

Employment and training

Unemployment

“In many African cultures,” NYIN/CYWN observed in their submission, “employment is seen as validation in terms of participation in a society. It is a source of pride and dignity”.

ABS labour force data show that at November 2004, the unemployment rate among Humanitarian Stream entrants was 10.5%, with a participation rate of 58.4%.⁶¹

Unemployment was the predominant issue raised in consultations with African communities, both in metropolitan and regional areas. Barriers to employment identified in consultations and submissions include:

- lack of available employment in regional areas
- low levels of English language proficiency
- low levels of literacy, numeracy and computer skills
- lack of recognition of overseas qualifications and skills
- lack of Australian work experience
- perceived racism amongst some potential employers
- difficulties in dealing with Job Network providers
- impacts on income support payments when people start low-paid work

Blacktown City Council in its submission stated that:

Gaining employment is a key step in settlement in a new country and it is generally accepted that the longer term aspects of becoming a part of a new community cannot begin in earnest until a level of financial independence is reached. Refugees, like all immigrants, face issues in regard to marketability for employment. African community members in Blacktown report limited employment opportunities based on the poor match between many people’s skill sets and the local job market. This is compounded by lack of knowledge and understanding of local workplace culture and expectations...

If employment rates are not supported to rise the spiral of negative effects for the African community, and the community at large will be dramatic, especially in relation to its impact on young people currently of school age and their opportunities in Australian environment. [BCC]

⁶¹ABS Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Migrants Survey (Cat No 6250.0), November 2004, cited in Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2006) *Transition Needs of Humanitarian Youth: Background Paper for Inter-Jurisdictional Meeting 3 March 2006*

Lack of employment opportunities in regional areas

Lack of local employment was identified as a major problem during consultations in regional areas, where the search for work can lead to secondary settlement which in turn impacts on families, communities, and access to services.

Consultations in Wollongong revealed a widespread concern amongst African communities that the lack of local employment was impacting on efforts to build communities there, as new settlers frequently move on to Sydney or other areas in search of employment opportunities.

Coffs Harbour City Council recorded high local levels of unemployment among African humanitarian entrants in its submission, and noted that “large employers of manual and unskilled labourers are located on outskirts of township and difficult to access without private transport”. [CHCC]

Newcastle City Council in its submission noted difficulties but also some successes in relation to employment in the Hunter:

Significant barriers to local employment opportunities exist with low adult refugee English proficiency levels and often significantly disrupted schooling that has led to low adult literacy and numeracy rates as well as minimal computer skills.

Access to low skilled jobs without these basic skills presents significant difficulties however approximately 100-120 African refugees have gained employment in the area. However, often the work is low paid and this impacts on Centrelink entitlements, particularly for larger families.

At the other end of the spectrum some Africans that have arrived in Newcastle are highly educated with good English skills and are completing further tertiary study at post graduate level. Certain African community groups such as the Liberians generally have good standards of English and are often multi-lingual. These people are in very high demand at all levels within their own communities as well as being major liaison points with local mainstream services. [NCC]

Job Network

The majority of adult humanitarian entrants from Africa who participated in consultations were job seekers, and many expressed a sense of confusion about the role of Job Network providers and frustration in not being able to deal directly with employers.

The Refugee Council of Australia in its submission recognised employment as a major issue and cited DIMA’s findings on the issue of employment services in the *Report of the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants* (2003):

The strongest messages from public consultations and submissions have been that new arrivals face considerable difficulty in obtaining employment, are dissatisfied with the assistance provided by current employment services, and see a need for more specialist employment services and more opportunities to gain work experience in the Australian labour market. [cited in RCOA]

Fairfield MRC raised a number of issues in relation to the Job Network in its submission:

A recently held employment seminar revealed a high rate of unemployment and underemployment in the African communities due to lack of English language, job-seeking skills and local job experience. It is clear that the Job Network System is not assisting the African communities effectively in accessing employment. For example, out of 15 people who attended the employment seminar, only 1 had secured a job. And he was assisted by a private employment agency, not a job network member.

One of the access issues here is that the new arrivals are not familiar with the job-seeking system in Australia. When referred by Centrelink to a job network member, the expectation is that the job network cards provide them with a job. In addition, the communities do not know what job network members do and how to contact them. This is mainly because the traditional mode of communication is verbal, not through written material and in any case all Centrelink client correspondence is in English. Thus, the numerous letters received from Centrelink mean very little to them and are confusing.

Upon referral to a job network member some, not all, refugees and humanitarian entrants, immediately qualify for Intensive Assistance. The 3 months wait policy is frustrating, as they are not used to writing resumes, using touch screens and newspapers in searching for jobs. It is therefore a waste of time for them to be clients for the first 3 months...

What is surprising is that people think that African refugees do not want to work and want to remain dependent on Centrelink money which is not the case, because many Africans have been contacting Centrelink because they want to work and they were referred to job network agencies which does not solve their problems as Job Network does not assist them with getting employment or assist with recognition of overseas qualifications. [FMRC]

Blacktown City Council in its submission stated that:

There are few employment programs available that target the special needs of humanitarian entrants and it is important that the Federal Government be approached to fund specialist brokerage programs aimed at meeting the needs of African communities. [BCC]

NYIN/CWYN in their submission recommended that:

Employment initiatives with African young people also need to continue to be implemented and developed from previously successful pilot projects such as the. The Humanitarian/Refugee Entrant Job Seeker Pilot Project (2004). This project which was undertaken by 8 job network members across Australia, has not been continued despite its success in exposing job seekers from humanitarian backgrounds to the labour force and developing a range of employment skills including language and communication, understanding the workplace and finding employment and training. Programs such as these need to be reinstated to support Newly Arrived young people in gaining access to employment and training. [NYIN/CWYN]

Recommendation 24

That the Australian Government through the Job Network develop and resource a refugee and humanitarian entrant job seeker program.

Skills and qualifications recognition

The recognition of overseas gained skills and qualifications is a major issue both for skilled migrants and humanitarian entrants, and one which also featured in consultations with African communities.

Fairfield MRC in its submission noted that:

Though the average years of education for refugees from Africa is low, there is a minority who are highly skilled in various specializations: education, engineering, law, etc that Australia is not benefiting from. Even after receiving further qualifications from here, employment is difficult which adds to their frustration with the settlement process. [FMRC]

NSW DET in its submission noted that “African refugees are likely to have incomplete qualifications or education, or are unable to provide sufficient documentary evidence of their knowledge and skills”. DET provided the following information on procedures in place in TAFE NSW to address these issues:

TAFE NSW staff may accept statutory declarations in support of applications in cases where course applicants and enrolled students with overseas skills and qualifications are unable to provide sufficient documentary evidence to support their application for entry or recognition of prior learning.

One successful example was in 2004, when a Sudanese refugee who had completed his Year 10 in a refugee camp approached TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute, Granville Campus to enrol in a Higher School Certificate preliminary studies program. The student did not have documentary evidence of his studies to support entry to the course. In order to establish that the student had the necessary knowledge and skills, the student provided details of his studies in a statutory declaration. The details in the statutory declaration were confirmed using available resources and the course co-ordinator challenge-tested the student in some learning areas. The student was enrolled in the program and is now completing the Higher School Certificate.

TAFE NSW also develops a range of curriculum products to support people seeking to upgrade their overseas skills for employment purposes. Bridging and refresher programs have been specifically developed or customised to assist overseas-qualified professionals, paraprofessionals and trades people seeking registration, licensing and employment. A customised hairdressing course with integrated English support was developed at TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute to assist 15 unemployed women from Africa who needed access to upskilling training and orientation to Australian work practices in the hairdressing industry. [DET]

The submission by NSW Government to the Joint Standing Committee *Inquiry into Skills Recognition, Upgrading and Licensing*, which was coordinated by the Community Relations Commission, detailed many of the issues relating to skills recognition in NSW. The submission noted that in New South Wales and across Australia there is no single authority to assess or recognise all overseas gained skills and qualifications. Many organisations are involved, depending on the type of qualification or occupation and whether the assessment is required for the purpose of migration, further study, or employment. This inquiry is currently in process; the NSW submission to the inquiry can currently be viewed at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/mig/recognition/index.htm>

The CRC submission to the NSW Parliament Legislative Council *Inquiry into Skills Shortages in Rural and Regional NSW* highlighted the need for on-going cooperation between Commonwealth and NSW Government agencies in attracting skilled migrants to rural and regional NSW, in recognising overseas skills and qualifications, and in establishing adequate settlement services, including skills training, for refugee settlers in regional NSW. This submission also outlined the role of several NSW Government agencies in assessing and responding to skills shortages, particularly in regards to skills training.

Recommendation 25

That DIMA assist humanitarian entrants wishing to have their skills and qualifications recognised by:

- (i) ensuring that families of humanitarian entrants are informed of the importance of having transcripts of academic records and original copies of qualifications available for recognition purposes when they arrive in Australia;
- (ii) working in collaboration with DEWR, DEST and relevant State and Territory agencies including the NSW Department of Education and Training, in particular, State Training Services and TAFE NSW, to develop State and Territory-specific information strategies;
- (iii) extending its fee-free document translating service to incorporate:
 - a. transcripts of academic records required for recognition purposes
 - b. all employment certificates that establish requisite on-the-job training for the recognition of trade skills
 - c. documents that attest to off-the-job training required for issuing a trade certificate
 - d. statutory declarations completed by humanitarian entrants who are seeking skills recognition
- (iv) collecting data on the occupation, work experience, qualifications, age, English language proficiency levels and LGA of intended residence of humanitarian entrants and making this data available to state government agencies for planning purposes.

Lack of local work experience

Another predominant issue raised in consultations related to the lack of opportunity for recently arrived humanitarian entrants to gain experience in the Australian workplace.

Many participants expressed frustration at the reluctance of employers to take on African workers, either because of their lack of Australian work experience, the lack of recognition of overseas gained skills and work experience, or because of what many participants regarded as discriminatory attitudes on behalf of some employers.

These issues were taken up in some of the submissions:

While Specialist Migrant Placement Officers (SMPOs) can help by developing, with their clients, employment and training plans including job search training and assistance with employer canvassing, many refugee and humanitarian entrants report, that despite the skills they have, the lack of work experience in an Australian environment is a major stumbling block in securing employment. [RCOA]

Lack of local experience is still one of the major obstacles to employment for refugees and humanitarian entrants. These individuals bring with them skills and a lot of experience that could benefit Australia. Local businesses should work together with job network members and DEWR (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations) to provide short or long-term opportunities to individuals for work experience. [FMRC]

For more than twelve months some African community representatives have been raising the reluctance of some employers to try African workers. This is evidenced by the slowness of any increase in the appearance of African workers in the range of businesses. This can only be worsened by deteriorating community attitude to Africans. [BCC]

Recommendation 26

That the Australian Government fund brokerage programs involving business, local agencies and community leaders to provide appropriately targeted assistance to refugee and humanitarian entrants from Africa to gain employment

Industrial relations

One of the issues arising from a lack of local work experience is that, when people do find work, they may possess a limited awareness of their legal rights as workers or of the responsibilities of employers.

Fairfield MRC in its submission suggested that this can disadvantage humanitarian entrants and potentially lead to exploitation:

Some refugees from Africa who are fortunate to be employed are either not knowledgeable of their work rights or are unaware of procedures put in place for lodging complaints. This places them in a position of disadvantage.... CALD [Culturally and linguistically diverse] communities and in particular newly arrived refugee communities have absolutely no hope in even beginning to understand their rights and therefore are vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous employers. And no one would dispute that such employers exist. [FMRC]

The situation faced by recently arrived humanitarian entrants entering the labour market without skills or qualifications and with poor English language proficiency is likely to become more complex and precarious with the introduction of the new WorkChoices legislation by the Federal Parliament. WorkChoices legislation may erode incentives for immigrants to move to regional and rural areas by providing less stability and security in the workforce. There is also a concern that the WorkChoices legislation will create feelings of resentment within local communities, if immigrants requiring work displace local workers, when employers offer lesser wages and conditions under Australian Workplace Agreements (AWA).

Recommendation 27

That the Australian Government monitor the impact of Australian Workplace Agreements (AWA) in terms of the labour market outcomes of unskilled humanitarian entrants with low levels of English language proficiency.

Work in welfare

Given high demand for community language assistance and cultural orientation identified among African humanitarian entrants, welfare agencies offering services to these groups would understandably look to recruit community members with the skills to address these needs.

Newcastle City Council and NYIN/CYWN both noted the important contribution of high skilled African workers in the welfare and community sector:

Observations by Youth Services and Migrant Resource Centres suggest that African people often have a higher English-language proficiency than other groups of humanitarian entrants, strong existing advocacy skills, and a self-reliance that has seen a huge take-up of employment and training opportunities in the welfare sector...

