



Research Service,
Parliamentary Library,
Department of Parliamentary Services

Research Paper

Offshore Refugees: Settlement experiences of humanitarian arrivals in Victoria

Claire Higgins
Research Officer
No. 1, April 2009

A discussion of humanitarian settlement in Victoria. The paper contains an outline of Australia's Humanitarian Programme, offshore visa categories, a description of settlement services, the needs of new arrivals and the challenges they confront.

This research paper is part of a series of papers produced by the Library's Research Service. Research Papers are intended to provide in-depth coverage and detailed analysis of topics of interest to Members of Parliament. The views expressed in this paper are those of the author.

Parliament of Victoria

ISSN 1836-7941 (Print) 1836-795X (Online)

© 2009 Library, Department of Parliamentary Services, Parliament of Victoria

Except to the extent of the uses permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including information storage and retrieval systems, without the prior written consent of the Department of Parliamentary Services, other than by Members of the Victorian Parliament in the course of their official duties.

Contents

Introduction	1
1. Australia’s Humanitarian Programme.....	2
1.1 Refugee Visas	2
1.2 Special Humanitarian Program Visas.....	3
1.3 Pre-Arrival Orientation.....	3
1.4 Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy.....	3
2. New Communities.....	5
2.1 Circumstances in Countries of Origin	6
2.2 Metropolitan and Regional Settlement	8
3. Settlement Experiences	11
3.1 English Skills and Tuition	11
3.2 Education.....	15
3.3 Housing.....	18
3.4 Health.....	20
3.5 Labour Market Participation.....	22
Conclusion.....	25
References	26

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the following individuals who generously provided information and assistance: Ramesh Kumar, Manager, Settlement Services, Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES); Lynette Dawson, Manager, Client Administration Unit, AMES; Colleen Duggan, Executive Officer at the Fitzroy Learning Network; and Julia Mardjuki, Administration Officer at the Fitzroy Learning Network. Thank you also to my colleagues Dr. Greg Gardiner and Bella Lesman for their useful comments in the drafting of this paper.

Introduction

Australia accepts around 13,000 refugees and persons in refugee-like situations every year as part of the Commonwealth Government's Humanitarian Programme.¹ This is one of the highest numbers of humanitarian arrivals amongst developed nations.²

Almost 3,000 of these new arrivals are settled in metropolitan and regional Victoria. They face many challenges during the course of their resettlement, including difficulties learning English, completing education, addressing health problems, finding permanent accommodation and securing suitable employment. In recent years Victoria has welcomed many Iraqis and Afghans, as well as 'new and emerging communities' who lack an established support network here, such as arrivals from African nations, Burma, and ethnic Nepalese from Bhutan.³ The absence of established networks and difficult pre-migration experiences can mean that they have 'more complex resettlement needs than earlier arrivals'.⁴

It is widely acknowledged that humanitarian arrivals 'are one of the most vulnerable groups in Australian society', especially during the initial period of resettlement.⁵ They arrive in Australia with few or no possessions, having endured persecution in their home country, prolonged displacement and the loss of family members.

This paper will examine the many challenges that new arrivals face and their resettlement needs. The paper will also provide an overview of the Humanitarian Programme, circumstances within refugee-source regions, regional settlement

¹ In May 2008 Immigration Minister Chris Evans announced an increase in Australia's humanitarian programme intake, and a focus on retaining persons in the community 'while their immigration status is resolved'. See further: Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, Foundation House, p. 7.

² It must be noted that a relatively small number of countries participate in the UNHCR settlement program, while many developing nations host large numbers of refugees - see further: UNHCR (2008) *2007 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons*, UNHCR, p. 8. In 2007, 9,600 refugees were resettled in Australia (this does not include Special Humanitarian Visa holders), compared to 11,200 in Canada, 48,300 in the United States, 1,800 in Sweden and 740 in New Zealand - see further: United Nations (2008) 'UN Agency assists highest ever number of refugees and displaced', *UN News Centre*, 17 June.

³ The ethnic Nepalese are Lhotshampas, descendants of Nepalese who relocated to Bhutan in the nineteenth century. The 2006 Census identified only 138 Bhutanese-born persons in Australia. A number of Bhutanese have also come to Australia to undertake tertiary study - see further: Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Bhutanese Community Profile*, DIAC, pp. 5, 17, 21. The number of African entrants arriving in Australia reached a peak in 2004/2005 and is now in decline, corresponding to an increase in new arrivals from Afghanistan and Burma - see further: Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, DIAC, pp. 21-22.

⁴ Burmese and ethnic Nepalese are likely to have spent years or even decades in refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border, in Bangladesh or Nepal, while arrivals from African nations may also have experienced protracted displacement, living for many years in refugee camps in neighbouring countries - African Think Tank (2007) *African Resettlement in Australia: The Way Forward*, Conference Report, The University of Melbourne, 11-13 April 2007, p. 58. See further: Australia. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (2005) *Australia's Support for Humanitarian Entrants 2004-05*, Canberra, DIMIA, p. 4.

⁵ P. Foley & A. Beer (2003) *Housing Need and Provision for Recently Arrived Refugees in Australia*, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Southern Research Centre, p. 1; C. Chamberlain & A. Babacan (2008) *The Belonging in Australia Project*, Report Prepared for the City of Yarra, RMIT University, p. 1.

programs, and some of the services provided by government and community organisations. In discussing English language skills, education, health, housing and labour market participation, this paper will draw upon research studies conducted by community organisations, academics and government.

1. Australia's Humanitarian Programme

Administered by the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), Australia's Humanitarian Programme has onshore and offshore components. The onshore program includes asylum-seekers who arrive in Australia, often on a valid visa, and request a protection visa.⁶

This paper is concerned with the offshore program, which comprises Refugee visas and Special Humanitarian Programme (SHP) visas. Collectively, recipients of these visas will be referred to as humanitarian entrants.

All Refugee and SHP visa holders are granted permanent residence in Australia, the right to work, and the same access to government services (such as Centrelink and Medicare) as the general population.

1.1 Refugee Visas

Offshore Refugee visas consist of the following categories:

- 200 (Refugee)
- 201 (In-Country Special Humanitarian)
- 203 (Emergency Rescue)
- 204 (Woman at Risk)⁷

Recipients of visas 200 and 204 are living outside their home country, and are subject to persecution in their home country. These are the most common Refugee visas.

Visas 201 and 203 are less common. Recently, the Australian Government has decided to grant 201 visas (In-Country Special Humanitarian) to Locally Engaged Employees in Iraq, who worked with the Australian Defence Forces and may now be subject to persecution. In May 2008 Immigration Minister Chris Evans announced an increase in Australia's humanitarian intake for 2008/2009 to accommodate these Iraqis.⁸

⁶ In 2007/2008 a total of 3,987 applications for initial Protection visas were lodged - see further: K. Simon (2008) *Asylum Seekers*, NSW Parliamentary Library Research Service, Briefing Paper No 13/08, p. 17–19.

⁷ In 2007/2008 there were 819 Women at Risk visas (204) granted, primarily to women from Afghanistan, Burma, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq and Somalia – see further: Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, DIAC, pp. 79, 85.

⁸ See further: Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Fact Sheet 60 – Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program*, viewed 14 January 2009, <<http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/60refugee.htm#c>>.

Entrants on Refugee visas are generally referred to the Australian Government by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). Resettlement is seen as 'the best durable solution' if the refugee cannot be voluntarily repatriated or integrated into the country of refuge.⁹ Recipients' travel to Australia is organised and paid for by the Australian Government. In 2008/2009, the Australian Government has a quota of 6,500 refugee visa places.¹⁰

1.2 Special Humanitarian Program Visas

Recipients of an SHP visa (202) are subject to 'substantial discrimination amounting to gross violation of their human rights in their home country', and are living outside their home country.¹¹ Their residence in Australia has been proposed by an individual or organisation already established in this country. That individual or organisation is then expected to assist the new arrival to settle here, including paying for their travel costs (if they themselves cannot pay it) and helping them to find accommodation and employment.

1.3 Pre-Arrival Orientation

Before travelling to Australia, both Refugee and SHP entrants take part in the Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Programme. On behalf of the Australian Government the International Organisation for Migration delivers this programme to entrants in Africa, Asia, South-East Asia and the Middle East.¹² The AUSCO Programme runs for 15 hours over three days, delivering information on departure arrangements, the settlement process, a 'realistic picture of life in Australia' and the services available.¹³ The AUSCO Programme also aims to provide 'the necessary tools to deal with initial settlement concerns and with the different stages of cultural, social and economic adaptation'.¹⁴

1.4 Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy

Once in Australia, humanitarian entrants are assisted under the national settlement program, known as the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS). The IHSS is funded by DIAC and has a consortium of service providers in each state. It provides entrants with intensive support for the first 6 months of settlement. Unlike those on Refugee visas, SHP visa holders are not eligible for some IHSS services as their proposer is expected to fulfil these roles.

⁹ Australia. Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2006) *Measures to Improve Settlement Outcomes for Humanitarian Entrants*, Discussion Paper, DIMA, p. 6; UNHCR (2004) *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook*, Chapter 1, Department of International Protection, Geneva, p. 3.

¹⁰ See further: Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Fact Sheet 60 – Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program*, op. cit.

¹¹ Australia. Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2006) *Measures to Improve Settlement Outcomes for Humanitarian Entrants*, op. cit., p. 6.

¹² See further: UNHCR (2004) *Resettlement Handbook*, op. cit., p. AUL/7.

¹³ Australia. Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2006) *Measures to Improve Settlement Outcomes for Humanitarian Entrants*, op. cit., p. 8.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

In Victoria, the IHSS program is delivered by Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES), in conjunction with other providers.¹⁵ As the lead partner, AMES is responsible for the overall management of the program and case co-ordination. The AMES consortium is contracted to deliver services in three regions of Victoria: Metropolitan East, Metropolitan West, and Rural.

Case co-ordination is the central element in this service. It involves assessing the needs of entrants and their families and devising a list of outcomes that need to be achieved within the first 6 months of settlement in order to ensure that entrants achieve a level of self-sufficiency. The case co-ordinator links entrants with community members of the same language or cultural background to provide practical support. The 6 month time frame is a notional guideline, and clients may receive further assistance if the outcomes have not been achieved.

