NSW Settlement Strategy: Refugee Lived Experience Framework

Approach to engage refugee lived experience in the implementation and evaluation of the NSW Settlement Strategy

Contents

Introduction

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1.1 Overview

The Refugee Lived Experience Framework (the Framework) will guide Multicultural NSW's efforts to bring together the context expertise of refugees with the content expertise of policy makers, settlement specialists and academics across the sector, to strengthen settlement outcomes across NSW.

This will contribute to the realisation of our common goal – a NSW where everyone benefits when refugees thrive.

The Framework will:

- guide Multicultural NSW in ensuring meaningful engagement with people with refugee lived experience in implementation and evaluation of the NSW Settlement Strategy (the Strategy);

- provide a foundation for the delivery of related Strategy actions; and

- be agile and responsive to learnings during Strategy implementation and evaluation.

The Framework includes:

- guiding principles for engaging people with refugee lived experience; and

- methods, considerations, adaptations and enablers as practical guidance when engaging refugee lived experience;

- useful resources to help guide Multicultural NSW and other NSW Government agencies in engagement planning.

1.2

Benefits of engaging lived experience

Engaging lived experience is increasingly recognised as best practice in the design and implementation of policies, programs and services. There is particularly strong practice in mental health, disability, community development and First Nations sectors.

Engaging people with lived experience:

- aligns with social justice and human rights requirements for people to have a say in decisions that affect their lives;

- elevates the voices of people most impacted by programs, services and policies, giving a sense of agency and control. This is sometimes expressed as 'nothing about us, without us', the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the full and direct participation of members of the group/s affected by that policy;[2]

- provides valuable context expertise that can enhance policy makers' and service practitioners' understating of the needs, preferences and aspirations of intended beneficiaries;

- incorporates people's views via a human-centred design approach, which improves the quality of services and ensures outcomes are achieved in the best possible way; and

- can support innovative new ideas and approaches, improve cost effectiveness, build trust in institutions and their policies, improve service engagement and improve outcomes.

Lived Experience

Personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand involvement in events rather than through representations constructed by other people. Engaging refugee lived experience is a mechanism for participatory democracy, giving refugees genuine opportunities to contribute to policy making through the expertise of their lived (or living) experience.[1]

Context experts/expertise

Context experts are people with lived experience of the situation. They are people who experientially know about the issue.[3]

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1   Australian Institute of Family Studies, *Lived experience of people with disabilities*, 2020
2   RCOA, *Nothing About Us Without Us: Getting serious about refugee self-representation* Report on 2017 UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs side event, 2017
3   Attygalle, L *The Context Experts*, 2017

1.3
Refugee lived experience

Engaging refugee lived experience specifically is increasing internationally as a way to engage refugees meaningfully in decision-making about policies, programs and services specific to them.[4] As refugees' experiences are often characterised by exclusion and a lack of agency in decisions affecting their lives, meaningful engagement can achieve particularly strong outcomes in the areas of social inclusion and civic participation.

Engaging people with refugee lived experience:

- can empower refugees to exercise self-representation, establish and strengthen connections with community and build a sense of belonging;

- increases opportunities for refugees to participate in decision-making about their lives in an active, free and meaningful way;

- leads to improved understanding about refugees' needs and preferences which can be incorporated into policies, programs and services;

- helps refugees navigate new and unfamiliar social structures and expectations; and

- can enhance a strengths-based approach, ensuring that the skills, experience and entrepreneurial drive of refugees are harnessed to the benefits of the host society.

Refugee lived experience

As a result of lived (or living) experience, refugees, people seeking asylum and migrants with similar backgrounds are experts in their own right, having unique perspectives that enable them to feel, think and act in ways that add value to the broader community.

Self Representation

Refugees should have the meaningful agency to make decisions that affect their lives.[5] This requires stakeholders (NGOs, government and others) to "[...] make space for refugee inputs, relinquishing decision-making power whenever/wherever possible"[6] and may involve refugees creating their own networks and forums for consultation that are self-directed/managed.

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4   United Nations, *Global Compact on Refugees*, New York, 2018
5   Feige and Choubak, *Compensating people with lived experience: best practices from the literature,* 2019
6   RCOA, *Wellbeing from the Refugee Lived Experience Perspective,* 2017

1.4 Lived experience in the NSW Settlement Strategy

The Strategy focuses primarily on people from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds – referred to as 'refugees' – who are within the first 10 years of their settlement journey and living in NSW. These are people who have been displaced from their country of origin by war, fear of violence or persecution, and who come to Australia seeking protection.

Placing refugee lived experience at the heart is a guiding principle of the Strategy and embedding the voice of lived experience in decision making is one of the Strategy's five objectives.

The Strategy is working towards achieving six short-term outcomes, including 'NSW Government settlement planning and evaluation is informed by lived experience' (short-term outcome 1).[7] This is being delivered through 10 strategy actions, organised by three sub-objectives:

Sub-objective 1: Develop and deliver a framework for engaging the lived experience of refugees in the implementation and evaluation of the Strategy (Actions 1.1, 1.2,.1.9);

Sub-objective 2: Build the capacity of the NSW Government to embed the lived experience of refugees in decision-making (Actions 1.3, 1.6, 1.7); and

Sub-objective 3: Engage the lived experience of refugees in targeted policies, programs and services (Actions 1.4, 1.5, 1.8, 1.10).