As recently as 2005, matriculation rates for African Young People into TAFE and University courses have been positive, particularly with enrolments into courses for community welfare. [NYIN/CYWN]

At the other end of the spectrum some Africans that have arrived in Newcastle are highly educated with good English skills and are completing further tertiary study at post graduate level. Certain African community groups such as the Liberians generally have good standards of English and are often multi-lingual. These people are in very high demand at all levels within their own communities as well as being major liaison points with local mainstream services. [NCC]

Vocational education and training: TAFE NSW

TAFE NSW is the major provider of vocational education and training in New South Wales. In its submission, DET noted that TAFE NSW initiatives include “customised and specifically designed products and services for overseas-born groups with diverse needs, including refugees with limited formal schooling and those with overseas skills and qualifications”.

African student enrolments in TAFE NSW

DET provided the following information on African student enrolment in TAFE NSW:

TAFE NSW enrolment data have been analysed for specific countries of birth – Burundi, Congo Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda (selected African countries).

There has been a steady increase in enrolments by students from the selected African countries, with a total of 6,469 enrolments for the period from 2002 to 2005 (year to date). Over half of these enrolments are by those born in the Sudan (3718 or 58%), followed by Somalia (958 or 15%) and Ethiopia (629 or 10%) and Sierra Leone (648 or 10%).

Enrolments by students from the Sudan have also increased markedly between 2001 (544 enrolments) and 2005 (year to date) (3718 enrolments). On the other hand numbers enrolling from Somalia have fallen from 544 to 191 over the same period. Enrolments by students from Liberia and Sierra Leone are relatively low but have increased markedly between 2004 and 2005 (year to date), consistent with DIMA settler arrival patterns. [*Appendix 3* of this report provides additional detail].

Arabic is the main language spoken by students from the selected African countries. In 2005 Arabic is spoken by close to half (1,025 or 48%) of students from the selected countries. Other major languages include those speaking African (not elsewhere classified - 356 or 17%)⁶² followed by smaller numbers speaking Somali (150 or 7%) and Amharic (104 or 5%).

These data are consistent with DIMA data for languages spoken by refugee and humanitarian arrivals to NSW (DIMA Settlement Database).

The majority of enrolments from the selected countries are in the Sydney metropolitan area, comprising 84% of the total enrolments from the selected countries in 2005 (year to date). Institutes with the highest share of enrolments by African refugee students are South Western Sydney (43%), Western Sydney (25%) and Sydney (14%).

The enrolments in metropolitan TAFE NSW Institutes reflect settlement patterns with the exception of Sydney Institute which draws students from across the metropolitan area.

⁶² Includes enrolments by students recording ‘Dinka’ as the language spoken at home

The proportion of enrolments from the selected countries in regional and rural areas has been increasing, reflecting the regional focus of the migration program, and reached 16 % in 2005 (year to date). Rural and regional institutes with increasing enrolments by African refugee students are the Hunter (4.1% of total enrolments from selected countries), Illawarra (3.7 %) North Coast (2.7%) and Riverina (2.2%).

Rural and regional enrolments are mainly concentrated in one or two college(s) / campuses in each Institute consistent with settlement patterns; Newcastle in the Hunter, Wollongong in the Illawarra, Wagga Wagga in the Riverina and Coffs Harbour in the North Coast.

Enrolment patterns by age show that students from the selected countries are more likely to be aged between 20-44 years and less likely to be aged between 45-64 years than all other students from non-English speaking countries of birth. This age distribution has remained fairly constant over the period 2002 to 2005 (year to date).

For the selected African countries in 2004, enrolments are higher for males (54%) than for females (46%) across all age groups. This pattern is consistent with DIMA settlement data for African born refugee and humanitarian arrivals in NSW in 2004 but differs from that for enrolments by all students from non-English speaking countries in TAFE. For instance, in 2004 58 % of enrolments by students from non-English speaking countries were for females and just 42 % for males.

Enrolment data indicate that students from the selected African countries usually enrol within the first two years of settlement. For instance, in 2004 12% of enrolments from the selected African countries arrived in that year and 65% of enrolments had arrived within the previous two years, a total of 77% of the enrolments.

Enrolment patterns by curriculum area have been consistent over 2001-2005 and differ to those for the population of all students from non-English speaking countries. Almost all enrolments are in four Curriculum Centre areas:

- Access and General Education 971 (57%)
- Business, Arts and Information Technology 365 (21%)
- Community Services, Health, Tourism and Recreation 173 (10%)
- Manufacturing, Engineering, Construction and Transport 157 (9%).

Compared with all students from non-English speaking countries, students from the selected African countries are more likely to be enrolled in Access and General Education programs and slightly more likely to be enrolled in Manufacturing, Engineering, Construction and Transport programs. They are however, less likely to be enrolled in Business, Arts and Information Technology and Community Services, Health, Tourism and Recreation programs. This indicates that students from the selected countries have a greater demand for English language and literacy courses and that their vocational pathways will tend to be longer than those for other students.

In 2004 in the Access and General Education area the majority of the enrolments 388 (40%) were in English language programs including Access English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) and ESOL Certificates I and II. In addition there were 168 enrolments (17%) in Outreach courses which assist people with barriers to accessing education. Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) enrolments accounted for 55 (6%) students enrolled in Access and General Education programs.

During the period 2001-2005 enrolments in Certificate III level courses and above by students from the selected countries have tended to average around one third of the total enrolments for those countries. This is lower than for students from non-English speaking countries overall.

In 2004 the module completion rates for students from Ethiopia were 75%, Sudan 70%, Somalia 69%, and Sierra Leone 64%. This compares to a module completion rate of 76% for all students from non-English speaking background countries and 80% for students from English speaking countries. [DET]

Provision for the education and training needs of adult African refugees

The submission from NSW DET highlighted some of the challenges for adult African students engaged in vocational education and training programs in TAFE NSW. Many of these are similar to the challenges encountered by school aged students detailed in the preceding chapter, including:

- adjustment to a new education system and learning culture
- limited formal schooling
- English language skills
- lack of computer literacy
- impacts of torture and trauma
- impacts of financial hardship
- access to information and support services

Newcastle City Council also stressed a key issue for parents, particularly women students, was adequate childcare facilities during TAFE classes:

The ongoing demand for childcare presents significant difficulties for refugee parents when they are trying to attend AMEP or vocational training classes at TAFE, particularly for women... In January 2006, to meet the needs of African women TAFE students, nearly 70 childcare places are required. Many women often require care for an infant and older children at the same time. The overall demand exceeds the capacity of the TAFE onsite childcare centre (Carinya) that also needs to cater for and meet the needs of all other TAFE staff and students.

Without adequate childcare, African refugees will not be able to access the education they require to be able to engage in employment opportunities as these arise. [NCC]

NSW DET provided the following information on some of the responses by TAFE NSW to the challenges identified in its submission:

Adjustment to a new education system and learning culture

Refugees and humanitarian entrants from African countries have experienced education systems that differ markedly from that in New South Wales. This may lead to differing teaching and learning expectations between teachers and African students in TAFE colleges.

Refugee students from Africa require time and support to gain familiarity with and adjust to a new education system and to a new teaching and learning culture. Refugee students particularly require understanding of the 'competency based' approach of the Australian Qualifications Framework and knowledge of the apprenticeship and training system. They also need to know how to access available support.

Similarly, teaching staff need support to develop effective teaching strategies for these students. Professional development activities are conducted for TAFE NSW staff to increase understanding of the education systems in countries such as the Sudan and to enhance understanding of the prior educational experiences of different groups of refugees. These sessions include presentations by community workers with the requisite cultural knowledge.

TAFE NSW Institutes deliver TAFE orientation and further study workshops for members of the African community to increase understanding of the NSW education system, vocational education and training pathways and programs and support services provided by TAFE NSW. TAFE NSW – Western Sydney Institute has for instance recently completed a series of 10 workshops at Blacktown College of TAFE addressing these and related topics.

Limited formal schooling

Many African humanitarian entrants have not had access to formal schooling and may not be literate in their first language. Young people in particular experience multiple barriers in completing and making a successful transition from school to further education and employment.

TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute delivered an automotive TVET program for recently arrived students from Sudan at Coffs Harbour TAFE and Orara High School in Term 4, 2004. This program grew out of a need to bridge a gap for Year 10 students from Sudan with low levels of schooling and low English language and literacy levels, who were not achieving at high school in Coffs Harbour.

The model entailed development of the students' English language skills while they gained basic skills in the automotive (light vehicle) area. The students were also introduced to employment opportunities in the broader Coffs Harbour community as part of the program. Two of the eight students went on to undertake further VET studies in TAFE and the others continued their schooling.

The model adopted in this program could assist refugee students in other rural and regional Institutes.

English language skills

Pathways to further study and sustainable employment are generally longer for people with lower levels of English language proficiency. The limited availability of vocational programs with integrated English language support can be a barrier to gaining or retaining employment for many migrants.

TAFE NSW has provided vocational programs with integrated English language training (English for Specific Purposes programs) in a range of areas to assist NESB groups with varying vocational goals. This model has been applied to refugees from Africa.

TAFE NSW - New England Institute recently delivered a Contracted Training Program for a group of Sudanese migrant workers employed at a local food company. The program involved English language development in the context of essential workplace requirements related to Standard Operating Procedures and Hygiene. The program has supported retention of the workers by the company.

TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute in conjunction with Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) developed a course attended by 11 refugees from the Sudan that assisted them to build on their existing farming skills in an Australian context. All students received integrated English language support, successfully completed the course and then went on to enrol in Certificate II in Production Horticulture.

Where discrete classes incorporating integrated English language training are not feasible students can still be provided additional learner support through small group tutorials. TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute is conducting an Aged Care Certificate III at Grafton that includes three students from Sierra Leone who, with the provision of language and literacy support tutorials, are expected to successfully complete the course. On completion, due to their special circumstances, the Southern Cross University has accepted them for enrolment in the Nursing degree.

These initiatives highlight the capacity of TAFE NSW, including rural Institutes, to provide specifically tailored programs to support refugee students from Africa subject to availability of resources.

Computer literacy

Refugees from Africa may have had little or no access to computer training. Computer literacy skills may also be low even among professionals and those who have received their schooling in English.

TAFE NSW develops customised programs to address the vocational education and training needs of migrants, including computer literacy programs for refugee groups. Discrete computer literacy classes are delivered for groups of refugees through Outreach. Computer modules are also integrated into VET programs specifically developed for NESB groups, including those for refugee youth.

Impact of torture and trauma

Many entrants from Africa have experienced inequitable access to education and employment under repressive regimes or severe disruption to their formal education as a result of war and poverty.

Further, outcomes from education and training post-arrival to Australia are impacted on by refugees' pre-arrival experiences including:

Direct and indirect experiences of torture, trauma, threat of violence, political persecution, sexual abuse and witnessing rape and killing of relatives or friends

Malnutrition and complex health problems including psychological trauma due to extreme poverty and lack of medical attention

Trauma of displacement and fragmented families.

Learning programs that are specifically tailored to the needs of refugees experiencing health issues and who are survivors of torture and trauma are required. Moreover, teaching and learning resources need to be available that reinforce concepts of democracy and equality and assist to build self-esteem and self-worth.

TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute, in collaboration with STARTTS and Multicultural Health, is planning to integrate mental health issues into its language programs for refugees.

Financial hardship

Many refugees experience severe financial hardship during their resettlement. Meeting costs of rental accommodation can be particularly difficult. A large number of refugees live in crowded accommodation as a result. Further, the need to support family still in refugee camps or to sponsor refugees adds to the financial pressures experienced by new arrivals.

Costs associated with study such as travel, books, protective gear and child care can be prohibitive.

The *Refugee Student Assistance Scheme* was established in 2004 and provides limited financial support for refugee students in NSW government schools and TAFE NSW Institutes. Funds are provided to TAFE NSW Institutes to support individual refugee students in their study. Funds are used for items such as textbooks, excursions, course specific costs, tools of trade and uniforms. The Scheme is jointly funded by the NSW Department of Education and Training and the NSW Teachers Federation.

Access to information and support services

Refugees from Africa experience difficulty in accessing appropriate information and services due to cultural and linguistic barriers and lack of recognised or accredited interpreter and translation services.

There is a need to increase culturally and linguistically targeted support services and to address the lack of recognised or accredited translation and interpreter services in small and emerging community languages.

A successful example of developing the skills of potential translators and assessors is illustrated by a project conducted in TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute. A need for translation services in Dari, Amharic, Somali and Tigrinya was identified in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. Eight participants, two from each language background subsequently undertook and successfully completed introductory training in Translation Skills. As part of the second stage of the project three of the participants are now undertaking Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Successful completion of this program will allow them to assist in the delivery of translation skills training in the future.

Preparatory training in interpreting has also been provided at TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute to assist two Dinka speakers to gain recognition by NAATI. Both are now working as telephone interpreters in the local community and one is involved in nationwide interpreting.
[DET]

Recommendation 28

That NSW DET support the development through TAFE NSW of Open Learning programs tailored to the needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants.

