



# IMPACT REPORT

## 2024/25



My name is Abdisamad, and my journey with Safe Passage International began as a client. The organisation not only provided me with the legal assistance I needed but also gave me hope and a sense of belonging during one of the most challenging times of my life. I'm very happy to introduce the 2024 Impact Report to share our activities with you.

In July 2023, I began my active involvement with Safe Passage as a Young Leader (a youth advocacy group for 16-25 year olds with lived experience of seeking safety) and now I am part of the Expert by Experience Consultants (EBE). In this role, I use my lived experience to inform and improve the support Safe Passage offers to others. My journey from client to advocate has been transformative and reflects the core of what Safe Passage stands for: empowering individuals to not only find safety but also to thrive and lead.

The EBE programme is a cornerstone of Safe Passage's approach. It empowers individuals with lived experience to advise and inform decisions being taken at every level across the organisation whether it be driving policy change or shaping campaigns. By centring our voices, Safe Passage ensures that its work is grounded in the realities of those it serves, creating more impactful and meaningful change.

2024 has been incredibly rewarding. As an EBE consultant, I've been involved in the expansion of the arrival support that Safe Passage offers. I was actively involved in advising on this initiative, as I know first-hand that help does not stop once children are reunited with their families. Many challenges arise after family reunification, from navigating new environments to accessing education and mental health support. That's why the introduction of two new dedicated arrival and social support workers this year has been so vital. This role ensures that families and individuals receive the ongoing support they need to thrive in their new lives.





One of the highlights of last year was when the Young Leaders had the opportunity to speak on stage at Glastonbury Festival, where we amplified the voices of refugees and shared Safe Passage's mission. This platform allowed us to raise awareness about the challenges faced by refugees and the importance of safe routes, connecting with people from all walks of life.



While we celebrated significant achievements last year, we also faced heart-breaking challenges. The tragic loss of lives at sea continues, highlighting the urgent need for the government to provide safe routes for those seeking safety. Even with new government in the UK there has been a troubling trend of implementing harsher laws that punish those seeking sanctuary instead of offering protection and support.

During the summer, we also witnessed anti-immigration protests and riots which created an atmosphere of fear and hostility for asylum seekers. During this challenging time, the Young Leaders with the support of Safe Passage, created a safe space for us to come together, share our experiences and support one another.

This solidarity has been a source of strength and resilience, reminding us why we must continue the fight for the rights of those seeking safety.

I look forward to the journey ahead as we continue to build a future where everyone has the right to seek safety with dignity.

To those still searching for sanctuary: we will not stop fighting for your right to live in peace and security. Together, we will continue to advocate for a world where compassion triumphs over fear and where safe passage is not just a dream but a reality for all.

## Abdisamad

Expert by Experience Consultant and  
Safe Passage Young Leader



## Our Mission

We champion the rights of refugees and displaced people as they flee persecution, using the law to help them access safe routes to a place of safety. We work alongside refugees to campaign for change and build public support for safe passage for all.

## Our Vision

We believe every person has the right to be safe, safe to be with their family and safe to rebuild their lives. Our vision is a world where the people who need it have safe passage to a place of safety, family and justice.





We assisted **870** people on the move with legal advice and direct assistance

We represented over **300** children seeking to reunite with family in a safe country

We mobilised **20,463** people in campaigning, engaging people in power to demand routes to safety



*"It was so beautiful seeing how much everyone bonded [on the Young Leaders residential]. The memories from this residential will truly be ones that I carry for a long time." - Young Leader Graduate*

*"I don't even know how to put this in to words, but thank you so much for ever" - SPI Client*

*"I will never forget the beautiful moment when I held my family in my arms" - SPI Client*

*"I am happier than ever. All the members of Safe Passage are my life teachers and my dear family who have brought me out of my loneliness." - Young Leader*

*"[The Young Leaders residential] felt like we created our own home. It felt warm and cosy and just peaceful. It was exactly what I think a lot of us needed." - Young Leader Graduate*

*"Everything was so special for me , especially when I was with a group of amazing people. We took care of each other and those who are fighting for a world which is safe and welcoming for refugees" - Young Leader Graduate*



# Across Borders

Last year, our teams in the UK, France and Greece used our legal expertise to support people seeking safety across Europe and in conflict areas.

