

NSW
Settlement
Partnership



NSW
Settlement
Partnership
Highlights
2015–2016

ABOUT

The NSW Settlement Partnership (NSP) is a consortium of community organisations, led by Settlement Services International (SSI), delivering settlement services in agreed areas of NSW under the Department of Social Services' Settlement Services Programme (SSP).

The NSP represents a unique and innovative settlement services model and provides an opportunity for organisations with a long and proud history in service delivery to migrants, refugees and humanitarian entrants to work collaboratively to address the aim and objectives of the SSP.

The consortium comprises 22 organisations, including SSI and its 11 member Migrant Resource Centres and multicultural services, as well as 10 community organisations located around the state.

Using the partners' grassroots experience in their local communities, the NSP's high-quality, integrated services support self-reliance, equitable participation in Australian society and, as a consequence, promote social cohesion and productive diversity within the Australian community.

Supported partnership

SSI provided support structures to the NSP and facilitated opportunities for engagement and input from all members of the partnership in all key areas of grant operation. A program of regular meetings provided flexibility and engagement across the NSP and engagement across key levels of NSP organisations including both senior management and settlement service managers.

NSP regular meetings:

- NSP Quarterly meetings
- Settlement managers bi-monthly teleconference
- Working groups:
 - DEX (DSS Data Exchange)
 - Communications
 - Innovation fund

Key policy documents, such as those governing communications protocols and DEX reporting, were developed with input of NSP members and ratified at the NSP quarterly meetings. This approach ensured all NSP members have a voice, and that the resulting protocols and procedures reflect the needs of the NSP.

The different range and focus of the meetings fostered learning across the group, and provided opportunities for members to partner on projects and learn from each other. The NSP has been able to respond to emerging issues and build on each other's strengths in service delivery.

Members of Parliament meetings

Coordinated by SSI, NSP representatives undertook a series of meetings with Members of Parliament (MPs) across the wide range of electorates the NSP covers. In all, 23 visits were completed, with a few regional meetings conducted by teleconference. Key discussion points were agreed to by NSP members beforehand, ensuring the meetings were relevant to the local issues in each electorate. Common points of discussion included:

- Briefing the MPs on settlement services in their electorate
- The history and origin of the NSP
- The Settlement Innovation Fund
- Key settlement issues in their electorate (for example housing, family and domestic violence, clients outside the Settlement Target Group)

The outcomes of the meetings were positive, with MPs expressing appreciation for the work of the NSP member in their area and having a greater understanding of settlement issues. In some electorates NSP members were able to initiate direct action with their local MP; for example the Community MRC in Parramatta raised employment issues, which led to plans for an employment forum hosted by MP Julie Owens.

Communications

Strengthening communications was a focus for the NSP, with a Communications Working Group established to develop a Communication Framework and related documents. All documents and protocols were developed in partnership with and ratified by the NSP.

The NSP now has:

- NSP Communications Framework
- NSP Marketing and Communications Strategy
- NSP Media Protocol
- NSP Communications Protocol

The NSP Communications Working group also oversaw the establishment of the NSP website, the NSP Facebook page and promotional materials including banners and brochures.

Settlement Innovation Fund

The Settlement Innovation Fund (SIF) was established to promote service experimentation and improvement across the NSP. The SIF Working Party developed program guidelines and an application form, which was ratified by the NSP.

Three rounds of funding were conducted during the reporting period, two open calls and a final targeted call for projects in specific areas. SIF projects include a wide range of geography and focus areas, offering NSP members the opportunity to capitalise on connections and relationships in their local area. The project management support provided by SSI focussed on strengthening the learnings across projects and regions, even in the early stages of project operation.

An internal evaluation of the SIF is being undertaken to review the processes within the SIF and help assess the impact of the initiative, with a view to identifying innovations and initiatives to promote across the NSP and beyond.

Settlement Standards

Standards have been strengthened across the NSP through the establishment of key projects to identify settlement standards in casework and develop outcome standards in line with the SCOA National Settlement Service Outcomes Standards. These projects will be supported by implementation working groups including NSP members and key internal SSI representatives.

Youth Collective

Youth Collective, an initiative of SSI, had strong outcomes this year, both in direct youth engagement and consultation, and in collaboration with MRCs, NSP and the settlement sector. The Youth Collective Strategic Plan was updated and ratified. Significant youth consultations were undertaken across NSW culminating in representation of refugee youth issues at an international level in Geneva in June 2016. The Youth Collective now has a formal youth reference group called the “20 Voices Youth Leadership Group”.



