



Meta-Creativity.

Methodological reflections on the co-development of creative methods within a participatory study on the health of migrant, refugees, and asylum seekers in London

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The project

MigRefHealth

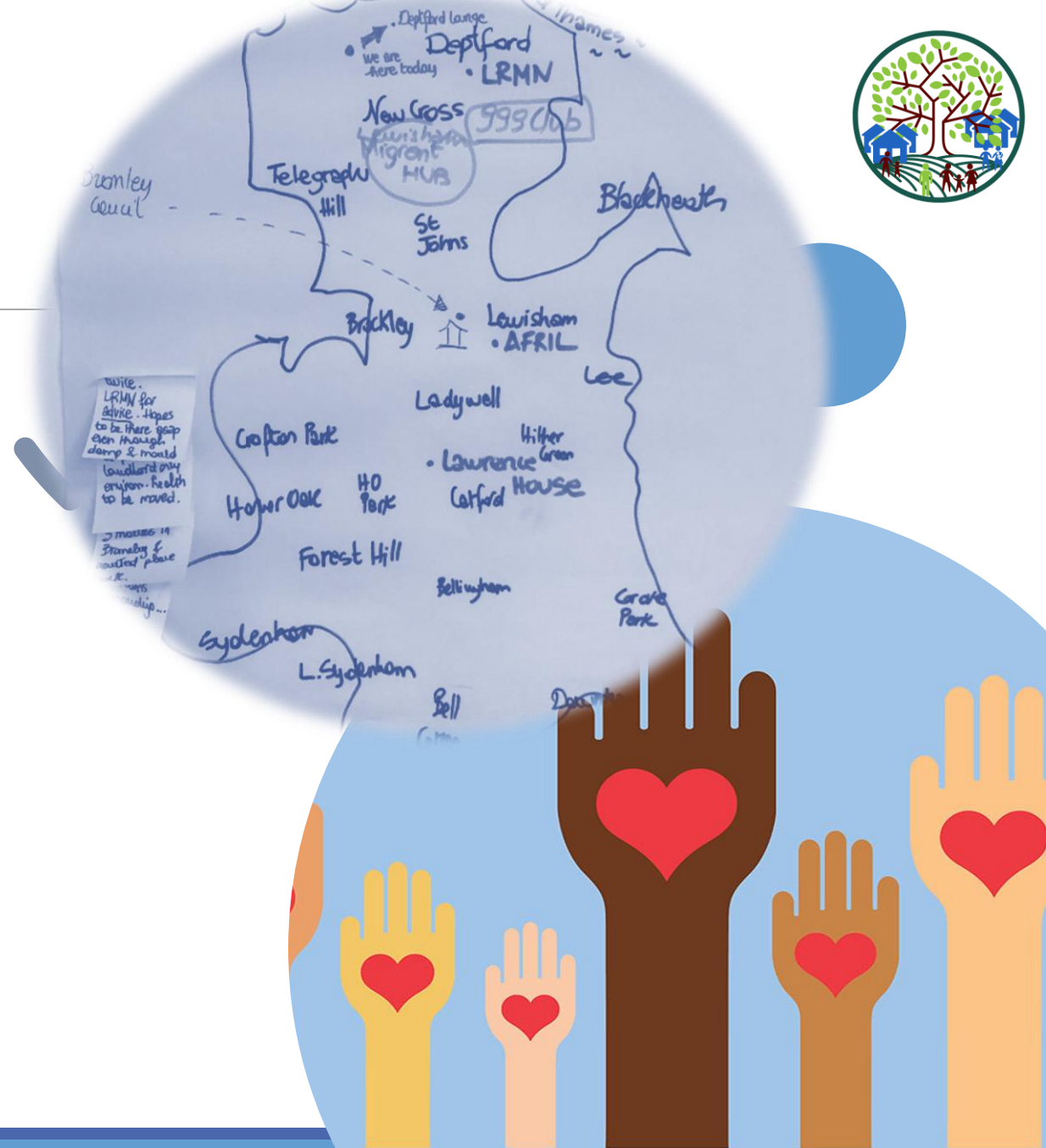
Co-creating asset and place-based approaches to tackling **migrant** and **refugee health** exclusion

[Programme of funding:
'Mobilising community assets to tackle health inequalities']

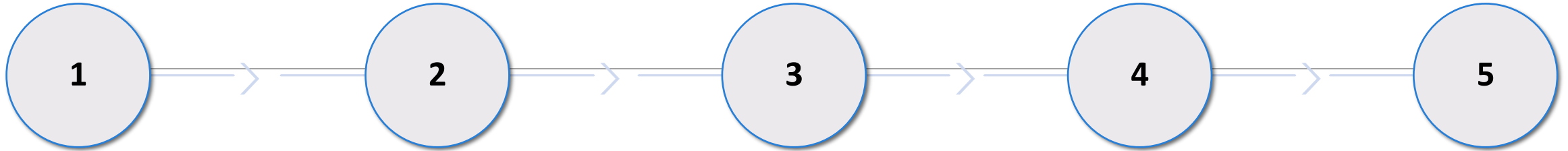
Goals

1. Explore how **community assets** can help tackle **social determinants of health inequalities** for diverse refugee, asylum seeking and migrant communities: North London, South London, and East of England.

