



EMPLOYING MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES - MANUAL FOR MEAT PROCESSORS

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

In mid-2016 the Australian Meat Processing Corporation (AMPC) initiated the development of a Refugee and Migrant Employment pilot project for the red meat processing industry. The primary goals of this Corporate Social Responsibility initiative were to:

- provide new refugee entrants into Australia a safe, welcoming, well resourced, affordable and viable settlement destination
- improve the economic prospects of regional communities
- address some of the challenges associated with an aging regional population and the resulting decline in the size of the pool of working age labour available to industry, especially the labour hungry food processing industry
- enable the more efficient use of refugee settlement and job support agency resources already allocated to the tasks.

Key focus areas for the pilot project included:

- key stakeholder group formation
- community preparation – housing, schools, church, recreation, personal financial arrangements, English lessons etc
- employer preparation – cultural awareness/knowledge of managers, supervisors, potential co-employees, language considerations
- work preparation – induction, orientation, support systems, transition arrangements, training requirements
- monitoring and ongoing support systems; family liaison
- review and evaluation processes.

AMPC contacted the National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council (MINTRAC) with a request to formally draft a Refugee Migrant Employment Project pilot. By early October 2016 a two-year draft project was presented to AMPC and approved with a start date of late October 2016.

The pilot project would seek to relocate and employ a group of 10-15 refugees with the appropriate visas enabling them to work. The host community would be Murray Bridge in South Australia with red meat producer Thomas Foods International volunteering to provide full time, permanent employment opportunities to the selected job seekers. The project model developed was to be adaptable for other red meat processors anywhere in Australia.

Underpinning project research

Literature and case study reviews undertaken as part of the pilot project not only served to highlight and underpin the need and importance of the pilot project, but also the complex nature of the task. Key points from the literature review include:

- “...settling new Refugee and Migrant arrivals, especially in regional areas, is a complex and difficult task requiring very high levels of expertise, clarity of purpose, commitment, teamwork and patience. “
- “Whilst full time employment is a critical outcome to be achieved, settlement is about community building and population growth... “
- “By settling in regional communities, international migrants are helping to provide stability to the local population and services as well as bringing more diverse and younger residents to these communities.”
- “In order for regions to access international refugees and migrants and make the most of these many advantages, a policy environment needs to be created that facilitates and encourages regional settlement.”
- “...the importance of achieving employment outcomes, especially for primary applicants who have families, cannot be understated as employment can act as a ‘pull’ factor amongst a range of ‘push’ factors.”
- It is also very apparent from the literature that the Red Meat processing industry has very real unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labour supply challenges.
- “...an excellent opportunity exists to better align, integrate and otherwise marry the excellent, post arrival settlement work being done by government and non-government agencies and service providers, Refugee and Migrant employment needs and aspirations with the very real labour supply needs of the Red Meat Processing industry. “
- “Whilst key themes such as community services and support agencies, health, education, English language, housing, family, social networks and employment have been easily identified, there is a strategic imperative for better communication and greater co-operation and improved teamwork between all key stakeholders...”
- “For one key stakeholder to try and exist independently of others e.g. settlement service providers, Jobactive, employers, can only be a recipe for diminished outcomes for refugees and host communities....and may also serve only to waste precious resources and exhaust those which deliver outcomes”
- “Working better together for common, agreed outcomes may require a larger than expected change in thinking, communicating and how stakeholders approach the various challenges.”
- “strong desire within the Red Meat processing industry, at both the enterprise and peak body levels, to move away from the current high dependence on low ‘return on investment’ 417 Working Holiday Visa workers and high cost/high risk Temporary 457 (Skilled) Visa workers. “
- “This can be achieved via the development of an industry specific Refugee and Migrant Employment Support model that has enough flexibility to allow for adjustment to suit the unique needs of the various processors and their locations.”

- “.....model could be rolled out as part of a national strategy for the red meat industry to decrease its reliance on 417 and 457 visa workers. 417 and 457 visa workers account for high numbers of permanent, full time jobs. “
- “..replacing these positions over time with refugee and migrant workers who want to build a new life in Australia can only result in a ‘win/win’ for all.

Case Studies

Four Case Studies were researched and key points and information which could be used for the current project were extrapolated.

1. Enabling Rural Migrant Settlement - Limestone Coast; Dr Helen Feist, Dr George tan, Dr Kelly McDougal, Professor Graeme Hugo , Hugo Migration Population Research Centre, Adelaide University and Australian Migrant Resource Centre

Findings – Need to learn about living in the region, importance of family and friendship networks, community acceptance of migrants, role of key stakeholders supporting integration, and the role of Mt Gambier MRC in local area coordination. (Appendix 1)

2. Castlemaine African Community Project (CACP) 2008-2010: Dr Meg Montague, December 2010

Findings - Support offered to refugees created some dependency and expectation, Development of leadership and independence within the African Community compromised by internal conflict and demands, ineffective English classes, need to balance settlement type services and encouraging the refugee community to develop capacity to resolve and address issues themselves, involvement and support of the local community a vital, cross-cultural information sharing was critical. (Appendix 2)

3. Allianz/Settlement Service International (SSI)

Findings - A pro-active approach, 46 scholarships to help refugees settle in the community, Primary School – 5 x \$500, Secondary School – 19 x \$1,500, Vocational Education & Training (VET) – 10 x \$3,000, University – 2 x \$5,000, Skills & qualifications recognition – grants up to \$2,000 each from a \$20,000 fund. The total investment was \$91,000. Early in 2017 Allianz recruited nine new employees from the program from countries such as Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Vietnam, who came to Australia as refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. (Appendix 3)

4. Small Town Big Returns Resettlement of 160 Karen Refugees in Nhill Vic: AMES, Deloitte Access Economics

Findings - Strong, effective, ethical, team-based leadership by Luv-a-duck, Nhill community, Australian Multicultural Education Services (AMES), leaders within the Karen resettlement group, host community well prepared to accommodate refugees, organised support, effective management of cultural adjustment on both sides, prepare the new settlers well for new environment. (Appendix 4)

INTRODUCTION

This Manual for Meat Processors is designed to provide red meat processors with a customised, step by step recruitment process from concept development through to ongoing, sustainable employment and community integration.

Employing recently arrived refugees and migrants and integrating them into the workforce and host communities is so much more than an initiative to meet labour needs.

Careful strategic and operational planning is required along with a strong commitment to:

- developing and working with a multi-disciplinary team that may include representatives from refugee support service providers e.g. Australian Migrant Resource Centre (AMRC), Red Cross, Australian Refugee Association (ARA) and Community organisations e.g. Local Council, churches, TAFE etc.
- project communication and flexibility
- capacity to learn, change and improve as the process unfolds
- ensuring essential and sufficient resources are allocated
- identification of goals to be achieved so return of investment can be measured.

Refugee employment projects, like all targeted recruitment initiatives, have their challenges but the opportunities and rewards can be great, far reaching and almost unlimited for employers, communities and the nation as a whole.

SECTION 1 – COMPANY PRE-PLANNING

Define role of project within Company strategic planning and workforce development processes

Over recent years red meat producers have been encouraged to develop Workforce Development Plans (WDP). A Refugee/Migrant Employment initiative would fit well with a WDP or other type of Human Resource plan, especially if ratified by Senior Management.

This is the level where the company goals, as well as the costs and benefits of a refugee recruitment initiative can be discussed and debated. For more advanced senior management teams, issues relating to how a production-focussed company/workplace culture may need to change to successfully accommodate a migrant/refugee recruitment initiative may also be considered.

This is also the level to have the project resourcing discussion.

The temptation here is to just get on with recruiting the labour required, but hard work and diligence at this stage can help prevent difficulties later in the project that come as some surprise to management, especially when unidentified costs occur.

