

The Global Refugee Youth Consultations NSW Report

Amplifying the voices
of young people from refugee
and asylum seeker backgrounds

30 March – 15 April 2016
Various locations in New South Wales



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Executive summary

SSI, through the Youth Collective, undertook a series of youth consultations in NSW as part of the Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC) – a joint initiative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC) designed to gather feedback about youth experiences while seeking asylum or living as a refugee.

A total of 216 young people were consulted in four sessions across NSW. The consultations highlighted the concerns young people have around safety and security in Australia, their home countries and refugee camps. Education is a priority for youth, as it is seen as an important way for them to build a positive future and as a gateway to employment. Young refugees want to have a voice and represent themselves, to advocate on the issues impacting their lives and contribute to solutions.

The full findings from SSI’s consultations are detailed below and in the attached appendices.

About SSI

Settlement Services International (SSI) is a community-based, not-for-profit humanitarian organisation providing a range of services in the areas of humanitarian settlement, accommodation, asylum seeker assistance, multicultural foster care, disability support, employment services and youth support in NSW.

SSI is committed to ensuring that people in vulnerable communities in NSW are supported and resourced to fulfil their potential as members of the Australian community.

The organisation’s vision is to achieve a society that values the diversity of its people and actively provides support to ensure meaningful social and economic participation and to assist individuals and families to reach their potential. Formed in 2000, SSI is also the state-wide umbrella organisation for 11 Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) and Multicultural Services across NSW.

SSI’s combined services cover parts of the Sydney metropolitan area as well as the Hunter-Central Coast, Illawarra and Western NSW.

About Youth Collective

Youth Collective began in March 2014, when SSI’s member organisations – the MRCs – met to establish an independent collective to give a voice to multicultural youth in NSW.

The establishment of Youth Collective responds to an unmet need for a service-delivery organisation focused on the unique needs of multicultural youth and young people of refugee backgrounds.

Youth Collective formed as a network of multicultural organisations and young people focused on service-delivery outcomes that reflect the needs and aspirations of multicultural youth in NSW, with a particular emphasis on migrant and refugee young people.

Hence, Youth Collective’s mission is to improve service-delivery outcomes for multicultural young people in NSW through innovative and collaborative initiatives that build confidence, resilience and leadership in young people.

The Collective is an initiative of SSI and its member organisations that want to provide an avenue for improved migrant and refugee youth participation in directing service outcomes.

It engages young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds at a local level to inform service planning, implementation and outcomes.

The Collective also coordinates cross-regional efforts of youth workers within the multicultural youth space, with a focus on the settlement sector.

As a multicultural youth-focused initiative, the Youth Collective values:

- Youth participation and empowerment
- Social justice and equity for all youth
- Youth safety, wellbeing and belonging
- Awareness of the settlement journey of migrant and refugee youth
- Respect for all young people and their cultural identity and background

Overview of GRYC project

The GRYC is a project resulting from a culmination of work done by the Youth and Adolescents in Emergency (YAE) advocacy group led by WRC, UNHCR and other organisations with an interest in refugee and asylum seeker youth advocacy. SSI is a member of the YAE group, which it currently co-chairs with WRC. SSI is also a member of the Steering Committee that is currently guiding the delivery of the GRYC globally.

The GRYC is coordinated nationally by the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) and the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) Australia. In the NSW context, SSI and the Youth Collective facilitated the consultations, while MYAN NSW ran parallel consultations.

The goal of the GRYC project is:

To give resettled refugee and asylum seeker youth a voice in decisions that affect refugee youth, through participation in a series of dedicated youth consultations that will help guide the development of youth-specific policy recommendations and programs addressing issues affecting refugee and asylum seeker youth in Australia and globally.

SSI and Youth Collective members undertook four events for the GRYC in NSW. The first event on 30th March 2016 was organised in partnership with, and led by, Auburn Diversity Services Inc. (ADSI) and Youth Collective members. There were 114 young people in attendance at the event, which was held at Auburn Youth Centre in Lidcombe. The second event was conducted at Newcastle on 8th April 2016 and was organised in partnership with MYAN NSW and Hunter Multicultural Youth Network (HMYN) members, including Northern Settlement Services (NSS), Samaritans, Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre, Hunter TAFE and NSW Police Newcastle City Local Area Command (LAC). The third consultation was conducted from the 11th to 13th of April 2016 at a youth camp in Narrabeen, which Community Migrant Resource Centre (CMRC) organised in partnership with Football United's Creating Chances initiative. The last consultation event was a Young Leaders' Forum on 15th April 2016 organised by SSI's Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program's Youth Committee with the support of Core Community Services (formerly Fairfield MRC).

Objectives of the GRYC

The GRYC aimed to achieve three objectives, some of which were adopted from the GRYC guidelines that UNHCR and WRC developed. These objectives were:

- I. To offer an opportunity for young people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds to engage in participatory activities with relevant stakeholders at local, regional, national and global levels, and improve access to these networks for them
- II. To foster and support participation, leadership and empowerment opportunities for young people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds in developing projects and initiatives for effective policy and research-based advocacy
- III. To consolidate and channel the learning from the consultations into the development of guidelines and policy recommendations on youth-inclusive programming to improve the humanitarian and settlement sector's understanding of, and work with, refugee and asylum seeker youth



Consultation findings

At each event, the discussions commenced with a question to young people about what it means to be part of a community or what their sense of the word 'community' is. This aimed to get participants thinking about the concept of belonging and refine their thoughts around identity. They were encouraged to write in their own language. This was a self-reflective activity, rather than one that ought to be analysed. With support from a talented mural art facilitator, the young people produced this image. Most young people directly wrote down the word 'community' but some wrote the meaning of a word that translates as 'community'.