Family and community

Family composition

DIMA has recorded in relation to the family composition of cases assisted under the IHSS (refugees and SHP entrants) in 2004-05 that:

- 30% of cases were large families or five or more people
- families with children and more than one adult were the largest group of cases assisted (43%)
- the next largest group was single adults (30%, of which 23% were male and 7% female)
- single parent families represented 14% of cases. In 2004-05 many of these single parent families were families headed by a female who entered Australia in a visa subclass 204 (Woman at Risk).⁶³

Women at Risk

DIMA notes that “eligibility requirements for a subclass 204 [Women at Risk] visa include, among others, lack of protection from a male relative and being in danger of victimisation, harassment or serious abuse because they are female.”⁶⁴

Woman at Risk cases (families headed by a female) settling in NSW more than tripled from 2003-04 to 2004-05, from 52 to 162 cases, largely due to the group resettlement to Australia of 751 Liberians, mostly female heads of household with high torture and trauma needs, from a single refugee camp in Guinea in January and April 2005 (see Chapter Two). The target for the Woman at Risk category is currently set at 10.5% of the offshore refugee category. [DIMA]

The Australian National Committee on Refugee Women (ANCORW) has noted that:

80 percent of the world’s 20 million refugees are women and their dependent children. They are forced to flee from their homes and their countries, in danger of their lives. They often suffer violence, rape and sexual abuse, torture, hunger, and loss of everything they hold dear. Family members are lost or killed. Refugee camps are often as dangerous as the places from which they have escaped. Refugee women are strong and resourceful. Despite all that they suffer, they protect their families, maintain their culture and rebuild shattered communities once conflict is over. When resettled in developed countries, the women take the role of supporting their families to settle into a new and strange environment.⁶⁵

⁶³ Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2005) *Australia’s Support for Humanitarian Entrants*

⁶⁴ Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2005) *Australia’s Support for Humanitarian Entrants*

⁶⁵ ANCORW website <http://www.ancorw.org/> accessed 2 June 2006

Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors

Children who enter Australia under the Humanitarian Program without parents are referred to as Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (UHM). Those who do not have a parent or adult relative to care for them are known as ‘unattached’ minors. Those who do not have a parent but have a relative over 21 years acting as a carer are known as ‘detached’ minors.

Unattached minors become wards of the Commonwealth Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, who delegates guardianship responsibility to officers of child welfare authorities in respective States or Territories. In NSW, guardianship of unattached minors is delegated to the Director-General of the Department of Community Services. Detached minors are non-wards.

DIMA records that as at 30 June 2005 there were 592 Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors in Australia, 253 more than at the same time in 2004.

This increase is largely due to the large number of UHMs arriving from Africa as members of families and extended families [detached minors].

Of the 592 minors in the UHM program at 30 June 2005, 10 per cent (28) were wards of the Minister, while the remaining 90 per cent (534) were non-wards.⁶⁶

As a signatory of the 1985 Commonwealth/State Cost Sharing program for Services to Refugee Minors Without Parents in Australia, the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) provides services targeted to young humanitarian entrants under the Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors Program.

Since 1985 this program has provided settlement support to both detached and unattached minors through local DoCS Community Services Centres, including support with settlement services, health care, financial services and benefits, and education and employment. DoCS has advised the Commission that it has continued to bear the cost of performing this role on behalf of the Australian Government without adequate reimbursement. For this reason, DoCS has recently advised DIMA that it will no longer provide settlement support to detached minors – that is, to those in the care of a close relative over the age of 21 – as the Australian Government is responsible for meeting the settlement needs of these children. DoCS will continue in its delegated role as guardian to UHM wards and continue to extend its protection to non-wards where the child is reported as a child protection risk.

Recommendation 29

That DIMA provide adequate resources to ensure that detached humanitarian minors (non-wards) under the Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors Program receive all settlement services previously provided to this group by NSW DoCS under the 1985 Commonwealth/State Cost Sharing Program for Services to Refugee Minors Without Parents in Australia.

⁶⁶Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2005) *Australia's Support for Humanitarian Entrants*

Gender roles and family dynamics

A number of submissions highlighted the impacts of refugee and resettlement experiences in terms of disrupted families and changes to the traditional roles of men, women and children. The St Vincent de Paul Society in its submission noted that:

...arriving in Australia as a refugee, having experienced refugee trauma and often protracted periods in refugee camp, has a huge impact on family dynamics and roles within the family. The position of women and children in Australian society, and the laws governing behaviour within the home, can be difficult to adjust to. [SVDP]

Consultations by the NSW Refugee Health Service have found that:

Family dislocation through war, conflict, process of fleeing and exile, as well as the disintegration and disconnection resulting from the experience of being a refugee has significant impacts on adults and children refugees.

Participants also described changes in roles, family composition and culture. For example, a male child may have to take on adult roles if their father has died. Parents were identified as sometimes not knowing how to play with children as a result of ongoing trauma. [cited in NSW Health submission]

In its submission, DoCS noted that:

Many African families are experiencing a range of pressures and stresses associated with the migration and settlement process, [including]:

- Managing shifts in relationships between parents and their children (particularly teenagers) associated with entry into a new social system
- Adjusting to changes to family dynamics and roles associated with a lack of access by male family heads to employment and income
- Financial stresses associated with obtaining access to affordable housing for what are typically large families
- Limited understanding of the availability of mainstream family support services
- Social isolation and a lack of social services with expertise and experience in assisting African people. This is particularly the case where African families have been settled in regional areas such as the Hunter and Coffs Harbour
- Limited infrastructure within African communities in terms of non-government organisations and associations.

Childcare

Childcare was a key issue raised by women in consultations and was also raised in a number of submissions. The issue has been raised in earlier chapters in the context of insufficient childcare places during TAFE and AMEP classes, which can particularly impact on the education and English language needs of women.

The African Workers Network raised the issue in its submission:

Childcare has previously been at the centre of discussions and has become more important. This is because of its high costs. The situation is further [exacerbated] by the greater number of children under school age in African families. [AWN]

Family breakdown and domestic violence

Concerns were raised by a number of parties to the investigation in consultations and written submissions about incidents of domestic violence in African families. A number of submissions pointed to underlying factors such as financial pressures arising from unemployment and the changing role of male heads of families in relation to the control of household finances:

In African cultures males play a more dominant role than females so that husbands are the head of the household and usually the breadwinners and control finances. Centrelink payments are viewed by African communities as a major contributor to domestic violence and family breakdown, as this represents a shift of power to women and young people (Youth Allowance) in the family dynamics. In Australia the law gives more protection to women which makes it difficult for some members of the African communities to come to terms with new laws. For instance some males believe that their authority within the family can be undermined by these laws. Another contributing factor to domestic violence and family breakdown is the high unemployment facing newly arrived Africans and of course post traumatic stress disorders. [FMRC]

[Gender] is an emerging issue. African culture is highly patriarchal and there are African male expectations that African women will continue in their customary social role on arrival in Australia. However, for African women, increasing education levels, an awareness of women's rights in an Australian context and an increased level of financial independence has highlighted underlying tensions. A particular area is an increasing level of reported domestic violence. Awareness and acceptance of the rights of women in Australia is highly variable amongst African refugees and this has implications for the police services and other services that are developing programs to meet the needs of refugee families. [NCC]

Unemployment severely affects the individual's self esteem and may be a contributing factor to outbreaks of family violence and a sense of a lack of dignity, particularly for men, when the main source of income comes from Centrelink benefits. RCOA's own consultations have found that:

- There are tensions in some families because the woman, believing that government benefits are for the mother and the children, wants control of the money.
- Those yet to find employment still need to send money back home or to relatives in camps. This exacerbates tensions generated by a lack of income. [RCOA]

Anecdotal evidence presented to the investigation also suggests a high rate of family breakdown among African families within the first year of settlement. Recent consultations with African communities by the Family Court of Australia should better inform discussion on this issue when the findings are made available [AC].

Discipline and child protection

Coffs Harbour City Council raised concerns in its submission that:

Families are aware they are unable to discipline children as they traditionally would in Africa. Many people have expressed their concerns that they do not know alternative methods for discipline. Many families have no father. This is difficult for sole mothers, especially of male youth. [CHCC]

DoCS provided the following information on child protection and the family support related needs of African communities in its submission:

Anecdotal information from the Department's Community Service Centres (CSCs) in Western Sydney indicates that there has been an increase in the number of child protection reports involving African families.

This increase has corresponded with the rapid increase in the number of African families settling in the Western Sydney area under the Humanitarian Program. It does not necessarily mean that child protection issues are disproportionately present in African communities compared to other communities.

It should be noted that many of the child protection concerns associated with African communities are concerns that have been experienced by other newly arrived refugee communities on arrival.

The Department's consultation with African communities has revealed that a key concern is limited information and understanding by African communities of the child protection laws and legislation in NSW. Associated with this lack of understanding is a significant level of anxiety and concern amongst newly arrived parents about what are acceptable and unacceptable forms of child discipline and the role of Government agencies such as NSW Police and DoCS in child protection intervention.

Consultation has also revealed that there is a significant level of misunderstanding about the role and function of DoCS with many community members. It is generally not known that DoCS provides a wide range of services from community strengthening through funding streams, early intervention, and child protection. There appears to be a wide perception within African communities that the Department's primary role is the removal of children from their natural families as an option of first resort. [DoCS]

DoCS has recently developed a "Learning Circle" of African leaders to raise awareness of the role of DoCS and the services it offers, and to provide a forum for discussion on community concerns.

Recommendation 30

That the NSW Department of Community Services, in consultation with the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FACSI), the Family Court of Australia, and the NSW Office for Women, review the appropriateness and accessibility of education programs dealing with domestic violence and child protection for refugees and humanitarian entrants from Africa.

Issues for young people

The submission from NYIN/CYWN to the investigation was especially comprehensive in detailing settlement issues confronting refugee young people and young Africans in particular. Many of these issues have been noted in earlier Chapters Four and Five on health and education, and the next chapter will detail some of the findings of the NYIN/CYWN networks on policing issues for young African humanitarian entrants.

NYIN/CYWN also observed in their submission that many refugee young people encounter issues such as:

- social isolation
- depression
- lack of social connection
- culture shock during settlement
- language difficulties
- the effects of torture and trauma

The concern raised by NYIN/CYWN that youth drug and alcohol use is a growing area amongst African communities was noted in Chapter Four.

Burdens of responsibility unmatched to age was given as an issue affecting refugee youth in the submission by NSW Health. It was also noted in Chapter Five that there can be pressure on young people to get a job as soon as they are old enough in order to help the family. [DET]

Sports and recreation

One of the key issues identified by NYIN/CYWN in their submission was the lack of opportunity for young African humanitarian entrants to engage in organised sport and recreation activities. NYIN/CYWN stressed the importance of this issue in addressing the settlement needs of African young people:

Similar to all young people, refugee young people from the African continent share the need for recreation and creative activities to improve health, fitness and provide social activities. Refugee young people have a keen interest in playing sport, along with arts projects have been the most popular methods of engaging new arrivals. However this participation in sport tends to take place in an ad hoc manner and on a social level only, as they are not fully involved in official sporting structures and competitions.

The increased opportunity for African young people to participate in sporting activities with their peers will:

- increase individual connection with the community
- build confidence and self-esteem
- strengthen social skills and reduce “at-risk behaviour patterns”
- improve mental health, such as depression, anxiety and stress
- benefit physical health
- improve individual communities’ connectedness and participation in broader community structures.

African young people and their communities need to have the appropriate skills and knowledge to facilitate, coordinate and implement sporting activities that will result with positive settlement outcomes and create social cohesion. Sport and recreation initiatives need to be increased targeting African communities through the department of Sport and Recreation and local youth and community sporting organisations and community services. [NYIN/CYWN]

Recommendation 31

That the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation, local councils, and peak sports organisations, like NSW Soccer, work together to encourage and support youth activities among refugees and humanitarian entrants and to consider ways of reducing or waiving venue, registration, and uniform costs for these groups.

Strong communities

Many parties to the investigation were enthusiastic about the fact that, despite the seemingly overwhelming challenges faced by African humanitarian entrants during settlement, African communities have displayed great strength, commitment, and resourcefulness in addressing community needs and assisting new arrivals with the settlement process:

It is of course also important to recognise the contributions a relatively new community is making toward the support of their own communities and also the very real successes and positive impact African communities have made with the wider community through various capacity building initiatives and other more individual endeavours, aspiration and successes...

African communities have in a relatively short period of settlement, adjusted impressively well to the new society, in spite of the immense obstacles and barriers faced upon arrival. The community spirit and resilience is comparable to the refugees from Indo- China, Europe and the Middle East.

African communities have quickly formed efficient welfare, cultural, social and religious support structures to assist in the smooth settlement of newly arrived community members. This admirable effort is sometimes more efficient than contracted providers eg IHSS. There is no doubt that community support initiatives have alleviated some of the pressures on NSW and federal service providers.

A number of African organisations have been formed and incorporated to support their communities in Australia and overseas. These organisations provide direct support to new arrivals through volunteer labour and raise funds from the scarce resources of their membership. Some like the Sudanese community, have set up no-interest loan schemes to cover the costs of flights for relatives coming to Australia through the humanitarian program, etc. Others provide spiritual and religious support. Finally groups are formed for the purpose of cultural expression through music, dance and traditional crafts....

