# Research in Practice

# Crime prevention programs for culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia

Dr Lorana Bartels
Criminology Research Council Research Fellow

Criminology Research Council

# Introduction

Australia has a greater proportion of migrants (ie people living in Australia who were born overseas) relative to most other Western countries (Baur 2006); as at 30 June 2009, around a quarter of Australia's estimated resident population was born overseas (ABS 2010a). According to the 2006 Census, in descending order of population size, the main CALD groups in Australia are from Italy, China, Vietnam, India and the Philippines. However, between 1996 and 2006, increasing proportions of new arrivals came from Sudan (an average increase of 28% per year), Afghanistan (12%) and Iraq (10%; see Baur 2006). Most CALD communities in Australia, especially Asian communities, are concentrated in urban areas (Sawrikar & Katz 2008).

It is generally recognised (eg see OMI 2009) that people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities may face a range of complex issues, including discrimination and prejudice, social isolation and disenfranchisement, and difficulties in assimilating within the broader Australian culture and/or in maintaining a sense of identification with the culture of origin. In addition, refugees or people who have migrated to Australia as a result of adversity may be suffering from undiagnosed or untreated trauma. All of these factors may impact on involvement in and engagement with the criminal justice system. In this paper, the key criminal justice issues in relation to CALD communities are reviewed and a summary of relevant protective and risk factors provided. Some CALD-specific crime prevention programs, which serve to promote resiliency and protective factors and/or inhibit risk factors, are then presented. In order to ensure relevance and currency, the paper is primarily limited to Australian research from 2006 onwards.

## Ethnicity and offending

One of the key questions that arises in the context of cultural diversity and crime is whether people from different ethnic groups are more likely or less likely to offend than the general Australian population. Although there are a number of limitations to the data on ethnicity and crime, including those as a result of recording practices by police and corrections agencies on ethnic background of offenders, the available evidence seems to suggest that overall, migrants have the lowest rates of criminality in Australia, followed by first generation Australians, with the remaining Australian-born population having the highest rates of criminality (Baur 2006). However, adult migrants from New Zealand, Lebanon, Vietnam, Turkey and Romania have been identified as having a higher involvement in criminal activity than the Australian-born population, while juveniles from Lebanese, Turkish, Vietnamese, Indo-Chinese and New Zealand backgrounds were more highly

represented in the criminal justice system than their Australian-born counterparts (Baur 2006). As Baur (2006: 4) acknowledged, however,

> it is misleading to suggest that being a member of one of these groups is causally related to criminal activity. It is necessary to reiterate that the statistics used to identify these groups are inadequate. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that socio-demographic factors and social disadvantage can better explain criminality than membership in the identified groups

At 30 June 2010, 20 percent of Australian prisoners (sentenced and unsentenced) were born overseas, although this rose to 25 percent in Victoria and New South Wales (which may be due to these jurisdictions having a higher immigrant population generally). While it is beyond the scope of this paper to examine the representation levels of different ethnic groups in the Australian prison population in detail, it is recognised that certain groups comprise significant proportions of the prison population. For example, at 30 June 2010, Vietnam was the most prevalent overseas birthplace for Victorian prisoners (5%; ABS 2010b). Accordingly, prison programs are clearly required to be sensitive to offenders' cultural needs (eg Caraniche 2011).

## Ethnicity and victimisation

A related issue is whether migrants are under- or over-represented as victims of crime. Although there are issues with under-reporting (see below), and police do not routinely collect information about a victim's country of origin (Baur 2006), the available research suggests that CALD communities may in fact be less likely than the general population to be victims of crime (Johnson 2005; Makkai & Taylor 2007; cf Poynting 2008 and see also Collins 2007).

Recent Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicate that migrants were just over half as likely as the Australian-born population to be victims of physical or threatened violence (6,922 vs 12,292 per 100,000; ABS 2008). Interestingly, the violence victimisation rate was much lower for people from 'non-main English speaking' (non-MES) countries than for those where English was the main language (MES; 5,710 vs 8,995 per 100,000). The rate of violence experienced by migrants born in southeast Asia was similar to the non-MES rate overall (5,727 per 100,000), while migrants from Southern and Eastern Europe experienced violence at a rate of only 3,550 people per 100,000 population. Males from non-MES countries were much less likely than those from MES countries or Australian-born males to experience violence (5,203, 11,092 and 15,906 per 100,000 respectively), with a similar pattern for women (6,209, 6,517 and 8,872). Women from Asia were more likely to be subjected to violence than those from Europe (6,908 vs 5,050; ABS 2008).

The victimisation rate for burglary was 7,480 per 100,000 for migrants, compared with 10,089 for the Australian-born population; there was little difference based on whether English was or was not the main language (7,333 per 100,000 for non-MES and 7,731 for MES). A further breakdown indicated that the break-in victimisation rate was lower for migrants born in Southern and Eastern Europe than those from North West Europe (4,982 vs 6,357 per 100,000; ABS 2008). Paradoxically, some of the programs described below may in fact increase apparent rates of victimisation, as they may make migrants more willing to report offences committed against them. Research is therefore required to ensure any future changes in apparent victimisation rates reflect the likely impact of such programs.

