



Australian Government

# Snapshots from Oz

Key features of Australian settlement policies, programmes and services available for humanitarian entrants



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## Introduction

**Indigenous Australians** are the original inhabitants of the [Australian continent](#) and nearby Torres Strait islands. Modern Australia is a nation built on immigration and shaped by the settlement<sup>1</sup> experience of migrants and refugees. Since 1945, more than seven million people have migrated to Australia, contributing to one of the most diverse nations in the world. Australia has benefitted in many ways from the rich diversity of its population, including economically and socially.

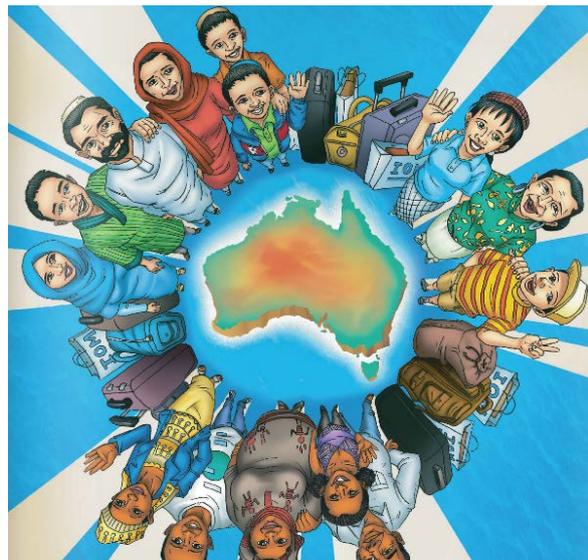
The positive effects of immigration on the Australian economy have been substantial. New migrants add to economic activity by increasing demand for products and services. By bringing new skills, knowledge, capital investment and innovative work and business practices they also contribute to increases in production and improvement in productivity.

## Executive Summary

This document will focus on the settlement journey of 'humanitarian entrants' who are a class of migrant settled in Australia under the Humanitarian Programme<sup>2</sup>.

Humanitarian entrants contribute their knowledge, skills and time to the community. They have a high level of volunteering and their contributions to other new arrivals and the broader community were recognised in the *Migrant and Economic Outcomes and Contributions report* of April 2011. Because humanitarian entrants tend to be young, they are more likely to be active participants in the labour market. This increases the size of the workforce, helps address labour shortages and eases the effects of Australia's ageing populations.

As humanitarian entrants come from a variety of different countries they revitalise and enrich Australian communities by introducing new social and cultural practices. They bring talent, ability, resilience, creativity and different perspectives and ideas. These qualities enhance the economic, social and cultural life of a community.



Cover page: One Step At a Time - AUSCO Programme Student Resource

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<sup>1</sup> The term settlement is used in this document to describe the process whereby humanitarian entrants become active and independent participants in the society of the settlement country. In Australia settlement services are provided over a period of five years. In the international context, settlement is also referred to as **integration** and is distinct from **resettlement** or **re-establishment**.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'humanitarian entrant' refers to refugees and other persons who are resettled in Australia under the Humanitarian Programme, which has a range of visa streams including the 'Refugee' stream, the 'Woman at Risk' stream and the 'Special Humanitarian Programme'. For more information on the visa subclasses see the [Department of Immigration and Border Protection](#) website.

This document provides information about the key features of Australia's approach to the settlement of humanitarian entrants. This document is separated into two parts. Part 1 outlines the overarching structure of Australia's settlement scheme, including governance structures and choice of settlement location. Part 2 provides more detail on the settlement services offered in the Australian context.

Many sections of this document include hyperlinks which readers can follow to access additional information on Australia's settlement programmes.

The information in this document is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather is designed to give readers a sense of the context in which Australia's settlement policies and programmes operate. Many of the policies and programmes described in this document have been developed over decades, and adjusted over time to take account of new developments, international and domestic circumstances and on the basis of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. Research has also played an important role in understanding the settlement experience of humanitarian entrants to Australia, and building an evidence base from which to inform the development of settlement policy and programmes.

Australia's approach to the settlement of migrants and refugees is based on several key principles, including providing support based on need, fostering participation in Australian society as soon as possible, fostering welcoming communities and drawing on the valuable skills and expertise of civil society to provide services and support. In Australia's experience, these principles have played a key role in the success of our multicultural society, supporting productive diversity and maintaining high levels of social cohesion.

Many factors have contributed to successful settlement outcomes for humanitarian entrants, as well as the wider Australian community. However, the following principles have proved particularly important in this regard:

- Humanitarian entrants generally need intensive initial support. Providing more intensive support up front helps refugees get settled and participate in society as soon as possible. Early intervention helps to prevent longer term reliance on welfare services.
- Services should be tailored to the needs of each humanitarian entrant. The needs of humanitarian entrants are particular to their circumstances, so a uniform level of servicing will not be appropriate to all entrants.
- It is important to involve the surrounding community in the settlement of humanitarian entrants. In Australia's experience, settlement works best when the community in which refugees settle are prepared for their arrival, have information about their refugee experience and can play a role in helping them to settle, for example through volunteer programmes.
- Involve multiple sectors of government and civil society, and develop a strategy for ensuring all stakeholders, including different levels of government, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), community, private sector and individuals, consult and work co-operatively.

- English proficiency, employment and education are key factors of good settlement outcomes for migrants and particularly humanitarian entrants. Of these three factors, learning English is the most important settlement requirement for newly arrived entrants to Australia.
- Continually evaluate, assess and refine programmes, to ensure they are providing the best outcomes for humanitarian entrants.

As described above, Australia's approach is based around working in partnership with civil society, in particular service providers in the settlement sector. There is a rich and vast array of information and best practice available from the sector. In particular, the peak body representing the sector, the Settlement Council of Australia (SCoA), can facilitate the flow of information and make connections with service providers. Details for SCoA and service providers are included in the **Useful websites** section of this document.

## Part 1: Overview of Australia's settlement programmes

Australia's settlement programmes are based on the principles of early intervention, needs-based services and fostering social and economic participation. The programmes have been successful in helping humanitarian entrants participate in Australian society as soon as possible after their arrival in Australia. In turn, this has helped to maintain the confidence of the Australian community in, and its support for, the migration and humanitarian programmes that are set by Government annually.

Humanitarian entrants often face multiple disadvantages because of their experiences, including mental health issues, physical disabilities, illiteracy, poor language skills, disrupted schooling and limited opportunities to gain skills, qualifications and work experience. Despite this, humanitarian entrants are resilient and enthusiastic about making a contribution to society, and the support they receive helps them to get started. Humanitarian entrants face many challenges in adjusting to the Australian way of life, but despite these challenges, most entrants and their families settle successfully and make a positive contribution to the Australian community.

Settlement services are designed to assist humanitarian entrants in the first five years of arrival in Australia. These services are designed to complement, not replace, the services available to all Australians, and are designed to support the needs of each particular entrant and link entrants to mainstream support services.

All newly arrived humanitarian entrants are eligible to receive initial, intensive settlement assistance through the Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) programme in their first year in Australia. These services are designed to provide humanitarian entrants with the assistance they need to build a life in Australia. They aim to assist clients to become self-reliant and participate equally in Australian society and minimise longer-term reliance on support services.

Clients are also eligible for more intensive support under the Complex Case Support (CCS) programme and may receive additional assistance through Settlement Services Grants, as required.



**Bhutanese humanitarian entrants at their citizenship ceremony**

## Yana's story



The Syrian civil war changed everything suddenly for so many people, including Yana. Yana, who managed the home front with her seven children while husband Sayid ran a fruit and vegetable shop, said life in Syria had been peaceful.

“We had a good life. Our children were at school and everything was quiet and settled,” she said. That all ended when the civil war brought a relentless day-to-day danger to neighbourhoods everywhere.

“The security issues turned people’s lives upside down,” Yana said, “It was too dangerous. We could not go to work safely.”

The family fled to Lebanon before settlement in Australia became available. Yana said her family was given general information on settling in Australia at AUSCO classes, including how to use transport and how Centrelink could help them.

Unfortunately, this upheaval came at the same time her husband was diagnosed with a serious illness. She said the biggest help in their first few weeks in Sydney came from a woman from Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS), who helped them with transport to appointments, and any other trips that were needed. “She was a big relief for us,” Yana said. “We had no links here, and my husband’s condition added more pressure, so it was great to have that help then.”