African communities already have in place significant advocacy skills and considerable community support programs through an admirable commitment to be self-reliant, supportive and self-determining.[FMRC]

Often it seems that only the difficulties being faced by new arrivals from communities from the African continent are considered. ANGLICARE workers have found that these communities have many strengths, and it is these strengths which have enabled many from these communities to settle effectively. Many new arrivals have come from refugee camps or been displaced elsewhere by civil war and persecution, and they are able to use strategies they have developed in order to survive in settling into their new environment. In addition, they are using their strong family and community ties to assist in such areas as conflict resolution within their communities, assist the police with situations involving members of their communities and disseminate information amongst community members. Many members of these communities are at present

involved in furthering their education, particularly at a tertiary level, and although they are not employed in positions commensurate with their qualifications or previous experience, they are keen to work and participate in their new society. [Anglicare]

...the independence and commitment of newly arrived community members to developing a strong community infrastructure for future arrivals from the African continent is a testimony to the resilience and determination displayed by various African communities living in New South Wales.

Many communities have intuitively established organic community support mechanisms and representative networks with a high level of initiative and strong advocacy skills. We see the role of services providers to support these groups and work with them providing support when needed, particularly with youth. [NYIN/CYWN]

The more established communities and their representative bodies, like the African Communities Council of NSW (ACC) and the Federation of African Communities Council (FACC), have also been quick to respond to issues arising for the more recent humanitarian arrivals and the smaller emerging communities from Africa.

A two-day national conference convened by FACC in Sydney in November 2005 (with sponsorship by DIMA, CRC and other agencies) brought together community leaders, key government agencies and service providers and academics from around Australia to discuss the settlement needs of African communities.

The ACC has been instrumental in advocating for African communities in NSW. The ACC's repeated call for a suitable meeting place for African communities in Blacktown has led to the recent opening of the "Africa House" drop-in centre which has proven a great success.

Auburn Council noted the following points on community capacity building for African communities and the need for community facilities like meeting spaces:

A great deal of capacity building activities have been carried out over the past years with African communities by workers at Anglicare, Blacktown MRC, Auburn MRC and African Communities Council.

There are now many incorporated African Associations, with various leaders who are assisting their own communities to settle in Sydney. However they are neither homogenous nor always harmonious due to past differences and current competition for resources. The political nature of communities impacts upon service delivery and community access.

There is a great demand for meeting spaces – rooms and halls – for community groups to use. Whilst Auburn Council can assist to a certain degree in this matter, there is difficulty for communities accessing facilities due to insurance issues for after hours use. At present we can only assist with free facility provision during working hours, when a Council worker is available to work with the group. We will be running information sessions for groups shortly, on such things as: insurance for non-profit organisations, ABN, facility hire processes etc. Hopefully this will increase community capacity to access resources. [AC]

Auburn Council in its submission also observed a need for greater representation by African communities at fora addressing the needs of these communities:

Some African workers and community leaders continue to raise concerns around representation and self-determination and those issues have impacted upon service delivery. [AC]

Chapter Three highlighted a number of concerns raised by small community organisations about the impact of new funding arrangements under the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program on the flexibility, responsiveness and relevance of services in the local area in which they operate, and recommended that the Australian Government assess the impact of new funding arrangements on the quality and range of services to new arrivals.

State funded organisations have expressed similar concerns, particularly in regards to the negative impact funding policies may have on the development and sustainability of organisations that represent and are best placed to deliver services to new and emerging communities.

Recommendation 32

That NSW Government agencies assess the impact of their funding policies on the development and sustainability of organisations that represent and deliver services to new and emerging communities.

Chapter 8

Racism, community relations, and crime

Racism and discrimination

Racism and discrimination were major issues raised in consultations with African communities and in written submissions.

Some adult participants reported feeling discriminated against by real estate agents when lodging lease applications, and by potential employers when applying for positions. Younger participants reported feeling unfairly targeted by police and transit officers. Similar examples were cited in a number of submissions.

The Refugee Council of Australia reported in its submission that “some women are discriminated against when applying for jobs because of their culture, background and the fact that they adhere to traditional dress standards” [RCOA].

The Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW (ADB) conducted a series of seminars with African communities on issue of racism and discrimination in March and June 2006, in which some Liberian and Ethiopian born women reported being treated unfairly in the workplace and being subjected to racist remarks [ADB].

Fairfield MRC in its submission, referring to the ADB consultations, noted that:

There appears to be many experiences of perceived or real discrimination and racism among members from the African communities. However not much is documented and unlike other communities who have learned their rights and therefore report to the various bodies like the Anti-Discrimination Board, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission or the Ombudsman’s Office, the African communities have not lodged many if any formal complaints to any of these offices. [FMRC]

Blacktown City Council in its submission raised a number of concerns about racism and negative attitudes in the wider community:

One particularly concerning aspect of the issues facing newly arrived Africans in Blacktown at present is the attitude of some community members towards them. Physical difference makes Africans highly visible... Skin colour clearly has some impact as many Africans report having suffered racist taunts based mainly on this. [BCC]

ADB submitted the following to the investigation based on observations made during its consultations:

The young people expressed concern about constant race discrimination by strangers in the street, and a lack of knowledge the Australian community had about Africa... e.g. a young male and a young female commented how racist taunts occurred daily, often whilst walking down the street, people shouted out of passing cars ‘nigger’ or ‘go home to your own country’.

The young people had a tendency to just ‘get on with life’ rather than do anything about the discrimination they faced and had not realised they were able to make a complaint. [ADB]

NSW Police in its submission noted some of the broader impacts of racism on social inclusion for African communities:

Police hold concerns for some African communities perceived to be at risk of social exclusion and vulnerable to racist attitudes in the wider host community... Real or perceived racism has the tendency to have enormous impact on family and community well being. Clearly, the effect of racism on people’s capacity and willingness to participate in broader social and political activities can be profound. [NSW Police]

Media and misinformation

Fairfield MRC raised a number of concerns about the negative impact of misinformed media coverage of African refugee issues:

The Media has provided some sympathetic coverage on the issues experienced by African refugees with the new IHSS provider and acted as an advocate for African refugees in support of proper treatment and services. However media coverage has also been quite harmful through a focus in mainstream media and talkback radio on generalisations about the education levels, language skills and even health status of arriving Africans. This had the effect of creating a negative image of Africans in the minds of many Australians. [FMRC]

The Refugee Support Network (RSN), a forum of agencies and services working with refugee and humanitarian entrants in Sydney, has recently raised concerns to the NSW Premier about media responses to comments by NSW politicians on African settlement issues:

The media has... sensationalised settlement demographics and conjured images of African youth gangs running out of control.

The impact of both issues is being felt at the individual level, with African children being bullied in the school playground, African families being abused in public places, and reports of the general community complaining about travelling on public transport with African communities. Some parents contacted schools saying they didn’t want their children sitting near children of African background.⁶⁷

A major concern raised to the Commission during a meeting with African community leaders in August 2005 related to the comments of Andrew Fraser, Associate Professor of Public Law at Macquarie University, published in the *Parramatta Sun* newspaper in June 2005. Fraser claimed that by resettling people from Sudan, Australia is potentially importing ethnic conflict and that expanding black population is a “sure-fire recipe” for increased crime and violence.

⁶⁷ Letter dated 30 May 2006, RSN to Premier of NSW regarding ‘Promoting positive community attitudes to new and emerging communities’, copied to the Chair of the Community Relations Commission.

The Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie University responded to the issue by saying that:

...I and other colleagues met with a number of leading representatives of the Sudanese community and the African Community Council in Sydney. I assured them that I personally disagreed profoundly with the views Professor Fraser has been propounding, and that the University as a whole dissociates itself from those views... I apologised to them both for the fact that Professor Fraser had signed his initial letter as an associate professor of Macquarie University, which doubtless gave it more weight, and for the distress and hurt caused thereby. They graciously accepted my apology.⁶⁸

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission found Fraser's comments offensive and unlawful because they amounted to a "sweeping generalisation" that was not backed by research, and requested Fraser to publish a public apology to the Sudanese community. Fraser has publicly refused to apologise and has defended his right to freedom of speech.⁶⁹

Blacktown City Council in its submission noted that misinformation has generated negative images and unfounded concern about African communities in the area:

African people are finding themselves tagged as a threat when the evidence of the crime statistics clearly indicates otherwise. The Police figures for Blacktown show that African involvement in crime is not high compared to the rest of the population...

A number of comments have been received by Council from community members to [counsel] fear and concern. These focus on three main themes:

- Crime – suggestions that Africans are involved in crime in Blacktown, that the crime level has risen in Blacktown and that this is consistent with the history of African migration in the UK and the USA.;
- Unemployment – lack of the skills and capacity and/or the interest to obtain work;
- Failure to become part of the community – lack of interest in, or capacity to, integrate successfully in Blacktown.

All of these areas of concern are based on incorrect information and/or unfounded fears. Where these comments are received by Council or published in letters to the editor pages Council can respond with correct information and hope to change attitudes at least somewhat. It is the much larger group who do not express their fear and feelings to Council or in print that is of concern in relation to the potential for growth of intolerance...

For the community as a whole to gain a greater understanding of the length and intensity of the hardship suffered by humanitarian entrants from Africa, it will be necessary for action to be taken to support Africans to tell their stories and provide opportunities for wide publication of these stories.

⁶⁸ "Macquarie University's Vice-Chancellor comments on academic's public statements", Macquarie University media release August 10, 2005

⁶⁹ "No apology for linking Africans to crime" The Australian 4 April 2006

On a local level, Blacktown City Council is very concerned about the impact on social harmony that growing negative perceptions may have. Council is actively engaged in working to address these attitudes, but resources and support are needed from both Federal and State level. [BCC]

Recommendation 33

That NSW Government representatives encourage the use of positive language that promotes community harmony and that recognises the cultural and linguistic value of the diverse African communities in New South Wales.

Police and community relations

NSW Police highlighted the negative impact that racist comments made in the public domain can have on police and community relations:

Racist responses from residents of NSW have the effect of creating major intercommunity tensions. For example, Associate Professor Andrew Fraser's public comments in July 2005, claiming that African migration increases crime, had a considerable impact on NSW communities. NSW Police had to deploy several personnel, from senior executive to local police, to manage the situation and to prevent even further fear of police among African humanitarian entrants...

...public comments or media reports that are detrimental to the role of police or inadvertently reinforce the fear of police among new arrivals such as African humanitarian entrants can be costly for the NSW community. [NSW Police]

NSW Police also highlighted some of the challenges for police in liaising with emerging communities with complex settlement needs:

NSW Police (NSWP) has noted several complex criminal incidents involving African humanitarian entrants, both as victims and offenders. This illustrates the vulnerability of this group of new arrivals to New South Wales. Individuals who have fled war torn countries and have experienced considerable torture and trauma are highly vulnerable when they arrive in a new environment, often with a range of expectations. Upon arrival to the host country, many of them experience a range of difficulties including unemployment, barriers with accessing educational pathways, family breakdown, cultural displacement, racism, isolation and poverty. The combination of these factors needs to be considered in understanding and addressing anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.

NSW Police as a government organisation does not have the responsibility, resources or skills to deal with such complex social issues or the stigma and marginalisation of emerging communities associated with it. Yet it is increasingly being called upon to manage and control anti-social/criminal behaviour beyond its current mandate and core business. Although police respond to crime, enforcement options preclude them from being able to address the core motivators for the behaviour or offer preventative solutions beyond the realm of deterring crime...

Within the settlement process, emerging communities come into contact with numerous government agencies that provide for basic needs such as financial support (Centrelink), shelter (Dept of Housing), health (Dept of Health), mental health, (STARTTS), employment (DEWRSB) and education (Dept of Education). NSW Police, however, along with the Department of Community Services (DoCS), is in a different and difficult predicament where interactions with newly established communities can generate great fear and suspicion. Interactions with such agencies tend to be for the purpose of compliance with laws and these are especially difficult interactions if they impact directly on the family unit... [NSW Police]

Fear of police and alleged “over-policing”

Some parties to the investigation raised concerns about prejudice on the part of police in dealing with African communities:

Blacktown LGA is known to be a suburb where African drivers feel targeted by the police because of their race. Though it is a fact that some of the drivers from the new and emerging communities violate traffic law regulations, it should not be used as a stereotype...

Policing or alleged over policing of African communities is an issue that has been addressed at various forums. Unfortunately, very little has been done to address this, as the police authorities on one side would always argue that people from new communities were unaware of the Australian system and were always on the wrong side. This is frustrating to many Africans as it hinders the scope with which issues may be addressed

In an attempt to find data on crime statistics relevant to African communities nothing was found to be notable. In Blacktown, which has the highest number of new African settlers, the police figures show that African crime is not high compared to the rest of the population. However traffic infringements regarding currency of license, registration etc is seen as a problem. [FMRC]

NYIN/CYWN highlighted this as a major issue for young people:

CALD [“culturally and linguistically diverse”] Young people often feel victimised, singled out and targeted because of their appearance or ethnicity, by uniformed authoritative figures believing they are in ‘gangs’ or acting ‘suspiciously’. Young African people are no exception to this negative stereotyping that is becoming more common. There is still no hard evidence of ‘gangs’ of African young people being involved in crime or anti – social behaviour, with young people feel that they are the victims of negative stereotyping and institutional racism simply because of their physical appearance, and their willingness to socialise with groups of other African young people.

