



**AFRICAN  
RAINBOW  
FAMILY**  
LGBTIQ EQUALITY



# OUR IMPACT

## ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2025

We are grateful for the persistent strength of our Siblings, staff, and supporters, this year was marked by profound growth and joy.

Yet, the introduction of new immigration rules has brought amplified challenges and uncertainty for African and the Global Majority LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum. This Impact Report celebrates our community's resilience and affirms our unwavering mission as a steadfast beacon of safety and hope.



**Read through this report to learn more about the wins that African Rainbow Family has been a part of this year, as well as how your generosity has continued to make our work possible.**

[www.africanrainbowfamily.org](http://www.africanrainbowfamily.org)



**AFRICAN  
RAINBOW  
FAMILY**  
LGBTIQ EQUALITY

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# INTRODUCTION

**Welcome to the Annual Impact Report for African Rainbow Family in 2025. Over the period of this year, 2025, we have supported hundreds of LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum and refugees around the UK, as well as lead on a number of key achievements in UK and European asylum policies.**

*As we close a challenging year, 2025, my deepest gratitude goes to every supporter of the African Rainbow Family. 2025 was a period of marked hostility for people seeking asylum, yet our community responded with unwavering solidarity and compassion. Looking ahead, we are immensely proud of our official Immigration Advice Authority (IAA) accreditation, which will enable us to give high standards regulated legal advice within our remit.*

*We reflect with grave concern on the new proposed policy introduced this year by the new Home Secretary. We condemn it outright in its entirety. We believe this is effectively another form of government-sanctioned slavery! It beggars belief that the UK would be looking to enact such an inhumane and cruel measure, subjecting LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum to double mental torture. Moving forward, we strongly urge the Home Secretary to rethink this diabolic policy.*

*We hold onto the hope that true compassion and justice will prevail, and we remain committed to advocating and campaigning for a UK where every person seeking safety is treated with dignity.*

**Aderonke Apata  
Founder and CEO**







# OUR STORY SO FAR

## 2014

**Founding of African Rainbow Family by Aderonke Apata!**

## 2015

**Began offering moral and practical support, including buddy support and evidence in court, for LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum.**

## 2016

**Reviewed and contributed to the Home Office Asylum Screening and Routing Policy**

## 2017

**Submitted evidence to the UK All Party Parliamentary Group on Global LGBT Rights inquiry.**

## 2018

**Contributed to Lesbian Visibility Day in the European Parliament and reviewed European LGBTIQ+ asylum policy.**

## 2019

**Registered as a charity (No. 1185902) and expanded to national network of 900 service users**

## 2020

**Expanded support services to offer free counselling, hot meals and weekly subsistence**

## 2021

**Briefed the House of Lords on the Nationality and Borders Bill concerning LGBTIQ asylum issues and other related matters**

## 2022

**Submitted an intervention to the European Court of Human Rights. Called on the United Nations to renew the mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on SOGIE.**

## 2023

**Briefed UN Independent Expert on SOGI protection during UK Country Visit. Launched our 2023 Home Office Accommodation report.**

## 2024

**Expanded the staff team to 11. Won ECHR judgment ruling that a gay man from Iran cannot be deported from Switzerland. Hosted our 10 year anniversary conference on 'Access to Justice'.**

## 2025

**We achieved official accreditation by the IAA, validating our strict standards for providing clear, regulated immigration support. To meet growing demand, the staff team has been expanded to 13 members.**



# Our 2026 GOALS

It is important for African Rainbow Family to look forward to where we would like to be in another 12 months' time.

**Read our four main goals for 2026 below...**

## 1

### **Achieve LGBTIQ+ specific Home Office Accommodation**

Based on our "Housing and Accommodation for African & BAME LGBTIQ+ People Seeking Asylum survey report, 2023", African Rainbow Family made some key recommendations for the Home Office accommodation system including establishing LGBTIQ+-specific housing and intersectional approach, providing inclusivity, and sensitivity training for staff. Further details on our website.

## 2

### **Support more LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum than ever before through their journey to freedom**

With more people requesting to register with African Rainbow Family, and access support, than ever before - we hope to prioritise the registration of new siblings in 2026.

By using our new database system and expanded team to speed up the registration process, we look forward to welcoming lots of new Siblings in the new year.

## 3

### **Grow our fundraising portfolio, drawing support from our passionate community advocates**

Although African Rainbow Family has been a registered charity since 2019, fundraising has only formed a very small part of our annual income.

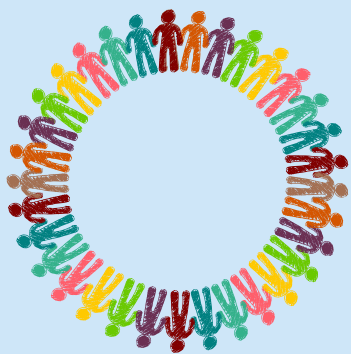
In 2026, we are planning to launch a fundraising volunteer committee and build on our fundraising potential in this way!

