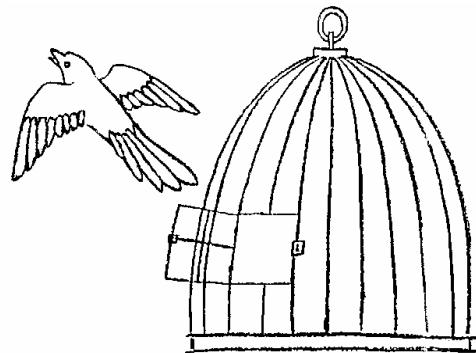


# KALAYAAN

justice for migrant domestic workers



## ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS APRIL 2006-MARCH 2007

St. Francis Centre, 13 Hippodrome Place, LONDON, W11 4SF  
Tel: + 44 (0)20 7243 2942 Fax: +44 (0)20 7792 3060  
[www.kalayaan.org.uk](http://www.kalayaan.org.uk) email: [info@kalayaan.org.uk](mailto:info@kalayaan.org.uk)  
Charity n. 1103847  
OISC n. N200100457

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## **CHAIR'S REPORT**

The most important aspect of Kalayaan's work this year has been our campaign to draw attention to the potentially disastrous impact that proposed government migration legislation would have on the employment conditions of migrant domestic workers in the UK. Kalayaan has worked closely with MDWs and the trade unions to inform the government and the general public of the fact that the proposals would immediately undo all the improvements that have come about since the new rules came into effect in 1998.

Kalayaan has continued to provide a range of advice and services to migrant domestic workers at the Centre and over the telephone. In particular the organisation increased the number of English classes and free legal advice sessions during the year. You will find detailed reports on all the activities elsewhere in the report. The high number of people who continue to access these services is testament to the work of the staff and volunteers, but also makes clear that the treatment of many domestic workers in this country remains unacceptable. This is particularly important at a time when UK government proposals for new immigration and work permit rules appear likely to worsen the status of migrant domestic workers.

At the beginning of 2007 it was agreed that the United Workers Association would move out of the St Francis Centre and since then Kalayaan has had sole tenancy of the Centre and this has begun to make clear the differences between the two organisations, although complete separation will take some time.

In 2006 Kalayaan was one of the six winners of a Centre for Social Justice award. These awards were given to small charities deemed to be carrying out exceptional work that needed more recognition and support.

Finally I would like to thank all the members of the Management Committee who have given up their time to support the work of Kalayaan during the year. I must also offer thanks to St Francis Church for continuing to rent us the St Francis Centre, which provides such an ideal space for the office and most of our activities.

# KALAYAAN AND MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS

## MDWs accessing services at Kalayaan

Kalayaan continues to provide advice, support and advocacy services to all migrant domestic workers regardless of nationality, gender, physical ability, age, religion or sexual orientation.

Migrant domestic workers are people who have entered the UK legally with an employer on a domestic worker visa to work in a private household.

Between April 2006 and March 2007, Kalayaan registered **340** new Migrant Domestic Workers (MDWs). The table below shows the percentage of new clients by nationality:

### New clients 2006-2007

Indian	34%
Filipino	29%
Sri Lankan	12%
Indonesian	8%
Nepalese	6%
Pakistani	3%
Nigerian	3%
Bangladeshi	1%

The remaining 6% percentage includes clients from:

Africa: Ethiopia, Ghana, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Tanzania, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco,

Middle East: Kuwait, Saudi, Lebanon, Lybia

South East Asia: Thailand, Mongolia, Burma

Latin America: Peru, Colombia, Honduras, Chile, Mexico

While the percentages for the top countries remain similar to previous years, we have registered a significant increase in the variety of nationalities, from a total of 18 different nations in 05-06 to 29 this year. Kalayaan is always keen to welcome clients from new countries, both as a means to enrich its multicultural environment and as a way to reach out to new communities. Word of mouth among people of the same nationality remains a strong means of advertising our services to domestic workers living in very isolated conditions.

Statistics also indicate a constant increase in male domestic workers registering: from 18% last year to 23% this year.

In the financial year 06-07, Kalayaan provided face-to-face advice and support services to a total of **2476** old and new service users. Of these, **84%** were women.

Our service users came from all boroughs in Greater London, with a significant majority living and working in Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Camden, Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham.

**Table of service users in 06-07 by borough:**

Brent	22%
K&C	13%
Camden	10%
Westminster	7%
Hammersmith and Fulham	6%
Croydon	4%
Ealing	4%
Bromley	4%
Hounslow	3%
Harrow	3%
Haringey	3%
Hackney	2%
Barnet	2%
Enfield	2%
Islington	2%
Wandsworth	2%

The remaining 11% is made up of smaller percentages of service users living in other London borough and by a 2% of MDWs living outside London. Kalayaan is keen to extend the benefits of its expertise to all MDWs in the UK, and some travel from other cities to use our services, particularly the advice sessions on Sundays. We also provided help and advice over the phone to nearly 2,000 callers from all over the UK.

## **Problems faced by MDWs**

Statistics collected upon registration of new clients confirm that MDWs continue to face situations of abuse as well as exploitative working conditions. The table below shows percentage of new clients reporting abuse, based on data collected upon registration.

