



Coordination of Settlement Services

**Ensuring Humanitarian Migrants in
South Australia Get a Fair Go**

January 2012

Multicultural SA

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1. Introduction

Purpose

This report provides a summary of how agencies in South Australia have taken action and are making progress to ensure humanitarian migrants have the best possible chance to settle, integrate and contribute to the State. This report suggests the next steps to be taken to enable humanitarian migrants to access the same opportunities as other South Australians as soon as possible after arrival.

The need for settlement services

All South Australians deserve equal access to opportunities regardless of gender, colour, background or culture. That includes the refugees who bring diversity, youth and determination to our community.

Every year, South Australia accepts hundreds of humanitarian entrants of the millions of displaced people who have been forced out of their home countries or are in need of urgent protection.

Humanitarian entrants have very varied backgrounds, skills and experiences. Some have savings, a good education and a strong employment history. Others have never attended school, have no belongings, are illiterate or disabled and have never known life beyond a refugee camp. What they share is desperation to find a place of safety, a new place to call home and an enthusiasm to settle down, get on with their lives and enable their loved ones to flourish.

The majority of the settlement process relies upon the personal capacity of each refugee and their friends, family and community. Nevertheless, government and non-government organisations play a valuable part in providing humanitarian entrants with a number of services during the first weeks and months of arrival to enable them to become established and independent. The services required vary widely depending on each individual migrant's circumstances - be it health-care, language classes, or appropriate education for children.

In this way, it is hoped that between arrival and a year's residency (five years at the latest) refugees will be able to access the same opportunities as other South Australians. For this reason, the Federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) – the major funder of humanitarian settlement services – focuses the majority of funding on the first six months to a year of residency in more intensive services (the Humanitarian Settlement Services program (HSS)) and the rest on varied services for those in need up to five years of residency (the Settlement Grants Program (SGP)).

For some migrants this level of provision works well. Many recent humanitarian entrants are working, studying and buying houses.

For others, services have served them well, but life is a constant struggle.

This program of work is only concerned with those whose needs can and should be met by settlement services, but are not. It was initiated following the death of a Sudanese teenager on a busy Adelaide street one afternoon in 2008, to answer the State Government's demand that all humanitarian migrants in South Australia get the support they need.

Work to date

Multicultural SA commissioned a review of all settlement services being provided for people arriving in South Australia on humanitarian-entrant visas: Refugee Visa (subclass 200); Special Humanitarian Program Visa (subclass 201 and 202); Emergency Rescue Visa (subclass 202); Women at Risk Visa (subclass 204); and Protection Visa (subclass 866).

The study revealed the existence of a large number of services: 21 sources of short- and medium-term funding were identified at Federal, State and local levels and 36 different providers were identified as delivering a range of services and programs across the State:

Table 1: Number and area of settlement services in SA, 2009

Service type	Number of providers involved
Community	20
Sport and arts	17
Child and youth	14
Coordination	12
Education and employment	12
Health	8
Accommodation	5
Financial	5
Funding	5
Other	5

Much good practice was identified amongst these settlement services. Nevertheless, duplication, gaps and a lack of coordination between service providers were all highlighted as significant barriers to efficient and effective service provision. Services were also focused in the metropolitan area, whereas humanitarian entrants were known to settle mainly in the western and northern suburbs of Adelaide, as well as in some regional areas.

What would success look like?

<p>Objective: Humanitarian migrants can access the same opportunities as other South Australians within 12 months of residency.</p>

The community members consulted did not offer many comments on the system as a whole. Nevertheless, access to services and equity of provision were commonly cited as necessary features of effective services.

Most NGO stakeholders consulted shared the view that a good settlement services system is one which:

- Is collaborative and well coordinated
- Is based on goodwill and dialogue
- Has recurrent funding
- Has multi-disciplined and culturally diverse teams
- Has flexible and holistic services based on individual client needs
- Is resourced in a manner that encourages collaboration and effective practices rather than competition and cutting corners.

Stakeholder suggestions for an improved settlement service system include:

- Greater recourse to professional support for assessment and support (such as social workers and psychologists)
- A services hub where all support services are accessible to new settlers to address the issues of transport, interpreters, service coordination, referral and duplication
- Flexibility rather than a one-size-fits-all approach
- Mainstream refugee specialist health providers
- Resources focused on building the capacity and existing enthusiasm of the community, rather than on service providers
- Quality indicators of performance, not quantity indicators.

From these comments and broader settlement research it appears that the ideal settlement services system would:

- **Enable humanitarian entrants to have equal access to opportunities in SA within a reasonable time-frame (12 months)**
- **Enable humanitarian entrants to be independent**
- **Be accessible to all**
- **Be equitable**
- **Be collaborative and well coordinated**
- **Be flexible and target services according to client need**
- **Be holistic in perspective and in delivery where necessary**
- **Use appropriate expertise**
- **Use both quantitative and qualitative performance indicators**
- **Encourage a spirit of volunteering**
- **Be funded and managed to encourage all of the above.**

Improving service coordination and provision

Since 2009, Multicultural SA has worked with service funders and providers to find better ways to meet the needs of new humanitarian migrants in a more targeted, effective and coordinated way.

To begin, Multicultural SA identified the needs of humanitarian migrants that they considered to be unmet by current service provision. Multicultural SA consulted widely, meeting with recent humanitarian migrants and members of their communities, as well as with the community, non-government and government organisations that work with them.

Migrants have expressed an overwhelming gratitude for the kindness and support they have been shown by South Australia and its people and they have highlighted the services that work well for them, such as the New Arrivals Program which helps students access education. They have also identified where services are not working well, where there are gaps, and they have suggested how improvements might be made within existing resources.

While the veracity of the comments made in the consultation cannot be fully tested, only those concerns that have been verified or repeated by a range of stakeholders have fed into this report. Nevertheless, the views highlighted in the consultation results may not be shared by all humanitarian entrants or stakeholders.

Multicultural SA presented the consultation outcomes to relevant State Ministers and State Directors of Commonwealth departments, who have given in-principle support for their agencies to address the identified gaps. Since then, a number of changes have been made by government departments. Most significantly, the DIAC has made changes to its HSS and SGP programs which respond to community concerns and seek to ensure that services are more targeted and can be extended for those most in need.

Multicultural SA has also presented the consultation findings to service providers and has asked them to respond to the concerns and ideas raised. 27 major providers have produced Action Plans to identify how their organisation will work to improve the provision and coordination of settlement services, in conjunction with other partners. Many of these actions are underway or have already been completed, although it is too early to tell if they have been effective.

At a stakeholders' conference in March 2011, Multicultural SA brought together 120 community members and service providers to work through the issues raised regarding settlement.

The conference fostered new links and conversations, which have inspired greater coordination between service providers. Regular networking groups have been established, at which information and concerns are discussed by settlement service stakeholders and shared problem-solving takes place. The improvements in coordination are already helping agencies to work together to identify new ways of doing things, to fill gaps, to keep abreast of policy and practice changes in a coordinated way and to reduce duplication.

The conference also resulted in a number of recommendations for improved service coordination. This report fulfils one of those recommendations – to report on how communities and agencies are working together in the interests of better-coordinated, more efficient and more effective settlement services. It also highlights ongoing concerns about access, levels of service, gaps and failures to coordinate.

Multicultural SA is grateful to everyone involved in this work for providing their ideas and perspectives, for developing new ways of working and for their ongoing enthusiasm, effort and commitment to improve the settlement experience of new humanitarian arrivals to South Australia.

2. Responding to Community Concerns

Consultation with recent humanitarian entrants and their communities has revealed many positives and some ongoing concerns about settlement services. South Australian services are responding to each area of concern.

In 2010 and 2011, Multicultural SA consulted with communities, individuals, service providers and government departments to identify the experience of humanitarian entrants in South Australia, concerns to be met and ideas for practical improvements.

The consultation involved individuals and groups from the biggest humanitarian migrant communities to arrive in South Australia in the recent years, including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burma/Myanmar, Burundi, Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan.

While the individuals and communities consulted have had very different settlement experiences, they share concerns around the following key topics (in order of priority):

- Language and comprehension
- Employment
- Housing
- Health
- Information
- Education
- Integration
- Youth and Family.

The concerns, ideas and actions taken to improve services in each of these areas are dealt with in order below.

In addition, the coordination of settlement services is discussed, as this was identified as vital to effective settlement service delivery.