The Framework fulfils sub-objective 1 and will provide a foundation for the fulfilment of sub-objectives 2 and 3 and their associated actions in the Strategy.

Refugee and refugee-like background

Multicultural NSW recognises that self-identification is the most important definition when engaging people with lived experience - as every person should be able to choose the words they use to describe themselves.

For the purposes of the Strategy and this Framework, refugee-like background refers to those who have arrived in Australia through migration streams outside of the refugee and humanitarian program, but have experiences similar to those who arrive as refugees.

7   Multicultural NSW, NSW Settlement Strategy, Outcomes, p15, 2023

1.5

How this Framework was developed

The Framework was developed through:

- reviewing evidence by academia, civil society and state and federal government on approaches, principles and enablers when engaging people with lived experience (see References);

- mapping existing NSW Government lived experience practice;

- including feedback of engaging people with refugee lived experience during the Strategy development; and

- consultation with key stakeholders, including people with refugee lived experience.

A summary of the lived experience literature and practice review is available on the Multicultural NSW website.

Multicultural NSW acknowledges the valuable contributions of various stakeholders in the development of the Framework.

Multicultural NSW gives special thanks and appreciation to:

» People with refugee lived experience who generously provided insights and feedback, including Forcibly Displaced Peoples Network (FDPN), Refugee Communities Advocacy Network (RCAN) and other Refugee-Led Organisations (RLOs).

» Non-government organisations with frontline experience of providing support to, and advocating on behalf of refugees, including Asylum Seekers Centre, Australian Red Cross, CORE Community Service, House of Welcome, Jesuit Refugee Service, Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network NSW, Navitas, Refugee Advice and Casework Services, Refugee Council of Australia, Refugee Support Network, Salvation Army, Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), SSI and SydWest Multicultural Services

» Australian Government, NSW Government and Local Government representatives.

Refugee-led Organisation (RLO):

An organisation or group in which persons with direct lived experience of forced displacement play a primary leadership role and whose stated objectives and activities are focused on responding to the needs of refugees and/or related communities.

RLOs are not a new phenomenon, however their work can be invisible to those outside their communities, and their knowledge and wisdom is not always considered.[8]

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8   Atem, A D, Inclusive Settlement Funding Model: The Role of Refugee Led Organisations in Settlement, 2023

The Framework

2

Figure 1: Lived Experience Framework

Figure 1: Lived Experience Framework

Inform

Methods and Approaches

Considerations

Guiding Principles

Respect

NSW Government settlement planning and evaluation is informed by refugee lived experience