## 4

### **Advancing to Level 2 Immigration Legal Advice Registration**

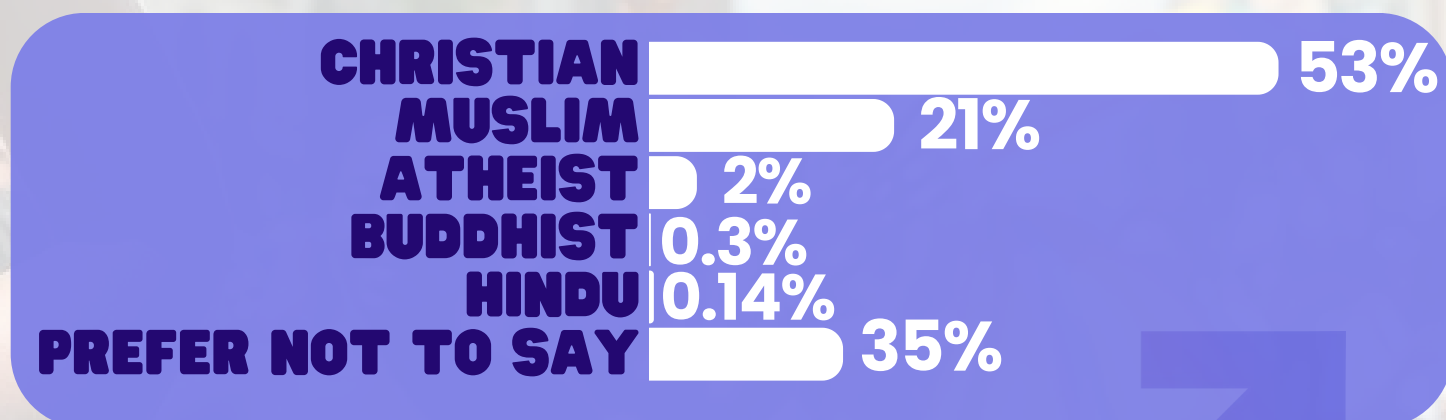
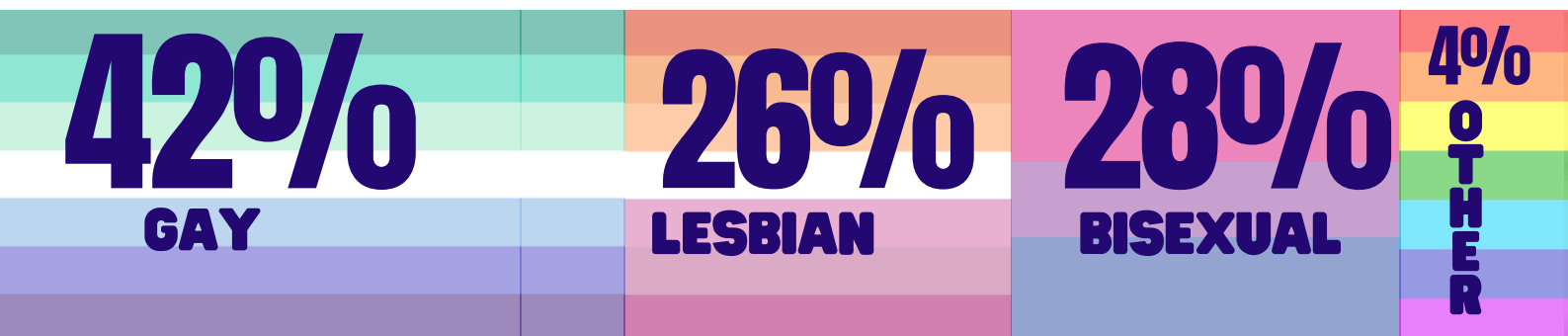
Building on our IAA accreditation, we aim for Level 2 registration in 2026. Achieving this will empower our team to offer comprehensive advice and representation for clients' applications and appeals before the Home Office.

This expansion ensures our support remains trustworthy and fully regulated, allowing us to change more lives, positively.

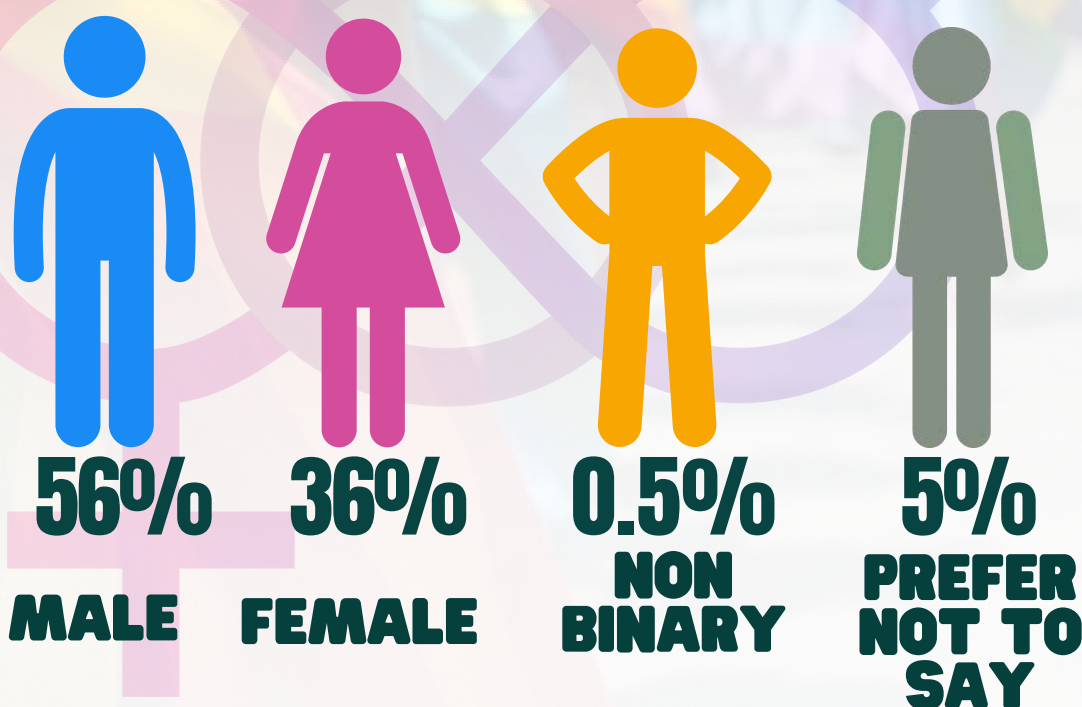


# THE PEOPLE WE SUPPORT

We support hundreds of LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum every year, see some more information on our Siblings below



these figures are trans-inclusive, with around 2% of our Siblings identifying as transgender





