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Hopes Fulfilled or Dreams Shattered?
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Background Paper

Learning to be Australian: Provision of education programs for refugee young people on-journey and upon resettlement

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This background paper has been prepared to inform discussion at this conference and does not necessarily represent the views of the Centre for Refugee Research.

Learning to be Australian: Provision of education programs for refugee young people on-journey and upon resettlement

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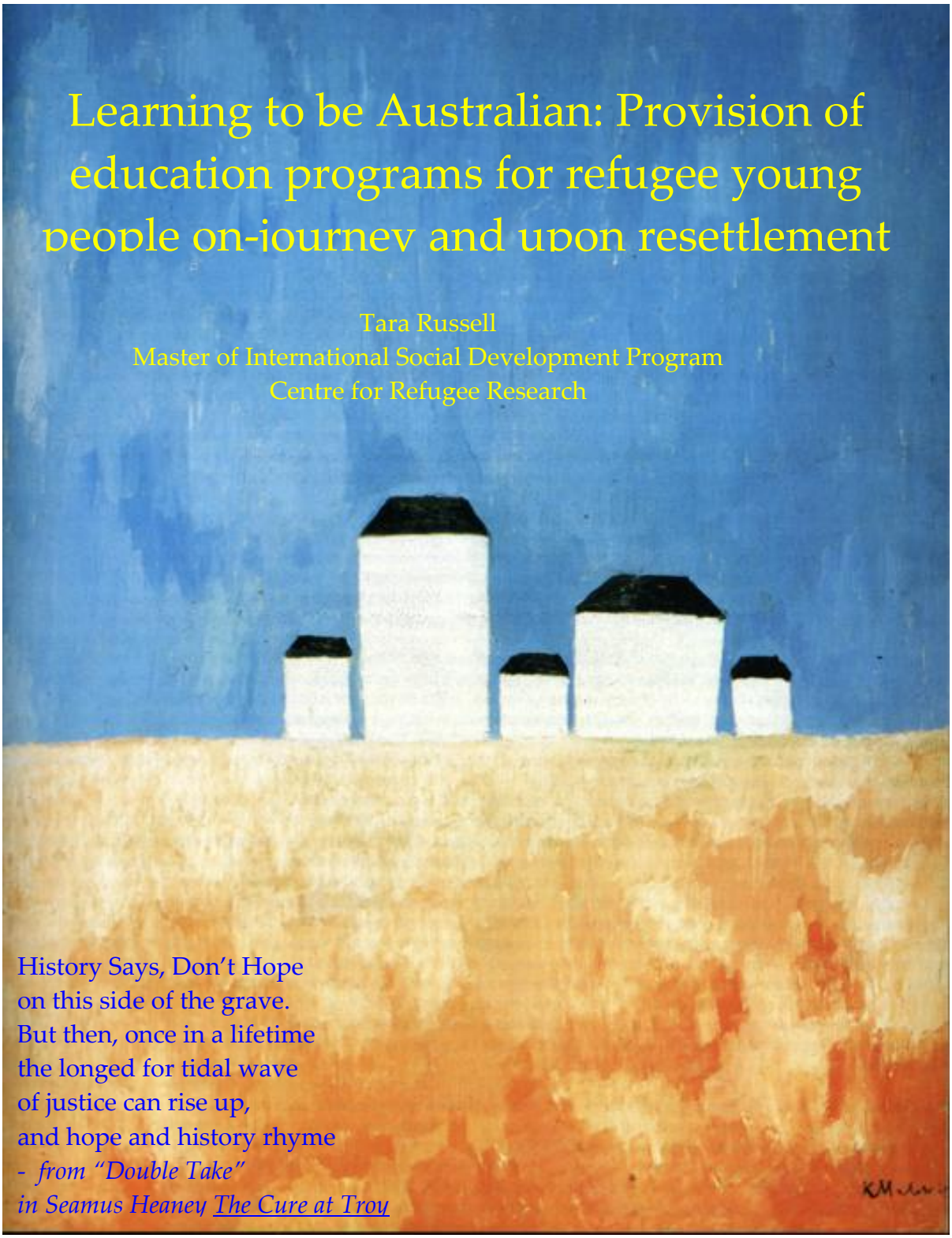

History Says, Don't Hope
on this side of the grave.
But then, once in a lifetime
the longed for tidal wave
of justice can rise up,
and hope and history rhyme
- *from "Double Take"*
in Seamus Heaney The Cure at Troy

Executive Summary

The disjuncture between the reality and the hopes, between the education programs and the needs of refugee young people, and how these can be met in, has provided the energy for this paper. The ambition is that current programs may be improved. The paper considers the formation of policy and subsequent programs in a series of layers: international policy, regulation and trends; three programs in practice under these regulations in refugee camps; Australian and New South Wales policy and provisions; and consideration of experiences of refugee young people in public schools in New South Wales. In an international context, the number of refugees in camps have increased, as well as the time spent in them. Policy and programs are responding and being formed to accommodate these changes, within particular socio-political contexts. The three refugee camp contexts that this paper will consider are: young women from Darfur in Chad; the 'Living Values' program in Karen camps in Thailand; and the 'International Network on Education in Emergencies' vocational programs. These experiences, as well as prior and journey experiences, inform some of the lives of young people entering public high schools in NSW. The international regulation that is both informed by these programs, and shapes them, is the same that is informing policy and curriculum development for refugee young people in public schools in New South Wales. The voices of refugee young people are heard less often informing policy and curriculum development, and could be a powerful tool for informing change.

Title Image: Kazimir Malevich. *Landscape with Five Houses.* 1928-1932. Oil on canvas. 83 x 62 cm. The Russian Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia.
Last viewed 6/11/2005 at
http://www.abcgallery.com/M/malevich/malevich173.html

Introduction

Learning, for refugee[1] young people,[2] is experienced in an unfixed set of environments across their refugee journey. It contributes to their accumulation of knowledge, and also becomes part of their own story. Understanding of self, family, community and society, is being formed as each of these forms is being disrupted by crisis. In protracted refugee situations in camps, this disruption becomes suspended, and crises drawn out to a norm.[3] The need for education to introduce and prepare young people for their futures has been recognised in a range of settings; parents, community leaders, non-government organisations, international organisations and young people themselves work to put programs in place that provide a range of learning outcomes from literacy to sexual health.

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[1] In this paper, refugee is used as defined in 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees - *Any person who owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country.* The text of the 1951 convention and the 1967 protocol can be viewed at http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/protect/opendoc.pdf?tbl=PROTECTION&id=3b66c2aa10
For a discussion of the use of 'refugee' and other terms in Australia see http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/html/facts_and_stats/facts.html

[2] In this paper, young person is used very loosely to include any person between 12 and 25years old. In the sections that consider programs in NSW, the age gap narrows as the focus turns to young people enrolled, or eligible to enrol, in public high school in NSW

[3] In other places referred to as 'warehousing', Protracted Refugee Situation refers in this paper to 'refugees for whom the international community has failed to find a durable solution'(U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2005) - where refugees are denied the right to earn a living or experience freedom of movement, generally in camps and ultimately dependent on humanitarian aid. For more information see - www.refugees.org/warehousing
The US Committee on Refugees May 2005 Global Survey of refugees found that 7 million of 12 million refugees worldwide were living in a protracted refugee situation that they had been in for 10 or more years (Refugee Council USA, June 2005). This situation is worsening - UNHCR estimates that the average time spent increased from 9 years to 17 years between 1993-2003 (Refugee Council USA, June 2005). Children and young people are being born and growing to adults within the confines of camps, never knowing first hand the life and landscapes of their families, cultures and societies.

The goals of each of these groups do not always coincide, and inevitably are charged with politics and power of a crisis situation, and of the very everyday factors of poverty, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and so on. Young people, and more particularly young women, are a vulnerable group - a significant population group in numbers as well as potential for influence, but one that is rarely represented in the processes that determine their futures. This paper considers the context, functionality and outcomes of three programs in protracted refugee situations that have been recently evaluated: Young Women from Darfur in Chad, Young people 'living values' in Karen camps in Thailand, and the International Network for Education in Emergencies vocational programs.

The length of time between departure and the establishing of a new life varies greatly, but, by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) measures, time spent in camps is greatly lengthening (Refugee Council USA, June 2005). For young people and their families that flee persecution in their home countries, some return home after the crisis has abated ('repatriation'), others find new lives in neighbouring countries ('settlement'), and still others seek asylum in third countries such as Australia ('resettlement'). For refugee young people and children, this has a major impact on their resilience and power to prepare, imagine, and dream their futures, as well as their capacity to adjust in countries of resettlement.