Identify labour issues to be addressed and establish clear targets in specific departments against which return on investment can be measured

A thorough review of current labour issues and identification of the purpose and targets when implementing a new employment program such as employing migrants and refugees is essential.

Staff turnover rates can be high due to a range of factors, for example:

- suitability of employee for the tasks
- poor leadership and people management by supervisors
- bullying and or other relationship issues with co-workers
- inadequate initial information about the job
- production-focussed workplace culture
- cultural and religious factors
- production pressure
- poor communication
- fatigue.

Review of past experiences and lessons learned

Most processing companies already have considerable experience in employing migrant workers. It is helpful to conduct a full review of past experiences and lessons learned, addressing areas such as the following.

- What strategies worked well, and why?

- Which migrant workers have stayed, and why?
- Which supervisory staff have managed migrant workers well – what strategies did they use?
- Where workers did not stay, why did they leave?
- What improvements were put in place as a result of past experiences?
- What were some of the key challenges, and how were they addressed?
- What external support agencies were used during the process of employment?
- What established company policies around migrant employment were in place?
- In retrospect, what would the company do differently?
- How were language and communication challenges addressed?
- What training was provided to migrant staff?
- Did the company use a 'one size fits all' approach, and make no adjustment around the employment of migrant workers?
- Did any critical incidents occur – how were they managed; what were the lessons learned?
- What were some of the unexpected benefits of employing people from other countries, especially those from Non English-Speaking Backgrounds?
- Did 'word of mouth communication' result in the attraction other potential employees from the same ethnic background? Why?
- Were there any issues with physical capability, and how were these addressed?
- How were issues around mental health awareness/management addressed?
- Were there any attendance challenges e.g. transport problems, and how were these addressed?
- Were there any issues around discipline, and how were these addressed?
- Were there any issues around acceptance by other workers, for example incidences of bullying and/or discrimination, and how were these addressed?

Review of staffing structure, training and support capability

Effective project leadership is vital to the success of the project. Ensure key staff are aware of their leadership roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

During the Refugee Employment pilot project, it became clear, very early, that recruitment projects such as this must be led by the host employer and by an individual who has a level of delegated authority commensurate with the requirements of the role. The processing company needs to control the direction, timing and progress of the employment strategy.

It is important to ensure that corporate project leaders and plant management staff are well connected with structured communication lines in place before commencement and during any refugee recruitment project, for example through weekly supervisor meetings with management.

Ensure that there is a full and comprehensive project debrief and handover when a need arises to change key project staff, especially at the operational level. This can be a momentum killer for any project if not handled competently.

Ensure suitably trained ground staff (e.g. Safety, Health Centre, HR, supervisors, team leaders, training, canteen etc) who are competent and committed to the initiative, are in place and working effectively prior to the recruitment of any refugees/migrants.

Areas of preparatory training may include:

- nationality/cultural awareness
- communication/language
- emotional intelligence
- critical incident response
- understanding of and working with support agencies
- patience.

Ensure project specific training is undertaken with all key staff in line with above points and is inclusive of a review of past experiences and lessons learnt.

Develop and document management commitment

Ensure a basic business or workforce development plan is developed and in place, including but not limited to identification of key stakeholders, company project leader and accountable officers, clear goals/targets, measurable expected outcomes, communication and reporting mechanisms and potential resource requirements.

Have such plans presented to the relevant senior management team for consideration and inclusion in the overall business strategy.

Proceed only once formal senior management approval and sufficient resource allocation is granted.

Identification of available positions for employment

Positions will usually be entry level and a clear picture of what the job entails will be required.

Any position on offer is best understood in the context of the whole red meat manufacturing process. As such the initial plant tour for potential job seekers is important.

Particular information should be provided not only for entry jobs on offer but also for the range of jobs that new recruits can aspire to once they have demonstrated their ability to work safely and productively, follow instructions and be reliable. Opportunities for career progression along with the associated increase in pay rates is very attractive to refugees and is a great value add to the employment proposition.

Of great assistance here is the development of individual refugee applicant fact sheets. This can help fellow employees and Supervisors understand the existing skills and qualifications that may be held by

the refugee and/or their family and the context around their country of origin and how they have come to be now settled in Australia. It is important to note that this option, whilst highly informative, must be gained through a legal (confidential), sensitive and respectful approach. Some refugees live in mortal fear for themselves and their families if they are somehow identified, especially over the internet. Settlement service providers can be an important source of information and assistance in this process.

Forward planning for required staff training, adjustment of roles

In association with any Business Plan, Workforce Development Plan or HR plan developed, a corresponding position-specific training plan should be developed and implemented.

Often training initiatives are developed as a reactive response to workplace difficulties encountered. This approach can result in being problematic with regards to maintaining employment and morale.

Adjustment of existing roles should be approached from a position development perspective so the employee role enhancement opportunity is not lost.

Often existing recruitment processes such as interviews, medicals, physicals and inductions only need basic adjustment to accommodate refugee applicants from non-English speaking backgrounds, for example using interpreters and pictures.

Failure to adjust existing recruitment processes will, however, increase the chances of unsuccessful placements.

The cultural competency of recruitment personnel should also be considered, and appropriate preparatory training provided where necessary. In the red meat industry recruitment staff are often at the lower end of the organisational structure, inexperienced and operate with little authority.

Quantify practical physical resources that will be required

During the planning stage, consideration will need to be given to the following.

- Funding for relocation
- Availability of current employees from target group country of origin (especially English/interpreter language support).

Vitally important at this stage is contact with Local Government representatives regarding the potential of the refugee employment project going ahead, what the project looks like and what role, if any Local Government would like to play in the project. Considerations will include:

- availability of ethnic and cultural information
- communication with the host community
- availability of rental accommodation
- access to schools
- medical services and facilities
- community religious groups
- access to public transport

- impact on community cultural mix.

Timely communication is the key as no one likes surprises of the type that could occur.

Host local refugee support agency orientation and familiarisation

It is very important that a strong partnership between host employer, refugee support agency and local Jobactive provider is established prior to the commencement of any refugee recruitment initiative.

From the outset refugees often form their strongest initial relationship with the first contact agency, nearly always a settlement agency such as the Australian Migrant Resource Centre or other available agency.

This refugee employment process will require refugees to progress to building stable relationships with Jobactive services providers and ultimately the host employer. During the pilot it became obvious that this is a more challenging task for the refugee than it appears.

Building trust is the key as trust is the foundation of any relationship.

This process can be made easier if each of the participating parties and the host employer learn and understand how each other operates and what the critical success factors are for each stakeholder.

This is helpful when there is a need to understand issues such as employment subsidies, and other assistance such as local area coordination, English language classes, transport, accommodation, schooling, child care, medical etc.

Provide cultural awareness training to existing staff

Provision of cultural awareness information/training is essential for Team Leaders, Supervisors, Operational Managers and allied support functions such as HR, Safety, Payroll, QA. In particular, specific information about the cultural background of incoming groups should be provided, as well general information about working with migrants and refugees.

SECTION 2 – ENGAGEMENT WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS

Identification of available service providers

This can be extremely challenging as there are a multitude of service providers, each with differing roles and responsibilities. At the very least, the following areas of service and support need to be identified:

- migrant/refugee support agency, such as Red Cross, Australian Migrant Resource Centre
- Australian Migrant English Program (AMEP) provider
- JobActiv provider.

Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)

The Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) assists clients to build the skills and knowledge they need to become self-reliant and active members of our society, through a needs-based, case management approach. Participation in the HSP is voluntary and support is provided on a needs basis, which means that not all clients will require all available services.

HSP service providers work with clients to identify their needs and goals and develop an individual case management plan. Service providers support clients to achieve outcomes in:

- Housing
- Physical and Mental Health and Well-being
- Managing Money
- Community Participation and Networking
- Family Functioning and Social Support
- Justice
- Language Services
- Education and Training
- Employment.