Following this reflective exercise, the next step was to look at the issues, needs and challenges young people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds face.

The young people identified numerous issues, needs and challenges, the full detail of which can be found in Appendix Three. The findings summary below captures the key points and common themes from the consultations.



Summary of issues identified:

Participants grouped the issues affecting young refugees into three phases:

- Issues that affected them before they arrived in Australia
- Issues that affected them after they arrived in Australia
- Issues that remained of concern to participants as they were impacting their families and friends back home or in refugee camps

The participants ranked the top three issues of concern as:

1. Safety and security
2. Education
3. Employment

Participants identified their education, belonging, culture and safety as issues that were affected during the refugee journey, in camps and once they arrived in Australia. They also identified shortages and financial constraints as key concerns, with significant practical implications, including shortages of food and educational resources, and issues accessing safe, stable accommodation.

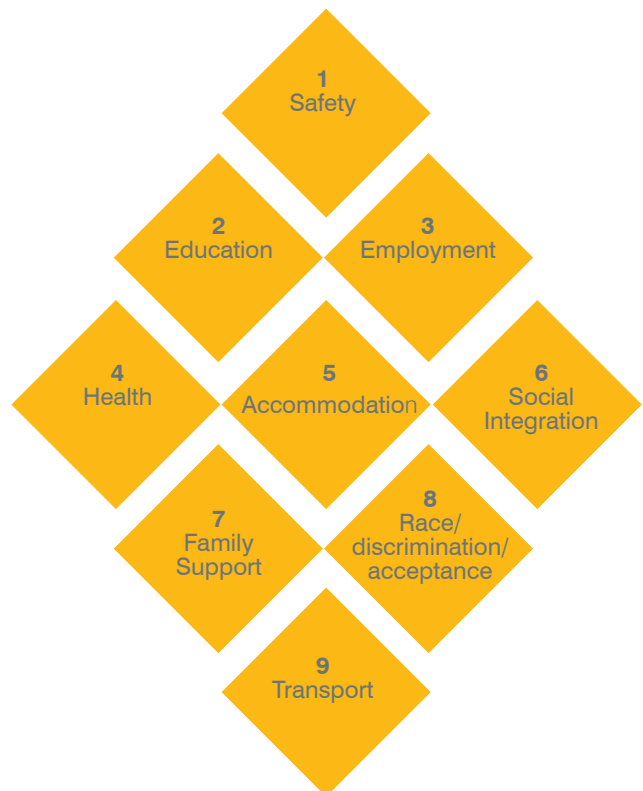
Language and cultural barriers are also identified as factors that impact and complicate life for young refugees.

Summary of effects identified:

The effects of the issues participants identified included **having difficulty in feeling a sense of belonging, with all the associated effects relating to connectedness, dislocation and guilt, including increased issues with mental health.**

Diamond Ranking outcome

Young people were asked to rank the issue they would most like addressed. The below table is an aggregate of the data collected from the consultation events.



Summary of solutions identified:

The participants identified solutions in 10 areas:

- **General solutions**
- Accessing education
- Understanding legal rights
- Addressing racism, discrimination and stereotyping
- Improving mental and physical health services
- Addressing language barriers
- Enhancing safety for unaccompanied minors seeking asylum
- Listening to youth voices
- Improving the pre- and post-arrival situations for refugee youth
- Changing community sentiment towards refugees

The solutions focused on the three issues of concern that participants had identified – finding strategies to enhance safety, improve education, and foster inclusion and integration. Discrimination was such a concern that the young people recommended the creation of a new ministerial portfolio and a Minister of Discrimination.

The breadth and detail of the solutions and ideas proposed highlight the creative approach young people can bring to the problems they face in navigating their refugee flight and settlement experiences. Improving opportunities for refugee youth voices to be heard, and for youth to represent themselves, will help their innovative ideas to get embedded into policy and programs.

Summary of the role of youth:

In discussing the role of youth, participants indicated a clear desire to be more involved in the work around them, sharing their ideas and contributing as an active expression of their community engagement, rather than as something that has been mandated.

Summary of actions towards identified solutions:

Participants identified a number of actions that are needed to achieve the solutions identified, including a range of youth-led and youth-focused programs and representation opportunities oriented towards strengthening youth voice, youth involvement and youth education.

Summary of stakeholder partnerships identified:

Participants identified a range of key partners and stakeholders from civic, education and government sectors to work with on these youth-focused programs.

Recommendations to the international community and other young people:

Participants made a range of recommendations to the international community and their fellow young refugees that focused on enhancing young refugees' access to opportunities through education, employment and civic participation.

When asked, 'what could young people themselves have done to improve their situation', participants identified participating in English language classes, volunteering, leadership and advocacy as areas in which they could be involved.



Questions guiding the consultations

The following questions, adopted from Australia's GRYC guidelines developed by MYAN/RCOA, helped to guide the discussions, although not all of the questions were covered:

1

What are the main issues, needs and 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?

2

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

3

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

4

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

5

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?

