



The Hills Holroyd Parramatta **MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE**

ANNUAL REPORT 2011



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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

To the members and friends of the Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and to pay my respects to their elders, past and present.

I am pleased and proud to present this, the fifteenth Annual Report of the MRC today. The Annual Report outlines the work that has been undertaken by the MRC in the 2010-11 financial year. It also includes the audited financial reports which outline our sound financial position.

There are many highlights to the year, but one in particular comes to mind. Early in 2011 the Board decided to rent premises on the ground floor of our building to enable the MRC to expand our services, to provide ground level access to the MRC and to promote our work to the people of Parramatta through the eye catching window display. We are pleased and excited that the ground floor spaces are as busy and productive as our 4th floor offices and conference room.

I'd like to acknowledge all those people who have worked diligently and with passion to ensure that we have met our obligations to the community and our funding bodies.

Melissa Monteiro, our Manager, has led her team ably. Our thanks go to Melissa, the coordinators and the staff for their achievements in this year. Their work is outlined in the pages of this Annual Report.

I'd like particularly to thank Melissa, and Board members Warren Schweitzer and Nola Randall-Mohk for their work in researching and leading the strategic planning process that the MRC is currently undergoing. Warren's leadership in this vital aspect of the Board's work is greatly appreciated by his colleagues and, I'm sure, by the staff.

I'd also like to thank our funders and their representatives for the opportunity to work with them to continue to help new communities in the complex process of settlement. This is the MRC's core business. It is where our skill and commitment lie, and we gratefully



acknowledge the financial support of all tiers of government and business for this work.

These funders include:

- The Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship, represented by Tim Morgan and Maya Macbeth
- The NSW Department of Family and Community Services
- Parramatta City Council
- The Hills Shire Council
- The Foundation For Young Australians
- Western Union
- Guildford Leagues Club and Holroyd City Council.

I'd like also to thank our partners and friends in the community with whom we've worked in this year. In the 2010-2011 year, the MRC worked with over a hundred community and non profit organisations and well over fifty

government instrumentalities like TAFE, schools and police. There are too many to mention, but please accept our thanks.

Finally, my thanks go to our Board members for their support of the Migrant Resource Centre this year, for their hard work and their wisdom. I'd like to acknowledge my colleagues on the Executive Committee Nola Randall-Mohk, Jason Guest, Warren Schweitzer and Renu Narchal.

I am pleased to report that the MRC is in good health and good hands. We thank you all for your continuing support and we look forward to the future with confidence.

Terrie Gardner
Chairperson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



*Echo Morgan,
Juliana Nkrumah and
Melissa Monteiro*

I am pleased to present the 2011 Annual Report for The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC. This year marks 15th Anniversary and our 10th anniversary was celebrated in this beautiful venue.

We have been busy planning for exciting projects of the future.

Focus in the last year was on leadership, connecting projects and developing strong teams within the organisation. The Board and staff were heavily involved in the restructure of the organisation. A core team was established with a view to implement the Intake and Assessment team.

My visit to ACCESS in Queensland proved to be more than worthwhile. It questioned our service delivery and the need to review our Intake and Assessment procedures.

Later in the year I visited MYSA in South Australia and learnt from their model. It was clear that our organisation needed to review policies and activities in order to obtain funding to support these activities.

The **Social Enterprise** project funded by Community Builders has been a major highlight of the year. Three year funding was obtained to develop Social enterprises programs in the region. Funding for a Driving School was obtained through the Clubs for Holroyd and Parramatta.

The Settlement Grants Program was refunded under the Generalist and Specialists categories. Two and three year funding was received for the Chinese, Indian Sub continent, Middle Eastern and the African Generalist.

MRC currently manages \$1.13 million in SGP project funding in 2011–12, as well as a Diversity and Social Cohesion Program (DSCP) project. Funding from DIAC constitutes around 65% of our total funding. Other major funding sources include the Department of Human Services, the NSW Department of Community Services and local Government.

Sessional services are offered from the MRC premises by Affordable Community Housing Ltd, African Women Australia Inc., Anglicare, the Australian Korean Welfare Association, Special Children Services Centre Inc. and Whitelion, an agency assisting juvenile offenders and at-risk youth. The MRC is an adaptive and innovative settlement services provider, well supported by an active Board of Management and dedicated staff.

Early intervention programs include “Sharing and Learning”, multicultural play group in Wentworthville, mothers groups, play groups, social support groups at the Parra West High School, Parra East School and more recently Parramatta North Public School.



*Melissa Monteiro,
Dorinda Hafner &
Senator Kate Lundy*

261 children participated in group work activities which included the Burmese & Rohinja, African and Indian Sub continent . The Merrylands Social Support Group – Gran Parents as Carers, Mothers and Babies, and Wentworthville Multicultural Womens.

25 women attended the Hills Multicultural women’s support and 22 Afghan women attended the social support group weekly.

7 PPP Positive Parenting Programs were conducted with 109 parents attending. 3 Group PPP programs saw a total of 31 parents complete the program.

30 parents attended the “Circle of Security Parenting Program” held in the Hills and Parramatta areas. 59 children attended School holiday programs organised in the year.

“Paint Parramatta Read” reading days was held in partnership with the Parramatta City Library and other partners. Over 100 children participated in the Reading day.

116 sessions held – the “Readiness to School” program

The CALD Perinatal Forum was held in partnership with the Westmead Social Work Department at Westmead Hospital.

- The MRC Supported the African Women Australia Inc. and the Australian Human Rights Commission, who have been leading activities to mark the UN International Year for Peoples of African Descent. Through this initiative, the diverse heritage of peoples of African descent in Australia is celebrated, and strategies generated and presented to government to address the challenges facing them.

Events to date have included the following:

- Support – **Human Rights commission** in July, 75 stakeholders participated in a community roundtable to explore human rights issues, and 80 stakeholders participated in a community forum held in partnership with African Women Australia to explore the concept of African descent in the Australian context;
- On 2 August, the Parliamentary Secretary attended the launch of the **Diversity and Social Cohesion Program (DSCP)** project, “Sing Loud! Dance Proud!” at the The Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre. The MRC was awarded \$50,000 to deliver the project, which will increase the confidence of thirty young adults from culturally and linguistically diverse communities facing multiple settlement challenges to write, perform and speak in public forums. Six paid positions have been created for bilingual Youth Team Leaders from Afghanistan, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Burma, Sri Lanka and the Pacific Islands.



DV roundtable 2011



Melissa with Terrie Gardner, Chairperson and Nola Randall-Mohk, Deputy Chairperson

- The **Each-One-Assist-One Program** is an ongoing partnership initiative with the University of Western Sydney (UWS) to identify and target barriers that inhibit CaLD clients from engaging with pathways to employment, particularly those transitioning into the community sector. Mentors work on inter-personal skills such as confidence-building, orientation to Australian work culture and communication skills. The program also offers education and training at UWS for CaLD students looking toward a community sector career. Additionally, through its Select Education Stream Program, the MRC assists young adults and adults to source and apply for Scholarships or enter further education. 200 job seekers assisted with Employment mentoring
- Soccer is (My) Life is a partnership initiative with The Big Issue and Parramatta City Council that offers a soccer coaching and training program every Thursday afternoon with accredited staff. This program provides an opportunity to create pathways for youth and young adults to connect with registered teams and foster closer ties between communities. Currently registered players and students are from the Nepalese, Bhutanese, Hazara, Sudanese and Ghanaian communities.
- The 2011 Census Assistance Program was a partnership initiative with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to maximise participation in the recent Census. Linking in with its capacity building and employment pathways programs, The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC recruited twelve bilingual workers to present 38 information sessions on how to fill out the census form for communities from Afghanistan, Burma, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Bhutan, India, China and Korea.
- In September, The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC co-presented at a Southern Sudanese church service under a partnership with the Traumatic Stress Clinic at Westmead Hospital. This project is based around building relationships between psychologists at the clinic and hard to reach communities with unresolved trauma, including the Southern Sudanese and the Afghan communities.
- In September, The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC presented an Immigration Forum at Parramatta Town Hall focusing on the Special Humanitarian Program in partnership with DIAC and the Parramatta Community Justice Clinic. Sixty participants from Iranian, Afghan, Southern Sudanese, Congolese, Guinean, Karen, Sri Lankan, Liberian, Bosnian and Chinese communities attended.
- The MRC convenes the Holroyd Parramatta Multicultural Network, a large network of government and community service providers interested in enhancing service provision to the CaLD community.

Other Highlights of the SGP program were as follows:

- 250 people attended the “Freedom from Fear” Refugee week celebrations
- After-school programs and homework support
- 90 community members participated in the Leadership Programs held in partnership with Anglicare
- 30 people attended Volunteer Training
- Driver education Program – 40 Afghan women participated women over 10 weeks
- 60 participated in the African Learning Circle held at the MRC
- Round table Family Violence Shows
- 500 people attended Harmony Day & International Women’s Day celebrations
- Supported Pathways to Primary Industry
- “Knowing Me Knowing You”- The rule of Law Forum
- 200 people attended the African Summer Festival in Parramatta
- “Find Your Voice” – 35 community members attended Public Speaking programs
- 12 young people attended a two-day camp at the Narrabeen Sports Academy. The camp provided an opportunity for at risk young people to engage with the Police and other services.

Successful partnerships included the programs with the AWG, PCJC, Wesley Mission, Rouse Hill Connect, GMCC, Anglicare Migrant Services, The NSW Police, Councils, TAFE and BMS.

I would like to end with expressing my sincere appreciation to the Chair Terri Gardner and the Executive Committee Nola Randall Mohk, Renu Narchal, Jason Guest. A special mention to Warren Schweitzer for the long hours spent on implementing the Strategic review of the organisation. Warren you can be assured that all that you have invested will bring big dividends to the organisation.

I acknowledge every member of the staff, the core team Aurelia Rahman, Dijana Mackic, Phin Tang, Priscella Engall, Maeve Brown and Solomon Freeman.

Melissa Monteiro
Executive Director

*Senator Kate Lundy
and Executive
Director and
Melissa Monteiro
with MRC staff*



ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL REPORT

During 2011, The Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre has maintained a positive financial status with both cash flow and equity increasing by over 15% since 2010. This has enabled MRC to expand its services and the organisation now leases two shops at ground level which allows for greater promotion of the activities of the Centre and provides valuable office and program space for the Settlement Services, Social Enterprise and Employment Support projects.

