



The Hills Holroyd Parramatta **MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE**



ANNUAL REPORT
2010



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Chairperson's Report

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Barramattagal clan of the Darug people of the Eora Nation on whose land we are meeting today and pay my respect to their elders both past and present and acknowledge any Aboriginal people who are here today.

I would like to welcome you to the Fourteenth Annual General Meeting of the Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre.

The MRC continues to bring multicultural communities together and endeavours to connect and link them to work so that the local communities will be strengthened and will grow. We are linking to other providers and constantly looking for better and more efficient ways to deliver our services and ensure that recipients can access all that they need in the easiest way possible. We also have a voice in decrying those actions which make the settlement process difficult and must stand up for and support those who face extreme hardship because of the words and actions of others.

It therefore gives me very great pleasure to present the Chairperson's report for the year 2010, my third year as Chair. It has been an exciting year, one in which we have achieved extraordinary results, built on our previous work, expanded and diversified our services and programs. This report highlights major areas of our work and our vision for the future.

I am sure my colleagues will agree with me when I say what a rewarding experience it has been for us as management to see the MRC grow from strength to strength. It has been a particularly peaceful period of growth with no glitches in management or issues with staff. We have been recognized as a peak body with the ability to deliver efficient and effective services. We are stable, strong and our activities reflect the settlement needs of our communities, which we have tried to address through the provision of information and referral, community capacity building and community development programs. Statistics reveal that in Parramatta alone there has been a significant increase in population in the last year. Given our resources we have tried our best to address emerging needs in the three LGA's and catchments in which we work.

I would just like to highlight for you, some of the most notable items of our service:

- Provision of settlement information to migrants and refugees. The Centre continues to conduct English classes, tax advice, legal advice, migration advice, and provide employment assistance to newly arrived migrants.
- Over twenty four consultations were held during the year as part of the Family Violence Shows research.
- The Centre continued to facilitate access to services, resource small ethnic communities and organisations, and identify capacity building initiatives approaches for emerging communities.
- The centre conducted five trainings, conducted six courses, held two forums, and celebrated Harmony and Refugee week in partnership with key organisations.
- We have extended our services to community groups and organisations over the weekend, 240 occasions of service have been registered for the use of our conference facility alone.
- Each day, well informed, experienced staff provided a bi-lingual service to clients on settlement related issues.
- We have been recognised as a peak body providing settlement assistance in the three local government areas.
- In the last year we successfully liaised with over twenty-five service providers on various community development program or activities.



**Nola Randall-Mohk,
Chairperson
at the launch
of Cultural
Footprints
booklet**

We have developed an innovative means of servicing our community and increasing their capacity to participate in the wider community through the following:

1. Community Leadership Programs (Anglicare partnership)
2. Mentoring Programs – Communities Interconnect
3. Soccer is Life- Living in Harmony
4. World Day for Dialogue and Diversity
5. Assist one- UWS partnership
6. Refugee week celebrations
7. Research on "Family Violence"

The frontline of our service delivery is the face to face contact we provide for people from various cultural backgrounds assisting them in their settlement.

The centre secured the services of two migration agents, providing free migration advice on a weekly basis.

We have ensured all funding requirements are met and reporting has been accurate.

Funding for the following has been received in the last financial year: Family Violence Action Research Project - WSAAS, Parramatta East School - Human Services, Strategic Planning Holroyd –Guilford Leagues Club (CDSE), Community Relations Commission, The Hills Shire Council, Holroyd City Council, Parramatta City Council, the NSW Rural Fire Service and SHELL Refining Australia.

I take this opportunity to thank Maya Salgado from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Barbie Bates, Peter Prants, and Ozen Karanlik, from Department of Community Services, for their support to the centre.

I acknowledge other funding bodies such as Community Services, Community Builders, the Hills, Holroyd and Parramatta Councils, Community Relations Commission.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank a number of people who have made things run so smoothly for us all. I would like to thank all my management colleagues for a very united year. I would like to thank all of the staff and volunteers who have worked extremely hard over the last year and especially thank Melissa Monteiro who so ably coordinates the centre on our behalf. Thank you, Melissa, for your constant smile and willingness to make things work.

United, we are able to do so much more. We are all committed to delivering our organisation's vision, to servicing our community and to making a difference in people's lives.

**Nola Randall-Mohk
Chairperson**

Manager's Report

I am delighted to present the Centre report for 2009-10. I would like to begin my report by acknowledging every staff member that has contributed to the activities of the Centre.

Each member has played an important role in providing assistance to our clients and meeting settlement related needs.

A close relationship has been maintained with funding bodies: DIAC and Human Services. We have delivered outcomes for funded programs as required by funding agreements.

We have retained all major funding in the last year. New funding was secured in the last year for the Family Violence Action Research Project - WSAAS, Parramatta East School - Human Services, Strategic Planning Holroyd -Guilford Leagues Club (CDSE), Community Relations Commission, The Hills Shire Council, Holroyd City Council, Parramatta City Council, the NSW Rural Fire Service and SHELL Refining Australia.

Communities Interconnect is a project funded by WSAAS which brought together a total of 12 mentors and 10 mentees. The program included an orientation to the Australian Way of Life, ongoing mentoring and a range of community development activities.

Three social groups in the Hills Shire (Arabic speaking, Indian sub-continent and Chinese) were supported in the last year. Over 40 men and women attended regular group activities held each month.

The **FNSW (Families New South Wales)** project delivered three Positive Parenting Program (PPP) programs, and facilitated three supported play groups in Parramatta East (25 families) and Parramatta West (35 families) schools. A premature baby's mothers group was conducted at the Community Health Centre in Parramatta, A Grandparents as Carers group was well attended in Merrylands. The Sudanese play group had over 35 children. The Afghan mothers group was successfully run in Merrylands.

A total number of 165 children and 150 mothers participated in the supported play groups.

Funded by WSAAS, **Family Violence Shows** was a participatory action research project that explored the intersection between family violence and settlement. Participating communities included the Afghan, Sierra Leone and Sri Lankan communities. This report was launched at the Holroyd Centre in July.



Twelve **African Sessional Workers** employed by the MRC assisted Community Services Case workers with cultural information and language assistance in case planning /management for African Families. This is a state wide project, and a total number of 136 calls out were made to Community Service Centres (CSC's).

Networking in the Local Government Areas and beyond is another important activity staff engaged in. Networking has provided us with many opportunities to further assist clients and vital links to government, non-government agencies and local community organizations have been established.

The centre continued to provide a range of settlement services to refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants and their families. The Granville TAFE English classes have helped over 400 students with English conversation. Pro Bono Migration advice was provided to over 100 clients and this service continues to draw large number of families seeking migration advice every week.

The **Settlement Grants Programs** funded by DIAC have organised information sessions for clients and workers on various issues such as: health, housing, employment and Welfare Reforms (Australians Working Together). A series of legal workshops were held in partnership with Macquarie Legal Centre on family law, employment law, motor vehicle accidents and insurance.

This program included 11 SGP staff from various backgrounds providing settlement information, orientation to Australia and integration services for newly arrived migrants and refugees



*Julie Owens
and Chris Evans,
Minister for
Immigration and
Citizenship
visiting the MRC*

Successful examples of our partnerships and networking include the following:

Assist One Mentoring Program – A total number of 240 job seekers were assisted by the Assist One program, a partnership with the UWS. This program was awarded the UWS Community Partnership Award for 2009

Refugee Week Celebrations: Soccer is Life: 200 students from Arthur Phillip School in Parramatta attended a Soccer coaching /referring program to celebrate Refugee Week.

A number of Service Providers attended Refugee Week Forum in the Hills to raise awareness of refugee communities and their needs.

Muslim and African Youth and Police Project (MaAP) This project fostered better relationships between Muslim and African youth in the Granville area. A total number of 450 young people attended ten life skills, sports and information sessions. This program was delivered in partnership with Granville Multicultural Community Centre (GMCC), Granville Youth and Community Recreational Centre, MCLO's and YLO's of the Parramatta, Rosehill and Merrylands police local area commands.

World Day for Cultural Dialogue and Development was held in the Hills Shire to showcase MRC services and initiate discussion on issues of service provision.

60 Service providers attended the **Journeys of Iraqi Refugees** Forum held to build a better understanding of the community in Sydney.

Listen, Learn & Grow – Women learning new skills was held over twelve weeks in partnership with Granville TAFE. 16 Afghan women attended. The women increased their capacity to pursue further education and employment pathways.

27 community leaders for the African and other communities attended the **Leadership Skills Training** held in partnership with Anglicare and Granville TAFE outreach.

Communities Pride Peer Support program to empower young people to increase confidence and self reliance. 10 young people participated in this program over six months. An educational DVD was produced which is now used widely as a teaching resource. This was a partnership with UTS.

African Learning Circle: Quarterly meetings were held with over 40 community leaders and members of the community attending the African Learning Circle. Child protection, wellbeing of children and young people were some issues discussed at the Circle. This is a partnership with Community Services and supported by other community agencies.

Strength to Strength is a family relationships program for humanitarian entrant families. This is a partnership with Relationships Australia. The program delivered 26 occasions of family counselling about parenting and changing roles in the family. Two support groups were run in the Blacktown and Auburn areas. The program focussed on delivering services to the Sudanese, Iraqi and Afghan communities.

The Darfur Community Support group is run in partnership with the Josephite community Service in Blacktown.

I end with a note of thanks to the Board of Management for their direction, the Chair, Executive Committee, Team Coordinators /Supervisors, Staff, funding bodies and local councils and community organisations that we have worked with in the last year.

Melissa Monteiro
Manager



Melissa Monteiro with Rosemary Kariuki - MECLO, Holroyd Local Area Command



Melissa Monteiro receiving NSW Fire Services Award from David Weir



Melissa Monteiro, Manager with African community leaders



Japanese delegation on a visit with representatives from Holroyd City Council

Admin and Financial Report

We are pleased to report that The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC continues to maintain a positive financial position.