Safety

Partnership

Inclusivity

Empower

Consult

Enablers

Adaptations

Collaborate

Involve
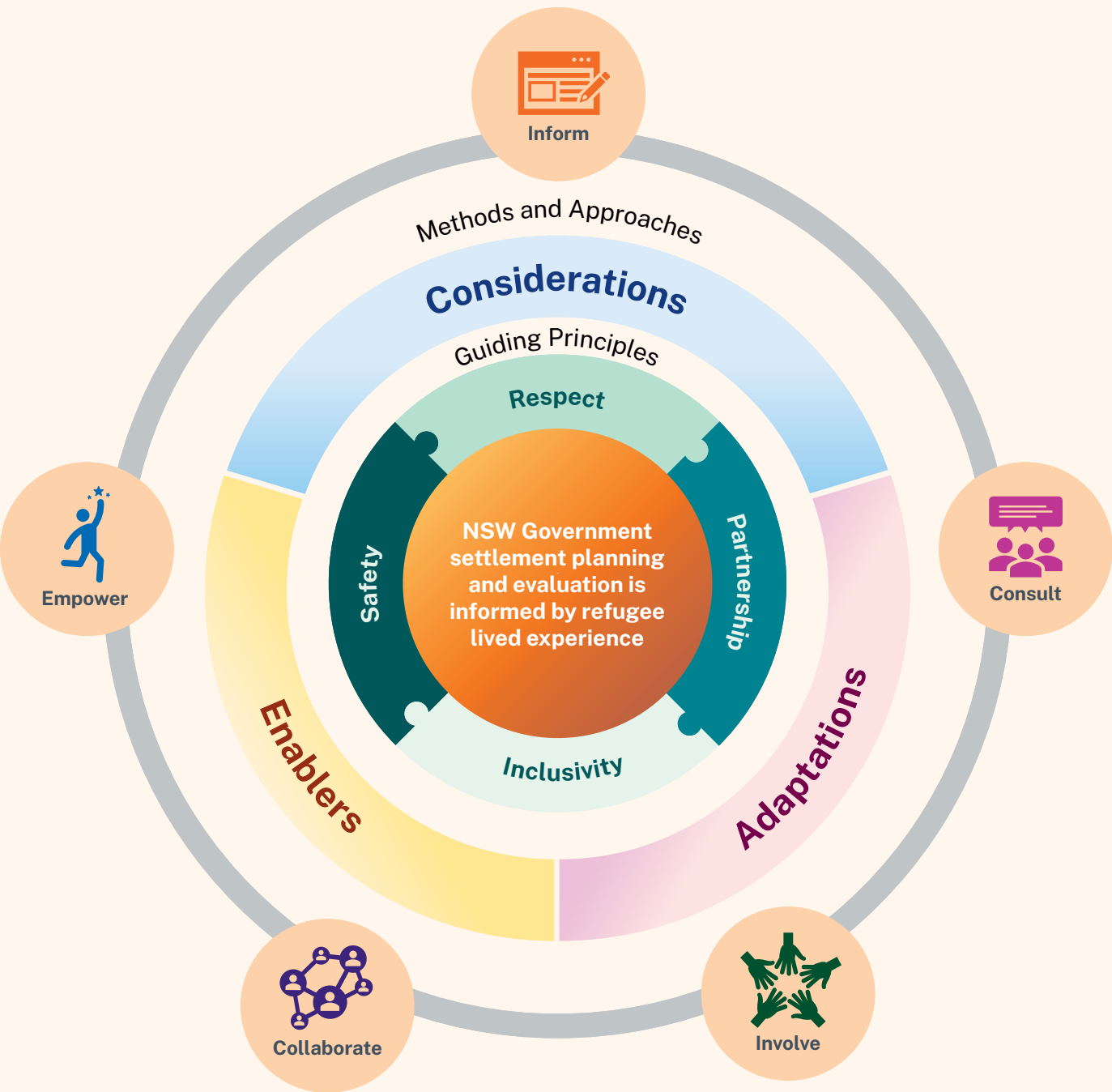
2.1

Guiding Principles

A range of principles can be applied to guide engaging lived experience. This Framework uses four key principles which are:

- specific to guiding engagement with refugee lived experience;

- reflective of some of the unique characteristics of people from refugee backgrounds; and

- underpinned by a strengths-based approach.

Strengths-based approach

A method used in a variety of different contexts to inform the way (the 'how') practitioners work with individuals or communities.[9]

In the context of engaging refugees, a strengths-based approach operates by placing the person or community at the centre of decision-making[10] This method considers how practitioners work with refugees by focusing on an individual or communities' skills, knowledge, experiences, aspirations, networks and relationships, rather than focusing only on the perceived deficits or what refugees may not have.

Figure 2: Guiding Principles

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9   UK Department of Health and Social Care, Strengths-based approach: Practice Framework and Practice Handbook, 2019
10   NICE, Evidence for strengths and asset-based outcomes: A Quick guide for social workers, 2019

Guiding Principles
Respect

What this means:

» value and respect lived experience as context expertise;

» uphold the intellectual property rights of people with lived experience, for example seek permission to use feedback and only for the original intended purpose;

» provide clear, accessible information about why feedback is being sought and how insights gathered will be used;

» be open about which decisions can and cannot be influenced;

» where possible, provide feedback on how lived experience has been incorporated into the decisions taken.

Why this is important:

» refugees are often incorrectly characterised as passive recipients, rather than acknowledged and respected for their vital role as actors in humanitarian responses;[12]

» engagement opportunities with refugees are often limited to 'storytelling', rather than providing opportunities to engage in and influence policies and programs that impact their lives.[13]

Good practice:

» show respect for people's time by providing compensation, publicly acknowledging contributions and including authorship recognition where appropriate;

» close the feedback loop to ensure that people who have given their time have information about how their input was used, for example using the 'We Asked, You Said, We did' approach;

» evaluate engagements to ensure they benefit both the organisation and the individual/s engaged and have a measurable positive impact for the community.

Intellectual property

Someone's idea, invention, or creation that can be protected by law from being copied by someone else. In the context of lived experience work, this can include stories, experiences, media, art, and/or resource development, among other things.[11]

We Asked, You said, We did

An approach to communicate how feedback has contributed to government decision making. It involves seeking and receiving feedback from stakeholders (we asked, you said), and providing a transparent overview of the results of the process, the actions taken and the policies impacted (we did).[14] It shows participants how their input has been valued and has resulted in tangible progress.

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11 WACOSS, *Lived Experience Framework: Principles and practices for Lived Experience partnerships,* 2020
12 Lough, Barbelet and Njeri, *Inclusion and exclusion in humanitarian action: findings from a three-year study,* 2022
13 RCOA, *Wellbeing from the Refugee Lived Experience Perspective,* 2017
14 Bello, B and Downe, J, 'We asked, you said, we did: Assessing the drivers and effectiveness of an e-participation practice in Scotland', in Randma-Liiv, T and Lember, V (eds) *Engaging Citizens in Policy Making,* 2022

Guiding Principles
Partnership

What this means:

» aim to build enduring, strategic relationships based on reciprocity, rather than one-off or transactional engagements;

» identify shared goals and solutions for mutual benefit to the organisation and people with lived experience;

» share knowledge, resources and facilitate connections as appropriate;

» where possible, include opportunities for people with lived experience to actively participate in, or lead, certain processes.

Why this is important:

» refugees, by nature of their circumstances, have often been denied opportunities to, or persecuted for reasons of, active citizenship and civic engagement.