The ability of the MRC 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 Family and Community Services. We also acknowledge the important contribution of the local councils and clubs: The Hills Shire Council, Holroyd City Council, Parramatta City Council and Guildford Leagues Club. In addition the MRC has attracted funding from Relationships Australia, SHELL Refining, Settlement Services International and Western Union. The ability of the MRC to attract diverse funding allows the organisation to continue to provide specific services in response to emerging community needs.

The Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre also supports smaller community organisations. In 2011 the MRC agreed to auspice a grant through the Attorney General's Department for African Women Australia, in support of the project "Let Me Tell It My Way: Human Rights Education Through Narratives".

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 financial report please note:

- The Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre is in a financially sound position which is supported by the Audit Report.
- The organisation has equity of \$504,020 with cash reserves of \$909,336 which are reflected in the Balance Sheet.
- DIAC continues to be the primary funding source with over \$1.1 million received in this financial year. These funds have supported 14 Projects through the SGP and Settlement Services grants.
- The Department of Family and Community Services funds over \$411,000 for Perinatal, Early Intervention Projects, Social Inclusion, Hills Communities Interconnect, African Sessional Workers and Parra East Projects.
- We continued to work in partnership with Relationships Australia in the Strength to Strength Project with over \$116 000 being received.
- The other grants from Guilford Leagues Club (CDSE), The Hills Shire Council, Holroyd City Council, Parramatta City Council, the SHELL Refining Australia and Western Union have allowed the MRC to run specialised projects such as: Paint the Town Read, Women Creating a Better Tomorrow, Human Rights, School Survival Skills, Strategic Planning and the African Summer Festival.
- 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 the MRC offers the community.

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

Finally, I would like to thank Jason Guest, our Treasurer, Terri Gardner, Chairperson, Executive and Board Committee members and Melissa Monteiro, Executive Director, for their ongoing support, mentoring and guidance.

Dijana Mackic
Admin & Finance Coordinator



Warren Schweitzer, Board of Management with Kate Lundy-Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship and Julie Owens, MP



Warren Schweitzer, Staff Liaison Officer with John Dor and Thomas Ater, MRC African youth workers



Carmen Garcia, Director, Multicultural Youth South Australia and Nola Randall-Mohk, Deputy Chairperson

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Terrie Gardner
Nola Randall-Mohk
Jason Guest
Renu Narchal
Warren Schweitzer

Ajmer Singh
Albert Jubian
Andrew Ang
Ion Gluga
John Cornwall
Mark Lack
Mehdi Arbabzadeh
Neil El-Kadomi
Peter Saw Htoo
Renee Acker-Sessions
Safar Sarmed
Tilahun Woldegabriel
Umaru Binneh Conteh
Banu Ranganadhan

Kerry Nettle

Chairperson
 Deputy Chairperson
 Treasurer
 Secretary
 Staff Liaison Officer

Sikh Council of Australia
 Council of Australian Palestinian
 TAFE NSW
 Australian Romanian Association
 HARDA
 Individual
 Individual
 Parramatta Islamic Cultural Centre
 Individual
 Wessley Mission
 Noor Association
 African Oz
 Individual

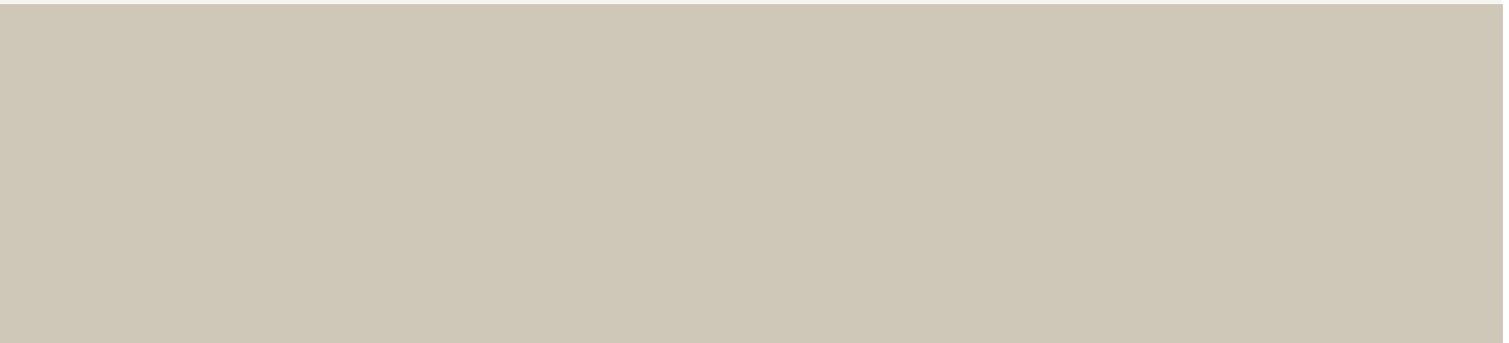
Program Development Officer
 The Hills Shire Council, ex-officio

Manager
 Community Capacity Building
 Parramatta City Council, ex-officio



Jason Guest, MRC Treasurer and Safar Sarmed

Dr Renu Narchal, Board of Management and Melissa Monteiro – Paint Parramatta Read, Parramatta Town Hall



Kerry Nettle, ex-officio, Parramatta City Council

Neil El-Kadomi, Board of Management member, with Meave Brown and Melissa Monteiro at Annual General Meeting, Dec 2010



Terrie Gardner, Melissa Monteiro and an ACL teacher





STAFF

Melissa Monteiro
Dijana Mackic
Linda Marsonet
Ifrah Mohamed
Wadiha Mouawad

Executive Director
Admin and Finance Coordinator
Bookkeeper
Customer Service Officer
Office Assistant

DIAC – SGP TEAM:

Aurelia Rahman	Community Capacity Building Coordinator
Thomas Ater (<i>until Dec 2010</i>)	African Youth SGP Worker
John Dor Achiek (<i>Sep 2010–Jun 2011</i>)	Humanitarian Youth SGP worker
Dativah Murungi (<i>Feb 2011–Jun 2011</i>)	Humanitarian Youth worker
Kassim Abood (<i>until Jun 2011</i>)	Iraqi SGP Worker
Maeve Brown	Community Development Officer-African communities
Emmanuel Kondok (<i>until Dec 2010</i>)	Community Development worker-African
Aidah Nakubulwa (<i>since Feb 2011</i>)	Community Development worker- African com
Priscella Engall	Community Settlement & Development Officer
Saw Aung Htut	Karen SGP Worker
Elizabeth Philipsz	Burmese SGP Worker
Getee Karim (<i>until Jun 2011</i>)	Afghan SGP Worker
Caroline Mueni Muisyo (<i>until Jan 2011</i>)	African Generalist SGP worker
Teresia Mwangi (<i>since Mar 2011</i>)	African Generalist SGP worker
Shantha Viswantahan	Indian Sub-continent SGP worker
Izeta Zecevic (<i>until Jun 2011</i>)	Humanitarian SGP Worker
Yuyang Su (<i>since Feb 2011</i>)	Chinese SGP worker
Xiaobing Cai (<i>since Feb 2011</i>)	Chinese group worker
Bih Juh Jin (<i>Feb 2011–Jun 2011</i>)	Chinese group worker
Bamathy Somasegaram (<i>Sep 2010-Mar 2011</i>)	Tamil SGP worker
Conscila Emilianus (<i>since Mar 2011</i>)	Tamil SGP worker



MRC staff at the Refugee Week, June 2011

Department of Human Services – Community Builders

Phin Tang *(since Mar 2011)*

Social Enterprise Program Coordinator

Department of Human Services – EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM:

Zulekha Nazir *(until Jun 2011)*

Early Intervention & Perinatal Coordinator

Norma Boules

Family CALD Worker

Li Hua Chu

Early Intervention Worker

Biljana Kulic

Early Intervention Worker

Department of Human Services – AFRICAN SESSIONAL PILOT PROJECT

Solomon Freeman

African Sessional Pilot Coordinator

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 *(until Jan 2011)*

Hills-Interconnect Project Coordinator

Mary-Rose Leona *(since May 2011)*

Hills-Interconnect Project worker

RAPS team:

Isho Georges (<i>until Aug 2010</i>)	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker- Arabic
Arige Sukkarieh (<i>since Sep 2010</i>)	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker- Arabic
Diing Bul (<i>until Sep 2010</i>)	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker- Dinka
Daniel Kwai Apat (<i>Nov 2010–Feb 2011</i>)	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker- Dinka
Ayan Makor (<i>since Apr 2011</i>)	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker- Dinka
Nasren Nasrat (<i>until Aug 2010</i>)	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker- Dari
Alham Ashiq (<i>since Oct 2010</i>)	Bi-lingual Family Support Worker- Dari
Biljana Kulic	Group worker

African Learning Circle:

David Pasipanodya (<i>Jul 2010–Apr 2011</i>)	African Learning Circle Facilitator
Atem Atem (<i>Apr 2011–Jun 2011</i>)	African Learning Circle Facilitator
Emmanuel Msafiri (<i>since Apr 2011</i>)	African Learning Circle Facilitator

CDSE Holroyd funding- Human Rights:

Bhawanl Loganathan (<i>since Feb 2011</i>)	Tamil group worker
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Parramatta City Council grant- Women Creating Better Tomorrow

Elizabeth Gezahegne (<i>until Jun 2011</i>)	Community development worker
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Department of Human Services – Parra East project

Lorna Chen (<i>Feb 2011–Jun 2011</i>)	Playgroup worker
Nancy Chu (<i>since Feb 2011</i>)	Playgroup worker

Casual community workers:

Maryam Zahid (<i>May 2011–Jun 2011</i>)	community worker- Afghan
Anthony Bee-Conteh (<i>Mar 2011–Jun 2011</i>)	community worker-African
Alia Bakht Noor (<i>since May 2011</i>)	community worker

*Saw Aung Htut
with Najah Kerbaj,
Centrelink*



*Caroline Muisyo – Christmas party
with Multicultural Women’s Group at
the Wentworthville Community Centre*