The participants

The target group for this event was young people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds aged 14–25 years living in NSW. Another essential criterion for participants was that had all recently arrived in Australia or still had contact with family members and/or friends back home or in refugee camps.

The four GRYC events were attended by 216 young people. For a full breakdown of participant details and demographics, please see Appendix Two.

The youth facilitators

The activity was facilitated by young leaders from both the Youth Collective Leadership Program and, in the case of the Hunter consultation, with the support of the MYAN Multicultural Youth Ambassadors program. The NSW consultations were designed to be youth-led and involved a lot of coordination with young people trained in youth facilitation and leadership. Youth Collective had 10 facilitators. We had two facilitators per group, with 4–5 groups with minimum of five and maximum of 15 young people. The other important aspect of the youth facilitators was that they spoke the language of youth participants so, where there was a need for language support, this was provided indefinitely.

GRYC partners

The SSI and Youth Collective GRYC events were organised in partnership with NSW Settlement Partnership (NSP) members, who are part of the NSP Youth Workers' Network (formerly MRC Youth Workers' Network). They then facilitated the involvement of other partners in the process.

The Sydney metropolitan consultations were organised in partnership with ADSi, CMRC, Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre, Core Community Services (formerly Fairfield MRC) and Metro Assist. They then coordinated the involvement of organisations such as Football United and Creating Chances, along with schools in the Sydney area and other interested organisations.

The Hunter region GRYC event was organised in partnership with MYAN NSW and HMYN, which comprises NSS, Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre Inc., Samaritans (Community Development Youth Project), Hunter TAFE, and the NSW Police Force's Newcastle City LAC. They then facilitated the involvement of the services and schools in the Hunter region.

The format for the consultations was adopted from the GRYC toolkit with specific changes adapted to the Australian context, as stipulated in the MYAN/RCOA GRYC toolkit, and to fit a half-day design methodology. See Appendix One for the full agenda.



Acknowledgements

SSI and Youth Collective would like to acknowledge the contribution of the following organisations and individuals in the process leading up to and on the day of the GRYC events.

First of all, we would like to acknowledge Eva Sanz Orio from ADSi for leading the way in the first consultations

Also, we would like to thank Tonkoh Kamara – NSS Multicultural Youth Worker – for his coordination of the Hunter region event.

Great appreciation goes to Dale Garbutt – Multicultural Youth & Family Project Worker, Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre Inc. – for coordinating and recruiting participants for the event with Waratah College and ensuring it ran successfully on the day. Dale's immense organisational and coordination work was highly regarded.

We also would like to thank Astrid Gearin – Community & Youth Development Officer, Samaritans – for her creativity and support for the whole team. Astrid's icebreakers were well-thought out and spot on.

Special thanks also go to Zachary Ekandi – Hunter TAFE Institute Multicultural Education Coordinator – and Patricia Owen – Multicultural Community Liaison Officer, NSW Police Force Newcastle City LAC.

It is with great appreciation we thank Alex Long – Executive Officer, MYAN NSW – for her great collaboration and passion for young people.

Helen Larkin – Case Manager, HSS, Navitas – for providing language support assistance for those young people who did not have commendable English. If it wasn't for her support, it would have been hard to get the message across and for the young people to participate fully due to language barrier.

We acknowledge the work done by CMRC's Acuoth John Acol, Inisya Oomati, Arif Nabizadah and Mayor Chagai for organising the Youth Camp in consideration of the GRYC methodology. In the same vein, a lot of thanks goes to Darren Chan from Liverpool MRC for his support of the Youth Camp and assistance with the youth facilitators' training.

A special mention to Assmaah Helal from Football United and Creating Chances for facilitating the workshop at the Youth Camp and ensuring that the young people came up with innovative ideas for solutions and EPIC messages to address particular issues the youth participants raised.

Also, appreciation goes to SSI's HSS Youth Committee for organising the Young Leaders' Forum where the final consultation took place. Thank you to Nabaz Al-Qadhi, Najeeba Wazefadost, Kidron Koroma, Abdoulaye Sangare and Alham Mujadeddi, who coordinates the HSS Youth Committee.

Lastly, thank you to David Manczak from CORE Community Services for his role in supporting the Young Leaders' Forum and running the side activities and workshops.



The Global Refugee Youth Consultation Report

Appendices

Appendix One: Agenda for the consultations

Below is the format for the consultation, as adopted from UNHCR GRYC toolkit with specific changes adapted to the Australian context, as stipulated in the MYAN/RCOA GRYC toolkit, and to fit a half-day design methodology.

