

SPEAKING UP

The Global Refugee Youth Consultations
in Australia Report



NOVEMBER 2016

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ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organisation
GRYC	Global Refugee Youth Consultation
MYAN	Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
RCOA	Refugee Council of Australia
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNV	United Nations Volunteer

States and Territories of Australia

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
Qld	Queensland
SA	South Australia
Tas	Tasmania
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

DEFINITIONS

The terms refugee youth, refugee young people or young people in this report refer to young people who may be seeking asylum or have been found to be a refugee by the Australian Government or in another country before arriving in Australia. This includes young people living in Australia on temporary visas. When describing issues for asylum seekers only, this is directly stated.

The report cites findings for two sets of refugee youth, one who are young people living in refugee camps / transit countries / countries of asylum and the other are young people living in Australia. This is because many young people in Australia can reflect on both contexts, with the majority of these young people having lived as refugees in other countries before being resettled permanently in Australia. As such many of the sections are divided into these two main categories.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The MYAN and RCOA would like to thank the young people who participated in the consultations and shared their experiences, concerns and possible solutions to improve the lives of young people from refugee backgrounds in Australia, and in first countries of asylum. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of all the organisations who supported the GRYC in Australia.

DISCLAIMER

This consultation was undertaken with young people living in the community in Australia. It was not possible in the scope of these consultations to meet with young people in immigration detention either in Australia, Nauru or Papua New Guinea (Manus Island). Further to this, the nature of the questions and structure of consultations meant that the focus of discussions about young people's experiences in Australia focused more intently on the experience of settlement rather than seeking asylum. As a result, young people did not talk in as much detail to the well-recognised and deeply concerning issues facing young people seeking asylum in Australia.

It is important to note however, that some participants had arrived in Australia as asylum seekers and did raise a number of concerns related to this experience, including barriers to realising their human rights to education, family reunion, protection, and freedom from unlawful and arbitrary detention. Some of these specific issues and concerns have been drawn out here to provide insight into the challenges identified through the consultations for this highly vulnerable group of young people and to ensure that voice is given to their experiences of seeking protection in Australia.

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COORDINATING PARTNERS

Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (Australia)

The Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) is Australia's national peak body on multicultural youth issues.

The MYAN works in partnership with young people, government and the non-government sectors to promote the interests of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, and to support a targeted approach to addressing these needs in policy and service delivery.

The MYAN engages in a range of policy, advocacy and capacity building activities to achieve this. The MYAN also supports the development of young people's skills and networks to engage in advocacy and influence the national agenda. The MYAN's vision is that all young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds can access the support and opportunities they need to be active citizens in Australian society.

For more information visit www.myan.org.au

Refugee Council of Australia

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) is the national umbrella body for refugees and the organisations and individuals who support them. It has more than 200 organisational and over 900 individual members.

Formed in November 1981, RCOA is a non-profit, non-government organisation registered as an incorporated association in the Australian Capital Territory. It is funded through contributions from its members and by project grants from philanthropic bodies and government agencies. The priority activities for RCOA are set by its members, as represented by an elected Board.

RCOA's own work is centred around five key areas: policy, support for refugees, support for its members, community education and administration. In addition, RCOA seeks funding for specific projects that directly relate to our objectives and enhance our capacity to serve the refugee community.

For more visit www.refugeecouncil.org.au

This report has been prepared by the MYAN Australia and RCOA.

Executive Summary

Speaking Up: The Global Refugee Youth Consultations in Australia Report, presents the voices and recommendations of young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds from consultations that took place across Australia from February to May 2016.

The Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC) in Australia provided a rare opportunity to consult widely with young people across the country from refugee or asylum seeking backgrounds. Alongside the international effort, consultations were organised with 555 young people across all states and territories to discuss with them what matters in their lives – their fears, their concerns, how they were able to settle into a new country and what they think should be improved.

The young people, aged 15-24, came from 53 different places, some were employed, some studying for a degree, and with an equal gender split. They were keen to share their experiences and ideas and to talk about solutions. These young people have energy, drive and vision and see themselves very much as part of the solution. Four of these young people travelled to Geneva, representing Australia at the GRYC Global Youth Workshop, Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR), the UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations, the UNHCR Standing Committee and a range of bi-lateral advocacy meetings.

Young people face many challenges when they arrive in Australia. They need support in learning English, accessing the education system and learning a new culture. If they are alone there is disconnection from family and community. They all carry with them experiences of fleeing from conflict and an often harrowing journey to get to Australia. These experiences can be difficult and traumatic and all services need to have a basic understanding of these issues so they can provide the best possible services for these young people.

Young people gave an insight into the clash of cultures that they experience when coming to Australia. This happens at home, at school, and when accessing supports such as mental health services. Young people also see themselves as part of the solution, making recommendations on how they could assist others by providing peer mentoring, information, and support networks.

With a solutions focus, the consultations provided young people with an opportunity to come up with answers to the problems they outlined. They talked about better access to education, and service providers understanding young people more in order to better target their services. They talked about sharing their stories and how this would increase community awareness and understanding of their experiences. The solutions are thoughtful and provide governments, leaders and decision makers some practical and achievable ideas on how to improve systems and supports, provide opportunities to learn from young people and foster future leaders.

A successful, culturally diverse society does not just happen, it requires that organisations, governments and the broader community listen to and act on what our whole community is saying, including young Australians from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds.

1. The Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC)

The Global Refugee Youth Consultation (GRYC) project is a joint initiative of the UNHCR and the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) in Geneva, Switzerland and is being supported by the Youth and Adolescents in Emergencies (YAE) Group. A key component of the GRYC project was the participation of 1,267 young people in 56 national or sub-national youth consultations held in 22 countries between October 2015 and June 2016. The purpose of these consultations was to amplify youth voices in decisions that affect them. These consultations are seen as the beginning of a process—a process that must continue to develop the leadership, capacity, and futures of refugee youth everywhere.

The youth consultations that took place across the globe were also preparation for the 2016 annual UNHCR-NGO Consultations, which were held in Geneva in June 2016 with the theme of 'youth'. During these consultations a GRYC Global Youth Workshop was held that brought together young people from across the globe who had participated in their national consultations. The GRYC Global Youth Workshop resulted in the development of 7 *Core Actions for Refugee Youth* and the global report, *We believe in youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultation Final Report*, which were launched in September 2016 (see Appendix 3).

This report, *Speaking Up: The Global Refugee Youth Consultations in Australia*, presents the findings and recommendations from the consultations with young people that took place across Australia.

1.1 THE GRYC IN AUSTRALIA

Young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds have enormous potential to be active participants in and contributors to Australian society but commonly face a range of barriers to realising this. These barriers often mean that their voices are marginalised in policy and practice and many do not have access to the tools, networks and platforms to advocate for their rights and interests, influence decision makers or be supported as leaders in their communities.

Consistent with the global consultations, the overall aim of the GRYC in Australia was to provide an opportunity

for young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds (aged 15-24) to articulate issues of concern, identify solutions, and contribute to national and international advocacy on issues for refugee and asylum seeking young people.

The GRYC in Australia recognised that this group of young people have unique experiences and knowledge, and are best placed to articulate their concerns and identify solutions. Between February and May 2016, 555 young people participated in 24 consultations across all of Australia's states and territories.