2. Collaboratively identify and map **community assets used by these communities locally** so that they are better known and **supported via a system change**.



Objectives



1

To identify and evaluate **how social determinants of health impact health outcomes** for refugee, asylum seeking and migrant communities.

2

To develop a place-based **model** which will support **Integrated Care Systems, civil society agencies, local authorities and research communities** to collaborate.

3

To research the scope for **community assets to support health and wellbeing for communities.**

4

To identify how **holistic approaches to health** can be embedded within **integrated health services.**

5

To build **opportunities for wider community impact** through sharing knowledge.

What are we looking at?



Three social determinants of health



Accommodation



Food/Nutrition



Support Services

Which migrant groups are we involving?



Afghans

Hong Kongers

Syrians

Ukrainians

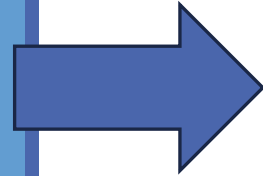
**EU: Romanians, Polish,
Italians**

**Non-EU: Vietnamese,
Nigerians, Somalis,
Iranians**



Where are we working?

Four Project
Fieldsites in
London



Islington



Lewisham



Greenwich



Barnet

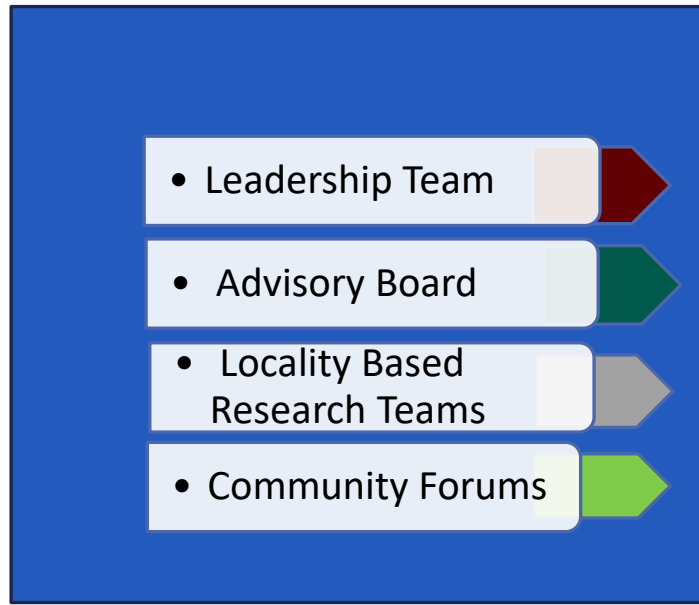


Who are we working with ?

Community Partners

Community Researchers and Participants with lived experience

Multi-agency Stakeholders (ICBs, Councils, Third sector)

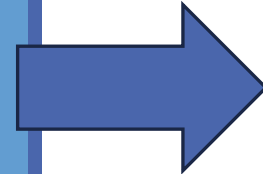


10 project team members: 5 Academics and 5 community partners

Including people with lived experience.

North London, South London and East of England

People with lived experience of migration and the asylum system in each of the 12 field sites.



How are we doing it? IN THEORY



Interpretivism and social constructionism

Critical Theory [critical medical anthropology and global health (Farmer et al. 2013; Abimbola, 2018)]

Intersectional, Social, and Structural Determinants of Health (ISSDoH)

Decolonial Methodologies (Bhakuni & Abimbola, 2021)

Participatory Zeitgeist (Palmer 2019)

Community-based Participatory Action Research (Israel et al. 1998; Wallerstein et al. 2020)

Creative Health (Fancourt et al. 2020; Waterson et al. 2025)

Creative PPI (Phillips et al. 2024)



How are we doing it? ON PAPER

Key Project Activities [September 2024 – December 2026]

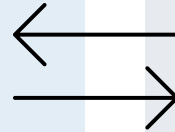
1

Set up **Community Forums**

Community Forums (CF) will discuss local issues, identify use of community assets and interrogate data.

2

Recruit and train **Community Co-Researchers (CCRs)** to **conduct walking interviews with photovoice**



3

'Data collection' activities using **creative methodologies**

to create community asset maps and explore people's use of assets.

