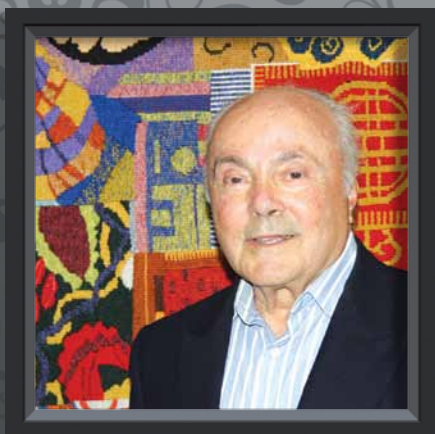




*South Eastern Region*  
***Migrant Resource Centre***  
annual report  
**09/10**



**Front cover photos:** Clients of the MRC

# Contents

Organisational Charter .....	4
Organisation Chart .....	5
Chairperson's Report .....	6
Board of Directors .....	7
Co-Located Organisations .....	7
Chief Executive Officer's Report .....	8
Staff/Volunteers .....	10
Highlights .....	12
Our Clients' Stories .....	16
MRC Programs .....	22
Settlement Services Data .....	24
Aged and Disability Services Data .....	27
Independent Auditor's Report .....	28
Statement by Members .....	29
Income and Expenditure .....	30

# Organisational Charter

## **Our vision**

All people are achieving their aspirations and participating fully in Australian society.

## **Our mission**

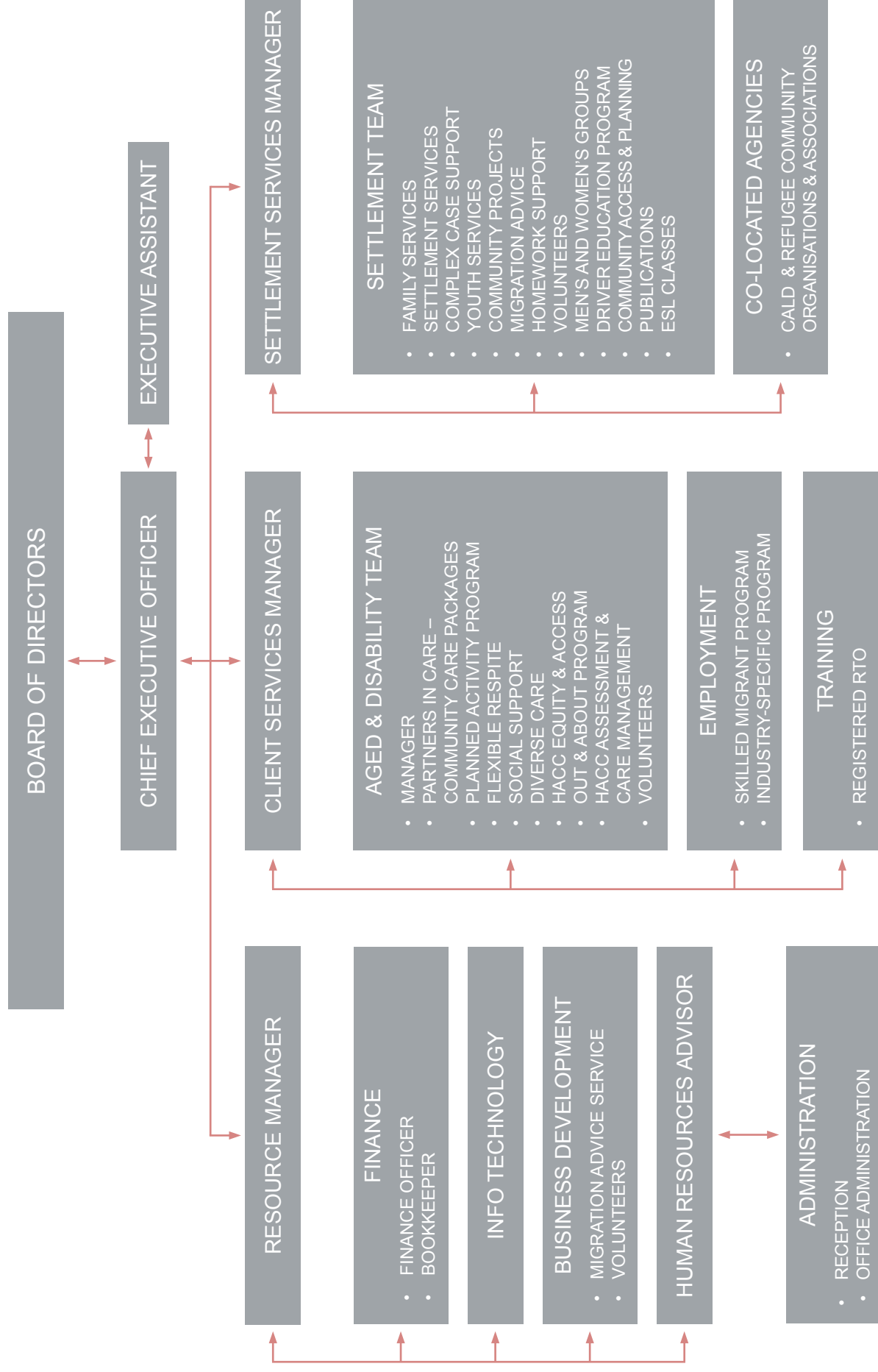
To empower and assist people who are migrants and refugees in Melbourne's south-east to establish themselves and achieve their aspirations in our culturally diverse community.

## **Our objectives**

In carrying out our mission, we endeavour to create the following circumstances –

1. Migrants, refugees and their communities will have access to culturally appropriate information and support services that assist and empower them to realise their aspirations.
2. The MRC will understand the support needs and aspirations of refugees and migrants and share this understanding with community agencies, business and governments.
3. Through effective advocacy, local, state and federal governments will be increasingly committed to promoting and upholding the human rights of migrants and refugees.
4. Governments, community agencies and business will be connected with, and increasingly responsive to, the culturally and linguistically diverse community of the south-east of Melbourne.
5. Cultural diversity in the south-east is promoted and celebrated.
6. The MRC will be a highly-regarded, creative, sustainable organisation with a culturally diverse workforce and strong connections with migrant and refugee communities.

# Organisation Chart





# Chairperson's Report

In my report last year, I mentioned that the Board of Directors was spending some time in reviewing its function as the governing body of the MRC so as to provide a better global vision of what the MRC stands for and the direction it takes in serving the community.

Consequently, throughout the past financial year the members of the Board have attended a series of workshops to develop a best practice governance model which would provide a basis for future policy making. In this process, the Board has looked at policy making, clarifying the role of the Board, developing effectiveness indicators, settings parameters within which the MRC is authorised to operate and, legal and financial risk management.

All in all, a very full year which I trust has provided all Directors with an opportunity to consider the needs and aspirations of the MRC and also to receive some professional benefit from the process.

Meanwhile, the multitude of community programs delivered by the MRC continue to be addressed in a culturally, sensitive and efficient manner, by a committed staff and under the guidance of our CEO, Jenny Semple. Our programs include a wide range of services designed to provide benefit to our clients and support to those who are in the process of establishing themselves in a new, and foreign, country. We have expanded our Aged Care services and opened a new office in Oakleigh for staff working in our Diverse Care program, and together with our offices in Dandenong and Narre Warren we seek to make ourselves available to the largest number of people possible.

I trust you will read about the work of the MRC in this Annual Report and gain greater insight into the wonderful efforts undertaken by our staff and volunteers.

I also wish to thank my colleagues, the Directors, for their dedication, vision and unstinting support of the MRC during the past year.