### **Abuse reported by clients registered in the period April 06 – March 07**

Psychological abuse	69%
Physical abuse	24%
Sexual abuse	9%
Food deprivation	37%
No day or time off	68%
No meal breaks	66%
Not allowed out	61%
No own room	54%
No own bed	37%
16 hours or more per day	66%
Passport retention	32%

New clients reported situations of physical abuse such as employers hitting them, grabbing and shaking them, throwing things at them, spitting in their face, slapping them and pulling their hair. Domestic workers caring for children often report of being kicked and hit by them, even under the eyes of their parents, who don't reprimand them.

Forms of psychological abuse described by our clients included shouting and insults such as 'stupid' 'dirty' 'donkey' or 'dog', and threats to be thrown out or deported. Salary and food are also withdrawn as a means of punishment. Workers often describe these humiliations as 'being treated like an animal'.

The isolated nature of their work within their employers' private house, makes domestic workers particularly vulnerable to the risk of sexual abuse. Worryingly, this year we have registered a 7% increase in reports of sexual abuse. We fear that the percentage of victims might be even higher, as evidence collected during more in-depths interviews shows that this crime is highly underreported at the point of registration.

Lack of privacy is another recurrent problem for MDWs, and often linked to sexual abuse. The majority live in the employer's household and have no private space to which they can retire. Over half of the MDWs that we have registered don't have their own room and sleep in public areas such as the kitchen, the living-room or the children's bedroom. In some extreme cases MDWs are expected to sleep outside the employer's room, in order to be readily at service. Sleeping in a public area means that they have no protection against the men in the house's attempts to approach them. In addition, it means that sleep is interrupted by people entering the room for other purposes, or by children waking up. Many of the workers registered are expected to wake up in the middle of the night to attend to

any needs of the members of the household, like making hot drinks, bringing water, etc. Many MDWs don't even have a proper bed and have to sleep on cold floors, with serious consequences for their health.

In some cases the isolation of living and working within the private household becomes extreme and MDWs are not allowed to go out except when accompanying the employer. A significant number of newly registered clients reported being locked in when the employer leaves the house.

Many of the exploitative situations suffered by MDWs, such as unreasonably long working hours and salaries well below the National Minimum Wage, are linked to the fact that domestic work is often not perceived as 'real work'. On average, the MDWs we registered in this financial year, worked 17 hours per day. The average monthly salary is £236 per month. Nearly 70% of workers have no day off.

## **SERVICES PROVIDED**

Kalayaan continued to provide information and services to MDWs through face-to-face individual advice sessions and through regular workshops. All advice sessions are confidential.

MDWs are normally offered one-hour-long individual advice sessions. Although they will be seen without appointment in an emergency situation, we normally encourage our service users to make an appointment, so that we can ensure we can dedicate the appropriate amount of time to their questions and problems.

All new clients go through a standard registration process, during which they receive information regarding the terms of their domestic worker visa and the procedure for its renewal. The session also includes an introduction to their employment rights in the UK. Most people that approach Kalayaan for the first time are not aware of their rights in the UK, and this initial session often represents a breakthrough towards regaining control of their lives. For many MDWs this is a sensitive and emotional time, since this is often the first time they have been able to talk about the abuse they have experienced.

This year Kalayaan has provided face-to-face advice on immigration and employment issues to an average of 25 MDWs per week (one-hour sessions). Kalayaan's objective is to give its service users the information and support needed for them to take as much control of their life as possible. During advice sessions the advisor discusses the situation with the workers, and informs them of their rights and responsibilities. Once the situation has been assessed and discussed, Kalayaan's policy is to encourage MDWs to decide themselves which option they wish to pursue, rather than offering them solutions.

A great achievement accomplished thanks to the Oak Foundation grant has been to be able to translate key literature in six community languages: Hindi, Tagalog, Tamil, Singhalese, Malayalam and Arabic. This material consists of:

- Kalayaan leaflet with description of services
- Information on immigration rights
- Information on employment rights
- Leaflet on how to renew the visa

Having literature in relevant languages allows us to ensure that even clients with little knowledge of the English language can have direct access to vital information about their rights in the UK, decreasing their dependence from a third person acting as interpreter.

## **Accessing Immigration Rights**

Kalayaan is authorised, by the Office of Immigration Service Commissioner (OISC), to provide immigration advice and services. Our exemption number is: N200100457. All advisors at Kalayaan have received training on immigration issued and have been conferred exemption to give Level 1 immigration advice by the OISC.

Kalayaan ensured that all MDWs attending the centre understood the terms of their visa and the responsibility of applying for visa renewal in time and the procedure to follow. In addition, regular updates were given by staff to our service users on all relevant news, including change of forms, fees, and procedures for Indefinite Leave to Remain and citizenship applications.

### **Legal surgeries**

Thanks to the generous support of several immigration solicitors, Kalayaan was able to continue to offer four free legal surgeries per month. The surgeries are held at the most convenient times for MDWs: two Sundays and two evenings a month. On average, 25 clients per month benefited from this service.