Duration	Section	Activity	Format	Who
30 mins	Arrival	Registrations Meet and greet Networking	Whole group	Youth Projects Coordinator
20 mins	Opening and introduction	Welcome and introductions to everyone in the room – facilitators and young people	All introduced	Youth Projects Coordinator
		Overview of the Youth Collective Overview of GRYC UNHCR video	Oral presentation Video	
		Overview of the purpose of this event and its contribution to the GRYC	Oral presentation	
		Explain what a consultation is, highlighting that there are no right or wrong answers during the discussions, that participants' thoughts are their own and no-one can take them away from them or question them, and that each contribution is valuable	Oral presentation	
		Share consultation agenda with participants	Oral presentation	
10 mins	Icebreaker game	Getting to know each other and creating a positive atmosphere in the room	Whole group – interactive	Youth facilitators
60 mins	Group discussions	Challenges/issues refugee youth face, and the effects of them Diamond Ranking/Storyboards activity	Small groups	Youth facilitators
15 mins	Morning tea			
15 mins	Exercise game	Time for fun activity	Whole group – interactive	Youth facilitators
55 mins	Group discussions	Solutions and recommendations In countries of first asylum/in resettlement countries Storyboards activity (should time permit)	Small groups	Group facilitators
45 mins	Break/lunch			
10 mins		Break/interactive exercise		Youth facilitators
60 mins	Group discussions	What role can youth play in contributing to the work of NGOs, UNHCR, IGOs, etc (Can be combined with skills development activity) 'What role?' exercise looking at what role stakeholders should play in addressing refugee youth issues Circles of influence (should time permit)	Small group discussions	Group facilitators
20 mins	Feedback of key discussion points from each group	Consolidation of ideas, and opportunity to add additional ideas Summary of the discussion outcomes and how they will be used	Whole group	Youth Projects Coordinator
10 mins	Closing and next steps	Wrap up and thanks Details for how youth can stay involved with the GRYC process – e.g. DIGILOGUE group, GRYC Facebook group Questions/comments Closing	Whole group	Youth Projects Coordinator

Appendix Two: Demographic details of consultation participants

Below is information on the demographic composition of the young people who attended the SSI/Youth Collective GRYC events.

1.1.	Total number of participating youth	216 (S = 114, H=22, C=43, F=37)
1.2.	Number of participants over 18 years	67 (S=39, H=8, C = 16, F=20)
1.3.	Number of participants under 18 years	106 (S=75, H=14, C=21, F= 17)
1.4.	Gender – number of males	82 (S = 56, H=8, C=22, F=18)
1.5.	Gender – number of females	91 (S=58, H=14, C=15, F=19)
1.6.	Gender – number identifying as ‘other’	0
1.7.	Country of Birth of participants (list)	Iraq (32), Afghanistan (39), Algeria (1), Australia (65), Burma (2), China (1), Colombia (1), Democratic Republic of the Congo (6), Ethiopia (1), Guinea (1), India (4), Iran (6), Kuwait (1), Liberia (1), Lebanon (1), Malawi (1), Nigeria (1), Pacific Islands (17), Rwanda (1), Senegal (2), South Sudan (6), Sudan (1), Somalia (1), Syria (17), Sri Lanka (6), Not stated (1)
1.8.	Length of time in host country (weeks/months/years)	Average of 0–5years = 49% 5–10 years = 20% Born in Australia = 31%
1.9.	Disability – number identifying as living with disability	2
1.10.	Number who have completed primary education	190
1.11.	Number of participants who have completed secondary education	26
1.12.	Number of participants who have completed undergraduate degree	0
1.13.	Number of participants who have completed postgraduate degree	0
1.14.	Number of participants who have completed other kind of formal training	6 completed TAFE
1.15.	Number of participants who are employed	Employed for 0–2 years = 19 Employed for 2+ years = 9
1.16.	Number of participants who are married	1
1.17.	Number of participants who have children	0

Appendix 3: Raw findings from consultations

TOPIC/SECTION

Write notes here, which may include summaries of key discussion points and conclusions reached, and direct quotes. When possible, please also attach photos of flipcharts and and/or photos of the participants engaging in the activities.

Issues

Please include ALL issues for refugee youth identified by the participants.

When young people were asked about the needs/issues and challenges faced by young people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds, they responded with the following:

Before arriving to Australia the needs and challenges are:

- Lack of educational opportunities and access to education was the biggest issue noted by young people
- Gender divide, “no access to education for female as well as some other barriers are placed on girls”
- Unemployment and lack of income/limited employment opportunities lead to financial issues
- Limitation in food - Young people found that there was always food shortage given that it was rationed, there was no variety as not many products being produced or donated hence hunger and malnutrition were frequent
- Difficulty integrating into new society/camp due to lack of social support
- It was not safe, issues with police, political persecution, fear, war and they felt there was no hope.
- Young people mentioned on numerous occasions the issues of language barrier relevant to local context which links back to education issues
- The young people found that discrimination and/or labelling, Bullying and racism are major issues faced in new host countries or camps
- Young people also identified that it was difficult trying to fit into new culture, environment and get to know new people – one young person described it as being “Like a bird in a cage”
- Some young people identified situations where they faced forced religion and culture upon them
- Young people experienced interrupted living, moving between countries hence also ended up with interrupted education and instability generally
- Some young people found that the journey of having to come to Australia leaving family members split and behind was a biggest challenge they have to go through
- Legal Status – no rights, visas issues, uncertainty of what is going to happen

- Racism and discrimination which is brought about as a result of non-recognition of refugee youth was common
- Overgeneralisation and stereotyping coupled with lack of support from both government and host communities is another issue that affects young people in a numerous of ways
- Young people also expressed views about the lack of awareness and knowledge of new systems in the host communities
- A big issue that contributed to boredom in the camps was around limited leisure activities
- Difficult navigating the new country and expensive Transport cost
- Access to information
- Friends, family, teachers, cousin, community, culture, mentors/coaches, idols, senior students, elders, sport teams
- Belonging
- Rights (human rights)
- Social Integration
- Shelter/Accommodation (Somewhere to stay)
- Safety
- Mental and Physical Health - Counselling/support for trauma
- Freedom
- Sanitation
- Visa conditions and immigration status was a challenging issue for young people. “it makes you hopeless” recounted an asylum seeking youth
- Seeking protection in a new country – support from other individual