The community and stakeholder views which have informed this report have not been fully tested for veracity and may be based on a misunderstanding. They may not represent the views of all humanitarian entrants, nevertheless, those concerns included in this report were raised by a number of humanitarian entrants or community representatives.

Broader research findings

The results of Multicultural SA's consultation correlate with the findings of other research into the experiences of humanitarian migrants.

Refugees mostly arrive in Australia with enthusiasm, enterprise and determination, to be successful and to ensure peace, prosperity and good health for their loved ones.

Reports indicate that, in the first two years of settlement, humanitarian entrants are subject to various stresses including: dislocation; confusion; grief and loss; post-

traumatic disorders; a lack of language proficiency; and isolation. They have also identified a disparity between pre-arrival hopes and expectations and reality, especially in the initial few months of settlement. Experiences tend to include employment and housing-related issues, cultural difficulties, problems accessing information and lack of access to services and long-term support. The reports point to double disadvantage in regional areas, due to the limited support available.

Ability to Communicate or Comprehend

The ability to communicate in English impacts all aspects of life in South Australia.

Issues have been identified with the accessibility, adequacy and appropriateness of existing English language learning options.

What works well

The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) run by TAFE SA's English Language Services (ELS) provides flexible English teaching for all humanitarian clients and migrants whose English language proficiency is below functional. The AMEP is offered in central Adelaide, in regional centres, in community classes and in the country. Classes may be full-time or part-time. There are day and evening classes available and occasionally, weekend classes have been held in response to client needs. ELS AMEP also offers informal tutoring in clients' homes and Distance Learning to suit the different needs and preferences of clients.

Community concerns

'I sit there in the class and listen to the teacher every day but I don't know what she is saying.' Elderly Somali man

- It takes a long time to learn English and communicate competently. Many feel that the training hours provided as part of settlement services are insufficient. Language research¹ shows it takes two to three years to communicate and five to ten years to be academically competent (as opposed to current language training provision of 510 hours)
- There are concerns that assessment of individual linguistic ability is inadequate so people do not get access to the services they need
- Some feel that the structure of the language training does not provide for cultural differences, for example, some migrants have never experienced a classroom or teacher/student environment before so it is hard to negotiate formal lessons
- There are concerns about inequitable access to additional free training, with some eligible people not finding out about what is available
- There are concerns that English as a second language (ESL) training in schools is inconsistent
- Work and family commitments, as well as transport issues, make access to training difficult.

Outcome

- The inability to speak, read and write English impacts on every aspect of settlement
- Some humanitarian migrants do not learn English at all.

¹ Source: SA Department of Education and Children's Services

Actions planned and in progress

Some of the concerns raised above are already being met by TAFE SA, the major South Australian AMEP provider:

- It is taking steps to provide information about the Home Tutor Scheme more widely so that all eligible humanitarian entrants are aware of it (a volunteer Home Tutor visits for two hours per week)
- It is providing learning opportunities in alternative environments (other than classrooms), dependent on gathering a number of people with a shared interest as it is not cost-effective to run very small sessions
- Its English Language School Consultative Committee comprises representatives of new and emerging humanitarian communities, who advise on areas of current student needs and maintain a two-way communication flow.

There is a range of free language and conversation groups available to humanitarian entrants beyond the AMEP program, run by some councils and community centres. Details of all current programs will be listed on the Multicultural SA Settlement Services Finder to enable more equitable access (www.multicultural.sa.gov.au).

Opportunities for parents to undergo adult education through Children's Centres have been created. Examples include:

- CaFE Enfield Children's Centre provides a range of programs for parents, such as Adult Learner's Week funded programs - Reading Food Labels (Health Literacy), Money Management (Financial Literacy), Resume Writing (Employment Literacy) and Living Stories (Cultural Literacy)
- The Salisbury and Cowandilla Children's Centres, in partnership with TAFE, link parents to English for Living in Australia courses.

Some other community-proposed solutions

- Begin language training before departure to Australia or while in detention – to save money, reduce stress, provide a community ready to integrate, undertake education and employment
- After the eligible language training period, provide access to further training to those who need it – use volunteers, community, employers, practice sessions
- Recruit community members to be part of language training in classrooms and in the community in order to ensure it is more appropriately targeted.

New and ongoing concerns

Language tuition for new humanitarian arrivals is the single greatest settlement cost for the Australian government. As the number of arrivals increases language services may be placed under increased strain.

Recent changes to the AMEP contract mean that, from now on, flexibility in undertaking language classes will be reduced. Students will now be required to sign-up for a specific course of lessons and if they fail to attend a number of those sessions they will not be able to return to the course until the next term. This could impact on the ability of migrants to attend classes.

Concerns have been raised about phone translation services being difficult to navigate for non-English speakers.

In addition to learning English, the mother tongue of humanitarian entrants should be fostered. Language is the single greatest means for communities to maintain and communicate their culture, and it is important for successful settlement that migrants are enabled to maintain that language and with it their identity.

Next steps

- English language teaching providers should encourage and support better advertising of relevant language programs amongst recent humanitarian entrants
- English language teaching and other language service providers should seek regular feedback and respond to client and community concerns and suggestions with regard to their humanitarian programs
- Consideration should be given as to whether asylum seekers in detention, who are on positive pathways, can be provided with English language training to better prepare them for life in Australia.

Employment

Difficulties accessing employment lead to poverty and can result in social exclusion, reduced self-esteem or anger.

There are concerns about levels of support, inequity and barriers to employment.

What works well

Many non-government organisations, such as the Australian Refugee Association (ARA) and the Migrant Resource Centre of SA (MRC), provide opportunities and support to enable humanitarian entrants to work as volunteers, which helps them to gain work experience and references in Australia.

Centrelink's Multicultural Services Unit (MSU) provides innovative and comprehensive services to newly arrived humanitarian entrants. All arrivals are interviewed on the day after arrival in Australia when Centrelink payments are issued and basic Centrelink information is provided using interpreters (and translated written information when available). The MSU has greatly simplified the Centrelink claim process – most of the forms are completed in advance.

Achievement highlights include Centrelink undertaking the work of other agencies to reduce the need for humanitarian entrants and their case workers travelling to and queuing at several service providers in order to organise important and urgent matters in the first few days of settlement. Centrelink does the following for newly arrived humanitarian entrants:

- Completes and submits applications for Tax File Numbers to the Australian Taxation Office
- Completes and submits applications for SA Transport Concession Cards to Families SA
- Issues interim transport concession cards on behalf of Families SA.
- Facilitates opening of a bank account
- Liaises with Medicare for the supply of a Medicare Card. Medicare staff attend Centrelink premises to collect forms and documentation and then return interim Medicare cards that day.

Community concerns

'I graduated from an Australian university with a nursing degree after four years of study, but I cannot pass the English test to get a job, even though I tried four times. It is very costly. If I passed my exams and my practicals while at uni, is that not enough evidence that I can speak adequate English to practise as a nurse? I now work as a volunteer and receive a Centrelink allowance.' Afghan young woman

- Language difficulties are a major barrier to employment
- The unskilled feel unwanted – 'no experience, no job, no experience' cycle.
- The skilled or qualified struggle to find appropriate work:

- International qualifications do not necessarily equate to qualifications required to register or practice in Australia
- Lack of local experience is a barrier
- Those with Australian qualifications face barriers to work in expensive language tests
- There are concerns about racism and discrimination at job interviews and at work
- Some migrants have unrealistic expectations about employment opportunities
- Many jobs are found by word of mouth and new arrivals do not have the networks to find work
- Some find it difficult to retain work due to transport problems, settlement issues and cultural differences
- Many humanitarian migrants do not understand their complex obligations with regard to tax or Centrelink.

In his recent report, *A Significant Contribution: The Economic, Social and Civic Contributions of First and Second Generation Humanitarian Entrants* Professor Graeme Hugo has identified very similar barriers to the employment of recent humanitarian migrants to the above, making it more difficult for them to contribute effectively to the South Australian economy for months or even years.

Outcome

- Financial difficulties
- Stress
- Legal problems over failed obligations or debts
- Tendency to move to where the work is, which impacts on families
- South Australia is missing out on an available but underutilised workforce
- Isolation and poor integration.

Interestingly, Professor Hugo's report² identifies that employment levels among first-generation refugees are impacted by issues like those listed above, but that second-generation refugees have higher rates of employment than the general Australian population.