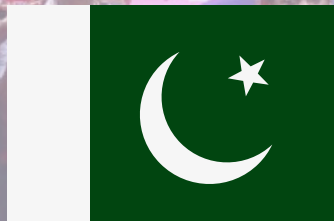
# THE PEOPLE WE SUPPORT

**IN 2025, WE  
REGISTERED 490 NEW  
SIBLINGS!**

**THE MAIN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN  
OF OUR SIBLINGS ARE:**



**NIGERIA 38%**



**PAKISTAN 11%**



**NAMIBIA 10%**



**CAMEROON 9%**



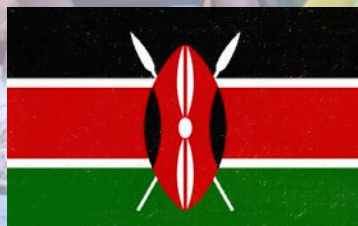
**UGANDA 5%**



**IRAQ 3%**



**GHANA 3%**



**KENYA 2%**



**BOTSWANA 2%**





# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

# 101

(60 in 2024)

**AFRICAN RAINBOW FAMILY  
SIBLINGS RECEIVED THEIR GRANT  
OF REFUGEE STATUS IN 2025**

**That is 101 lives forever changed for good!**



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## MONTHLY MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2025

Total Number of Attendees per centre (IN PERSON)



**Birmingham**

**284**

(184 for 2024)



**London**

**509**

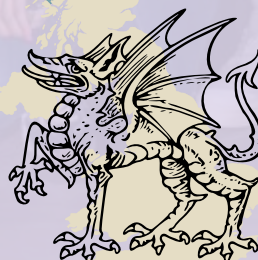
(342 for 2024)



**Manchester**

**607**

(389 for 2024)



**Swansea**

**15**

(started in 2025)



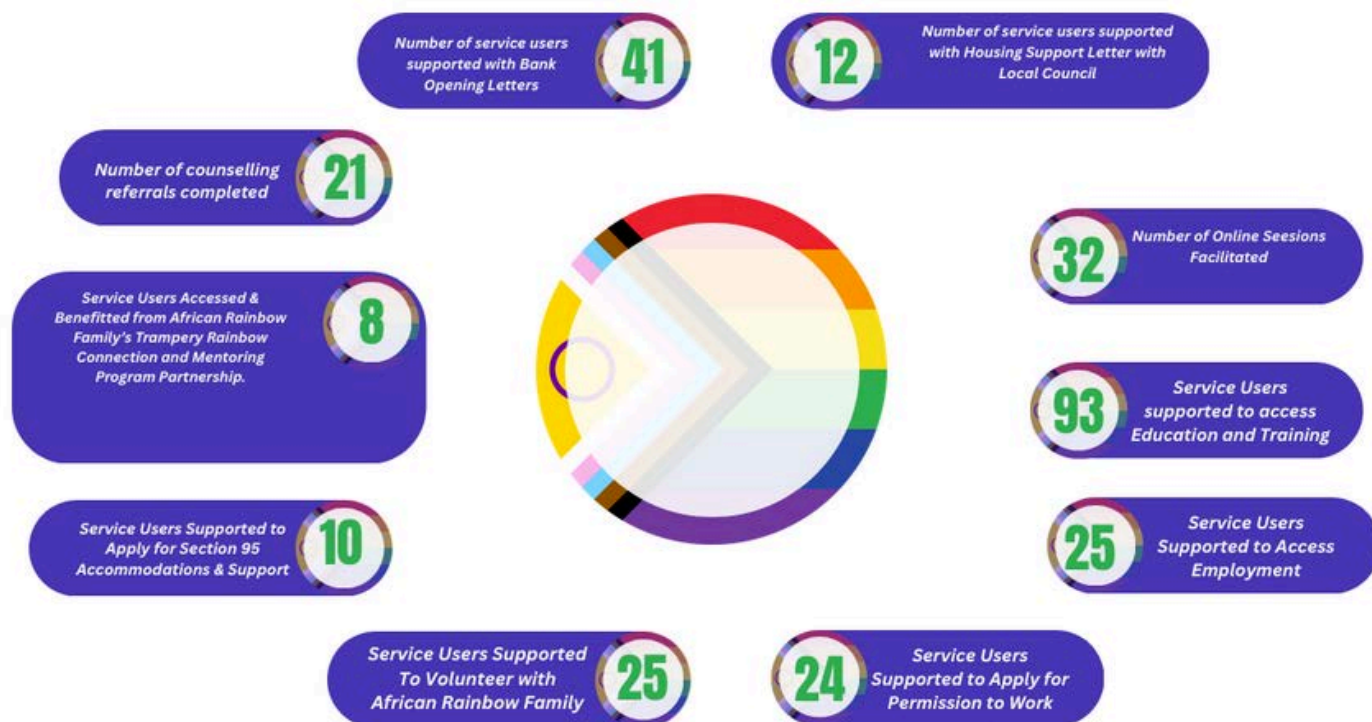
**Leeds**

**141**

(181 for 2024)