Not surprisingly, Yana said the most challenging part of settling into Australia has been the language barrier. “I wasn’t confident speaking, even if I wanted to catch a bus,” she said. “But it’s better now with my eldest daughter who is getting better at English.”

Yana said the family was settling quite well as their surroundings became more familiar. “Once we started going back to the same places again, such as shopping centres, things started to become familiar,” she said.

Yana said she was grateful to be in Australia where she could secure her children’s future. “The most important thing now is the children,” she said, “It’s a big relief that the children are now studying.”

## Support based on need

### Numbers of entrants

Each year, the Australian Government decides the size and regional composition of the humanitarian entrant programme considering:

- advice from UNHCR on global resettlement needs and priorities
- Australia's capacity to provide comprehensive settlement support services
- the evolving humanitarian situations and changes to the global need for resettlement.

The government also has a comprehensive consultation process with peak refugee and humanitarian bodies, state, territory and local governments and the general public about the size and composition of the programme.

### Level of servicing

In the 2013-14 financial year the Australian Government allocated \$142.8 million to fund a range of settlement services, which are provided in addition to support offered through mainstream servicing. It is not possible to provide indicative servicing costs for humanitarian entrants, as each different group of humanitarian entrants will require a different level of assistance through the range of settlement services and other Government programmes.

In previous years humanitarian entrants arriving in Australia on various visas were eligible for different settlement services. However, the eligibility for settlement services was simplified in 2004, because research indicated that the settlement services eligibility was becoming too complicated<sup>1</sup>. Eligibility was again reviewed in 2013.

Currently, settlement services are available for all humanitarian entrants to Australia, but people must hold a visa to be eligible.

While new arrivals share some common needs, it is important to recognise the individual needs of each and every client. For this reason, settlement services providers assess the settlement needs of each humanitarian entrant on a case-by-case basis. For example, people from an urban background who have had access to education may require different services to those from a rural background with little opportunity to undertake schooling. Some people may have some level of proficiency in English, and may not require interpreting services or only in certain circumstances; others may not have any level of English language skills and may need interpreting assistance for some time after arriving in Australia.

As the needs of individuals differ, service providers arrange an initial interview after arrival and create an individual settlement plan to address the specific needs of individuals.

In our experience, a small percentage of entrants require more intensive support, such as entrants with severe mental or physical health issues due to torture/trauma or other challenging experiences, disabilities or family violence issues.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information see the *Report on the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants*, Department of Immigration, May 2003. Additional Historical information is available on the [Australian Parliamentary website](#).

For example, humanitarian entrants entering on a 'Woman at Risk' visa are, by definition, women who have been without the protection of a male relative before coming to Australia. Many of them have children and therefore face the challenges of single parenthood, as well as facing the challenges of being a humanitarian entrant.

In Australia, clients with multiple and complex needs can be referred to the Complex Case Support programme for additional, intensive support and assistance. Specialist torture and trauma counselling is also available to support those who are experiencing psychological or psychosocial difficulties associated with surviving torture and trauma before coming to Australia.

### Role of community, family and friends

In the Australian experience, humanitarian entrants with family or friends in Australia generally benefit from settling in locations close to those links.

Applications for [Special Humanitarian Programme](#) (SHP) visas must be supported by a proposer, which can be a relative or friend of the entrants who is living in Australia (it can also be an organisation). Proposers are required to take responsibility for some areas of initial settlement support, including funding airfares and meeting entrants on arrival. Persons or organisations undertaking the role of proposer can be assisted by service providers to understand their obligations and to respond to the needs of their entrants. This support includes information and guidance on how to assist the entrant to settle in Australia and gain access to available services. The proposer can obtain further assistance if required after the entrant's arrival.

It is intended that SHP entrants have the support of a proposer to assist them with their settlement needs, however, in some cases, a proposer's ability to support their SHP entrant may be limited and a HSS service provider may provide assistance to the entrant.

The Australian Government is also piloting a [Community Proposal Pilot](#) (CPP), which allows a small number of 'approved proposing organisations' (including migrant / multicultural services and charities) to propose a visa for someone outside Australia in a refugee or humanitarian situation. The organisations work with specific communities to identify appropriate entrants, and meet pre-arrival costs (including for example the cost of travel to Australia). The organisation also provides basic settlement services for the entrants once they are in Australia. The CPP programme was introduced in 2013, and will be assessed on completion.



Reunion: brother and sister

## **Governance: roles and responsibilities of various levels of Government**

In Australia, the various levels of government have different roles and responsibilities. Collaboration between the three levels of the Australian government (Commonwealth, State and Local), as well as with service providers and the non-government sector, is key to the delivery of high-quality, culturally appropriate and inclusive services that ensure new arrivals are able to participate in Australian society as quickly as possible.

Responsibility for settlement services and support is divided between the three levels of government and the non-government sector along the following lines:

### **The Commonwealth Government**

- Has responsibility for administering the migration and humanitarian programmes.
- Provides funding to service providers to provide specialised settlement services to humanitarian entrants during the first five years of settlement, including HSS, CCS and settlement grant activities.
- Provides a range of mainstream services, delivered by a number of agencies, to meet the on arrival and longer term needs of migrants.
- Provides funding to State and Territory Governments for a range of other mainstream services, such as education and health services.
- Funds some initiatives to address barriers to settlement (such as racism and discrimination) and encourage multiculturalism.

### **State and Territory Government**

- Provides accessible and equitable mainstream services (such as education and health services) to the Australian community.

### **Local Government**

- Provides a range of services and infrastructure to the local community, including specialised services to migrants and initiatives to encourage settlement in a particular locality.

### **Non-government sector**

- Engages with migrants at a grass roots level and plays a key role in advising all levels of government on community and client groups, settlement needs and social policy issues.
- Contribute to effective planning and delivery of settlement services based on considerable experience and knowledge.
- Provides a link between mainstream services, the settlement sector, and communities.
- A broad range of supports and interventions to meet particular needs (e.g. volunteer run programmes, emergency relief, industry initiatives, community cooperatives, ethnic associations).

Sharing information between the government and the non-government sectors improves the collective ability to determine the appropriateness of settlement services and possible responses to changes over time. It also enables governments to work more closely with stakeholders, to be responsive and flexible in service delivery and to analyse migration trends and their projected impacts to get a better understanding of individual and community needs.

### *New resettlement country experience*



Australian Government staff member Sandra Fleming has spent some time working as a mentor to government agencies and NGOs in a new resettlement country.

She works with NGO service providers who deliver early practical support to humanitarian clients to help them settle into the community. Sandra recently had the opportunity to talk through the Australian settlement experience with a country new to resettlement.

Sandra says that engaging with NGOs in the new resettlement country was at times challenging as they were coming from a very different starting point: i.e. their country was culturally homogenous and with very low levels of immigration.

“In some countries the NGO sector is not the same as it is in Australia or it may not be operating in a similar political environment, and therefore will rely more on government guidance and decision-making. This is something that new resettlement countries would need to consider when developing their own settlement programmes”, she says.

Sandra says that Australia is lucky to have long established programmes such as the Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP) and the Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) programme to assist with the settlement experience.

“The capacity to learn the local language of any resettlement country is paramount to fulfilling a person’s goal of independence in their new country. By investing in language skills programmes and providing orientation to their new country increases a person’s capacity to successfully participate in society. Feeling accepted and contributing to their local community restores a person’s dignity and enables their successful settlement”.

Government consultation on settlement issues is conducted in a number of different forums. Peak bodies, such as the Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA), also provide valuable advice on policy and programme development. Consultation with peak bodies provides an opportunity for governments to become better informed about issues at the grassroots level. Peak bodies also advocate on behalf of culturally and linguistically diverse clients and communities and disseminate key messages and information through their members and community and business partnerships.

### *The Settlement Council of Australia*



The Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) is the national peak body representing agencies across Australia that assists migrants and humanitarian entrants to settle into their new life in Australia. SCOA operates as a network of members who provide settlement services and brings settlement service providers together to create cohesion and improve collaborative and strategic planning processes for the settlement sector. SCOA has 80 member organisations that provide settlement services for migrants and humanitarian entrants in every capital city and major regional town in Australia, and undertakes a range of activities to connect with and support these members.