Other IHSS service providers in Victoria include:

- The Brotherhood of St Laurence, which is contracted to provide a package of basic household goods for new arrivals;
- The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, otherwise known as Foundation House, which provides short-term counselling and advocacy for families and individuals who have experienced torture and trauma;
- Redback Settlement Services, which provides an on-arrival reception and accommodation service for Refugee visa holders, and some accommodation services for SHP recipients based on need;
- Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau; and,
- Regional and rural sub-contractors, such as the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council and Gippsland Multicultural Services.

Aside from the IHSS, DIAC also funds the following settlement services:

- The Settlement Grants Program (SGP), which funds ethno-specific community organisations and migrant resource centres to run programs that help new arrivals orientate themselves in the community and promote social integration;¹⁶
- The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), which is delivered by AMES in Victoria;
- The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), which is a national telephone service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the cost of a local call. It provides for more than 100 languages and dialects; and,
- Complex Case Support (CCS); a new addition, this service addresses cases which are too difficult for the IHSS to resolve in the 6 month period (e.g. entrants with severe emotional or psychological trauma).¹⁷

¹⁵ AMES is a statutory body, accountable to the Victorian Minister for Skills, Education Services and Employment.

¹⁶ The SGP targets refugees who arrived in Australia during the previous five years, or family stream migrants with low English proficiency.

While primary settlement programs are federally funded, the provision of settlement services ‘cuts across each of the three levels of government in Australia’.¹⁸ Local government is closest to migrant communities through the management of libraries and community health services.¹⁹ State governments fund services ‘that have direct contact with refugee communities’, such as the police, schools and hospitals, as well as additional settlement services.²⁰ In the 2008/2009 State Budget, the Victorian Government allocated funding toward the newly established ‘Refugee Support Strategy’, which included: early intervention and education programs through the Department of Justice; the expansion of the existing refugee health plan for assessment and health promotion through the Department of Human Services; and support programs for refugee school students through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.²¹ This funding was welcomed by the Centre for Multicultural Youth as a ‘great benefit’ to the ‘volunteer-run homework clubs in schools and community centres around Melbourne’.²²

2. New Communities

In 2007/2008, Australia accepted humanitarian entrants of 17 nationalities, mainly from the following countries:

▪ Burma / Myanmar	2,961
▪ Iraq	2,215
▪ Afghanistan	1,185
▪ Sudan	1,158
▪ Liberia	410
▪ Congo	348
▪ Burundi	303
▪ Iran	302
▪ Sierra Leone	267
▪ Sri Lanka	243 ²³

¹⁷ The CCS is a long-term program which draws on a panel of service providers (the ‘Humanitarian Services Panel’) to address the needs of each individual case.

¹⁸ African Think Tank (2007) op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Personal communication. Information supplied to author by the Victorian Multicultural Commission, 8 December 2008. See further: Victoria. Department of Treasury and Finance (2008) *Victorian Budget Overview: Taking Action for Our Suburbs and Our Regions, 2008/2009*, Melbourne, DTF, p. 29; Victoria. Office of the Premier (2008) *\$19.7 Million to Support Refugees Settling in Victoria*, media release, 6 May; Victoria. Department of Human Services (2008) *Refugee Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2008–2010: Current and Future Initiatives*, Melbourne, DHS, p. 26; Victoria. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008) *Victorian Budget 08/09: More Help for Refugee Students*, fact sheet, viewed 18 June 2009, <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au>>.

²² Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (2008) *Victorian Government Budget Supports Refugee Students*, Media Release, 7 May.

²³ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Fact Sheet 60 – Australia’s Refugee and Humanitarian Program*, op. cit.; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, op. cit., p. 30.

Victoria is the second largest settlement location for all new arrivals under Australia's Humanitarian Programme.²⁴ In 2007/2008, a total of 2,787 offshore humanitarian entrants settled in Victoria, the majority of whom are listed below:²⁵

▪ Burma / Myanmar	975
▪ Iraq	457
▪ Afghanistan	373
▪ Thailand	358
▪ Sudan	210 ²⁶

2.1 Circumstances in Countries of Origin

In order to better appreciate the challenges faced by humanitarian entrants during their settlement in Australia, this section will briefly outline political and economic circumstances in refugee-source countries and regions.²⁷ Many of these countries are the site of 'protracted refugee situations', humanitarian crises that have persisted for more than five years.²⁸

Africa

Humanitarian entrants from the African continent include persons from Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Togo. Socio-political circumstances differ in each of these nations, some having experienced violent conflict for more than two decades. External and internal displaced persons have generally fled sectarian and ethnic violence.

- It is estimated that almost a million Sudanese are internally displaced, many within the Darfur region, while thousands more have fled to neighbouring countries and the Middle East.²⁹
- Ethiopia hosts more than 80,000 refugees from Sudan, Eritrea, Somalia and Kenya, yet at the same time many thousands of Ethiopians who were displaced

²⁴ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 21.

²⁵ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Immigration Update 2007–2008*, DIAC, p. 9.

²⁶ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2009) *Top 20 Countries by Migration Stream*, Department of Immigration and Citizenship Settlement Database, data extracted on 11 February 2009.

²⁷ The following websites contain useful information on displaced populations around the world: International Organisation for Migration (IOM) www.iom.int; Amnesty International www.amnesty.org.au; United Nations High Commission for Refugees www.unhcr.org; Medecins Sans Frontieres www.doctorswithoutborders.org.

²⁸ A. Guterres (2008) *Opening Statement of High Commissioner*, High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges: Protracted Refugee Situations, Geneva, UNHCR, 10 December. See also - A. Guterres (2009) *Statement by Mr Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the United Nations Security Council*, New York, UNHCR, 8 January.

²⁹ UNHCR (2006) *Refugees by Numbers 2006 Edition*, viewed 22 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/basics/BASICS/3b028097c.html#IDPs>>; Refugees International (2008) *Sudan*, viewed 28 April 2009, <<http://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/africa/sudan>>.

during the wars and border disputes of the 1990s remain in refugee camps in Sudan and Kenya.³⁰

- In 2007, political violence in Kenya caused tens of thousands of people to be internally displaced. Kenya also hosts thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries, particularly Sudan and Somalia.³¹
- In Central Africa, it is estimated that around 430,600 persons from the Democratic Republic of Congo have fled to neighbouring countries, while around 1.25 million internally displaced Congolese live at the mercy of assault, rape and looting by armed groups.³²
- In West Africa, 231,100 Liberians are externally displaced in neighbouring countries.³³ From the small nation of Togo, more than 300,000 people have been displaced by political violence since the early 1990s, and many remain in refugee camps in neighbouring countries.³⁴

Asia

Asia includes Afghanistan, Burma and Bhutan.

- Since the 1970s hundreds of thousands of Afghans have sought refuge in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran. The UNHCR has reported that while many Afghans who fled the Taliban have begun returning home, the repatriation process is complicated by ongoing violence, political instability and human rights violations.³⁵
- In Burma, it is estimated that well over 500,000 people are internally displaced. The number of Burmese taking refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh, India and Thailand is estimated at between 200,000 and 500,000.³⁶ There are also estimated to be 728,000 stateless persons in the Northern Rakhine State of Burma.³⁷ Displaced persons are at great risk of trafficking and disease.³⁸ Burma is

³⁰ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2006) *Ethiopia: Community Profile*, DIAC, p. 8.

³¹ For example, the Dagahaley refugee camp was established in 1992, and 90 per cent of its population are Somali – see further: R. Seal (2008) ‘Militia, bandits, one meal a day’, *The Observer*, 27 April.

³² UNHCR (2006) *Refugees by Numbers 2006 Edition*, op. cit.; Refugees International (2008) *Sudan*, op. cit.

³³ UNHCR (2006) *Refugees by Numbers 2006 Edition*, op. cit.

³⁴ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Togolese Community Profile*, DIAC, p. 3.

³⁵ UNHCR (2006) *The State of the World’s Refugees 2006*, viewed 23 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/publ/PUBL/4444d3cc2.html>>.

³⁶ Thailand Burma Border Consortium (2008) *Internally Displaced Persons Overview*, viewed 27 January 2009, <<http://www.tbtc.org/>>; UNHCR (2007) *Protecting Refugees and the Role of UNHCR*, 2007 Edition, p. 15, viewed 27 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/country?iso=mmr>>.

³⁷ This number includes the Rohingya people, a Muslim minority who have been stripped of their citizenship and rendered stateless by the Burmese government – see further: UNHCR (2008) *UNHCR Global Appeal 2008-2009: Myanmar*, viewed 27 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/ga08/index.html>>.

³⁸ International Organisation for Migration (2007) *Myanmar*, viewed 23 January 2009, <<http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/activities/asia-and-oceania/east-and-south-east-asia/myanmar>>.

reportedly a major source country and transit country for persons trafficked into the sex industry, domestic servitude and forced labour.³⁹

- Around 108,000 ethnic Nepalese from Bhutan are living in seven refugee camps in south-eastern Nepal. They were rendered stateless by the Bhutanese government in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and expelled by security forces.⁴⁰ They have been the focus of a UNHCR resettlement program to countries such as the United States and Australia since 2006. Those ethnic Nepalese who remain in Bhutan suffer severe legal and social discrimination, despite constituting almost one quarter of the total population.⁴¹

Middle East

While Victoria welcomes entrants from a number of Middle Eastern countries, the majority are from Iraq.

- Since the United States invasion of Iraq, more than 4.7 million Iraqis have become internally displaced or have fled to neighbouring Iran, Jordan and Syria.⁴² This is an enormous and long-term problem for refugee agencies and host countries in the region. Ongoing sectarian violence in Iraq has made it very difficult for people who fled to return safely; those who do return may find that their homes and businesses have been commandeered by others or destroyed. Despite improvements in the overall security situation, the UNHCR has reported that ‘the basic conditions for sustainable, large-scale return of Iraqi refugees in conditions of safety and dignity are not yet in place’.⁴³

2.2 Metropolitan and Regional Settlement

Humanitarian entrants will generally settle in areas close to their ‘social links’, i.e. friends, family or an established community. For those entrants who are ‘unlinked’, without an established social network in Victoria, DIAC aims to take into account their needs and the location of corresponding services and opportunities. These will generally be entrants on Refugee visas rather than SHP visas (who are likely to settle near their proposer). After the initial period of settlement entrants are free to re-locate wherever they wish, in pursuit of employment, education or other opportunities.⁴⁴

³⁹ CIA World Fact Book (2009) *Burma*, viewed 23 January 2009,

<<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bm.html#People>>.