## Key criminal justice issues and barriers for CALD communities

Although there are risks associated with assuming homogeneity among CALD communities, a brief review of the recent Australian literature (see AHRC 2010; Baur 2006; Browne & Renzaho 2010; Collins 2007; Donato-Hunt & Turay 2009; Kaur 2009; Makkai & Taylor 2009; Mason 2008; MDAA NSW 2010; OMI 2009; Reese & Pease 2006; Simons 2008; Sivasubranmaniam & Goodman-Delahunty 2008; Sowey 2007; H Sowey personal communication 4 March 2011; Taylor & Putt 2007; VEOHRC 2008; Warne-Smith 2009) has identified the following as key criminal justice issues among such groups:

- difficulties with police, including perceptions and instances of racism, bias and over-policing;
- racially motivated attacks, predominantly from strangers, particularly in the context of so-called 'hate crime';
- disproportionately high rates of fear of crime, again, often in the context of hate crime;
- lack of awareness of the law (eg in relation to driving and domestic violence) and the operation of the criminal justice system;
- under-reporting as victims of crime, which may be due to a lack of understanding of, or confidence in, the criminal justice system, as well as fear of police and concern about the stigma and shame associated with criminal justice system contact, which may act as a barrier to accessing both formal and informal support systems;
- issues with alcohol and other drugs (AOD), although there is some evidence suggesting lower levels of use among non-English speaking background groups than in the general population;
- difficulties accessing culturally appropriate services (eg legal assistance, domestic violence support and substance abuse treatment); and

- child protection and domestic/sexual violence issues.

In addition, Sawrikar and Katz (2008) have identified the following barriers as common to CALD communities:

- cultural barriers (language and cultural norms, as well as traditional gender roles and fear of authority figures, such as police);
- structural barriers (lack of knowledge of available services and difficulties accessing them); and
- service-related barriers (eg service models are culturally inappropriate or are perceived to be so).

## Summary of protective and risk factors

Protective factors are those that reduce the impacts of unavoidable events, help people to avoid temptations to break the law and reduce their chances of breaking the law and/or promote an alternative pathway, while risk factors increase the likelihood of offending behaviour and include individual characteristics, as well as the influence of the family, the immediate community and available services (NCP 1999). It should be noted, however, that although this work attempted to account for differences in CALD communities, it did not examine any possible variations in detail. Accordingly, these factors are a summary of generic characteristics primarily derived from work with mainstream communities. Notwithstanding this limitation, the protective and risk factors associated with criminal behaviour as shown in Table 1 are well-known and would appear to be of particular relevance in the present context.

The Office of Multicultural Interests (2009) recently identified religious faith, freedom from discrimination and feelings of safety and support in the community as relevant protective factors for CALD young people. Key risk factors, by contrast, included:

- limited English language proficiency;
- acculturative stress;
- racism and discrimination;
- disrupted education; and
- cultural isolation.

In relation to substance abuse issues, Browne and Renzaho (2010) have suggested that the maintenance of traditional values and norms is likely to inhibit drug and alcohol use, while acculturation to the generally permissive Australian drinking norms may increase the likelihood of people from CALD backgrounds using alcohol and, potentially, other drugs.

**Table 1** Protective and risk factors for criminal behaviour

| | Examples of protective factors | Examples of risk factors |
|---|---|---|
| Child factors | Social skills and competence, moral beliefs and values, attachment to family, empathy and optimism | Chronic illness, poor social skills, alienation, impulsivity, insecure attachment, beliefs about aggression |
| Family factors | Secure and stable family, strong family norms and morality, supportive relationship with other adult, small family size | Single parents, mental illness and substance abuse, family violence, long-term parental unemployment, low involvement in child's activities, absence of father |
| School factors | Positive school climate, sense of belonging, pro-social peer group, school norms about violence | School failure, deviant peer group, bullying, poor attachment to school, inadequate behaviour management |
| Life events | Moving to a new area, encountering opportunities at critical turning points | Divorce and family breakup, war or natural disasters, death of a family member |
| Community and cultural factors | Access to social services, attachment to the community, participation in church or other community group, strong cultural identity and ethnic pride, community/cultural norms against violence | Socioeconomic disadvantage, population density and poor housing conditions, neighbourhood violence and crime, cultural norms about violence being acceptable response to frustration, lack of support services, discrimination |

Source: NCP 1999

## Examples of promising initiatives for CALD communities

In this section, some examples of Australian good practice in dealing with CALD communities in relation to criminal justice issues are described. The examples are drawn primarily from the 2006–10 Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards (ACVPA) and case studies from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's (2011) *Taking The Initiative: Police Working With Australia's Diverse Communities* website, supplemented where possible by information from
the program managers. It is not suggested that the programs represent a comprehensive audit of all such programs, as there are many other examples of programs with broad crime prevention objectives (eg see Browne & Renzaho 2010 for further examples of AOD primary prevention initiatives); nor have most of the examples cited here been the subject of independent evaluation. Notwithstanding these limitations, it is suggested that the examples below provide an overview of the kinds of initiatives currently in operation in this context.