Thank you and congratulations to all,

Very Rev Dr Michael Protopopov OAM, JP

Chair

## Life Members



*SERMRC life members: Costa Azzam, Fr Michael Protopopov, Anton Nadarajah*

# Board of Directors

MEMBERS	ROLE
Very Rev Dr Michael Protopopov OAM, JP	Chairperson
Mr Brian Oates JP	Deputy Chairperson
Mr Anton Nadarajah JP	Secretary & Public Officer
Mr Ray Jopling	Treasurer
Mr Costa Azzam	Assistant Secretary
Mr Hafez Abdul Wahab	Member
Mr Ismail Demiri	Member
Mr Khalid Al-Dabbagh	Member (resigned)
Ms Anne Catanese	Member (resigned)
Ms Helen Cester	Co-opted member
Mr Sam Eichenbaum	Co-opted member
Mr Phil Dalling	Co-opted member
Ms Kerry Boland	Co-opted member



*Board Members and CEO*

## Co-Located Organisations

Afghan-Australian Women & Youth Association Inc  
 All Mesopotamian Christians Association Inc  
 Federation of Chinese Associations Inc  
 Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service Inc  
 Logomua Fono Samoa Inc  
 Lopit Community Association of Australia Inc  
 Narre Community Learning Centre  
 Nasir Community Association Inc  
 Somaliland Society of Australia Inc  
 South Eastern Region Melbourne Oromo Community Association in Victoria, Aust Inc  
 Sudanese Community Association of Australia Inc  
 Sudanese Disability Action Group in Victoria Inc  
 Ventana Hispana Inc (Spanish Window)  
 Victorian Arabic Social Services Inc  
 Victoria Legal Aid

# Chief Executive Officer's Report

This year has been an interesting one with new challenges and pursuits for the MRC together with many changes in the community sector. The main highlights for the year include the following:

Firstly, we opened our second branch office for the Diverse Care program in Oakleigh. This program is expanding and it was considered the best location for staff to focus on the inner southern part of the region to recruit workers and provide services to elderly clients. We were very pleased to have Mr George Lekakis, Chairperson of VMC to launch the office opening.

The City of Casey continues to be a focus for our settlement and aged care services and we were able to extend our settlement services with an additional part time worker located at our Casey office. We also held our second forum entitled, "Who's settling in Casey? The Afghan community." This was in response to the demand for information from local service providers. We are continuing to work with the City of Casey and several community agencies to secure funding from the federal and state governments to build a community centre in the City of Casey. This is yet to be achieved.

We were successful in securing funding from Department of Employment and Workplace Relations for a program to assist skilled migrants in obtaining work in their area of expertise and qualifications; we have focussed on the IT, Accounting and Engineering industries. This program provides training on Australian workplace industry specific information, resume writing and interview techniques together with mentoring from industry specific mentors. This assistance has proved very successful for participants. The MRC has also developed very strong links with professional associations which has been a bonus for the participants.

The Department of Health and Ageing provided funding for a new Community Partners Program with a focus on the Cambodian and Sri Lankan elderly communities. The aim of this program is to strengthen the links between the community members and all aged care services with a focus on Residential Care services. This program also provides information on particular communities for the staff in aged care and residential services.

The MRC also received funding from the Department of Education, via CMY to provide home work support programs within 7 schools in the Cities of Greater Dandenong and Casey. The MRC has run a program at Dandenong in partnership with Dandenong AMES for many years, so this additional funding has assisted in meeting the high demand for this program. We work in partnership with schools and have increased our team of volunteers tutors for these programs. Thank you to all the schools and volunteers for your commitment and work with these young people.

As part of Cultural Diversity Week we were very fortunate to have Kerry Boland (UNICEF consultant) visit the MRC and give a presentation on her work in Afghanistan. This was very interesting for staff and local agencies who attended. Kerry completed work on the movement of unaccompanied children from Afghanistan to western countries. The published report of this study is now available on the MRC website. Kerry has also joined the MRC Board and was an original founding member of the MRC so it is great to have her back on the Board.

We have continued to work with our partners including the Cities of Greater Dandenong and Casey, all other local community agencies and government agencies, private businesses, schools, refugee and migrant groups and associations, and our co-located agencies: who all assist with our work and support us in many ways to provide the best possible services to the migrants and refugee communities of the south east region. Thank you to all these councils, government departments, agencies, groups and individuals.



I have continued in my role as Assistant Secretary for the Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA), also as a member of the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council (RRAC) and as a board member of Refugee Council of Australia. (RCOA) These positions enable me to advocate and work for all refugees and humanitarian entrants on a strategic and national level.

Thank you to all our volunteers for their invaluable work in many of our programs. We really appreciate your time and commitment to our clients and this organisation.

A special thank you to all the staff, who complete their work on a daily basis, with passion and enthusiasm. We have achieved a great deal this year and we should be very proud. I find the changing environment in which we work exciting, challenging, sometimes frustrating but also rewarding . It keeps us busy anticipating and planning for the future. This agency has amazing and very special staff who all have their own stories to tell. Thank you to all staff for a year of great work and commitment to our clients and the MRC.

Thank you to the Board of Directors who have continued in their role as volunteers to ensure the MRC is governed in a professional and strategic manner. Thank you for the support and guidance you have provided to me over the past 12 months, in particular Father Michael and the executive members.

Finally, thank you to all our funding bodies, including Government Departments, for your continued support and confidence in this MRC. I look forward to continuing our work together with healthy and robust discussions and positive outcomes for our clients. Thank you also to our local councillors, state and federal Members of Parliament for your continued support and faith in the MRC and we look forward to working with you in the future.

I look ahead to the next year and beyond with energy and passion for the work we do and for the opportunities and challenges that will arise. Our aim is to continue to deliver the best possible service to all our clients .

Jenny Semple

CEO



*MRC Staff Christmas 2009*

# Staff

## Chief Executive Officer

Jenny Semple

## Managers

Client Services

Bill Collopy

Resources

Jacob Lee

Settlement Services

Sally Regan, Despina Haralambopoulos

Aged & Disability

Galina Kozoolin

Human Resources Advisor

Melanie Babet

## Team Leaders

Partners in Care

John Chu

HACC Services

Zlatica Bukarica

Diverse Care

Charlene Pereira

HACC Access & Equity

Anne Jones

Youth Services

Kate Jackson

Family Services

Kathryn Voutier

Community Projects

Deb Holmes

Employment

Sharon Smith

Complex Case Support

Tai Cao, Iulia Kramar

## Staff

Alice Watson

Hannah Jakubenko

Perla Mazie

Amir Omerovic

Hany Boulous

Ruot Marwang

Aurelia Fonceca

Iman Allaf

Salore Craig

Bernadette Cherry

Jacqueline Rice

Sanja Grahovac

Belthrand Habiyakare

Jarrold Laphthorne

Sarah Williams

Bianca Walsh

Jeanne Chippett

Shashi Rane

Cecilia Ocloo-Fiadonur

Jennifer Dunne

Sina Ah Lam

Champa Wattegamage

Jennifer Walker

Sitara Samaranayake

Chandravathana Rajkumar

Joanne Marron-Mill

Spencer Haines

Chenelle Jayawardena

Josephine Khoshaba

Sylvia Wan

Christine Green

Lammerdina McKeown

Tatjana Krneta

Claudio Olivares

Marilyn-Jane Greeff

Toshome Yabio

Danielle Morice

Marlena Kupczyk

Tumema Fuimaono

Delphine Bosquet

Mary Zettl

Vesna Stevcic

Emma Allitt

Mercy Thatiparthi

Vijaya Sundaramurthy

Evelyn Paguio

Naeem Yari

Vilma Maruzza

Felicita Sivasudasan

Nary Sam

Wai Yee Leong

Georgina Crawford

Natalia Micsunescu

Wendy Fox

Godette McGregor

Neela Kareemy

Yembeh Forna

Godwin Masuka

Pam Gilmore

Yumiko Powney

# Casual staff

Carmen Ingles  
Breschna Aschna  
Elena Phelan  
Farida Bezhan  
Freshta Nasir  
Frank Elliot

Kai Chung Lin  
Kamani Ilanperuma  
Mary Biel Reik  
Marzia Masood  
Mitra Amin  
Mohamed Mougadam

Myint Myint San  
Nishana Azadoi  
Ndaia Abu-Duhou  
Nyajany Dei Wal  
Nyawargak Dei Wal  
Parveen Babak

Sally Baldwin  
Sandra D'Souza  
Shirin Safi  
Sue Akcali  
157 Personal Care  
Workers – Diverse Care  
Program

# Volunteers

## Homework Support

Agnieszka Teoludzka  
Alice Tran  
Amanda Lim  
Amy Wong  
Anh (Trang) Nguyen  
Anna Li  
Blaga Vasilevska  
Chris Lawton  
Daniel Lloyd  
Evelyn Paguio  
Fiona Lynch  
Geoffrey Smith  
Gillian Mclean  
Gwen White  
Husna Azmutally  
Jade Sofra  
Jay Chauhan  
Jewelie Yu  
Kalvin Lim  
Kang Chuen Tat  
Laith Naeima Egab  
Lechuan Wen (David)  
Marita Lofthouse  
Max Waugh  
Perlita Navarro-  
Cabilangan  
Redu Ghaly  
Rosie Salalila  
Rupinder Kaur  
Ruth Jacob  
Sachintha Dharmasena