The GRYC in Australia was coordinated through a partnership between the MYAN and RCOA. It utilised existing structures and networks and built on the breadth of work currently occurring with young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds across Australia. The MYAN's national Youth Ambassadors Network (YAN) supported the planning and delivery of the consultations in each state and territory, along with a broad range of organisations. GRYC in Australia Guidelines (based on the GRYC Tool Kit) were developed to support consistency in methodology.

There were three key components of the Australian consultations:

1. National consultations with young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds
2. Selection of four youth delegates to attend the GRYC Global Youth Workshop in Geneva, as well as the UNHCR-NGO Consultations, UNHCR Standing Committee, the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) and other bi-lateral meetings, in June 2016.
3. Opportunities (national and state) for the four youth delegates to report back to key stakeholders and decision-makers on findings of the consultations, outcomes of the Geneva GRYC and other advocacy activities in Geneva.

The GRYC in Australia consultations were held in a range of formats, including one day and half day consultations, gender-specific discussion groups and targeted consultations with specific organisations. Consistent with the global project, the GRYC in Australia consultations

explored with young people:

1. Key issues/concerns and possible solutions
2. What helped and what would improve their circumstances as asylum seekers and refugees
3. The role of young asylum seekers and refugees as advocates

However, in the Australian context young people were asked to explore these areas in relation to both living in Australia and outside/prior to coming to Australia. The full list of consultation questions can be viewed at Appendix 2.

31 NGOs supported the consultations, including:

- AMES Australia
- Assoc. of Services to Torture & Trauma Survivors (ASeTTS), WA
- Auburn Diversity Services
- Centre for Multicultural Youth
- Community Migrant Resource Centre, NSW
- Core Community Services
- Football United Creating Chances
- Hunter Multicultural Youth Network
- Katanning Senior High School
- Melaleuca Refugee Centre
- Migrant Resource Centre Southern Tasmania Inc.
- Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre Lambton, NSW
- Multicultural Youth Network, NT
- Multicultural Youth Services, ACT
- Multicultural Youth South Australia
- Multicultural Youth Queensland
- MYAN ACT
- MYAN NSW
- MYAN TAS
- MYAN WA
- Northern Settlement Services; NSW
- Police Newcastle City Command
- Ram Khanal (Albury young person)
- Samaritans, NSW
- Shire of Katanning
- Service for Treatment & Rehabilitation of Torture & Trauma Survivors, NSW
- Settlement Services International, NSW
- Sydney West Multicultural Services
- TAFE Hunter
- Wyndham Community & Education Centre
- Youth Affairs Council of WA
- Youth Coalition of the ACT
- Youth Collective, NSW.

The GRYC in Australia has contributed to the overall GRYC project and to the international context by informing the advocacy work of the Australian youth delegates who attended the GRYC Global Youth Workshop and the Australian delegation in Geneva, who attended the UNHCR-NGO Consultations and related side meetings. However, the GRYC in Australia also served to capture the reflections of young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds in order to inform ongoing policy and advocacy work in Australia related to their needs and concerns.

Since June 2016, the MYAN, RCOA and other organisations have supported a range of report-back opportunities for the Geneva youth delegates and follow-up on the outcomes of the GRYC Global Youth Workshop and meetings in Geneva. These have included the development of an Australian GRYC Action Plan (which outlines how the *7 Core Actions for Refugee Youth* will be implemented in Australia) and participation in regional activities, including the Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights in September 2016.

1.2 PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Most participants completed a registration form which included demographic information. Participant demographics are included in Appendix 1 and are summarised on the following page.

555

young people participated in the Australian consultations. Of those who responded to our survey...

52% aged eighteen and over & 48% aged under eighteen

Participants had been in Australia from between 3 months to 14 years. The average was 4 years.



47% female &



53% male

Participants represented a total of 53 places of origin



Before arriving in Australia



Key challenges - access to basic services including health, barriers to education, poor access to legal support and rights, living precariously

Living in Australia



Key challenges - a lack of opportunity to engage in education and training, difficulty in navigating pathways into employment, poor access to youth sensitive mental health services, difficulties with legal and justice matters, experiences of racism, discrimination and exclusion, barriers to connecting with family and community

Consultations were conducted with the support of:

11 young people
(Youth Ambassadors to the MYAN & GRYC Youth Delegates to Geneva)

31 non-government organisations from across each of Australia's states and territories

2. Before arriving in Australia

THE MAJOR CHALLENGES

Issues facing young people residing in refugee camps, in countries of transit or in countries of asylum were highlighted by youth consultation participants. The following section provides an overview of the major challenges identified by young people before they arrived in Australia. The key issues related to the precariousness of life and access to basic services.

2.1 POOR ACCESS TO BASIC HEALTH CARE

Key issues

- There is a lack of basic health infrastructure
- Mental health issues impact heavily on health and wellbeing

The key health-related issues were a lack of medical facilities and services and poor access to existing services and facilities. Young people reported that access was inhibited due to cost, distance, safe passage or even because of local eligibility rules.

Additionally, young people reported that medical issues were not adequately addressed due to a lack of trained or qualified staff and a lack of qualified interpreters to support diagnosis and communicate treatment. Lack of sexual education for young people was identified as an issue alongside health-related concerns for young women, including a lack of support for young mothers.

Mental health was also consistently raised by participants as a concern. Mental health issues were linked directly to experiences of torture and trauma, including conflict and exposure to war, persistent fear and/or exposure to danger, the loss of and/or separation from family members, constant uncertainty, injustice, and ongoing persecution and discrimination. Participants also spoke of mental health issues as a result of flight, including the experience of detention outside and within Australia. These issues were exacerbated by limited access to

adequate counselling and support services, as well as by a lack of opportunities to engage meaningfully in work or social activities.

2.2 SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO EDUCATION

Key issues

- There is a lack of basic education infrastructure
- Corruption in the system impacts on equal access

Lack of opportunities to engage in education was a top issue identified across a majority of sites. The key factors impacting on access to education were:

- class sizes and over-crowding of classrooms;
- lack of / poor infrastructure;
- long distances to school;
- young women's exclusion;
- the lack of transport or safe passage to travel to sites; and
- barriers created by visa-status and local eligibility requirements.

Added to these challenges, when young people could gain access to education there were added issues of:

- poor quality of education;
- poorly trained teachers;
- lack of resources;
- limited / no supervision;
- discrimination; and
- language barriers.

"I recently went back to Malaysia and the system has not changed, asylum seekers are still living in the community with no access to education or support."

2.3 POOR ACCESS TO LEGAL SUPPORT

Key issues

- A lack of accessible and accurate information
- Protecting rights of young people is of paramount importance

Issues related to the role of the UNHCR and the process for seeking protection were identified as highly important to participants. Young people's major concern related to the lack of information they receive about the process of seeking protection, long waiting periods and the status of their protection claim. Participants further highlighted issues of corruption and fraud within the protection system, and confusion about the role and responsibility of different United Nations bodies and local agencies.

During the consultations, young people also raised concerns related to legal issues, justice and human rights. Young people reported concerns ranging from people having to steal to survive to police racism and brutality. A lack of equality before the law, discrimination in governance practices, and experiences of injustice in accessing products and services, including UNHCR offices, was also reported.

Young people also reported numerous barriers to realising their human rights. Specific references were made to:

- freedom of movement and the consequent impact on access to basic services such as employment, education and health;
- civil and political rights;
- freedom from gender-based abuses, including sexual violence and slavery;
- rights of the child, with specific reference to child labour;
- labour rights, including a lack of information about rights and the right to work and fair pay; and

- protection, including access to rights and legal status as an asylum seeker or recognised refugee, access to permanent status and citizenship, and recognition of and access to identity documents.