Actions planned and taken

A number of actions are being put into practice to address these concerns:

- The onshore orientation program, delivered by the MRC on behalf of DIAC, now includes information sessions on working in Australia
- TAFE SA has increased the emphasis on workplace-related language and job search skills within its AMEP curriculum, including online applications, applying for police checks and so on
- DIAC continues to review the possibility of placing humanitarian entrants into new non-metropolitan and regional areas which have the jobs and resources to support them

² A Significant Contribution: The Economic, Social and Civic Contributions of First and Second Generation Humanitarian Entrants, Professor Graeme Hugo, 2011

- Skills for All, the new strategic direction for vocational education and training in South Australia, will give greater access to training for humanitarian migrants. Qualifications up to Certificate II will be 100 per cent subsidised, qualifications up to Certificate III will be 80 per cent subsidised and Diploma and Advanced Diploma level qualifications will be up to 70 per cent subsidised
- There are a number of programs and training options available to assist humanitarian entrants to develop their own businesses in a sustainable way, such as those run by local Business Enterprise Centres
- YouthJET is helping TAFE SA to provide accurate information to young refugees about realistic timelines and goals for careers, education, training, employment and other life outcomes
- Adult Community Education (ACE) funding is available via DFEEEST-funded training organisations, such as TAFE, to community groups to provide vocational and foundation skills (including literacy and numeracy support) to humanitarian migrants. This funding can also be used to extend English language training beyond the usual 510 hours
- ARA Employment Services help refugees get a job and provide options for future opportunities
- Thebarton Senior College provides a teacher to support women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to complete their TAFE Certificate I in Community Services and undertake pathways to further education and employment. On-site crèche or child care and transport are provided.

A number of agencies and employers are working to develop training pathways to enable the entry of able and diverse humanitarian entrants to their workforce in a linguistically and culturally appropriate way:

- Since the March conference, the South Australian Council of Social Service, Aged and Community Services SA/NT and SA Health and Community Services Skills Board have been working to develop improved employment pathways for refugees into the community care sector. They have undertaken consultations with community care trainees and graduates to identify the blockages to entry and limits on retention. Recommendations will be put forward with the intention of action being taken to address the issues in 2012
- South Australia Works Networks (which have wide representation from all tiers of Government, not for profit organisations, local industry and community groups and training and employment services providers) consider and give priority to humanitarian migrant learning, training and employment issues in regions where there is a high proportion of humanitarian migrants. Issues are identified through an evidence-based regional strategic planning process and responded to within annual regional action plans. An example is the ARA Jobs and South Australia Works Western Adelaide initiative with Urban Superway. This partnership assists Migrants from Non- English speaking backgrounds into work on the South Road Superway
- The All State Training College specialises in small-group training for predominantly CALD communities and provides a unique training program for Certificate III in Children's Services.

Other proposed solutions

- Job agencies to implement specialist support geared to needs and gaps such as using culturally trained workers. Job Services Australia (JSA) offices with culturally trained workers have had significant success, for example, Workskil Salisbury had far more success after employment of an African worker who focused efforts on building links with refugee-friendly employers
- Specialist refugee employment agencies
- Financial incentives for employers to employ and mentor new migrants in traineeships, apprenticeships, or work-experience places to eliminate the 'no experience, no job' cycle.

In addition, Professor Hugo has suggested that links with country-of-origin are an economic opportunity that could be better supported in the interests of the State³.

70 per cent of those refugees he interviewed for his recent study had sent money to their homeland at some point since their arrival in Australia and it was not unusual for African migrants to send 10 to 20 per cent of their wages regularly⁴.

Professor Hugo has identified that the Australian economy could benefit from trade links, alternative trades and ways of doing things shared via these networks⁵. He suggests that humanitarian settlers' economic contributions could be encouraged by:

- Developing programs and training to assist humanitarian entrants to develop their own businesses
- Identifying humanitarian settlers who have lived previously in regional or rural areas who may have a preference for living in non-metropolitan areas
- As part of development assistance policy, facilitating the flow of remittances from humanitarian groups to their homelands
- Helping humanitarian entrants to develop trade with their home country.

Next steps

- Government should continue to negotiate with major employers about pre-study English testing and better advertising about the English standards required for different professions
- Multicultural SA will publish information about employment services on the Settlement Services Finder
- Employment service providers should improve marketing of their job assistance work
- Government agencies should encourage employment of more culturally trained workers amongst employment agencies where there are a number of CALD clients

³ A Significant Contribution: The Economic, Social and Civic Contributions of First and Second Generation Humanitarian Entrants, Professor Graeme Hugo, 2011

⁴ Ibid, p.40

⁵ Ibid, p.43

- Government and non-government service providers should consider how to support and utilise trade links between humanitarian entrants and their countries of birth
- Consideration should be given to undertaking job assessments for those asylum seekers in detention who are on positive pathways, so that they can begin to consider realistic employment options at an earlier stage.

Housing

Homelessness and the risk of homelessness cause considerable distress.

Housing in inaccessible places and frequent moves cause isolation and impact on employment and education.

There are concerns that humanitarian entrants do not have sufficient support to enable them to navigate the private housing system.

What works well

Many humanitarian entrants and their communities greatly value the initial housing support provided under the HSS scheme, including the standard household goods package. Entrants are provided with a place to stay for which they pay rent after the first month. This means that they do not have to negotiate the rental market until they are reasonably settled.

Anglicare has gone beyond its contractual obligations to provide a range of additional supports to newly arrived humanitarian entrants such as:

- **Welcome Boxes:** Anglicare provides a box of second-hand personal items, designed to add a welcoming personal touch to the properties when the families first arrive. For the adults, the items include framed pictures (non-denominational), vases, extra crockery and tablecloths. For children, there are age-appropriate books and toys contained in a back-pack
- **Visual Key Cards:** Anglicare has developed a set of laminated 'keycards' to assist newly arrived refugees who often have little or no English language, to purchase appropriate products when shopping. This consists of a picture of a cleaning product on one side and a picture indicating what that product is used for on the reverse
- **Private Rental Referrals Officer:** The Officer provides targeted housing information that is designed to improve understanding about how to navigate the private rental market.

There are a range of supports available to humanitarian entrants to enable access to accommodation beyond HSS housing, for example:

- **ARA Housing Support** can help new arrivals to look for suitable private or community rental properties and apply for them, get assistance from Housing SA to guarantee bonds, contact agents or landlords and find emergency accommodation. It also provides accommodation support workshops about different aspects of housing. ARA also enables community members to act as housing information sources for their communities
- **Lutheran Community Care** provides support to help settlers find appropriate accommodation
- **Housing SA** offers bond and rent in advance assistance and other means of helping those in need into accommodation via its Private Rental Assistance Program
- **HomeStart Finance** provides low-cost loans to a growing number of humanitarian migrants to enable them to buy affordable homes.

Community concerns

'Last week I had a house, me and my family were living happily. Today we are homeless because the landlord refused to renew my lease. I don't know what to do.'

Somali leader

'My landlord took my bond. He said the house was not in good condition, even though it was better than when I moved in. So I didn't have a bond for another place.'

Sudanese woman

'There are cockroaches and rats in my house, however much I clean it. When I told my landlord, he said I can leave.' Somali woman

Although happy with initial housing support, many humanitarian entrants struggle to find accommodation after they leave the HSS program:

- Settler expectations are much higher than the reality of life in Australia
- It is hard to complain when you have poor English and you are afraid of losing your home
- Available housing can be far from community services and the area of initial integration where new migrants have built friendships and networks
- Many refugees have no understanding of rental procedures in South Australia or even basic home management
- Lack of understanding of tenancy and other legal obligations and rights can lead to broken contracts and homelessness
- There are reports of bullying by landlords and loss of accommodation and bonds
- Many experience difficulties obtaining housing in the private rental market due to their lack of bond, limited access to transport, other commitments and failure to understand the system.

Outcome

- Stress
- Financial difficulties
- Hidden homelessness – 'couch surfing', overcrowding
- Housing stress for the family that is helping another
- Family breakdown
- Impact on children and young people at school – changing schools frequently, difficulty maintaining friendships
- Inability to form bonds and support networks due to instability
- Lack of knowledge of new area impacts on access to services and supports.