The ability of our organisation to provide quality core services that seek to meet the diverse needs of the community would not be possible without continuing support from our key funding bodies: The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and The Department of Community Services (through FNSW and AAS) and FaHCSIA.

We also acknowledge the important contribution of: the Community Relations Commission, Guildford Leagues Club (CDSE), The Hills Shire Council, Holroyd City Council, Parramatta City Council, the NSW Rural Fire Service and SHELL Refining Australia who enable The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC to provide specific services in response to emerging community needs.

The MRC is proactive in ensuring funding is effectively spent with the Board of Management, the Manager and staff working together to ensure every dollar has maximum return. Additional funds are raised through Conference/ office room hire. This assists with the costs of maintaining the facility and also ensures the profile of our MRC remains high in the community.

In relation to the financials please note:

- The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC is in a financially sound position which is supported by the Audit Report.
- The organization has equity of \$404 236 with cash reserves of \$787 876 which are reflected in the Balance Sheet.
- DIAC continues to be our primary funding source with over \$930 000 received in this financial year. These funds have supported 10 key Settlement Grants Projects -SGP projects.
- Community Services funds over \$ 516,000 through FNSW for the Perinatal, ParraWest and Early Intervention Projects. In addition the Community Services, the AAS funding has enabled projects such as: the African Sessional Project, Hills Communities Interconnect, African

Employment and the Family Violence Action Research Project.

- We continue to work in partnership with Relationships Australia in the Strength to Strength Project with over \$150 000 being received.
- The other grants from Guilford Leagues Club (CDSE), Community Relations Commission, The Hills Shire Council, Holroyd City Council, Parramatta City Council, the NSW Rural Fire Service and SHELL Refining Australia have allowed the MRC to run specialised projects such as: Cultural Footprints, Emergency Expo, First Aid, Hills Cultural Festival, School Survival Skills and Strategic Planning.
- With regard to expenditure, wages and the cost of the facility continue to be our largest expenses but they also represent our greatest assets. The accessibility of the facility and the commitment of the staff are key factors in the quality of service delivery MRC offers the community.

I would like to thank Zaga Nagy, our Treasurer, Nola Randall-Mohk, Chairperson and Melissa Monteiro, Manager for their ongoing support, mentoring and guidance.

A big thank you to Linda Marsonet, our bookkeeper and other staff who have provided assistance throughout the year especially Aurelia, Ifrah and Wadiha.

Dijana Mackic
Admin and Finance Coordinator

Board of Management

Nola Randall-Mohk Chairperson
Safar Sarmed Deputy Chairperson
Zaga Nagy Treasurer
Mark Lack Secretary
Terrie Gardner Staff Liaison Officer

Andrew Ang TAFE NSW
Mehdi Arbabzadeh Individual
Neil El-Kadomi Parramatta Islamic Cultural Centre
Jason Guest Bigger Picture Foundation
Masudul Haque Bangladesh Association of NSW Inc.
Albert Jubian Council of Australian Palestinian
Susana Lolohea Fiji Australia Community Development Inc.
Michael Maghiaru Australian Romanian Association
Renu Narchal University of Western Sydney
Michael Perry Individual

Banu Rangganadhan Program Development Officer
The Hills Shire Council, ex-officio

John McInerney Acting Service Manager Community Capacity Building
Parramatta City Council, ex- officio



Board of Management



Board of Management and Staff



Board of Management Meeting

Staff

Staff:

Melissa Monteiro	Manager
Dijana Mackic	Admin and Finance Coordinator
Ifrah Mohamed	Customer Service Officer
Wadiha Mouawad	Office Assistant

DIAC - SGP TEAM:

Aurelia Rahman	Community Capacity Building Coordinator
Thomas Ater	African SGP Youth Worker
Kassim Abood	Iraqi SGP Worker
Maeve Brown (until Feb)	Community Development Officer-African communities
Emmanuel Kondok (since Feb)	Community Development Officer-African communities
Priscella Engall	Community Settlement & Development Officer
Saw Aung Htut	Karen SGP Worker
Getee Karim	Afghan SGP Worker
Caroline Mueni Muisyo	African Caseworker
Elizabeth Philipsz	Burmese SGP Worker
Shantha Viswantahan	Indian Sub-continent SGP worker
Izeta Zecevic	Humanitarian SGP Worker

Community Services (formerly DoCS)-EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM:

Zulekha Nazir Early Intervention & Perinatal Coordinator
Norma Boules Family CALD Worker
Li Hua Chu Early Intervention Worker
Biljana Kulic Early Intervention Worker

Community Services (formerly DoCS)- Family Violence Action Research project:

Amrit Versha	Principal Researcher
Rugmini Venkatraman	Assistant Researcher
Nasiba Akram	Group Educator
Ebadullah Amid	Group Educator
Hafizullah Angury	Group Educator
Jeneba Conteh	Group Educator
Getee Karim	Group Educator
Alfred Sankoh	Group Educator
Shantha Viswanthan	Group Educator

Community Services (formerly DoCS) AFRICAN SESSIONAL PILOT PROJECT:

Solomon Freeman	African Sessional Pilot Coordinator
Achom Edward Apouro-Dimo	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Anthony Bee-Conteh	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Monica Biel	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Ayen Atem Chol	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Anthony Deng	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Naimo Abdullahi	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Amou Job	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Gloria Marcella Johnson	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Liliane Lukoki-N'Gengu	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Angelina Makeny	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Chibalonza Malula	African Sessional Pilot Worker
Jean Boscoe Muhiziwintore	African Sessional Pilot Worker

Hills outreach office:

Kamalini Fernando	Hills-Interconnect Project Coordinator
Lulitta Li	Hills Multicultural Volunteer worker
Shirok Shaaban	Support Community Worker
Anuradha Tierney	Support Community Worker

RAPS Team:

Isho Georges	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker
Diing Bul	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker
Nasren Nasrat	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker
George Okwera	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker
Biljana Kulic	Group worker
Fayaz Wazin	Group worker

African Learning Circle:

Martha Anne Nyamu	African Learning Circle Facilitator.
David Pasipanodya	African Learning Circle Facilitator

Linda Marsonet	Bookkeeper
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*Solomon, Caroline and Liliane**Maeve and Caroline*



Li and Kassim



End of Year party Management and Staff

Elizabeth and Victor



"Generating leadership" training for staff, March 2010



*Staff
Development
Day*



*Warren
Schweitzer
(trainer) and
staff*



Funding Bodies, Networks and Partnerships

The Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre would like to thank the following organisations and individuals for their support this financial year:

Funding Bodies:

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)
Department of Human Services - Community Services
Area Assistance Scheme (administered by Community Services)
Parramatta City Council
Holroyd City Council
Guildford Leagues Club

Supporting Agencies and Partnerships:

- Holroyd CALD Consultative Committee
- NSW Police
- Parramatta Health Multicultural Access Committee
- Harris Park Community Centre
- Community Health Services (Hills, Merrylands, Parramatta)
- STARTTS
- Holroyd City Council
- Parramatta City Council
- Rouse Hill Community Centre
- The Hills Shire Council
- The Hills Community Centre
- NSW Refugee Health Service
- Anglicare
- Rouse Hill Families Connect
- Centrelink
- Western Sydney Area Health Service
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Office of Fair Trading
- Department of Human Services - Community Services
- Granville TAFE Outreach
- NSW Ombudsman
- Granville Multicultural Community Centre (GMCC)
- Immigrant Women's Speakout Association
- Local Area Commands: Merrylands, Parramatta, Rosehill
- University of Sydney

- Cumberland Women's Health Services
- University of New South Wales
- Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
- Department of Housing
- University of Western Sydney
- NSW Attorney General's Department
- Mile End Community Church
- Holroyd Parramatta Multicultural Network (HPMN)
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Hills Community Aid and Information Service
- Maronite Catholic Society
- Baptist Community Services
- Hills Youth Support Service
- Karabi Community Development Services
- Hillsong Youth Services
- Hewitt House Neighbourhood Centre
- St Michael's Family Centre
- Glenhaven Community Centre
- KU Children's Services
- GROW Employment Council
- AMES Employment
- Australian College for Languages (ACL)
- Family Court of Australia
- Gandhi Outreach Programs
- El Bethel Crusades
- The Smith Family
- Auburn Diversity Services
- Syd-West Multicultural Services
- Metro MRC
- Australian Egyptian Cultural Forum
- Legal Aid NSW
- Macquarie Legal Centre
- Westmead Hospital
- Relationships Australia
- Parramatta RSL Club
- Parramatta Leagues Club
- Dinka Literacy Association
- Community Relations Commission for NSW
- Ethnic Communities Council (ECC)
- Technocrats Associations of Australia Inc
- SEVA Inc
- Australian Hindi Indian Association
- The Sikh Council of Australia
- Lions Club of Parramatta
- Australian Ethiopian Association
- Lakemba Somali Cultural Centre
- Iranian Community Organisation
- Bor Community Organisation
- Croatian Australian Community Council
- African Communities Council
- Madi Ethnic Community Association
- Darfur Association
- Congolese Association of NSW
- Duk Community Organisation
- Sudanese Association of the Lost Boys
- Anuak Australian Community NSW
- Equatorial Community and Welfare Association
- Awiel Community Organisation
- Federation of African Communities Council
- Luo Community Association
- Southern Sudanese and Other Marginalised Areas
- Igbo Association of NSW
- Upper Nile Regional Youth Association
- African Women Australia
- Nigerian Association of NSW
- Edo Association of NSW
- Odua Association of NSW
- Abieyi Community Organisation
- The Vedanta Centre
- Association of Liberian Communities
- African Women's Group
- Ghan Lighthouse Institute
- Afghan Australia Youth Network of NSW
- Friends of Sierra Leone
- Myriad Consultants
- Congolese Association of NSW
- Zimbabwean Community Association