"There were sometimes fear within the camps and you are often told not to talk to the UNHCR."

2.4 LIVING PRECARIOUSLY

Key issues

- Basic infrastructure for living a decent life is missing
- Fear is a constant presence

Participants identified that often basic necessities are either not adequate or are completely absent. This included shelter, food insecurity, poor quality water, electricity, transport, sanitation, and digital technology. Young people also highlighted the issue of living in a poor environment, with issues ranging from having a lack of open spaces to the health effects of insect infestations and epidemics.

Young people felt their freedom of movement was compromised, and reported lack of security and safety in refugee camps, places of transit and places of asylum. Young people spoke about living in constant fear of violence, of not feeling protected and of not having safe access to services, including UNHCR offices. The lack of security for children and young people was felt to be particularly acute, with reports ranging from kidnapping to child abandonment and children living on the streets. There were specific concerns for young women and their experiences of sexual and gender-based violence, including forced marriage.

Access to opportunities and concerns from security extended to economic participation, with young people



Photograph by Access Community Services

identifying barriers to accessing work in refugee camps and local communities as an issue. The need for local permits or identification to be able to work, and to move in and out of camps was one key barrier to economic participation for young people, while others identified the lack of opportunities in camps as a further barrier.

Host community perceptions and reception of refugee young people has a significant impact on young people's wellbeing and sense of safety. Experiences of racism and discrimination, including physical violence, were issues young people reportedly faced alongside challenges related to language barriers, social integration and cultural adjustment. This reportedly impacts not only on the young person's sense of security and stability, but on feelings of belonging and personal safety.

"We changed our names to protect ourselves."

THE KEY SOLUTIONS

Participants identified several solutions to the issues for young people residing in refugee camps, in countries of transit or in countries of asylum. The following are the key solutions or actions that participants identified.

2.5 PROVIDING ACCESS TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND BASIC SERVICES

Key solutions

- Provide better health services, particularly for women and children
- Improve access to education by providing free schools for all young people

Young people spoke about the need to improve access to well-trained health professionals, health insurance, facilities and infrastructure, and to mental health supports, education and services in refugee camps, and

countries of transit and asylum. Young people suggested that incentive schemes could be developed to provide improved health care to refugee and forced migrant populations. This might include programs that encourage professionals in training to work at sites where refugee populations are concentrated or could include volunteer programs and field training for refugees themselves.

Specifically, there is a need to address gaps and access to support and information regarding sexual health, and supports for young mothers.

Young people presented a range of solutions for improving access to education and addressing other barriers to participation in this area. These included:

- advocacy, from organisations like the UNHCR, that focuses on promoting access to education for all young people, regardless of their visa status;
- investment in improving school infrastructure and accessibility, including transportation;
- providing financial supports to young people and their communities to encourage engagement in education; and
- targeted programs that work to improve the quality of education offered in countries of transit and refugee camps, for example, teacher exchange and skills building programs.

Young people made numerous suggestions for ways to improve access to basic services and infrastructure such as UNHCR providing more food each month, installation of bores and taps in communities, improved waste management and access to welfare support.

Participants also suggested that young people should be supported to access employment in camps to enable them to gain skills and experience and build expertise.

2.6 GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE A VOICE

Key solutions

- Young people have a role in developing solutions
- Provide opportunities for young people to share their experiences with decision makers

Young people highlighted the need to work in collaboration with governments “to help us and enable young people a voice in both identifying issues and devising solutions”. Participants highlighted the need for support to carry out such functions, especially the value of peer-to-peer supports and training and development opportunities.

The idea of creating more platforms for refugees to help other refugees was a common theme throughout the consultations. Another popular solution was the desire to have more people from refugee and migrant backgrounds addressing poor knowledge and understanding (of the refugee experience) within existing communities. They suggested the need for more opportunities to share their stories and experiences.

Young people suggested that there was a need to create greater awareness of the issues and needs of refugees within service systems and government structures. Participants suggested that there needed to be more pathways for people to share their direct experiences with those with the power to affect change. This could be achieved by having more UN staff visit camps and talking directly to those young people living there.

3. Living in Australia

The refugee and asylum seeking experience is characteristically traumatic and many young people may face a myriad of issues after they arrive in Australia that are associated with their flight from their country of origin and their journey to Australia. In addition to these challenges, upon arrival to Australia young people are also faced with a new culture, language, education and service system that they must navigate. This process of settlement can be frustrating, isolating and confusing, but also an exciting time offering many opportunities.

THE MAJOR CHALLENGES

The following section provides an outline of the main issues and challenges faced by young people after their arrival to Australia. The key issues related to family and community, education, employment, integration, and legal and justice issues.

3.1 A LACK OF OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Key issues

- It is important to assess and place students at the right educational level
- Information on education pathways is needed

Education, including disrupted, poor and no education was a central concern for participants. This was identified by many as likely to have long term consequences, one young person described a lack of education as “creating all the problems there are in the world”.

Challenges associated with navigating an unfamiliar education system were highlighted. This included understanding pathways, access to accurate information, including fees and supports available, as well as knowing where to go to find information and seek assistance.

A greater need for support for young people who have disrupted education was highlighted. The process used to allocate newly arrived young people to schooling in Australia failed to fully capture young people’s knowledge and skills on arrival. This led to many feeling they were not placed in the correct level when they started schooling and facing challenges when placed in classes with children of different ages.

Other issues included missing key foundational areas of learning such as digital technology skills, and health and



Photograph by MYAN NSW

physical education subjects including sexuality and sexual health. Participants also discussed the challenges in gaining recognition for prior learning and qualifications, including frustration at not having life experiences recognised.

Concern also related to teacher's knowledge and understanding of newly arrived students and how their refugee experience can impact their education. This included issues such as language barriers, experiences of displacement, health issues, the social and family context, and cultural differences.

The specific experience of young asylum seekers in Australia being denied access to education and training was identified by young people. They reported a lack of financial support and access to further education in particular. This is critical for asylum seekers on temporary visa arrangements who are required to pay international student rates once they have reached 18 years of age.

English language was a challenge for young people settling into Australia that is compounded for some by limited access to additional supports and advanced language courses that can support further education. Language is a challenge that also affects access to services, school performance, and establishing relationships. One participant described it as "like watching a movie without the subtitles turned on."

"50% of IEC (Intensive English Centre) students don't feel ready to go to high school due to lack of confidence."

3.2 DIFFICULTY IN NAVIGATING PATHWAYS INTO EMPLOYMENT

Key issues

- Discrimination, language skills and lack of recognition of qualifications makes it hard to find employment
- Extra support is needed to help maintain employment

Navigating unfamiliar employment systems creates a challenge for refugee young people seeking employment. Young people talked about the need for support to negotiate pathways and transitions to employment, particularly in the absence of support, opportunities and networks.

Young people also identified specific challenges in seeking and maintaining work:

- poor understanding of rights and laws, resulting in young people experiencing workplace harassment;
- exploitation and discrimination;
- lack of recognition of qualifications;
- English language skill level;
- difficulties in maintaining employment;
- familiarity with technology for those cut off from technology for significant periods;
- no access to work rights; and
- the need to adjust to expectations regarding work in Australia.