Good practice:

» build and sustain relationships with refugee communities based on shared motivations and goals, a commitment to partnership and the equal participation of refugee communities in decision making;[15]

» use collaborative governance practices to enable access to opportunities that might otherwise be denied, such as sharing decision-making;[16]

» provide capacity building opportunities to refugee communities.

Collaboration

A practice whereby individuals with different backgrounds and experiences work together for a common purpose, on the basis of mutual respect, to achieve better outcomes.

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15 Packer J., Spence R. & Beare E, *Building community partnerships: an Australian case study of sustainable community-based rural programmes*, Oxford University Press and Community Development Journal, 2002

16 Grootjans, S.J.M., Stijnen, M.M.N., Kroese, M.E.A.L. et al., *Collaborative governance at the start of an integrated community approach*: a case study, BMC Public Health 22, p. 1013, 2022

Inclusivity

What this means:

» acknowledge and embrace the diverse backgrounds, characteristics and aspirations of refugees;

» give consideration to intersectionality, and how the characteristics of a person's identity may create or exacerbate barriers to participation, increase marginalisation or privilege, or inform people's experiences;

» prioritise accessibility.

Why this is important:

» refugees may have been persecuted due to characteristics that are part of their identity, such as race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group;

» refugees can face further discrimination based on their refugee status, as well as other, compounding forms of discrimination, for example LGBTQIA+, racial, religious, disability, sex, age;

» refugees often experience compounding barriers to participation due to prejudice, a lack of English oral and written proficiency, non-recognition of skills and qualifications, digital exclusion, visa status and a lack of awareness, knowledge and support to navigate new and complex systems.

Good practice:

» tailor approaches to the needs of the target group;

» be flexible and willing to adapt and operate differently;

» provide a variety of ways for people to participate;

» be aware of the impacts of one's own background, experiences and cultural lens;

» use inclusive approaches to recruiting lived experience;

» be mindful of power dynamics, including within and between refugee communities;

» seek out historically unheard voices;

» avoid a privileging of individuals/groups who align with the preferences and interests of the engagement organiser;'

» build sector capability to address systemic barriers for refugees.

Intersectionality

The dynamic ways in which multiple aspects of a person's identity, such as race, gender, sexuality, socio-economic status, family circumstances and age, can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and privilege. It is important to recognise that intersectionality shows that an individual can face a very complex overlap of multiple barriers and privileges simultaneously. Intersectionality also demonstrates that members of particular social groups are not all the same. While they may face similar barriers and share experiences, every person's challenges and opportunities are unique.[17]

Particular social group

UNHCR defines a particular social group as a group of persons who share a common characteristic other than their risk of being persecuted, or who are perceived as a group by society. The characteristic will often be one which is innate, unchangeable, or which is otherwise fundamental to identity, conscience or the exercise of one's human rights.[18]

LGBTIQA+

An acronym used to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual, and other sexually or gender diverse peoples.[19]

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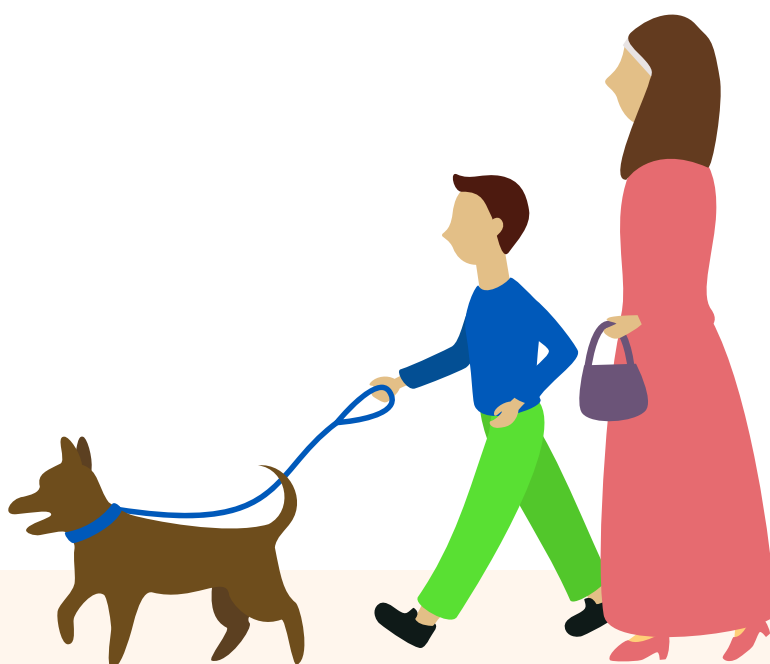
17 Regional NSW, *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* 2022-2025, 2022
18 UNHCR, *Guidelines on international protection: "Membership of a particular social group" within the context of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees*, 2002
19 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *LGBTIQA+ people*, 2024

Guiding Principles

Safety

What this means:

» conduct engagements in an ethical and respectful way;

» consider the psychological and cultural safety of people with lived experience and plan for appropriate supports to be available;

» take part in training, if needed, to help take a trauma-informed approach.

Why this is important:

» refugees may fear or have low trust in the government, due to experiences prior to arriving in Australia;

» many refugees have family overseas who could be put at risk if they are seen to be sharing information with the government in Australia;

» refugees may also experience protection risks in Australia due to attempts at foreign interference;[20]

» for those whose legal status is uncertain, such as people seeking asylum, disclosing information could jeopardise their protection claim;

» previous experiences of trauma and risk of re-traumatisation may be high in any participant group.

