



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

SECRETARY

30 July 2009

The Hon Catherine Branson QC
Australian Human Rights Commissioner
Australian Human Rights Commission
GPO Box 5218
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms Branson

Catherine

DIAC Submission in response to the *African Australians: A Report on Human Rights and Social Inclusion Issues Discussion Paper*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *African Australians: A Report on Human Rights and Social Inclusion Issues Discussion Paper*. I am pleased to share with you the wide range of specialised settlement services, programs and initiatives my Department offers to refugees and humanitarian entrants, including those of African background.

People from the African continent represent tremendous ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. For the purposes of the Humanitarian Program, the department does not use the term 'African Australians' as part of service delivery. To do so could be perceived as discriminatory considering DIAC's Humanitarian Program is premised on individual, ethnic or nationality based persecution claims. The words 'African', 'Asian' and 'Middle Eastern' are used only to distinguish people from different geographical areas.

The proportion of African humanitarian entrants within the Humanitarian Program has changed over the last few years, from a high of 70.8% of the Program in 2003–04 to around 33% of the Program in 2008–09. These shifts are due to a number of factors, including the large scale repatriation of various caseloads and a general improvement in some humanitarian situations in the African region.

Generally speaking, humanitarian entrants from Africa have greater settlement needs in comparison to those from Asia and the Middle East, which is reflective of their past experiences and circumstances. Some of these pre-migration experiences include:

- higher levels of poverty;
- lower levels of education and English proficiency;
- lower levels of literacy in their own languages;
- higher incidence of health issues;
- longer periods spent in refugee camps;

people our business

- limited contact with urban environments;
- increased exposure to protracted conflict; and
- higher rates of torture and trauma.

In addition to these, humanitarian entrants from Africa encounter different resettlement experiences. Factors such as choice of dress and religious identifiers may potentially, on their own or in combination with the issues identified above, create further barriers and difficulties for resettlement.

The Department continues to support the settlement and long-term integration of African communities in Australia by providing settlement services that are responsive to the needs of humanitarian entrants from all regions.

In addition, I would like to highlight the Department's commitment to fostering social inclusion. This commitment is reflected in the Department's funded settlement services, which are focused on building self-reliance, developing English language skills and facilitating connections with mainstream services post arrival in Australia.

An overview of these services, and the response to the complex needs of the African caseload, is at Attachment A.

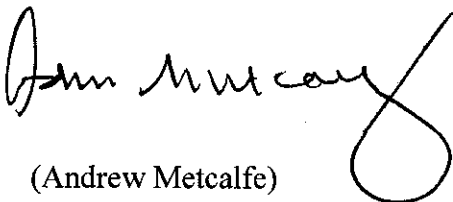
Further information on the:

- Settlement Grants Program (SGP) funded projects aimed at assisting clients of African background is at Attachment B;
- Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is at Attachment C;
- Settlement Planning information resources is at Attachment D; and
- Diverse Australia Program (DAP) and National Action Plan (NAP) projects is at Attachment E.

The Department welcomes feedback on its services, programs and initiatives from service providers, settlement clients and the community. This ensures our settlement programs continue to be effective and supportive of the needs of refugee and humanitarian entrants.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely *regards*


(Andrew Metcalfe)

ATTACHMENT A

The African caseload

The Humanitarian Program responds to changing global resettlement needs. Africa, along with the Middle East and Asia, forms one of the three key regions from which Australia resettles the majority of its refugee and humanitarian entrants.

African entrants resettled under the Humanitarian Program in recent years have emanated mainly from Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Burundi, Congo (DRC and Republic of Congo), Sierra Leone, Liberia and Eritrea.

In 2008-09 more than 50 per cent of the overall Refugee category allocations were made to refugees from protracted refugee situations. In Africa, around 20 per cent of the Refugee category allocation was to refugees in protracted refugee situations including Burundians and Congolese in Tanzania, Sudanese and Somalis in Kenya and Liberians in Ghana.