SCOA holds regular consultations with members on settlement topics such as housing, employment, health and education. Consultations promote information sharing between settlement agencies and inform the development of SCOA's input into government policy.

SCOA also hosts a series of regular forums and conferences, and maintains relationships with a wide range of government and non-government agencies and networks at local, state and federal levels. Regular meetings with key government departments facilitate representation of settlement sector policy perspectives and issues, enabling the settlement sector to have a unified voice with government.

For additional information on this organisation see **Attachment A**.

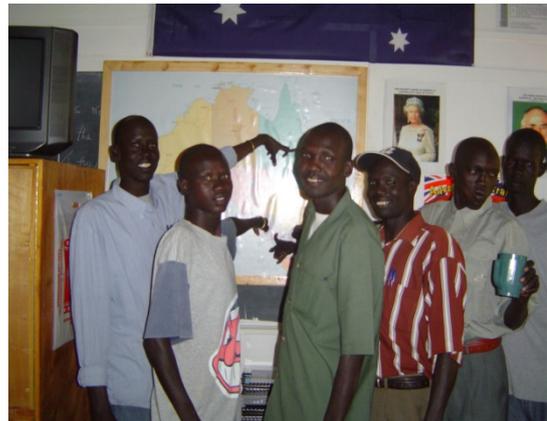


- Through its Multicultural Community Liaison Officer (MCLO) network, the Government works with community leaders and stakeholders to monitor community tensions and the views and needs of multicultural communities. MCLOs disseminate government messaging and provide support to affected communities. MCLOs can link community leaders to relevant services and agencies.

### Settlement location / the importance of links

The Australian Government has identified 23 contract regions across the whole of Australia for the purposes of delivery of initial settlement services to humanitarian entrants.

Currently, in about 90 per cent of cases, humanitarian entrants have family or friends who are already living in Australia and the Government will seek to settle them as closely as possible to their family and friends. In the majority of cases, this will be a major metropolitan centre such as Sydney or Melbourne.



AUSCO students pointing to their sites in Australia

The remaining 10 per cent, who do not have any existing links to Australia, will be referred directly to an appropriate settlement location. An entrant will be settled in a regional Australian town if the specific circumstances of the entrant make this appropriate.

Generally, the Australian Government will attempt to settle particular groups of humanitarian entrants together. When settling particular groups of humanitarian entrants, the Government considers the size and ethnic/cultural/religious composition of an existing community, including other migrants in that location, and the potential for the harmonious settlement of the specific group. In addition, the Government looks at specific issues relating to the people being considered, including:

- the gender and age composition of the people
- if families are being settled, the size and composition of the family, to determine if there are sufficient suitably sized houses available
- whether the people come from an urban, rural or remote background
- the ability of the service provider to support the particular humanitarian entrants.

This requires detailed knowledge on the group being settled and the community being proposed as a potential settlement site. Potential new locations are assessed to determine whether the community has the services needed to support humanitarian settlement, including:

- access to mainstream services, including Centrelink and Medicare offices
- appropriate health services, which may include support for those who have suffered torture and trauma
- suitable and affordable accommodation

- access to English language tuition through the Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP)
- access to appropriate translation and interpreting services
- appropriate employment opportunities
- education opportunities for children, adolescents and adults
- opportunities for social participation and religious expression.

In order to ensure the contributions of humanitarian entrants to the community are meaningful in the longer term, a location needs to be able to support a sufficient number of humanitarian entrants to create a community, and potentially attract other humanitarian entrants and migrants to subsequently settle in the same area.

In addition, in the Australian experience the location should be of sufficient size to support new communities, generally with a pre-existing population of at least 20,000.

When the Government assesses a new potential settlement location, particularly in a regional area, local consultation is a critical step. A local decision to proceed encourages ownership and commitment. The Australian Government will consult with the state and local governments and with the community, including any other migrant and indigenous groups, to ascertain the willingness and capacity of a community to support humanitarian settlement.



AUSCO children participants studying a map of Australia

## *A Resettlement community experience*



Maralee Vogel, Community Development Officer at Albury City Council, says the local community has really helped refugees settle in Albury. 'The community has been caring and very willing to be involved in refugee settlement', Maralee says.

The first Bhutanese refugees arrived in Albury in 2008, and were joined by refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo in 2009.

Albury City Council has organised a number of events and programmes for refugees and the broader community, including:

- an annual cultural festival
- a community garden, established using a \$20,000 grant from NSW Ministry of Health
- two seminars on nutritional practices and safe food handling
- The Photo Voice project where 55 new arrivals shared their refugee and settlement experiences

a mentoring programme to help refugees obtain jobs.

"We found the refugees were quite frustrated about the lack of available jobs", Maralee remembers. "For a short time, the council acted as agent and rang employers on their behalf, seeking apprenticeships or traineeships. It also helped to have a dedicated refugee employment officer who worked with this group."

Albury City Council now participates in three multicultural forums.

Maralee feels the refugee settlement process has been successful in Albury. "All the services have worked well together from day one," she says. "Refugees have been welcomed by the local Education services, they have access to medical and dental services and accommodation. Volunteers have also been critical to the successful settlement of the refugees. Everyone wants to volunteer, and they are well organised and supported by the settlement service providers."

Maralee believes humanitarian settlement has enhanced Albury. "Refugees are adaptable and have a strong positive outlook. They are hard workers and want to be successful". She notes that the families who first arrived are now buying houses and helping the new arrivals to settle using the strong local networks they have established.

However, it's important to remember refugees go through a period of adjustment after they arrive in Australia. "It takes time for a community to get on their feet," Maralee says.

## Review / Feedback mechanisms

### Programme monitoring

Regular monitoring of settlement services ensures continual improvement and best outcomes for humanitarian entrants.

A number of mechanisms are in place to evaluate the quality of services provided to humanitarian entrants and their ongoing welfare. These include national workshops, local area coordination meetings and client contact visits. National workshops, for example, provide an opportunity to identify process and service delivery improvements and for best practice models to be shared between service providers and the Government's service managers.

### Programme evaluation

Reviews are currently being undertaken of a number of settlement services. To inform this process, the views of a broad range of stakeholders, including service providers, clients, government agencies and the sector have been sought. This will ensure that these programmes continue to provide appropriate and tailored settlement support and language learning for humanitarian entrants. The reviews include:

- *Evaluation of the Humanitarian Settlement Services and Complex Case Support programmes*: The evaluation will assess the effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness of the programmes and their alignment with other settlement services.
- *Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) Review*: The TIS review will determine the most cost effective method of obtaining quality interpreting services for settlement services, and provide evidence and advice to determine if and how the government should invest in the translating and interpreting industry.

### Review of services

The Government also takes the opportunity to consider changes to the parameters and / or direction of settlement services according to:

- any lessons learned in the delivery of services
- changes to settlement locations
- changes to settlement needs and priorities.

### Quality Assurance

The HSS programme has a Quality Assurance Framework which monitors the quality of settlement services. The purpose of the framework is to provide an overarching policy for the delivery of quality assurance activities which are designed to assess the quality of service delivery and client outcomes. The framework establishes a robust mechanism through which to undertake end-to-end quality assurance, with an emphasis on measuring real time programme and client outcomes.

Quality assurance allows ongoing monitoring of HSS service provider performance, and also enables the Government to capture data relating to client experiences, which can be used to inform future programme design.

Quality assurance activities may focus on the following: contract management; programme management; stakeholder management; financial management; referrals management; information management and programme alignment.

This Framework was created after the *Review of Humanitarian Settlement Services Performance Measures and Contract Management* was released and the Government accepted the recommendations. The review concluded that Australia's settlement services were adequate, but identified the need for improvement in areas such as quality assurance and risk management. Additional Information can be found at: [Review of Humanitarian Settlement Services Performance Measures and Contract Management](#).

### **Research example: Building a new life in Australia**

The Building a new life in Australia (BNLA) study is a longitudinal survey of humanitarian migrants which will help the Australian Government and stakeholders better understand the factors that aid, or hinder, successful settlement for humanitarian migrants during their first five years in Australia. The study will involve annual interviews with respondents over five years, commencing in 2013 and finishing in 2017.