The program examples included in this assessment span a wide range of goals, including those with direct relevance to the criminal justice system, such as:

- legal education—programs designed to promote a better understanding of the Australian legal and criminal justice system; and
- police engagement—programs that seek to foster better relationships between CALD groups and police, including programs that provide cross-cultural training for police and other justice agencies.

The examples also include programs that would have a less immediately apparent—but nonetheless significant—role in this context, including:

- sporting, leisure and social activities;
- practical assistance (eg homework clubs, free or subsidised driving lessons, case management for at-risk or vulnerable people);
- arts programs; and
- leadership and training courses, especially for young people.

Such programs have the potential to support many of the protective factors identified in Table 1, including promoting social skills, competence and attachment to family, encouraging a sense of belonging and providing access to social services, and encouraging cultural identity and ethnic pride. The programs may also inhibit risk factors such as alienation, family violence, parental disengagement, problems with school, addressing cultural norms about the acceptability of violence and a lack of support services.

Forty-one programs were examined; these are identified in Table 2. Many of the programs fulfilled multiple purposes but have been classified according to their primary focus. There were also three examples each of cross-cultural training for police, arts programs and programs designed to promote leadership skills among young people. Almost all jurisdictions have implemented at least one program in each of the four categories set out below.

### New South Wales

#### Law of the Land

The Law of the Land project targeted newly arrived African refugees and migrants and their families. The project sought to foster positive links between police and community groups and young people and their families. Respect for Australian laws was a key outcome and all participants reportedly gave positive responses to the program and had learned about NSW laws. The project received $3,000 and an ACVPA certificate of merit in 2008 (AIC 2008).

| Program | Legal education | Police engagement | Sporting/ leisure/social | Practical assistance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Table 2** Australian programs targeted at CALD communities | | | | |
| African All Stars Cup (Vic) | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| A Journey of Understanding (Vic) | | ✓ | | |
| Burmese Refugee (Karin/Chin) Police Information Sessions (Qld) | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Community Engagement Events (Vic) | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Connecting at Risk Young People (Vic) | | | | ✓ |
| Crime Stoppers for Everyone (Vic) | | ✓ | | |
| Crossroads Project (SA) | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| For the Love of the Game (Qld) | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Footy with the Fuzz (WA) | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Hands Across Hobart—Refugee/Migrant Program (Tas) | | | | ✓ |
| Hobson's Bay New and Emerging Communities Youth Leadership Program (Vic) | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Journey Towards Hope Dance Project (WA) | ✓ | | | |
| 'Knowledge=Power' and 'Respect Yourself' Camps (NT) | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Law of the Land (NSW/WA) | ✓ | | | |
| Legal Education and Awareness Project (SA) | ✓ | | | |
| Legal Education for New Migrants (SA) | ✓ | | | |
| Migrant Information Centre (various programs) (Vic) | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia (various programs) (SA) | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Motiv8/Sporting Interaction with New and Emerging Communities (SA) | | | ✓ | |
| MRC Jurisdictional Community Partnership (JCP) Project (Tas) | | ✓ | | |
| Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (various programs) (NT) | | | | ✓ |
| Multicultural Futsal (ACT) | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Muslim Women and Youth Day (Qld) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| No Excuse for Family Violence (Vic) | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Operation Zoolander (Vic) | | | ✓ | |
| Pasifika Support Services (NSW) | | | | ✓ |
| Police and Afghan Youth Camp (NSW) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Police and African Youth Project (NSW) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Reel Connections (WA) | ✓ | | | |
| Safe at Home Workshops (Tas) | ✓ | | | |
| Short Story Big Screen (ACT) | | ✓ | | |
| Sudanese Dads and Kids Program (Vic) | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| 'Taste of Harmony' African Australian Women's Day Barbeque (SA) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Top Gear Mentor Driving Program (Tas) | | | | ✓ |
| Under the Radar Research and Intervention Program (SA) | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Vietnamese Transitions Project (NSW) | | | | ✓ |
| Women's Only Swimming (Vic) | | | ✓ | |
| Youth Driving Program (ACT) | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Total (categories are not mutually exclusive) | 19 | 16 | 18 | 11 |

## Pasifika Support Services

The project involved referrals from selected police local area commands across southwest Sydney for at-risk young people from Pasifika backgrounds. On the basis of these referrals, Pasifika Support Services undertake a needs assessment which leads to an overarching intensive case plan for a three month contact period with the client, including education, employment and training, AOD and other health issues and social and family support. The program received $7,000 and an ACVPA certificate of merit in 2007 (AIC 2007). Between its commencement in 2005 to June 2009, it supported more than 250 Pacific young people, with staff working with participants across 13 areas, including substance use, legal issues and personal and social skills (Mission Australia 2009). According to an independent evaluation (ARTD Consultants 2007), the project appeared to be associated with reduced reoffending—65 percent of the participants (n=23) had not reoffended within 12 months of the program. By way of comparison, in the six months prior to their referral to the project, the group had been charged with 24 offences, 14 of which were serious. In the subsequent six months, they were charged with 11 offences, only five of which were serious.