⁴⁰ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Bhutanese Community Profile*, op. cit., p. 4; Human Rights Watch (2008) *Bhutan’s Ethnic Cleansing*, 31 January, viewed 24 February 2009, <<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/01/31/bhutans-ethnic-cleansing>>.

⁴¹ Human Rights Watch (2008) *Bhutan’s Ethnic Cleansing*, 31 January, viewed 24 February 2009, <<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/01/31/bhutans-ethnic-cleansing>>; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Bhutanese Community Profile*, op. cit., p. 4.

⁴² UNHCR (2009) *The Iraq Situation*, viewed 22 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/iraq.html>>.

⁴³ UNHCR (2008) *Iraq Situation Update – August 2008*, UNHCR, Geneva, p. 6. For further information see the UNHCR’s Iraq webpage: <http://www.unhcr.org/iraq.html>.

⁴⁴ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Settlement Trends and Needs of New Arrivals 2007: Victoria*, op. cit., 24.

Recent data from AMES shows that Refugee and SHP entrants settle in a wide range of Local Government Areas (LGAs) across Melbourne.⁴⁵ Between October and December 2008, a large proportion of entrants on Refugee visas settled in the following metropolitan LGAs:

- Maroondah
- Hume
- Greater Dandenong
- Maribyrnong

In the same period, a large proportion of entrants on SHP visas settled in:

- Greater Dandenong
- Hume
- Casey
- Brimbank
- Darebin

Regional settlement has been a focus of the IHSS since 2004, particularly for ‘unlinked’ entrants. Regional settlement is seen as a means of promoting economic development and population growth in rural communities. It has the potential to provide entrants with greater access to employment and more affordable services than those available in metropolitan areas, although this does not necessarily eventuate.⁴⁶ Regional settlement can be particularly suitable for unlinked entrants who have rural backgrounds or skills relevant to industries in regional areas. As the IHSS lead partner in Victoria, AMES has established partnerships with service providers in regional Victoria and has assisted in the planned resettlement of new communities.

DIAC selects a settlement location ‘with consideration of the settlement needs of the individual and the services available to address those needs in the receiving location’.⁴⁷ Families may be chosen according to particular characteristics, such as at least one member having good English skills, a lack of complex health needs, and the family being intact (and therefore able to concentrate on their settlement rather than reunification with family members).⁴⁸ Ultimately entrants are chosen ‘who are best placed to provide a stable, core community for later arrivals’.⁴⁹

A number of humanitarian entrants have settled in the Shepparton area, either planned under the auspices of DIAC or through organic social networks.⁵⁰ The Iraqi population in Shepparton has been growing since the 1990s, and is estimated at

⁴⁵ Adult Migrant Education Services (2008) *IHSS Settlement Information, October 2008 – December 2008*, AMES.

⁴⁶ See further: J. Taylor & D. Stanovic (2005) *Refugees and Regional Settlement: Balancing Priorities*, Fitzroy, Brotherhood of St Laurence, p. 36.

⁴⁷ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Settlement Trends and Needs of New Arrivals: Victoria*, op. cit., p. 14.

⁴⁸ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Shepparton Regional Humanitarian Settlement Pilot*, Summary Report of an Evaluation undertaken by Margaret Piper and Associates for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, pp. 11–12.

⁴⁹ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Settlement Trends and Needs of New Arrivals: Victoria*, op. cit., p. 28.

⁵⁰ *ibid.* p. 25.

around 3,000 people. More recent arrivals include 10 Congolese families who were settled in Shepparton by DIAC in 2005.⁵¹ The Congolese received an ‘extraordinarily warm and welcoming response’ from the local community.⁵² A DIAC settlement program was also established in Ballarat in 2007, with the planned settlement of 10 families from Togo. Recent entrants have also been settled in Geelong, Mildura and Swan Hill.⁵³ Overall, in 2006–2007 approximately 7.5 per cent of humanitarian arrivals to Victoria settled in regional areas.⁵⁴ Of those between the ages of 13 and 25, 4 per cent settled in Greater Shepparton, 2.2 per cent settled in Mildura, and 1.8 per cent settled in Swan Hill.⁵⁵

Other regional centres have sought to attract entrants already settled in metropolitan areas.⁵⁶ A Colac employment organisation was ‘instrumental’ in bringing Sudanese men to work at the Colac meatworks, paving the way for wives and children to settle in the town.⁵⁷ Swan Hill and Warrnambool initiated pilot resettlement projects in conjunction with Horn of Africa community groups and service providers between 2002 and 2005. A subsequent report on Warrnambool’s resettlement program lauded the successful integration of Sudanese entrants into what was previously an extremely mono-cultural community, aided in part by a ‘zero-tolerance’ policy on racism at the local meatworks.⁵⁸

Evaluations of these programs by community groups and government have concluded that there are distinct advantages and disadvantages for entrants settling in regional Victoria, and that the challenges facing regional communities (such as high unemployment) will invariably affect the entrants as well:⁵⁹

Refugees cannot be the single answer for regional problems, although they can make a contribution if appropriate resources are in place.⁶⁰

Successful resettlement of humanitarian entrants requires the development of social capital between the host community and the entrants, and sustained investment in support services.⁶¹ As pilot programs in regional centres have shown, for entrants to remain in a regional area it is highly important that they have access to employment,

⁵¹ Adult Migrant Education Services (2008) *Annual Report 2007*, Melbourne, AMES, p. 8.

⁵² Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Shepparton Regional Humanitarian Settlement Pilot*, op. cit., p. 6.

⁵³ Adult Migrant Education Services (2008) *IHSS Settlement Information, October 2008 – December 2008*, op. cit.

⁵⁴ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Settlement Trends and Needs of New Arrivals: Victoria*, op. cit., p. 27.

⁵⁵ Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (2007) *Humanitarian Youth Arrivals to Victoria*, Information Sheet no. 15.

⁵⁶ See further: R. Broadbent et al. (2007) *The Relocation of Refugees from Melbourne to Regional Victoria: A Comparative Evaluation in Swan Hill and Warrnambool*, Institute for Community, Ethnicity and Policy Alternatives, Victoria University; Victoria. Economic Development Committee (2004) *Inquiry into the Economic Contribution of Victoria’s Culturally Diverse Population*, Final Report, No. 83 – Session 2003-04, pp. 48–50.

⁵⁷ Taylor & Stanovic (2005) op. cit., p. 27.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 40–41. See also: A. Jackson (2008) ‘A long way from the violence in Sudan, they now call Australia home’, *The Age*, 18 November, p. 3.

⁵⁹ J. Taylor (2005) *Refugees and Regional Settlement: Win-Win?*, Paper presented at the Australian Social Policy Conference ‘Looking Back Looking Forward’, Fitzroy, Brotherhood of St Laurence, p. 5.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ See further: Broadbent et al. (2007) op. cit., pp. x – xvii, 23.

education and training, and affordable housing. With these elements in place, settlement can be of ‘mutual benefit’ to the regional community and the entrants themselves.⁶²

3. Settlement Experiences

Humanitarian entrants endure discrimination, social exclusion and dislocation from their community in their country of origin. Despite this, successful resettlement in a foreign country invariably requires ‘a level of pride in one’s identity’, and a commitment to ‘participate fully’ in the new society. In turn, there is an expectation of ‘responsible reciprocity’ from the host community.⁶³

According to VicHealth and the Institute for Community, Ethnicity and Policy Alternatives (ICEPA), successful settlement in Australia is dependent upon three key areas:

- Social inclusion: this includes access to health services, English tuition, respect for religious and cultural beliefs, and community networks;
- Freedom from discrimination and violence: this includes access to trauma counselling, and collaboration between government and the ethnic community; and,
- Access to economic resources: i.e. work, education, housing and money.⁶⁴

Aside from English tuition and access to health services, this paper does not have the scope to discuss all the topics identified by VicHealth and the ICEPA within the first two areas, but considers them inextricably linked with the more tangible elements of ‘access to economic resources’.

3.1 English Skills and Tuition

Over the last decade, only 10 per cent of humanitarian entrants to Australia have reported speaking English ‘very well’ or ‘best’.⁶⁵ In Victoria between 2002/03 and 2006/07, only 9 per cent of entrants reported speaking ‘good’ or ‘very good’ English.⁶⁶ The vast majority of entrants (82 per cent) have had little or no English proficiency. This section will discuss the delivery and accessibility of English tuition in Victoria, with reference to DIAC’s 2008 *Review of the Adult Migrant English*

⁶² *ibid.*, p. 107.

⁶³ UNHCR & Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2002) *Refugee Resettlement: An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration*, UNHCR, Foundation House, p. v.

⁶⁴ Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (2005) *A Plan for Action 2005–2007: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing*, VicHealth, p. 13; Broadbent et al. (2007) *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁶⁵ D. Cobb-Clark & B. Chapman (1999) ‘The Changing Pattern of Immigrants’ Labour Market Experiences’, Discussion Paper no. 396, Centre for Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, Canberra, p. 39; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁶⁶ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

Program Discussion Paper ('Review Discussion Paper') and the views of stakeholders.

IHSS English Provision

AMES provides newly arrived humanitarian entrants with a set amount of free English tuition. All entrants are eligible to enrol in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) through which they receive 510 hours of English language classes with AMES. Entrants study at four levels from Beginner to Advanced, receiving a Certificate of Spoken and Written English (CSWE) at the completion of each level.⁶⁷ AMEP classes may be accessed part time or full time, or through home tutoring. Entrants must enrol in the first six months of their settlement.

Some entrants may be eligible to enrol in the Special Preparatory Program before undertaking the AMEP. This program grants up to 400 hours of tuition to entrants aged between 16 and 24 years who have had less than 7 years of formal education, or up to 100 hours of tuition to those entrants aged over 18 years of age who have had difficult pre-migration experiences (e.g. torture).