For the 2009–10 Program, there will be a greater focus across the Humanitarian Program on the resettlement of refugees in protracted situations. As part of this, the Department is currently scoping a longer term commitment to the resettlement of Eritrean refugees from Sudan.

Newer groups currently being considered for resettlement include Congolese in Rwanda and Somalis in Eritrea. The Department will continue to work closely with the UNHCR to identify changing resettlement priorities, particularly in Africa.

Specialised Settlement Services

The diverse and complex needs of recently arrived humanitarian entrants present significant challenges to the delivery of programs and services. A range of initiatives have been introduced in recent years to strengthen the settlement prospects of humanitarian entrants, including:

- the Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Program,
- the Special Preparatory Program of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), and
- Complex Case Support (CCS) services.

Existing settlement services and programs are also continually adapting to respond to the needs of refugee and humanitarian entrants as well as newly emerging communities.

Settlement assistance begins with pre-embarkation information provided to humanitarian entrants through the **Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Program**. Many humanitarian entrants have little knowledge of Australia and little idea of what to expect when they arrive, which can result in additional personal stress or difficulties adjusting to their new home. Recognising the many issues associated with resettlement the Department established the AUSCO program in response to changing caseload and client needs. The AUSCO program aims to enhance humanitarian entrants' settlement prospects and help them develop realistic expectations for their life in Australia.

When humanitarian entrants arrive in Australia they receive intensive settlement assistance for approximately six months. This support can be extended to 12 months where needed through the **Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS)**. The program aims to help humanitarian entrants achieve self-sufficiency as soon as possible by providing them with specialised settlement services on a needs basis. Services are designed and administered in ways which promote humanitarian entrants' competence and help them to achieve self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

IHSS service providers deliver a range of services including:

- initial information and orientation assistance;
- information and assistance to access services and become part of the local community;
- a package of goods to help humanitarian entrants establish a household;
- accommodation assistance; and
- short term torture and trauma counselling.

The **Complex Case Support (CCS)** services commenced nationally in October 2008 and provide specialised and intensive case management services to recently arrived humanitarian entrants who have special or complex needs, beyond the capacity of existing settlement services. The program provides flexible, tailored and localised responses to meet the needs of each case. Clients are eligible for CCS services for up to five years after their arrival in Australia. Flexibility may be shown to this time frame on a case by case basis.

The **Settlement Grants Program (SGP)** is the next level of settlement support, aimed at delivering services which assist eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants to become self reliant and participate equitably in Australian society as soon as possible after arrival.

Projects targeting refugees and humanitarian entrants from African backgrounds operate in all states and territories. These include projects that target specific sub groups within the SGP African communities, such as youth and women. The projects assist clients to overcome issues related to health, housing, education, employment, legal and social aspects of settlement in Australia.

More information on SGP projects aimed at assisting African communities is at [Attachment B](#).

The **Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)** provides English language tuition to adult entrants who do not have functional English. The Australian Government encourages eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants to undertake free English language tuition which will not only assist them to participate fully in Australian life, but also help with finding employment, becoming independent and applying for citizenship.

More information on AMEP related programs is at [Attachment C](#).

The **Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)** provides translating and interpreting services to enable communication between non-English speakers and approved individuals and organisations, including doctors in private practice and pharmacies. TIS National is accessible from anywhere in Australia and telephone interpreting is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. DIAC also provides eligible Australian residents and citizens with free extract translations into English of their settlement-related personal documents.

Interpreters in new and emerging languages are critical to recent arrivals accessing services in Australia. Due to the changing nature of the Humanitarian Program, DIAC is continually encouraging and recruiting interpreters in new and emerging languages, including those spoken by non-English speakers of African backgrounds. Since 1 July 2004, TIS National has recruited 231 interpreters, covering 47 African languages and dialects. TIS National has delivered approximately 50,000 interpreting services in the African languages over the past financial year.