Entering school in a place of resettlement such as New South Wales (NSW) represents an end of journey for young people. The programs in place in NSW focus on preparing young people 'entering the mainstream', and this is consistent with studies that indicate that it is crucial to focus on arrival and transition (Rutter and Jones, 1998, p 9). Generally, language, literacy and system orientation in public high schools is provided in a controlled environment in Intensive English Centres (IECs/IEHS). This is a learning environment exclusively made up of other young refugees and migrants for a time before they make a transition to high school, other education programs, or employment. This program has its own goals and objectives, and there exists some mismatch of expectations between young people, their families, and schools. Additionally, these objectives fit into a wider debate in Australia regarding multiculturalism and values in public education. In exploring these, it is hoped that there are ways in which programs might be improved, and how refugee young people might be supported and prepare for their futures, whether for return to their country, settlement in a country of first asylum, or resettlement in a third country such as Australia.

Method

This research paper is the culmination of a literature review and several short informal/qualitative interviews to enrich findings and to inform recommendations. The literature review consisted of a consideration of the instruments of international policy, and the web-based debates that surround them, web-based monitoring reports of education programs, book and journal articles on multicultural education, refugee and at-risk young people, Australian

and NSW government department documents, and several published and unpublished reports undertaken by service providers and teachers.
It was not within the scope of this project to interview refugee young people themselves. With limited time and resources, young people could not have been supported appropriately in sharing current struggles and trauma. Their own voices are related (in the text of this paper) to allow their stories to be heard in a limited manner, and come from a variety of previous projects that have collected the experiences of refugee young people in schools in Australia. Names have been changed to protect identities.

Additionally, it was not within the scope of this project to consider the opportunities for and provisions made for young people from refugee backgrounds in independent schools. Some families (with the inclination and resources) do chose to enrol their young people in schools outside the public system, and these schools make their own provisions for these students. The Catholic Education Centre reports significant increases in the number of enrolments of newly arrived[5] young people in their schools (Catholic Education Centre, 2005). Muslim schools in NSW are growing, who also absorb significant numbers of young people from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds (Russell, 2004-5). Also not within the scope of this research was those older refugee young people in AMEP, TAFE, university, or younger refugee young people that disengage from school and enter alternative education programs such as links2learning or JPET (Job Placement, Employment and Training).

[5] DIMIA defines the period that individuals need specialist assistance in settlement as the first 5 years from arrival (DIMIA, May 2003). While this is contentious, indeed DIMIA acknowledges that this should not be considered the fixed time period for adjustment, this is the definition used by most service providers and is the way that the term is used in this paper.

Significantly informing this project has been the 18 months I spent in 2004/5 as the NESB[6] Youth Policy Officer for South West Sydney based at Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre in Cabramatta, South Western Sydney, and funded by the Department of Immigration Multiculturalism and Indigenous Affairs. This project represents and promotes the needs and issues of newly arrived refugee and migrant young people. The project is ongoing, and information about the project can be found at www.fmrc.net The commentary and research contained in this paper in no way represent the views or sentiments of the Migrant Resource Centre.

Reliance on this local field research has meant that this paper focuses on refugee young people in NSW. Policy that informs practice in this field combines both federal and state, but, as this paper sets out, practice is significantly determined by resources and school-based expertise. Practice does vary from state to state, although the cumulation of expertise of people and institutions (although not necessarily best practice) is where most refugees are - in South West and Western Sydney in NSW, and in Greater Dandenong in Victoria. Much good work is done in other states, but not all is documented. The Victorian Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues is a good place to start for pursuing other state programs (www.cmyi.net.au).

I am grateful to those that gave their time and shared their experiences with me in interviews. A small number of informal/qualitative interviews were undertaken towards the end of the research with settlement service providers,

[6] Non-English Speaking Background: where used in this paper, Non English Speaking Background or NESB refers to people from non-English speaking backgrounds, as distinct from refugee, migrant or culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD). NESB both identifies language as a major barrier for access and participation, and indicates a need for language assistance.

youth workers, and educators. These interviews were designed to enrich the desk-based research and to enable me to highlight some of the key issues of concern among teachers, service providers, and refugee populations that inform this paper. Participant information statements and consent forms were provided to all those to be interviewed, and are contained at the end of this paper as Attachment 1 and 2. All interview participants were recruited with direct support from the Centre for Refugee Research and Australian National Committee on Refugee Women (ANCORW), and included contacts acquired in my own work in settlement service provision. Ethics clearance was obtained from the University of NSW Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel.

Recommendation 1: That future research into issues that impact young people from refugee backgrounds allow for consultation and discussion with refugee young people.

Recommendation 2: That further research is undertaken on the experiences of refugee young people in independent and faith-based schools. Lessons learnt could be documented, and best practice learnt from and considered for implementation elsewhere.

Recommendation 3: That further research is undertaken on the experiences of
refugee young people in non-school programs. Lessons learnt could be documented, and best practice learnt from and considered for implementation in schools.

International Standards

There are at least 1.5 million refugee children aged 12-17 in developing countries today. Only 3% of them have access to education. Yet their generation will be called on to lead their war-torn societies tomorrow. Let us give them the skills to rebuild.

INEE 2nd Announcement (INEE, August, 2002)

Education is considered a priority to refugee populations. Groups of displaced persons will set up education spaces in every circumstance (INEE, August, 2002). In countries of resettlement, refugee, and migrant families place high expectation on their children to do well, and a large number of such children do better than Australian-born students[7].

The right for all to have access to education at its most basic level, is a relatively uncontroversial one, recognised in international law - in Article 26 of the International Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations General Assembly, 10 December 1948), echoed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations General Assembly, 20th November 1989), and elsewhere - the most significant recent contribution being Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that sets out that, by 2015, "all boys and girls complete a full course of primary school" (Millennium Campaign, 2004). As with many international guidelines, the detail becomes very quickly complicated in the implementation - the role of the state, the role of politics, religious institutions, gender and ethnicity.

For refugees and internally displaced persons, provision for education is given in the refugee convention guidelines. In article 22 "the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education…[and] with respect

[7] For a longitudinal survey of this, see Bob Birrell, Siew-Ean Khoo, Peter McDonald and Dimi Giorgas. (April 2002)

to education other than elementary", and, significant in its specificity, article 4 "freedom to practice their religion and freedom as regards the religious education of their children" (UNHCR, 1967).

Where they discuss education for its own sake – not for the transferral of health and other messages - the MDGs place precedence on primary education. Programs in camps for adolescents tend to have quite different objectives from those that could be expected to be found in secondary schools. The stated and unstated objectives vary depending on who delivers the program. Numeracy and literacy are often the objectives of parents and *ad-hoc* set ups that emerge where groups of displaced persons are congregated. However, other deliverers of education - aid organisations, host countries governments, international organisations – have objectives that emphasise keeping busy, distracting attention away from joining armed conflict, and conveying health messages.[8] Advocates are using the second of the MDGs to draw attention to the need for a strategic approach to education programs for refugee children and their families. The International Save the Children Alliance, International Rescue Committee, Inter-agency Network on Education in Emergencies' Focal Point on Minimum Standards on Education in Emergencies and Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children have issued a joint statement "Education in Emergencies: A precondition to achieving the Millennium Development Goals"[10]. The

[8] This is discussed further in case study 3 below

[10] available at http://www.sphereproject.orgThe Sphere Project was launched in 1997 by a group of humanitarian NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. Sphere is based on two core beliefs: first, that all possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering arising out of calamity and conflict, and second, that those affected by disaster have a right to life with dignity and therefore a right to assistance. Sphere is three things: a handbook, a broad process of collaboration and an expression of commitment to quality and accountability. The project has developed several tools, the key one being the handbook. Visit the sections below for more information

statement considers the linkages between development, peace and human rights and the role of education in conflict-affected communities in achieving this: key survival messages for whole populations (from hygiene and sanitation, sexual health to landmines); structure and stability for traumatised children and adolescents; and lessoning the chance that children and adolescence will be exposed to the risk of joining fighting groups or be sexually or economically exploited (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, May 2005, p1). Further, the statement emphasises that without education, communities lack the skills for post-conflict reconstruction (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, May 2005, p1).