AMEP classes consist of adult students from different migration streams and of varying literacy and educational levels. The DIAC Review is examining this format, having found that mixed classes can be 'ineffective' because they hamper progress 'by either the more advanced or the less literate clients'.⁶⁸ According to the Review Discussion Paper of July 2008, those who are 'highly literate' may be able to achieve English proficiency in the allotted 510 hours, but those who lack literacy in their own language 'do not achieve the required English language proficiency within the available hours'.⁶⁹ This observation was also made by speakers at the Conference on African Resettlement in Melbourne in 2007.⁷⁰

DIAC's Review Discussion Paper found that the hours provided for English tuition through the AMEP was 'the issue most frequently raised by all those consulted':⁷¹

There is general consensus that the number of hours offered through the AMEP is insufficient for the majority of clients to acquire sufficient language skills to manage at an acceptable level within the workplace and in social situations.⁷²

⁶⁷ Personal communication. Email correspondence between Manager of AMES Client Administration Unit and author, 3 February 2009.

⁶⁸ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Review of the Adult Migrant English Program*, Discussion Paper July 2008, DIAC, p. 14.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 22.

⁷⁰ African Think Tank (2007) *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 21, 40, 45.

⁷¹ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Review of the Adult Migrant English Program*, Discussion Paper July 2008, *op. cit.*, p. 22. Maher's report compared language tuition in other nations to that provided in Australia. It found that in Norway, where the yearly intake is around 1500, humanitarian arrivals receive 3000 hours of Norwegian language tuition with 'intensive support'. This stands in contrast to the Australian Government's intake of around 13,000 humanitarian entrants and the provision of 510 hours (plus the possible Special Preparatory Program) within a six month period. Maher concluded that while Australia is 'very generous' in its annual humanitarian intake, the 'essential element in this settlement process is inadequate' – see further: S. Maher (2007) *Community Adult Education based settlement programs for newly arrived African women on Humanitarian and Women at Risk visas*, The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia, p. 14.

⁷² Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Review of the Adult Migrant English Program*, Discussion Paper July 2008, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

A 2008 report by Victoria University's ICEPA made a similar assessment:

...it is widely recognised that the 510 hours of English language training is insufficient to acquire English language skills to a level required in the workplace.⁷³

DIAC's Review Discussion Paper has flagged the possibility that tuition hours could be increased to enable students to achieve 'English proficiency levels commensurate with employment requirements and/or to transition into further study'.⁷⁴ At a Senate Estimates hearing in February 2009, DIAC officials outlined a focus 'on the clients and their needs in relation to employment' and a focus on English tuition 'in the direction of employment'.⁷⁵

Community Groups

English tuition is also provided by community-based organisations around Victoria, such as the Sudanese Australia Integrated Learning Program, the Fitzroy Learning Network, the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and migrant resource centres. These classes are often staffed by volunteers, and operate for students of all ages and abilities. As humanitarian entrants are granted a limited number of hours in the AMEP, these services can provide further and ongoing tuition. The aforementioned community groups also run home-tutoring programs, in which entrants (and other non-English speaking migrants) are paired with a volunteer who comes to their home on a regular basis.

Community groups also hold social gatherings and workshops that serve to integrate an activity with English learning; programs such as the Fitzroy Learning Network weekly sewing class 'provide a comfortable learning environment'.⁷⁶ This style of activity based learning can be especially useful for pre-literate students; a 2007 study of such classes in Canada found that some students, 'particularly older women, learn through activity rather than theory'.⁷⁷ Activity-based classes can place emphasis on 'the building of confidence through regular participation and activity to counter the effects of trauma and culture shock'.⁷⁸

Childcare

Recent Melbourne based studies have identified a number of basic obstacles that can prevent entrants attending English classes in the first place. Overwhelmingly, this has

⁷³ D. Ben-Moshe, S. Bertone & M. Grossman (2008) *Refugee Access and Participation in Tertiary Education and Training*, Final Report to the Adult and Community Education Board and the Victorian Multicultural Commission, Institute for Community Ethnicity and Policy Alternatives, Victoria University, p. 8. See also – D. Sleiman (2005) *Perspectives on New Arrival African Humanitarian Entrants in the City of Whittlesea*, Whittlesea Community Connections, p. 11. Speakers at the African Resettlement Conference also argued that language tuition for school-age entrants be extended to two or more years in English language schools, rather than six months, with a focus on 'English for careers, life skills and educational pathways' – African Think Tank (2007) op. cit., p. 21.

⁷⁴ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Review of the Adult Migrant English Program*, Discussion Paper July 2008, op. cit., p. 14.

⁷⁵ Australia. Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs (2009) *Estimates*, 24 February, p. 78.

⁷⁶ Fitzroy Learning Network (2009) *What We Do*, viewed 5 March 2009, <<http://www.fitzroylearningnetwork.org.au/What%20we%20do.html>>.

⁷⁷ Maher (2007) op. cit., p. 10.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p. 9.

included the accessibility of affordable child care.⁷⁹ While AMES provides free childcare for students of the AMEP, this is not on site; rather, childcare is sourced through AMES partner the YWCA. It is a DIAC guideline that childcare places should 'be within 30 minutes travel of either the client's home or the classroom'.⁸⁰ Given the shortage of childcare places, this means that parents may have to wait weeks until they are able to commence learning English. Once the free AMEP tuition is completed, the free childcare ends as well. Parents then have to find themselves a new English class (generally at a community organisation) and a proximate childcare provider. Again, the shortage of childcare places means there is invariably a waiting period and this childcare can also be quite expensive.⁸¹

Some community-based organisations provide childcare services for entrants learning English. For example, the Sudanese Australian Integrated Learning Program runs concurrent English tuition for adults and their pre-school aged children at campuses across Melbourne, thereby providing adult participants with 'some quiet time to concentrate on learning English'.⁸² In the City of Yarra, the Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL) provides four hours of childcare per day at the Napier Street Child and Family Resource Centre for those women who are attending English classes at the Fitzroy Learning Network.

According to a 2008 report by RMIT University, childcare services for humanitarian entrant families need to be responsive to their special needs and pre-migration experiences. In the case of the Napier Street Child and Family Resource Centre, it was found that parents were often unfamiliar with the concept of childcare and playgroup and most children 'have not previously been cared for by someone outside their immediate family'. Due to their traumatic experiences and loss of family members it was found that children need a service that focuses on 'building attachments'.⁸³ Developing a level of trust between childcare workers and these families has been crucial to Napier Street's success, because childcare workers 'become part of their extended family [...and] share the care of their children'.⁸⁴

English Tuition for School-age Entrants

School-age humanitarian entrants are able to undertake intensive English tuition for two to four school terms at an English language school or centre in metropolitan or particular regional areas. Those students who are unable to attend this tuition can participate in a range of outreach programs or apply for funding to provide an ESL-

⁷⁹ Sleiman (2005) op. cit., p. 9; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement Trends and Needs of New Arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 32; L. Kyle et. al (2004) *Refugees in the Labour Market: Looking for Cost-Effective Models of Assistance*, Fitzroy, Ecumenical Migration Centre, Brotherhood of St Laurence, p. 5; F. Farouque (2008) 'Volunteers help settler Sudanese speak the word of hope', *The Age*, 17 May; Ben-Moshe, Bertone & Grossman (2008) op. cit., p. 6; Chamberlain & Babacan (2008) op. cit., p. 7–8.

⁸⁰ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Review of the Adult Migrant English Program*, Discussion Paper July 2008, op. cit., p. 11.

⁸¹ M. Schubert (2007) 'Melbourne feels child-care cost pain', *The Age*, 7 February.

⁸² See further: Sudanese Australian Integrated Learning Program website – <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~sail/about.htm>.

⁸³ Chamberlain & Babacan (2008) op. cit., p. 8.

⁸⁴ *ibid.* The Napier Street service also runs a playgroup that includes art therapy activities for women, such as weaving and jewellery making, and a weekly meal for families.

qualified teacher or mentor.⁸⁵ Organisations such as the BSL, the Sudanese Australian Integrated Learning Program and the Fitzroy Learning Network also provide tutoring for school-age entrants, either in English or in specific school subjects.

3.2 Education

New humanitarian entrants to Victoria have varying levels of literacy and educational qualifications, largely dependent upon the level of development and stability in their countries of origin or transit. This section will discuss the difficulties that adult entrants face in having their qualifications recognised, and in embarking upon further education; it will also examine the distinct problems encountered by school-age entrants.

Pre-migration Education Levels

In some refugee-source countries schooling may be unaffordable or prescribed according to gender. In others, schooling will have been interrupted or stopped altogether by civil conflict and unrest.⁸⁶ The form and content of schooling may also differ significantly from country to country and in comparison to that provided in Victoria.

In refugee camps there will usually be organised schooling available for children, which helps to restore a sense of normalcy in their lives.⁸⁷ There may also be language classes or skills development training for adults.⁸⁸ Attendance at school is not necessarily guaranteed; the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has noted that children in refugee camps may not attend class because they need to queue at food distribution points, they are ill, or they lack adequate clothing or money.⁸⁹

There is some difference in the discussion of entrants' education levels in recent literature, particularly the rate of higher education qualifications. DIAC has noted that some humanitarian entrants may have no history of formal education, and limited literacy.⁹⁰ DIAC data on the level of education of humanitarian entrants arriving in Victoria between 2002/03 and 2006/07 shows that 23 per cent had only completed primary education, while the majority (46 per cent) had only completed secondary education. Nineteen per cent of entrants had further tertiary or trade qualifications.⁹¹ In contrast, the Centre for Social and Community Research at Murdoch University has detailed high rates of tertiary qualifications amongst emerging communities from

⁸⁵ Victoria. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008) *English as a Second Language in Victorian Government Schools 2007*, Melbourne, DEECD, pp. 18–21.

⁸⁶ Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2005) *Education and Refugee Students from Southern Sudan*, Foundation House, pp. 1–2; C. Off (2004) 'Back to school in Afghanistan', *CBC News Online*, 27 January, viewed 4 February 2009, <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/afghanistan/schools.html>>.

⁸⁷ CBC (2007) 'Anatomy of a refugee camp', *CBC News Online*, 19 June, viewed 28 January 2007, <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/refugeecamp/>>.

⁸⁸ See further: Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Bhutanese Community Profile*, op. cit., pp. 6–7.

⁸⁹ Victoria. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008) *Strengthening Outcomes: Refugee Students in Government Schools*, Melbourne, DEECD, p. 8.

