



Shared Prosperity:

Economic Inclusion for Sustainable Livelihoods for Migrant and Refugee Communities in Australia

Mohammed Yassin
Vinita Godinho, PhD
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Introduction

This report summarises the key findings from two evidence-based projects ('Partnering Employment Renewal' and 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan') led by Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre and Grameen Australia to explore pathways to economic inclusion and sustainable livelihoods for people from refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) migrant backgrounds living in and around Hume LGA, Victoria. Both projects were launched under the aegis of the Broadmeadows Revitalisation Board and funded by the Office of Suburban Development at the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industries and Regions (previously known as the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions). A brief introduction of each partner organization follows:

The Office for Suburban Development at the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions drives the suburban policy agenda for the Victorian Government through the Metropolitan Partnerships and Suburban Revitalisation Programs (see <https://www.suburbandevlopment.vic.gov.au/>). Engaging with local stakeholders and communities to identify their needs and aspirations, this team delivers projects to improve local community involvement, infrastructure and services.

The Broadmeadows Revitalisation Board provides a local voice to the Victorian Government's Suburban Revitalisation program, working with the Broadmeadows community to identify opportunities for locally-led projects which can make the community thrive (see <https://www.suburbandevlopment.vic.gov.au/suburban-revitalisation/broadmeadows>). With a strong commitment to strengthening local social and economic opportunities, the Board drives the delivery of local projects enabling the government, business and community groups to work together to support Broadmeadows to become a vibrant place to live, learn and work.

For over forty years, Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (Spectrum) has delivered settlement, aged and disability services to migrants and refugees in northwest Melbourne (see <https://spectrumvic.org.au/>). Both the projects showcased in this report have built on learnings from the delivery of these services at Spectrum, have been designed to address gaps identified by their clients, as well as create new employment-focused opportunities for refugees and CALD migrants across Hume. The mapping exercises undertaken by these projects aim to enable users to better access culturally appropriate products and services in the local community. They can also inform local service providers about the design of more effective products, services and collaborative processes that can better meet the needs of these client groups.

Grameen Australia (Grameen) is a new charity which builds on Grameen Bank's globally recognised, Nobel Prize-winning microenterprise program which now operates in fifty-nine countries. Over the last fifty years, these programs have positively impacted the lives of more than 300 million people living in poverty, by helping women to build microbusinesses that generate incomes. Launching its first pilot branch in Broadmeadows in early 2022, Grameen aims to support entrepreneurial women living on low incomes in the local community, to establish and/or grow small businesses that generate incomes and enable meaningful livelihoods (see <https://grameen.org.au/>). Grameen has partnered with Spectrum to lead these local projects as enabling sustainable livelihoods for refugee and CALD migrant women is directly aligned with their strategic priorities.

A brief description of the 'Partnering Employment Renewal' and 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' projects follows:

Partnering Employment Renewal (<https://www.suburbandevlopment.vic.gov.au/suburban-revitalisation/broadmeadows>) was delivered in April 2022 by Spectrum and Grameen in collaboration with local service providers. The project aimed to map the challenges and gaps that migrant and refugee communities face in accessing training and employment services in the Broadmeadows area. The project utilised this research to find areas of potential collaboration and co-design between partner agencies to deliver more impactful and efficient training and employment programs.

Economic Inclusion Action Plan (<https://www.suburbandevlopment.vic.gov.au/suburban-revitalisation/broadmeadows>) led by Spectrum and Grameen in collaboration with local cross-sectoral partners from the government, business, community and academia, will be delivered by end June 2023. This project aims to enable Hume-based providers to take practical, strategy-aligned actions for the 'system-change' needed to support sustainable, longer-term livelihoods for Refugee/CALD migrants and promote 'culturally-safe' workplaces in Broadmeadows.

At the time the 'Partnering Employment Renewal' project was launched (November 2021) more than forty employment-related service providers within the Hume area were receiving approximately \$80 million in annual government funding to help link local job seekers to employers. Yet unemployment levels remained stubbornly high across Hume - compared to the state average of 8.5% unemployment, Broadmeadows experienced more than double the state average (19.3%) with Meadow Heights and Campbellfield following closely behind at 19.1% and 18.1% respectively.

Employment outcomes were particularly poor for those from refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) migrant backgrounds across Hume, keeping many people trapped in lower-skilled, insecure, and lower-paid jobs. The emergence of COVID-19 made this situation even more dire, revealing multiple gaps in the local employment support systems, particularly for migrant and refugee jobseekers. Tangible and timely improvements to employment outcomes for these group via targeted efforts such as the 'Partnering Employment Renewal' and 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' projects are therefore a local imperative.

Approach: Local Engagement & User-Centred Research

This report, which combines the learnings and insights from these two projects, is intended to provide guidance and support for future efforts to enhance economic inclusion and sustainable livelihoods for refugee and CALD migrants, so that they can better share in Australia's prosperity. Whilst our project outputs have been designed to meet the specific needs of local jobseekers across Hume (Victoria) and address the gaps in the local employment-related support ecosystem identified by our participants, we hope that our recommendations can be generalized to support refugee and CALD migrants living in other communities across Australia via local, user-centred research. This report aims to assist future researchers to achieve the following:

1. Engage local refugee and CALD migrant groups to better understand employment-related needs via user-centred research;
2. Map the users' employment journey, identifying barriers and enablers, as well as potential gaps if any;
3. Identify and engage local employment-related service-providers supporting the targeted community groups;
4. Map the local employment-related service ecosystem, identifying potential gaps if any;
5. Co-design a place-based, collective impact framework enabling cross-sectoral leaders to take action to enhance economic inclusion and sustainable livelihoods for the targeted community groups.



Mohammed Yassin
Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre



Vinita Godinho, PhD
Grameen Australia

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Introduction: The Hume region, identified as a growth-corridor in Victoria as it is growing at almost twice the national rate (ABS 2016), has received significant Government funding to boost services linking local jobseekers to employers, over the last decade or so. In 2021, services focussed on linking jobseekers and employers attract around \$80million of Government investment annually into the Hume area. This is distributed amongst 42 providers, and they in turn service around 10,500 unemployed people (Victorian Parliament, 2019). Yet unemployment has remained stubbornly high across Hume, particularly amongst migrants from refugee and CALD backgrounds.

In mid-2021, the Broadmeadows Revitalisation Board funded Spectrum to develop the 'Partnering Employment Renewal' project, to build on prior research which identified the need for a more integrated and tailored service experience for job-seekers from community groups particularly vulnerable to social and economic exclusion. Spectrum and Grameen partnered to deliver on this project, adopting the following approach to undertake local engagement and user-centred research for the 'Partnering Employment Renewal' which then informed the design of the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project:

Desktop research based on published data from government, community and industry sources (including the Australian Bureau of Statistics, reports from the Hume City Council, and the Australian and Victorian Councils of Social Service) was used to collate and analyse the existing evidence-base on refugee and CALD migrants. The desktop research helped to profile the community groups; highlight common socio-demographic characteristics; and identify local service providers providing employment-related supports for the targeted community groups across Hume LGA in Victoria.

The insights from the desktop research were used to design the primary data collection plan for the research which informed both the projects, including the following:

1. **Preliminary Consumer Survey** of Hume residents living on low incomes, particularly from refugee and CALD community groups, sourced via Facebook groups. The survey was designed to gauge participants' experience with employment; interest in self-employment pathways; and appetite for microenterprise funding.
2. **Survey of Spectrum Clients** to explore their employment journey; awareness of and experience with, local employment-related service providers; and appetite for self-employment.
3. **Focus Groups and Interviews** targeting specific users, to better understand their employment journey; identify common barriers and enablers of employment; gaps in the local employment-related support ecosystem; and potential solutions to address identified gaps.
4. **Workshops and Interviews** targeting local employment-related service providers with relevant experience, to identify what works and what does not, to best support the targeted community groups.
5. **Workshops** targeting local Government representatives and governance bodies, to better understand employment-related investment in the region; and the ongoing progress within the local community.

The assumptions underlying this research include the following:

- a. The definition of **poverty** used by this study is informed by research undertaken by the Australian and Victorian Councils of Social Service - ACOSS and VCOSS respectively.
- b. **Poverty** can be experienced differently by varied groups, even amongst those living in the same community. It is thus important to clearly identify the specific groups being targeted by any research.
- c. Those living in poverty, particularly people from refugee and CALD migrant backgrounds, can often experience **multiple, interlinked disadvantage**. It is therefore vital to partner with local service providers trusted by the targeted community groups, in order to fully understand their lives.

This evidence-based study has been undertaken in collaboration with key local partners including the Hume City Council, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Hume Neighbourhood Homes, Migrant Resource Centre Northwest, Brite - Disability Employment Services, AMES, Arabic Welfare, Uniting Care, Nestle, DPV Health, Kangan Institute, and Banksia Gardens Community Services, amongst others.

Five distinct 'user-personas' have been identified based on the research, representing the groups most likely to experience lower employment outcomes in the Hume region:

- Male and female youth aged 15-24, particularly early school leavers;
- Middle-aged women, particularly those who have arrived recently or within the last 5 years;
- Mature-aged men (above 50 years) with prior work experience in their country of origin.

In the remaining sections of this report, we present our key findings as follows:

The chapter on User Profiling describes the five 'user-personas' identified; their distinctive socio-demographic characteristics; and employment-related aspirations and needs.

The Client Journey Mapping chapter describes how we mapped the employment journey for the targeted users; their common barriers and enablers; gaps they identified in the local support ecosystem; and their potential solutions to address common gaps.

The chapter on Local Service Ecosystem Mapping describes the mapping of local employment-related services for targeted users; and documents local providers' views on what works and what does not, to support employment outcomes for these users.

The Collective Action Framework in the final chapter has been developed collaboratively with the Trailblazer organisations which participated in the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project, highlighting three key action-areas which they would like to focus on.

We conclude this report with recommendations for Next Steps which future projects can take.