Good practice:

» carry out risk assessments and employ appropriate mitigation strategies before recruiting for and organising engagements;

» ensure safe spaces for participation through use of privacy and confidentiality policies, robust data protection measures, safeguarding policies, adherence to a code of ethics, obtaining fully informed consent, and providing options for anonymous, small group and de-identified participation.

Informed consent

Consent must be informed, voluntary, current and re-negotiable.[21] Comprehensive information, that is clear and able to be understood by all participants must be provided. Engagement practitioners must be particularly mindful of power dynamics, noting that for some refugees their experiences with government might make them afraid to say no, or to only provide answers that they feel the questioner will want to hear.

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20 Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, *Countering foreign interference in communities*, 2024
21 Office of the Advocate for Children and Young people, website, 2024

2.2

Methods and Approaches

There are many different ways to engage lived experience. Engagement methods will be appropriate to the purpose and corresponding level of the engagement. All levels of 'participation' are legitimate as determined by the goal of the engagement.

This section:

» outlines the different levels of engagement and corresponding activities;

» highlights some of the considerations, adaptations and enablers that may be required to support meaningful engagement with refugee lived experience; and

» provides examples of what good practice might look like.
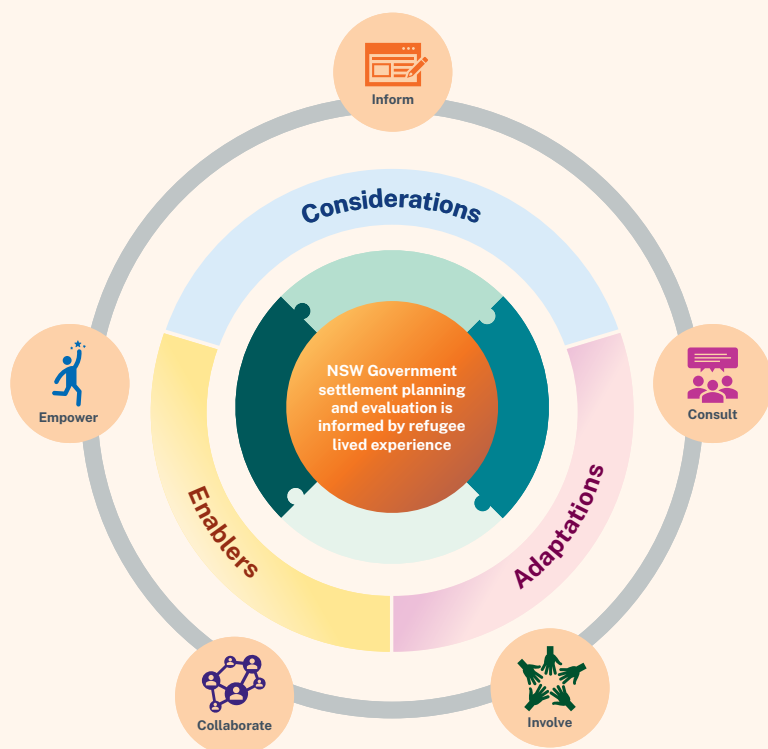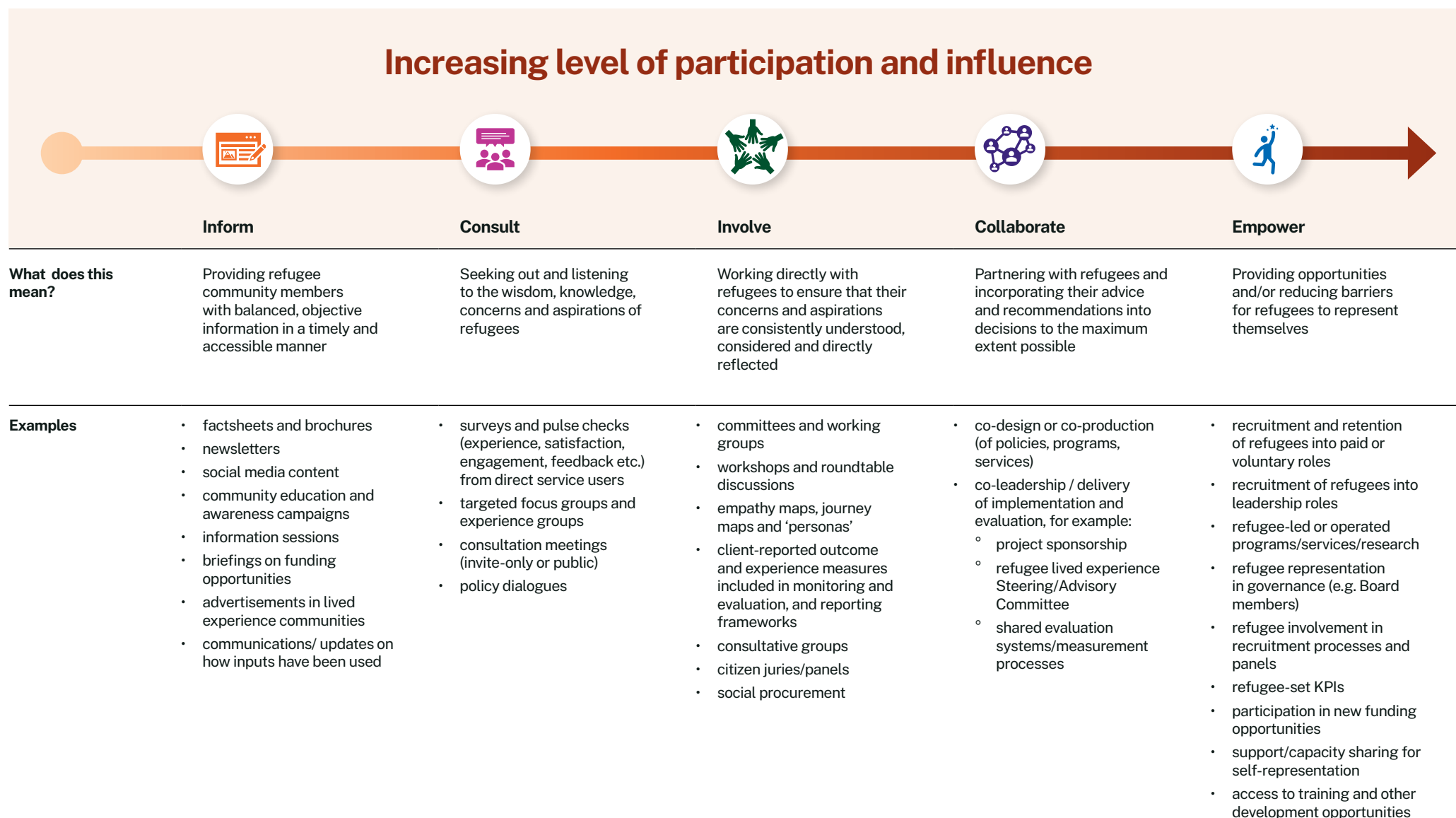
Figure 3: Methods and Approaches