The HSP is delivered by five service providers in 11 contract regions across Australia on behalf of the Australian Government:

- Australian Red Cross Society
- Settlement Services International Limited
- MDA Limited
- Melaleuca Refugee Centre
- AMES Australia (in partnership with the Australian Migrant Resource Centre from October 2017)

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is an Australian Government initiative which provides up to 510 hours of English language tuition to eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants to help them learn foundation English language and settlement skills to enable them to participate socially and economically in Australian society.

The Adult Migrant English Program is delivered at around 307 locations across Australia in major cities as well as rural and regional areas. English language classes generally take place at learning centres and are delivered by AMEP service providers.

Further information is available at: <https://www.education.gov.au/adult-migrant-english-program-0>

Jobactive

Jobactive is the Australian Government's way to get more Australians into work. It connects job seekers with employers and is delivered by a network of Jobactive providers in over 1700 locations across Australia. Employers can use a local Jobactive provider for tailored recruitment services, at no cost to their business. Jobactive providers work closely with employers to understand their recruitment needs.

Jobactive providers can access funding to assist new employees to pay for work-related items, professional services, relevant training and support after they start work. They can also connect employees to a range of other government initiatives. These include relocation assistance, employer wage subsidies, training, and apprenticeships.

Further information is available at: <https://jobactive.gov.au/>

A strategy used during the pilot project was to identify all the potential support groups and then bring them together in a single forum to share information about roles and responsibilities. From this information the meat processing company can then decide which providers best suit their needs.

Alignment of roles and agendas

Once the stakeholder groups, including employer and support agencies are established, aligning roles and agendas is arguably one of the most difficult tasks. Success in identifying common combined stakeholder team goals lays the platform for project success.

The achievement of stakeholder teams' goals almost always guarantees the achievement of individual team member's goals and outcomes.

Understanding and acceptance of all stakeholder team member roles and agendas and the alignment of those roles and agendas with the team goals greatly helps the team leader navigate the pathway to success.

These roles should be formalised in an agreement such as a Memorandum of Understanding.

Host company orientation and familiarisation

As noted in Section 1 the development of a WDP or HR Plan that includes a refugee recruitment initiative makes it far easier to explain to external refugee support agencies what the company is trying to achieve.

This initial information, when combined with practical participation in exercises such as plant tours, interviews, inductions and other host employer recruitment activities, fast tracks external stakeholder understanding of host employer operations.

It is important that the host employer also allocates time to familiarise themselves with the operations of support agencies. The employer can learn from the support agencies, especially the partner settlement agency, and thus re-align its HR and WHS plan.

Process of candidate identification and selection

Clear and specific selection criteria should be developed by the host employer, taking into consideration the special needs of refugee applicants. During this process, advice should be sought from the settlement service provider.

Selection processes need to accommodate the possible need for interpreters at key points of the recruitment process, and possibly also after commencement of employment, (for example when accessing company health services). Having existing employees from the same ethnic background can be a great asset as it can provide career advancement opportunities for those who choose to assist.

Consideration needs to be given to the interview location and set up. Refugee applicants can be easily intimidated and put off by very official looking environments.

Documentation of roles and responsibilities including nominated project contact or key representative

As with host employer internal planning, service providers to the project need to be clear about the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of designated company personnel.

This is especially important in the areas of communication, authority and decision making.

Identification of gaps in service provision

The pilot project experienced great difficulty in engaging with Jobactive providers. Jobactive providers play a vital role in assisting job seekers, especially with government subsidy support, in the early stages of recruitment and employment.

Refugee support agencies do not have knowledge of or access to the type of government funding support that is available to host employers, for example assistance with transport, accommodation, and wage subsidies.

It is important for all stakeholders, especially the host employer, to understand what assistance is provided by support agencies, how this assistance is accessed and the roles and responsibilities of those directly involved.

Budgeting including government funding support and possible employer contributions

Refugee recruitment projects would benefit greatly from direct involvement of all stakeholder members during the early planning stage.

This should be led by the host employer so the planning stage leads to the identification of the availability external funding and other recruitment and employment support to ensure key partners are well resourced to achieve the required outcomes.

Identification of cultural groups and specific language and cultural considerations in consultation with host employer

Clearly this is the role of a well-informed refugee settlement support agency in consultation with the host employer, fully supported by the Jobactive service.

Strong consideration should be given to employing groups from the same ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

This greatly assists with community building and the development of a support base outside of the employment arrangement.

This is important as in the early stages of resettlement when one member of a family unit gains employment, the other is at risk of becoming isolated in the community.

Community connectedness and access to services and supports for the whole family is paramount in achieving sustainable settlement and employment

Identification of community requirements (church, housing, schools, medical, social)

Once an ethnic group is identified by the refugee support agency and the host employer, research should be conducted on how well equipped the host community is to accommodate the arrival of what is hoped will be a significant number of new refugee arrivals. Research has shown that the optimal groups consist of 10 families of up to 5 members each; 10 to 20 single males etc. Optimally, the family would have primary school or pre-school aged children that can better integrate into the school system in smaller regional towns.

Town tours for interested applicants are very beneficial in the familiarisation process.

If Local Government is not represented in the stakeholder project team, contact should be made, information about the refugee initiative should be provided and possible levels of support identified. Local government support is essential to the settlement process and thus to sustainable employment.

Plan ongoing interaction and engagement schedule

In the first instance responsibility for ongoing interaction and engagement with new refugee recruits lies with the host employer, and initial planning should include planning for ongoing engagement once employment commences. Daily or at least weekly personal contact is important in the building of relationships and staying aware of any issues that be arising away from work. During the pilot project this quickly became an issue that needed to be addressed.

To some degree the refugee support agency field staff will try and keep contact but with limited funding may only be able to keep contact periodically.

It is likely that the Job Actives will only provide support to the point where their outcomes have been achieved e.g. after 26 weeks of full time employment.

Ongoing interaction and engagement is an area where, if attended to well, employment sustainability can be achieved. If neglected, all the hard work undertaken to get the refugee workers into the business can be undone very quickly.

It should be noted that most refugee ethnic groups are very well connected on social media and both good and negative news can travel very fast. Failure to stay closely connected to the new employees can result in much 'brand' damage from a refugee ethnic group and community perspective.

It is likely that the most challenging phase of any refugee employment initiative is how best to support refugees and their families, post-employment.

SECTION 3 – ENGAGEMENT WITH POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES

Structure of information giving processes – workshops, promotional materials, key personnel etc.

The quality and sufficiency of the information given to stakeholder groups and refugee job seekers will often determine the quality of the response.

This will be a key area for the project stakeholder group. Information needs to be easy to follow, to the point and in a format that is easily understood by the target groups.

Care should be taken to not couch the information in a minimalist way e.g. pay rates. Refugees are able to quickly evaluate the immediate cost/benefit scenario.

Information sessions must be facilitated by the right stakeholder representative in the right environment. It is recommended that the employer present employer/job information as information can quickly become muddled or unclear when relayed by a third party not associated with the company. This information needs to be documented clearly and made available to the settlement agency to ensure that messages relayed are the same and to assist the countering of any misinformation.

Documentation of key information

As with all potential employees, clear information about pay rates, training and career opportunities, job roles, job readiness requirements (physical, medial, etc), community, support services, language, is essential. Collation of this information is the responsibility of the host employer. Again, special care should be taken not to dwell on the minimums but promote the whole of the job opportunity.

Refugees are real people with real aspirations, not only for themselves but hopefully also for other family members who settle in the host regional community. When considering employment they are making decisions about relocation, moving families and engaging with new communities and as a result need access to accurate information about the longer term prospects of the jobs on offer.