User Profiling: Hume & Surrounding LGAs

Introduction: Spectrum and Grameen's research for the 'Partnering Employment Renewal' project showed that despite the significant Government investment into providing employment-related services within the Hume region, unemployment has remained stubbornly high. As of 2021, 19.3% of the population in Broadmeadows is unemployed, as compared to 12.1% in Hume, 8.5% across Victoria as a whole, and 6.6% in Greater Melbourne. Unemployment rates were higher amongst refugees and migrants from CALD backgrounds even before COVID emerged, with the 2016 Census showing that the unemployment rate of refugees after one year of arriving is 77%. While the unemployment rate drops rapidly over time, 38% are still unemployed after three years of being in Australia, and 22% after 10 years.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation has significantly worsened as the often-precarious jobs that refugee/CALD migrants were likely to hold, were disproportionately impacted by the lockdowns and closures. In addition, many recently arrived migrants and refugees have been locked out of vital networking, work experience and volunteering opportunities, leading them to feel a sense of isolation and experience mental stress. This is particularly relevant to Hume City, which is home to the second-largest refugee and multi-cultural population. This makes it even more vital to provide targeted assistance for these community groups, if their employment outcomes are to be improved.

Five 'user-personas' representing the groups which are most likely to experience lower employment and socio-economic inclusion in the local community were developed, as briefly described in the sections below.

Persona 2: Female youth aged 15-24, particularly early school leavers.

Young female migrants in Hume (see infographic for Mary) are also more likely to have lost jobs during the COVID pandemic, as their already precarious roles such as those in casualised retail, hospitality or travel, have been badly impacted.

Women and girls are also bearing the burden of additional household duties with families stuck indoors and younger children being home-schooled during COVID lockdowns.

Although young women are less likely to leave school early than young men, their employment options post schooling remain limited.

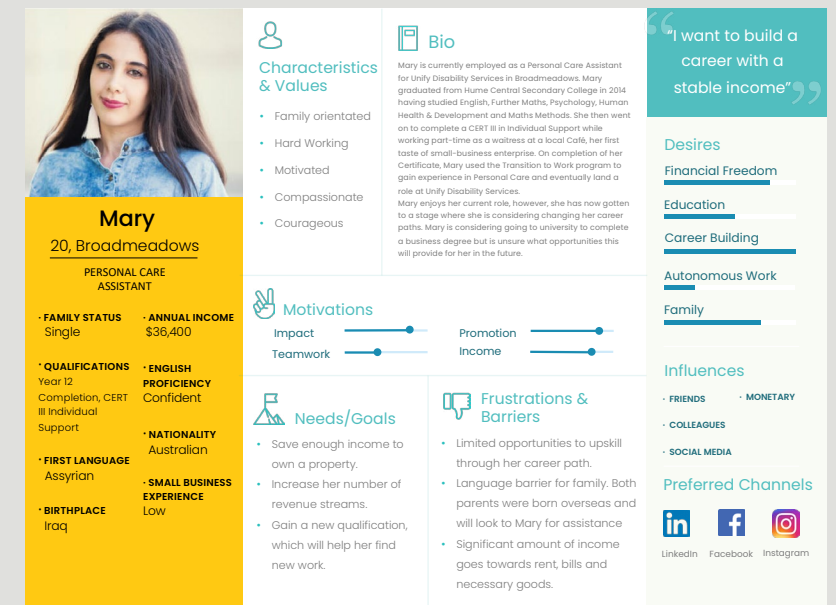


Figure 2. Source: Client Personas (Female youth aged 15-24) developed during research

Persona 1: Male youth aged 15-24, particularly early school leavers.

COVID has exacerbated the disadvantage experienced by youth aged 15-24. In the Hume region, their employment has fallen by 11% versus 3.4% for workers aged 25-54, since the pandemic emerged.

Young men such as Ali (see infographic) have been hard hit as they tend to work in sectors impacted by lockdowns and closures. High-school disengagement amongst young males, already high in the community, has also worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For young males who have left school early, low-skilled, low-paid jobs are often the only employment option available.

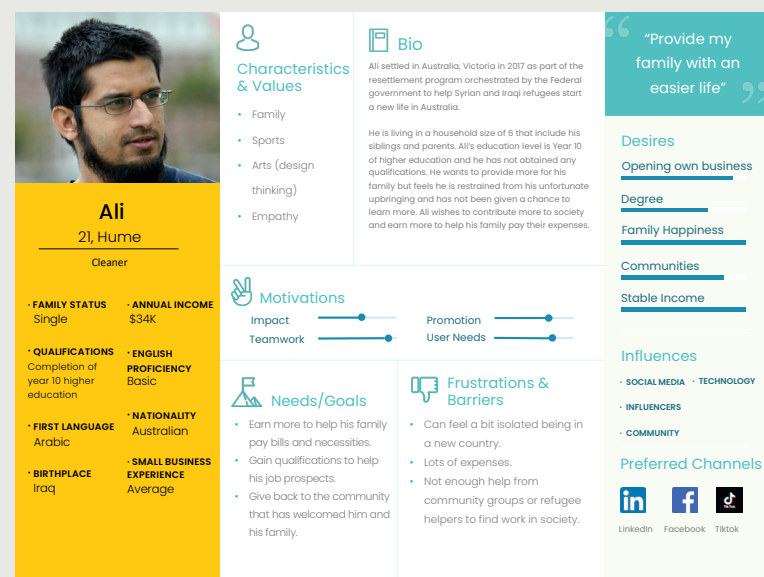


Figure 1. Source: Client Persona (Male youth aged 15-24) developed during research

Persona 3: Middle-aged female migrants - recently arrived/within the last 5 years.

Hume has the second-highest intake of humanitarian settlers - 47% vs. 9% in Victoria. 42.3% of Hume residents were born overseas (35.1% in Victoria); and 55.3% speak a language other than English at home (29% in Greater Melbourne). Despite many migrants having held professional qualifications and work experience in their country of origin, this is often not being recognised in Australia. Only 17% of humanitarian settlers find employment within 18 months, and 1 in 3 works in lower-skilled, lower-paid and/or more precarious jobs such as labourers, machine operators or drivers.

Middle-aged female migrants such as Miriam (see infographic), have been more vulnerable than men during COVID. Those who worked have had their hours dropped by 11.5%, much higher than men (7.5%).

Women, already more likely to face financial hardship, have also reported increased family violence during COVID. More than 5% have faced physical/sexual violence, 10% emotional abuse, and 5.8% coercive control.

Opportunities to find flexible work or microenterprise can improve their social and economic participation, helping them to move away from crisis towards stability. Yet job-services providers are not incentivised to support self-employment.

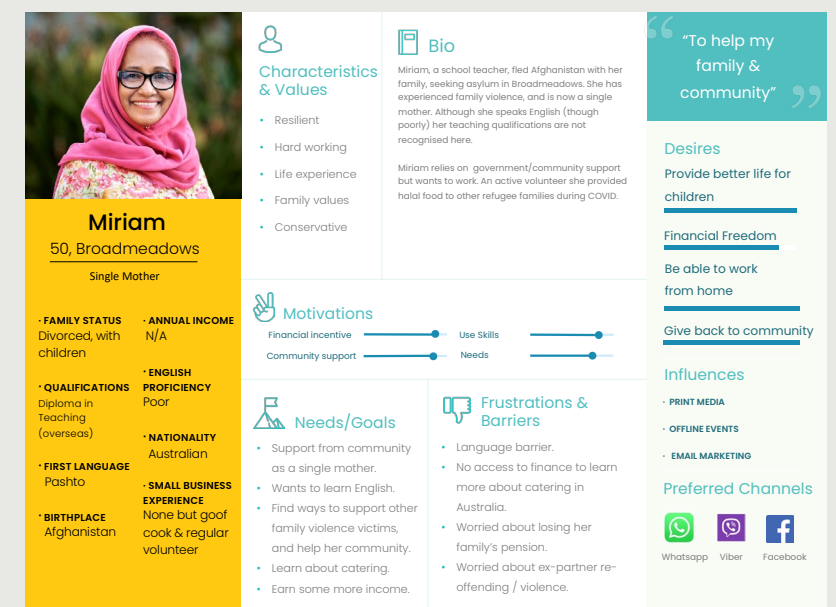


Figure 3. Source: Client Persona (Middle-aged females) developed during research

Persona 4:
Mature men aged 50 and above, with prior work experience in their country of origin.

28.6% of Hume residents are more than 50 years old. The downturn in manufacturing (especially in auto-sector) and loss of construction jobs during COVID have badly impacted this mature-aged workforce.

Workers from CALD backgrounds have lost more jobs during COVID. This has had a disproportionate impact on Hume residents, given the very high intake of humanitarian settlers, many of whom were qualified professionals or business owners in their country of origin.

Data relating to the NW Melbourne Employment Area shows that 24% of male workers aged 50 years and over such as Musa (see infographic) are chronically un/under-employed.

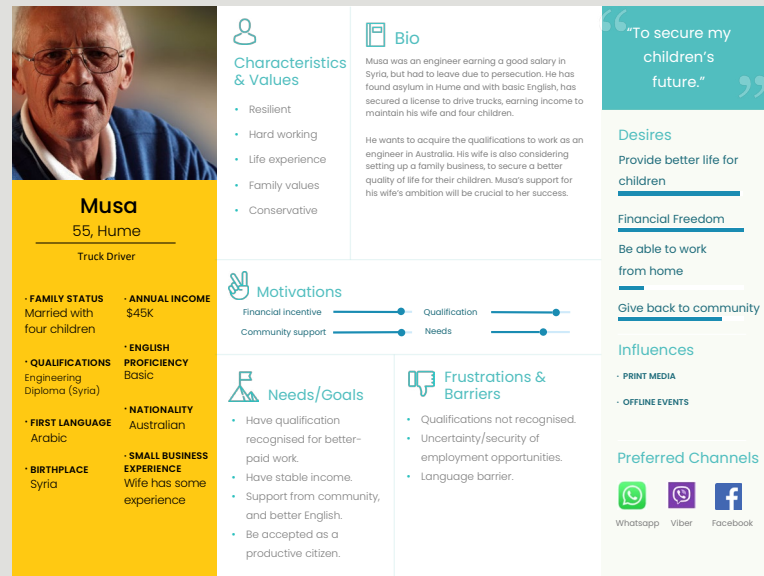


Figure 4. Source: Client Persona (Mature-age CALD Male) developed during research

Persona 5:
Women with entrepreneurial ambition/running a micro-business.

Many women migrants to Hume such as Farah (see infographic) may have run businesses in their country of origin but need help to become self-employed in Australia.