Outreach Organisations

- Affordable Community Housing
- Australian National Committee on Refugee Women- ANCORW
- Australian Chinese Association
- Australian Korean Welfare Association
- Chinese Migrant Welfare Association
- Darfur Australia Network
- Smith Family
- Special Children Services Centre



Centrelink Information Session for the Chinese community organised by ACCA



Volunteers

English Classes:

Nancy Shearer
Ted Wiswaasam

Migration advice:

Amanda Kirkpatrick

Tax help:

Michael Perry

Reception /admin volunteers:

Ahmed Omar Mowafaq
Elizabeth Davis
Gurpreet Kaur Rainu
Isaac Emmanuel Siduna
Jelykater Tunkara
Jihye Park
Kamaljit Bahtia

Kannika Shetty
Krishna Tiwari
Megha Bhavasas
Michael Lee
Padmaja Machiraju
Prasanna Sakthisekaran
Rex Taylor

Burmese/Karen SGP Project:

Volunteers:

Monica Tun
Hal Wut Hmon

Early Intervention Project:

Volunteers:

Alison Li
Jimillah Samadi
Melinda Zhang

Student Placement:

Jamillah Samadi

Generalist SGP Project:

University of Western Sydney student placements - Assist One Project:

Amy Purser
Jerry Ketsamone Keomalarong
Joshua Panton
Lisa Powys
Maryanne Alexander
Melissa Garcia
Nancy Ibrahim
Olivia Thai

Omer Er
Ozan Bahciuzn
Rouba Merhi
Sofia Koutsioukis
Stephanie Cipolla
Toula Koolbanis
Yousra Dawidar

University of Western Sydney student placements - Cultural Footprints Project:

Lauren Chapman

Granville TAFE student placement:

Alia Massudi

Indian Sub-continent SGP project:

Volunteer:

Krishna Tiwary

Iraqi SGP:

Volunteers:

Boushra Aldaraji
Shailan Meer

Hills Inter-connect Project:

Volunteers:

Ann Coupland
Bev Mac William
Bev Pearson
Judy Cioccarelli
Lynn White
Tricia Lin

Humanitarian Women SGP Project:

Volunteers:

Agnes Jusu
Haregu Tesfai
Yuki Horinka

Settlement Grants Program Report

Team Coordinator: Aurelia Rahman

SGP staff: Caroline Mueni Muisyo, Elizabeth Philipsz, Emmanuel Kondok, Getee Karim, Izeta Zecevic, Kassim Abood, Maeve Brown, Priscella Engall, Saw Aung Htut, Shantha Viswanathan and Thomas Ater

The Settlement Grants Program (SGP) funds services which help newly arrived migrants, refugees and humanitarian entrants become self reliant and participate equitably in the Australian society as soon as possible after arrival. The provision of services is done under three service types: orientation to Australia, community development and integration.

During the past year, the SGP Team have worked together on significant community projects, addressing issues of access and equity and integration of the newer communities in the wider fabric of the Australian society.

With the combined efforts of the SGP team, increased awareness of issues affecting refugee and migrant communities has been created and relevant service providers became aware of the issues raised. The SGP team actively assisted service providers work on strategies to address the issues identified.

Through the casework system, the SGP team has addressed the needs of **2,564 clients**, made over **5,000 referrals** to relevant and appropriate services and **792 group sessions**. Over **8,000** newly and recently arrived migrants participated in support groups and other activities organised by SGP project workers.

Main issues identified and addressed by the SGP team through casework and group activities during the year included: English language proficiency, lack of affordable and appropriate housing, gaps in education, barriers to employment, recognition of overseas qualifications, Australian work experience, legal issues, safety and violence prevention, budgeting and financial assistance, understanding Australian culture and systems, family relationships, inter-generational conflict, isolation, accessing mainstream services and activities as well as support with community development and sourcing of funding for projects.

The capacity building project developed mechanisms to ensure the ongoing involvement of target communities in issues affecting them, assisted the community to conduct discussions and consultations on topics of relevance to them and to implement projects that assist in addressing their needs.

The MRC's SGP team works with mainstream, community, government and private agencies to increase their knowledge and understanding of the experiences of people from a refugee and migrant background. This is done by educating and raising awareness about the diversity of the community and how to provide better access to services for people from CALD backgrounds.

MRC's SGP projects are based on building community leadership, participation, integration and shared community vision.

The SGP team works in partnerships with service providers in the catchment area of the MRC to provide best practice approaches towards assisting refugee and migrant settlement groups with strategies for furthering their acceptance and participation in the local communities. SGP team workers participate in key regional multicultural networks, settlement coordinating committees and service planning committees including the provision of training and advice to regional service providers.

Following are highlights of the projects and initiatives that the SGP team was involved in the past year:

Facilitating Leadership and Community Engagement

Carnivale and Harmony Day 2010 - Partnership with Holroyd City Council, Merrylands Community Health and Police. The aim was to celebrate cultural diversity and inform the wider community about migrant and refugee communities through a Talking Tent feature. Speakers from various communities (Afghani, Congolese, Sierra Leone, Bosnian and Indian) spoke about their migration and settlement experiences. More than 2000 people participated at this Carnivale/Harmony Day celebration held on the 21st of March 2010 at the Holroyd Gardens.



Harmony Day in Holroyd 2010 - Aurelia Rahman and Maya Salgado



Granville TAFE Students at the Talking Tent 2010 in Holroyd

During the past financial year, the MRC continued to convene the **Holroyd Parramatta Multicultural Network** – a network of service providers in the area with a view to exchange information and work on joint projects and collaborative partnerships.

Assisted community groups to **build their capacity to advocate** on behalf of their members and provided training to service providers on working with people from African backgrounds and the issues for refugees and humanitarian entrants.

Mentoring Programs



Terrie Gardner and Priscella Engall receiving UWS Award for Assist One Project



National SIFE Conference with Assist One Program

Assist: One Employment Mentoring Program - Partnership with University of Western Sydney-Psychology Department and School of Education. The project assists with job seeking and collects research data on Employment Barriers affecting newly arrived refugees. Overall 121 days of service delivery was achieved. The MRC was invited to compete at the National SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) Conference to award Best Practice Partnerships between universities /community/business and it won the UWS Community Partnership Award for 2009.



Priscella Engall at the Kudual DVD launch - Communities Pride Mentor Group Project with UTS

Communities Pride Peer Support Group (CPG) (19-26yrs of age) Mission Statement - Build membership into educated, empowered and self reliant young people. **Kudual - In My Shoes Project**. Partnership with UTS. The aim was to address issues of identity crisis and confidence of young people. CPG were interviewed about cultural differences growing up in Australia compared to Sudan. The participants in the project were given a camera to take photos that expressed how they felt about their life and documenting events in their daily life. The group was then filmed and interviewed around places of importance- church, home, cultural events. This became the educational DVD – **Kudual** which is now used regularly at cross cultural training sessions for service providers. CPG worked on a new theatre project My Name Is Sud which was performed at Blacktown Arts Centre. My Name is Sud marks the third theatre engagement project the group has been involved with (following on from Shine and Walking in my Shoes). The group members participated in **Football for Hope** project –with Refugee Youth Soccer Development Program (Football United) (UNSW) School of Public Health and Community Medicine and played soccer in South Africa during the World Cup 2010.

Mentoring support provided to community volunteers and student placements from Granville TAFE continued through the year.

Employment mentoring program conducted for Arabic speaking and Iraqi individuals to explain the Australian workplace culture, how to construct a resume, addressing selection criteria and how to present at a job interview.

The **African Employment Pathways Project** benefitted people from newly arrived African communities by providing opportunities for them to become better equipped with skills in financial management and budgeting, how to find a job, managing events and applying for funding. A partnership was entered into with Australian African Women (former AWAU) to run employment workshops and identify the skills that African women have and pathways towards employment, small business and social enterprise. The project had a great echo among target communities and has addressed issues that are at the core of enabling their successful settlement.

Muslim and African Youth and Police project (MaAP) has continued during the past year with assistance from GMCC, GYCRC and police MCLOs and YLO's from Granville LAC, Merrylands and Parramatta. The project holds monthly meetings with young people and police representatives where sports are played, life skills and information shared in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The aim is to build better relationships between the Muslim and African youth in the Granville area and service providers and the police.

Karen School Partnership with Woodville Community Services. Two homework support classes run weekly for Karen students.



Karen School Homework Support Program

Community Soccer Coaching program. Partnership with the Department of Sports and Recreation. 60 children (including Afghan, Somali, Ethiopian, Sudanese, Sierra Leone, Lebanese, Chinese, Korean, Iraqi) participated and community coaches later completed the Coaching Accreditation course.

Afghan Youth League. The project has been working with the **National Launchpad Grant with The Foundation for Young Australians** from Melbourne in partnership with the Ghan Lighthouse Institute. A **GAP Model (Ghan Assistance Program)** was developed – a mentoring program with educational assistance as entry level point of access with community, followed by settlement assistance for parents. Weekly classes are conducted with students in Years 7-9, providing homework assistance, life skills & peer support. Following the pilot program, the classes have now expanded into two weekly groups. The group has successfully delivered 72 group sessions for young Afghans. During the past year, a peer support camp was run in Kiama.



Afghan Girls Support Group

Training*Andrew Ang TAFE at the Leadership Skills Training 2009**Leadership Training Oct 2009*

Leadership Skills training - a three day training for community minded people to assist with developing their skills in the area of effective communication, conflict resolution, advocacy and networking. Between 27 and 32 interested community members participated. Partnership with Anglicare and Granville TAFE Outreach.

Leadership Skills Training – a session was run with participants sourced from Southern Sudanese community organizations.