4

Identify and develop **Place-based models:** Embedding **system change** and building capacity within institutions
Exhibitions and **knowledge exchange**



How are we doing it? IN PRACTICE before...

Each community forum is **co-designed** with community partners and leverages on site-specific assets.



It employs an **ad hoc qualitative and creative method** to explore and more inclusively capture the practices, experiences, and sentiments of migrant participants.

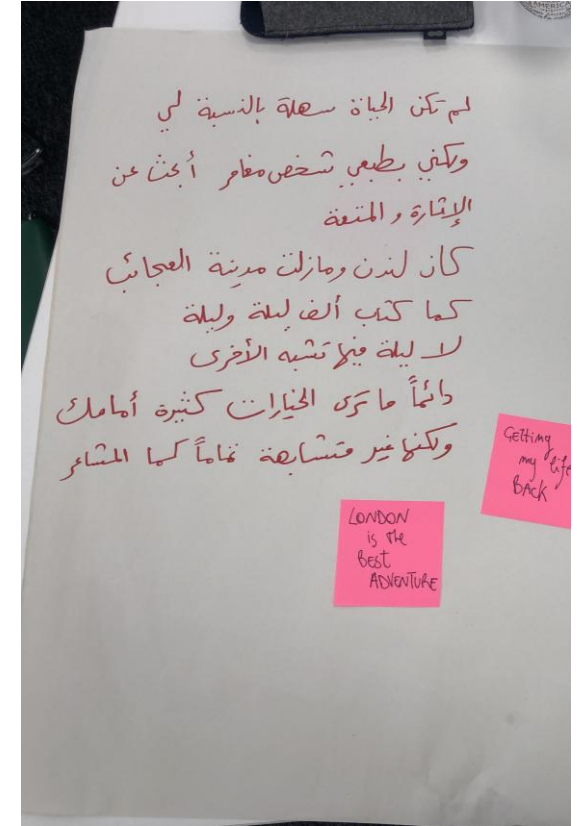
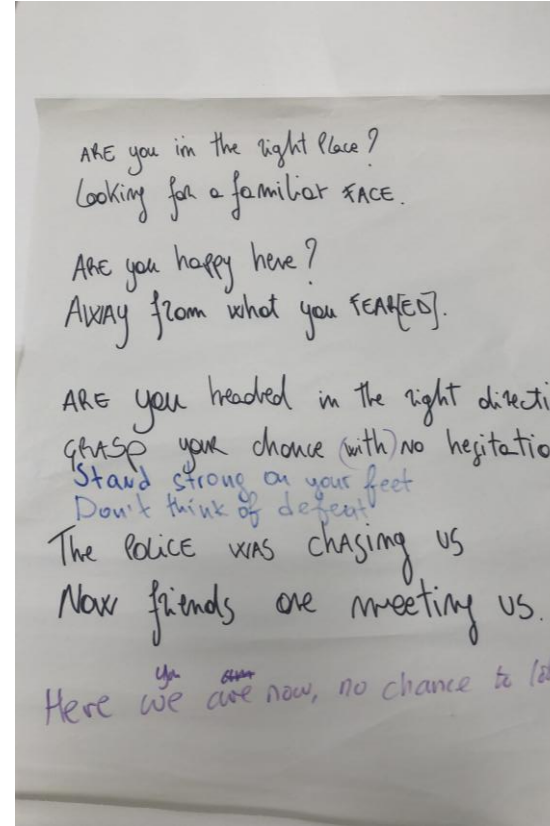
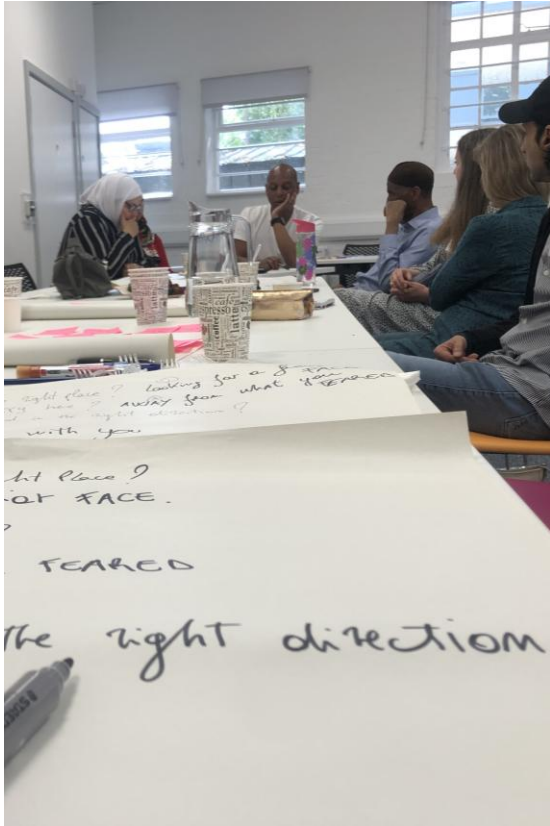
It **blurs the boundaries** between data collection, consultation with experts-by-experience, and intervention activities.