Common barriers are lack of English, knowledge of legal & regulatory needs, and access to the finance needed to establish and grow businesses. Women may also face socio-cultural barriers relating to their role in the home and society, which can discourage entrepreneurship.

Home-based work and a group model for support may be ideally suited to their circumstances.

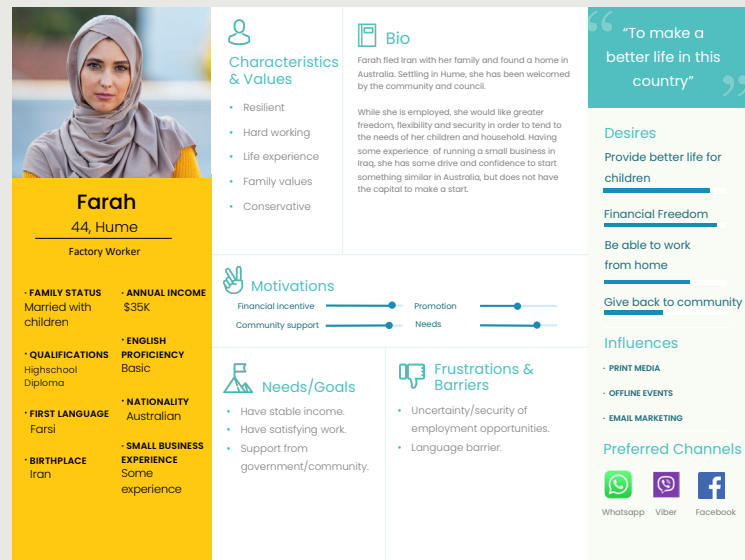


Figure 5. Source: Client Persona (Female, Entrepreneurial Ambitions) developed during research

NOTE: Data sourced from Hume City Council reports showed that low levels of English proficiency; lack of recognition of overseas qualifications and/or relevant work experience; and poor understanding of the Australian workplace; were the most oft-quoted barriers to employment faced by vulnerable groups in the local community. Our research also highlighted the importance of recognising the 'intersectionalities' of identities and circumstances, when determining groups which are more likely to face poorer employment outcomes and socio-economic vulnerability. A number of the specific cohorts identified by the Hume City Council as being more 'at-risk' of vulnerability including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; ex-offenders with criminal records, and those recently released from prison, have not been included in the scope of this research, given our focus on refugee and CALD migrants.



Local Employment-related Services: Mapping the Service Ecosystem in Hume

Introduction: As part of the 'Partnering Employment Renewal' Project, Spectrum and Grameen consulted with key local service providers, finding that whilst employment-related services in the Hume area had been reviewed multiple times, a user-centric journey map of the migrant/refugee experience through the employment support ecosystem had not yet been developed. In this Section, we describe the approach the research team adopted to achieve the following objectives:

1. Map the Hume employment services system, with key service providers servicing refugee/CALD migrants.
2. Identify what works best to achieve employment outcomes for refugee/CALD job-seekers, and success-stories.
3. Identify what does not work for these cohorts, and examples of what can be improved, and what to avoid.
4. Identify sectors/industries that offer employment opportunities, and gaps that can be filled by self-employment.

A series of **expert workshops** were held between November 2021 and January 2022, with key organisations and governance bodies invited to participate, including local service providers, Broadmeadows Revitalisation Board members (Hume City Council, DPV Health, Banksia Gardens Community Services, Brite Disability Employment Services, and the Kangan Institute), Hume Multicultural Advisory Group members (AMES, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Arabic Welfare, Uniting Care) and representatives from the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) as it was known at the time. Individual meetings and workshops were also organised to broaden the evidence-base informing the mapping exercise, and incorporate the insights, learnings and experiences of a wide range of service providers.

Potential Solutions - Service Provider-focused Research:

Our research concluded that there is a growing appetite across service providers in the Hume region, to adopt a 'collective-action' approach to improving employment outcomes in general, and for refugee and CALD migrants in particular. This is evidenced by the creation of a number of cross-sectoral bodies such as the Hume and Broadmeadows Revitalisation Boards, the Hume Multicultural Advisory Group amongst others, bringing together key leaders from service provider organisations, to consider potential solutions to local challenges.

Yet the focus of these groups appears to be solutions which individual providers can implement, rather than a concerted and coordinated effort to create the 'system-wide' change that is needed to break the cycle of social and economic disadvantage faced by refugee and CALD migrant groups. There is a genuine opportunity for local partners to co-design and lead an evidence-based, cross-sectoral, client-centred action-focused program, to enable refugee and CALD migrants in the Hume region to achieve economic independence and lead more fulfilled, productive lives.

Key Learnings from Service Provider-focused Research:

1. There are a large number of organisations, from across various sectors, which receive funding from a range of Government bodies (at Federal, State and local levels) to deliver employment-related services to job-seekers from refugee and CALD migrant backgrounds, in the Hume region. Victorian Parliament data showed that more than 40 employment service-providers from across industry and non-profit sectors across Hume have been funded up to \$80 million p.a., to connect local job-seekers with employers. Yet the rate of unemployment in Broadmeadows remains disproportionately high (19.3% vis-à-vis 6.6% in Greater Melbourne – in particular amongst CALD migrants and refugees (TACSI, 2017).
2. The service provision landscape in Hume is often described as 'siloed' by participants. Most service providers welcomed the attempt from the Spectrum/ Grameen research team to create a system-map of employment-related services in the Hume region - yet they appear to have been more focused on their own services and service-delivery model, rather than on considering how they may interact with services from other providers to better meet the clients' needs.
3. Some service providers (especially JobActive providers and JVES mentors) are incentivised based on their ability to place jobseekers into employment, and retain their employment for 6 months. This discourages long-term engagement for most disadvantaged jobseekers, especially those with language and qualification barriers. In addition, encouraging jobseekers to consider self-employment is not an incentivised activity.
4. Many service providers have a standard suite of services which are offered to all job-seekers, irrespective of their background. These are likely to have been designed for 'mainstream' users with little to no cultural understanding of their target audiences, with few providers saying they are customising their services for clients from refugee or CALD migrant backgrounds.
5. Service providers begin their engagement with refugee and CALD migrant job-seekers post-settlement – there is little or no employment-related support provided pre-arrival into Australia or early in the settlement journey. Moreover, most services typically stop after the client has been placed into employment – there is little or no support provided post-placement hence employment-related aspects such as career progression, upskilling or aspiring to a job which is a better fit with the job-seekers prior qualifications and professional experience, are neglected. Moreover, most settlement services typically cease after the client pass the five-year mark post arrival into Australia.
6. Few providers focus on professional networking for jobseekers from refugee/CALD migrant backgrounds, or pathways to have their prior qualifications and professional experience recognised in Australia. Instead, most providers are actively trying to place their clients in any job opportunity presented to them, usually entry level jobs that don't match the qualifications or the aspirations of the jobseekers. This leads to sense of mistrust and resentment by the jobseekers and disengagement from the employment services system.
7. Service providers from the non-profit or NGO sector, previously focused on emergency relief and family/ youth-focused programs, are increasingly being funded to provide employment and entrepreneurship-related support. While this is welcomed, many organisations are struggling to provide high level professional employment and career coaching services. These organisations are also finding it hard to connect with and provide value to commercial and private businesses.
8. The State Government has also initiated funding for a number of initiative targeting CALD jobseekers, including Jobs Victoria Mentors and Jobs Job Advocates, providing specialised and targeted support. Nonetheless, many of the employment service providers and NFPs working in this space are finding it difficult to have a complete understanding of how these services fit and work together.





Client Journey Mapping: The Employment Experience in Hume

Introduction: Grameen and Spectrum researchers also mapped the journey of refugee and CALD migrant job-seekers as they navigate the local employment-related ecosystem in the Hume region. This Section of the report describes the human-centred approach we adopted to better understand the needs and experiences of the targeted participants. Our preliminary consultation showed that although employment services in the Hume area had been reviewed multiple times, the focus had been more on the supply-side i.e. the service providers' perspective, than on the demand-side i.e. the job-seekers' views. Our project therefore adopted a refugee and migrant-centred approach, to achieve the following objectives:

- Better understand the clients' employment-related needs, aspirations, expectations and experiences;
- Explore common barriers and enablers of their desired employment outcomes;
- Identify common gaps over the course of their employment journey;
- Brainstorm potential solutions that clients feel could have helped them to fill the identified gaps.

A series of expert workshops were organised with relevant Spectrum staff, to identify at a high-level, the typical stages of their client's journey towards employment (see Figure 6 below). This exercise revealed that the usual client journey had five steps – expectations pre-arrival to Australia (Step 1), starting the employment search (Step 2), locating help & support (Step 3), applying for jobs (Step 4) and post-placement support once employed (Step 5).

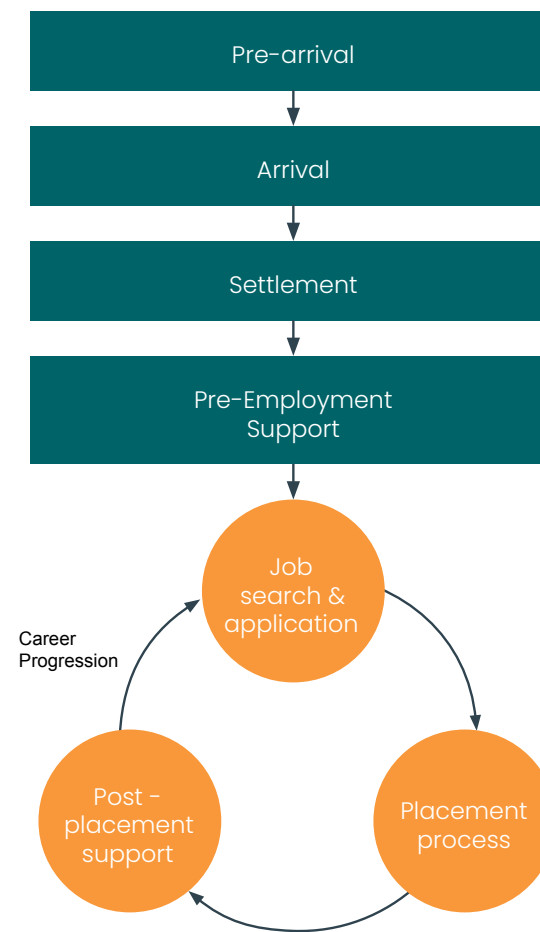


Figure 6. Source: Preliminary Client Employment Journey developed during research

A Client Survey informed by the employment journey captured above was then developed with the intention of validating each step and further exploring the client's needs, aspirations and expectations. This survey was released in October 2021 to selected CALD Spectrum clients and contacts across Hume, with an incentive of a \$20 voucher available to participants who completed it within a specified time period. 32 valid responses were received over the period October to December 2021, which were analysed to identify emerging insights. The data validated the five-step journey towards employment as captured in the expert workshops; highlighted the common pain-points (barriers/challenges) experienced by respondent; gaps in the current service provision; and potential solutions they feel could have assisted them.