## Police and Afghan Youth Camp

This project involved a three day camp in 2008 for NSW Police and young Afghan community members, with 30 young men and 14 young women aged 12–20 years attending. Crime prevention workshops held during the camp covered issues such as AOD, interacting with police, public space, crime and consequences. The camp reportedly resulted in ongoing friendships, improved police knowledge of the Afghan community and greater confidence among the participants when dealing with police (DIAC 2011).

## Police and African Youth Project

This project involved sporting, social and workshop events for over 60 young people from African backgrounds and has evolved into monthly meetings between the young people and police in the Rosehill Local Area Command. Workshop sessions included topics such as young people's rights, driving without a licence, personal safety, reporting crime, bullying, weapon carriage, youth violence and sexual harassment. The project also included family events every four months. The support of youth workers also provided a whole-of-community approach to help the new communities integrate into mainstream society, while inviting parents to the family events provided an opportunity for police and youth services to consult with them (DIAC 2011; Elefante 2010). Positive outcomes included 'significant improvement' in relationships between young Africans and Muslims and police, breaking down police misunderstandings and stereotypes about youth workers and services, and young people approaching youth workers to discuss current life experiences (Elefante 2010). The project, also known as the Muslim and African People in Harmony Project, has now received a crime prevention grant from the NRMA to run to the end of 2011 (E Elefante personal communication 3 February 2011).

## Vietnamese Transitions Project

This project received an ACVPA certificate of merit and $3,000 in 2010. The project aimed to prevent recidivism and relapse into drug use for Vietnamese drug offenders by engaging them prior to release and providing intensive post-release case management support. It also assisted local Vietnamese community welfare associations to address transitional support issues for former prisoners and their families, as well as working on family reconciliation (AIC 2010; H Sowey personal communication 4 March 2011). During the evaluation period, it was reported that none of the participants were charged or convicted of any offence (AIC 2010). Further advice indicated that there were 28 participants in 2008–09, with the 17 who participated in the first six months included in the evaluation. None of these participants reoffended over the evaluation period, although the short follow-up period (6 months) was noted. The project has received funding to continue for a further 18 months (H Sowey personal communication 4 March 2011).

## Victoria

### African All Stars Cup

This soccer event between police and young people from the Horn of Africa is has been held for the last five years, with around 400 people attending the final play-off. At the end of the game, a trophy is awarded, with the African team beating the police in all finals to date. The event has also provided an opportunity for emergency service staff to encourage people from diverse backgrounds to consider a career within their agencies (DIAC 2011).

### A Journey of Understanding

This event brought together 168 Sudanese residents living in Wyndham, local service providers and government agencies to tackle the widespread disengagement of the Wyndham Sudanese community. Since the event, there has reportedly been a decrease in the Sudanese community's negative involvement with police and no complaints to council regarding the Sudanese community. The event was awarded $3,000 and an ACVPA certificate of merit in 2009 (AIC 2009). The report from the event, which was launched by former Chief Police Commissioner, Christine Nixon APM, aimed to inform government and non-government organisations and service providers about the complex

issues facing the community in Wyndham and provide recommendations on how to respond to those issues. The Sudanese in Wyndham Association and Wyndham Humanitarian Network Sudanese Subcommittee now meet on a monthly basis to ensure the report recommendations are met by the relevant agencies (DIAC 2011).

### Community engagement events

These dinner events have aimed to foster inter-cultural relations and enable Victoria Police to express their respect for, and increase their understanding of, diversity. The dinners have been attended by 150–350 guests and have included New and Emerging Communities Reception, the Jewish Community Dinner, an Iftar Dinner and the Multi-faith Reception (DIAC 2011).

### Crime Stoppers for Everyone

This multilingual program (MLP) aimed to make CALD groups feel more at ease in dealing with police and providing information about crime by disseminating three simple messages:

- 'Crime is NOT culturally sensitive…you can trust Australian police';
- 'Crime Stoppers is the people's program…you don't have to give your name or become involved'; and
- 'Crime happens in and affects every community… you have the power to combat it.'

The program manager was from a CALD group and was familiar with criminal justice issues. The program reportedly increased calls to Crime Stoppers from CALD callers and received an ACVPA certificate of merit in 2007 (AIC 2007).

### Hobsons Bay New and Emerging Communities Youth Leadership Program

This project aimed to develop leadership skills for Hobsons Bay's emerging communities. Participants attended a four day camp, as well as workshops on leadership, emergency services, employment, education and the legal system in Victoria, culminating in a graduation ceremony. The program ran in 2007, 2008 and 2009, with 15 people aged 15–25 years from Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia and Burma participating in 2009. The program won a commendation in the 2008 National Awards for Local Government and an evaluation of the program has reportedly been commissioned (DIAC 2011).

### No Excuse for Family Violence

This project was operated by the Victorian Arabic Social Services and aimed to educate the community about family violence, Australian law and services

available to victims, as well as educating service providers about the prevalence of family violence and how to recognise and respond to it. Outcomes included media campaigns, programs for 50 violence-prone men on community correction orders, establishment of playgroups, a women's empowerment workshop for 50–60 refugee women, network meetings about family violence, a gambling session for 10 staff members, cross-cultural training for 15 judicial officers, a community leaders' forum and client referral, counselling and training (AIC 2008; Younan nd). The program received $3,000 and an ACVPA certificate of merit in 2008 (AIC 2008). The program ended in 2010, but further funding has been sought (VASS nd).