Whilst it is acceptable to reference starting rates of pay (these will automatically be evaluated by refugees against Centrelink entitlements), greater emphasis should be placed on career pathways, potential to move to higher paying jobs, accredited training and formal qualifications such as *Certificates II/III in Meat Processing*.

To complement job information, real life success testimonies and stories from existing employees should be woven into the information. There is nothing so powerful as a success story where someone just like them has made it through to a position of some significance on a pay rate well above what Centrelink has to offer.

HR personnel should also take careful note of the job history of the applicants. Many will have been trade, or even University qualified, in their own countries. To try and link potential job pathways to existing skills will be encouraging to potential employees.

Equally as important, the settlement service will provide information on the benefits of the locality and or relocation in terms of housing and competitive rent, safety, education for their children and support for wives and other family members.

Plant and community tours

Community tours during the pilot project proved to be very effective in matching a picture with the words about the job.

Many refugees come from third world environments, persecution at the hands of authorities and war affected and damaged communities. The sight of a beautiful, peaceful country town can be both overwhelming and encouraging.

As for plant tours, seeing the job opportunity from a whole of process perspective helps during exposure to the parts of red meat manufacturing that some find difficult. As well as direct, hands on production roles in the boning room and the meat harvest floors, there are many other opportunities in yards, cold storage, packing, maintenance etc.

Links to current employees from same or similar cultural/religious groups

Many processing facilities now have very diverse workforces and there are great opportunities to attract job seekers with refugee backgrounds who are from the same ethnic and language origin as existing employees.

Ethnic groups from countries including but not limited to Myanmar (Burmese), Syria, Nepal, China, Sudan, Burundi, Philippines, have been very successful in gaining employment with red meat producers and integrating well into regional communities.

Employers who have invested in and completed successful refugee employment programs can then reap the benefit of having many 'ethnic buddies' and English language interpreters available to make entry into the workforce of future refugee recruits that much easier.

Document customised induction processes

It is important that all steps in a refugee employment process be documented and approved. This makes transition much easier when the inevitable staff change occurs.

This is especially so with new refugee employee inductions. All employers should already have developed comprehensive, documented inductions that not only include written material but also interactive audio-visual presentations. A wise investment would be the customisation of existing induction material to suit the particular nominated ethnic audience.

Document monitoring, mentoring and support arrangements

Most employee turnover occurs within the first month of employment in the red meat industry. Developing an employee retention strategy that closely monitors the early progress of new recruits can be very successful in lowering the turnover rates. As with the induction, new employee monitoring arrangements can be easily customised to cover new refugee recruits, especially from a special needs perspective. This assists greatly with identifying the correct support arrangements that need to be in place, especially for recurring issues.

To establish a mentoring system, the first and easiest solution is an ethnically compatible 'buddy'. This should then be well supported by a Team Leader and Supervisor mentoring system. This however can be problematic given the production demands placed on such positions. Consideration could be given to identifying one of the 'buddies' for development into a roving mentor and guide for new refugee employees.

Human Resource staff may also be able provide support in this area.

This period is the point of employment where the settlement service can play a critical role in supporting the employer to understand any difficulties that may arise for a worker and or to provide the necessary communication to the worker's community about why the difficulty and possibly the retrenchment is occurring.

Document the training program

Having a simple personalised training plan for each new refugee employee can go a long way towards convincing the new refugee recruit that they have a career path if they apply themselves to the position they are allocated.

Identify relocation requirements

For regional centres that have already been designated a Humanitarian Refugee Settlement destination, this is not as critical an issue.

For other centres which are located some distance from designated settlement areas, relocation can be a determining factor for refugee groups. The pilot project was based in Murray Bridge South Australia, seventy kilometres from the designated settlement centre of Adelaide. Whilst a number of refugees were unwilling to relocate, some were willing to move.

Those willing to move required assistance beyond that which was available through the Migrant Resource Centre. This resulted in the host employer allocating cash resources for each individual or family group to make the move.

Others decided to try and commute through car-pooling. This seemed to work, until the host employer needed to change the shift of the main driver.

A localised solution will need to be developed to address any relocation issues that may arise.

Identify transport issues, arrangements and solutions

Even if refugee job seekers are directly settled into a regional centre, the issue of transport will still be a factor as many do not hold driver's licences.

This is not an issue specifically related to refugee employees. Critical mass is the key. If a refugee settlement initiative is successful in identifying reasonable numbers of new job seekers, the purchase of a company mini bus may be a viable option.

Documentation and communication of any refugee employment success story testimonies

A short film was developed as part of the refugee employment project to feature refugees who have successfully transitioned into full time jobs with the host employer. The visualisation of their hopes for the future, gratitude, passion and appreciation for the efforts of their employer have been captured far better than any written words could convey.

Prospective host employers are encouraged to find an existing employee who has successfully retained employment, to develop a bank of audio visual clips promoting refugee recruitment success stories.

Such a resource would be an invaluable tool to inspire prospective groups of interested refugee job seekers.

SECTION 4 – COMMENCEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT

Conduct and evaluate effectiveness of preparation and induction processes

All modified and customised refugee specific recruitment processes should be developed with the idea of continuous improvement in mind.

Often each separate ethnic group will have different requirements. For example, many Syrian refugees are from city based urban areas that would be categorised as middle class. Rohingya and Karen people from Myanmar are from rural areas and have been greatly persecuted by their governments. Many African refugees have only ever known civil war and their societal structures, customs and cultures are very different to Australia's.

One way to sharpen the focus of many of the recruitment processes is to include representatives from the refugee settlement agencies and if possible current employees from the same ethnic origin.

This may sound a little 'left field' but be assured that a standard, one size fits all approach will prove to be less than effective.

Establish clear communication lines for new employees

There is nothing about relationships that doesn't involve communication. Interestingly, when reviewing the project progress, staff members identified this as the area in the pilot project where there was greatest scope for improvement.

Communication of information that needs to be clear, specific, easily understood and timely is essential.

A designated officer should be delegated responsibility for maintaining effective two-way communication with new refugee employees at least until they are well settled.

Communication lines also need to be established from the responsible officer to a level of management to whom the officer can report issues, concerns and progress.

Two-way communication lines should also be developed and formalised for all internal and external stakeholder team members. This is required to ensure sustainability of the refugee labour supply pipeline.

All communication lines must include relevant supervisors and team leaders.

Implement workplace monitoring, mentoring, support and problem-solving processes

The systems and processes identified during the planning stages become especially important when events result in or lead to resignation, or a negative decision about the suitability of new employees.

Often effective monitoring, mentoring and support is heavily dependent on the level and quality of resources allocated for such a purpose. Most red meat processors run very lean non-production work teams, and release of such personnel can be challenging.

Along with ineffective communication, insufficient and/or poorly qualified or motivated resources are project 'killers'.

Many refugees have issues such as coping with authority after persecution, post-traumatic stress, other mental health issues including high sensitivity to any type of bullying. Failure to monitor, mentor and support will almost certainly result in the breakdown of the employment relationship.

In cases where new refugee recruits are failing to meet employment requirements, all avenues relating to retaining refugee employment should be explored with termination the last option.

With new refugee recruits it may be difficult to recognise cultural and language factors that are present but not easily evident. Successful refugee employment programs, once established, could consider the idea of a fellow countryman peer review system. This would entail good fellow workers from the same ethnic origin being consulted about the issues prior to any decision being made to terminate employment.

Of utmost importance is the partnership with the local settlement agency which has the knowledge, trust and understanding to support effective communication in a timely manner to the relevant parties to address the issues.

Identify gaps in the preparation of current staff and develop strategies to address

A full refugee initiative training needs analysis of supervisory staff likely to be in charge of new refugee recruits is highly recommended. In many organisations supervisory staff are often left to their own devices when it comes to dealing with a very diverse workforce.