The survey participants were a good representation of the recent waves of migrants/refugees in Hume, arriving in Australia over the last 8 years from countries such as Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Iran amongst others. These groups speak many languages including Arabic, Assyrian, Chaldean, Dari, Syriac and Persian, with the majority (69.9%) identifying themselves as having very low or average English proficiency.

About half of the participants (53.1%) were not employed prior arriving to Australia due to their age or personal circumstances. Those who had already been employed in their country of origin, had worked in various fields and sectors such as Engineering, Nursing, Tourism, public health and Accounting. Only 12.5% of participants did not have an accredited qualification.

The majority of the participants (68.8%) are currently unemployed and are looking for work, while 9.4% of participants were unemployed but not looking for a work at the time. Only 21.9% of participant were employed. These participants identified a number of employment support organisations they have been engaged with, but when asked if these services are able to help them achieve their employment goals, the majority answered with maybe (46.9%) or no (15.6%). This view of the employment services was rooted in the fact that most of the participants (71.9%) stated that they had not been engaged by an employment service provider yet.

Note: although most participants would have been assigned a JobActive provider as part of their initial settlement requirement, most participants are failing to recognise the JobActive providers as employment support organisations. This was further confirmed during our focus group discussions.

The quality of the employment support participants received varied with the majority (63%) receiving no support at all and only 11% of those who received support secured a job. About 22% being placed into an education or training program. Overall, the majority (70%) of those who have received support from an employment service provider indicated a need for more support.

In addition to the survey above, a series of **client focus groups** were also conducted, targeting the five client personas developed during the earlier phase of this research. In total 25 participants were interviewed: 9 youth, 6 men, 7 women and 3 women with small businesses. The intention of these focus groups was to further explore insights gleaned from the client survey, and offer selected clients the opportunity to provide more qualitative, in-depth responses to the survey questions.

These sessions were recorded (wherever client permission was obtained) and facilitated in Arabic when requested by clients. Additional learnings generated through this qualitative approach were incorporated into the ongoing analysis, offering further validation and triangulation of emerging insights, as briefly illustrated in the following chart:

Client Employment Journey in Broadmeadows/Hume (Low-Income, CALD Community Groups)

	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3		
	Pre-arrival	Arrival	Settlement	Pre-Employment	Placement	Post-Placement	Career Progressions
Gain	Hope	Energy	Aspirations	Community-based employment services	Commitment Bi-lingual/ Bi-Cultural	Self-Esteem	Financial Freedom
Pain	Mental Health/ Trauma (PTSD)	Social Network	Info Overload	Lack: English, Local Experience, Professional Network/ Cover-letter/ Interview/ Volunteer to get jobs	Work Culture	Childcare	Lack of Support - leadership, upskilling
	Safety, Security, Survival	Soft Skills hobbies, language, sport, humour, volunteering	Navigation Employment, Recruitment processes	Overseas Qualifications not recognised	Worker's Rights	Employment Conditions, EAP	Entrepreneurship Supports e.g. online, marketing etc.
	Uncertainty, Confusion limited knowledge	Workplace Culture & Expectations what, when, how, level of English is needed for job?	Confidence Am I good enough?	Specialist Employment services mismatch/ profession	'Fit' - Job Skills, Aspirations	Tax, Super etc.	
	Expectations (employers/ workers)		Mental Health Trauma - are they 'job-ready'?	Loss of Prestige/ Status prior employment, going backwards	Regulations	Self-Employment Pathways - no support	
	Everyday living e.g. public transport, driver's license etc.			Unconscious Bias/ Racism	Peer Support	Scared to change jobs - exploitation in wrong job	
				Awareness of State-led programs/ Self-Employment	Childcare	Training/Skills for next job	
				Financial Stress accept any job	Casual Job & Entrepreneurship not recognised by Govt/ no incentive for Job Services Providers to promote		

Figure 7. Source: Preliminary Analysis of Barriers/Enablers for Client Employment Journey from Client Surveys and research

Key Findings from Client-focused Research:

A number of themes emerged from the client-focused research, with some of the key insights summarised below.

1. There are multiple 'demand-side' barriers to employment faced by Hume residents from refugee and CALD backgrounds, including low levels of English proficiency; difficulty with obtaining recognition of overseas qualifications; lack of relevant local work experience; lack of in-language employment-related support and resources; a mismatch between workers' and employers' expectations; lack of understanding of workplace-related rights/obligations and work-culture in Australia; lack of a professional network and/or opportunities to learn from other successful refugee/migrants; amongst others.
2. There are also 'supply-side' barriers to employment faced by refugee and CALD migrants in Hume, including a lack of awareness of available services despite a crowded service-system with multiple agencies (at times across federal, state and local levels) being funded to offer job-related services to the same groups; information overload and difficulty in navigating the complex service ecosystem without dedicated support; a lack of trust in institutions; lower than expected usage of available services; a mismatch between job-seekers' qualifications/desired profession and the jobs on offer; lack of longer-term support once workers have been successfully 'placed'; amongst others.
3. There is a lack of focus on entrepreneurship and self-employment within the current service-ecosystem, which has led to an unmet need for dedicated support to encourage refugee and CALD community groups in the Hume region, to start or grow their own small/micro-businesses. Service providers are not being incentivised to encourage self-employment; community groups lack knowledge about the regulatory/legal obligations involved in establishing a business, and/or financial capabilities required to run a successful business; and access to finance is very limited, particularly for women on low incomes.

In order to capture the full breadth of feedback from our participants, the research team created a mind map (see Diagram 1) to provide a comprehensive visual representation of the multifaceted challenges faced by migrant and refugee job seekers in accessing employment opportunities in the Hume region. This Issue Map traces the multiple interconnections between causes, impacts, benefits, enablers, and stakeholders relevant to the topic, in an attempt to facilitate a deeper understanding of the systemic nature of the issues, as well as to highlight the complexity and nuanced analysis required to address this topic.



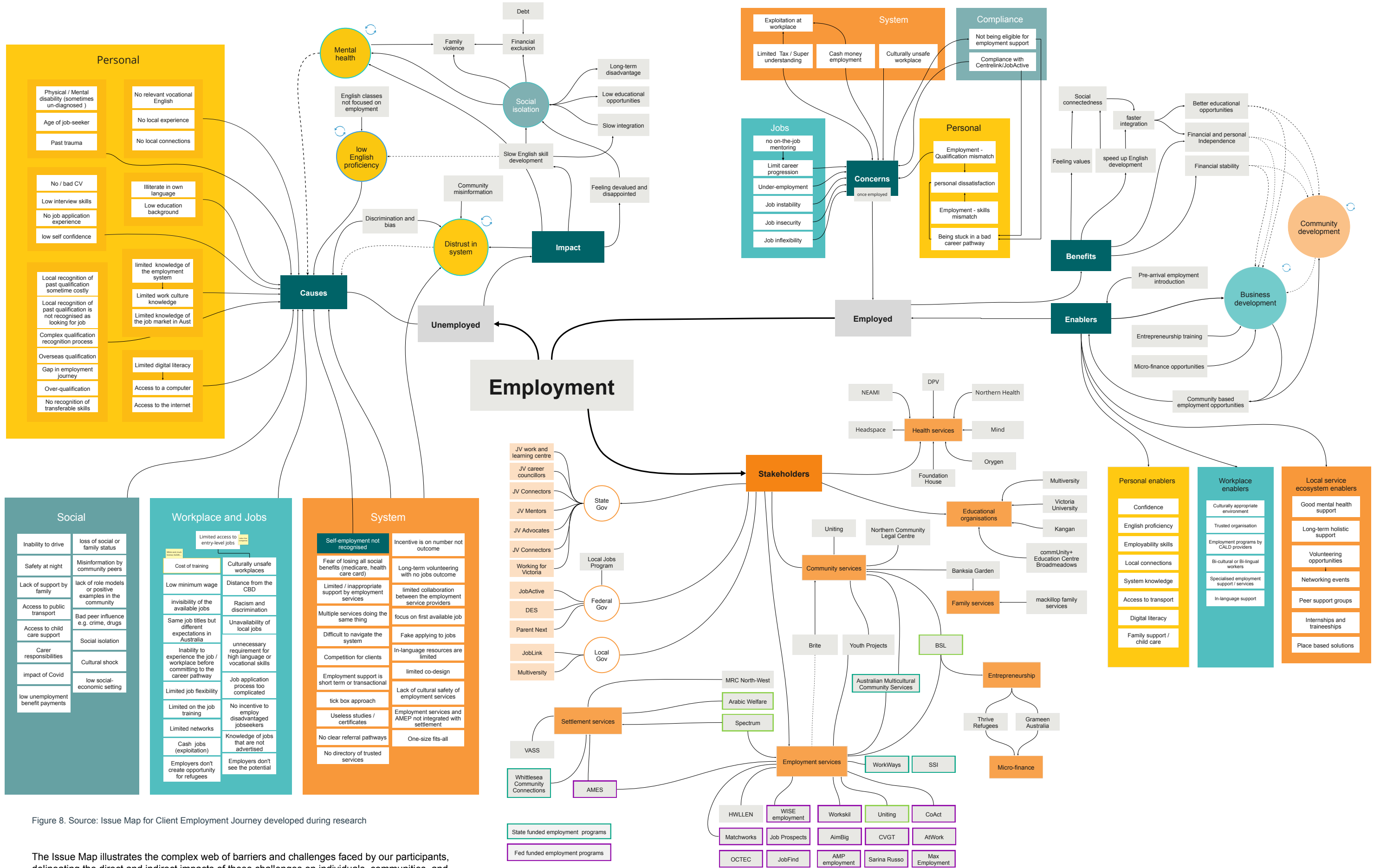


Figure 8. Source: Issue Map for Client Employment Journey developed during research

The Issue Map illustrates the complex web of barriers and challenges faced by our participants, delineating the direct and indirect impacts of these challenges on individuals, communities, and the wider economy. By also identifying potential enablers and relevant local stakeholders, this mind map serves as a foundation for the development of targeted interventions, policies, and support services that can more effectively address the employment needs of this vulnerable group.