We expanded this area of work, to assist people seeking family reunion after fleeing new and ongoing humanitarian crises; continuing to assist those from Afghanistan and Ukraine, and also began providing legal support to families from Gaza and Sudan.

This year also saw us strengthen and expand our arrivals and social support offer as we hired two new Social Support Workers in the UK and France to work with our clients throughout their family reunion journey; as we have already been doing in Greece.





## Legal Expertise - Our Impact

870

**People on the move** provided with expert legal and protection advice and referred into relevant services.

340

**Children represented** and over 400 family members supported

60

**Visas granted** thanks to our legal teams' expertise, meaning more families can be safely reunited

260

**Legal workshops delivered**, building knowledge of Entry Clearance and Family Reunion procedures for sector peers across Europe

Sharing our expert legal knowledge on safe routes with other organisations working with children and families on the move is key to ensuring more people have better access to information and are aware of their options.



# Working with, not for

We work with, not for, refugees and we have been at the forefront of modelling meaningful representation and co-production, through our Young Leaders programme, Expert by Experience (EBE) Consultants Programme and Positive Action recruitment practices.

In 2024, Safe Passage Young Leaders led on campaigns, hosted events during Ramadan, spoke at round table events in parliament, were involved in the recruitment processes for all new members of staff and were even invited to speak on the West Holts stage at Glastonbury Festival.

In the past year, EBE consultants have worked to strengthen our arrivals support for clients, written funding bids, driven forwards our campaigns, and co-produced a 'Lived Experience Manifesto' outlining how SPI can centre lived experience voices in all that we do.





This year saw more challenging anti-refugee rhetoric and policies across Europe, but we fought harder than ever to build public support and achieved:

5 Policy Changes, including extending the Afghan family scheme

739 Mentions in the media - up 125% from 2023

26 Young Leaders with lived experience campaigning for change

4 Expert by Experience Consultants working across the organisation to ensure lived experience shapes our work

20463 Digital campaign actions taken by our wonderful community





# Samira\*'s Story

When the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan, Samira - a dentist and feminist activist - had her life turned upside down. Samira's husband disappeared after joining the resistance, and her dental clinic was forced to close under Taliban rule. Samira continued teaching secret lessons to students who had lost access to education – but began receiving death threats and took the heartbreaking decision to flee her home with her three-year-old son and her mother-in-law.

It was a dangerous journey for the women and the little boy, but they eventually reached Pakistan. There, they were able to contact Safe Passage International in France who worked tirelessly to secure a visa for the family to join Samira's sister; who had been in France since 2021. The family were finally reunited in Paris in 2024, where they could hug and hold each other once again, and start to rebuild their life in safety.



\* names have been changed to maintain confidentiality

2024 was another challenging year for people seeking safety, as we saw continued global conflict and humanitarian crises forcing the displacement of millions of people as they fled unimaginable danger. We continued our work supporting Afghans through our APBI and Reunir projects, and established new areas of work to assist those fleeing Gaza and Sudan.

Afghan Pro Bono Initiative (APBI): our legal team in the UK continued to work alongside our partners at Refugee Legal Support to support Afghans fleeing persecution and the Taliban, in our pro-bono work we've run since the Taliban took Kabul in 2021. We work alongside pro-bono law firms to provide information to Afghans in danger, including support on accessing the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy and Citizens Resettlement Schemes.

Safe Passage France continued their Réunir work (previously known as AFPBA) collaborating with 12 commercial law firms to provide assistance to Afghans and people from the surrounding region.

We secured **78 visas** for people from this region who can now be safe and with their family again.

## Crisis Response



Ukraine Response Project: We closed down our Legal Clinic in Warsaw towards the end of 2024, as the need was no longer as vital. Our UK legal teams started taking cases in house, and are currently working on 2 cases. We used the insights of the legal casework from these projects to inform and strengthen our campaigning efforts to improve and expand safe routes.