The words of advocates aside, MDGs' focus on material (hunger, poverty) rather than civil (cultural, religious) rights and benchmarks, means that what post-conflict futures are to be explored in education programs is unstated and unguided. Significantly, the MDGs have no targets for secondary education. The reality is that refugee education is delivered in camps in a very *ad hoc* manner, and that the delivery depends very much on those that deliver it. The development of the Sphere guidelines in 1997, with the goal of reducing preventable deaths, barely mentions education – certainly not for young people and their futures (The Sphere Project, no date). It makes mention of education as a mechanism for imparting immediate behavioural change – use of sanitation facilities, proper understanding of HIV/AIDS, and so on (The Sphere Project, no date). Some note is made of the need to provide for safe access to whatever

The Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) has, with the inception of its Task Team on Adolescents and Youth Education in Emergency in 2000, offered an emphasis on the importance access to education for refugees and displaced young people, not just as a mechanism to halt marginalisation of a large and important part of the population, but to counter the intergenerational cost. Education is not a "forfeit right" - it is not one that is suspended in times of crisis (INEE, 2004, p 6). The taskforce offers minimum standards that contain a dual understanding of education with dual roles of *saving life* (reducing health risks and risk-taking) and *sustaining life* (stability, healing and hope for the future) (INEE, 2004, p 5). In keeping with the Sphere project's charter, these minimum standards lay responsibility for implementation in the hands of "states and warring parties...When the relevant authorities are unable and/or unwilling to fulfill their responsibilities, they are obliged to allow humanitarian organisations to provide humanitarian protection and assistance" (The Sphere Project, no date). The standards set out relate to participation and resources, analysis and tools for measurement, access and learning environments, teaching, learning, teachers and other educators (INEE, 2004). The detail takes an approach that who determines what may be included, and what might be included may cater for literacy, numeracy, as well as history and cultural knowledge (INEE, 2004). The vocational component of the taskforce is discussed in case study 3 below.

Recommendation 5: That programs and standards listen to young people and are not simply a preventative 'occupying' activity, that allow young people to grow towards their future.

Recommendation 6: That programs and standards listen to parents and carers, preserving their role and recognising their role in providing for young peoples future.

In-Camp Programs

School changed, too. Teachers disappeared and were replaced by ones from the North. We learnt politics all day and we were too frightened to say anything in class. Students who spoke out were reported and officials visited their parents. In 1976 when I was 14 my mother made me leave school. She was afraid they would take me away for the army.

(Quan 'Life in Vietnam' cited in ____, 1984, p 7)

The later children advance in their education, the more politicised the content becomes. As discussed earlier, access to primary education is a right guaranteed in the international declaration of human rights and protected in the Refugee Convention, but access to secondary education is not (UNHCR, 1967). Numeracy and literacy education is political, in the language of its the teaching, in who is excluded, in teaching methodologies; but as minimum, 'universal' standards are reached, and as students gain more 'agency' in their participation, the controversy increases (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005). Adolescence is a time of identity formation – sexuality and family roles are being redefined, young people are often income–earning for the first time, and, for young migrants and refugees, cultural identity is challenged at the same time. All schools "aim to create a common understanding of identity in terms of what is imagined as legitimate expressions of nationalism, patriotism, and economic activity…the nation and its schools define the 'we' that is the citizenship of a modern state…it also defines a 'them'" (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005).

The journey for a refugee young person from war and persecution varies. For some, flight is from the situation of crisis to a bordering nation to refugee camps, as in Chad, or settlement in the community. Others travel through country after

country seeking refuge, often covering great distances over several years. Acquisition of the label "refugee" facilitates access to supports and rights, but at the same time excludes members from a societal "we" that reaches its own consensus on curriculum; and also from a common government that makes decisions about what kind of citizens that are desired (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005). Instead these decisions are made in camp situations, by deliverers of humanitarian aid; in other circumstances by the government within whose borders asylum is sought, and, in the case of resettlement; the society in which refuge has been granted, in which processes are already in place forming curriculum for an already established society.

The following case studies consider education in protracted situations. They are programs that have been evaluated in the past 5 years and have been chosen for partially for their relevance to current arrivals to NSW. However, due to the nature of humanitarian crises, programs and circumstances cited in these case studies will have changed since evaluations were concluded.

Case Study 1: Adolescent Girls in Chad

The main data from this analysis comes from a report produced by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children following an assessment visit to 10 of 11 camps in Eastern Chad in January 2005. The report, "Don't Forget Us": The Education and Gender Based Violence Protection Needs of Adolescent Girls from Darfur in Chad, is available at http://www.womenscommission.org/pdf/Td_ed2.pdf

The 220000+ Sudanese refugees in Eastern Chad have fled several decades of violence and unrest in Darfur (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and

Children, July 2005, p1). The increased violence and suffering of the past 2 years has drawn international attention to the situation of the people of Darfur both in Sudan and in countries of asylum. Chad is one of the world's poorest nations, with 80% of its population of 9 million living in poverty (ibid, p 29). The Chad government has granted the Darfurians in Chad, unconditional refugee status (ibid, p 29). Arrivals continue and have to wait up to 3 months to be registered - during this time they have no access to rations and services, including health and schooling (ibid, p 19-20). The conditions in camps in Eastern Chad are brutal - there are shortages of water, food, shelter and adequate clothing to protect from the extreme weather. Violence (including sexual violence); personal and property insecurity is rife - from Sudanese Liberation Army rebels who cross the border and enter the camps (ibid, p5), from Chad villagers and nomads competing for the same scarce water and firewood, and within families struggling to with their experience of war and frustrated by the insecurity of their present position (ibid, p 9).

Displaced people from Darfur initially established education programs as they arrived in Chad. Refugees with teaching experience established primary classes, adult literacy and some preschools. Parents contributed what they could to pay the teachers and resource the classes (ibid, p 13). With the presence of UNICEF and NGOs, and the length of time that the camps have continued to be present, there are now programs in all the camps. UNICEF has taken the lead, but lack of funding and the inaccessibility of the region appear to be affecting the provision of shelters for the schools, schools supplies and guidance to teachers and management (ibid, p 2). The pay ('incentives') that United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) supplies is very low, and not given to

teachers of adult literacy and preschool, so that some teachers have left their roles to earn money collecting firewood (ibid, p17).

Many young women are attending classes for the first time. Girls from Darfur experience many barriers to school attendance (ibid, p8). "Adolescence" is not a part of growing up (ibid, p 7). Girls, and in particular teenage girls, have household responsibilities of caring for children, cooking and collecting water and firewood (ibid, p 7). Additionally, young women between 14 and 18 years old go to live with husbands, and have children of their own (ibid, p7). Some young women are pregnant or have children as a result of rape (ibid, p 2). Without preschools to provide childcare, young women are therefore not available to attend classes (ibid, p 21). The loss of livestock and crops to attend to, and the recognition that girls will need different futures in their changed circumstances, has left girls with some time to attend classes (ibid, p 8). Attendance at classes continues to be limited both by responsibilities - eg being sent to collect wood will mean missing a day of school (ibid, p 10).

Because young women haven't attended school before, most are in lower primary classes. Other programs vary from camp to camp. Some psychosocial programs have been introduced to work with whole families (ibid, p11). The Women's Commission places value on programs for providing young women for 'cognitive development, overall well-being and protection of girls and adolescent girls, as well as for the safety of a community' (ibid, p 12). Providing structure and the care of a teacher offers immediate respite from the continued chaos and disruption of lives, and is a healing tool that does not disrupt traditional cultural norms of "not speaking" of traumas (ibid, p 16). However, it is very limited. There are no secondary classes in the camps, and no

vocational/livelihood projects for girls and young women (ibid, p 12). The curriculum taught is the Sudanese school curriculum and is in Arabic (ibid, p 17). Health and hygiene is also taught in some of the camps (ibid, p 18).

Education programs are not culturally neutral. Educating girls and young women will result in cultural change (ibid, p 20). The recommendations included in the report include introducing gender-specialists to the camp, involving girls and young women in decision-making, care for the survivors of violence, alternative methods of cooking (to protect firewood collectors from violence), semi-permanent classrooms, school supplies and curriculum guides from Sudan, coordinating food distribution times away from class time, incentives for parents for their girls to attend school, and literacy classes for all (ibid, p 21 and p 25). The report makes provision for preparing families for the impact of such changes, and makes note of many parents desire for their girls to learn. However, it also notes the language of teaching is mostly is Arabic, but does not acknowledge that this is not the first language of many young people of Darfur nor is it likely to be the main language in potential countries of resettlement. The report makes mention of the presence of Koranic schools (teaching Islam and literacy) in camps, but many of refugees from the Darfur are not Muslim.

Recommendation 7: That the impact of protracted refugee situations on all is recognised and halted, but particularly on children and young people and women.

Recommendation 8: That the needs of young women, which have been well-documented, are recognised and made provision for in programs and guidelines.

Case Study 2: 'Living Values' education in practice in Karen refugee camps in Thailand

"Living Values: An Education Program" (LVEP) is a program developed through UNICEF and its partners. It grew out of international dialogue between students, parents and educators – but more formally with an initial meeting of twenty educators at UNICEF headquarters in 1996 (Tillman, 2001). The explicit ideology is that values can and should be taught in schools – 'Young people around the world are increasingly affected by violence, social problems, and a lack of respect for each other and the world around them' (April 2005, p 1). The program's intention is whole-person development – affective as well as cognitive thinking, aspiring to the development of "common" values – 'peace, love, respect, tolerance, cooperation and freedom' (April 2005, p 1). The program is used in practice in many contexts, and is written to be a 'global' intervention; it has particular modules for children and young people affected by war, children and young people at-risk (homeless, drug affected), and children and young people affected by environmental disasters (April 2005, p 1).