Actions planned and in progress

To address the community's concerns, service providers have made some significant changes:

- DIAC has amended its settlement services contracts to meet community concerns. Since July 2011, HSS providers must review the case of each

refugee to ensure that they are not exited from the program if there is a risk of homelessness, which means they can remain in HSS housing for longer if they need to. HSS providers support clients to access suitable accommodation before they leave their HSS home

- Anglicare, the provider of accommodation under the HSS program, has expanded its services to include more private rental advice and support for its tenants before they leave
- Service providers representing humanitarian entrants, including Multicultural SA, have had an input into the planning process for Housing SA's new strategy
- Housing SA is currently working to improve access to its services, both for public housing and to support entry into community and private rental accommodation. The changes will be put in place in 2012
- A Real Estate Pilot has recently been established by DIAC which gives approved estate agents unlimited access to free telephone interpreting to assist non-English speaking clients to independently navigate the rental market
- The Refugee Housing Network provides a forum for organisations involved in providing accommodation support for humanitarian entrants to meet regularly to share information, best practice, lessons learnt, discuss concerns and raise issues for future consideration
- Housing SA, ARA, Multicultural SA and others are actively promoting the true situation regarding public, community and private rental and ownership in South Australia and the services available to assist settlers in finding accommodation.

Community-proposed solutions

- Employ community members as support workers, because they are the ones who end up helping anyway
- Ongoing support after move to private housing
- Agreements with refugee-friendly real estate agents
- Better and more appropriate information.

New and ongoing concerns

Housing remains a key concern of humanitarian migrants and many community leaders feel under pressure to provide support to enable new arrivals to find accommodation:

- Concerns are ongoing about access to adequate appropriate advice for humanitarian entrants trying to understand the current housing situation and how to negotiate the rental market
- Many humanitarian entrants find out about the housing market from friends and community members whose knowledge is not always accurate and up-to-date.

Next steps

- DIAC will investigate the quality of service under the new HSS arrangements over the coming weeks and months
- Multicultural SA will publish information about available housing services on its online Settlement Services Finder.

Health

Health issues can go untreated and deteriorate due to barriers accessing physical and mental health services.

What works well

There are many accessible health services available for humanitarian entrants:

- All humanitarian entrants receive an initial health assessment and those in need are provided with immediate or ongoing care from the moment they arrive
- Free immunisation is provided by many service providers
- The Migrant Health Centre is highly regarded amongst the community and other stakeholders
- Specialist services like Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Services (STTARS) and SHine SA provide excellent services to support the physical and mental health of humanitarian entrants in a culturally sensitive way.

Health information is provided by a range of organisations in a culturally and linguistically appropriate way:

- There is an increasing emphasis on prevention and many organisations are running health programs for refugees on nutrition, exercise and other health matters, such as through the African Foodies program or the PEACE health awareness program
- TAFE SA incorporates health-related information and discussion about health-related issues into the AMEP curriculum both for information and health-related language practice
- SHine SA and DECD work together in the interests of raising awareness – SHine SA delivers training to teachers who provide sexual-health education in schools.

In the interest of coordination and shared knowledge:

- Referrals to health providers can be made by organisations such as Centrelink and schools, if the individual wishes
- The Migrant Health Service is helping to train mainstream healthcare providers in the different diseases and conditions facing many refugees and the different approaches required for persons of different cultural backgrounds
- STTARS provides information sessions to new arrivals; staff of HSS and SGP settlement services; and social workers, psychologists and other health professionals to improve their understanding of the effects of torture/trauma on resettlement, increase knowledge of the health and social issues that affect people from refugee backgrounds and improve their ability to refer to torture/trauma and other mental health services as required
- The Refugee Health Association combines a range of health providers who have interests in the healthcare of humanitarian entrants. They meet regularly to share knowledge and discuss concerns about matters relating to migrant health.

Community concerns

'There is a young woman whose husband has a sexually transmitted infection. I advised her to go to the doctor. When I next visited her, she refused to talk to me. I suspect her husband told her not to. She does not speak English and is really very isolated but I cannot force her to do something she does not want to.' CALD health worker

- There are concerns about the health information provided before arrival and after
- Many humanitarian entrants find the health system hard to navigate and feel that they have little access to specialist services
- There are concerns about access to culturally appropriate modes of delivery for physical and mental health
- Absence of knowledge about sexual health, healthy living, nutrition, communicable diseases, mental health, dental matters, vaccinations, lifestyle diseases and health checks can have drastic impacts
- Sexual health and mental health are taboo subjects in some cultures and can bring shame on individuals and families
- Many suffer silently as they are not aware of available services or do not feel comfortable seeking help
- Many youths lack awareness about sexual-health matters or are reluctant to discuss them
- There is considerable pressure on mental-health services for clients with unresolved issues and for clients ineligible for HSS support
- Housing and financial security issues impact on the recovery of survivors of trauma and torture.

Outcome

- Physical, sexual and mental-health problems are not addressed or resolved adequately
- There is a high longer-term cost to the health system
- Health impacts on other areas of life (eg. education, employment, family relationships, wider community)
- New arrivals go to Emergency Departments with non-emergency health issues, because they do not know where else to go.

Actions planned and taken

New Family Mental Health Support Services are to be introduced at Seaton, Murray Bridge, Northwest Metro and Hindmarsh with a specific CALD focus.

New and expanded Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) services will be implemented progressively from January 2012. These community mental-health services aim to provide increased opportunities for recovery for people whose lives are severely affected by mental illness.

Community-proposed solutions

- Provide local refugee-specific health clinics
- Provide information about refugee-friendly clinics/hospitals and GPs who already have access to, or provide, interpreters
- Speed up and support family reunifications to enable people to 'move on'.

New and ongoing concerns

Despite the efforts of the Migrant Health Service and others, little seems to have changed in mainstream health services to meet the needs of humanitarian entrants, particularly outside central Adelaide. Multicultural SA has been working with Health SA to encourage a greater appreciation of the needs of refugees and CALD communities across mainstream health services.

Medicare has merged its refugee health item for GP claims with a 'complex assessment' item, which pays less. This may deter GPs from taking adequate time to deal with new humanitarian entrants.

Dentistry is not covered in health provision for humanitarian migrants, although many have significant problems. Unless dentists are willing to provide pro bono help or other organisations help with funding, serious problems can result.

Next steps

- Health SA and other health providers should ensure that humanitarian entrants receive the healthcare they require as part of mainstream services
- The Health Settlement Action Group should be re-established to enable knowledge sharing and focus efforts on critical issues
- Multicultural SA will publish information about relevant health services on its online Settlement Services Finder
- Government agencies should ensure improvements in access to health services continue to be made across South Australia.

Information and Communication

Many humanitarian entrants harbour misconceptions that lead to disappointment and distress.

The absence of appropriate and timely information can mean that humanitarian entrants do not achieve a basic understanding of how things work in South Australia.

What works well

There are many examples of good information provision for humanitarian entrants in terms of orientation, expectation setting and assisting understanding, for example:

- The Legal Services Commission provides free legal education in a range of places to migrants from new and emerging communities, which is designed to meet participants' educational, cultural and linguistic needs
- Anglicare SA has developed a set of laminated 'keycards' featuring on one side, a picture of a cleaning product and on the reverse side is a picture indicating what that product is used for. This helps newly arrived refugees (who often have little or no English language), to purchase appropriate products when shopping.

There are also good examples of information sharing between agencies to assist coordination. For example, the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) informs relevant community groups when new arrivals are coming to South Australia so that they can offer support from arrival.

Community concerns

'I was happy when I heard about the money I'd get from Centrelink...I would buy a car, nice things, send money home...If someone had explained to me that this much will go to rent, this to electricity, transport, food, clothes, school and that at the end there would be no money left, it would have prepared me'. Afghan woman

Many humanitarian entrants have unrealistic hopes and expectations about their new life in Australia which can lead to significant disappointment and anger after arrival.

Misconceptions typically include:

- They will be financially better off
- They will get a job soon after arrival
- They will get a job based on their professional qualifications, skills and experience
- They will learn English quickly
- They will have the same community relationships as back home
- They will be assisted by the government, which will take care of everything.

Many of these beliefs are based more on hope than on misunderstanding or misinformation. It takes a long time to understand how life in Australia works because people tend to learn about those matters that immediately affect them and selectively absorb information based on what is relevant to the individual at the time.

Consultations suggest that, on arrival, most migrants absorb information about money and accommodation only.