The Department has offered in-kind support for translating and interpreting services for national consultations and focus groups. Moreover, summaries from the discussion paper entitled the *African Australians: A report on Human Rights and Social Inclusion Issues* were translated into 10 community languages. The final reports and plain language guide will also be translated.

The Department has also launched a settlement information DVD for newly-arrived refugees and humanitarian entrants from Africa. The DVD, *Australia – a new home*, gives new arrivals the opportunity to review important settlement information in their own home, as often as required, in their first few weeks in Australia. The DVD includes information on housing, health, education, money, work, family, Australian law and living in the community.

The DVD is dubbed into key African languages such as Amharic, Dinka, Kirundi, Sudanese Arabic, Swahili and Tigrinya, with English subtitles. This helps to address communication challenges such as low levels of literacy and English language proficiency.

The **policing website** is a project funded by the Department that will provide information and ideas to help police develop positive relationships with humanitarian entrant communities. The website will showcase some of the successful initiatives being delivered by police around Australia, and will also be a useful resource tool for settlement service providers and other stakeholders in the sector. Contact details for each initiative will be published on the website so those who want further information can make direct contact. It is anticipated this website will be launched in the coming months.

DIAC funded information products

DIAC provides a range of information products to assist immigrants, service providers and the community during the settlement process. Some of these publications are focussed particularly on humanitarian entrants, including those from African backgrounds, and their settlement needs.

Further details on information products relevant to African migrants, refugees and humanitarian entrants is at Attachment D.

DIAC funded projects

In addition to specialised settlement programs, the Department has funded a range of social inclusion projects focused on African communities arriving under the Humanitarian Program. Over \$5 million in funding, for example, has been allocated to 138 projects over the past 5 years through the Diverse Australia Program (DAP) and National Action Plan (NAP).

The **Diverse Australia Program (DAP)** is primarily a community-based educational strategy for all Australians which aims to address issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance by promoting respect, fairness, inclusion and a sense of belonging for everyone. DAP was launched on 28 January 2009 and replaces the Living in Harmony program.

The **National Action Plan (NAP) to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security** was developed by the Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, at the request of the Council of Australian Governments. The NAP responds to the particular pressures Australian communities are facing as a result of increased intolerance and the promotion of violence arising from events around the world and in Australia since 2001.

The NAP seeks to foster connections and understanding between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians and reinforce the major contributions that all Australians can make to our country's future.

More information on African related projects funded under the DAP and NAP in 2008-09 is at Attachment E.

Consultation and dialogue

Through its **Community Liaison Officer (CLO) network**, the Australian Government maintains constructive dialogue with over 6000 organisations and individuals with an interest in Australia's multicultural society, including representatives of ethnic and religious organisations. CLOs engage with a wide range of African community groups, including a number aspiring to be recognised as peak bodies, such as the Federation of African Communities Council and the African Think Tank in Victoria.

CLOs work with all levels of government, supporting and occasionally organising community consultations. CLOs also work closely with relatively new and emerging communities, including the diverse range of African communities. This engagement can include assisting new and emerging communities to forge links with more established communities, or assisting to identify ways to raise their profile in the broader community. For example, in March 2009 the CLO network in South Australia helped organise a meeting with the Sudanese community and the Governor General at the Woodville Community Centre in Adelaide.

Community liaison and engagement with African communities is also pursued through the government's relationship with the **Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)**. FECCA is the national peak body representing Australians from diverse backgrounds and is funded by government to provide inform the Government on the views and needs of diverse communities, including African communities.

As part of its funded activities, FECCA engages in projects designed to facilitate capacity building as well as participation and inclusion of new and emerging communities, including African communities into the broader community. These initiatives take the form of training courses and manuals that illustrate how communities can effectively advocate for their best interests. FECCA has also established a New and Emerging Communities Committee to further strengthen linkages with newly emerging communities and other organisations with a similar focus. The aim is to enhance FECCA's capacity to represent and advocate on behalf of these communities.