*"Get that Grant"*

How to Get that Grant training session in partnership with Anglicare to assist small community organisations with project planning in direct response to identified needs, formulating work plans and sourcing funding. 24 people participated.

Understanding Budgeting and Financial Accountability training session in partnership with Anglicare for small community organisations in order to increase their understanding of financial accountability and governance.

Leadership and Volunteer Training Program. The objectives of the training were to equip participants with knowledge and understanding of what it means to be a volunteer, settlement services, needs and issues of communities, how to work with individuals and how to make effective referrals to relevant services. Training also provided for newly employed SGP workers at DIAC.

Understanding how funding works and how to write a successful funding application for community leaders from the Indian Sub-continent.

Community Education Programs

Energy Bill Busting Project- Partnership with The Department of Environment and Climate Change & SEWS (Sustainable Energy and Water Services). Household Refit Assessors visited community homes and provided energy saving advice and installed energy efficient appliances. Communities members saw reduction in their energy bills and were able to pursue employment pathways, as some members were trained as bilingual assessors. Information sessions were held with Karen, Indian, Korean, Sudanese, Liberian, Bhutanese, Afghan communities. 158 families participated in this project.



Sustainable Energy Information Session



"Soccer is Life" Program with Arthur Phillip High School

SOCCER IS LIFE Program: Refugee Week event. Partnership with Arthur Phillip High School, Western Sydney Regional Refugee Student Support Office, Communities NSW, Department of Sport and Recreation, Granville Multicultural Community Centre, Granville Referees Football Association, Rotary Australia, Young Christian Workers, Youth Connections (MTC Work Solutions), Parramatta City Council and a number of community based soccer clubs, with coaches & players sourced from humanitarian entrant target groups, including Sudanese (Rumbek United FC), Karen, Afghan and Iraqi and Registered Soccer Clubs such as the Granville Waratahs. To coincide with the World Cup an education pathways program was organized with over 200 Refugee Transition Unit & Yr 7 students participating in a coaching/refereeing program and soccer match. On the day students and community clubs were able to link up with paid employment with registered clubs.

Pathways to Primary Industry Project- Partnership with Penrith Centrelink and Campbelltown TAFE. Emerging communities including Karen, Southern Sudanese and Liberian enrolled for an entry level certificate course in farming/ English/ computing. 20 students completed course and 8 students gained employment.

Cultural Footprints Book. Funded by Parramatta City Council. Steering Committee: ACL and Holroyd City Council. This educational publication looks at the resilience of those refugees who have finalized their settlement journeys and are proving key role models for those more newly arrived members. As identified by a number of Local Council Social Plans, a key strategy identified to assist refugees is to promote more HEROES – local achievers - and provide a platform to speak positively to those people who have arrived and completed successful integration and can now create pathways for others to follow and build bridges in the “social coalition” between community / government/ business.



Pathway to Farming Course at Campbelltown TAFE



Nola Randall-Mohk and Priscilla Engall at the Cultural Footprints Launch



Chris Bowen, Minister to Human Services and Karen Farmers at Down nursery

Karen Employment Pathways Program – Partnership with Kincare and National College Australia. Training program (Cert IV in Home Care) for 19 Karen students was run by NCA. The program included 5 wks classes and 13 weeks mentoring assistance. As a result of this course, 5 students have moved into traineeships with Kincare.

School Survival Skills program has been run in partnership with Granville TAFE Outreach support, GMCC and Holroyd Youth Services. The program focused on working with young people to improve their study skills, English literacy and life skills in order to improve results at school and catch up with their Australian born class mates. The program was initiated based on the needs identified for additional support for young people who have difficulties in understanding English and homework assignments. This program has been made possible thanks to a community development grant from Holroyd City Council.

Sports, drop in and life skills programs have continued to be run at Granville Youth and Community Recreational Centre providing the African youth worker with opportunities to assist young people access information and receive referrals for other support agencies.

The **African Learning Circle** project continued to be held during the past year. This is a partnership between the MRC, Community Services and other community service providers in Western Sydney. The project provides an opportunity for people from African communities, Community Services and other service providers to meet and discuss issues relating to child protection and the well being of children, young people, their families and communities. The Circle meets quarterly and the topics discussed included improving communication and relationships between young people and their parents, substance abuse (drugs and alcohol) and its consequences and bridging the inter-generational gap between parents and their children. A partnership was forged with Relationships Australia and Lyndal Power held very interactive workshops on effective communication between parents and their young people. The 2009-2010 meetings have been co-facilitated by two community facilitators: Martha Nyamu and David Pasipanodya.



African Learning Circle Meeting on Child Protection



Parenting program – Parramatta High School



Parenting workshop – Parramatta High School

Parenting program in Partnership with Relationships Australia, Parramatta High School and Parramatta West Public School - Afghan parents were engaged at a number of local primary and high schools to introduce them to MRC services and SPARK (homework mentoring) program. Clients were referred to a number of vocational activities including English classes, computer classes and sporting activities throughout the year. This helped them to increase their understanding of the Australian schooling and educational system, effective parenting strategies, truancy and its consequences, and also how to create a healthy and harmonious environment for children at home.

Reducing Rates of Informal Voting among CALD communities - community workers information session. Partnership with Cultural Perspectives and the Australian Electoral Commission. Bilingual workers trained up to deliver How To Vote workshops to a wide variety of communities identified from the last election as having above average rates of informal voting patterns.

Community education program on various health topics for the Korean community - a partnership program with the Australian Korean Welfare Association, Merrylands Community Health and Parramatta City Council.



English and Employment class



Job search Employment session

English Language and Job Search

A nine week course was held during the past year with 14-16 women attending the 'Listen Learn Grow – Women learning new skills' program. The project aimed to assist Afghan women to gain relevant skills to enter the employment sector. The course had two separate groups - one group assisted women to gain confidence in English and another group learnt to identify what skills they possess, how to write a resume and practiced mock interviews.



Computer classes for Afghani women at Parramatta Library



Health Session (Stress Management)

Stress Management

An eight week project was run in partnership with the Community Bilingual Educator Program of Multicultural Health Unit at Cumberland Hospital, NSW Refugee Health Service and Merrylands Community Health. This program delivered information about stress, identifying how stress affects people, recognising the causes and learning how to deal with them, experiences of migration and ways of coping, dealing with loss, discussing the link between self esteem and stress, being in control, self-care options, problem solving and support networks.

Personal care & hygiene

A community education program on personal care and hygiene were delivered to Afghan women during the year. 15-17 women were involved in these sessions.

Health & Nutrition Programs: A variety of activities that were organised for the groups at Wentworthville and Castle Hill have resulted in increased awareness of the importance of leading healthy lifestyles, knowledge of health services available and the importance of undertaking regular health screening where and when appropriate. Participants from both groups registered for the Healthy Life Coaching Campaign.

Capacity Building Initiatives



Mens Forum - The Family Violence Project

Domestic Violence Working Group: Breakdown in family relationships has been identified as one of the key issues affecting new migrants from the Sikh community. This group, an initiative of the Sikh Council of Australia is supported by the MRC. The main focus is centred on reducing family violence in the Sikh community, scoping possible solutions, current support services and system improvements. Education, advocacy and raising the Sikh community's awareness of domestic violence were the immediate strategies that have been identified to address this issue. Since the establishment of this group, there has been continuous dialogue and constructive steps towards moving forward with this project.

Women's Cooperative: MRC worked closely on a feasibility study undertaken by TAFE (Granville) on behalf of SEVA (Social & Entrepreneurial Ventures of South Asians in Australia) to assess the potential market for nutritional and affordable South Asian food with the ultimate aim of setting up a South Asian Women's Cooperative. One of the main aims of the cooperative is to empower the new South Asian migrant women with skills and knowledge to overcome employment barriers.



Launch of the South Asian Womens Cooperative Feasibility Report

Workshops

Women as Mothers: Workshop held for newly arrived mothers from the South Asian communities to assist them in making a positive transition to motherhood by providing them with practical information on the birthing experience, myths of motherhood, enjoying baby through play and communication & self care. This was also an opportunity for the participants to share their experiences.

Financial First Steps: Workshop held in partnership with Parramatta City Council and Westpac Bank. Participants gained an understanding of various aspects of budgeting such as money management including general banking, tips on energy consumption, bulk shopping to name a few.

Positive Parenting Workshop: Members of the Wentworthville Women's Support Group participated in a seminar that delivered practical information about parenting skills they can incorporate into

everyday interactions with their children to help them become better communicators and problem solvers as parents. The workshops provided an insight for both parents and grandparents to recognise and deal with issues derived from inter-generational conflicts and children's emotional well being.

Inter-generational Family Issues Workshop - Twenty five (25) Karen community members participated in this workshop facilitated by the Centre for Refugee Research – UNSW. Participants felt confident to speak out about their settlement experience.



Community workshop facilitated by the Centre for Refugee Research UNSW

Information Sessions

Information sessions were organised on topics such as: Housing, Education, Access to Legal services, Cultural Exchange, Money Management and budgeting for refugee and humanitarian women.

Information sessions on women's health for Burmese and Rohingya women in Auburn and Canterbury Bankstown areas were organised. A number of women's health issues were identified and addressed. As a direct result of these information sessions, women have followed up on breast and cervical screening checks. Other sessions included **craft classes, financial management and budgeting and effective parenting**. Educational seminars on settlement issues such as education, employment, accommodation, immigration, income support, housing were held for Burmese clients.

Fifteen (15) Karen drivers who recently obtained NSW car license attended this session presented by a Senior Road Safety Officer from Fairfield City Council. The topics discussed were road safety, NSW Road Rules, the difference between third party and comprehensive car insurance and steps to take when involved in an accident.