In the following sections, we have broken up this complex Issue Map into smaller segments, so that we can deep-dive into different aspects of our findings, and more clearly discuss the specific domains discussed by our participants. The first of these segments categorises the causes of unemployment for refugee and CALD migrant jobseekers into four specific areas of concern – personal challenges, social barriers, workplace/job-related issues, and systemic challenges needed in the local employment services ecosystem, as described in the Figure 9 below:

Personal challenges faced by refugee/migrant job-seekers encompass factors such as language proficiency and lack of local qualifications, while social challenges can include broader issues including lack of appropriate cultural assimilation and feelings of being isolated.

For those who are applying for jobs, workplace and job-related challenges might involve discrimination or limited job opportunities. Meanwhile, systemic challenges such as difficulties in navigating Australian job application processes or lack of recognition of international experience and qualifications, also feature repeatedly in our participants' feedback.

Figure 9 also illustrates the impacts of unemployment on migrant and refugee communities, which can lead to financial instability and increased social isolation, thus perpetuating a cycle of disadvantage.

We discuss each of these four domains of challenges and barriers further in the section below.

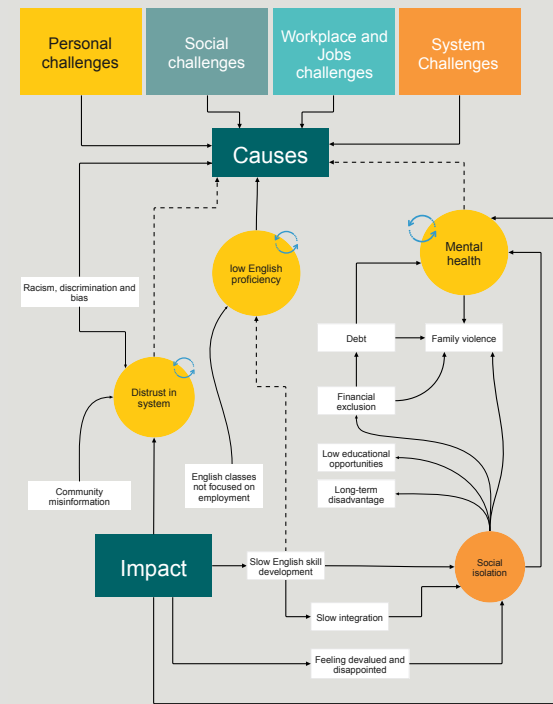


Figure 9. Source: Causes of unemployment & Impacts for Migrant/Refugee Job-seekers - preliminary analysis from client surveys and research

Personal Challenges Faced by Migrant/Refugee Jobseekers: Figure 10 provides a more detailed description of the personal challenges encountered by migrant and refugee jobseekers.

Personal challenges faced by refugee/CALD migrants span across diverse dimensions such as past trauma, physical or mental disabilities, age considerations, absence of local experience or connections, lack of relevant vocational English proficiency, inadequate CVs, low interview skills, and minimal job application experience.

These challenges also include issues related to self-confidence, recognition and cost of prior qualifications, complexity of the qualification recognition process, gaps in employment history, over-qualification, low education background, and illiteracy in one's own language.

Knowledge of the work culture in Australia, understanding of the local employment system and broader job market, digital literacy, and access to technology (computer and internet) are highlighted as additional barriers.

Furthermore, Figure 10 underscores the challenge posed by low vocational skills. Together, these factors provide a comprehensive insight into the personal obstacles that migrant and refugee jobseekers may face in their journey to secure employment in Australia

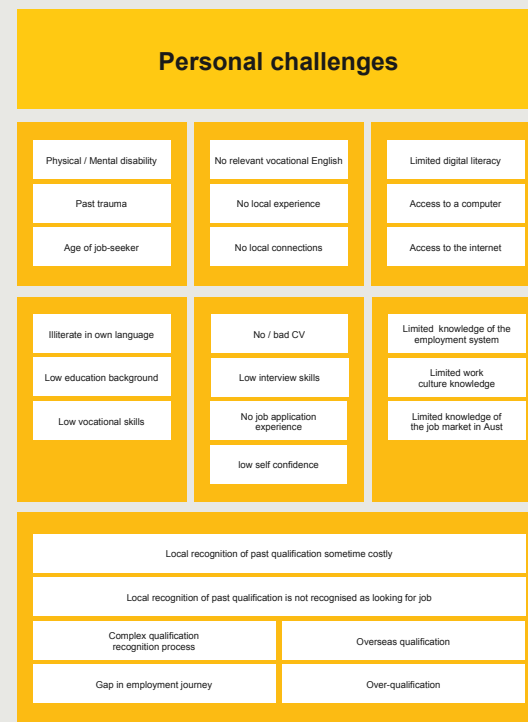


Figure 10. Source: Personal Challenges - Preliminary Analysis from Client Surveys and research

Workplace and Job-related Challenges: Figure 11 below illustrates multiple barriers and challenges faced by refugee / CALD migrants who have found work in the local Hume region.

Figure 11 delineates a range of obstacles specifically related to the workplace and job availability for migrant and refugee jobseekers. Foremost among these are culturally unsafe workplaces, instances of racism and discrimination, and limited job flexibility.

The feedback from participants also highlights the dearth of local job opportunities and the invisibility or inaccessibility of available jobs. The complexity of the job application process and limited access to entry-level jobs pose additional barriers.

This figure also calls attention to economic factors such as the high cost of training, unnecessary requirements for advanced language or vocational skills, and the distant location of jobs from the Central Business District (CBD). The low minimum wage and lack of incentives to employ disadvantaged jobseekers further compound these challenges. Together, these factors present a comprehensive view of the hurdles faced by our participants.



Figure 11 Source: Workplace and job-related Challenges - Preliminary Analysis from Client Surveys and research

Social Challenges: Figure 12 summarises a wide range of social challenges faced by migrant/refugee jobseekers.

Central to the social challenges mentioned by our participants are logistical considerations such as access to public transport and child care support, along with personal safety concerns, particularly at night.

Family dynamics also play a role, including lack of support from family members and the inability to drive. Community-specific factors such as misinformation from peers, lack of positive role models or examples, and negative peer influences, such as crime and drug involvement, are highlighted.

Figure 12 also underscores the difficulties posed by social isolation, being situated in a low socio-economic setting, and receiving inadequate unemployment benefit payments. Further challenges are connected to loss of social or family status and cultural shock, reflecting the broader socio-cultural adjustments that migrant and refugee jobseekers face.

Lastly, the figure acknowledges the specific impact of the Covid pandemic, illustrating how public health crises can exacerbate existing challenges. Collectively, these factors provide a nuanced understanding of the social barriers encountered in the employment journey of migrant and refugee communities.



Figure 12. Source: Preliminary Analysis from Client Surveys and research

System Challenges: Figure 13 below captures the systemic, system-wide challenges our participants have identified.

Figure 13 presents an array of system-related challenges experienced by migrant and refugee jobseekers. At the forefront are issues relating to limited or inappropriate support by employment services and a scarcity of in-language resources. Other challenges include practices such as fake job applications, acquiring non-beneficial studies or certificates, and prolonged volunteering without job outcomes.

The figure also underscores the lack of cultural safety within employment services, minimal collaboration between employment service providers, and duplicative efforts by multiple services. Navigating the system itself is highlighted as a significant challenge, alongside fears of losing social benefits, such as Medicare and healthcare cards.

In addition, the feedback from participants highlights the short-term or transactional nature of employment support, the 'tick box' approach, a focus on the first available job rather than meaningful employment, and limited co-design. Collectively, these factors shed light on the systemic barriers faced by migrant and refugee jobseekers, emphasizing the need for systemic changes to better support these communities in their employment journeys.

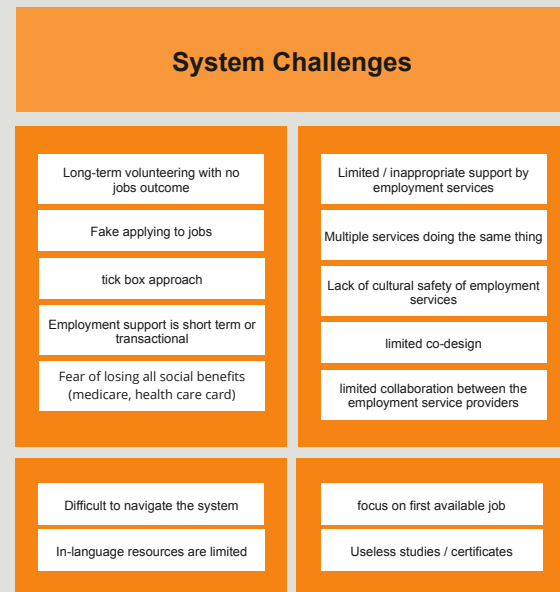


Figure 13. Source: Preliminary Analysis from Client Surveys and research

Post-employment concerns: Figure 14 captures the issues and challenges that refugee/CALD migrants continue to face, once they have entered the workforce.

Figure 14 presents the key concerns migrant and refugee jobseekers encounter post-employment. These include under-employment, limited understanding of tax and superannuation, workplace exploitation, and culturally unsafe environments.

Some participants also mention cash-in-hand employment and compliance issues with Centrelink/JobActive. Personal dissatisfaction, job instability, insecurity, and ineligibility for further employment support are significant concerns. Job inflexibility, employment-qualification mismatches, limited career progression, and feeling trapped in an undesirable career pathway are further highlighted.