The 16-member **Australian Multicultural Advisory Council (AMAC)** brings together expertise and networks from across government, community and private sectors to support the Australian Government in developing its cultural diversity programs and communicating with the public on related issues. The Council considers cultural diversity issues of concern to all Australians, including intolerance, racism and community relations issues, plus the benefits arising from diversity. The Council consists of individuals who have contributed significantly to, and reflect, the success of a diverse Australia.

The **Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council (RRAC)** is an expert reference group on refugee and humanitarian settlement matters. It consists of ten members who have wide ranging experience in working with refugees, some of whom also arrived in Australia as refugees themselves. RRAC advises the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services on matters relating to the settlement of migrants and humanitarian entrants. In doing so, the Council improves the information flow on settlement policy between the Government and the community sector.

Responsive government services

The Australian Government aims to achieve fairer and more accessible government services and programs through its **Access and Equity Strategy**. The strategy promotes fairness and responsiveness to the cultural, religious and linguistic diversity of the Australian population in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of government services.

The framework guides government services in meeting the needs of Australians, irrespective of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, creating opportunities for them to achieve their potential and participate fully in society.

The 2006-08 annual report on agencies' performance in responding to their clients' cultural and linguistic diversity, including best practice examples, was tabled in parliament on 18 March 2009.

The report can be found on the Department's website at:
<http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/access-equity/2008/>

Research

Government cultural diversity programs are informed by research. In 2008, a project funded by the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme released a research report entitled *Culturally And Linguistically Diverse Young People and Mentoring: The Case of Horn of African Young People in Australia*. The research found that mentoring, in conjunction with more frequently provided settlement programs, may benefit a range of Horn of African young people. While mentoring alone would not be sufficient to meet the more intense set of needs for newly arrived young migrants, mentoring can be a useful means by which young people can learn about Australian culture and way of life, as well as learn about services, options and opportunities in Australia.

The Diverse Australian Program (DAP) and the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security (NAP), provide support for community projects which either incorporate a mentoring component, or provide opportunities for mentoring relationships to develop.

The research report can be found at:
http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/youth/programmes_funding/nyars/Culturally_and_Linguistically_Diverse_CALD.htm

ATTACHMENT B

Settlement Grant Program (SGP) – funded projects aimed at assisting clients of African background

Multicultural Council (Northern Territory) (Education and Employment)

The service provider assists new and emerging communities to develop and support integration activities. A number of humanitarian entrants have low English proficiency and limited experience with formal education. They need hands on experience and assistance. For example:

- **Homework club** operates to assist middle and high school students (11-18 year olds). The club meets weekly and the students work in subject-based groups. The volunteers including teachers, provide guidance and support to the students. This particular project is very popular and is highly praised by parents and students.
- **Sewing class** is held three times a week. The participants are provided with practical experience, which they have been able to display at fairs and events, and some members are employed by a sewing company in Darwin.

Spiral Community Hub Ltd (Brisbane) (Employment)

The Enterprise Development Program was established in 2007-08 to help humanitarian entrants establish and operate their own business by:

- identifying business ideas;
- developing business plans, and linking them to training; and
- support including a volunteer business mentoring scheme.

The organisation provided direct support and coordinated assistance from other community and government agencies for the Eritrean Women and Family Support Network. The successful outcomes are:

- establishment and opening of Mu'ooz Restaurant in suburban Moorooka in Brisbane;
- operation of a catering business for community and school events;
- set up of traditional Sudanese cuisine at market stalls around Brisbane; and
- home-based tailoring business.

Multilink Community Services Inc (QLD)

The service provider, Multilink Community Services along with Griffith University School of Drama, delivered settlement information to eligible clients who have little or no formal education.

They consulted with leaders from the Ethiopian, Burundian and Afghan communities in Logan, Queensland and developed three role plays around general themes of intergenerational and intercultural challenges, money and family conflict, and qualification recognition in Australia.