*Maryam Zahid
with participants of
sewing class*





Phin Tang



Ozen Karalink, Community Services and David Pasipanodya, facilitator with members of the African Learning Circle



Alia and Shantha – Paint Parramatta Read, Parramatta Town Hall



MRC staff and Board of Management

Lorna Chen, casual worker at Parra East playgroup



STS team – Alham, Biljana, Arige and Ayan





African Youth camp – Thomas Ater and John Dor with African youth and police



Thomas Ater, Norma Boules, Ayen Chol and Zulekha Nazir – End of Year Party 2010



Dativah, Priscella, Kassim and Li at the staff meeting



Su and Xiaobing – Chinese workers, Refugee Week



Dativah, Teresia and Aidah- Harmony Day, March 2011

Shantha, Ifrah, Conscla, Solomon, Kassim, Elizabeth, Izeta, Su, Bhawani and Bi-Yuh





Staff, volunteers and performers – Harmony Day, March 2011

Wendy, Anthony, Elizabeth, Aurelia and Solomon



John Dor and Daniel – youth consultation

MRC 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)
- Family and Community Services – Community Services
- Area Assistance Scheme (administered by Community Services)
- Parramatta City Council
- Holroyd City Council
- The Hills Shire Council
- Guildford Leagues Club
- The Foundation For Young Australians
- Western Union

*UWS Partnership Award
for Parramatta Community
Justice Clinic and Blacktown
Court Support Program with
Dr Geoffrey Lee*



Supporting Agencies and Partnerships – Government

- Westmead Hospital and Centre for Newborn Care
- Parramatta East Public School
- Parramatta West Public School
- Parramatta North Public School
- Castle Hill High School
- Ironbark Ridge Public School
- Ngroo Preschool
- The Cottage Preschool
- SIDS and Kids NSW
- Save the Children NSW
- Karitane
- Arthur Phillip High School
- Holroyd High School
- Parramatta High School
- Macarthur Girls High School
- Open Training and Education Network (OTEN)
- Office of Environment and Heritage
- Kidsafe NSW
- Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA)
- Attorney General Department of Justice
- The Australian College for Languages (Navitas)
- Legal Aid NSW
- NSW Police
- The Department of Education
- The University of Western Sydney - School of Law
- Traumatic Stress Clinic (Westmead Hospital)
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics
- The Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations
- NSW Refugee Health Services
- NSW Ombudsman Office
- Macquarie Legal Centre
- The Human Rights Commission of Australia
- Office of Information and Communication
- AMEP Counselling Service
- Australian Electoral Commission
- Holroyd CALD Consultative Committee
- NSW Police
- STARTTS
- Holroyd City Council
- Parramatta City Council
- Rouse Hill Community Centre
- The Hills Shire Council
- The Hills Community Centre
- Centrelink
- Western Sydney Area Health Service
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Office of Fair Trading
- Department of Human Services - Community Services
- Granville TAFE Outreach
- Local Area Commands: Merrylands, Parramatta, Rosehill, Granville
- University of Sydney
- University of New South Wales
- Department of Housing
- Westmead Hospital

Supporting Agencies and Partnerships – Community Organisations

- Community Health Centres in Parramatta and Holroyd
- Wentworthville Youth Centre
- Josephite Community Aid
- Boronia Multicultural Services
- Relationships Australia
- St Vincent De Paul
- Anglicare
- Community Christ Church
- Together for Humanity Foundation
- African Oz
- Australian Soccer Referees Federation
- Western Sydney Tenancy Service
- Holroyd Parramatta Family Support
- The Big Issue
- St Anthony's Family Care
- United Future Foundation
- African Aids Foundation
- Mission Australia
- Fitted for Work
- Parramatta Community Justice Clinic
- Parramatta Young Christian Workers
- Family Relationship Centre
- Tri Community Exchange
- Family Practice
- Catholic Care
- Red Cross
- Diverse Community Care
- Parramatta Health Multicultural Access Committee
- Harris Park Community Centre
- Community Health Services (Hills, Merrylands, Parramatta)
- Wesley Mission
- Rouse Hill Families Connect
- Granville Multicultural Community Centre (GMCC)
- Immigrant Women's Speakout Association
- Cumberland Women's Health Services

- Mile End Community Church
- Holroyd Parramatta Multicultural Network (HPMN)
- Hills Community Aid and Information Service
- Baptist Community Services
- Bears of Hope
- Miracle Babies
- Ku Children's Services
- Karabi Community Development Services
- Hillsong Youth Services
- St Michael's Family Centre
- Glenhaven Community Centre
- Gandhi Outreach Programs
- The Smith Family
- Auburn Diversity Services Inc
- Syd-West Multicultural Services
- Metro MRC
- Parramatta Leagues Club
- Community Relations Commission for NSW
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Ethnic Communities Council (ECC)
- Lions Club of Parramatta
- Myriad Consultants
- Ames Employment
- Max Employment

Ethno-specific Community Partnerships

- Australian Korean Welfare Association
- Technocrats Association of Australia Inc
- SEVA Inc
- Australian Hindi Indian Association
- The Sikh Council of Australia
- Sudan Sports Association of NSW
- Bhutanese Association
- Guinea Community Association
- Community of Southern Sudan and Other Marginalised Areas
- El-Bethel Crusades
- Yirrol Community Association
- Warrap Community Association
- Karen Association of Australia
- Rumbek Women's Group
- Zimaid
- Aweil Community Association
- Igbo Community Australia
- Chaldean Association
- Rwanda Association of NSW
- Hazara Council of Australia
- Dinka Jieng Association
- African Women's Group
- African Women Australia
- Twic Mayardit Youth Association
- African Diversity Council of Australia
- Skidrow- Sierra Leone Radio
- Bhar al-ghazal Youth Union
- Granville Nepal Football Club
- Rumbek Youth Association
- Radio Sudan
- Bor Community Association
- Afghan Australia Youth Network of NSW
- Ethiopian Community Association
- Sierra Unite
- Iraqi Graduates Forum
- Federation of African Communities Council
- Dinka Literacy Association
- Australian Ethiopian Association
- Iranian Community Organisation
- African Communities Council
- Madi Ethnic Community Association
- Darfur Association
- Congolese Association of NSW
- Duk Community Organisation
- Sudanese Association of the Lost Boys
- Equatorial Community and Welfare Association
- Luo Community Association
- Upper Nile Regional Youth Association
- Nigerian Association of NSW
- Edo Association of NSW
- Odua Association of NSW
- Abyie Community Organisation
- Association of Liberian Communities
- Ghan Lighthouse Institute
- Friends of Sierra Leone
- Zimbabwean Community Association
- Tamil Refugee Assistance Network

Paint Parra REaD Launch at Parramatta Town Hall



OUTREACH ORGANISATIONS

- Affordable Community Housing
- African Women Australia Inc
- Australian Korean Welfare Association
- Special Children Services Centre

*Australian
Korean Welfare
Association –
Harmony Day,
March 2011*



VOLUNTEERS

English Classes:

Nancy Shearer
Chris Ligertwood

Migration advice:

Amanda Kirkpatrick
Bol Nyoul

Tax help:

Michael Perry

Reception volunteers:

Bhawani Loganathan
Januka Acharya

Burmese/Karen/Tamil SGP Project

Volunteers:

Anne Josephine Theresa
Skandakumar – *Tamil volunteer*
Aung Hun – *Karen volunteer*
Dnthumathy St George – *Tamil volunteer*
Krishan Rajaratnam – *Tamil volunteer*
Ma Hla Wut Hmon – *Burmese volunteer*

Community Capacity Building SGP project:

Volunteers:

Anita Jahid



Student placement:

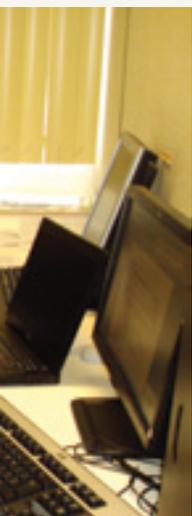
Navreet Kaur – *Granville TAFE*
Promodh Johnson – *Granville TAFE*
Rupinder Kaur – *Granville TAFE*
Sophia Sandy – *Granville TAFE*



Aung Han –
Karen Student
Placement



Aurelia
Rahman and
Alham Ashiq,
MRC staff
with Rupinder
Kaur, volunteer
(centre) –
Harmony Day
2011



Prakash
and Daniel,
Employment
Assistance
volunteers and
Ibrah, Customer
Service Officer
with a client
assisting with
job seeking

Indian Sub-continent SGP project:

Volunteers:

Alia Bakht-Noor
Anita Jahid

Generalist SGP project:

**University of Western Sydney
student placements – Each One**

Assist One project:

Adrian Serban
Daniel Parmenion
Elizabeth Holiday
Judy Sun
Lisa Thompson
Mariam Albaf
Ngoc Chanh Nguyen
Pamella Barkachi
Prakash Ganeshalingam
Pritishna Ram
Sofia Edsomwan
Trang Au
Yedwana Ncube
Zeynep Benli

Student placement:

Ring Malek – *Granville TAFE*
Yom Mapiou – *Birrong Girls High School
Work Experience*

Early Intervention Project

Volunteers:

Ceu Ping Jiang
Chris Ligertwood
Li Wang

Hills Inter-Connect project:

Volunteers:

Beverly Pearson – *English classes*
Beverly McWilliam
Hsieh Li-Fen Lin
Lynette White

SETTLEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM REPORT

The SGP team of the MRC comprises the following workers: Aurelia Rahman (Coordinator), Priscella Engall, Maeve Brown, Emmanuel Kondok, Aidah Nakubulwa, Thomas Ater, John Dor Akech Achiek, Elizabeth Philipsz, Saw Aung Htut (Victor), Bamathy Somasegaram, Conscila Emilianus, Yuyang Su, Xiaobing Cai, Bih Yuh Jin, Getee Karim, Kassim Abood, Izeta Zecevic, Alham Ashiq, Caroline Mueni Muisyo, Teresia Mwangi, Shantha Viswanathan.

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 had a significant impact on the individuals and communities with whom they are working, initiating and delivering much needed community projects, addressing issues of access and equity and working towards integration of the newer communities into the broader fabric of the Australian society.