### Operation Zoolander

This project enabled around 1,000 people from diverse backgrounds to go to the Melbourne Zoo. External funding was provided to cover the cost of zoo entry and there were displays from a range of organisations, such as the Victoria Multicultural Commission, Royal Victoria Life Saving Society and Maribyrnong City Council (DIAC 2011).

### Sudanese Community Cross Cultural Training for Police

This cross-cultural training package was developed by Victoria Police in consultation with representatives of the Sudanese community. The training package includes information on Africa, the pre-migration experiences of refugees, religions, cultural groups, gender issues, police in Sudan, statistics, issues facing young men and domestic violence. The Multicultural Liaison Unit delivered training presentations on over 200 occasions, with plans for monthly presentations to police. The training package has also been adapted for other key agencies, such as Centrelink, the Department of Human Services, the Magistrates' Court and teachers and local councils (DIAC 2011).

### Sudanese Dads and Kids Program

This three day camp was first held over the Australia Day weekend in January 2009 and attended by 10 Sudanese men and their 11 children aged five to 12 years. It sought to help build relationships between the men and their children. Participants explored concepts such as respecting both traditional culture and the new way of life, as well as having an opportunity to understand child discipline, family violence and the law in Australia (DIAC 2011). The program was repeated in October 2010 with 14 men and 14 children aged six to 15 years and is scheduled to run again in May 2011 (CCFS 2010).

## Women's Only Swimming

This project provided an opportunity for disadvantaged women from diverse communities to have exclusive use of a local pool and gym facilities. The program started in 2007, with over 200 women attending the pool for every fortnightly session. A women's-only swimming class was later introduced and some women opted to undertake lifesaver training. Currently, the program is run by the local council and the pool, with sessions offered every Sunday and positive anecdotal feedback from both the participants and the local community (DIAC 2011; M Sakkar personal communication 3 February 2011).

## Connecting At Risk Young People

Another initiative in Victoria is the *Connecting At Risk Young People* initiative, a program to provide a range of responses including outreach and a process to better connect vulnerable young refugee people to services and the *Justice For Refugees* initiative. The intention is to contribute to providing a more responsive justice system and better information to new arrivals, via multicultural liaison officers, as well as offering early intervention and diversionary programs (VEOHRC 2008).

## Migrant Information Centre

As an example of the range of programs migrant resource centres may be involved in, crime prevention programs run by the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) have included:

- regular visits to the magistrates' courts and police stations;
- education on road rules and obtaining a driver's licence, as well as subsidised driving lessons;
- homework support groups;
- training for community elders about family violence;
- developing a DVD on family violence and the Sudanese community, called *But Here, Life is Different*;
- the Sisters Together Group, a two month program in 2008 which sought to develop culturally appropriate service models to prevent and respond to family violence in Southern Sudanese families. The project was rated very positively by the five women who participated in the evaluation;
- a project to decrease racism and promote an understanding of the role of police and the law; This project is due to be completed in April 2011 and a report on the project will be made publicly available; and
- a new project commencing in February 2011 that aims to prevent crime amongst youth from Sudan and Burma by training them to become leaders/ youth ambassadors and supporting them to develop

social/recreational and educational programs for other young people in their respective communities, as well as linking them to existing youth services (J McDougall personal communication 12 January 2011; MIC 2008; MIC nd).

## Queensland

### Burmese Refugee (Karen/Chin) Police Information Sessions

This project included a police information session with 25 members of the Queensland Burmese community, a tour of a police station and PCYC for 73 people and a 'driving in Australia' information session for 25 people, which was organised at the community's request. The Burmese refugee communities continue to request and attend information sessions of this nature, have been seen as a low-cost initiative which could be easily adopted by other jurisdictions (DIAC 2011). Regular police visits to leaders' houses for morning tea with the community and police participation in Karen new year celebrations also appeared to 'work well' (C Crane personal communication 11 February 2011).

### For the Love of the Game—Queensland Police Service/Ethnic Community Council Queensland Football Tournament

This project aimed to build rapport between police and young people of diverse cultural backgrounds through sport. Between 2005 and 2008, over 6,000 young people attended the Multicultural Football Tournament, with 32 teams participating in the games. The program has reportedly been associated with improved relationships with police and a decrease in youth crime in the area. The 2007 tournament received a police certificate at the 2007 ACVPAs (AIC 2007) and the program's founder was named 2009 Suncorp Queenslander of the Year (DIAC 2011).

### Muslim Women and Youth Day

This initiative aimed to build positive relationships between police and the Muslim community, with around 30 Muslim women and children attending a day of activities hosted by police in January 2009. Activities included an introduction to police liaison officers from a range of cultures, informal 'yarning sessions', education about breath testing, kayaking, abseiling and bushwalking. Participants reportedly developed a better understanding of the role of police and remained in contact with the project organisers (DIAC 2011).