Information session for the Burmese community



Women's Health Information Session for Karen Women



Information session at Campsie



African Multicultural Social Group

Fourteen (14) information sessions were organised for African women throughout the year on topics such as: nutrition, education, community safety, tenancy rights, housing, family harmony, sustainable living, parenting, breast feeding, Centrelink, relaxation and healing therapy, the law and the role of Multicultural Community Liaison Officers, financial management and budgeting. The information sessions were organised in partnership with Anglicare and Karabi Community and Development Services.

Information sessions provided through youth centres and after school programs included topics such as: healthy relationships and negotiating consent, alcohol and other drugs and their consequences, driver safety information, accessing education and employment pathways and understanding Australian laws and systems.

Support Groups



Burmese consultation



Burmese Advisory Committee Meeting

Regular group meetings with **Burmese and Rohingya women** were held during the year to address and advice on issues affecting women's lives and other settlement issues.

African Multicultural Social Group started in 2008 with the aim to reduce isolation and provide an opportunity for Africans from diverse backgrounds and the broader community to learn from each other by sharing culture, knowledge and experiences. The group also celebrated the Chinese New Year with a guest speaker presenting on eating etiquette and use of chop sticks. The group meets monthly and is run in partnership with Karabi Community and Development Services.

Merrylands Multicultural Women Social Group was formed as a result of the cultural excursions held earlier in the year. The aim of the group is to reduce isolation and provide an opportunity for African women to meet with others from diverse backgrounds, to practice English and learn from each other. One of the highlights of the group was attending an event at UTS with 'Creators of the Peace' and singing African songs. The group meets monthly in Merrylands and is run in partnership with Holroyd Local Area Command and the African Women's Group.



International Women's Day - Trip to Parliament House



Bbq - Holroyd Gardens



Multicultural Women's Group
The group has met throughout the year and participated in the celebration of **International Women's Day in March 2010** by visiting the NSW Parliament House. The women were delighted to meet with other CALD women including Aboriginal women at this celebration.

**International
Women's Day
2010**

Forums*Health Conference for Communities from Burma Dec 09*

Health Forum on Diverse Refugee Communities from Burma (Burmese, Karen and Rohingya) Partnership with NSW Refugee Health, Fairfield MRC, Sydney West Area Health Service – Auburn Hospital, Fairfield Liverpool Multicultural Health Service, STARTTS. The forum addressed health professionals about refugee experiences and health issues in order to streamline provision of health care to these three communities.

Community Engagement with Universities Forum: Penrith UWS Campus. Presented on community engagement models. The forum was moderated by a visiting Professor from the Institute of Education at London University.

The United Nations International Day of Non-Violence Forum at Parramatta Town Hall In partnership with Gandhi Centre Australia and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia.

Day of Dialogue Forum – Partnership with Kidsafe NSW, NSW Refugee Health and Families NSW. Forum for Southern Sudanese on road safety, health and positive parenting practices. 60 people participated on the day.



27/07/2009

*African Communities Consultation*



Melissa Monteiro, Wasif Al-Shanoon, Kassim Abood and Laura Beylerian



Maya Salgado, Kassim Abood and Deborah Baverstock at the Iraqi Refugee Forum

Journeys of Iraqi Refugees Forum was organised for service providers in June 2010. The aim of the forum was to showcase the history, cultural tradition and various ethnic groups in order to build a better understanding of the Iraqi community in Sydney. A wonderful cultural display was provided by a community member while another community member gave a testimonial of his personal refugee experience. This was a successful event with about 60 people in attendance. This project was in partnership with the NSW Refugee Health Service.

Afghan Community Forum – A meeting with all Afghan community leaders, other community workers and service providers was held to discuss issues affecting the community and strategies to address and resolve those issues.

Ethiopian / Eritrean Community Forum – A meeting was held with the communities to identify emerging settlement needs, pinpoint gaps in service provision and propose strategies to address these gaps.

International Women's Day Forum: To celebrate the achievements of women especially migrant women

both local and international, a Women's Forum, supported by the MRC, was organised by United India Associations. This provided an ideal platform for interaction amongst women, and for the MRC to provide information to newly arrived migrants about the support services and availability of different community facilities.

Freedom from Fear - Hills Refugee Forum - partnership with the Hills Shire Council. Paul Power, CEO of the Refugee Council of Australia, spoke at the forum. Other speakers were workers from African and Karen backgrounds. They gave in-depth presentations of the issues faced by refugees in refugee camps overseas and their transition to life in Australia.

Karen Women (Women at Risk) Forum

The forum provided them with the opportunity to gain better knowledge of service providers available in NSW and especially Women's Health with NSW Refugee Health Service and Family Planning NSW.

MRC Services Promotion

MRC services promotion at the United Indian Association's Women's Forum on the 6th of March. This was organised to celebrate International Women's Day. About 140 women were present on the day.

MRC service promotion for medical and administrative staff of Parramatta Community Health. About 35 people were present including early childhood nurses, medical staff and other health workers.

Introduction to MRC services, projects and programs to a **delegation of 18 Japanese representatives of local government**. Japanese local government is trying to understand how best to manage the cultural diversity which has become one of features of life in Japanese major cities.

Orientation to MRC services and projects to a 20 strong **Chinese delegation at Parramatta City Council**.

Cultural Awareness



Kassim Abood at the Cultural Awareness Session at the Institute of Family Practice



Cultural Awareness Session - Uniting Care Burnside



Aurelia Rahman at the Cultural Awareness Session at the Institute of Family Practice



Ombudsman Cultural Awareness Session June 2010

MRC services promotion and cultural awareness training for staff of the Institute of Family Practice at Burnside - focus on African, Afghani and Iraqi communities as well as understanding the programs and projects of the MRC. 27 staff from the Institute of Family Practice were present.

Cultural awareness for staff of the NSW Ombudsman

- to raise awareness of the cultures and issues of newly arrived and emerging communities such as Karen, Iraqi and the Indian subcontinent with emphasis on Sri Lankan Tamil. 27 staff were present at this interactive session.

Who Am I? Refugees in Focus - Cross Cultural training seminar delivered to service providers: Red Cross, Arthur Phillip High School, Auckland Regional Migrant Services (ARMS), Parramatta West Public School.

Employment seminar - As employment is predominantly the major barrier that affects the new migrants from the Indian sub-continent, MRC partnered with Technocrats Association of Australia to hold an informative employment workshop for new migrants to educate and equip them with information relating to the current Australian job market, work culture and skills required to enter the workforce. As a community capacity building initiative, established migrants from the Indian and Sri Lankan communities have nominated themselves to be mentors for newly arrived migrants and refugees from the targeted communities.

Cultural Dialogue and Development Day - To commemorate this day, a presentation was held at the Hills Shire Council to showcase the activities undertaken by the Indian Sub-continent Settlement Grants Program in The Hills Shire.

"Karen Resettlement in NSW" presented at Community Relation Commission For a Multicultural NSW and at the "Health forum on Diverse Refugees communities from Burma in NSW" Refugee Week 2010 presentations at Bankstown City Council and The Hills Shire Council.

Fundraising Activities

Cancer Council Morning Tea was a partnership among various SGP projects at the MRC and involved many communities participating in this worthwhile activity. An informative session on various types of cancer was presented by the Cancer Council and information distributed. This activity increased women's awareness about various types of cancer, screening and precautions that can be taken to avoid this life threatening disease. They also looked at healthy eating and lifestyle habits. This program promoted fundraising activities among the target group and encouraged the participants to become more active in initiating and participating in such activities for the benefit of the wider community. Participation in charitable and fund raising events for worthwhile causes have helped instigate a community spirit amongst the communities and also a platform where they can learn, share and feel part of the Australian society.

The **Twic Mayardit Orphans Project** has successfully held a fundraising dinner. The African Community Development Project has worked intensively with this group to assist them in organising this event which was held in August 2010 at Granville Town Hall with good attendance and over \$2000 raised to assist the orphans from Southern Sudan. This project was a partnership with Anglicare Migrant and Refugee Services and STARTTS.

Cultural Exchange Programs

African Women's Cultural Exchange Program began in 2009 with the aim of providing an opportunity for African women, women from other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Australian born women to exchange cultures at a grass root level, reduce isolation, increase mutual understanding through direct contact and provide an opportunity for African women to integrate with the broader community. The first cultural exchange program was an extension of the African Women's Dinner Dance. A group of 10 Australian and African women met in Baulkham Hills initially and that was followed-up by a 3 day excursion in September 2009 to Ulladulla. The program was organised in partnership with the African Women's Group of NSW, Anglicare, STARTTS and Pamoja group of Ulladulla.

Cultural exchange trip to Bobbin Head

A cultural exchange trip to Bobbin Head in Kur-ringai National Park. The African women and others from diverse backgrounds joined about 20 creators of peace for a picnic at Bobbin Head. The women shared traditional stories and food from different cultures. The event was organised in partnership with the African Women's Group of NSW.

Focus on Africa - Presentation at the Australian Tamil Senior Week

The African generalist worker spoke about African customs and traditions at Australian Tamil Seniors Association Seniors week celebration event at Wentworthville. African music and drumming, Indian and Chinese dancers performed at the event.

Cultural Exchange Trip to the Blue Mountains

A two days excursion to Blue Mountains was organised. The aim was to attend an Aboriginal Art exhibition and provide an opportunity for the women to meet with indigenous Australians and other Australians in a social environment, share cultural information and reduce isolation. This event was organised in partnership with the Afghan and Indian Sub-continent SGP workers, RAPS, Holroyd Local Area Command, the African Women's Group of NSW and STARTTS.



Multicultural Group Excursion to the Blue Mountains

Cultural Celebrations and Festivals

Celebration of African Cultures: The aim of this event was to unify the diverse African communities in Sydney, to learn from each other and to share different cultures and traditions in a social environment.

Parramac Festival: The MRC's Indian subcontinent and African Community development workers participated in the Macquarie Bicentennial Illuminated Parade organised to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Governor Macquarie's arrival in Australia and his legacy to Parramatta and Australia. This was an occasion for new migrants to learn about Australian history and also to participate in local mainstream festivities.