The survey covers a broad range of social and economic issues - including housing, English language proficiency, education and training, employment and income, health, community support and life in Australia – which will help build an understanding of the early settlement experiences of this group. The survey also looks at the experiences migrants and humanitarian entrants have had with government supported services, levels of independence and aspirations for the future.

The BNLA will provide a significant contribution to the evidence base in relation to settlement and assist in the development of improved policies and programmes for settling humanitarian migrants in Australia.

Additional information on this evaluation can be found at [BNLA Report](#).

## Part 2: Services offered in the Australian context

Co-ordinated on-arrival services play an important role in ensuring a good settlement experience. In the Australian context, entrants travel a very long way to Australia and it is vital they are met on arrival and given assistance to settle in accommodation and join up to essential services quickly. On arriving in Australia, humanitarian entrants will receive intensive initial support from HSS, which is provided to clients until they are able to independently live in the community, particularly until they reside in long-term, stable and secure accommodation and are assessed as competent in all orientation topics.

Within the first three weeks the HSS case manager will assess and identify the key settlement needs and goals of each individual entrant, and develop an individually tailored case management plan to meet these needs. Case management plans consider:

- language assistance requirements
- accommodation needs
- support for [Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors](#)
- health and medical needs
- employment referrals
- educational goals
- links to community/sporting/recreational groups
- links to other government programmes.

As previously mentioned, not all HSS recipients require or receive all available services to meet their settlement needs, and all services are interrelated, so language assistance services will improve employment and educational prospects.

### Initial HSS services: Basic Orientation and Life Essentials

#### Meeting at the airport/ Transport from the Airport to temporary accommodation



HSS providers meet humanitarian entrants on arrival at the airport (except those met by a family or community link) and transport them to their initial location.

Some entrants have noted that seeing a familiar face in the airport would be welcome: “I would like to suggest that some of the brothers from the community come to the airport to welcome new African arrivals, because you are very frightened when you come here and if you see another black face you will know that it is going to be ok”<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Regional Settlement in Australia, Research into the settlement experience of humanitarian entrants in regional Australia*, Dr Christine Shepley, et al, 2006-07,pg 53

Although support services do not specifically call for individuals of a similar ethnicity to meet entrants at the airport, some of those who have arrived earlier will volunteer to provide this service to new arrivals.

### Short term accommodation when arriving in the country

HSS provides accommodation services, including assistance in locating affordable accommodation and a package of basic household goods (if required) to help people establish a household when they are placed in longer-term accommodation.

HSS clients may be placed into accommodation that caters to the different needs and composition of each family (or the individual needs of single clients) on arrival to Australia. This may be short-term accommodation of up to twelve weeks or long-term accommodation of six months or more. If entrants are initially housed in short-term accommodation, HSS providers may assist clients to find and arrange long-term accommodation of at least six months.



HSS providers pay the full accommodation costs (including utilities) for the first four weeks after client arrival unless the client is living with a relative or friend.

Service providers will also ensure HSS recipients have the knowledge and skills to function safely in their accommodation and to utilise available facilities. This includes but is not limited to knowledge on:

- how to contact emergency services, the case manager and interpreters
- using cooking equipment and appliances
- toilet and bathroom facilities
- refrigerator, washing machine and dishwasher (if applicable)
- security features of the house.



### Mobile phones

HSS providers can also give, or loan, clients a mobile phone with \$30 pre-paid credit to each entrant or family group to facilitate contact with case workers.

A pre-paid SIM card and \$30 of mobile phone credit may also be given to clients arriving with mobile phones. These SIM cards (including mobile phone numbers) remain the property of clients at the end of the six-week period.

### Orientation and Training in Australian living

The orientation component of HSS aims to equip clients with basic life-skill competencies to progress along their settlement journey. Orientation focuses on developing clients' capacity and understanding across a range of settlement topics. All HSS recipients aged 15 years and over are eligible for orientation support, and the programme is based on their individual needs and capabilities.

Orientation information is delivered progressively over the initial settlement period with critical information delivered up-front (e.g. safety, laws, budgeting). Orientation is complete when clients have achieved competency in the following core areas:

- finding information and accessing services
- making an appointment
- transport
- money management
- tenancy issues
- employment and education
- Australian law.

### *Abbas' story*

From *Humanitarian Settlement Services: Onshore Orientation Programme*, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011, page 12



Abbas Rezai is an Afghan Hazara who came to Australia in August 2011 and lives in Brisbane. The 17 year old found the orientation to be very beneficial.

“I learned about Australian law, how to rent a house, how to pay bills, how to catch buses and trains and how to check the times. I learned about police, the fire brigade and about driver's licences, school, TAFE and making appointments.”

“I also learned about self-protection, what to do if I see violence, and what to do if I lose my bank card. I am happy that I did the programme because I learned about Australia and the systems here. The orientation programme helped me settle in Brisbane.”

### On arrival food package

On arrival HSS recipients are provided with a one off package of culturally appropriate food (including fresh food products), essential personal hygiene items and basic cleaning products. The package is sufficient to last seven days and is suitable to the size of the family, after which it is assumed they will possess sufficient knowledge to purchase their own food.



### Basic financial/service education, including opening a bank account

The needs of humanitarian entrants are assessed and addressed through an integrated case management approach. Within the first three days after arrival HSS providers assist entrants to register with essential services including:

- Centrelink, who will provide income support and employment support based on the person's circumstances, and a Tax File Number, which is vital for employment
- Medicare (see **Health** below)
- appropriate banking services to open a bank account (for clients aged 16 or over)
- the [Adult Migrant English Program](#) (AMEP), which will provide English language education (see **Language** below).



When humanitarian entrants arrive in Australia, they can immediately gain access to income support payments under the same eligibility criteria as an Australian citizen. They are also eligible for a single crisis payment when they arrive in the country, to help them get settled<sup>1</sup>.

In Australia, humanitarian entrants are far more likely to be in receipt of Centrelink payments than other migrants (such as skilled migrants). Around 85 per cent of humanitarian entrants' households are in receipt of income support payments after initially entering the country, while around 28 per cent of skilled migrants' households make use of income support payments. Research has indicated that the proportion of humanitarian entrant's households in receipt of income support payments decreases over five years as the entrants gain employment<sup>2</sup>

The Australian Government has recognised that welfare dependency could become an issue for humanitarian entrants, if they aren't motivated and supported in seeking employment and integrating into Australian society. Refugee community support is important in this context, and to claim income support payment in Australia a person must be actively seeking paid work through engagement with an Employment Service provider.

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<sup>1</sup> Additional information can be found on the [Department of Human Service website](#).

<sup>2</sup> *Settlement Outcomes of New Arrivals – Study for Department of Immigration and Citizenship*, Australian Survey Research Group Pty Ltd, April 2004, pp.27.

Generally, humanitarian entrants are eager to seek gainful employment; however there can be barriers to employment for humanitarian entrants (see **Employment** below).

### Learning to drive

Many entrants note that learning to drive is an important concern.

### *Evelyn's story*

From *Getting Settled: Women Refugees in Australia*, Department of Social Services, page 32



Evelyn came to Australia in 2005, fleeing war in Liberia. When interviewed in 2008 she said “the next great challenge was using public transport. Because it was difficult for me, I decided to get my driver’s license. I was one of the first Liberian women in my community to do so, and this in turn inspired other women in the community to also learn to drive”.

Driving is important in securing employment, (especially critical in rural areas where public transport may not be reliable), and many entrants have not learnt how to use a car, and are not able to undertake a class to learn how to drive. Settlement Grants funds services that provide basic driver education to assist entrants to get their licences.



## Nadia's story



Nadia was 13 when the war in Iraq began. Instead of spending her days at school or with friends, she and her family were forced into hiding for fear of persecution. Nadia and her family were all born and raised in Iraq, but are of Palestinian heritage. This means they were stateless — with many restrictions placed on them including being unable to ever own a house or car. And that was before the war. Once the war began in 2003, Sunni Muslims (particularly of Palestinian heritage) like Nadia's family, were in danger. Nadia's home was sprayed with bullets, it was unsafe to go to school for months at a time, and Nadia and her family were evicted from their home. In 2006, after three long years in war-torn Baghdad, Nadia and her family fled to Syria where they applied and prayed for their visa to come to Australia. A year and a half later, their prayers were answered.