Whilst some may see this as just another cost burden, it is in fact project critical. Diversity is difference. 'One size does not fit all' and understanding is required before any solution is applied.

At a minimum following basic training is recommended:

- cultural awareness
- ethnic origin familiarisation (fact sheet on new groups/individuals)
- conflict resolution in a diverse workplace
- recognising and managing basic mental health problems
- refugee/country of origin research and presentations at weekly production meetings
- supervisor/manager 'buddy' system when there is a need to manage delicate/complex issues.

Monitor community settlement and engagement processes with service provider

This should be a by-product of a healthy relationship developed between the refugee support agency and the designated refugee project host employer officer.

Clear, formal, documented arrangements need to be in place to ensure to the timely reporting of any issues, successes or problems.

Implement training program

It is highly recommended that preparatory training for all key personnel be delivered prior to any new refugee recruits commencing employment.

Ongoing in-service training should then occur especially if there are incidents that need to be debriefed by supervisors and managers.

Where applicable all other training that requires a people management response should incorporate a reference to managing diversity and maintaining harmony.

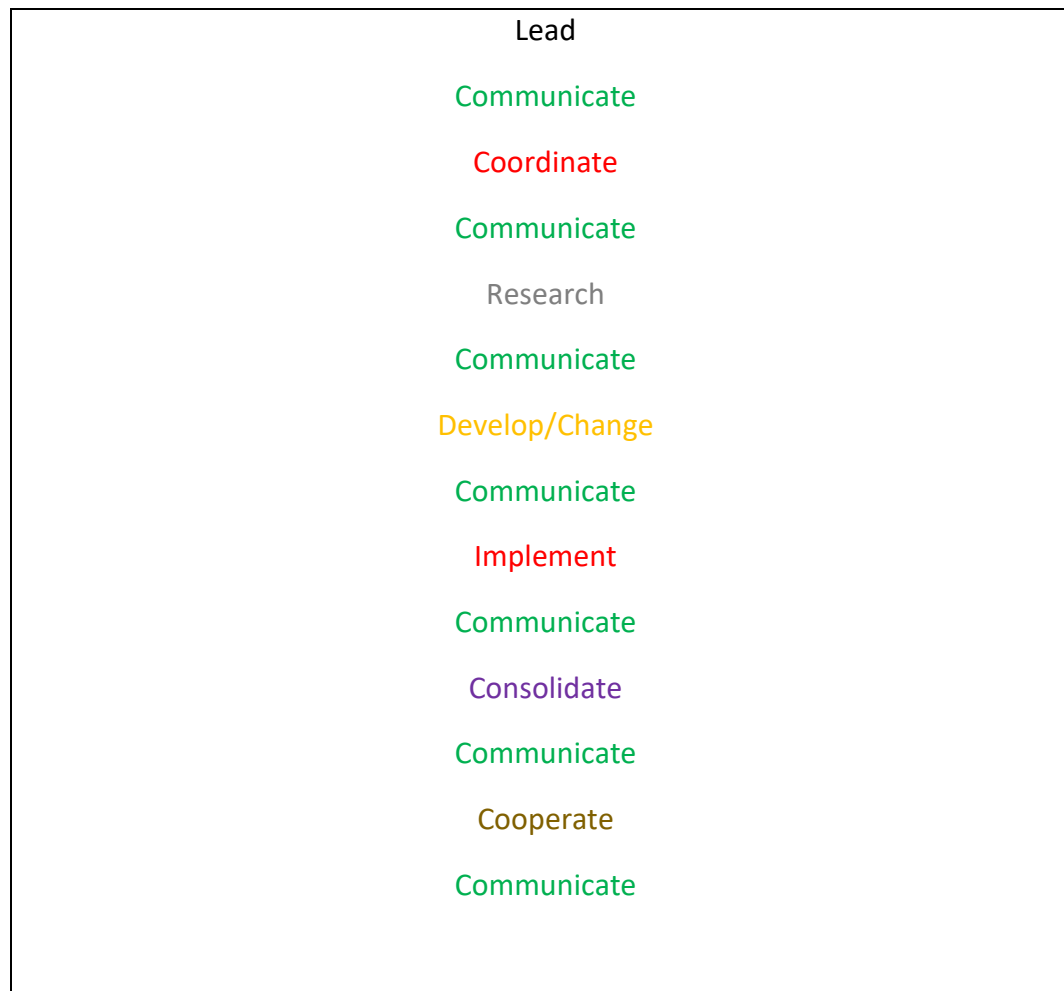
Commence planning for next round of refugee recruitment

If approved by management, commence the entire process again, starting at Section 2 of this Manual.

If not approved by management begin at Section 1.

Begin with a review of past performance and identification lessons learned. Apply agreed solutions under a banner of continuous improvement: *Plan, Do, Check, Act* (also known as the Deming circle/cycle/wheel).

Add, change or delete steps as required to streamline and customise the process to better suit company processes and the target group of refugee job seekers.



SECTION 5: APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Case Study 1: Enabling Rural Migrant Settlement: A Case Study of the Limestone Coast

Dr Helen Feist, Dr George tan, Dr Kelly McDougal and Professor Graeme Hugo, Adelaide University in partnership with Local Government and the Australian Migrant Resource Centre.

Introduction

This case study sought to achieve a better understanding of the role local government can play in the successful settlement of new migrants in rural and regional South Australia, and involved the experiences of migrants settled and working with Teys Australia at Naracoorte and JBS Australia at Bordertown, along with other employers.

The study was undertaken in 2014 and included interviews with migrants living and working in the Limestone coast, their employers, other key community stakeholders and Local Government representatives.

The Case Study was documented by researchers from the University of Adelaide, and the project was a partnership of the following agencies:

- the Migrant Resource Centre, South Australia (Australian Migrant Resource Centre)
- the Australian Population and Migration Research Centre,
- University of Adelaide
- the City of Mount Gambier
- the Rural City of Grant
- the Naracoorte-Lucindale District Council
- the Tatiara District Council.

Relevance of this Case Study

While the focus of this study was on the role of Local Government, the preparation and resettlement experiences were documented in detail and very relevant to the current AMPC/MINTRAC/TFI project. In particular the study covered:

- learning about living in the region
- the role of family and friendship networks in settlement and integration
- perceptions of community attitudes towards new migrants
- the role of key stakeholders in supporting integration
- the role of local services in enabling migrant settlement

- housing
- employment – finding, barriers, language, transportation, exploitation, future mobility
- role of local area co-ordination.

Some of the key messages/learnings from this Case Study

Knowledge of the region

Most of the migrants in the study knew little about the region before arrival – they had received general information about Australia and had been given some brochures about the region. The study highlighted the importance of on-arrival case management services that included reception, case management, accommodation and orientation.

Role of family and friendship networks

It was evident that integration was much easier for those groups who migrated as whole families and cultural groups. In addition, those who migrated as whole families were likely to stay longer.

Community attitudes towards new migrants

Developing a common understanding of cultures and groups within the wider community was acknowledged as both important and difficult to develop.

Key stakeholders supporting integration

Community events such as Harmony Day and sports events were described as valuable in developing cultural understanding, but schools; the Migrant Resource Centre servicing Mt Gambier, Naracoorte and Bordertown; churches; as well as supportive councils were also seen as critical. Migrants who participated in their own and broader community groups also appeared to settle and integrate more quickly.

The role of local services

English language capability was described as a key barrier to effectively accessing health services, Centrelink, employment services, schools etc. Another barrier to access was transportation, especially in terms of employment and further education.

Housing

A large number of the migrants in this Case Study were not part of an HSS program and as a result finding suitable housing was an issue. This was not such an issue for the pilot project, since housing support is offered as part of the program, and there appears to be sufficient suitable accommodation available in Murray Bridge.