Incidents relating to African youth engaging in anti-social behaviour are relatively low compared to various, more established CALD community groups. The NYIN has done extensive work to ensure that ongoing concerns of refugee & CALD young people and public space are addressed through education for young people on Australian law and also lobbying for increased understanding and education for police and security personnel. [NYIN/CYWN]

ADB in its submission made the following observations based on its consultations with African communities:

Some women complained about police officers targeting the young men in their communities. They told of local police stopping male youths on the street without apparent reason and asking questions such as where they were going or what they were doing. The young men in question apparently felt it was because they were black and that this was not happening with young white males..

Participants revealed personal stories of discrimination being targeted by police whilst walking down the street and by train guards whilst travelling on trains.

E.g. An adult male spoke of sitting on a train and being the only African person in the carriage. When the train guard entered he immediately targeted him and asked where his ticket was. When the man questioned this and asked why the guard had not asked anyone else in the carriage, the guard became aggressive and abusive.

They spoke how, culturally in their community and in particular refugee camps, they ‘treat fire with fire’ to resolve issues, therefore if they are harassed or bullied they may often respond to this in a similar fashion. This is often the only way to resolve the problem in their community, however in Australia it may be viewed as aggressive or inappropriate response. [ADB]

NYIN/CYWN noted a number of issues arising out of what they labelled ‘the transit fine phenomenon’ among young Africans:

When African young people do encounter problems with the Law that result in fines, new waves of issues arise out of this situation. Receiving fines places a massive financial burden on refugee young people and their families. These families may already have major financial difficulties and worries, and this added imposition of fines increases their anxiety and stress. Being apprehended for transit offences, which are largely minor and often unintended misdemeanors, are often due to language difficulties or being mistaken as being older than they actually are. Having extremely heavy fines can trigger previous trauma and cause much distress, among an already vulnerable group of people.

...African young people are often disadvantaged in terms of giving verbal explanations at the time of the offence and also in providing subsequent written explanations. Anecdotal evidence suggests that articulate English speakers are often not fined if they provide a reasonable explanation, which is extremely difficult for African and other refugee young people.

Furthermore, in the country of origin, African young people’s experience of people in uniform tends to be as persecutors and torturers. Therefore there is an underlying feeling of distrust with all people in uniforms, which exacerbates an already tense relationship. [NYIN/CYWN]

Law and justice awareness

A number of parties to the investigation raised concerns about a lack of awareness of law and justice processes on the part of recently arrived humanitarian entrants from Africa.

This issue frequently arose in the context of discussion on unlicensed driving and traffic violations. Fairfield City Council highlighted this issue in its submission:

Of concern are road safety issues associated with unlicensed driving, the purchase of unregistered vehicles and a lack of access to fully licensed drivers (within or without the community) to assist learner drivers in attaining the requisite 50hrs supervised driving. As inexpensive second-hand vehicles are readily available for purchase, members of African communities are increasingly buying cars without fully understanding licensing, insurance and registration requirements. Consequently, they are more commonly breaking the law, facing fines they can't afford to pay and, in some cases, obtain a criminal record. The impact of insufficient knowledge and inadequate resources (in these circumstances) has the potential to severely hamper individual and family settlement processes and to restrict aspirations and longer-term prospects. [FCC]

The issue also arose in relation to a lack of awareness of appropriate child punishment and domestic violence, as addressed in the preceding chapter.

...consultation with African communities has revealed that a key concern is limited information and understanding by African communities of the child protection laws and legislation in NSW. Associated with this lack of understanding is a significant level of anxiety and concern amongst newly arrived parents about what are acceptable and unacceptable forms of child discipline and the role of Government agencies such as NSW Police and DoCS in child protection intervention. [DoCS]

In the context of domestic violence, Fairfield MRC raised the issue that:

In Australia the law gives more protection to women which makes it difficult for some members of the African communities to come to terms with new laws. For instance some males believe that their authority within the family can be undermined by these laws. [FMRC]

NSW Police in its submission noted that a lack of awareness of the law and a fear of police arising from pre-migration experiences can heighten tensions in interactions between police and African community members:

A salient issue that has contributed towards criminal involvement by some recent humanitarian entrants from African countries is their genuine lack of awareness and understanding of the police role and the legal process. Many of our recent refugee and humanitarian entrants have come from remote, rural or refugee camp environments, which are often devoid of structured services and legal systems. Interactions between police and some individuals of such background have the potential to escalate due to:

- Limited understanding of police roles and powers e.g. move along and stop and search;
- Limited English language proficiency
- Antagonism towards police resulting in adversarial contact;
- Perception that all police are racist, which shifts the focus of an interaction from the issue at hand to one of placing and avoiding blame

NSW Police has a very important role to play in terms of community education and law enforcement, but calls for a contextual approach to the settlement needs of African communities that allows it to work with other service providers and government agencies in developing, implementing and evaluating relevant educational strategies...

A number of LACs [Local Area Commands] have identified representation of recently arrived humanitarian entrants in their crime statistics. These include Mt Druitt, Flemington, Parramatta, Holroyd, Rosehill, Campsie and Bankstown. Each of these LACs have developed or have started to develop responses to the issues appropriate to their context and populations, including training initiatives for police, information initiatives for communities, agency coordination, community consultation and establishing networks and relationships with leaders and respected members of African communities. Despite these isolated responses, the overlap and increasing prominence of related issues calls for a coordinated approach not only by NSW [Police] but its partner agencies in addressing settlement needs. A coordinated approach to the experiences of LACs will be taken up through the NSW Police Ethnic Community Liaison Officers and the Cultural Diversity Team to identify common trends and effective approaches that are consistent with a corporate position on the issue.

...the experiences of police in New South Wales are relatively unique as it is one of a few government agencies that is heavily impacted because of prior policing experiences of groups such as African humanitarian entrants. Fear of police is a critical issue among such people and this needs to be addressed collaboratively to ensure that crime is actually reported, detected, investigated and that victims or crime are adequately supported. [NSW Police]

Similar issues were highlighted in the 1994 report *Police and Ethnic Communities* by the former Ethnic Affairs Commission, which made a range of recommendations which were endorsed by NSW Police and which sought to build bridges between police and ethnic communities and to build trust and co-operation where in the past there had been a measure of suspicion and unfamiliarity.

NYIN/CYWN in their submission highlighted the need for increased awareness of Australian law on the part of African young people, and the need for increased awareness among police of the issues confronting humanitarian entrants during settlement:

Developing an understanding of the Australian law and the role of the people that enforce it will help alleviate the mistrust and suspicion that exists among African young people. Additionally, African young people need to be further informed about their rights and responsibilities as citizens and the methods used to report if they have been victims of crime and/or make complaints due to possible police, security guards or transit officers' mistreatment.

Greater access to appropriate forms of information, better understanding of the roles of police, security guards and transit officers by African young people and more awareness of the issues faced by refugee young people by police, security guards and transit officers, will strengthen relationships and foster mutual respect between the groups. [NYIN/CYWN]

NYIN/CYWN also highlighted some of the positive efforts on the part of police and young Africans to participate in joint recreational activities and raise mutual awareness:

Youth & settlement networks in Western Sydney have taken a proactive approach to engage both refugee young people and the police through sporting events (soccer matches), information sessions and barbeques that have been successful in developing partnerships and an open dialogue...

The community sector supports ongoing positive interaction between African youth and the police, as it is important to develop strong relationships and understanding as African communities increase in size. African communities, like other CALD communities have special needs in terms of cultural sensitivity and communication, particularly with authority figures who look like uniformed government personnel...

Police need to continue developing cultural sensitivity training in direct partnership with African communities and community organisations. It would also be of benefit to both police and African communities for Youth Liaison officers to have more direct contact with African young people through youth programs, recreational activities and schools on a regular basis. [NYIN/CYWN]

Fairfield MRC also acknowledged the responsiveness of NSW Police in its engagement with African communities:

The Police Services in Blacktown, Auburn and Fairfield have worked very closely and proactively with African communities by providing information on their law enforcement and community roles, participating in soccer matches and barbecues. These events were organised through Police Ethnic Community Liaison Officers (ECLOS), local Police Services and Migrant Resource Centres. The activities are an important and very successful crime prevention and community relations tool between ethnic communities and the Police. It is of course a testament to what we have learned over time from the settlement of refugees and migrants from South East Asia and the Middle East. The Police Service is to be commended on its rapid response and willingness to participate in the prevention and educational programs. [FMRC]

Community harmony

A number of parties to the investigation raised concerns about the potential long-term impacts on community harmony that may arise from inadequate early settlement support for African communities. African humanitarian entrants may not be overly represented in crime statistics at the present time – no conclusive data exist with respect to the ethnicity of recorded offenders or victims of crime⁷⁰ – but some parties to the investigation, including NSW Police, raised concerns that crime amongst African-born humanitarian young people may increase in the longer term given the education and employment barriers currently being faced by many African humanitarian entrants (as detailed in Chapters Four and Five).

CRR/ANCORW in their submission pointed to a connection between complex settlement needs, wider community awareness of refugee issues, and long term consequences in terms of social exclusion and crime:

An honest appraisal of the real needs of this group, the problems they are facing and the failures of support is essential. Wide community education about the circumstances from which these groups have come is a key element of this preparation. If we do not do this and allow the problem to be dismissed as one of culture we will indeed be well on the way to creating a “black underclass”. Black street gangs will replace Indochinese and Lebanese gangs because we have again failed to support and address the needs of these groups. If we allow this to occur we as a society will have failed these young people and their families.

The potential for long-term settlement problems for vulnerable refugee groups has serious implications for the wider Australian community in terms of its social cohesion and the weakening of the social fabric. It also has significant economic implications in terms of the high cost of settlement breakdown in contrast to the benefits of successful settlement. Past research on settlement has shown that access to specialised settlement support services can significantly improve the ease with which refugees integrate into their country of resettlement.

[CRR/ANCORW]

Some parties to the investigation also raised concerns about ethnic tensions that appear to have surfaced on occasion between African communities and other ethnic communities. NSW Police representatives in various meetings have suggested there is a potential for tensions to arise between African and Aboriginal communities in regional areas of NSW where humanitarian entrants have been settled and where rates of Aboriginal unemployment are high.

In a metropolitan context, Auburn Council in its submission observed:

There is a need for community harmony projects in the Auburn area. Police are increasingly being called to intervene in groups of African and Pacific Island youth (predominantly boys) fighting. [AC]

⁷⁰ Formal advice to Commission from NSW Police on this issue further notes that the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) has officially indicated that overall country of birth crime statistics are not reliable because a large percentage of incident records are incomplete.

These are matters of concern, however there is no evidence to suggest that these incidents were anything other than isolated conflicts between different groups of young people.

This investigation revealed a concern among some African community leaders that some young people in African communities may be inclined to react in inappropriate or unlawful ways when they feel they have been victimised or subject to racist attack.

The following case study, based on observations made during the investigation, highlights some of the complex social issues surrounding law and justice awareness, community harmony, and a sense of victimisation apparent among some African young people. But it also serves to demonstrate some of the positive responses by communities, police, and service agencies to emerging issues facing African communities.

Case Study

In January 2006, a Sudanese father of three who had recently arrived in Australia was hospitalised with critical head injuries after being bashed by two youths in Auburn, and died as a result a few days later.

Police were quick to dismiss suggestions that the attack was racially motivated, describing the attack as a ‘prank’ that had gotten out of control: reportedly two youths had been throwing eggs at people from a car; the victim responded by yelling back; the two youths stopped the car and bashed the victim.

Sudanese community representatives in contact with police, CRC, DIMA and settlement service providers nevertheless expressed an urgent concern that young Sudanese in the area felt the attack was racially motivated and might be contemplating revenge attacks.

Community sensitivities were reportedly heightened by perceptions that Sudanese were repeatedly subject to racial taunts in the area; that the perpetrators of the crime were of “Middle Eastern background” and that the attack might be interpreted in the context of the ongoing persecution of Southern Sudanese Christians at the hands of Arab Muslims in Sudan; and that police had shown leniency to the teenaged perpetrators by releasing them on bail after their arrest (in the days before the victim died and new charges were laid).

Police reported that large groups of Sudanese arrived at the local station demanding explanations as to the police response to the attack. A series of crisis meetings were facilitated by NSW Police to explain the legal process. NSW Police, CRC, DIMA, and the local IHSS provider all participated in uncoordinated meetings with community representatives to discuss the possibility of revenge attacks by Sudanese youths, the need to quickly disseminate information to communities, and the plight of the victim’s family. The African Communities Council called a special meeting of community leaders, police, and senior government representatives to address the issues.

It is not possible to know whether these responses helped to prevent further crime or a possible breakdown in community relations, or if the likelihood of such occurrences may have been exaggerated by some parties. Nevertheless, the vocal community response to the issue, the willingness of government and non-government agencies to rapidly attend to community concerns, and the goodwill expressed towards the victim's family by the broader community, including the local Turkish community in Auburn, are encouraging indications both of the resourcefulness of African communities and of the level of support in the wider community.