During the past year, increased awareness of issues affecting refugee and migrant communities has been created and relevant service providers became aware of employing better engagement strategies.

During the 2010–2011 financial year, the SGP team has addressed the needs of 4,620 clients and made over 10,000 referrals to relevant and appropriate services. Over 3,500 newly and recently arrived migrants participated in support groups and other activities organised by project workers.

There were a number of issues identified and addressed by the SGP team through casework and group activities during the past year. These issues included: English language proficiency, lack of affordable and appropriate housing, gaps in education, barriers to employment, recognition of overseas qualifications, Australian work culture and 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 endeavoured to develop strategies and generate adequate leadership within the target communities to ensure the ongoing involvement of the communities in addressing and resolving issues affecting them through the development and implementation of appropriate projects.

The 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 increase access to services for people from CALD backgrounds.

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

The SGP workers participate in key regional multicultural networks, interagencies, forums and service planning committees to provide input and feedback, guidance and advice.

The projects that the SGP team was involved in are numerous and encompass a large range of activities. We would like to present some of the most significant highlights of the projects and initiatives taken during the past year:



Refugee Week 2011

Facilitating Leadership and Community Engagement

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 share information and work on joint projects and collaborative partnerships that benefit the community as a whole.

The MRC continues to be a strong part of the **Hills Multicultural Network** and works with service providers in the area to address issues of service access and equity. The MRC is also the convener of the Multicultural Network.

Soccer Is Life Program – Partnership with Parramatta City Council, Sudan Sports Association of NSW and Australian Soccer Referees Federation. This was a 3 month round robin soccer tournament for youth-at-risk from Sudanese and other marginalised communities (including Afghan, Lebanese, Iraqi) living in Western Sydney. This soccer engagement program enabled us to reach over **150** young people and keep them focused on positive, life affirming, healthy activities every weekend for three months. Every week a Soccer Update bulletin was broadcast to promote the efforts of the team players.

Afghan Education Intervention Project – Partnership with Marsden HS, Multicultural Health Service, Dept of Education, Eastwood LAC, Ryde Council.

The project included a series of education programs with Afghan and Iranian parents to introduce the community to various health services, the role of the police and an overview of the roles and responsibilities of local councils. A youth program was also organized to canvas intergenerational issues between parents and their children.



Refugee Week Event 2011



Refugee Week Event Performers



Refugee Week Celebrations



Soccer is Life Tournament 2010-11

Find Your Voice Program – Partnership with Together for Humanity Foundation. A three week training program to assist 35 community members from Afghanistan, Burma, Sierre Leone, Sudan, Ghana, Bhutan & Sri Lanka with public speaking, engaging the audience, confidence building and storytelling skills. Graduates of the program grew in confidence and pride about connecting with people through their ability to distil their story into a powerful form of communication. Some expressed enhanced skills in public speaking and job interviews.

Freedom From Fear Concert – Graduates from the **Find Your Voice Program** – South Sudanese & Karen – presented *A Refugees' Moment in Time* segment. As the audience on the day was predominantly youth, the two presenters were able to engage the audience in retelling a key moment in their refugee journey which proved life changing. Communities represented in the concert included Karen, Sudanese, Sierra Leone, Sri Lankan, Turkish and Samoan. The event was a showcase of refugee resilience and talent and also gave an opportunity for communities to express themselves through cultural mediums with a view to increase awareness of cultural / social diversity in refugee communities, and thus foster social cohesion.

Karen Refugee Week Celebration was held this year with about 150 people attending. Two Karen girls shared their refugee experience through a powerful presentation. The South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE provided information about their *educational pathways for refugee youth*.

Find Your Voice Program 2011





Mentoring Programs

Each: One: Assist: One Employment Assistance Program – Partnership with University of Western Sydney – Psychology Dept. Project assists with job seeking, collects research data on employment barriers affecting newly arrived refugees and provides training for those moving into community sector. Overall 16 CaLD students assisted 200 clients. 71% experienced increased confidence in jobseeking independently. One graduate is now Community Development Officer at Strathfield City Council.

Afghan Youth League. We have been working with the **National Launchpad Grant** with **The Foundation for Young Australians** in 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 class operates with mentor group, working with students in Years 7–9, with homework assistance, life skills & peer support strengthening exercises. Following the pilot program, the classes have now expanded into two weekly groups. The group has successfully delivered 86 group sessions for young Afghans.

Communities Pride Peer Support Group (19–26 years of age) strives to build the participants into educated, empowered and self reliant young people. Some of the outcomes included community newsletters relaying positive stories about community members, academic / employment achievements. Work has been undertaken with ethnic media, eg. Radio Sudan, on strategic planning and revamping training program. An employment and education pathways information day was organised with UWS. These activities have assisted with increasing the number of community members accessing various programs at MRC.

A **Youth Training Workshop** was organised to build the capacity of future Karen leaders. Thirty-five (35) Karen youth attended the workshop. Youth were involved in group discussions, role plays and various other activities.

Mentoring support provided to community volunteers and student placements 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, address 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.

After-School Programs were run by the African and Humanitarian Youth workers during 2010–11. These programs have included homework support and drop-in programs at local high schools and youth centres. Homework help programs were run regularly at Merrylands High School and Macarthur Girls High School with between 5-11 young people attending each session. The Homework Help programs focussed on assisting newly arrived students with their assignments, but also with helping them to build their English literacy and numeracy skills. The workers also attended drop-in programs held at the Granville Youth & Community Recreation Centre and provided support with sporting and other after-school activities.

Sporting Programs were organised by the African Youth and Humanitarian Youth Workers in 2010–11. The African Youth Worker partnered with GYCRC, GMCC and the police to continue to run sporting and bbq events targeting Muslim and African young people through the **MaAP program. Soccer is Life Tournament** also continued to run weekly during 2010–11 and a Youth Soccer Friendly Match was organised in April 2011 between a Sudanese Youth Team and a Bhutanese Youth Team, with the aim of encouraging young people from refugee backgrounds to participate in sporting activities and to give young people a chance to interact through sport.

*Friendly Soccer
is Life Game –
Bhutan Vs South
Sudan 2011*



Digital Media Performance and Visual Arts Program for young people in partnership with ICE. 8 sessions were held focusing on visual arts (**Optic Stories**) and 8 Sessions were held focusing on music writing, performance, and video clip producing (**Megaphonic MC's**). The program not only gave young people an opportunity to access social support programs, but gave them the chance to learn new skills and potentially build careers in music and the arts.

An African Youth & Police Camp was held in 2010 at the Sydney Academy of Sports facility in Narrabeen. The camp was attended by 9 African young people, some of whom had previous contact with the legal system or who had experienced or were at-risk of homelessness, dropping out of school and substance abuse. While the camp included a number of sporting and outdoor activities, it also focused on providing information sessions to the young people on: legal issues and the police with the Parramatta, Holroyd and Rosehill Police MCLO's, accessing legal aid support with Macquarie Legal Centre, sexual health and alcohol and other drug issues with High Street Youth Health Service, issues relating to discrimination with the Anti-Discrimination Board, and accessing other youth support services with The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC and GYCRC.

Karen School – Partnership with Woodville Community Services. Two homework support classes run weekly for over 30 Karen students.



African Youth Camp information session with NSW Police



African Youth Camp 2010

Education and Training

Leadership Skills training has been undertaken during October 2010. The training program focused on understanding leadership within the community context, styles of leadership, communication skills, advocacy, and networking. 25 participants from various cultural backgrounds such as African, Bhutanese, Pacific Islander, Indian subcontinent attended. The course has provided the participants with the tools to understand how best they can assist their communities and provided educational pathways into TAFE to study community welfare. This project was a joint partnership with Anglicare and Granville TAFE Outreach.

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 community leaders from 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.

Women Learning New Skills – a series of workshops were run *in partnership with TAFE Granville (Outreach)* to assist Afghan Women improve their communication skills in English, enhance their self-esteem, find out about employment opportunities and prepare them to engage with the wider community by building confidence and leadership.

Leadership Training
2011 – exercise



Leadership
Training 2011



Community Education Programs

Driver Education Program – *partnership with the RTA.* Forty (40) Afghan women participated in this 10 week program to learn about the Driver Knowledge Test, sit for their L-plates and thus gain an invaluable sense of independence.

The **Pathways to Primary Industry Project** has seen the Karen community undertake a 16 week course where they received their “Statement of Attainment in Vocational and Community Engagement”. Onsite training took place at the Orchard Hills farm. Our partners included Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, Centrelink, NSW Farmers’ Association and DEEWR.

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.

Driver Education Program – *partnership with the Australia Arab Council and RTA.* Participants in this program gained increased understanding of road safety, the role of police, the Australian law, insurance, licence renewal and car maintenance.

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 wellbeing of children, young people, their families and communities. The sessions this year focussed on changes to the child protection system in NSW, how to better support families and children, roles and responsibilities within the family and how to talk to teenagers about freedom and responsibility. This year the African Learning Circle was co-facilitated by David Pasipanodya, Atem Atem and Emmanuel Masafiri.



Pathways to Primary Industries Participant

Pathways to Primary Industries Training



Afghan Women's Driving Group



Cancer Council Information Session



Women's Health Talks

A community education program on personal care and hygiene and women's health matters covered aspects relating to general personal hygiene, health checks and screening, family planning and healthy lifestyle and nutrition.

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.

Health Information Session



Hindi Storytelling Session held at Vinegar Hill Library, Rouse Hill was attended by 30 mothers residing in the Hills Shire. Participating parents from the Indian sub-continent found the stories from ancient folklore valuable as it inculcated positive values in the children while keeping them connected with the culture of their parents.

Afghan Women's Information Session



2010 Zest Award Nomination for the African Learning Circle – David Borger MP, Aurelia Rahman and Maeve Brown



Learning New Skills, Improving English

Fashion design classes were conducted at MRC in partnership with Granville TAFE Outreach. This was a positive step towards creating a pathway to employment, confidence building, skills enhancement and improving the English language proficiency of newly arrived migrant women from various CALD backgrounds.

Pattern making classes for members of the Wentworthville Women's Support Group were held by a volunteer from the group with experience in this field. This not only empowered the women with a new skill, but also increased their self confidence and interaction with each other.



