This file is part of the following work:

Davis, Margaret M. (2024) *Exploring the resettlement experiences of women from diverse countries of Africa who have arrived as former refugees to north Queensland through Australia's humanitarian program 2010–2020.* **PhD Thesis, James Cook University.**

Access to this file is available from:

https://doi.org/10.25903/tadg%2Dfs64

Exploring the Resettlement Experiences of Women From Diverse Countries of Africa Who Have Arrived as Former Refugees to North Queensland Through Australia's Humanitarian Program 2010–2020

Margaret. M. Davis

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for

the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

College of Arts, Society and Education

James Cook University

June 2024

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful for the invaluable advice from my supervisors Associate Professor Nonie Harris and Associate Professor Abraham Francis throughout my studies. Thank you both for sharing your experience, infinite patience, knowledge, and encouragement. Nonie's feminist wisdom and capacity to articulate her knowledge have inspired and encouraged me. Abraham has supported my learning and sharpened my understanding of research rigour, but also reminded me of the value of thinking while walking. I have long been inspired by the research of Adjunct Associate Professor Eileen Pittaway and Dr Linda Bartolomei of the Forced Migration Research Network (formerly the Centre for Refugee Research) in the school of Social Science, University of New South Wales Arts, Design & Architecture. I am grateful for the loving support and direction of my advisory group members, Masalam Damey and Iraha Umutoni, who have been generous with their time and belief in the importance of this study, have kept me on task and so readily shared their wisdom and lived experience.

I am deeply humbled by the courage and commitment of the 20 women who participated in this study. I have been sustained throughout this research by their contribution and by many women who taught me so much during my years of social work practice and those associated with the Townsville Multicultural Support Group Incorporated (TMSG). prior to my retirement. The research thesis is witness to all of your insights and deep thoughtfulness for women who will arrive in North Queensland as humanitarian entrants in the future.

I appreciated the support of the chief executive officers, managers, and resettlement service personnel of Centacare Far North Queensland and TMSG for their encouragement and contributions to this study.

The beautiful, surprising gift of this laptop from the 2020 Management Committee and staff members of TMSG supported and sustained me throughout this endeavour. Thank

Statement of the Contribution of Others

Editorial Contribution

Editorial suggestions for the study were made by my supervisors, Associate Professor Nonie Harris and Associate Professor Abraham Francis of the College of Arts, Society and Education, at James Cook University.

Editing assistance in compliance with Standards D and E of the Australian Standards for Editing Practice was provided by Dr Eileen Siddins.

Financial Contribution

Abstract

This thesis explores the resettlement experiences of former refugee women from African countries who arrived in regional North Queensland between 2010 and 2020. In this thesis, I inform and strengthen resettlement policy and social work and human service practice. I was prompted to do this study by my sense of unfinished business after retiring from 22 years of coordinating a resettlement service in Townsville. Throughout this research, I privilege women's experiences of being and belonging in North Queensland.

In June 2023, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees announced there were 110.3 million people forcibly displaced across borders and recognised 36.4 million as refugees. Australia's national humanitarian resettlement program is regarded as world class with the current government reinvigorating the national intake of offshore humanitarian entrants to 20,000 places annually. North Queensland participates in the resettlement program in both Cairns and Townsville. As directed by the United Nations *Global Compact on Refugees*, a primary responsibility of resettlement is the protection of women and girls, and also, gender-sensitive responses before and after resettlement. As professionals committed to human rights and social justice, social workers have a critical role in resettling former refugees and ensuring a network of human service support for women.

Using a layered theoretical foundation of feminism, human rights, critical social work, and decolonialism, I qualitatively interviewed 20 women who arrived between 2010 and 2020 from four African countries: Rwanda, Somalia, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I also interviewed delegates of two chief executive officers who are managers of resettlement services and four experienced resettlement practitioners. The study considered broad questions of women's lives from their memories of their home countries to their experiences of refugee life in different locations of displacement and, particularly, their post-arrival experiences in North Queensland.

On arrival into North Queensland, the majority of women anticipate safety and peace, and they perceive a future where they will connect with and contribute to the local community. However, women's resettlement experiences continue to be affected by accumulated gender inequities of the past and ongoing exclusion from access to equal opportunities in resettlement. Gender-based violence does not cease. Furthermore, some women are frustrated with a continued refugee identity and uncertain experiences of being and belonging. Accounts from the managers and resettlement practitioners indicate resource constraints and a lack of support for women in the wider human services sector.

My research provides unique insights into women's experiences of resettlement in North Queensland. It highlights the effects of continued male supremacy, discusses the challenges of current regional resettlement policy and draws attention to the implications for social workers and human service practitioners. The thesis concludes that former refugee women from diverse African countries have vital wisdom and experience that should guide regional resettlement policy and critically reform social work and human service practice.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

AASW: Australian Association of Social Workers

AIHW: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

AMEP: Adult Migrant English Program

ASGS: Australian Statistical Geography Standard Remoteness Structure

AUSCO: Australian Cultural Orientation

BNLA: Building a New Life in Australia

CAMS: Community Action for a Multicultural Society

CAR: Central African Republic

CEDAW: Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

CRRF: Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework

DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo

FNQ: Far North Queensland

HSP: Humanitarian Settlement Program

IASSW: International Association of Schools of Social Work

IFSW: International Federation of Social Work

IMF: International Monetary Fund

JCU: James Cook University

NAATI: National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters

NRC: Norwegian Refugee Council

NSW: New South Wales

PASTT: Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma

RCOA: Refugee Council of Australia

SCOA: Settlement Council of Australia

SIS: Specialised and Intensive Services

TAFE: Technical and Further Education

TMSG: Townsville Multicultural Support Group Incorporated

SETS: Settlement Engagement and Transition

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN: United Nations

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNSW: University of New South Wales

USA: United States of America

Preface: Unfinished Business

In order to claim a place in an intellectual culture which has in the past

excluded us, we need to seek out a new path to 'knowledge'. We must begin by

developing self-confidence, valuing our own experience, and most importantly,

by taking ourselves and others seriously. (Sutherland, 1986, p. 151)

Coordinating the resettlement of former refugees in Townsville, North Queensland

shaped the last 22 years of my professional social work practice before retirement in mid-

2020. Working with the Townsville Multicultural Support Group Incorporated (TMSG)

catapulted me into social work practice that demanded I attend to world politics and be ready

to engage with an increasing diversity of clientele populations and needs (Monani, 2018).

Before that appointment, my professional interaction with migrants and humanitarian entrants

in Townsville had been limited. I was ignorant of world events that caused people to flee and

seek refuge in other countries. Becoming the TMSG coordinator was a pivotal point in my

social work practice and a far cry from my origins.

Growing up as a middle child of a large family in a small rural town on the Darling

Downs, 30 kilometres from Toowoomba in South-West Queensland, was the foundation of

my regional social work practice spanning 42 years in Townsville, North Queensland. I have

eight surviving siblings – being the fourth daughter of seven – sandwiched between the eldest

and second sons. I learned to make my voice heard. We grew up valuing caring and respect

for others. The centre of our lives was a small regional community (population fewer than

2,000) where life revolved around the production of quality cheese by the combined efforts of

surrounding dairy farmers and cheesemakers of the Southbrook Co-Operative Dairy

Association. My father managed the cheese factory. One primary school and a scattering of

small businesses underscored a strong and supportive regional community life. Women were

at the helm of families and active in local community associations. Tertiary studies had never been on my radar, but with the benefit of a Commonwealth scholarship and the Whitlam Government's introduction of free tertiary education, I embraced the opportunity to complete a degree in Social Work at the University of Queensland (1971–1974). There, I was startled out of the comfort of my safe mono-cultural community life into the social and political landscape of haves and have-nots. I also confronted my ignorance of Australia's colonial history, which was heralded by the raising of the British flag by Captain James Cook on Possession Island at the tip of North Queensland in 1770 and framed by Moreton-Robinson (2003) as "patriarchal whiteness" (p. 84).

My first full-time social work position was a 12-month appointment to North Queensland at the Townsville Aboriginal and Islanders Health Service in 1978. I was unfamiliar with the North Queensland region. Townsville's "tropical climate," "rocky landscape," and "dry coastal hinterland" were initially stifling and foreign to me (Forbes & Van Rossum, 2016, p. 15). The beautiful seaside strand, however, and the welcome from local Indigenous personnel and the few social workers in the region at the time soon appeased me. I worked with a team of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health assistants who were informed by their lived experience, local knowledge, and mental health training (Larsen et al., 1977). I put down roots here. The Townsville city expanded with further growth of the army base, James Cook University (JCU), a large shipping port and an administrative centre for government services (Anderson, 2015). Subsequent social work positions throughout the 1980s and 1990s included community development with social work colleagues across practice areas of homelessness, support of prisoners and their families, work as a member of a multidisciplinary psychiatric team at the Townsville hospital, and family skills support at Relationships Australia and Centacare. During this time, I grew accustomed to the four- to

five-hour drive to Cairns and witnessed its transition from a small city to becoming a major tropical tourist centre and gateway to Far North Queensland.

I embraced feminism in the 1980s. I benefited from the inspirational work of Townsville's strong Feminist Collective and the Centre for Women's Studies at JCU (Harris & Baker, 2008). Feminism became integral to my personal and professional life, influencing my social work practice (Carrington, 2016). Regardless of difficulties or the seeming hopelessness of women's power over their lives, as a radical feminist, I chose "to stay engaged" (McLellan, 2010, p. 83).

I had much to learn in accepting the position of coordinator at TMSG in 1998 (reframed to manager in 2016). My lack of direct experience in working with migrants and former refugees was compensated for slightly by my previous practice experiences and contacts across local community services. One of my first tasks was to support women associated with TMSG in doing a community needs assessment of ethnic groups across Townsville. The needs assessment educated me. I learned from local migrant and former refugee women from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Chile, Fiji, Iran, Papua New Guinea, El Salvador, and diverse provinces of the Philippines. These women shared their unique experiences of migration and resettlement and of exclusion and inclusion in North Queensland. Women's support for each other demonstrated passion for "women's commonalities and women's distinctive ways of being for each other – across a diversity of ethnic, racial, and national boundaries" (Raymond, 2001, p. 38). Sharing experiences through discussion and collective advocacy efforts contributed to an empowering "office culture" of relational and cultural respect that enhanced human rights (Ife, 2012, p. 281). This office culture served the organisation well. It attracted the generosity of a local church parish and local government to survive a loss of funding in 2000 and a loss of offices due to a fire in 2004 (Frazer & Beplate, 2018).

Our advocacy for the inclusion of migrant and former refugee women was at that time directed towards local government and community-based services (women's services, housing organisations and local welfare services). One area of identified need was for a local torture and trauma service. Our representations to government-administered services were limited but we attended state government community cabinets when they were in the region and raised concerns with social workers within the then Commonwealth Department of Social Security. The common "We don't see many migrant or refugee women" response from services forced me to accept the challenges of systemic advocacy and community development throughout my work at TMSG.

National humanitarian settlement policy changes after 2000 extended my social work practice within the organisation to include coordinating the resettlement of former refugees. There was minimal guidance available on regional resettlement within social work practice. Practical service challenges included navigating the business framework of contract service requirements and working closely with government and local services to develop capability and capacity and respond to people's needs as they resettled. Up to that point in time, my experience in community development had always been one of working directly with client groups and helping them submit their cases to services. I needed to expand my ways of influencing a broader network of diverse systems to ensure service responsiveness to entrants' needs, and to ensure women's needs were prioritised. A huge learning curve in my social work practice included developing strategies to encourage effective networks, coordinating advocacy with women who had arrived as humanitarian entrants, advocating with experienced and concerned migrant and resettled former refugee women, and lobbying for system changes. I was deeply affected by a faint woman's voice asking, "Do women have rights there?" during a teleconference with people in a remote African location before their arrival to Townsville. As a team, the mantra of "In Townsville, settlement is everyone's

business" became a focus of influence across mainstream services and through the city's registration as a Refugee Welcome Zone in 2009 (re-affirmed in 2017). Contributions from research developed as a critical tool of systemic advocacy through local networks and with state and national government departments.

My interest in research developed gradually. Opportunities to volunteer in research conducted by Eileen Pittaway and colleagues from the University of New South Wales, and opportunities to participate in international national and local research with refugee women, influenced my practice development and piqued my interest (Allan et al., 2009; Beddoe, 2019; Monani, 2018). I valued the experience and wisdom of the University of New South Wales staff and the opportunity to engage directly with women refugees living in displacement situations and others who had resettled in Australia. Harris et al. (2013) concluded that social workers develop an interest in research "after some experience in the field and after acquiring a broader and more inclusive world-view and understanding of the inter-connectedness of everything we do with some form of research activity" (p. 4). The authors suggested that social workers hesitate to take up research studies due to a lack of confidence in knowledge, skills, and time constraints. Robinson (2014) noted an increasing number of social workers engaged in working across humanitarian services, but they noted a lack of studies "that examine the demands and issues they face" (p. 1602). I continued to consider further studies in my developing empathy and passion for women's needs in resettlement. Gair (2012) identified the role of empathy in qualitative research and named feminism as one of many methodologies that "have much in common with professional helping philosophy, processes, theories and ethical considerations" (p. 137).

In 2012 I completed a Graduate Certificate in Research. By 2020, time was running out to pursue further studies as the demands of neoliberalism in management and practice limited my capacity to focus on research (Goel et al., 2018). Retirement loomed. Critical

thinking on topics of casework and community development, confronting whiteness in social work, civil liberties, human rights, radical social work, and feminism had guided my career and passion for feminist region-centric social work practice (Alinsky, 1971; Bauman et al., 2013; Dominelli, 2002; Ife, 1997). Yet I felt I had unfinished business. Inspired by former refugee women recreating their lives in North Queensland, I engaged with doctoral research to embed local social work experience in regional resettlement policy and practice.

Chapter 1. Introduction

To understand subjective and collective Afrodiasporic experiences, we must
critically theorise how migratory and bordering practices are summoned when
racialised bodies cross international boundaries and how that positioning affects
their ability to belong in the new country. (Gatwiri & Anderson, 2022, p. 34)

Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program includes both offshore and onshore
components and is considered a part of Australia's Migration Program (Hugo, 2002; Phillips
& Karlsen, 2014). This thesis is concerned with the resettlement experiences of offshore
humanitarian entrants from African countries in the unique location of North Queensland. It
is anchored in my practice experience and my sense of unfinished business. My research
intent is to privilege women's views of resettling into the region and their "deeper
experiences of being and belonging" as described by Nyadol Nyuen when introducing a study
of migrant and refugee women by Segrave et al. (2021) at the Australian National Press Club
(July 2021). I use a layered theoretical foundation of radical feminism, including
Afrofeminsims, decolonialism, human rights, and critical social work to inform my
qualitative research. The women in my study were assigned refugee status by the United
Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). They arrived in North Queensland
between 2010 and 2020, through Australia's offshore Humanitarian Settlement Program
(HSP). I also explore the experiences of chief executive officers (CEOs), who are referred to
throughout the thesis as *managers* of resettlement services, and of resettlement practitioners
who engage directly with the women in their resettlement. I then consider these voices (of
former refugees and resettlement service workers) alongside existing resettlement policy and
consider the implications for regional social workers and those who work within a plethora of
generic regional human services. I have begun this thesis by sharing my previous social work

practice career in North Queensland and 22 years of management experience in a resettlement service that has compelled me to engage in this research – my unfinished business. In this chapter, I provide the background context of the study from global and national contexts to the unique local space of the North Queensland region. I then detail the origins of the research and the research aims and questions. The significance of the study is outlined. After a chapter summary, I outline the order of the thesis.

1.1 Global Context and Human Rights in Australia

By mid-2023, the UNHCR mid-year trends report identified over 110 million people who were forcibly displaced across borders; 36.4 million of whom were recognised as refugees under the UNHCR mandate (2023b). Numbers have since increased due to the war in Ukraine and ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Burkino Faso in West Africa, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). At the *Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement* in June 2023, the UNHCR predicted an increase of people requiring urgent resettlement to 2.4 million in 2024 (Refugee Council of Australia [RCOA], 2023c). The number of Palestine refugees under the United Nations (UN) Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees was then 5.9 million but has, sadly, escalated as of February 2024. The UNHCR 1951 Convention defined a refugee as "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion" (2010, p. 3). The 1951 Convention has not been signed and ratified by all member states (145 out of 193), many of which are the countries that host most refugees with "dubious human rights records – rendering refugees in those countries unprotected by human rights" (Pittaway & Bartolomei, 2022, p. 53). The 1967 Protocol removed the limitations of geography (being limited to people fleeing events within Europe) and date (being initially limited to events before January 1951). An increase in Australia's annual commitment to humanitarian intakes

to 20,000 annual places was announced by the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs on 11 August 2023 (Australian Government, 2023). The 1951 Convention definition, with its focus on persecution and subsequent flight for safety across an international border, is central to understanding and connecting life before and after resettlement and is thus relevant to my research. An important document, the *African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa* supplemented the 1967 Protocol, was adopted in Addis Ababa in September 1969 and officially came into effect on 6th December 2012. It extended protection to internally displaced people, ensuring "assistance to internally displaced persons by meeting their basic needs … and unimpeded access by humanitarian organizations" (African Union, 2009, p. 10). Displaced people live with uncertainty about their future in temporary urban locations or large UNHCR-managed camps. The *Global Compact on Refugees*, adopted at the UN General Assembly 2018, now drives the work of the UNHCR (see Chapter 3). One of its core tasks is to find solutions for displaced people, including granting refugee status to applications from displaced peoples. UNHCR solutions are limited to three options: voluntary repatriation, local integration into the host country, and resettlement as refugees to a third country. In 2022, fewer than 4% of refugees (57,483 people) were identified as needing and able to access resettlement (RCOA, 2023c, p. 1). Challenges to the Humanitarian Program occurred through the Morrison Government, which imposed a ceiling on numbers in the Humanitarian program and ignored UNHCR priorities (resettling just 350 UNHCR referrals in 2021; see RCOA, 2022).

The harsh reality is that, through flight and displacement, women and girls are at great risk of sexual abuse, violence, and threats to their safety and the safety of any children or adults they are caring for. Eckert and Hofling (2008) emphasised the endemic nature of rape and violence experienced by women and girls during and after conflicts; experiences that can

haunt them throughout their lifetime. The UN (2018) *Global Compact on Refugees* stated that any country participating in any of the durable solutions is expected to implement policies that "empower women and girls" and "promote full enjoyment of their human rights, as well as equality of access to services and opportunities" (p. 28).

However, unlike other liberal democracies, and despite being an original signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Australia does not currently have a Bill of Rights, national act, or national charter of human rights. A range of national conversations is occurring through the five-year project, *Free and Equal: An Australian Conversation on Human Rights* (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2023). This project has planned a two-day conference for June 2024 bringing together leaders and social justice advocates and community personnel to contribute to a reform agenda (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2024). The states of Victoria, Queensland, and the Australian Capital Territory have human rights legislations.

1.2 Australian Humanitarian Settlement

> The Refugee Convention (Convention relating to the Status of Refugees) is
> designed to provide protection to people who are denied rights in their country
> of origin. The settlement regime, and its accompanying infrastructure, has
> come about through political movements and advocacy to ensure that refugees
> have access to human rights in third countries. (Pittaway et al., 2018, p. 259)

Migration and humanitarian programs have been the administrative responsibility of various departments according to the will of the government of the day (Phillips & Karlsen, 2014). References to policy and program occur interchangeably throughout much of resettlement literature and in this thesis. Hugo (2002) noted that, in the mid-1970s, Australia developed "a more comprehensive approach to the global refugee situation" by introducing

an annual allocation of settlement places for refugee and humanitarian entrants (p. 28). The first formal Australian refugee policy was introduced in 1977. The policy initiatives included an annual allocation of settlement places and a Special Humanitarian Program for people at risk of human rights violations offshore and who have available support from a relative or proposer in Australia for visa subclass 202 (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2024a; Hugo, 2002). A national community refugee settlement scheme of locally based volunteers was established to assist refugee arrivals (Cox, 1983). A 2000 review by the Australian Government introduced changes away from the volunteer scheme to a business model for delivering humanitarian resettlement services (Frazer & Beplate, 2018). The backdrop of this initiative was the Australian Howard Government's years of neoliberalism (1996–2007), a reaction to the 9/11 event in New York in 2001, and the war on terrorism. The current national program, the HSP, is administered by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. Humanitarian visa subclasses are those numbered from 200–204 that provide permanent residency in Australia (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2024b). The Humanitarian Woman at Risk visa subclass 204 assists women who are identified as having additional needs shaped by trauma experienced in their respective countries of origin and while living as refugees (Eckert & Hofling, 2008). The location of resettlement services and the capacity of mainstream local human services affect women's resettlement experiences.

1.3 Introducing North Queensland

The Australian Statistical Geography Standard Remoteness Structure (ASGS) defines remoteness as the road distance people have to travel to services with five classes of relative remoteness across Australia: major cities, inner regional locations that are two to three hours outside a major city, outer regional areas further than three hours from a major city, remote, and very remote (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Townsville and Cairns, the sites of

my study, are both designated outer regional areas by ASGS under the guidelines of the

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The vehicle travelling distances from

Brisbane are 1,808 kilometres to Cairns and 1,422 kilometres to Townsville. The travelling

distance between inner-city Cairns and inner-city Townsville is four hours (Royal

Automobile Club of Queensland, n.d.). Cairns and Townsville together are the North

Queensland contract region of the Australian HSP. They are the only humanitarian

resettlement sites of an outer regional category within Queensland. Mount Gambier in South

Australia is the only other humanitarian outer regional resettlement site in Australia. Both

Cairns and Townsville local newspapers have featured stories of resettled individuals and

families. For instance, Falvo (2018) authored a report on a Congolese family resettling in

Cairns in June 2018. Lucas (2018) profiled Townsville as a place of peace for resettling

former refugees in the Townsville Bulletin.

 The 2021 Australian Census recorded population figures for Statistical Area Level 4

with the local government areas of Cairns population at 166,449 and Townsville at 192,796

(Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021). The cities, although distinct tropical environments

(Cairns is in the wet tropics and Townsville is in the dry tropics), share collegial relationships

across tertiary education, businesses, refugee resettlement and health and social services

networks. Both Cairns and Townsville feature a coastline near the city that offers a variety of

recreational options for all ages as well as cafes and outdoor sporting facilities. My personal

experience as a previous newcomer to North Queensland, and my observation of new arrivals

through TMSG, is that those of us from country areas or landlocked countries of another

continent delight in the coastal features of North Queensland. A distinctive feature of Cairns

is its attraction as a centre for tourism. Townsville is the site of the largest base for the

Australian Defence Force. The Townsville City Council was registered as a Refugee

Welcome Zone in 2009 (Frazer & Beplate, 2018, p. 11). Together, the cities are the field of this research study.

Before 2000, volunteer refugee support groups operated across North Queensland as part of the aforementioned community refugee resettlement scheme. The introduction of a resettlement service business model in 2000 ushered in changed arrangements. Volunteer groups were absorbed into TMSG in Townsville and Cairns; Centacare Far North Queensland (FNQ) accepted responsibility. The services were independently contracted to deliver the first Commonwealth Government contracts through an initial Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy and the later revised Humanitarian Settlement Service. Numbers of people on humanitarian visas arrived in unpredictable high levels (peaks) or low numbers (troughs) at both sites between 2000 and 2010 with a steadier rise in numbers after 2010 (Frazer & Beplate, 2018). Referrals to North Queensland included women on visa subclass 204. Available Centacare FNQ and TMSG annual reports between 2016 and 2021 referenced a gradual increase in humanitarian arrivals from African and Asian countries in both cities, to over 250 per year as contracts changed between 2000 and June 2020.[1] From mid-2015, each service was independently subcontracted by the Brisbane-based Multicultural Development Agency, which is now Multicultural Australia, to deliver complex case services assisting people identified as requiring additional support.

Late 2017 ushered in another round of major changes with the introduction of a revised offshore HSP, including a redesign of complex case services to Specialised and Intensive Services (SIS) later managed by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs (2024b). The department now has contracts with five major metropolitan-based service providers to deliver a tiered system of services to 11 contract regions through an

---

[1] For more information, see Centacare FNQ (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020) and TMSG (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020).

undisclosed number of subcontracted services across Australia. Each North Queensland site provider, Centacare FNQ in Cairns and TMSG in Townsville, has separate contracts for the delivery of resettlement services with the state-wide and Brisbane-based service, Multicultural Australia. The new arrangements heralded an increase in anticipated (non-guaranteed) annual arrival figures to each site of 400 individuals. Arrivals were suspended in March 2020 due to COVID-19 (T. Nguyen, personal communication, January 28, 2021). However, Australia reopened its borders in 2022, and offshore arrivals gradually began to arrive (RCOA, 2022).

During the decade under study (2010–2020), the home countries of most humanitarian entrants to Cairns were the DRC and Rwanda. In Townsville, entrants originated from the DRC, Rwanda, Somalia, and the Central African Republic (CAR), which is distinct from the geographic region of Central Africa. Figures provided on request from the Department of Home Affairs provides detail on the arrivals of 2,748 registered humanitarian entrants with visa subclasses 200 to 204 over 20 years residing across Cairns and Townsville. The total of 1,557 arrivals into Cairns for the period included nine entrants during 2020. Over these 20 years, there were 733 adult female and 824 adult male entrants. There were 365 arrivals from African countries, including the DRC ($n = 141$), Sudan ($n = 47$), Kenya ($n = 10$), Burundi ($n = 27$), Rwanda ($n = 46$), Tanzania ($n = 11$), Sierra Leone ($n = 42$), Uganda ($n = 18$), Liberia ($n = 8$), and Guinea ($n = 6$). Several African countries were registered as having less than five entrants: Benin, Congo Republic, Ghana, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (Australian Department of Home Affairs, 2020a).

The total of 1,191 arrivals into Townsville for the same period (1 January 2000–31 December 2020) included 69 entrants in 2020 who were female (n=29) and male (n=40) adults and children. Arrivals from African countries from 2000 to 2021 included: Chad ($n = 38$), Cameroon ($n = 6$), the DCR ($n = 338$), Somalia ($n = 119$), Sudan ($n = 69$), Kenya

(n = 79), Burundi (n = 5), the CAR (n = 81), Rwanda (n = 32), Tanzania (n = 36), Uganda (n = 23), Liberia (n = 16), Zambia (n = 13), Ethiopia (n = 12), Malawi (n = 8), and Eritrea (n = 7). Small numbers (less than five) of arrivals from African countries included: Djibouti, Egypt, the DRC, Guinea, Mozambique, Namibia, the Republic of South Sudan, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Other groups of arrivals into North Queensland included Afghan, Bhutanese, Burmese, Iraqi, and ethnic groups from Myanmar, Nepal, and Syria (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020a). Arrivals from the CAR and Chad into Townsville were the first humanitarian visa entrants to Queensland at the time of the study.

1.4 The Humanitarian Service Program Delivery

The Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Program is provided across five days by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs (2024c) to prepare most humanitarian entrants for their flight and arrival in Australia. My experience has been that not all entrants in this study period were able to attend the AUSCO Program. Furthermore, communication difficulties may affect the attendees' ability to understand the AUSCO information. Translations and interpretations of AUSCO information relevant to women in this study include Arabic, Somali, and Swahili. However, translations are not available in Sango and French, which are two of the languages common to entrants from Central Africa.

For this study, I adopted the term *resettlement practitioners* to emphasise workers' environment as distinct from the generic term, *case manager*, which is used across multiple human services. HSP services are delivered through a prescribed case management model with a suite of services through a case management framework across six core stages. HSP case management support is dependent on a client's assessed need and clients are generally provided for between six to 18 months. The stages broadly are intake, arrival, planning, implementation, monitoring, and review. Specific services include airport reception, provision of short-term accommodation, referral to mainstream and specialist support

services, connections to find long-term accommodation, linkages to adult migrant English classes as a pathway to employment and training, and connections to local community groups and orientation to Australia. The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is delivered in each city for migrants and humanitarian arrivals by arrangements via a state-wide Queensland Technical and Further Education (TAFE) office also based in Brisbane. TAFE also delivers employment and training courses that are accessed by resettling refugees.

Clients with complex needs may be approved for additional support through the SIS program, which is delivered by the contracted HSP service before or after the HSP within five years of arrival. Other general and less intensive support after the HSP is available through the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program. Both SIS and SETS programs are administered by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. At the time of the study, Centacare FNQ and TMSG had independent contracts with the Australian Department of Home Affairs for delivery of the SETS program to migrants and former HSP clients. Services available from other human service organisations across the region are referred to as mainstream services, and according to Fors (2018), referring to mainstream support simplifies what services do and ignores the contextual differences of regional living.

A broader picture of humanitarian settlement includes support that is offered also to migrant arrivals on a range of visa subclasses that are distinct from humanitarian entrants. In addition to delivering (SETS) programs, each service is independently contracted by the Queensland Government Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services to deliver a Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS) program.

I turn now to detail the origins of the research and my unfinished business that inspired this study.

1.5 Origins of the Research

Before my appointment to TMSG, Ms Maria Suehrcke, the community worker with TMSG, spoke on behalf of women at a 1996 *Congress of Ethnic Communities of North Queensland* (Casson, 1996). She accused North Queensland services of neglecting ethnic women's needs and declared that many women from non-English speaking backgrounds across the broad geography of North and North-West Queensland were suffering "isolation and cultural dislocation," were dependent on husbands and fathers, and lacked "peer support for social and personal needs" (Casson, 1996, p. 9). She noted too that there were few ethnic services in North Queensland, and within these services women "rarely hold position of power" with services that have a "tokenistic approach," "cultural blindness," and "do not allocate funds to target non-English speaking background women" (Casson, 1996, p. 9). Suehrcke addressed concerns with women-specific services that marginalised the needs of migrant and former refugee women with recommendations that included:

- using existing services more effectively to improve access for non-English speaking women
- developing new models to assist non-English speaking women for outreach purposes (Casson, 1996, p. 10).

Social work practice was therefore challenged. My lack of knowledge and experience was underpinned by a "hierarchy of hegemonic whiteness" (Gatwiri & Anderson, 2022, p. 34). During my practice experience within TMSG, changes to the delivery of resettlement services ushered in changes to my role in social work practice. My interest in research developed slowly throughout the cycles of change in resettlement service contracts and restructures. I experienced the combined effect of a business service contract to refugee resettlement and irregular arrival numbers from 2000 to 2020 that challenged North

Queensland resettlement service capacity, and the effect made it imperative that TMSG influence broader social work and human service support for humanitarian entrants. My colleagues in Cairns shared similar concerns. The challenges aligned with my original assigned task as TMSG coordinator.

The new contract style of delivery in 2000 supported under 50 arrivals annually on humanitarian visas to the region. Many humanitarian arrivals did not stay and were keen to settle in larger Southern metropolitan cities. These small numbers were manageable by harnessing the goodwill of local volunteer groups. Resettlement service personnel represented clients' needs for services. Volunteer support was invaluable in assisting people in the home and when they needed to attend some appointments. Women needed numerous health appointments due to outstanding medical issues and their continuing role as primary caregivers to family members in the new environment. Before the decade considered in this study (2010–2020), a specialist recovery program for humanitarian entrants, the Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (PASTT), was unavailable in both North Queensland sites. In the interim, each site arranged access for arrivals to local counselling services. Reliance on volunteers and substitute counselling was neither sustainable nor a just professional response "beyond individual interventions" as numbers gradually increased across the region (Monani, 2018, p. 39). After sustained post-2000 advocacy, local PASTT services in Townsville and Cairns commenced in 2011 (Queensland PASTT, 2021). Family arrivals from diverse countries included women as heads of households with diverse strengths and, also, complex resettlement needs. The diversity of arrivals and increased numbers during the latter half of the 2000 to 2010 decade compelled a radical shake-up of many services (income security, housing, education, health services) for sustainable structural changes responding to women's needs. A lack of specific refugee health services hindered support for women in the region. Advocacy and lobbying with colleagues across the state influenced the

2008 establishment of a state-wide Refugee Health Network funded by Queensland Health. However, a funding crisis in 2013, when the Campbell Newman Government reduced funding throughout Queensland, effectively reduced the services. My memory, prompted by logbook entries at the time, reflects that North Queensland resettlement services limped along with minimal support from health resources in the region through the General Practitioners Network (later morphing into Primary Health Clinics), which assumed responsibility for delivering refugee health services in late 2017.

In my experience, the pressures of increasing arrivals and an increasingly neoliberal service delivery context risked social work values of respect and relationality and the office culture that rested on women's mutual support within TMSG. Robinson (2014) cautioned that increased service volume may threaten social work service delivery principles of social justice and human rights in working with refugees. An additional challenge for North Queensland services was to sustain viability to deliver other under-funded support such as multicultural women's groups, volunteer English tuition groups, craft groups, and participation in local events. Strains on the capacity of sector-associated services risked working relationships across the plethora of human services. Certainly, this was the reality in Townsville. The Cairns service was afforded some protection as it was situated within the framework of a major local service provider of Centacare FNQ. Neither service wanted to deny former refugees the opportunity to resettle in the region.

There is a pronounced absence of research on the experiences of former refugee women from diverse African countries who arrived in North Queensland. A Cairns-based study by Babacan and Gopalkrishnan (2005), examined the case of one Somalian woman, highlighting the "particular vulnerability" of women in the resettling adapting process and the predilection of the resettling community to misunderstanding the effects of trauma as mental illness (p. 150). The study also concluded that in Australia "women have a harder time with

the settlement process than men" (p. 153). The authors suggested that "services are usually monocultural and monolingual in orientation, and service providers are not sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences" (p. 154). Former refugee women living in regional areas generally, and in Cairns and Townsville, were excluded in a report on the impact of COVID-19 by Monash University and the University of New South Wales (UNSW) between February 2020 and June 2021 (Rees et al., 2023). An article titled "Covid worse for refugees" (2023) appeared on page three of the Townsville Bulletin. Of the 650 women interviewed, 52% were from a refugee background living in metropolitan areas of Sydney and Melbourne. The rate of those who reported a problem with fear or stress was "significantly higher" than those of non-refugee backgrounds (Rees et al., 2023, p. 1). Njaramba's (2022) study explored the strengths and struggles of 65 African women originating from 26 different countries (some were secondary migrants, having first migrated to Europe or the United States) who were operating small businesses across North Queensland. Njaramba commented that those women who arrived on humanitarian visas had experienced "overcrowded refugee camps with overstretched basic infrastructure" in environments that had affected their physical and mental health and limited their ability to access the job market once they arrived (p. 127). Au et al. (2021) studied refugee perceptions of health support available in Townsville, which included male and female former refugees from Burma, Iraq, Congo, and Somalia. The study reported that issues of discrimination, transport difficulties, and reliance on family and peers may affect former refugees' access to and experiences of health support in regions.