In Karen camps in Thailand, the program has been used since 1998 to teach intra- and inter-personal skills to refugee children and young people (Tillman, 2001). Annual training has followed (July 2005). Where refugee experience occurs concurrently to child and adolescent development, natural development of these is interrupted, with some children learning violent and aggressive behaviour (Tillman, 2001). The program was implemented and evaluated by LVEP and its partners in two Karen camps in Thailand. It was not one initiated by locals. The idea that peace should be taught in an educational program was not a cultural norm. However in discussion it was acknowledged by the community that children and adolescents were learning behaviours in the camps that equally were not culturally normal (Tillman, 2001).

While repatriation is the goal of community leaders, the imagining of a future, and of a peaceful society is one that the community acknowledged required effort. The program trains local teachers to use their cultural knowledge of local story and song to teach reflective and imagining activities, communicating attitude and behaviours, personal and social responsibility (April 2005). Both younger and older (up to 20 years) children participated in the program, with older groups having both the creative and relaxation exercises as well as lessons on sources of conflict and the peaceful resolution of international conflict. Discussion also includes sharing of local cultural understandings of death. This component links with parents programs. The program has been evaluated as a success with students (reported by teachers) demonstrating more friendliness, respect, and to be less prone to sudden anger, reduced aggression and violence (April 2005). Teachers also reported - "Before, when the students were noisy and disobedient, I would speak forcefully. Now I speak gently and I love them more and more." (Tillman, 2001)

Since the implementation of these programs in the camps, "values education" has gained currency in mainstream education and academic debate in Thailand, and the program has been introduced to 150 sites, both in government and Catholic schools across the country (July 2005).

Recommendation 9: That programs and standards recognise both the strength and resilience that an understanding of own culture and history grants to young people.

Case Study 3: A Vocational Skills Project

In 2000 UNHCR evaluated its vocational programs for Barundian refugees in Tanzania[13]. The current programs available for the 350000 refugees include limited-access scholarships to Tanzanian colleges, and programs established by NGOs (Lyby, January 2002, p 217).

INEE's Youth and Adolescent Task Team is explicit on the necessity for vocational education. These are activities whereby "skills [are developed] that will speed recovery and contribute to the reconstruction and development of their nations and communities" (INEE, 2005). Where programs exist, their objectives centre vacillate between the not necessarily competitive goals of: a need for self-employment for refugee young people in camps; preparing refugee young people for employment/livelihood post camp-life; and for offering

[13] The report is available at http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/research/opendoc.pdf?tbl=RESEARCH&id=3b8a1b774, and is the main source material for the rest of this section

alternatives to joining armed groups (Barry Sesnan, Graham Wood, Marina Anselme and Ann Avery, May 2004). However, these programs are among the least regulated, monitored and planned (Lyby, January 2002, p 1).

In the case of Burundian[14] refugees in Tanzania, current purposes of programs move between 'occupying' young people - reducing the incentive and opportunity for disruptive or criminal behaviours - and providing employable skills (Lyby, January 2002, p 217). Trainers are skilled refugees, providing group-based training (ibid, p 218). NGOs provide resources needed, in response to the situation and requests by the refugee community, targeting particular groups identified as vulnerable - young people, women, people with disabilities (ibid, p 229). Trainers however are not payed or provided with incentives; the work is seen as a community service/duty, and so many discontinue in order to take up income-generating activities(ibid, p 218). Some skilled workers take-on apprenticeships; this is a more traditional method of skills acquisition, more mutually beneficial to the participant and the educator, and one identified as a potential for further expansion in the evaluation (ibid, p 229).

One component of UNHCR's evaluation was to inform decisions about expanding existing programs, for the purposes of providing "*education for repatriation*" - skills development for use upon return to Burundi (ibid, p 217). Advise from the World Bank informs the report in terms of what skills will be needed for rebuilding Burundi upon peace being brokered to the country (ibid, p 216). Skills and program training, based both on this advice and outcomes from the evaluation, and recommended for future funding and development include:

[14] In the Tanzanian camps there are also small numbers of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. Data available, focuses on the needs of the vast majority that come from Burundi (ibid, p 218)

shoemaking and repairs (an industry where refugees with disabilities are able to find employment); bicycle and radio repair; and textiles (tablecloths and curtains not clothing so as to protect from the risk of fashion trends) (ibid, p 243-244). The World Bank advice notes that the country does not have a plan nor the resources to absorb a large number (such as in the camps in Tanzania) of repatriated refugees (ibid, p 236).

Monitoring is particularly important for vocational programs. For this very vulnerable, and in many cases already injured, population group, vocational programs make young refugees available for economic exploitation. Where schools seek resources that are difficult to deny, even where they are not made available - curriculum, textbooks, school walls - vocational programs rely on the trades and willingness of tradespersons in the camp for transfer of knowledge. The trades taught vary in their practicality as to the usefulness for young peoples' future (whether their future lies in repatriation or resettlement), the availability of production materials, the commercial viability of the product and access to the market, and the access available for both young women and young men. The needs for young women in programs must take into account their existing household responsibilities and demands on refugee young women, childcare for young mothers, and traditional roles (Barry Sesnan, Graham Wood, Marina Anselme and Ann Avery, May 2004, p 33). For INEE, programs should not seek to reinforce roles or limit young women, but taking on knowledge as economic reality, and what the possibilities for income generation are –
"Agencies must consider the degree to which certain vocations may be culturally acceptable in specific contexts and therefore the basis for secure livelihoods. A

female carpenter may be able to earn a living in Uganda but not in Afghanistan" (ibid, p 33).

Recommendation 10: That vocational programs are included as part of the mix of education provisions made in refugee camps with a consideration of the futures that the skills are preparing the participants for.

These three case studies cannot demonstrate the exact breadth of education programs. However, they can illustrate some of the experiences and needs of refugee young people in camps. Most particularly, they highlight the necessity for intervention, and the urgency of shortening stays in camps. However, whilst programs are *ad hoc,* forming and responding to the needs and circumstances, resources are made available conditionally that shape future lives. Burundians are being provided with skills for repatriation, where other programs might foster economic enterprise for immediate improved self-sufficiency and self determination. Other program designs may have considered readying the camp community with *education for resettlement*. For the Australian community and educators here, understanding of the values, experiences and prior learning of refugee young people enables an environment for settlement.

The Settlement Program and Impacts

Refugees arrive in Australia through two main mechanisms. Some arrive in Australia and claim asylum at the border or in Australia (Temporary Humanitarian and Temporary Protection categories), but most are identified by

the UNHCR as in need of protection and resettlement (refugee category), or sponsored by family or friends in Australia and identified as in need of protection (Special Humanitarian Program – SHP)[16]. The welfare of refugees in Australia is provided for through a range of formal and informal support mechanisms. A table is provided at Appendix 3 to detail some of the provisions, as well as the limits to access.

Settlement data and other information from DIMIA indicates that permanent arrivals to Australia over the next few years from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds will come in the main from the Middle East, Sudan and Sub-Saharan Africa (DIMIA, October 2004, p 5). The program does change in focus – during the 80s, former Indochina and Latin America, in the 90s the Middle East and the former Yugoslavia (ibid) –largely in response to humanitarian crises. As well as bringing to Australia new ideas, practices and culture, refugee arrivals bring their refugee experience.

In the current stream of arrivals, families from Sudan tend to have more children, more have long experiences of living in camps (up to twenty years), and rural/farming employment experience (Russell, 2004-5). Families from Iraq tend to be smaller, with older family members having higher education qualifications, and have spent time in Syria and Jordan and the surrounding nations while seeking asylum (Russell, 2004-5 and Educator 1, 18th October 2005). It is necessary for schools to consider this both in curriculum development and in delivery.

[16] Some asylum seekers are placed in immigration detention. This impacts access to welfare services. Children and young people are provided with education programs, but it is not within the scope of this paper to discuss these here.

Permanent arrivals to Australia with refugee and refugee-like experiences arrive on a range of visa types that impact access to community services. Initial, intensive support is provided to Refugee Program arrivals – through Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) services. Families and individuals are picked up from the airport, provided with initial (4 weeks) accommodation, assistance with finding permanent accommodation and furnishings, enrolling in school, health assessments, specialist counselling[17].