⁹⁰ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement Trends and Needs of New Arrivals 2007*, op. cit., pp. 36–37.

⁹¹ *ibid.*

Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea (using Australia-wide figures rather than Victorian).⁹² Both the Centre and the Conference on African Resettlement have argued that there is a ‘common perception’ that humanitarian entrants from developing regions or war-torn countries are ‘poorly educated’ or ‘typically illiterate’, and that the rate of tertiary qualifications amongst these entrants is not well-recognised.⁹³

Recognition of Qualifications

There are distinct problems with the process by which entrants can have existing qualifications recognised. A 1999 study by the Australian National University’s Centre for Economic Policy Research found that only 59 per cent of humanitarian entrants received equivalent qualification recognition.⁹⁴ This figure was significantly lower than for new arrivals in other visa categories. A 2004 inquiry by the Parliament of Victoria’s Economic Development Committee recorded repeated instances of entrants in regional Victoria working as labourers despite holding qualifications in medicine or accounting, or having held high public office in their country of origin.⁹⁵ Most recently, the ICEPA found that tertiary staff identified poor Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as the ‘main institutional barrier’ to entrants’ pursuit of further education; in particular, ‘the Australian RPL system remains resolutely document-focused in its evidentiary requirements’, which is unpractical for those entrants who no longer have documentation of their skills or degrees.⁹⁶ Staff suggested the use of a model similar to the British RPL system, which is based upon oral assessment where required, in order to ‘help refugees move to the next stage of their working and social lives... much more quickly and satisfactorily’.⁹⁷ The recognition of qualifications and experience can be particularly consequential to an entrant’s self-esteem or sense of identity; as one Victorian study found, a ‘mismatching of new arrivals with job placements can be disastrous for both employers and employees’.⁹⁸

Pre-Migration Experiences

The ability to undertake further education can be hampered by pre-migration experiences. Traumatic experiences can impact upon personal development and integration into a school or academic community.⁹⁹ Furthermore, according to the ICEPA, there is ‘strong evidence’ to suggest that exposure to traumatic events can lead to memory and concentration problems (among other things); ‘the after-effects of trauma and torture interfere with refugee students’ ability to learn’.¹⁰⁰ This is applicable to both adult and school-age students.¹⁰¹

⁹² V. Colic-Peisker & F. Tilbury (2007) *Refugees and Employment: the effect of visible difference on discrimination*, Final Report, Centre for Social and Community Research, Murdoch University, p. 7.

⁹³ *ibid.*; African Think Tank (2007) *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁹⁴ Cobb-Clark & Chapman (1999) *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁹⁵ Victoria. Economic Development Committee (2004) *Inquiry into the Economic Contribution of Victoria’s Culturally Diverse Population*, Final Report, *op. cit.*, pp. 62 – 64.

⁹⁶ Ben-Moshe, Bertone & Grossman (2008) *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*

⁹⁸ Broadbent et al. (2007) *op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁹⁹ Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2005) *Education and Refugee Students from Southern Sudan*, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ Ben-Moshe, Bertone & Grossman (2008) *op. cit.*, p. 13.

¹⁰¹ Refugee Education Partnership Project (2007) *The Education Needs of Young Refugees in Victoria*, Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, p. 13. See also: Victoria. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008) *Strengthening Outcomes: Refugee Students in Government Schools*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

School-age Entrants

School-age humanitarian entrants face additional challenges to those of adult entrants. As DIAC reported in 2007:

...a combination of interrupted education, the refugee experience and low English proficiency result in difficulties in the classroom, particularly when students are placed within mainstream classes prematurely or where age criteria is used for placement rather than English language proficiency and educational experience.¹⁰²

The placement of school-age entrants in classes corresponding to their age group appears to be an ongoing issue.¹⁰³ The African Resettlement Conference called for a review of this practice in one of its three key recommendations on education.¹⁰⁴ Other concerns expressed by stakeholders include the efficacy of ESL support provided to school-age entrants, and the possibility that students can become discouraged and avoid school.¹⁰⁵

The English skills of parents can impact upon the ability of children and high-school age entrants to engage with school and to successfully complete homework tasks. A study conducted for the City of Whittlesea in 2005 found that the African migrant community desired more homework support programs for their children, as parents 'felt incapable' of assisting their children themselves.¹⁰⁶ Settlement programs in Shepparton and other regional areas have addressed similar problems.¹⁰⁷ An inability to engage with their child's everyday schooling invariably impacts upon a parent's ability to assist them with long-term educational decisions. According to Victorian Governor Prof. David de Kretser, failure to address this problem 'will create a disadvantaged group in our society'.¹⁰⁸

Parents may also require general information on other elements of their child's schooling, such as how to pack school lunches.¹⁰⁹ In countries such as Somalia, lunch is the main meal of the day and children will return home to eat. Dr Cate Burns of Deakin University has observed that Somali mothers can experience difficulty in 'shaping an alternative arrangement' that maintains cultural traditions, especially if their children prefer to take conventional Australian food to school in response to peer pressure.¹¹⁰

¹⁰² Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement Trends and Needs of New Arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 37.

¹⁰³ B. Ahmed (2007) 'A tragedy among growing violence', *The Age*, 2 October 2007; Farouque (2008) op. cit.

¹⁰⁴ African Think Tank (2007) op. cit., p. 10.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p. 6; Refugee Education Partnership Project (2007) op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁰⁶ Sleiman (2005) op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁰⁷ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Shepparton Regional Humanitarian Settlement Pilot*, op. cit., p. 17; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2009) *Regional Humanitarian Settlement Pilot: Ballarat*, Report of an Evaluation undertaken by Margaret Piper and Associates for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, p. 45.

¹⁰⁸ African Think Tank (2007) op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement Trends and Needs of New Arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 9.

¹¹⁰ C. Burns (2002) 'Moving to Australia could be bad for your health: food and nutrition issues of Somali women arriving in Australia as refugees', *Nutridate*, vol. 13, no. 2, May 2002, p. 6.

3.3 Housing

In attempting to secure suitable and permanent accommodation humanitarian entrants are challenged by a confluence of issues, beginning with the general shortage of rental housing in Melbourne, where vacancy rates are below 2 per cent.¹¹¹ Having arrived in Australia with negligible finances and unlikely to obtain high-paying employment, they face a long-term reliance on rental accommodation. In struggling to find affordable housing in such a tight rental market, humanitarian entrants are in much the same boat as other low socio-economic groups. Humanitarian entrants may, however, face distinct problems, and these are outlined below.

Finding permanent accommodation

As a result an entrant's poor English skills and 'visible difference', applying for a residential lease can be complicated by the following.¹¹²

- Their proficiency in English and familiarity with terms and conditions of tenancy; the Migrant Information Centre of East Melbourne (MIC) and DIAC have both noted that humanitarian entrants can require assistance in understanding their rights and obligations as tenants;¹¹³
- New arrivals may lack suitable referees or a rental history;
- New arrivals may be unemployed and reliant on welfare; and,
- Discrimination and/or a lack of cross-cultural awareness on the part of real estate agents; the MIC found that discrimination 'is a major barrier to securing private rental housing'.¹¹⁴ Both the MIC and DIAC stated that real estate agents may require improved information on the housing needs of humanitarian entrants.¹¹⁵

An entrant's family circumstances can impact upon their rental application for the following reasons:

- Many new arrivals (particularly from African nations) have large extended families. Of those humanitarian entrants who settled in Victoria between 2002-2003 and 2006-2007, 43 per cent lived in households of 5 to 7 people, while 10 per cent had 8 to 10 people;¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Victorian Council of Social Service & Australian Conservation Foundation (2008) *Housing Affordability: More Than Rent and Mortgages*, VCOSS, p. 3.

¹¹² 'Visible difference' is a term used by the Centre for Social and Community Research at Murdoch University, in its 2007 report on refugees and employment.

¹¹³ Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (2007) *Finding a Home: A Research Report on Supporting Newly Arrived Migrants and Refugees to Secure Housing*, Melbourne, p. 5; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., pp. 35–36; Foley & Beer (2003) op. cit., p. 2.

¹¹⁴ Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (2007) op. cit., pp. 5–6.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 5–6; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 36. The ACT Government's Affordable Housing Steering Group made a similar recommendation – see further: ACT Government (2007) *Report of the Affordable Housing Steering Group*, Affordable Housing Steering Group, p. 35.

¹¹⁶ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 35.

- Large families could therefore be forced to accept poor quality or inappropriately sized accommodation;¹¹⁷
- Migrants may also accommodate newly arrived extended family members for long periods of time, which could breach the terms of their tenancy agreement; and,
- If a family has disabled children, they can experience ‘particular difficulties’ in securing suitable accommodation.¹¹⁸

During the Tenancy

Once they have secured a lease, humanitarian entrants may continue to experience problems during their tenancy due to culturally different notions of dispute resolution and a feeling of vulnerability in the housing market. A Tasmanian study of 2007 discovered that entrants were unwilling to assert their rights as tenants or to pursue complaints through formal processes; some respondents to this study had been waiting more than a year for the landlord to fix the kitchen stove, while others reported being bullied into paying a higher bond.¹¹⁹ In 2007 the MIC surveyed a wide range of entrants living in Melbourne, and reported that a number of them ‘were very frustrated by the slowness with which landlords/real estate agents responded to maintenance requests’.¹²⁰ Most notably, some entrants ‘felt that they had been treated unfairly’ when trying to reclaim their bond, ‘due to damage or cleanliness issues cited by agents’.¹²¹

New arrivals may not have realistic expectations as to the cost of private rental accommodation, and struggle to cope on a tight budget.¹²² DIAC has found that some humanitarian entrants spend more than half their income on rent.¹²³ This is what the Victorian Council of Social Services terms ‘housing stress’, where a household in the bottom 40 per cent of income distribution spends more than 30 per cent of gross income on housing costs. Housing stress is linked to poor health and social exclusion.¹²⁴ A Sydney Migrant Resource Centre reported in 2008 that refugees were presenting with ‘high levels’ of stress, anxiety and even homelessness.¹²⁵ Reports

¹¹⁷ Foley & Beer (2003) op. cit., p. 2; Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 36. See also: J. Flanagan (2007) *Dropped From the Moon: the settlement experiences of refugee communities in Tasmania*, Hobart, Anglicare Tasmania, p. 67.