A report by Shepley (2007), for the multicultural division of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, commented on the "limited research into the experiences of humanitarian entrants living in regional and rural Australia or the impacts of their settlement on the established community, the services and economics of the region" (p. 7). Queensland regional resettlement research is primarily from Queensland's South-East corner. The few

existing studies focus on youth or families and have a broad focus on health and parenting. Fozdar (2023) observed assumptions by a majority population that assumes a common language and culture of Black African migrants and concluded that there is an "urgent need for research using wider samples" apart from the focus on South Sudanese, which has risks of generalisations that may be "impossible and even dangerous" (p. 23). Westoby (2008) studied the settlement of South Sudanese in Brisbane and Logan in Queensland by working closely with leaders and using a community development approach. One of the comments from leaders emphasised the importance of services to avoid homogenising refugees: "They understand refugees as refugees wherever they come from. But actually it is different" (p. 490). Boese and Phillips (2017), who studied regional resettlement in Victoria, recommended research that values local context. Zuchowski et al. (2018), who examined the perspectives of generic human service practitioners on the needs and experiences of young refugees in North Queensland, concluded that "little is known of perceptions of service providers about their work" in North Queensland (p. 67). Furthermore, in addition to the research noted above, there is minimal research on the implications for social workers in the refugee field of practice in North Queensland. Robinson (2014) urged social workers to be conscious of increased managerialism effects when working with refugees in an environment of financial constraints. She considered critical race theory to be a "vital" underpin to social work training as a basis from which to challenge racism and other forms of discrimination:

> There is a distinctive and specific need to promote research skills and build the
> confidence of new researchers to engage in empirical research in this arena.
> These are twin issues that are interrelated and need to be addressed as a matter
> of urgency. (Robinson, 2014, p. 1615)

Additionally, Mohanty (2013) questioned the effect of neoliberalism on the capacity of feminists to apply "the personal is political" principle to advocacy about public policies when services are reduced to individual transactional commodities (p. 971). Finally, I was guided at the time by a publication that focused on refugees and asylum seekers by the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW, 2020), which encouraged social workers to "draw on a broad range of theories, knowledge, research and skills to ensure comprehensive and holistic analysis of the client's circumstances" (p. 6). I resolved to proceed with research that focused on the experiences of resettlement of women from African countries in the unique site of North Queensland across Cairns and Townsville.

1.6 Research Aims and Questions

The overarching aim of this research is to explore with women from diverse countries of Africa their resettlement experiences in regional North Queensland. Further, this research seeks to inform and strengthen resettlement policy and social work and human services practice. I do this by asking the following questions:

1. What are the resettlement experiences of women refugees from diverse countries of Africa to tropical North Queensland?
2. What are the experiences of resettlement practitioners with women refugees from diverse countries of Africa?
3. What are the implications of these experiences (women refugees and sector personnel) for resettlement service planning and delivery?

As a feminist researcher, I endeavoured throughout the study to privilege the experiences of the women humanitarian entrants resettling in North Queensland. I was aware of the need to remind myself to develop and maintain a scholarly, critical lens given my previous status as a social worker (cast and moulded ontologically in colonial whiteness). I

also had to be primarily responsible to the women participants and maintain a consciousness of the Australian and North Queensland histories of social work practice that may have influenced my approach to research with former refugees. Similarly, my insider position as a previous manager overseeing resettlement in the region needed to be considered as potentially affecting the research methodology, ethics, analysis, and the consideration of implications for social work practice (bell hooks, 1981; Chilisa, 2012; McIntosh, 2012; Pease, 2010; Stewart et al., 2020).

As a white monolingual researcher, I am aware of the dominance of white voices in the knowledge production of Black lives (bell hooks, 1981; Tascon & Gatwiri, 2020). I committed to conscientiously engaging with literature authored by women writers from within the continent of Africa, Australia, and the diaspora. Similarly, I determined to maintain attentiveness "to the continued under-representation and marginalisation of women, people of colour and those othered through white heteromasculine hegemony" (Mott & Cockayne, 2017, p. 955). I also acknowledged an awkwardness and un-comfortability in using the terms "resettlement" and "settlement" throughout the study; "resettlement" being a derivative of settlement that has its origins in the imperialist notion of terra nullius and the unceded sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders by the British in 1788 (Due, 2008). I have made the deliberate choice to prefix refugee with "former" as a conscious decolonisation of social work vocabulary (Tascón & Ife, 2019).

1.7 The Significance of the Study

This thesis makes an original and significant contribution to the knowledge and understanding of regional resettlement. The thesis is original due to topic uniqueness, being grounded in social work practice experience, and the methodological and theoretical choices I have made. A study that takes place across both North Queensland refugee resettlement sites, privileges the experiences of women from diverse countries of Africa between 2010 and

2020, and includes the perspectives of experiences of resettlement practitioners is unique research. I have reviewed relevant literature and concluded that my study fills a gap in social work and human service literature. My social work practice experience in the region of North Queensland since 1978, and in particular, the 22 years of managing a resettlement service before undertaking the research, lends a unique vantage point to the research. My methodological choices contribute to research methods suitable for use in small regional areas while responding to the linguistic diversities of potential participants and the protection of anonymity of a distinctive group. A theoretical foundation resting on radical feminism and informed by critical social work, human rights, and decolonialism provides a deep and expansive understanding of research findings and incorporates the "multiple locations" of my identity as a white monolingual woman, experienced social worker, and previous manager of a resettlement service (Lal, 2018, p. 102). The theoretical foundation (Chapter 2) and literature review (Chapter 3) support the study in understanding resettled former refugee women who arrived from countries of the African continent seeking to belong in North Queensland.

1.8 Chapter Summary

The preface introduced my motivation to engage in this research and provided insight into who I am professionally. I documented my practice as a social worker in North Queensland, which affords me a unique vantage point to undertake the research. My intention in Chapter 1 was to provide an initial window on the global to regional sociopolitical contexts of the study that will be further developed through the literature review in Chapter 3. I named the primary knowledge gap that the study is designed to address and detailed the research questions, aims, and significance. I now outline an overview of the thesis.

1.9 Thesis Outline

Chapter 1 (this chapter) provided context to the study. It outlined a global-to-local context of humanitarian crises, Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program and participation in the UNHCR, and North Queensland's role in the resettlement of people on humanitarian visas. I shared the origin of the study and set out the overarching research aim and the research questions.

The second chapter locates the study theoretically – outlining a layered foundation that informs a critical lens across the domains of radical feminism, African feminism, critical theory and critical social work, human rights, and decolonialism. This chapter introduces the African philosophy of Ubuntu.

Chapter 3 highlights key literature about the resettlement of women from a global, national, and regional Australian perspective. I introduce key UNHCR documents and policies and profile three African nations that host displaced people and refugees. I draw colonial connections between African and Australian continents and sketch out the background of Australia's refugee policy, including the White Australia policy. Further, I discuss key discourses of racism and multiculturalism, and I consider regional resettlement literature that excludes North Queensland resettlement and introduces discussions of belonging and integration that are at the centre of refugee resettling experiences. I also discuss social work literature and practice realms that contribute to considering the import of the study findings and implications for practice.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology I employed across the two phases of the study. I detail the rationale for qualitative feminist research, consider the ethics of research with select vulnerable populations in small regional areas, and make explicit the challenges I wrestled with – including those related to my position as a previous social work practitioner emerging

as a researcher. A poem by a legendary Kenyan poet Micere Githae Mugo precedes Chapter 5, which introduces and positions the findings of the research.

Chapter 6 synthesises the themes that emerged from women's experiences of life before resettlement under four major parts: "life in the home country," "access to food in the home country," "crossing borders into refugee life," and "survival as refugees in countries of displacement." I draw on the theoretical foundation of Chapter 2 and the reviewed literature to provide the lens for analysing women's shared experiences.

Chapter 7, "life in North Queensland," explores the findings that emerged from women's resettlement experiences across the two sites of the unique North Queensland location. I discuss emergent themes and provide an analysis of women's experiences, from their initial euphoria and relief in "a new life" to facing experiences that were "a little bit difficult" and their distinct experiences of welcome and unwelcome.

Chapter 8 presents the findings of Phase 2 of the research. I share an overview of the managers' perspectives on their role and then discuss themes that emerged from four experienced resettlement practitioners about their responsibilities.

Chapter 9 provides a thesis summary before elaborating on the research conclusions, from which I draw implications for social work practice and human service providers' practice. I conclude with a final discussion of the significant contribution of this thesis and outline future research recommendations.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1 Introduction

Theory enables us to deal with contradictions and uncertainties. Perhaps more
significantly, it gives us space to plan, to strategize, to take greater control
over our resistances. The language of a theory can also be used as a way of
organizing and determining action. It helps us to interpret what is being told to
us, and to predict the consequences of what is being promised … If it is a good
theory, it also allows for new ideas and ways of looking at things to be
incorporated constantly, without the need to search constantly for new
theories. (Smith, 2021, p. 42)

In this chapter, I articulate the layered theoretical foundation I used to inform my
research on women's experiences of resettlement in North Queensland. The four layers are
radical feminism including Afrofeminisms, decolonialism, human rights, and critical social
work. Robinson and Haintz (2021) recommended that any research with former refugees
consider the "dual dynamic" of oppression and women's agency (p. 316). I used my
theoretical foundation to guide my choice of research methods, inform my data analysis, and
shape my conclusions and recommendations for resettlement policy and social work practice.
I commenced from the radical feminist position that the primary influence on all women's
lives is patriarchy, whereby women are consigned to a lesser status (affected by race and class
oppression) by men engaging in power struggles, including war (Thompson, 2001). Theory
has actively supported me throughout my social work practice and has been a source of
support and direction when my practice felt challenged. Theory has given me pause to think,
read, reflect, discuss, listen, explore, and embrace experience and research literature to
inform practice. The support of feminists and a belief in the potential of social work to

contribute to the lives of resettling women from African countries guided me in framing this thesis within the discipline of social work. The thesis is therefore informed by feminism, human rights, critical social work, and decolonialism (Bartolomei, 2009; Dominelli, 2012; Ife, 2016; Moreno & Pessoa, 2021a; Moreno & Pessoa, 2021 b).

In this chapter, I detail radical feminist theory and integrate Afrofeminism and Afrocentric theories that include women in the African diaspora. Decolonialism is then discussed as a theory that underscores the importance of my being mindful of researcher privileges that may affect my methodology, analysis of data gathered, conclusions, and implications for social work practice. I also discuss human rights theory, critical theory, and critical social work. This layered foundation is a basis for "weaving the stories of both the researcher and her respondents" in constructing knowledge (Cotterill & Leatherby, 1993, p. 68).

2.2 Radical Feminist Theory

Radical feminist theory guides the framing of my research aims, questions, and data collection methods. Further, this theory guides how I position myself as a researcher and contributes to how I analyse and interpret the data. Radical feminists challenge the structures and systems that enshrine and protect male supremacy and power. The key tenet of radical feminism is recognising men's fundamental belief in their superior human status. From that premise, men have constructed myths about women's bodies, brains, and abilities; developing global structures of power that protect the beliefs and advantages of men at every turn, at the expense of women's agency, health, and safety (De Beauvoir, 1989; Firestone, 1970; MacKinnon, 1989; McLellan, 2010). Radical feminism considers male domination as a construct across all systems of the many societies we live in and experience. Thompson (2001) considers the perpetuating belief by men in their superiority as the basis of "the struggle for a human status for women identifying with women" (p. 16). Humanising women

as thinking people, and not as chattels available to benefit men's lives, is central to radical feminist theory. Radical feminist theory is about getting to the "root" of concerns and ensuring that "women's experiences and interests are at the centre of our theory and practice" (Rowland & Klein, 1996, p. 10).

I first met Patricia McFadden when she was a keynote speaker at the Townsville *Winter Institute for Women* in 2004 who addressed "African Feminists Interpretations of Post-Coloniality." Patricia is a radical feminist scholar who was based in Zimbabwe for many years and has now returned to live in her birthplace of Eswatini (reclaimed from the previous British-assigned Swaziland in 2021). In an interview with Moreno and Pessoa (2021a) for Capire, a feminist website described as "feminist voices designed to change the world" (Capire, n.d., About Us section), Patricia discussed the UN and the women's movement. She stressed that radical feminism is suitably charged with "politics and the fire" despite desperate attempts by gender advocates to minimise it (Moreno & Pessoa, 2021a, 12:37). In the same interview, McFadden named feminism "a radical thinking tool" within feminist epistemology (Moreno & Pessoa, 2021a, 17:39). When speaking on a religion and ethics program, Kim Huynh referred to feminist theory as a valuable tool for critiquing Australia's obsession with control:

> Feminism provides an explanation and critique of how a masculinist ethos and
> drive for coercive control underpin Australia's refugee regime. From a
> feminist perspective, Australia's anxious construction and guarding of borders
> and its hostility towards those who cross them are products of a patriarchal
> state and society. Specifically, the state is defined by its ability to exert and
> legitimate violence. This legitimation occurs through masculine values and
> feats that are commonly celebrated in politics — such as adventurism,
> calculation, and a willingness to do whatever it takes. (Huynh, 2023)

Radical feminism is the primary base of a layered theoretical foundation for my study with former refugee women in North Queensland. I now consider the traditions of feminisms and other theories across African nations as an important step in being open to "new ideas and ways of looking at things" as recommended by Smith (2021, p. 68).

2.3 Afrofeminisms

Mekgwe (2006) emphasised the importance of developing a theory devoted to present-day Africa and not one characterised by postcolonialism. Minna Salami, a London-based Nigerian-Finnish and Swedish feminist, traced the chronology of African feminisms in a blog proclaiming African women's struggles against Euro-historical exclusion (2022a). She considers two major chronological periods: the pre-feminist modern time between 1500 and 1900 and the contemporary feministing period from 1900 to the present day, which she further divides into three parts. By redefining the pre-feminist period from a Euro-patriarchal focus to an Africa-centred protofeminism perspective, Salami emphasised incidences of healers, chief women, and priestesses who resisted male dominance – as did other women around the globe at that time. Detailing the contemporary feminism post-1900s, Salami refers to "rises" in African feminist history (distinguishing them from the global North Euro-feminist waves of the 20th century). She foregrounds women across Africa who engaged in feminist discussions after 1900, participated in international discussions, and stood up against colonialist patriarchal foreigners. In the interval between world wars, increasing numbers of white women who visited parts of Africa, were agitating for improvements to race relations. According to (Bush, 2017), however, they were motivated by wanting to protect the rights of white women and the British empire from "radical anti-imperialism" (p. 200). Indigenous African women were portrayed as objects of pity. In her blog under the section titled "Internationalist & Indigenous Women's Rights Activists c 1900s - 1950s," Salami (2022a) profiled activist women, including Nigerian revolutionary Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti and

Adelaide Casely-Hayford of Sierra Leone. Both women opposed multiple structures of oppression of the anti-imperialist and decolonialist struggles from the 1950s through to the 1990s. Salami (2022a) said:

> These women were not only internationalist women's rights campaigners, but they were also part of rising emancipatory movements such as Pan Africanism and Black Liberation struggles. They were cultural icons, grassroots activists, and peace campaigners. They travelled to America, England, Switzerland, America [sic], China, where, they spoke of the coming of "A new day, in which Africa shall be allowed a chance to expand and develop, along her own ideas and ideals, grafting from Western civilisation only that which is necessary for her development and progress on up-to-date lines.

Minna Salami (2022a) and Patricia McFadden (2007) both noted that nationalist independence movements promoted patriarchy and diluted feminism through promoting Womanism. Bagele Chilisa (Bantu woman, Botswanian scholar, author, and guest lecturer at the 2022 Annual Ubuntu Lecture of the African Social Work Network) also cautioned against liberal feminist influence over more recent policies, such as Women in Development, which she considered reflected "a one-way traffic of universal gender theory that follows from Northern America and Europe to the South" (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010, p. 622). Bawa and Adeniyi Ogunyankin (2018), Ghanaian scholars writing from Canada, argue instead that "African identity and subjectivity is fluid, eclectic and agentic" (p. 445). They argue that it is difficult to be rid of "Western imaginaries that Africa is monolithic, static and backward" (p. 445). I therefore consider it respectful and necessary to engage with African theories of feminism through the theoretical foundation of this unique regional resettlement study.

I share the preamble of *The Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists*, documented by the African Feminist Forum hosted by the African Women's Development Fund, which reflects radical feminist theory and is a call to women across the African continent:

> We define and name ourselves publicly as Feminists because we celebrate our feminist identities and politics. We recognize that the work of fighting for women's rights is deeply political, and the process of naming is political too. Choosing to name ourselves Feminist places us in a clear ideological position. By naming ourselves as Feminists we politicise the struggle for women's rights, we question the legitimacy of the structures that keep women subjugated, and we develop tools for transformatory analysis and action. We have multiple and varied identities as African Feminists. We are African women when we live here in Africa and even when we live elsewhere, our focus is on the lives of African women on the continent. Our feminist identity is not qualified with 'Ifs', 'Buts', or 'Howevers'. We are Feminists. Full stop. (African Women's Development Fund, 2007, p. 3)

In the following sections, have included other major prominent theories and philosophies within Africa that are referred to frequently within African feminist and social work literature. These theories are Afrocentricism, Womanism, and Ubuntu.

2.3.1 Afrocentricism

Molefi Kete Asante, an African-American professor and leading philosopher, repositions Africans wherever they live as active subjects – not as objects of study:

> Afrocentricity is when African, continental or diasporan, view themselves as agents, actors and participants rather than as marginal on the periphery of the

political or economic experience of Europe. To be an African is to be a part of

a community, in contemporary terms, that was historically enslaved, exploited,

and colonized, because of skin color, and a community that lost some of the

control of the intellectual, social, philosophical, and religious ideas it has

inherited. (Asante, 2007, p. 16)

Afrocentricity directs researchers to (a) consciously seek out subtle racism in theory and methodologies, (b) centre African values as legitimate, and (c) value place in generating knowledge (Reviere, 2001). Afrocentricity is not a singular feminist theory but it has contributed to feminist thinking. Ama Mazama, an African French citizen of Guadeloupe, used Afrocentric theory to contextualise and activate social consciousness while successfully arguing for positioning Creole as a recognised language of Guadeloupe and refuting colonialist ranking of Creole as an inferior form of French (Asante, 2007, p. 10). Asante (2007) profiled Mazame's work and use of Afrocentricism as an example of successfully turning over "five hundred years of mental enslavement prosecuted through language" (p. 16). Ama Ata Aidoo, an author, playwright, academic, poet and former minister of education who is also from Ghana, leaned on Afrocentricism in her 1992 published essay "The African Woman Today" where she objected to representations of the African woman:

The African woman is old beyond her years; she is half-naked; her drooped

and withered breasts are well exposed; there are flies buzzing around the faces

of her children; and she has a permanent begging bowl in her hand. This is a

sorry pass the daughters of the continent have come to – especially when we

remember that they are descended from some of the bravest, most independent

and innovative women this world has ever known. (para.1)

After naming a litany of brave women who fought against colonialists, Aidoo continued under the heading "Struggles for Independence":

> Given such a heroic tradition, it is no wonder that some of us regard the docile mendicant African woman of today as a media creation. But if she does exist, she is a result of the traumas of the last five hundred years' encounter with the West, the last one hundred years of colonial repression, the current neocolonial disillusionment, and of a natural environment that is now behaving like an implacable enemy. (Aidoo, 1992, para. 3)

Aidoo professed that the only way to achieve independence across the continent of Africa is if every man committed to feminism.

2.3.2 Womanism

Womanism has been and remains popular with many women across Africa and the United States. Patricia Hill Collins (2000a), when writing about United States Black feminism, noted that the term "womanist" is considered often in preference to "feminist" to emphasise political commitment. Alice Walker is credited with coining the term in 1983 as a way of including a broad concept of African American humanity (Collins, 2000a, p. 41). Alice Walker stated that "one is womanist when one is committed to the survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female" instead of being a separatist (p. 42). Collins (2000a) determined that honouring African-American women's survival experience is the "cutting edge" difference between knowledge and wisdom and is key to understanding contexts of intersecting oppressions as Black feminist epistemology. Collins (2000a) stressed that "knowledge without wisdom is adequate for the powerful, but wisdom is essential to the survival of the subordinate" (p. 257). Collins situates oppression and denial of human rights at the centre of African women's diverse struggles within Africa and transnationally. She

argued that there is an "intercontinental Black women's consciousness movement" that recognises and responds to "intersecting oppressions that are differently organized via a global matrix of domination" (Collins, 2000a, p. 238). Womanism sits within Afrocentrism and recognises women as leaders and rulers throughout African history, including precolonial experiences of racism, slavery, and forced migration (Haffejee & East, 2016).

2.3.3 Ubuntu

I first encountered Ubuntu as a farewell statement made to me by a woman leader of North Queensland after I had thanked her for her time and interest in my proposed research project. The leader explained the meaning of Ubuntu to me as a recognition of our tied humanity: "I am because you are" (leader, personal communication August 24, 2021). Mugumbate et al. (2023) respect Ubuntu as an Afrocentric philosophy originating between 4,000 and 5,000 years ago in West Africa. This philosophy is referred to by many different names in different countries, languages, and localities across Africa. Ubuntu, the authors say, "rests on the belief that every human being is part of both a micro (individual and relational or family), meso (communal or community) and macro (society, country, environment or spiritual) levels" (Mugumbate et al., 2023, p. 13). They note that it is "distinctly" Black African:

> Ubuntu has existed since time immemorial, and its origin is attributable to
> Black Africans as a whole—North, West, East, Central and South of the
> continent. Black people, on all sides of the Sahara contributed to the origin
> and development of this philosophy over a period spanning thousands of
> years. Different communities may emphasise different aspects of the
> philosophy but there is a common foundation that shapes relations,
> knowledge, values and practices. (Mugumbate et al., 2023, p. 2)

Ubuntu is promoted by The Africa Social Work and Development Network and is a key theme of the *Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development* for 2020 to 2022 supported by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), and the International Council on Social Welfare (Global Agenda Task Force, 2022). Gatwiri and Tusasiirwe (2022) discuss Ubuntu as defining humankind and "emphasising that we are made human through the process of humanising others" (p. 125). Chilisa (2017) insists that researchers use the principles of Ubuntu as an ethical framework respecting the researched as one would respect oneself. She argued that individuals and communities who are the subjects of research must get something in return. To do otherwise, she argued, ignores the Ubuntu ethical principles she had named in 2012 and referred to again in 2017, as "the four R's of 'relational accountability', 'respectful representation', 'reciprocal appropriation' and 'rights and regulations' " (Chilisa, 2017, p. 820).

2.3.4 Postcolonial or Living Colony

Mbembe (2001) extended Afrocentrism to discussions of the postcolony:

African politics and economics have been condemned to appear in social theory only as the sign of a lack, while the discourse of political science and development economics has become that of a quest for the causes of that lack. On the basis of a grotesque dramatization, what political imagination is in Africa is held incomprehensible, pathological, and abnormal. War is seen as all-pervasive. The continent, a great, soft, fantastic body, is seen as powerless, engaged in rampant self-destruction. Human action there is seen as stupid and mad, always proceeding from anything but rational calculation. (p. 13)

30

Mbembe positions the land mass of the continent of Africa as having a persona, affected by statelessness within and through colonisation, domination, and adjoining struggles of the people of Africa. A strength of this theory is that it extends an understanding and deeper appreciation of the continuous colonial experiences of women in the study (rather than postcolony) across Africa. The theory is important for women's lives in this study; it respects their experiences before their flight, throughout their lives as refugees, and as a continuing influence in resettling in North Queensland. This theory connects experiences of colonisation across Africa with Australia's colonial history. It begs a deep attentiveness to previous and current economic and political power of global north countries on the internal economies and politics of living conditions experienced by women across the African continent. Mbembe asserts that there is an insufficient examination of arbitrary tyranny and ongoing brutalisation across African nations to inform and facilitate the freedom and autonomy of African nations. Questioning or modifying the value of an Afrocentric approach, Mbembe suggests that constructing an image of Africa emerging through an emancipatory process into a utopia free of prejudice has a "counter-effect of reducing African discourse to a simple polemical reaffirmation of black humanity" (2001, p. 16). Interestingly, the work of Lengwe-Katembula et al. (2012) resonates with Mbembe's work. Lengwe-Katembula et al. (2012) suggest that if social workers are to meaningfully implement professional standards and principles, they need to be aware of the "specific needs of people in different countries and regions of the world" (p. 393). They also stress that independence in many African nations was something of a fairy tale due to previous exploitation, economic colonisation, and ongoing effects of conflict and corruption. Mbembe's (2001) position that there remains a continued powerlessness reflected by violence through tyranny (signified by slavery and colonisation) can minimise the effects of living with endless suffering as a stateless refugee. This position needs to be understood by social workers internationally to avoid positioning

refugees living in a time-specific, dislocated provisional ad hoc existence. Rather, Mbembe (2001) posits that a living relationship of subjectivity and temporality of experiences unfold as "languages of life" or a "life world" of existence and that past, present, and future experiences are an "entanglement" (p. 18). His position is that chaos and unpredictability of different forms of privatised bureaucracies have developed due to the global deregulation of markets and difficulties of postcolonial states. The result is that "functions supposed to be public, and obligations that flow from sovereignty, are increasingly performed by private operators for private ends" (Mbembe, 2001 p. 64).

As a radical feminist, McFadden powerfully captured the history and the mix of Afrofeminisms, Afrocentricism, Ubuntu, and living colony theories in an interview:

> For the past 500 years, our Black bodies and psyches have been devastated
> and mauled physically, psychologically and spiritually by capitalism and
> Christianity. We carry a lot of trauma in our bodies, which is reflected in the
> many illnesses we suffer and in many of the fractures which are destroying our
> communities. These contemporary challenges have instigated our
> consciousness as Black women. We have a deep longing for narratives and
> legacies of struggle as we search for our wholeness. We want to reconnect
> with who we were before colonialism ruptured and destroyed the spiritual
> connectivity that existed in African communities. (Moreno & Pessoa,
> 2021b, 10:42)

The rich wisdoms across Africa continue to emerge throughout the diaspora since African people have survived the imperialism of the 19th century and influence of nationalist struggles and continuing globalism. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009), in her TED talk titled "The danger of a single story," explained that there is no single story of women's lives

and no single narrative of Africa. My research with women from African countries must respectfully honour the wisdom and diversity of African theories. Reviewing the influences of Afrofeminism and Afrocentric theories leads me now to consider the layer of decolonialist theory.

2.4 Decolonialist Theory

Decolonisation requires confronting ongoing epistemic colonisation with a view to understand, question and challenge how it devalues African knowledges and experiences. Engaging in this process is an important step that leads to recovering, re-centring and returning to forgotten indigenous African ways of knowing, being and doing. (Gatwiri & Tusasiirwe, 2022, p. 125)

The global definition of social work was approved in July 2014 at an international conference of the IASSW and the IFSW. It is detailed on the IFSW website:

The uniqueness of social work research and theories is that they are applied and emancipatory. Much of social work research and theory is co-constructed with service users in an interactive, dialogic process and therefore informed by specific practice environments. (IFSW, 2014, Knowledge section)

The definition continues to acknowledge the past, present, and continuing harm of Western hegemony:

Social work seeks to redress historic Western scientific colonialism and hegemony by listening to and learning from Indigenous peoples around the world. In this way social work knowledges will be co-created and informed by Indigenous peoples, and more appropriately practiced not only in local environments but also internationally. (IFSW, 2014, Knowledge section)

Decolonialist theory challenges world knowledge that has been claimed without due consideration of the effects of colonisation and imperialism. As an indigenous wisdom of Africa, decolonialist theory has synergies with Afrocentricism, Afrofeminisms, and Ubuntu theories and with other indigenous experiences throughout the world (Smith, 2021). Afe Adogame (2004), a Nigerian-born leading scholar of religious studies, referred to the *Berlin Conference of 1884–1885* as the Berlin-Congo Conference. He considered the partition of Africa by European powers (England, France, Germany British, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, and Turkey) as "artificial geographical domains of European influence, exploitation and expropriation" (p. 186). Resources were appropriated following earlier 15th-century power lines of the East and West (Adogame, 2004; Smith, 2021). The scramble for power and resources extended the notion of European superiority, assuming a right through the doctrine of terra nullius to establish and extend empires – shattering former living systems of family, community, and religion and marking a new world order of expansion and colonisation (Chilisa, 2017; Hawthorne, 2002; Kenyatta, 2015; Stearns, 2012). Raw materials and resources were not all that were plundered: "Knowledge was also there to be discovered, extracted, appropriated and distributed" (from social systems, languages, and cultures) as materials and new ideas during a period in European history hailed as "the Enlightenment" (Smith, 2021, p. 67). Contending that the Berlin Conference was "effected through the sword and the bullet." Professor Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986), a male Kenyan-born author, poet, and social theorist, challenged the traditional dominance of patriarchy and stressed how language is the primary means used by external powers to imprison peoples' souls before and after independence. He opined that the bullet was the force for physical subjugation, but language subjugated the spirit. Further, he noted that after the independence of countries within Africa, vocabulary was confused and unacknowledged as foreign imperialist languages. For instance, he suggested that a sentence stating "when the white man came to Africa" could be more

accurately described as "when the imperialist or the colonialist came to Africa" (wa Thiong'o, 1986, p. 4).

The act of pursuing new knowledge and the reason for that pursuit is embedded in imperial practices. Imperialism devalued local knowledge, ergo languages of Africa, by its invasive strategies that are masked as curiosity (Smith, 2021). Interest in what was considered new knowledge of colonies across the world was sparked by "travellers' tales" highlighting difference, fear, adventure, and curiosity; for example, of tribal chiefs, the witch doctor, or the savage – all components of pirating knowledge (Smith, 2021, p. 9). Smith elaborated that members of learning societies and clubs of environment and human nature generated knowledge through a Western lens and ignored and disrespected living Indigenous knowledge. She considered that individuals looking for adventure or seeking to escape hardships in their own country were "in the end, they were all inheritors of imperialism who had learned well the discourse of race and gender, the rules of power, the politics of colonialism. They became the colonizers" (Smith, 2021, p. 9).

> This collective memory of imperialism has been perpetuated through the ways
> in which knowledge about Indigenous peoples was collected, classified and
> then represented in various ways back to the West, and then through the eyes
> of the west, back to those who have been colonized. (Smith, 2021, p. 1)

An assumption of rights and superiority of knowledge, wrapped in a positivist theory of scientific objectivity, assigned a subordinate status to the diverse ethnicities, tribes, and clans of the African countries (and other global Indigenous populations). Spivak, cited by Chilisa (2017), referred to this process as "othering" (p. 8). Conjointly, new sciences about the nature of knowledge and research treated people as objects of study; this research used coercive practices to access populations that were denied rights to access data, engage in

debate, dispute or review data, or contribute to or access produced knowledge (Chilisa, 2017; Smith, 2021).

Indigenous knowledge and decolonialist theory gained theoretical ascendance in the 1970s for the authors' emphasis on the value of firsthand experiences, connections with oppressed groups, and experiences of colonialism (Smith, 2021). Grenier (1998) valued local knowledge and wisdom developed through community living that was lost through the effects of accelerated growth of international economies, markets, and technologies. She attributed increasing interest in Indigenous knowledge to a growing awareness of climate and ecological concerns of the earth's resources and on the health of world populations. Chilisa (2017) considered it important for research to differentiate local and community knowledge from knowledge generated by Western academics. Recognising the interrelated influences of imperialism and globalisation on women's narratives around the globe, she commented:

> One of the shortfalls of Euro-Western research paradigms is that they ignore the role of imperialism, colonization, and globalization in the construction of knowledge. An understanding of the values and assumptions about imperialism, colonization, and globalisation that inform Euro-Western research paradigms will enable you to appreciate and understand how Euro-Western methodologies carry with them an imperial power and how they are colonizing. (Chilisa, 2012, p. 8)

Chilisa and Ntseane (2010), both researchers at the University of Botswana, illuminated the risks that Western colonial influences may exert on research. I am ethically bound to consider their concerns as relevant to my research study with women and girls who had to leave their countries and resettle across foreign boundaries. Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) reject research that ascribes Western knowledge and experience as the norm. They contest the use of

Western feminist structures of "language, concepts, theories and models of reality and world views" that potentially insult women's struggles, constant negotiations, and resistance to patriarchal oppressions aligned with imperial domination within Africa (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010, p. 618). While holding Western hegemony and universalism to account for silencing and erasing experiences of girls and women learning in Africa, Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) used feminist standpoint theory to accentuate the value of folklore, history, proverbs, and songs that have been and continue to be muted through male domination in colonisation and in postcolonial governments of the African continents (p. 621). They argue for an alternative respectful decolonising approach that defers to women's previous knowledge and experiences, enables exposure of "culture-based ideologies of oppression," and honours women's resistance to "the gender order" (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010, p. 621). Similarly, Gatwiri and Tusasiirwe (2022) call for researchers to respect women's inherited richness of stories as cultural wisdoms that background their experiences before and after arrival in Australia:

> We position African women as custodians of indigenous African philosophies, values and knowledges, which they pass onto younger generations through orature. These indigenous knowledges are embedded within stories, proverbs, songs and folklore and are an important resource in rethinking and decolonising feminism and social work. (p. 125)

Gatwiri and Tusasiirwe (2022) maintain that an African feminist approach elevates African women's sense of self and power, and the approach is mindful of the systemic oppressions these women have experienced within Africa and those they encounter in Australia. They encourage researchers to be aware that "the global and imperial oppression of African women, for example, is inextricably linked with the devaluation of the knowledges

that they have historically been custodians of" (Gatwiri & Tusasiirwe, 2022, p. 127). The reappraisal of Euro-Western research methods has influenced alternative epistemologies (Chigevenga, 2022; Chilisa, 2012; Chilisa, 2017, Silverman, 2020; Tascón & Ife, 2019). When women arrive to refashion their lives in North Queensland, Western hegemonies prevail through their memories of vast interactions with systems before arrival, and the new experiences and challenges of North Queensland services and communities.

By adopting a decolonising theory in my research, I was encouraged to legitimatise and prioritise the agency and narratives of the women participants in the research. Doing so required my constant and conscious awareness of the ontological whiteness that could affect my interactions with women and my analysis of their contributions. Jacobsen and Landau (2003) emphasised the dual imperative of research with refugees living in displacement situations – and I believe, with research conducted in resettlement sites – that the methodology be transparent and that the research be relevant to policy that dictates women's lives. Adopting a decolonialist approach, I strove to respect the "multi-layered, complex linguistic and cultural experiences" that former refugee women bring to regional resettlement through "convoluted" pathways of different countries for extended periods before resettlement (Ndhlovu, 2014, p. 153). The languages women arrive with may include their "heritage languages; African cross-border languages; languages acquired from countries of first asylum; discursive/symbolic languages; and varieties of English" (Ndhlovu, 2014, p. 149).