For young asylum seekers who do not have access to work rights, employment becomes almost impossible and meaningful engagement activities are essential to maintain skills and motivation.

“When young people are employed they don’t even know about the Australian tax system, about things like superannuation. So people like my friend, yeah, he got ripped off, because he didn’t know the system.”

3.3 POOR ACCESS TO YOUTH SENSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Key issues

- Mental health issues are prevalent and far reaching
- Problems are exacerbated by unemployment and a sense of hopelessness

Mental health issues were linked directly to pre- and post-arrival experiences of torture and trauma, ranging from conflict and exposure to war, persistent fear and exposure to danger, the loss of and separation from family members, constant uncertainty, injustice, and ongoing persecution and discrimination.

Participants reported that the impacts of the refugee experience had far reaching consequences, leading some to feel their future was uncertain or that they simply had ‘no capacity to plan (their) future’. Some young people also spoke about not being ‘fully accepted’ and feeling that they didn’t belong with such challenges reported by young people to impact on their lives in myriad ways. Young people also spoke about experiences with depression, suicidal thoughts, anxiety, feelings of disempowerment and uncertainty, lack of identity, feelings of stress and fear, leading to self-esteem problems.

Mental health issues were reportedly exacerbated by limited access to adequate counselling and support services, as well as by a lack of opportunity to engage meaningfully in work or social activities. The reported outcome for many being long periods of idleness and for others, an ever-present sense of hopelessness.

Participants also spoke about the role unaddressed mental health issues can have in the prevalence of drug use and violence, and linked the latter to experiences of domestic and family violence. One group of participants reported that domestic violence, impacted by poor mental health, is a “big problem” and suggested that services needed to provide more regular checks for families and should engage the parents and the children in conversations about what happens in the family.

Australia’s policy of mandatory detention for all asylum seekers arriving without a visa in its territories means that all asylum seekers have experienced detention in closed facilities, often for prolonged periods. Young people reported on the devastating impacts of detention on their physical and mental health.

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“Sometimes people don’t feel confident because they’ve lost their sense of self-esteem.”

3.4 A LACK OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

Key issues

- Experiences of displacement have long term implications
- The refugee experience impacts on a sense of belonging and personal safety

The impact of displacement on a sense of security and stability was raised in several consultations, with many young people reporting on the longer term impacts of this on their future.

The community perceptions and reception of refugee young people has a significant impact on young people's wellbeing and sense of safety. Experiences of racism and discrimination, including physical violence, were issues young people reportedly faced alongside challenges related to language barriers, social integration and cultural adjustment.

Safe, adequate and secure housing was also highlighted as a concern, with some young people experiencing homelessness after settling in Australia. Young people reported that often a key contributing factor leading to feelings of dislocation, insecurity and the risk of homelessness, was their needs not being addressed in on arrival and settlement support. For example, young people arriving to Australia as part of a family unit described how the concerns of the family were often attended to, but that they were not asked about their own particular needs or interests.

“Every day is a struggle, every minute is a struggle.”

3.5 DIFFICULTIES WITH LEGAL AND JUSTICE MATTERS

Key issues

- There is an ever present concern about immigration processes
- Accurate information and knowledge is greatly needed

Young people reported barriers in access to legal services, describing challenges such as getting to know the law, accessing accurate information, knowledge of

immigration processes and access to support for family reunion matters.

Young people reported concerns with government processing of their visas and identification, and requested the Australian Government to allow changes to biographical data post-settlement. A number of young people experienced the personal impact of incorrect biodata directly affecting their lives in Australia. They stated that what may seem trivial to government or agencies felt like a major stumbling block to them. For example, age determination processes that resulted in incorrect ages had significant consequences in post-settlement contexts where eligibility for services such as schooling, driver's licenses, and scholarships are governed by a date of birth.

Issues related to the role of UNHCR and the process for seeking protection were identified as highly important to participants. Young people's major concern related to the lack of information they receive about the process of seeking protection and the status of their protection claim. Young people said that they were not directly consulted about the application process, instead information is often given to their parents with the assumption that it would be passed on. This does not allow young people to engage with the process and to request information relevant to their own experience and concerns.

Young people spoke about the reintroduction of temporary protection visas in Australia and their uncertainty and fears around this. Temporary protection visas were previously found to perpetuate a young person's uncertainty about their future, impacting a young person's sense of security and belonging, capacity to feel settled and to establish long term goals, compounding the effects of trauma and impeding recovery. Certain temporary visa holders also currently have no access to education, work rights or family reunion.

“I want to know more about my rights as a young person in Australia because sometimes



Photograph by MYAN Australia

I feel like I'm being used. I was exploited at work, I didn't know my legal rights, I worked 70 hours and was paid \$70. Knowing the law is very important."

3.6 ENCOUNTERING DISCRIMINATION, RACISM AND EXCLUSION

Key issues

- Negative stereotypes can lead to discrimination and bullying
- Cultural adjustment issues can impact negatively on identity

Young people described feelings of social isolation and stigma associated with experiences of racism, discrimination and bullying. They expressed concern that lack of awareness and understanding in the broader community of the experience of forced displacement lead to bullying, stereotyping and labelling, with the media reinforcing this by publishing negative stories that further marginalised refugees.

Added to experiences of host community reception, the process of acculturation was considered especially challenging. During the consultations, young people reported feeling socially isolated, disconnected, and lonely as a result of experiences of exclusion, rejection and mistrust. Such feelings were linked to experiences of culture shock, uncertainty, and a lack of opportunities to engage with others and build relationships and learn more about culture, norms and society in Australia.

Identity was considered to be one of the greatest challenges facing refugee youth. Young people explored how choosing who they identify as can affect how they

fit in society and can leave them feeling stuck between cultures, torn between the pressure to fit in and the pressure to preserve their cultural identity. Some young people described the experience of being pressured to engage with religion or culture that they were struggling to identify with as very challenging.

While one participant noted "sometimes we feel stronger, because what we have been through with the war and our experiences", others shared the immense sense of loss that comes with the experience of displacement, of losing memories, parents and friends, of the loss of connection to the land and the resulting feelings of loneliness, uncertainty and fear.

The "collision of culture" further combined for many with experiences of exclusion, discrimination, racism and misrepresentation of their home. This resulted in young people feeling torn and unsure of where they fit and confused about their identity. This extended to making friends and building trust, feelings of security and stability, a sense of belonging and identity, as well as self-esteem, feelings of control and social connection.

Young people identified the media, specifically negativity towards young people and refugees in the media, as a challenge. They emphasised the role discrimination and racism, negative community sentiment and reception played in silencing their voices – making them feel their views and opinions and the roles they identified for themselves, were not appreciated or valued by others.

"Young people don't always have a say in leaving their country but they have to leave. Some lose their identity and when they come to a new country they have to rebuild that identity."

"Young people also lose

themselves trying to fit in to the culture of hosting countries.”

3.7 THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Key issues

- There is a deep sense of loss and disconnection for those without family
- Parents reliance on their children can create adjustment problems

One of the greatest challenges reported by young people settling in to life in Australia was the reality of not being with family. The death of family members or forced separation during migration left many young people experiencing a great sense of loss. Those who spoke to this issue during the consultations reflected on the incredible challenge of building a life without their family and how this impacted on all areas of their lives.

A number of young people settling with family reported that they often find themselves in a confusing situation when different cultures collide, as parental expectations conflict with cultural norms and values in the country of settlement. This can leave young people feeling as though they have little or no support from their family or that familial expectations are unreasonable, leading to miscommunication and conflict.