Factors that may impact understanding include:

- Insufficient or inappropriate provision of information before and on arrival
- Printed information can be meaningless to those who do not understand English, or are illiterate
- Complex information provided in language and terminology that is too complicated
- Insufficient easily accessible day to day support.

Outcome

- Important information is missed or not taken in, resulting in confusion and poor understanding about other relevant matters
- Services are not accessed or requested by some because individuals do not know about them, so service provision seems unfair and inconsistent
- People cannot speak up for their rights because they do not know what their rights are, or for fear of being cut off from the support service.

Actions planned and taken

- Under the new HSS program, introduced in April 2011, onshore competency-based orientation sessions have been introduced and greater emphasis is placed on individualised case management, as well as better linking of clients to the community and other services
- Multicultural SA has developed part of its website into a settlement services finder. This is primarily intended to be a tool for those working with refugees, so that they can provide advice on the services available and access to them. The information is provided under a range of headings to assist searching by region, eligible groups and service area
- Multicultural SA has provided briefings to community groups and service providers on topics where there appear to be knowledge gaps
- Centrelink has begun implementation of a program of in depth interviews (Better Settlement Interviews) with all humanitarian entrants, to be conducted between six and 12 months after arrival to cover a wide range of subjects and are likely to lead to referrals to partner agencies such as education, health and housing
- The Ausco visiting scheme is bringing offshore trainers to experience the situation for settlers in South Australia so that they can advise refugees more appropriately before they arrive in Australia
- The coordination improvements prompted by the Multicultural SA Settlement Services Conference has helped service providers to share information and best practice. Organisations are cross-promoting each others' services and events to a greater degree, and new working relationships have been formed which benefit service recipients.

Other community proposed solutions

- The role of HSS case manager should be expanded so that they can act as a single central contact point for information and be readily available to each new arrival throughout the first few months of settlement, as required
- Resource the community to provide information in a culturally appropriate way. For example, financial literacy means nothing to many refugees but can be explained by reference to things they understand, like managing resources between seasons
- Create a one-stop information centre, like the Women's Information Service – a central information centre or system, with interpreter assistance that can be accessed from anywhere in South Australia by phone (freecall) or at a conveniently placed shopfront.

Ongoing concerns

There are ongoing concerns regarding the availability of information about services for humanitarian entrants.

Local councils are keen to help refugees, but they do not know who is living in their council area from one census to another. For those areas that are service hubs for residents of neighbouring areas, like Adelaide City, it is even more difficult to identify who is using the city and what their needs are. Councils can check the DIAC website to identify who settled initially in their council area, but no information is shared about which areas settlers are based in from then on and it is known that many humanitarian entrants are highly transient.

Next steps

- Government agencies should continue to work together towards developing and sharing better data about humanitarian entrants to inform better service provision
- Service providers should continue to work together to share information and communicate that information to clients
- Service providers should maintain conversations with communities and address any misunderstandings
- Government agencies should consider how to improve quality standards as part of their agreements with external service providers. For example, published service standard agreements or charters could be required of all outsourced providers as part of all government contracts. These standards would be provided to clients to help create more realistic expectations of service providers
- Service providers have checked the information on the Multicultural SA online Settlement Services Finder to ensure it is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Continuing input is requested to ensure this resource remains useful.

Education

Inappropriate education and pressures on students can lead to disengagement from learning, which impacts the rest of their lives.

What works well

The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) has a number of programs and initiatives that support humanitarian entrants:

- Its Preschool Bilingual Program provides support to four-year-old children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families. Early-childhood educators support preschools in the development of a curriculum that fosters the child's home language and identity, literacy development, numeracy and a sense of belonging. The program also provides professional development for preschool staff, specialist support for children and families who have experienced trauma and interpreting and translating services for staff and families
- Children's Centres provide care, education, health, community development activities and family services for families and their young children. Each Children's Centre is tailored to meet the needs of the local community
- New Arrivals Program (NAP) prepared students to enter mainstream education via English language training and other activities relating to confidence in the Australian community. The program has now been replaced by Intensive English Language Centres (IELCs), which provide intensive English language and orientation to South Australian schooling for young humanitarian entrants without proficient English and / or without continuous schooling experience at 18 primary IEL centres (17 in metropolitan Adelaide and one in Mount Gambier), one secondary (Croydon) and one adult-entry (Thebarton).

For those young people who have dropped out of school, Baptist Care's flexible learning program targets young people from refugee backgrounds. The Transitions program provides literacy, numeracy, life-skills training and case-management support to young people who have disengaged from mainstream school.

To ensure that young people have access to the training they want and need, public schools in the northern suburbs work in partnership to provide a wide range of subjects, including a range of vocational options.

ARA and Inclusive Directions provide Cultural Competency Support for schools and childcare centres strengthen the capacity of these institutions to be supportive and inclusive of students from refugee backgrounds.

Community concerns

'Some young people don't fit in the new arrival program or in high schools. They need skills training to prepare them for employment because they will ... enter into crime if they can't get a job.' Sudanese community worker

'I wake up at 4am to help mum prepare my brothers and sisters for school, take them to school by bus, then catch another bus to school. I am always late and get

punished. After school I collect my brother and sister, catch another bus home, prepare dinner, help with their school work, then do my homework. I sleep around midnight. My teacher tells me I need to be more organised.' Congolese Year 10

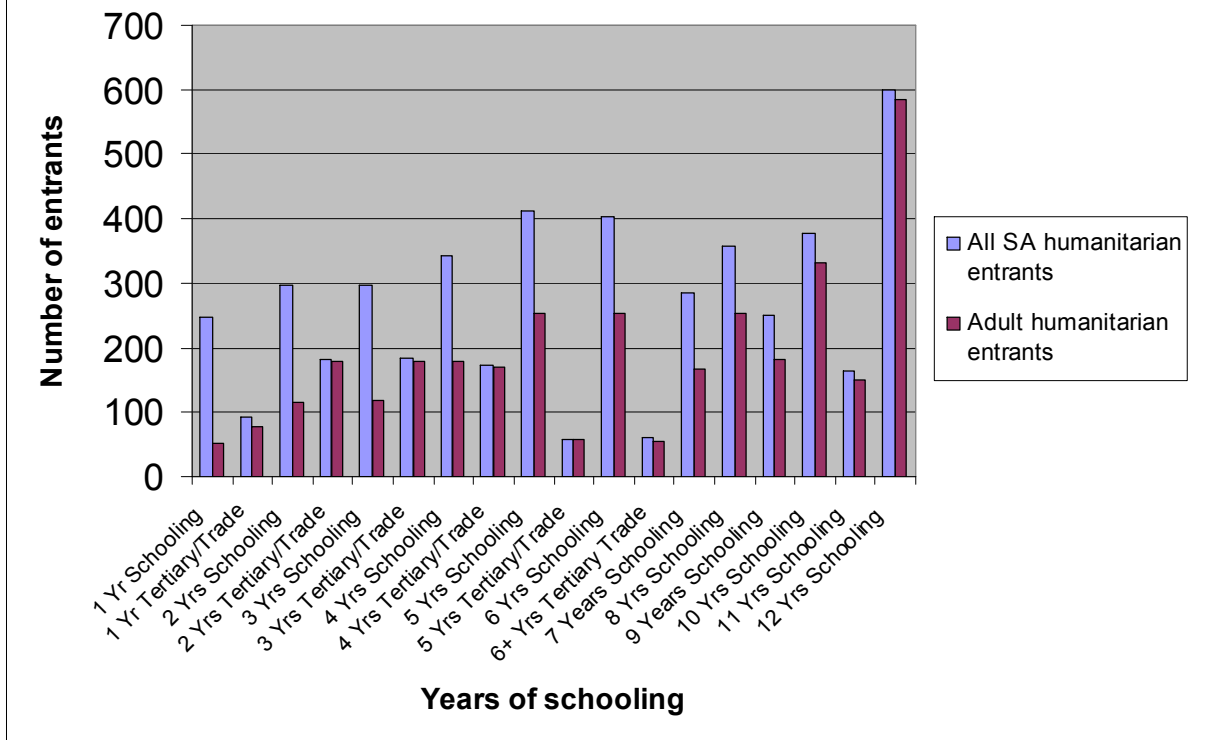
'I really liked it at my first school because there were other refugees and I made friends quickly. The teachers were nice and understood when we couldn't do some things because of English or problems at home.' Liberian Year 10

- Although the New Arrivals Program (NAP) was viewed as effective, it was limited to a few schools and there were some concerns that the standard 12-month program was too short for some students
- It is felt that some students do not fit the requirements of the education system and are more suited to skills and employment training rather than high school
- Some parents feel that their children are moved from specialist new arrival program schools to mainstream schools too soon and that their education deteriorates from then on
- Students are placed in schools according to age level, not ability, and some students seem to drop out as a result of their inability to cope with the year level
- Mainstream schools do not have the same level of support as NAP schools. Staff and students are not considered to be well-prepared to meet the needs of new arrivals
- There are different levels of support available in different mainstream schools
- Language is a barrier to literacy and numeracy for many new migrant children
- Racism and bullying have been experienced by some humanitarian entrant children at school
- Many humanitarian entrant children have family responsibilities that impact on their schooling, such as being carers, interpreters, or managers of family finances.