'When we arrived, I was overwhelmed, everything was different. I couldn't speak any English the culture was so different but at the same time I felt so welcome and supported.' Nadia said.

A HSS provider supplied Nadia's family with basic furniture, kitchenware and toiletries. 'I don't have the words to explain how grateful we are for that support. It made me feel like this really was our new home.'

'What stands out for me on that day we first walked through the door, was the attention to detail and the careful consideration that had happened before we arrived.'

'It sounds silly now but I remember noticing and appreciating that we all had our own toothbrush, own pillow, own towel all laid out for us'.

Nadia was even given a second-hand computer to help her complete her studies. 'Having access to that computer got me through year 12 and my first years at TAFE.'

She also found the trauma counselling immensely helpful during her first year in Australia. 'When I felt stressed and confused it was great to be able to turn to someone who knew my story, who I felt safe with. My counsellor helped me so much especially in the early days.'

In her first two years in Australia, Nadia had learnt to speak English, completed year 12, had two jobs and was studying at TAFE.

One of Nadia's greatest joys was when she saved enough money and bought her own car.

'I used to volunteer to drive everywhere for my family, I'd drive around the neighbourhood—it was the best feeling, I never dreamed I would have my own car, especially growing up in Iraq where that just wasn't an option.'

Now Nadia wants to give back to people who are on a similar journey and have experienced similar hardships. Nadia has an Advanced Diploma in Community Services and hopes to start her Bachelor of Social Work next year.

'I know how hard it is, I went through it, I lived it, and I want to help other people feel welcome in their new home the way I was helped when we first came to Australia.'

## Additional Targeted Support for particularly vulnerable people

### Complex Case Support

The Complex Case Support (CCS) programme delivers specialised and intensive case management services to humanitarian clients who have a multiplicity of high support needs, which are beyond the scope of other settlement services. The programme is available to humanitarian entrants for the first five years in Australia. The client needs can include:

- significant mental and physical health conditions
- crisis events after arrival
- very low life skills that present significant barriers to successful settlement.

This programme has been operating since October 2008 and has assisted the small proportion of humanitarian entrants (less than 3 per cent) who require a particularly high level of intensive support to build a new life in Australia and participate effectively in community life.

### *A Complex Case Support Story*



One married and three unmarried adult brothers, along with their parents, arrived in Australia in February 2014 after living in a refugee camp for 21 years. The three unmarried brothers are unable to hear or speak and are not literate in their own language. They were occupied in different trades in the refugee camp but after arrival in Australia, due to their severe communication restrictions, were unable to do very much except stay at home to garden and cook.

They were unable to use public transport independently and had anxiety around this. Although they appeared to be content and have the support of their family, they were very isolated and their settlement progress was hindered by their inability to communicate.

Their hearing brother and his wife provided much support in terms of caring for the family and taking the brothers to appointments (as well as caring for their elderly parents) and as such they were missing out on much of their own language classes and settlement goals.

The brothers were very keen to learn to sign fluently in AUSLAN (Australia's sign language system) and to become more involved in the community to allow them to become more able to communicate and increase their self-confidence. They acknowledged their need to become more independent.

The Complex Case Support provider:

- facilitated access to the relevant health professionals
- assisted the family to become self-confident in engaging with services independently
- identified interpreters who were able to communicate appropriately with the whole family
- assisted the hearing brother and his wife to find the time to attend English classes, including providing the opportunity for them to access home tutoring, and to register with respite services
- facilitated access to AUSLAN classes
- explored and found appropriate ways to educate the brothers in the use of technology.

The whole family is now coping much better and while acknowledging that they still have a long settlement journey ahead they now feel that they have the skills and support they need to move forward with their lives.

### Settlement Grants Activities

The Australian Government introduced Settlement Services Grants on 1 July 2006. Under this programme, the Australian Government provides grants to community organisations to deliver settlement services to a range of migrants, including humanitarian entrants, in their first five years in Australia. Funded activities work in parallel to the HSS and CCS programmes and aim to assist eligible clients to become self-reliant and participate equitably in Australian society as soon as possible after arrival, and which helps to minimise longer term reliance on social services.

The types of services funded under Settlement Services Grants include:

- casework/coordination including information, advice, advocacy or referral services to a client on an individual or family basis
- community coordination and development: by facilitating community development and coordination
- youth settlement services: specifically targeting youth
- support for ethno-specific communities: to build confidence and independence to assist with their development.

For more detail on these programmes please see the [Department of Social Services website](#).

### English language services

Language proficiency is paramount to successful settlement. In Australia, the ability to speak English assists new migrants secure employment, undertake education and training and fully participate in the Australian community. The greatest barriers to services take-up and participation are related to language competency and education. Australian research consistently shows that there is a clear relationship between language proficiency and unemployment rates across all migration streams, with higher unemployment levels being experienced amongst those with lesser English language capacity.

New migrants, and particularly humanitarian entrants, may have limited English language proficiency prior to arriving in Australia and will require English language training to access services and fully participate in the community.

Many entrants have noted that language is the key barrier to successful settlement and integration.

### Ali's story

From *Refugee and Humanitarian Issues: Australia's Response*,  
Department of Immigration and Citizenship, June 2009, page 6.



Ali's family were forced from their homes in Iraq and into Lebanon. They were recognised as refugees, and were granted an Australian visa in 2003. "Migrants are new born people", said Ali "there's such a large gap between two cultures and the gap begins with language"<sup>1</sup>.

### English language classes – Adult Migrant English Programme

The Australian Government has a national English language programme, the Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP). It has been providing free English language tuition to new arrivals since 1948.

The AMEP is a voluntary programme and is available to humanitarian entrants. The programme provides clients access to up to 510 hours of English language tuition in their first five years of settlement in Australia.

The AMEP is of central importance in assisting humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants to become self-reliant and to participate in Australian society. The programme achieves this through:

- providing eligible clients who do not have a functional level of English proficiency with assistance to learn basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy);
- a settlement course that is provided to help clients develop basic skills to participate in the community; and
- offering some clients additional tuition and work experience placement to assist with the transition to work in Australia.



An AMEP class

The course helps new arrivals to develop friendships and support networks, giving them the language and cultural understanding required to connect with their local community, assisting them with the development of literacy and numeracy skills as well as language proficiency, and guiding them towards the development of realistic educational and employment goals.

Further information about the AMEP can be found on the [Department of Education and Training website](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Settlement in Australia: Research into the settlement experience of humanitarian entrants in regional Australia highlighted language as a major driver to migrant employment. Preliminary BNLA research also shows a correlation between the ability to speak English, and the ability to access Government services

### Interpreting services and related issues

The Australian Government provides a commercial interpreting service, called the [Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#), that allows government services, the community sector and private businesses to access interpreters for a fee. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Australian Government also funds free interpreting services in some cases, for example private medical practitioners and various non-government organisations that provide case work and emergency services.



Private interpreting service companies are also available in Australia however they may not have interpreters available for low-demand languages, which newly arrived migrants often speak.

Free translation, into English, of key personal documents, such as identity documents, education or employment certifications and drivers licences is also provided to eligible clients.

Australia has a government funded National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters, that sets the benchmark for professional interpreters and translators. This assists in achieving consistency in the abilities of professional translators and interpreters and ensures appropriately trained and qualified interpreters are available. This is particularly important for interpreters dealing with health and legal matters.

The Multicultural Language Services Guidelines provide overarching guidelines to Australian Government agencies on policies and procedures relating to language service initiatives, such as the use of domestic interpreting and translating services. This document also describes best practice adopted by government departments to reduce barriers to humanitarian entrants accessing services.

Link to Best Practice Guidelines are available at [Multicultural Language Services Guidelines for Australian Government Agencies](#).

### Health Services

Humanitarian entrants may have serious and complicated health needs for a wide range of reasons. Once humanitarian entrants have arrived in Australia, they are eligible for medical benefits and services including [Medicare](#) (a publically funded universal health care system), the [Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme](#) (PBS), and the [Australian Childhood Immunisation Register](#)

After being enrolled in Medicare humanitarian entrants can visit doctors and specialists, and buy prescription medicines at a reduced cost (or even for free). Children under seven years of age who are enrolled in Medicare are automatically included on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, which will assist parents to seek immunisation



services for their children. Parents will often not have had an opportunity to immunise their children while living in refugee situations.