Young people also reported that there can be additional pressures placed on them to support their parents or older family members who may take longer to adjust to life in Australia and learn English. This reliance on young people can disrupt power relationships and dependencies within families and across generations. Added to this, young people suggested that a further issue or point

of conflict was between their past and present. This was described as an internal struggle to align feelings of wanting to have a brighter future in Australia, with a desire for change in their home country and a sense of responsibility for family and friends left behind.

The issue of family separation was particularly acute for those who had sought asylum in Australia. Those who arrive in Australia by boat are placed at the lowest processing priority for family reunion, effectively denying them the chance to reunite with family members. Separation from family can add significantly to the challenges of settlement with negative impacts on health and wellbeing, and motivation to build connections and skills to support participation, including engagement in education, training and employment.

“It’s hard to concentrate on school when I’m always thinking about my mum. I miss her and I want to bring her here but I can’t.”

“Feeling like you have to help family back home puts you under too much pressure, (it) affects your priorities... (Do you) forget about your dreams and help out people or do you forget about your people and chase your dreams?”

THE KEY SOLUTIONS

Young people from refugee backgrounds play an essential role in supporting peers, their families and communities. They are tech savvy and connected to the world in a way that was never previously possible. They have

drive, enthusiasm and a focus on the future that we can harness. In identifying solutions, young people showed their capacity to network, support, inform and lead.

Young people highlighted a number of roles they can take up in the process of finding solutions and bringing about change for young people living in Australia. The areas of information, access to education and youth leadership and participation were identified as ways young people can engage and work with stakeholders to bring about positive changes for young people.

The following section outlines key solutions that participants identified, including wanting to see more young people in leadership and mentoring roles, raising awareness and providing information to address challenges.

3.8 ENCOURAGING LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

Key solutions

- Young people are skilled networkers
- Fostering leadership requires an investment of time and money

As leaders, participants identified the role of refugee youth as many and diverse. They were seen to be spokespeople and decision makers, diaspora representatives of communities abroad, recruiters engaged in bringing opportunities and networks to other young people, as well as organisers and change makers.

Young people saw the need for opportunities to showcase strong leaders from a range of cultures and backgrounds, to build their own cultural competence and improve skills and capacity to inform the service system of young people's needs.

Participants identified that young people have a key role to play in amplifying the profile and voice of refugee youth. Part of young people's role in this regard is to share stories and ideas, to promote one another's skills, and to advocate for rights and resources. Participants reported that young people speaking up in public forums empowers other young people, giving them the confidence to speak up, and that there is a need to ensure diverse representation of voices, including young women and young people who sought asylum in Australia.

The role of young people might also include starting a conversation that is focused on their unique needs and concerns. Young people have a role in organising youth networks and bringing other young people into existing networks and organisations, to support their message and provide forums for their meaningful participation and engagement. Youth-led programs would enable young people to collectively identify specific issues they faced and provide a space where they could work through barriers together. This would also help support young people to engage with stakeholders as part of the program and across the wider community.

Role modelling was one of the key leadership roles participants identified for refugee young people. The importance of providing peer support, mentoring and guidance to other young people and supporting them in their migration journey was a ubiquitous one in the opinion of participants. Related to their role as leaders and role models, young people also have a role to play in volunteering. Participants identified refugee young people's engagement in volunteering as a responsibility to work to help others, and an important means for engaging in and building relationships into the broader community.

"It's hard to know how to make a difference, how to change, (how to) talk to politicians... We don't have the information."

3.9 IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Key solutions

- Extra supports are needed to smooth integration into school
- Cultural training is valuable for educators

Young people provided a number of suggestions for how education in Australia could be improved to address the issues faced by refugee young people. The most important issues and solutions were identified as the need for support, assistance during transition, financial support and training for educators.

Educational supports were described as fundamentally under-resourced. There is a need for targeted supports, such as:

- homework clubs;
- teachers recruited who are specially trained to work with refugee young people;
- additional language supports;
- flexible and innovative teaching methods to support those with disrupted education (including youth-specific classes, based on English language proficiency rather than age);
- improved resources and support for young people in year 11 and 12, including access to special consideration; and
- one-on-one tuition to enable students to compete with peers.

There is a need to ensure smoother transitions and pathways within education and training systems in Australia. This can be improved with the use of interpreters by careers counsellor, greater recognition of overseas qualifications, lower entry scores and/or more alternative pathways for university entrance for students from a refugee background, supports to navigate transitions to pursue further education after high

school, and improved access to information on further education, training and employment. There is also a need for increased grants and scholarships to study at a tertiary level.

Young people identified the need for training for educators, specifically to provide cultural training to teachers in schools and universities. This would encourage greater awareness of the needs of refugee young people and their potential, enabling teachers to work more cohesively with newly arrived young people and avoiding negative assumptions about their capabilities.

Participants spoke to the importance of investing in education more broadly. This includes, teaching young people to help others in their communities and schools running seminars in conjunction with refugee agencies to break down existing stereotypes.

Participants also identified adult education as a concern and stated that more English language support for parents is required to avoid reliance on children to interpret.

“We believe that increasing the level of education and investment in ourselves leads to our voices being heard”

3.10 IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

Key solutions

- Consult with young people to learn how to improve services
- Bicultural and bilingual workers are important in delivering services



Young people are able to provide valuable insight and knowledge about service systems and share information and experiences with organisations that work with refugee youth. Young people should be engaged by organisations in such roles and also to support other young people. They should be supported to build their skills and develop their interests and capacities, and such work (whether paid or unpaid) should be recognised by both the sector and employers more broadly as development of skills relevant to employment.

When exploring solutions to the challenges within the service system, young people strongly identified that systemic change was what they wanted to see. Consultations with young people were seen as an important first step to ensure that services heard their voices and engaged them in the development and delivery of services.

Participants raised the concern of an increasing number of young people being excluded from services or 'falling through the gaps' due to narrow policy requirements and service delivery approaches. This could be remedied by increasing communication and collaboration between refugee young people and organisations. For example, organisations could include young people in their decision-making processes and consult young people on what kind of services are available, and how they could be provided and/or improved.

Young people spoke of the importance of affordability of services and providing targeted supports that are flexible and responsive to the unique needs of refugee young people. They spoke about diversity in the workforce, and the key role for bilingual and bicultural workers in working with young people. Such supports were seen as central to ensuring young people had access to someone who understands their experience and can help them articulate their needs, and who can explain systems and processes in both a language and a way that they can understand.

On the whole, young women were acknowledged as experiencing a larger number of issues accessing services and thus required specific support and attention. The education system was seen as a key point for providing

information on family planning and safe sex for young women as new arrivals.

Mental health services

There were a number of solutions identified for improving access to mental health services. Specifically, young people suggested that services should be more youth-friendly, both in terms of access points and cost. One group of participants focused on the role of peer-to-peer mental health support mechanisms and the value of a shared experience in easing stress and feelings of isolation and loneliness. One example was 'African House', which would be a place where all young people can go to feel safe, protected, cared for, accepted and surrounded by peers who can support and look after them from a place of mutual understanding and shared experience.

Accessing mental health services is particularly difficult for refugee young people who have experienced trauma. Developing a mentor relationship with another refugee young person, alongside the relationship with the health care professionals, was noted as a potential support option. Through these relationships refugee youth could feel safe to communicate their issues and be directly supported.