Issues continued

After arriving in Australia, the challenges are:

- Many young people identified that the key issue of concern to them is access to education & supported learning, compounded by language barriers as one of them noted that “50% of IEC students don’t feel ready to go to high school due to lack of confidence”
- More specifically accessing tertiary education was highlighted as a key matter to address
- But even with this, some felt that the fact that they have “to go to school every day no matter their circumstances” so they would appreciate understanding of their learning needs as well as health, social and other needs
- Shortage of resources e.g to buy books and learning materials was another issue identified by young people
- Making new connections/meeting new people
- Hurdles of mental journey
- Having your overseas qualification recognised
- Negative community perceptions
- Difference in age between refugee students and Australian kids in same class
- Parents: child safety and protection rules
- Hard to fit in to new society
- They identified that they face issues with understanding new laws and Australian cultural customs leading to culture shock, as one of young people explained; “different people, different culture – hard to understand new society”
- Finding employment/job

Back home/in camps the needs are:

- Safety, including housing/shelter/accommodation
- Basic needs (food, water, health care)
- Jobs to stabilise family
- Access to Training and Education
- Community support
- Material assistance provided
- Equality – make rules and regulations fair to refugees
- Engaging activities

Needs of young refugees in Australia are:

- Language support
- Education and employment
- More resources to support young people
- Mentors from same background to help them navigate Australian systems
- Counsellor to help adjust mentally to new country
- Transport – car/recognition of overseas licenses
- Various workshops – English Learning, local experience programs, assistance with bills
- Connect individuals to family back home
- Affordable and accessible housing
- Access to healthcare support
- Access to Legal information
- Financial support
- Human rights abuse faced by asylum seeker youth
- A place where they belong
- Extra co-curricular activities while studying



Overall, the young people ranked the issues from most important to least important to them.

The top three issues identified by young people were:

- Safety and security
- Education
- Employment

Among other notable issues were accommodation, language barriers, discrimination, integration into local community, health care, impacts of detention, and family support.

Impacts

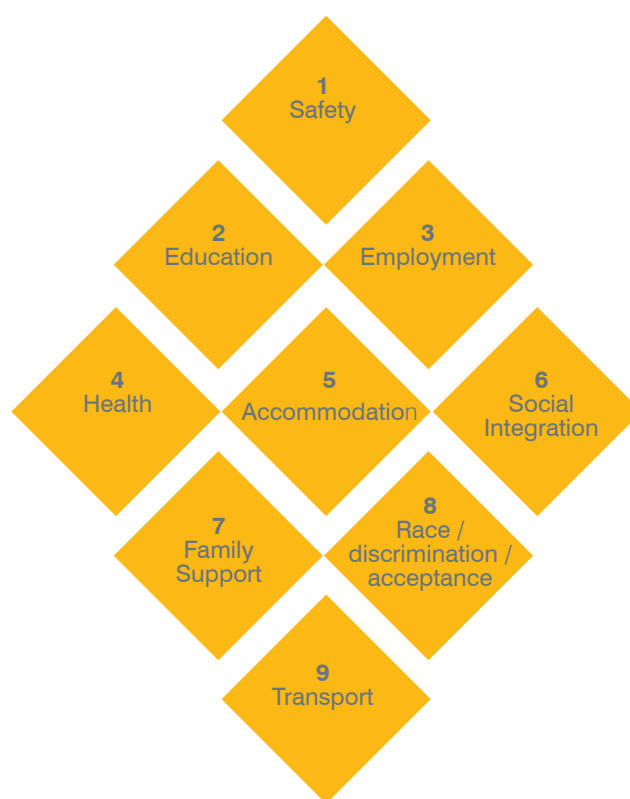
Please include ALL impacts on refugee youth identified by the participants – highlighting which issues they connect to. When asked about the impacts of the needs and challenges on refugee young people, their responses were:

Back home/in camps

- Young people felt they are not safe and that safety must be a guarantee for human survival. They felt that this is the most important issue of concern
- Young people also felt that lack of education creates all problems there are in the world and that young people should not be deprived from. It leads to lack of knowledge
- Language barrier came up as prime issue next to education as it creates this communication vacuum where young people are unable to communicate their needs and issues, feelings, wishes and all there is to share.
- Young people felt out of place because of depression and trauma (Psychological effects such as Suicidal thoughts or young people become easily angry)
- This is compounded by the loss of property due to destruction and displacement
- Loss of identity, culture and belonging inversely resulting in low self-esteem, fear and isolation
- Can't get an employment leading to poverty, depression, disengagement and falling into crimes
- Substance abuse (drug and alcohol) and risk behaviour
- Demotivation and feeling of inferiority
- Lack of opportunities generally in life, educationally, employment and other opportunities of personal development
- Withdrawal from support services
- Increased health problems / poor health due to lack of access to support services
- Young people are locked into this cycle of unresponsive services due to the fact that they are not tailored to young people
- Being treated as a burden by the community and world at large
- Dislocation – sense of discomfort, Isolation and loneliness
- Challenged physically, mentally, and psychologically
- Feeling guilt in a sense that they feel like not contributing to society

Diamond Ranking outcome

Young people were asked to rank the issue they most would like addressed in order of priority and this is what they came up with as an aggregate of the different data collected from these consultation events.