Going to Medicare for registration

As noted above, there is a free interpreting service available in Australia to assist doctors to communicate with humanitarian entrants who have not developed sufficient English. However, it is often difficult for people with limited English to communicate mental health problems to health care professionals, even with the support of an interpreter, and the Government funds specialised services that are tailored to the particular mental health needs of humanitarian entrants, through torture and trauma services.

### **Torture and trauma services**

Some humanitarian entrants have fled the violence of war or have escaped direct persecution. Their history could involve torture, imprisonment and denial of rights, which can lead to long-term physical and mental health issues. Preliminary analysis of results from the 2014 BNLA survey of humanitarian migrants settling in Australia found that the incidence of psychological distress and possible mental health problems were very high and well above estimates for the general Australian population.

The experiences of humanitarian entrants in refugee camps can be equally difficult and traumatic. For examples, the traumatic experiences of female refugees are outlined in *Woman Alone: The fight for survival by Syria's refugee women*<sup>1</sup>.

Once in Australia, if a person is identified, or self-identifies, as a survivor of torture and trauma, they are referred to special torture and trauma counselling services. These services are provided by the Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma member organisations (FASSTT network). FASSTT is a network of 8 specialist services (one in each State and Territory) that provide assessment, counselling, and ongoing therapeutic interventions for people and communities who are survivors of torture and trauma. The services help humanitarian entrants recover from their experiences and build a new life in Australia. The organisations offer psychological assessments, individual psycho-therapeutic interventions, group and family therapy, youth activities, natural therapies and community development.

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<sup>1</sup> Link: [Woman Alone](#)

FASSTT services deliver specialist services tailored to the needs of survivors of torture and trauma, whether these are short or long term, but are also designed to improve access to mainstream services for survivors with high needs. Services are generally provided in the first 1 to 3 years in Australia, but can be for a longer period. It is possible that problems arising from these experiences could manifest much later in the settlement period, once the person is fully settled:

“During the first 12 to 18 months, humanitarian entrants are too busy coming to terms with being in a different country, getting settled, getting the children to school and finding jobs all while learning English that the trauma they experienced has been pushed aside. It is only after they start to settle that they begin to experience the effects of the trauma and that is when they then need counselling.”<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Regional Settlement in Australia, in Australia, Research into the settlement experience of humanitarian entrants in regional Australia*, Dr Christine Shepley, et al, 2006-07, pp. 43.

## Zahra's story

From [Getting Settled: Women Refugees in Australia](#),  
Department of Social Services, p20.



Zahra<sup>1</sup> is a 30 year old woman from Somalia. Her ordeal began when rival clans attacked Zahra's village, killing all of the men, including Zahra's husband. Zahra and her two eldest daughters were raped repeatedly before being left for dead by the militia. Her three youngest children escaped with a neighbour but they were later reunited. She and her children then fled to Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, travelling at night to avoid being attacked. However, life in the camp was also very dangerous. Women and girls were often raped and there was never enough food or money for essential items such as soap or medicine.

Like many other single women in the camp, Zahra felt she had no choice but to engage in survival sex in order to get enough money so her children could eat. Once this became known to others, Zahra and her children were abused, ostracised, and any rations they could get were stolen. Zahra worked hard to protect her family and was ashamed of what she was forced to do. Men would often force their way into her home and rape her, telling her she could not say no as she was a prostitute. Zahra gave birth to her sixth child in the camp. Soon after, her case came to the attention of one of the resettlement officers from Australia and she and her family were resettled a year later under the Woman at Risk programme.

Zahra arrived in Australia scared and extremely traumatised by her experiences. She was welcomed at the airport by two women, both of whom spoke her language. She was settled into a house which was stocked with food from her home country and close to local services. Prior to her arrival, Zahra's case manager, who specialised in working with women at risk, did extensive research on the camp conditions Zahra had been in. The case manager also talked with other women from the community who had been resettled from Kenya to ask what conditions were like and what extra support they felt would be helpful in making Zahra feel welcome.

Soon after she arrived Zahra was assigned a volunteer who had experience working with vulnerable women. She was also connected with other women from other refugee backgrounds who had formed a women's support group. A torture and trauma counsellor visited the group to explain the service and what counselling meant. Zahra saw the counsellor regularly to help her cope with the traumas she had experienced. She was also able to access a family support programme for single mothers. After a year Zahra's case manager introduced her to another worker who was familiar with her story and women at risk clients. Zahra was able to seek ongoing assistance through a migrant resource centre and now, three years later, she helps other newly arrived women at risk.

As previously noted, Complex Case Support (CCS) services can also support people with particularly difficult physical and mental health issues, including torture and trauma and family violence intervention.

## Employment Services

The range of background circumstances, work experience, level of skills/qualifications and language proficiency will all affect the level of support needed to help each relevant humanitarian entrant achieve 'employment-readiness'. However some challenges are common to many new migrants and humanitarian entrants looking for work, particularly:

- lack of education
- lack of familiarity with the operation of Australian workplaces and workplace culture, including government regulation issues
- lack of familiarity with Australian recruitment practices
- lack of Australian work experience or job search history
- lack of recognition or acceptance of overseas skills and qualifications.

## Success in Employment

Many humanitarian entrants will have lived in refugee camps or in very basic conditions in a third country, sometimes for many years. Their education may have been disrupted as they may have had no access to education services, resulting in limited literacy and/or numeracy. To address this lack of training, HSS caseworkers assist entrants to enrol in colleges, universities and institutions of vocational training.

Lack of knowledge of the Australian labour market or misinformation about employment opportunities in Australia can result in unrealistic expectations of employment opportunities that need to be addressed. Settlement services attempt to manage humanitarian entrants' expectations through orientation, both through the [AUSCO](#) programme and the HSS Onshore Orientation Programme after arrival.

While humanitarian entrants were living as refugees in a third country, they may have had no right to work, and therefore limited recent work experience. HSS and Settlement Grants caseworkers can provide clients with information about work placement and work experience programs. They can also accompany clients to Centrelink, where job-ready clients may undertake a Job Seeker Classification Instrument assessment and be referred for a Job Capacity Assessment. After this, the client may be referred to employment services providers, who will assist the client to find employment<sup>1</sup>.

There are also several work placement initiatives run independent of Commonwealth services, including the Given a Chance programme run by the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the Tasmanian Government Work Placement Programme.



Preparing a resume in an AUSCO class

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<sup>1</sup> In Australia, to receive the Newstart income support payment, a person must be actively seeking employment or participating in approved activities, such as AMEP. Humanitarian entrants seeking this income support payment while looking for work will be assisted by employment services providers in seeking employment.

## Ahmed's story



Ahmed led a comfortable and successful life in Homs, Syria, with his wife, six children and his logistics company. Then came the war. When he was first kidnapped, Ahmed's life began to unravel. He was detained by the authorities for 11 months. He was released only to be kidnapped again - this time with a ransom attached. His family had fled to Lebanon and he was forced to surrender all his assets, including his house, land and his business.

"I was three years in suffering," Ahmed said, "I felt like I was drowning in a bad sea."

He said the idea of settling in Australia was appealing as his pre-settlement information suggested a cohesive nation with a standard of living comparable to his homeland. He thought Australia could provide a comfortable life again, like the one he had spent years building up before it was taken from him. Ahmed, his wife, five daughters and son have been in Australia for 11 months. He said everything was going well for him now.

"People have helped me. They have helped me find a temporary home," he said, "We are now looking for a new home near a school," he said.

So far he has been supported with accommodation, goods such as food and drinks and Centrelink has allocated some financial assistance. "I am also learning English," he said

Ahmed has already had some medical support, with doctors identifying and treating a stomach condition. He described his life now as "the best ever."

"It's going very well. I have been treated very kindly," he said, "I will be grateful until the day I die."

Stripped of the business he built up, and without a trade or other qualification, he finds it a challenge to find work. He sees paths to employment as a priority for migrants to Australia.

"When you work, you can better assimilate and forget your worries," he said.

For now, Ahmed is more focussed on the future for his children in his new country.

"I can compare it to my home - before the war."

### Lack of Documentation

Humanitarian entrants may lack documentation relating to qualifications and work experience, which means they are unable to prove they have qualifications and experience.