## AFRICAN RAINBOW FAMILY IN NUMBERS



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## ONLINE MEETINGS

**Total Number of Attendees at Family Social Hour Series:**

**1042**

**MEETING TOPICS:**



**British  
humour &  
small talk**



**Black History  
Month**



**Mental health  
& wellbeing**



**Substantive  
Interviews**

**Total Number of Attendees at Women's Hour Series:**

**113**

**MEETING TOPICS:**



**Mental health  
& wellbeing**



**How to reduce  
anxiety**



**Health And  
Accessing  
Health  
Services**



**Family  
Reunion**



**CV and  
Cover  
Letter  
Writing**

**Total Number of Attendees at Asylum Process Presentation Series:**

**820**

**MEETING TOPICS:**



**Substantive  
Interviews**



**Decisions  
and  
Appeals**



**Immigration  
Detention,  
Removal &  
Deportation**



**Preparing  
Evidence in  
Asylum Claims**



**New Asylum  
Policy:  
Pros & Cons**

**Total Number of Attendees at Integration Series:**

**887**

**MEETING TOPICS:**



**Building  
connections  
in the UK**



**Computer  
Literacy**



**Driving  
in the UK**



**Family  
Reunion**



**CV and  
Cover  
Letter  
Writing**

**12**

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## IMMIGRATION ADVICE AUTHORITY ACCREDITATION

We are officially accredited by the **Immigration Advice Authority (IAA)** the body that regulates immigration advice across the UK.

This accreditation means we meet strict standards of quality, professionalism, and care when supporting people through the often complex immigration process. It's an important recognition of the hard work and dedication of our team, ensuring that everyone who comes to us for help receives clear, trustworthy, and regulated advice.

We believe that safe and informed immigration support can change lives, and this accreditation allows us to continue doing just that with confidence and integrity.

**Professional Integrity**

**Regulated  
Advice**

**Client Confidentiality**

**IAA  
Standards  
& Impact**

**Quality Assurance**

**Access to Legal Aid**

**Expert  
Casework**



## Focusing on Commitment and Growth

Achieving the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA) accreditation is a critical milestone that reinforces our commitment to integrity and professional quality of service.

This foundation allows us to strategically expand our regulated support services, increase accessibility, and continue advocating for vulnerable individuals across the UK with greater confidence and authority.



# 5

## WAYS WE SUPPORTED OUR SIBLINGS OVER PRIDE SEASON IN 2025:



We supported LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum to attend Pride, a total of **495** Siblings



For **68** of those people, this was their first time attending Pride



We provided hot food at all of our Pride picnics, feeding over **500** people



We supported **358** people with transport costs to get to Prides



**100%** of those that attended felt that the Prides were an inclusive space

*Pride*

“The pride is a place of happiness and confidence, I felt loved and accepted of who I am”

“I felt like I have a family and community that makes happiness possible”



“African rainbow family is the happiest thing ever in my life”





## ATTENDANCE: Pride Season 2025

**BIRMINGHAM PRIDE: 114**

**LEEDS PRIDE: 49**

**PRIDE IN LONDON: 102**

**WOLVERHAMPTON PRIDE: 5**

**SPARKLE TRANS PRIDE: 4**

**SALFORD PRIDE: 37**

**PRIDE IN LIVERPOOL: 15**

**COVENTRY PRIDE: 29**

**UK BLACK PRIDE: 44**

**CHESTER PRIDE: 8    MANCHESTER PRIDE: 98**





# ADVOCACY

## JUDICIAL REVIEW

### ROYAL COURT OF JUSTICE



In June 2025 African Rainbow Family provided an Expert Witness Statement in support of a **Judicial Review (“JR”)** proceedings at the Royal Court of Justice (“the Court”), challenging the Home Office’s use of all-male accommodation, including hotels, for housing LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum.

The proceedings also sought to challenge the Home Office’s failure to develop a policy that adequately addresses the specific housing needs of LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum. The Court granted permission for the JR to proceed, recognising that the case raised a systematic issue as highlighted in our 2024 Accommodation Report.

## UNHRC RESOLUTION



### MANDATE ON PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SOGI

African Rainbow Family joined 1,258 other non-governmental organisations from 157 states and territories in a global campaign to combat discrimination and violence against individuals of all sexual orientations and gender identities. The campaign urged all states to fulfil their international human rights obligations towards people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

This collective advocacy effort played a significant role in the adoption of **United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/59/L.2**, which renewed the mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.



# CAMPAIGNING

## NO PRIDE IN DEPORTATION



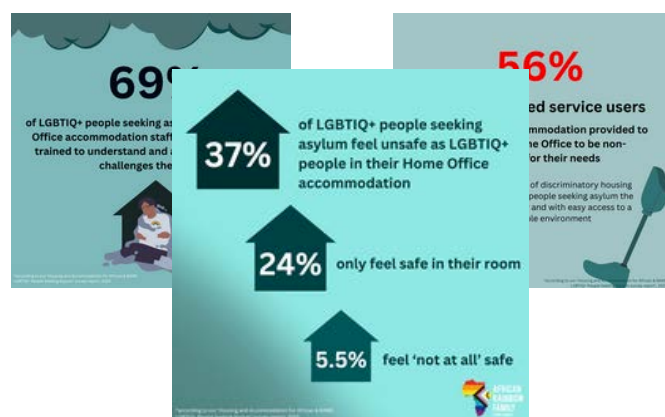
This campaign was headlined with an open petition via the Gov.UK Petition portal, calling for an end to the cruel practice of deportation for LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum. A campaign page was created on the website, with additional pages providing more information and insights into the background of the issue, especially as related to the Rwanda Scheme

## THE 20-YEAR SHADOW



This campaign sheds light on the UK government's 20-year path to citizenship for refugees, a policy that forces lives to remain on hold. Our work is driven by personal interviews with people seeking asylum—detailing their age, the reasons they fled, and their dreams for the future. By contrasting these dreams with the age they will be upon gaining citizenship, we reveal the profound human cost of this extended delay.