Solutions

Please include ALL solutions identified by the participants – highlighting which issues they connect to.

Generally

- UNHCR should have minimal conditions for those waiting or on resettlement process, those waiting for only visas
- “War is everywhere, but doors are not open for certain nationalities”
- Provide financial services to provide financial security
- UN should try to provide safety immediately once people are in imminent danger
- Provide opportunities for young people to access education, better job prospects and progression
- Enabled access to education and health care through subsidised programs or existing national institutions
- Young people must be afforded first available opportunity to leave a war or else they risk becoming involved in the war as well
- There are young people who face physical violence with nowhere to seek help, could there be support in those countries with this children
- “Kids needs Education – just provide education and everything is solved”
- Need to establish a hotline to guide or provide mentoring to young people
- Settlement support services should be available regardless of length of time spend in Australia (should not be time determined)
- Continued orientation program rather than the one day class orientation which is not enough
- Programs to foster acceptance in the society e.g establish Connect Groups to link young people with community
- Provide a rest period of 6 days after arrival before being asked to immediately go to Centrelink, bank, AMEP, Medicare
- Create a “diverse Community Centre” to run diverse events
- Run workshop to provide information in languages other than English

- Establish employment training and mentoring program
- People send by organisations to help refugees should be from the same backgrounds (e.g. SSI does this)
- More hospitals and medical centres and increased visiting periods
- Youth Centres to run social media campaigns for young people
- “Government should treat everyone equal regardless of their visa, culture, religion” access to education should be free to all young people (from primary to tertiary)
- Mentoring and more jobs by Creating “Community Connection” programs through Youth Night Out, movies nights, fun workshops, feedback and discussion tables to raise awareness for refugee youth issues
- Have lawyers who speak the same language to provide explanations about people’s rights and obligations
- Have different activities (music, food, dancing, sport) then run an English program
- Provide counselling support for young people
- Create a “diverse Community Centre” to run diverse events
- Youth Centres to run social media campaigns for young people
- Young people need to accept change to change themselves
- Young people should create their own organisations to deliver programs and services they way they see fit.
- Create “Community Connection” programs through families nights, movies nights, fun workshops, feedback and discussion tables,
- Provide a facility (Hall) for multilingual interaction

Solutions continued

Solutions/recommendation for education

- Educational programs should be designed to be inclusive of CALD students
- Allow more time to learn and more computer classes
- Have extra separate classes for each subject (Math, English, etc)??
- Utilising varied teachers, teachers without strong accents
- More interpreters at schools and services
- Have different activities (music, food, dancing, sport) then run an English program
- Provide counselling support for young people
- Provide a facility (Hall) for multilingual interaction
- Provide flashcards for young people or community members to take home which have info on them
- Provide that classes that only teaches English (not the IEC style)
- Establish committees that support non-English speakers by providing free English courses
- Volunteers can offer their time to teach and help refugees with their English through a project called "Grammar Lining Program"
- "Grammar Lining Program" could involve other elements such as tutorials on how to write a resume, could include excursions, Tips on getting employed.
- After school programs where newly arrived can interact and improve their English as well as their confidence. This should be coupled with an activity (1 hr in class, 1 hr on an activity)
- Provide interpreters/Teacher's aide/culturally appropriate worker to support the young person to feel comfortable, welcomed and introduces the young person to the school.
- There need to be more resources available to young people. Facilities like computers, laptops, textbooks,
- Reduce school or uniform fees
- Provide scholarships or change the nature of application
- Change the system altogether by allowing young people access to tertiary education regardless of their immigration status
- Eliminate the labelling of English levels (we need to replace it with just English and have a choice of extension or advanced)
- Run motivational programs – motivational speakers
- Educational programs should be supportive of an individual choice
- Providing for elder education programs at TAFE, Colleges

Solutions/recommendation for understanding legal rights

- Legal classes for newly arrived refugees in Australia
- Legal information for teenagers/youth who newly arrived to be provided through home visitation and talking to parent in regards to legal rights

Solutions/recommendations for racism, discrimination and stereotyping

- Adequate enforcement of law e.g. the anti-discrimination legislation
- Create a Minister of Discrimination to provide consultation and send info to the decision makers directly.
- Create discrimination awareness programs, courses, and enforce into school systems
- Introduce cultural education into school system; cultural awareness activities, multicultural dress day, food, music, cultural practices, stories
- To solve stereo-type, education is the key and this needs to be placed into the young person's educational system.
- Create programs through media outlets (movie, play/theatre, Video projects) to provide awareness about experiences of refugee and asylum seekers
- Create punitive programs at schools as consequences for engaging in discriminatory behaviour
- Have a platform where young people could use articles, songs, art activities to provide awareness on experiences of those affected by this issue



Solutions continued

Solutions/recommendations for mental/physical health

- Establish a refugee medicare program in places like Lebanon and Jordan
- Have a medical assessment program for refugee young people in urban centres, refugee camps and in other places of refuge
- Provision of range of services available to support young people with their mental and physical health through online and distance digital services
- Services and wider communities should recognise the impacts of mental health on refugee young people
- Availability of health support services to all members of the family; not just parents

Solutions/recommendations to language barrier

- Volunteers can offer their time to teach and help refugees with their English through a project called "Grammar Lining Program"
- Grammar Lining could involve other elements such as tutorials on how to write a resume, could include excursions, Tips on getting employed.
- Provision of interpreters and translators at schools
- Specialist teacher at school that assist with language
- Beginner books or workshops for language support
- More programs to educate ourselves to accept one another regardless of language issues
- Provide flashcards for young people or community members to take home which have info on them
- Provide classes that only teaches English (not the IEC style)
- Establish committees that support non-English speakers by providing free English courses
- After school programs where newly arrived can interact and improve their English as well as their confidence. This should be coupled with an activity (1 hr in class, 1 hr on physical activity)
- Provide interpreters /Teacher's aide /culturally appropriate worker to support the young person to feel comfortable, welcomed and introduces the young person to the school.