Kalayaan wishes to thank the following solicitors for giving us their time and expertise:

Adrian Seelhoff at White Ryland Solicitors

Chris Randall and Peter Moss at Bates, Wells and Braithwaite Solicitors

Lawrence Lupin and colleagues at Lawrence Lupin Solicitors

Sunny Leong at Sunny Leong & Co. Solicitors & Notary Public

## **Support with passport retention**

During the period April 06-March 07, Kalayaan assisted 109 new clients whose passports had been withheld by their employers. Passport retention causes serious problems to migrant domestic workers, including:

- Lack of official identification and/or knowledge of immigration status. At worst, this can lead to arrest, detention and incorrect deportation. It can also lead to the worker becoming an overstayer due to the visa expiring unknowingly.
- Abuse and exploitation, since MDWs feel unable to leave employers without their passports. Retaining a worker's passport confers power and enables the employer to intimidate workers and subject them to unacceptable working conditions.
- Difficulties accessing essential services including healthcare, education, financial services, legal services, emergency housing or refuges.

Kalayaan tackles this issue on two levels: it offers practical help to individual MDWs whose passport has been withheld, but it also works to raise awareness on the issue and develop a strategy against this problem together with the police force.

In terms of direct assistance to clients in this situation, Kalayaan begins with contacting the British Embassy that issued the visa, so as to obtain proof of entry clearance, a vital document for someone left with no other way of proving their

legality in the UK. We also contact the employer in writing, requesting the return of the passport to us or the embassy of the worker. If employers do not respond within 7 working days, workers are then accompanied to report the retention to the Police as theft. The Police provide a crime reference number, which enables workers to apply for a new passport if necessary. In spite of being the victim, going to the Police station is often a rather intimidating experience by our service users, both because of language barriers and because of the fear that ‘the police will catch you and deport you if you run away’ that employers have instilled in them. Kalayaan ensures that MDWs are always accompanied by a trained volunteer. We owe our gratitude to all the volunteers who have helped MDWs make this important step towards reclaiming their rights: Camilla Skoglie, Justyna Muller, Jennifer Makin; and Hannah Baker.

Thanks to the support of Chukwudum Ikeazor, Refugees & Asylum Seeker Desk, Diversity & Citizen Focus Directorate, Metropolitan Police, significant progress has been made in raising awareness of the issue among the police force. Following discussion with Chukwudum Ikeazor and Michael O’Hanlon, it has been agreed to hold an Awareness Raising Day with the Metropolitan Police on 10th May 2007. Borough commanders have been invited to this event, where issues will be raised about problems MDWs experience, with a particular focus on passport retention. In addition to raising awareness, the aim of the event is to have policy makers within the police force to produce recommendations for stations.

### **Accessing Employment Rights**

Kalayaan provides employment rights support and advocacy to MDWs through face to face advice, advocacy work and negotiation with employers, referral to Law Centres and Trade Unions, and workshops.

Advice on employment issues includes providing information on their rights as workers in the UK, including National Minimum Wage, time off and holiday entitlements, right to maternity leave, etc. Kalayaan also assists MDWs with getting a NI number, negotiating with employers for payment of tax and NI, and making National Minimum Wage claims.

Thanks to the support of the LVSC and of the TUC, Kalayaan ran a two-day training course on employment law, specifically tailored for MDWs. The ‘Knowing Your Rights at Work’ training ran on the 9th and 16th July 2006, two consecutive Sundays (often the only day off for MDWs), from 9.30am to 4.40pm. It was facilitated by Jonathan Jefferies, TUC. The course was attended by a total of 27 MDWs. The course was extremely successful and achieved the following outcomes:

- In oral feedback and on evaluation forms, a great number of the participants reported that they are better aware of their rights at work and the support available to access these rights. Participants agreed to meet regularly to see how they can offer support to each other and to other more vulnerable workers to defend their rights at work.
- All MDWs who attended the course reported that they had a better understanding of how trade unions can support them and many expressed an interest in getting more involved in the Union.
- MDWs were able to share practical experiences of dealing with problems they had experienced at work.
- The course allowed staff to develop their understanding of the employment problems faced by MDWs and this understanding will be used to adapt the training for future use as well as to help Kalayaan and the T&G to offer further support to MDWs.

## **Accessing Employment**

MDWs who have escaped abusive situations are in urgent need of finding another job, not only for their subsistence and accommodation, but also to comply with the terms of their visa and to be able to apply for visa renewal. Unfortunately language barriers and limited knowledge of the employment system in the UK often make it difficult for MDWs to get back into work.

Kalayaan supports MDWs by collecting details from potential employers who know Kalayaan and contact us with available positions. While we are careful not to represent ourselves as a job agency, we do accept to display good positions that comply with UK employment law.