Figure 14 also acknowledges the employment-skills mismatch and the enduring presence of workplace discrimination and racism. These concerns underscore the continuing challenges faced by migrant and refugee individuals even after gaining employment, emphasizing the need for robust support systems that extend beyond the job acquisition stage.

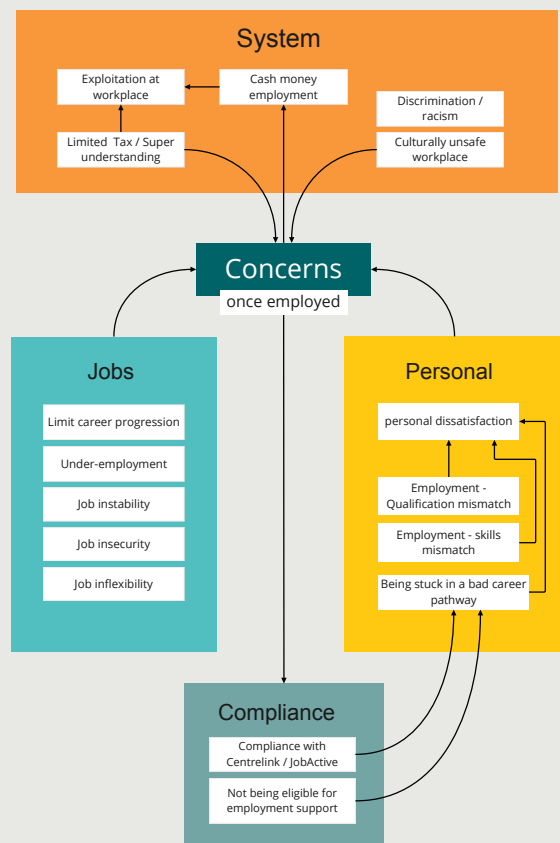


Figure 14. Source: Preliminary Analysis from Client Surveys and research

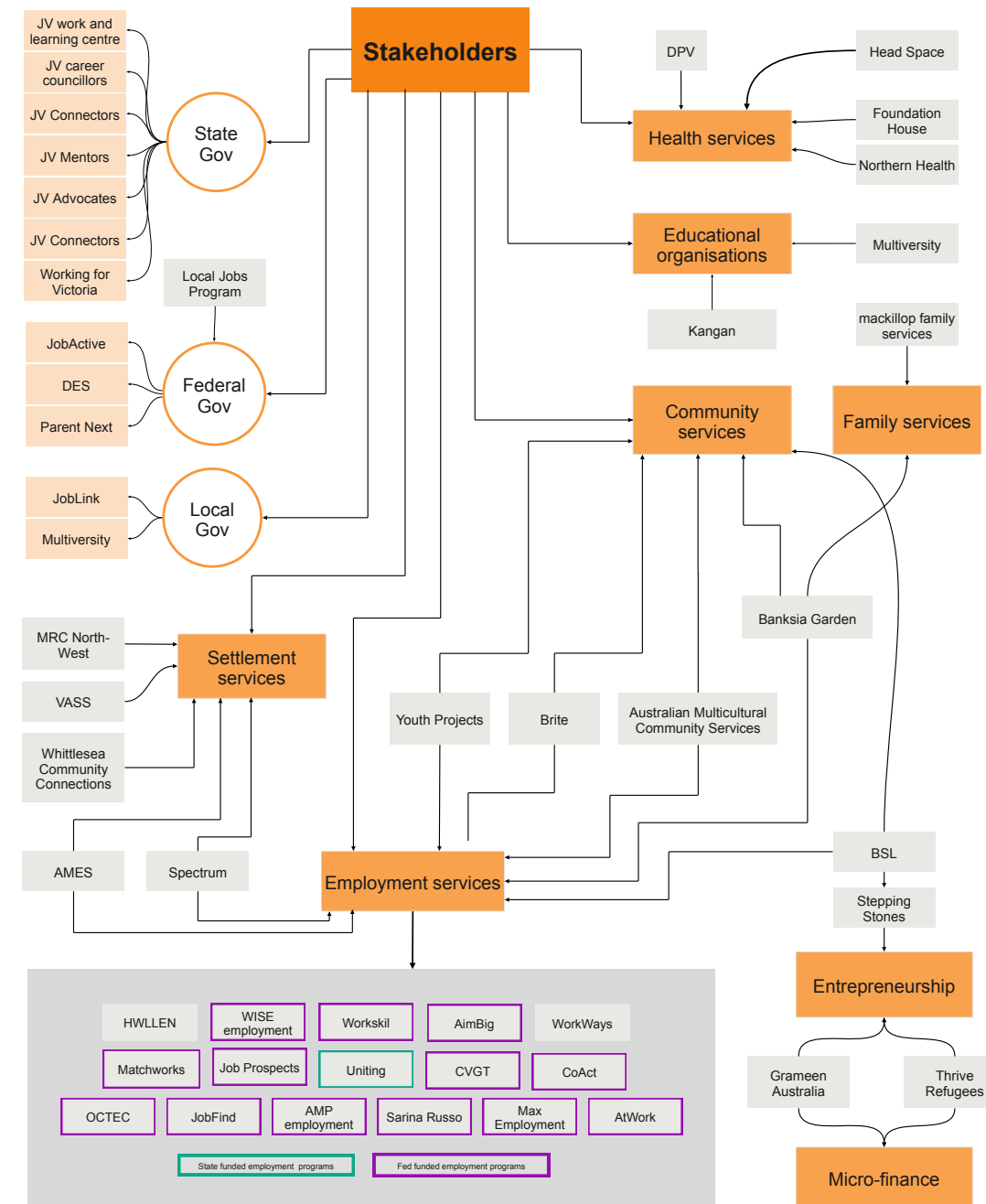


Figure 15. Source: Preliminary Analysis from Client Surveys and research

Key Local Stakeholders: We also created the following map of local service-providers mentioned by our participants, categorised by the type of services they offer. Note that this is not a complete list of local service providers - it merely reflects the organisations that our research participants have interacted with, or know of.

This detailed analysis of the participant feedback from our client-focused research confirmed our preliminary findings that there are considerable barriers faced by refugee and CALD migrants when they embark on their employment journey. These are on the demand-side as well as on the supply-side, which means that the potential solutions to address these barriers can be actioned by the refugee / CALD migrant employment-seeker themselves, as well as the employers who wish to engage them in productive and sustainable employment. In addition, there are several gaps in the current service-ecosystem that employment service-providers, and various government bodies that are encouraging employment for refugee and CALD migrants, can also address. We explore these ideas further in the next sections of this report.



Towards Shared Prosperity: Promoting Economic Inclusion

Introduction: In the previous sections of this report, we have explored how the COVID pandemic has exacerbated existing socio-economic inequalities in Australia (CHA 2022). Those living in lower socio-economic circumstances, often in crowded homes and unable to afford medical care or time off work, were more susceptible to catching disease and spreading it within their community. They have also experienced higher job-losses and reduced working-hours, impacting their ability to make ends meet. In particular, those from CALD backgrounds have been the hardest hit by the pandemic, with every 1% increase in diversity (as measured by CALD workers) translating into an additional 642 COVID-cases in Melbourne, and 609 in Sydney.

It comes as no surprise that the Hume region - which has the second-highest proportion of CALD residents - has experienced some of the highest infection rates in Victoria, as well as dramatically lower workforce participation. Our research has highlighted that job-seekers from refugee

and CALD backgrounds are facing chronic economic exclusion, despite significant mainstream supports being made available, including millions of dollars in employment support programs and Billions in infrastructure projects, redevelopments, and other investments. A system-change is needed across the employment services ecosystem, if the return on this investment is to be improved.

Our solution is the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project, designed as a pioneering strategy to collectively develop a solution to the multiple challenges and employment hurdles encountered by migrant and refugee communities in Hume as discussed in previous sections of this report. In this chapter, we first focus on the enablers that our participants identified, which have or could have enabled them to address the multiple challenges they have face in their employment journey. We then describe the way in which the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project has been designed.

Enablers of refugee/CALD migrant employment:

The research identifies potential areas for strategic investment, including mental health services, English language education, and initiatives to build trust in systems, which could yield significant beneficial outcomes in mitigating unemployment within these communities. We have categorised the enablers of employment identified by our participants into three distinct segments as briefly described below:

1. Personal enablers: steps that refugee/CALD migrants can take to enhance their employment opportunities,
2. Workplace enablers: improvements to workplace culture and/or job design: suggestions which can improve the design of inclusive workplaces.
3. Local service ecosystem enablers: improvements to local employment services and/or navigation of the employment services ecosystem: factors that can address some of the key identified gaps in the local employment services ecosystem.