HOW are we doing it? IN PRACTICE

...in action...

Example 1.
Traditional storytelling
on home/ belonging/sense
of community





How are we doing it? IN PRACTICE ...in action...

Example 2. Song writing on perceived wellbeing, health and access to services

Creating A Zine Workshop

Are you a migrant, refugee, or asylum seeker from Afghanistan, Syria, Ukraine, Hong Kong, Vietnam, or Romania living in Greenwich?






You are invited to join a creative and fun workshop where we will be creating a Zine all about food.

A light lunch will be provided. We will provide a £30 voucher to everyone who attends.

For more information or to register contact Laura Marziale
Email: info@theground.org.uk

Location: GWest Community & Arts Centre,
141 Greenwich High Road, London SE10 8LL

This forum is part of a national research project funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). We will be running a series of Migrant Community Research Forums in Lewisham and Greenwich over the next two years.

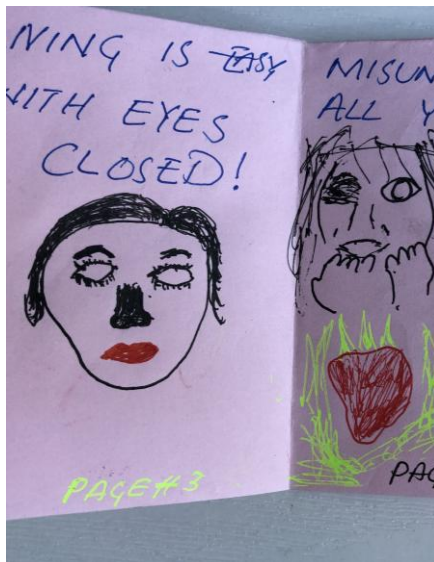






Study title: Co-creating asset and place-based approaches to tackling refugee and migrant health exclusion. Study approved by Greenwich University Research Ethics Committee, MCRF participants advert, version 3, 03 October 2024.



How are we doing it? IN PRACTICE

...in action...



*Example 3. Zine Making on
food and nutrition*



How are we doing it? IN PRACTICE ...afterwards

Co-constructs meanings through **shared analysis**, ongoing **reflexivity**, and **experiential knowledge**
(Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Guba & Lincoln, 2005)

Polyphonic, multi-step, iterative analysis:

1. Practitioner/academic team co-analysis
2. Higher-level analysis and condensation with intertextuality and reflexivity effort where quotes, visual data, and literature are collated
3. Pracademic' team critical data interpretation towards impact generation and further steps
4. Multi-stakeholders consultation/KE
5. Ongoing input from lived-experience collaborators



How are we doing it? IN PRACTICE ...afterwards

We critically **reflect** on the processes behind each community forum, attentive to **power dynamics, pragmatic factors, rigour, flexibility**, decision on what counted as data and for whom in the different creative methods, and how these are to be interpreted according to which goal of the study.

Locality-based lessons learnt in each study activity are set against broader study goals and inform the **following step**.





What's promising and what needs rethinking?



Multi-level, 'immediate' impact systems

Power reshuffling and academic de-centring

Methodological innovation

Inclusivity and safe spaces

Social health

Time and Resource Intensive

Complex data analysis

Replicability and generalisability

Sustainability and Implementation

Embeddedness in hyper-local networks

Led by existing expertise

Other health and access to services

Which are some elements of MigRefHealth meta-creativity way?



Embracing **polyphony** of meaning-making, experiences, and interpretations

Embracing **pluriversality** of sectors, worldviews, and interests

Embracing **blurring** between data generation, intervention, impact, knowledge exchange

Reflecting on **power** dynamics, within and outside the team

Embedding **reflexivity** at all stages

Embedding **creative iteration** and flexibility throughout

Interlacing the **hyper-local** with **higher** system change and insights for other sites and broader implications for policy, research, and practice



Meta-creativity in a multisite, multi-stakeholder, multi-method CBPAR study in health and health inequalities?

1. Could meta-creativity be crystallised in an approach or model to conduct complex participatory and creative studies in health? [epistemological advancing]
2. Should creative methods be accompanied by more traditional qualitative ones to answer certain questions and generate certain impact? [methodological contribution]
3. To what extent the meta-creativity of MigRefHealth advance the field of participatory, creative epistemologies and methodologies to impact the reduction of health inequalities via a community assets/ISSDoH approach for marginalised groups? [spread and scale]

#MigRefHealth



Thank you!

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www.migrefhealth.co.uk





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