

## Resources and models to assist access to sport in a regional setting for Newly Arrived and Refugee Young People

### Overview

This information sheet is based on a Multicultural Sports Network Meeting held in Ballarat in November 2007. The meeting highlighted many of the challenges faced by newly arrived migrant and refugee communities in accessing local sporting clubs and leisure centres.

Poor access to transport, limited finances and knowledge of local clubs were all identified as issues that affect newly arrived and refugee young people's access to sport in regional areas, as is the case in urban areas. However, these issues are compounded in rural areas as young people are more isolated, and that the resources to support the sporting clubs and leisure centres to become more accessible to this target group were limited.

The meeting aimed to address the latter of these two compounding issues. Three of the larger sporting associations – Basketball Victoria, the Australian Football League, and Football Federation Victoria – all presented resources available for groups in regional settings. A summary of these resources is included in this tip sheet.

Also identified at the meeting was the importance of partnerships in regional settings, as resources are limited. The meeting included a model currently operating in the regional setting of Geelong, where an effective partnership has been developed which includes Corio Bay Cricket and Sports Club, the Geelong Sudanese Association and Diversitat. A copy of this presentation is included in this tip sheet.

Many representatives of sporting clubs and leisure centres that attended the meeting identified a need for information on migrant services in their local area. The tip sheet includes a list of regional contacts for workers from migrant services and translations services.

Sport is a great way for newly arrived and refugees living in regional Victoria to build links with their communities.

# Tip Sheet from CMYI

## The Model: 'Out of Africa, Into Soccer' project

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*Information in this section is taken from the presentation by project officer, James Muir.*

**Ballarat Diversitat and Corio Bay Cricket & Sports Club**

**Three year project**

**Project Officer: James Muir**

The project was initiated by the Geelong Sudanese Association and an application was submitted by Leisure Networks. The project was funded by VicHealth's 'Active Participation Grant' and Diversitat was identified as the lead agency.

## The aim of the project

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- To provide pathways for playing and employment for young men through assisting more African refugees to get involved in playing, coaching and refereeing soccer
- To establish an 'African Subcommittee' in the Corio Bay Cricket and Sports Club.

## Why is there a need for the project?

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- Everything is unfamiliar for the African refugees
- Soccer is something they know
- Sport is a great way to integrate into the community
- Sport provides positive experiences
- Sport develops greater connections, opens up other opportunities and increases skills

Through a shared passion, the African community members are given the chance to get to know people in their community, play sport, have fun, make friends, and become a part of the club just like any other member. Feeling comfortable and welcome in a sporting club environment can then build confidence to do well in other aspects of life, such as employment, education, and socialisation.

## Barriers to access

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Many of the barriers listed are common in the general community; however they can be greater for newly arrived refugees.

Barriers can include:

**Language:** many communication barriers exist through different languages, literacy skills, IT, systems and processes.

**Cost:** earning a low income, or no income, so only the essential day-to-day items are purchased. Sporting fees, equipment, clothing, footwear aren't even close to being a priority.

Setting the agenda on multicultural youth issues

**Transport:** may not have a car or a license. Even if they do the cost of petrol, maintenance, and paying off a car loan is very high

**Parental support:** parents may be working odd shifts, busy with other family commitments.

**Priorities for individual / family:** sport isn't high – day to day issues are more important.

**Confidence / self esteem / behavioral issues:** not having the confidence in their own ability; just need to be given a go and have something positive in their lives – sport can be a great influence in developing responsibility, discipline, confidence, determination, and courage.

**Knowledge of what's available:** and the issues involved with accessing new services in a new country or community.

**Lack of opportunities/exposure to activities:** African refugees aren't just new to the area; they are new to a totally different country and culture. Just accessing shops, health services, employment services, welfare, etc would be an enormous task – once again, sport isn't a priority. They haven't been involved in any programs, they have no link to clubs, and they've had no chance to see if they like a new sport – and why would they when so many other issues need to be addressed?

**Fear of discrimination:** being new to a predominantly white country, an obvious fear in getting involved in sport is that of racial discrimination – and it does happen.

## Project outcomes

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The project has put one referee through a training course, with another two to go through on the next course. A coaching course in the first weekend of January will be held, where over 20 African men and women will undergo their Level 1 Junior Licence. They will then become involved in helping coach the club's junior teams.

Over 70 senior and junior players are now training every Sunday, and some of the better players intend to play for other clubs in Geelong, Melbourne or overseas. Other sporting events and opportunities – such as basketball, netball, athletics, swimming and gym programs – are currently being organised.