¹¹⁸ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 36.

¹¹⁹ Flanagan (2007) op. cit., pp. 71–72.

¹²⁰ Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (2007) op. cit., p. 8.

¹²¹ *ibid.*

¹²² Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., pp. 35–36; P. Bidy (2008) ‘Refugees Face Rent Anguish’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 August.

¹²³ Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., pp. 35–36.

¹²⁴ Victorian Council of Social Service & Australian Conservation Foundation (2008) *Housing Affordability: More Than Rent and Mortgages*, op. cit., pp. 2–3.

¹²⁵ Bidy (2008) op. cit.

from agencies in Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and the ACT suggest this is a common problem.¹²⁶

IHSS Housing Services

AMES works to assist new arrivals to secure suitable accommodation as soon as possible, liaising with real estate agents and helping to organise Centrelink payments. AMES seeks to find entrants accommodation in the vicinity of their established ethnic or cultural community. It also works to ensure that entrants on SHP visas are being assisted by their proposers to find housing. Some new arrivals will invariably stay with family, friends or community members for a period of time, while permanent accommodation is being found.

3.4 Health

Having lived and travelled in impoverished, stressful and/or dangerous conditions, humanitarian entrants are likely to suffer the effects of malnutrition, trauma and physical injury.

Nutrition

The World Health Organisation guidelines for nutrition in refugee camps prescribe a minimum of 2,100 calories per person, per day.¹²⁷ Rations will generally include a basis of wheat or rice, some dried beans, peas or lentils, and oil and spices. These foods are distributed at intervals of several days or weeks. As a result, refugees may only eat one or two meals a day, depending on the camp.¹²⁸ Vegetables and meat can be rare luxuries.¹²⁹

Once in Australia, a humanitarian entrant may have a vastly different diet and lifestyle. Dr Andre Renzaho, of Deakin University, has studied the nutritional needs of new arrivals from the African continent and found that after years of hunger, there is 'a catch-up phase'.¹³⁰ Diabetes and other nutrition related illnesses have become common as the consumption of processed foods high in sugar and fat has increased; take-away food is widely available and affordable, while traditional meal preparation has been usurped by labour-saving devices.¹³¹

¹²⁶ Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (2007) op. cit., pp. 2, 8–9 ; Bidy (2008) op. cit.; (2008) 'Government Promises Refugee Housing Forum', *The Anglican Guardian*, vol. 103, no. 3, pp. 1–2; ACT Government (2007) *Report of the Affordable Housing Steering Group*, op. cit., p. 33.

¹²⁷ UNHCR (2003) *Food and Nutrition Needs in Emergencies*, p. 1, viewed 28 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/doclist/publ/45fa743b2.html>>.

¹²⁸ Seal (2008) op. cit.

¹²⁹ Most refugee camps will have some form of market, involving external local traders or the refugees themselves, which sells food and material goods. In more established resettlement camps residents may be able to cultivate and grow some vegetables. See further: Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Bhutanese Community Profile*, op. cit., p. 6.

¹³⁰ G. Maslen (2005) 'Diet disaster in the Lucky Country', *The Age*, 10 October.

¹³¹ *ibid.*; Burns (2002) op. cit., p. 6. See also: S. Jackson (2006) *Community Development and Social Inclusion. A Report into the Somali Community's Access to Council Services in the Banyule LGA: Assessment, Barriers and Recommendations for Improvement*, Victorian Parliamentary Internship Research Report, pp. 23–24.

Mental Health

For humanitarian entrants, emotional trauma from their past experiences can take months to surface. According to Melbourne's Foundation House, after the initial activity and excitement of resettlement an entrant will slowly start to think about 'how they managed to survive'.¹³² This process is compounded by the challenges of learning a new language, new laws and a new way of life, while financial pressures and separation from family members bring new feelings of guilt and anxiety:

...a single mother ...may be sending money back to other family members to help them survive. On Centrelink payments she cannot save money and it is not easy to find a job. That is the guilt and pressure she is living with all the time.¹³³

The concept of counselling may be very new, as mental health services are 'practically non-existent' in African nations, and 'thinking about your feelings can be a luxury when you are thinking about survival'.¹³⁴ Data compiled by Foundation House shows that a great deal of their IHSS clients have experienced psychological violence in the form of 'dangerous flight', disappearance of family members, mock executions, and witnessing violence and death.¹³⁵ Foundation House states that while most of Australia's refugees will not necessarily have experienced a single traumatic event, they will invariably have lived through 'a prolonged climate of political and civil repression', involving dislocation from family members, community and culture. This can result in post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety disorders in adults and children.¹³⁶

Settlement itself will bring emotional challenges. According to VicHealth, people from culturally diverse backgrounds can exhibit higher rates of 'psychological stress' than the Australian-born population as a result of cultural shock, discrimination, limited English proficiency and consequent social exclusion, and difficulty accessing employment and education.¹³⁷

Physical Health

Humanitarian entrants may have physical health problems related to their past experiences. Foundation House has reported that a number of its IHSS clients have experienced some form of physical violence, such as assault, rape, beating, mutilation or coming under combat fire.¹³⁸ Those entrants who have experienced trauma and torture may suffer physical sequelae, manifesting in forms 'as varied as the methods of torture practised'. These physical effects can include brain damage, impaired hearing (from beating or electrical torture), missing teeth, scars and disfigurement,

¹³² Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, op. cit., p. 11. See also: Flanagan (2007) op. cit., pp. 76–79.

¹³³ Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, op. cit., p. 11. See also: Flanagan (2007) op. cit., pp. 76–79.

¹³⁴ African Think Tank (2007) op. cit., p. 29; Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, op. cit., p. 11.

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 18–19.

¹³⁶ Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2007) *Promoting Refugee Health: A Guide for Doctors and Other Health Care Providers Caring for People From Refugee Backgrounds*, Foundation House, p. 49.

¹³⁷ Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (2005) *A Plan for Action 2005–2007: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing*, op. cit., pp. 25–26.

¹³⁸ Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, op. cit., pp. 18–19.

bronchitis (from being forcibly submerged in water), sexual or gynaecological dysfunction, chronic pain and poor mobility.¹³⁹

A study by the University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Hospital, published in 2000, reported that humanitarian entrants may have ‘complex health needs’ which are unfamiliar to Australian GPs.¹⁴⁰ Entrants can require many forms of traditional and complementary medicine, including physiotherapy, naturopathy and counselling.¹⁴¹ The study found that GPs and other health professionals benefit greatly from interpreting services and education on the specific health needs of humanitarian entrants.

In turn, the study argued that humanitarian entrants must receive ‘appropriate information, in their own language, about what is a new and complex health system’ in order to improve their effective utilisation of health services.¹⁴² Victoria’s Department of Human Services, in conjunction with La Trobe University’s Refugee Health Research Centre, has examined hospital utilisation rates among persons born in refugee-source countries compared to the Australian-born population between 1998/99 and 2003/04. The comparisons varied; while persons from Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Sudan had much higher rates of hospital admission in obstetric, pregnancy and birth-related conditions, they had lower rates of admission in areas of mental health.¹⁴³ This is despite Foundation House observing that there is ‘a high prevalence of depression, guilt, anxiety and grief’ amongst humanitarian entrants who have experienced severe trauma, torture and the loss of family members.¹⁴⁴

3.5 Labour Market Participation

It is widely acknowledged that the successful labour market participation of humanitarian entrants is often the most crucial part of their settlement experience, providing a level of social engagement, a sense of worth and basic financial security. Securing employment is consequential to an entrant’s ability to obtain permanent accommodation for themselves and their family. This section will outline the main challenges facing humanitarian entrants in the labour market.

¹³⁹ Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2007) *Promoting Refugee Health: A Guide for Doctors and Other Health Care Providers Caring for People From Refugee Backgrounds*, op. cit., p. 48.

¹⁴⁰ A. Neale et al (2007) ‘Health service utilisation and barriers for settlers from the Horn of Africa’, *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, vol. 31, no. 4, p. 335.

¹⁴¹ Foundation House (2008) *Annual Report 2008*, p. 21. For an overview of health problems experienced by humanitarian entrants, and health services provided by the Department of Human Services, including the Victorian Refugee Health Nurse Program, see further: Victoria. Department of Human Services (2008), pp. 19–20, 23–38.

¹⁴² A. Neale et al (2007) op. cit., p. 335.

¹⁴³ Victoria. Department of Human Services & Refugee Health Research Centre (2006) *Hospital Utilisation and Outcomes Amongst Victorian Residents born in Refugee-source Countries: An Analysis of Hospital Admissions between 1998/99 and 2003/04 from the Victorian Admitted Episodes Dataset*, Melbourne, Victoria, pp. 137, 148, 159, 170.

¹⁴⁴ Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2007) *Promoting Refugee Health: A Guide for Doctors and Other Health Care Providers Caring for People From Refugee Backgrounds*, op. cit., p. 25.

Language

English skills will invariably impact upon an entrant's employment prospects. The BSL *Given the Chance* program has reported that proficiency in English 'is the most important form of human capital influencing the employability of refugees'.¹⁴⁵ The very fact that entrants come from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) may put them at an automatic disadvantage in a context where employers prefer native English speakers 'relative to recently-arrived NESB migrants'.¹⁴⁶ As previously discussed, employment-oriented English tuition is a focus of DIAC's Review. It has been shown that 'relatively small improvements' in English ability at the lower end of the proficiency spectrum 'might result in large gains in job search and on-the-job productivity'.¹⁴⁷ In turn, there is the chance that entrants will improve their English skills through their employment.¹⁴⁸

Discrimination

Evidence of discrimination against humanitarian entrants in the labour market has been mixed. A study by the Centre for Social and Community Research at Murdoch University found that entrants may encounter discrimination in the labour market for their 'visible difference'.¹⁴⁹ The study surveyed entrants from the Middle East, Africa and the former Yugoslavia in 2004, and concluded that discrimination presented a significant challenge to their employment prospects:

...visible difference, in the form of name, language ability, accent, appearance and religious customs is a widespread problem in the Australian labour market and poses a major barrier to satisfactory employment outcomes for refugees.¹⁵⁰

The ICEPA has noted that 'an absence of economic participation [can contribute] to feelings of distress' and a sense of discrimination.¹⁵¹ In the case of Iraqi settlers in Shepparton, anecdotal evidence has suggested that a lack of appropriate services, 'inexperienced job placement agencies', and 'little recognition of prior skills' has made it hard for new arrivals to obtain permanent employment or higher rates of pay.¹⁵²

Employment History and Community Networks

Of those surveyed, the Centre for Social and Community Research found that a lack of employment history in Australia also impacted upon employment outcomes, even if an entrant's qualifications had been recognised. Entrants will invariably lack a work history in Australia and, for those who have suffered long periods of displacement, recent work history in their country of origin. Entrants may also lack references from

¹⁴⁵ K. Mestan (2008) *Given the Chance: An Evaluation of an Employment and Education Pathways Program for Refugees*, Fitzroy, Brotherhood of St Laurence, p. 6.