## NAFF ACCOMMODATION



This campaign arose as a result of the inadequate accommodation that is provided to LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum by the Home Office. It came coupled with an extensive report that two members of staff (including the Refugee Communication and Campaigns Officer) have written and published on the topic.

## MORE THAN 'SIMPLY GAY'



This campaign, although short-lived due to the expulsion of Ms. Braverman from her role as Home Secretary, was successfully enacted in the aftermath of a speech made by Ms. Braverman in Washington DC, where she stated that 'being gay or a woman' was not enough to justify claiming asylum. Our Refugee Communication and Campaigns Officer launched the campaign online along with an open letter to Ms Braverman.

# CAMPAIGNING THE 20-YEAR SHADOW

This campaign is dedicated to shining a critical light on the devastating consequences of the UK government's **20-year path to citizenship for refugees**—a legislative barrier that systematically forces the lives, careers, and personal futures of people seeking asylum to remain in a state of indefinite, precarious suspension for two full decades.

At the heart of our initiative are powerful, personal interviews conducted with people seeking asylum. These interviews move beyond statistics, capturing the fundamental details of applicants' lives: their current age, the urgent reasons they fled persecution and sought asylum, and the specific dreams they hold for **a future of stability and contribution within the UK**.

The most compelling aspect of this data is the subtext we provide: a calculated reveal of the age they will be upon finally attaining citizenship. This stark contrast between present aspirations and a distant legal right serves to humanize the policy's impact, exposing the profound interruption and deferment that this policy imposes on their pursuit of belonging.

### Our campaign is currently executing a three-part strategy:

1. Humanizing the Policy (Interviews): We are using personal stories and future age calculations to create an emotional hook, generating instant empathy for media and social content.
2. Providing Authority (Report): Our staff report acts as the intellectual anchor, supplying legal and statistical data for parliamentary briefings and expert commentary.
3. Defining Action (20-Year Focus): By targeting the 20-year plan, we establish a clear, powerful narrative. Our Call to Action (CTA) consistently demands the government shortens or abolishes this excessive waiting period.

## CAMPAIGNING ACCELERATE ACTION: PLEDGE FOR GLOBAL EQUALITY



**Aderonke Apata**, CEO and Founder of African Rainbow Family, was selected to serve as a delegate for the **UN Women UK Digital Participant at the 69th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69)**, a principal global intergovernmental body dedicated exclusively to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The critical theme for this year's session was "For All Women and Girls – Equality. Rights. Empowerment."

This selection provided a vital and high-level platform for ARF to engage directly with international policy discussions, connect with global gender equality advocates, and collaborate on strategies to drive meaningful change.

Aderonke utilized this opportunity to reflect on the current state of global progress:

*"We have made some inroads in women's and girls' rights over the eight decades since the United Nations was founded. However, there is still a lot more to be done to achieve gender equality rights for women and girls!"*

Aderonke Apata



*"We have made some inroads in women's and girls' rights over the eight decades since the United Nations was founded. However, there is still a lot more to be done to achieve gender equality rights for women and girls!"*

Following the delegation, ARF initiated a campaign to champion the call for Accelerated Action on Equality, Rights, and Empowerment, inviting supporters to formalize their commitment to the core themes discussed at the CSW69. This initiative broadened the reach of the UN's goals within our community and network.



## OUR RESPONSE TO THE RIOT

Throughout 2025, the safety of our service users was significantly jeopardized by a marked increase in threats from organized far-right and anti-immigration groups across the UK. These violent actions specifically targeted the hotel accommodations of people seeking asylum, placing many individuals at immediate risk of harm. Our organization took an alert stance and implemented high-alert safeguarding measures.

This involved using our WhatsApp communication channels to advise people to avoid specific high-risk areas or to shelter indoors.



### RIOT UPDATE

**In terms of practical next steps, this is an ongoing situation and we will be sharing more updates and consulting with relevant teams.**

#### VOLUNTEER SAFETY

There is no expectation of you to travel to the office or other locations if you feel unsafe to do so. Please inform a member of the staff team if you have concerns for your safety.

#### SIBLINGS SAFETY

Guidance has already been sent out through our WhatsApp groups, including signposting documents for siblings. We will provide further updates if we receive new intel, especially in relation to siblings living in asylum hotels.

#### YOUR WELLBEING

Protecting your own wellbeing is of the utmost importance throughout all of this, so please do speak to a member of staff if you need additional support or flexibility.

This immediate, clear-cut advice was a crucial method of safeguarding, especially for those with limited command of English or access to reliable news, ensuring that our entire team was mobilized and ready to action established safety protocols.

### RIOT SUPPORT

**Sadly, a group of far-right rioters have been attacking Home Office accommodation in recent days. If you feel unsafe and you have a trusted friend that you can stay with, we would recommend that you stay with them.**

**Try not to worry, police and UK government are working to stop these riots!**

**If you are struggling with your mental health, please let one of our staff team know so that we can offer support ❤️**

**If you feel unsafe in your accommodation or are at risk of harm, please:**

- 1. Contact the police on 999**
- 2. Contact the ARF Emergency Line on 07917 690954**



## THE WOMEN'S HOUR

The Women's Hour group was established in 2025, meeting twice monthly to provide a critical, safe, and collaborative space for women Siblings. The sessions successfully delivered a balance of emotional support (group therapeutic sessions, 1-2-1 counselling referrals), practical assistance (casework advice, urgent financial/winter aid), and integration support (employability workshops, cultural trips). The initiative has effectively addressed isolation and significantly boosted financial resilience and access to vital support services for its members.

