEFORE SELECTING THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID TO DO HIS DEGREE IN HUMAN RESOURCES. HE HAS NOW BEGUN HIS MASTERS PROGRAMME AT SWANSEA UNIVERSITY IN HUMAN RESOURCES.

HAROON





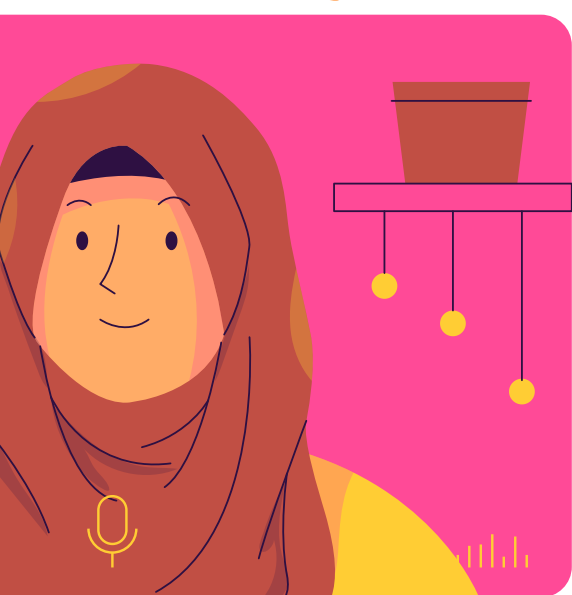
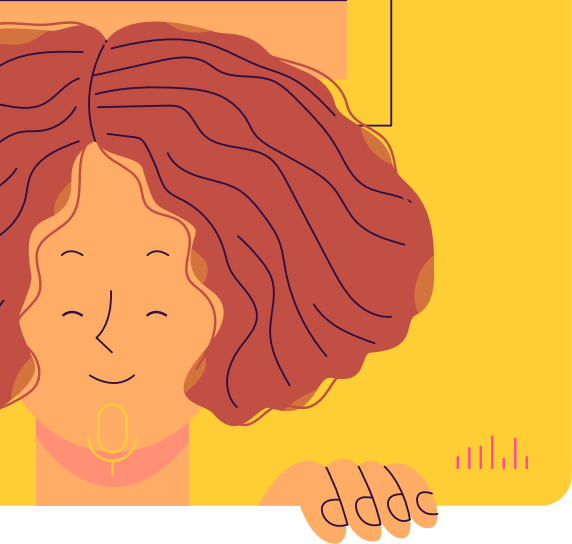


“WHEN I WAS AN ASYLUM SEEKER, WHEN I CAME FOR THE FIRST TIME...WHEN YOU GO TO A NEW COUNTRY OF COURSE, YOU FACE MANY DIFFICULTIES. THE ENVIRONMENT, THE PEOPLE, THE CULTURE, RELIGIONS BUT I BELIEVE THE UK, WALES AND SWANSEA ESPECIALLY, WAS THE BEST PLACE TO GO. THEY ARE VERY GOOD PEOPLE, VERY FRIENDLY. THEY SUPPORT ME LOTS, NEIGHBOURS, FRIENDS. I HAVE MANY FRIENDS FROM HERE, THEY SUPPORT ME, HELPED ME TO ADAPT TO WHERE I AM AT THE MOMENT. YEAH, IT WAS A CHALLENGE BUT YEAH, I GET IT NOW.”

“AT THE MOMENT ALL OF MY CONCENTRATION IS ON GETTING MY MASTERS DONE BECAUSE WITH A MASTERS I CAN DO WHATEVER I WANT...MY PLAN HAS BEEN TO WORK WITH THE ORGANISATIONS LIKE HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE UN. I NEED TO HELP PEOPLE BECAUSE I SUFFERED A LOT TO GET HERE, PLUS I HAD MY FAMILY TO LEAVE. IS IT'S A HARD STORY BUT... NEED TO JUST HELP PEOPLE LIKE THIS IN THE FUTURE. I'D LIKE TO GET THE JOB FOREVER AND TO SPEND IT IN THE CHARITY...”

HAROON





“EDUCATION IS EVERYTHING, ESPECIALLY NOWADAYS. YOU CAN’T LEARN SOMETHING WITHOUT EDUCATION. WE LEARN, WATCH AND THEN WE PRACTICE. SO, LEARN FIRST AND THEN YOU HAVE GO TO SCHOOL OR COLLEGE... KNOW MY ENGLISH IS NOT PERFECT SO FAR, BUT IT IS A SHAME TO STAY IN IN ONE PLACE FOR LONGER AND YOU DON'T KNOW THE LANGUAGE. IT IS MAKING LIFE HARDER, YOU CAN’T DO NOTHING, YOU CAN’T KNOW NOTHING, SO THAT WILL BE HARD FOR YOU. HERE, LANGUAGE, ENGLISH, IT IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS. IF YOU WANT TO BE SUCCESSFUL, WHEREVER YOU GO, GAIN THE LANGUAGE FIRST, THAT’S THE KEY FOR YOUR LIFE AND YOU WILL BE SUCCESSFUL AS WELL.”