The Queensland Police Service has also developed two resources for dealing with people from CALD communities:

- the Multicultural Quick Reference Guides, which provide country and community profiles, police multicultural resources, recent police support and initiatives, details of interpreting services, common phrases, a guide to religions, diplomatic and consular support and community organisation contact details. To date, guides have been developed for the Samoan, Tongan and Sudanese communities, with guides for southeast Asian, African and Middle Eastern communities currently being developed; and

- the Multicultural Awareness Online Learning Product, an interactive web-based course which aims to include increase police awareness and understanding of cross-cultural issues and cultural diversity, as well as improving communication skills with people from different cultural backgrounds and creating more effective policing responses. A number of local area commands have made the product compulsory training for their sworn officers (DIAC 2011). An evaluation of the program is reportedly planned (QPS 2011).

## South Australia

### Crossroads Project

Crossroads involved a series of workshops, recreational and sporting activities for African young people. The project ran from 2007 to 2008, with 124 African males aged 12 to 30 years participating. Activities included 17 life skills sessions (which focused on law and order, wellbeing and development and future pathways), six recreational and sporting activities, and two camps. Reported outcomes included increased self-confidence, resilience and capacity to make informed and positive choices, as well as increased social inclusion and recognition of the positive benefits of sport and recreation as part of Australian life (DIAC 2011).

### Legal Education and Awareness Project

The Legal Education and Awareness Project delivered youth-focused workshops on a range of legal topics, as well as providing young people with a forum to share their views about the law and access to the justice system and legal issues that affect them. Some of the topics covered included information about legal rights and responsibilities, criminal offences, driving, group offending, the role of police and police powers, information about the youth court and how to access legal advice (DIAC 2011). Over 800 young people participated in the program (LSCSA nd), which received $3,000 and an ACVPA certificate of merit in 2009 (AIC 2009). Some of the strengths of the program were considered to be flexible community engagement and communication strategies and training and development approach (LSCSA nd) but the program is no longer being funded (C Cifuentes personal communication 20 January 2011).

### Legal Education for New Migrants

This program is run by the Legal Services Commission and was developed to help migrants and refugees understand the legal system. Topics covered included how to get help with a legal problem, disciplining children, violence at home and rights and responsibilities when interacting with police. Since 2005, more than 6,000 people have participated in the education program, with sessions continuing to run every month (DIAC 2011).

### Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia

The Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia has conducted a series of initiatives that bridge the gap between refugee community groups and the police, including brochures on young people and the law and the role of the police. The Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia's Youth Leaders Initiative also aimed to develop the leadership skills of young people from refugee backgrounds so they can support and mentor other young people in their communities and advocate on justice issues on their behalf (DIAC 2011).

### 'Taste of Harmony' African Australian Women's Day Barbeque

This event was held on Harmony Day in 2009 and attracted around 80 African Australian women, their children and volunteers. It was part of a broader African Women's Day program, where African women meet weekly to offer a range of services. Since 2007, police have attended these sessions to educate the women about the role of the police, their rights and responsibilities, traffic laws, domestic violence and obtaining drivers' licences. Both the organisers and police have reportedly noticed a change in the women and children's attitudes towards uniformed police (DIAC 2011).

### Under the Radar Research and Intervention Program

This program ran for three years from 2007 and was targeted at at-risk African males aged 15–25 years. It included research, skill development sessions, recreation activities, mentoring (from police officers to chefs, accountants and surf life savers) and resource development. Over 400 young people were engaged in camps, recreational activities, mentoring, casework and other activities. Of these, 67 took part in a research project, which found that skill development sessions and lecture-style workshops were less effective and an 'action learning' approach was required to successfully develop skills. The camps and recreation activities emerged as a suitable form for addressing the participants' problems (DIAC 2011).

Other South Australian projects have included:

- Motiv8, where more than 750 African young people participated in basketball sessions and recreation and life skills activities; and
- the Sporting Interaction with New and Emerging Communities project, which involved sporting activities between police and CALD communities, including soccer matches against African teams in 2007 and 2008. As part of the program, police have donated sporting kits and resources to Families SA Refugee Services (DIAC 2011).

## Western Australia

### Footy with the Fuzz—Police Multicultural Friendship Games

Footy with the Fuzz has provided opportunities for CALD young people to build positive relationships with police through sport. Around 1,000 community members attended and 20–30 teams participated in each of the games, which were held in November 2009, March 2010 and October 2010; the next games are planned for March 2011. The initiative won the 2009 'Community Event of the Year' Western Australian Sport and Recreation Industry Award and its coordinators were acknowledged at the Office of Multicultural Interests WA Multicultural Community Service Awards on 1 December 2009, receiving a highly commended certificate for 'Excellence and Innovation in advancing multiculturalism, inclusiveness and participation' (DIAC 2011).