This year we reviewed the way in which the job service is run. Previously workers had to attend a workshop on Monday, during which they were individually assisted to choose one job from the folder. That job was then removed from the folder for a week, to give that worker a chance to attend an interview. However, due to the high number of job seekers, not everybody could receive details of a job, and we had to operate on a lottery basis. While this system guaranteed a higher level of individual assistance, it also meant that some did not get the chance to see any jobs. In addition, the service was only available to people who could attend the workshop on Mondays. In consultation with the clients, it was therefore decided that the jobs would simply be displayed in the public area, and the board would remain available every day of the week. Job seekers could apply for any job on display. In order to ensure that those with less language or reading skills would still be able to use the service, a volunteer is available on Tuesdays to assist them with reading ads and contacting employers. Feedback from service users has been very positive: people feel they have more chances as they can contact several employers each week, and they can come to look at the board on whatever day of the week suits them best.

Thanks to the help of several volunteers, Kalayaan has also continued to assist MDWs with writing CVs.

While the job service prioritise people who are still on the domestic worker visa, Kalayaan is also aware of the needs of those who have settled in the UK but are still unsure of their next career step. In partnership with the Red Kite Learning Project, Kalayaan has been able to provide a weekly ESOL class and weekly advice session at Kalayaan for women with ILR who are either unemployed or part-time employed to support them back into work. Service users have been helped access free training and employment opportunities. Many thanks to Sarah Oakley-Hill and Victoria Topley, who successfully ran this project throughout the year.

## **Emergency Accommodation**

Securing emergency accommodation for MDWs continued to be a challenge in 06-07. Domestic worker visa holders have no recourse to public funds. This restriction closes off access to the majority of housing providers and hostels.

During the year we continued to develop more contacts with members of the community and religious organisations who can provide more unrestricted support. We assisted a total of 13 homeless domestic workers, in some cases by paying for short-term accommodation provided by former clients and other trusted members of the community, in others through referral to the Home of Peace. Unfortunately our limited funds only allow us to offer 1-2 weeks emergency accommodation, and the average permitted stay at the Home of Peace is also one week. It is therefore extremely important that in this short time clients are offered individual assistance with finding another live-in job.

However, there are situations in which women have been through very traumatic experiences and need a longer period of recovery before they can get back into work. In this financial year Kalayaan assisted two particularly vulnerable women: one had just escaped a very violent and threatening employer; the other was undocumented and alternated periods of homelessness with occasional jobs in return for shelter. In the first case, we secured her a place in a refuge for victims of domestic violence. The refuge normally only accepts women with recourse to public funds, but thanks to our close relation with the Southall Black Sisters and Amnesty UK (Violence against Women), who supported our referral, she was accepted. In the case of the undocumented domestic worker, we were able to secure longer support from the Home of Peace, who not only guaranteed her a 3-month stay, but is also assisting us with finding other religious organisations that might offer help afterwards.

Kalayaan has been increasingly involved in raising awareness of the issue of MDWs as victims of domestic violence at the hands of their employers, and has participated in policy forums and debates organised by the Women's Resource Centre (WRC) and Southall Black Sisters (SBS). As a result, the issue of MDWs has been included in the joint campaign for the abolition of the 'no recourse to public funds' requirement for women who experience domestic violence. The current definition of domestic violence, as given in the WRC and SBS publication '*How can I support her? Domestic violence, immigration and women with no recourse to public fund's*', includes 'violence in the context of marriage, employment or trafficking'.

## **HEALTH PROJECT**

In 2004 Kalayaan began a three-year Health Project funded by the Kings Fund.

Whilst MDWs have the 'right' to access the NHS and other services, they often face multiple barriers as speakers of another language: as members of a BME group; as 'live-in' workers dependent on their employer for accommodation, immigration status and employment; as workers who work unsociable hours and often in isolation. For some workers this can leave them particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

It is vital to understand the holistic experience of MDWs before we can understand their relationship to health. The Kings Fund project was specifically aimed at promoting knowledge of health and health issues; promoting knowledge of the NHS and facilitating access to its services; targeting the needs of particularly vulnerable workers i.e. newly-arrived MDWs or workers with limited English skills; and to support those with mental health needs. Importantly, the health project also served as a means to raise awareness of MDWs with health professionals and through networking with health fora.

Throughout the entire project there were evident reoccurring themes. Firstly, health was always a secondary or tertiary concern for MDWs. Employment, immigration status and accommodation would always be the prime concerns and it was for these reasons that MDWs came to Kalayaan. Health must be understood in relation to these concerns and the work done on health would always need to factor this in and be understood holistically.

Secondly, MDWs often experience high levels of stress, anxiety and depression. The isolation from their families and the pressures put upon them to send remittances home, coupled with their uncertain immigration status and experiences of abuse, provide a life of constant uncertainty. The constant preference elicited by MDWs for managing their mental health was for community activities such as English classes and exercise classes. The community and health fair stands out as a real success of the health project in bringing these needs together.

Thirdly, over the course of the project, MDWs encountered increasing barriers in accessing primary health care. The report published in 2004 'National Health Service (Charge to Overseas Visitors)(Amendment) Regulations' added to the normal barriers of language, lack of proof address (i.e. utility bills) and served to create a climate of almost xenophobic hostility to all migrants. Misinterpretation of the term 'ordinarily resident', the status applied to MDWs, seemed central to the debate. In response to these increased barriers there was an increased demand for advocacy work on both an individual and policy level.