Figure 4: Methods of engagement

Different levels of engagement and associated examples are provided using the structure of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Federation Spectrum of Public Participation.[22]

Increasing level of participation and influence

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
What does this mean?	Providing refugee community members with balanced, objective information in a timely and accessible manner	Seeking out and listening to the wisdom, knowledge, concerns and aspirations of refugees	Working directly with refugees to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood, considered and directly reflected	Partnering with refugees and incorporating their advice and recommendations into decisions to the maximum extent possible	Providing opportunities and/or reducing barriers for refugees to represent themselves

Examples	• factsheets and brochures
	• newsletters
	• social media content
	• community education and awareness campaigns
	• information sessions
	• briefings on funding opportunities
	• advertisements in lived experience communities
	• communications/ updates on how inputs have been used
		• surveys and pulse checks (experience, satisfaction, engagement, feedback etc.) from direct service users
		• targeted focus groups and experience groups
		• consultation meetings (invite-only or public)
		• policy dialogues
			• committees and working groups
			• workshops and roundtable discussions
			• empathy maps, journey maps and 'personas'
			• client-reported outcome and experience measures included in monitoring and evaluation, and reporting frameworks
			• consultative groups
			• citizen juries/panels
			• social procurement
				• co-design or co-production (of policies, programs, services)
				• co-leadership / delivery of implementation and evaluation, for example:
				  ° project sponsorship
				  ° refugee lived experience Steering/Advisory Committee
				  ° shared evaluation systems/measurement processes
					• recruitment and retention of refugees into paid or voluntary roles
					• recruitment of refugees into leadership roles
					• refugee-led or operated programs/services/research
					• refugee representation in governance (e.g. Board members)
					• refugee involvement in recruitment processes and panels
					• refugee-set KPIs
					• participation in new funding opportunities
					• support/capacity sharing for self-representation
					• access to training and other development opportunities

22   IAP2 *Spectrum of Public Participation*, 2018 – used with permission

Figure 5: Considerations, adaptations and enablers

Considerations, adaptations and enablers underpin the methods of engagement.

	Considerations Taking into account the unique needs, desires and experiences of participants in the planning process to ensure meaningful participation	**Adaptations** Changing traditional ways of working to overcome barriers to participation	**Enablers** Policies and practices that support engagements at all levels and build organisational capacity

Language	Refugees arrive in Australia with varying degrees of competency in English and literacy in their mother tongue. This may impact their ability to navigate systems and access information and services	• using interpreters and bi-lingual facilitators
		• providing translations of all written content
		• writing in plain language, including:
		  ° using jargon-free language;
		  ° avoiding puns, colloquialisms and double negatives; and
		  ° completing readability testing
		• using of a variety of communication formats, including print, digital, audio, visual
		• using infographics, icons and illustrations to remove literacy barriers
			• engagement guidelines and frameworks
			• interpreting and translating guidelines and agreements
			• communications guidelines
			• best practice use of language services training