Key emerging themes

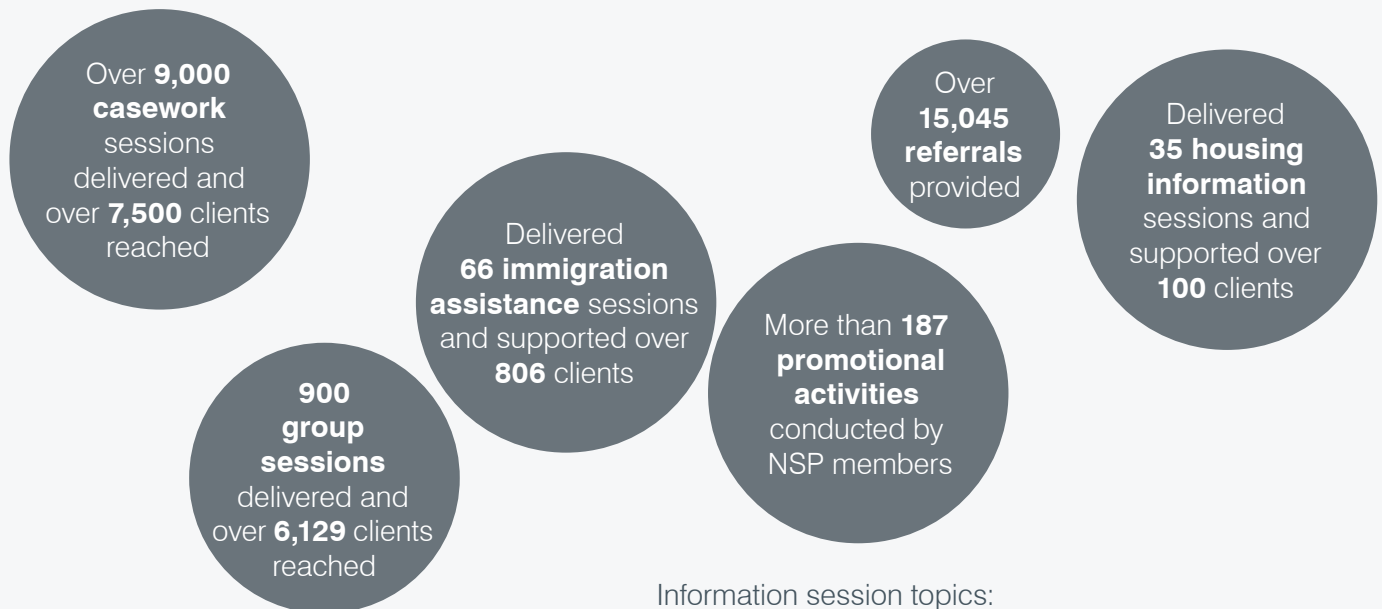
Key themes that arose over the year were responded to proactively by NSP members and SSI.

The focus on English language, employment workshops and education pathways was evident in the variety of service provision examples and activities undertaken by NSP members. Members held employment workshops, and there were many innovation fund projects focussed on employment. NSP members found creative ways to engage with jobactive providers and other funded employment services. An Education Pathways forum for NSP members was hosted by SSI in December 2015 and NSP members also continued to host community based English language practice support activities in their respective local areas.

SSI took an active leadership role in supporting Professor Shergold and the Joint Working Group on Refugee Resettlement. SSI co-chaired the Working Group, and participated in many focus area working party meetings. Continuing discussions remain important to understand and build on the opportunities offered by long term settlement support within the SSP once refugees are exited from the HSS program.

NSP Work plans overview and examples

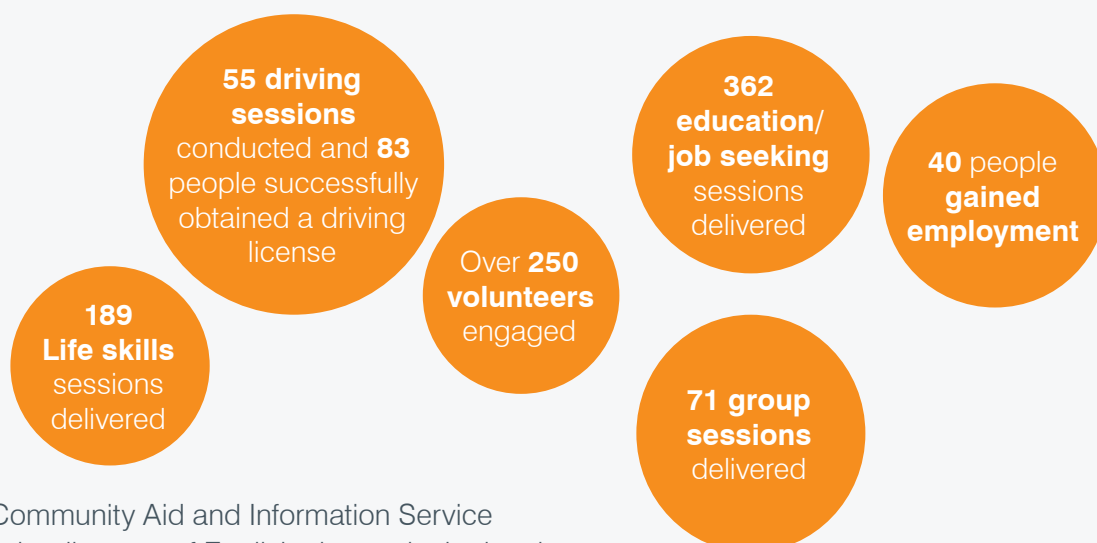
Deliverable 1 – Casework/coordination and delivery of services



Information session topics:

- Health issues
- Immigration assistance
- Domestic Violence and family issues
- How to access services, information and referral
- Orientation to Australian systems and laws

Deliverable 2– Community Coordination and Development



Gynea Community Aid and Information Service developed a directory of English classes in the local area. The directory is available online and more than 1000 copies have been printed and distributed through local libraries and community events.