The question I asked myself as a researcher was "Whose knowledge?" This question underscores decolonialist theory. It serves to raise more questions than to provide answers for the outsider researcher, yet it was important to my research. Constant awareness of power is critical:

When undertaking research, either across culture or within a minority culture, it is critical that researchers recognize the power dynamic that is embedded in

the relationship with their subjects. Researchers are in receipt of privileged

information. They may interpret it within an overt theoretical framework, but

also in terms of a covert ideological framework. They have the power to

distort, to make invisible, to overlook, to exaggerate and to draw conclusions,

based not on factual data, but on assumptions, hidden value judgements, and

often downright misunderstandings. They have the potential to extend

knowledge or to perpetuate ignorance. (Smith, 2021, p. 229)

2.5 Human Rights

As someone committed to human rights, I believe that human rights theory

encourages a deep understanding of women's lives throughout their journeys across borders

and their resettling experiences. It follows that there is a human rights layer to the theoretical

foundation for this thesis. The Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission

website (n.d.) notes, in a section on Australia's obligation under international law, that

Australia is currently a signatory to seven human rights treaties. The UN human rights

conventions and associated protocols, declarations, and documents provide the framework for

equality and international justice. Being a signatory to international conventions is a

commitment by Australia to internationally and legally respect human rights and address

structural inequalities that affect abuse. Three basic principles underpin the UDHR:

universality, indivisibility, and inalienability (UN, 1948). Australia actively participated in

lobbying for and contributing to research that resulted in the office of the UNHCR affirming

the *Global Compact on Refugees*, which was adopted on 17 December 2018. The *Global

Compact on Refugees* represents political will across the international community for an

improved response to refugee situations. It includes a commitment, through common pledges

by associated UNHCR States and stakeholders, to empower women and girls to access their

human rights at every point of their disrupted lives, including resettlement (Pittaway &

Bartolomei, 2018; Triggs & Wall, 2020). These same principles of rights and a commitment to empower women drive a rights-based approach to resettlement work and to research with refugees or former refugees. Ife (2012) stressed the importance of social work research that has a "clearly articulated value position … aimed at some form of empowerment, and at the realisation and protection of human rights" (p. 242). Mackenzie et al. (2007) posited a rights-based approach to ensure researchers are respectful of refugees' precarious lives, their resilience, and their agency during displacement.

Intersectionality is a theory that sits in tandem with human rights. Essentially, intersectionality (see Chapter 3) challenges the marginalisation of minorities that occurs through the simultaneous interaction of social and cultural constructs such as race, gender, disability, class, and identity labels. Crenshaw (1991) developed the theory of intersectionality as existing across three structural, political, and representational dimensions that emphasise different influences of power in any analysis. She demonstrated her theory by examining Black women's experience with anti-discrimination law in 1989 and 1991 in America, where she challenged anti-oppressive movements including feminism and anti-racism as potential locations of marginalisation. Amy McQuire, an Indigenous Australian woman, contested the use of intersectionality on the Indigenous-X website when discussing racism in the women's movement. She insisted that intersectionality obscures and reduces attention to individual factors of oppression to a mere footnote – a "buzzword" of "inclusiveness" (McQuire, 2018, para. 3). Her contention aligns somewhat with concerns about the risks of business managerialism in social work and of radical feminism's focus on the effects of patriarchy (Robinson, 2014; Rowland & Klein, 1996).

A rights-based approach encouraged me to reflect on the dynamics of power when conducting research with diverse African women in outer regional Australian sites, as they are readily identifiable as a minority population with Blackness and distinct forms of dress

that are highly visible in small numbers relative to the major population. Other considerations were my professional practice history with resettlement in the region and previous associations with resettlement services and networks. A rights-based approach insists on all women having the opportunity to participate in the research, and the approach respects women's rights freely participate without coercion from the researcher or an intermediary (Fooks & Nyoni, 2020; Hugman et al., 2011). The responsibility is squarely on the shoulders of the researcher to respect women's rights and ensure they are fully informed and assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

The rights-based approach considers responsive ways that respectfully explore participants' experiences without exploitation and condescension (Mackenzie et al., 2007). Engaging with refugees and former refugees involves seeking ways to move from minimising harm during the research to further respecting and acknowledging participant contributions to knowledge construction. The researcher needs to consider "reciprocal benefits" for participants as respectful valuing of women's experiences, needs, and values (Mackenzie et al., 2007, p. 301). The rights-based approach does not imply that researchers make unrealistic commitments, but it is an approach that synergises with feminist valuing of women's agency and their ownership of knowledge about their lives. It also acknowledges the Western hegemonies that are present in the research and the researcher's stance in understanding, analysing, and recording interpretations and conclusions (Hugman et al., 2011; Mackenzie et al., 2007). Dorothy Smith (1990) insists that knowing "is always a relation between knower and known. The knower cannot be collapsed into the known, cannot be eliminated; the knower's presence is always presupposed" (p. 33). Smith affirmed my understanding that, as I reached research conclusions, I know participants only from my own "historical and cultural situation" (p. 33). Stanley and Wise (1983) stressed that researchers do not "showcase" participants who are at the core of the study, but that we commit to presenting them "as the

41

focus of outcomes and instead present ourselves in the form of our understandings about what's going on … We must make ourselves vulnerable and not hide behind what 'they' are supposed to think and do" (p. 196).

The importance of human rights theory for this research is also its capacity to inform conclusions and recommendations that strengthen social work practice. Ife (2012) concludes:

> For practicing social workers, human rights are not simply a case of
> academic or political definition as outlined in the Universal Declaration.
> Rather, they are grounded in practice, and it is the relationship between the
> discursive construction of human rights and the practice of human rights that
> is critical. (p. 205)

2.6 Critical Theory and Critical Social Work

Critical theory was developed at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research and included the works of Jurgen Habermas, Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse (Macey, 2000; Neuman, 2019). The institute drew sharp distinctions between scientific and critical theories. Geuss (1981) considered scientific theory to have a logical structure with a specific goal, whereas critical theory aims to enlighten humans by revealing coercive forces through self-reflection as a pathway to freedom. Critical theory enables a social worker and researcher to question ideology and assumptions of power and structure. This theory informed me as a researcher, that all points of the research are framed in a white value system that privileges me, leading me to critical race theory. Moreton-Robinson (2020) argued:

> Critical race theory accepts that all speaking positions are valid even though it
> forces students to recognise that the Law is grounded in a white value system
> that privileges white people over others. All speaking positions are valid but

are not of equal worth. Who is listened to or heard depends on their ability and capacity to exercise power as part of a dominant group … In this way whiteness remains centred and is marked in pedagogy. (p. 133)

My whiteness therefore remains centred, and it was my responsibility to name it and remain aware of it throughout the research. Critical theory underscores other layers of the theoretical foundation. It has contributed to shaping feminist and social work thinking related to previous practice and research. However, feminists have rightly expressed reservations about critical theory by drawing attention to the neglect of gender issues and the devaluing of the extensive diversity of women's lives (Fraser, 1989). Prior discussion of radical feminism has pinpointed the primary focus of radical feminism as getting to the roots of patriarchy and disrupting seemingly indestructible power structures. For example, Denise Thompson (2001) said:

Feminism's task in relation to the Western intellectual tradition is to evaluate whether or not, and if so to what extent, frameworks owe allegiance to male supremacist interests, meanings and values, and to challenge and oppose those frameworks in the interest of a human status for all. (p. 120)

Social workers and theorists who identify and challenge the oppressive sociopolitical and ideological structures of people's lives have valued critical theory (Dominelli, 2014, 2017; Pease, 2010). Dominelli (2002) encouraged social workers to examine unjust policies and practices aiming to influence social change. The IFSW's social work definition aligns with a critical approach that promotes "social change, social development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people" (IFSW, 2014, Core Mandates section, para. 1). It emphasises the need to critically and consciously consider privilege and structural bases of oppression expressed through "race, class, language, religion, gender, disability,

culture and sexual orientation" (IFSW, 2014, Core Mandates section, para. 2). It encourages social workers to develop strategies to support people's liberation.

Critical social work thinking applies a spotlight on structural inequalities, affecting social workers' ability to deliver just and equitable services. Carmichael et al. (1989), through the Townsville Critical Edge Collective, spoke about social class and race as a "major cause of disadvantage and oppression," and they acknowledged the important emergence of anti-racist and feminist critiques to address inequities of social class and race (p. 176). Pease (2017) acknowledged that the social forces between capitalism and working people from the 1970s to the 1990s gave rise to contradictions that paved the way for social workers to engage "in a continuous struggle against dominant definitions of the social world" (p. 6). Adams (2002) connected being a critical researcher with critical social work practice:

> [This practice] makes links between the particular situation and wider social structures and the way power operates, so as to get beneath the surface. This includes the way that ideology operates to cloak oppressive structural relationships, including class, gender, race, disability, age and other forms of oppression. (p. 84)

Ife (1997) emphasised the need to link individual oppressions to structural power and social systems, as did Pease (2009), who advised that critical theory be used in tandem with listening to the client base and at no time should be prioritised over listening to those with lived experiences. Pease understood that social justice values are best served in practice and research by consumer-informed knowledge and critical reflective practice, yet they also queried a growing emphasis on evidence-based social work practice. Pease (2009) asked: "What constitutes evidence and who chooses it? (p. 46). Understanding the "*felt-and-embodied* experience" of belonging in the distinct regional location of North Queensland

must first rest on accounts by former refugee women's experiences (Gatwiri & James, 2024, p. 1). Pease did not suggest that quantitative or qualitative social research is not valuable, but that it cannot replace client experiences. Indeed, in the field of social research, qualitative and quantitative methods are "now regarded as forming different, but equally vital, aspects of the social science research endeavour" (Walter, 2019, p. 25).

Critical theory also provides a foundation for examining the effects of increasing neoliberal management in social work practice and services. According to Larner (2000), neoliberalism rests on five values: the primacy of "the individual, freedom of choice, market security, laissez faire and minimal government" (p. 7). McDonald (2006) considered the concerns of neoliberalism as being tied to international competition policy, and in effect "rolling back of welfare state activities and a new emphasis on market provision of public services" (p. 63). Client care priorities are at risk of being minimised as changes to a business transactional focus intrude on costs to the welfare of individuals. During the last five years of my practice and continuing to this day, I have observed and participated in sweeping changes to the contract environment in humanitarian settlement. I have witnessed a similar process across other human services. The neoliberalist focus on management of grants (many of which are now constructed as contracts) may sap worker energy away from collegial advocacy across services for social justice. A symbolic indication of neoliberalism creep is the change in leaders' titles from coordinators in the 1970s and 1990s to managers or CEOs of home-grown community-based services. I contend that the trend reflects a transition away from a leadership focus and a culture of the team to a budget-prioritised management environment. The focus on meeting transactional-based contract requirements may dominate decisions about, and time allocated to, examining the effectiveness of social supports and structural obstacles. This focus risks pathologising individuals who are in need. Moreover,

the focus may limit worker insights into systemic issues that could influence the denial of human rights and working for systemic changes (Pittaway et al., 2018).

2.7 Chapter Summary

Day (2001) emphasised that researchers need to clarify their theoretical basis as a way of "deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and for ensuring that the knowledge is both adequate and legitimate" (p. 116). I have shared the layered theoretical foundation that guided and influenced my research. Radical feminist theory and the long histories of Afrofeminisms that underpin the "critical notions of male supremacy and impunity" are core to the research (McFadden, 2007, p. 551). These theories situate women who have resettled in North Queensland as women with agency and bearers of ancient wisdom, cultures, songs and, stories. Reviewing Afrofeminisms emphasised that there is no single-story narrative of women in Africa and of former refugee women from Africa (Adichie, 2009). Decolonialist theory is grounded in acknowledgement of the shattering experiences of colonisation and it imbues respect for indigenous epistemologies. Human rights underscore the integrity of this research by situating women as owners, as rights-based contributors of knowledge, and as rights claimants in resettlement. The final discussion on critical social work theory is cognisant of pressures on the social work profession. The theoretical foundation is important for determining the research conclusions and implications for social work and human service practice in regional North Queensland.

Chapter 3. Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

> Powerless groups, particularly if they are totally integrated within a system of
>
> power and exploitation, find it difficult to define reality differently from the
>
> powerful. This is particularly true for people whose material existence
>
> depends largely on the goodwill of the powerful. (Mies, 2014, p. 15)

In this literature review, I provide the context of study participants' lives, identify research gaps, and establish the need for my research. New literature will also be interwoven into the findings chapters. I bring together literature on globalisation and neoliberalism as an overarching influence in a world where there are increasing numbers of displaced people. I then provide some detail about the UNHCR *Global Compact on Refugees* and its associated Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), and I provide insight into three African countries that host people as refugees. I travel through literature across borders to Australia's refugee policy history and discuss racism and multiculturalism. I sift through resettlement literature, focus on regional resettlement, and establish an absence of literature on former refugee women in North Queensland. Finally, I share the operational guidelines of the HSP and related practice literature.

3.2 Globalisation and Neoliberalism

Globalisation is considered broadly in the literature as a major contributor to escalating hunger and impoverishment throughout the world, including countries of Africa (Hawthorne, 2002; Shiva, 2012; Steady, 2014). The basis of globalisation is that wealth and innovation are created through highly functioning free markets and that free trade will protect choice and individual freedoms. Hawthorne (2020) suggested that globalisation is based on

excessive power, despite the rhetoric of level playing fields and choice: "the reality is about impossible gradients, shifting targets and confusion, consolidation that reduces the range of products and often annihilates local assets and goods, and trade that is structured to benefit the powerful and the monied" (p. 152).

Vandana Shiva (2012), an Indian scholar, feminist, and environmentalist, discussed how women are key to food production. Yet they consume less. She commented that in Kenya "huge retail chains, hypermarkets and transport by food trucks" eclipsed the market share of small farmers during the 1990s "from 70 percent to just 18 percent" while commercial farms and external companies increased their profits over 80% (Shiva, 2012, p. 217). Moving capital across borders is encouraged as a way of opening global markets and exchange based on a "populist culture of differentiated consumerism and individual libertarianism" (Harvey, 2007, p. 42). Competition – including international competition, privatisation, and deregulation – is promoted as a cost-cutting measure to provide cheaper goods and services and to increase efficiency. Following the imperialist tradition, a complicated global marketing system is managed by an international team of eight, representing the wealthier capitalist-driven nations. Currently, these nations include the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Russia, and Japan (Hawthorne, 2002). Dambisa Moyo (2009), a world-leading economist who grew up in Zambia, contended that as nationalist movements for independence across Africa have not removed economies from the power of foreign countries, those same wealthy nations continue to reap and plunder riches, generating "unmitigated, political, economic and humanitarian disaster" (p. xix). Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) and Hawthorne (2020) extend Moyo's concerns about the influence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on UN development projects for women, as women are framed according to traditional heterosexual family roles without reference to their many other roles within their community. For instance, the Africa

Gender Innovation Lab project funded by the World Bank seeks to develop evidence about gender gaps in earnings and productivity for developing economies (World Bank Group, 2024b). This project includes a study of socioemotional skills training with men and women from eight Sub-Saharan African countries. It analysed 10 interpersonal and intrapersonal skills of adult men and women in both urban and rural areas. The report by Ajayi et al. (2023) makes no mention of traditions or cultural knowledge. It concludes that "women in Sub-Saharan Africa could benefit from training programs designed to improve their socioemotional skills, especially interpersonal skills" (Ajayi et al., 2023, p. 4). A financial and development report, by Brixi et al. (2021) for the IMF website, duly recognises the gender inequities women experience in schooling and with their economic contribution in Sub-Saharan Africa. Brixi et al. (2021) outline a 4 E program to support women developing human capital skills and rights to enhance their health and sexual health rights, education, empowerment, and economic inclusion. Again, however, there is no reference to women's traditional and local knowledge and skills. Hawthorne (2020) imagines an alternative:

> Imagine if the development institutions thought instead of communities of women – sisters, lovers, friends, aunts, mothers, grandmothers and daughters, with men at the semantic and symbolic margin? What if development institutions imagined single women? What if development institutions considered lesbians? How would development projects look, if the assumed heteronormativity, which determines how money and resources are used, were removed from the development process … How would the visibility of women's economic and social relationships change? (p. 154)

Neoliberalism has developed hand in hand with globalisation. As previously discussed, neoliberalism emphasises contractual relations (international to local) as a blanket

management guide that "seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market" requiring technologies and "massive databases to guide decisions in the global marketplace" (Harvey, 2007, p. 3). As the number of globally displaced people has exponentially increased, the number of agents engaging in world aid has expanded. Both Moyo (2009) and Harvey (2007) consider international agreements, including those that involve the IMF and the World Trade Organisation, as driving globalisation and neoliberalism throughout the world and contributing to disasters across Africa. Lokot (2019), a researcher in Jordan, explored feminist values and the dynamics of power operating within aid provision for refugees living in displacement situations. While commending changes in humanitarian response moving from basic life needs to a broader focus on development and empowerment, Lokot (2019) expressed concern about the neoliberal emphasis on data collation and monitoring and evaluation by project officers that could undermine women defining their own needs. I have previously referenced Kim Robinson's (2014) reservations about the risk of increasing managerialism in human service delivery (Chapter 1). Lokot's concerns about overseas neoliberal influences are worthy of consideration, given this study addresses change to resettlement service provision in the outer regional area of North Queensland – a location where two distinct subcontracts now govern resettlement. To date, I have not located any studies that comment on the neoliberal frameworks of a subcontracting model in regional resettlement. I turn now to detailing the *Global Compact on Refugees* and establishing the background policy as one intended to guide countries that receive displaced people and host refugees.

3.3 Global Compact on Refugees

In 2016, the UN General Assembly of leaders from 193 countries adopted the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (UNHCR, 2018). The declaration heralded documentation of a *Global Compact on Refugees* aimed to bolster "international cooperation"

which was affirmed in December 2018 and linked to the CRRF in 15 countries (Triggs & Wall, 2020, p. 293). The declaration also emphasised the specific needs of women. Pittaway and Bartolomei (2018) observed that this New York declaration was the "first document adopted by the UN General Assembly specifically for refugees and migrants that includes strong gender commitments" (p. 77). It is a highly important global document for women who are currently refugees, for those who are resettling in locations around the world, and for social workers and human service workers supporting former refugees. Australia participated in the documentation of the *Global Compact on Refugees* by supporting local and international representations of refugees and former refugees at discussions and conferences. The RCOA website referred to the document as a "long-awaited re-assessment" of how UN states can contribute to global responsibilities towards refugees (RCOA, 2020, para. 1). The *Global Compact on Refugees* emerged from the momentum of Black women's voices and the dedicated work of refugee advocates that evolved from an international feminist agenda after the UN's 1995 *Fourth World Conference on Women* in Beijing (Pittaway & Bartolomei, 2022). Triggs and Wall (2020) noted the significant contribution of the UNSW, Australia, in producing gender audits of women's lived experiences of displacement, which informed the *Global Compact on Refugees*.

In his foreword to the UNHCR global appeal (2023a), High Commissioner Filippo Grandi emphasised the extensive need for broad support to ensure adequate care for those living in displaced situations:

> This cannot be done through humanitarian aid alone, and increasing emphasis
> has been and must continue to be placed on partnership with development
> actors, including the World Bank, regional financial institutions, and bilateral
> development agencies to ensure support for the displaced and hosting
> countries and communities. (p. 5)

Before 2022, the escalating number of people considered forcibly displaced sparked international debate and initiated the UNHCR to push for a "multilateral and multi-stakeholder effort to develop an architecture to share more equitably and predictably the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the world's refugee" (Triggs & Wall, 2020, p. 283). At the *2023 Global Refugee Forum*, Australia pledged to give $265 million to advance the four key objectives of the *Global Compact on Refugees* to ease pressures on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, increase access to durable solutions, and improve conditions in countries of origin with new funding over three years to support peacebuilding and assistance to refugees in host nations (RCOA, 2024).

Ramsay (2020) expressed reservations about the *Global Compact on Refugees*, raising concerns that the change to a partnership with financial institutions and a development approach may raise expectations that refugees will be economically beneficial to the host nation. Her concerns emanated from research with former refugees from the DRC who resettled in both Uganda and Australia. She contended that there are subtle shifts in discourse that can increase peoples' vulnerability by prioritising neoliberal capital and market pressures over the resettling needs of former refugees. Weber (2020) provided an example in Germany where refugees were offered lower-paid jobs camouflaged through the rhetoric of community integration. Triggs and Wall (2020) insisted that while recognising that not all refugees will be self-sufficient economically, the *Global Compact on Refugees* is designed to safeguard and protect refugees from "unintended negative consequences and coping strategies" (p. 315). The authors (Triggs & Wall, 2020) stressed that self-reliance is important to human dignity and underpins the intent of the UDHR (UN, 1948).

I now provide insight into the *Global Compact on Refugees* associated document, the CRRF. I then share background details of three countries where women who participated in this study lived as refugees before being resettled in North Queensland.

3.3.1 Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework

The CRRF is designed for global application with a multi-stakeholder approach involving refugees, national and local authorities, international organisations and financial institutions, regional organisations, civil society and faith-based partners, academia, the private sector, and the media (UN, 2018, p. 43). The framework was informed by international dialogues with women living as refugees and local Australian dialogues with resettled women. I was humbled to assist the UNSW research team with some international dialogues and co-conduct dialogues with women resettled in Townsville while assisted by a representative of the local Queensland PASTT service. Through all dialogues, women shared their experiences of flight and survival to inform documentation of the CRRF.

The CRRF addresses all concerns at all points of the refugee journey into resettlement (Pittaway et al. 2016; Pittaway & Bartolomei, 2018; Triggs & Wall, 2020). It has four major sections relating to easing pressures on host countries, enhancing refugee self-reliance, expanding access to third-country solutions (resettlement options), and supporting conditions in countries of origin of refugees for safe return (Triggs & Wall, 2020, p. 291). Each refugee host country has developed a Refugee Response Plan in accordance with the *Global Compact on Refugees*. Although this North Queensland study is focused on arrivals to North Queensland between 2010 and 2020, the commencement of the *Global Compact on Refugees* and associated CRRF during the latter years of the study has local import. It is first relevant due to its emphasis on the needs of women and girls at all points of their displacement and their future, including resettlement. Second, the CRRF has the potential to contribute to Australia's resettlement policy and national annual humanitarian intake as part of our commitment to sharing global responsibility for increasing numbers of global refugees and displaced people.

The *Global Compact on Refugees* and the CRRF, and its operations in diverse locations, do have critics. In addition to Ramsay's (2020) previously stated concerns regarding neoliberal influences on management, Mlauzi and Small (2019) questioned the UN Northern countries' international commitments to sharing the burden with host nations of the global South above their own national sovereignty and security concerns. They also questioned whether the CRRF can ensure the engagement of local service providers within host countries of Africa, given the pressures on Africa as a "neglected continent" (Mlauzi & Small, 2019, p. 15). In contrast to countries within Africa, Mlauzi and Small (2019) considered barriers and deterrents to refugee entry exercised by global North countries. For example, (a) barriers preventing refugees from crossing into Europe (Hungary, Greece, Spain, and the United States), (b) military and naval forces intercepting migrants (the United States of America [USA], Italy, and Australia), and (c) use of military or developmental bilateral aid deterrents to enforce offshore processing zones (Australia in agreement with Papua New Guinea, Nauru and Manus; Italy in Libya; the European Union; and Niger).

When interviewing Tom Peyre-Costa of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Julian Morrow of the ABC Listen radio (2022) discussed the release of the NRC's 2021 annual report on the world's 10 most neglected displacement crises. For the first time, all neglected sites of the Norwegian report were in Africa, including the DRC. Peyre-Costa described the DRC as a mega-crisis in Africa, with 30 million people hungry and approximately 6 million people displaced at that time in the DRC (Morrow, 2022). He emphasised the difference in the availability of funding to Africa compared with the immediate response to the Ukraine crisis: "There is a neglect and there is an incapacity or a lack of willingness to solve the issues" (Morrow, 2022, 12:35) Peyre-Costa considered that the geographical distance and the greater geo-political focus on wars that are on the border of Europe are prioritised over conflicts in North-East Africa. He stressed that global funds

"respond to the crisis based on the needs and not be based on political or media agendas" (Morrow, 2022, 18:29). He also suggested that global funds need to be increased rather than redistributing the same amount and having to choose whose needs are highest. The written report's opening statement reads:

> The war in Ukraine has highlighted the immense gap between what is possible
>
> when the international community rallies behind a crisis, and the daily reality
>
> for the millions of people suffering far from the spotlight … Most
>
> international media outlets rarely cover these countries beyond ad hoc
>
> reporting on new outbreaks of violence or disease, and in several African
>
> countries the lack of press freedom is exacerbating the situation. Then there's
>
> donor fatigue, and the fact that many African countries are deemed to be of
>
> limited geopolitical interest. (Wanless et al., 2022, p. 4)

The UNHCR report on mid-year trends (2022) also noted the support for Ukrainian refugees: "Some 5.4 million Ukrainian refugees remained displaced at mid-2022, finding protection primarily in nearby European countries that showed an unprecedented solidarity by providing emergency humanitarian support to refugees leaving Ukraine" (p. 6.) Before the Ukraine war, Africa was the site of most UNHCR refugee emergencies and hosted 50% of UN peacekeeping missions. Spitzer (2019) also commented on conflict within the African Great Lakes region, noted the fragility of Africa, and remarked on the millions of people who are on the move "due to the consequences of politically and economically induced violence and warfare" (p. 569). There is a major crisis of migration within Africa, which is "the source, transit and destination for forced migration, with most Africans moving within Africa" (Mlauzi and Small, 2019, p. 16). The UNHCR report and The NRC report both highlight the selective barriers of Northern states compared with the fragility, yet generosity,

of the African continent in receiving displaced people. The African Union generously declared 2019 as the year of "Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced persons, with many countries and regions opting for open borders" (Mlauzi & Small, 2019, p. 3). In 2009, *The African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa* responded to human needs by expanding the definition of "Internally Displaced Persons" to include those "who have been internally displaced due to natural or human made disasters, including climate change" (p. 13). The approach has recognised people who are moving across borders due to reasons other than war and conflict, such as the agricultural disaster in Somalia reported by March and Davis (2023). The disaster forced women to walk for days to seek support from a centre in Egypt or Ethiopia. The major difference for UNHCR recognition as a refugee "is, fundamentally, a category of statelessness" due to people being unable to return to their home country (Ramsay, 2017b, p. 10). The support refugees require from countries of Africa imposes additional stress on economies. This effect is relevant to my study, as it may influence support for all women (refugees or internally displaced) whose needs to access basic survival resources and pathways to education and other means of livelihood are traditionally second to men.

Rajaram (2002) considered that, as refugees, women experienced domination through the influence of patriarchal power delivered by UNHCR policies and influences of world aid organisations. One hesitates to suggest a hierarchy of need or of deservedness in human distress – particularly when there are increasing disasters forcing people to move to survive. However, the pressures within Africa's continent and the selectiveness of Northern countries for refugees will undoubtedly affect women's survival and may influence pressure for additional resettlement places in global Northern countries, including Australia, which is relevant for future resettlement planning. I now consider literature about displacement and refugee experiences before outlining three diverse host countries of refugees within Africa.

3.3.2 Understanding Displacement Experiences

> Becoming refugees meant that they had managed to remove themselves from the immediate danger of imminent physical harm. But being recognised as a refugee, and being granted permission to live in a host nation of asylum, does not necessarily mean that the more intangible and existential problem of being able to live lives of regenerative possibility is solved. (Ramsay, 2017b, p. 81)

Ramsay (2017b) disputed assumptions of "a linear trajectory from a distinct point of displacement to a distinct point of refuge" (p. 2). Mbembe's (2001) aforementioned theory about the post-living colony extends Ramsay's warning to consider women's experiences of being displaced within Africa to be "time as lived" (p. 8). Mbembe (2001) also described the life of displacement as a historical "collapse of worlds" (p. 13). Personal stories are not sharp, defined moments in history, but are multiple forms of colliding experiences that may occur simultaneously (Mbembe, 2001). This concept aligns with an earlier reference to Dorothy Smith's (1999) "everyday/everynight knowledge" of women (p. 68). Mbembe's theory offers a lens to understanding experiences at the sites of displacement and statelessness, as well as understanding the transition from refugee status to the UNHCR durable option of integrating into the local host community. This theory may also apply to those who resettled in North Queensland. However, I bear in mind the challenges raised by Elizabeth Gross (1992) to avoid "intellectual perils of abstraction, idealization or irrelevance" (p. 360). Studies by Wachter et al. (2016) and Wachter and Gulbas (2018) considered the experiences of women refugees from the DRC, who resettled in the United States. Wachter and Gulbas (2018) emphasised the value of reframing resettlement through a lens of social support that considers "factors sparked by war" and stressed the importance of "invoking the past to understand the present" of women whose experiences with social support reflect complex journeys (p. 113).

I have thus examined three host countries within Africa that have documented a CRRF: Uganda, Burundi, and Kenya. Each country was host to some of the former refugee women who participated in this North Queensland study.

3.3.3 Uganda

The World Bank Group (2024a) reports the total population of Uganda as a little less than 50 million. The "Uganda Population Dashboard as of April - 2023" (UNHCR, 2023c) showed that the Sub-Saharan country hosts a refugee population of over 1.5 million people. Uganda participates in the *Global Compact on Refugees* and has a documented CRRF as a translation of the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (UNHCR, 2017). Refugees have arrived in Uganda from South Sudan, the DRC, Somalia, Burundi, and Rwanda (UNHCR, 2022, 2023c). The UNHCR (2023b) mid-year trend report indicates that Uganda is one of the countries that hosts a high number of refugees despite a minimal gross domestic product. Refugees are hosted across districts with host communities that are designed to encourage self-reliance. Khaled Hosseini, Afghan-American novelist and UN ambassador, commented in a UNHCR "Welcome to Uganda" story on Uganda's generosity and open settlement approach. His comments are featured in large print in the report: "Uganda's policy is not only progressive and compassionate, but also smart" (Hosseini, 2017).

Uganda though, is not without its story of unrest and difficulties. From 1981 to 1986, there was a civil war in Uganda that particularly affected the Northern region where thousands of children and youth were forced into rebel groups (Mugerwa-Sekawabe, 2022). People fled and later returned. Uganda's president Museveni assumed power in January 1986 after leading a five-year guerrilla struggle against two regimes. He formed a broad-based government that reportedly unified the former hostile factions (Museveni, 2000). There is still political unrest, although he was initially welcomed enthusiastically. Kimeu (2023) reported

that the opposition leader had made allegations of torture and abduction, perpetrated by the Museveni Government, to the International Criminal Court. Claudia Taranto (2021) interviewed Stella Nyanzi, a Ugandan scholar and human rights advocate. Nyanzi spoke about the use of traditional Ugandan "nude protest" to bring the ruling Museveni Government's attention to poverty, unemployment, and the dispossession of lands previously cultivated by women (Taranto, 2021, 1:43). As a child, Nyanzi fled Uganda with her feminist social worker mother during the civil war and later repatriated to Uganda. Due to her protests, she was imprisoned for two years and now lives in exile in Germany (Taranto, 2021). Linking to concerns raised earlier by Lokot (2019) about the effect of neoliberalism and international influence on national governments and refugees, Tusasiirwe (2022) questioned the ongoing persistent influence of Western influence in Uganda (and Africa generally): "The colonised have come to believe that what is needed in African or Ugandan contexts is western knowledges, languages, education systems, theories, models, among others" (p. 11).

Tusasiirwe (2022) considers that the Ugandan model of refugee protection has become economised through the merging of humanitarian systems of protection with the economy. Her concerns mirror those raised by African feminists in Chapter 2. She refers to the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the UN. Echoing Ngugi wa Thiongo's theory that language is a tool of power, Tusasiirwe also emphasised that Uganda's national language, although recorded to be English, is spoken by less than 30% of Ugandans. She estimated that there are a minimum of 56 languages spoken across Uganda, rendering those who are stateless refugees unable to comprehend and demand their rights. Ramsay (2017b) also queried whether the self-reliance model within Uganda may not treat people with the dignity intended by the CRRF, but instead shift refugees from being passive victims of aid to exploitable workers.

3.3.4 Burundi

The World Bank Group (2024a) reported Burundi's total population as close to 13 million. Burundi is a relatively small landlocked country in Eastern-Central Africa, which consists of 17 provinces. According to the UNHCR situation map (2024a) and the UNHCR (2024c) monthly report as of 29 February, prepared by the Regional Bureau for East, Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes, Burundi was hosting 88,169 refugees and asylum seekers with a further 73,931 people internally displaced. The same report noted 326,000 Burundi refugees and asylum seekers in five neighbouring countries (Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, the DRC, and Uganda) and a total of 1,591 returnees. Before the European scramble of 1884 and 1885, Burundi was part of the Rwanda-Urundi Kingdom, first taken over by Germany and later passed on to Belgium after the First World War (Ndimurwimo and Mbao, 2015). The European scramble disrupted historical kinships and relationships between ethnic groups of previous centuries (Hutus, Tutsi, and Twa). This postcolonial history "is littered with gross human rights violations" (Ndimurwimo & Mbao, 2015, p. 852). Burundi gained its independence from Belgium in 1962, which sparked civil war and intervention from the UN peacekeeping mission in 2004 (Ndimurwimo & Mbao, 2015). This intervention involved the swearing in of President Nkurunziza (a former armed group leader) in 2005 and a comprehensive ceasefire agreement in September 2006 (Ndimurwimo & Mbao, 2015). Ndimurwimo and Mbao (2015) noted that no truth-telling process occurred and charged the elected Burundian Government as lacking "robust political will to end impunity" for crimes committed under the previous military regimes (Ndimurwimo & Mbao, 2015, p. 884). They concluded that a cycle of armed violence and violation of human rights has resumed and includes "arbitrary detentions without trial, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, [and] the ill-treatment of minorities" such as Burundians returning from exile who are often then regarded as "foreigners" (Ndimurwimo & Mbao, 2015, pp. 850–851). The UNHCR

"Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan January–December 2021" noted the "significant numbers of unaccompanied children and the heightened risk of sexual and gender-based violence" due to overcrowded shelter conditions (p. 11). Some women who participated in this North Queensland study lived in Burundi before their arrival.