Worryingly, the potential implications of the proposed changes in legislation on the health of MDWs are nothing short of devastating. As business visitors, MDWs will not be ordinarily resident in the UK. They will have no right to access healthcare in this country. If they run away, their illegal status will make accessing the NHS a virtual impossibility.

## **Health and Community Fair**

As part of the Health project, a half-day Health & Community Fair was held on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2006. The purpose was to have a fun day at which information about healthcare is made available to domestic workers. Health organisations and health professionals were invited to give information about their services and to support workers to access primary health care. An osteopath, a dietitian and representatives from Medicins du Monde attended.

We recorded a total number of 80 MDWs who attended the event, with a good range of nationalities represented:

India	27
Sri Lanka	10
Indonesia	9
Philippines	7
Nigeria	2
Pakistan	2
Egypt	2
Ivory Coast	1
Mongolia	1
Morocco	1



MDWs attending the Health and Community Fair

Fun activites included a tombola, an aerobics session with a volunteer instructor and a Salsa and Merengue dance demonstration. All of the MDWs attending the event participated enthusiastically in the exercise and dancing.

Home cooking was provided by workers of three nationalities, so hat there were three stalls with Filipino, Indian and African food available for free to all attendees.



MDWs attending the Health and Community Fair

### **Aerobics Classes**

Thanks to a Sports Relief Grant, Kalayaan was able to offer aerobics classes to migrant domestic workers. The classes were run on Sundays to guarantee maximum accessibility.

Attendees gave very positive feedback: they found the class an opportunity not only to improve their physical wellbeing, but also an opportunity to socialise and make new friends in a different context.

**ACCESSING SKILLS:**  
**ESOL (English For Speakers Of Other Languages)**  
**AND VOLUNTEER-RUN ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLASSES**

The number of ESOL classes available at Kalayaan have increased over the last year- in response to demand for classes and particularly for those classes which are accessible to all workers. We continue to work with Workers Education Association and Kensington & Chelsea College to run 4 accredited classes every Sunday which continue to be incredibly popular with learners. However, due to their funding restrictions, Workers Education Association and Kensington & Chelsea College are unable to accept students who have been in the UK for less than 3 years. This means that the most recently arrived workers are unable to access these classes despite being potentially the most in need of English lessons. They are less likely to speak any English and stand to benefit most from the classes- not only in terms of learning English and so be better equipped to learn about their rights and entitlements in the UK, access services and have more employment options but also from having some time for personal development, from meeting other MDWs and developing friends and networks.

In response to this need, Kalayaan now runs three additional classes taught by volunteers. As these classes are not run by a college they are not accredited but still provide a valuable opportunity to learn English, develop confidence and meet other workers.

Most MDWs work very long hours. This has implications for all services provided at Kalayaan and means that nearly all the demand for English classes is on Sunday- usually the only day off (if any!) MDWs have. Due to restrictions on space two of the volunteer run classes are on weekday evenings but attendance is far lower due to work commitments of potential students.

**English classes at Kalayaan:**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>
Tuesday	7.30-9pm volunteer run
Thursday	7-9pm volunteer run
Sunday	10am -1pm Volunteer run
Sunday	1-3pm Workers Education Association
Sunday	3-5 WEA
Sunday	1-3.30pm Kensington & Chelsea College
Sunday	3-5pm K&C

Each week around 90 MDWs access English classes at Kalayaan

Due to high demands for activities to be run on Sundays (the day most MDWs have off) we rent space for the WEA and the K&C ESOL classes at a community centre 5 mins walk from Kalayaan. This has been working well and we have now successfully secured funding to cover venue costs for the 4 college run ESOL classes for the next two years, enabling us to commit to the learners and our college partners that the classes can continue.

We especially need to thank all the dedicated teachers who volunteer to teach the English classes. They all work in their free time with little support to provide popular classes which are really valued by the learners. During 2006-07 Gillian Doherty has volunteered to teach the Tuesday evening class, Tara Orlanes- Angelopoulou has

volunteered on Thursday evenings until she left to have her baby Andreas Sebastian Angelopoulos. Many congratulations to Tara! We would also like to thank Carola Addington who took over the Thursday evening class from Tara.

An especially big thank you to Simon Ryan for giving up his weekends to teach the Sunday morning English classes.



Students attending the English classes

## **COMMUNITY RESEARCH PROJECT**

### **WHO CARES? : RESEARCHING THE NEEDS OF MIGRANT CARERS**

In January 2007, Kalayaan recruited a new staff member, Lourdes Gordolan, to start a new community research project. This project, funded by the Big Lottery Fund, and done in collaboration with the Centre on Migration, Policy, and Society (COMPAS) in Oxford, is designed to examine the needs of migrant carers and provide much needed statistics and qualitative information about this seeming invisible workforce. Throughout the project's two-year duration, 50 migrant carers of different nationalities will undergo in-depth interviews in order to help thresh out the following research questions:

1. What role do migrants play in the provision of elder care among London households?
2. Do migrant elder carers share particular characteristics (i.e. overrepresentation within sample of specific immigration status, nationality, age, gender, etc.)?
3. What are the living and working conditions of migrant carers?
4. How do migrant carers negotiate their working and living conditions with their employers and the relatives of their employers?
5. How does race and racism impact the recruitment and employment of migrant carers?
6. Based on our findings, what strategies should be adopted to promote the social inclusion of migrant carers?