### Journey Towards Hope (JoTHe) Dance Project

This project sought to engage, educate and empower participants through dance, as well as convey messages of violence prevention. The United Nations White Ribbon pledge 'not to commit, condone or remain silent on violence against women and children' became the theme woven into dance workshops and guided the development of performances at leading dance festivals. The projects traversed social, ethnic and economic boundaries and generated new partnerships with stakeholders. The program won the 2008 Western Australian Award for Multicultural Community Services and $5,000 and a certificate of merit at the 2009 ACVPAs (AIC 2009).

### Law of the Land

The Law of the Land project involved the development of a DVD to introduce new entrants to Australian law. The free DVD is available in English and 12 community languages (Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Burmese, Cantonese, Dari, Dinka, French, Mandarin, Kirundi, Somali and Swahili). It is intended to be used either as a self-education tool or by service agencies for new arrivals. Over 7,500 copies have been distributed since it was launched by the Federal Attorney General, the Hon Robert McClelland, in September 2008. Copies have also been distributed by local government authorities via citizenship ceremonies and the DVD has been requested by all other Australian states, as well as attracting interest from overseas (DIAC 2011; ECCWA 2011).

### Reel Connections

Reel Connections offered a range of community arts training programs to provide Indigenous and CALD young people with an opportunity to develop new skills, meet new people and learn more about the law in Australia (AIC 2010). Over 120 young people participated in the project (C Meyers personal communication 17 January 2011) and short films produced as part of the project included a 12 minute film on the consequences of driving without a driver's licence and a 10 minute film which explores the role of the police in Australia (DIAC 2011).

The project was independently evaluated by Cooper and Bahn (2010: 2), who found that the 'project is clearly highly valued and respected by diverse stakeholders, and has the confidence of the leaders of many different cultural groups'. The project was a finalist in the 2009 Australia Business Arts Foundation Awards, received a service award in the 2009 Multicultural Service Awards, received a community service award from the Western Australian Office of Multicultural Interests community (Cooper & Bahn 2010) and $4,000 and an ACVPA certificate of merit in 2010 (AIC 2010). Notwithstanding these awards, funding for the project finished in 2010 and has not been renewed (C Meyers personal communication 18 January 2011).

## Tasmania

### Hands Across Hobart—Refugee/ Migrant Program (Tasmania)

This project provided opportunities for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to get involved in a range of community activities, as well as providing paid work experience and referral to mainstream organisations. Over 8,000 people from more than 30 nationalities participated in the project and participants gained practical skills and self-confidence through the work experience component. The project received $2,000 and a certificate of merit in the 2007 ACVPA awards (AIC 2007) and a similar project, Meeting in the Middle, commenced in Hobart and Launceston in 2009 (DIAC 2011).

### MRC Jurisdictional Community Partnership Project

The Jurisdictional Community Partnership project helped 54 participants from Congolese, Burundian, Afghan and Sudanese communities become familiar with Australia's emergency services through workshops involving police, fire and emergency services. The project received television coverage and provided opportunities for cultural exchange. As a follow-on, the CALD Volunteering in Emergency Services project is currently being developed and will aim to identify, link and support newly arrived community members to volunteer in emergency management roles (DIAC 2011).

### Safe at Home Workshops

These workshops aimed to educate newly arrived entrants and humanitarian entrants about the Tasmanian Safe at Home legislation, with police explaining family violence and the impact of the legislation on perpetrators and victims. Four workshops were held over one year and yielded such a positive response that more are reportedly planned. To date, there have been 60 participants from the Burundian, Sierra Leone, Sudanese, Congolese and Ethiopian communities (DIAC 2011).

### Top Gear Mentor Driving Program

This program began in 2006 and helped new arrivals to Australia to obtain a provisional drivers licence by giving participants free access to a car and supervising driver. It aimed to reduce the incidence of unsupervised and unlicensed driving and the risk to other road users, as well as reducing social isolation and reliance on public transport and friends for transport and increasing opportunities for employment and access to community services. Fifty participants have gained their provisional licences through the program, with one former participant volunteering as a supervising driver (DIAC 2011).

## Northern Territory

### 'Knowledge=Power' and 'Respect Yourself' Camps

This project involved four three-day camps held in 2007 and 2008 at NT Police facilities. There were 34 Indigenous participants and 15 from African communities. Camp activities included bushwalking, rock climbing and workshops on health, nutrition, substance abuse, as well as aspects of the law. The camps included 'Men's and Women's Business' forums where participants could discuss sensitive issues. Ongoing contact between participants and police indicated improved education and employment for some participants (DIAC 2011).

Other relevant NT initiatives include the homework club, which provides school and tutoring support, as well as mentoring, to young people from refugee and non-English speaking backgrounds (MCNT 2009). DIAC has also funded the Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory to deliver the 'Passport To Drive' Project, which commenced in October 2010 and is designed as a driver education, training and mentoring program (MCNT 2010).

## Australian Capital Territory

### Short Story Big Screen

This was a film-making project run in 2009 to provide an opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to tell their stories and strengthen their relationships with police. The film-making workshops focused on addressing, exploring and dramatising the issues around cultural diversity and covered such issues as social inclusion, harmony, cohesion and participation. The films centred on participants' tribal identity and were screened at the National Film and Sound Archive (DIAC 2011).