3.3.5 Kenya

The World Bank Group (2024a) reported Kenya's total population as close to 55 million. Situated in East Africa, Kenya is known as a country of diverse peoples that reflect ethnic groups across Africa. Bantu and Nilotic populations constitute the majority. Kenya is one of the top refugee-hosting countries in Africa. The UNHCR (2024b) reported the total number of asylum seekers and refugees in Kenya during January 2024 as more than 774,000 (the majority being Somalian, Congolese, and Ethiopians). Nairobi is the site of UN headquarters in Africa where many refugees also survive with minimal support. Kakuma and Dadaab camps were established in the early 1990s. They are huge camps, and people live in durable tents provided by UNHCR or self-constructed or mud-brick housing (Bilotta, 2021, p. 437). Dadaab camp is near the Somali border with three major functioning camps. The second paragraph of the UNHCR data portal reports that "almost half of the refugees in Kenya reside in Dadaab (44%), 40% in Kakuma and 16% in urban areas (mainly Nairobi), alongside of 18,500 stateless persons" (UNHCR, 2024b). Bilotta (2021) described Kakuma as over 10 kilometres wide with four major areas. The UNHCR *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018* report described a newly established "integrated settlement" called Kalobeyei that has supported returned refugees and host communities (2018, p. 55). Although temperatures are often over 40 degrees, the area in North-West Kenya experiences severe floods that can influence rubbish, sewage, and general health conditions. Kenya gained independence from Great Britain in 1963 and has experienced ethnic conflicts and political turmoil in previous decades. Hornsby (2013) noted that Kenya is favoured by Western aid

and investment including tourism. Spitzer (2019), in a study of social work in East Africa focusing on Kenya, noted a population explosion of displaced people and refugees.

The three countries highlighted in Section 3.3 share a singular similarity: their generosity in accepting displaced people from countries with diverse histories, languages, and skills. Each country has managed economic and civil disruptions that affect the number of internally displaced people or refugees in neighbouring countries. Furthermore, all three countries are actively welcoming back their own citizens as repatriated refugees – one of the three UNHCR solutions to displaced people. I now consider connections between the continents of Africa and Australia, followed by a discussion of Australian refugee policy, associated discourses, and the HSP.

3.4 Colonial Connections: Africa and Australia

> The dispossession, domination and denial of Indigenous people's sovereignty provided the foundations for the modern Australian state. (Moreton-Robinson, 2020, p. 4)

Two continents: Africa, defined geographically by the equator through its centre, and Australia, located entirely in the Southern Hemisphere, share a historical convergence of colonisation. After proclaiming possession at the tip of North Queensland in 1770, the British Empire usurped Australia in 1778 with the arrival of the First Fleet into Sydney Cove using terra nullius to disregard Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the oldest civilisation in the world (Perkins, 2022). Before the 1884 European scramble for African territories, the British monarchy was engaged in trafficking humans as slave labour out of the African continent and punishing and transporting convicts comprised of the poor from England and Ireland. Pybus (2006) discussed the inclusion of "eleven black convicts sentenced in England to Australia" on the First Fleet; some of whom were runaway slaves

from African countries or who had served in the American Revolution of the 1760s and 1770s (pp. 40–42). Santilla Chingaipe (2021) traced the descendants of 10 of these convict men in the film "Our African Roots."

The colonial government advanced from New South Wales (NSW) to Northern Australia throughout the early 19th century due to gold rushes, pastoral grabs for land, and the development of sugar plantations from Mackay and North through Townsville to Cairns. Early sugar industries were worked by indentured or ticketed labourers who were enslaved from the islands of the Pacific and the South Seas – a process referred to as blackbirding (Harrison, 2010). Queensland assumed self-governance in 1859. The expanding population in Queensland was accompanied by extensive violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and deteriorating peace with people trading along the sea passages and trade routes of the Chinese, Japanese, and Indonesian Archipelago, including Torres Strait Islanders, Papua New Guineans, Macassans, Malays, Dutch, Chinese, Japanese, and people of African descent (Beck, 2008; Macknight, 1986; Reynolds, 2003). Southern beliefs in white supremacy affected an increasingly virulent racial discourse. Chinese immigrants were dubbed Coolies on the north-west gold fields and indentured or ticketed labourers from the islands were referred to as Kanakas (Pybus, 2006; Reynolds, 2003, 2013; Udah, 2020). The federation of the states occurred in 1901. Southern notions of white supremacy, born of the 18th- and 19th-century sciences, ascribed race based on physical characteristics that further contributed to notions of white supremacy and fears of multiracialism. These notions birthed the successful passing of the Immigration Deportation Act 1901 known as the White Australia policy. The policy prioritised those of white and European background in migration and effected a 'colour bar' against people who were not white and of Asian descent (Pavlich, 2024; Reynolds, 2022; Udah, 2020). The White Australia policy caused many people to be deported or leave, regardless of those who had married across races and who had come to

regard North Queensland as home (Mercer, 1981). The ripples of the White Australia policy continue. In March 2024, the Compass television program described the Indigenous family descendants of Dirrikaya in Northern Australia and their attempts to trace splintered family history connections with Macassans of Indonesia (Parke, 2024).

Janet Phillips' research paper (2017) reports an estimated arrival of 170,000 displaced people between 1947 and 1954. Phillips (2017) described the displaced as being "assisted, that is, provided with passage but not necessarily considered to be refugees, such as prisoners of war or slave labourers" (p. 3). Persian (2018) indicated that the displaced people were primarily from Central and Eastern Europe. Hugo (2002), however, notes that after the Second World War, there was a "progressive loosening of ethnic discrimination of immigration policies on the basis of ethnicity, religion, culture" until it was abolished in the 1970s (pp. 27–28). The RCOA estimated that by 2023, a total of 950,000 refugee and humanitarian entrants would be welcomed to Australia since the Second World War (RCOA, 2022). The RCOA (2023b) applauded the Australian Government's announcement in November of an increase in the annual Refugee and Humanitarian Program from less than 18,000 to 20,000 places. The RCOA recommended the Australian Government allocate an additional 5,000 places through community sponsorship.

3.5 Racism in Australia

> The respective positionings on power relations of African American,
> Indigenous women and women of colour are based on their lived experiences
> of being located within them. They speak not from a position of race privilege
> but from one of racial oppression. (Moreton-Robinson, 2020, p. 63)

I speak from a position of racial privilege. In addressing racism, I am aware that I occupy a position of privilege in conducting this research as a global North Eurocentric white

woman. Racism permeates Australian history and continues into the present day. As Quinn (2009) emphasised, the value of critical social work in understanding that race continues to be a primary means of categorising people. Changes in government policies towards offshore refugees in the late 1990s and 2000s are reminiscent of the historical fears behind the White Australia policy. Notable events include the Tampa affair, the introduction of detention and temporary protection visas, and the Malaysia and Pacific solutions of deterrence and detention (Butler, 2016). The refugee topic has gained media attention by stirring up "narratives of privilege, entitlement and unfairness" using terms such as "queue jumpers" and "boat people" (Butler, 2016, p. 342). These terms have misled the Australian public's understanding of our international commitments as signed members of the UNHCR Convention 1951 and its 1967 Protocol (Butler, 2016). Industry deregulations, public sector cutbacks, droughts in rural areas, changes in welfare, and escalating numbers of families living in poverty added to the mounting fears and suspicion of anyone who was presented as a threat (McLachlan et al., 2013; Sherval & Askew, 2012; Strazdins et al., 2010). Increased numbers of immigrants from diverse African countries arrived during the early 2000s, (as well as former refugees from Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan). Humanitarian entrants also arrived from South Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, and the DRC (Jakubowicz, 2010). Udah (2020), a North Queenslander researcher hailing from Nigeria, has not always felt welcome. Reflecting on the treatment of Indigenous people, South Sea Islanders and Chinese immigrants to Queensland, Udah (2020) contended that the White Australia policy was "the closest Australia and Queensland in particular got to formal apartheid" (p. 2). He invoked the popular opinion expressed by Knight (2007) that Queensland and North Queensland are a redneck country or the Deep North. Briskman (2012), however, suggested that the movement called Rural Australians for Refugees refuted that image, stating that "regional Australia is not the redneck, conservative monolith that most people think." Briskman suggested that

"country people are far more diverse than city dwellers realise" (p. 158). The rhetoric of homogeneity of people out of Africa is, however, problematic. This rhetoric has affected political and public dissension in Australia and was responsible for youth gangs being supposedly linked to South Sudanese in 2007. The Minister for Immigration at the time, Kevin Andrews, abruptly cut the intake of former refugees from all of Africa because of "their (Africans) difficulties in 'settling in' " (Windle, 2008, p. 561). A core understated and avoided theme of Andrew's claim was referred to by Gatwiri and Anderson (2022) as the trend of "global anti-Blackness resulting in over-surveillance of Black people" that was conspicuous in the use of force by police (p. 37). When exploring the identity and belonging of refugees from Africa in regional NSW, Anderson et.al (2019) commented: "Given the historic centring of whiteness as the primary identifier of Australian-ness, racial difference impacts greatly on Black African refugees" (p. 24).

In March 2022, everyday racism was exposed globally in words and images as Ukrainians attempted to cross borders into Europe. People of African, Asian, and Middle-Eastern descent who were leaving Ukraine were met with either abuse, de-prioritised for seats on transport, or not permitted over the Polish borders (Fernandez, 2022). Fernandez (2022) said: "Many African, Asian, and Middle Eastern nationals spent two to three days at border check-points, and reported lack of food, water, accommodation or basic support in freezing winter conditions, while they waited to get through" (para. 4). Fernandez (2022) further reported that the Africa Union condemned the reports as "shockingly racist and in breach of international law" (para. 5).

The Australian Human Rights Commission (2018) reported that 34.2% of some migrant communities experience "particularly intense forms of discrimination" (p. 7). O'Donnell (2022) found that one in four people born overseas, and more than one in three who speak languages other than English, experienced discrimination. O'Donnell (2022)

documented high levels of negative perception towards people from different backgrounds –
particularly towards Muslims and immigrants from non-European countries (that is, people of
colour). The words of bell hooks (2000) resonate with people's negative experiences of
Blackness: "Being oppressed means the *absence of choices*. It is the primary point of contact
between the oppressed and the oppressor" (p. 5).

3.6 Multiculturalism

Sparked by the arrival of Indochinese asylum seekers fleeing the Vietnam war, the
White Australia policy was abolished in 1973 by the Whitlam Government, ushering in a
concept of multiculturalism and changes in the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* supported
enthusiastically by the then Minister for Immigration, Al Grassby (Jakubowicz, 2018).
Australia brandishes its multiculturalism as a success. However, beneath its veneer,
multiculturalism is increasingly scrutinised for contributing to the marginalisation of
immigrants as another way of noting differences. At the core of debates is whether people are
appreciated only as curiosities for their differences of dress, dance, and music; respected as
individuals seeking to create lives and contribute to their communities; or viewed as threats to
white dominance (Babacan & Gopalkrishnan, 2020; Gatwiri & Mapedzahama, 2022;
Kalantzis & Cope, 1992).

Wadham (2004) considered Pauline Hanson's use of racial differences to legitimise
sameness as a form of "cultural defensiveness" (p. 201). Hanson projected a white image as
being Australian and posited that no one should get special treatment. Babacan (2006) linked
the rise of patriotism in Australia to a dual effect of globalisation and multiculturalism:

> The response to globalisation in Australia has been the rise of new forms of
> patriotism and national identity, often sponsored by the nation-state. In many
> instances this has been accompanied by rhetoric relating to multiculturalism.

The new forms of patriotism operate at different levels ranging from extreme xenophobic forms, non-recognition of racism to moderate forms of cultural nationalism. Underlying the new form of patriotism is the hostility towards immigrants and people of culturally diverse backgrounds and the definition of the nation increasingly more based on opposition to immigrants. The result is a crisis between social citizenship and nationalism as the nation state increasingly discards it universalistic claim. (p. 118)

Multiculturalism has been called to account for disguising racism by bestowing "certain, so-called privileges on the racial Other as a show of good faith" (Tacson & Gatwiri, 2020, p. 7). Multiculturalism is thus a disguise of treating someone equally but regarding them as an object of curiosity to demonstrate a form of tolerance (Tacson & Gatwiri, 2020). Essed (1991) referred to multiculturalism as "the application of the norm of tolerance," which presupposes that one group of individuals assume a higher position of power and can decide whether or not they will accept another group (p. 210). Essed (1991) considered such use of power as attempts to control culture. Ndhovlu (2014), reflecting on the increasing numbers of diverse people from African countries, stressed that they cannot be simplified into a singular African identity, as the attempt to do so would risk "mainstreaming of multiculturalism" (p. 2). He states:

People of African descent living in Australia are an extremely diverse group, reflecting the linguistic, cultural, ethnic and political diversity of their continent of origin, and also their different immigration trajectories, histories and life journeys as migrants and as refugees. Their cultures, identities and linguistic repertoires, therefore eschew any easy generalizations and are far more complex than is suggested by reified single-strand descriptions found in

Australian and International policy debates and public media discourses.

(Ndhlovu, 2014, p. 1)

Tascon (2011) situates multiculturalism as another attempt by Australians to legitimise borders that are historically "premised on racial whiteness" and invoke culture to mark differences that ultimately mask racial anxiety. Huynh and Neyland (2020) consider multiculturalism as a strategy within the "third wave" of Australian whiteness dictated by race and privilege (p. 113). This third wave generates the myth of a refugee queue to increase anxieties influencing policies and decisions relating to border control. Huynh and Neyland (2020) emphasise that controls are bolstered by offering rewards to smaller and poorer Pacific nations. Strategies that engage with the nations of the Pacific are somewhat similar to the concerns raised by Dambisa Moyo (2009) about the control and influence of African nations' economies by international economic institutions.

Baak (2021) discussed the effects of debates about identity on those who are more visibly different, or as she explains, are "marked" by their race:

> Having a "visibly different" appearance, whether on the basis of skin colour or religious markers (such as wearing Islamic dress), results in a very different resettlement experience than those refugees who can pass in the "invisibility" of "whiteness" in Australia. (p. 53)

Baak (2021) maintains that humanitarianism is politicised in international circles when refugees are objectified as images of pity and suffering by media and internationally renowned public figures including entertainers. Baak addressed the contradictions inherent in images of the pitiful refugee living in hunger and trauma, that attract funding for world aid organisations, with the political discourse of fear that promotes a fear of terrorists and queue jumpers. As previously highlighted, despite the severe impact of global displacement across

69

African nations, there is a dissonance between the international response to white Ukrainian refugees and pitiful images of people within Africa who are seeking refuge. Former refugees on humanitarian visas are assigned permanent residency on arrival into Australia (or after arrival if they are previous seekers of asylum). People are no longer refugees, but the labelling continues due to rhetoric throughout communities and resettlement spaces of organisations. The risks of continuing the refugee label narrative anonymise former refugees as individually complex people who have different needs and are intent on establishing themselves as contributing community members. Baak (2021) notes that organisations may objectify refugees as the "objects of their knowledge, assistance, and management" (p. 57). From my practice experience, I am aware of how easily the narrative of the refugee label can be continued through both internal and external pressures for good news stories. Well-intentioned groups of volunteers, church groups, media, or government funding bodies may seek stories of refugee survival and success for organisational promotional purposes. Sometimes, a government or non-government human service representative may also specifically request to engage with "refugees" to meet their responsibilities for a successfully funded diversity or multicultural project. Baak (2021) suggested that Australian scholarship about refugees may contribute to the "continuing haunting of the refugee label" (p. 63) and recommended that research demonstrate the complexities of people's lives. Anderson et al. (2019) recognised that research about refugees is more common than research with and for refugees. This research study is therefore designed to privilege and centre women's voices, make recommendations for regional resettlement policy, and enhance social work and human service practice with former women refugees.

Having positioned white hegemonic power as core to the racist devaluation of migrant and former refugees within Australia, and having considered the discourse of multiculturalism, I turn now to the delivery of the HSP that was introduced briefly in Chapter

1. The detail is important for framing the reception and processes that support the experiences of arrivals and the work of resettlement practitioners, social workers, and human service providers within the regional context. The HSP is the core policy affecting experiences of resettlement and welcome to women who are former refugees out of Africa. I also detail the *National Settlement Outcome Standards* that are used to guide expectations about settlement outcomes for both migrant and humanitarian entrants. I pick up the themes of racism and belonging in a related discussion of integration, which is an expected outcome of the HSP.

3.7 Humanitarian Settlement Program

This research is based on changes to humanitarian services that accommodated the increasing numbers of arrivals in North Queensland from the late 1990s (Chapter 1). Other factors that motivated this research include frustrations expressed by former migrant and refugee women regarding the service responses across North Queensland and minimal local social work experience, knowledge, and research. Since the 1990s, Australian resettlement policies have focused on settlement away from metropolitan areas to support struggling labour markets in regional centres and to "utilise existing capacity in regional areas" and recognise the "potential of humanitarian entrants—particularly those from rural backgrounds or with employment skills sited to regional areas" (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2013, p. 13). The resettlement policy of the 1990s, and subsequent policy name changes, also included women on visa subclass 204 and entrants from North Africa, the Horn of Africa, and West Africa; some of these women arrived in Cairns and Townsville (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013). Humanitarian entrants from the African continent added to numbers of immigrants on working visas from Africa during the early 2000s (Jakubowicz, 2010). As humanitarian entrants from African countries arrived, booklets were published to inform Australians of differences among arriving groups and their histories (Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 2006).

The stated overarching goal of Australia's HSP is that it "supports humanitarian entrants and other eligible visa holders to integrate into Australian life" (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2024b, para.1). Prescriptive case management guidelines state the additional aims of the HSP "to create shared understanding and consistency in approach, while allowing flexibility to respond to diverse Client needs and local settings" (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b, p. 1). Ager and Strang (2008) document central elements of what constitutes successful integration, which are frequently referred to throughout resettlement literature. Ager and Strang (2008) named four key domains of integration:

> Achievement and access across the sectors of employment, housing, education
> and health; assumptions and practice regarding citizenship and rights;
> processes of social connection within and between groups within the
> community; and structural barriers to such connection related to language,
> culture and the local environment. (p. 166)

The introduction to the HSP case management guidelines states that the HSP "assists clients to build the skills and knowledge they need to become self-reliant and active members of our society" (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b, p. 1). Further reference is made to achieving "sustainable client settlement outcomes" which aim to assist clients towards independence and capacity to link with other settlement and mainstream services. (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b, p. 3). Specific HSP services include airport reception, immediate and short-term accommodation, assistance to locate appropriate long-term accommodation, provision of a basic household kit, referral to mainstream and specialist support services for trauma and torture counselling, connections to local community groups and activities, connections to AMEPs and other education,

connections to assist in gaining employment and training, and orientation to Australia. This orientation includes laws and values relating to personal safety, child protection, tenancy, household management, and workplace culture. Services for clients' needs are determined by the allocation of a tier level (1–3) before arrival. After arrival, individual client needs (each member of a family is a client) are assessed and case managers may request approval from the Department of Home Affairs for a higher tier level that entitles clients to additional service support. In my experience, this neoliberal business approach renders the power of final determination of a woman's need to a market contract transaction (Harvey, 2007). Furthermore, the practice relationship between the woman, the resettlement worker, and other human service workers is very important in helping her access appropriate support. The policy is generic to all HSP services regardless of location capacity and constraints. Available local resources are determined for each client through an ongoing needs assessment. The HSP guidelines provide some recognition that the service's capacity to successfully deliver and achieve settlement markers, and the client's capacity to develop skills and knowledge they need, critically depends on the responsiveness of many statutory and community human service providers (e.g., providers for health, personal support, trauma and torture support, mental health needs, education, training and employment, and housing). The department website specifically notes that successful regional resettlement requires "a sustainable and coordinated approach" that "prioritises the needs of both humanitarian entrants moving to regional locations and the communities that support them" (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2024b, Humanitarian Settlement in Regional Australia section).

As an adjunct to the HSP guidelines, and to situate the resettlement processes within a framework of practice, I also share the *National Settlement Outcome Standards* that were documented by the Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA, 2021). The *National Settlement Outcomes Standards* were developed through a series of national consultations with affiliated

services. These standards provide a framework of practice and a "tool/reference point" for organisations and settlement workers (SCOA, 2015, p. 3). There are no compliance regulations attached to the nine standards (education and training, employment, health and wellbeing, housing, language services, transport, civic participation, family, and social support and justice). However, indicators of each standard act as a reference guide. Three indicators are directly relevant to this North Queensland study. These indicators include: "stimulus for capacity building within settlement agencies," "collaboration with mainstream and private sectors to build capability," and "encouraging responsiveness to challenges faced by humanitarian entrants" (SCOA, 2015, p. 5). In my practice, the standards have been a useful aid for discussion about the whole of service delivery with client groups and staff, and they are a useful tool for critical advocacy with other local services. There are no specific regional guidelines, although there was input from regional services including TMSG. The SCOA demonstrated support for regional differences and needs. In January 2022, a SCOA webinar featured a local example of community collaboration by the Cairns Centacare FNQ settlement services manager (SCOA, 2022a). SCOA has made representations to the Department of Home Affairs and documented submissions that draw attention to regional resettlement needs for "targeted community capacity building" as a pathway to a strong locally informed regional response (SCOA, 2022b, p. 10).

3.8 Resettlement Literature: National

In the literature discussing people who settle throughout Australia as humanitarian entrants, people are commonly referred to as refugees, which continues the label of a refugee while ignoring their permanent residency status on arrival (Baak, 2021). Continual references to humanitarian arrivals as refugees have the potential to affect the arrivals' sense of welcome. Emphasising the refugee label potentially inflames divisive debates about legal and illegal refugees, although it does draw attention to human rights violations concerning those

who arrive outside the offshore Humanitarian Program. Within the context of this study, attention to permanent residency is important, and it serves to foreground women's rights to services – informing also the study's aim of strengthening resettlement policy and social work and human services practice. Notable national studies about the resettlement of humanitarian entrants include Graeme Hugo's report (2002) discussing Australia's policies of offshore humanitarian resettlement and subsequent policy responses to increasing global conflict and arrivals of asylum seekers. In another study about the general economic contribution of immigrants, Hugo (2008) drew attention to humanitarian entrants settling in regional areas who subsequently moved to capital cities to seek employment and housing. The national BNLA longitudinal study focused entirely on humanitarian adult arrivals between May and December 2013 across 11 locations, but the study did not include North Queensland (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017). Further, there is little examination of macro issues linking UNHCR resettlement goals to Australian humanitarian service policy. I noted that settlement studies regularly use deficit language through terms such as "barriers" and "lack" or "lacking" when discussing settlement outcomes and concerns (e.g., limited English, access to transportation, health literacy, and access to education pathways, or terms including "problem youth" or "family and generational" difficulties; see Chen et al., 2019; Fozdar & Hartley, 2013; Hugo, 2009). A national report into migrant and refugee women's safety in Australia, with a focus on domestic violence, included collecting quantitative data from a diversity of women across Australia (Segrave et al., 2021). However, there is infrequent attention in resettlement literature on the diverse country, identity, history, and pre-arrival life contexts of people from countries in the African continent. Furthermore, male voices are predominated in youth studies and scant attention is paid to the gendered or racialised subtext of policy and the structure of services (Adusei-Asante & Adibi, 2018; Au et al., 2019; Chung et al., 2018;

Javanparast et al., 2020; Kong et al., 2016; True, 2010). Former refugee women are, however, included in studies related to mental health, integration, and domestic violence (Bartolomei et al., 2014; Brough et al., 2012; Pittaway et al., 2009; Rees et al., 2023). Fozdar and Hartley (2013b) observed "the relative dearth of literature differentiating refugees from other migrants" in literature published between 1994 and 2011 (p. 30). This trend has led to the AIHW flagging the lack of data gathered about refugee and humanitarian health and welfare, and the subsequent funding in June 2022 of a database that seeks to "build a more comprehensive picture of the health and welfare status of refugees and humanitarian entrants" (AIHW, 2023, p. 1).

3.8.1 Regional Resettlement Literature

While Australia is a world leader in refugee settlement service provision, there are gaps and shortcomings in both the model and the service provided. The most obvious problem is the inconsistent spread of these services within metropolitan areas, and in particular in regional and rural areas. (Pittaway et al., 2009, p. 144)

Hugo (2008) remarked that:

While refugee-humanitarian settlers are not compelled to settle in particular areas, many are channelled into regional areas. There is often a lack of support services for them in these areas, although some regional communities are mobilising to cancel this out. (p. 553)

Likewise, a report by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Shepley, 2007) reflected on the "limited research into the experiences of humanitarian entrants living in regional and rural Australia or the impacts of their settlement on the established community,

the services and economics of the region" (p. 7). Limited regional resources were recognised in a report by McDonald-Wilmsen et al. (2009) that recommended flexible regional resettlement contractual arrangements, such as "loading" in recognition of "organisational infrastructure development in regional settlement" (p. 107). A similar recommendation was suggested by Duncan et al. (2010) when discussing the secondary movement of former refugees from a metropolitan centre to regional locations. Duncan et al. (2010) suggested that the relocation of former refugees to regional areas is not straightforward but requires "dedication and effort" from community members to adapt to different and possibly confronting experiences (p. 2). Ten years later, a review of integration, employment, and settlement outcomes reported that – despite a gradual increase in new arrivals being designated to regional areas since 2014 and 2015 – "more than 70 per cent of refugees were still being settled in metropolitan areas" (Shergold et al., 2019, p. 54). The report echoed the recommendations of McDonald-Wilmsen et al. (2009) and Duncan et al. (2010) to support former refugees' secondary migration from metropolitan to regional areas (Shergold et al., 2019). The report also recognised that "the valuable experience of community-based organisations is inadequately utilised" and recognised the need to consult with regional communities that consider refugee settlement one sound way of securing regional futures (Shergold et al., 2019, p. 2). An in-depth case study of Hazara people settling in rural Leeton, New South Wales, also appreciated the "social and cultural capital" contributions to the region (Radford et al., 2022, p. 3).

Sparse regional resettlement literature, particularly in North Queensland, seems to be due to the smaller numbers of arrivals (as compared with metropolitan locations) and three other factors. First, the word "regional" is used interchangeably in the literature without distinction between inner regional or outer regional and rural communities as distinct geographic sites; for example, studies of the Riverina or other rural areas of NSW or rural

Victoria (Curry et al., 2018; Kivunja et al., 2014; Nsubuga-Kyobe & Hazelman, 2007).

Second, unless specifics are detailed, the settlement experiences of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers are often discussed as homogenous culturally and linguistically diverse communities (Adusei-Asante & Adibi, 2018; Caperchione et al., 2011). A study conducted in Townsville with 22 migrant families from eight Sub-Saharan countries (Congo, Eritrea, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zimbabwe) explored parental influences on the acculturation strategies of families (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2021). This study noted that the eight countries were "treated as a single entity because they have many cultural and historical similarities" (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2021, p. 3). Commonalities may exist, but these findings do further a dominant narrative of the African continent being a homogenous community. It may also ignore differences in the support needed; for example, parenting in Australia may be affected by participants' migration type (economic or humanitarian). Finally, just as the national literature neglects the diversity of people out of Africa, so too does the regional resettlement literature. This generalisation has occurred purposefully within the context of discussing racism and the effects of othering based on being black-skinned (Anderson et al. 2019; Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017; Udah et al., 2019).

Robinson and Haintz (2021), in their study of Syrian refugees, noted some emerging literature on refugee resettlement in regional areas. However, much of the Queensland regional resettlement literature emanates from the South-East Corner in areas such as Logan, Ipswich, or Toowoomba (Anderson et al. 2019; Correa-Velez et al., 2012; Gichunge et al., 2015; Vromans et al., 2018). Through a systematic review and thematic analysis of literature exploring refugee perceptions of the Australian healthcare system, Au et al. (2019) demonstrated a lack of studies examining the healthcare of refugees across Northern Australia. Hawkes et al. (2021) studied resettled women refugees in Hobart and identified regional location as one factor associated with "professional mental health support seeking"

(p. 441). Collins and Reid (2018) promoted positive experiences of humanitarian entrants in Brisbane and regional Logan and Toowoomba. A key difference for both Toowoomba and Logan regions is the proximity to metropolitan Brisbane where the lead state service contractor (Multicultural Australia) and an office of the Department of Home Affairs is situated. Also, regional refugee literature that focuses on women emanates primarily from inner-regional areas across Victoria (Manderson & Vasey, 2009; Nsubuga-Kyobe & Hazelman, 2007), South Australia (Penman & Goel, 2017; Radford et al., 2022), NSW (Curry et al., 2018; Ochala & wa Mungai, 2016) and the South-East corner of Queensland. Some exceptions have previously been referenced (Au et al., 2019; Babacan, 2006; Babacan & Gopalkrishnan, 2005; Gopalkrishnan, 2021). Key topics about women in regional areas are framed within a discourse of the barriers they encounter when learning English and the associated difficulties of accessing appropriate healthcare (Javanparast et al., 2020). Support for trauma and torture experience is discussed as essential (Babacan & Gopalkrishnan, 2005; Kaplan, 2020), and issues around accessing employment or establishing a business are also explored (Njaramba, 2022; Robinson & Haintz, 2021). North Queensland has been excluded from major studies on resettlement including the BNLA report (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017) and topics on the effect of COVID-19 (Rees et al., 2023), domestic violence (Segrave et al., 2021), and broader settlement responses (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017). I now discuss integration as the expected outcome of Australia's HSP, which connects with discussing the concept of belonging.

3.8.2 Integration or Belonging

> I miss it all. I miss all the places I used to visit when I was a kid. I miss the
> streets I walked every day. I miss all the people I love. But most of all I miss
> the feeling you get when you know that you are home. (Kaplan, 2020, p. 247)

Integration implies mutuality and the delivery of a sensitive welcome, by all human services and institutions, to assist women who are at the nexus of Australia's international commitment to the UNHCR convention, the HSP policy, and social work and human service practice (Fozdar & Banki, 2017). Given the intersecting oppressions of patriarchy and racism, I was curious to know whether the exit of women from HSP services engendered a sense of belonging as part of the goal of integration. Building on the theme of racism and whiteness that pervades the colonial histories of Africa and Australia, Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo (2017) conducted a study in three regional locations and two metropolitan areas in NSW and Victoria. The researchers examined experiences of race discrimination with people from the African diaspora (Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017, p. 6). There were 63 participants, including some who had arrived on humanitarian visas. Most participants were migrants and a mixture of professionals and non-professionals. The research concluded that the Blackness of the new entrants challenged white dominance, sparking heightened suspicions and hostilities. They determined that importantly, the migrant status of the new Black (African) body adds a layer of complexity to belonging that requires individuals to constantly negotiate suspicion, curiosity, and hostility. Participants described their experiences as a burden that they had no control over, which forced them to perceive all events with anxiety, as they had little to no control over the negativity that has been attached to their bodies (Blackness). Thus, the study concluded that people originally from Africa constantly regard events and experiences through "racial eyes" (Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017, p. 10). Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo (2017) used critical theory and standpoint theory to inform their contention that participants living in NSW and Victoria experience their bodies and lives as burdens. They referred to four broad dimensions: first, problematic socially constructed stereotypes; second, the paradox of invisibility; third, the burden of racial "two-ness;" and finally, experiences of minimisation.

A study by Anderson et al. (2019), across two regional locations, also observed that "racial difference impacts greatly on Black African refugees" (p. 24) and suggested that, as a marker of visible difference, race contributes to challenges in the new environment. Gatwiri and James (2024) referred to belonging as "a *felt-embodied* experience that is heavily mediated by power" (p. 1). Assumptions of superiority, power, and judgement of the receiving community underscore Baak's (2021) contention that there is a conflation of "blackness with refugeeness" (p. 65). Udah (2020) shared his experiences of stigma and othering as a Black African professional migrant, drawing on Essed's work (1991), which stressed the relationship between memory and experience to seek belonging. Udah (2020) suggested that racism in today's world is subtly disguised by practices that are cloaked as non-racial or anti-racial.

A study by Anderson et al. (2019) demonstrated the power of dialogue and interaction. In this study, former refugees provided feedback to the broader community, which stimulated interactive discussion with long-term residents. Anderson et al. (2019) concluded that long-term locals came to "better understand the lived experiences of and contributions of former refugees from African nations," which effectively disrupted conventional narratives and definitions of who a refugee is (p. 28). The researchers demonstrated how dialogue can facilitate the process of moving away from the perpetual transient position of a refugee label to one of citizenship in daily living. Some former refugees retained pre-existing identity markers important to them but named access to services (e.g., childcare, good education, and local associations and activities) as contributors to feeling like a local. The study gave me reason to pause and imagine the potential for shifting a current underlying dominant narrative of Eurocentricity to expansive all-embracing connectedness. I did not need to go further than the standard set by *The Uluru Statement From the Heart* by over 250 delegates across Australia "from all points of the southern sky"

at the 2017 First Nations National Constitutional Convention. It was a statement of welcome and invitation to and for all present and future generations of Australians, and it sets a beautiful standard of welcome for all former refugees (Referendum Council, 2017).

The HSP context of integration is a key policy expectation of case managers and, in practice, it is related to experiences of belonging. The next section discusses the effects of loss, torture, and trauma experiences, including pre-arrival trauma that can be triggered in resettlement and may influence the capacity of newly arrived women to resettle.

3.8.3 Loss, Grief, Torture, and Trauma

Trauma following war and political conflicts is common and has been defined by Ramon and Maglajlic (2012) as "highly adverse and often unexpected outcomes that potentially or actually leads to a variety of losses" (p. 314). Much of the literature on experiences of post-traumatic experiences in the resettlement of former refugees assumes that appropriate support may minimise the effect of trauma on resettlement progress. Kaplan et al. (2016) noted that trauma may affect the capacity of individuals to access and effectively trust and engage with services. Mangazva (2011), a former humanitarian entrant, explored the resettlement challenges of single women-at-risk entrants who were heads of households in Western Australia between 2001 and 2006. She concluded that being a single woman who is the head of the household and living in an unfamiliar host society posed a dual culture shock that could trigger past trauma and exacerbate resettlement anxieties. Westoby and Ingamells (2010), however, take a different view by suggesting that overemphasis on trauma and vulnerability effects may risk social workers and human services from engaging "proactively and reflexively" with groups of former refugees (p. 1759). Similarly, June Allan (2009) reflected that social work practice has moved from a focus on individualised, potentially pathologising responses to one that integrates a sociopolitical understanding of global events and incorporates collective ways of support, such as challenging discriminative structural and

community attitudes that may precipitate grief. Chen et al. (2019), in their study of loneliness and social integration involving BNLA participants (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017), observed fluctuations in the mental health of former refugees and considered the need for strategies to include support for social integration and loneliness.