Lantern Workshop for Parramac festival

Sourcing of Funding and Grants

Funding applications that have been successful during the year include DIAC for the Settlement Grants Program, Parramatta and Holroyd Councils, CDSE (Clubs money), Community Builders (former Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme) for a social enterprise project that will benefit our migrant and refugee communities.

The achievements highlighted in this report were made possible through the commitment and hard work of the staff involved. A heart-felt thank you to all the SGP team members for their contributions that sometimes went well beyond the call of duty.

The achievements mentioned above and many more would not have been possible without the excellent guidance, ongoing support and direction from the Centre Manager, Melissa Monteiro and the dedicated Board of Management. The team would like to thank Melissa once again for all the encouragement and support that she has provided throughout the year and for being such a source of inspiration to us all.

The support of the Admin and Finance hub and of the Customer Service Officer has been essential in ensuring the smooth running of various aspects of the projects and I would like to sincerely thank Dijana Mackic and Ifrah Mohamed for their dedicated support and assistance during the year. A big thank you goes to Wendy Mouawad for her support to the team in various ways.

To conclude, on behalf of the team, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to a multitude of services and agencies without whom we would not have been able to deliver such great outcomes. We greatly value the partnerships developed and consolidated during the past year. Our thanks go to the three local councils in our catchment area, government agencies, various community and ethno-specific organisations, RSL and Leagues clubs, Office of Fair Trading, Centrelink, Community Services, DIAC, community health, local area police (Granville, Merrylands and Parramatta) and many more with whom partnership projects were conceived and implemented. We are all looking forward to new challenges and achievements in the year to come.

Aurelia Rahman
Coordinator

Early Intervention & Perinatal Report

Team Coordinator: Zulekha Nazir

EIP Staff: Norma Boules, Li Hua Chu, Biljana Kulic

The Early Intervention and Perinatal project funded by Families NSW has continued to provide culturally supportive programs to migrant and refugee families across the Parramatta and Holroyd LGAs with a focus on community development, home visiting and supported playgroups and parenting programs.

The Early Intervention project includes services for families with children 0-8 yrs and the Perinatal Project for families with children 0-2yrs. During the past year, more than 900 families were provided with a service from the project through their contacts with playgroups, information sessions, advocacy and referrals, self referrals and word of mouth communication between communities and service providers. The project has had a major growth rate this year as more families became aware of the programs on offer.

Overall evaluation, feedback and project assessments provided the following results:

- 100% of parents learned something new to assist them with parenting
- 74.5% of parents noted positive changes in their children's behaviour
- 94.2% of parents learned about local services in their area
- 80% of parents made a connection with other parents and groups in the community

It is encouraging and rewarding to note that all the families that accessed groups during the year remained involved. Some parents went on to volunteer work in the community and taking up studies and work.



Easter egg hunt at Wentworthville playgroup



Wentworthville Playgroup

Sharing & Learning Playgroup



Sharing and Learning playgroup at Granville Youth and Recreational Centre



Sharing and Learning Playgroup

The Sharing & Learning Playgroup had a major move this year and linked in with Granville Multicultural Community Centre playgroup program at Granville. The families felt it was easier to access the group on the one day of the week and has proved to be a success. The majority of parents are from Chinese and other CALD backgrounds.

The nutrition workshop taught mothers how to make pumpkin soup for their children, using different ingredients and learning about how families can enjoy food from other cultures, what is in season and how to cook on a budget.

Other workshops were:

- Importance of home language
- Teaching children about good manners
- Relaxation and leisure time
- Parents as role models
- Being a good reader in any language

The project ran the following programs in partnerships with other agencies:

An excursion to the Australian Museum was organized for the families from the playgroup; they used their children's adventure passports to access museums and galleries. Families commented that it was good to go out with the children and see something new.

A safety house visit was also organized with one mother commenting "I will look carefully around my house and see how I can make it safe especially with the nonslip mats in the bathroom"

Other highlights included Mothers day craft for children and families attended the Baby Expo at Olympic Park.

Parramatta East Public School Playgroup

This playgroup in partnership with Parramatta East Public School was launched on the 20th of November 2009 with an attendance of over 120 families.

There were various activities such as face painting, jumping castle and parents were invited to wear their traditional dress.

Grandparents who have joined the group shared a lot of time together. Some grandmothers are caring for children under 2 years of age and the interaction with other mothers and children benefit them as they are isolated at home. They shared cooking tips, stories and advised mothers who are mainly of Chinese background. The families get together and celebrate special days that are relevant to the Chinese community and there is always a grandparent to tell a special story from their past experience in China.

Mothers Day, Fathers Day and Grandparents Day were celebrated in the group.

Other CALD mothers have joined the playgroup during the year and numbers are increasing.



Mothers making play dough at Parramatta East P.S. playgroup



Playgroup story time with Parramatta East P.S. principal

Sudanese Playgroup

Craft, free play, story time, readiness for school are some of the programs that take place at the Sudanese playgroup. All children learned something new at the playgroup and how to play with other children.

This year the project has decided to have a playgroup with other CALD families joining the Sudanese mothers. This has worked well and there is a lot of cross cultural sharing and support with the families. The children easily broke down any barriers that the families had and now everyone is playing and sharing together. Sudanese mothers welcomed the changes and it has been a great experience for all.

Mother's Day, Father's Day and Grandparents Day crafts were made by the children and presented to family members.

A ten pin bowling day was organized for families. It was a new experience for some families but there were smiles and laughs and a fun day for everyone who attended. They also learned about sporting activities and services in their community.

Parramatta West Public School Playgroup**Parramatta West Anniversary 2010****Mother's Day 2010 celebrated at Parramatta West Public School****Red Nose Day 2010 at Parramatta West Public School**

During the past year, consultations were held with parents to understand the type of activities to be run in the playgroup. There was increased interest from parents and children to learn more about the transition to school program. Helping children at home was an important issue for parents to discuss. "My son asks more questions, I think he's a good listener".

Listening skills were practiced as part of story time; each child was asked to try to be quiet for 5 minutes, mothers learned of the importance of having physical closeness to the child at story time and how that improved their relationship.

Cultural days such as St Patrick's Day, Sorry Day and Red Nose Day were celebrated and information was provided about why these days are special in Australia.

An information session entitled "Your Child's Well Being," was held thanks to a medical practitioner who gave their valuable time to talk to the mothers present at the playgroup.

A Christmas party was held for the playgroup with 120 participants from the community.

Merrylands Playgroup

The Merrylands playgroup has a large number of newly arrived Afghan mums and children who are 3 and under. They have limited English but the support they find at the playgroup is helping them to adjust. They have had bubble dancing, story time and a lot of play therapy. Eid Celebration was held in September and attended by 15 parents and children.

Grandparents Group

Once again Grandparents Day was celebrated by all in the groups. Grandparents became emotional to be acknowledged. Scrapbooking activity was organized and grandparents told some wonderful stories about their own grandparents. "Grandparents give support not only to the children and parents but they also are a valuable part of the community".

The group has been very productive this year; they have made 6 blankets for the homeless. Thanks to a great partnership between our groups and The Community of Christ Church grandparents are working together to make homeless peoples' lives a little warmer during winter.

Guest speakers from Community Wheels gave insight into issues of travel for the elderly. Diabetes, hypertension, arthritis care and self care especially in times of stress were some of the sessions provided for grandparents.

Multicultural Womens Group

The Multicultural group in Wentworthville is progressing well. Women felt the need to meet and share skills. In partnership with the Indian Subcontinent SGP worker, 15 women have learned to do the following: cake decorating, fruit and vegetable carving, knitting and sewing garments. These skills provide an opportunity for them to think about having a business or just having a skill to use at home with their families. Women's health and nutrition sessions were held.

The women participated in a Community Fire Safety Program which taught women about fire safety at home and in particular the legislation of having smoke detectors in the house.



Multicultural group at Wentworthville - scrapbooking

Positive Parenting Program

Parenting programs run this year:

- Positive parenting program (PPP) for Sudanese community women
- PPP seminar for Sudanese community members attended by 55 people
- PPP seminar for Afghan mothers held at Merrylands Community Centre
- PPP parenting program held at Parramatta East Public School
- PPP Group parenting program with Karabi Community Development Services



School holiday program at the PCYC Parramatta

Other Activities

During the year, the project also participated in the following programs and activities:

- Cumberland Women's Health Centre – Open Day Workshop
- Cumberland Blacktown, Hills Child and Family Worker Forum: Collaborate and Connect
- African Multicultural Social Group Get together – Karabi Community Centre
- Eid Festival for African Communities- Relationships Australia, St Anthony, JCA
- Official launch of CALD Family Dispute Resolution Scholarships- Uniting Care Institute of Family Practice
- Morning Tea with Guildford Community – Community of Christ Church
- Sustainable Living Information for Southern/ Sudanese Communities- St Anne Church
- Holroyd Child and Family Forum- Family worker training & Development
- Diversity & Ageing in Action Forum – COTA NSW
- Women as Mothers Workshops- Indian Sub continent SGP program
- Sudanese/ African Women's Health and wellbeing information session- Anglicare



Zulekha Nazir at the scholarship presentations by Uniting Care

Acknowledgements

A big thank you to all the mums, dads, grandparents, children, students and volunteers who participated in the program throughout the year.

An extra big Thank You to the team: Biljana Kulic, Li Hua Chu and Norma Boules.

I would like to acknowledge the funding body, the Department of Human Services – Community Services, for their continued support to the project.

Also a sincere thank you goes to the Board of Management and Melissa Monteiro, Manager, of the Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre for their input, advice and assistance to the project.