#### **Activity update: January – March 2007 by Lourdes Gordolan**

The project officially began on the 16 of January 2007, when I joined Kalayaan as a full-time staff member. Rooting the project within Centre meant first learning about the Centre's administrative and community functions. The first quarter was spent establishing my presence at the Centre as a new staff member, and meeting and developing linkages with migrants who frequented Kalayaan. I received training on how to register new migrants and completed an OISC Level 1 course on how to give immigration advice, which will be developed further as registration of new migrants continues. I likewise participated -- though tangentially -- with other Kalayaan activities, such as the campaign against the new Home Office Proposals for Migrant Domestic Workers.

In addition to learning about Kalayaan and its activities, the first quarter was devoted to setting the groundwork for the project, and integrating it within the other work of the Centre. The staff was exceptional in their support, understanding, and advice during this process. Activities devoted specifically to the project included writing project briefings, buying computer software, and planning out the project website. Background material on the social care sector and migrant labour was collected, and the project's Advisory Board and Stakeholder members were finalized. All information about the project, including its background, findings, progress, and future plans, will be housed in the website, which we are hoping to launch before the end of 2007.

## CAMPAIGN

In the financial year 06-07, Kalayaan increased its campaign work against the government proposals to change the domestic worker visa, as part of its new immigration strategy. The Home Office paper on the new points-based migration system, presented to Parliament in March 2005, did not make reference to MDWs. However, at a meeting on 10th March 2006, the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) presented their proposals to Kalayaan. The government proposes to:

- Discontinue the current domestic worker visa
- Continue to bring migrant domestic workers to the UK but on an amended business visitor visa.
- This visa will have a maximum duration of six months with no option to extend or renew
- Workers entering the UK on this visa will no longer have the right to change employers
- Workers entering the UK on this visa may not be recognised as workers under UK law
- Workers entering the UK on this visa will no longer have any route to settlement

These proposals raise serious concerns including:

**Legalising trafficking for forced labour:** the removal of the right to change employer or renew the visa will make it virtually impossible for any MDW to challenge any maltreatment or abuse. These changes would dramatically increase the power the employer holds over the worker facilitating abuse. Of MDWs who registered at Kalayaan during 06-07, 32% had their passport kept from them by their employer, 69% had experience psychological abuse and 99% were expected to be 'on call' to work at any time of the day or night.

**The removal of any option to challenge or to leave an exploitative or abusive employer** is in direct contravention to the Home Office stated policy to protect victims of trafficking.

**Facilitating an increase in abuse and illegality:** Removing the right to change employers and to renew their visa, plus potentially making employers responsible for ensuring that the mdw leaves the UK at the end of six months, will further increase the power the employer has over the worker. As well as increases in levels of abuse more mdws will be forced into illegality through escaping abuse or having being forced to overstayer by their employer. Once an overstayer, the worker will be more vulnerable than ever to those who wish to take advantage of their illegal status.

**Removing access to UK employment law:** Despite the proposed visa being granted to allow the applicant to enter the UK for the purposes of work in a private household it is now uncertain as to whether MDWs will be recognised as workers under the new scheme. Even were this recognition to be granted it would not be possible in practise to access UK employment law within the six months allowed and without the right to find alternative employment. As soon as a worker leaves an employer under the proposed scheme they will be homeless and destitute with no right to work to support themselves.

The Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) pledged their support for MDWs and opposition to the government's proposals as soon as they were announced. In particular, we would like to express our gratitude to Diana Holland, TGWU National Organiser for Women, Race and Equalities, whose support has been invaluable to raising the profile of the campaign. Her commitment to fighting for and defending the rights of MDWs in the UK has remained unstinting since she fought alongside Kalayaan in the 90s to win MDWs their current rights.

The campaign is also supported by Anti-Slavery International, Amnesty International UK and the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI), among others.

Among the most significant campaign events that took place in this period, we would like to highlight:

-A platform at the T&G Women's Conference on 30.06.06, where a domestic worker spoke about her personal experience to the delegates

-A Multilingual campaign meeting attended by 120 MDWs, hosted at T&G Transport House on 03.09.06. Presentations on the proposals and focus groups to discuss campaign strategy and responses were held in six languages: English, Hindi, Tagalog, Singhalese, Arabic, Indonesian.

-A Campaign Day at the T&G Transport House attended by over 300 MDWs on 04.03.07. There were some excellent speeches from Diana Holland, Chris Randall, immigration solicitor, and Ruby Lopes, a migrant domestic worker. We were particularly grateful to Barbara Roche, the minister responsible for implementing the changes to the MDW visa in 1998, who gave a speech to express her support to the current campaign. The afternoon also split into different workshops focusing on letter writing to MPs (over 70 MDWs wrote letters), public speaking, media work and an art workshop.