Brough et al. (2012), in their study with humanitarian entrants from Burma, broadened the lens of understanding trauma and associated resilience to include information about cultural and political events that precede people's flights to safety. Their study emphasised the value of understanding a macro, sociopolitical context of power and oppression on a former refugee's experience of trauma – while being mindful, however, of the global North's hegemonic interpretation of history (p. 208). Babacan and Gopalkrishnan (2005), also researchers in North Queensland, commented:

> Women have been more vulnerable to settlement and adjustment problems. Female immigrants and refugees generally have poorer English proficiency than men and are more likely to immigrate as dependents than in their own right. Compared with men, women are more likely to have limited economic means and be subjected to traditional family constraints on behaviour. Separation from family and kin-based social support systems is a particularly important factor for women. Unfavourable employment and housing circumstances, prejudice, and discrimination in the labour market and in the community also have disproportionate impacts on women. (p. 153)

McLellan (1995), a North Queensland radical feminist and a psychotherapist with experience supporting women humanitarian entrants through torture and trauma, described feminist therapy as "a socio-political philosophy that refuses to begin with the blaming of women" (p. xiv).

3.9 Social Work Practice

To demonstrate the link between experiences of belonging, trauma and the need for social workers to be constantly reflective about their practice with former refugees, I share African-born (country unidentified) Simangaliso Brenda Nyoni's experiences as a social worker in Australia:

> Racism exists. I have experienced it in many workplaces from clients, from colleagues and from managers. Some of it was overt, some subtle, but every experience shaped me. Without first calling our white privilege, we can't call out racism. I was working in a place where it was assumed that I was treated equally to my white colleagues which was not the case. We might have worked the same hours at the same place for the same pay but we were not equal in so many ways. The number of times I get asked where my accent is from, how long I have been in Australia, what my qualifications are, means that I work longer hours, and work harder. The emotional and spiritual toil is immeasurable. So, no, we are not equal in that sense. I strongly feel that it is every individual and counsellor's responsibility to come together in solidarity to acknowledge this lack of equality and to work together to dismantle racism and white privilege.

> I have lost count of the number of times I have had my experiences of racism minimised or dismissed. Incidents are so hard to call out. I have suffered things in isolation, and I didn't realise the magnitude of the accumulated harm of racism and white privilege. This is only the beginning of this work and I would love to form more partnerships and to work with as many people as possible on these conversations about ending discrimination, oppression and injustice. (Fooks & Nyoni, 2020, p. 71)

Simangaliso Brenda Nyoni's call to dismantle racism and white privilege is starkly different to the broad and somewhat paternalistic frame for working with refugees, as outlined by Nelson et al. (2014):

> Social workers are a group of professionals, situated within Australian systems, who may come into contact with people from refugee backgrounds. Practice contexts include generalist services such as hospitals, schools, family, and children's services, housing, income support, and many others, as well as specialist refugee services. In working with people from refugee backgrounds, social work aims to mitigate the effects of past adversity and to enable individuals, families, and communities to thrive in their new environment. (p. 567)

3.9.1 Overview of Social Work Practice

Within (white) Australian history, social welfare work occurred in the 19th century through different church congregations and nuns, including the work of Caroline Chisholm with immigrants, the suffragette movement, and the growth of social activism from the turn of the century (McMahon, 2003). In Chapter 2, I discussed the influence of critical theory and a growing emphasis from the 1970s on critical social work to address inequities and inequalities within institutions and social work systems. Social workers are increasingly being encouraged to consciously consider how global events influence the livelihoods of populations they engage with.

The social work profession engages continuously in reviewing its education processes and commitment to human rights, social justice, and social action. Linking with the Africa Social Work and Development Network exposed me to the wisdom of social workers across Africa. I particularly appreciated their awareness of ongoing colonialist influences in peoples'

lives and their social work practice. I was also delighted to discover the decolonisation calculator within the website (African Social Work and Development Network, n. d.). This calculator uses 10 decolonisation questions designed for social work education institutions, which are adaptable to any organisation across the world. Similarly, Tascón and Ife (2019) have examined social work vocabulary from a decolonial perspective. They questioned the implicit Eurocentric values in regular social work vernacular such as "vulnerable," "strength-based practice," and "family" (Tascón & Ife, 2019, pp. 185–193). Miller (2024) commented that women's issues concerning social work were "almost invisible until the second-wave women's movement of the late 1960s" (p. 203). Anti-racist and feminist practices within social work research and practice emerged in the late 1970s, including work by North Queensland researchers in collaboration with local Indigenous communities (Gair et al. 2003; Lynn et al. 1998). Other researchers have included Petruchenia and Thorpe (1990) and Weeks (1988; 2003). However, this research does not deny social work's historical participation in being complicit with institutional policies of assimilation and social control, and being an instrumental arm of government that impacted the Stolen Generations in Australia (and throughout the world; see Blackdeer & O'Campo, 2022; Dominelli, 1997; Ife & Tacson, 2016; Ife & Tacson, 2019; McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992). Notable Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices have challenged feminist positions (McQuire, 2018; Moreton-Robinson, 2020; Watego et al., 2021). Huggins, cited in Gair et al. (2003), expressed her frustrations with the burden imposed on Indigenous women by white women requesting direction for resolving our problems. These voices all argue that early and current feminists neglect the centrality of power generated through colonisation, of race, on women's ongoing oppression and freedom.

3.9.2 Feminist and Rights Practice

The necessary and integral connection between feminist scholarship and

feminist political practice and organizing determines the significance and

status of Western feminist writings on women in the Third World, for feminist

scholarship, like most other kinds of scholarship, is not the mere production of

knowledge about a certain subject. It is a directly political and discursive

practice in that it is purposeful and ideological. It is best seen as a mode of

intervention into particular hegemonic discourses (e.g., traditional

anthropology, sociology, and literary criticism); it is a political praxis that

counters and resists the totalizing imperative of age-old "legitimate" and

scientific" bodies of knowledge. Thus, feminist scholarly practices (reading,

writing, critiquing, etc.) are inscribed in relations of power – relations that

they counter, resist, or even perhaps implicitly support. There can, of course,

be no apolitical scholarship. (Mohanty, 2003, pp. 18–19)

Throughout the Eurocentric waves of feminism, feminists from the global South

challenged global Northern feminist approaches and understandings of women's oppressive

environments and how those environments are experienced and understood. They have

argued that feminists cast women in the North as the only legitimate subjects of a global

feminist struggle, and by default, they have constructed a singular Third World or global

South woman (Mohanty, 2003). Furthermore, Northern feminists have been challenged for

ignorantly appreciating that other ways of living do not automatically negate the agency of

women (Marchand & Parpart, 2003). Similarly, Northern feminists have wrongly assumed

that freedom for women of the global South lies in mirroring the ways of the North

(Marchand & Parpart, 2003). Mies (2014) has respected feminists who dare to break the

conspiracy of silence about, and want to change, the oppressive and unequal man–woman relationship. However, Mies commented that speaking up about male dominance while using terms like sexism or patriarchy has not reduced the ambivalence about it. When speaking of connections between African and Western feminism, Davies and Graves (1986) commented:

> Both identify gender-specific issues and recognize woman's position
>
> internationally as one of second class status and "otherness" and seek to
>
> correct that. An International Feminism to which various regional perspectives
>
> are contributed seems acceptable to African women while the
>
> European/American model is not. (p. 10)

Nkealah (2006) discussed the difficulties experienced by Black African female writers who must weave their way through feminism that may be unsupportive of their cultural beliefs before deciding whether to accept it, reject it, or redefine it to reflect their cultural experiences. She suggested that these writers constantly negotiate "between 'feminism', 'womanism', and 'humanism' as appropriate terms" for the "interpretation of works by African women" (p. 133). However, Nkealah (2006) has acknowledged feminism is indispensable for women from Africa who struggle to rise above dominant patriarchy. According to Bartolomei (2009), Black women of America explored links between gender and race as "compounding oppressions" (p. 50). (see also bell hooks, 1992; Collins, 1999; Lord, 1988). Davies and Graves (1986) suggested that women and men need each other within the African nations to remove "the yokes of foreign domination and European/American exploitation" (p. 8). Buchi Emecheta, a celebrated Nigerian novelist who lived in London until her passing in 2017, wrote in 1982:

> I did not start as a feminist. I do not think I am one now. Most of my readers
>
> would take this to be the statement of a coward. But it is not. I thought before

that I would like to be one but after my recent visit to the United States, when

I talked to real 'Feminists' with a capital 'F', I think we women of African

background still have a very very long way to go before we can really rub

shoulders with such women.

And later:

But most of Africa is a man's kingdom … I still think it is a mistake to

suppress half the population of a country just because the other half wants to

remain supreme all the time. (pp. 116–117)

As social workers, our responsibility concerning women from African countries is to respectfully find ways that appreciate diverse contexts of their lives from a macro perspective rather than narrowing our focus on the individual (Dominelli, 2012). Ramon and Maglajlic (2012) called on social workers to be aware of global issues that influence the displacement of people and political conflicts that may affect the diverse contexts of client lives. We must also be cognisant of global gender inequities and be conscientiously attentive to Eurocentric thinking from a rights-based feminist practice. Spotlighting the disproportionate vulnerability and burdens of disasters on women risks labelling them as vulnerable objects of pity who are agentless, and risks ignoring their rights and capacities to contribute to individual and collective solutions. The international bodies of social work have made considerable progress in refining a global agenda that is commensurate with human rights, as previously highlighted in Chapter 2. This raises the question, "What is the place and form of feminist practice within social work with former refugees?"

Gatwiri and Tusasiirwe (2022) link Afrofeminisms and social work in discussing continued Eurocentric influences on women within Africa. These authors emphasise the need to avoid homogenising Africans "as there are diverse pluralities of women experiences everywhere" throughout the continent (Gatwiri & Tusasiirwe, 2022, p. 130). They shared

their experience as social work students across Africa, Sweden, and Australia, where they felt alienated and isolated by discussions about women of Africa as agentless objects of pity. They mutually felt "there was no room for us, as African women to be complex or multi-storied. Through the white, Eurocentric gaze, we were one thing only oppressed" (Gatwiri & Tusasiirwe, 2022, p. 126). The authors suggested that contextualising and theorising are important to limit feminists and social workers from acting as colonisers when communicating with women from Africa. A principal emphasis in their discussion is the value of interconnectedness through "Obuntu / Ubuntu" as a philosophy that sustains humanity in a dignified manner (Gatwiri & Tusasiirwe, 2022, p. 128). In terms of Kenya and Uganda (countries that have been highlighted as host countries of former refugees), British education and economic strategies inherited from colonial days have continued post-independence. In the face of continued Western influence and hardships in both countries, women continue to organise themselves in mutual helping groups by pooling resources of money, land, seeds, knowledge, and energy in a spirit of Ubuntu and reciprocity. Together with Chilisa and Ntseane (2010), Gatwiri and Tusasiirwe (2022) reposition women who are preliterate as the keepers of Indigenous knowledge and orature "that has become a powerful source of resistance to ongoing colonisation" (p. 135).

Focusing on women's strengths, resilience, and Afrocentric knowledge may inform the framing of appropriate support for women through their resettlement. Walter et al. (2011) recommended social workers frame the focus of research and practice away from the "other" to the "non-other" by respecting and valuing the knowledge and skills of clients and examining our own "racial location and the role of White privilege" in our lives and practice (p. 6). Indeed, they suggested that we (social workers) extend the feminist notion of the personal is political "to make racial issues being personal as well as political" (Walter et al., 2011, p. 6). Penman and Goel (2017) and Huynh (2010) emphasised former refugees'

resilience and resourcefulness, including their capacity to adapt and resist, which are skills that have served them well throughout their survival of atrocious circumstances. Huynh (2010) when reflecting on the experiences of his parents, drew attention to refugees' alertness to the local environment:

> Refugees are attuned to the fragility of the social structures upon which they stand. They know that whatever is fixed today can be torn away tomorrow. With their ears close to the ground and eyes fixed on the horizon, they are highly sensitive to imminent threat and possibilities. This perceptiveness is borne out of the uncertainty, and arbitrariness and persecution that they have faced. (p. 54)

In a study on resilience development, Penman and Goel (2017) suggested that individuals in a rural South Australian location may be simultaneously vulnerable and resilient. The researchers identified resilience attributes, including perseverance, hope, and patience that were useful for facing challenges. This approach synchronises with Weeks (2003) contention that the feminist premise of linking the personal and the political "explains people's personal experiences as reflecting wider social and cultural conditions and, in the case of women, historically and socially structured gender power relations" (p. 108). Appreciation of adaptability, resourcefulness, resilience, and resistance links with Afrocentrism and Ubuntu as integral to feminist social work practice with former refugees, which is emphasised by Gatwiri and Tusasiirwe (2022):

> Afrocentric feminism is a collection of multiple knowledges that are focused on returning to our forgotten and often marginalised ways of being, doing and knowing and reclaiming a somehow lost or disfigured identity which was and is continually altered by colonialism and its ever lingering presence. (p. 124)

A second theoretical premise of feminist practice, named by Weeks (2003), is the commitment to action to change structural conditions of women's lives instead of assisting women to adjust to conditions as though they have no agency. The Forced Migration Research Network (2017) of the UNSW considered the language of rights to be important in practice with former refugee women. The network challenged the persistent use of terms such as "vulnerable" (which I admit to using quite often in practice) and emphasised that gender inequities are defined in law and policy (Forced Migration Research Network, 2017). The authors stressed that women refugees are not inherently vulnerable, given they share the same basic needs as men and boys. However, girls and women have "different needs and face additional difficulties in accessing these" needs (Forced Migration Research Network, 2017, p. 2). By avoiding a focus on vulnerabilities, feminist practice mitigates assigning the role of victim to women and instead draws on their strengths, capacities, resilience, and agency, which again are reflected in Afrofeminisms. A final feminist premise outlined by Weeks (2003), who cited the work of Dominelli and McLeod (1989), stresses being alert to hierarchical structures of organisations that can facilitate or deflect a feminist focus. North Queensland researcher Debra Miles (2004), in her study of women working in feminist organisations, explored significant issues that impacted women's work experiences and preference for being outside statutory services to pursue feminist goals and practice. Miles also noted that workers within feminist services at the time of her writing (2004) confirmed Ms. Maria Suehrcke's concern documented in Casson (1996) about not including women from former migrant and former refugee backgrounds.

3.9.3 Cultural Competence

Social work in the 1980s and 1990s was partially influenced by the policy of multiculturalism and the increasing attention to anti-racist social work as influenced by Dominelli (1997). Consequently, social work in the 1980s and 1990s focused on cultural

92

competence in individual and organisational practice. Its stated aim was to "transform knowledge and cultural awareness into health and / or psychosocial interventions that support and sustain healthy client-system functioning within the appropriate cultural context" (McPhatter, 2004, p. 105). Cultural competence workshops became common and included prescriptive strategies and training programs for worker skill sets. Workshops focused on four major areas: worker's self-awareness, knowledge about the culture of the client (risking an assumption of sameness), communication skills, and learning inductively through interactions with the client. Gopalkrishnan (2008) pointed out that the model did not consider the contexts of organisational culture or the experience of the client with the organisation. Moreover, Quinn (2020) emphasised the cultural competence concept's lack of attention to racism perpetrated at both individual and organisational levels. Ife (2012) warned against the risks of reifying culture and ignoring the continuously changing nature of cultures, the diversities of ideas, and contested positions within cultural traditions. Similarly, Tascon and Gatwiri (2020) stressed the contextual forces that constantly contest cultures as they change over time and are worked out differently according to influences of "vertical (norms) and horizontal (hierarchies)" (p. 3). The concept of cultural competencies also ignores the different ways of knowing, which may be quite distinct from the linear and dualistic thinking of a Western or European worldview. Smith (2021), in discussing Kaupapa Maori engagement with critical theory, emphasised the value of localised knowledges and challenged a tendency for European rigid attachment to a concept that fails to acknowledge inherent differences affected by contexts within groups and culture. Ife (2012) also emphasised that some cultural traditions are debated within cultural groups and are not a universal belief of a culture – nor are they above censure of human rights (female circumcision is just one example). Ife (2012) suggests that rather than trying to learn cultural competencies, the challenge to social workers is awareness of previous or current global and

international events that may affect the presenting needs of a client, rather than focusing solely on immediate contexts. Tascon and Gatwiri (2020) challenged the concept of cultural competency training by suggesting that it is a deflection from being fully attentive to racialised power wielded by "quick-fix professionals" that may result in tighter operational guidelines (p. 1). They recommended that social workers instead critically consider the "definitional field" of our sources of knowledge:

> People who are white are not seen as having 'cultural identities' and therefore are positioned as the normative reference point by their cultural invisibility. Addressing the challenges of social inequalities and our complacency in the structural oppression of others is one of the key goals of transformative social work practice. And yet we can be complicit in this very oppression if we do not place sufficient critical attention on the complexity of culture, and on the racialised privilege that is sustained through the profession itself. The emphasis on attempting to 'know' and become 'competent' in understanding another's culture is fundamentally flawed. (Tascon & Gatwiri, 2020, p. 6)

When examining The AASW's initial *Scope of Social Work Practice* (2020) for working with refugees and asylum seekers, I observed that some notions of cultural competence have been reviewed. The report limits the social work role with refugees to assisting their access to entitlements, and it also suggests that social workers "work respectfully and inclusively with cultural difference and diversity" (AASW, 2020, p. 5). The primary emphasis is on individual work. There is minimal emphasis on social work value differences or reflecting on service or institutional barriers. The upgraded and detailed document (AASW et al. 2022) was completed in collaboration with the NSW Refugee Health Services and the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma

Survivors. This document, titled *Working With People From Refugee Backgrounds*, is a comprehensive insight into institutional and professional racism. I also appreciate the title change from the aforementioned 2020 report that acknowledges the past status of refugees. The foreword by Jim Ife is a rallying call to social workers to work from a decolonialist perspective that questions "the assumption of White Western patriarchal superiority" and draws attention to racism and negative attitudes towards former refugees (AASW et al., 2022, p. 4). It calls on social workers to be attentive to their practice and to engage in dialogue with refugees. The AASW et al. (2022) document includes tips for being alert to specific needs in working with women (e.g., using interpreters and recognising the effects of trauma and domestic violence). This emphasis on dialoguing with former refugees leads me to consider the role of community work and advocacy within social work practice in resettlement.

3.9.4 Community Work and Advocacy

In exploring the changing definition of Social Work in Australia, McMahon (2003) referred to welfare agents' and social workers' growing commitment to social justice throughout the 20th century. He suggested that the changes were the basis of activism by suffragettes and workers' rights groups. Social action became intrinsic to social activist community groups and organisations, including the aforementioned Critical Edge Collective in Townsville (Section 2.6) and the Melbourne-based Brotherhood of St Lawrence. The application of social activism by social workers with communities influenced separate community work degrees or community work course content in social work degrees. The AASW et al. (2022) guideline for working with former refugees has a strong emphasis on community development by specifying it as "a process," a "pathway," and a "long journey, not a project" (p. 27). Further, AASW et al. (2022) have recommended workers sustain engagement while stressing that the journey belongs to the community group or groups who initiate it: "You are there to provide help along the way but neither you nor your employer

own that journey" (p. 27). Taylor (2015) summarised three conceptions of community work. Citing Ife (2012) and Kenny (2011), Taylor (2015) considered the first concept as "a method or practice or discipline, within a body of knowledge supporting it and a set of values and principles underpinning practice" (p. 6). Taylor's second conception of community work acknowledged Pugh and Cheers (2010) and detailed community work as a "set of processes, usually stimulated by an external agent, intended to strengthen community skills and knowledge to participate in planning or implementation of project … often referred to as Community capacity building" (Taylor, 2015, p. 6). The third conceptualisation by Taylor (2015) recognised initiatives of local groups within communities as "communities of interest" that may be established without funding or through formal agencies (p. 6). Social work practice and feminist practice engage with the rights of individuals and support communities. Westoby and Ingamells (2010) considered individual work with former refugees as tending to focus on individual difficulties with trauma-centric work risking de-politicising the trauma. They also alerted social workers to the risks of compromising work with communities due to neoliberal constraints of funding contracts. Westoby and Ingamells (2010) suggest that workers in this space must be reflexive and find ways of harnessing the social strengths of individuals, families, and communities. They admitted that such work is a "long term commitment to relationships that cross work boundaries" as one supports the skills and enterprise of refugee groups (Westoby & Ingamells, 2010, p. 1772). Similarly, Gopalkrishnan (2021) stressed that social workers encourage and support people to be actively involved in community decisions. He considered it imperative for social workers to embrace a macro perspective in response to global pressures, through engagement with communities. Owen and Westoby (2012) stressed that community development skills emphasise dialogue that humanises "communication and relationship" as a springboard for sound strategic community development (p. 308). Community development literature emphasises sound relationships

with refugee groups by beginning with the reflexivity of one's position and its power, which is reminiscent of Ife's foreword to the AASW et al. (2022) document and the feminist practice principle of "the personal is political" (Mohanty, 2013, p. 971).

Pittaway and Bartolomei (2022) stressed the importance of advocacy for supporting refugees and former refugees: "Advocacy is a collective endeavor and can seldom be done alone … The important point is that it can work. Most major social changes come about because of the work of advocates, not because politicians are intrinsically good and caring people" (p. 54).

They further recommended refugee-informed and research-based evidence gathered with a strong theoretical framework to support advocacy work with former refugees. Pittaway and Bartolomei's (2022) many years of persistent feminist advocacy have contributed to the active participation of refugee and former refugee women in the UNHCR – and to the formation of national and international associations (Pittaway & Bartolomei, 2022; Romero 2021).

The Queensland Government Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (2024) funds the CAMS program to promote harmony and emphasise engaging with locally emerging and newly settled groups of migrant and humanitarian arrivals. CAMS original funding body, referred to the program intent as: "key touch points between locally culturally diverse communities and government, non-government, community or corporate organisations, building sustainable opportunities for inclusion in local employment, services, networks and industries" (Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, 2021, p. 4). The program funds community development activities that engage and encourage interaction between groups of former refugees and migrants with local community services and activities. This is reflective of Taylor's (2015) third conceptual level where I contributed my practice experience of focussing on strategic community local advocacy (see pp. 58–62).

3.9.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have explored and reviewed literature from a global to a local North Queensland perspective. I have discussed globalisation and neoliberalism, the *Global Compact on Refugees*, and the associated CRRF. I have reviewed nations of Africa that host displaced people and noted their generosity despite the influences of continuing international control and human rights violations. I have also examined how countries of the global North block the entry of some refugees. Historical colonial connections between the two continents of Africa and Australia underscored critical consideration of national discourses of Australia's racism and multiculturalism. I have reviewed literature that homogenises arrivals from different countries of Africa and highlighted the limited localised North Queensland research with former refugees. Detailing the HSP structure and processes has provided a background to the resettlement processes that women experience and the working domain of resettlement services and practitioners. I examined the goal of integration in resettlement and its relevance to women's experiences of belonging. I also considered the risk of pathologising women by focusing on their individual needs and ignoring their life contexts. Finally, I engaged with literature on Australian social work history and discussed current themes of feminist and rights practice, cultural competence and advocacy, and community work as social work practices that confront institutional and structural obstacles in social work practice. This chapter, and the theoretical foundation in Chapter 2, informs and guides the study to respectfully interpret data gathered from women participants and resettlement practitioners.

Chapter 4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Just as women know in many different ways, we must be known in many

different ways. (Reinharz, 1992, p. 106)

In this chapter, I discuss my methodology. Reinharz (1992) suggests that feminist researchers provide descriptions of the conditions in which they gather and analyse data to ensure transparency and accountability, and to enable others to judge the validity and rigour of their study. My intent is to lay bare the particular challenges I faced in conducting research with a select group of women and a small number of practitioners in a unique regional location. Further, I describe the advantages and challenges posed by my previous practice experience. Hesse-Biber et al., (2004) emphasise that "feminists explicitly link theory with methods" (p. 15). This chapter outlines the processes of doing the research. My theoretical positioning weaves through and informs my methodological discussions. Firstly, I recap what brings me to this research and the research question and aims while discussing my choice of a qualitative feminist research approach across two phases. I explore the ethical challenges and vulnerabilities of the North Queensland region and I outline how I addressed them across two separate ethics applications (Phase 1 and Phase 2). By detailing the research methodology (inclusion and exclusion criteria, sampling techniques, sample size, recruitment, and data collection), I describe the steps I took to introduce the research across the two research sites. I articulate the steps that I used to analyse the data gathered in both phases. In the final section, I reflect on the trustworthiness of the study and its limitations.

4.2 Research Aim and Questions

> I have not started writing on the basis of research data. Rather, I have started
> with a sense of problem, of something going on, some disquiet, and of
> something that could be explicated. (Smith, 1999, p. 9)

My research approach, motivated by my experience as a social worker in North Queensland (see Chapter 1), was framed by the theories outlined in Chapter 2. The aim and the research questions documented in the introduction are duplicated here for the reader's convenience.

The overarching aim of the research is to explore with women from diverse countries of Africa their resettlement experiences in regional North Queensland. Further, this research seeks to inform and strengthen resettlement policy and social work and human services practice. The research questions are:

1. What are the resettlement experiences of women refugees from diverse countries of Africa to tropical North Queensland?
2. What are the experiences of resettlement practitioners with women refugees from diverse countries of Africa?
3. What are the implications of these experiences (women refugees and sector personnel) for resettlement service planning and delivery?

To answer these questions, I chose a two-phased approach to my research. In Phase 1, answering Question 1, I wanted to ensure the primacy of women's resettlement experiences. Phase 2 was designed to answer Question 2. The number of interviews and design of Phase 2, which aimed to capture practitioners' experiences, was influenced by the initial analysis of Phase 1 interviews. Together, the women's responses and the practitioners' responses contribute to addressing Question 3 and the overarching research aim.

4.2.1 Qualitative Feminist Research

Research conducted within a feminist framework is attentive to issues of difference, the questioning of social power, resistance to scientific oppression, and a commitment to political activism and social justice. (Hesse-Biber et al., 2004, p. 3)

My research interest had been piqued by opportunities to engage with researchers within Australia and overseas, and my sense of unfinished business. I experienced some unresolved disquiet about the appropriateness and adequacy of support extended to arriving groups of humanitarian entrant women formerly from African countries. I wondered if we, the humanitarian settlement organisation and local social service networks, had fully unravelled regional blocks to secure positive resettlement outcomes and if we had valued these arriving women's strengths and resources.

A qualitative research approach rejects positivist assurances that scientific and objective research can deliver "unambiguous and accurate knowledge of the world" (Crotty, 2020, p. 18). Positivism is embedded in empirical science and a belief in objectivity, not necessarily the world that is experienced or lived by people, as "it is a world of regularities, constancies, uniformities, iron-clad laws, [and] absolute principles" (Crotty, 2020, p. 28). Feminist theory privileges understanding the multiple and diverse lived ways of women's knowing (Oakley & Cracknell, 1981; Reinharz, 1992). Feminist research can be quantitative or qualitative and it uses a variety of methods to collect and analyse data (Glesne, 2016). Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002) emphasise that it is not the topic that makes the qualitative research feminist, but how it is understood and conceptualised through its framework and foundations to explore the influence of male power on women's lives. I actively use "women's consciousness and resistance" to honour the living knowledge of women

(MacKinnon, 1996, p. 46). In a second interview, Patricia McFadden spoke of Black women having a "deep longing for narratives" of the struggles of women across Africa to enrich an understanding of feminism being outside of – not only in opposition to – patriarchal thinking (Moreno & Pessoa, 2021b, 12:18). Qualitative research emphasises interpretation, and Liamputtong (2010) suggested that it is well suited for research with people across cultures and languages to reduce the "distrust that individuals from ethnically diverse communities may have toward research and the researchers" (p. 18). In choosing feminist research, I prioritised trust and consciousness of power relations in my choice of research methods.

4.2.2 Ethical Challenges: Researcher Subjectivity and Power

> At all stages in the research you have to decide on ethics and accountability, to
> consider who your work is for, and its political and practical implications.
> Practical considerations about how to get access to the people you have
> selected are entwined with ethical issues about informed consent, and possible
> harm to research subjects or others. (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 157)

Feminist researchers examine their backgrounds and their values to explicitly question subjectivity and power while consciously trying to avoid reproducing unequal power and authority throughout every step of the research (bell hooks, 1981; Hesse-Biber, 2012; Thompson, 2001). Daly (1978) refers to examining researcher subjectivity as locating one's "original integrity" (p. 3). Smith (1999), who recommended examining different worlds where women live to deepen our understanding of women's lives, stressed being cautious: "We are addressing relations, practices, powers, and forces which are actual, [and] have consequences (p. 44). Collins (1999) warned that implicit racist and sexist ideologies share "the common features of treating dominated groups – the others – as objects lacking full human subjectivity" (p. 160). Similarly, Shope (2006), a white United States researcher who

studied rural women of South Africa, suggested that feminist methods encouraged a "never-ending process of reflexivity" instead of theorising abstractions or claiming shared experiences (p. 176). I committed to maintaining reflexivity throughout every step of the research. I was not a complete outsider as I was known as a practitioner with community connections and experience. I could not deny, though, my lens or the power of my privileges in listening, responding, and interpreting meaning. Accordingly, in the next section, I consider my position relative to the position of women from countries of Africa who are new to North Queensland.

As a white Australian-born researcher, I am a global North, privileged, and retired social worker who has taken safety and access to rights for granted (Stauffer, 2015). I am an insider to Australian life but an outsider to women participants' lived experiences. I am monolingual. I am confident in speaking, writing, and reading only in English. My language throughout the research "is not a neutral tool" as it shapes and reinforces "linguistic hegemony" as a tool of colonialism in some countries of Africa and within Australia (Shope, 2006, p. 167). Here in Australia, my whiteness has extended me numerous privileges – many of which I may not yet have identified. I have never experienced the powerlessness of being unable to read directions or to approach a stranger and trust them to assist me in a necessary life task (catch a bus, complete a form, read my mail or a text, seek an item in a supermarket, or understand protocols of a social situation). Nor have I experienced discrimination based on skin colour, dress, faith, or sexual preference. As a woman, I have experienced discrimination and abuse. I have known, however, how to ask for help and where to ask for help, and I have been confident of my language being understood and confident of being welcomed at the service desk in a language and form of address that is familiar to me. Privilege has defined me in travels overseas, where I have arrogantly assumed that my English language would be understood. I represent a lifestyle that may be a dream for the women participants in Phase 1

of the research. As a practising social worker, I have resettled former refugees and managed a resettlement service in North Queensland. As the researcher, I could then be perceived as an insider who will demonstrate respect and willingness to understand. Alternatively, I could be perceived as having power as an insider who may induce an obligation from women to participate in the research or to participate with expectations of assistance. What is important is to not ignore my power as a researcher, as it "requires specific attention and listening to" in feminist research (Hesse-Biber & Leckenby, 2004, p. 215). In Phase 2 of the research, I considered again my status as an insider and outsider. Having been in a position of authority in a service delivering Australian government humanitarian settlement, I was an insider with previous leadership and professional guidance to resettlement practitioners. Although I am now officially an outsider, I could have potentially been perceived to retain a level of continuing insider status with a personal and professional investment in the outcome of the research.

4.2.3 Ethical Challenges: Research With Former Refugees in North Queensland

Planning research with former refugee women from the African continent, whose numbers are small compared with the local majority white populations, and who are distinguishable by differences of Blackness, clothing, and languages, required conscientiousness of my whiteness and their rights (Udah et al., 2019, p. 2). I have drawn on feminist, human rights, and social work texts that emphasise the need for reflexivity and respect in planning and doing social research with former refugee women. The *AASW Practice Standards* (2023), *Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development* (Global Agenda Task Force, 2022), the IFSW (2014), Truell and Jones (2023), and the UDHR (UN, 1948) demand ethical social work research practice. The National Health and Medical Research Council's *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2018) is endorsed by Universities Australia. The statement includes principles of autonomy regarding informed consent, the right to privacy, non-maleficence, beneficence, justice, and

contribution to knowledge (Alston & Bowles, 2018). Taking my lead from Fonow and Cook (1991), who argue that "feminists must take extra precautions not to betray the trust freely given (p. 8)." I discerned potential risks for women from diverse African countries who would participate in this North Queensland research. These risks included the possibility of some women being excluded from the opportunity to participate due to either preliteracy or nil literacy in English and not understanding consent processes or the meaning of confidentiality. Some women could also feel pressured to participate and have concerns about remaining anonymous contributors in two regional cities where there are small numbers of newly emerging African associations. Informed by my practice experience, I was aware of the risk that bilingual community members from within African associations may be burdened with additional responsibilities and I may unintentionally pressure people to participate. I was also aware that men are more likely to be assigned visible community leadership roles in these communities (Pittaway et al., 2016). Block et al. (2013) reminded me that "abuse of power is often the precondition for people becoming refugees in the first place" (p. 7). Moreover, I needed to be sensitive to the real possibility of triggering trauma through discussions. I had to ensure the availability of support. I felt experienced and comfortable in my professional capacity to discern potential triggers, respond to signs of distress, and appropriately refer participants to available PASTT personnel in each North Queensland city.

Published regional studies with refugees provided me with scant guidance. I remain curious about the opportunity extended to women and their level of participation in some studies. A study by Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2021) with 22 migrants from Africa (nine of whom identified as humanitarian entrants) in Townsville reported doing all interviews in English, and "no professional bilingual interpreter was required." Njaramba et al. (2015) studied the financial literacy of 11 North Queensland African women migrants – four of

whom self-rated with "low" English language skills (p. 203). Two participants identified as former refugees. However, there is no indication of languages used in interviews or if interpreters were needed or used. Curry et al. (2018) accepted referrals of participants with "moderate English-language skills" from local organisations in a study in regional northern NSW (p. 435). Six males and three females participated. Seven interviews were conducted, five being with individuals and two with couples (Curry et al., 2018). The assessment details of the English level were not provided. The level of participation of two women who were interviewed with their partners was also not clarified. Single-parent women participants of a study in Wagga Wagga (NSW) were recruited through a mail-out from an African association. No detail of the language used in the mail-out was provided. The study reports that interviews were conducted by a local "African woman" but again, it is not known whether one or more languages were used (Ochala & wa Mungai, 2016, p. 314). Correa-Velez et al. (2012), in a study with resettled adult men in Queensland's South-East corner, refers to a trained peer interviewer research model that is inclusive and respectful of language abilities, but no detail of the peer interviewer training is provided. Another study with immigrants in South Australia by Penman and Goel (2017) described participants as fluent "in conversational English" and reported that bilingual interpreters were available on request (p. 182). Finally, a Townsville study by Au et al. (2021) outlined a partnership with the local resettlement service (TMSG), which facilitated access to local bilingual workers for the distribution of fliers and access to certified telephone interpreters for interviews through the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd. (NAATI). There was also mention of bilingual assistants being present to assist at a community feedback session. Details of the gender of interpreters or bilingual assistants are unclear across these studies. My quest for advice from other regional research was not fully sated, but as a feminist and a social worker, I was committed to doing my very best to extend an opportunity for every

eligible woman across Cairns and Townsville to know about and to participate in the study (Fooks & Nyoni, 2020). I also wanted to be rigorous in ensuring the safety and anonymity of women participants (Gatwiri & Anderson, 2022; Shope, 2006).