Solutions/recommendations on Asylum Seeker Safety: Unaccompanied Minors

i.e. Refugees under the age of 18 unaccompanied by guardian

- Provide education to communities receiving refugees on the plight of refugee youths
- Establish community support programs to engage the community with young refugees
- Organise visits to detention centres for native speakers who can speak to young people in detentions
- Organise online and Social Media Advocacy group to raise awareness of refugee issues
- Organise contact and links to organisations that may have broader service area and access to the issue
- Create care packages for asylum seeker minors

Solutions/recommendations to address youth voices not being heard

- Establish more Youth Voice Committees but more so eliminate token representation
- Open up opportunities for young people to volunteer with organisations to show them way
- Young asylum seekers need to have their voices factored into policy making processes by allowing access to detention centres or treating them as human being and that they need to be talked to always
- Peer to peer support groups need to be established to support refugee youth and asylum seeker youth
- Organisations need to support young people's initiatives by funding them to run their own

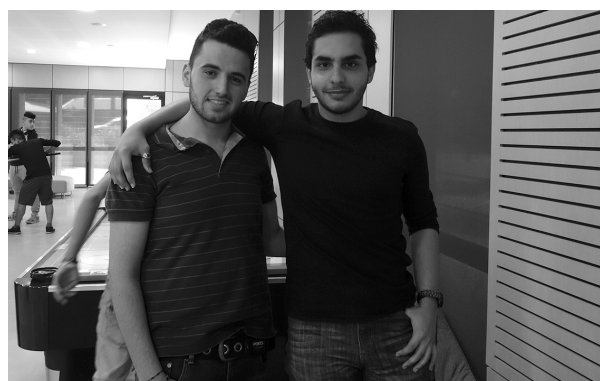
Solutions continued

Solutions/recommendations to address pre- and post-arrival situation

- Pre-arrival preparation should be done for young people on resettlement process by running a youth info session in the last 2 weeks of departure date
- Young people should be involved in the emergency handouts programs during humanitarian emergencies
- “Show Young People the way” activity should be run prior to arrival and shortly after to provide a youth-led, youth-focused and youth-themed orientation program
- Through technology connect young people from refugee situations with young people from resettled communities (English, counselling, mentoring)
- Allocate Mentors and Youth Guides after arrival – Government should create a funding for this matter
- Allow for more time to rest for people arriving from overseas as they would have had a painful long journey on the plane and are exhausted instead of taking them to Centrelink, Medicare, Bank and other intense services within 3 days of arrival

Solutions/recommendations to “Changing community sentiment around refugees”

- Establish more cultural awareness in schools by having refugee youth speaking at school assemblies
- Have an SRC Get together event for all school leaders to spread awareness of refugee youth Issues
- Organise workshops to provide information and engage the wider community
- Run Refugee Youth Support groups
- Establish Motivational speaker program at schools
- Have multicultural school days where all schools celebrate diversity



The role of youth

Please include ALL ideas that the participants have about what roles youth should take in the process of bringing about positive changes for refugee youth.

- Volunteer work with NGOs to ensure their voices are heard and youth focused solutions are valued
- Sharing ideas, views, speaking up and involved in activities when there is an opportunity offered
- Signing petitions and involving on more advocacy
- Taking part in small initiatives such as donations events – 40hr famine to give back to the society
- Young people said they have skills and feel that they can make a difference in NGOs, government and CBOs works
- Young people suggested they should provide a letter of appreciations to NGOs to motivate them to involve young people and work in the best interest of youth
- Young people's expression of culture through skills will bring cultural cohesiveness and enhance multiculturalism
- Run more consultations not only for youth week/ refugee week
- Plan campaigns and then promoted through to organisations
- Advertise events, programs through social and mainstream media (creating a page for an issue)
- Young people should take part in legislative reforms and so must demand the governments to consider them in this important process
- All a young person should do is to focus on school and studies & training
- "Young person shouldn't have to think about 'mature' issues (e.g. money, housing, food)
- Get jobs for financial security
- Young people should support surveys, activities, programs offering more opportunities

Actions for solutions

Please include any specific ideas of actions that individuals or the group as a whole want to take forward after the consultation.