An increasing proportion of arrivals from Africa enter on the Special Humanitarian program (Russell, 2004-5). Sponsors undertake an agreement to provide the support that is otherwise provided for IHSS – airfares, orientation to housing, employment and education and so on. SHP visa class holders eligible for IHSS services *where their proposer is unable to provide* (see appendix 3). However, this requires knowledge of what is available, and a confidence in asking for assistance. Once airfares are saved and recipients have arrivals, proposers are already working and saving to pay for further family and friends, and do not have time, or knowledge to provide the orientation that they have agreed to. Many fear ramifications of admitting that they are unable to provide further assistance to government officials (and do not make distinctions between community workers and government officials) (Russell, 2004-5). Arrivals are often not provided with more than an introduction to Centrelink, and are under pressure to begin repaying the airfare amount and send money home themselves (ibid). New arrivals who are still themselves orientating to new systems are being given the responsibility of orientating very vulnerable new arrivals.

[17] More information about DIMIA funded programs is available at http://www.immi.gov.au/refugee/migrating_refugee.htm

All school-age children and young people are entitled to enrol in NSW schools, except for a small number on some categories of Temporary Protection Visa (NSW DET, 2005). Some schools offer additional assistance – links to ethno-specific organisations, Teacher's Aides (ethnic) and Community Information Officers familiar with community leaders, faith-based connections, Saturday-school language classes, community organisations(Multicultural Programs Unit 2003), all of which can provide support, but depend on competence and experience of schools and teachers. However, categories of visa class do impact access to education and learning experiences – Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs) are granted for three to five years and may be granted some family members and not others. This places particular strain on families, and in the classroom, young people behaviour may become erratic, their concentration affected as dates of visa expiry/extension approach (DET, 2003, p 22). Schools who receive children and young people who are sponsored do not receive prior notice of their arrival in order to arrange onsite interpreters or make available immediate ESL support (this is discussed further below in the section 'Rural and Regional NSW).

Relationships between sponsor and sponsored are impacted between the high levels of dependency, and roles of service provider and carer. Where relationships break down, children are essentially isolated from any formal assistance (Russell, 2004-5). Enrolling children in schools, learning to use public transport and English language programs can be difficult (NESB Youth Issues Network, 2005). The role of older children can change. Children and young people do learn English quicker, and are often used as interpreters and for

assistance in filling forms[18] (ibid) – this is the case for almost all refugee young people, but the SHP appears to have exacerbated the situation.

I remember when I was about thirteen, my dad asking me what a certain word n a newspaper meant, or about an insurance form or bill. Being in Year 7, I had no knowledge of those sorts of 'adult' things. I'd answer that I didn't know. He would then start saying that I should know these things. 'You should be explaining these things to me. Your English is better than mine,' he would say. Don't they teach you anything at school?' Trying to explain that understanding tax forms was not part of the school's Year 7 curriculum was useless. *(___, cited in Tsolidis, 1987 p 23)*

The SHP visa category places significant additional financial pressures on families. Repaying proposers, sending money home to family members that remain within the humanitarian disaster or other country of asylum, save to pay to sponsor future families (NESB Youth Issues Network, 2005). Young people in schools that are struggling with formal education for the first time, or after years of interrupted education, are leaving school to find work to support families. Work opportunities for refugee young people with limited English (and sometimes first-language) literacy[19], without Australian work experience, can be dangerous and inappropriate. Often it is in informal economies – labouring, factory work, textiles and clothing, cleaning, helping community members in business – but young people have little knowledge of their rights and no negotiating power. Work is sometimes dangerous, and young people can find themselves unpaid after months of work (Educator 1, 18th October 2005). Moreover, these are industries that offer little opportunity for improving English

[18] The care roles of refugee young people in the family are also discussed below

[19] A 1995 Victorian study of newly arrived (not only refugee-background) students in high school found that nearly one third had literacy problems - 9% were not literate in any language and 22% were only semileterate in any language (Coventry, Guerra, Mackenzie and Pinkney (2002)

(because the workforce is a single migrant language group), little mobility of occupation and income (Russell, 2004-5).

'When [the teachers] told [my mother] she started crying. I had never seen her so angry. She told me that my father had worked very hard for me to study. She said that she didn't want her son to work with his hands. The next two weeks were terrible. There was shouting every night. In the end they said I could do the job if I kept studying Maths and English at night. Then when I started work I was very disappointed...A machine could have done it. The work stopped after one month. I kept going out every day as if I was going to work because I couldn't tell my parents the truth' (David, cited in _____. 1982, p 31)

Where young people disengage from school, or never engage in community services because of knowledge of services or eligibility due to visa class, their stories and experiences go unheard. For young people that arrive in Australia under the Special Humanitarian Program that may not meet community service providers, issues in settlement are never identified. Because no service is responsible for their settlement until the young person claims eligibility, needs are not identified, monitored or addressed.

Recommendation 11: That service providers look beyond the ease with which may newly arrived young people acquire spoken English and consider their other needs when planning services for the newer and younger client group.
Recommendation 12: That the needs of SHP entrants are further tracked and recorded, and successful programs and initiatives are documented and adapted for implementation in other identified areas of need.

Refugee Young People in Public High Schools in NSW

The Saturday *Sydney Morning Herald* magazine 'Good Weekend' cover 29/10/2005 carries the cover 'We Are Australian: From Sudan, Samoa, Sierra Leone – meet the new faces of our national identity' (Janet Hawley, 29th October 2005)– 7 of the 8 young faces have arrived in Australia from countries affected by war in the last five years - an editorial decision requiring a certain spread of colour and drama across the page, but nonetheless a challenge for educators and writers of curriculum to consider.

Educators and curriculum developers are not the parents of these children; parents do not arrive able to participate in these processes (Osborne, 2001, p 247). Oftentimes, newly arrived refugee adults will find work in schools as Teacher's Aides (ethnic) and community information officers (Russell, 2004-5). Often these workers will have experience as teachers and in education in camps and in birth-countries, but the path to roles in the bureaucracy and writing of curriculum is through academic study, and not a promotion path from community information officer (Russell, 2004-5). DET does engage in consultation with teachers and teacher's aides in the development of curriculum (Russell, 2004-5). In 'Teaching, Diversity and Democracy', Osborne suggests that curriculum is not reciprocal negotiation between multiple objectives - learning from others – where knowledge from all groups, is incorporated into the curriculum itself (2001, p 247).

Young refugees are provided for in policy terms in the Department of Education, Science and Training's ESL Policy (Federal); the NSW Department of Education

website also refers those interested to the *Community Relations Commissions Multiculturalism Act* (*2001)*[20]. In fact the Multiculturalism Act offers nothing particular to education. The NSW DET Multiculturalism Policy hasn't been updated since 1983. Revisions have been undertaken but never adopted. A range of other resources is produced by NSW DET to support educators and students[21].

Resources such as 'Assisting Refugee Students in Schools' are notably silent on culture and the ways in which culture might be a source of strength for students resilience and integration. While the use of ESL policy as a guide for teachers working with students' with poor English alongside resources that assist teachers' understanding the impact of refugee experience on learning, they do not assist teachers in understanding cross-cultural learning, or the experience of minorities. Noble and Poynting (2000) comment on the move from 'Assimilation to multiculturalism to …[sic]' in terms of multicultural education policy and for the multicultural curriculum to be limited to festival dates where culture is fetishised in terms of exotic/food/dance costume (p 63). Osborne calls for 'democratic reform of curriculum' - to reconstruct knowledge for the fostering of identity formation (ibid, p 247). The process he calls for is one in which the point of view of different groups of deeper knowledge is learnt by all – marginalised groups are more informed about social injustice, ethnic minorities of racism (ibid, p 245).

[20] see: www. schools.nsw.edu.au/learning/yrk12focusareas/multiculted/index.php

[21] Most of these are listed in Multicultural Programs Unit (2003) Assisting Refugee Students at School

Recommendation 13: That the role of culture in smooth settlement be further recognised in a current Multicultural Education policy for NSW

Arrival and Transition

Some students do very well. As with displaced refugee populations, refugee young people and their families generally have high expectations of school (Richmond, 1998, p 61). Last year a student became dux of a South-western Sydney High School after only 3 years and a previous life of war and disruption (Educator 1, 18th October 2005). This kind of transition and achievement, as well as other more modest but similarly rewarding and healing, are possible for refugee young people, with appropriate resources and care, and with the skills/interests/abilities/experience that young people bring. Others take longer, and generally do very well (Bob Birrell, Siew-Ean Khoo, Peter McDonald and Dimi Giorgas, April 2002) and others disengage from school to other pathways. Many share similar struggles and barriers, some of which are documented here with an eye to what resources and care are affective, and in what areas more is needed to be done.