Inclusivity and sensitivity to needs underscore the theoretical foundations of human rights (Hugman et al., 2011; Pittaway & Bartolomei (2013). Nelson et al. (2014) named the use of interpreters as "crucial" for integrating human rights and trauma frameworks into social work practice (p. 572). Engaging with interpreters can ensure equity of opportunity and inclusiveness. I was confident in my knowledge of the names of languages spoken by women who had arrived throughout the decade from 2010 to 2020. I was also aware that some preliterate women may not be able to read a translated flier, may not have access to a personal mobile phone, or may need assistance from a family member to read a text message in English. I decided to use remote accredited interpreters available through the Telephone Interpreter Service to ensure anonymity and confidentiality and to reduce any coercive influence over potential participants. The decision avoided putting pressure on anyone with a dual role of community leader and worker in the distinct resettlement space of the small regional sites. I had experience in using remote telephone interpreters, and I was aware that using remote telephone interpreters could at times be awkward and clumsy. Furthermore, I was not fully confident in being able to access certified female interpreters. However, I was aware through previous feminist practice experience that, together with women, we could establish control early in the interview and manage any potential intrusive dominating influence of a male interpreter. Adopting the method used by Au et al. (2021), I decided to source local bilingual people for the translation of recruitment fliers by subcontract arrangements with TMSG. I arranged a university account with NAATI for access to remote, trained, and certified telephone interpreters. Discussion about these decisions formed part of my ethics applications, as outlined in the next sections.

4.3 Ethics Applications

I submitted two separate ethics applications to the JCU Human Ethics Review Committee. This process was guided by the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* by the Health and Medical Research Council and Universities Australia (2018). Both applications included approved attachments (recruitment fliers, information sheets, consent forms, and interview prompters).

4.3.1 Phase 1 Application

The Phase 1 ethics application was approved on 15 December 2020 (Approval Number H8283) at a category four rating, being for "research with the potential to cause genuine but not severe psychological distress or physical pain with no long-term effect" (Appendix A). The Phase 1 information sheet (Appendix B) was sent with the informed consent forms that contained checkboxes to indicate preferred interpreter use and acquire consent to the audio recording of interviews (Appendix C). Recruitment fliers in English (Appendix E) and an interview prompt sheet (Appendix D) were submitted with the ethics application.

4.3.2 Advisory Group

Information about an advisory group was included in the Phase 1 ethics application. The advisory group consisted of two former refugee women from African countries who have been resettled for more than five years. The advisory group advised me on practical concerns, such as flier display locations and distribution points. The women were also available as a sounding board throughout the research process to support my general broad understanding of women's culture and experiences of refugees from African countries.

4.3.3 Phase 2 Application

This ethics application was submitted after the completion of interviews with Phase 1 participants and a preliminary analysis of Phase 1 data. Ethics approval (H8773) was granted on 16 May 2022 at category level two, as the only foreseeable risk was discomfort including "the anxiety induced by an interview" (Appendix F). I considered time limits and difficulties with anonymity for a small sample of participants. The ethics approval specified how to protect participants' anonymity. During recruitment, managers of resettlement services and resettlement practitioners were approached through telephone and email scripts (Appendix G). Recruitment fliers for practitioners were sent after the managers agreed to participate (Appendix H). The ethics application included a pre-interview form to gather data about the practitioner (Appendix I), an informed consent form (Appendix J), and an interview prompt sheet including prompts for both CEOs and resettlement practitioners (Appendix K).

The approved ethics of both phases guided me throughout undertaking the research. (Chilisa, 2017; Oakley, 2015; Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002).

4.4 Data Collection Methods

Adopting a qualitative approach, and particularly interviewing methods, can provide in-depth information about individual experiences (Chilisa, 2012; Oakley, 2015; Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). Both Reinharz (1992) and Glesne (2016) suggest that open-ended interviews can also facilitate a deeper sharing of participants' experiences. For example, Bashir's study (2023) with ethnic community gatekeepers in the Midlands, United Kingdom, used semi-structured interviews as a way of providing participants with opportunities to choose topics of importance to them. Semi-structured, open-ended interviews served my intent to interact in a "woman to woman, sensitive style" that could be respectful of language difficulties or differences in cultural mores, particularly when all questions were in English (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 155). I strived to establish a basis for dialogue,

described by bell hooks (1989) as: "Talk between two subjects, not the speech of subject and object. It is a humanizing speech, one that challenges and resists domination" (p. 131).

Botswanan researcher Chilisa (2012) suggests using prompts in a semi-structured interview at a pace that demonstrates respect for participants. She stressed the importance of "ceremony" to establish and maintain relationships at the beginning of interviews (p. 173). Ceremony together with "yarning" was a cultural process used in developing relationships before interviews with Indigenous participants in a transnational study across Botswana and Australia (Bessarab & Ngandu, 2010, p. 37). I occasionally used initial greetings or farewell statements as learned through practice. For instance, "*jambo*" for "hello" in Swahili (proununced phonetically in English as "jumbo"), and the Muslim greeting response of "*as-salamu alaykum*" or "*shukkran*" for "thank you" in Arabic at the end of an interview.

4.4.1 Inclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria were guided by other studies with resettled migrants and former refugees, my research aim, and my practitioner experience (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017; Segrave et al., 2021; Vromans et al., 2018). The inclusion criteria for Phase 1 participants were for women from diverse countries of Africa who have arrived as adults (using Australia's adult age of 18 years) between 2010 and 2020 through Australia's offshore Refugee and Humanitarian Program in either North Queensland resettlement region (Cairns or Townsville) and women who had been resettled for a minimum of two years. Recruiting women who arrived as adults provided scope for participation by women with diversities of demographics and living circumstances. It excluded women whose arrival date was less than two years, respected the demands and stressors of immediate and early years of resettlement, and acknowledged that some women may still be receiving support through the HSP. I recruited 20 women participants who all met my inclusion criteria.

The Phase 2 participant inclusion criteria were for (a) up to two CEOs, or their nominated delegate, as managers of services that are responsible for overseeing the delivery of Australia's humanitarian settlement policy in North Queensland, and (b) four practitioners with a minimum of five years' experience in resettling humanitarian entrants in North Queensland (Yohani & Okeke-Ihejirika, 2018). The criteria excluded practitioners with less than five years' experience to recognise the extensive practice knowledge and "distinct and specialised form of social service" necessary to work within the humanitarian settlement processes (SCOA, 2022b, p. 31). Peshkin (2001) advised that our research outcomes are influenced by the decisions we make about the sample. For Phase 1, I chose purposive sampling combined with snowballing through word of mouth using translated recruitment fliers (five languages including English) as an appropriate process "to locate cases of a highly specific and difficult-to-reach population" (Neumann et al., 2014, p. 274). In Phase 2, I again used purposive sampling to identify resettlement practitioners across both sites of North Queensland. The managers were directly invited through telephone and email invitations using a script (Appendix G). I recruited two managers of resettlement services and four resettlement practitioners across the region for Phase 2.

4.5 Entering the Field

Respecting others guided my decisions on what steps to take next. (Mosby, 2015, p. 83)

Glesne (2016) has reminded all researchers of their responsibilities in paving the way for future researchers. Minichiello et al., (2008) discussed four social research steps: "getting in, learning the ropes, maintaining relations and leaving the field" (p. 242). My action plan of entry into the field included introducing both phases of the research to known contacts (gatekeepers) followed by a concentration on recruiting Phase 1 participants. Bashir (2023)

valued a reflexive feminist approach when accessing key community gatekeepers of diverse communities in the United Kingdom. She described gatekeepers as "holding [a] deep understanding of their (communities) social, cultural and political backdrop" who often mediate access to communities and potential research participants (p. 1501). Gatekeepers can be formal and easily identifiable if access is required within organisations, or they may take time to be discovered (Chilisa, 2012). I accepted suggestions from members of the advisory group. My practice experience and established professional relationships were also valuable in introducing the research to the field. I was familiar with the basic framework and daily operations of the Refugee and Humanitarian Program, and I understood the formal and subtle service protocols of organisations.

Further, I was known to key people within helping associations and gatekeepers of diverse African associations in Townsville, and I had previous collegial relationships with service personnel and gatekeepers in Cairns. I sent courteous emails of appreciation to personnel of resettlement and generalist services while indicating that I would be in contact later about Phase 2. I made a list of who I knew and who I could approach on each site.

I simultaneously set several processes in motion that conformed with ethics approvals. I established a University account with NAATI. The TMSG acting manager granted approval for bilingual workers to translate the flier into four languages: Sango, Swahili, French, and Kinyarwanda. I accepted a recommendation for a change in the flier's wording from "I would like to have a discussion" to "I would love to talk with you." A senior staff member at a service volunteered for a trial interview based on her personal experience of resettlement as a migrant and her extensive experience as a practitioner.

A research kit of information (the fliers, information and consent forms, prompter question list, a world map, a notepad, and an audio recorder) accompanied me everywhere. I initiated an information email or introductory call to a range of generalist education, housing,

health and mental health, NDIS, and women's services. I also contacted key personnel on councils and local academics. I did one major entry trip to Cairns for pre-arranged appointments with key personnel, some on-the-spot discussions, and cold calling. I also dropped fliers at public community notice boards in shopping centres, libraries, and into businesses or market stalls owned and operated by migrants or former refugees out of African countries on both sites.

I remained mindful that although men were named as community leaders, there were highly respected women leaders within these communities (Pittaway et al., 2016). I was conscious and sensitive to the dual or multiple roles and expectations of local bilingual people and consciously avoided pressuring them to recruit people on my behalf. I reached out to key contacts by telephone or cold calling for assistance in informing all eligible potential participants regardless of their preliteracy and levels of English literacy. These key contacts included the president of the Bright Horn of Africa in Townsville, the Cairns African Association, leaders of diverse African businesses, church leaders, and women's groups.

Documenting my entry processes helped me maintain a watchful, reflexive, and interrogative feminist eye and critical consciousness of my power as a researcher throughout all processes (Fook, 2014). Rodgers and Cowles (1993) emphasised the value of researchers being "compulsive" in recording "ideas, decisions, actions and responses" as part of "rigorous and credible qualitative investigation" (p. 225). Notes, memos, candid PhD journal entries, and random thoughts were tracked as I sorted and sifted my thoughts while working with and through the methodology (Hesse-Biber, 2012; Lokot, 2019; Watts, 2019). I also continued to update research notes on relevant literature to group sets in an EndNote library.

4.5.1 Recruitment of Participants

> Participant observation is particularly important in the beginning stages
> because of its role in informing us about appropriate areas of investigation
> and in developing a sound researcher-other relationship. (Glesne & Peshkin,
> 1992, p. 39)

In Phase 1 of this study, 20 women from four different countries in Africa participated in semi-structured, in-depth interviews. Two managers and four resettlement practitioners were interviewed in Phase 2. Recruitment processes for each phase were markedly different. The Phase 1 recruitment processes involved a range of strategies that were intensive, varied, and often spontaneous. Word-of-mouth snowball sampling generated some interest as did chance encounters in public spaces. Leaders and resettlement service personnel offered opportunities to introduce the research at community events or festivals. On occasions where I was unable to attend events I had been invited to, I interacted through social media. I was extended opportunities by the key settlement services to speak with women formally or informally in assembled groups (a craft group, employment training, a family fun day in a park, International Women's Day, women's conversation groups and an information session on domestic violence). By contributing to refreshment items on these occasions, I acknowledged "relational aspects, mediated through respect" (Bessarab & Ngandu, 2010; Chilisa, 2012; Redman-MacLaren et al., 2021, p. 9). In my PhD journal, I recorded women's appreciative response to my acknowledgement of the diversity of African countries as an experience akin to "a key turning a lock" with a group of women who responded eagerly and introduced me to other women (M. Davis, personal communication, May 20, 2021). On one occasion, a woman queried my name, as I had been introduced as "Meg" rather than my full name "Margaret" on the information sheet. I explained that I am often called "Meg." She

then shared the correct pronunciation of her name, which differed from how I had been introduced to her. I adopted the habit of checking name pronunciation with women as a demonstration of courtesy. In some assembled groups, women raised individual and broad resettlement concerns. I responded in an understanding manner but explained that I could not provide direction to them in my role as a researcher. With their permission, I passed on their general area of enquiry to service personnel. In-person communications with some women were awkward and difficult due to varying levels of language and literacy. I followed up on individual expressions of interest in participation with one-on-one, in-person discussion by direct phone call, or through a NAATI-certified telephone interpreter in a three-way mobile telephone link. Although it was an awkward process via three mobile phones, the interpreter's assistance extended participation opportunities and was a vital step in developing trust and obtaining genuine voluntary informed consent (Hugman et al., 2011).

Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002) forewarned the likelihood of suspicion of feminist research, and there were incidences where I had to defend the women-only focus of the research with male leaders. At such times I discussed the project politely. I shared information gained from the literature review while demonstrating that most of the research about resettlement in Queensland was confined to the state's South-East corner and predominantly with males. I emphasised that I had a strong interest in supporting women who were sometimes isolated due to caring responsibilities. In one instance a gentleman, who was well known to me in my previous role, then offered to distribute some fliers and said that he would inform his wife. At several businesses, after similar conversations with managers who were male, I was introduced to female staff for assistance with informing and recruiting women.

4.5.2 Interview Locations

An interview site should offer a quiet, physically comfortable retreat of sorts that allows participants an opportunity to focus on their thoughts and escape the intrusion of daily life (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). I negotiated options of private, accessible, convenient, and available interview spaces in both locations for both phases of the research (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). In Townsville, I arranged access to venues including a church meeting room, my office at the university, offices at the TMSG site (for Phase 2 interviews), and my private home address. In Cairns, I arranged options for private spaces at the resettlement service, the local library, and an independent office space in the Cairns city centre.

4.5.3 Reflection on the Gatekeeper Role

It is doubtful that I could have accessed the women who participated in the study without the generous support, knowledge, and brokerage work of community leaders and resettlement service personnel across the region. After I acknowledged a community leader's assistance, a leader responded with "Ubuntu Meg, I am because you are." (leader, personal communication, August 24, 2021). It triggered my curiosity about Ubuntu and its application across the region. In my journal, I mused about the unique ambience and welcome of the different North Queensland locations; for example, "the gentle atmosphere of beauty," "posters in diverse languages" at some services, and "a space that breathes peace and hope." It prompted me to consider the value of space, environment, and welcome in locations where people resettle (M. Davis, personal communication, August 12, 2021). My experiences mirrored Bashir's (2023) who described gatekeepers' ways of knowing and doing and their understanding of norms and values of communities that can empower research.

Phase 2 recruitment involved directly contacting the six participants (two managers and four practitioners) in English by initial telephone or email contact, using scripts that had

ethics approval (Appendix E) and a follow-up supply of fliers for display in worksite

locations to recruit practitioners (Appendix G).

4.6 The Participants

Interviews were conducted in Cairns and Townsville. Twenty women engaged in the

Phase 1 interviews throughout 2021. At interview closure, gift vouchers were provided to all

participants out of respect for their time and contribution. One interviewee left without taking

her voucher, so I subsequently posted it.

Six people engaged in Phase 2 interviews that occurred in 2022. I made two interview

trips to Cairns for Phase 1 and one interview trip for Phase 2. One interview was rearranged

on the scheduled day as a Zoom interaction. Interview times in both phases varied between

45 minutes and up to two hours, except for two short interviews (30 minutes) in Phase 1.

4.7 Phase 1 Interviews

4.7.1 Interview Preparation

Use methods of gaining knowledge that are not oppressive … [researchers]

should continually develop a feminist critical perspective that questions

dominant intellectual traditions and can reflect on its own development.

(Acker et al., 1991, p. 133)

To assist my preparation for the interviews, I conducted a pilot interview with a

migrant woman. The pilot interview helped me ease my way into my new role as a

researcher, which was distinct from my past social work practitioner and manager role. From

the pilot interview, I learned to appreciate and take time explaining the meaning of

confidentiality to women who may well have "many reasonable concerns" about signing

official forms based on previous experiences of broken trust (Hugman et al., 2011, p. 666).

Therefore, I was careful in interviews to reassure participants that identifying information (birth dates, addresses, personal and family details, and dates of arrival to North Queensland) about themselves or family members would be protected. The pilot interview also prompted me to stress each woman's right to withdraw consent at any time during or after the interview. Additionally, the pilot interview highlighted the difficulty of asking more than one question in one sentence, which is particularly confusing for speakers of diverse languages (Birks et al., 2007, p. 152). The pilot interview reminded me to be responsive, encourage participants to tap into their experiences, and be attentive to their voices (Gilligan, 2015). I felt encouraged and better prepared for the interviews. The following discussion focuses primarily on the Phase 1 interviews with women. The Phase 2 interviews are discussed in Section 4.9.

4.7.2 Ceremony

As previously mentioned, Botswanian researcher Bagele Chilisa (2017) recommended initial ceremony within research as an Indigenous research paradigm to acknowledge the "relationships that people have with each other and the environment, as well as the moral and spiritual-based obligation that they have for each other, the community, and the environment at large" (p. 173).

I had no familial or cultural relationships with any woman participant in Phase 1. The four resettlement practitioners and two managers of resettlement services were known to me. Previous learned practices of cultural and relational respect, as part of TMSG policy, underscored my use of ceremony. I knew seven women quite well, and I had met or communicated by telephone with most other women during recruitment. I picked up three women from their homes, which initiated some social non-personal exchange. Before appointments, I either sat outside the interview room or building, or I walked out of the building or room to greet women. Walking together into the interview space acted as a type

of ceremony, which involved exchanging "hello," in English or in the appropriate language if known to me. Undoubtedly, I felt a little awkward, but an open smile and hand gesture of welcome helped ease mutual uncertainty. Sharing tasks of arranging chairs or preparing a cup of tea together were also forms of ceremony. I recall one participant sat down and had her lunch while I made a cup of tea. I had learned as a practitioner not to presume that humanitarian entrants could read a world map, so I avoided directly or immediately using the map for discussion. However, when opening up the world map for display at the commencement of interviews, or in responding to the map if displayed, some women voluntarily perused the map and pointed out countries familiar to them. I also shared the location where I grew up and pointed out the distance between my original home and the sites of Cairns and Townsville. Two women arrived in a vehicle driven by family members. One woman received a phone message within a minute of being seated. On reading it, she said that the family member (a male) requested to come in too. I explained that the interview was with her alone as it was focused on women. She smiled broadly. I offered to explain to her relative, but she said "No, I will text him," which she did immediately, and then of her own volition, turned off her phone. I anticipated that some women would be anxious. One woman stated immediately that she did not know me. I acknowledged with a smile that no, we had not met in person, and I had not been able to contact her for a prior discussion. I informed her that I had received a message from someone in the community (whom I named) who said that she had agreed to an interview and had passed on a text to her about the time. I assured her that there was no pressure for her to stay and briefly informed her of the aims of the research. Being an afternoon appointment, I commented, "I realise you may be tired," which she confirmed and she talked a little about her work. I offered to cancel the interview, or if she was interested, to arrange an alternative date and time. However, she insisted she was okay. I proceeded to gain her informed consent and we closed the discussion within an hour.

4.7.3 Informed Consent

Sharing my previous practice history and my reasons for doing the research was part of the ceremony. I then focused on discussing the consent form and took care to be explicit with details of confidentiality. I stressed to each woman that I could stop the interview at her request for any reason at any time. I invited women to read the consent form. On occasion, I read it out. Before signing, I said I could provide a photocopy (or screenshot) to the women after the interview. In interviews where an interpreter was used, I explained to the interpreter that I needed to be sure that the participant (by name) understood what she was signing. Informed consent included requesting permission to record the interview. I told each woman that I would be able to share a copy of the interview transcript or read it with her and that she could add to or change any information in it. I answered any questions women had about the research (How long will the discussion take? Will I hear back about the study? Will it make changes?). Once a woman verbalised consent and signed consent, I too signed the informed consent in front of her and provided her with a copy immediately after the interview.

4.7.4 Audio Recording

Taking reflexivity personally means reflecting critically on the consequences of your presence in the research process (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 158).

Nine women exercised their rights to deny consent to recording the interview. Non-consenting reflected these women's awareness of their power in the research. I consciously desisted from engaging in usurping their power by avoiding asking for an explanation. Three women volunteered that they were embarrassed by their level of English-speaking ability. On the first occasion of non-consent, I observed the woman's uneasiness with the recorder remaining on the small table that separated us. I pointedly unplugged and removed the recorder from the table and adapted that same procedure on further occasions as a matter of trust and a "collaborative interactional process" (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 159). In

one interview where informed consent, including consent to be recorded, had been finalised through an interpreter, I was conscious of the woman's non-verbal demeanour and her frequent glances towards the recorder. I decided not to use the device and verbalised my decision while asking the interpreter to translate. The participant visibly relaxed and continued to engage in our discussion. Women who did not consent to being recorded agreed to me taking notes as an alternative. I avoided taking notes verbatim so I could continue to be present to the woman. Some women monitored the notes that I took during the interview by either questioning what I had written or by asking me not to note some content.

4.7.5 The Interviews

After gaining informed consent from participants, I monitored myself to ensure a continuing trusting environment. I followed leads from women – be it through silence, observance of gestures, facial expressions, or tone of voice – to assess whether the participant wanted to talk or pause (Glesne, 1992). I did not rigidly follow the interview prompt sheet. I adapted my approach with each woman, sometimes clarifying demographics as they arose through discussion. I usually acknowledged that although the focus of the research was on women's experiences in North Queensland, I was aware that their former lives before coming to North Queensland had been disrupted and life as a refugee before arrival was often complex and difficult. Most women responded with a "thank you" or a nod and voluntarily shared details of their pre-arrival circumstances at that time or during the discussion. A few women were responsive to a broad invitation such as "Tell me about yourself" or "I am aware that you have been here for quite some time; would you like to tell me about life for you … beginning where you want to, either in Australia or before arrival?" Some participants preferred to be asked questions – a tendency described by Acker et al. (1991) as an interviewee striving to give the "right answer" or perhaps not valuing anything about their lives (p. 140). In this study, I conjecture that some women's preference for being led was

about self-protection and perhaps uncertainty about the research or uncertainty about trusting me as the researcher, and perhaps they were taking time to assess the value and relevance of the discussion to their lives (Block et al., 2013; Fonow & Cook,1991). One method I adopted often was funnelling; for instance, making the broad statement: "I am aware that some people have been waiting in camps or cities in neighbouring countries for a long time" or "resettlement may be different for everyone." Throughout the interviews, I used a probing soft manner, referred to by Minichiello et al. (2008) as a "nudging probe" that encourages a safe accepting atmosphere (p. 101). For instance, "Tell me more" or "Ah hah" or "Hmmmm" or "That sounds interesting." When a woman engaged, I followed her lead regarding what she decided to take forward rather than introducing a topic that could be uncomfortable (Minichiello et al., 2008). A hypothetical and informal prompt for women to imagine a best-case or dream scenario of resettlement generated the sharing of ideas for change and women's ideas of optimal resettlement experience (Bashir, 2023; Birks et al., 2007; Minichiello et al., 2008). I sometimes felt the need to check my understanding of women's statements due to possible language or contextual differences. Two interviews were a little stiff and unconnected. One woman had time constraints, and another had a small child with her. I have reflected on what I may have been able to do differently to put them at ease. In two instances, women voluntarily contacted me to add, change, or withdraw data from the interview; this is considered next.

4.7.6 Anxiety and Second Thoughts

Second thoughts, or reconsideration of interview contributions during or after interviews, is consistent with vulnerability issues in research with former refugees (Block et al., 2013; Hugman et al., 2011; Obijiofor et al., 2018). Two women were interviewed twice on their request. On the morning following the first interview, one woman sent me a text asking to see me before I wrote out what we had discussed and stating that she wanted to

change and add some information. I agreed immediately by text and offered to see her at any time that same day. She was worried that she had talked and talked unrestricted about herself and other family members without their consent and that she had overshared on some broader issues relating to her ethnic community group. I deleted the first interview from the audio recorder. She was happy to have another recorded discussion containing much of an edited version of the first interview. We then had an informal unrecorded chat over a cup of tea; during this time, I reminded her of available 24-hour counselling support. Another participant who requested a second interview (the scheduled time had been reduced due to interpreter access issues) did so on the basis that she had matters to discuss that she regarded as important and that "you need to know."

4.7.7 Listening

I was very aware that women may feel obliged to tell me a good or sanitised story of their resettlement (Mies, 1983). I endeavoured to demonstrate a primary focus of listening to participants. I scribbled quickly without looking at my page where practical. If I sensed a woman's anxiety, I read out what I had written. I circled phrases or used asterisks to emphasise comments and mark non-verbals or strong enunciations that indicated feelings. Infrequently, I requested a pause to write notes, which acted to affirm trust with people of lived experience as former refugees (Block et al., 2013). Women demonstrated their trust in me and the research process by requesting deletions from notes in transcripts. After the interviews, some women engaged in informal chats, including debriefing with me about any trauma that was triggered, despite my directions to appropriate services.

4.8 Interpreter Challenges

4.8.1 Accessing Remote Interpreters

> Working with interpreters in qualitative research is broadly acknowledged to
> have methodological implications. (Ingvarsdotter et al., 2012. p. 34)

My monolingualism and its power within the interview dynamic affected my need for an additional presence: an interpreter. The use of telephone interpreters for research is an emerging field in theoretical and methodological frameworks (Ozolins, 2011). Alexander (2010) discussed the difficulties of identifying and sourcing ethical and professional interpreting services in small regional areas. A Melbourne study by Yelland et al. (2016) noted women's strong preference for the availability of female interpreters in discussing sensitive personal health issues and noted that anonymity of remote interpreters prevented concerns of "personal information" becoming "community gossip" (p. 4). Ingvarsdotter et al. (2012) discussed the frustrations of being unable to use the same interpreter for all interviews in a study of health concerns in Norway. Berman & Tyyskä, (2011) and Chilisa (2012) contend that providing interpreters can offer inclusion to women who may otherwise not be consulted. Interpreters therefore exercise an important role and may affect power relations. They "are increasingly seen as cultural brokers who balance language proficiency with cultural knowledge to provide a meaning-based translation, with the best conceptual equivalence" (Sanderson et al., 2013, p. 12). Wong and Poon (2010) maintain that interpreters' knowledge of idioms can assist researchers to gain insight into political, historical, and social contexts of participants.

Optimising communications is a major concern in regional and remote areas, where limited access to appropriate interpreters is "inadequate in general health assessment, health literacy support and for sexual and reproductive health consultations and examinations of

former refugees" (Javanparast et al., 2020, p. 2). Some reports suggest that telephone interpreters offer comfortable anonymity (Tuteja et al., 2021). Remote telephone interpreters were accessed in this study for reasons other than accessibility. Erica Galvez (2009) recommended the use of telephone interpreters for interviews "in favor of less qualified in-person interpreters, whether they be family members, friends, or the casual bilingual staff" (p. 602). Similarly, researchers (Machin & Shardlow, 2018; Squires, 2009) recommend using remote interpreters to reduce feelings of intrusion or intimidation to the participant. The NAATI certification model includes a category for the "recognised practising" interpreter, which is described as being appropriate for "languages that are new to communities and for which there is no testing available" (NAATI, 2024, Overview section, para.1). The Sango language, which is one of the common languages of entrants from Central Africa to North Queensland, is an example of this level of interpreter certification at the time of the study. I accessed certified interpreters. The languages I needed to access were established during recruitment and included Swahili, Kiswahili, Arabic, and Kinyarwanda, which originated from women's home countries and their countries of displacement including Burundi, Rwanda, the DRC, Uganda, Zambia, Tanzania or Malawi and Central Africa and Chad.

On just three out of nine occasions, regardless of my pre-booking gender preference or on-the-spot requests for female interpreters, the majority of available interpreters were male. In the second instance where my request of a female was unsuccessful, I was informed by the Telephone Interpreting Service that if a request is "too particular" (specific gender plus a high level of certification), it is "virtually impossible" to fulfil the request (NAATI Telephone Interpreting Service, personal communication, July 21, 2021). Transcripts of interviews where these difficulties occurred included my comments such as "pre-booked interpreter was not available so relied on an available on-call interpreter (male)." When I offered an alternative date and time for an interview, participants preferred not to rearrange

another interview time. Participants preferred to proceed with male interpreters rather than arrange alternative appointment times. I assumed that they were accustomed to the difficulty or felt it impolite to refuse to use a male interpreter. On reflection, I have questioned if this assumption reflected researcher power and if I should have explored it further. The limited availability of certified female interpreters in the language of humanitarian arrivals is not uncommon. It is affected by the disadvantages of being a woman in a caregiver role, limited access to education, and limited English lessons before and after arrival (Pittaway, 2004). After arrival, the BNLA study (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017) focused on three waves of arrivals, including migrant women, and reported that "some women do not look to participate in English study until five years post arrival when the family as a whole is settled" (p. 25).

4.8.2 Managing Interpreters During Interviews

Accessing interpreters in North Queensland is often difficult. Using interpreters was a learned process for both me and the participant, and it was useful to discuss how to work with interpreters after the participant consent process and before interview commencement. Berman's study (2011) noted the feminist researcher's use of reflexivity in managing the role of interpreters in research and in making their role visible. Squires (2009) recommended that researchers adopt a partnership style with interpreters. Alternatively, Ingvarsdotter et al. (2012) suggested a style that invokes a balance between verbatim translation that may result in a flow of words without surrounding context, and requesting an interpreter for some explanation of context, which may be perceived as an "intrusion of the interpreter's understanding" (p. 35). I took up a middle position. I initially briefed the participant and interpreter about the research and discussed how to work together. I informed the women to raise any interpreter concerns throughout the interview. This directive had to be interpreted to the women and was prompted by the comment of Pittaway & Bartolomei (2014) that

"refugees are not stupid and have a very clear analysis of their role in the research industry. They also exercise their power and agency" (p. 156). I noted the certified interpreter's number in those interviews where women seemed relaxed and requested that same interpreter in future interviews. One participant complained about the slowness of one interpreter's responses who, when queried, explained that he kept notes during the exchanges and then reviewed them to assist in getting the interpretation correct. During another interview, the interpreter suggested he was not needed. However, the woman informed him (in English) that she felt more confident having access to language support and stated that she would request assistance when needed. On one occasion when I knew the interpreter, I informed the participant and offered to arrange an alternative interpreter, but the woman said she did not mind. Another interpreter (male) informed me:

> An interpreter who is comfortable and has a good command of the language makes a lot of difference. I have a lot of experience; I've been doing it for 16 years and context matters; context matters for me. (Interpreter, personal communication, September 3, 2021)

I am reluctant to suggest that the use of male interpreters, albeit distant interpreters, was free of the influence of male power. It is possible that using male interpreters limited or precluded the women's sharing of some experiences, such as disclosures of traumatic refugee journeys, sexual assault, and emotional impacts of loss of family. (Au et al., 2021; Tuteja et al., 2021). However, in interviews where I used interpreters, some women did share incidents of trauma. As discussed, women asserted their rights if they were unsure or unhappy with interpreters. Occasional difficulties, such as disconnection due to loss of battery charge to the interpreter's mobile, were managed by the participant and me sharing a cup of tea, looking at a world map or exchanging family photos on our mobile phones.

The need to protect participant anonymity is paramount. During interviews, the initial use of ceremony and respect, and use of an interpreter throughout all stages of consent, laid the groundwork for trust. Other strategies of briefing the interpreter, and encouraging women to exercise control over interpreter contributions, created a collaborative working relationship in the majority of interpreter-assisted interviews. Some women controlled, queried, or confronted interpreters. Some had discussions with them. I am confident that most women trusted me throughout all interview stages, and they cooperatively managed an outer regional challenge of access to accredited remote female interpreter support.

4.9 Phase 2 Interviews

Informed consent forms for all interviewees were signed and emailed to me before the Phase 2 interviews. I acknowledged the signed consent and double-checked consent before the interview's commencement. Phase 2 participants all agreed to be recorded with an understanding that the recorder would be turned off at their request. The recorder was turned off frequently. My insider knowledge of organisation contexts across the region – particularly in one site – added a layer of complexity due to my role change from working within a resettlement service to emerging as a researcher. Prior preparation of reminder Post-It notes to myself helped me monitor myself, our interview discussion, and my status during our discussion.

4.9.1 Ceremony

Knowing all participants eased the ceremony of interviews. In two interviews, I acknowledged recent community distress that had affected changes to interview arrangements. Occasionally, the interview was delayed by initial discussions that went beyond pleasantries of re-acquaintance and verged on debriefing. I managed debriefing by listening with no direct comment on any details, or with vague responses that acknowledged

difficulties and stressors within social service settings where there are always pressures of timelines and accountabilities. I also checked on the availability of support for the participant. Once I was assured that the participant had access to support, I suggested interview commencement.

Our shared affinities with facing challenges influenced participants pre-supposing my knowledge. During some interviews, I observed some stiffness in my manner as I was trying too hard to be formal and avoid familiarity. I consciously relaxed my facial expression or tone and refrained from responding to subtle invitations to comment on service organisational matters.

My extensive practitioner experience helped me to understand the contexts of program demands and in-house operational acronyms and services. I was also sensitive to nuances of service relationships across the region. However, my experience intruded into the interview space marked by comments of "you know, Meg" or "I don't need to tell you." I tried to disengage using probing responses such as "I would like to hear your understanding," "not necessarily," or "well … it's been some time … I'm out of touch … can you tell me more?" Glesne and Peshkin (1992) refer to "over-identification" when interviewees assume that the researcher knows the answer (p. 99). One participant suddenly understood, in response to my continued probing, and verbalised: "I just realised Meg, that you can't answer these questions yourself!" I was also aware of participants wanting to assist me with the research.

Across both phases, the processes were comfortable and engaging and provided rich content. There was one interview by telephone and one by Zoom connection. However, my engagement with all participants was evident by their enthusiasm, as expressed emotively through varying tones of voice, and by participants asking for time to think, their frequent pauses, or by my checking verbally if they had any queries.