Three sessions were conducted and succeeded in provoking discussion among the audience not only on the general themes, but on associated issues: family problem solving, financial budgeting, employment, gender equality, and youth issues.

Feedback from the audience indicated that the 'performances' and associated discussions were not only interactive but informative in a way that they could easily relate to.

Lutheran Church of Australia, Developing Communities Centres (Adelaide Metropolitan)

The Lutheran Community Care is currently running an innovative project connecting new arrivals with community centres and neighbourhood houses in their own local area, thereby ensuring more accessible involvement in the local community without the need to travel to the city centre.

The programs were developed in consultation with community groups and key stakeholders/staff local centres. The programs include orientation sessions on local community services, support groups, cultural transitions, information sessions on mainstream services, and information on legal issues.

Communities are assisted to utilise venues at local centres for one-off cultural events, for regular community meetings and groups and for provision of settlement services by the specific communities for their own community. Centre staff are assisted to ensure their services are culturally appropriate, effectively promoted and offer translated material of their programs.

Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors Inc (ASeTTS) (WA)

The Families in Cultural Transition (FICT) program trains bicultural workers to conduct educational sessions with their community groups. These groups are designed to:

- enable refugee families to develop an understanding of concepts such as health, welfare and education systems, parliamentary democracy, individual and societal rights and obligations in relation to employment and the legal system;
- assist family members to feel valued and supported; and
- assist families to understand that what they are going through are “normal responses to abnormal situations”, taking away the shame involved in their experiences, enabling them to feel more confident in asking for help and to better utilise their own resources to face these problems.

The program consists of an information session and the following nine modules which include Introduction to Settlement, Support Systems, Money, Trauma and Healing, Families, Children, Gender, Youth, and Enjoying the New Environment.

Bicultural workers were initially recruited through advertising in a number of locations visited by the target group. In subsequent years, once families were settled and familiar with their new environment, they were invited to assist other refugee families. This approach assists in reinforcing what has been learnt and “giving back” to their community. A further advantage of this method is the development of skills and knowledge and the subsequent engagement by facilitators in further studies or obtaining employment.

The interaction of bicultural workers with mainstream service providers also enables knowledge and/or service gaps in the provision of information and assistance to this group to be highlighted and addressed.

One of the most effective outcomes of the program is the passing of information by participants to family members and friends. Data available for the 2006/2007 financial year indicates that the FICT program has been accessed by almost 120 participants and by association 10 times that number of newly arrived people.

Griffith University Community Food Garden (GUCFG) (QLD)

A community garden established at Griffith University's Logan Campus provides the opportunity for new arrivals to grow their own fruit and vegetables, learn about good food choices, cook nutritious meals, gain gardening and horticulture skills, and connect with other communities.

The garden was established in 2005 initially to research the benefits of community gardens. In mid-2006 in collaboration with ACCES Services Inc, the GUCFG generated participation from the African communities in Logan. There is also an interest from the Pacific Islander and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in using the facility.

The garden was recently recognised by the Refugee Council of Australia as being one of the leading multicultural programs for settlement. In addition, the garden project was included in the DIAC 2008 publication *Empowering Refugees : A Good Practice Guide to Humanitarian Settlement*.

The GUCFG has been developed in partnership with the Australian and Queensland Governments, Logan City Council and non-government agencies including ACCES Services Inc and Multilink Community Services Inc. In addition, many local businesses have contributed to the development of the site.

Under the Settlement Grants Program, ACCES Services Inc received funding in 2008-09 to work with the GUCFG to enhance access to the garden by newly arrived refugees.

YouthJET – Employment Pathways for Humanitarian Youth (Adelaide Metropolitan)

The project's target group are newly arrived humanitarian youth with low English proficiency who are facing barriers to employment, education, training and other basic services in their initial stage of settlement.