Sewing Classes with the Multicultural Women's Support Group

Capacity Building Initiatives

Domestic Bliss Project: Breakdown in family relationships has been identified as one of the key issues affecting new migrants from the Sikh community. During this year the MRC continued to support this initiative of the Sikh Council of Australia. 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. A training session was organised and delivered for interested people from the Sikh community with the view to assist them in better understanding what constitutes domestic violence and what services can be accessed to resolve the issues. The group also participated in White Ribbon Day which raises awareness about family violence.



Tai Chi class

Domestic Bliss Workshop 2010



A successful **Harmony Day** event was held in March 2011 at Parramatta Church Street Mall. Multicultural stalls, vibrant performances by artists from various cultural backgrounds and a good turnout of people created a wonderful atmosphere of celebration that broke down barriers between cultures and people. This project was supported by Parramatta City Council, Merrylands and Parramatta Police and local community organisations.

Harmony Day Event – Holroyd – Partnership with Holroyd City Council, Holroyd LAC. This event was organized in conjunction with refugee communities so they could express their feelings about acceptance and tolerance in Western Sydney. The event included inspiring speeches from youth leaders from Somalia and Afghanistan. The event also included cultural exchanges of food and rituals: Ethiopian coffee, Sudanese singing, Chinese dancing, Tongan singing, Afghan henna tattoos & Sudanese / Lebanese / Indian morning tea.



Harmony Day at Greystanes Primary



Harmony Day Performance in Parramatta



Karen Stall at Harmony Day in Parramatta

Holroyd City Council Mayor – Peter Managhen, and Priscella Engall – Harmony Day 2011 – Merrylands



Roundtable discussion on domestic and family violence was held during April 2011 with the aim of examining current practice in delivering family support services to CALD communities in Western Sydney. This was the culmination of a one year action research project to look at the intersection between migration and domestic violence. Over 40 representatives of various services in Western Sydney participated in this dynamic discussion.

Iraqi Cultural Day – an initiative of the Iraqi Australian University Graduates Platform held in November 2010 has been supported by the Iraqi SGP worker who provided guidance and assistance in formulating the program, had an input in shaping the day and promoted it widely to relevant service providers.

About 300–400 people from Iraqi and Arabic background attended and all Iraqi ethnicities were represented in the program such as Arabic, Assyrian, Chaldean, Kurdish, Mandaean. The program included a presentation about Iraqi people contribution to the world’s civilization, Arts, Antiques exhibition, Iraqi music and food.

Family Matters series in the Hills aims to introduce participants to the power of positive parenting, how to raise happy, healthy and resilient children and how to balance all aspects of life. This is a project in partnership with Sydwest Multicultural Services, Wesley Mission (Rouse Hill Connect), Hills Community Health and Hills Community Aid and Information Inc.

Assertiveness and Confidence Building Workshop – In partnership with the Early Intervention team, an assertiveness and confidence building workshop for 30 women from the South Asian communities was held in November 2010 at Parramatta West Public School. The eloquent speaker who was of South Asian descent was able to engage the women and provide culturally appropriate and practical tips on how to gain confidence in their day to day activities.

A one day **legal workshop** organised in partnership with the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) and Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA) in November 2010 at MRC. Twenty-five participants from various cultural backgrounds took part in this day long workshop which explored the Australian legal system, with specific focus on debts, fines, how to engage with a lawyer, what evidence means and how to provide it. The participants gained knowledge about various legal issues that may assist them or members of their communities.

DV Roundtable



Sri Lankan Tamil Mother’s Group

“Women as Mothers” workshop



DV Roundtable Discussions



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 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.

Karen Community Housing Co-operative Limited

In order to solve the rental issues that affects the emerging Karen community, community members founded *The Karen Community Housing Co-operative Limited* on 11 December 2010. With advice from Ruben F. Amores, the President of Kapitbahayan Coop and in cooperation with Common Equity NSW Ltd, currently ten individuals obtained single units in Chester Street, Merrylands.



Afghan Parents Meeting



Housing Co-operative workshop

Sustainable Living Workshop with the Karen Community



Support Groups

Regular group meetings with **Burmese and Rohingya women** 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.

Wentworthville Multicultural Women's Support Group – partnership with Early Intervention and Perinatal project to assist new arrivals in the area with information and support in their settlement journey.

Hills Multicultural Women's Support Group – organised jointly by Sydwest Multicultural Services and the MRC to address issues of social isolation, parenting and life in a new country.

An outing to Canberra to visit **Parliament House and the War Memorial** was organised by the Burmese SGP worker for new and recent arrivals from Burma. The participants had a tour of the Parliament House and the War Memorial which enabled them to better understand the nature of democracy in Australia.

Multicultural Women's Support Group



Burmese Group Trip to Canberra



Multicultural Women's Group



Opera House Trip with the Wentworthville Women's Support Group





International Women's Day Speaker – 2011



Consultation with the Tamil Community

Forums:

Employment Pathways Forum held in partnership with African Women Australia (AWAU) in 2010. The Forum included sessions on starting a small business, finding employment, foster care, working in the community, public and private sectors and information on networking, volunteering, how to search for employment, résumé writing and writing job applications. Guest speakers from New Enterprise Initiative Skills, Max Employment, The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC, Anglicare, AWAU and Community Services, presented on the day. Following this forum 4 women were assisted with résumé writing and 2 gained employment in Aged Care, while the other 2 progressed to the interview stage. An additional 5 women were provided with extensive support, which included referrals to the Each:One:Assist:One Program, assistance with résumé writing, and help with addressing selection criteria.

Immigration Forum at Parramatta Town Hall – Partnership with UWS School of Law/Community Engagement Dept, Parramatta Community Justice Clinic, DIAC, Dept Justice Attorney General and Parramatta City Council. The Forum addressed a number of pressing issues which prevent refugee communities from achieving true settlement due to separation from loved ones. Presentations were given by pro bono migration agents and the Humanitarian Program Decision Support Section, from DIAC in Canberra. This project has received a Partnership Award with the School of Law at UWS for the Parramatta Community Justice Clinic project and Steering Committee work.

Knowing Me! Knowing You! – The Rule of Law Forum. Partnership with Attorney General's Department, University of Western Sydney (School of Law), Macquarie Legal Centre, Parramatta Local Area Command, Granville Local Area Command. A cultural exchange event between African Communities, Parramatta and Granville LAC and pro bono legal assistance in Western Sydney. Testimonies were given from Congolese and Southern Sudanese leaders about the law and Policing in their home countries and the challenges of circumnavigating the laws of the land in Australia. The Police and workers from the UWS / Macquarie Legal Centre's Sudanese Court Support Program and the Parramatta Community Justice Clinic talked about community engagement programs and their services. Project received PCJC Partnership Award.

Safety Forum at Wentworthville. The aim of the forum was to create awareness about home and personal safety. The panel discussion that followed identified safety concerns of the local South Asian community and strategies to address these issues. This was a partnership with Merrylands Local Area Command and Holroyd City Council.

Getting to Know the Australian Education System and Pathways to TAFE Courses information sessions were run by the Tamil worker for newly arrived refugees and migrants from Sri Lanka.

Living in Australia Forum – sharing journeys and experiences of Tamil women who lived in Australia for more than 10 years with newly arrived members of the community.

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.

Celebrating 100 years of women achievements – International Women's Day 2011 was held at MRC on the 8th of March 2011. This event included speakers from TAFE, Business, and community members' stories. There were community cultural performances, singing and dancing. Our partners in this event were ACL and Iranian Community Organisation. The Information Corner provided women with information about local services.

International Women's Day Forum: Supported by MRC, a Women's Forum 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 various community facilities.

Cultural Exchange Programs

Three Cross-Cultural Exchange Programs were held during 2010–11 in partnership with the African Women's Group and STARTTS. The excursions included trips to Mt. Annan Botanic Gardens, Griffith and Bathurst. The aim of the Cross-Cultural Exchange Program is to provide an opportunity for African women, women from other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Australian born women to exchange cultures at a grass roots level, reduce isolation, increase mutual understanding through direct contact and provide an opportunity for African women to integrate with the broader community. This year two of the trips were to rural areas which helped women to better understand life in rural Australia and to introduce women from rural Australia to African women from different backgrounds who are now living in Australia.

Excursion to the Auburn Botanical Gardens – To coincide with Eid and the Chinese Moon festival, 14 members of the Wentworthville Multicultural Womens Group enjoyed an excursion to the Auburn Botanical Gardens. Participants gained knowledge about Australian fauna and flora and native birds and animals. A special tour of the Calligraphy exhibition was organised with information provided on the Chinese Moon Festival and Chinese calligraphy.

“Putting the Pieces Together” was a network forum for service providers, that showcased some of the projects that are working well to address issues relating to employment, education and housing for refugees. The forum was held in June 2011 as part of Refugee Week. Speakers from the MRC, Anglicare, DEEWR and Human Rights Commission presented on the day. The aim of the forum was to showcase examples of good practice in the provision of better services to migrant and refugee clients. The African Youth Worker presented a best practice example of **The African Parents School Support Program: The case of Pendle Hill High School** at the forum. The presentation showcased a project that was working to help parents support their children's learning at home, create better communication between teachers and parents, help parents advocate for their children, and overall help parents become active partners in their children's education.

Community Development Support was provided to a number of African community groups and associations in 2010–11. Southern Sudanese Warrup Community, the Southern Hope Community, the Twic Mayardit Community of NSW, the Federation of Congolese Assoc. , the Zimbabwean Community, the Association of Liberian Communities in NSW, the Ethiopian Community of NSW, the Igbo Association of NSW, the Dinka Literacy Association, the Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency, the African Women's Group and African Women Australia.



Cultural Exchange in Griffith



Refugee Week Forum Presenters



Excursion to Mt Annan Botanic Gardens



Excursion to Bathurst

Cultural Celebrations and Festivals

African Summer Festival – Partnership with the African Leaders’ Steering Committee, African Oz, Western Union & supported by Holroyd High School. The festival was an inclusive, celebratory showcase of the diversity and strength of African refugee communities in the wider community. The event allowed opportunities for community members to build their capacity through project planning, develop social enterprise projects and to network and enhance their skill sets. The project also enabled a partnership to grow between Holroyd High School and African families whose children attend the school. Community leaders steered the project, and on the day were enlisted as Team Leaders.