4.10 Transcribing Interviews

Aiming for accurate transcription is complicated when the language of the participants does not match that of the researcher. Translation into English (assuming this is the language of the researcher and the ultimate report) can be done during the interview, later during transcription or even later during analysis and write-up. Each of these options brings risks of distortion, and the first can be disruptive to the flow of the interview. There are few guidelines to follow here, but the usual approach is to translate as closely as possible to the intended meaning – when words or idiomatic phrases do not translate, leave them intact … and explain their meaning in brackets or footnotes. (Padgett, 2017, p. 148)

Transcribing was a labour-intensive and time-consuming task. It was humbling and rewarding, and it provided an invaluable process of gaining insights into participants' lives. Similar processes of transcribing were used for each phase. Handwritten and audio records from interviews were transcribed verbatim over many hours. I valued listening to audio recordings away from my desk and computer to reflect on the mood of exchanges with participants. There were moments of frustration when I was aware that "I didn't pick up on that!" During transcribing, I often gained an acute sense of participants pausing and deliberating before verbalising a response. I included pauses and any notes relating to participant–interpreter–interviewer contributions during the interviews as important considerations during each analysis stage.

Machin and Shardlow (2018) and Nasri et al. (2020) recommend the visibility of interpreters in transcriptions to inform an analysis. Thus, in checks of interview transcripts with women, I marked interpreter contributions while noting any interactions and associated

observations (Berman & Tyyskä, 2011; Ingvarsdotter et al., 2012). I de-identified individual and family members' names referred to by Phase 1 participants. I assigned pseudonyms to transcripts of both phases and similarly de-identified any names of their colleagues within any service. I also conducted an overview memo associated with each transcript from notes I had relating to recruitment and ceremony in addition to memos documented throughout interview arrangements, ceremony of the interview, and overall reflections.

4.11 Transcript Reviews

Nine Phase 1 participants reviewed the transcripts. I used diverse strategies to encourage review opportunities for these participants. For example, I phoned each participant twice, and for participants who requested a telephone interpreter for the interview, I used interpreters to text or speak directly to them. All participant transcript reviews are summarised in Table 4.1. In particular, the two women who met with me in person were rigorous in going through transcripts.

Table 4.1

Participant Transcript Reviews

Engagement with transcript review	Participants ($N = 20$)
Agreed to transcript review	5
Did not attend in-person review	3
Attended in-person review	2
Requested that transcript be emailed	4
Requested that transcript be posted	1
Non-responsive to phone call or text	5

Note. Nine participants were interviewed with an interpreter. These interviews were recorded and transcribed.

I primarily changed the transcripts to de-identify references to locations or family members. This de-identification was prompted by participants' fear of being identified and fear of reprisal if a comment seemed to be critical of either a place or a person. I made thorough notes of these discussions in a general form without obvious linkage to any one interview. These notes also contributed to the analysis of the data. Some changes to the content and my understanding of meaning were made. In these conversations with women, I considered some content as meaningful for background context as well as for interview content. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that this strategy contributes to the trustworthiness of the data. One participant requested that her repetitive statements be deleted but agreed to leave them in after I explored with her if her repetitions reflected her depth of feeling about the matter at hand. Reviewed transcripts and audio records of all interviews for both phases were uploaded to NVivo 12, a qualitative data software program used to store my transcripts. The demographics of participants were recorded on a spreadsheet and uploaded to complete a case component in NVivo. I completed memos in NVivo and consulted transcripts throughout all data analysis (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019).

All participants in Phase 2 reviewed interview transcripts by email. They were finalised with a follow-up courtesy phone call. Participants were also assigned a pseudonym. All data from each phase were uploaded to NVivo and identified in separate folders. Codes were allocated in NVivo as determined by respective phase analysis processes. I did not use NVivo querying functions. Finally, the associated memos were written in NVivo.

4.12 Data Analysis

Making your data speak, even when you are drawing on the exact words of the researched, is a creative process of imagining gendered social existence. However closely you aim to represent and respect your research subjects,

human life is so complex and multifaceted that researchers constantly have to

make decisions on selecting, refining and organizing their perceptions to avoid

drowning in data. (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 15)

As an emerging researcher, data analysis was initially overwhelming because, as

Judith Spiers said, during a webinar for the International Institute for Qualitative

Methodology (2019), "it just isn't linear" (21:12). I prepared for the analyses of each phase

separately in different periods and used different analyses. Common initial processes

included re-listening to original recordings or re-reading original notes and side memos, as

advised by an unknown Native American, cited by Jamake Highwater and recorded in

Peshkin (2001): "you must learn to look again, with your eye at the very edge of what is

visible … you must learn to look at the world twice if you wish to see all that there is to see"

(p. 238). Similarly, Padgett (2017) recommended "reliving the interview" (p. 145).

4.12.1 Phase 1

Data gathered from Phase 1 participants were analysed using the thematic model

(Clarke & Braun, 2017). Spreading out the codes and related quotations on Post-It notes

provided a bigger visual picture and aided my immersion in the data. Engaging in an iterative

process with supervisors and the advisory group during the analysis process provided some

measure of external "critical consciousness" of my understanding of this data (Ramazanoglu

& Holland, 2002, p. 119). I consciously asked "What am I learning? What are the data telling

me?"

I used the memo function of NVivo to record reflections and to assist me in repetitive

interrogations of all transcripts; noting intonations, pauses and expressions of participant,

interpreter and myself (Minichello, 2008). I referred to theories and literature (Bigby, 2015;

Nguyễn-Nalpas, 2023). I formed initial codes assigned to transcripts and progressively sorted,

defined, and refined codes using Post-It notes. I gained what I called a helicopter view of data

from each phase – more aptly described by Maher and Tetreault (2001) as the

"kaleidoscopic" view (p. 24), and I drew mind maps and constructed matrices to enrich my

understanding of themes and concepts. More than one narrative emerged from the data. I kept

a close eye on my thinking and my inclination to impose my opinions, and to try and ensure

that women's voices directed the assembly of the data (Glesne, 2016; Padgett, 2017;

Piantanida & Garman, 2009). I literally walked through the data, first laying it on my floor

and then progressing to tape it to what I called the women's wall or philosopher's wall. I

retained the life and integrity of participants' voices through discursive interaction with

literature (Piantanida & Garman, 2009). I also wrote reflective memos as I coded to monitor

my interpretations.

4.12.2 Phase 2

The manager transcripts were not analysed thematically due to the small sample size

and the importance of ensuring anonymity and avoiding an evaluating stance. Rather, their

responses to questions inform a de-identified composite narrative account of manager data as

part of findings (Chapter 8).

I used episodic profiling – suitable for a small data size – as the primary method of

analysing Phase 2 data from resettlement practitioners (Maietta et al., 2021). I initially

documented an overview of each interview with notes of interview interactions and reactions

that may signal insider bias. I read through each transcript and highlighted powerful

quotations that were "present to the text," and on occasion, I highlighted additional

quotations that I had missed in the first review (Maietta et al., 2021, p. 2050). I created an

inventory of quotations associated with each transcript. Moving through the list, I inserted a

reasoning alongside each quotation. Selecting the quotations based on the documented

reasonings. I then colour-coded them into three categories: X being a potential theme, topic,

or heading; V being a quotation that may be part of a cluster under initial topics; and Y for quotations that may reflect a learning based on my researcher insider–outsider position.

I visually sifted and connected emerging themes of episodic profiles. During this process, I monitored topics that seemed to drive participant experience and highlighted turning point quotations that affected my way of perceiving data. Positioning themes on large Post-Its assisted my consistent engagement in a reflexive process as I considered why I had highlighted particular sections. I followed my review with a mind map of some emerging topics, adapting the process that I had used with Post-It notes and mind maps in Phase 1. Mind maps then informed a large poster matrix that informed my analysis and findings.

During the analysis of both data sets, the EndNote library, layered theoretical foundation, and literature review enriched my understanding of voices and enabled connections of data within and across each phase.

4.13 Reflections: Trustworthiness, Rigour, and Limitations

> Research should contribute to women's liberation through producing knowledge that can be used by women themselves; should use methods of gaining knowledge that are not oppressive; should continually develop a feminist critical perspective that questions dominant intellectual traditions and can reflect its own development. (Acker et al., 1991, p. 133)

Being known by key gateway personnel in both sites was invaluable when entering into the field. Attentiveness to researcher power and position in the interests of research rigour was named and considered in the planning of each phase. I consistently engaged in a reflexive process to actively monitor my responses and interpretations of any interactions that occurred between myself and all participants. In the following, I refer to key areas of reflexive consideration. Gair and Luyen (2017) maintained that "an empathic connection

between researcher, participant/narrator, writer and reader is a core precept of qualitative research" (p. 5). Sprague and Kobrynowicz (2004) contend that empathic connection can assist in bridging contradictory social locations of the subject and researcher, the outsider–insider, or the insider–outsider. My experience in the field contributed to creating an empathic comfortable respectful place and ceremony for women and for all interviewees to share their experiences. I was acutely aware of my insider-ness with the mangers and resettlement practitioners, as reflected in the following memo:

> I had a sense of accompanying participants on the journey they shared. But then I had to sit back and clear my mind of clutter; sorting and sieving through my biases. All participants detailed their vision, experience and their responsibilities of governance or direct service support provided across the region. Difficulties and triumphs of managing a region took me right back to my practice days! I appreciated the frankness and trust of participants as they shared their professional view of strengths and needs of former refugee women from Africa. There were periods of unrecorded discussion at the request of participants or at my discretion. (M. Davis, personal communication, August 15, 2022)

4.13.1 Addressing Inequities

I endeavoured to extend equal opportunities for every woman from diverse countries of Africa and for interested practitioners who met the study criteria across the two sites of the North Queensland region. My advisory group and key members of diverse community groups were valuable in recruiting women. I tempered potential coercion or a sense of obligation that women may hold towards gatekeepers by offering individual recruitment discussions before committing to interviews and again during informed consent processes. Interpreter

availability afforded opportunities for women whose voices may otherwise have remained silent to participate (Berman & Tyyskä, 2011; Chilisa, 2017; Sanderson et al., 2013). I also responded affirmatively to women who requested an alternative or additional interview.

Some women managed the interpreter by discussing context, clarifying questions, or exchanging opinions. I mitigated risks of harm by actively encouraging a trusting comfortable atmosphere and remained responsive and sensitive to participants to develop and maintain trust throughout the research. I felt reasonably comfortable with my capacity to tune into potential triggers and signs of participant distress. However, I have to allow for the possibility of arrogance in making that claim, as it may be imbued with white privilege (BlackDeer & Ocampo, 2022; Fooks & Nyoni, 2020). In one interview where horrific circumstances were shared, my professional practice experiences prompted me to stop making notes. I put down my pen and devoted complete attention to the woman. At the end of her sharing, I reached out and placing my hand on hers, expressed regret that she had experienced such events. I noted broad circumstances only. When participants in either phase shared distressing events, I checked if support was needed and provided information on available supports, offering to personally link them to an appropriate service during the interview or at closure. On some occasions, the participant and I sat together over a cup of tea at the end of an interview and chatted about general non-personal matters. Some women may have arranged for follow-up support independent of my intervention. I maintained anonymity and honoured women's requests for transcript corrections or deletions throughout or after interviews, and I have refrained from documenting a list of participants with associated individual demographics. At times I have been distressed, perhaps traumatised by the details of events shared. In such instances, I have accessed professional support for vicarious trauma.

4.14 Limitations

A perceived limitation of the research could be that I did not record almost 50% (nine) of the 20 Phase 1 interviews. Yet not recording interviews, at the participant's request or my determination throughout some interviews, demonstrated trust and openness between myself and the participant. It reflected participant agency. Using remote interpreters – the majority of whom were male – is a considered limitation that risks data distortion, preclusion, and limitation. However, like Willey et al. (2020), I argue that without the availability of an interpreter, the voices of women who do not speak English would otherwise have not been heard. Also, I worked with women to jointly manage male dominance during interviews and noted comments on transcripts. I also emphasised my need for an interpreter due to my Eurocentric monolingualism (Ndhlovu, 2011; Ndhlovu, 2014). Accessing interpreters was a necessary part of the research design and was openly discussed as a unique challenge in research with former refugees in North Queensland and regional resettlement across Australia. I consulted with the advisory group to check my understanding of broad topics including contexts around some emerging themes during the analysis, the concept of living transnationally, and their understanding of the philosophy of Ubuntu.

A perceived limitation of Phase 2 could be my extensive working experience in the sector and my investment in the outcomes of the study for the region. However, I argue that my experience and knowledge of the sector and some participants, contributed to participant trust and a degree of freedom to expand on topics. It also facilitated dialogue without the participant bearing the burden of explaining service vernacular and acronyms. Managers and resettlement practitioners comfortably reviewed my interview transcripts and made changes.

As the researcher, I ultimately made decisions and choices about which issues to select; what words, intonations, pauses and silences influenced my understanding of issues; and how the data were interpreted. While I have truly tried to represent each participant's

experience from both phases, the overriding balance of power between researcher and participant was always weighted my way as the researcher. My personality, my experiences of living, and my previous professional experience are considered influences. To deny myself in the methodology would not be real, would not be feminist, and would undermine the validity of the feminist methodology and findings. Being aware of my own emotions during interviews and in listening and transcribing interviews was integral to the research process. I have prioritised trust, respect, dignity, and safety for everyone who engaged across this North Queensland research at every point of the research process.

This study was developed with a commitment to making research findings accessible to those who participated in the interviews. A research summary will be provided to participants. The summary will include an overview of the project and research findings in everyday language so that participants can see that their generous contribution of time and content is reflected in the study thesis. I am committed also to disseminating the research findings through future publications in scholarly books, journals, and presentations with interested community groups and services.

4.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter began by re-introducing the origin of the study and the research aim and questions. I described the qualitative research methods as supported by the layered theoretical foundation. I identified the study of resettled diverse African women's experiences as the major focus of the study with a second smaller phase that explored accounts by managers and resettlement practitioners to provide context for strengthening resettlement policy and service delivery across North Queensland. I explicitly discussed my research power and detailed how I responded to challenges. I described ethics procedures and challenges posed by my monolingualism and shared the methods I used to ensure women's informed consent and protected anonymity. I discussed the value of a pilot interview and the processes of accessing

remote interpreters in North Queensland. I declared my insider status in Phase 2 and shared how I managed over-identification. Finally, I reflected on participant motivations and the trustworthiness and limitations of all data.

An overview of the data and an introduction to the findings are outlined in Chapter 5. Firstly, I share the "Prosaic Poem" as a fitting tribute to the legacy of Micere Githae Mugo (12 December 1942–30 June 2023) whom I discovered in feminist literature of women across Africa. Micere was "a professor emerita at Syracuse University New York" (In memoriam: Micere Githae Mugo 1942-2023, 2023, p. 1). Micere was remembered as a Kenyan playwright who fled the political turmoil of Kenya in the 1980s, and who later returned to teach in Zambia and Zimbabwe. Micere was the first female Dean of the Faculty of the Arts at the University of Nairobi in 1980. Rose Sackeyfio (2023, para. 1) described Micere as an author, activist, and "one of Africa's foremost poets of distinction" whose poetry spoke for social justice and political feminist activism.

Prosaic Poem by Micere Githae Mugo

In commemoration of those moments

when we make prosaic statements

that end up sounding poetic and then

we are reminded that ordinary human

dialogue is often punctuated with poetry.

Refrain: One Day!

One day, we shall rescue our lives from precarious peripheral hanging on

and assume the centre of historical action. We shall explore every avenue

that runs through our lives and create life roads that know no dead ends,

extending them to the limits of human destination. We shall put an angry

full-stop to the negation of our human rights.

One day!

One day, we shall undertake a second journey along the bushy path of

denied human development, chasing away the wild beasts that prowl the

route of our narrow survival lest they make a complete jungle of our

already beastialized lives. We shall then cultivate a huge global garden

and plant it with the seed of true humanity.

One day!

One day, we shall emerge from the wings and occupy the centre stage in full

visibility, refusing to be observers and understudies who wait behind the

curtain of living drama. We shall liberate the word and become its

utterers, no longer cheer crowds or ululators who spur on and applaud the

molesters of our affirmative speech.

One day!

One day, we shall explode the negative silences and paralyzing terror

imposed upon us by the tyranny of dominating cultures and their

languages of conquest. We shall discover the authentic voices of our

self-naming and re-naming, reclaiming our role as composers, speaking

for ourselves, because we too have tongues, you know!

One day!

One day, we shall make a bonfire of currently dismantling and maladjusting

economic structural adjustment programmes, then engage in the

restructuring process, producing coherence around our scattered daily

existence till it is full to bursting. We shall stop at nothing short of

holding the sun to a standstill until the job is complete.

One day!

One day, we shall move the sun of our existence so that it truly rises from

the east of our lives, reaching its noon at the centre of our needs. We

shall then release it to set in the west of our perverted and dominated

history, never to rise again until it learns to shine upon the masses of

global being, not only Islands of pirated living.

One day!

One day, we shall exterminate the short distance between the kitchen and

bedroom of our lives, storm out of the suffocating space between the

factory and the overseer of our exploited creative labour, paving a path that leads to

the buried mines of our suppressed human potential. We

shall walk it if it stretches unto eternity.

One day!

One day, we shall celebrate this earth as our home, standing tall and short,

boasting of the abundance and multifariousness of our fulfilled human

visions. We shall not look to the sky waiting for unfilled prophecies.

We shall upturn the very rocks of our enforced stony existence, converting

them into fluvial banks of life sustenance.

One day! (Mugo, 2008, pp. 66–67)

Chapter 5. Introduction to Findings

This chapter introduces the participants of each phase of the study. I also present the discussion and analysis of the Phase 1 (Chapters 6 and 7) and Phase 2 (Chapter 8) findings that address the research questions:

1. What are the resettlement experiences of refugee women from diverse countries of Africa into tropical North Queensland?

2. What are the experiences of resettlement practitioners with women refugees from diverse countries of Africa?

3. What are the implications of these experiences (women refugees and sector personnel) for resettlement service planning and delivery?

5.1 Analysis

I analysed each data set by discerning themes, including those I had not anticipated. I first position the discussion within the context of my layered theory foundation (Chapter 2) and reviewed literature (Chapter 3). New literature that is relevant to a particular finding is also included in the findings chapters. Chapter 6 focuses on women's pre-settlement experiences, including their lives before having to flee across borders. In Chapter 7, I present women's experiences of resettlement being "Life in North Queensland." Chapter 8 shares a broad account of the managers' experiences with coordinating the resettlement services of North Queensland before presenting an analysis of findings from resettlement practitioners. Finally, Chapter 9 provides the research conclusions and discusses the implications of the research for resettlement policy, social work practice, and human service practice.

5.2 Data Overview of Participants

5.2.1 Phase 1

The majority of women in my sample came from the DRC with the remaining participants being from Rwanda (1), Somalia (2), and the CAR (2). The distribution mirrors the demographics of humanitarian entrants across Australia between 2010 and 2022 except entrants from the CAR who are a recent offshore humanitarian arrival cohort from 2019 and 2020 (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020a, p. 19). Twenty women across North Queensland participated in the study. Their pseudonyms are Alzina, Axlam, Barkhado, Bisette, Claudine, Davine, Gracia, Gloria, Joyce, Kampire, Laura, Lisette, Makiese, Mylene, Pauline, Rosie, Sheera, Siyana and Tracy.

The de-identified participant demographics are summarised in Table 5.1. Of the 20 women participants who engaged in the study, two had been residents for 11 years, two for 10 years, one for seven years, and another for six years. Seven have resided in North Queensland for three years and another seven women have been here for two years. Nine women were married with children on arrival; one of whom is now living independently as a single woman with her children. Two were widowed before arrival, each with dependent children. Two women arrived as single parents of children. Seven participants arrived as members of their families of origin. On arrival, 13 of the participants were accompanied by between two to eight dependent children including young adults; in total, the participants had 60 dependents under the age of 18 (mean = 5). Two women each had eight dependent children. At the time of the interview, 19 participants (one unknown birthdate) were aged between 21 years and 52 years (mean = 34), three of whom were under 25 years. Three women identified as arrivals under the visa subclass 204 for Women at Risk. Other women were unaware of their visa number. Some women arrived with a capacity to converse in more than one language: the language of their home country and dialects or languages of the

country where they had been living as refugees before arrival. Across the 20 participants, nine languages were spoken: English, Somali, Swahili, Kinyarwandan, Kiswahili, Kirundi, Arabic, Sango, French, and one undisclosed language due to non-disclosure of country of displacement.

Women spent between two years and 17 years (mean = 11) in nine different secondary countries of displacement; with the majority being in Burundi. Other secondary displacement countries included Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania, South-East Asia, Rwanda, Malawi, Kenya and Chad. One woman did not declare where she had lived during displacement. Three women also described moving in a zigzag fashion between their home country to secondary countries and back to their home country before reluctantly accepting the need to register as refugees.

Table 5.1

Phase 1 Participant Demographics

Demographic	Variable	Participant number ($N = 20$)
Home country	The Democratic Republic of the Congo	15
	Rwanda	1
	Somalia	2
	The Central African Republic	2
Partner or family status on arrival	Married parent	9[a]
	Single parent (including widowed)	4
	Married with no children	0
	Single with no children	7

Demographic	Variable	Participant number (*N* = 20)
Age group	21–25 years	3
	26–35 years	7
	36–45 years	3
	46–52 years	6
	Unknown	1
Visa subclasses	204	3
	200–202	17
Period of resettlement	2–3 years	14
	5–7 years	2
	10–11 years	4
Years spent in displacement	2–8 years	5
	9–17 years	14
	Undeclared	1
Locations of displacement	Burundi	7
	Zambia	1
	Uganda	2
	Tanzania	1
	South-East Asia	1
	Rwanda	3
	Malawi	1
	Kenya	1
	Chad	2
	Undeclared	1

Note. One married woman is now independently living as a single woman with her children.

5.2.2 Phase 2

Of six Phase 2 manager and practitioner participants, four self-identified as first-generation migrants of economic or humanitarian visa types. The four resettlement practitioners had between five and 12 years of experience working in North Queensland resettlement (mean = 7). Their areas of expertise varied across social work, psychology, public health, casework, and community development. All practitioners spoke more than one language, including English and different African, Asian, and Eurasian languages.

The perspectives of managers from the Phase 2 are presented as a composite narrative that does not identify manager or site. The resettlement practitioner pseudonyms are Susan, Kerry, Lorella, and Jean. The resettlement practitioner locations are not disclosed to protect their identities and the identities of any entrants they referenced.

5.3 Positioning the Discussion

> The first premise of a feminist analysis is making links between the personal
> and the political. Similar to structural approaches to social work, this explains
> people's personal experiences as reflecting wider social and cultural
> conditions and, in the case of women, historically and socially structured
> gender power relations. (Weeks, 2003, p. 108)

Feminist wisdom guided my analysis of the data. Reinharz (1992) stressed the capacity of feminist research to reach across a perceived divide between the personal and the political, and they recommended that feminist researchers intensely study the cultural context of women's lives as a precaution against universalising women's lived experiences. Similarly, esteemed sociologist and standpoint feminist Dorothy Smith (1999) encouraged researchers to write about the way women's "everyday/everynight experiences" assist our comprehension and validation of women's experiences as they are lived (p. 31). I draw on

Collins' (2000a) theory of valuing women's wisdom of survival through intersecting oppressions across different realities (Section 2.3.2). I consider women's navigation of diverse power structures and processes throughout three life contexts: life in the home country before resettlement (Section 6.1–Section 6.3.2), survival as refugees (Section 6.4– Section 6.4.2), and life in North Queensland (Section 7.1–Section 7.3).

The cornerstone narrative that emerged from the Phase 1 data is of women constantly having to negotiate power through a maze of "social conditions within which experience is already embedded" (Thompson, 2001, p. 34). Negotiation and navigation of power are the hallmarks of women's experiences before and throughout their resettlement in North Queensland. Women's diverse experiences of being and belonging, that is, of being an insider or an outsider, were affected by personal, political, language, and geographical borders. I, on the other hand, am an insider to the everyday world of Australia and North Queensland, and with my practice experience as a social worker and manager of a resettlement service, I was an outsider to their lives, but also an insider researcher (Section 4.2.2). I strove to be attentive to power derived from my ontological whiteness, monolingualism, and monoculturalism.

I share participants' voices throughout the discussion of findings through three life contexts to reflect their tone and manner of response during the interview. These expressions ranged from vulnerable to bold, hesitant, angry, confused, humorous, anxious, hopeful, determined, and frustrated – along with claimants of justice. I share participants' voices verbatim to exemplify the emergent themes. On occasion, I provide a composite narrative quotation or blend specific information across individuals to avoid identification; this is achieved without affecting meaning or analysis (Mcelhinney & Kennedy, 2022; Nelson et al., 2014). To protect women's identity in North Queensland, in some quotations, I have included minor changes to grammar or bracketed general information to provide context (Bigby, 2015). I now share my findings across three chapters.

Chapter 6. Life Before Resettlement

6.1 Life in the Home Country

I now explore themes that emerged through the contexts of women's lives before resettlement firstly in their home countries and secondly as refugees in displacement after flight across borders. As discussed in the research methodology, I did not directly ask women about their lives before resettlement, as the focus of the research was resettlement experiences in North Queensland. Nivyabandi (2022), a Burundian woman who chose to be quiet about her life in Burundi before being resettled in Canada, reflected on the heartache of remembering:

> But you remain quiet, because there are no words to explain these mutterings
>
> in your veins. Because you should be grateful for being alive, even when your
>
> whole life burns. Because there is a certain indecency in not being grateful. In
>
> not acknowledging your fortune, the misery and fear of those who stayed
>
> behind, the kindness of your host country. (p. 660)

Remembering life before arrival in North Queensland differed for the participants. Not all women volunteered their previous life details. Five women shared their memories of their home countries of the CAR, the DRC, and Somalia. Women aged between 25 and 30 chose not to recall memories of their home country. On some women's requests, details were not recorded. Others had no recollection of their home country due to their age when they left. Some women weaved recollections of home countries through memories touched by the trauma of having to flee, and memories about how they ensured their own and other's survival as refugees (Kaplan, 2020). Others esteemed the African philosophy of Ubuntu as integral to the pre-arrival contexts of their lives.

6.1.1 Life Was Very Good

Young Davine's memory of her home country is one of a life of predictability

and rhythm:

> Life was very good. My father was a businessman and travelled a lot. We had
>
> a housemaid who came at nine o'clock in the morning to maybe two or four
>
> o'clock in the afternoon. The housemaid did cleaning, washing [by hand] and
>
> housework. My mother did the cooking. We had separate rooms … my father
>
> decided to get away from trouble. Here [North Queensland], we have a
>
> washing machine, my mother does the cooking and the cleaning, and we all
>
> help. (Davine)

Davine's story lauded her father who has driven family lifestyle and decisions,

including leaving the home country. There was a daily home routine shaped by sexual and

class division of labour with her mother being primarily responsible for preparing and

cooking food, overseeing home management with the assistance of a housemaid, and bearing

and rearing children. Davine noted changes in the material contexts of her mother's role in

their new household, and she noted the need for other family members to contribute to

household tasks in the absence of a housemaid. Although Davies and Graves (1986)

suggested that interconnecting global oppressions of race, class, and sex connect African and

Western feminism, the reality is that "white women are often partners in the oppression of

both African women and men" (p. 10). Discussing the growth of feminism across Africa,

Minna Salami (2022a) emphasised the dominance of Euro-patriarchal interpretations of

African country histories. She acknowledged that the nation-states of Africa have promoted,

and are continuing to actively promote, distinct gender roles that advantage men. Salami

further suggested that this practice of promoting male roles is justified by a rationale that it

strengthens countries' struggles for independence. However, she suggests that the practice undermines women's struggles for recognition and demands for justice. McFadden (Moreno & Pessoa, 2021a) and Salami (2022a) emphasise that feminism is not new to African countries, but it is embedded in their countries' struggles for freedom and that the women's role is minimised by liberal Womanist feminism.

Barkhado drew a picture of her life in her home country when comparing her previous home with her new house in North Queensland:

> The house we lived in was really a big house because we were living in the city. We had built a big house [with] a very big living room and a very big gate. In my house, the kitchen was very big. You can eat in it if you want and many people can work [in it]. But here … here it's really small. The thing I notice is um, that in many houses here, the kitchen is not really big (pause) no very small (pause) but it is still enough for us. (Barkhado)

From Barkhado's reflection, I pictured a comfortable income and a house where there is room for many people to meet, cook, share food, and interact communally. Barkhado's remembered comfortable home conjures images of life based around family and community. What I heard, too, was a hint of wistful thinking about how life may have been – but for experiences of trauma and loss. Her remembered images of life in her home country vie with images of refugee women out of Africa who are often depicted as being without means and agency. Reminiscent of the Ghanian poet Ama Ata Aidoo's previously documented essay "The African Woman Today" (1992), Ramsay (2020) questioned scholarship that rests on casting refugees as objects of humanitarian intervention, rather than as "actors within broader configurations of political economy" (p. 5). Gissi (2018), who explored connections between refugee experiences and policy making in her study with Syrian refugee women in Lebanon,

commented that "images of people fleeing conflicts, usually empty-handed women and children immortalized on their way to safety, have been flooding news reports and TV programmes throughout the twentieth century" (p. 539). She concluded that images of desperation may affect the world's perception and the women's wellbeing and capacity to move forward and create a dignified life. Barkhado's remembered life before her resettlement defies the images of desperation and poverty. Rather, she was a woman who had property and family and who engaged with the community. Political and civic disruption caused her to flee from her home. She drew on her skills to ensure the survival of herself and her loved ones before arrival in North Queensland. She arrived as a woman with agency and capacity to contribute to her adopted community in North Queensland.

Ife (2001), who stressed the need for social worker's understanding of human rights, also contended that images of refugees reduce their lives to ones of seeming helplessness without agency. He asserts the need for social workers to be cognisant of global neoliberal capitalism in countries and to be informed of the political, social, religious, and economic contexts of former refugees' lives.

6.1.2 Gratitude

Discussing her immediate environment and living circumstances in North Queensland triggered Barkhado's memories of life in her home country. When Barkhado compared the size of the kitchen in her North Queensland home with the previous one in her home, she finalised her statement with an assurance:

But it is still enough for us. (Barkhado)

Barkhado's immediate assurance of being satisfied with the housing provided to her, after reference to a small kitchen, borders on an apology. It is possibly affected by the power dynamic between me as a previous manager of resettlement service and researcher and

herself as a person with a previous refugee history of vulnerability (Block et al., 2013). Barkhado emphasised her primary desire for peace in her new life:

> When we get settlement and come to Australia … we don't worry about rent, we don't worry for life. We have our peace. We don't worry … so it's really different (pause) we get lots of opportunities here that we didn't have there. (Barkhado)

Ramsay (2017b), referring to studies across Uganda and Australia, argued that resettlement is conditional (not humanitarian) on former refugees demonstrating "suffering, subservience, and gratefulness" as a rite of passage to citizenship (p. 202). Barkhado's expression of gratitude may be motivated by needing to protect herself from other shared negative experiences of discrimination and abuse in the North Queensland community. She also shared how over time, and with patience, the exchange of meals, and mutual acts of kindness, she has "really good neighbours now."

Murray et al. (2022) discussed the explicit, expected outcome of integration in Australia's resettlement program as affected by the "white settler identity as dominant and superior" that puts extra pressure on women (p. 3). That pressure may have influenced Barkhado's choice to remain in the accommodation that was originally organised for her. Regardless of any discomfort experienced, Barkhado retracted her musings of "a beautiful house" in favour of her quest for peace, and she named having good and trustworthy neighbours:

> No … we can't move, [our] neighbours are really very important. If you don't have good neighbours, you can't live. (Barkhado)

Gratitude is a subtle continuing influence of the discourse of multiculturalism and another form of maintaining hegemonic whiteness (Babacan, 2006; Huynh & Neyland, 2020; Tascon, 2011).

6.1.3 Confronting the Past

Minna Salami (2022b) quoted Margaret Busby's editorial introduction to explain her search for feminist roots: "tradition and history are nurturing experiences for women of African descent. For without an understanding of where we have come from, we are less likely to be able to make sense of where we are going" (p. 685).

Siyana's experience of knowing her home country was quite different from Davine's and Barkhado's experiences. Siyana had to confront not knowing her country of birth. She was shocked when told by her family that the country she lived in was not her country of birth and that Australia was not the country identified by her family as their home country:

> I can't remember what happened to me because I was too young. No … I can't
> remember; I know what happened to me, I know that um I said [to my parent]
> "Oh! We are living in [location in Africa]. I was thinking I was born in here.
> But I was told "No (pause) you are not born here. You were born in [a location
> in Africa], so you are here as a refugee." I said, "Oh *okay*" … I said, "*Okay*,
> well, *okay*" (voice lowered and long pause). (Siyana)

When Siyana asked her parent about the possibility of returning to her home country, she was confronted with her parent's fear:

> "No – I'm scared to go back, so we will stay here as refugees." I said, "*Oh
> okay well, okay*" (quiet voice again and long pause). (Siyana)

I felt Siyana's astonishment that she was not born in the country where she was living, her struggles in having to confront learning that her parent experienced fear of returning to their home country, and her realisation that she and her family were living as self-described stateless refugees. Siyana later expressed a strong protective behaviour toward family members, which may be a response to hearing about experiences previously endured by her family in the home country. Kaplan (2020) considered trauma experienced by children and youth as "cultural dislocation" where meanings and values may be overturned or vary when confronted with a new language and cultural system (p. 242).

In Davine's and Siyana's experiences, I hear two young women sharing different knowledge sources and experiences of life in their home countries. Davine's strong memories and sense of security and connection contrast sharply with Siyana's ignorance of her home country and the shock she experienced in confronting her family members' past and anxieties. Mohanty and Martin (2003) suggest that moving through changing interpersonal and political contexts, and one's understanding of oneself through memories, home, and connections, involves "rewriting of self" (p. 104). Barkhado's, Davine's, and Siyana's starkly different experiences of their respective African home countries unravel the diversity of the lives and strengths of women – contrary to popularised media images.

Next, I introduce the topic of access to food as an issue that is pivotal to women's lives. Access to food and managing food supplies is a constant gendered responsibility of women across the three life contexts.

6.2 Access to Food in the Home Country

The politics of food is gendered at multiple levels. Firstly, food production, processing, and provisioning have been women's domain in the social division of labor (women grew food, cooked food, processed food, served food).

Women-centred food systems are based on sharing and caring, on conservation and well-being.

