

“Know Your Rights!”

Innovative brochure supports female refugees in gaining knowledge for a self-determined and independent life in Germany.



iq | **GOOD PRACTICE** in a nutshell

Adressees for Transfer:

Counselling centres for female migrants, professionals and volunteers working in support of refugees, women and girls

Brochure “Know Your Rights!”:

The sixteen-page brochure addresses female refugees and informs about the rights as a woman in Germany regarding the topics of asylum, family, education, labour, violence and mutual exchange. The brochure provides contact information to counselling centres and help desks where female refugees can get individual counselling. The information booklet from Lower Saxony is available in the languages German, Arabic, Farsi, English, French, Turkish, Russian, Tigrinya, Kurmanji and Albanian. Moreover, a nationwide version of “Know Your Rights!” with corresponding contact offices has been published.

Project:

Fokus Flucht

Implementing organisation:

Refugee Council Lower Saxony e. V.

Project contact:

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Offer:

Please find the brochure of Lower Saxony “Know Your Rights!” under www.nds-fluerat.org as PDF for downloading. Printed copies of the publication can be ordered from contact person Vivien Hellwig under the above e-mail address. The German version of the publication can be downloaded under www.netzwerk-iq.de/angebote/eingewanderte/publikationen.html. All previously published IQ Good Practice examples can be downloaded at www.netzwerk-iq.de.

Starting point/challenge

Female asylum seekers and their needs have not been the main emphasis when it comes to migration work. A lot of information for refugees has been formulated in fairly general terms. However, initial advice regarding life as a woman in Germany is essential for female refugees. Moreover, current analyses, for example of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), have shown that there is a greater need for information among women who sought asylum since they have been barely represented in integration activities and in the labour market up to now. As the implementing organisation of the project “Fokus Flucht” in the Network IQ Lower Saxony, the Refugee Council of Lower Saxony e. V. has developed the brochure “Know Your Rights!”, which supports female refugees in creating a future in Germany and shaping it themselves.

Realisation of the brochure

Not all female refugees are facing the same problems and have the same questions. There is no “stereotypical female refugee”, the situations of people are diverse and that is why the use of the brochure “Know Your Rights!” depends on the individual person. In surveys of female refugees and of consultants who work on a full-time and on a voluntary basis, specific demands for information could be identified and evaluated. Important additional insights were provided by existing information materials as well as counselling services for women with a migration background who already live in Germany. From the identified subject matters, concise and comprehensive texts were composed and subsequently checked by counsellors and lawyers of the implementing organisation. In order to make the sixteen-page brochure appealing to people with little knowledge of German, they have been illustrated with images and written in simple language. Furthermore, concrete indications regarding advice and counselling centres are



listed in every chapter. The brochure contains initial information about legal fundamentals and support possibilities for female refugees. Subject matters of the chapters are amongst other things: asylum procedures, health care, dealing with domestic violence, education as well as labour market integration.

Conclusion

The information booklet “Know Your Rights!” has proven to be transferable as well as successful in practice, since the information booklet has already been highly in demand by multipliers working with female refugees. The brochure is also available in Arabic, Farsi, English, French, Turkish, Russian, Tigrinya, Kurmanji and Albanian. There is also a website on www.refugee-women.de that is continuously updated and supplemented. Apart from the booklet designed for Lower Saxony, an edition of the brochure has been adapted for Germany as a whole which points to contact overviews via which local contact points can be found on site.

Over 4.000 orders after only three weeks

Subject matters of the information booklet: from asylum procedures to the right of residence through to work permit

Many refugee women are affected by an increased extent of violence, sexual assaults, traumatisations and family separations. In Germany, female refugees are in part also subject to discrimination. When it comes to integration into the labour market, they also see themselves confronted with specific challenges. In this regard, many questions do arise, such as “How can I combine work with family obligations?”, “How are my resident status and a job connected?”, “Where can I find support in case of experiences of violence in Germany and during my journey here?”. The focus of the brochure “Know Your Rights!” is to address these topics. Upon production of the publication, discussions with counsellors for asylum proce-

dures, leaders of professional integration measures as well as consultants of specialist departments against sexual violence have been conducted for this purpose. Further-



more, self-organised groups of female refugees as well as supporters of refugee women have been interviewed. This resulted in the central, recurring themes “asylum procedures and women-specific rights in these proceedings”, “residence permit consequences of a separation or divorce”, “possibilities of a work permit and its relevance for a long-term residence” as well as “access to healthcare and the education system”. The Refugee Council Lower Saxony e. V., the implementing organisation of the project “Fokus Flucht” has received positive feedback quickly: The brochure has been ordered 4.150 times in German, Arabic, Farsi, English, French and Russian within the first three weeks of its publication.

Three questions to Vivien Hellwig, manager of the project “Fokus Flucht” in the Network IQ Lower Saxony

Great interest among many female refugees



What is the innovative aspect of the brochure “Know Your Rights!”?

Before creating the brochure, there has already been information material for refugees and information for women with a migration history, but not explicitly for female refugees. The brochure combines both topics and thus composes relevant information briefly and comprehensibly from asylum procedures to job-hunting for the target

group. The simple language, the illustrations and the references to specific contact persons in various languages result in a keen interest among the many female refugees, according to our experiences. The women find advisory centres, telephone numbers and further information regarding every subject area.

May the brochure also be utilised elsewhere?

Many women who sought asylum in Germany are facing similar challenges: unsecure living conditions in shared accommodation, search for work and vocational training, restricted access to health-

care or uncertainty about their resident status. Therefore, it was important for us to shape the brochure in a way that that it can be adapted without major problems throughout Germany if necessary, which has been realised within the framework of the national public relations of Network IQ. The brochure of the Network IQ Lower Saxony is tailored to offers in Lower Saxony so that women who sought asylum are finding contact persons on the fastest route. The format may be easily adopted for other federal states, the local contact persons merely have to be adjusted accordingly.

Which sustainable effects can the brochure have?

After the direct reception and supply with the basic necessities, for many female refugees face the next step of orientation and localisation. For this purpose, the information booklet provides all relevant information from a single source. It serves as an overview and draws on the one hand attention to long-standing structures, offerings and emergency calls which are until then hardly known by the target group. On the other hand, the brochure gives guidance to fundamental rights in Germany. In doing so, information about crucial steps for the integration of female refugees in Germany is provided in a sustainable manner.

Imprint

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Network IQ

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