Accessibility	The pathway to services for refugees can differ from the Australian-born population, and they may face delays and barriers in accessing required supports	• holding face to face engagements in easy to access and trusted locations, local to target group participants • ensuring venues are accessible for people with a disability • ensuring digital content is accessible, including consideration of assistive technologies, access to the internet, access to devices • planning for and providing for or reimbursing transport costs • flexible timing for engagements, factoring in the needs of the target group (e.g. in/outside of school hours, outside of working hours, outside of religious days/holidays) • providing options for online participation, including consideration of the accessibility features of different platforms • ensuring engagements are located at child-friendly venues, and planning for and providing provisions for childcare, including costs	• anti-discrimination policies • health and safety policies • paid participation policies and associated resources • accessible, safe and welcoming spaces • accessibility guidelines
Establishing safety	Refugees are often fleeing trauma and persecution, which can impact on feelings of safety. Additionally, refugees can face ongoing safety risks after arriving in Australia.	• providing options for anonymous, small group or de-identified participation • considering gender and/or age based small group participation • conducting wellbeing check-ins with participants • completing participant needs assessments prior to engagements • utilising known and trusted networks to recruit engagement participants	• informed consent guidelines • accountability frameworks • risk assessment and management policies • privacy policies and management plans • trauma-informed consultation practice training
Lack of familiarity with NSW/ Australian systems	Refugees may be unfamiliar with NSW/Australian systems and these systems may differ greatly from what they have experienced in their country of origin	• including induction/training as part of engagements (e.g. how to use technology) • providing clear information and adequate time for participants to prepare for engagements, (e.g. providing agendas, topics for discussion, outline of expectations well in advance)	• accessibility guidelines • engagement standards
Diversity of experiences, skills and expertise	Refugees have diverse experiences, which may differ from the Australian-born population. Engagement practitioners should challenge assumptions about what and how people can contribute	• providing a mix of activities throughout engagements, which allow the different strengths of participants to be used • completing skills analysis activities prior to ongoing engagements to identify strengths and opportunities for capacity building • involving a cross-section of representatives of the target group in planning, running and evaluating engagement activities • reflecting on and supporting a flexible approach to 'essential criteria' • giving due weight to lived experience and context expertise	• compensation policies – both financial and in-kind • position descriptions reflecting lived experience • cultural capability training

Practice example 1:
Develop a state-wide strategy

Goal: Deliver a NSW Settlement Strategy which:

» provides a deeper understanding of the settlement landscape in NSW, informed by the lived experiences of people from refugee backgrounds who have settled in NSW;

» identifies specific actions to be implemented by NSW Government to improve the settlement journey; and

» establishes a mechanism to monitor and evaluate progress.

Engagements:

» consult with people with lived experience to get their advice and recommendations;

» inform participants about how their inputs were actioned; and

» inform the community about the Strategy.

Considerations	Adaptations	Enablers
• diversity of skills and context experiences	• provide participants with information beforehand to allow participants time to prepare and participate • provide a mix of activities to allow the different strengths of participants to be used	• trauma-informed training and consultation practices
• limited English proficiency/confidence	• create plain English versions of all key documents • use data to inform the target language groups of refugees in NSW, and provide translation of key written materials in multiple target languages • use a variety of communication formats, including audio recording for participants with limited mother-tongue literacy • give participants the opportunity to participate in their preferred language via interpreters	• Multicultural NSW Language Services Panel
• participant availability	• target the length, style and timing of the engagements based on the needs and experiences of the participant/s	• dedicated resourcing for engagement activities
• lack of previous participant engagement with NSW Government	• use longstanding relationships and trusted networks to recruit participants	• cultural capability and capacity-building training
• respecting and valuing participants' lived/context experience	• inform participants of what was heard, how and why their inputs were/were not actioned	• establishing a feedback mechanism for each engagement • publicly acknowledging participants contributions

Practice example 2:
Identify improvements to service availability and accessibility

Goal: Deliver a customer journey map which:

» provides a deeper understanding of the lived experience of people from refugee backgrounds when navigating NSW Government services;

» identifies areas for attention; and

» develops recommendations for improvement.

Engagements:

» inform participants about the purpose of the project and intended outcomes;

» involve participants to get their first-hand experiences; and

» inform participants about the findings and next steps of the project.

Considerations	Adaptations	Enablers
• appropriate engagement with participants who have trauma	• complete training in trauma-informed approaches and applied these throughout the project • provide participants with information beforehand to prepare for interviews • reiterate important information several times	• trauma-informed training and consultation practices
• limited English proficiency/ confidence	• give participants the opportunity to participate in their preferred language via interpreters • create plain English versions of the standard legal consent forms and translate them into participants' preferred languages	• Multicultural NSW Language Services Panel • Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NSW Government departments to provide accredited interpreters and translators • NSW Government department informed consent models
• varying levels of digital literacy	• provide options that participants are comfortable using, for example WhatsApp voice notes to share their stories and feedback	• NSW Government department engagement guidelines
• participant availability	• give flexible options for participants to be involved and participate	• NSW Government department engagement guidelines
• lack of previous participant engagement with NSW Government	• recruit participants via frontline workers from agencies known to the participants, rather than pay an external company to recruit participants	• cultural capability and capacity-building training
• respecting and valuing participants' lived/context experience	• provide paid incentives for participants' time	• NSW Government department paid participation policies

Practice example 3:
Redesign a refugee employment initiative

Goal: Redesign and deliver an employment initiative which:

» aligns and enhances strategies to support refugees to gain employment in the NSW Government;

» coordinates best practice information support for employers to ensure longevity of employment outcomes; and

» works to embed a best practice approach across the public sector.