After conducting scoping missions for Sudan and Gaza, we identified an urgent need for our expertise, with the main focus of our proposed response being our legal advice and family reunion legal casework. Our main aim is assisting children fleeing conflict in Sudan and Gaza to safely reach family members in the UK, using litigation where possible to achieve systemic change for many more where possible.

We are one of the few organisations still taking on cases from Gaza, and in the past year responded to over **360 people (137 family units)**.

We took on **19 cases**, for a total of 45 clients - a relatively low caseload in comparison to our normal cases, as this is complex work, made more difficult by the severity of the situation on the ground in Gaza and the mental toll this work is having on lawyers. However, we will continue this work as long as the need is there.



**13 year old Iyad's\* entire family was killed in an Israeli airstrike on Gaza, which also left him severely injured, needing urgent medical treatment. Iyad was initially treated in Gaza before being evacuated to Egypt due to the severity of his injuries. His uncle in the UK reached out to us for help in bringing Iyad to safety so we immediately began the process to secure a family reunion visa.**

**Thanks to these efforts and the support of the wider community, Iyad's visa was granted in May 2024. He arrived in the UK in June, where he is now safe, with his uncle and settling into his new community.**

\* names have been changed to maintain confidentiality

# ***Safe Passage***

## *A poem*

In lands where hope begins to fade,  
In shadows deep, in dreams delayed,  
They search for light, a guiding spark,  
To lead them safely through the dark.

Across the seas, a voyage dire,  
Through tempest winds and nights afire,  
They yearn for shores where freedom rings,  
Where peace resides and new life springs.

But pathways fraught with dangers grim,  
With peril's edge so harsh and slim,  
We must create a safer way,  
For those who seek a brighter day.

For every heart that flees the night,  
Deserves a chance at morning light,  
A route that's safe, a haven true,  
Where dreams can blossom, hope renew.

Oh, Britain, open wide your arms,  
Protect these souls from further harm,  
Provide a path where they can tread,  
With dignity, their spirits fed.

Let kindness guide our every act,  
With empathy, let's form a pact,  
To pave the way, to hold the key,  
For safe arrival, sanctuary.



**by Ilsa Gichki**  
**Young Leader and Grassroots Campaigner**



# Looking Ahead

2025 will see us continue increasing our efforts to improve access to safe routes for refugees both in and out of Europe, including further developing our family reunion work in Greece and France and strengthening our social support offer to new arrivals. We'll also remain flexible to respond to emerging humanitarian crises if the need arises, and expand our work where it's needed.

In the face of anti-refugee policies and the rise of the far right across Europe, we'll step up our campaigning to protect this fundamental right for refugee families and the need for safe routes for refugees to reduce the dangerous journeys and loss of life we are seeing in the Channel.

We are also excited to expand our co-production and participation work, to see more Experts by Experience driving forwards Safe Passage International so we can truly work with, not for, refugees.



# Our Financials

## Income

- Restricted Funding - £1,427,312
- Unrestricted Funding - £1,535,653

**TOTAL £2,962,965**

## Expenditure

- Legal & Casework - £1,346,014
- Campaigning & Advocacy - £1,366,836
- Raising Funds - £42,378
- Support Costs – £324,492
- Governance - £3851

**TOTAL £3,140,316**

During 2024, we continued to develop and grow our team, scaling in response to crisis and strengthening our foundations. We generated funds from diverse income sources, including trusts, individual donations, community fundraising as well as Gift Aid. We received a large unanticipated legacy gift at the end of 2023 which we spent down during this year. We also remained committed to transparency around the sources of our funding and how we utilise donations towards our mission.

**Thank you for your continued support in making Safe Passage International's work possible.**

NB: The figures shown reflect income and expenditure records prior to our audit. There may be slight variance when records are consolidated for our 2024 Annual Report.



# A huge thank you to:

- 💖 The 27 incredible volunteers and 11 trustees who generously gave their time, as well as their translation, governance and web development skills
- 💖 All the pro-bono partners and our talented peers in the sector whose time and determination to ensure access to safe routes has been invaluable
- 💖 All our generous funders, donors and friends whose unwavering support has made our work possible through the last year



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