Sarah Branton  
Sarah Yousef  
Satbir Singh  
Sean Leoszko  
Thilini Kaushalya  
Thuong Le (Tom)  
Tina Au  
Todd Phillips  
Vimalata Faterpenkar  
Wen Shi  
Yasas Siriwardene  
Yifan Fang  
Zhang Zeyu

## Aged & Disability

Magdy Abdelkoudous  
Yohana Alvarez  
Nelida Barroso  
Catrine Bierkadar  
Bridgette Blackburn  
Graciela Cardozo  
Fazil Centiner  
Desiree Cerdor  
Sai Ngo Cheng  
Mauricette Clair  
Meg Cornell  
Antonio De Vito  
Manjusha Dewoo  
Maria Erdeg  
Vicky Falconer  
Blazena Gecova  
Ursula Girstun  
Anna Giummarra

Wagma Hashemi  
Amalia Hatzemihelakis  
Marie Hernandez  
Qinglan Hu  
Nita Ivancic  
Maria Janac  
Lina Jom  
Maria Jordanou  
Dilpreet Kaur  
Mujgan Kabakci  
Huseyin Kiyagan  
Antonia Legaie  
Suha Loli  
Alia Malaeb  
Connie Marateo  
Fatah Mohmand  
Tammy Nguyen  
Simarjit Pannu  
Luz Aquino Philip  
Radha Raju  
Richeel Reyes  
Ehsan Sadeghi  
Connie Scata  
Edgardo Senese  
Lucila Sison  
Vera Stankovic  
Torpekai Taniwal  
Roula Theodorakis  
Vlasta Turynski  
Bernardita Vera  
Jing Wang  
Delain Wijesekera

## Young People's Action Committee Members

Negin Rahmani,  
Simon Amosa Tilo  
Muzhda Faizi  
Paul Adcock  
Elaha Sahar Ashoor  
Heela Nader  
Mujgan Argand  
Ehab Khalifa  
Carina Bailey  
Zachary De Silva  
Tut Mut Lam  
Nida Ahusu  
Abbas Ahmadi  
Sofia Bakhtani

## Settlement Services

Lasantha Lokubandara  
Lina Chmait  
Severino Hobon

## Migration

Perlita Cabilangan  
Lorena Manuel  
Farhad Ahmadi

# Highlights

## Opening of Oakleigh branch office

The MRC launched its branch office for the overall care program, on Monday 12th April 2010. We have opened this office in Oakleigh due to the increasing demand for casual personal care workers in Melbourne's southern suburbs for CALD older people.



*George Lekakis, Chairperson of the VMC with SERMRC representatives Galina Kozoolin, Manager Aged & Disability Services, Very Rev Dr Michael Protopopov, Chairperson and Jenny Semple, CEO*

Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission, George Lekakis, officially opened the office, in the presence of members of the SERMRC board of directors, staff and invited guests.

The Diverse Care <sup>TM</sup> (now a registered trademark) program started in 1998 and by 2004 had 17 providers and 15 workers. The program has grown to now provide services to 49 providers and has 158 workers speaking a total of over 50 languages and dialects.

We recognise that service providers are becoming more culturally sensitive to acknowledging the value of matching the language of home care clients with the language of workers and so increasing the cultural understanding of all concerned.

The focus of Diverse Care for 2010-2011 is to establish even better links with local councils and service users in the southern suburbs, to target aged care employment needs of nursing homes and hostels, to expand our fee for service activities in home care; to increase and diversify our casual aged care workforce by employing bilingual workers and to increase the training and skills of our multi-lingual workforce.

# Highlights

## A Snapshot of a Diverse Care Worker

Janina is one of our active bilingual Direct Care workers she has been with Diverse Care since June 2001 and has provided client home care services. She is adept at working with clients who have a history of dementia, depression and disability.

Born in Poland, Janina speaks fluent Polish and Russian. She completed Year 12 and then studied statistics for two years in Warsaw, before migrating to Australia in 1992. Janina helped look after her ailing mother, which led her to pursuing a passion for working with and helping people like her mother who were frail and aged in the aged and disability sector.

The MRC encouraged Janina to pursue her Certificate III training in Community Services (Aged Care), which she completed in January 2002. Compassion and empathy are Janina's biggest strengths, besides being extremely dedicated, hardworking and organised. She has been a good advocate on behalf of her clients by providing timely feedback, making appropriate recommendations and essentially by keeping a close eye on her clients, ensuring they are well looked after.



*Janina Popielczyk*

## Skilled Migrants employment program

The MRC has been successful in securing funding from the Jobs Fund of Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to deliver a program aimed at assisting skilled migrants into work. Skilled migrants often miss out on opportunities for financial support and access to services that refugees and other migrants receive, and are doubly disadvantaged because they arrive with high expectations of fulfilling their professional careers, after having their qualifications recognised in Australia but lacking local experience. This program works with clients, professional bodies and employers to deliver individual case management for eligible participants. The program, is part of the Federal Government's economic stimulus package, focusing on the south-eastern growth corridor, and the clients have been in Australia less than 2 years, and arrive on Skilled Migrant visas. The aim of the program is to place skilled migrants into jobs appropriate to their professional background and qualifications. We have found that often the only component lacking is Australian experience, but this is a huge hurdle for many clients, who report that prospective employers are often reluctant to take a chance on them. The MRC provides clients with relevant training and Australian workplace experience as well as mentoring and employment advocacy. This is an exciting opportunity in a previously untried sector and we have been very pleased with the results.



*Participants of the Accounting Mentor Program with Robert Comelli (centre)*



# Highlights

## Beyond the Bell – Homework Support Program

The MRC has delivered a homework support service for many years, providing free tutoring by volunteers to students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds from Years 7 to 12 in subjects such as Maths, Science and English. Students also benefit from assistance with writing resumes, applying for part-time jobs and practising their written driver's test. The MRC's role is to recruit, train and support the volunteer tutors.



*Atefeh, at Gleneagles Secondary College with Homework Support Program  
Coordinator, Hannah Jakubenko*

This year we have been able to expand this program, thanks to funding received from the Centre for Multicultural Youth under their Learning Beyond the Bell program, via the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. We have also had enthusiastic and committed support from the City of Casey youth team, and generous financial assistance from St Agnes Anglican Church in Glenhuntly. From a program comprising only two locations we now have seven, with four in the City of Casey. Homework Support Program locations in Greater Dandenong are Dandenong High School, Noble Park Secondary College and AMES Dandenong. Locations in Casey are the secondary colleges of Hampton Park, Fountain Gate, Cranbourne and Gleneagles. The level of involvement by the teaching staff at Gleneagles in particular has surpassed all our expectations. The school has supplied volunteers from its teaching staff, including the principal and assistant principal. And the numbers of students attending have been extraordinary, vindicating our decision to invite the school to participate. Gleneagles has shown what is possible when schools and the community sector work effectively with dedicated teaching professionals. Congratulations to Gleneagles for their support and commitment to students and our homework support program.

# Highlights

## **Making a Move - Falls Prevention research.**

The SERMRC participated in the SEHCP project “Making a Move” which was funded by the state Department of Health. The project partners included CGD (fund holder), Vision 2020, Vision Australia, Dandenong Community Health, RDNS and this MRC. The focus of the project was to determine whether providing information and training to frail elderly on nutrition, foot care and vision in addition to exercise, reduced the incidence of falls. The outcome was inconclusive on this point. However it did identify the barriers which exist for older persons, particularly those from an ethnic background, and carers, to access assistance and services which could have a positive impact on their health outcomes.

We recruited 60 participants from Cambodian, Turkish, Arabic and Croatian backgrounds. The client outcomes that we experienced were substantial. Clients were very happy with the program, reporting improved health and confidence and requested the continuation of the service. This led to approval of another application to continue to deliver the program from the MRC which will commence as of November 2010.

Other benefits of this research project included strengthening agency partnerships in the project, continued joint delivery of the program outside the research project with Dandenong Community Health Service, and an expansion of the program by Croatian Catholic Welfare Association in partnership with Dandenong Community Health Service.