Even if humanitarian entrants possess their qualification documents, their qualifications may not be recognised by the Government of their settlement country. For example, it is possible that the Australian Government will not recognise qualifications from some overseas universities or allow humanitarian entrants from these countries to gain professional recognition in Australia without completing additional study. Australia assesses overseas qualifications as per its obligations under the *Lisbon Recognition Convention 2002*. For more information please visit the [Department of Education and Training website](#).

### Cultural and Environmental Issues

Cultural and Environmental factors may impact on a humanitarian entrant's ability to obtain or sustain employment, requiring sensitive treatment from employment services. These include:

- **Health issues:** pre-arrival exposure to violence, instability, persecution, torture and/or trauma potentially resulting in post-traumatic stress disorder, mental or physical health issues and/or physical disabilities (see **Health**) can impact on a humanitarian entrant's ability to obtain/sustain employment. This can include stress relating to separation from family members who are still in conflict areas or refugee camps or other dangerous or unstable circumstances overseas.
- **Changing family roles:** Australian social norms in relation to gender equality can be new to some entrants and may require significant adjustment. Failure to adjust to these norms could lead to changes in family dynamics and gender roles (e.g. women may become the major provider). This could weaken or disrupt a family, or exacerbate instances of domestic violence.
- **Insufficient child-care:** it may be difficult to obtain adequate childcare arrangements for large families or woman at risk.

Migrants and refugees may also face racism or stereotypical discrimination if there is a perception that making them productive could require more effort than employing a 'local'. There must be local support for the employment of humanitarian entrants, because they often require additional help to get into gainful employment.

## *Refugee Employment Pilot*



In 2009 the 'Luv-a-Duck' company, based in the town of Nhill, western Victoria, was looking to expand its labour force. They had heard about the Karen community from a local refugee support group. They approached AMES, a settlement service provider in Melbourne, with a proposal about meeting the community to present information on employment opportunities.

Getting the initiative started and ensuring its success involved AMES, the employer, the local community and service providers in Nhill to all work together. The scheme offered benefits to both the employer and the Karen community, who were then living in Melbourne. For Luv-a-Duck, the refugees provided a much needed labour force to help grow the business. For the refugees, many of whom were from rural communities, the opportunity to work and live in a regional community was welcomed, and Luv-a-Duck was successful in attracting many to move.

In Nhill, the Karen are now working in other industries including aged care, a local café, a local motor mechanic's workshop, the Nhill Neighbourhood House and Nhill College.

With the support of Luv-a-Duck's manager, the Karen have now set up their own egg production business, which helps Luv-a-Duck's hatchery meet the growing demands of domestic and international markets. This move to self-employment in small business is creating further employment for members of the Karen community who have business and management skills.

The Karen have embraced the opportunities that have been provided to them. They have also been supported by members of the Nhill community who act as mentors and life-skill coaches in areas such as banking, rental housing and obtaining a driver's license. As a result, strong cross-community connections are being built in the town.

Luv-a-Duck was a winner of the Business Inclusion Category of the Migration Council of Australia's Migration and Settlement Awards in 2013.

### Services for youth and children

Australia's settlement programmes include a strong emphasis on the needs of youth. While service providers provide strengthened case management planning and services for all humanitarian clients, there is a specific focus on the needs of younger clients aged from 15 to 25 years. Case managers develop 'youth sub plans' as part of the initial consultation which identifies the entrant's educational, employment, recreational, social, sporting and orientation needs as well as strategies to achieve these goals. The orientation programme offered by HSS providers includes information designed to meet the needs of young clients and their parents - such as vocational planning, family relationships, health, understanding the law and adjusting to life in Australia. Settlement Grants funds services specifically targeted at young humanitarian entrants.

HSS providers will also assist humanitarian entrants to enrol their school-age children in primary or secondary school, no later than six weeks after arrival. Under the HSS contract, the enrolment of children in schools is one of four key settlement outcomes that must be met before a client can be exited from the HSS programme. As refugees, youth or children may have spent a substantial amount of time in refugee camps without access to schooling, they may be behind in their education.



## Youth services



Settlement Grants funds services specifically targeted at young humanitarian entrants. Youth organisations aim to increase the independence, knowledge, self-reliance and ability to navigate mainstream services for humanitarian entrants aged 12-30 years. These organisations provide casework to address problematic behaviours and health risks (such as sexual education, substance abuse, pregnancy) as well as truancy, legal and self-esteem issues.

Some youth organisations:

- link young people at risk with mentors to increase life skills
- facilitate social activities
- deliver information sessions on a range of issues from housing to more culturally sensitive issues
- refer clients to other support services for additional assistance
- provide a drop-in centre for clients to participate in informal recreational activities
- provide cultural awareness training to external organisations
- other community initiatives to support and develop the capabilities of newly arrived young people to actively engage and participate in the community.

## Useful websites

We have compiled a list of websites which may be useful. Peak bodies can provide a range of information on the delivery of services, including best practice initiatives. A suggested initial point of contact is the Executive Officer of the Settlement Council of Australia, [eo@scoa.org.au](mailto:eo@scoa.org.au).

### Peak Australian Bodies

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia [www.fecca.org.au](http://www.fecca.org.au)

Migration Council Australia <http://www.migrationcouncil.org.au>

Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network: <http://www.myau.org.au>

Refugee Council of Australia [www.refugeecouncil.org.au](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au)

Settlement Council of Australia [www.scoa.org.au](http://www.scoa.org.au)

### Australian Settlement Services

#### HSS Service providers

AMES <http://www.ames.net.au/>

Settlement Services International <http://www.ssi.org.au/>

Migrant Resource Centre <http://www.mrcsa.com.au/>

Access Community Services Ltd <http://www.accesscommunity.com.au/index.html>

Anglicare North Coast <http://www.anglicarenorthcoast.org.au/>

Melaleuca Refugee Centre <http://www.melaleuca.org.au/>

Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre  
<http://www.mmrcwa.org.au/>

Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services of the ACT Inc. <http://marss.org.au/>

Navitas English <http://navitasenglish.com/>

MDA <http://mdaltd.org.au/>

Communicare Family and Employment Services <http://www.communicare.org.au/>

Centacare Tasmania <http://centacaretas.org.au/>

Migrant Resource Centre (Northern Tasmania) Inc. <http://www.mrcntn.org.au/>

Centacare Cairns <http://www.centacarecairns.org/services/migrant-services/migrant-services.html>

Humanitarian Settlement Service information on the St Vincent de Paul Society website  
[http://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find\\_Help/NSW/Resettling\\_in\\_Australia/Humanitarian\\_Settlement\\_Services/](http://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find_Help/NSW/Resettling_in_Australia/Humanitarian_Settlement_Services/)

### **CCS Providers**

ACCESS [www.accesscommunity.com.au](http://www.accesscommunity.com.au)

AMES [www.ames.net.au](http://www.ames.net.au)

Anglicare North Coast [www.anglicarenorthcoast.org.au](http://www.anglicarenorthcoast.org.au)

ASeTTS [www.asetts.org.au](http://www.asetts.org.au)

Cabramatta Community Centre <http://cabracc.org.au/>

Centacare Catholic Family Services [www.centacare.org.au](http://www.centacare.org.au)

Centacare Tasmania <http://centacaretas.org.au/>

Companion House [www.companionhouse.org.au](http://www.companionhouse.org.au)

CommuniCARE WA <http://www.communicare.org.au/>

MDA (QLD) <https://mdaltd.org.au>

MRC northern Tasmania [www.mrcntrn.org.au](http://www.mrcntrn.org.au)

Centre for Multicultural Youth <http://cmymy.net.au/>

Diversitat promoting access and equity <http://www.diversitat.org.au/>

InTouch Multicultural Centre against family violence <http://www.intouch.asn.au/>

Migrant Information Centre (East Melbourne) <http://www.miceastmelb.com.au/>

Migrant Resource Centre, North West Region <http://mrcnorthwest.org.au/>

New Hope Foundation <http://www.newhope.asn.au/>

Spectrum Victoria <http://www.spectrumvic.org.au/>

Catholic Care <http://www.ccam.org.au/>

Primary Care Connect <http://www.primarycareconnect.com.au/>

CareConnect <http://www.careconnect.org.au/>

Max Solutions [www.maxsolutions.com.au](http://www.maxsolutions.com.au)