Outcome

- Early disengagement from education by youth
- Depression and hidden health problems (including mental and sexual health)
- Impact on academic performance
- Career pathways limited
- Low self-esteem
- Behavioural and relationship problems at school, home and in wider community
- Financial difficulties post-school.

Years of Schooling of SA Humanitarian Entrants January 2007 - January 2012



Notes:

1. Data source: Department of Immigration, January 2012
2. Chart only includes years of schooling where stated, 2014 entrants (1,111 adults) did not provide information on years of schooling.

Actions planned and in progress

- The new Intensive English Language Centres (IELC) expand on the highly regarded New Arrivals Program (NAP), bringing it to three new sites in Elizabeth Downs, Darlington and Hampstead
- DECD is trialling Individual Learning Plans - meetings for 'students at risk' exiting the New Arrivals Programs (NAP/IELC). Pathways will be developed for these students to improve their chances of educational success
- Baptist Care is seeking support for each humanitarian entrant considered at risk of disengaging when exiting the NAP/IELC, be streamed as a FLO (Flexible Learning Option) student whereby they could receive individual case management and support from a trained, culturally competent youth worker to ensure their transition to mainstream school is smooth and effective.

Other community-proposed solutions

- Students should be assessed as having adequate language skills before they are moved to the mainstream system

- Students should be involved in their own educational assessments
- Placement at school should be by ability and not by age
- Mainstream schools should be better supported to increase teacher understanding of the needs of new humanitarian entrant students before they commence
- Mainstream schools should have access to support workers who could visit new students for a full year to assess their academic, social, family and health environment as an early intervention mechanism
- Funding should follow students as they move between schools so that each school has the resources to support them.

New and ongoing concerns

There are concerns about the appropriateness of mainstream education for refugees, particularly teenagers. Some youths have little prior education and poor English and feel they are wasting their time trying to learn, as it seems an impossible task.

Next steps

- DECD is working with DIAC and regional services to develop cross agency support for children attending preschools and schools from the detention centre at Inverbrackie or from community detention. Protocols are being established to enable smooth transition between systems
- Education services should continue to work together to ensure that the needs of young humanitarian entrants are met in a linguistically and culturally appropriate way.

Integration

Many factors can isolate new humanitarian entrants, including language barriers, cultural misunderstanding, fear, trauma, limited access to transport and poverty.

Provision of appropriate and convenient services and information can help.

What works well

Humanitarian migrants have highlighted the support they get from service providers, community members and the broader Australian community, including caring neighbours and volunteers.

A range of activities are in place to help humanitarian entrants to integrate in South Australia, for example:

- Centacare's Afghan Settlement Program has been operating for five years, under Centacare's Afghan case worker assists clients with many different issues such as interpreting Australian culture, accessing services and dealing with documentation. Local Afghan organisations are also supported and help is provided to individuals to 'connect' with mainstream activities
- A number of home-visiting and mentoring services are available to provide support at home, such as those run by Onkaparinga and Playford City Councils
- The African Community Organisation of SA (ACOSA), Lutheran Community Care (LCC) and the City of Prospect established the African Twilight Market, which has a range of benefits for new communities. The market has enhanced the well being of stallholders and customers through music, dance, networking and a fun atmosphere. The market connects the multicultural community of South Australia with the wider community and has created an opportunity for stallholders to participate in other markets
- Lutheran Community Care has worked with local supermarkets in Murray Bridge to encourage them to stock items that local humanitarian communities need or want on a regular basis to help them to settle in
- Bikes for Refugees services donated second hand bikes and for use by refugees. It also provides training in how to use and maintain bikes safely. This enables settlers to get around their local area, including kids getting themselves to school
- Local coordination committees in the regions ensure service provision meets local needs
- Most local councils and many other organisations offer spaces for community groups to meet on a regular basis for free or at low rent
- Multicultural SA and others provide funding to enable communities to get together and celebrate their culture
- Centrelink has developed its Better Settlement interviews which will enable Centrelink staff to link humanitarian entrants to relevant services from six months to a year's residency.

Community concerns

'We are one of the most isolated communities – we don't know what services are available, when we ask for help they tell us the program is not funded for our community, no one comes to visit us, no one cares about us.' Somali elder

'We have asked for funding to build our capacity to help ourselves but never get it. We can provide many of the support services for our community and remove dependency.' Afghani community worker

- Almost all the settlement issues outlined in this report result in the isolation of the individual – language difficulties, poverty, housing instability, lack of information and knowledge, educational distress and unresolved physical and mental health issues
- South Australia is a car-based environment and it is difficult for many refugees to get a drivers license because it requires 72 hours of training with an appropriate instructor, which is not affordable for most new migrants
- Many humanitarian entrants have come to Australia without their families and can feel extremely lonely as a result
- Most new communities are keen to establish a place to belong where they can meet regularly to help each other.

Actions planned and in progress

- The new HSS program has greater emphasis on individualised case management plans and on linking clients to relevant services. This includes a competency based exit process and referral agreements. In addition, the onshore orientation program now includes targeted information sessions on settlement and social support
- Home and Community Care Services (HACC) has completed an 'emerging needs scoping study' to help understand the needs of newer migrant populations and plan for their needs in future.

Community-proposed solutions

- All humanitarian entrants should have equal access to settlement services
- Funding providers should evaluate the effectiveness of service providers through regular consultation with the community
- Service providers should consider the specific needs of refugee women, the elderly and those with disabilities, who tend to be more isolated
- A 'buddying' system could be introduced whereby existing community members are supported to buddy with new members of their community.

New and ongoing concerns

Many services are still focused in central Adelaide, even though most humanitarian entrants live in the western or northern suburbs, or in the regions.

Key aspects of Australian life, like going to the beach, may seem out of reach to many new settlers who do not swim. Efforts to provide free or cheap swimming

lessons tend to focus on children and many of those programs have ceased. There are concerns that large proportions of the migrant population do not know basic water safety.

Consultation findings indicate that citizenship tests are considered difficult by many migrants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Failure to gain citizenship makes many residents feel like they are not considered a full part of the community and it means that they lack a political voice as they cannot vote in state and federal elections.

Next steps

- Government and non-government mainstream service providers should take account of the interests of humanitarian entrants, identified through ongoing dialogue
- Greater support should be given to capacity-building within new and emerging communities so that humanitarian migrants are better able to help themselves and each other.

Youth and Family

Family breakdown and youth problems are a major concern for new humanitarian entrant families and communities.

Conflicts between cultural and Australian parenting practices and laws and the different settlement experiences of parents and young people are the source of family upset and youth issues.

What works well

The Refugee Services program of Families SA provides care and support for an average of 130 unaccompanied humanitarian minors at any one time. Refugee Services provides a range of service models to meet the various needs and circumstances of the children and young people, ranging from group homes with foster carers to family groups with external support.

Everyone in the care of Families SA has a dedicated caseworker. Case-plans are prepared in consultation with the young people themselves, their carers and others if appropriate. On reaching 18 years of age, they receive extra help to move to independent living. Statements by former clients testify to the success of this program in mitigating the worst effects of the refugee experience and in addressing their needs and aspirations.

Families SA relies on the goodwill of community members, many of whom take responsibility for fostering unaccompanied children.

The Imagine the Future (ITF) program, run by Baptist Care SA and STTARS is a multi-pronged early-intervention project aimed at crime prevention. The project targets African humanitarian entrants aged between 10 and 15 years and involves one-on-one case management, working with schools and families, mentor support and adventure therapy.