*Cambodian session.*

## **Forum on Afghan Arrivals in the City of Casey**

Due to overwhelming popular demand, we hosted a second session of the Afghan chapter of our Who's Settling in Casey series at the Balla Balla Centre in Cranbourne. A capacity audience of staff and volunteers from a variety of service providers attended the forum, which was supported by the City of Casey. In addition to speakers from the MRC, we introduced guest speakers from Narre Warren P-12 Primary School, City of Casey and AMES Settlement, who each outlined their respective responses to the arrival of many more members of the Afghan community to Casey. Topics covered included: recent history, demographic data, cultural awareness and service provision issues. Following a delicious Afghan lunch, two young Afghan community members spoke about their settlement experiences.

# Our Clients' Stories

## Who are our clients?

This MRC exists because of the need for services for migrants and refugees in this region. Our clients come from all corners of the earth. They include refugees, skilled migrants, aged and frail migrants, and volunteers assisting us with delivering services to migrants and refugees. People come into contact with the MRC for a variety of reasons and in a variety of ways. Some also become MRC members and some become Directors of the Board. Some clients may come to the office for one appointment, and others we can work with for a few weeks, months or years, depending on their needs and circumstances. Others volunteer in a different capacity or participate in our many programs and activities. The following clients offer a small selection of the MRC's large book of client stories.

## Chatura Gamage, client of the Skilled Migrants Employment program

"I am a civil engineer from Sri Lanka and have a BSc in engineering. I have worked in several countries including Dubai, Singapore and Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka I worked as a design engineer for 6 months. I then moved to Singapore and worked on projects such as Pulau Ubin and Pulau Tekong for a year, after which I moved to Dubai and was involved in the Discovery Gardens and Jumeirah Heights projects. I stayed there up until December 2009 and I moved to Australia in January 2010. Once I moved down under it was quite difficult to find a job as a civil engineer as I don't have local experience. Joining the Skilled Migrants Employment Program has given me a fantastic opportunity. I soon understood all the requirements of the program and the adjustments I had to make to my covering letter and my CV. I also learned about Australian workplace culture and the local labour market.

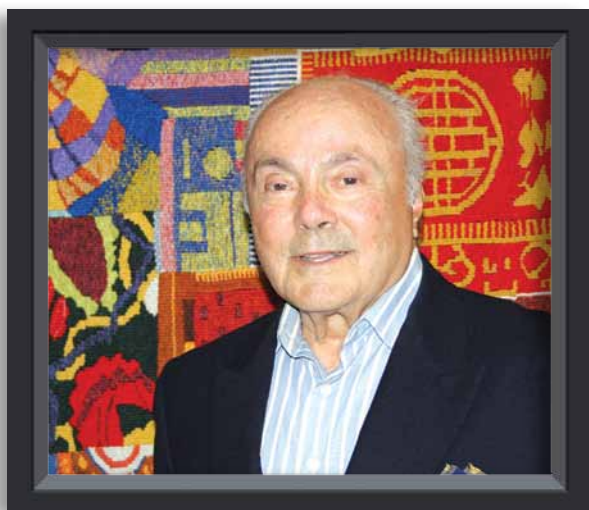
I had the opportunity to prepare for interviews through performing mock interviews. I got all the support that I expected from the program and the staff guided me to the stage of facing an interview. And I succeeded. I have now gained employment in the Dubbo City Council. Thanks MRC."





## **Edgardo Senese, SERMRC volunteer for 10 years, Aged Care**

Edgardo recently celebrated his 80th birthday. He arrived in Australia in 1976, a qualified podiatrist from Uruguay who had previously volunteered in multicultural organisations there. He retired in 1998 and commenced with MRC in 2000. Edgardo provides social support in our Spanish Planned Activity Group. He accompanies them on outings, provides meaningful conversation and companionship, distributes meals and takes part in games and activities. He also visits clients in their homes from Spanish-speaking backgrounds and other cultures. Edgardo says “it feels like I only started last year in this volunteering role, not a decade ago.” He likes to mix with people and make connections and he really enjoys helping others.



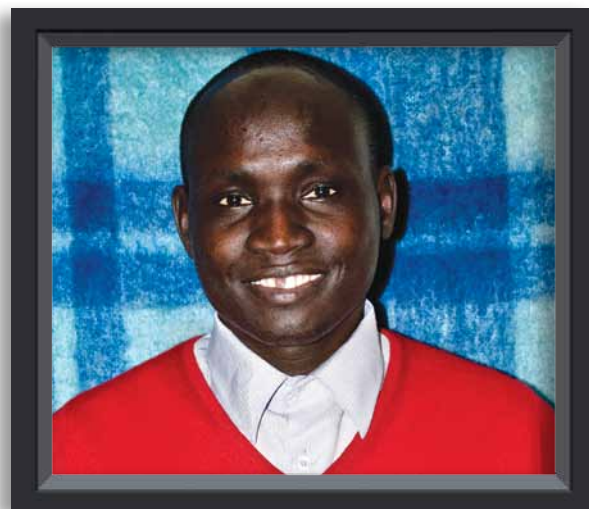
## **Saleha H, client of Homework Support program**

“I came to Australia when I was 12 with my mum and family. I was so excited, as I hadn’t seen my dad for many years. I attended Noble Park English Language School. I really liked it because there were a lot of other Afghan students like me. I started high school a year later and found it very difficult. I changed schools in 2008 and found the homework even harder. I heard about the Homework Program run by the MRC from some friends at Dandenong High, so I thought I would go along. I began attending the program regularly and found it very useful. There were helpful tutors who worked with me to finish my homework. They taught me things I hadn’t learnt at school. I learnt about essay structures which has been especially helpful for English and my exams. The program has given me more confidence at school. I now attend three times a week and know I do better at school because of this. Now I dream to be a lawyer or study medicine to help others.”

# Our Clients' Stories

## **Santa Armato, client of Planned Activity program (PAG)**

Santa is an active participant of PAG and has been attending since 2001. She enjoys the exercises, singing, dancing, socialising and other various activities at PAG and looks forward to attending each week. She has made many friends from different cultures and has benefited in learning about the various cultures since attending. Santa has also recently participated, along with other PAG clients, in supporting KOGO (Knit-One-Give-One) by knitting and crocheting scarves, beanies and blankets, which are then distributed to the homeless. She has commented: 'I enjoy this as it makes me feel that I am still doing valued work for the community.' In recognising Santa's talent for crocheting, The MRC's PAG staff encouraged and supported Santa in submitting a crotchet blouse in the Dandenong Show 2009, in which she won 1st prize in the "Over 80's" category. Congratulations Santa.



## **Obura Gringi, client of Driver Education program**

Obura came to the MRC in October 2008 looking for help to obtain his driving licence. On arrival from Sudan, he was referred to our driver education project. On completion of the course he was awarded a certificate and five free driving lessons. After the driving lessons with a professional instructor, and practice from friends with a full licence, he returned to the MRC to explain how the project has helped him. He said he had not known the road laws and traffic regulations and he needed practice on the hazard test before attempting it. MRC's project worker held individual practice sessions with him for two weeks, plus reading materials for take home practice. After two months a grateful Obura returned to the MRC with his driving licence to thank the worker for all his help and support. The program has equipped Obura with valuable information needed in settling into his new country. He will encourage his community and friends to take part in the program. Obura has since secured a part time job, and referred many of his community to the program. He recently offered himself as a volunteering interpreter if we need one.





### **Lien Phan, client of Flexible Respite program**

Lien Phan is taking care of her son who has autism. She has been a participant of our Flexible Respite Program since February 2002. She was also a devoted carer to her parents for many years. Lien believes that it's a family's responsibility to take care of elderly parents at home. She has taken the same attitude to her disabled son. She has faced many challenges along the way including tiredness, isolation and lack of resources, and she rarely has had the luxury of having a cup of coffee with a friend.

However, when her caring role allows, Lien enjoys attending carers' monthly meetings and outings. These meetings provide not only an opportunity for her to share her experience with other carers but she also benefits from information sessions especially those that educate carers how to care for themselves.

Socialisation with others of like interest provides Lien with a sense of belonging and a respite from her caring role. Lien is always encouraged to actively participate and to contribute towards the program and she often likes to express her gratitude to MRC.

Due to her caring role, it was never easy for her to have time for herself, but as Lien says: "Now I sometimes take time out from being a carer and just relax."

### **Thet Soe Lwin, client of Family Relationships program**

Thet Soe Lwin arrived in Australia from Burma in July 2007 with his family on a refugee visa. They settled in Noble Park and welcomed another son into their family in 2008.