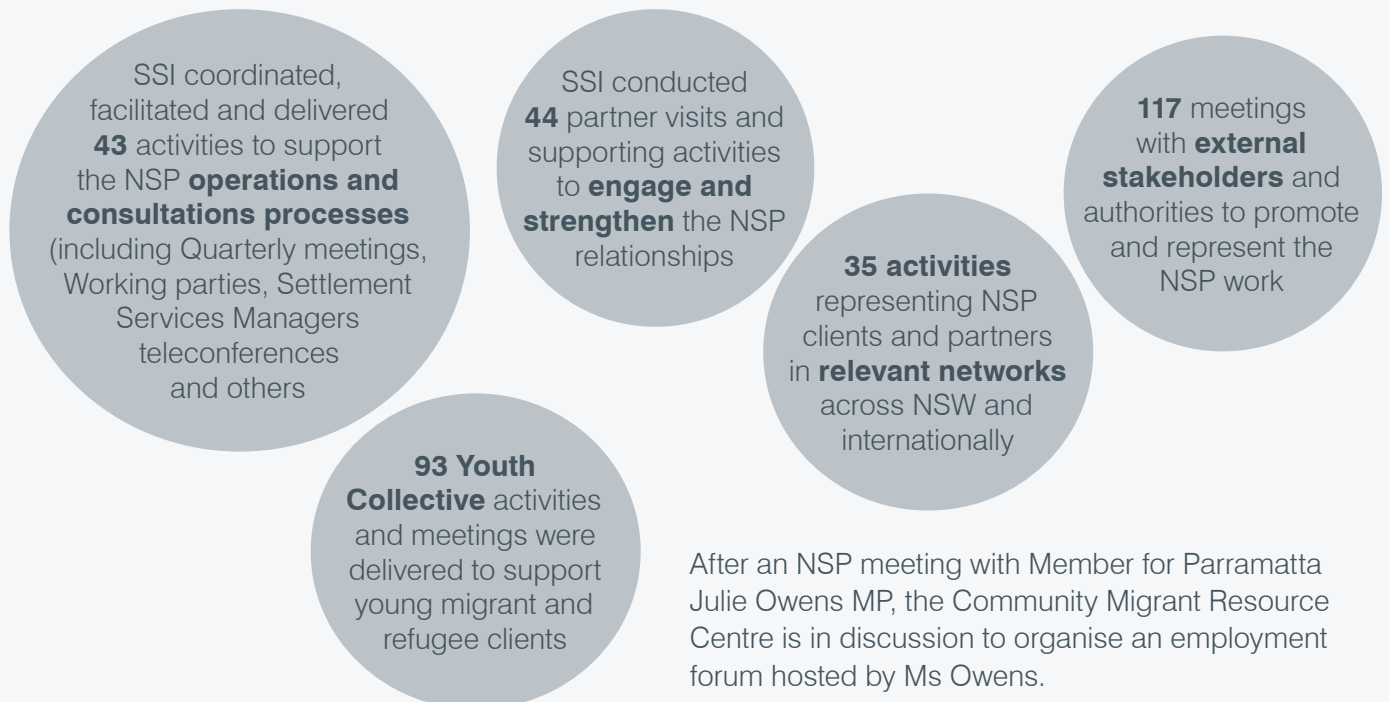
NSP Work plans overview and examples

Deliverable 3 – Youth Settlement Services



Auburn Diversity Services Inc. hosted and led the Youth Collective's Youth Summit. Almost 120 young people from all walks of life came together to express their concerns, share experiences and ideas, and explore pathways to work together in developing a vibrant and unified multicultural society in Western Sydney.

Deliverable 4 – NSW Settlement Partnership



After an NSP meeting with Member for Parramatta Julie Owens MP, the Community Migrant Resource Centre is in discussion to organise an employment forum hosted by Ms Owens.

for more examples and information please visit nsp.ssi.org.au



NSP Partners:

Advance Diversity Services

Auburn Diversity Services Inc.

Bathurst Information and Neighbourhood Centre

Community Migrant Resource Centre

Core Multicultural Communities

Dubbo Neighbourhood Centre

Great Lakes Agency for Peace and Development International

GyMEA Community Aid & Information Service

Illawarra Multicultural Services Inc.

Khmer Community of NSW

Lebanese Community Council of NSW

Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre

Macarthur Diversity Services

Manly Community Centre & Services Inc. joined NSP in July 2016

Manning Valley Neighbourhood Services Inc.

Melkite Catholic Welfare Association

Metro Assist

Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency joined NSP in July 2016

Nepean Multicultural Access Inc

Northern Settlement Services Ltd

Settlement Services International

Sydney Multicultural Community Services

SydWest Multicultural Services

**For more information please visit
nsp.ssi.org.au**