- Young people to liaise with stakeholders involved in this process to organise youth-led conferences to address certain issues eg an Art themed conference was suggested
- Stakeholders to support Youth Groups to organise surveys and questionnaires to feedback about pressing issues such as new arrivals
- Services should start programming real life documentaries at schools to advocate on behalf of young people from refugee backgrounds about a particular issue – young people to take this back to their schools
- All stakeholders who took part in the program to establish committees that support non-English speakers by providing free English courses
- Young people to explore the Grammar Lining Program with SSI, Youth Collective, Football United, Creating Chances, CMRC and any other service willing to help in addressing language barrier.
- Young people to create Social Media campaign points and EPIC messages for issues relevant to their local area
- Services should commence running movie nights
- Student Representative Councils need to commence interaction and organise an all-SRCs event to raise awareness of refugee youth issues
- Organise a Social Media Advocacy group to raise awareness of refugee issues, particularly asylum seeker conditions
- The young people in one group quoted the below phrase that sums up the whole issue they were talking about asylum seekers treatment in Australia:
"We think too much and feel too little" Charlie Chaplain
- Create educational opportunities for young refugees by operating school for refugees after hours of national school times
- Renting an institution to provide tertiary and vocational classes for refugees
- Introduce more informal education programs run by volunteers with teaching backgrounds
- Take skilled people to refugee residents to provide training to those identified as having a resettlement process – to give them a head start

Working in partnership with stakeholders

Please include ALL ideas that the participants have about the best ways that refugee youth can effectively work with stakeholders to bring about positive changes for refugee youth.

- Stakeholders should provide financial support for youth programs e.g “Private business / corporate sector can provide scholarships for young people” or “donate money to initiative like Grammar Lining Program”
- Local governments (council) need to support local youth initiatives
- Schools, TAFE, UNI Colleges need to create educational opportunities for asylum seekers youth
- Family and friends should provide social support
- Provide facilities like Halls, Movies Screening facilities
- Provide financial resources for translation of flashcards for young people to take home
- Local community organisations such as Syrian Community Association (NGOs) can provide cultural support and cultural appropriate workers
- Charity Organisations could help with providing resources to support refugee young people
- Support young people in the promotional process
- Involve young people to be part of decision making
- Provide training for parents through community channels (community meetings) so youth can take less responsibilities
- Provide more resources for parents to become more aware of the support systems
- They should set policies, values, principles and morals to guide services to be more youth focused
- Provide guidance, role modelling and mentoring
- Educate the wider community through media
- Governments should ensure consistency in policies (e.g. Tafe fees, some charge, others don't)
- Government must allocate more \$\$ in the budget to provide increased and continue financial assistance to families
- Government must have a long term plan rather than Band-Aid solutions
- Government should provide support to young people in difficult situations and establish programs so they can earn money while still at school



Recommendations to the international community and other young refugees

For resettled youth:

Please include ALL ideas that the participants have for recommendations to

- a) governments, NGOs, INGOs and UN organisations, and
- b) other young refugees who are still in first countries of asylum, in relation to the following question –

How could your experience have been improved?

- More funding for resources provided to UNHCR, Red Cross, AID agencies, Foreign Aid to address specific needs of young people in refugee situations
- Raise awareness through Ads, just like that one that was done by Western Sydney University
- Provide resettlement opportunity for refugees in situations of unlikely future developing
- Empower those young people that can't seek resettlement with means for local skills such as agricultural skills, technical skills, talent development, etc
- Build more taps for clean water in refugee camps, displaced persons camps and urban settings
- Provide subsidised shelters or build more shelters for refugees
- Build connections and links with employers that have positive view of refugees and run work experience programs for refugee youth
- Provision of Interpreters
- More schools and more teachers to provide for more supported learning in refugee situations
- Create awareness programs to address language and cultural issues

- Provide learning resources in various languages
- Create scholarship, fee waiver and support with access to education in Australia, as well in refugee camps, especially higher and vocational education.
- Giving rights to education for those young people on bridging / temporary visas regardless of their immigration status
- Provide employment programs to help refugee youths to get jobs such as mentoring support – “just someone to help with skills required resume writing, encouragement, informed choices in educational options”
- Provide training to teachers as they don't understand what the student have been through
- Teachers should challenge and motivate student and end generalisations
- Listen to Youth testimonies
- The word “refugee” should not be used in a way of marginalisation for people in those situations
- Schools should introduce lunch time programs run by youth e.g. games, documentaries, refugee students showcase, etc



What you could have done/are you doing differently to improve your situation?

For youth in countries of first asylum:

Please include ALL ideas that the participants have for recommendations to

- a) governments, NGOs, INGOs and UN organisations, and
- b) other young refugees who are still in first countries of asylum.

Young people stated the following as some of the things they could do to improve the situation of refugee young people or their own situation.

- Young people should associate more with English speakers in English speaking countries
- Young people should attend ESL classes
- I could volunteer and help a newly arrived
- It would be good if young people contribute to emergency hand out
- I am interested in taking part in future advocacy on youth issues
- Some of the identified areas that youth could involve in are in the areas of Health, Music, Education, Employment, Environment and Arts. Gender Equality and Culture were also mentioned as possible topics to explore
- I am interested in further leadership opportunities to support other young people as I understand them



Glossary

ADSi	Auburn Diversity Services Inc
CMRC	Community Migrant Resource Centre
GRYC	Global Refugee Youth Consultations
HMYN	Hunter Multicultural Youth Network
HSS	Humanitarian Settlement Services
LAC	Local Area Command
MRCs	Migrant Resource Centres
MYAN	Multicultural youth Advocay network
NSP	NSW Settlement Partnership
NSS	Northern Settlement Services
RCOA	Refugee Council of Australia
SSI	Settlement Services International
UNHCR ...	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission
YAE	Youth and Adolescents in Emergency
YPC	Youth Projects Coordinator

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