Engagements:

» collaborate with employers and job seekers from refugee and non-refugee backgrounds to redesign the project; and

» empower refugees to apply successfully for employment in the NSW Government, therefore representing themselves and their own lived experience day-to-day.

Considerations	Adaptations	Enablers
• lack of familiarity with Australian job-seeking and hiring practices	• co-design the redesigned program to ensure objectives and approaches are appropriate for people with refugee lived experience	• cross-government Community of Practice to share data, ideas, experiences, including representation from refugees
• barriers to visibility of job opportunities	• advertise job opportunities through broad community networks and via frontline service providers • develop referral pathways between frontline service providers and employers	• hiring organisation relationships with the community and frontline services working with the community
• barriers to applying for jobs	• review employee hiring practices to improve accessibility and inclusivity • develop plain English and simplified guides to employer organisation recruitment process and application requirements • build the job application skills of refugee job seekers via capacity-building initiatives	• recruitment materials (incl. Public Sector Capability Framework) • GSC Rule 26
• unconscious bias and unintended institutional barriers of the hiring organisation	• provide training to employees to support inclusive hiring and management practices • provide training, mentorship and capacity-building opportunities for refugees to support sustained employment	• HR policies, including induction of new employees • cultural capability and capacity-building training

Resources

3

Resources

3.1 Tools and Resources

Name	Description	Link
Multicultural Planning Engagement Tools and Resources	Resources and tools to assist people undertaking multicultural planning in government and other organisations.	[Multicultural Planning Engagement – Tools and Resources](#)
Multicultural Communications Playbook	One in four NSW households speak a language other than English at home. Making information accessible to everyone in the community will improve access and services for our newest Australians and support established communities to continue being full and active participants in our society.	[Multicultural Communications Playbook](#)
Multicultural NSW Compass	Provides users with the ability to via Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data in an attainable format. The webpage displays data for 30 variables, covering several topics for 128 different Local Government Areas (LGAs) within NSW, the whole of NSW and the two regions of Greater Sydney and Rest of NSW.	[Multicultural NSW Compass](#)
Multicultural NSW Language Services Guidelines	The NSW Government Multicultural Principles, as outlined in the Multicultural NSW Act 2000, require that all individuals in NSW should have the greatest possible opportunity to: make use of, and participate in, relevant activities and programs provided or administered by the Government of NSW. The provision of language services makes services provided by NSW Government agencies and funded organisations more accessible to people who have limited English or prefer to communicate in a language other than English. This is in accordance with the Multicultural Principles. This document is designed to provide NSW Government agencies and funded organisations with clear guidance on how and when language services should be used in the provision of services.	[Multicultural NSW Language Services Guidelines](#)
Days of Religious Significance	In NSW we practise more than 148 religious traditions. By understanding our religious diversity, we can better promote interfaith harmony and respect, including in the workplace. The Days of Religious Significance calendar is compiled in consultation with members of the Multicultural NSW Religious Communities Forum as a guide for employers and managers to assist them in accommodating the needs of staff. The calendar is not a comprehensive list of all days of religious observance and there may be different religious interpretations relating to some dates.	[Days of Religious Significance](#)
Refugee-owned business and social enterprises in NSW	Welcome Merchant is an award-winning social enterprise that offers a free online refugee powered business directory.	[Welcome Merchant – Refugee Powered Business Directory](#)

3.2 Existing NSW Government lived experience practice

Portfolio	Department/Agency	Mechanism	Experience
Premier's Department	Aboriginal Affairs NSW	OCHRE: NSW Government Plan for Aboriginal Affairs	First Nations
		Local Decision Making: Policy and Operational Framework	First Nations
Education	NSW Department of Education	Student Voice Framework	Students
		NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group	First Nations
Health	NSW Ministry of Health	All of Us: A guide to engaging consumers, carers and communities across NSW Health	Healthcare consumers and carers
		Elevating the Human Experience: Our guide to action for patient, family, carer, volunteer and caregiver experiences	Patients and their families and carers
		Framework for Mental Health Lived Experience (Peer) Work in South Eastern NSW	Mental health
	Mental Health Commission of NSW	Lived Experience Framework for NSW	Mental health
	NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation	Working With Consumers guidance	Healthcare consumers
		Co-Design Toolkit	Healthcare consumers
Transport	Transport for NSW	Aboriginal Participation Strategy	First Nations
		Principles and Framework for Aboriginal Engagement	First Nations
Customer Service	NSW Department of Customer Service	Aboriginal Customer Engagement Strategy	First Nations
	State Insurance Regulatory Authority	Engaging with Lived Experience Framework: A strategic framework for guiding our work impacting mental health	Mental health
Communities and Justice	Aboriginal Housing Office	Aboriginal Reference Group	First Nations
		AHO Engagement Framework	First Nations
	NSW Police Force	Framework for Community Engagement	N/A (community wide)
	Office for the Advocate for Children and Young People	Engaging children and young people in your organisation	Children and young people

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