

Queensland Strategic Settlement Committee (QSSC)

Meeting Communiqué 6

10 July 2024

The Queensland Strategic Settlement Committee (QSSC) met on Wednesday, 10 July 2024.

Members in attendance:

- Julie McDougall (DCSSDS)
- Ross Alcorn (QLD Health)
- Scott Bray (TAFE QLD)
- Anna Rolandsen (ECCQ)
- Shane Klintworth (MCCGC)
- Dr Tariro Mutongwizo (QCOSS)
- Andrea Obeyesekere (Centacare FNQ)
- Liz Gordon (QPASTT)
- Chitra Herft (DHA)
- Andrew Kiley (DHA)
- Jane Mok (SPG)
- Tra Nguyen (TMSG)
- Gabby Cabral da Rocha Weiss (Refugee Health Network QLD)
- Christine Castley (Multicultural Australia)
- Rose Dash (Multicultural Australia)

Guest Speakers:

- Fardowsa Yussef (FLAG Youth leader)
- Asmeret Kesete (Case Worker, MCCGC)
- Sadiki Mwinyi (TMSG)
- Andrew Barker (CEDA)
- Nathan Gallagher (QFCC)

Summary of Discussions and Outcomes from the QSSC Meeting – 10 July 2024

Stories from the ground: Refugee and Migrant Youth in Queensland

QSSC heard from youth representatives and youth leaders on their experiences of settlement and growing up in Queensland. Young leaders from different settlement regions across Queensland (Brisbane, Logan, Gold Coast and Townsville) shared their settlement experiences, challenges and opportunities. They spoke strongly from their personal experiences of settlement and as youth leaders on behalf of their peers, highlighting:

- The importance of building a sense of belonging for our children and young people.
- Settlement challenges that impede the development of this sense of belonging including: housing pressures, the often overwhelming and challenging experiences in schools, lack of opportunities and places to build connections – including through sport, and mental health and wellbeing concerns. They also noted concerns around young people taking adult responsibilities (for example, as interpreters for their parents) and a lack of information or clarity about the range of pathways available to young people (to plan for their futures and to build connections).
- Youth leaders offered suggestions and ideas to support young people and their settlement in Australia, including – specific orientation for young people arriving in Australia, consideration of ways to support young people with their mental health and wellbeing, supporting youth to understand the pathways to securing their future and achieving employment, and importantly, building a sense of belonging within young people.
- Nathan Gallagher (Child Rights Lead, QFCC) – spoke to the rights of children and young people in the context of growing up in Queensland. The upcoming Queensland *Child Rights Report 2024* will include a spotlight on migrant and refugee children and young people in Queensland. This spotlight will include the direct voice of migrant and refugee children and youth in QLD. The report looks at learning and exploring ways to best monitor and report on child rights from a state level (looking at four themes - *commitments* (in policy, legislation), *efforts*, *results* (what has been achieved) and *opportunities*).

Key themes discussed at the meeting:

1. **Settlement Planning FY 2024-25:** the Refugee and Humanitarian Program remains at 20,000 places in 2024-25 and Queensland is expecting to host a similar percentage of humanitarian arrivals as previous years. QSSC discussed the ebb and flow of arrivals across different (humanitarian) settlement regions in Queensland (including, secondary settlement locations) impacting ability of local services to plan and deliver optimal services.
 - QSSC deliberations noted ways to discuss planning for new humanitarian settlement locations – starting with ways to review and understand current settlement sites and locations for their capacity and efficacy to continue supporting humanitarian settlement.
 - Conversations highlighted the importance of discussion, planning and joint work in ensuring the success of current settlement locations as well as exploring potential or new locations for settlement.
- **Economic participation:** QSSC retains its focus on supporting economic participation – enabling meaningful and equitable employment opportunities for new arrivals and established multicultural communities in Queensland. Building on previous QSSC deliberations highlighting key issues, policy challenges and promising initiatives to support employment outcomes for migrants and refugees, this meeting invited Andrew Barker (CEDA) to discuss their recently launched report '[Making Better Use of Migrants' Skills](#)'.
 - QSSC noted the urgent need to address CEDA research findings that indicate the scale of loss to Australia in not making effective use of skills that migrants bring to Australia (\$4billion in lost wages). Poor economic inclusion outcomes are bad for both migrants themselves, and the economy. QSSC noted concerns especially, for migrant women whose economic inclusion outcomes are lower across different migration streams.
 - QSSC members discussed ways to move towards increased and tailored meaningful employment opportunities utilising key research, direct voice from communities and priorities and opportunities available across Federal and State governments.

- **QSSC and regional LACs:** the QSSC continues to receive updates from regional networks (Local Area Collaboratives) and will retain a watching brief on key issues and themes in settlement raised through these networks.
- **QSSC consideration and action for 2024:** QSSC members retain focus on settlement planning processes, employment and health issues.