Thet was referred to the MRC family support program by AMES at the end of January 2010. By that time Thet had separated from his wife and required assistance with parental responsibility and issues regarding his two younger sons aged seven and two years old. Staff assessed his needs with the aid of interpreters, and offered emotional support regarding relationship issues, and assistance: liaison with AMES employment, referrals to Centrelink, and information regarding housing and legal issues. Shortly afterwards, Thet and his sons enjoyed participating in the Dads' School Holiday Program with MRC and Southern Health representatives.

In May 2010 Thet managed to secure full time employment with a packaging company in Dandenong. He is very happy there but has decided to look for further employment opportunities that would afford him overtime and more flexible hours. The MRC has consequently assisted Thet by editing and proof reading his resume and assisting in writing his job application letter. His now eight-year-old son is living with him. Therefore, staff at the MRC are assisting Thet to access Centrelink payments for the care of his son, and has provided further liaison with a Legal Aid solicitor for ongoing issues. Thet has thanked staff at the MRC for their continued support.



# Our Clients' Stories

## **Lasantha Lokubandara, SERMRC volunteer, Settlement, Housing Club**

"I came to Australia in 2007 as an international student, selecting community welfare as my field of study. I managed myself to finish my studies. After that, when I was looking for some avenues to get into the workforce in Australia, I found the MRC a suitable place to explore my abilities, creativities and opportunities for a new life. I started as a volunteer at the MRC in December 2009 as a settlement and housing volunteer. I helped with housing issues, particularly office of housing application procedures, and other support services. That helped me to gain valuable knowledge about housing and homelessness in Melbourne. As a housing club volunteer I got the opportunity to assist clients to find private rental properties, filling applications, talking to real estate agents on behalf of clients, budgeting and offering other services through the housing club."



"I positively implemented all the technological expertise I have gained as a computer professional in Sri Lanka into this humanitarian industry. Moreover, this club gave me an opportunity to identify the consequences of homelessness. This information guided me through the continuous improvement process to deliver a solution-focused approach to client issues. After six months, I began applying for professional jobs. My supervisors and colleagues encouraged and supported me. As a result I applied for jobs related to homelessness. I got a job from my first interview in a prominent organisation working with homeless people in the south east of Melbourne. This achievement is a breakthrough for all people wanting to enter the social welfare sector in Australia. As an international student, I continuously work towards my ambitions and objectives. My Volunteer experience at the MRC has opened doors for my life. I am proud about myself because I have fulfilled and achieved the Australian migration policy to bring productive professionals into Australia and give back to the community. I must give my gratitude to all SERMRC staff for their support, especially Sarah and Natalia who guided me in the right direction. Without this support I would not be able to achieve my success."





## Awatif Ibrahim, client of Settlement program

After fleeing Sudan and living in Cairo for a while, Awatif Ibrahim and her three children arrived in Australia in August 2004 to reunite with her husband. The family settled in Dandenong. Three years later, Awatif and her husband separated.

In 2008, Awatif and her children went back to Sudan for a while and on her return to Australia, she was given a notice to vacate her rental property as the landlord wanted to put it up for sale. She came to the MRC for assistance. A worker advocated on her behalf with WAYSS for emergency accommodation for the family. Whilst attending the MRC Housing Club, Awatif was later able to secure another rental property with the help of an MRC worker.

As a single parent, Awatif experienced huge financial difficulties and five months later found herself and her family homeless once again. The MRC was successful in securing her and her family a Transitional Property. The worker filled out an Early Housing application form, advocated on her behalf for utility relief and also assisted her with obtaining a fridge and washing machine.

Awatif currently still resides in the Transitional Property and is linked into the MRC's Housing Club to actively seek private rental again. She participates in our Beading Class and has enjoyed going on MRC excursions.

"Everyone is good to me here. They are my second family because I have no husband and no family here; only me and my children. I bring my friends here and they fix it straight away"

## Mohammad Nazeeruddin, Migration Advice client

Begum Mahmuda Naima was on a first stage temporary partner visa (309) sponsored by her husband Mohammad Nazeeruddin. In June 2008, DIAC asked them to provide additional evidence within 28 days as part of the second stage partner visa processing.

At the time, Begum was still in Bangladesh due to an injury sustained in an accident. With time running out and finding it hard to provide the evidence, he came to the MRC for migration advice. He heard from the community that the MRC could provide quality service to refugees and low income earners and the service fee was very competitive. After the first meeting, the migration agent contacted DIAC immediately and requested an extension to the deadline.

Further meetings were held between Mohammad and the migration agent to prepare for the evidence. The MRC explored different aspects of the couple's circumstances including nature of the household, communication pattern and emotional support, social recognition as well as sharing of financial resources. Mohammad was then advised to collect relevant documents and pictures while the migration agent filled out the forms and prepared a statement regarding their relationship and on-going mutual commitment to share life as husband and wife.

After the evidence was submitted in late September, the MRC kept liaising with DIAC and following up additional requests. Eventually in January 2010, Begum was granted a permanent partner visa. Mohammad and Begum said, "MRC has efficient, hardworking and highly competent staff". They wished the MRC well in the provision of future services and hope it will continue to provide assistance to refugees and low income earners.



# MRC Programs

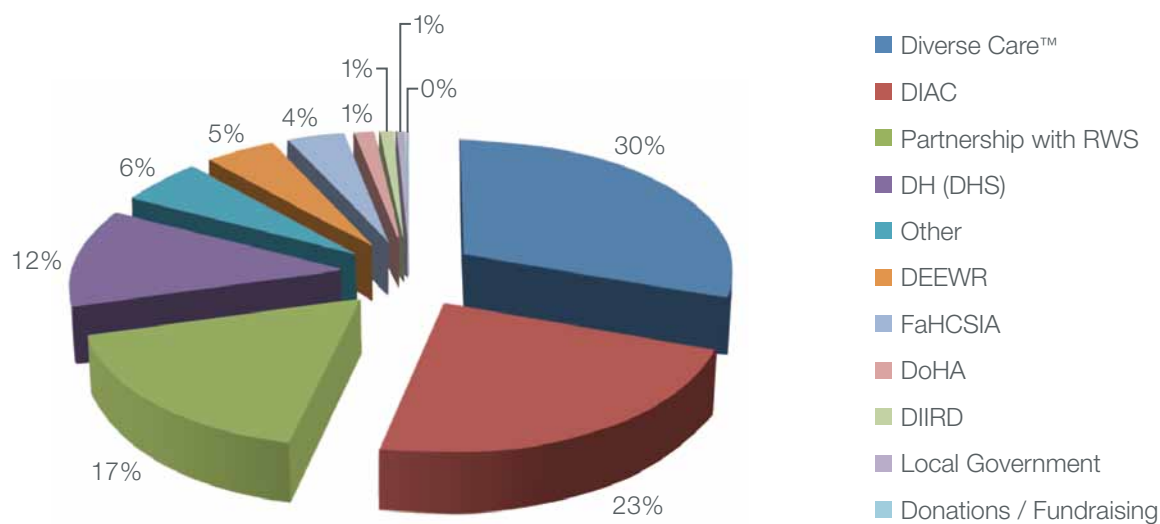
Settlement Services	Funding Body
Settlement Grants Program - to provide information and referral as required for refugees and humanitarian entrants.	DIAC
Refugee Minor Program - to facilitate family conferencing meetings with the minor, the family and DHS to ensure smooth transition for family and minor.	DIAC
Migration Advice - to provide advice to refugee and humanitarian entrants.	DIAC and MRC
Driver Education - to provide information to refugees on driving, road rules and role of the police and other related matters, provide limited driving lessons.	DIAC
Youth Settlement Program - to provide information and referral to services as required for refugee youth, provide activities and recreation, and work with schools and other youth agencies.	DIAC
Youth Foundations Victoria - to provide leadership development opportunities for youth in Narre Warren South and Hampton Park.	Office for Youth /DPCD / Bendigo Bank Group
Homework Support Program - to provide young people with volunteer tutors to assist in homework after school. Social activities for young people.	CMY/ DEECD MRC and donations from St Agnes Church
Access and Equity Program - to work with groups, communities and associations with the aim of providing refugees with better access to services, information sessions and forums to service providers, providing relevant material and data to service providers and govt as requested.	DIAC
Family Relationships for Humanitarian Entrants Program - to provide family counselling, parent support and parenting across cultures sessions.	FaHCSIA
Kar Kulture - to provide the opportunity for refugee youth and Australian born young people to meet and work together on restoring a vehicle which is then used for driving practice.	VicHealth
Multicultural Playgroup - to provide a playgroup for children under 4 years of age and their parents.	City of Casey
Refugee and CALD Youth Mentor Program - to match refugee young people with peer mentors and facilitate one on one and group activities.	Attorney-General's Department
Multicultural Sewing Centre - to provide lessons in sewing for refugee women.	MRC and City of Greater Dandenong
Tax Help program - to provide assistance via trained volunteers for migrants to complete their taxation papers for the year.	ATO
English language classes - to provide ESL to eligible participants.	ACFE
Refugee Action Program	VMC / SCAAB
Active Children and Families Project	Mission Australia, Communities for Children, FaHCSIA