- A MDW was invited to speak with Frances O'Grady (TUC) and Diana Holland at the TGWU Women's Conference in Eastbourne on 30.06.06. Her speech on the proposed changes to the immigration rules was received extremely positively by the delegates.

-Kalayaan gave evidence at the Joint Committee on Human Rights Enquiry into Human Trafficking, on 29/06/06, highlighting how the proposed changes would significantly increase the risk of domestic workers being trafficked for labour exploitation

-On 07/02/07, Chris McCafferty MP tabled EDM 860 calling for current protections for migrant domestic workers to remain in place. The EDM has received cross-party support, and it has been signed by 97 MPs

-Kalayaan also attended the TUC annual conference in Scarborough on 15.03.07 and spoke at a fringe meeting with one MDW. Barbara Roche and Diana Holland (T&G) spoke passionately about the campaign.

-Kalayaan is part of the NGO Advisory Group on Trafficking for Labour exploitation set up by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform of the Home office, and also sits on the Asylum and Migration Subgroup of the Women's National Commission

-As part of our lobbying activities, we met with Vernon Coaker, John Battle MP and Lord Hylton to discuss issues arising from the proposed changes to the immigration rules



Ruby Lopes speaks at the Campaign Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 07 – Photo by Uri Sadeh



MDWs attending the Campaign Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 07 – Photo by Uri Sadeh



MDWs at the Art workshop during the Campaign Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 07 – Photo by Uri Sadeh

## **Leadership and Community Building**

Kalayaan strongly believes that MDWs should own the campaign against the government's proposals to change the domestic worker visa, and in doing so remove many of their rights. For this reason we have been working to encourage workers to take on an active role in speaking out about their experiences. This includes running training in rights and in media work and awareness raising events as well as working with individual workers to support them to speak at conferences or to the media. We pay tribute to the workers who have taken on leadership roles and spoken out.

English classes are an important part of community building among MDWs at Kalayaan, providing an opportunity for workers of all nationalities to come together and share information and experiences. In addition, improved English allows workers independence from their employers as well as to become better informed about their rights and opportunities within the UK. The continued growth of the English classes at Kalayaan is testimony to the success of these groups.

We have also continued to build on and to develop our links with the TGWU. The union has been looking at the ways in which it can support workers including training workers as collectors and organisers and giving the use of Transport House as a Sunday training and meeting venue. The TGWU has ensured that the voices of MDWs are heard within the union as well as at a policy level, giving workers the opportunity to speak at numerous meetings and fringe events.

## **MDWs and the Trade Unions**

As a result of their involvement in the campaign, more MDWs have expressed an interest in joining the T&G union. The issue of membership was hard to tackle: migrant domestic workers often have very little income. In addition, most don't have bank accounts and find it difficult to ensure they can keep up with the regular payment of fees.

Thanks to the work of Diana Holland and David Turnbull, T&G Regional Organiser, it was confirmed that MDWs would be eligible for a special low membership fee. In addition, arrangements were made to train a domestic worker to answer workers' questions about membership and to collect fees at Kalayaan, to enable MDWs with no bank account to pay their membership fee weekly in cash. A T&G membership desk is set up at Kalayaan every Monday, the day when most clients are in the centre for their job search. Kalayaan wishes to thank Ruby Lopes for taking on this important role of membership collector.

## MEDIA WORK

In its efforts to raise awareness of the campaign, Kalayaan has considerably increased its work with the media. Articles about the campaign featured in:

-Britain's Streets of Slavery: This BBC series puts the spotlight on unpaid carers, migrant workers, domestic servants and human trafficking in the streets of modern Britain. Broadcast on 31 March 06

-'Suburban Slaves' Article published in Real Magazine 28th April -12 May 06 issue.

-‘Middle East Crisis: Thousands of domestic workers are caught up in the crisis’. The Guardian. July 24 2006

-‘Small community organisations deliver big returns’ Bob Holman: The Glasgow Herald 11th July 06

‘Slavery in the UK’ The Independent 27th December 2006

‘Serves us right if the domestics turn dirty’ Cristina Odone, The Observer, January 21, 2007

‘Migrant workers stand to lose their rights’ Nigel Morris, Home Affairs Correspondent. Published: 02 March 2007 The Independent

‘Immigration rules to leave unskilled workers in the lurch’ Anasudhin Azeez 4 March 2007, Khaleej. Times Online

-‘London's twenty-first-century slave trade’ Rebecca Taylor, Time Out, March 2007

-‘Incredibly, we are about to legalise modern domestic slavery again’ Madeleine Bunting, The Guardian Comment and Debate, 26th March 2007

Polly Billington’s Report on planned changes to the rules for Migrant Domestic Workers. The Today Programme, Radio 4. 28th March 2007 6.52am

The issue of MDWs also featured in two exhibitions:

-St Paul’s Cathedral hosted an exhibition Slave Britain: New Photography Exhibition explores today’s growing trade in human lives. This featured some photographs of MDWs, in support of the campaign.

-The Oxo Tower hosted an exhibition Forgotten but not Gone: Slavery and Resistance 200 years after abolition from 21 March – 15 April 07. This also featured some stories of MDWs who had suffered abuse and exploitation at the hands of their employers.

## STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

### Staff

**Rita Gava – Projects Co-ordinator.**

**Kate Roberts - Community Support Worker.**

**Camilla Brown - Health Worker.** Camilla's Health Project finished in Dec 06, and she then continued her work at Kalayaan as Community Support Worker

**Lourdes Gordolan – Community Researcher**

### Volunteers

Kalayaan wishes to thank all its invaluable volunteers:

**Sr Hilda Kenny**, our longest-standing volunteers, who continues to make Tuesdays special with her warm presence and her practical and emotional support to workers at the centre.

**Aodh O'Halpin** for his passionate involvement in all campaign activities

**Aziz Abou El Mjamar** for his great assistance in the office, his translation work and his help at events for workers

**Camilla Skoglie, Hannah Baker, Jennifer Makin, and Justyna Muller**, for their help and support to workers, especially in accompanying them to embassies and police stations.

**Sr Archana** and **Sr Leela Roselin**, of the order of the Franciscan Servants of Mary , who came from France to volunteer for a month at Kalayaan and offered invaluable support both with office work and with interpreting for clients and assisting them.

Kalayaan also wishes to thank the following volunteers for dedicating their evening and Sunday time to run classes for our clients:

**Carola Addington, Gillian Doherty, Simon Ryan and Tara Orlanes-Angelopoulou**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Income for the year of **£186,253** was more than double the previous year, mainly due to the large increase in restricted funds raised for Kalayaan's work and to the phasing of some grants. Total expenditure of **£123,726** for the year was **£9,404** above the previous year. The standstill was due to the fact that there was no staff turnover during the year and delays in beginning the new research project. In consequence Kalayaan's accounts for the financial year 2006/7 showed a surplus of £62,797, made up of a surplus of £57,479 on restricted funds and a surplus of £5,318 on unrestricted funds. The organisation's free reserves remain very low at £11,812, which is less than two months of core costs.

The Management Committee would like to extend its thanks to all the donors and funders who have enabled Kalayaan to continue to provide support and services to migrant domestic workers throughout the year. Such support comes not only as financial contributions, but also in the voluntary support so freely given by members, volunteers, solicitors, trade unions and religious organisations. In the financial year 2006/7 we would particularly like to thank the following:

Kings Fund: the Fund made the final payments of a two-year grant towards the costs of employing a health advice worker.

Oak Foundation: continuing grant for the costs of advice and support work.

City Parochial Foundation: grant towards the costs of advice and support work.

Tudor Trust: grant towards the costs of advice and support work.

Henry Smith Charity: grant towards the costs of advice and support work.

Big Lottery Fund: research work on MDWs and care work.

Mercers Foundation: grant towards community support work.

Centre for Social Justice: donation towards Kalayaan's work.

Sports Relief: support for aerobic classes.

We are also grateful for the many other generous donations that we have received.

A full picture of Kalayaan's accounts for the year may be found in the figures provided in the financial statements at the end of this annual report.

## Thanks

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***Kalayaan wishes to thank all those who have supported its work  
April 2006- March 2007***

*Thanks to our fantastic Management Committee members for their constant support:*

David Ould – Chair and Treasurer  
Natasha David - Secretary  
Beth Herzfeld  
Emma Newcombe  
Mahani Rajak  
Mara Stankovich  
Margaret Healy  
Melanie Vilano  
Myriam Cherti  
Poonam Joshi  
Padma Devla  
Rickey Denton  
Viviane Abayomi Noutai  
Virgie Canada  
Rachel Witkin

*Thanks to our staff team:*

Camilla Brown - Health Project Worker  
Kate Roberts, Community Support Worker  
Lourdes Gordolan – Community Researcher  
Rita Gava - Projects Co-ordinator

*Thanks to our invaluable, hard-working volunteers:*

Sr Hilda Kenny  
Father Aodh O'Halpin  
Aziz Abou El Mjamar  
Camilla Skoglie, Hannah Baker, Jennifer Makin, and Justyna Muller  
Sr Archana and Sr Leela Roselin  
Carola Addington, Gillian Doherty, Simon Ryan and Tara Orlanes-Angelopoulou

*Thanks to our English classes providers and their teachers:*

Kensington and Chelsea College and Claudia Lozano  
Workers Education Association (WEA) and Tahra Actar

*Thanks to the solicitors who ran free legal surgeries at Kalayaan*

Adrian Seelhoff at White Ryland Solicitors  
Chris Randall and Peter Moss at Bates, Wells and Braithwaite Solicitors  
Lawrence Lupin, and colleagues at Lawrence Lupin Solicitors  
Sunny Leong at Sunny Leong & Co. Solicitors & Notary Public

*Thanks to our generous Funders and Donors, who make our work possible*

St. Francis Centre, 13 Hippodrome Place, LONDON, W11 4SF  
Tel: + 44 (0)20 7243 2942 Fax: +44 (0)20 7792 3060  
[www.kalayaan.org.uk](http://www.kalayaan.org.uk) email: [info@kalayaan.org.uk](mailto:info@kalayaan.org.uk)  
Charity n. 1103847