Employment

In this Case Study over half of the migrants interviewed were working in the meat works, and one of the most common issues was that people who were skilled in their home countries were employed in unskilled positions.

However, meat works were acknowledged as working hard to retain employees.

English language proficiency was a major issue, with both access to suitable classes and the adequacy of the allocated 510 hours questioned.

Access to transportation to and from work was an issue.

Informal interaction offered by employers through workplace events etc were valued by interviewees.

Issues around community perceptions of whether migrants were filling unmet labour requirements or being used as 'cheap labour' were mentioned several times in this study, and such perceptions need to be well managed.

Appendix 2 - Case Study 2: Castlemaine African Community Project 2008-2010

Dr Greg Montague, December 2010

Introduction

This Case Study is an evaluation of the Castlemaine African Settlement Project (CACP) which operated over a period of two years between 2008-2010 to provide settlement support to the refugee community in Castlemaine, Victoria. The CACP had been set up in response to the needs of over 50 African Australians from refugee backgrounds who had arrived to take up jobs in the Castlemaine meat works.

By mid-2010, there were about 110 African community members in Castlemaine, and of these 50-60 were working at the meatworks. Six families lived in the town, while others had families who remained in Melbourne and the workers commuted between the two locations on a regular basis.

The Project focussed on combining the development of the capacity of the Castlemaine African Australian residents and community development work with local agencies and the general community. As such, it focussed on five main areas:

- strengthening African community capacity and leadership
- increasing access to a range of education and employment opportunities
- improving access to and the capacity of local services
- supporting the capacity of local volunteer networks, and
- building cross-cultural understanding and relationships.

Relevance of this Case Study

While the focus of this Case Study was on the effectiveness of the CACP itself, the nature of the employment, the distance between the meatworks and the State's Capital City, and some of the re-entitlement experiences had the potential to align with the current Murray Bridge project. In addition, many of the services of the CACP are those provided by similar agencies in re-settlement locations.

Some of the key messages/learnings from this Case Study

The writers observed that the intensive support offered to refugees on arrival to Australia appeared to have created some dependency, and that there had been an expectation that that level of support would continue to be provided on an ongoing basis.

The expectation that the Project would support the development of leadership and independence within the African Community was only partly successful, and was impacted by internal conflict and the demands on a small number of involved individuals.

The effectiveness of English classes were reduced because they were in Bendigo (not Castlemaine), were not often enough, were not available to fit in with different shifts and were not available in different levels.

Concentration of employment in the meatworks was interpreted by the author as limiting diversification of employment among the African Australian community.

A key role of the CACP was the identification of interpreters/translation support and the raising of cross-cultural awareness, particularly with schools, health services, police and the justice system. It also

helped to strengthen the volunteer services. The report stated that this is a vital area of resettlement work and needs to be flexible, accessible and ongoing.

An important aspect of relationship-building was being able to understand their concerns and challenges, their networks and conversations i.e. communication.

The outcomes of the project demonstrated the importance of maintaining a balance between settlement type services and encouraging the community to develop the capacity to resolve and address issues themselves.

The involvement and support of the local community is a vital component of successful settlement. Cross-cultural information sharing was critical.

Montague, Dr Meg (December 2010) *An evaluation of the Castlemaine African Community Project 2008-2010 – Activities, achievements, lessons learnt and potential future directions.* A report to the Mount Alexander Shire. www.refugeecouncil.org.au/doc/1012_CACP_Eval.pdf

Appendix 3 Case Study 3: Allianz/ Settlement Support International (SSI) Refugee Scholarship Program commenced in 2016

<http://www.ssi.org.au/scholarships>

www.allianz.com.au/media/news/2016/new-scholarships-for-refugees

Assessing the economic contribution of refugees in Australia June 2013 by Richard Parsons

Introduction

In 2016 Settlement Support International (SSI), a not-for-profit humanitarian organisation, and Allianz (Insurance) joined forces to develop a scholarships program for refugees who have settled in Australia. The program is focussed on assisting refugees including young people needing help with their school education and adults seeking recognition for their qualifications. Successful applicants will be eligible for a range of new scholarships worth more than \$90,000.

Forty-six scholarships, ranging from \$500 to \$5,000, are offered in five categories, including primary and secondary school, vocational training, tertiary qualification and skills recognition.

Examples scholarships on offer include the following.

Table 1

Provider	Scholarship	No	Type	Value	Criteria
SSI/Allianz Australia	SSI Allianz Refugee Scholarship	46	Primary/ Secondary school Voc Ed + Training (VET) University Skills & Quals recognition	Primary School – five x \$500 Secondary school – 19 x \$1,500 Vocational education & training (VET) – 10 x \$3,000 University – 2 x \$5,000 Skills & qualifications recognition – grants of up to \$2,000 each from a \$20,000 fund	To be eligible, students must: -Be from a refugee background on a permanent humanitarian visa -Have been living in Australia for five years or less -Be able to demonstrate additional socio-economic disadvantage such as financial hardship or family challenges -Study and reside in NSW
Swinburne University	Welcome Scholarships	6 u/grad 4 Dip/AdvDip 4 Foundation TBC Cert I-IV	Full-time. U/Grad, Dip/Adv Dip, Foundation Certificate I-IV.	Tuition fees or in the case of Cert I-IV - concession fees. Recipients undertaking a course longer than 12 months who lose their government support as a direct result of doing so will receive a payment of \$7,500.00. This will not be sufficient to live on, so recipients of this	Bridging Visa E (BE) (subclass V050) & TPV (subclass 785). The following equity principles will be applied in the selection: o Commitment to study o Likelihood of success o Financial hardship o Connection to support agencies and community (to ensure the student is

Provider	Scholarship	No	Type	Value	Criteria
				payment will be expected to be working part-time whilst they are studying.	supported and has every opportunity for success) o Other factors such as disability, women in non-traditional areas of study, regional/rural location
University of Canberra	UC Foundation Refugee Scholarship	5	First year undergraduate degree	\$2,500	Considered a refugee student enrolled full-time ; Be able to demonstrate financial need; Attach a 300 word statement outlining how the financial assistance provided by the award would contribute to the advancement of their education and career ambitions; Be willing to be profiled to promote scholarships offered by the UC Foundation.
University of Notre Dame	The Vice Chancellor's Humanitarian Scholarship	Scholarships awarded each year will be at the discretion of the Vice Chancellor	Granted for one year and reviewed each year	The tuition fees of the recipient	i) Be from a refugee or asylum seeker background as evidenced by the recipient holding a current Australian Government Refugee and Humanitarian Protection Visa or a Bridging Visa E which permits the recipient to undertake tertiary studies in Australia; ii) Be able to demonstrate that they will be able to reside in Australia for the completion of their course; and iii) Have been accepted as a full time first year or Foundation Year student at The University of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle or Sydney campus.
University of Western Australia	UWA Humanitarian Visa Scholarships	3	Undergraduate	All tuition costs for 6 semesters plus honours if applicable	applicants must hold or have applied for a Temporary Protection Visa (subclass 785) or a Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (subclass 790

This Case Study looks to understand the driving forces behind this initiative, the criteria developed for the different scholarship opportunities and how the program may impact the potential for employment for young refugees and adults seeking recognition for their qualifications.

SSI is a community-based, not-for-profit organisation providing a range of services in the areas of humanitarian settlement, housing, asylum seeker assistance, foster care, disability support and employment services in NSW. Allianz Australia delivers a wide range of personal, commercial and corporate insurance products and services to more than 3 million policyholders.

Relevance of this Case Study

This Case Study provides insights into an alternative approach to aligning the talent needs of business and industry with the desires and aspirations of newly arrived refugees and migrants as they seek settle into the Australian community. The scholarship program looks to remove some of the financial barriers that often hinder the refugee's progress towards further education and skills/qualifications recognition. By eliminating some of these barriers, the doorway to employment can be opened wider.