Zulekha Nazir
Coordinator



Red Nose Day celebrated with CALD families in partnership with SIDS NSW



Cooking competition for the Rohingya Community



TB resource launch at Westmead Hospital with Refugee and Community Health

Hills Communities Inter-connect Project Report

Coordinator: Kamalini Fernando

Project Goal

The "Hills Communities Inter-connect" project aims to create an environment where every person will have equal opportunities to pursue their expectations while respecting social norms and cultural diversity and to establish a balance between diversity and unity.

Activities

The second year of the project mainly focused on working with the newly arrived migrant families and the community volunteers from the established wider community through the Mentoring Program. The program activities are evolving around the needs of these new migrant families. The program is being run by Mentors and Mentees together to address the needs identified by them.

Currently the project works with around 24 new migrant families and 11 community volunteers at any given time. These groups meet 3-4 times a week to address issues such as skilling up their English language, learning Australian history and heritage, Australian laws and rules.

The project develops social capital in the Hills Shire by facilitating opportunities for new and more established residents to engage with each other through mentoring.



Group Mentoring Session

Implementing the Mentoring Program with Community Volunteers

The Mentoring Program continued during this reporting period. Eighteen (18) families connected with Volunteer Mentors. They are being given assistance in language, connecting with the services, home visits, shopping and taking them around the Shire. The group mentoring sessions are being conducted with one mentor working with three to four new migrants.

The language skilling sessions started this year with 14 families participating and currently there are 24 families going through the Mentoring Program. Some of the sessions include Workshops on Australian Day and History, Interactive cookery session with families learning how to make typical Australian food. These new migrants have also attended the Multicultural Choir with their Mentors where they learnt different cultural songs and shared their singing skills. This has assisted them consolidate their English language skills, has helped connecting them with the wider community and making new friends.



Community Services Information Session



English classes for new migrants at Castle Glen Community Centre

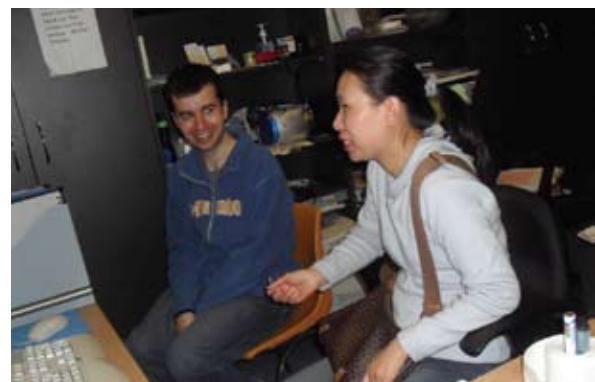
One-On-One Mentoring

New migrant families needing intensive support participated in one-on-one mentoring sessions. Currently 8 families are getting support under this program.

Over the past 18 months, 4 people graduated from the higher level English conversational class and got admitted to TAFE to do vocational courses.

The most rewarding day was when one lady who could not speak a word of English said "thank you for teaching me English....."

Social networking has also assisted new migrants to gain employment in their professional line.



One-On-One Mentoring Session - Communities InterConnect project

Enhance the Volunteers Skills and Knowledge on Mentoring

The project has conducted Volunteer Mentoring Training Sessions once a month covering topics such as Mentoring Support Network Guidelines, Mentor/Mentee matching criteria, Mentoring Code of Conduct, guidelines for Mandatory Reporting. Each session is attended by 20 to 25 volunteers.

Training mentors on Australian History, legal system, values and way of life to resource and support volunteer leaders who became mentors for the new migrant families

Interactive and practical Mentor Training sessions were carried out by respective professionals in the areas of Australian History, Legal System, norms and ethics to resource the volunteer mentors. The mentors were also provided with computer skill development opportunities so that they are well versed with recording and reporting on the program. This has also helped them to do networking and being connected with the Mentees. Other important training given to the volunteer mentors included: leadership, community engagement and strength based practices, legal framework for volunteers.

During the past year the project has continued to work with local schools and to reach out to new migrant families. There has been a considerable increase in the number of parents accessing the project services this year.

Community networks were used to promote the activities of the project in order to reach out to the target group. One successful promotion was the presentation of the project at the Hills Family Forum where contacts were established with Westmead Hospital and the Play groups in the Hills. Promotional booths at shopping centres in the Hills Shire and on notice boards helped increase awareness about the project.



Computer classes for new migrant families in the Hills Shire

Partnerships Established

Partnerships have been established with the following agencies through connecting the new migrant families:

- Hills Family Centre through the Women's Connect project whereby New Migrant families are being given opportunity to interact with other communities and get more information on services relevant to their needs.
- Partnership with The Hills Community Health Centre, NSW Dept. of Education and Training, SydWest MSI (formerly Blacktown MRC), The Hills Community Aid & Info. Service Inc., Wesley Family Services (North West Sector) through The 'Family Matters for the Multicultural Community' Project. The project is a series of community education programs to address the needs of the CALD families. The sessions were a great success with more than 40 families participating at these interactive workshops.
- The Hills Shire Council - Harmony Day Celebrations, Cultural Festival and World Day of Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- Rouse Hills Family Connect – Playgroup Project and Garden to Kitchen Project where the opportunity was given to new migrant families and the Volunteer Mentors to Learn about garden vegetables, herbs, making menus and learning English.

More than 20 families were connected with GPs to address medical requirements for their children, public housing, community health, schools, TAFE, Centrelink, Legal Aid and Library services. These have resulted in 7 families getting family benefits, and has helped almost all 18 – 22 families the project worked with to find simple things like the way to get to a friend's place, an electrician, where to get the public transport, how to find the community centres or libraries in the area and other things required.

The partnerships that the project has entered into during the past year has led to positive outcomes for the client group and strengthened the communities through better access to resources and expanding networks with service providers.



Communities Interconnect project Partnership with Schools to mentor the New Migrant Parents



Interconnect Project partnership with Schools to Mentor the New Migrant Parents

Kamalini Fernando
Coordinator - Hills Communities Inter-connect Project

African Sessional Project Report

Team Coordinator: Solomon Freeman

ASSP Team: Achom Edward Apouro-Dimo, Anthony Bee-Conteh, Monica Biel, Ayen Atem Chol, Anthony Deng, Naimo Abdullahi, Amou Job, Gloria Marcella Johnson, Liliane Lukoki-N'Gengu, Angelina Makeny, Chibalonza Malula, Jean Boscoe Muhiziwintore



African Sessional Workers Team 2010

The African Sessional Workers Project began in July 2007 as a pilot project funded by the Department of Human Services-Community Services. The project which is based at the MRC, aims to address issues related to communication, improve service delivery, assist in assessments and investigations and to ensure constructive and appropriate interventions and case plan implementations with African families by Community Services caseworkers.

The 13 Sessional Workers employed to deliver this project are from the following target communities: Burundi, Congolese, Liberian, Sierra Leonean, Somali and Sudanese. These bilingual workers speak 16 African languages among themselves, with Dinka (a Sudanese language), Kiro/Creole (Sierra Leonean language) Kirundi (a Burundian language) and Langala (a Congolese language) being the most requested languages.

Along with the services provided through referrals, the community education component within the project addresses the general information needs amongst African communities regarding the role of Community Services, rights and obligations under the child protection systems and laws. The project is focussed on building and strengthening relationships between Community Services, African families and communities.

Project Achievements

Following promotion of the project to the various Community Services Centres and to respond to the increasing demand, the project has been extended state-wide. The project has been extended to the Metro Central and Eastern regions of Sydney, as there was a steady increase in requests for services outside the original target region of Western Sydney. Services have also been provided outside Sydney to Armidale, Bathurst and Nowra.

During the past year, eleven (11) promotional presentations were held across the Metro West and Central regions of Sydney. This promotional drive has helped increase demand for referrals from Community Services caseworkers.

Some of the significant outcomes for the project include:

- Enhancing communication and building trust between caseworkers and clients.
- Improvement in the provision of language and culture support services to Community Services caseworkers.
- Improvement of family interventions, linking Community Services caseworkers with community contacts and support services available to African families.

The Sessional Support workers completed an additional 32 hours of training on the following topics:

- Legal Understanding – Law Access Parramatta
- Foster Carer Training
- Accidental Counselling (STARTTS)
- “Keep Them Safe Training” - New Changes in NSW Child Protection

During the past year, there have been Eighty-five (85) occasions of sessional support services provided to Community Services caseworkers and African families. The support services are still ongoing and majority of requests came from the Blacktown Wesley Mission, Fairfield, Lakemba, Auburn, Blacktown and Mt. Druitt Community Services Centres. Forty-six (46) families benefited from the service with a total of 191 individuals on a one time occasion of service per each family head.



Sessional Workers training



Information session for the Somali community

Six community education sessions on community services were delivered and well received by the communities including: Congolese, Somali, Sudanese and Sierra Leone Communities. The sessions provided information on the role of Community Services, the Child Protection System and Laws in Australia. The sessions also provided an opportunity for community members and caseworkers to work together to bridge gaps of communications and trust, as well as to discuss the impact of culture on parenting (with emphasis on discipline).

I would like to take this opportunity to give a 'SPECIAL THANK YOU' to our reference group for their guidance and commitment to the project. A big thank you to Bernice Redman for her tireless efforts over the past three years. The reference group welcomed Ozen Karanlik who replaced Bernice Redman.

Most of all, I would like to acknowledge our hard working team of sessional workers who have done an incredible job and continued to be committed to the project: Deng Anthony, Monica Benjamin Biel, Amou Job, Angelina Makeny, Ayen Chol, Gloria Johnson, Malula Chibalonza, Lillian Lukoki, Jean Bosco, Naima Abdullahi, Anthony Conteh and Elizabeth Gezahegne.

The feedback received from Community Services caseworkers indicates that the sessional workers are culturally knowledgeable, proficient and committed to supporting children and their families.

A big thank you to the dynamic support personnel who keep supporting the life of this project, they are: Ozen Karanlik, Fatma Mohamed, Aurelia Rahman and Melissa Monteiro, our dedicated Manager.