### Multicultural Futsal

This project, run by the Canberra PCYC, provided an opportunity for young former refugees to participate in an indoor soccer (Futsal) competition with other young Australians. The project aimed to provide an opportunity for ethnically diverse young people to build community spirit and at the same time learn about Australian laws. The pilot program involved 11 players from Sudan, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia and India, with spectators from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds (DIAC 2011).

### Youth Driving Program

This program targeted newly arrived young people seeking a driver's licence and aimed to help participants become safe, legal and knowledgeable drivers on public roads. It provided attitudinal training and practical driver training sessions to participants, as well as breaking down barriers between police and newly arrived youth and received positive feedback from participants (DIAC 2011). To date, there have been 42 participants over six sessions (B Martin personal communication 2 February 2011).

## Conclusion

Baur (2006) noted that socio-demographic factors and social disadvantage are more important than migrant status in explaining why some individuals and groups engage in criminality. In this paper, some examples are provided of initiatives from around Australia that have been designed to counter CALD social disadvantage.

These examples generally fall into one or more of the following categories:

- education about Australian laws (eg substance abuse, domestic violence, road rules);
- practical assistance (eg homework clubs, free or subsidised driving lessons, case management for at-risk people);
- programs to foster better relationships between CALD groups and police;
- cross-cultural training for police;
- sporting, social and leisure activities, especially for young people;
- arts projects (eg dance and film-making); and
- leadership and training courses, especially for young people.

Clearly, those involved in developing and running the programs described in this paper are strongly committed to ensuring positive outcomes. One area of concern, however, is that most of the programs described in this paper—and in many other similar areas—are only funded on a short-term basis. Programs such as these will often take some time to establish and engage effectively with target populations. As is the case with programs targeting Indigenous communities, the process of establishment can be a lengthy one and therefore some programs will still be establishing when their funding terminates. To establish an effective program requires time, thus the provision of longer term funding is desirable. This would enable programs to develop more effectively, and relationships between the relevant CALD communities and law enforcement agencies and program developers to be established and maintained. Formal recognition and support of the time and resources required by programs to transition from an establishment phase may increase the chances that a program will develop an effective and sustainable operating model.

Without clearly successful results, it is difficult to attract continued funding and support, yet many programs are not evaluated. Indeed, even where provision has been made for program evaluation, there tend to be methodological concerns associated with attempting to assess what are typically small, short-term programs. These include lack of access to evaluation expertise, small sample sizes, a lack of pre- and post-test data and short follow-up periods. Many of the observations made by Tomison (2000) in relation to the evaluation of child abuse prevention programs are equally applicable in the present context. In particular,

- the programs frequently target complex social issues and require relatively complicated evaluations to determine program effects;

- research is typically affected by a multitude of extraneous factors that are difficult to control;
- inadequate resources and/or measures may make it difficult to implement a rigorous evaluation design;
- programs of this nature have often been given relatively low priority by the relevant agencies and there has been a tendency, as noted above, to only fund short-term projects;
- empirical evaluations require a high degree of skill and a reasonable number of participants in order to assess program outcomes in a reliable manner— when many programs have small client populations, need significant resources and often require a long timeframe beyond the scope of many of the programs described in this paper; and
- it may be difficult for service providers and evaluators to balance methodological and ethical considerations.

In recognition of these practical and methodological issues, it may be more appropriate for programs of the kind described in this paper to be the subject of participatory action research, which is generally community-based and carried out by a practitioner in the field (Stringer 1996), rather than formal process or outcome evaluation. As Dick (2000) noted, action research tends to be:

- cyclic, with similar steps tending to recur, in a similar sequence;
- participative, with clients and informants involved as active participants in the research process;
- qualitative, as it deals more often with language than with numbers; and
- reflective, with critical reflection upon the process and outcomes considered to be important parts of each cycle.

Participatory action research is underpinned by shared ownership of research projects, community-based analysis of social problems and an orientation toward community action (Kemnis & McTaggart 2005). This approach may be of particular relevance in relation to projects of the type described here because it:

- is not conducted after the event, based on outcome measures or interviews involving recollection of participants, but is instead based on participant observation in which the researcher's presence has an effect on the process being recorded;
- is concerned with an ongoing spiral of praxis (action, reflection, evaluation, new action etc), which involves collaboration with the participants in the action(s); and
- does not impose a strict progression through predetermined procedures. Given the fluid and unpredictable nature of establishing and implementing the crime prevention projects in this paper, action research may be a more flexible evaluation model, able to 'go with the flow' as actions develop (see Gardiner 1996).

In addition to rethinking the form of program evaluation best suited to these sorts of community-based crime prevention programs, there is a need to communicate the experiences in developing and implementing such programs successfully to others who may be making similar attempts elsewhere. By way of example, the Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia 'provides assistance with accessing evidence regarding the planning and delivery of services to children and families in disadvantaged Australian communities' (AIFS 2011: np). The lessons learned in developing and implementing crime prevention programs for CALD communities should likewise be disseminated more widely. This paper makes a contribution towards this objective by describing a range of programs that target a number of areas of relevance to diverse communities, including legal education, police engagement, practical assistance and sporting and social events.

## Acknowledgements

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