High-school aged (up to 19 years old) newly arrived refugees settling in Sydney or Wollongong that enrol in the public school system are assessed for English language proficiency, and those who do not have sufficient English are enrolled in Intensive English Centres (IECs) or Intensive English High Schools (IEHS). IECs/IEHS provide English language, orientation, settlement and welfare programs in an environment where all students are newly arrived and share common experiences of adjustment (Multicultural Programs Unit, 2004). The

centres are for both refugees and migrant children, and life and school education experiences differ greatly across both these groups - from children of skilled migrants from Hong Kong to Sudanese unaccompanied refugee minors that have been living in the Kakuma refugee camp. The period of this support is limited, and largely determined by English Language proficiency (Multicultural Programs Unit, 2004, p 15ff).

Students are enrolled in either IECs/IEHS as either regular or Special Needs. Regular students are transferred to mainstream high school after participating in the IEC/IEHS program for up to 30 weeks (Multicultural Programs Unit, 2004, 15ff). Special Needs is a broad category that can indicate: interrupted education (more than two year gap); limited education; literacy in first language; long displacement period/journey; health problems; disability; or trauma (ibid, p 19). Special needs students participate in the IEC/IEHS program for up to 40 weeks, or in special circumstances, 50 weeks (Ibid, p 19). Classification can be changed from regular to Special Needs at any time, where behaviour or learning difficulties become apparent – teachers and counsellors are discouraged from pursuing to any depth trauma experiences (Elisabeth Pickering, Gerri Lonnon, Nancy Nicholls. 2002, p 6).

English Language proficiency is the focus of the provisions, along with some provision for adjustment and preparation for a classroom environment. Welfare and orientation programs form part of the IEC/IEHS curriculum (Multicultural Programs Unit, 2004, p 17). The 'Settling in' Program was designed as a group based intervention for counsellors to use in public schools. For many young

refugees, learning spoken English does not take long[22] but what Kalowski describes as 'familiarity', takes much longer (1987, p 13). This is story/songs/humour – where household stories are all of flight. Stories within the refugee household are dominated by stories of escape, and not necessarily the wider stories of a culture (Kalowski, 1987, p 13-14).

The experience of 'double identity' or 'living in grey space' is shared with migrant young people. Young people report and others observe young people living one life at home and others elsewhere; having two (indeed, more) languages, two social and cultural identities (Russell, 2004-5). There is a great deal of literature on this experience, and how it particularly relates to adolescents, and their development and well-being. There is not space here to discuss this literature fully. What is interesting to note however, is that research into the needs of refugee young people identifies this as an area needing provision for in the education system for the past twenty years (in Kalowski, 1987 and NESB Youth Issues Network, 2005).

In week one at school, "I argued with a boy, then hit him, to make him respect me. I was taken to the head office, and I explained – that's what we do in Sudan. You argue with someone, boy or girl, and if you don't understand each other, you physically fight to gain your right"

(Aluong, cited in Janet Hawley, 29th October 2005, p 27)

As discussed earlier, experiences of formal education vary greatly. These experiences, as well as life experience, enter the classroom when a student enrols

[22]It is important to note that acquisition of written literacy depends heavily on level of literacy in first language so caries greatly depending on previous learning.

[24] The telephone interpreter service (TIS) can provide on-call language support to schools. However, some languages, particularly some African languages, are new to Australia, and the service has not yet been able to engage sufficient interpreters in these languages to provide services on-demand. These must be booked in advance.

at a school. The majority of young refugees arriving in the past few years have been from Iraq, Sudan, and the Horn of Africa (DIMIA, October 2004). Even within these groups, experiences of formal education vary greatly. Some Iraqi young people have experienced many years of formal education, with a small period of disruption (Russell, 2004-5). Others, for example, Assyrian young people whose families first sought asylum in Jordan, they may had a few years of primary education followed by many years of disrupted living arrangements before reaching Australia (Russell, 2004-5). Some young people from Sudan may never have experienced classroom-learning before, they may require teaching the young person to hold a pen for the first time (Russell, 2004-5). Parents and grandparents may never have had formal education, and will struggle to provide homework support (Russell, 2004-5). Other refugee young people from the Horn of Africa may have spent time in refugee camps and received some education, and acquired good spoken English from camp officials and workers (Russell, 2004-5).

Classroom sizes in IECs/IEHS are small, and Teacher's Aides (ethnic) are made available where possible - where there are suitable experienced persons with language to match a significant proportion of the students (Multicultural Programs Unit, 2004, p 17). The more linguistically diverse the group is, or the newer their language needs are to the system, the less likely this is (Russell, 2004-5). Post - IECS/IEHS, students are enrolled in mainstream high-schools, where the amount of support available can vary greatly. IECs are located in the grounds of mainstream high schools. If a student makes the transition from IEC to the co-located high school, s/he will have informal connections with the students from the classroom, as well as physical access to IEC teachers, counsellors, and Teacher's Aides (ethnic) (Russell 2004-5). Additionally, mainstream high schools

co-located with IEC will generally have a school community familiar with the needs of refugees.

Teachers with interest and time have the opportunity to participate in additional training and receive additional curriculum support (Multicultural Programs Unit, 2004, p 16). Many teachers will have had the opportunity only once, and rely on very limited information (Russell, 2004-5). In 'Access and Equity' – style training, many teachers and workers confronted every day with difference will request further information on cultural groups in a manner which amounts to racial profiling (Russell, 2004-5). It was only the early 90s where teachers were provided with resources that attributed learning styles to race (this was subsequently banned a few years later) (Noble and Poynting, 2000, p 73). Many teachers will receive only a single instance of in-service training, and teachers in rural and regional area may, in the rush to accommodate newly arrivals, rely on this learning, or instruction received even earlier in teacher training.

Many teachers do make efforts to go beyond the closest available material, with varying degrees of success. Students are aware when their difference is emphasised by a teacher, and equally where their difference is minimised by teachers in an equal effort to assist participation and integration in the class group (Youth Workers 1 and 2, 24th October 2004-5). Students, especially older students, are quick to pick up the nuances of racism behind individual teacher acts (Russell, 2004-5). Bilingual dictionaries available online for teachers, and some teachers use these to learn key messages of welcome and instruction, and

Recommendation 14: That more is done to ensure that best-practice initiatives are documented and adapted as resources for all schools, and where possible generalised into policy.

students report that this demonstrates to them a level and interest in them as an individual in the classroom (Educator 2, 14th November 2005).

Rural and Regional NSW

Settlement in regional areas is encouraged by DIMIA and others through the "State-Specific and Regional Migration Initiative" to address skill shortages, regional investment, and more balanced settlement (DIMIA, 31st August 2005). Many refugees settle in regional areas however to fill shortages in unskilled labour intensive areas such as harvest work (Settlement Services Workers, 9th November 2005). High Schools rural and regional areas are resourced to provide for these students through the Multicultural Programs Unit, Multicultural/ESL Consultants and Community Information Officers (Multicultural Programs Unit, 2004, p 16).

For students enrol in high schools outside of metropolitan centres, enrolment in IECs is not possible. The DET New Arrivals Program allows an allocation of three hours of Intensive ESL Support per week per newly arrived student (Multicultural Program Unit, 2004, p 16). At other times, the student is in mainstream classes, which can be very difficult. Where there are enough newly arrived students enrolled in a school, the hours accumulate for the allocation of a full-time ESL teacher to support all the newly arrived students in an intensive cell (Multicultural Program Unit, 2004, p 16). Additionally, schools with consistently significant ESL (not only newly arrived) enrolments over several years, provision is made for ESL support (Educator 2, 14th November 2005). Some

schools have developed a 'buddy' system, where the newly arrived students is matched with another student from the same language background - where available - or a student that has been briefed to assist (Educator 2, 14th November 2005).

The SHP visa class has had an impact on schools in regional areas. Where other humanitarian arrivals are linked with community services, schools are given prior notification of their pending enrolment, and the time to make suitable resources available. Issues have arisen where students have arrived for enrolment in schools with no prior notification, no present ESL support, and without access to an interpreter[24]. Settlement and integration in schools in these circumstances has been difficult (Russell, 2004-5). Schools have responded to these issues and put strategies in place. In the Newcastle/Hunter region, a network has been established between the schools and the Churches and NGOs that are sponsoring families. When sponsors are anticipating arrivals, they provide details to the Community Information Officer maps the needs and matches the student with a suitable school - making the arrangements for out-of-zone enrolments where this is the most appropriate outcome (Educator 2, 14th November 2005).

Principles, Teaching and Non-teaching staff are also provided with support. Community Information Officers provide information and arrange In-service training(Educator 2, 14th November 2005). Specialist ESL provide advice and resources to teachers about strategies in working with students from refugee backgrounds and with interrupted education (Educator 2, 14th November 2005). There are 7 full- and part-time regional Community Information Officers, covering vast areas of the state (Educator 2, 14th November 2005). In most areas

there are only a very small number refugee arrivals; currently there are significant number however in the Illawarra, Newcastle/Hunter, and smaller concentrations in Coffs Harbour (Russell, 2004-5).