# MRC Programs

Aged Care Services	Funding Body
Diverse Care - to provide qualified bilingual bicultural workers to provide personal care in the home of elderly CALD clients.	DHS and MRC
Community Aged Care Packages - to provide case management to high need elderly clients to assist them in remaining independent and living in their own homes for as long as possible.	DoHA
Access & Equity - to improve the uptake of aged care services (with a focus on HACC) and assist aged care agencies to be more culturally responsive, especially targeting Arabic, Tamil and Vietnamese communities.	DH
Social Support - to provide a friendly visiting program to visit elderly CALD clients to prevent social isolation.	DH
Community Partners Program - to create partnerships between aged care services, specific ethnic communities and the MRC, to improve access to culturally appropriate aged care services.	DoHA
Planned Activity Groups - to provide centre based recreational activities and meals for CALD clients, and provide transport for 6 groups of these clients.	DH
Flexible Respite - to provide support and activities for carers, facilitate a support group, and respite when required.	DH

Employment Services	Funding Body
Jobs Fund Skilled Migrants Employment Program - to provide training, pre-employment preparation, referral and mentoring for recently arrived skilled migrants in Australian professions with skills in demand.	DEEWR
Workforce Participation Partnerships - to provide assistance and advice to jobseekers, refugees and skilled migrants, with the aim of finding employment.	DIIRD

# Funding Sources

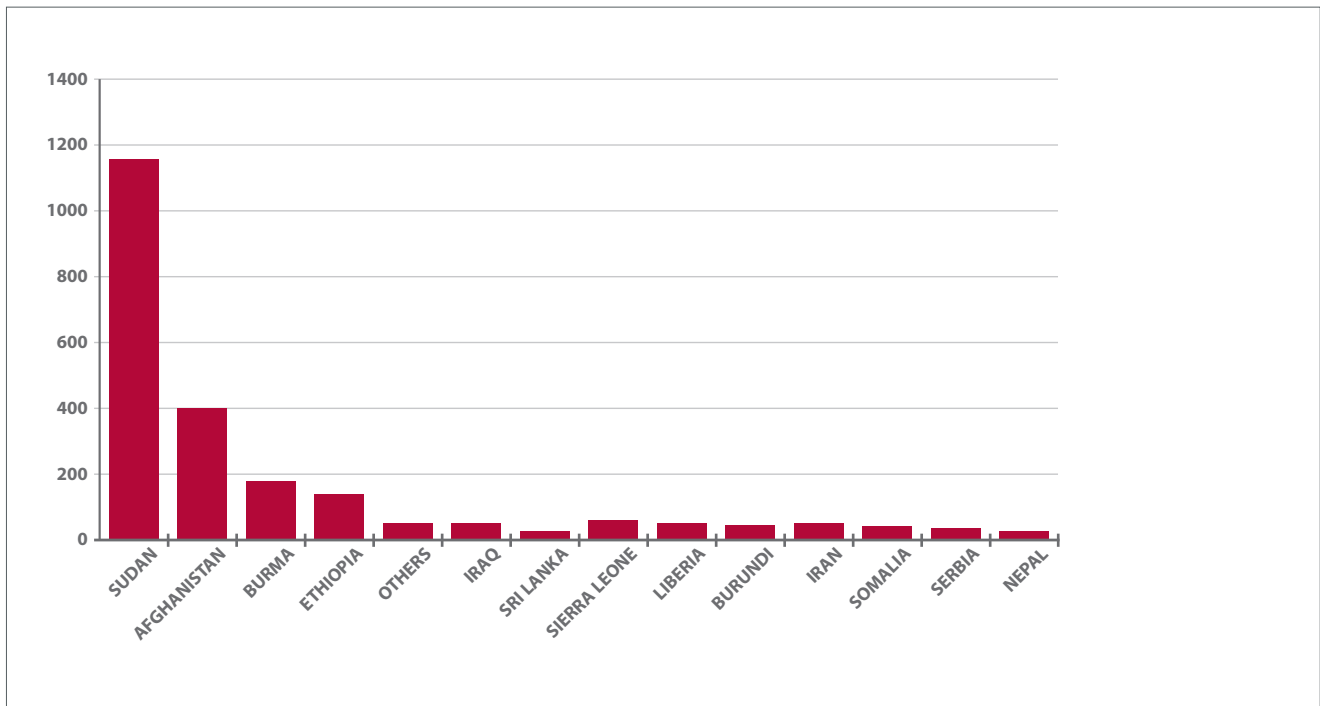


*'Other' includes: Attorney-General, ACFE, DPCD, VMC, Office for Youth, Vic Health, Legal Services Board, CMY, Mission Australia, Connections, Commonwealth Respite, AMES*