Recommendation 34

That the Research Advisory Committee of the Standing Committee on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs consider funding a research project examining the long term social and economic benefits of developing early intervention strategies to address the needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants.

Recommendation 35

That all government agencies consult with and provide timely advice to the Community Relations Commission on any emerging issue affecting or potentially affecting community harmony in NSW; and

That the Community Relations Commission co-ordinate the resolution of any such issue by NSW Government agencies, in accordance with the Commission's legislative mandate "to assist in resolving issues associated with cultural diversity" under Section 13(h) of the *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000*.

Recommendation 36

That NSW Police:

- (i) actively recruit Ethnic Community Liaison Officers (ECLOs) from African communities in Local Area Commands with high rates of settlement of humanitarian entrants from Africa;
- (ii) formally encourage recruitment of police officers from African communities

Recommendation 37

That the NSW Attorney-General's Department in consultation with the CRC, NSW Police, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Department of Corrective Services develop and maintain up-to-date information sheets and other appropriate media translated into African languages on aspects of the criminal justice system and the role of the police.

Co-ordinated response

Issues arising in the settlement of African humanitarian entrants have been a focus of discussion at a plethora of meetings of government and non-government agencies over the past few years. Various State and Commonwealth Government agencies have engaged in community consultations to identify the service needs of African humanitarian entrants as these relate to the core businesses of particular service providers.

On the one hand, these responses indicate a good level of awareness amongst government and non-government service providers as to the challenges confronting African humanitarian entrants during settlement, and a positive degree of responsiveness in efforts to address these challenges. Fairfield MRC in its submission noted in this regard:

- that service providers have in fact responded quickly to the needs of African communities, these include Centrelink, health services, community based services like Migrant resource Centres, Refuges, Domestic Violence, youth services etc.
- that both government and non-government services have already been successful in recruiting a substantial number of very capable African language aides and welfare workers.
- that a wide range of government and non-government providers are much more prepared to participate in programs which provide information about the histories, cultures, traditions, and religious practices of the African communities than they were with previous refugee communities .
- that African communities already have in place significant advocacy skills and considerable community support programs through an admirable commitment to be self-reliant, supportive and self-determining.
- that some service providers appear to be daunted but not paralysed in their efforts to address the complex needs of African clients. Despite expressing concerns about how needs can be met these services are actively engaged in developing programs to meet those needs. [FMRC]

On the other hand, this investigation has found an inefficient level of communication and co-ordination between agencies sometimes resulting in the duplication of work. Officers from State and Commonwealth departments who deal directly or indirectly with settlement issues in NSW are frequently invited to attend a range of government and community meetings at which many of the same issues are discussed, and without any formal links existing between these different fora to share information, ensure a consistent response, and avoid duplication. In a similar fashion, the same representatives from non-government organisations attend different community meetings, auspiced by different bodies, that discuss similar issues. In the case of some NSW government agencies, a lack of adherence to communication protocols has sometimes resulted in policy positions being misrepresented in public fora.

The Commission received a useful submission to the investigation through the Premier's Department Hunter Regional Co-ordination Management Group (RCMG) in the form of a report from the Hunter Taskforce Supporting African Settlement. The investigation would have benefited from further input from other RCMGs in the form of a consolidated submission from the Premier's Department Regional Coordination Program (RCP).

The RCP coordinates NSW government effort at a regional level through the RCMGs to maximise benefits to local communities within each of the ten regions. The RCMG is primarily a forum of NSW State agency regional managers, and its role is to:

1. identify and prioritise initiatives and issues that require a multi-agency response;
2. develop and manage regional strategic initiatives;
3. allocate and monitor resources to support projects;
4. evaluate and monitor project outcomes; and
5. enhance interagency networks and information exchange⁷¹

In this respect the RCP has a critical role to play in the successful settlement of humanitarian entrants in regional and rural NSW.

A number of submissions to the investigation pointed to a need for a whole-of-government strategy to address the settlement needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants from Africa. In this context, it is noteworthy that the recently established Commonwealth Inter-Departmental Committee on Humanitarian Settlement (IDC-HS), chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, has agreed that the successful settlement of humanitarian entrants requires a whole-of-government approach across Commonwealth, State and local governments. The IDC has identified a range of issues previously identified by the NSW Government at meetings of State and Territory and Commonwealth governments for the past four years (see Chapter One). The Australian Government has indicated it will consult with State and Territory governments on its initiatives later in the year, once it has a clearer position on what is to be done at the Commonwealth level. At this stage there has been no consultation with the States on the development of ideas to address the issues.

Chapter One detailed some of the mechanisms by which the Community Relations Commission on behalf of the NSW Government has sought to highlight the urgent need to review the adequacy and coordination of settlement services to meet the particular needs of African humanitarian entrants. The Commission facilitates the coordination of NSW Government policy on settlement issues through the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee (NGISPC). Key NSW Government agencies and the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs provide input and advice to the Committee to inform a co-ordinated response to settlement issues in this State (see Chapter One; Appendix 4 demonstrates some of the sources of input to the NGISPC and Committee's links to other whole-of-government structures for settlement planning).

⁷¹ Premier's Department website, <http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au/workandbusiness/workingforgovernment/strategicmanagementframework/corpplanning/servicedeliverystrategy.htm> accessed 20 June 2006

The NSW Government has consistently argued that the issues need to be addressed at the national level, and that it is the responsibility and duty of care of the Australian Government to ensure that refugees and humanitarian entrants are resettled in Australia without suffering further unnecessary hardship. The issues presented in this report require a national response which is inclusive of State and Territory and local governments in its development and implementation.

The following recommendations seek to address the need for a whole-of government strategy in NSW by better utilising some of the existing mechanisms to co-ordinate the efforts of NSW Government agencies in co-operation with the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

Recommendation 38

That the settlement of African refugees and humanitarian entrants become a standing item on the agenda for the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee, and that the Committee provide an annual report for inclusion in the Community Relations Report tabled by the Minister for Citizenship in Parliament each year.

Recommendation 39

That, in order to improve efficiency and better co-ordinate NSW Government responses to African settlement issues, all NSW Government agencies involved in fora addressing African settlement issues:

- (i) report on their activities in this regard to the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee; and
- (ii) clear all policy positions on African settlement issues through the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee.

Recommendation 40

That the provision and co-ordination of NSW Government services to African communities in regional NSW be addressed:

- (i) at meetings of the Premier's Regional Co-ordination Management Groups (RCMGs) and that the Premier's Department report quarterly on issues and actions to the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee.
- (ii) at meetings of the Community Relations Commission Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), and that the Commission report quarterly on issues and actions to the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee.

Recommendation 41

That agencies designated by the NSW Premier as key EAPS agencies include strategies to address the needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants in EAPS planning and performance assessment.



Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That the Australian Government endorse Recommendation 55 of the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee Report of the Inquiry into the Administration and Operation of the *Migration Act 1958*:

“That, in the light of increasing numbers of refugees from Africa, DIMA should reassess its resettlement programs to ensure that services are relevant, and that sufficient budget appropriation is made to cover all the costs of implementing those programs.”

Recommendation 2

That DIMA:

- (i) assess the capacity of SHP proposers to meet their requirements to provide necessary support to proposed entrants (as stated in DIMA Form 681) prior to visa grant, and only grant subclass 202 (Special Humanitarian Program) visas to persons whose proposers can satisfy these requirements;
- (ii) reclassify the visa status of a subclass 202 (SHP) visa holder to a visa subclass 200 (Refugee) if an assessment by DIMA anticipates the failure of support on the part of a proposer, post-arrival if necessary;
- (iii) investigate the impact of non-government organisations operating or brokering loan schemes on their operations as SHP proposers;
- (iv) consider the recommendation by NSW Police that provision be made for assessing and monitoring the security status and accountability of non-government organisations acting as SHP proposers.

Recommendation 3

That DIMA:

- (i) in assessing SHP proposer applications, take into consideration the location of SHP proposers and the accessibility of services and employment opportunities in that location prior to visa grant;
- (ii) not settle entrants under the Refugee Program in regional locations where there is limited access to services and limited employment opportunities;
- (iii) continue to work cooperatively with the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee in scoping suitable settlement locations in regional NSW for entrants under the Refugee Program.

Recommendation 4

That DIMA provide NSW Government agencies with information on the timing and location of humanitarian arrivals as soon as practicable after these become known to DIMA, to ensure the effective provision of services to these groups.

Recommendation 5

That the Australian Government ensure that pre-embarkation cultural orientation (AUSCO) programs make clear that settlement is a long term process and that new arrivals are likely to have limited financial capacity during early settlement to support relatives still in Africa or to sponsor their entry to Australia.

Recommendation 6

That the Australian Government, through the IHSS, introduce a formalised program of cultural orientation and life skills classes for refugee and SHP entrants on a monthly basis for the first 12 months of settlement.

Recommendation 7

That the Australian Government:

- (i) provide refugee and humanitarian entrant families with a crisis payment equivalent to one week's worth of Centrelink benefits on the day of the first Centrelink interview (i.e. within 48 hours after arrival);
- (ii) issue Tax File Numbers to refugees and humanitarian entrants at their initial Centrelink interview (i.e. within 48 hours after arrival) so that families can receive the Family Tax Benefit;
- (iii) provide on-arrival accommodation to refugees for an extended period (beyond four weeks) determined by an assessment of the individual household's readiness to move from on-arrival accommodation;
- (iv) ensure that all humanitarian entrants assessed as having high settlement needs on-arrival are offered 12 months of support under the IHSS;
- (v) fund an independent evaluation of the 'exiting' procedures by which IHSS providers determine if entrants' needs have been met, including an evaluation of the longer term settlement outcomes of entrants who have exited the IHSS at various stages (e.g. after 3, 6, or 12 months).

Recommendation 8

That the Australian Government:

- (i) introduce contractual obligations on the part of IHSS providers to monitor the needs of SHP entrants through face-to-face interviews with SHP entrants;
- (ii) introduce eligibility requirements for SHP proposers so that proposers must be Australian citizens or eligible for Australian citizenship, i.e. permanent residents who have lived in Australia for two years.

Recommendation 9

That the Australian Government introduce contractual obligations on the part of IHSS providers to maintain established networks and partnerships with government and non-government service agencies.

Recommendation 10

That the Australian Government:

- (i) introduce contractual arrangements under the IHSS that can facilitate cooperation and communication between transitioning contractors before new contractors start delivering services under the IHSS;
- (ii) monitor and assess the quality of services provided by IHSS contractors and report on this evaluation annually to the Ministerial Council for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs;
- (iii) ensure that reported failures in the delivery of the IHSS are investigated by an independent body.

Recommendation 11

That the Australian Government establish formal protocols for referring clients from IHSS to post-IHSS settlement services

Recommendation 12

That the Australian Government monitor and assess the impact of the change in program funding and arrangements under Settlement Grants Program on the quality and range of services provided to migrants and humanitarian entrants and report on the outcomes of this evaluation to the Ministerial Council for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs in 2007.

Recommendation 13

That the Australian Government

- (i) provide fee-free interpreting to all agencies providing services to entrants under the Humanitarian Program in their first two years of settlement.
- (ii) provide additional funding to community settlement services to engage professional interpreters in delivering services.

Recommendation 14

That the Australian Government:

- (i) provide scholarships for individuals who speak emerging languages identified as being in demand in the provision of services to humanitarian entrants to undertake appropriate interpreter and translator courses;
- (ii) provide a tax deduction equivalent to the cost of two NAATI examinations for candidates on successful completion of NAATI examinations in languages identified as being in demand in the provision of services to humanitarian entrants.

Recommendation 15

That the CRC, NSW Health, DIMA, Centrelink and NAATI work together to increase the availability and quality of interpreting and translating services that would assist in the successful settlement of humanitarian entrants from Africa in NSW.

Recommendation 16

That NSW Government agencies seek to recruit bilingual speakers of African languages for frontline services and assist in the development of language services through the promotion of the Community Language Allowance Scheme (CLAS).

Recommendation 17

That the Australian Government assess the housing requirements of refugees and humanitarian entrants post-arrival and negotiate funding enhancements to state government agencies to address the housing requirements of these groups.

Recommendation 18

That the Australian Government:

- (i) urgently review options to ensure full coverage of 72-hour pre-departure health screening (PDHS) for refugee and SHP entrants and introduce documentary evidence of PDHS as a pre-condition for entry into Australia for refugees and SHP entrants;
- (ii) provide a specific infrastructure for on-shore health assessments for refugees and humanitarian entrants;
- (iii) fund NSW Health to provide comprehensive and timely on-shore health assessments and relevant care for refugees and humanitarian arrivals to NSW;
- (iv) include specified medications needed to treat exotic infections in refugees and humanitarian entrants on the PBS;
- (v) resource initiatives to support the health needs of African humanitarian young people and children with particular emphasis on building the capacity of African communities to assist its young people with health and mental health issues.

Recommendation 19

That the Australian Government increase support to the NSW Government to address current inequalities in funding for intensive English provision for school-aged new arrivals.

Recommendation 20

That the Australian Government, through consultation between DIMA and the NSW Department of Education and Training, review AMEP entitlements in order to provide more flexibility and improve access for 16 to 18 year old students, particularly in rural NSW.