Employment services

In relation to accessing employment services, young people said that governments have a central responsibility to support refugee young people to gain meaningful employment. Young people suggested that youth-focused employment agencies could be created to support young people in the job search process and with gaining relevant experience, networks and skills.

Some further solutions young people identified included the development of online applications that would enhance young people's access to information regarding employment services and opportunities. Another solution was to encourage the employment sector to learn more about young people from refugee backgrounds and their lived experiences. The aim being to foster greater understanding of refugee young people's capabilities and to enhance engagement with such services for improved outcomes.

“When organisations show signs they’ve heard what we said it makes us engage with them better.”

3.11 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO SETTLE INTO AUSTRALIA

Key solutions

- Orientation workshops would assist in the cultural transition
- Sharing stories is the best way to counter discrimination

Participants identified a wide array of challenges and issues facing young people settling into life in Australia. As a priority there is a need for more supports and resources to facilitate young people’s settlement, including the provision of orientation workshops, pre- and post-arrival, that would provide information to young people about services, culture and life in Australia. There is also a need for greater guidance for young people on coping strategies for managing acculturation stress and increased resources for counselling for refugees.

There is an important role for targeted social activities, sports and music events, special interest groups, community festivals and youth conferences to support young people from refugee backgrounds to meet others and build social networks. Participants highlighted that young people should be engaged in the development, planning and communication of such events to ensure broad community engagement.

There is a need to respond to discrimination, racism and bullying by strengthening cross-cultural understanding. Young people identified the need to address negative

or inaccurate views about refugees through community education and awareness campaigns. Participants noted that young people have a direct role to play in breaking down stereotypes and challenging misconceptions by sharing their stories and their experiences. The media and education systems also have a role in directly challenging negative perspectives of migration, breaking down stigma, and to “teach more about the beauty of different cultures”.

“Young people can easily reach out to other refugee young people and relate to them.”

3.12 ENHANCING THE PROTECTION OF REFUGEE YOUTH

Key solutions

- Young refugees and asylum seekers arriving alone require special attention
- A greater refugee intake is needed to provide greater protection for young people

Participants expressed deep concern about young people seeking asylum arriving alone in Australia. They were concerned about public perceptions, public sentiment and government policies that negatively impacted refugee and asylum seeking young people arriving alone.

Young people specifically suggested that the Australian Government should increase its refugee intake and provide greater protection for displaced people “so they don’t have to get on boats”.

“The future is young people.”



Photograph by Access Community Services

3.13 FACILITATING YOUTH NETWORKING AND PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT

Key solutions

- Youth-led programs are most effective
- Young people are the best transmitter of accurate and timely information for their peers

Participants called for the creation of more platforms for young people from refugee backgrounds to help other refugees and for increased respect for the potential of refugee young people. They highlighted the role of refugee young people in areas such as peer-to-peer mentoring and support programs. Young people identified a need for newly arrived young refugees to connect with young people from similar backgrounds on arrival who can support them in an informal way and provide them with advice and assurance. Young people noted that this was a role that could be filled by refugee youth, who could become youth advisors and bicultural and bilingual workers for other young, newly arrived refugees.

In addition to this, participants identified a lack of mechanisms and sustained commitment to engage young people in ongoing conversations and dialogue about issues impacting them. There are also other barriers to participation that young people are sometimes unable to overcome that they feel are the responsibility of the service system. These range from feeling there are a lack a supports and advice to enable their engagement, to financial barriers preventing active participation. Young people suggested there could be greater investment in training and development opportunities to support increased participation.

Participants highlighted the importance of access to information and described how the lack of information they received from stakeholders regarding their own, and

their family's, situation directly impacted their decision-making on a range of critical issues. They described this experience as resulting in ongoing uncertainty and as highly stressful. Regular updates and feedback from stakeholders were suggested to improve this engagement as it would significantly ease their situation.

Youth-led programs would support young people to connect with each other and build relationships across the common barriers of language, age and cultural differences. In addition, participants described this as the potential means to collectively solve issues they experience. The development of youth-led programs could also provide a safe space for social events for young people and their families, where they could feel valued and welcomed in their new communities. Furthermore, participants articulated the centrality of youth-led programs as a platform upon which they could actively participate and begin to rebuild their confidence and identities.

Other ideas that were raised included:

- the importance of training to assist with general information sharing, specifically for understanding legal rights in Australia;
- the need for access to resources to be able to build their own skills, connect young people together and to enable them to seek out potential employment opportunities within their communities;
- sharing stories and experiences of young people with the broader community to allow people from refugee backgrounds to address poor knowledge and understanding of the refugee experience in the broader community;
- engaging with social media as a means to communicate with each other and as a tool to reach out, be heard and teach others about themselves within their new communities; and
- the development of peer-to-peer educational programs within immigration detention centres, supported through relevant organisations, whereby young people could support each other and share skills such as English language, cooking or crafts.

Young people said that they are not directly consulted

about what is going on, instead information is often given to their parents with the assumption that it would be passed on. This does not allow young people to engage with the process and to request information relevant to their own experience and concerns as young people.

In relation to this issue, young people also raised concerns about long waiting periods, both for outcomes but also to be updated with information or to speak with someone about their case. Young people felt that this lack of information and engagement left them feeling powerless and that key agencies should engage young people in the early stages of asylum.

“Young people should be encouraged to step up with what they are passionate about to influence others. Opportunities to talk with the media more (and) to give their side of the story (as opposed to a mostly negative story that is often portrayed).”

3.14 ENGAGING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Key solutions

- It is valuable to educate young people about the civic process
- Investment and training is needed to support young people to have a voice

Young people emphasised the critical role of engaging youth in decision making, highlighting that young people should be given a meaningful platform and voice in policy and decision making. This requires that refugee young

people are supported to understand their role in the political and civic process in Australia.

Engaging young people means investment in education and support to develop their knowledge of Australian society and culture, laws, regulations, policies and political landscapes. It also requires support for a level of discourse and debate within the education environment, as well as youth-orientated leadership workshops in school and visits to, for example, parliament house, local government and courts of law.

Participants articulated a number of areas where they felt organisations could improve their engagement with refugee young people, including:

- becoming more approachable for young people to give them the confidence to access services;
- staff becoming more culturally aware and sensitive to issues of trauma and other psychological issues that refugee young people experience;
- supporting self-discovery for young people by providing spaces where youth are encouraged to share their talents creatively and get to know each other;
- greater engagement with refugee youth via staff meetings or informal interviews to develop understanding of their situations;
- providing student placements and volunteering positions for refugee youth; and
- striving to ensure values and morals in service philosophies align with those of refugee young people.

Young people highlighted the need to work in collaboration with governments “to help us and enable young people a voice in both identifying issues and devising solutions”. Participants highlighted the need for support to carry out such functions, especially the value of mentoring, training and development opportunities.

Furthermore, young people highlighted the importance of being involved with the private sector. Young people identified the need for the private sector to have a youth platform from which key industries engaged with young people.

Participants suggested that young people from refugee backgrounds should be using personal stories and experiences to change the conversation surrounding refugees. A role for young people is to step into the local conversation, especially if this is anti-migration, anti-asylum seeker or anti-refugee.

Young people could share their experiences by contacting ministers and politicians, through social media, setting up meetings and forums or participating in existing events. Or more indirectly, by socialising with peers, engaging with youth networks, and participating in community activities. In such forums, young people's role is to share their stories, to let others know of their experience, to build understanding of the refugee experience. Young people have a role as community educators and change makers.