Data from an interim evaluation indicates that teachers find ITF to be very positive for students and believe their participation has benefited the community in some way. Teachers noticed that their students displayed an increase in self-confidence, improved resilience, more respect for others and that they tried harder at school as a result of ITF.

Findings from participants show that, upon completion of the program, they feel more supported by their community, have goals for the future and an understanding that their own efforts and actions will determine their future. Participant evaluations indicate an increased respect for others, pride in who they are and what they have achieved, determination to work hard at solving what causes their problems and an increase in outdoor recreation skills and experiences.

SA Police undertake a range of activities to broaden understanding about their role and SA law enforcement. They also work closely with local communities, councils and other organisations to address community concerns about new arrivals and crime to help overcome misconceptions and prejudices as well as take action to

respond to crime. This includes employment of an African Liaison Officer who works closely with African communities in metropolitan Adelaide on crime prevention and related matters.

Community concerns

'I didn't know how to ask for help...I didn't know what 'help' was.' 16-year-old in detention

'Many of us have nothing to do, no work, no education. We get bored and get into trouble. We need activities that interest us to fill our time like soccer and music. Some of us have lots of skills in sport and music but no one is interested.' Sudanese youth

'We are losing our children to the government, a nine-year-old has more power than me, but when there is trouble, the government runs to us for help, they ask us what are we doing about it...' Sudanese parent

'Government bodies and NGOs should work with families and understand the reasons, the culture, before getting involved in the family's business. We don't reject government involvement where necessary, but many matters can get resolved internally without wasting government resources and breaking up families.' Congolese leader

While many young people who are humanitarian entrants cope well and live in happy family environments, there are also many youths and families who experience problems after arrival in Australia.

Youth concerns:

- They get caught between two cultures
- They are aware of, and affected by, their parents' struggle in the new society and do not know how to help
- Conflict at home leads to problems at school
- Access to money is closely linked to 'freedom' and 'independence'
- Youths do not ask for help because they do not know it is there, or do not know what 'help' is in the Australian context
- The absence of cross-cultural role models makes it difficult to manage the transition into adulthood.

Parental concerns:

- Families do not feel adequately prepared for the differences in law and culture in relation to bringing up children in Australia
- Young people as young as 12 leave home
- Parents feel they are consulted to help with problems such as youth crime but that communication stops when they try to seek help
- Parents feel that children have rights but parents do not (particularly men)
- Mechanisms to support youth independence, such as financial support, are blamed for youths rebelling and losing respect for parents and elders
- The difference in the speed of adjustment for youths and parents causes tension

- There are concerns that service providers lack a cultural understanding of expectations, obligations and conflicts and that they are poorly equipped to provide a sensitive approach to family conflict.

Other concerns

A number of NGOs expressed concern for the wellbeing of young people and commented that:

- Their complex settlement needs result in problem behaviour
- There is a lack of recognition for the contributions of young people to the social fabric of the South Australian community
- The assumption that general funding would 'trickle down' to young people is unsubstantiated
- Absence of adequate childcare leads to gender inequity in programs.

Outcome

- Family breakdown
- Parents are distressed by threat of losing their children
- A sense of hopelessness
- Mental health issues
- Youths involved in substance abuse, gangs and crime
- Youths are uncertain of their role in the family and in the wider community
- Youths take control of their own lives because they can cope in the new country better than their parents can
- Disengagement from education, training and employment
- Rebelliousness and undesirable behaviours
- Homelessness.

Actions planned and in progress

For young people:

- Families SA is using community development workers to build relationships within communities. It finds this work invaluable in working with families and children
- A range of social and sporting activities are available to young humanitarian entrants. For example, on Sunday afternoons there are basketball sessions held at Wayville which are free once you have paid \$20 to be a member
- The new HSS program, introduced in April 2011, includes a greater focus on young people with the additional requirement for youth action plans to be developed for all clients aged 15-25
- South Australia Works and Northern Futures coordinated a youth CALD specific pre-employment program with Boral in 2011. It is anticipated that this project will be run again in 2012.

Community-proposed solutions

- Better early intervention to provide support for young people and their families before it results in family breakdown and youth crime

- Service providers must understand cultural differences in order to appreciate how different families work
- Youth workers and counsellors should be drawn from new and emerging communities
- Communities should be resourced to help themselves and their youths as they understand the situation better
- Enable greater access to activities of interest to engage young people in positive ways and divert them from undesirable behaviours
- Shared booking systems for sport and transport facilities would be helpful.

New and ongoing concerns

Recently, a larger proportion of older unaccompanied humanitarian minors have arrived. Their needs are different to those of younger UHMs and services are not yet sure of the best approach to take with regard to housing, education and employment in particular.

Next steps

- Multicultural Youth SA (MYSA) has been contracted by DIAC to look at how best to support older unaccompanied humanitarian minors (UHMs) in a pilot project to commence in 2012
- Families SA should continue to work with communities to encourage better information sharing, outreach and parent education
- Consideration should be given to the provision of more youth-specific HSS and SGP services.

Better Service Coordination

In its review of settlement services in 2009, Multicultural SA identified the need for greater coordination of settlement services across the state to improve opportunities for humanitarian migrants.

What works well

Almost all new communities have developed associations and groups through which they share knowledge and funds to support each other.

Some collaboration between service providers and shared interest networks has been working well for a while. For example, Centrelink's streamlined processing, means all new humanitarian entrants are interviewed on the day after they arrive and receive a range of services via Centrelink, tax file number applications, applications for SA Transport Concession Cards, opening bank accounts and supply of a Medicare Card.

Multicultural SA and Families SA exchange information about community groups seeking funding in their administration of the Community and Multicultural Grants schemes. In this way, they enable those seeking funding to access the most appropriate grants.

Community concerns

'Services are not provided in a uniform way across all communities – some get help, some don't.' Burundian woman

Community members have commented that service issues appear to result from:

- The way things are done rather than an absence of resources
- Inconsistent provision of settlement services – not all humanitarian entrants receive the same settlement support
- The absence of a coordinated settlement services system.

Government and non-government feedback

The government agencies consulted commented that the settlement services system of 2009/10 featured poor communication and information sharing, which formed a significant barrier to effective service provision. Communication between divisions of individual departments was considered poor and there were concerns that without an effective coordinating process or body inefficient implementation of settlement services would continue.

HSS service providers report that they have very little notice from DIAC about when new arrivals will be coming to South Australia which makes managing support very difficult.

Stakeholders consulted expressed the view that efficiency would be enhanced by the creation of a central settlement information clearinghouse.

Non-government agencies complained that the short-term and competitive nature of the current grant system impacts on their ability to provide services, retain staff and plan for the future. They stated that this creates confusion and tension across the settlement services system, discourages collaboration and ultimately impedes service quality.

Concerns have been raised about inadequate referral processes, which impact on the smooth transition between services and on access to services.

Actions planned and in progress

Many improvements in service coordination have been made in the past year. Most significant are changes to the HSS program. DIAC, the major funding source for settlement services, has made clear that collaboration is an essential part of delivery under its new contracts. HSS providers have created written contracts to establish agreed ways of working together and stakeholders agree that working relations have improved between service providers as a result.

The following networks have been established between service providers to help them to share information, discuss concerns and seek shared solutions:

- HSS regional networks
- Refugee Health Network
- Refugee Housing network
- SGP Workers Network
- Settlement Action Network (SAN) and its subgroups– YSAN, Community Development, Employment and Education
- SA Transcultural Mental Health Network (SATMHN)
- Local employment networks, which have representatives from refugee agencies where there are large humanitarian entrant communities
- There are also a number of regional groups run by local councils, such as the Playford Cultural Diversity Group.

The Red Cross also hosts the Migrant Network Meeting for service providers dealing with asylum seekers.

Stakeholders have expressed thanks for the activities undertaken by Multicultural SA to:

- Provide the opportunity for networking and knowledge-sharing between service providers at the March Conference
- Provide a comprehensive view of settlement services across South Australia
- Seek the views of new humanitarian communities in order to inform service providers and government
- Share contacts and knowledge across all stakeholders involved in settlement services across South Australia
- Advise government and providers about improved ways of working to meet community concerns.

Given the competitive nature of the outsourcing process, there are still tensions between NGOs, but these appear to be improving through coordination efforts and networking groups. Stakeholders have identified better day to day collaboration and

most service providers feel that they now have improved understanding of the system as a whole and good working relationships with related organisations.