### Key Activities and Impact

- Frequency: Meets twice per month (hybrid—online and in-person).
- Support Focus: Sessions are co-designed and range from sexual health information to cultural trips.
- Employability: Delivered a monthly employability workshop series (CV writing, interviews, financial advice). The last workshop saw over 60 women Siblings attend, demonstrating high engagement in poverty alleviation efforts.
- Welfare and Mental Health: Provided emergency support (food, winter clothes, welfare packs) and offered casework advice, signposting, and urgent referrals, including 6 women Siblings referred for accredited 1-2-1 counselling. Meals were provided at group therapeutic meetings to alleviate food poverty.
- Barrier Removal: Eliminated key barriers to attendance by reimbursing Siblings' and volunteers' travel costs.
- In person meetings 18

### Conclusion

The Women's Hour is a vital, well-attended, and highly effective program, successfully delivering holistic practical and emotional support to women Siblings.

**WOMEN'S URGENT  
SUPPORT FUND**



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

# 2025 AWARDS

**We were nominated for several awards in 2025 and are very proud of the notable recognitions we received during the year.**



### **Spirit of Manchester Awards 2025** ***Shortlist for Tackling Inequalities***

The Spirit of Manchester Awards, hosted by Macc, annually honor local voluntary organizations. They recognize groups making a significant, positive impact and demonstrating innovation in improving communities across the city.

### **National Diversity Awards 2025** ***Nominated Community Organisation Award LGBT***

The National Diversity Awards (NDA) 2025 is a prestigious annual event celebrating the UK's most inspiring diversity role models and community organizations. It honors those who show exceptional dedication to promoting equality, inclusion, and creating a more diverse society.



### **Heart of Salford 2025** ***Shortlisted for Large Community Group of the Year Award***

The Heart of Salford Awards 2025 celebrate the city's community sector. Being shortlisted for the Large Community Group of the Year Award is a significant honor, recognizing the organization's widespread positive impact and dedication to improving many lives in Salford.

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

# 2025 AWARDS



## DIVA Awards

### *Shortlisted for the Charity or Community Project of the Year Award*

Our CEO & Founder, Aderonke Apata, and Trustees Kristina and Kevin, attended the **DIVA Awards**—a celebration of LGBTQIA women and non-binary people. African Rainbow Family was shortlisted for the Charity or Community Project of the Year Award, recognising our dedicated work supporting LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum and refugees.

## Aderonke Apata Selected for UN Women CSW69

Aderonke Apata, CEO and Founder of African Rainbow Family, has been selected as a delegate for this year's UN Women UK Digital Participant at the 69th session of the **United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69)**.

The theme for this year's CSW is "For All Women and Girls – **Equality. Rights. Empowerment.**"

This opportunity enables ARF to connect and collaborate with global gender equality advocates to drive meaningful change.

Aderonke emphasized the need for Accelerated Action to achieve gender equality rights for all women and girls globally.



... These honours represent the highest points of a year defined by many recognitions for our staff and volunteers.



# ENGAGEMENT

## Windrush Initiatives

In June 2025, ARF Founder and CEO, **Aderonke Apata**, represented the organization at the National Windrush Museum Summit at the UK Home Office. Invited by **Seema Malhotra MP**, the Summit brought together **Windrush** elders, campaigners, the Home Secretary, and government officials for dialogue on the Windrush Scandal.

### Key Outcomes:

- **Justice & Reform:** Dialogue focused on change, support, and a shared commitment to meaningful reform.
- **Community Focus:** ARF ensured community voices and accountability remained central to discussions on past injustices.



On 18th June 2025, CEO **Aderonke Apata** attended a Prime Ministerial reception at **10 Downing Street**.

Discussions on the Windrush Generation and immigration policy were held with the Prime Minister, **Sir Keir Starmer**, the Home Secretary, and Minister **Seema Malhotra**.

### Key Outcomes:

- **Commitment to Justice:** The Prime Minister reaffirmed the commitment to rectifying Windrush Scandal injustices.
- **Future Work:** ARF will collaborate with the Windrush Commissioner, Reverend Clive Foster, toward achieving justice.

## ENGAGEMENT

### Launch of Lesbian Visibility Week at the House of Commons

In April 2025, our Founder & CEO, Aderonke Apata, and Trustee Kristina Martirosjana, attended the launch of **Lesbian Visibility Week (LVW) at the House of Commons**.

Hosted by **MP Kate Osbourne**, the event was organized by DIVA and the LGBT Foundation as the official kick-off to LVW.

Key Initiative: The reception included the launch of a new manifesto focused on IVF equality, a joint effort by **DIVA** and the **London Women's Clinic**.



### Kaleidoscope Trust Global LGBT+ Rights Reception



Our CEO, **Aderonke Apata**, attended the Kaleidoscope Trust and APPG Global LGBT+ Rights Pride Reception in Central London.

The event launched the **Global LGBTIQ+ Rights Commission**, a new body tasked with developing strategies to counter the global backlash against LGBTIQ+ communities.

Key Outcome: ARF affirmed solidarity with global leaders (MPs, diplomats, and activists) in supporting the Commission's work, which included the release of the Impact Analysis of the USAID Freeze on LGBTIQ+ Organisations.