There is also a role for young people as community builders. Participants suggested that young people from refugee backgrounds should be directly involved in engaging their local communities in the process of integration, in building mutual understanding and respect across diverse cultures and ethnicities, languages, experiences, ages and genders. Building on existing events, such as Harmony Day, young people from refugee backgrounds were seen to have a critical role to play in connecting communities across a range of activities, from shared stories to sport.

Media was an important aspect of engagement that participants highlighted as a way to develop positive messaging and images to counter stereotyping, negative impressions and anti-social behaviors within their communities. Through this positive community engagement, and the opportunity to stand up and engage on an equal public platform, refugee young people would also be empowered to represent themselves.

“We need to recruit young people from each ethnic background – advocates for their community – and provide role models or supports to help identify issues, advocate and find the solutions.”



Photograph by MYAN NSW

4. Recommendations

Consultations with young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds provided an opportunity to engage with young people about what they thought needed to be improved for themselves and their communities. A number of general recommendations are made followed by specific recommendations for government and service providers.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase targeted services for refugee young people, including more refugee youth and culturally specific counselling and support services.
 - Increase the number of community workers who have had a refugee or migrant experience in order to bridge the divide between service providers and refugee youth in government agencies and community services.
 - Engage young people in genuine collaboration to assist them to shape and improve programs aimed at refugee youth.
 - Engage young people in working towards the elimination of racism, discrimination and prejudice by including young people and their families and communities in awareness-raising and information sharing about refugee youth experiences.
 - Support young people to undertake community education by sharing their stories in order to contribute to public knowledge on refugee matters.
- Ensure that changes to biographical data are accommodated post-settlement.
 - Develop peer-to-peer educational programs within all detention centres accommodating young people with the support of relevant community organisations.
 - Ensure that funding for social services is contracted in a manner that encourages young people to deliver programs, provide supports and develop skills and capacities in themselves.
 - Fund settlement services to deliver refugee youth-led programs, for example, post arrival orientation programs.
 - Engage in dialogue with young people from refugee backgrounds to learn about their experiences and create opportunities to challenge the existing negative narratives around refugees.
 - Review the Australian Volunteers for International Development Program to promote young people from refugee backgrounds in Australia to volunteer overseas in diaspora communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT

- Work with international organisations to provide better health, education and basic services in refugee camps, countries of transit and countries of asylum.
- Provide increased support for young refugees arriving alone.
- Increase the humanitarian intake to accommodate more refugee youth entering Australia.
- Review harmful immigration policies affecting young people, including temporary protection, restrictions to family reunion, and mandatory detention.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

Mental health services

- Implement a peer support model in refugee camps and other settings to address mental health issues including feelings of isolation and hopelessness.
- Mental health service providers engage across the broader community to break down stigma and shame surrounding mental health.
- Engage bicultural youth workers to build awareness and provide support to newly arrived youth accessing mental health services.
- UNHCR and other legal services to provide access to free advice and information for young people in refugee camps, in countries of transit or countries of asylum regarding their claim for protection.
- Provide information and education on legal rights in the form of legal classes for newly arrived refugees and their families.

Education and training services

- Replace age-based determination for school level entry with a merit or skills-based measure.
- Increase the provision of English language classes in schools.
- Create opportunities for young people from refugee backgrounds to engage in dialogue with teachers, school administrators, and educational forums to present their experiences and challenge existing negative narratives around young refugees.
- Provide facilities for students to engage in multilingual interaction and educational activities and share educational resources with their families.
- Create opportunities for further education for refugee young people by, for example, subsidising school fees and increasing the number of scholarships.
- Remove restrictions to asylum seeker access to further education beyond the age of 18 years.
- Engage interpreters and culturally sensitive teachers' aides to support students and their families during orientation to schools.

Settlement services

- Provide more platforms for young people to mentor newly arrived young refugees from similar backgrounds to provide advice, information and support.
- Support and establish mentoring programs for parents and elders, to assist in understanding how young people are impacted by the challenges of settling into life in Australia.
- Train and mentor young people from refugee backgrounds to become involved in community education and awareness building on refugee youth experiences and concerns.
- Support young people to engage with social media to raise identified issues in a positive and proactive manner.
- Support young people to take up volunteering opportunities in the broader community and their own ethnic community.

APPENDIX 1

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Age, gender and disability*

State	Location	Total Participants	No. over 18	No. under 18	Age Not stated	Male	Female	Other	Gender Not Stated	Identified as Disabled or Physically Impaired
SA	Adelaide	21	21	0	0	12	8	0	1	1
QLD	Brisbane	10	9	1	0	4	6	0	0	0
WA	Perth	11	11	0	0	5	3	0	3	0
	Katanning	18	1	17	0	9	9	0	0	0
ACT	Canberra	12	8	4	0	10	1	0	1	0
VIC	Melbourne	7	7	0	0	6	1	0	0	0
	Ballarat	18	14	3	1	8	8	0	2	0
	Werribee	8	7	0	1	4	4	0	0	0
	AMES	112	-	-	112	-	-	-	112	-
NSW	MYAN NSW	71	26	29	16	29	26	0	16	0
	SSI	216	67	106	43	82	91	0	43	2
NT	Darwin	5	4	1	0	1	4	0	0	0
TAS	Hobart	46	24	22	0	28	18	0	0	0
TOTAL		555	199	183	173	198	179	0	178	3

*Not all participants answered all questions related to demographics.

Education*

State	Location	Total Participants	Completed Primary Education	Completed Secondary Education	Completed Undergraduate Degree	Completed Post-Graduate Degree	Completed other Formal Training
SA	Adelaide	21	21	5	9 (completed or in process of completion)	1	1
QLD	Brisbane	10	10	2	6	1	1
WA	Perth	11	11	11	2	0	0
	Katanning	18	18	1	0	0	0
ACT	Canberra	12	0	8	3	0	1
VIC	Melbourne	7	1 (completed or in process of completion)	5 (completed or in process of completion)	2 (completed or in process of completion)	1 (completed or in process of completion)	0
	Ballarat	18	8 (completed or in process of completion)	16 (completed or in process of completion)	4 (completed or in process of completion)	0	0
	Werribee	8	4 (completed or in process of completion)	7 (completed or in process of completion)	3 (completed or in process of completion)	1 (completed or in process of completion)	0
	AMES	112	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NSW	MYAN NSW	71	8	39 (some participants in final year)	6	2	0
	SSI	216	190	26	0	0	6 (TAFE)
NT	Darwin	5	4	4	0	0	1
TAS	Hobart	46	12	24	2	2	6
TOTAL		555	287	148	37	8	16

Employment*

State	Location	Total Number of Participating Youth	No. Employed
SA	Adelaide	21	11
QLD	Brisbane	10	3
WA	Perth	11	6
	Katanning	18	2
ACT	Canberra	12	4
VIC	Melbourne	7	2
	Ballarat	18	11
	Werribee	8	3
	AMES	112	NA
NSW	MYAN NSW	71	7
	SSI	216	28: 0-2 years (19); 2+ years (9)
NT	Darwin	5	3
TAS	Hobart	46	8
TOTAL		555	88

Family*

State	Location	Total Number of Participating Youth	No. Married	No. with children
SA	Adelaide	21	0	0
QLD	Brisbane	10	0	0
WA	Perth	11	1	1
	Katanning	18	0	0
ACT	Canberra	12	0	0
VIC	Melbourne	7	0	0
	Ballarat	18	0	0
	Werribee	8	0	0
NSW	MYAN NSW	71	1	1
	SSI	216	1	0
NT	Darwin	5	0	0
TAS	Hobart	46	0	0
TOTAL		555	3	2

APPENDIX 2

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

The GRYC in Australia utilised the questions designed by the GRYC team in Geneva and asked globally in the 'parallel' consultations. In Australia, we asked that young people answer the questions both in relation to their experiences in Australia and outside/prior to coming to Australia. The questions were:

1. What are the main challenges that young refugees and asylum seekers face, and how do these challenges impact on the lives of refugee young people/what are the negative impacts?