¹⁴⁶ B. Birrell & L. Hawthorne (1996) 'Immigrants and the Professions', *People and Place*, vol. 4, no. 4, p. 11.

¹⁴⁷ Cobb-Clark & Chapman (1999) *op. cit.*, p. 45.

¹⁴⁸ See further: Australia. Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs (2009) *Estimates*, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

¹⁴⁹ Colic-Peisker & Tilbury (2007) *op. cit.*, p. 18 – 21. See also: Flanagan (2007) *op. cit.*, pp. 54–60; Mestan (2008) *op. cit.*, p. 6.

¹⁵⁰ Colic-Peisker & Tilbury (2007) *op. cit.*, p. 18 – 21.

¹⁵¹ Broadbent et al. (2007) *op. cit.*, p. 24.

¹⁵² *ibid.*, pp. 24–25.

employers in their country of origin.¹⁵³ It is for this reason that established community networks can be so important to an entrant's settlement in Australia, as they are able to make use of what is colloquially known as the 'grapevine method' – informal community recruitment networks, which migrants have utilised throughout Australian history.¹⁵⁴

As stated earlier in this paper, new and emerging communities in Victoria lack this network. The BSL released a study in 2004 entitled, 'Refugees in the Labour Market', which found that the personal resources (family and financial) of newly arrived African entrants are often weaker than those of other entrants, and the resources of their communities in Australia may be similarly insubstantial.¹⁵⁵ The BSL reported that recent arrivals (those between 2000 and 2003) had poorer employment outcomes than refugees of the early 1990s.¹⁵⁶ The Centre for Social and Community Research made a comparable assessment through interviews with 150 entrants from the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East and Africa. The Centre concluded that 'community networks were highly important' for job-seeking Yugoslav and Middle Eastern entrants.¹⁵⁷ The 'new and emerging communities' of African entrants could not access an established community in Australia, and therefore lacked informal job-seeking networks.¹⁵⁸

Navigating the Labour Market

The BSL has argued that employment is 'not only necessary for economic well-being following resettlement, but can also be crucial for establishing an identity and a place in a new society'.¹⁵⁹ The sense of urgency may be particularly great for those entrants who have endured years of displacement and the loss of friends, family and community. The BSL noted however, that the desire to find work may lead an entrant to forego completion of English classes or, most notably, accept employment that is unsuitable and / or exploitative, which could impact upon the wellbeing of themselves or their family.¹⁶⁰ The possibility that entrants may be exploited or mistreated in the workplace is heightened by two things: the fact that entrants invariably enter the lowest rung of the labour market, performing low-paid and low-status jobs, and the fact that entrants may be unfamiliar with Australian employment systems and workplace culture.¹⁶¹ DIAC has noted that humanitarian entrants may lack an understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the workplace.¹⁶² As DIAC explained to a Senate Estimates hearing in February 2009, the program 'Pathways to

¹⁵³ See further: J. Topsfield (2008) 'Plea to mentor African refugees', *The Age*, 24 November.

¹⁵⁴ G. Di Lorenzo (2001) *Solid Brick Homes and Vegie Patches: A History of Italian Migration to Moonee Ponds*, Parkville, History Department, University of Melbourne, pp. 92–93. See also: T. K. Hareven (1978) 'The Dynamics of Kin in an Industrial Community', *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 84, Supplement: Turning Points: Historical and Sociological Essays on the Family, pp. S156–S158, S161–S163.

¹⁵⁵ Kyle et. al (2004) op. cit., p. 6.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁷ Colic-Peisker & Tilbury (2007) op. cit., p. 27.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁵⁹ Kyle et. al (2004) op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁶¹ Mestan (2008) op. cit., p. 6; Ben-Moshe, Bertone & Grossman (2008) op. cit., p. 17.

¹⁶² Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, op. cit., p. 37.

Employment' is designed to address this problem, providing information on topics such as occupational health and safety, taxation, and the role of unions.¹⁶³ The efficacy of employment assistance in addressing the myriad needs of humanitarian entrants is therefore very important.¹⁶⁴ Both AMES and the BSL run employment programs in Melbourne. According to the BSL, these are a valuable means of ensuring greater community capital and social integration, and less reliance on government support services in the long-term. Successful employment outcomes for humanitarian entrants promote local business development, combat skills shortages and improve the health of the entrants and their community.¹⁶⁵

Conclusion

In March 2009 the Victorian Government released its new multicultural policy, *All of Us*. Among many other things, the policy document notes 'the special needs of our new and emerging migrant groups, particularly refugee communities', in a diverse and expanding population.¹⁶⁶ It states that 'increased global mobility' will ensure that migrants continue to contribute to Victoria's population growth.

This increased mobility will invariably include humanitarian displacement. As the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres has argued, 'refugees are a symbol of our turbulent times'.¹⁶⁷ Due to the global economic downturn, developing nations may experience reduced demand for exports and less foreign investment, thereby ensuring 'less growth and government revenue for already fragile social protection and services'.¹⁶⁸ According to Guterres, climate change and poor governance are similar contributing factors, and there is a growing 'inter-linkage between the environment, the economy and conflict and security issues'.¹⁶⁹ In this environment, refugees are 'a responsibility of the international community'.¹⁷⁰

Australia's Humanitarian Programme is part of what the UNHCR calls 'burden sharing'. The UNHCR considers the resettlement of refugees 'a mark of true generosity' on the part of national governments.¹⁷¹ In turn, evidence has clearly shown that 'with appropriate integration measures in place' humanitarian entrants can make a valuable contribution to the host society.¹⁷²

¹⁶³ Australia. Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs (2009) *Estimates*, op. cit., p. 77.

¹⁶⁴ Kyle et. al (2004) op. cit., p. 6.

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 19–20.

¹⁶⁶ See further: Victoria (2009) *All of Us: Victoria's Multicultural Policy*, Victorian Government, pp. 10, 12, 25.

¹⁶⁷ A. Guterres (2008) *Enduring Exile*, High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges: Protracted Refugee Situations, Geneva, UNHCR, 10–11 December.

¹⁶⁸ A. Hewett (2008) 'In this crisis, it is the world's poor who stand to lose the most', *The Age*, 24 October, p. 15.

¹⁶⁹ Guterres (2009) op. cit.; A. Guterres (2008) *People on the Move: The Challenges of Displacement in the 21st Century*, IRC–UK Annual Lecture, Royal Geographical Society, London, 16 June.

¹⁷⁰ Guterres (2008) *Opening Statement of High Commissioner*, op. cit.

¹⁷¹ UNHCR (2004) *Resettlement Handbook*, Chapter 1, op. cit., p. 1/3.

¹⁷² *ibid.* See also - Guterres (2008) *Enduring Exile*, op. cit.

References

(2008) 'Government Promises Refugee Housing Forum', *The Anglican Guardian*, vol. 103, no. 3, pp. 1–2.

ACT Government (2007) *Report of the Affordable Housing Steering Group*, Affordable Housing Steering Group.

African Think Tank (2007) *African Resettlement in Australia: The Way Forward*, Conference Report, University of Melbourne, 11-13 April 2007.

Ahmed, B. (2007) 'A tragedy among growing violence', *The Age*, 2 October 2007.

AMES (2008) *Annual Report 2007*, Melbourne, AMES.

AMES (2008) *IHSS Settlement Information, October 2008 – December 2008*, AMES.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, DIAC.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Bhutanese Community Profile*, DIAC, p. 4.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2006) *Ethiopia: Community Profile*, DIAC.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Fact Sheet 60 – Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program*, viewed 14 January 2009, <<http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/60refugee.htm#c>>.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Immigration Update 2007–2008*, DIAC.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008) *Review of the Adult Migrant English Program*, Discussion Paper July 2008, DIAC.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Shepparton Regional Humanitarian Settlement Pilot*, Summary Report of an Evaluation undertaken by Margaret Piper and Associates for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2009) *Regional Humanitarian Settlement Pilot: Ballarat*, Report of an Evaluation undertaken by Margaret Piper and Associates for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Togolese Community Profile*, DIAC.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007) *Victoria: Settlement trends and needs of new arrivals 2007*, DIAC.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2006) *Measures to Improve Settlement Outcomes for Humanitarian Entrants*, Discussion Paper, DIMA.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (2005) *Australia's Support for Humanitarian Entrants 2004-05*, Canberra, DIMIA.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2009) *Top 20 Countries by Migration Stream*, Department of Immigration and Citizenship Settlement Database, data extracted on 11 February 2009.

Australia. Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs (2009) *Estimates*, 24 February.

Ben-Moshe, D., S. Bertone & M. Grossman (2008) *Refugee Access and Participation in Tertiary Education and Training*, Final Report to the Adult and Community Education Board and the Victorian Multicultural Commission, Institute for Community Ethnicity and Policy Alternatives, Victoria University.

Biddy, P. (2008) 'Refugees Face Rent Anguish', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 August.

Birrell, B., & L. Hawthorne (1996) 'Immigrants and the Professions', *People and Place*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 1–11.

Broadbent, R., M. Cacciattolo & C. Carpenter (2007) *The Relocation of Refugees from Melbourne to Regional Victoria: A Comparative Evaluation in Swan Hill and Warrnambool*, Institute for Community, Ethnicity and Policy Alternatives, Victoria University.

Burns, C. (2002) 'Moving to Australia could be bad for your health: food and nutrition issues of Somali women arriving in Australia as refugees', *Nutridate*, vol. 13, no. 2, May 2002, pp. 5–7.