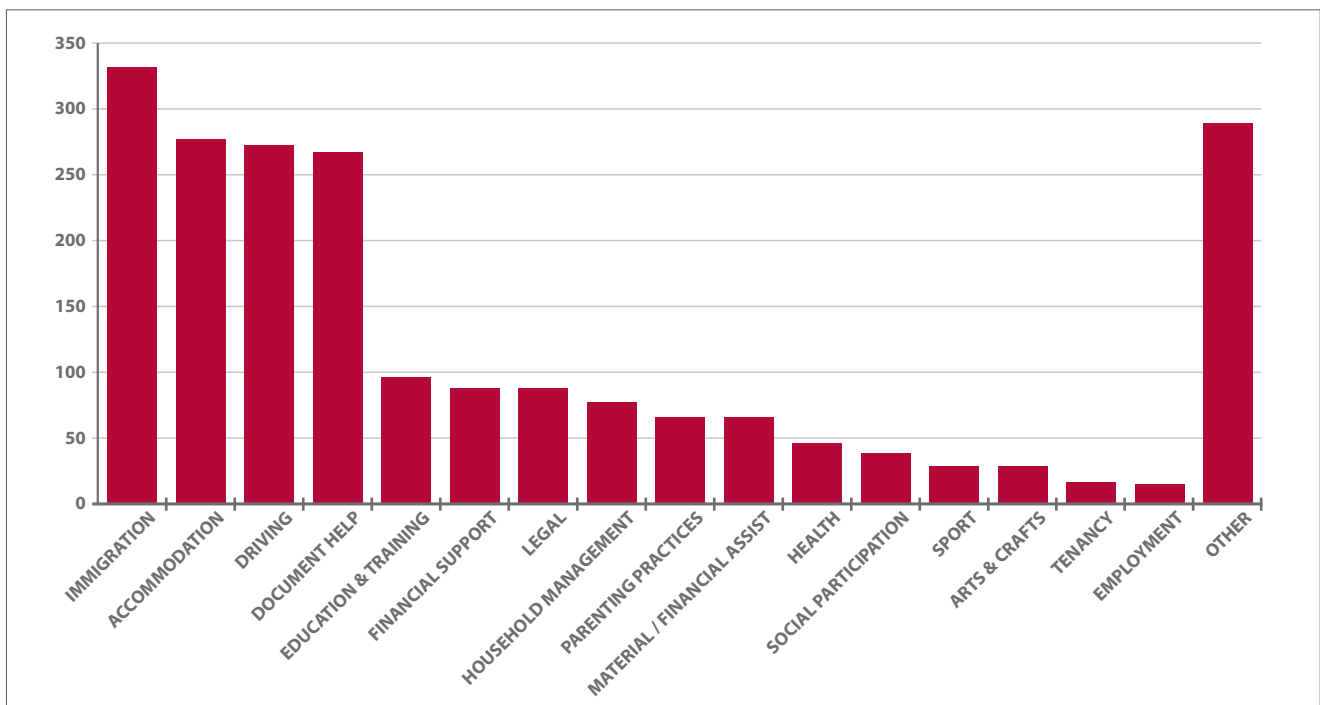


# Settlement Services Data

## Settlement Services



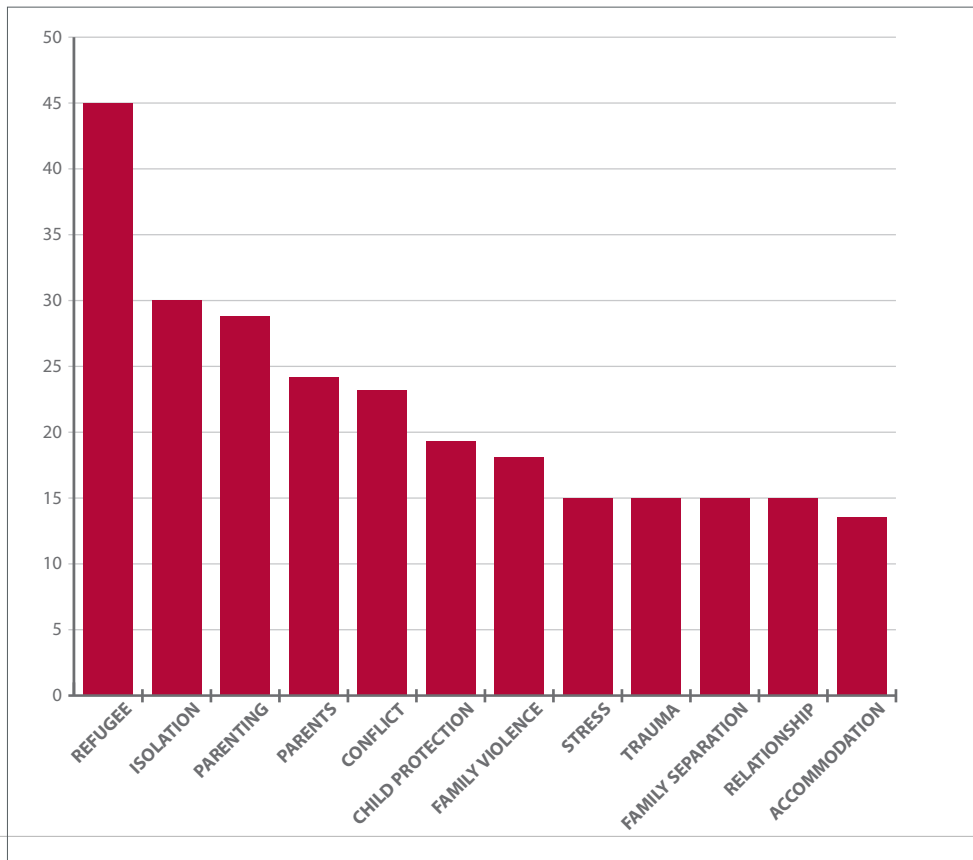
Contacts for Settlement Services by country of birth. Contacts in Driver Education (751 clients were Sudanese, Ethiopian and Other African), Lifeskills settlement program, Youth program – Source: OSCAR



Contacts for Settlement Services by type of enquiry – Source: OSCAR

# Settlement Services Data

## Family Relationship Services

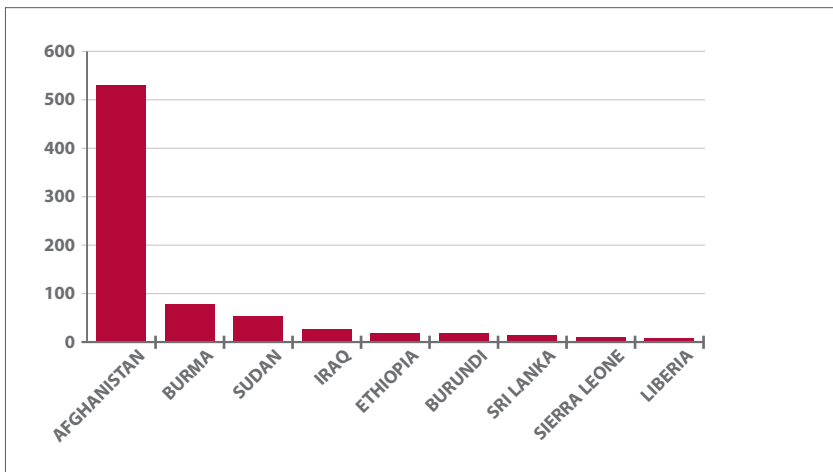


Top 12 types of enquiry for clients of Family Services – Source: FRSHE, FaHCSIA

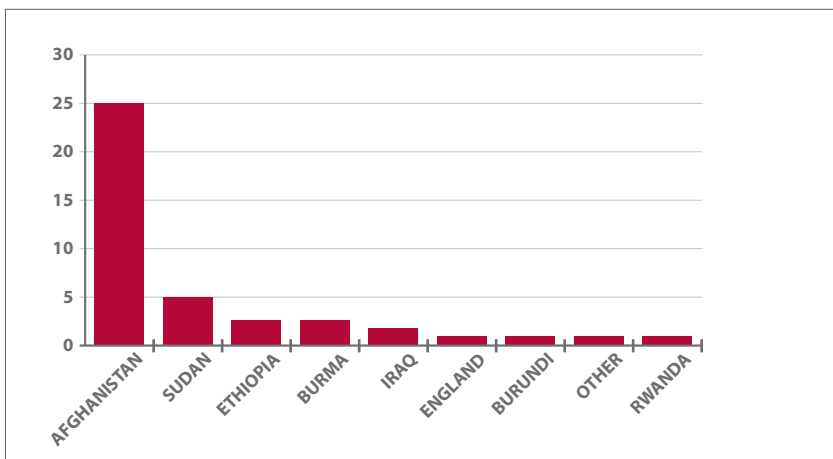
## Sub-totals

Settlement client contacts (casework only)	1,078
Family services clients	533
Complex Case Support clients	26
Refugee Minor Program clients	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,661</b>

# Migration Advice Service Data

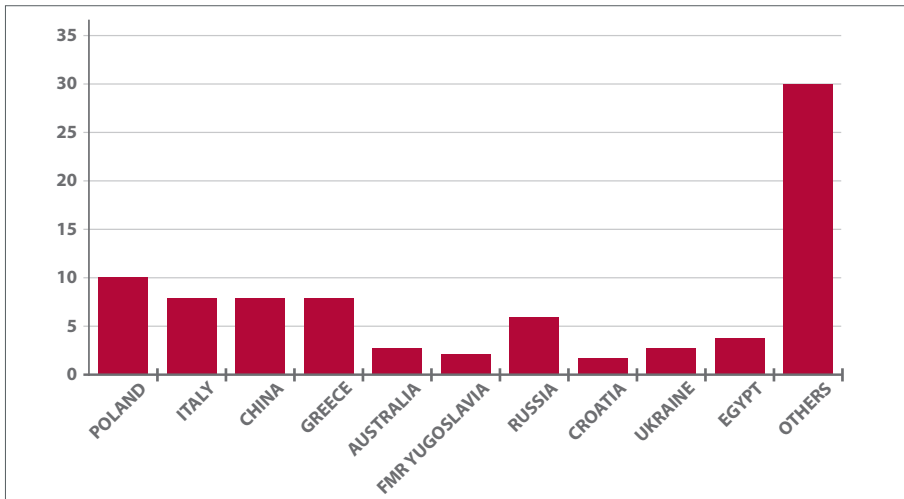


Free Migration Advice Service to humanitarian entrants by country of birth – Source: MRC