- 1.1 What solutions or recommendations would you propose to respond to these challenges, and what would their impact be on the community/young people?

2. What are the roles that refugee young people should/ can take in the process of finding solutions and bringing about change?

- 2.1 What are some of the challenges young people face in carrying out these roles, and what can you practically do in your community/ country?

3. In what ways do you think that young people could get more involved/engaged with stakeholders such as governments, UN organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) to help improve the lives of young refugees?

- 3.1 Do you have (practical) examples of this working well? Please provide.

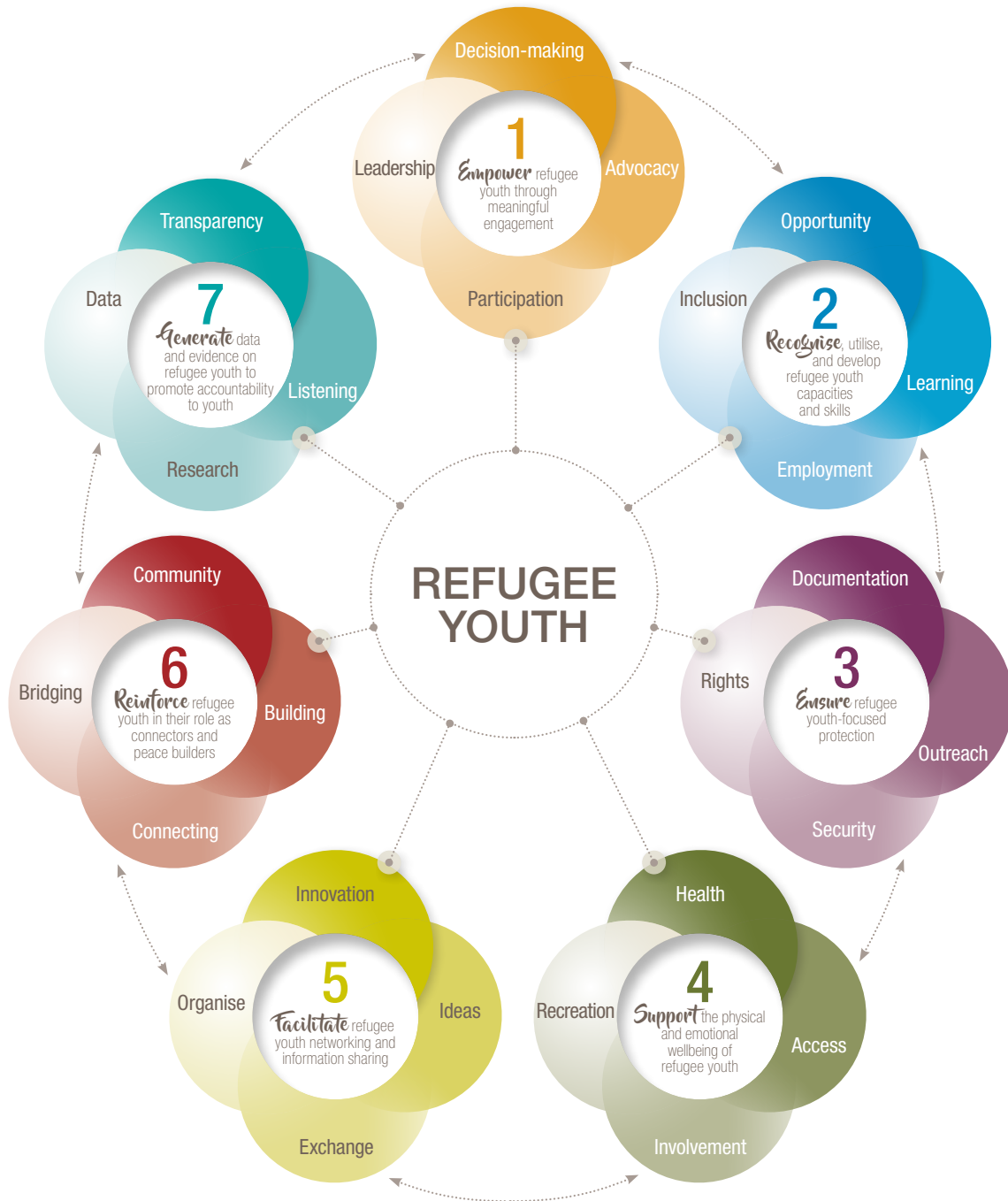
- 3.2 What (support) is needed to ensure the meaningful involvement or participation of young people in these organisations (outside and in Australia)?

- 3.3 Who is responsible for this?

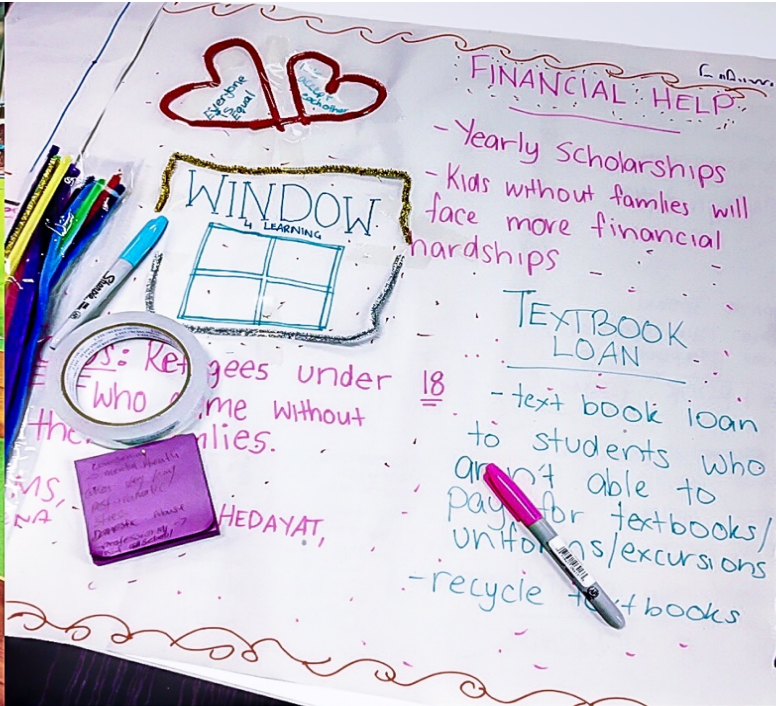
APPENDIX 3

7 CORE ACTIONS

CORE ACTIONS for Refugee Youth



From UNHCR & WRC (2016) *We believe in youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultation Final Report*. Accessed from <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/images/zdocs/2200-WRC-Youth-Report-LR.pdf>, p. 24.



Photograph by MYAN NSW

