

NSW Settlement Partnership Regional Settlement Conference Program

Date: Tuesday, 12th April 2022

Login (for Audience):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84358504804?pwd=K08wT1BWRkZGVWx4VEIRUmpvYXFpQT09>

Time	Item	Speakers
9:45	Online portal opens	
10:00	Acknowledgement + Welcome	Dor Akech Achiek
10:10	Opening Remarks	Violet Roumeliotis, AM
10:20	Overview of Regional Settlement	Sharon Daishe
10:30	Client Voice Session 1	Akram Kudeedah and Perry Calkin
10:45	Panel Discussion + Q&A: Strengthening Settlement Capacity and Social Cohesion in Regional Areas	Jane O'Dwyer Menna AlNaqa Raquel Aldunate Debbie Carsens Moderator: Dor Akech Achiek
11:30	Keynote Address: A Vision for Regional Settlement	David Wilden
11:50	Break	
12:05	Client Voice Session 2	Arun Nepal and Menna AlNaqa
12:20	City of Newcastle – CALD Social Network Analysis	Simone Soeters and Debbie Carstens
12:35	Reflections on the Day	Yamamah Agha
12:45	Policy Recommendations (from <i>Insights into Regional Settlement in Practice</i>) & Way Forward	Raquel Aldunate
13:00	End of Program	

Speaker Profiles

David Wilden is the First Assistant Secretary of the Refugee, Humanitarian and Settlement Division within the Department of Home Affairs, where he is responsible for the refugee, humanitarian, settlement and migrant English language programs. Mr Wilden previously led the International Policy and Immigration and Citizenship Policy Divisions and was responsible for policy development and advice for temporary and permanent visas in the skilled, family, and humanitarian programs as well as the citizenship, status resolution and community protection areas. From 2009 to 2012, he was Regional Director, Europe, based in London. Over the course of his career, David has worked in a range of government departments and agencies including Centrelink and the Public Service Commission and across functional areas as diverse as IT and Human Resource Management. David has a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration and a Master of Business Administration.

Violet Roumeliotis, AM is a social entrepreneur who champions the strengths of our diverse communities. She is the CEO of Settlement Services International (SSI), a community organisation and social business that supports newcomers and other vulnerable individuals to achieve their full potential. During her eight years as CEO, Violet has taken SSI from a Sydney-based organisation with 68 staff to a 900-plus workforce that supports more than 37,500 people nationally each year.

Violet is committed to achieving equity and advancing diversity and inclusion in all forms. She sits on the board of the Australian Council of Social Service and has appointments with the SBS Community Advisory Committee, the NSW Council for Women's Economic Empowerment, NSW Domestic and Family Violence, and Sexual Assault Council, Leadership Council on Cultural Diversity, and the NSW government's joint partnership working group overseeing refugee resettlement.

Sharon Daishe is the CEO of Northern Settlement Services (NSS). Sharon has a background as CEO/principal officer in three states with a focus on governance and organisational transformation. Sharon's sector qualifications and experience include a Master of International and Community Development, a year spent volunteering in rural Tanzania to establish the inaugural governance framework for a start-up education NGO, and an executive internship with the CEO and leadership team of Alola Foundation in East Timor. Sharon spent over six years as a CEO in two outback local governments working with Indigenous communities.

Yamamah Agha is General Manager of Newcomers, Settlement and Integration at SSI. Yamamah joined SSI in 2011 as the Manager of the Humanitarian Settlement Program gaining extensive experience in team leadership, program management and stakeholder engagement. She leads all of SSI's Settlement Programs, which supports newcomers and other vulnerable Australians to prosper. With over 15 years' experience assisting new arrivals to settle in Australia, Yamamah has a strong passion for delivering social justice to refugees and vulnerable groups in need. She has a particular interest in women's rights and supporting and empowering refugee women and their families to reach their potential.

Simone Soeters is a social researcher and social planner currently working at the City of Newcastle Council. She has a background in international community development, gender and social inclusion, and population studies with a Master of Science in Demography. She has worked in over ten countries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, Europe and Australasia and is fluent in French and Dutch. Simone's current research and work interests focus on community-wide liveability, social cohesion and understanding the social issues impacting local communities experiencing vulnerability. Through research, planning and policy development, Simone seeks to contribute to equitable community development for all.

Panel Speakers

Jane O'Dwyer has been a settlement services coordinator and case worker in a part-time capacity for the past 11 years. Her role is primarily providing settlement related information, advice, referral, casework, advocacy and assistance to access mainstream services to newly arrived humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants. Jane is based at **Manning Valley Neighbourhood Services (MVNS)**, which serves the communities of Kempsey, Port Macquarie, Gloucester, Taree and Forster on NSW's Mid-North Coast.

Menna AlNaqa is originally from Egypt and has lived experience of migrating to a regional area of Australia. She is the migrant support worker at **Connecting Community Services (CCS)** in Dubbo, where she supports migrants and humanitarian entrants under the SETS Program.

Raquel Aldunate is the CEO of **Illawarra Multicultural Services (IMS)**, where she has been overseeing a range of programs since 2016. Raquel is a Social Work graduate from the University of Queensland and a Registered Migration Agent and has extensive experience in both government and non-government sectors. Originally from Chile, Raquel came to Australia in 1974. She has been the Director of the Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS) in Queensland, the Coordinator of the Immigrant Women's Support Service, the Coordinator of the Brisbane Migrant Resource Centre, a social worker at Legal Aid Queensland and has served in a host of other roles and capacities including on committees and advisory bodies at the national and state levels.

Debbie Carstens has a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Queensland. She has worked in various roles in the multicultural sector for more than 25 years, and has worked in Newcastle since 2013. She worked with SSI Newcastle in both the asylum seeker and multicultural foster care programs and joined **Northern Settlement Services (NSS)** in 2017, where she is currently the Manager of Settlement and Communities. Korean is Debbie's second language.