

Settlement Experience of Syrian and Iraqi Refugees: Opportunities, Challenges and the Way Forward

On Thursday August 29, Edmund Rice Centre (ERC) launched officially its new research report ***Settlement Experience of Syrian and Iraqi Refugees: Opportunities, Challenges and the Way Forward*** at Gilbert + Tobin, a long-term supporter of ERC's research, advocacy and community development programs. 65 people from diverse backgrounds attended the report launch, including representatives of government departments, local councils, businesses, academics, community organisations, community representatives/leaders, community development practitioners and refugee rights advocates.

The report draws on the experiences of recently arrived Syrian and Iraqi refugees in Australia, and seeks to identify gaps between current settlement supports and what else might be needed to achieve further positive outcomes for refugees. The report includes concrete recommendations for further investigation and policy improvement in refugee settlement. It is hoped that these recommendations will be used to improve services to refugees, and to inform relevant stakeholders, including Government, the community sector and the wider community.

The report launch was hosted and facilitated by Mr Tim O'Connor, Impact Manager of Amnesty International Australia followed by Mr Danny Gilbert, Managing Partner of Gilbert + Tobin who welcomed the guests. The report was officially launched by Mr Phil Glendenning, Director of ERC who extended his deep appreciation to the many participants in the study, including Syrian and Iraqi refugees, community leaders, key informants and representatives of government and non-government service providers, who offered their perspectives, views and opinions on the settlement experience of Syrian and Iraqi refugees.

Mr Glendenning also acknowledged the time, expertise, commitment and determination of the authors of the report who have completed the research and produced an in-depth and nuanced analysis of the settlement experience of Syrian and Iraqi refugees, including concrete recommendations for further investigation and policy improvement in the refugee settlement space.

The report launch event also included a panel in which Dr Shashi Sharma, Mr Farhad Arian and Mr Rahal Dergham discussed briefly the content of the report, the study's objectives and impacts and relevant recommendations. The panel discussion attracted significant attention from the present audience and led to very useful discussions about the report and the implementation of its recommendations to reach policy makers at the Government for further investigations and improvements in the refugee settlement policies and programs.

ERC is committed to make the report available on its website and other online platforms for public access, distribution and discussion. To read and share the report, please visit our website: www.erc.org.au

For inquiries about the report, please contact Farhad Arian or Phil Glendenning at ERC on 02 8762 4200 or email at FArian@edmundrice.org