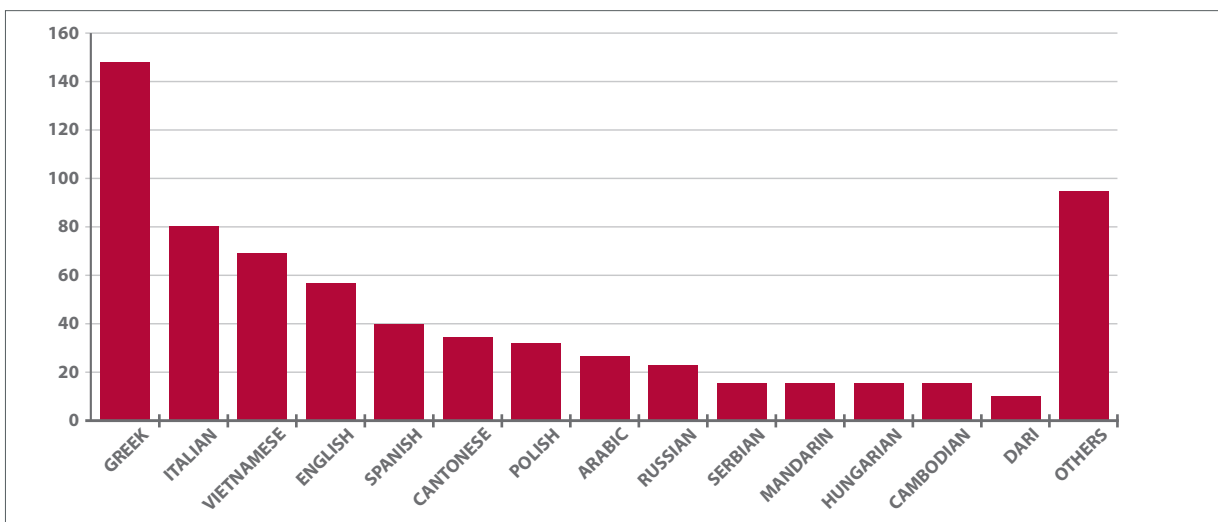


Fee-for-service Migration Advice Service by country of birth – Source: MRC

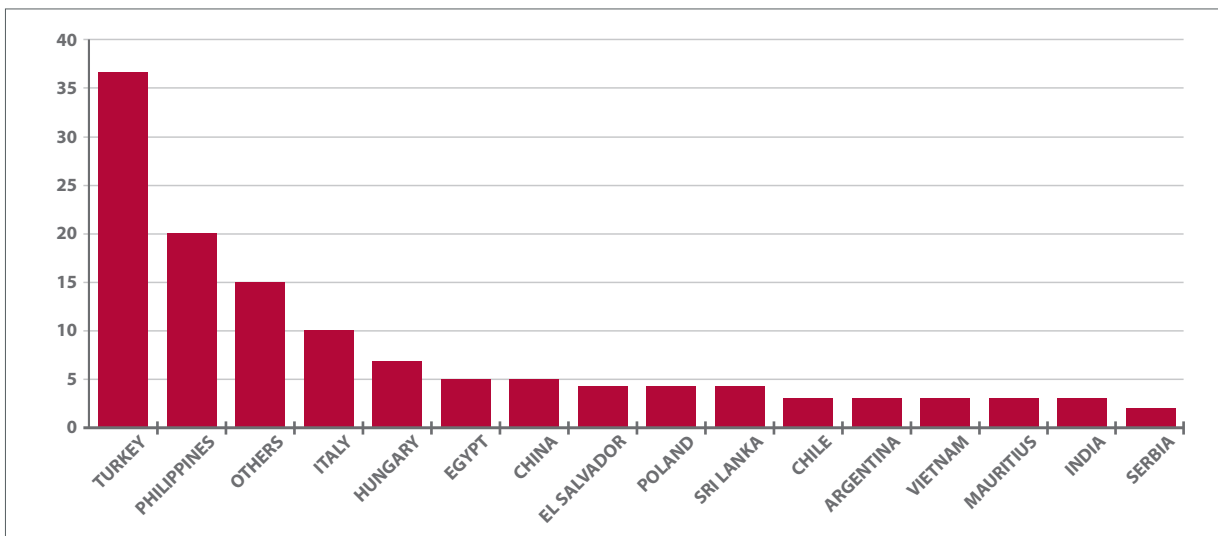
# Aged and Disability Services Data



Community Aged Care Packages, by country of birth – Source: CareManager



Diverse Care workers, by languages spoken – Source: CareManager



Home and Community Care – PAG clients, by country of birth – Source: CareManager

Partners in Care = **84**, HACC: **126** (PAG) + **65** (Flex Respite) + **62** (Social Support) + **81** (Access & Equity) = **334**, Diverse Care = **686**. **Aged & Disability team – total clients = 1,104**

# Independent Auditor's Report

Independent auditor's report to the members of South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre Incorporated

## Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report of South East Region Migrant Resource Centre Inc. (the association) which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2010 and the income statement and statement of recognised income and expenditure, and cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the Board.

## Board's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Board of Directors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Associations Incorporations Act Victoria 1981. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

## Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditors consider internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

## Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

## Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion:

The financial report of South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre Inc. is in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act Victoria 1981 including:

- i: giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2010 and of its performance and its cashflow for the year ended on that date; and
- ii: complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Associations Incorporation Act Victoria 1981.



Name of Firm

MORTON WATSON & YOUNG  
Chartered Accountants



Name of Partner

GRAEME A. HALLAM, F.C.A.

Address

51 Robinson St, Dandenong Vic 3175

Dated this

18th October 2010



# Statement by Members

## STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

In the opinion of the Board of Directors the financial report as set out on page 30 of the annual report.

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre Inc as at 30 June 2010 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:



**Chairperson:** Very Rev Dr Michael Protopopov OAM, JP



**Treasurer:** Ray Jopling ASA, AIM

Dated this 15th day of October 2010

# Income Statement

for the year ended 30th June 2010

	Note	2010 \$	2009 \$
Revenue	2	6,627,965	6,084,848
Other revenues	2	-	(1,580)
Administration expenses		(162,139)	(135,352)
Communication expenses		(64,307)	(47,916)
Depreciation expenses	3	(49,624)	(29,568)
Employment expenses	3	(4,370,065)	(3,933,362)
Internal expenses		(691,749)	(683,886)
Occupancy expenses		(325,027)	(213,265)
Program related expenses		(603,576)	(494,378)
Travel and vehicle expenses		(170,876)	(149,202)
Other expenses		(15,941)	(14,377)
<b>Profit before income tax</b>	3	<u>174,661</u>	<u>381,962</u>

# Balance Sheet

as at 30th June 2010

	Note	2010 \$	2009 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	372,996	522,437
Trade and other receivables	5	728,342	750,429
Financial assets	6	1,812,392	1,938,814
Other assets	7	22,245	22,063
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>2,935,975</u>	<u>3,233,743</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	8	168,918	90,031
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>168,918</u>	<u>90,031</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<u>3,104,893</u>	<u>3,323,774</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	9	296,061	297,698
Short-term provisions	10	266,013	189,288
Other current liabilities	11	1,038,511	1,536,997
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>1,600,585</u>	<u>2,023,983</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Long-term provisions	10	179,317	149,461
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>179,317</u>	<u>149,461</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<u>1,779,902</u>	<u>2,173,444</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>1,324,991</u>	<u>1,150,330</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained earnings	12	1,324,991	1,150,330
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<u>1,324,991</u>	<u>1,150,330</u>

# Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30th June 2010

	Note	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2008</b>		768,368	768,368
Profit attributable to members		<u>381,962</u>	<u>381,962</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2009</b>		1,150,330	1,150,330
Profit attributable to members		<u>174,661</u>	<u>174,661</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2010</b>		<u>1,324,991</u>	<u>1,324,991</u>

# Cashflow Statement

for the year ended 30th June 2010

	2010 \$	2009 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Grants & income	6,053,768	5,421,743
Payments to suppliers and employees	(6,301,245)	(5,576,986)
Interest received	91,853	128,719
Donations received	<u>8,270</u>	<u>5,635</u>
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<u>(147,354)</u>	<u>(20,889)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment	-	10,455
Proceeds from sale of investments	126,425	-
Payments for plant and equipment	(128,511)	(36,031)
Payments for investments	<u>-</u>	<u>(166,165)</u>
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<u>(2,086)</u>	<u>191,741</u>
<b>Net decrease in cash held</b>	(149,440)	(212,630)
Cash at beginning of financial year	<u>522,437</u>	<u>735,067</u>
Cash at end of financial year	<u>372,997</u>	<u>522,437</u>

A complete set of accounts is available on request at the MRC

## MRC Gratefully Acknowledges:

St Agnes Anglican Church - Glenhuntly, Queen's Fund, George V Smith, Diana A Ajak,  
Calvary Silver Circle, Out on a Limb and several anonymous donors

To make donations to the SERMRC, please visit our website at [www.sermrc.org.au](http://www.sermrc.org.au)  
Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible.  
All donations will help us to continue providing services for migrants and refugees.

*South Eastern Region*  
***Migrant Resource Centre***

Level 1, 314 Thomas St Dandenong Victoria 3175  
Phone: 9706 8933  
Fax: 9706 8830

60 Webb St Narre Warren 3805  
Phone: 9706 8933  
Fax: 9705 6977

3 / 24-28 Chester St Oakleigh, 3166  
Phone: 8574 4600

E-mail: [sermrc@sermrc.org.au](mailto:sermrc@sermrc.org.au)  
Website: <http://www.sermrc.org.au>