Recommendation 21

That DIMA review AMEP contracts to allow providers to adapt their curricula to the learning needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants with low levels of literacy in first languages (including oral languages) and low levels of formal schooling experience.

Recommendation 22

That the Australian Government fund more childcare places to meet the demand and specific needs of AMEP students.

Recommendation 23

That the Australian Government consider the provision of English language classes in refugee camps so as to assist in the successful settlement of refugees and humanitarian entrants from Africa

Recommendation 24

That the Australian Government through the Job Network develop and resource a refugee and humanitarian entrant job seeker program.

Recommendation 25

That DIMA assist humanitarian entrants wishing to have their skills and qualifications recognised by:

- (i) ensuring that families of humanitarian entrants are informed of the importance of having transcripts of academic records and original copies of qualifications available for recognition purposes when they arrive in Australia;
- (ii) working in collaboration with DEWR, DEST and relevant State and Territory agencies including the NSW Department of Education and Training, in particular, State Training Services and TAFE NSW, to develop State and Territory-specific information strategies;
- (iii) extending its fee-free document translating service to incorporate:
 - a. transcripts of academic records required for recognition purposes
 - b. all employment certificates that establish requisite on-the-job training for the recognition of trade skills
 - c. documents that attest to off-the-job training required for issuing a trade certificate
 - d. statutory declarations completed by humanitarian entrants who are seeking skills recognition
- (iv) collecting data on the occupation, work experience, qualifications, age, English language proficiency levels and LGA of intended residence of humanitarian entrants and making this data available to state government agencies for planning purposes.

Recommendation 26

That the Australian Government fund brokerage programs involving business, local agencies and community leaders to provide appropriately targeted assistance to refugee and humanitarian entrants from Africa to gain employment

Recommendation 27

That the Australian Government monitor the impact of Australian Workplace Agreements (AWA) in terms of the labour market outcomes of unskilled humanitarian entrants with low levels of English language proficiency.

Recommendation 28

That NSW DET support the development through TAFE NSW of Open Learning programs tailored to the needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants.

Recommendation 29

That DIMA provide adequate resources to ensure that detached humanitarian minors (non-wards) under the Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors Program receive all settlement services previously provided to this group by NSW DoCS under the 1985 Commonwealth/State Cost Sharing Program for Services to Refugee Minors Without Parents in Australia.

Recommendation 30

That the NSW Department of Community Services, in consultation with the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FACSI), the Family Court of Australia, and the NSW Office for Women, review the appropriateness and accessibility of education programs dealing with domestic violence and child protection for refugees and humanitarian entrants from Africa.

Recommendation 31

The NSW Department of Sport and Recreation, local councils, and peak sports organisations, like NSW Soccer, work together to encourage and support youth activities among refugees and humanitarian entrants and to consider ways of reducing or waiving venue, registration, and uniform costs for these groups.

Recommendation 32

That NSW Government agencies assess the impact of their funding policies on the development and sustainability of organisations that represent and deliver services to new and emerging communities.

Recommendation 33

That NSW Government representatives encourage the use of positive language that promotes community harmony and that recognises the cultural and linguistic value of the diverse African communities in New South Wales.

Recommendation 34

That the Research Advisory Committee of the Standing Committee on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs consider funding a research project examining the long term social and economic benefits of developing early intervention strategies to address the needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants.

Recommendation 35

That all government agencies consult with and provide timely advice to the Community Relations Commission on any emerging issue affecting or potentially affecting community harmony in NSW; and

That the Community Relations Commission co-ordinate the resolution of any such issue by NSW Government agencies, in accordance with the Commission's legislative mandate "to assist in resolving issues associated with cultural diversity" under Section 13(h) of the *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000*.

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- (i) at meetings of the Premier's Regional Coordination Management Groups (RCMGs) and that the Premier's Department report quarterly on issues and actions to the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee.
- (ii) at meetings of the Community Relations Commission Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), and that the Commission report quarterly on issues and actions to the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee.

Recommendation 41

That agencies designated by the NSW Premier as key EAPS agencies include strategies to address the needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants in EAPS planning and performance assessment.



Appendices

Appendix 1. Submissions received by the Commission

The Commission called for submissions addressing the investigations terms of reference from the following stakeholders:

- key NSW Government agencies
- multicultural affairs offices of each of the States and Territories
- the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
- local and regional councils in NSW
- key non-government organisations
- settlement service providers
- community refugee support groups

25 written submissions were received by the Commission. Submission are listed below according to agency type.

Local Government:

Auburn Council [AC]
Blacktown City Council [BCC]
Fairfield City Council [FCC]
Holroyd City Council [HCC]
Coffs Harbour City Council [CHCC]
Newcastle City Council [NCC]
Tamworth Regional Council [TRC]

NSW Government:

Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW [ADB]
Department of Housing [DoH]
Department of Community Services [DoCS]
Department of Education and Training [DET]
NSW Health
NSW Police

Other State Government:

Multicultural Tasmania [TAS]

Commonwealth Government:

Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs [DIMA]

Key non-government:

Refugee Council of Australia [RCOA]

Anglicare

St Vincent de Paul Society of NSW [SVDP]

Settlement service providers and networks:

Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre [FMRC]

Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre [BMRC]

NESB Youth Issues Network/CSSS Youth Workers Network [NYIN/CYWN]

African Workers Network [AWN]

Community and government interagency:

Community Relations Commission/Premier's Department Hunter Taskforce [Hunter Taskforce]

Community organisation:

Strategic Community Assistance to Refugee Families, Wollongong [SCARF]

University

Centre for Refugee Research (University of New South Wales) and the Australian National Committee on Refugee Women [CRR/ANCORW]

Appendix 2. Health Service provision for Refugees

NSW Refugee Health Service

In 1998/99 the NSW Department of Health produced the policy *Strategic Directions in Refugee Health Care in NSW*, the first document of its kind in Australia. It was created in recognition of the high level of health needs among people of refugee background.

To help implement the identified approaches, the Department formed the NSW Refugee Health Service in 1999. Its aim is to protect and promote the health of refugees and others of refugee-like background in NSW. The service facilitates access to care and fosters more appropriate health care for the target group. This is done through:

- A “bridging service” clinical role, assisting new arrivals in particular through health assessments, advice and referral; community-based asylum seekers and TPV holders are also assisted
- Improving the health literacy of refugees through education and orientation to the health system
- Targeted health protection and health promotion projects, including nutrition and immunisation
- Building the capacity of health services and health professionals to meet the needs of refugee patients, through strategic planning, consultation, support and education
- Facilitating and conducting research into refugee health needs and service delivery issues.

Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)

STARTTS was established in 1988 in response to recognition that the health system was not well equipped to meet the special needs of those who have been tortured or traumatised as part of their refugee experience. The service provides an array of clinical, psychological and psychosocial services to people and communities from refugee and refugee like backgrounds residing in NSW. STARTTS also plays an important role in supporting and resourcing the work of mainstream health services and other organisations providing services to refugees, through the provision of training, supervision, support and consultancy.

As a service specialising in the treatment of the effects of torture and refugee trauma on individuals, families and communities, STARTTS has a growing role in research and development of new interventions and models to assist refugee survivors.

Transcultural Mental Health Centre

The Transcultural Mental Health Centre is a statewide service funded by the NSW Centre for Mental Health. It aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people of non-English speaking background through a community capacity building approach. It has a whole of lifespan focus, working with gender and age-based populations. It seeks to achieve this through working in partnership with mental health services, consumers, carers and the community. Around one third of its clientele are of refugee background.

The Centre undertakes a range of activities including:

- Developing, promoting and distributing a range of multilingual mental health resources which focus on positive mental health and wellbeing. The resources aim to reduce stigma, build resilience and raise awareness about mental health and illness;
- Providing a clinical service which includes: multilingual psychosocial assessment; counselling; individual family and group psychoeducation; and language specific outreach clinics to complement existing mental health services and to assist consumers and carers to access these services more effectively;
- Providing a number of specialist projects, for example: suicide prevention, mental health promotion, carer support, child mental health, adolescent mental health and older people. Projects also involve working with General Practitioners and with service providers in rural and remote areas of NSW;
- Planning and delivery of specialist transcultural education and training initiatives to enhance the skills and capacity of mental health, health, welfare and community workers to provide culturally appropriate care and to promote access to mental health services;
- Producing publications on transcultural mental health issues that contribute to the development of knowledge and expertise in issues faced by CALD communities;
- Contributing to the development and promotion of policy and planning documents at area, state and federal levels to review and enhance the policies which guide the promotion of the mental health and wellbeing of CALD communities, the provision of services and resources and access to appropriate care;
- Providing an academic program for curriculum development and research projects in transcultural mental health in tertiary education institutions. The aim is to integrate cultural issues into the training of medical and allied health professionals and to build closer links between the Centre and the academic community.

NSW Area Health Services

Area Health Services provide a range of health services across New South Wales within a number of program areas. These include:

Area Multicultural Health Units provide a range of initiatives targeting people from CALD backgrounds including refugees. Emphasis is on the development of programs and initiatives ensuring mainstream services to offer culturally and linguistically appropriate health care to people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including refugees. Examples of this work include the development of Area demographic profiles to target service planning, the delivery of health promotion initiatives, and training health professionals to deliver best practice culturally and linguistically appropriate health care.

Primary and Community Based Services. Provision of health services to persons attending a community setting or in the home, including health promotion activities, community based women's health, dental, drug and alcohol and HIV/AIDS services. Provision of grants to non-government organisations for community health purposes.

Outpatient Services. Provision of services in outpatient clinics including low level emergency care, diagnostic and pharmacy services and radiotherapy treatment.

Mental Health Services. Provision of an integrated and comprehensive network of services by Area Health Services and community based organisations for:

- Children and adolescents seriously affected by mental illnesses and mental health problems.
- Development of preventative programs which meet the needs of children and adolescents.
- Adults and the general population who are seriously affected by mental illnesses and mental health problems.
- The development of preventative programs which meet the needs of specific client groups.
- Older people who are seriously affected by mental illnesses and mental health problems.
- Development of preventative programs which meet the needs of older people.

Rehabilitation and Extended Care Services provide appropriate health care services for persons with long-term physical or psycho-physical disabilities and for the frail aged. Coordination of services for the aged and disabled with those provided by other agencies and individuals.

Population Health Services provide health services targeted at broad population groups including environmental health, food and poisons regulation and monitoring of communicable disease, plus some immunisation programs that target Intensive English Centres.

Special clinics addressing the health needs of refugees have been established in two locations. Hunter and New England Area Health Service has recently opened a clinic to address specific health needs of refugees settling in the Newcastle area and the Children's Hospital at Westmead has opened a clinic to help address the special health and physical development needs of refugee children in Sydney.

Initiatives specifically targeting the health needs of African refugees

Refugee Health Service

The NSW Refugee Health Service, as mentioned above, has played a significant role in addressing the on arrival health needs of African refugees over the last 12 months. As well as continuing to provide its GP clinics in metropolitan locations, the service has also supported the work of Areas across NSW in providing culturally appropriate services to these refugees, with the provision of on site training and supervision. The service has also lent its expertise to the establishment of a number of Area Health Service initiatives including the establishment of the paediatric clinic at the Children's Hospital at Westmead and the Hunter and New England Area Health Service clinic. The RHS has been liaising with Commonwealth, State and Territory health providers regarding the health needs of refugees from African countries.

STARTTS

STARTTS has a comprehensive health program targeting a variety of Sub Saharan refugee communities.

Initiatives include:

- Sierra Leone Radio Play
- African Day of the Child
- Development of a Sierra Leone Resource Folder for STARTTS staff
- Glossary of Sierra Leonean terms for STARTTS staff
- Review of the STARTTS relaxation tapes for use by Sierra Leone clients
- African Women's Drop-in Centre (Auburn) – "Coffee Shop"
- Somali Gentle Exercise Group
- African Hairdressing Group
- Somali Leadership Project
- Provision of English classes for the Hazara community

STARTTS has also recently concluded a comprehensive consultation program with the Somali and Sierra Leonean communities.

Female Genital Mutilation Project (FGM)

The FGM projects undertakes a range of health promotion and community capacity building projects to address the FGM and related violence issue of African communities. Recent initiatives of the program include the camp for Sierra Leonean women and girls (over 12 years old) and activities associated with the international day of zero tolerance to FGM.

Women at Work Program

In order to better provide assistance to African communities, the Women at Work Program has recently concluded a consultation which explored a range of issues and the way they were impacting on different communities.

The issues explored include:

- employment in the country of origin or asylum;
- the expectations of obtaining work on arrival in Australia;
- work type obtained by the women in Australia;
- workplace training and skills development;
- the issues encountered in their employment;
- the impact that employment has upon the lives of the women, their families, and their communities;
- the health of the women;
- workplace health and safety issues.

Transcultural Mental Health Service (TMHC)

The TMHC has recently launched its rural, regional and remote mental health program. The program, as well as aiming to provide specialist mental health services for minority communities like the African communities, will also undertake a number of initiatives to build the capacity of existing mainstream mental health services to deliver culturally and linguistically appropriate services to CALD communities in rural, regional and remote areas.