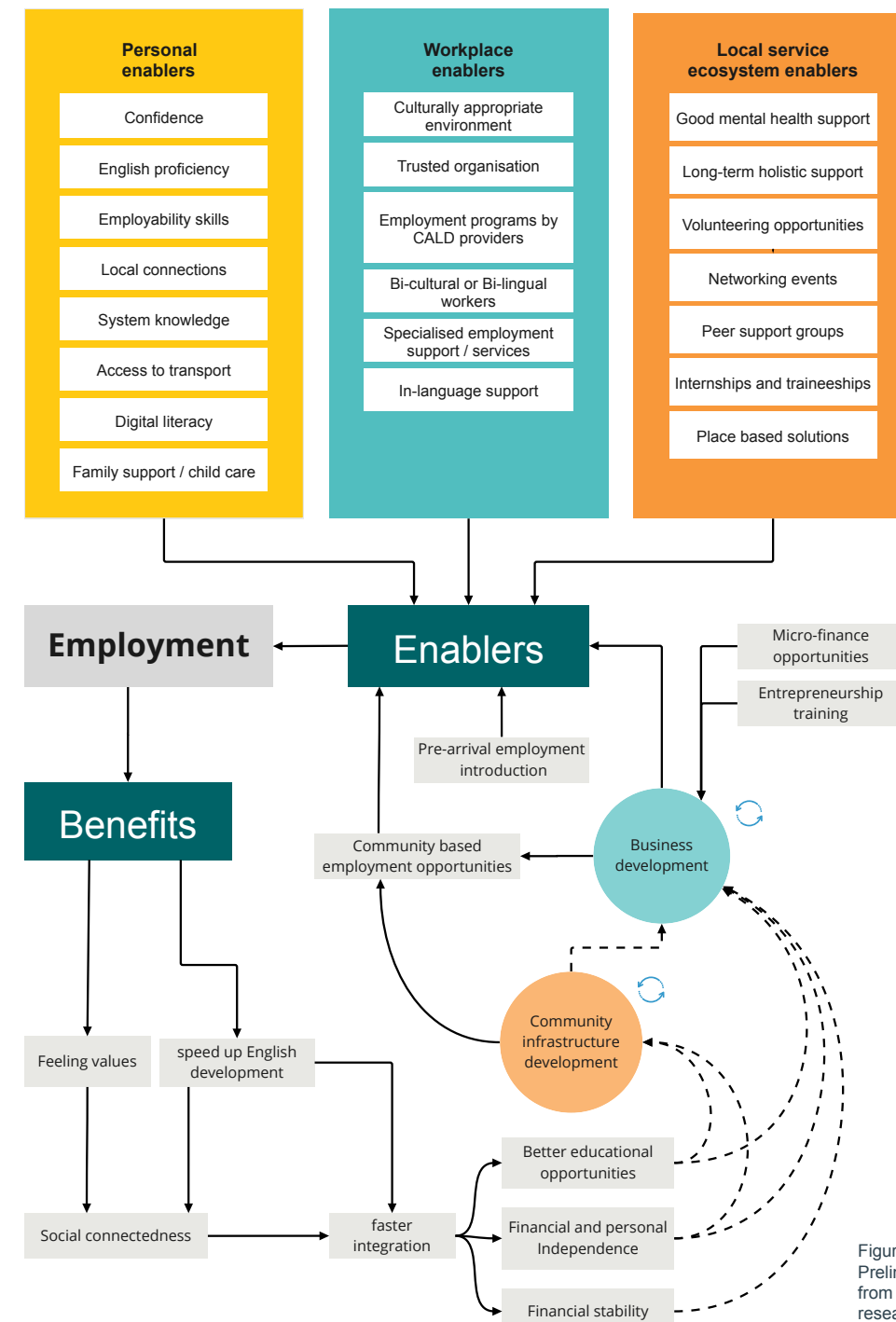


Figure 16. Source: Preliminary Analysis from Client Surveys and research

Figure 16 outlines the various factors that enable successful employment pathways for migrant and refugee jobseekers, along with the benefits that derive from obtaining meaningful employment.

Enablers range from personal factors such as confidence, English proficiency, local connections, employability skills, system knowledge, digital literacy, and access to family support and child care, to broader systemic supports like culturally appropriate services, entrepreneurship training, micro-finance opportunities, and specialized employment support.

The figure also emphasizes the importance of workplace enablers such as culturally appropriate workplaces, in-language support, bi-cultural or bi-lingual workers, and employment service design. Benefits obtained through meaningful employment are outlined as social connectedness, feeling valued, financial stability, and better educational opportunities.

The figure also underscores the critical areas for investment in the local service ecosystem, such as community infrastructure development and business development. Collectively, these enablers and benefits highlight the multi-faceted approach needed to support migrant and refugee jobseekers, while also drawing attention to the significant positive impact that meaningful employment can have on these communities.

CALD service providers and not-for-profits who are targeting CALD clients are consistently identified as the most trusted by the refugee and CALD migrant groups in Hume. They are also more likely to offer holistic and culturally-appropriate support to address the multiple social determinants which enable stable employment, including access to services such as food, health, education, transport, language and family-support, domestic-violence, sporting and cultural activities etc.

'The Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project: our aim to create a sustainable and independent working model to address the employment challenges faced by migrant and refugee communities in Hume led to the development of the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project. Recognizing the complexity of the issue, as described in Figure 17a below, Phase 1 of this project should focus on the development of a Collective Impact Framework as the first step in a multi-phase approach designed to ensure the success and longevity of the initiative. Phases 2, 3 and 4 will focus on ways to implement the Collective Action Framework. In this section, we outline our vision for the proposed phases of the plan, detailing the key objectives and milestones for each stage, and illustrating how this approach will progressively lead to the desired impact on employment outcomes for migrants and refugees in Hume.

Economic Inclusion Action Plan @ Hume – beyond 2023

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Establish & Engage	Critical Mass	Community-Led	Exit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seed-funding Received Backbone organisation Engage Stakeholders Establish Partnerships Co-design & Plan Partner Commitments Partner Action Plans Expand cross-sectoral services to client groups Independent Evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Partnerships in local community Launch new Partner Commitments/Action Plan Replicable Model to expand Collective Impact Additional Investment Audit of Action Items from Action Plans Independent Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community of Practice Enable local community to adopt Action Plans within their own sphere of influence via Portal Independent Evaluation & Audit of Action Items Share Learnings Track/Report Progress Explore User-Play Options to Self-sustain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions embedded into business as usual practice across all sectors in local Hume community Program becomes self-sustaining Share Learnings across other LGAs/States National roll-out to align with strategic priorities

Figure 17a. Source: Proposed phases of 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project with Phase 1 deliverables highlighted.

Across the world, collective impact frameworks are innovative and structured approaches being used to address complex social and environmental issues, which are commonly referred to as "wicked problems." These problems are intricate, interconnected, and resist conventional problem-solving methods. The collective impact framework provides a platform for collaboration among multiple stakeholders with diverse perspectives, competing priorities, and limited resources, enabling them to work together towards a shared goal. This approach involves five core elements, which are essential to its success: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and the presence of a backbone organization. By aligning their efforts around a unified vision and setting clear objectives, stakeholders can effectively utilize resources and generate positive outcomes that would be difficult to achieve individually.

We have chosen to apply the collective impact framework to address the issue of employment pathways for migrant and refugee populations. This issue involves multiple barriers, such as language barriers, cultural differences, and lack of recognition for foreign qualifications, which prevent these individuals from accessing job opportunities. By using the collective impact framework, stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and private sector employers, can work collaboratively to design and implement comprehensive strategies that address the unique challenges faced by this group. This approach can help facilitate the economic inclusion of migrants and refugees and promote positive outcomes for all stakeholders involved.

Collective impact frameworks have proven effective in tackling complex societal issues, as seen through successful cross-sectoral initiatives in Australia, including the Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) and Financial Inclusion Action Plans (FIAPs). These frameworks provide a structured platform for collaboration among diverse stakeholders, enabling them to align their efforts, share resources, and work towards a common goal. In Australia, **RAPs (Reconciliation Australia, 2023)** have played a vital role in promoting positive

relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community. Through engagement of various sectors, these plans have facilitated significant progress in areas like cultural awareness, education, and economic opportunities. RAPs have created meaningful partnerships that have led to increased employment and training opportunities for Indigenous Australians, while also raising cultural awareness and fostering mutual respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Similarly, **FIAPs (Good Shepherd, 2023)** aim to improve access to financial products and services for underrepresented groups, empowering individuals and communities and promoting economic resilience. Through collaboration among stakeholders across sectors, FIAPs have developed targeted strategies to address unique barriers faced by marginalized populations. These plans have expanded affordable financial services, developed tailored financial education programs, and created innovative banking solutions.

Both RAPs and FIAPs demonstrate the power of collective impact frameworks in addressing complex societal issues. Through collaboration, alignment, and leveraging of diverse stakeholder strengths, these initiatives have made significant strides in promoting social and economic inclusion, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and prosperous society. We have drawn inspiration from these successful, long-running programs to inform the design of the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project.

A Pathway towards developing a Collective Action Framework to inform the Economic Inclusion Action Plan project:

- Step 1:** User-focused research to understand the challenge
- Step 2:** Establish a community of practice of willing collaborators from multiple disciplines (government, industry, service providers, employers, education providers, community leaders, job-seekers from the targeted community groups etc.)
- Step 3:** Co-design a collective impact framework
- Step 4:** Develop action plans specific to the participating partner agencies

In Phase 1 of the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' project as funded by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, we have concentrated on the first three steps of this pathway, engaging a diverse group of stakeholders, including local government, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and private sector employers, to work collaboratively and design targeted interventions that will empower these communities to overcome obstacles and access meaningful job opportunities. By fostering a strong partnership among stakeholders, the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' embraces the power of a collective impact model to drive sustainable change and promote economic integration for migrant and refugee populations in Hume.

In tackling the complex employment challenges encountered by migrant and refugee job seekers, our collaborative impact framework takes a comprehensive approach that addresses three interrelated layers of the issue. These layers consist of the challenges faced by the individuals, the obstacles present within the workplace, and the shortcomings of the existing support system. Our framework aims to create a more accommodating and supportive environment for migrants and refugees by addressing these layers concurrently, eventually leading to positive employment outcomes.

This framework was co-designed by a group of 7 local "Trailblazer Organisations" which included: Spectrum, Grameen, the local government (Hume City Council), an education provider (Kangan Institute), a community service provider (Banksia Gardens Community Services) and local employers (DPV Health and Nestle).

The first layer of our framework as described in Figure 18 below - which we call "Grow the Local Workforce" - focuses on overcoming the challenges encountered by migrant and refugee individuals in their pursuit of employment opportunities. These challenges frequently include language barriers, a lack of recognition for foreign qualifications, and limited knowledge of the local labour market. Our framework proposes initiatives that aim to enhance the skills and employability of the target population. For example, tailored language training programs can be developed to improve communication skills and increase cultural understanding. Additionally, bridging courses or recognition of prior learning can facilitate the accreditation of foreign qualifications, while targeted vocational training can equip migrants and refugees with the specific skills needed in the local job market.

	Grow Local Workforce: Work-readiness & Pathways to Employment	Foster Inclusive Employment: Culturally-Safe Workplaces	Build a Supportive Ecosystem: Social Capital for Sustainable Employment
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build organisational awareness & Capacity Simplify workplace processes Build local workforce capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build workplace cultural competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide education & training to staff Host events, cultural & professional networks Provide employment pathways
Refugee/ CALD Migrant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for employment Proactively seek social & professional connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn & grow in the workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build leadership skills Progress your career Develop others
The Collective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build local user capacity Provide practical supports to boost local employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local workplaces Build local employer capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build local infrastructure

Figure 18. Source: Preliminary Analysis of Collective Action Framework from participant feedback, surveys and research

NOTE: The 'Foster Inclusive Employment' pillar has been aligned to the Hume City Council-led SEED program's framework under the 'Employer' section, with permission from the Hume City Council team.