The primary driver for Allianz to invest in the scholarship program was their absolute commitment to diversity and the strong belief "that a diverse workforce is a better workforce."

Some of the key messages/learnings from this Case Study

The *New Scholarships for Refugees* program by its very nature validates the fact that the majority of new arrivals to Australia, through the various refugee, migrant and asylum seeker channels are intelligent, skilled, adaptable, resilient, motivated to work/learn and in many cases well educated. From a more intangible perspective, refugees also possess a strong sense of, and commitment to family and community, respect for leadership in both internal and host communities, strong family values and a richness of spirit. All are highly desirable qualities for any business or community looking to grow and prosper.

Some of these attributes are required just to meet the selection criteria (Table1) for the scholarships. Selection criteria includes but is not limited to:

- ability to demonstrate additional socio-economic disadvantage such as financial hardship or family challenges
- commitment to study
- likelihood of success
- financial hardship or be able to demonstrate financial need in a 300-word statement
- connection to support agencies and community (to ensure the student is supported and has every opportunity for success)
- other factors such as disability, women in non-traditional areas of study, regional/rural location.

Often in the business rush to identify and acquire labour (in large numbers) to meet urgent business needs, the realities of many of these virtues are lost (especially in the red meat processing industry). This problem can be further compounded by the general temptation of many in the community and in industry to stereotype and judge refugees before there is any effort to establish a relationship.

This problem is highlighted in Richard Parsons 2013 Literature review 'Assessing the economic contribution of refugees in Australia'

"...we know that refugees contribute to the Australian economy through employment, business, and other activities, but we do not know the extent or value of this contribution, or how to assess it holistically. This gap enables the public and media to focus on alleged negative consequences and financial costs of refugee settlement. In particular, those arriving by boat have received increasing opposition in Australian opinion polling and public sentiment over the last four decades (Phillips and Spinks, 2010). The resulting uneven debate tends to perpetuate what Courtney (2013) describes as an "island-nation mentality which fears invasion by sea", belying the fact that the number of 'unauthorised' boat arrivals in Australia is small compared to the US and parts of Europe (Phillips and Spinks, 2010). Such a mentality is perpetuated by language characterised by derogatory terms, such as 'bogus asylum seeker' and 'queue jumping' (Phillips and Boese, 2013). The debate, in other words, appears to be biased by misinformation, myth, and misplaced assumptions. Common assumptions – or myths – are that refugees are an economic burden on society, taking much and giving little, and that they take immigration places away from skilled workers who would make a bigger contribution (Stevenson, 2005)."¹

In this Case Study Allianz has shown the importance of great leadership and, in partnership with SSI, has matched the words of their strategic business commitment to diversity, with a real pre-employment program funded by real dollars. The program looks to invest in the potential of people first before seeking to recruit talent. The potential is there however for Allianz to be the number one 'employer of choice' when the studies and recognition are complete and the employment journey commences.

" In the very early stages of the program Allianz recruited 9 new employees from countries such as Vietnam, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan."

For SSI, this is part of why they exist and what they do. This partnership between SSI and Allianz is a direct response to the various educational needs of refugee communities. Education Scholarships for individuals for the 2017 academic year are as follows:

- a) Primary school – five x \$500
- b) Secondary school – 19 x \$1,500
- c) Vocational education & training (VET) – 10 x \$3,000
- d) University – 2 x \$5,000
- e) Skills & qualifications recognition – grants of up to \$2,000 each from a \$20,000 fund.

As seen in many other case studies, outcomes are achieved when there is strong leadership, teamwork, mutual respect and a commitment between business, support agencies and the community to work together for people goals. When all act together, with integrity, everyone can win. Full time employment can then be a beautiful by-product of prospering communities and enriched lives.

<http://www.ssi.org.au/scholarships>

www.allianz.com.au/media/news/2016/new-scholarships-for-refugees

¹ Richard Parsons, June 2013 *Assessing the economic contribution of refugees in Australia*.

Appendix 4 - Case Study 4: Resettlement of 160 Karen refugees in Nhill Victoria - 'Small towns Big returns' AMES (Australian Multicultural Education Services) Research and Policy/Deloitte Access Economics 2015

http://www.karen.org.au/karen_people.htm

Introduction

This case study looks to identify and assess some of the key factors that underpinned the successful placement of 106 Karen refugees from (Myanmar) in the small, isolated agricultural town of Nhill in the Wimmera region of north-western Victoria. Nhill, like many small, regional towns throughout Australia was experiencing some of the negative impacts of an aging population. These impacts included very low unemployment and a significant decline in the available number of younger people of a working age. This situation was resulting in an ongoing decline in the town's economy and social health and wellbeing.

The catalyst for the refugee settlement initiative came from one of the towns largest commercial businesses. Luv-a-Duck is a family owned, vertically integrated, agribusiness that produces and processes duck products for both domestic and export markets.

Luv-a-Duck needed additional labour to support an expansion program. With both "economic and humanitarian motivations" Luv-a-Duck contacted AMES (Australian Migrant Education Service). AMES is a 'not for profit' organisation that works closely with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. AMES provide Job Services Australia (Job Active) specialist employment services to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) groups, Humanitarian Settlement Services and Adult Migrant Education Programs across Victoria. Through these services AMES established communication link between Luv-a-Duck and the large Karen community living in Werribee in Melbourne's west.

About the Karen people

The Karen people are an ethnic group living in South-East Asia. The Karen people are culturally and linguistically diverse. There are about seven million Karen people living in Burma (Myanmar), about half a million Thai-Karen whose ancestral villages are in Thailand, and smaller groups of Karen living in India and other South-East Asian countries. There are about 140,000 Karen refugees living in camps in Thailand, and about 50,000 Karen refugees have been resettled in America, Canada, Australia, and some European countries. Australia resettled the second highest number (approx. 11%; over 7000).

Most Karen people are subsistence farmers, living in small mountain villages, and growing rice and vegetables and raising animals and many have not had the opportunity to obtain higher levels of education. There are Buddhist monasteries in most Karen villages, and the monastery is the centre of community life. Karen monks are religious leaders but they are often also community leaders, school teachers, human rights activists, counsellors, herbal doctors, and care for orphans and homeless children. About one hundred and fifty years ago Christian missionaries started working with the Karen and now about 15% of Karen people are Christians. In the 19th century Britain colonised Burma and destroyed the Burmese monarchy. Burma regained its independence in 1948. Civil war soon broke out between the government, the Karen and other ethnic minority groups.

In 1962 the Burmese Army took power. While the military regime has changed names several times since, Burma continues to be a military dictatorship. The Burmese Army held elections in 1990 but refused to hand over power to the democratically elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

The military held new elections in 2011 for “discipline-flourishing democracy”. A quarter of the seats in the new parliament have been reserved for military officers, international observers and media were barred, and the outcome was widely regarded as ‘rigged’.

The transition from military regime to military-controlled "discipline-flourishing democracy" has made little difference in the life of villagers in Karen State or elsewhere in Burma.

Since 2013 there has been little fighting in Karen State, and there have been on and off ceasefire negotiations between the Burmese government and several Karen armed groups. There is still occasional fighting, extortion and forced labour by the Burmese Army. Karen State also now has a landmine problem matched only by Afghanistan.²

Relevance of this Case Study

Whilst the focus of this case study was essentially employment related, additional detail provided in the report concerning other, more intangible critical success factors adds greatly to the understanding of the challenge overall. The *Small Towns, Big Returns* report shows an economic benefit estimated to be \$41.5 million in net present terms based on modelling by Deloitte Access Economics. This is attributed, in the main, to the creation of 70.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs over a five-year period. The report however sheds much light on why the refugee resettlement initiative was successful and sustainable.