Area Health Service initiatives addressing the health needs of Refugees

Areas have undertaken a number of initiatives to address the particular health needs of African refugees. Hunter and New England Area Health Service and the Children's Hospital at Westmead have both opened clinics to address the special health and physical development needs of refugee children. North Coast Area Health Service has undertaken a number of health promotion initiatives which have been identified as priorities in the Somali communities settling in Coffs Harbour. South-East Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service in partnership with the NSW Refugee Health Service and the Transcultural Mental Health Centre have opened a GP and mental health service clinic for African refugee communities settling in Wollongong.

Appendix 3. African humanitarian enrolments in NSW government schools and TAFE NSW

Refugee students in schools 2002-2005

Refugee students enrolled (ESL New Arrivals surveys)	2002 (11/01 – 10/02)				2003 (11/02 – 10/03)				2004 (11/03 – 9/04)				2005 (11/04 – 06/05)			
	PS:		HS:		PS:		HS:		PS:		HS:		PS:		HS:	
	No.	Visa	No.	Visa	No.	Visa	No.	Visa	No.	Visa	No.	Visa	No.	Visa	No.	Visa
	748		737	633	737	633	737	633	737	633	737	633	737	633	737	633
	56		48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
	761		795	749	795	749	795	749	795	749	795	749	795	749	795	749
Total:	1565		1580	1455	1580	1455	1580	1455	1580	1455	1580	1455	1580	1455	1580	1455
Visa sub-classes																
	010	238	210	010	204	010	204	010	204	010	204	010	204	010	204	010
	020	6	211	020	209	020	209	020	209	020	209	020	209	020	209	020
	030	12	212	030	210	030	210	030	210	030	210	030	210	030	210	030
	050	3	215	050	211	050	211	050	211	050	211	050	211	050	211	050
	200	336	217	200	327	200	327	200	327	200	327	200	327	200	327	200
	201	14	447	201	451	201	451	201	451	201	451	201	451	201	451	201
	202	561	451	202	785	202	785	202	785	202	785	202	785	202	785	202
	204	76	785	204	785	204	785	204	785	204	785	204	785	204	785	204
	209		10 866	209		209		209		209		209		209		209
Main Countries of origin																
	Afghanistan, Former Yugoslavia, Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, Iran															
Main language groups (including bridging visas)																
	Arabic, Serbian, Assyrian, Dari, Farsi, Korean, Bosnian, Persian, Chaldean, Kurdish, Turkish, Somali, Creole African, Pushtu, Tamil															
Areas of enrolment																
	Albury	2	Newcastle	22	Armidale	2	Mt Druitt	35	Armidale	5	Muswellbrook	1	Bankstown	92	Newcastle	
	Bankstown	159	Northern Beaches	9	Bankstown	122	Newcastle	22	Bankstown	115	Newcastle	56	Bathurst	2	Northern Bx	
	Blacktown	108	Parramatta	98	Blacktown	143	Northern Beaches	6	Blacktown	52	Northern Beaches	1	Blacktown		Orange	
	Bondi	52	Penrith	11	Bondi	49	Parramatta	102	Bondi	22	Parramatta	83	Bondi		Parramatta	
	Broken Hill	1	Port Jackson	15	Broken Hill	1	Penrith	6	Campbelltown	5	Penrith	3	Campbelltown		Penrith	
	Campbelltown	9	Port Macquarie	1	Campbelltown	7	Port Jackson	13	Campbelltown	5	Port Jackson	46	Campbelltown		Port Jacks	
	Dubbo	2	Queanbeyan	3	Campbelltown	7	Ryde	12	Clarence/ Coffs H	482	Ryde	41	Clarence/ Coffs H		Queanbeyan	
	Fairfield	464	Ryde	16	Fairfield	572	St George	15	Fairfield	10	St George	17	Fairfield		Ryde	
	Granville	208	Shellharbour	2	Granville	151	Sutherland	2	Granville	10	Sutherland	4	Granville		St George	
	Griffith	14	St George	11	Griffith	7	Wagga Wagga	5	Griffith	6	Wagga Wagga	7	Griffith		Wagga Wa	
	Hornsby	69	Sutherland	3	Hornsby	54	Wagga Wagga	5	Hornsby	159	Windsor	1	Hornsby		Wagga Wa	
	Lismore	1	Tweed Heads/Bellin	1	Liverpool	176	Wollongong	66	Liverpool	162	Wollongong	34	Lismore		Wollongong	
	Liverpool	232	Wagga Wagga	6	Maitland	1			Mt Druitt				Liverpool		Wollongong	
	Maitland	1	Wollongong	38									Maitland		Wollongong	
	Mt Druitt	29											Mt Druitt			

1. The table above shows the numbers of new arrival refugees settling in different areas of the state.
2. The data above relate to refugee students newly arrived from overseas countries and do not reflect the total numbers of refugees enrolled in individual government schools.



Newly arrived refugees and African students

Total number of refugees from 1 November 2004 - 30 June 2005: 872

Region	Total Refugees				Total African Students			
	PRIMARY	HIGH	IEC	TOTAL	PRIMARY	HIGH	IEC	TOTAL
Hunter / Central Coast	29	9	–	38	26	9	–	35
Illawarra/South Coast	10	1	5	16	8	1	5	14
North Coast	11	7	–	18	9	5	–	14
Northern Sydney	4	–	5	9	–	–	–	0
Riverina	13	6	–	19	12	6	–	18
South Western Sydney	222	4	284	510	87	3	94	184
Sydney	6	1	12	19	6	1	8	15
Western NSW	3	–	–	3	3	–	–	3
Western Sydney	148	1	91	240	98	1	71	170
Total	446	29	397	872	249	26	178	453

Total number of refugees from 1 November 2003 - 30 October 2004: 1214

Total number of refugees from African countries from 1 November 2003 - 30 October 2004: 524

Region	Total Refugees				Total African Students			
	PRIMARY	HIGH	IEC	TOTAL	PRIMARY	HIGH	IEC	TOTAL
Hunter / Central Coast	37	24	–	61	36	23	–	59
Illawarra/South Coast	11	–	10	21	7	–	5	12
New England	5	5	–	10	5	5	–	10
North Coast	10	16	–	26	9	16	–	25
Northern Sydney	9	–	27	36	1	–	3	4
Riverina	11	7	–	18	5	3	–	8
South Western Sydney	283	6	439	728	87	3	116	206
Sydney	14	2	29	45	4	2	18	24
Western NSW	2	–	–	2	1	–	–	1
Western Sydney	152	3	112	267	91	1	83	175
Total	534	63	617	1214	246	53	225	524

Total number of refugees from 1 November 2002 - 30 October 2003: 1578

Region	Total Refugees				Total African Students			
	PRIMARY	HIGH	IEC	TOTAL	PRIMARY	HIGH	IEC	TOTAL
Hunter / Central Coast	23	3	–	26	15	2	–	17
Illawarra/South Coast	26	–	40	66	5	–	16	21
New England	2	2	–	4	–	2	–	2
North Coast	–	9	–	9	–	9	–	9
Northern Sydney	19	3	50	72	–	1	–	1
Riverina	10	2	–	12	–	1	–	1
South Western Sydney	451	20	548	1019	36	5	52	93
Sydney	50	–	33	83	3	–	5	8
Western NSW	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	–
Western Sydney	153	11	122	286	14	3	14	31
Total	734	51	793	1578	73	23	87	183

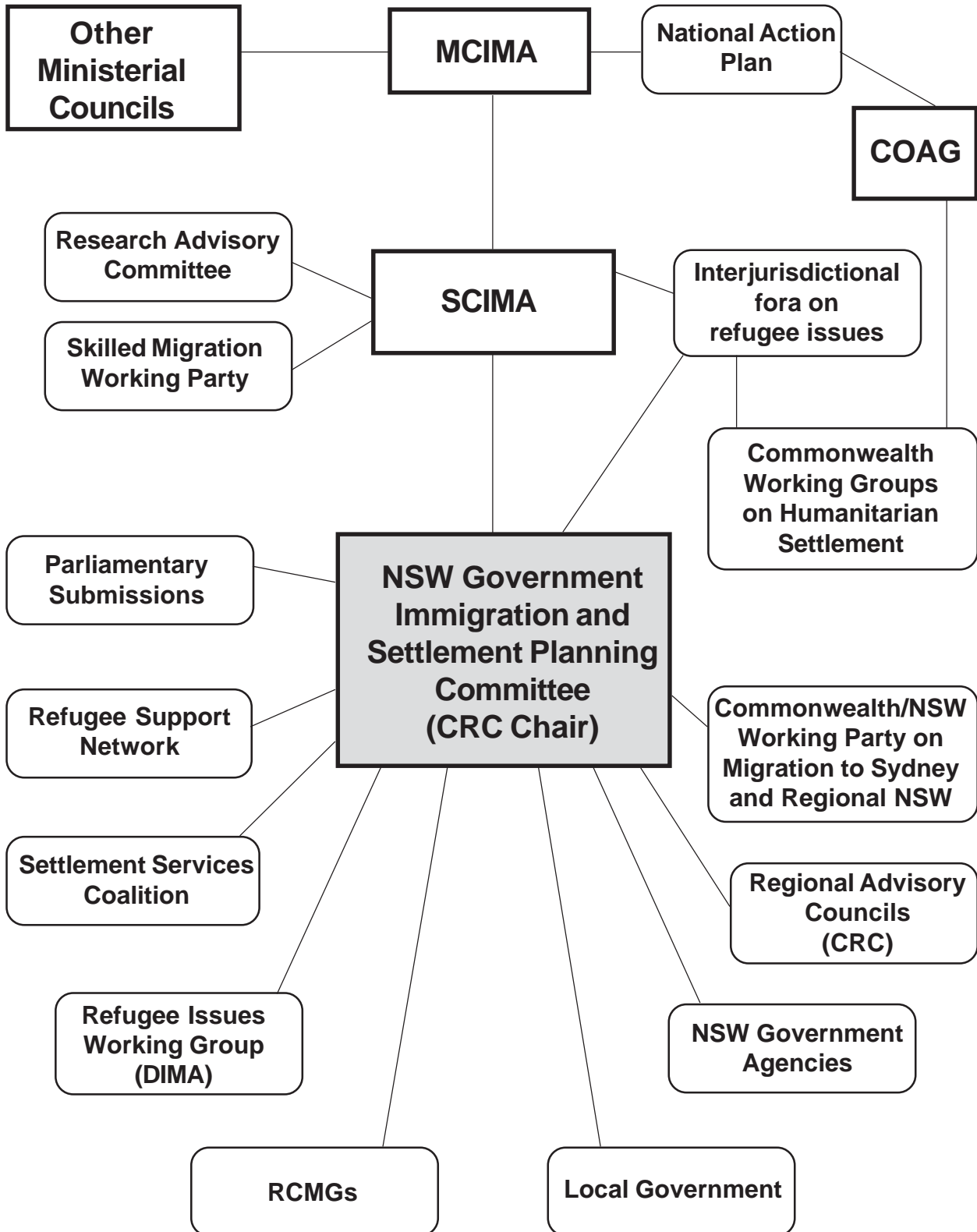
Total number of refugees from 1 November 2001 - 30 October 2002: 1565

Region	Total Refugees			
	PRIMARY	HIGH	IEC	TOTAL
Hunter / Central Coast	1			1
Illawarra/South Coast	18		25	43
North Coast	2	1		3
Northern Sydney	33	3	58	94
Riverina	13	9		22
South Western Sydney	488	30	540	1058
Sydney	41	4	50	95
Western NSW	3			3
Western Sydney	147	11	88	245
Total	746	58	761	1565

TAFE NSW Enrolments for selected African Countries

	2001	2001%	2002	2002%	2003	2003%	2004	2004%	2005	2005%	Year (all)	All %
BURUNDI	0		1	0.09%	0		0		26	1.22%	27	0.42%
CONGO REPUBLIC	6	0.57%	4	0.34%	16	1.09%	17	1.00%	25	1.17%	62	0.96%
ERITREA	30	2.84%	17	1.46%	39	2.66%	31	1.82%	20	0.94%	107	1.65%
ETHIOPIA	124	11.74%	148	12.70%	160	10.91%	162	9.52%	159	7.45%	629	9.72%
LIBERIA	3	0.28%	7	0.60%	26	1.77%	28	1.65%	120	5.62%	181	2.80%
SIERRA LEONE	56	5.30%	128	10.99%	163	11.11%	156	9.17%	201	9.41%	648	10.02%
SOMALIA	273	25.85%	292	25.06%	234	15.95%	241	14.16%	191	8.95%	958	14.81%
SUDAN	544	51.52%	530	45.49%	794	54.12%	1035	60.81%	1359	63.65%	3718	57.47%
UGANDA	20	1.89%	38	3.26%	35	2.39%	32	1.88%	34	1.59%	139	2.15%
Totals	1056	100.00%	1165	100.00%	1467	100.00%	1702	100.00%	2135	100.00%	6469	100.00%

Appendix 4. NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee – structures and input





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