The second layer of our framework, "Foster an Inclusive Workplace" addresses the challenges that migrants and refugees face within the workplace. These challenges may include discrimination, lack of cultural awareness among co-workers, and insufficient support for workers with diverse backgrounds. To create a more inclusive work environment, our framework promotes employers' adoption of diversity and inclusion policies, provision of cultural competency training for staff, and offering tailored support for migrant and refugee employees. We have ensured alignment with the local Hume City Council-led SEED program which encourages inclusive workplaces, by incorporating their framework within this segment. Embracing more inclusive initiatives can help build a welcoming and supportive workplace culture, where migrants and refugees feel valued and appreciated, leading to increased job satisfaction and retention. Furthermore, by embracing diversity and inclusion, employers can benefit from the unique skills, perspectives, and experiences that migrants and refugees bring to the workplace, ultimately contributing to increased innovation and organizational performance.

The third layer of our framework, "Build a Supportive Ecosystem," aims to enhance the broader support system available to migrant and refugee job seekers. This layer acknowledges the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and private sector employers. The framework proposes the development of a coordinated approach that leverages the strengths and resources of each stakeholder, creating a more effective and efficient support system for migrants and refugees. Examples of initiatives within this layer may include the establishment of a one-stop-shop for employment services, the provision of mentorship programs, and the creation of networking opportunities to connect job seekers with potential employers. By strengthening the ecosystem of support, the framework seeks to empower migrants and refugees on their journey towards economic integration and independence.

Next, we provide examples of how "the employer", "the refugee/CALD migrant", or "the collective" may adopt this framework to help create and access more sustainable employment pathways.

Grow the Local Workforce: Figure 19 describes this in more detail, with practical examples of how it can be implemented.

Grow Local Workforce: Work-readiness & Pathways to Employment		
Employer	• Build organisational awareness & Capacity	Exmples: Train staff on benefits of diverse employment, cultural awareness training, trauma-informed practice
	• Simplify workplace processes	Exmples: Recruitment (PD; Job Application; Interview...) inclusive website/comms, social procurement
	• Build local workforce capacity	Exmples: Work-readiness Skills, Recruitment Process, Coordinate with Service Providers
Refugee/ CALD Migrant	• Prepare for employment	Exmples: Develop Workplace Skills (English, Working in Australia), Prepare necessary Documents (CV, Job Applications, Referees etc.)
	• Proactively seek social & professional connections	Exmples: Identify local employment needs (e.g. Transport, Child-care, Mental Health support), Identify and connect with supportive social & professional groups based on prior expertise
The Collective	• Build local user capacity	Exmples: Induction for new arrivals/Navigator? Industry-based, technical skills & English in workplace; industry licenses, digital literacy & support
	• Provide practical supports to boost local employment	Exmples: Help obtain Birth certificates, work experience certificates, overseas qualifications, local Job Advertisements & Job Advocates, Support Self-employment

Figure 19, Source: Preliminary Analysis of Collective Action Framework from participant feedback, surveys and research

Foster Inclusive Employment: Figure 20 describes this in more detail, with practical examples of how it can be implemented.

Foster Inclusive Employment: Culturally-Safe Workplaces		
Employer	• Build workplace cultural competence	Exmples: • Increase awareness of, and of value diversity at workplace • Value language skills & community connections • Eliminate racism/discrimination • Recognise culturally important dates & celebrations • Cultural Awareness training/support • Ensure workplace website is multilingual & appeals to multicultural communities
Refugee/ CALD Migrant	• Learn & grow in the workplace	Exmples: Skills (English in Workplace, Rights & Obligations), Career Planning/Progression, Mentoring, Long-term emp pathways
The Collective	• Support local workplaces	Exmples: Coordinate person-centred services; Support Culturally-safe Workplaces
	• Build local employer capacity	Exmples: Provide trends re local job market; Advocate on behalf of ref/ CALD; Job fairs/local matching? Build service provider capacity; Post-placement support;

Figure 20, Source: Preliminary Analysis of Collective Action Framework from participant feedback, surveys and research

Build a supportive ecosystem: Figure 21 describes this in more detail, with practical examples of how it can be implemented.

Build a Supportive Ecosystem: Social Capital for Sustainable Employment		
Employer	• Provide education & training to staff	Exmples: Provide specific training to enhance staff professional skills, cultural awareness, benefits of supporting refugee/CALD migrants in workplaces etc.
	• Host events, cultural & professional networks	Exmples: Professional Networks/Events; cultural networks, Encourage Employee Volunteering, provide Community Sponsorships etc.
	• Provide employment pathways	Exmples: Provide opportunities for Volunteers, Interns, work intergrated learning, workforce placements etc.
Refugee/ CALD Migrant	• Build leadership skills • Progress your career	Exmples: Develop management skills, Financial capabilities, entrepreneurship skills
	• Develop Others	Exmples: Encourage Peer to peer learning, provide mentoring etc.
The Collective	• Build local infrastructure	Exmples: • Advocate for refugee/CALD migrant employment, raise awareness of benefits for individuals, workplaces & the local economy • Provide Education to Employment Pathways • Provide Place-based, smart investments \$\$ • Encourage targeted Social Procurement example within government agencies • Sponsor community organisations, build social connections • Coordinate between service providers for holistic support • Provide Navigation support for users • Service Providers' Directory, shared resources, No or low-cost supports etc.

Figure 21, Source: Preliminary Analysis of Collective Action Framework from participant feedback, surveys and research

Next Steps: Implementing the EIAP Collective Action Framework

Our vision for the remaining steps involved in Phase 1 which were not included in the scope of the funded 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' (EIAP) project, as well as Phases 2, 3 and 4 can inform future efforts to create a sustainable and independent working model to address the employment challenges faced by migrant and refugee communities in Hume. Recognizing the complexity of the issue, the development of this Collective Impact Framework is the

first step in a multi-phase approach designed to ensure the success and longevity of the initiative. Here, we outline the proposed phases of the plan, detailing the key objectives and milestones for each stage, and illustrating how this approach will progressively lead to the desired impact on employment outcomes for migrants and refugees in Hume.

Phase 4: Exit

The final phase, "Exit," aims to embed the actions and initiatives of the EIAP into standard business practices across all sectors in the local Hume community, ensuring the program becomes self-sustaining and resilient for the long-term. During this phase, the learnings and insights gained throughout the initiative will be shared across other local government areas (LGAs) and states, promoting a national roll-out that aligns with strategic priorities.

An important aspect of this phase is the adoption of a fee-for-service model. This model will enable the program to generate revenue by developing, supporting, and evaluating EIAPs for organizations that seek to implement similar initiatives in their own context. By providing these services, the program not only ensures its financial sustainability but also reinforces its mission of fostering economic inclusion and prosperity for migrant and refugee communities. The fee-for-service model will allow the program to continuously adapt and improve, as well as extend its reach and impact, ensuring that the benefits of the 'Economic Inclusion Action Plan' system-change initiative are able to be sustainably experienced by a growing number of individuals and communities well beyond the confines of this project.

Conclusion

This report encapsulates our bold vision for shared prosperity for all refugee and CALD migrants who are welcomed into Australia. It also captures the hopes and dreams of our local participants for a better future, as we launch this report during Refugee Week in June 2023 with the theme of 'Finding Freedom'. We trust that every reader of this report is able to find some practical steps that they can take, to promote sustainable employment and financial freedom, for all Australians.

Economic Inclusion Action Plan @ Hume – beyond 2023

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Establish & Engage	Critical Mass	Community-Led	Exit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seed-funding Received ✓ Backbone organisation ✓ Engage Stakeholders ✓ Establish Partnerships ✓ Co-design & Plan ✓ Partner Commitments ✓ Partner Action Plans ✓ Expand cross-sectoral services to client groups ✓ Independent Evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand Partnerships in local community • Launch new Partner Commitments/Action Plan • Replicable Model to expand Collective Impact • Additional Investment • Audit of Action Items from Action Plans • Independent Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community of Practice • Enable local community to adopt Action Plans within their own sphere of influence via Portal • Independent Evaluation & Audit of Action Items • Share Learnings • Track/Report Progress • Explore User-Play Options to Self-sustain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions embedded into business as usual practice across all sectors in local Hume community • Program becomes self-sustaining • Share Learnings across other LGAs/States • National roll-out to align with strategic priorities

Figure 17b. Source: Phases 2,3, & 4 – Economic Inclusion Action Plan project

Phase 2: Critical Mass

The second phase of the initiative, titled "Critical Mass," focuses on building momentum and expanding partnerships to create a strong foundation for the Economic Inclusion Action Plan. During this phase, trailblazer commitment statements will be developed to articulate the vision, goals, and principles that guide the plan. These statements will serve as a rallying point for stakeholders, inspiring collective action and commitment to the cause.

Following the development of trailblazer commitment statements, the action plan will be launched, detailing the specific initiatives and strategies that will be implemented to address the employment challenges faced by migrants and refugees. The expansion of local partnerships will be a critical aspect of this phase, as it will ensure that a wide range of stakeholders are engaged in the process, leveraging their unique strengths and resources to maximize the plan's impact.

As the plan gains traction, new partner commitments and action plans will be developed, contributing to the creation of a replicable model that can be expanded to other contexts. Additional investments will be sought to support the initiative's growth and ensure its sustainability. The phase will culminate with an audit of action items from partner action plans and an independent evaluation, assessing the progress and effectiveness of the implemented strategies.

Phase 3: Community-Led

The third phase, "Community-Led," will focus on scaling up the reach and impact of the EIAP, empowering local communities to adopt action plans within their own spheres of influence. A portal will be created to facilitate this process, enabling community members to access resources, share learnings, and contribute to the ongoing development of the plan.

An independent evaluation and audit of action items will be conducted to ensure the plan's ongoing effectiveness and to identify areas for improvement. During this phase, the initiative will explore 'user pay' options to create a self-sustaining model that can continue to grow and evolve without relying solely on external funding.

The community-led phase will emphasize transparency, with progress being tracked and reported regularly. Sharing learnings and insights will be a key component of this phase, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.



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Mohammed Yassin, Vinita Godinho, PhD
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