STTARS Supporting survivors of torture and trauma <http://www.sttars.org.au/>

Multicultural Youth SA Inc. <http://www.mysa.com.au/>

Baptist Care <http://www.baptistcaresa.org.au/>

Australian Refugee Association [www.australianrefugee.org](http://www.australianrefugee.org)

Metro Migrant Resource Centre <http://metromrc.org.au/>

Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre <http://lmrc.org.au/>

SydWest Multicultural Service <http://www.sydwestmsi.org.au/>

Macarthur diversity service initiative <http://www.mdsi.org.au/>

Centacare southwest NSW <http://www.centacarewagga.org.au/>

Northern Settlement Services <http://www.nsservices.com.au/>

### **Torture and Trauma service providers**

Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma <http://fasstt.org.au/>

Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors <http://www.asetts.org.au/>

Companion House <http://www.companionhouse.org.au/>

Foundation House <http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/>

Melaleuca Refugee Centre <http://melaleuca.org.au/>

Phoenix Centre <http://www.mrchobart.org.au/content/phoenix-centre>

Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma  
<http://www.qpastt.org.au/>

NSW Service for the Treatment of Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors  
<http://www.startts.org/>

STTARS Supporting survivors of torture and trauma <http://www.sttars.org.au/>

### Other useful websites

#### Beginning a life in Australia

Department of Social Services – Beginning life in Australia <http://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-services/beginning-a-life-in-australia>

Overview of Australia <http://australia.gov.au/>

#### Health

Medicare Services [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/medicare-services](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/medicare-services)

Immunisation [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

Nutrition [www.gofor2and5.com.au](http://www.gofor2and5.com.au)

Mental Health [www.fasstt.org.au](http://www.fasstt.org.au)

Smoking/Alcohol/Drug Use [www.quitnow.gov.au](http://www.quitnow.gov.au) and [www.drugs.health.gov.au](http://www.drugs.health.gov.au)

Managing Families <http://raisingchildren.net.au/>

#### Education

Education in Australia [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au)

Adult Migrant English Program <http://www.education.gov.au/amep>

Australian Apprenticeships [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au)

#### Employment /finding a job

Centrelink [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

Information for Job Seekers <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/themes/job-seekers>

Australian Workplace Information [www.australia.gov.au/topics/employment-and-workplace](http://www.australia.gov.au/topics/employment-and-workplace)

Australian Apprenticeships [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au)

Starting your own business [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au)

#### Money management

Australian Taxation Office [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)

Centrelink <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/centrelink>

Managing Money [www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au)

### **Housing**

Moving out of home for under 25s <https://www.moneysmart.gov.au/life-events-and-you/under-25s/moving-out-of-home>

Australian rental sites [www.realestate.com.au/rent](http://www.realestate.com.au/rent) and [www.domain.com.au/?mode=rent](http://www.domain.com.au/?mode=rent)

Good Neighbour Guide

[http://www.crs.org.au/html/documents/CRSBrochure\\_AGoodNeighbourGuideforStreetPartyinGintheSuburbs.pdf](http://www.crs.org.au/html/documents/CRSBrochure_AGoodNeighbourGuideforStreetPartyinGintheSuburbs.pdf)

### **Transport**

Road Safety and Licences [www.rta.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au)

Pedestrian Safety <http://www.kidsafensw.org/road-safety/>

### **Australian law**

Australian Federal Police [www.afp.gov.au](http://www.afp.gov.au)

Law and Legislation <http://australia.gov.au>

### **Youth sites**

Centre for Multicultural Youth <http://www.cmy.net.au/>

Multicultural Youth services [http://www.act.gov.au/browse/topics/community-and-family/multicultural\\_youth\\_services](http://www.act.gov.au/browse/topics/community-and-family/multicultural_youth_services)

Multicultural Youth SA Inc. <http://www.mysa.com.au/>

Multicultural Youth NT (MyNT) <http://www.mynt.org.au/>



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## Attachment A:

### Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) – National representation in action

The Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) is the national peak body representing agencies across Australia that assist migrants and people of refugee backgrounds to settle into their new life in Australia. SCOA operates as a network of members who provide settlement services. Our aim is to bring settlement service providers together at a national level in order to create cohesion amongst our members, and improve collaborative and strategic planning processes for the settlement sector.

SCOA has 80 member organisations who provide settlement services for migrants and refugees in every capital city and major regional town in Australia.

SCOA's Strategic Plan captures the key priorities of the organisation:

1. Ensure effective consultation and engagement with the settlement sector
2. Represent the settlement sector
3. Pursue an evidence base
4. Provide leadership
5. Improve governance

The settlement sector in Australia is involved in supporting over 190,000 migrants and 13,750 refugees settle in Australia each year. As a sector we have a workforce of approximately over 30,000 paid staff and over 9,000 unpaid volunteers. The settlement sector provides settlement programs covering a wide range of support activities including orientation, initial housing support, case management, English language education, employment support, health services assistance, specialised support for the young and those unaccompanied by adults, and early intervention for a diverse range of issues including torture and trauma counselling.

#### Key activities & services of SCOA:

SCOA undertakes a range of activities to connect with and support our members in the settlement sector. Much of SCOA's work is done via email and teleconference due to geographic distances between our national membership.

**Consultations & forums:** We hold regular consultations on settlement topics such as housing, employment, health and education. Discussions may take place in person or via teleconference. SCOA also hosts a series of regular forums:

- Policy Practice Forum: a regular teleconference which brings together settlement sector practitioners and academics to discuss emerging policy research and policy research issues.
- Humanitarian Settlement Service Providers forum: a regular teleconference specifically focussed on providers funded under the government refugee resettlement program

- CEO Think tank: A series of discussions on particular focus topics of relevance to CEOs working for our member agencies, covering issues such as human resources, media, international refugee issues and the federal government's budget
- Settlement Policy Network: co-hosted with the Refugee Council, the Settlement Policy Network is a national teleconference focussing on specific policy issues relating to resettlement which brings together a wide range of people working in refugee resettlement to share information and promote discussion on settlement issues.
- National member consultations: each year SCOA hosts face to face consultations in each capital city for members and stakeholders. National consultations are an opportunity to strengthen engagement with members and discuss settlement issues from a regional or state based perspective. These consultations inform SCOA's engagement and representation in the coming year.

**Representation:** SCOA maintains relationships with a wide range of government & non-government agencies and networks at local, state and federal levels. Regular meetings with key government departments facilitate representation of settlement sector policy perspectives and issues, enabling the settlement sector to have a unified voice with government. Meetings occur with federal government departments responsible for settlement programs and associated portfolio areas such as employment, housing etc. Meetings also take place at a state level with agencies responsible for supporting multiculturalism and social inclusion.

**Settlement issues:** The issues SCOA addresses are diverse, covering the main areas and services which recently arrived migrants and refugees need most. These include services and programs in areas such as:

- Employment
- Housing
- Health
- Education
- English language

SCOA has the scope to react flexibly to policy issues and situations which arise, based on our member's requests or in response to events.

SCOA has prepared policy discussion papers to support dialogue within the sector and government on specific policy issues, including:

- Housing
- Sport
- Employment
- Family and domestic violence

**National Conferences:** SCOA hosts national conferences every 2-3 years which bring together settlement sector workers, bureaucrats and academics. The national conferences have been a productive forum for the sector, helping to share information on best practice and consolidate policy priorities.

**National Standards project:** SCOA has been leading the settlement sector in a series of discussions and workshops on benchmarks identifying best practice in settlement service delivery. Supporting the settlement sector to self-define

benchmarks of successful settlement beyond particular grants or programs has been beneficial, providing a more holistic view of settlement.

**Training:** SCOA periodically co-hosts training for the sector, improving the capacity of the settlement sector in key areas, for example recently SCOA provided members with training in “Navigating Government”.

**Website:** The SCOA website contains a great deal of information relating to settlement including research papers, reports and discussion papers. Information and documents are sourced from SCOA members and the settlement sector. Papers and documents are searchable providing an on-line resource for the settlement sector.

For more information on SCOA please check out our website: [www.scoa.org.au](http://www.scoa.org.au) or email Sky de Jersey, the Executive Officer at [eo@scoa.org.au](mailto:eo@scoa.org.au)