The aim of the project is to facilitate successful transition and to connect youth better with their future and the community by providing transition coaching, career advice, training, volunteering and work experience opportunities and linking with mainstream service providers. Ultimately the aim of the project is to assist youth to travel the pathway to secure long-term employment, which in turn boosts confidence and assists to ensure their successful integration into the wider Australian community.

In February 2009, YouthJET launched Australia's first youth focussed and facilitated career centre in Adelaide. Whilst the centre is available to all youth in Adelaide, it has proven particularly popular with humanitarian youth highlighting their interest and need for this type of service.

The project is designed to enhance existing support provided by the Job Network, and other government services from agencies such as Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and Centrelink.

YouthJET provide casework, mentoring, referrals, advocacy, group information sessions and a driver education program to assist clients to obtain their Learner's Permit Driver's Licence. YouthJET also coordinated a friendly soccer competition amongst clients of various SGP funded organisations across Adelaide, facilitating a healthy and cross-cultural exchange.

It is envisaged that not only will many individuals receive valuable ongoing assistance from this project, but it may also serve as a best practice model to build effective employment pathways for humanitarian youth.

Edmund Rice Centre, Driver Education Program (Mirrabooka Inc, Perth)

The Driver Education Program for eligible SGP clients falls within two of the three service types, 'Developing Communities' and 'Integration – Inclusion and Participation'. This is the first year that such a program has been funded under the SGP program in Western Australia and arose out of the identified need for humanitarian entrants to obtain a driving license in order to facilitate both work opportunities and transport needs generally.

Community and Police sources identified that an increasing number of humanitarian entrants are driving without a driver's licence, insurance and with limited knowledge of road rules. This has the potential to impact on the safety of all road users.

Some of the reasons identified as to why humanitarian entrants are driving without a licence are:

- high cost of professional lessons;
- scarcity of suitable licensed drivers from new and emerging communities who can assist logbook requirement; and
- complex language and colloquial terms used by instructors and assessors.

The Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka Inc, recognized these issues and was subsequently granted funding under the 2008/09 SGP program to initiate a pilot project. The program consists of 30 practical driving lessons per client by qualified instructors from a recognised Driving School. Another main aspect is the Driver Instructor Program which offers a ten day intensive course enabling participants to obtain a Certificate III in Driver Instructor Training.

The response to the overall program has been overwhelming with a waiting list of over 40 people to participate in the program. Currently 3 people have successfully gained their driving licenses and 7 community members have achieved the Certificate III in Driving Instruction

ATTACHMENT C**Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)**

The Australian Government considers learning English to be one of the first and most important steps that eligible migrants can take towards successful settlement.

The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is a national settlement program which provides English language tuition for eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants at more than 250 locations around Australia.

The AMEP helps participants learn to appreciate the diversity of Australia's population and for some, is the first experience of understanding, in a tangible way, how many cultures and ethnically diverse people can learn together, forge cross-cultural relationships and co-exist harmoniously.

Newly arrived eligible migrants with low levels of English are eligible for up to 510 hours of English tuition. Under the SPP, humanitarian entrants under 25 with less than seven years of schooling are eligible for up to an additional 400 hours and those over 25 who have suffered difficult pre-migration experiences such as torture and trauma are eligible for up to an additional 100 hours of tuition.

The AMEP, like all of our settlement programs, continuously evolves to meet the needs of our ever changing case load. It plays a crucial role in the delivery of settlement assistance because migrants and humanitarian entrants generally access it within the first few months of their arrival in Australia. Alongside teaching English, the program provides an opportunity to develop settlement skills and knowledge as well as establish links to existing communities and networks.

Recent changes to the AMEP include:

Special Preparatory Program (SPP)

In 1997, additional funding allowed the establishment of the Special Preparatory Program (SPP) for humanitarian entrants with special needs who had suffered difficult pre-migration experiences such as torture or trauma.