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## RESOURCES FOR WORKERS

### Translation and Interpreting Service (TIS) National

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The Australian Government, through TIS National, provides free interpreting services to non-English speaking Australian citizens or permanent residents communicating with the following approved groups and individuals: not-for-profit, non-government, community-based organisations for case work and emergency services where the organisation does not receive funding to provide these services and local government authorities to communicate with non-English speaking residents on issues such as urban services. Need an interpreter? Telephone 131 450.

### Support offered by three sporting associations

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**Basketball Victoria** provides a focused approach to engaging Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and Indigenous people into the sport of basketball. This includes the development and implementation of inclusion plans, policies and specific basketball programs catering for groups within the community.

Basketball Victoria aims to incorporate these initiatives into all areas of the organisation. For further information in regards to Basketball Victoria's Multicultural and Indigenous Program, please contact Daniel Quick at Basketball Victoria on 9927 6666 or [daniel@basketballvictoria.com.au](mailto:daniel@basketballvictoria.com.au).



## Support offered by three sporting associations (continued)

The primary objective of the **Australian Football League (AFL)** Multicultural Program is to assist migrant and refugee communities to access Australian Football whether that is as a player, fan, administrator or umpire. With this in mind, a Multicultural Unit has been established within the AFL Game Development department to achieve this objective.

The Multicultural Program has seven Multicultural Development Officers (MDOs) based in Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia. This enables the AFL and the AFL clubs to reach more people in the community and add value and quality to all our initiatives. The MDOs are based at and working closely with AFL clubs to deliver programs encouraging participation in Australian Football within multicultural communities and schools across greater Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide and some rural areas.

The program aims to introduce young people from targeted culturally and linguistically diverse communities to Australian Football, and to influence mainstream Australian Football.

For further information contact Nick Hatzoglou, AFL Multicultural Coordinator on [Nick.Hatzoglou@afl.com.au](mailto:Nick.Hatzoglou@ afl.com.au).

The aim of **Football Federation Victoria (FFV)** Community Development is to provide football opportunities for various community groups. Football opportunities are not restricted to playing but cover opportunities in coaching, refereeing and club administration.

As a non-profit organisation, FFV is able to deliver the majority of their programs through funding and working closely with other funded organisations. FFV is able to provide guidance to organisations who are seeking financial aid by pointing them in the right direction and supporting them to obtain funding, however they do not have the capacity to offer financial support to organisations and individuals. FFV's aim is to support organisations that are running Football related events by providing support and guidance where possible.

Current FFV programs include the All Communities Project – Ballarat. This project focuses on providing opportunities for men and women of all ages, from new arrival refugee and CALD communities, to be integrated into football at all levels.

For any enquiries on how FFV can be involved in your community event or for more information, please contact Chris Arena – Community Development Coordinator on 9474 1833 or [carena@footballfedvic.com.au](mailto:carena@footballfedvic.com.au).

## Migrant service contacts for regional Victoria

### **Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council**

504 Mair Street, Ballarat 3350  
T: (03) 5337 0700 / F: (03) 5337 0777  
Service Regions: Central Highlands

### **Bendigo Regional Ethnic Communities Council**

120 McCrae Street, Bendigo 3550  
T: (03) 5441 6644 / F: (03) 5441 6644  
Service Regions: Loddon

### **Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District**

309 Maude Street, Shepparton 3630  
T: (03) 5831 2395 / Fax: (03) 5831 3764  
Service Regions: Goulbourn

### **Diversitat (Geelong Ethnic Communities Council)**

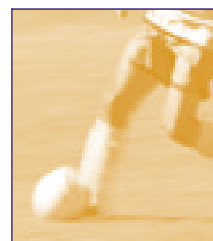
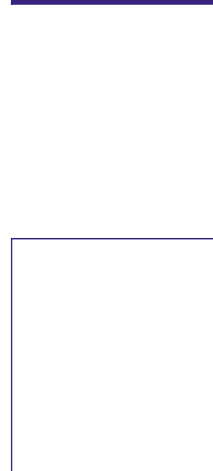
153 Pakington Street, Geelong West 3218  
T: (03) 5221 6044 / F: (03) 5223 2848  
Service Regions: Barwon

### **Gippsland Migrant Resource Centre**

100-102 Buckley Street, Morwell 3840  
T: (03) 5133 7072 / F: (03) 5134 1031  
Service Regions: East Gippsland, Gippsland

### **Wodonga City Council Services**

104 Hovell Street, Wodonga 3690  
T: (02) 60 229 300 / F: (02) 60 229 322  
Service Regions: Ovens-Murray



For more sport and rec resources, check out

[www.cmyi.net.au/  
MulticulturalSport](http://www.cmyi.net.au/MulticulturalSport)