Community Information Officers work with Principals and executive to develop strategies to match the needs and resources of the school. There is much knowledge and resources available to schools within DET, but where the schools have never had any reason to access these resources, they are unknown (Educator 2, 14th November 2005). In-service training is arranged to improve: use of interpreters and effective communication with students and their families; the referral of students and families who need additional help to other services (Educator 2, 14th November 2005). DET reimburses individual schools their expenditure on interpreting to encourage increased use. It is possible to fly in interpreters once a term for activities such as information sessions for groups (Educator 2, 14th November 2005). Inexperienced school staff, like other service providers, find the interpreting service awkward, and will use students (who pick up English much quicker) or family friends who are present to interpret (Russell, 2004-5).

Schools are encouraged to work with families and parents (Educator 2, 14th November 2005). Some schools with experience and significant enrolments provide on-arrival information sessions for families(Educator 2, 14th November 2005). Onsite-interpreters are used to make known key contacts and important policy information - eg, discipline and uniform(Educator 2, 14th November 2005). Families are also encouraged to have ongoing monthly meetings with the school until they feel settled and familiar with the system(Educator 2, 14th November 2005).

Recommendation 15: That clear protocols are in place for all schools to ensure that all teaching and non-teaching know the steps that must be taken for young people from refugee backgrounds to participate in school.

Recommendation 16: That the provision of 3 hours ESL is reviewed as an adequate provision for newly arrived refugee students to participate in public schools .

Parents and Family

"I went to Year 9 at school. I liked the teachers here. They were friendlier and more open than the ones I had in Laos. One of them even visited my house for dinner. Only once did I get upset with her. She told me that I shouldn't do all the housework for my father and brothers. She said that girls in Australia didn't do all the work. She didn't understand that things in Laos were different and that here I wanted to do the work. My mother would have wanted that...At the end of Year 10, I got a grade 1 in Maths. My teacher told me that I should go on to Year 12. My father said it was up to me to decide. I decided to leave because it was more important to do what I could to help my family...Even though I get sore hands and a sore back from my job, I'm happy with it. It means that my brothers can keep studying at school. However, I worry about my father" (Linda, citied in _____,1982, p 33)

A refugee young person's home life has a significant impact on that young person's capacity to learn. Many refugee young people have significant care roles in the home. Older refugee children often take on the roles of care-givers where one or both parents have died, and may have been providing this care role throughout the refugee journey (Russell, 2004-5). Others take on new roles when they acquire English earlier and act as translators and go-between between

teachers and others for their parents (Educator 1, 18th October 2005).. This alters fragile family dynamics - young men may be frustrated by their role of protecting younger sisters experimenting with new-found freedoms (Settlement Services Workers, 9th November 2005). Mothers may find work where they never have before, whilst a father may struggle to find employment in the industry he has always worked. Where family structures break down, some family members, sometimes young people, find themselves isolated and outside of the only support that fully knows and understands their life experiences (Russell, 2004-5).

Most families have great commitment for the achievement of their children in schools. Many factors in home life can impact a young person's achievement, and ability to engage, in school. Families are likely to be in various forms of temporary accommodation – for SHP visa holders in sponsors own home, for Refugee entrants, accommodation is provided for the first 4 weeks followed by assistance (see appendix 2). For many of the current stream of very large families with 6-12+ children, housing simply isn't built to accommodate these needs at a suitable cost – and never in public housing (Russell, 2004-5). Few private landlords are comfortable with families of this size living in investment properties. Families and the Department of Housing resort to finding two adjoining properties (Russell, 2004-5). Where families are sponsored by other newly arrived families on the SHP program, both families often live for a time in the one property (Russell, 2004-5).

While most refugee young people learn English fairly quickly, there are some that do not. Restricted recreation, or groups of friends of the same language group, will mean that the classroom is the only place where English is practiced (Richman, 1998, p 63, 71). Past traumatic experiences can cause poor

concentration, under-achievement, non-attendance, withdrawal and depression, and importantly frustration (p 47, 2002 Coventry, Guerra, Mackenzie and Pinkney).

Parents have expectations of the achievement of their children in schools, of the roles of schools and of teachers. Many parents have a cultural view of teachers – that children are 'handed over' to schools for education and moral development, to emerge at the end fully participating members of society (Educator 1, 18th October 2005, Settlement Services Workers, 9th November 2004-5). This 'handing over' and 'trust' is partly cultural, but can also be exacerbated, by parents' own confidence, language proficiency and familiarity with new systems, and own experience, or lack of, education (Youth Workers, 24th October 2005). Teacher's Aides (ethnic) and Community Information Officers employed by DET in areas of high concentration of NESB students have a role in working with families and communities, and have been put in place to overcome these barriers. Translated materials are also available for parents (Richman, 1998, p 62).

Some parents experience mistrust of the system. Parents in some instances feel that the 'friendliness' of teachers is an inappropriate behaviour for a person to be held in great respect (Educator 1, 18th October 2005). Some parents, and young people, feel that the lack of discipline lacks the direction to help achieve and meet family expectations (Coventry, Guerra, Mackenzie and Pinkney, 2002, p 47). Teachers, should be good disciplinarians, and instruct, in terms of obedience and respect, and within cultural expectations, the difference between right and wrong (Educator 1, 18th October 2005). Intergenerational conflict can exacerbate these experiences. Parents who feel that they are 'losing' their children to a new world that they are struggling with, to a new language that they can't

understand(Educator 1, 18th October 2005).. As young people begin to realise and experiment with new rights and freedoms, parents may take more disciplinarian approach to their role as parent (Educator 1, 18th October 2005).

NSW schools have a role for parents. Parents are to be 'the partner'(Educator 1, 18th October 2005).. Whilst, as has been highlighted earlier, parents have high hopes for their children in schools, they are not always able to provide the support that is expected. Teachers' expectation for parents' involvement can be unrealistic of refugee parents. Inexperienced teachers don't understand barriers of language, experience knowledge and trauma that blocks participation in the school community (Educator 1, 18th October 2005). Supporting students at home – with homework, with making space available for study, is sometimes difficult for families (Russell, 2004-5). DET does have resources and programs for teachers to access, but this relies on school Principals and teachers to seek and follow up opportunities (Educator 1, 18th October 2005).

Parent's expectations of the achievement of their children in schools can be unrealistic. Refugee flight/journey is often motivated by the protection of children – seeking asylum for their future (Educator 1, 18th October 2005). Some, particularly parents who have no experience of education and its opportunities themselves, find it difficult that something other than hard work is needed to do well in schools, and that apprenticeships, TAFE and similar options are futures for their children. One group of young men in a South West Sydney High School are enrolled in year 11 and 12. They know work is available to them in community businesses at the end of year 12, and they know that their attendance in school will not lead them to tertiary education. Their poor results, and the lack of change in their circumstances that participation will bring, means that in the

meantime their attendance is poor, fights break out, teachers worry, and the young men become further alienated and restless (Educator 1, 18th October 2005)..

Recommendation 17: That clear protocols and adequate resources are in place for all schools to ensure that all teaching and non-teaching know the steps for ensuring clear communication is established and maintained with the families of refugee students.

Recommendation 18: That subject-area teachers are obliged to attend in-service training on the needs and experiences of refugee young people and their families in areas of high concentration of refugee students.

Conclusions

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 13 (1)

Many providers of education to refugee young people have the experience and knowledge of their needs. Not all of these have the resources to provide for these needs. Some education providers in NSW, are not experienced, and are operating in a school environment where there are only a few refugee young people whose needs can become lost amongst the competing needs of other students in their care. Problems are compacted by the distance from which they are away from the institutional and human supports that are available. This problem appears to be

known, but there is an absence where a current Multicultural Education policy could be. Such a document that could bring together the ESL policy and best-practice protocols and strategies that are in place in some areas. This would allow a reference not only for teaching staff in daily contact with students, but also a guide for Principals and non-teaching staff to make arrangements for suitable resources to be in place.

The federal settlement program has a major impact on public schools in NSW. Educational and life backgrounds - exposure to trauma, length of time spent in camps, level of education and interruption, health, support available in Australia and so on - all have impacts on the behaviour and needs of refugee young people in the classroom. In addition to behaviour and needs, refugee young people bring life experiences to the classroom that has the potential to change the learning experiences of other students. While some stories young people are not ready to share in the classroom, recognition can be made of refugee students unique skills and voice. Refugee young people have high hopes for what education can offer for their futures, and often only need the space to be heard for them to articulate what they need to achieve these goals.