In 2004, the SPP was extended to provide up to an additional 400 hours of supplementary tuition for eligible humanitarian entrants under the age of 25 who have seven years or less of formal schooling.

Citizenship Course

Let's Participate: A Course in Australian Citizenship was launched in 2002. This course was written to help recent arrivals to Australia learn more about their new country and becoming an Australian Citizen. The course combined exercises designed to help students learn English, with content aimed at providing students with valuable knowledge about Australia's society and institutions. Furthermore, doing the course assisted migrants understand more about the responsibilities and privileges of Australian Citizenship and how to apply to become an Australian Citizen. The Course was available to students of the AMEP until implementation of the citizenship test.

Let's Participate was replaced with Understanding Australia: People and Government. Understanding Australia provides students with an introduction to civics and democracy in Australia, within an English language program.

Get Wise – Teaching Materials

The Get Wise series was developed to provide young AMEP clients (ages 16 to 24) with stimulating, topic-based classroom material relevant to their needs and interest. This series signifies a commitment to providing students with the most appropriate and beneficial English language education, to ensure they have the best foundation for achieving their long-term goals in Australia. Topics include:

- Your future - work and study;
- Your time out;
- Your money;
- Your communications;
- Your health and wellbeing; and
- You and me.

Employment Pathways and Traineeships in English Programs.

In October 2008 two new programs were introduced under the AMEP.

The **Employment Pathways Program** is aimed at clients with lower levels of education but with sufficient English to benefit from the program. The program assists clients to learn English while also gaining familiarity with Australian workplace culture and practices. It includes exposure to work situations, occupational health and safety, and other employment preparation skills.

The program includes face-to-face tuition of 160 hours and work placements of 40 hours per client (which is in addition to clients' current AMEP entitlement). Participants may undertake the program on a full or part-time basis, but it is expected that they will complete the program within 6 months. A Vocational Counsellor counsels participants about their employment goals and options, organise work placements and provides support.

The **Traineeships in English and Work Readiness Program** helps AMEP clients with more advanced levels of English proficiency and other skills to transition into employment or into their professional field by offering them a combination of English language tuition, work orientation and awareness, employment mentoring and work experience placements. It works along the lines of a bridging program, with expected outcomes being transition into a formal traineeship or direct employment.

The program includes 120 hours of face-to-face tuition (which is in addition to the current AMEP entitlement), plus a block of work experience for approximately 40 hours and a mentoring placement. Participants may undertake the program on a full or part-time basis, but it is expected that they will complete the program within 6 months. A Vocational Counsellor also counsels participants about their employment goals and options, organise work placements, and provides overall support.

On completion of their AMEP entitlement, students who are job seekers are referred for further English to the Language Literacy and Numeracy Program managed by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Other clients are referred to state sponsored programs.

The Government announced additional funding for the AMEP in the 2008-09 Budget to implement the Employment Pathways and Traineeships in English and Work Readiness programs at a cost of \$49.2m over four years.

ATTACHMENT D**Settlement Planning Information Resources****The 'Beginning a Life in Australia' booklets**

These booklets provide useful settlement information for new arrivals, including important things to do after arrival and contact details for necessary services such as health, education, employment, housing and law enforcement. Currently, a separate version of the booklet is produced for each state and territory.

The booklets are available in English and 37 community languages including Amharic, Dinka, Somali, Arabic, Italian, Portuguese, French and Italian. The provision of the booklets in additional languages is assessed in response to client needs and caseloads. For example, over the last year there have been 13 new translations added including Swahili, Tigrinya, Kirundi and Nepali.

The booklets are available on the Department's website at:

<http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/settle-in-australia/beginning-life/index.htm>

Community profiles

The Department has published a range of community profiles on key humanitarian communities in Australia. The community profiles include the following African communities: Congolese, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Liberian, Sierra Leonean, Sudanese and Togolese. Other profiles deal with the Bhutanese and Burmese communities.