The Hills Cultural Festival: This vibrant multicultural annual event was held in May 2011 at Rouse Hill Town Centre to celebrate the cultural diversity of the Hills Shire. This is a partnership with services and community members in the Hills Shire: Glenhaven KU Children’s Services, Wesley Mission, The Hills Shire Council, the Bahai Community of the Hills, Hills Community Aid and Information Service, Rouse Hill Town Centre. This year well over 700 people attended the festival.



African Summer Festival 2010 Performers

Hills Cultural Festival



Hills Cultural Festival



African Summer Festival 2010

The achievements highlighted in this report were made possible through the commitment and hard work of all the staff involved. A grateful thank you to all the SGP team members for their work with clients and communities and for the positive outcomes they have achieved during the year.

The achievements mentioned above are only a glimpse into the complex work that SGP workers do throughout the year. This 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 each and every one of us.

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 the support she has provided to the team in various ways.

We had to say goodbye to a few workers at the end of June 2011. Izeta Zecevic, Kassim Abood and Bih Yuh Jin have left the MRC. Caroline Muysio Mueni and Emmanuel Kondok had finished up earlier in the year. I would like to thank them all for their work and commitment to the refugee and migrant communities.

Thomas Ater has left the MRC in January 2011 and sadly passed away a few months later in Southern Sudan. He has been a great youth worker, passionate about making a difference in the lives of young people and always eager to help and support everyone at MRC. His untimely death has come as a shock to everybody. We will always remember him and his unwavering commitment to young people.

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, Fair Trading NSW, 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 looking forward to new challenges and achievements in the year to come.

Aurelia Rahman
Coordinator



Harmony Day 2011



Launching Paint Parramatta Read



MRC Staff at International Women's Day

WE REMEMBER

THOMAS ATER

(1970–2011)

Thomas Ater was born in Sudan and came to Australia as a refugee with his family in 1998 from Cairo, Egypt.

Sports, young people, empowerment and education were always a part of Thomas's life in Africa and in Australia. Thomas played professional basketball in Egypt and Australia in addition to coaching and working with young people. He saw sports as a tool to engage with young people and a means of strengthening their leadership and resilience, keeping them in school and helping them become productive members of their communities.

Through coaching Thomas moved into youth work. He worked with the Granville Youth & Community Recreation Centre to run basketball, life skills and drop-in programs for young people. He worked with Granville Multicultural Community Centre to run the "Risky Business" Program. His work in turn was the driving factor behind the project winning the 2010 Western Sydney Zest Award. Most recently, from 2008–2010, Thomas was employed at the Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC as the African Youth Worker, where he helped numerous young people and their families through casework, information sessions, working with schools, after-school programs, and sports and life skills sessions.

Thomas passed away from Malaria on Monday, Aug. 15th while in Sudan.

Thomas was an amazing youth worker, with an incredible ability to connect with young people and advocate for youth issues, settlement issues and the needs of his community. His positive attitude, energy and commitment made him an inspiring person to be around and pleasure to work with. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends, his colleagues, many in the community sector, schools, government and of course the young people he helped every day.

Thomas is irreplaceable, but his legacy lives on in the young people he inspired. A group of young people, led by Acouth John, Ayan Makor, & John Dor Akech Achiek have been meeting to organise sporting tournaments and community events to celebrate Thomas's life. The first event was held on Saturday, Sept. 24th in Merrylands Park and attracted over 200 young people, leaders and community members. These young people will continue to meet and plan events so that they can inspire the next generation.



EARLY INTERVENTION & PERINATAL REPORT

The Early Intervention and Perinatal Team have the pleasure to present our seventh AGM report. 2010–2011 has been a very busy and productive year.

This year we farewelled our Project Coordinator Zulekha Nazir who had been with us for seven years. We thank Zulekha for sharing her time, talents and enthusiasm and wish her happiness as she embarks on the next stage of her journey.

In the past year we continued to support families in creating a greater level of access to services, providing information relating to child health, child development, strengthening parent/child relationships, as well as preparing children for a smoother transition to school.

To ensure that children experience increased success at home as well as at school, EIP offered an extensive array of services for families:

- Parents and Grandparents support groups
- Playgroups
- Home visiting program
- Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)
- School Holiday Program
- Ongoing collaboration with other service providers

*School
holiday
program*





Multicultural Women's Group – Healthy Cooking workshop



Stretching exercises for grandparents in Merrylands

The aim of support groups is to break social isolation, ease the understanding of Australian culture and inspire our clients' hopes for a better life in this country. The project offered information about rearing children in Australia, parenting between different cultures and offered examples from among the many who have overcome similar struggles to become Australian success stories.

EIP Team facilitates following support groups:

- Multicultural Women's Group
- Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren
- Mothers and Babies Support Group at Westmead Hospital
- Mothers and Babies Support Group at Parramatta Community Health

64 families with 48 children registered with our support groups in 2010 -2011. Group members participated in a range of different information sessions. Some of them included: effective communications workshop, cross cultural exchange, cultural budgeted cooking, baby massage sessions, information session about signs and effects of post-natal depression, safe travelling with babies, children nutrition, women's health etc.

Our team takes great care in building a safe and creative learning environment for children and parents in order to ensure that children grow and achieve their utmost potential. Essential to the success of our playgroups are our partnerships with families, local schools, government and non-government agencies. Our current playgroups include:

- Multicultural Support Playgroup in Wentworthville
- Sharing and Learning Playgroup in Granville
- Parramatta East Public School Playgroup in Parramatta
- Parramatta West Public School Playgroup in Parramatta
- Parramatta North Public School Playbuss
- CALD Family Support Playgroup in Merrylands



Readiness to school – Wentworthville Playgroup



Graduation at Parramatta West Public School

During the last year 242 parents and 261 children enrolled in our playgroups in Parramatta and Holroyd Local Government Areas.

School readiness programs have been very popular with 30 children participating in the program every week across our playgroups. Ongoing feedback from parents has been very positive. Early literacy continued to be a high priority for our project. We continuously used different opportunities to help children to learn. Our playgroups provide ongoing support to children in developing listening and speaking skills especially during group time. The team worked very hard to create an environment where children are exposed to print, music, languages and the arts, have stories read to them, and have regular access to stimulating, play-based learning materials and experiences.

Wentworthville Multicultural Playgroup participated in one year long research that is in its final stage. The research focused on involving, supporting and sustaining the early literacy practices of children and families in supported playgroups and is funded by a grant from the Australian Research Council and Families NSW, Community Services. The project team is led by Professor Alastair Pennycook from the University of Technology, Sydney and also includes Dr. Liam Morgan, Associate Professor Ken Cruickshank from the University of Sydney and Dr Criss Jones-Diaz from the University of Western Sydney.

CALD Family Support playgroup Merrylands and Parramatta West Playgroup participated in a 7 week research from Neuroscience Research Australia - Evaluation of CALD specific brochure about safely restraining children travelling in cars. The aim is to compare the effectiveness of the brochure between newly arrived immigrant communities who speak different languages that are not covered in most translated documents around child safety in cars, versus the effectiveness in more established communities who do have access to technical documents in their first language - such as Arabic. The research was conducted by Phillipa Crook Research Assistant and Team.

Playgroups have proven effective in helping parents become more nurturing, to manage their children's behaviour more effectively and promote their children's language and literacy.

The Early Intervention and Perinatal Project takes a holistic approach in supporting families to access information to get support and referral to services. We believe that in order to provide what people really need, we had to take into account everything about an individual's needs and circumstances and how these might affect different parts of their life. The ongoing referrals have grown over the past year with the majority of the families being referred to other services. Most of our referrals are sent to settlement team with increased number of clients facing housing issues, immigration, financial and emotional support needs.

The EIP team visited 52 families with newborn babies across Parramatta and Holroyd LGA's. Most of our referrals come from Westmead Hospital and Early Childhood Nurses from Community Health Centres in Parramatta and Holroyd.

A number of Positive Parenting Programs (Triple P's) have been continuously delivered. The EIP team facilitated Seminars and Group Triple P's delivered in Chinese and English and assisted clients with individual consultations. This is what some of the participants said about the program: *"I feel more confident dealing with my child. The difficulties still occur but less often. I do know it's not a quick fix, still a lot of work involved."* *"Very helpful, gave me a few tips to manage my child differently in a stressful situation"*.



Group PPP at Granville Youth Community centre



Paint Parramatta Read – Oct 2010

The past year has provided many opportunities for our team to be involved in a wide range of exciting and rewarding activities. The actual list of our achievements is far too long to include in this brief report, however the following specific achievements do warrant a mention:

- “Holroyd Parramatta Child and Family Forum” – Engaging hard to reach families
- Harmony Day in Holroyd – tour of the Hindu Murugan Temple, Gallipoli Mosque and Saint Patrick’s Catholic Church. Our clients had an opportunity to learn about different faiths and celebrate multiculturalism with their neighbours from all corners of the world.
- During National Families Week, our team hosted “Movies Under the Stars” in Pendle Hill, encouraging local families to strengthen their relationships and to get to know their neighbours.
- Building Self-esteem Workshops” at Parramatta West Public School, Wentworthville and The Community Christ Church
- “A healthy smile for life” session in partnership with the Dental Hospital in Westmead
- Women as mothers workshop



Women as Mothers workshop at the MRC



“A healthy smile for life” workshop at Parramatta East Public School

Day trips to Auburn Botanical Gardens, Moving Calligraphy Exhibition, Excursion to the City by ferry and visiting The Cottage Preschool in Granville were some of the outings that we organised for our clients. The outings were a good opportunity for our clients to see different places, have a break from many family responsibilities and simply enjoy fun days out.

In June this year, a very successful CALD Perinatal Forum was held at Westmead Hospital. The forum focused on holistic service provision for CALD communities. A number of hospital staff and service providers took the opportunity to participate.