CBC (2007) 'Anatomy of a refugee camp', *CBC News Online*, 19 June, viewed 28 January 2007, <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/refugeecamp/>>.

Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (2007) *Humanitarian Youth Arrivals to Victoria*, Information Sheet no. 15.

Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (2008) *Victorian Government Budget Supports Refugee Students*, Media Release, 7 May.

Chamberlain, C. & A. Babacan (2008) *The Belonging in Australia Project*, Report Prepared for the City of Yarra, RMIT University.

CIA World Fact Book (2009) *Burma*, viewed 23 January 2009, <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bm.html#People>>.

Cobb-Clark, D. & B. Chapman (1999) 'The Changing Pattern of Immigrants Labour Market Experiences', *Discussion Paper no. 396*, Centre for Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, Canberra.

Colic-Peisker, V., & F. Tilbury (2007) *Refugees and Employment: The effect of visible difference on discrimination, Final Report*, Centre for Social and Community Research, Murdoch University.

Di Lorenzo, G. (2001), *Solid Brick Homes and Vegie Patches: A History of Italian Migration to Moonee Ponds*, Parkville, History Department, University of Melbourne.

Farouque, F. (2008) 'Volunteers help settler Sudanese speak the word of hope', *The Age*, 17 May.

Fitzroy Learning Network (2009) *What We Do*, viewed 5 March 2009, <<http://www.fitzroylearningnetwork.org.au/What%20we%20do.html>>.

Flanagan, J. (2007) *Dropped From the Moon: the settlement experiences of refugee communities in Tasmania*, Hobart, Anglicare Tasmania.

Foley, P. & A. Beer (2003) *Housing Need and Provision for Recently Arrived Refugees in Australia*, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Southern Research Centre.

Guterres, A. (2008) *Enduring Exile*, High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges: Protracted Refugee Situations, Geneva, UNHCR, 10–11 December.

Guterres, A. (2008) *Opening Statement of High Commissioner*, High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges: Protracted Refugee Situations, Geneva, UNHCR, 10 December.

Guterres, A. (2008) *People on the Move: The Challenges of Displacement in the 21st Century*, IRC–UK Annual Lecture, Royal Geographical Society, London, 16 June.

Guterres, A. (2009) *Statement by Mr Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the United Nations Security Council*, New York, UNHCR, 8 January.

Hareven, T. K. (1978) 'The Dynamics of Kin in an Industrial Community', *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 84, Supplement: Turning Points: Historical and Sociological Essays on the Family, pp. S151–S182.

Harrison, D. (2007) 'African refugees face integration issues: Andrews', *The Age*, 3 October.

Hewett, A. (2008) 'In this crisis, it is the world's poor who stand to lose the most', *The Age*, 24 October, p. 15.

- Hobday, L. (2007) 'Migrant groups defend African refugee integration', *ABC News Online*, 3 October, viewed 3 February 2009, <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/10/03/2049606.htm>>.
- Human Rights Watch (2008) *Bhutan's Ethnic Cleansing*, 31 January, viewed 24 February 2009, <<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/01/31/bhutans-ethnic-cleansing>>.
- International Organisation for Migration (2007) Myanmar, viewed 23 January 2009, <<http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/activities/asia-and-oceania/east-and-south-east-asia/myanmar>>.
- Jackson, A. (2008) 'A long way from the violence in Sudan, they now call Australia home', *The Age*, 18 November, p. 3.
- Jackson, S. (2006) *Community Development and Social Inclusion. A Report into the Somali Community's Access to Council Services in the Banyule LGA: Assessment, Barriers and Recommendations for Improvement*, Victorian Parliamentary Internship Research Report.
- Kyle, L., F. Macdonald, J. Doughney & J. Pyke (2004) *Refugees in the Labour Market: Looking for Cost-Effective Models of Assistance*, Fitzroy, Ecumenical Migration Centre, Brotherhood of St Laurence.
- Maher, S. (2007) *Community Adult Education based settlement programs for newly arrived African women on Humanitarian and Women at Risk visas*, The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia.
- Maslen, G. (2005) 'Diet disaster in the Lucky Country', *The Age*, 10 October.
- Mestan, K. (2008) *Given the Chance: An Evaluation of an Employment and Education Pathways Program for Refugees*, Fitzroy, Brotherhood of St Laurence.
- Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (2007) *Finding a Home: A Research Report on Supporting Newly Arrived Migrants and Refugees to Secure Housing*, Melbourne.
- Neale, A., J. Y. Y. Ngeow, S. A. Skull & B. Biggs (2007) 'Health service utilisation and barriers for settlers from the Horn of Africa', *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, vol. 31, no. 4, pp. 333–335.
- Off, C. (2004) 'Back to school in Afghanistan', *CBC News Online*, 27 January, viewed 4 February 2009, <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/afghanistan/schools.html>>.
- Refugee Education Partnership Project (2007) *The Education Needs of Young Refugees in Victoria*, Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture.
- Refugees International (2008) *Sudan*, viewed 28 April 2009, <<http://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/africa/sudan>>.

Seal, R. (2008) 'Militia, bandits, one meal a day', *The Observer*, 27 April, viewed 28 January 2009, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2008/apr/27/healthandwellbeing.foodanddrink>>.

Simon, K. (2008) *Asylum Seekers*, NSW Parliamentary Library Research Service, Briefing Paper No 13/08.

Schubert, M. (2007) 'Melbourne feels child-care cost pain', *The Age*, 7 February.

Sleiman, D. (2005) *Perspectives on New Arrival African Humanitarian Entrants in the City of Whittlesea*, Whittlesea Community Connections.

Taylor, J. & D. Stanovic (2005) *Refugees and Regional Settlement: Balancing Priorities*, Fitzroy, Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Taylor, J. (2005) *Refugees and Regional Settlement: Win-Win?*, Paper presented at the Australian Social Policy Conference 'Looking Back Looking Forward', Fitzroy, Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Thailand Burma Border Consortium (2008) *Internally Displaced Persons Overview*, viewed 27 January 2009, <<http://www.tbcc.org/>>.

Topsfield, J. (2008) 'Plea to mentor African refugees', *The Age*, 24 November.

United Nations (2008) 'UN Agency assists highest ever number of refugees and displaced', *UN News Centre*, 17 June.

UNHCR (2008) *2007 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons*, UNHCR.

UNHCR (2007) *2006 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons*, Division of Operational Services, Field Information and Coordination Support Section.

UNHCR (2003) *Food and Nutrition Needs in Emergencies*, p. 1, viewed 28 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/doclist/publ/45fa743b2.html>>.

UNHCR (2008) *Iraq Situation Update – August 2008*, UNHCR, Geneva, p. 6.

UNHCR (2007) *Protecting Refugees and the Role of UNHCR*, 2007 Edition, p. 15, viewed 27 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/country?iso=mmr>>.

UNHCR (2006) *Refugees by Numbers 2006 Edition*, viewed 22 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/basics/BASICS/3b028097c.html#IDPs>>.

UNHCR (2004) *Resettlement Handbook*, Department of International Protection, Geneva.

UNHCR (2009) *The Iraq Situation*, viewed 22 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/iraq.html>>.

UNHCR (2006) *The State of the World's Refugees 2006*, viewed 23 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/publ/PUBL/4444d3cc2.html>>.

UNHCR (2008) *UNHCR Global Appeal 2008-2009: Myanmar*, viewed 27 January 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.org/ga08/index.html>>.

UNHCR & Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2002) *Refugee Resettlement: An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration*, UNHCR, Foundation House.

Victoria (2009) *All of Us: Victoria's Multicultural Policy*, Victorian Government.

Victoria. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008) *English as a Second Language in Victorian Government Schools 2007*, Melbourne DEECD.

Victoria. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008) *Strengthening Outcomes: Refugee Students in Government Schools*, Melbourne.

Victoria. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008) *Victorian Budget 08/09: More Help for Refugee Students*, fact sheet, viewed 18 June 2009, <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au>>.

Victoria. Department of Human Services & Refugee Health Research Centre (2006) *Hospital Utilisation and Outcomes Amongst Victorian Residents born in Refugee-source Countries: An Analysis of Hospital Admissions between 1998/99 and 2003/04 from the Victorian Admitted Episodes Dataset*, Melbourne, Victoria.

Victoria. Department of Human Services (2008) *Refugee Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2008 –2010: Current and Future Initiatives*, Melbourne, DHS.

Victoria. Department of Treasury and Finance (2008) *Victorian Budget Overview: Taking Action for Our Suburbs and Our Regions, 2008/2009*, Melbourne, DTF.

Victoria. Economic Development Committee (2004) *Inquiry into the Economic Contribution of Victoria's Culturally Diverse Population*, Final Report, No. 83 – Session 2003-04.

Victorian Council of Social Service & Australian Conservation Foundation (2008) *Housing Affordability: More Than Rent and Mortgages*, VCOSS.

Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, Foundation House.

Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2005) *Education and Refugee Students from Southern Sudan*, Foundation House.

Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2007) *Promoting Refugee Health: A Guide for Doctors and Other Health Care Providers Caring for People From Refugee Backgrounds*, Foundation House.

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (2005) *A Plan for Action 2005–2007: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing*, VicHealth.

Victoria. Office of the Premier (2008) *\$19.7 Million to Support Refugees Settling in Victoria*, media release, 6 May.

Victoria. Victorian Multicultural Commission (2008) *Annual Report 2007/2008*, Melbourne, VMC.

Research Service

This paper has been prepared by the Research Service for use by Members of the Victorian Parliament. The Service prepares briefings and publications for Parliament in response to Members, and in anticipation of the requirements, undertaking research in areas of contemporary concern to the Victorian legislature. While it is intended that all information provided is accurate, it does not represent professional legal opinion.

Research publications present current information as at the time of printing. They should not be considered as complete guides to the particular subject or legislation covered. The views expressed are those of the author(s).

Author

Claire Higgins
Research Officer
Victorian Parliamentary Library Research Service

Enquiries

Enquiries should be addressed to:

Dr. Greg Gardiner
Senior Research Officer
Parliamentary Library
Parliament House
Spring Street
Melbourne

T: (03) 9651 8640

F: (03) 9654 1339

Information about Research Publications is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au>