Again to the African communities, thanks for allowing us to serve you; this is your project, make good use of it and give your children a better and brighter future.

Solomon Freeman
African Sessional Workers Project Coordinator



Information session for the Congolese community

Family Violence Action Research Report

Principal Researcher: Amrit Versha

Assistant Researcher: Rugmini Venkatraman

FVAR Team: Nasiba Akram, Ebadullah Amid, Hafizullah Angury, Jeneba Conteh, Getee Karim, Alfred Sankoh, Shantha Viswanthan

This regional one-year project was conceived to explore the interface between domestic and family violence and settlement with the support of Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme grant from Communities NSW. From the outset, the aim was to forge a partnership between community-based agencies and the Centre for Refugee Research (CRR) at the University of NSW in order to develop a model of research practice that utilised and valued the social capital within refugee communities and the community sector at large.

This project commenced in September 2009, with a research team made up of female and male bilingual workers from Afghan, Sierra Leonean and Sri Lankan Tamil backgrounds. The project also engaged bilingual workers from the two other Migrant Resource Centres in the region. In line with the identified visions the researchers gathered qualitative (consultations) and quantitative data (secondary data from various sources).

The principal researcher, Amrit Versha, was provided with support and assistance from Rugmini Venkatraman, a community associate. The researchers were supported by the Manager of MRC, Melissa Monteiro, and academic supervision was provided to the principal researcher through the Centre for Refugee Research (CRR) at the University of New South Wales.

The consultations were conducted across three data streams – Refugee communities, bilingual and ethno-specific workers that provide settlement support to new arrivals and mainstream domestic violence support services.

Over a five month period nine community consultations were held at various locations in the Metro West Department of Human Services-Community Services Region. The consultation venues included a mosque, two Churches, a school and community organizations. The approaches used with the refugee communities were educative, consultative and solution driven. The workers ran the consultations in their community languages. The researchers attended all consultations as observers. Ethics forms were translated and explained before every consultation. The consultations were attended by women, men and community leaders. Additionally, women's only consultations were organized. Case studies from each of these communities were also collected to gain more in-depth information.

Interagency collaboration was used for collection of stakeholder data. The researchers facilitated discussions with fifteen important networks. These included; Domestic Violence Interagency meetings (4), Holroyd Parramatta Multicultural Network (1), team meeting of settlement services (3), Integrated Settlement Services Strategy (IHSS) providers (2), relationship and counseling services (2) and Health services (3).

As part of the project two networks were developed to further enhance the reflective cycles of qualitative data collection. These networks initiated a dialogue between the settlement service providers and family and domestic violence services. Some of the providers on these networks included The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC, Auburn Diversity Services, Anglicare-Emerging Communities Project, Australian Centre of Languages (ACL), Immigrant Women's Speakout Association, Holroyd City Council, Older



Peter Prants, Senior Regional Strategies Officer, Department of Human Services, Melissa Monteiro-Manager, Maria Dimopolous, FVAR Forum facilitator, Mark Lack- ACL, Aurelia Rahman and Amrit Versha- Principal Researcher

Women's Network, NSW Police Regional Domestic Violence Strategy, Flemington Local Area Command, Parramatta Local Area Command, Metro West Department of Human Services- DoCS, Women's Health Advisor -Western Sydney Area Health Service (WSAHS) and Syd West Multicultural Services.

On completion of the project, the report was successfully launched by Dr Eileen Pittaway, Director of Centre for Refugee Research, at a forum chaired by Maria Dimopoulos and attended by many including the Mayor of Holroyd City Council, community members and several service providers. Discussions progressed to the formation of a Round Table to implement the recommendations put forward in the report.

This project would not have been possible without the efforts of many and we thank everyone involved. We thank the refugee communities that participated in the consultations and trusted us with their stories, opinions, experiences and ideas. We thank Dr Eileen Pittaway, Director of Centre for Refugee Research, Dr Linda Bartolomei and Rebecca Eckert for their extensive support to the researchers.

Thank you to Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme for funding this project and to Peter Prants, in particular, the regional coordinator for WSAAS. We acknowledge all the members of the Reference

Group. In addition, special thanks to all the bilingual workers for facilitating the consultations: Alfred Sankoh, Ahlam Mujaddedi, Bintu Kamara, Geete Karim, Hafizullah Angury, Jeneba Conteh, Nasiba Akram, Shantha Viswanathan, Bhavani Loganathan and Tennah Kpakia.

Thank you to Auburn Diversity Services and SydWest Multicultural Services for their partnership and support to the project.

Finally, sincere appreciation to Ms Melissa Monteiro, Manager of The Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre for making this project possible.

Thank you to all the other team members of the MRC who supported this project and a special thank you to the Board of Management of the MRC.

**Amrit Versha
Principal Researcher**

Strength To Strength Report

Coordinator: Rahat Chowdhury

RAPS Team: Diing Bul, Isho Georges, Nasren Nasrat, Biljana Kulic, Fayaz Wazin

Strength To Strength (STS) is a family relationships program which supports humanitarian entrant families residing in the Local Government Areas of: Auburn, Holroyd, Parramatta, Blacktown and Baulkham Hills, as they seek to strengthen their family relationships. It provides assistance in a culturally appropriate way by matching bi-lingual, bi-cultural family workers with families.

Strength To Strength provides:

- Family counselling about parenting and changing roles in the family
- Parenting groups about child discipline, conflict resolution and effective communication
- Workshops - Relationships after migration
- Support groups, casework, information, referral and advocacy

Strength To Strength is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs [FaHCSIA] under the Family Relationship Services Program. The Strength To Strength program is delivered through a partnership with Relationships Australia and the Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre.

The last year has been a challenging and busy year for the program. The program has had successful outcomes .Thanks to the dedication and commitment of project staff, and the cooperation of the MRC, we have worked together to deliver a much needed service to families migrating to Australia on humanitarian grounds. The STS program has been able to overcome a number of challenges. The project was funded for the three years 2008 to 2011. The continued support of FaHCSIA is an acknowledgment of the program's achievements and success.

The following capacity building activities were undertaken during this period:

Counselling and Family Therapy

Face-to-face counselling and family therapy is an integral part of the program. This was delivered (where possible) by a bi-lingual worker. Where the language spoken by a family was not spoken by the project's bi-lingual workers, an interpreter was engaged. The family therapy took place via an integration of the STS and the RAPS (Resources for Adolescents and their Parents) programs, whereby STS families were seen by a RAPS family therapist in conjunction with an STS worker. In the period 1st July 09 – 30th June 10, over 2000 individuals were provided with counselling and family therapy.

Computer, Homework and English classes for Darfur community in Seven Hills

Computer classes were run with the support of the Josephite Community Aid (JCA). The JCA has been a valuable partner and provided much support for the computer and homework support classes. JCA provided the Darfur community space and other resources to teach computers, English classes and programs to help young people with their homework.

BBQ/Picnic for Sudanese Darfur community in Blacktown

One hundred and fifty people attended the BBQ organised for the Sudanese Darfur community in Seven Hills in December 2009. Strength To Strength partnered with the Jesuit Community Aid, St Anthony's Family Care and Volunteers. Activities on the day included face painting, raffle (prizes included sports equipment and food hampers) and a BBQ.

Harmony Day

Harmony Day was celebrated with Holroyd City Council. The aim of the program was to raise awareness about the Darfur community in Sydney. This included a photographic exhibition, cultural dances and food.

Afghan Mothers and Daughters Group

STS and Auburn Youth Centre organised a BBQ and recreational activities for mothers and daughters of the Afghan community at the Auburn Botanic garden. 12 girls (11-22 years of age) and 16 mothers attended the barbecue and interactive games. Group aims were reviewed and specific needs were identified.

A series of five information sessions were organised to address the career aspirations of the young Afghan girls. The girls' mothers were also invited to attend a TAFE information session which was an eye opener for mothers to see opportunities their daughters had. It was an opportunity to witness their daughter's enthusiasm for further studies and being independent. The event was successful as it provided an opportunity for the Afghan mothers and daughters to be more connected and break the social isolation. It helped to explore the changing mother-daughter relationship after migration

Parenting Workshops

A series of workshops were organised for a mixed group (Indian, Tamil, and Pakistani) of mothers and Iraqi families in partnership with Auburn Diversity Services. This program explored relationships after migration and parenting across cultures.

A total of 15 workshops have been organised for the Chinese, Sudanese, Afghan, and Iraqi, communities.

The workshops helped parents voice the opinions and challenges they experience with parenting in a new culture and environment. The workshops explore parental expectations and provided participants with additional tools and strategies for parenting in Australia. The workshops enabled parents with the opportunity to 'normalise' their experiences, share ideas and build networks with other parents.

Ongoing groups:

The Afghan Youth group was run in partnership with the Auburn Youth Centre. Young people participated in lively discussions around family, migration, DV and schooling.

Celebration of Afghan Youth's Soccer success:

The STS project sponsored and supported the Afghan soccer team which was a runner-up in the amateur football league match. 120 young people and parents participated.

Some major challenges of the program in the past year have included instances where cases referred to the program involved Community Services. In some instances children may have been removed from the family. It highlighted the need for more information regarding child protection and parenting in these communities. It was observed that the majority of clients were from newly arrived communities.

A significant number of clients had cases pending at the Children's Court or the Family Court of Australia. Though legal-aid was provided, it was often observed that the client had no thorough briefing with the lawyer assigned or no interpreter was present for meetings held. As a result there was inadequate documentation of clients' grievances.

The program with its myriad of challenges has proven to be a strong performer and key service provider around relationship issues for newly arrived refugee and Humanitarian entrants. I thank the members of my team for their dedication and passion to assist our clients.

**Rahat Chowdhury
Coordinator**

Financial Report

for the Year Ended 30 June 2010