*CALD
Perinatal
Forum at
Westmead
Hospital*



The highlight of the year for many parents and grandparents was launch of Paint Parra Read. Paint Parra Read is a community project which aims to promote the importance of reading to, singing to, playing with and talking with children from birth. Over 200 children and 150 parents/grandparents/carers attended reading day. Number of local business hosted reading groups for the little ones. Our mascot ReadSee was the star of the day arriving at the back of the fire engine. Thanks to his warm-hearted and charming nature, he won over little fans. The reading day was a great success and we decided to make it an annual event.

*Launch of Paint
Parra ReAd*



This is just a glimpse of the work that our team has done in the past year. We take great pride in offering a high level of service.

The Early Intervention and Perinatal team would like to conclude this report by thanking our Board of Management, each one of our staff members and our volunteers for their tireless efforts in working together to support us. We would like to thank all our partner agencies for their contribution and support. Special mention and big thank you must go to our Manager, Melissa Monteiro for her mentoring, guidance and ongoing support.

The EIP Project would not be where it is today without each of your unique contributions. So again, thank you all.

We are excited about the year ahead of us and look forward to sharing that enthusiasm with all of you.

HILLS INTER-CONNECT PROJECT REPORT

Coordinator: Kamalini Fernando until January 2011

Hills-Interconnect project worker: Mary-Rose Leona from March 2011

Project Aim

The “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 third year of the project focused mainly on working with the newly arrived migrant families and promoting its services to the wider community through partnership with local schools, and participating in community events held locally.

Kamalini Fernando has left the project at the beginning of 2011. A new person, Mary Rose Leona has been employed to continue delivering the outcomes for the project.

The project works with 21 newly arrived migrant families, 2 local schools and several service providers through their referral programs. This resulted in the increase of number of parents accessing the project services this year.

During this period, the Mentoring Program continued with participating families connecting with volunteer mentors. The families receive assistance with language, linking with services and understanding the history of the Shire and Australia in general. The language skills sessions incorporate sessions on Australia Day and history, the legal system, aspects of volunteering and how to engage with your neighbours and various programs in the Shire and beyond. Some of the new migrants were also part of the Multicultural Choir with their mentors where they learnt songs from various cultural traditions and shared their own songs. The aim is to connect with the wider community, make friends and break down isolation.

The activities of the project were promoted extensively in order to reach out to the target group. One successful promotion was the presentation of the project in a number of local schools such as Carlingford West Primary School, Kellyville Ridge and Kellyville Public School. Contacts were re-established with the Hills Community Health Centre, St. Michael’s Family Centre, including other playgroups in the Hills. Promotional booths at shopping centres in the Hills Shire, distribution of flyers as well as flyers and promotional material on notice boards in the Hills helped increase awareness about the project.

During the past financial year, the following workshops were held on: Family Legal Issues, Australian History, How to get your Citizenship, Employment Tips, Parenting, Health and Medicare, Drivers Licence and Public Transport, Immigration Citizenship and Legal Aid, Australian Tax System, Banking & Insurance

Educational tours were conducted with over 40 recently arrived migrant families: Council Orientation Tour, Australian History & Heritage Tour, Bush Tour – Cumberland State Forest. The purpose was to get the families acquainted with the new environment they live in and develop understanding of the history of the area and the wider community.



Hills Multicultural Women's Group

One-On-One Mentoring

Newly and recently arrived migrant families in need of intensive support continued to participate in one-on-one mentoring sessions. Currently seven families are getting intensive support under this program.

Social networking has also assisted the new migrants to gain employment and break down isolation.

Mentoring Program – Mentoring program continued during this reporting period. Twenty four (24) families were connected with volunteer mentors. They were given assistance in language, connecting with the services, home visits, shopping and taking them around the Shire.

The group mentoring sessions were conducted with one mentor working with three – four new migrants.

The language skilling sessions continued during this period with 24 families participating. All of these families are also participating in the Mentoring Program. Some of the sessions included various topics such as Halloween, Australian Federal Election process, Melbourne Cup and Local Government Information. Interactive cookery sessions took place with all the families learning how to make typical cultural cooking from around the world and exchanging recipes.

Social Life skills development sessions were being conducted for the new migrants to help them connecting to the wider community through the following activities:

- Personal Development Day
- Gardening Tour
- Gentle Exercise
- Tai Chi
- Patch Work
- Learning in the Park
- Cultural Exchange Program
- Women As Mothers Workshop

During this reporting period continued with interactive and practical Mentor Training sessions in the areas of Australian History, Legal System, Australian norms and ethics to resource the volunteer mentors.

Hills Group, Activities re: Emotional Activities



Partnerships Established

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

- The 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 Multicultural Services Inc, The Hills Community Aid & Information Service Inc., Wesley Family Services (North West Sector) through The 'Family Matters for the Multicultural Community' Project. The project consists of a series of community education programs to address the needs of our CALD families. The first six sessions were delivered on 'Oral Health for Children', Helping your child to succeed at school, Healthy weight for healthy children, Self care, Child development through music and first health record, Nutrition for healthy children and local government services and children's services with great success. Each of these interactive workshops had 50- 60 participants from multicultural families.
- The Hills Shire Council - Harmony Day Celebrations and the Hills Cultural Festival. Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds participated in these initiatives through the Multicultural Women's Choir and the grandiose festival which
- Rouse Hills Family Connect – Playgroup Project and Garden to Kitchen Project where the opportunity was given to new migrant families to learn about garden vegetables, herbs, making menus and learning English.

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.



Shantha, Mary-Rose and Aurelia at the Hills Cultural Festival

AFRICAN SESSIONAL PROJECT REPORT

Department of Family and Community Services

African Sessional Support Worker project

Team Coordinator: Solomon G. Freeman

ASSP Team: Deng Anthony, Monica Benjamin Biel, Amou Job, Angelina Adol Makeny, Ayen Atem Chol, Gloria Marcella Johnson, Malula Chibalonza, Lillian Lukoki-N'Gengu, Jean Bosco Muhiziwintore, Naima Abdullahi, Anthony Bee Conteh, Elizabeth Gezahegne, and Emmanuel Msafiri.



Elizabeth Gezahegne, Solomon Freeman and Malula Chibalonza receiving the ZEST Award 2011 – Outstanding Project within a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Group/Organisation

The African Sessional Workers Project began in July 2007 as a pilot project funded by the Department of Family and 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 plans implementations with African families by Community Services.

The 13 Sessional Workers employed to deliver this project are from the following target communities: Burundi, Congolese, Ethiopian, Liberian, Sierra Leonean, Somali and Sudanese. These bilingual workers speak 16 African languages, with Dinka/Juba Arabic (a Sudanese language), Creole (Sierra Leonean language) Kirundi (Burundian language) and Langala (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 the relationships between Community Services, African Families and the wider community.

Project Achievements/Highlights:

In February, the project was awarded the 2011 Western Sydney Community Forum's ZEST AWARD for 'Outstanding Project in a CALD Organization' in recognition of its capacity building, advocacy, leadership and commitment to 'Standing up for Western Sydney'.



*Nominees
and recipients
of the ZEST
Award 2011*

A steady increase in requests for services outside the original target region of Western Sydney prompted the extension of the service state-wide providing services in the Metro Central, Eastern, Hunter Central Coast, *Northern and Metro South West* Regions of Sydney and New South Wales. Services were also provided outside Sydney to Bathurst, Lismore, Orange and Newcastle.

In the past financial year, Eighteen (18) promotional presentations were held across the Metro Central, Eastern, Hunter Central Coast, *Northern and Metro South West* Regions of Sydney/New South Wales at the Community Services Centres and partners. The promotional drive has helped increase demand for referrals.

Some of the significant outcomes for the project include:

- Improved 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.
- Positive engagement between African families and community services case workers.

In order to keep up with their professional capability, the Sessional workers completed an additional 37 hours of training on the following topics:

- Community Services Corporate Cross Agency Training Program
 - Identify and Respond to the Risk of Harm
 - Introduction to Case Management
- Working with Family and Community Services, Child Protection Training
- Metro West Child and Family Regional Unit, Parramatta African Foster Carer Program Information Session/Training.

*Sessional Support
Workers Training Session*



There have been one-hundred and nine (109) occasions of Sessional support services provided to seventeen (17) Community Services Centres and their partner's caseworkers when seeing African families.

The support services are ongoing and the majority of the requests were made from the following Community Services Centres and partners:

- Blacktown Wesley Mission – (B/F).....41
- Blacktown Community Services Centre.....15
- Auburn CSC.....11
- Mount Druitt CSC7
- Fairfield CSC.....6
- Parramatta Community Services Centre4
- Central Syd Adol/Unit Kings Cross4

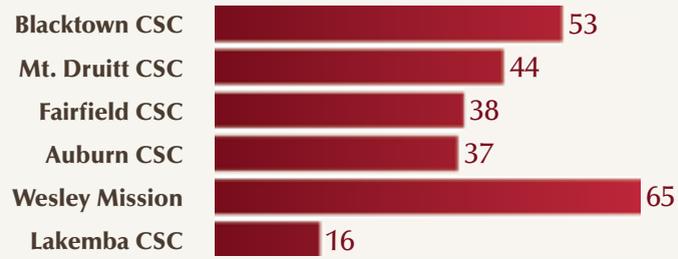
Twenty-nine (29) families benefited from the services provided by the project. One hundred and nine requests were attended with the total individuals within these families being one hundred-fifty (150) individuals.

Three (3) community education sessions on the roles and decision making processes of Community Services were delivered and were well received by the African communities including: Sudanese and Ethiopian communities. The sessions gave 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 communication and trust, as well as to discuss the impact of culture on parenting, Child Protection and discipline methods (with emphasis on young people with challenging behaviours).

Monica Biel at information session for the Sudanese community



Highlights of CSC with High Referrals over the period of 4 years



Family Heads

66



Individuals

312



Nominees and recipients celebrate ZEST Award 2011

Thanks to the project reference group for their guidance and commitment and also the staff at the MRC for their great assistance. Heart-felt thanks to Ozen Karanlik, Peter Prants and Fatma Mohamed who tirelessly assisted in all aspects of the project and continued to promote it to service centres and partners.

Most of all I would like to acknowledge our hard working team of sessional workers who have done an incredible job and continued to remain 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, Elizabeth Gezahegne, and Emmanuel Msafiri.