Refugee young peoples lives in Australia bring both the memory of their homes and of their journey of flight. For an increasing number of refugee young people, their home and their journey of flight has become one in the space of protracted refugee camps. Protracted refugee situations have a particular impact on children and young people whose only living memory is of the camps. More needs be done to recognise the impact this has on their lives and their futures. Programs that are put in place need to be planned in partnership with young

people and their carers, for a mix of needs that includes literacy and numeracy, but also culture and history, as well as vocational programs. Such a mix is necessary if young people are to imagine and plan for their futures away from war and conflict.

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Appendix 1

Recommendation 1: That future research into issues that impact young people from refugee backgrounds allow for consultation and discussion with refugee young people.

Recommendation 2: That further research is undertaken on the experiences of refugee young people in independent and faith-based schools. Lessons learnt could be documented, and best practice learnt from and considered for implementation elsewhere.

Recommendation 3: That further research is undertaken on the experiences of refugee young people in non-school programs. Lessons learnt could be documented, and best practice learnt from and considered for implementation in schools.

Recommendation 4: That there is greater opportunity for educators and to share experiences between states, and greater transparency and space for recognition and reform of poor programs and bad practice.

Recommendation 5: That programs and standards listen to young people and are not simply a preventative 'occupying' activity, that allow young people to grow towards their future.

Recommendation 6: That programs and standards listen to parents and carers, preserving their role and recognising their role in providing for young peoples future

Recommendation 7: That the impact of protracted refugee situations on all is recognised and halted, but particularly on children and young people.

Recommendation 8: That the needs of young women, which have been well-documented, are recognised and made provision for in programs and guidelines.

Recommendation 9: That programs and standards recognise both the strength and resilience that an understanding of own culture and history grants to young people.

Recommendation 10: That vocational programs are included as part of the mix of education provisions made in refugee camps with a consideration of the futures that the skills are preparing the participants for.

Recommendation 11: That service providers look beyond the ease with which may newly arrived young people acquire spoken English and consider their other needs when planning services for the newer and younger client group.

Recommendation 12: That the needs of SHP entrants are further tracked and recorded, and successful programs and initiatives are documented and adapted for implementation in other identified areas of need.

Recommendation 13: That the role of culture in smooth settlement be further recognised in a current Multicultural Education policy for NSW

Recommendation 14: That more is done to ensure that best-practice initiatives are documented and adapted as resources for all schools, and where possible generalised into policy.

Recommendation 15: That clear protocols are in place for all schools to ensure that all teaching and non-teaching know the steps that must be taken for young people from refugee backgrounds to participate in school.

Recommendation 16: That the provision of 3 hours ESL is reviewed as an adequate provision for newly arrived refugee students to participate in public schools .

Recommendation 17: That clear protocols and adequate resources are in place for all schools to ensure that all teaching and non-teaching know the steps for ensuring clear communication is established and maintained with the families of refugee students.

Recommendation 18: That subject-area teachers are obliged to attend in-service training on the needs and experiences of refugee young people and their families in areas of high concentration of refugee students.

Appendix 2

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
SUBJECT INFORMATION STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM
Research Title: "Hopes Fulfilled or Dreams Shattered: Refugee Resettlement Conference with a focus on Education Provision and the Needs of Young People"

I am conducting research into education provision and the needs of refugee young people. I am conducting this research for two reasons; the first is to inform a background paper which will be published by the Centre for Refugee Research in the lead up to a major international conference entitled "Hopes Fulfilled or Dreams Shattered", from Resettlement to Settlement responding to the needs of emerging communities. This event will be held at the University of NSW in November 2005. I will also be using this research as part of a master's research project in which I am currently enrolled.

I am interested to explore if there are ways in which education programs might be improved, what the points of disjuncture are between refugee young peoples' needs and the goals of education programs are, and how the education needs of refugee young people may be better met in Australia. As part of the project I will be conducting interviews with a small number of service providers in Sydney.

I am writing to invite you to take part in an interview in which you will be asked to tell me about your experiences of working with refugee young people.

I cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you or your clients will receive any direct benefits from this study. However this study aims to identify ways in which services could be improved for refugee youth settling in Australia. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or except as required by law.

If you give us your permission by signing this document, I will use the information that you share in my background paper to be published by the Centre for Refugee Research for the Conference and in my assignment.

In Australia complaints may be directed to, the Ethics Secretariat, University of New

South Wales, SYDNEY 2052 AUSTRALIA (phone 9385 4234, fax 9385 6648, email ethics.sec@unsw.edu.au). Your
decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the Centre for Refugee Research, the University of New South Wales or ANCORW. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me. If you have any additional questions later I can be contacted on Ph: 0421614641 or Email: tralalaa@tpg.com.au or Linda Bartolomei my supervisor can be contacted on Ph: 9385 1859 and we will be happy to answer them.
You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
SUBJECT INFORMATION STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM
(continued)

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that, having read/understood the information provided above, you have decided to participate.

Signature of participant: Signature of witness:

Please PRINT name: Please PRINT name:

Date: Nature of Witness:

Signature(s) of researcher(s):

Please PRINT Name:

REVOCATION OF CONSENT

***(Title of project*: "Hopes Fulfilled or Dreams Shattered: Refugee Resettlement Conference with a Focus on Education Provision and the Needs of Young People")**

I hereby wish to **WITHDRAW** my consent to participate in the research proposal described above and understand that such withdrawal **WILL NOT** jeopardise my relationship with the Centre for Refugee Research and the University of New South Wales.

Signature: Date:

Please PRINT Name:

The section for Revocation of Consent should be forwarded to Dr Eileen Pittaway

Fax: 02 9662 8991

Trigger Question Schedule

For refugee young people that you come into contact with, what do you know of their experiences of formal education
- in their home country?
- in a country of asylum?
- in refugee camps?

For refugee young people that you come into contact with, what do you know of their experiences of informal education
- in their home country?
- in a country of asylum?
- in refugee camps?

For refugee young people that you come into contact with, what do you know of their experiences of vocational skills acquisition
- in their home country?
- in a country of asylum?
- in refugee camps?

For refugee young people that you come into contact with, what do you know of their expectations for
- educational achievement?
- other opportunities that schools might offer?
- employment pathways and career?

For refugee young people that disengage from school and formal education, what do you know of
- their experience of employment?
- what services they access?
- what other activities they engage in?

What are the expectations parents might hold of the Australian education system, in relation to
- the role of teachers?
- the curriculum that is taught?
- the opportunities that it might afford their children?
- their role in their child's learning?

What are the reservations parents might hold of the Australian education system, in relation to
- the role of teachers?
- the curriculum that is taught?
- the opportunities that it might afford their children?
- their role in their child's learning?

What are your impressions of specialist teachers (in IECs/IEHS, Teacher's Aides (ethnic) (etc) and their attitudes towards refugee young people in relation to
- special allowances they make?

- expectations they have for behaviour?
- expectations they have for prior learning?

What are your impressions of mainstream teachers and their attitudes towards refugee young people in relation to
- special allowances they make?
- expectations they have for behaviour?
- expectations they have for prior learning?

Is their anything else you would like to add?

Appendix 3: Service Access and Visa Class	Refugee	SHP(1)	PPV	TPV/THV
IHSS Initial Information	Y	Y	N	N
IHSS Accommodation Support (first 4 weeks to 6 months)	Y	Y	N	N
IHSS Household Formation (first 6 months)	Y	Y	N	N
IHSS Early Health Assessment and Intervention	Y	Y	y(4)	y(4)
Proposer Support	N	Y	N	N
SGP (Settlement Grants Program) (6 months to 5 years)	Y	Y	Y	N
Unaccompanied Minors Support	Y	Y	Y	Y
Counselling (Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors – STARTTS)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Centrelink	Y	Y	Y	Some
Medicare	Y	Y	Y	Limited
Department of Housing	Y(2)	Y(2)	Y(2)	Y(2)
TIS (Translating and Interpreting Services) (3)	Y	Y	Y	Y
TAFE, primary and secondary school	Y	Y	Y	Y
Adult Migrant English Program	Y	Y	Y	N
Department of Community Services	Y	Y	Y	Y

Source: DIMIA (11 November 2005) and Refugee Council of Australia (April 2004)

(1)SHP entrants rely on their proposers knowledge of services to access all services. Many proposer and their proposed fear asking for assistance because they fear it will jeopardise future eligibility to sponsor further family member

(2): Housing waiting lists vary from 1 years for priority cases and 10 years for all others eligible, and there is no housing stock suitable for large families arriving from Africa

(3): costs vary and can be prohibitive leading to misunderstanding, blocking access, and inappropriate us of children and young people as interpreters

(4): PPV and TPV/THV holders are eligible for Short term Torture and Trauma Counselling when they access the service upon entering the community.

Note: the most restrictive visa classes are grouped generally under 'bridging visa' and depends on individual circumstances. Most bridging visa holders rely totally on community members, faith-based groups and private charity