# ENGAGEMENT

## Manchester Pride Flag-Raising Ceremony at Etihad Stadium

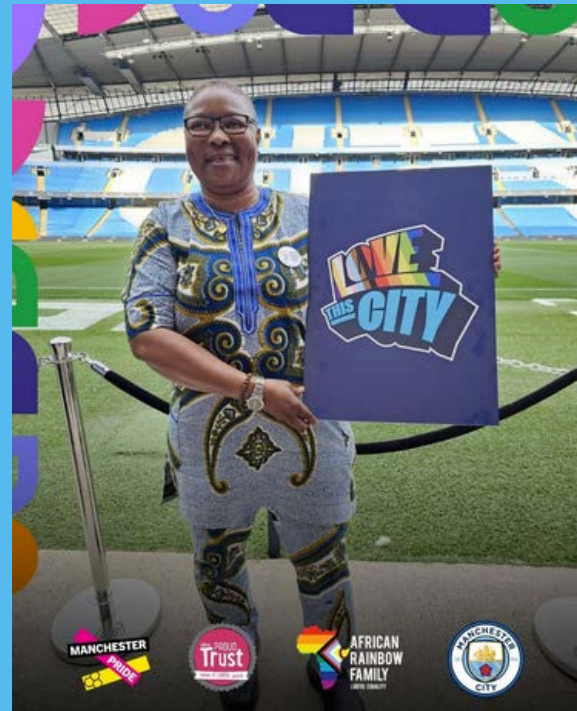
African Rainbow Family was represented by Founder and CEO, **Aderonke Apata**, at the annual **Manchester Pride** flag-raising ceremony held at the iconic Etihad Stadium, hosted by **Manchester City Football Club**.

The ceremony, which officially marked the start of Manchester Pride celebrations, saw the rainbow flag hoisted above the stadium as a powerful symbol of love, inclusivity, and solidarity for the LGBTIQ+ community.

### Key Engagement:

The event provided an important platform for engagement with key allies, including the Operations Manager for Etihad Stadium and Danny Wilson, Operations Director at Manchester City Football Club, whose commitment to diversity aligns with ARF's mission. Aderonke also connected with Rachel Williams, CEO of The Proud Trust, one of our key partners.

ARF's attendance highlighted our sustained commitment to standing in unity with the **LGBTIQ+ community** and amplifying the voices of LGBTIQ+ people, particularly those of African heritage and the Global Majority.





# ENGAGEMENT



### Engagement with Lloyds Banking Group Leadership

Aderonke Apata, Founder and CEO, represented African Rainbow Family at a dinner hosted by **Lloyds Bank Foundation (LBF)** on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at the Kimpton Clocktower Hotel in Manchester.

The event, arranged by LBF's Greater Manchester & Lancashire Manager, brought together regional leaders and was attended by **Sir Robin Budenberg, Chair of Lloyds Banking Group**. As one of the charities funded by LBF, this provided a key opportunity to discuss economic challenges, community priorities, and potential collaboration.

The dinner served to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders committed to driving positive social change across the UK. Attendees included Ehinor Otaigbe-Amedu (Wonderfully Made Woman), Ella Sips (LBF), Callum Jones (High Level Northern Trust), and Aderonke Apata (African Rainbow Family).



## ENGAGEMENT

### Manchester City Council LGBTIQ+ Summit: Advocating for People Seeking Asylum

On September 9, 2025, CEO Aderonke Apata spoke at the **Manchester City Council LGBTIQ+ Summit**.

Her address, focusing on the "Lived Experience of the Systemic Barriers Faced by LGBTIQ+ People Seeking Asylum," used her background as a former refugee to highlight the impact of hostile immigration policies.

Aderonke called for an urgent intersectional approach to dismantle institutional bias and demand freedom and justice for all LGBTIQ+ individuals, keeping the needs of people seeking asylum central to the equality agenda.



### Leigh Day Immigration Summit 2025: Panel Contribution



On April 29, 2025, CEO Aderonke Apata spoke at the **Leigh Day Immigration Summit**, on a panel addressing credibility assessment in asylum claims.

She highlighted key issues such as the culture of disbelief, trauma, and cultural misinterpretations. Solutions proposed included cultural sensitivity training and using tested interpreters.

The discussion covered the major impact of ARF's intervention in the **M.I. v Switzerland ECHR ruling**, which ended the discretion and concealment test for LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum in Europe.



# ENGAGEMENT

## Lloyds Banking Group Staff Rainbow Network

African Rainbow Family was honoured with an invitation from the **Lloyds Banking Group Staff Rainbow Network**.

We attended the Rainbow Network Event on 18 December at the Lloyds Banking Group office in London. We had the opportunity to raise awareness about the plights of **LGBTIQ+** people seeking asylum, especially the government's newly proposed heinous "Restoring Order and Control" policy. The support was overwhelming. We also had the privilege to network and of receiving their various other in-kind support.

Thank you to the organisers, and we look forward to taking this partnership working further to enhancing mutual benefits.





## PUBLICATIONS

### **Through Our Eyes: An Assessment of Home Office Asylum Casework for LGBTIQ+ Claimants**

In response to a call for evidence by the Independent Inspector of Borders and Immigration on asylum casework in July 2025, the African Rainbow Family conducted a survey with our service user population and frontline staff team titled, "Through Our Eyes: An Assessment of Home Office Asylum Casework for LGBTIQ+ People Seeking Asylum" ("Through Our Eyes Report").

The Through Our Eyes Report gathered insights from the 106 LGBTIQ+ survey respondents who are either currently seeking asylum or have been granted refugee status in the UK and three members of African Rainbow Family's staff team who work directly with our service users. The aim was to evaluate the fairness, accuracy, sensitivity, and transparency of Home Office asylum casework through the prism of asylum claimants and frontline staff working with them.

This executive summary highlights key findings and systemic concerns, it also identifies barriers affecting LGBTIQ+ claimants, and outlines clear recommendations for improving the asylum process in line with human rights and the principles of equity.



# ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

**Aderonke Apata as Guest Lecturer:  
University of London MA Programme**

**Gender and group identities in the refugee context:  
MA in Refugee Protection and Forced Migration Studies**

**Aderonke Apata**, CEO and founder of African Rainbow Family, served as a Guest Lecturer this past autumn for the University of London's MA in Refugee Protection and Forced Migration Studies.

Her lecture was featured in the module: "Gender and group identities in the refugee context."

The presentation contributed to Topic D: **Sexual orientation, gender identity and international protection** (which concluded in December).

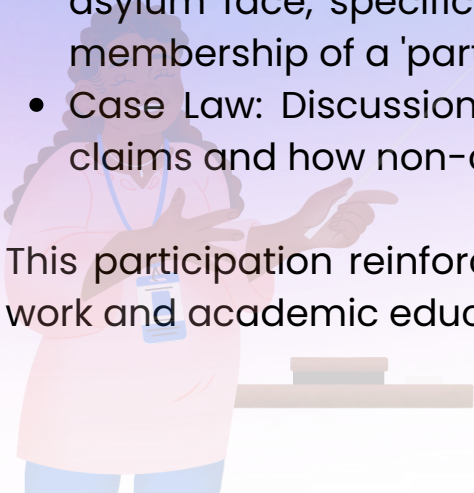
### **Lecture Overview:**

The session utilized ARF's frontline experience to provide students with practical analysis of SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) claims in international refugee law.

### **Key areas addressed included:**

- **Systemic Barriers:** Examining the challenges LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum face, specifically relating to issues of credibility and establishing membership of a 'particular social group.'
- **Case Law:** Discussion included the development of SOGI-based refugee claims and how non-conformist identities can lead to persecution.

This participation reinforces the crucial link between our practical advocacy work and academic education.





# THE DIFFERENCE WE MADE

Using data from our Annual  
Impact Survey, Dec 2025

in  
2025

We carried out an online survey between Wednesday 10th December and Friday 12th December 2025 with our Siblings. This was to capture their feedback on how they felt their experience with African Rainbow Family had been throughout 2025.

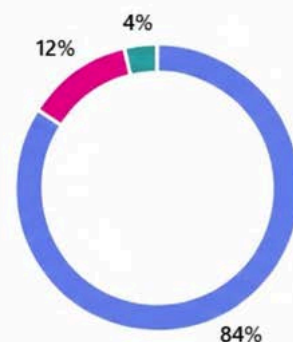


## OUR IMPACT

**We asked Siblings how satisfied they were with our services.**

**107 Siblings said:**

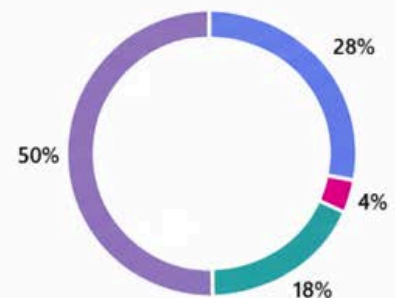
Very satisfied	90
Satisfied	13
Neutral	4
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0

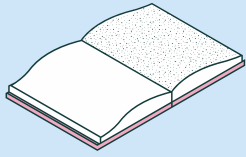


## OUR IMPACT

**When asked how being part of African Rainbow Family has impacted their asylum journey, they said:**

I have not sought support for my asylum journey from African Rainbow Family	30
It has not helped me at all	4
It has somewhat helped me	19
It has helped me significantly	54





## COMMENTS FROM OUR SIBLINGS

**V says:** "I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to Africa Rainbow Family for their incredible support throughout my asylum journey, I know I couldn't have reached it without your guidance, kindness, and solidarity. Thank you for standing with me and giving me hope."

**A says:** "Your acceptance and encouragement gave me strength and hope during one of the most challenging times of my life. You've been a true light in my life, reminding me that home is built on love and acceptance. Thank you for standing by me, believing in me, and helping me find safety and belonging. I am forever grateful for your generosity and the beautiful example of humanity you live every day."

"Your unwavering commitment, understanding, and compassion made a significant difference in my journey. In moments when I felt unheard and uncertain, the team stood beside me, not just as advocates, but as a family. Your support gave me hope, courage, and the strength to keep going." **G says**

"I am grateful for the person I've become and the freedom to live openly. Thank you to my incredible LGBTQ+ family for walking this journey with me and to my dear Mama Aderonke for your endless love and support." **J says**

"The asylum journey was not easy. There were nights I could not sleep, days when I felt invisible, and moments when it seemed like the system did not see my humanity. I struggled in silence, fought through trauma, and held on even when my hands were shaking. But I also found strength in unexpected places, in the kindness of strangers that I now know as siblings, in the support of African Rainbow Family, the family that stood beside me when I had no one, and in the courage I discovered within myself." **O says**



**D says:** "Your work at ARF and the kindness of its lovely members, makes a real difference in people's lives, you gave me hope when I needed it most, and for that, I will always be thankful."



# FEEDBACK FROM OUR PARTNERS

## Partnership Working



**The following quotes show the positive view that our partners have of ARF:**

**They made me feel welcomed**

**They were very accommodating, and have helped me gain a better understanding of immigration/ asylum services and the areas of improvement needed for people seeking asylum in the UK**

# THANK YOU

## TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS, ALLIES AND FRIENDS



We hope that this Annual Impact Report, 2025 has given our readers an insight into the goings-on of African Rainbow Family throughout 2025, if you would like to support us to continue our work, please consider donating via our website today

<https://africanrainbowfamily.org/donate/>