New and ongoing concerns

There are continued concerns amongst new and emerging communities about government 'not listening'. This is sometimes the result of not providing feedback on action taken, when agencies have listened and taken action, but failed to inform those consulted.

Despite recent changes there is still a sense that it is difficult for newcomers to work out how to get things done in South Australia. Even under the HSS contract, case managers are not funded to be a first point of contact for every service. This becomes a greater issue for those moving from area to area and losing touch with former service providers and supports.

A number of concerns have been raised about service standards – where a service appears to be doing the right thing but closer examination reveals that the way in which those activities are undertaken is less than ideal. For example, there have been claims made that 'referral' for some service providers means giving a migrant a piece of paper to tell them where to go, rather than a genuine interaction with the referral service and with the client.

There are still some concerns about levels of coordination and information-sharing between service providers, which NGOs feel impacts on the quality and targeting of support for refugees.

Next steps

- Government and non-government service providers should continue to communicate their needs, capabilities and limitations more effectively to communities. This will help to improve understanding on both sides and help to focus resources where they are most needed
- Multicultural SA will work with service providers to keep the Settlement Services Finder accurate and up-to-date. Individuals and organisations working with humanitarian entrants can access this information to identify what services are available, where and for whom. Service providers have expressed enthusiasm for this tool to aid referral, advice, coordination and to enable migrants to help themselves
- Networking groups should continue to meet and have effective meetings to share information and plan coordinated solutions to upcoming issues
- Networks should monitor and respond to settlement concerns, including standards of service.

A recommendation of the Settlement Services Conference in March 2011 was that working parties should be formed to facilitate the coordination, collaboration and implementation of service provider action plans. This seems unnecessary and impractical at present. There are already networks that address progress in many of the key areas of community concern – the refugee housing network, the refugee health network, the Youth Action Network and so on. These groups provide mutually

beneficial forums for discussion between stakeholders about concerns or ideas relating to their role supporting humanitarian entrants. These networks work well at present and are well-attended.

4. Conclusion

Improvements have been made to the coordination of settlement services that are already having positive impact.

Specific service improvements look promising but have yet to be evaluated.

There is still a way to go to ensure that humanitarian entrants to South Australia have equal access to opportunities as other South Australians. Settlement Service agencies and mainstream providers must continue to consult with humanitarian migrants and their communities to ensure their needs are met.

The work of Multicultural SA to support improved coordination of settlement services has received widespread support from communities and service providers. The role of the program to bring service providers together, consult with humanitarian entrants and their communities, share knowledge and insights across the State service system and negotiate improvements is seen as one of the best things to have happened to date in the settlement services system and stakeholders are keen for it to continue.

Now that stakeholders are working together better, the role of Multicultural SA will change. It is vital that the whole settlement services system takes steps to ensure the ongoing coordination and improvement of provision to ensure the timely and effective settlement of humanitarian entrants in South Australia.

Are the changes made sufficient?

While the impact of specific service changes are yet to be evaluated, improved coordination is already taking effect. As a result of better communication and coordination between service providers, agencies have been better able to ensure that service gaps are met, duplications eradicated and shared solutions are developed to meet new challenges. For example, the impact of changes to the TAFE SA AMEP on refugees have been discussed and issues addressed by relevant agencies, such as Centrelink, before the new practices came into effect, to reduce concerns and confusion for migrants. Improved referral processes have also begun to ensure that humanitarian entrants access the services they need when they need them.

The Coordination of Settlement Services conference itself was seen to be extremely useful by attendees. They commented that it was informative, useful and timely, provided a rich level of interaction between government and NGOs, aided understanding of the breadth of service provision and, 'Unpacked the issues that have beleaguered us all in this area of work'.

South Australia has some excellent programs in place to support its humanitarian entrants, which enable them to take active roles in the South Australian community and economy. Some of the personal stories of refugees entering university, starting businesses and buying property are indicators of the positive settlement experiences that are taking place.

Of the service improvements already put in place to respond to community concerns, Multicultural SA welcomes the changes to the HSS contract put in place by DIAC in particular, and looks forward to the outcome of its evaluation of the new contract. Changes to referral practices should enable more targeted, timely and appropriate access to services according to need and exit procedures should ensure that humanitarian entrants have appropriate life skills and have secured a new home before they leave their HSS property.

Nevertheless, it appears that we are still a long way from the ideal of all recent humanitarian entrants having the same opportunities as other South Australians within 12 months, or even five years, of residency. Difficulties accessing sufficient language tuition, barriers to employment and concerns about accommodation are of immediate concern to most new arrivals and action must be taken to ensure that the already changes put in place are effective and that further supports are put in place to help.

These issues will become more acute if the government increases the number of entrants to South Australia.

Next steps

Based on consultations and research it appears that there is more to be done to improve settlement services. Stakeholders are generally keen for Multicultural SA to continue in its role supporting knowledge-sharing and coordination as it is uniquely placed to review and negotiate with all stakeholders across the South Australian settlement services system. Nevertheless, it is important that all stakeholders work together to ensure the ongoing improvement of the system.

Based on the suggested improvements of communities and service providers and the new and ongoing issues identified, Multicultural SA will continue to take action to address ongoing concerns and will advise, encourage and support other organisations to do the same.

Multicultural SA will continue to support the improvement of service provision via consultation, knowledge sharing, advocacy and better coordination in order to address the needs of new and emerging communities.

Settlement services finder

Equitable access to services appears to have improved over the last year thanks to greater awareness of services amongst entrants and those working with them. However, there is still a paucity of information which can be a barrier to access. Multicultural SA's online Settlement Services Finder will provide up-to-date information about settlement services which is easy to search by topic, region and eligibility. This tool has been welcomed by service providers and communities as a means of easily identifying the current services available. Multicultural SA will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure that the Finder remains relevant and useful.

A change of perspective

There has been significant value in focusing on service provision to date. However, the majority of settlement has nothing to do with services but rather on the individual humanitarian entrant's nature, talents and understanding; situation and experiences; family, friends and community. Now that progress is being made in the coordination and responsiveness of services, it is appropriate to return the focus to new humanitarian entrants themselves.

Research and experience shows the entrepreneurial bent of many refugees has resulted in many examples of strong community, social and business leaders on a small and large scale. Governments and service providers should learn from successful settlers as to what works.

There is no point policy-makers and service providers second-guessing what the needs of humanitarian entrants are when there are many entrants and communities keen to explain what they need. Communities are already responding to the needs of their members without input from government and other providers, but this is hard to sustain without support. It is vital that government and other stakeholders ask about and listen to what is really needed (if anything) and respond appropriately rather than try to retro-fit established grants and funds to meet the needs of new and emerging communities.

Multicultural SA can help organisations to listen and involve individuals and communities, in order to find out the actual needs of new refugees.

This role will be particularly important for mainstream agencies, such as health services, which tend not to focus on the small proportion of South Australians who are humanitarian entrants. Settlement service providers can play an important role in reminding government about the specific needs of humanitarian entrants. Multicultural SA will continue to negotiate at the highest level to ensure that mainstream services are accessible and appropriate for refugees and other culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Broadening the focus of the work

Changes since the commencement of this work mean it now makes sense to broaden the focus from humanitarian entrants to those in detention, the families of humanitarian migrants and those applying for humanitarian status in Australia.

The government has placed a number of refugee detainees in community detention in South Australia and has introduced Bridging Visas for some asylum seekers, which enables them to work in the community while they apply for permanent residency. These moves bring new opportunities and challenges for humanitarian entrants in South Australia and the providers who service them. It is proposed that Multicultural SA focuses on those in community detention to ensure a smooth transition between asylum seeking and settlement.

Those who apply for humanitarian status while resident in South Australia should be included so that the South Australian government can ensure that their rights and those of the broader community are met effectively.

The families of humanitarian migrants often have minimal access to services, even though they have significant needs in terms of language, integration, access to employment and so on. It is important that government does not lose sight of their needs.

Positive settlement benefits us all

If we can provide humanitarian entrants with equal opportunities to thrive and contribute to South Australia, the impact will be dramatic not only on the individuals concerned but also on the prosperity of the State. If migrants are not supported to be independent and to utilise their capacity there is a risk that they will leave the State or will have a less than ideal impact on its economy and society.