The profiles aim to assist settlement service providers, other organisations and the general public understand the experiences and needs of humanitarian arrivals. They provide information such as community size and settlement locations in Australia, settlement needs, and background information on language, ethnicity, culture and history.

The profiles are available in hard copy or on the Department's website at:

<http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-planning/community-profiles.htm>

The DIAC website

General information about living in Australia may be found on the Department's website at <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia>. This website is aimed at a variety of client groups including migrants, service providers and community organisations.

Topics that can be accessed include:

- Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP);
- Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National;
- Settlement Grants Program (SGP);
- Settlement Database (with a Settlement Reporting Facility);
- A Diverse Australia;
- National Action Plan; and
- Australian Citizenship website.

Up-to-date figures on migrant and humanitarian arrivals are available via the online Settlement Reporting Facility, which utilises the Settlement Database.

See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/settlement-reporting-facility>

The reporting facility is available free of charge and allows people to prepare their own reports on the number of arrivals to Australia according to selected criteria including:

- migration category;
- country of birth;
- language;
- English proficiency;
- religion;
- gender; and
- settlement location.

There is also information about settlement planning, the regional settlement of humanitarian entrants and the evaluation of pilot projects in Shepparton, Mount Gambier and Ballarat available on the Department's website at:

<http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-planning/>

New Beginnings: Supporting New Arrivals on Their Settlement Journey 2006-07

The Department has brought together information about the settlement services provided to humanitarian entrants by the Australian Government in a book called *New Beginnings: Supporting New Arrivals on their Settlement Journey 2006-07*. The book explains how the Department assists new arrivals to settle into their new communities and establish new lives in Australia, and includes profiles of recent humanitarian entrants including African entrants.

The booklet is available under the heading "General Publications" on the Department's website at: <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/settle/>

State and Territory newsletters

Some state and territory offices of the Department also produce newsletters to communicate directly with clients and service providers on settlement issues. Examples of these newsletters, which frequently deal with topics concerning African migrants and refugees, can be found together with other publications under the heading "Publications by state/territory offices" on the Department's website at: <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/settle/>

ATTACHMENT E**Diverse Australia Program (DAP) and National Action Plan (NAP) Projects in 2008-09**

The DAP and the NAP provided \$892 000 in funding for 48 projects with an African community focus, including the following:

Country Womens Association, Evolveris - Cohesive community through story (Sudan and Tamworth project) (NSW)

The project will record the Tamworth Sudanese community's stories, history, heritage and visions of the future to reframe the refugee story as one of resilience and promote cross- cultural understanding. In partnership with the New England TAFE, a digital storytelling training program will be piloted for youth that will extend the existing TAFE Indigenous music program and will provide training and mentoring opportunities with Sudanese and Indigenous youth. The Country Women's Association will participate in activities to learn more about Sudanese culture and craft and it is expected that this will lead to enduring friendship support networks.

Springvale Learning and Activities Centre, Interpretation Matters project (VIC)

The project aims to enhance communication and understanding between local Sudanese Australians and Victoria Police. Project activities will include: police academy tours for Sudanese youth; focus groups between police and Sudanese representatives examining instances of confrontations and finding strategies to resolve them; relationship building activities, for example basketball and pool competitions and two Harmony events; and the production of a 10-minute DVD *Interpretation Matters*. The DVD will present activities, discussions and interpretation of confrontations, as well as promote respect/fairness of cultural issues, the rule of law and authority. A number of Sudanese youth will also participate in capacity building training.

The East African Women's Foundation- Connecting Communities through African Muslim Art project (VIC)

The project aims to provide African Muslim youth with the opportunity to gain life-long skills, become involved and create positive relationships with Victoria Police and non-Muslims. It will provide young women and men, including African Muslims, with a series of activities and workshops to develop skills and creativity, culminating in a display of the final products as part of the Braybrook Big Day Out. Skills workshops will include media relations, communication and public speaking, leadership, planning, teamwork and cooperation.