HAROON





ESMAIL



ESMAIL HAS BEEN IN WALES FOR FIVE YEARS AFTER ARRIVING FROM SUDAN AT THE END OF 2015. HE HAD GAINED HIS HIGH SCHOOL QUALIFICATION BUT HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO CONTINUE HIS EDUCATION IN HIS COUNTRY DUE TO LEAVING TO SEEK ASYLUM. ESMAIL WORKED AS A SECURITY GUARD WHILE STUDYING FOR HIS INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH TESTING SYSTEM (IELTS) CERTIFICATION. HE HAS EXPRESSED THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE THAT ALLOWED HIM TO GAIN ENTRY TO CERTAIN UNIVERSITIES AND THAT LEARNING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE WAS THE BIGGEST BARRIER HE FACED WHEN SETTLING IN WALES. ESMAIL HAD BEEN EMPLOYED IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT ROLES BEFORE LEAVING SUDAN AND WHEN HE ARRIVED IN THE UK, HIS ULTIMATE GOAL WAS TO PURSUE HIS EDUCATION. HE WORKED ON A WELSH GOVERNMENT RESEARCH PROJECT AS AN INTERPRETER AND PARTICIPANT BEFORE EMBARKING ON HIS DEGREE PROGRAMME AT SWANSEA UNIVERSITY. ESMAIL IS CURRENTLY IN HIS SECOND YEAR AND IS STUDYING ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING. HE FEELS HE GAINED MOST OF HIS SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE FROM THE SUDANESE COMMUNITY IN SWANSEA.

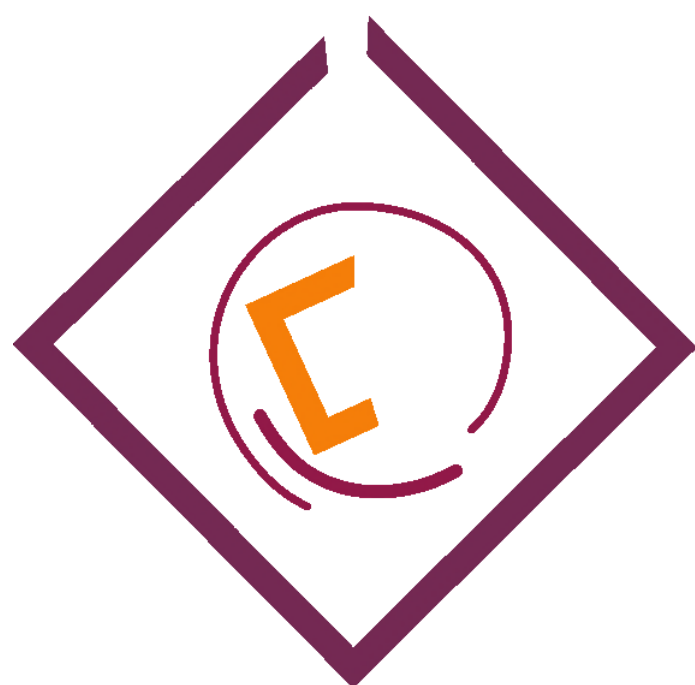


ESMAIL



"I THINK IT DEPENDS ON YOUR BACKGROUND, WHERE YOU COME FROM, BUT IT'S STILL...WHEREVER YOU COME FROM, YOU HAVE TO WORK HARD, AND YOU HAVE TO JUST TO FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WANT TO DO AND JUST CARRY ON. YEAH, IT WASN'T EASY, IT WASN'T EASY TO ACHIEVE IT, YOU HAVE TO WORK HARD. LIKE REALLY HARD, WHEN I SAY WORK HARD, I MEAN IT, LIKE REALLY HARD... JUST FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS BUT IT WASN'T EASY AT ALL."

I THINK FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE, OBVIOUSLY, EVERYONE HAS DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES AND DIFFERENT THINGS. BUT FOR ME...TRY TO ASK SOMEONE WHO IS IN YOUR COMMUNITY, WHO HAS HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCE. I THINK THAT THAT'S MY FIRST ADVICE. AND MY SECOND ADVICE IS YOU DON'T HAVE TO USE THE LANGUAGE BARRIER AS A BIG CHALLENGE FOR YOU. ALWAYS TRY TO LEARN, YOU DON'T HAVE TO JUST TRY TO LEARN, TRY TO WATCH A MOVIE, TRY TO WATCH YOUTUBE. INSTEAD OF WATCHING EVERYTHING IN YOUR OWN LANGUAGE, TRY TO WATCH IT IN ENGLISH. TRY TO MAKE YOURSELF USED TO THE SOUND. TRY TO MAKE FRIENDS OUTSIDE YOUR COMMUNITY. EVEN IF IT IS NOT EASY, TRY TO MAKE FRIENDS OUTSIDE IF YOU CAN."



ESMAIL





**Swansea City of Sanctuary**  
**Abertawe Dinas Noddfa**