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

My sincere appreciation goes to Aurelia Rahman, Bernice Redman, Richard Prunty and Melissa Monteiro, out thoughtful and extremely supportive Executive Director of the MRC.

I remain grateful to both caseworkers and the African communities for allowing us to serve them; let us unite our strengths and increase our efforts together to ensure a great future for African Australian children, young people and their parents.

Solomon Freeman
African Sessional Support Workers Project Coordinator

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE REPORT

Definition:

“Social Enterprises are businesses that are set up for the principal purpose of delivering social outcomes through trading activity.”

Background:

This Social Enterprise Program is funded by Family and Community Services (FACS) under the Community Builders Program for a 3 year fixed term provision, targeting CALD refugee women and young people aged between 18 to 25 years, with the following aims:

1. to provide training projects that provide information and training to members of the community so that their access and knowledge of community resources is improved,
2. increase participation and social inclusion in the community and
3. develop and provide consultancy on social enterprise projects that will enhance employment access and opportunities

Program Development:

Since my appointment as Social Enterprise Program Coordinator in March 2011, I have conducted over 5 Civic Education workshops, 1 information session on Interpreting and 1 on Mediation, 2 workshops on Job Readiness, 1 information session on Mentoring program plus chairing 2 Reference Group Meetings. In the process of service delivery, I received a constant response from participants saying that they have been unsuccessful in accessing any job despite having attended numerous courses and trainings workshops over the years. One of the common reasons given was that they do not have a car to get to their place of employment and that they can't drive a car because they don't have a licence and that they don't have a licence because they can't afford to pay \$60 per hours for the driving lessons. For those who are under 25 years old, they are required to have up to 120 hours of supervised driving lesson before they are eligible to sit for the driving test under the current RTA requirements.

During that period I also attended a job network information session for the newly arrived refugees and migrants organised by a job network provider. At that meeting, the job network officer informed that there are 10 farmhand workers required by this employer and to start immediately the next day. A showed of hands was requested by the officer to indicate their interests. All 20 over hands were raised instantly. The next question was immediately put to the jobless attendees, asking who has the car to get to the place of employment which is not accessible by public transport. To the officer's dismay, not one person raised their hand. All the jobless attendees do not have a driving license let alone owning a car.

From the consultations with various community groups and community/caseworkers, the top priority needs identified was access to employment opportunities and access to the place of work is their greatest barrier. Thus their job opportunities are only limited to employment that is accessible by public transport.

The following is an excerpt of the letter from the General Manager – Sales and Marketing of MTA Apprenticeships Plus, Parramatta that highlights the importance and essential need to have a driving licence to be given a fair go in competing for jobs through available training opportunities for youth:

I am writing to pass information available from the Motor Traders Associations Apprenticeship Plus in Parramatta. They have 120 vacancies for apprentices and trainees in the motor trades in Sydney, some unfilled for months. Many of these jobs are for first year apprentices and many located in or within commute time from western Sydney. Employers prefer applicants to be under 21 years of age. These jobs range from mechanics, spray painters, panel beaters, tire fitters, diesel mechanics etc. Most of these jobs will require applicants to have a drivers licence as an essential criteria as they would be expected to move vehicles and cannot do this without a licence. The panel beater, spray paint and tire fitter jobs may not require this as essential. This may be a good entry point into the industry for younger applicants.



CDSE Presentation 2011 Parramatta



CDSE Presentation 2011 Parramatta

SE Projects Developed To Address Perceived Needs:

With my over 30 years of experience in the welfare sector in various positions mainly as Community Development Worker and Community Program Officer for FACS, I was successful in securing funding for our Fair Go Driving School social enterprise projects under the Community Development Support Expenditure (CDSE) program of Holroyd and Parramatta councils. Additionally, I also successfully negotiated a partnership project with the Jesuit Social Justice Centre based at Mount Druitt, that has a vehicle available to be used to servicing eligible learner drivers from the Blacktown LGA.

What is Fair Go Driving School?

It is a social enterprise project that aims to assist those who are unable to acquire their provisional driving licence in an affordable manner because of their circumstances, so that they can have equal access to jobs, services and employment opportunities.

Who are eligible?

- Refugees and new migrants who are in long term unemployment
- Women who are deprived of this opportunity given their circumstances
- Youth in supported accommodation due to family breakdown and do not have access to any family support

How it works?

- 5 hours of subsidised professional driving lessons from qualified driving instructors before entering into our Fair Go Driving School program
- Mentors from our Mentoring Program will provide supervised driving until they pass their driving test
- The Mentor will also help build relationship with the students and assist in every way possible in all aspect of their resettlement process to become a contributing member of community
- Sourcing reliable second hand cars with warranty from dealers
- Secure low interest loan from participating banks for clients to complete the car purchase

Other potential Social Enterprise Projects currently being explored or to be explored:

- Hair and Beauty Salon – Rent A Chair Model
- Cleaning and Gardening Enterprise
- Removals and recycling of donated computers and furniture
- Cooking/Food and Catering

All these projects will provide employment experience and training opportunities to our clients as a stepping stone to other employment pathways opportunities or may lead to setting up their own social enterprise project and be self employed with our support and guidance under this Social Enterprise Program.

STRENGTH TO STRENGTH REPORT

**Strength To Strength Western Sydney
A family Relationships Program for Humanitarian Entrant Families**

**A partnership between
Relationships Australia NSW and The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC**

Coordinator: Rahat Chowdhury

STS Workers: Biljana Kulic, Ayan Majok, Arige Sukkarieh, Alham Ashiq, 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 regarding parenting and changing roles in the family
- Parenting groups about child discipline, conflict resolution and effective communication
- Workshops about relationships after migration
- Support groups, casework, information, referral and advocacy

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

The past year has been a challenging, successful and busy year for the STS program. The program has achieved above and beyond expectations thanks to the dedication and commitment of project workers, and the cooperation of the project partners to work together to deliver a much needed service to families migrating to Australia on humanitarian grounds. The STS program has certainly not been without its challenges as the project coordinator, managers and workers experience the many complexities of such a unique program, with limited resources and ever increasing demands on its services. The continued support of FaHCSIA is an acknowledgment of the program's achievements and success.

Clients:

Clients of the program are predominantly from Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan. We also supported clients from Sierra Leone, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Burundi, Sri Lanka, Bosnia and Burma, providing individual as well as family counselling. Clients generally presented with issues stemming from the impact of settlement on their relationships. As a result, the staff undertook a case management role with many of the clients. The majority of those cases were successfully referred to other services whilst still providing ongoing support to the clients/families. Examples were legal matters involving the Department of Community Services, housing issues and financial constraints. The challenges these posed required the STS worker and other support agencies to work side by side. Some complex client cases were referred to other counselling services within Relationships Australia NSW for support via the brokerage funding in the program. Clients were referred to STS from various services including: STARTTS, ADSI, THHP MRC, community organisations, Sydwest, ACL, various schools and Burnside.

Groups:**Darfur groups:**

Darfur women's group continued as usual every week to the satisfaction of the community. Biljana also established good rapport with the Darfur men and helped them to identify issues as a group. Josephite Community Aid played a crucial role as a project partner to resource the group with a stream of volunteers and other materials needs.

Refugee Men's group:

This was a combined group of Afghan and Iraqi men. Burnside was the project partner and facilitated the group. Both Alham and Arige resourced and supported the groups. It focused on the emotional turmoils fathers are facing in a new country with their teenage sons. It was an educational group working through their concerns and strategies to handle issues while looking after themselves. There were three sessions provided.

Afghan Youth support group:

A leadership and self esteem building course was run for six sessions with Granville TAFE for the young Afghan boys at the Auburn Youth Centre. Fayaz Wazin supported, resourced and encouraged the boys to get involved.

Afghan Mothers and Daughters group:

Alham facilitated the Afghan mothers' and daughters' group. The group met quarterly and we had 2 sessions for 3 hours each time. The first session was dedicated to review the group's needs and second part of the session was dedicated to identifying and working with our own coping skills and self care in times of stress. The second meeting dealt with intergenerational conflicts and how to manage them.

Mums and Bubs fun day:

It was organised with ADSI for the Iraqi women and children. The children were provided with entertainment of face painting, colouring and music while mums got a break and discussed the present day issues faced by traditional families in a more modern fast paced world. In the first session, the project coordinator was involved and thereafter Arige along with the ADSi Iraqi worker continued for four sessions. There were two self referrals from the group around behaviour issues of the children.



Sudanese Mothers group

Sudanese Mother’s Consultation:

A Sudanese Mother’s consultation was organised by Ayan. This was attended by 11 mothers and was well received with ongoing supportive groups with a focus on English, Arts and Craft requested specifically.

Other group facilitation:

STS workers were also invited as group facilitators for many community groups. The groups we ran were on the topics of intergenerational conflict, preparing nutritional school lunches, migration and relationships, self esteem and leadership skills and managing difficult situations. The groups were Mandeian Women’s group and the Al-Batool Iraqi women’s group.

Refugee Youth Camp:

The refugee youth camp was surely the most magnificent group work which happened over two days at Milson’s Island. Several services were involved in the project such as NSW Police, ADSI, THHP MRC. Twenty-two boys aged 14–19 years old from refugee backgrounds. They were of Sudanese, Afghani and Iraqi origins. The main focus of the weekend were workshops on communication, Australian laws and how it affects them, effective teamwork and relationship building with peers and family. Police participation from Auburn, Parramatta and Rose Hill was a huge success with the young boys. They showed great enthusiasm and active participation with activities such as high ropes and archery. Learning a life skill like cooking was a great hit where they worked in groups to prepare their lunch with limited resources.

The program with its myriad of challenges has proven to be a strong performer and key service provider around relationship issues for the newly arrived refugee and humanitarian entrants with a dedicated and passionate ethno-specific team. The continued funding for the period 2011–2014 will mean the continuation of this much needed service for humanitarian entrant families and the further development of the program’s model to best service them.

In the end, I would like to thank all the dedicated staff of STS for their enthusiasm and positive contribution, the management of The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC for its ongoing support and leadership and last but not least, the management and clinical supervisors of Relationship Australia NSW for their constant support for the program, insight into the complex family issues, and providing effective leadership.

Rahat Chowdhury
Strength To Strength Coordinator

FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011



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