Of particular note in the report is the statement that while employment outcomes were critical, they were not in themselves sufficient to bring about the desired resettlement outcomes. Other contributing factors that benefited the employer and both the host and settlement communities included strong leadership, high quality preparation, good accommodation options, effective family support networks and high quality management of ‘cultural adjustment’ issues on both sides. When these community based factors were added to Luv-a-Duck’s strategic intent and combined economic and humanitarian motivations, success was inevitable.

Some of the key messages/learnings from this Case Study

Overall the *Small Towns, Big Returns* report captures much more than an initiative by an employer with labour supply needs. There is a ‘bigger picture’ here that relates much more to building sustainable, regional communities than to meeting the labour supply needs of a food processor. The Nhill/Luv-a-Duck story could apply to almost any regional town in Australia that host’s medium to large businesses with ongoing labour supply needs.

Australia’s ageing population is a reality as is the ever-declining numbers of young people of a working-age, being available to regional industries. The report clearly shows that reversing the impacts of our ageing population is possible when all business, host community and settlement community stakeholders work together as ‘one’ to achieve refugee resettlement outcomes. Clearly the achievement of 70.5 FTE positions over 5 years is impressive as is the economic impact of the increased labour supply, estimated to be \$41.5 million in net present value terms. There is, as the report states, a “story behind the numbers”.

The foundation stone of the Nhill/Luv-a-Duck “story” is leadership. Often opportunity arises from crisis. In the case of Luv-a-Duck the ‘crisis’ was insufficient labour supply to meet the needs of a business expansion program driven by a spike in domestic demand for product.

² http://www.karen.org.au/karen_people.htm

Strong leadership was displayed by Luv-a-Duck, the Nhill community, AMES (Adult Multicultural Education Services) and ultimately the Karen resettlement group. The key learning here was all leadership groups working together, respectfully.

Other critical success factors that contributed to the eventual success of the resettlement program include:

- a host community well prepared to accommodate refugees in a resettlement program.
- provision of access to accommodation
- organised support for new families
- effective management of 'cultural adjustment' on both sides
- preparing potential new settlers well for their new environment.

Resettlement of a single group of people from one ethnic origin assisted in decreasing the linguistic and cultural complexity of the exercise. The report indicates that the selection of the Karen group of people was attractive due to the fact that "As a people the Karen are strongly community oriented and place high importance on family and respect for elders and community leaders"³. More importantly for Luv-a-Duck and Nhill, the Karen people group "were attracted to the prospect of moving to a small rural town".

The decision by Luv-a-Duck to initiate a resettlement program started as a little idea in a small conservative community. Sustainable success was achieved when business, community, government resettlement support agencies and the targeted resettlement group, in this case the Karen people, worked together as 'one'.

If this working together as 'one' can be achieved in resettlement programs, the rewards will come. In the case of Nhill, population decline for the township was redressed, local services were revitalised, government funding for the town increased and social capital and prosperity across both communities were greatly improved.

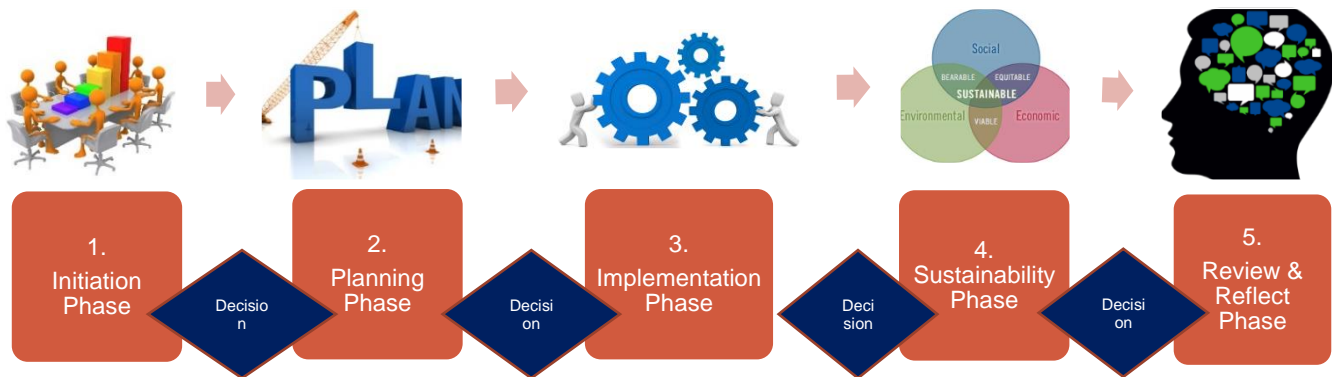
'Small towns Big returns' AMES Research and Policy/Deloitte Access Economics 2015

³ SE Region Migrant Resource Centre, May 2011, People of Burma in Melbourne; Perspectives of a Refugee Community

Appendix 5 - Developing a model to support the employment of migrants and refugees in the Australian meat processing industry at Thomas Foods International, Murray Bridge

The migrant and refugee employment model developed from the project pilot is as simple in its structure as it is complex in its detail. The model as shown in Figure 1 below is a phase gated process where the success of each phase is totally and wholly dependent upon the quality and effectiveness of the previous stage.

Figure 1



Initiation Phase



- Concept meeting attended by – GM Operations, Plant Manager, HR Manager, Plant HR Officer, Recruitment Officer
- Key Discussion Points
 - reaching of consensus on:
 - concept development
 - need, scope and approach
 - identification of potential project partners
 - project goals
 - resource requirements and potential return on investment.
 - project team members (internal and lead)
 - potential project stakeholders (external)
 - preliminary meeting with senior management to present concept
 - Senior Management approval in principle Yes or No.



Yes

Planning Phase



- commencement of draft project plan and workforce development plan
- business case for incorporation into business strategy and workforce development plan
- stakeholder identification and confirmation of availability (internal/external)
- project team formation (internal/external) e.g. employer, support agencies, community, other
- first preliminary project team meeting
- confirmation of project leaders (internal/external/overall)
- confirmation of common goal/s agreement between stakeholders,
- research, viability assessment, opportunity identification and programming
- resource requirements (funded/unfunded)
- potential target group/s identification
- cultural and communication considerations and strategies
- finalisation of project plan and presentation to senior management
- senior management project approval and resource allocation Yes or No.



Yes

Implementation Phase



- working with support agencies - preliminary selection of refugee group
- joint development of relevant employment and town/area information
- call for expressions of interest, initial target group meeting, registration
- presentation re company and workplace
- town tour of facilities such as accommodation, schools, religious centres, medical, retail etc
- identification of language and cultural special needs (interpreters)
- employer orientation including plant tour and general conditions of employment brief
- possible relocation process and support (if required)
- medicals and job suitability assessments
- English language requirements and support identification
- recruitment of suitable applicants
- supervisor fellow employee cultural awareness and other project specific training
- induction through modified processes
- commencement of employment
- implementation of 'buddy system' and early problem detection process
- supervisor and support agency monitoring
- regular supervisor/buddies/plant HR/plant management meetings and communication
- monitor progress and successful completion of probation period Yes or No.



Yes

Sustainability Phase



- address feedback from 'buddies', supervisors, HR, support agency staff and other early problem detection process
- monitor and manage impact of changes in work arrangements e.g. change of shifts
- record success stories
- continue with cultural awareness training as required
- progress new employees who achieve competency to better paid jobs
- recognise and promote champions
- decision to commence engagement with next group of migrant /refugee job seekers (Phase 3 repeated) Yes or No



Yes

Review and Reflect Phase



- reflect on project key learnings and workshop with key stakeholders
- incorporate corrective actions into process, training and work plans
- record all improvement actions and initiatives
- recognise and acknowledge key staff and project stakeholders as required.