

Introduction

Empowering Refugees: A Good Practice Guide to Humanitarian Settlement showcases initiatives that assist humanitarian entrants to settle in Australia. It is primarily designed as a resource tool for community workers, volunteers and government multicultural project or liaison officers who are helping refugees and humanitarian entrants settle in Australia.

The Guide has been produced to disseminate information about useful and successful projects so they can be copied or adapted elsewhere in Australia. For this reason, the projects are presented in detail. The Guide aims to provide those considering establishing a similar project with a good understanding of the resources needed to run the project, and the timeframe needed to adequately plan, implement, monitor and evaluate the project.

The Guide's secondary audience is government and non-government policy makers working in the field of humanitarian settlement who are interested in being informed about the types of projects that are working well in the field and to aid policy formulation.

The Guide contains details of two projects that produced resource kits aimed at schools. One is exclusively focused on helping refugee students and the other is aimed at parents of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Schools participated in several other projects.

The Research Advisory Committee of the Standing Committee on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs provided funding for the research for the Guide. The Committee consists of the heads of multicultural affairs agencies in each Australian state and territory and the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Participating state and territory agencies are:

- Community Relations Commission For a multicultural NSW
- Victorian Multicultural Commission
- Multicultural Affairs Queensland
- Office of Multicultural Interests (Western Australia)

- Multicultural SA (South Australia)
- Multicultural Tasmania
- Office of Multicultural Affairs (Australian Capital Territory)
- Office of Multicultural Affairs (Northern Territory).

The Guide highlights the key features of each project that promote Access and Equity. These features include informing and consulting the community about the project in a culturally appropriate way in its planning and development phases and using bilingual workers or interpreters when needed.

The Guide features each project's achievements and key factors in its success. It also presents the challenges the organisation experienced and passes on key messages and advice for those wanting to copy or adapt the project.

Each project is prefaced by a brief introduction and is written as a step-by-step account so that each reads as a story. This chronological style is intended to help readers understand the project and how it developed. As far as possible, an attempt has been made to avoid technical terms to make the Guide accessible to a wide audience.

Selecting the projects

A wide range of stakeholders were invited to nominate successful projects including:

- the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia
- the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council
- the Council for Multicultural Australia
- the Standing Committee on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
- Settlement Planning Committees
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship settlement grants officers
- local governments.

Projects needed to:

- address a need in one or more key areas of employment, education, health, law and community harmony and/or
- address a need of a key client group: youth, women or families and
- follow Access and Equity principles.

The projects have been included under the key area or key client group that is most relevant. However, as most of the projects address more than one key area and some also address a need of a key group, the other key areas covered are listed besides colour-coded arrows under their titles (see key below). This facilitates the use of the Guide as a resource tool by enabling the reader to skip to the key area or case study of interest rather than needing to read the whole publication.

Key Area	Colour Code
Health	
Education	
Employment	
Community Harmony	
Law	
Youth	
Families	
Women	
Other	

The geographic distribution of projects was also considered. The intention was to try to cover both urban and regional projects from as many states and territories as possible.

An initial selection based on these criteria was prepared and circulated to members of the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council which shortlisted the initiatives. The Refugee Council of Australia was engaged to finalise the shortlisting process, under take detailed research and analysis, interview project organisers and their clients and draft the individual project outlines. The final selection of 29 projects was also based on obtaining a good range and variety of projects. Further research and consultation with project organisers was then undertaken by the Humanitarian Branch of the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

Some are simple projects in regional locations that have been included to demonstrate what can be achieved with limited resources in these settings. Other projects are more complicated. Some have involved lengthy and complex research and development and others have necessitated the involvement of a large number of project partners.

In writing about the projects, the preferred terminology of the organisations involved has been respected. All of the projects involve humanitarian entrants. This group is comprised of those found to be refugees under the Refugees Convention, as well as people granted humanitarian visas on the basis of having been in refugee-like situations. Some of the project organisers refer to this group as 'humanitarian

entrants', some as 'refugees' and some as 'refugees and humanitarian entrants'. Some projects also include migrants more generally, particularly those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Each project required the efforts of committed workers, many of whom were volunteers. This Guide recognises the hard work and dedication of all those involved in helping refugees and humanitarian entrants settle in Australia.

This publication is available on the website of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship at www.immi.gov.au/media/publications.htm. If you would like to provide feedback on this publication please send your comments to humanitarian.projects@immi.gov.au.

Good Practice Trends

Many of the projects featured in this Guide have a number of common features:

- the need for the project is identified through grassroots feedback, community consultation or detailed
- refugee communities are consulted about their needs and priorities and help determine the project's scope
- community leaders are often consulted first and are used to encourage the community to attend community consultations and to get involved in the project
- interpreters and bilingual workers are used at the consultation phase and when
- providing information orally
- there is often a focus on the provision of oral information in keeping with the traditions of refugees from African countries. Where information is provided in writing, translations are provided
- promotion of the community consultations and the project is done using community networks and word-of-mouth, as this can be very effective
- transport is considered to enable project participants to attend classes or events
- child care is considered to enable women to attend.

Acknowledgements

The Standing Committee on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs acknowledges the valuable contributions of all the organisations involved in the projects as sole project organisers, project leaders or project partners. It is not possible to mention them all here, but they are listed in the case studies that follow.

Special thanks are extended to all the organisations managing or coordinating the projects described in the Guide, particularly for finding the time to be interviewed and to provide feedback on drafts of the case studies.

Those agencies are:

- Assisting Collaborative Community Employment Support Services Woodridge, Queensland
- Australian Refugee Association, Adelaide, South Australia
- Brisbane City Council, Brisbane, Queensland
- Centrecare (Catholic Migrant Centre), Perth, Western Australia
- Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, Melbourne, Victoria
- Ecumenical Migration Centre, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne, Victoria
- Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka, Western Australia
- Family Court of Australia, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory
- Foundation House, the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, Brunswick, Victoria
- Griffith University Logan Campus, Logan, Queensland
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Sydney, New South Wales
- Leading Australia Foundation Ltd trading as the Life and Career Centre, Toowoomba, Queensland
- Lutheran Community Care, Kilburn, South Australia
- Mercy Refugee Service, Lewisham, New South Wales

- Multicultural Community Centre, Fortitude Valley, Queensland
- Multicultural Community Services of Central Australia, Alice Springs, Northern Territory
- Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga, New South Wales
- Multicultural Tasmania, Hobart, Tasmania
- Northern Settlement Services, Newcastle, New South Wales
- Office of Multicultural Affairs, Australian Capital Territory
- Refugee and Immigration Legal Service, West End, Queensland
- School of Public Health and Medicine, University of New South Wales, Sydney, New South Wales
- Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors, Auburn and Carramar, New South Wales
- STEPS Employment and Training Solutions, Hobart, Tasmania
- Sudanese Australian Integrated Learning Program, Melbourne, Victoria
- Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Services, Bowden, South Australia
- Sydney West Area Health Service, Penrith, New South Wales
- TAFE SA English Language Services, Adelaide, South Australia
- Victoria Police, Dandenong, Victoria

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