Secondly, corporate globalization driven by capitalist patriarchy has transformed food, food production, and food distribution. The control over the entire food chain from seed to table, is shifting from women's hands to global corporations who are today's "global patriarchs." (Shiva, 2009)

Shiva (2009) studied the effect of global patriarchy and capitalism on devaluing women's vital knowledge of seed management and agriculture. Women were consequently subjected to patriarchal domination of lands that contributed to populations of hungry people and mass movements of displaced people (Shiva, 2009). Steady (2014) described women's multiple roles in agriculture, forest management, and water supply management across Africa as a "double burden" due to the colonialist ruin of rural economies and patriarchal control of land (p. 316). Production difficulties, changes in economies, and political and civil unrest contributed to women's flight from unfavourable life conditions in the four countries that feature in this study. Dorothy Smith (2003) emphasised how thinking and worrying about feeding loved ones plagues women's work. Smith emphasised that although the work is intensive, it is so common that it is invisible and unacknowledged. Women in this study spoke often about hunger as it remained a primary influence over their work to ensure the survival of loved ones through flight and across borders. Their references to previous hardships were often couched in surprise at the range of foods on display in markets and stores in North Queensland. They occasionally referred to food they used to grow and would like to grow again.

6.2.1 Back Home We Had a Lot of Food

Rosie's recollections move from contentment and security of growing one's own food to a loss of control due to war in her home country:

> Back home we had a lot of food; all kinds of food you want. We had a cow, we had milk, but when the war is there you don't eat what you produce. Back home there was enough food but we were not able to enjoy what we grew because of war, because of lack of peace. (Rosie)

Rosie concluded wistfully that "my own country was good when there was peace" whereas Mylene remembered only hunger throughout her home country:

> There was a lack of food … just enough for once a day; the situation was very hard in my home country prior to leaving. (Mylene)

Rosie and Mylene's recollections reveal their experiences of powerlessness over wars in their countries and the effects of war on the material conditions of their lives. Sheera spontaneously remembered life in her home country, and its associations with food and family, when examining a map of the world:

> Culture is different in Australia: language, different food, some same food. In [location in Australia], we eat the same meat: beef, chicken, lamb. When I went to the seafood shop here, I was excited as I saw the same seafood as my mum and dad used to have … their original food from where they grew up and [location] we would visit (she pointed to a lake on the map near where her parents grew up). I was so happy to see that the same food was here … happy memories of childhood (nostalgic tone of voice); (some time was spent in silence looking at the map). (Sheera)

Sheera's memory conjured images of family gatherings and peaceful times in her home country, hinting at a loss of family and a life that she could not control. She was pleased to identify the similarities and differences of foods across the two continents of Africa and Australia. My study brings a new understanding of the central importance of access to, preparation of, and distribution of food in women's lives before resettling. I move on now to consider themes that emerged in women's experiences of crossing borders into life as a refugee.

6.3 Crossing Borders Into a New Life

It was home until I crossed the border, looked back at the green sliding into

red, and felt everything inside me falling apart. (Nivyabandi, 2022, p. 659)

Women described their various incidences of having to decide, or not having any time to decide, to leave their homes for an unknown future or leave their homes temporarily in the belief that they would return to life as they knew it.

6.3.1 We Had to Keep Fleeing

Rosie and her family reluctantly accepted refugee status after zigzagging between her home country and across borders before resettling in North Queensland. Women from each of the four countries represented in my study (the DRC, Rwanda, Somalia and the CAR) braved the retelling of their flight experiences and living with the consequences. As discussed in Chapter 5, most women in my study were refugees in displacement countries such as Burundi (the majority); others lived in Asia, Chad, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zambia for two to 17 years. Contrary to common media images, not all women travelled by foot. Some travelled in vehicles or planes.

Gender-based violence is a recurring theme throughout discussions on women's life contexts across borders. In sharing the women's experiences and acknowledging cautions by

Gatwiri and Mapedzahama (2022), I foreground and dignify women's strength throughout their journeys across boundaries and beyond. Trust in the research relationship was an important basis for Mylene to bear witness to her experiences. She volunteered her fleeing experience very early in the interview, declaring it to be important information that "you need to know." Her emphasis on my need to know resonates with a concept of "ethical loneliness" described by Stauffer (2015) as "the experience of being abandoned by humanity compounded by the experience of not being heard" (p. 9).

> My [loved ones] were killed. We had to keep fleeing. We fled and fled and fled. We fled because of the war … very difficult living in a war zone, hearing gunshots and a lack of food … just enough for once a day. The situation was very hard. (Mylene)

Mylene laid bare her fears for her life that pre-empted her immediate flight. She highlighted the threats of lurking violence against women during their flight that did not deter her determination to survive. She went on to describe atrocities endured at gunpoint during flight. She concluded with a statement of gratitude, blocking out those memories:

> We ended up in Australia and we are very grateful for that. (Mylene)

Her experience is echoed by other women in studies within Australia and internationally. Remembered experiences of rape, sexual abuse, and sexual torture are common across women's experiences of flight as a recurring theme of oppression experienced by women from the four countries featured in this study (Pittaway and Bartolomei, 2022). The UNHCR report on dialogues with women (2013) recommended "tackling impunity" of sexual gender-based violence experienced by women refugees across borders, as well as women displaced within their home countries (p. 19). The same report is hopeful that increased numbers of victim support units in countries of displacement will

gradually increase women's trust to report incidences of sexual gender-based violence, and to strengthen women's capacity to call men to account (UNHCR, 2013).

Barkhado's memory centred on her sense of a lack of choice:

> It wasn't at first what I wanted. I had to run somewhere. When I talked to people, they suggested we sell our house, and we flew to [location of displacement]. (Barkhado)

Joyce remembered having to flee with an older relative and another younger family member:

> I went to the camp as a young child. I was there for a very long time … many years. I was responsible for [family member]. It was very sad and really hard. A relative lived nearby. (Joyce)

Similar to Rosie's experience of zigzagging across borders, Davine mused about enduring life difficulties in a neighbouring country. After several unsuccessful attempts over four years to return and re-establish life in her home country, the family sought refugee status in a camp across a border and remained there while waiting for a longer-term solution:

> At first we did not register [as refugees] but after some time, my parents decided to register and we moved to a camp … life was very difficult. (Davine)

Kampire has no memories of fleeing. Rather, she drew on stories from her family and her recollections of fear, lack of power, and rights while surviving in a refugee camp for more than 10 years:

> Someone can come and say: "Today you are dying and if you don't run for your life you will die." (Kampire)

Her image of living constantly on the edge of fear captures the stateless, powerless life of a refugee where "men can do anything they wish to you":

> You used to have your rights and now you have zero rights. If you stand up at the house, for your rights … there is no rights to protect you; they can do anything they wish to you. That's what a refugee means to me in my years. Being a refugee is not a fault of someone; anyone can be a refugee yes … but what does it really mean? It means that you don't have rights at all. That is what I understand. (Kampire)

The legacies of colonisation, exploitation, and disintegration of political systems observed by Stearns (2012) in his history of the DRC, may differ across the women's four home countries and across the 10 (one undeclared) countries of refuge displacement that are represented in this North Queensland study. The strength of women and their efforts to address abuse is discussed on the Global Fund for Women website in a section on DRC women's groups who are speaking out about rape being used as a weapon of war and a constant threat to women's safety (Global Fund for Woman, 2015, para. 1). But the deep sense of powerlessness when fleeing their homes, and their accompanying fears for and experiences of surviving the atrocities of men's acts and threats of violence, pervades women's memories in this study. A few women were protected by their male spouse if he was present when they fled. The women hung on to their belief in their rights and continued to strive for them regardless of how and where they fled. However, patriarchy across systems of policy, economy, and legislation contributes to national and international conflicts (e.g., witness the current wars in Ukraine and the Israeli and Gaza communities) through which women are continuing to lose their lives and the lives of loved ones. Banwell (2014) recognised that if women are to achieve their rights, "hegemonic masculinity, along with

ideas about women and femininity need to be tackled at the meso and micro levels both within and outside" conflict zones (p. 54).

Flight across borders can include the shocking experience of loved ones being killed, losing loved ones when fleeing, and losing contact with family who may end up being scattered around the world simply to survive. The next theme I explore is the experiences of the loss of loved ones, which in this study of women's resettlement experience, has haunted women's lives before they travelled across borders to North Queensland. Sustaining hope for a reunion in resettlement is a primary motivator to survive refugee life along with recreating independent lives on arrival.

6.3.2 Loss of Loved Ones During Flight

Women shared the enduring heartache of losing spouses, children, parents, or siblings during their flight. These family members may either never be found or have been located years later when everyone's lives have changed. Lisette's memories are of losing contact with some family members. They were either living in different areas of her home country or other countries at the time of war. She fled with those who were in the same place:

> We had no idea where all the kids lived, so, on the [UNHCR] refugee card
> … you know… the card for refugees. There were just [number of children].
> One was already married somewhere and others … well (pause) we didn't
> know. (Lisette)

Not knowing each other's survival, or indeed their whereabouts, thwarted all family member's opportunities to resettle together in Australia. Although some family members have now re-established contact, their relationships are marred by their diverse experiences of separation, survival, and current living circumstances.

Bisette remembered losing a child when fleeing the DCR. Her arrival in North Queensland sparked expectations of a reunion:

One was separated in [home country] due to flight. He is now [age] and lives now in [location in Africa] I am sure it will happen (long pause). We completed forms so now we are waiting. (Bisette)

Sheera laments losing contact with family due to war and I sensed her hope of getting family information from people in her home country who have resettled in other Australian locations:

 In [country of displacement], I was sad. My children had no aunty, niece, grandparents, it was very sad. I would tell them stories of my family. I have no communication with family … with siblings. But now in some communities within Australia I am starting to find out a little. People ask each other: "What about so and so?" (Sheera)

Long-term effects of losing family members during flight may result in families being scattered across the world. Zigzagging in and out across borders as refugees, while working to ensure the survival of herself and her loved ones, nurtured Sheera's expectations of increased capacity to support her loved ones and reunion soon after arrival into North Queensland. Women in the study continue to care and assume responsibility for other family members according to gender and traditional systems of caring and family life. It is not regarded as a burden, but rather, I contend, reflective of women's gendered role as carers and a commitment to the philosophy of Ubuntu as introduced to me when entering the field of research in Section 4.5.3: I am because you are.

Barkhado remembered her reluctance to relinquish hope of returning to her country, despite the circumstances that forced her to leave. Remembering her journey, and musing on

the uncertainties of being in limbo as a refugee in a foreign location, kindled her empathy for resettled families in North Queensland who worry for their relatives:

> Where I was, wasn't my country… it's different, not the same. We didn't have settlement in [location of displacement]. You just run from your own country … you come to another country and you are still waiting to get to another country if you are lucky – 'cos if you are not, you may stay forever; you don't have what you need … you may live without hope. (Barkhado)

The mourning for lost family members during flight remains an ongoing theme throughout displacement and life in North Queensland. Having discussed how women crossed borders to different countries for indeterminate lengths of time, I now share women's survival as refugees before they arrived in North Queensland. Again, this section is shared by viewing women's lives as Mbembe's concept of a "life world" existence where past, present, and future experiences are entanglements that collide during everyday life (Asante, 2007). The next theme, of navigating for food across borders, picks up the integral theme of accessing food that was discussed within the context of life in the home country. It emphasises women's roles as caregivers and connects also with their survival and later commitment to resettlement while supporting those left behind and hoping for family reunions in resettlement.

6.4 Survival as Refugees in Countries of Displacement

In Chapter 3, I quoted Tom Peyre-Costa's concern about hunger across African nations that host millions of displaced people (Morrow, 2022). Hunger and associated risks of seeking food is a dominant theme throughout the next life context of women's survival as refugees. Nelson et al (2014) used "a fictionalised composite of many real experiences" to inform their position on the importance of praxis in social work (p. 568). McElhinney and

Kennedy (2022) reflected on the emerging value of composite narratives in medical education. They suggested that it has capacity to appreciate individual experiences through a constructed combined story that protects participant anonymity. I sought to unmask women's experiences while simultaneously maintaining the dignity and anonymity of participants. I compiled the gathered voices of nine participants to form one quotation. It represents women's complex and frayed experiences of seeking food to ensure survival of those in their care in life threatening circumstances across different locations of displacement (rural, urban fringes, and UNHCR camps):

> The food they are giving you there is sometimes expired. You might find maggots in the maize flour. It is just flour, oil, salt, and lentils (pause) that's it, and there is not enough. Like maybe I may eat just once a day. It was very hard (pause) to have wood to cook (pause) you know, sometimes it's too far and you can't go there (pause). It's not safe. You find that kids get raped for food (long pause). You make porridge every day (pause) one week, one month, a year, five or maybe 10 years: porridge, porridge; every day (pause) porridge, porridge. People fight for food (long pause). Today you will eat, tomorrow you will not. Life was very discouraging when you don't have enough food and you think about your future (long pause). It was a miserable life. Here [North Queensland] there is no stress to access food for children. It is just a miracle to see people here healthy and happy. (Kampire, Lisette, Laura, Joyce, Siyana, Gloria, Tracy, Rosie, and Claudine)

The risks of starvation, risks to health, and risks to the safety of both women and those in their care, have been influenced by the global market and competing effects on countries

where women have fled from and fled to. (Harvey, 2007; Mlauzi & Small, 2019; Moyo, 2009).

6.4.1 It Was a Miserable Life

Women from all four source countries of the study (the DRC, Rwanda, Somalia, and the CAR) shared their difficulties experienced when accessing food and maintaining livelihoods across all displacement locations. Women's gendered experiences of accessing food, as shared in this study, have occurred before current regulations within the UN *Global Compact on Refugees* (2018), which recognises safety concerns for women in accessing food. Many of the displacement locations (Asia, Burundi, Chad, DCR, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia) are under-resourced and unable to support refugees, and they still experience civil and political unrest. These locations may also bear the effects of the agricultural impact of globalisation previously outlined by Shiva and Bedi (2002). Ramsay (2017a) reported stories of women displaced in Uganda who believed that food had been poisoned at the behest of military agents. The above composite quotation of the nine women's voices articulates the risks women (and children) endured in navigating the minimal amount of food needed for survival.

Radical feminism acknowledges the developing global structures of power that protect the male dominance of power and impugn men at every turn at the expense of women's agency, health, and safety (De Beauvoir, 1989; Firestone, 1970; MacKinnon, 1989; McLellan, 2010). Kampire's experience of being denied access to food is an example of the effects of globalisation and neoliberalism and also the misuse of power by men and associated impunity. The hopelessness experienced by women and yet their agency to fight for survival breathes through her words:

Someone can decide (pause) maybe a UNHCR worker, can decide that you cannot get food. It happened to my family for six months and you cannot get food. So you have to beg people until maybe when you are going to meet with another officer or an immigration officer then you will tell them. And it is not easy; you have to have certain ways; you have to almost sleep outside the UN office and wait to see if he/she [someone you can trust], comes in and when he/she gets out from the car you will get a chance to see them. And they don't come regularly; they will just come once every three weeks. (Kampire)

Pauline discussed continued living in fear in an urban setting and supporting others after their flight:

I suffered with my husband. We spent nights without eating. There was a war and there was killing in the other suburbs, so everyone fled and our relatives came to our place. Then we welcomed people who were running away from the war and sometimes there were 30 people living in the house with two bedrooms. (Pauline)

Gloria shared the stress related to providing food but also simultaneously prioritising children's access to education while being displaced in an urban centre:

At the time, in [location of displacement], children were studying, but it was a lot of stress to look for money to pay for schools. (Gloria)

Neela shared some details of life as a refugee in an urban area after her previous, more comfortable life:

It was a hard life (pause) while you are in that country, even though you have a particular level [previous lifestyle and education]. You struggle to have a job

168

and you struggle to pay your rent and to educate your children and also to

have food. (Neela)

As determined through the literature, the primary motivation for women in displacement is ensuring the survival and safety of themselves and loved ones in their care (Bartolomei et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2022). Prior to being a refugee, Sheera and her family had lived well through a business operation. As refugees, they continued to strive to ensure their survival. Sheera explained:

There is a lot of stress on refugees from within the host country and the

camp. You can't do anything, despite our [previous] business knowledge

and experience. But it was controlled by the government there and they

wanted money to be paid to them and if we did that we would get very, very,

little money. So we worked independently but were punished by [unnamed

authority]. Eventually, the UNHCR intervened. My [family member

died] (Sheera)

Women lived with risks within the country of displacement. There was no certainty of safety in the host country. There is a subtext to Sheera's account that was not addressed. My conjecture based on the literature is that it was Sheera's persistent advocacy to UNHCR that ensured her family's survival of intolerable conditions and paved the way to resettlement.

Laura had lived on the fringe of a large city in a camp-like setting. She contrasted her present experiences of feeding her children with her previous anxiety, guilt, and fear:

Here, we've forgotten that hunger. (Laura)

As previously discussed, Shiva and Bedi (2002) contended that women and children bear the toll of escalating hunger in the world caused by corporate agriculture that has forced

169

small farmers out of the market. Michel Chossudovsky added to that understanding when cited in Hawthorne (2002) by discussing the effect of globalisation on the collapse of civil and economic institutions, livelihoods, and food supplies. In 2018, more than 2,000 Congolese from a Kiziba camp in West Rwanda (operated by Russia) protested in response to a 25% reduction in supplies by the World Food Bank. Eleven people were shot dead by Rwandan police (Sandner, 2018). Memories of navigating for food in locations of displacement remain with women as they live in North Queensland. These memories can contribute to distress during resettlement if they have family members remaining in displacement situations.

The next theme spotlights the sexual gender-based violence experienced by women as they fled atrocities but risked rape and other forms of sexual abuse during and after their flight. Violence does not cease after crossing borders into Australia.

6.4.2 Gendered Violence as Refugees

If you are a woman it is the worst place you could wish to be. (Kampire)

The struggle for humanising women as thinking people, and not as chattels available to benefit men's lives with impunity, is central to radical feminist theory (Thompson, 2001). The resettled women participants spoke boldly of women's endurance of sexual gender-based abuses and living in fear across all life contexts due to male sexual abuse. Romero (2021) reported an online discussion where refugee women around the world shared the disappointment and frustrations of continued experiences of violence across borders. This online discussion was co-hosted by the Global Independent Refugee Women Pleaders and the World Refugee Migration Council (Romero, 2021). The reported abuse did not stop after crossing Australian borders.

Conflict seems to escalate men's belief in their absolute supremacy and the right to rape and abuse women with impunity. Pittaway and Bartolomei (2022) commented that despite increased international awareness of the vulnerability of women refugees, the UNHCR is still not fully and effectively able to protect women. Eckert and Hofling (2008) stressed the importance of breaking the silence around the consequences of "endemic levels of sexual violence and women who bear children of rape" in conflict situations, to ensure appropriate support for women, girls, and their children (p. 4). The women who resettled in North Queensland have not been exempt from struggles affected by men's violence. Lisette's vivid memories exposed her fear:

> Oh god! It was a horrible life. Sometimes you spend all night sitting, cos you say [to yourself]: if I'm sleeping, someone will come tonight. Sometimes there was the girls who were getting pregnant (long pause) you know, selling their body to (pause) to get some financial. Even the adult mature woman they do that; they sell their bodies. It doesn't mean they like it, but it does mean they want to save their children or their siblings. But the girls who were doing that they get some HIV … that is the life in the camp. (Lisette)

Lisette's recollections emphasise the anxiety associated with women's powerlessness and sensitivity to women engaging in survival sex to protect children (Bartolomei, 2009).

Kampire drew a desperate picture of women living under the constant foreboding power of men and recognised perpetrators of violence in the camp:

> So a refugee camp is a place where you find other people there, ummm, people who have killed other people (pause) people who are running away from war. They are there. So it is hard to tell which one has good intention, or who has been in the war or who has caused the war even. They are all there. If

you are a woman it is the worst place you could wish to be; you are worried, you don't really want to interact with the men or do anything with them. If you are a girl, you have to give what you have, to get what you want. Some people do … do that you know. I used to be very scared. (Kampire)

She perceived intersecting dangers across all of life, including attempts to leave the camp:

Refugees have to stay in the refugee camp … if you want to get out, you have to ask for a permit and to get a permit you have to pay money and so if you don't have money and if for example you are a widow, well (pause). (Kampire)

Alzina's memories are of fears associated with bearing overwhelming responsibility for every need of the family in her husband's absence:

It was very difficult; like I had children by myself, no husband, no mum nor dad, so it was scary. (Alzina)

Camps are not the sole site where there is a lack of safety. Axlam was abused in the large city where she lived as a refugee:

I used to be very scared. I remember one day when I was going somewhere in the morning. Four men approached me; they stole my purse; they beat me up so I had like uh and (long pause) it's not safe. I mean, I used to feel unsafe in that country. (Axlam)

All of the statements of women, above and below, disclose women's attempts to exercise the "inalienable and non-negotiable rights of women" to rule their own bodies as enshrined in the UDHR (McFadden, 2007, p. 41).

172

6.5 Chapter Summary

Chapter 6 introduced women's two life contexts before the third context of resettled life in North Queensland (Chapter 7). Some women zigzagged back and forth to their familiar home country before accepting refugee status across borders. Women's memories of their home countries defy pitiful, racialised, and powerless images of women from African countries. Quite the reverse. Women have made difficult choices to leave their variously remembered lives in their home countries to secure the survival of those in their care across borders. To survive, women have had to navigate their way through the laws and ways of life of countries of displacement across borders, and through UNHCR processes. Many have encountered trauma, sexual violence, and hunger. They protected those in their care. This chapter has introduced some of the study participants and laid the foundation for discussion of their anticipated belonging in North Queensland in the next chapter.

Chapter 7. Life in North Queensland

When they told us that now it is time to go to Australia, I think: Oh wow! I am going to start a new way of life! (Lisette)

7.1 Introduction

This chapter foregrounds women's experiences after the initial relief of arrival and the reality of adjusting to Australian life in regional North Queensland. As previously noted (Section 1.3), independent subcontracts in Cairns and Townsville, with the Brisbane-based Multicultural Australia, deliver HSP services. The broad goal of the HSP is to build the skills of arrivals to enable integration into Australian life. Between 2010 and 2020, annual anticipated humanitarian arrivals to each North Queensland site increased from 50 to 250, and with contract changes in late 2017, the anticipated arrival levels to each site leapt to 400 per annum. HSP services are delivered through a structured support process for each individual, according to a pre-arrival determined tier level of need.

Women's resettlement experiences that emerge from the data continue the cornerstone narrative of women struggling to navigate power over their lives in the unique surrounds of North Queensland. I delve into women's lives as they progress beyond the euphoria of arrival into everyday "time as lived" realities (Mbembe, 2001, p. 8). Feminist analysis enabled me to perceive themes emerging from women's interactions with resettlement services, mainstream human services, and local communities. As in Chapter 6, some women could talk directly about their experiences, including their frustrations and disappointments of anticipated belonging in the future. Others maintained a polite tone veiled with gratitude.

7.1.1 A New Life!

> Oh! My mind! The way I was in Africa (sigh and long pause). From that time
> when they told us: "Now it is time to go to Australia," I thought: "Oh wow! I
> am going to start a new way of life!" My mind started to change. Especially, I
> started to see everything differently (Lisette)

Lisette's relief and anticipated future of promise and safety from refugee living
conditions captures all of the study participants' anxieties, hopes, and dreams: their first plane
flight, their arrival in Australia and their expectations of peace, safety, and opportunities.

Lisette described feeling welcomed and supported by the resettlement service:

> The first thing I have to say is thank you to the settlement agency. I am proud
> because they treated me like family, not a job or a number. They surpassed
> their duty to put us in a normal life; driving us slowly, not pushing. The
> settlement agency was trying to put us in a new life. When I came first, I was
> in private rental. They helped me to get some community housing which
> helped my family to settle down because the rental was not very expensive. So
> when I came here, I didn't know how to use anything in the house –
> dishwasher, washing machine; everything was new; so they [settlement
> agency] just try to set us up, put us in a new life like; like uh when a baby is
> born … and you teach your baby step by step. I still remember. (Lisette)

Axlam's arrival to Australia came after choosing between resettling in another
approved resettlement country or Australia. The deciding factor was the most expedient path
out of their dire living circumstances:

First, we were told that we got resettlement to go to [another country]. A year later we had a call from the Australian embassy. The process started, and we came here. On arrival into [North Queensland site]. We started breathing; we were like ok … *finally*. In the early days of resettlement, I used to pay attention to all the details around me, as life was so overwhelming. (Axlam)

Neela felt immediately safe and in good hands:

The settlement agency supported us on arrival and took us in charge. They were around and they were answering all the questions. This is a beautiful place, this is a good life, and this is a nice country. (Neela)

Claudine captured the busy time of the initial weeks of resettlement that she and her family experienced:

I remember we were received by resettlement [staff] at the airport and we were transported to the temporary accommodation and taught how to use the various equipment like a washing machine, fridges, and cooking stove … and then we started going for appointments that were set up for us. (Claudine)

Pauline rejoiced in there being "*no similarities at all*" between life in North Queensland and her previous life. She referred to overcrowded living conditions in a large city in a country where she had lived as a refugee, and where she extended support to others seeking refuge:

Here I am living in a big house: four bedrooms, a lounge room, a sitting room, a kitchen. But in [location of displacement], we were living in a two-bedroom house, where there may be 30 people, because there was a war, and we welcomed people who were running away. (Pauline)

Tracy felt so grateful but was also anxious about all the new learning she continues to face:

> We are blessed to have an opportunity to leave [location in Africa] and to come to Australia, but the life has been a long process of learning and we are still learning. It looks like the future will be better; it will be good. (Tracy)

All women were hopeful for their future. Women expressed joy; a sense of finally being able to breathe; and anticipated peace, security, and opportunity. They surrendered absolute trust in the resettlement service and in the surrounding "beautiful place" to guide and support them through the whirlwind of early resettlement processes (Neela). As a practitioner and manager, I had heard settlement service personnel colloquially refer to this time as the honeymoon period. A directive for "supporting realistic expectations" of clients is written into current HSP *Case Management Guidelines* (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b, p. 3). I now share women's remembered post-arrival experiences.

7.1.2 It Was a Little Bit Difficult

My study extends the findings of other regional studies. For Axlam, life in North Queensland was "so new and overwhelming; you have to learn everything" (Axlam). Post an initial flurry of being taken "in charge" by resettlement service practitioners, women encountered difficulties (Neela). Vromans et al. (2018) considered resettlement experiences of Afghan and African women on Women at Risk visas in South-East Queensland as affected by multiple oppressions due to the impact of power hierarchies and the intersectionality of gender, culture, faith, and age. The findings are similar to those of a study with migrants and former refugee families from Nigeria, Congo, and Sierra Leone in regional Northern NSW (Kivunja et al., 2014). Kivunja et al. (2014) concluded that under-resourced regional human services limited long-term cohesive support to former refugees and migrants.

The Australian Women's Weekly featured a story on Akuch Kuol Anyieth and her mother, Mary Achol Anyuon, in May (2022). Akuch is a South Sudanese-Australian writer and scholar whose mother had ensured the family's survival before arrival in Australia. Akuch described many frustrations and recalls her mother's experiences of isolation and culture shock soon after their arrival in Melbourne:

> She didn't speak English and while her children were making friends at school, Mary was isolated at home. She didn't verbalise this often but there were moments where she felt like she was relying on us children too much, when we should just be focusing on school and she should be carrying on with what she was doing before coming to Australia, which was to lead the family. ("Family: Akuch Kuol Anyieth," 2022, p. 37)

As women resettled beyond the initial welcome from HSP services, they encountered a range of challenges and experiences through the daily life of interacting with the community and services: supporting children's travel to school, accessing English classes, maintaining housing, catching buses, exercising, interacting (or not) with neighbours, walking in public, seeking familiar foods, and attending appointments. Lisette recognised that after initial arrival support, she eventually had to be more independent:

> But I had to go out and start talking for myself; I had no idea. We had to start to go out and about. I still remember everything!! (Shaky voice throughout). (Lisette)

Alzina and I exchanged greetings and small talk in English before accessing interpreter assistance throughout the interview. Alzina is conversant in two languages; the second language was learned during displacement when she was solely responsible for her family in the absence of her husband. Remembering her early days in North Queensland,

Alzina's immediate comment was about having to adjust to her husband's daily presence at home:

> Back home in Africa, the men travel, they have the main trouble to find
> sustenance or to work for the family and the women are only responsible to
> stay home to look after the children. (Alzina)

Although Alzina found the new way of life confronting, she rated her household management, child caring, and protection skills throughout life before and after resettlement as secondary to her spouse: "they (men) have the main trouble" and "the women are only responsible to stay home." Alzina shared her experience of adjusting to the changed way of life:

> I realised things have changed and I realised men are staying at home with the
> children (pause) it did affect me, it was a kind of a shock to me. It becomes a
> shock to your system as you are not used to it, so it is very difficult. (Alzina)

Alzina avoided talking directly about her feelings and appeared uncomfortable in responding to further probes about her husband's presence in the home. I realised that I may have been pushing her to verbalise what I wanted to hear and what I supposed she needed to do (Stanley & Wise, 1983). I pulled back. I confronted the risk of potentially abusing researcher power in the discussion. Alzina did her best to perform her role managing "my responsibilities at home" under changed conditions. She shared her difficulties with navigating her new life and adjusting to change in her new environment:

> It was a little bit difficult in Australia when we first arrived. It is a new
> country; language and everything was difficult for me (pause) it was very
> difficult because I have never ever been to school. I don't know how to read, I

179

don't know how to write, and I have never experienced or ever gone to school

in my country at all (long pause). I had children. We take the children to the

park and uh, they play with you know, friends, each other and (pause).

Something like that. (Alzina)

Claudine shared her guarded disappointment with accessing adequate-sized affordable long-term housing after the on-arrival temporary accommodation provided by the settlement agency:

It was a problem because of getting a house for us to move from the temporary

accommodation (long pause). They [settlement agency staff] were looking for

a four-bedroom house but we could not get one. (Claudine)

Now more than three years after her arrival, Claudine continues to seek a larger affordable house on the public rental market.

Gracia grappled with anxieties of having to try to speak in English every day and in accessing familiar foods. She claimed her right to expect equal opportunity:

The first problem I met here is the language. I was not even able to greet

people and I did not know what to say. It was not easy at the beginning, but I

am getting used to it now. I expect the settlement agency to help women, so

we are not behind men in learning. (Gracia)

Gracia expressed deep fears of being excluded in the new environment where, again, male privilege and her caregiving responsibilities limited her access to education and learning some English before departure. I could sense her embarrassment and concerns about being rude when she talked about not being able to greet people. I suggest that she is getting used to being embarrassed and having difficulty communicating. Gracia claimed her right to choose

opportunity (Thompson, 2001). Gracia's expectation of the resettlement service is a reminder to all human service workers of the need to constantly examine the service design of welcoming practices and preparedness for people whose linguistic abilities may be adept, but they may not be able to respond to the dominance and peculiarities of English.

Stanley and Wise (1979) talked about bringing a "feminist consciousness" to understand women's oppression and the need for an "on-going process" of constant examination and "re-interpretation of feminist experience" (p. 359). Women brought their strengths and beliefs, but they also wrestled with the accumulated disadvantages of their flights across borders and survival as refugees, including post-traumatic stress, preliteracy, and minimal English-speaking skills. Their "language repertoires" that they learned across borders of different countries of refuge in Africa – for instance in Uganda – was of no benefit whatsoever (Ndhlovu, 2014, p. 153). Understanding the new information, presented in English through various appointments and the orientation program, complicated the hurdles of adjusting to daily living. The burden of navigating processes within a milieu of preliteracy or limited English, and with difficulties of access to remote interpreters, was challenging, frustrating, and potentially demeaning. Adjusting to changes in family routines, limited access to family members for support with children, and the regulations of childcare centres were confronting. For example, attendance at the AMEP classes is tied to payment of fees by the AMEP provider of a childcare centre. However, if a health appointment clashes with an English class, a medical certificate is required to meet the required fee waiver by a childcare centre. If not, the parent is responsible for the daily fee. On the occasion of a child's illness, the parent (generally the woman) must be told her responsibilities through an interpreter on enrolment. She will have to understand, remember when she is ill, and feel confident to navigate her way through making a doctor's appointment, accessing public transport to get there, requesting an interpreter, requesting a certificate for submission to AMEP, and

knowing where to take the certificate. She will also have to communicate with the childcare centre. This is just one example of women having to navigate a maze of power in resettlement.

Managing systems is potentially difficult for a local, but it is much more stressful within a milieu of limited English (Bellamy et al., 2017). Women discussed their confusion when navigating the maze of rules relating to tenancy, education, and accessing health services. Complex tenancy rules relating to the number of occupants, inspections, responsibilities for yard care, and automatic rental deduction arrangements created anxiety and confusion. Despite the resourcefulness that women had drawn on to survive pre-arrival challenges, they were flummoxed by so much regulation of daily living. As another example, seeking health support involves independently responding to messages, texts, and referrals about a doctor's appointment and navigating limited North Queensland public transport to personnel (dentists, general practitioners, nurses, optometrists, obstetricians, pathologists, radiographers) and services (audiology clinics, diabetes clinics, tuberculosis clinics, hospital clinics and Medicare). The range of and division of services and personnel was noted by Axlam, Barkhado, and Kampire as new and overwhelming. Other services and personnel across education (guidance counsellors, teachers, teacher-aides, principals), housing, and income and banking services were similarly identified as overwhelming.

7.2 Welcoming and Unwelcoming Experiences

Raymond (2001) could not emphasise enough the profound value of friendship for women struggling within systems dominated by patriarchy. Understanding social customs in new countries with a foreign language and the uncertainty of custom protocols is stressful and potentially alienating. Subthemes of difficulty after the initial welcome and support from services emerged across women's experiences; for example, Gracia's embarrassment for not being able to greet people and her concerns about equal opportunity. Syrian refugee women shared their disappointment of not being able to sustain the social custom of breaking up

daily domestic routines with visits to female relatives and neighbours in Australia (Gissi, 2018). Gissi (2018) highlights the potential for isolation and distress that resettling women may experience when they are not familiar with welcoming customs and where they are unable to share customs familiar to them. Syrians (formerly displaced in Lebanon) who resettled in regional and rural Victoria described how positive friendships and connections between themselves, as well as with Australians, helped them to settle and to access opportunities (Robinson & Haintz, 2021). Moreton-Robinson (2020) explained that experiences of racism affect a person's experiences of power in society or community. Women resettling in North Queensland described feeling awkward when trying to interact with people who did not share their language or knowledge of local customs. They described discriminatory incidences where they felt uncomfortable, isolated, or unwelcome.

Lisette had anticipated a welcome from her affiliated religion. Her initial disappointment continued beyond her early years of resettlement:

> The religion from where I came – I am [name of religion] is different from in Africa. The [religious people] from here they are not (pause), they are not looking after their [religious people]. In my country when you are an [religious person], they come to visit you at your home and they encourage you. Sometimes you can be friendly with other [religious people] (some laughter). You know when you are [religious identity], religion can be like your brother or sister but here, I have never experienced that. I have never seen anyone. I have never, never had them visit at home. I did find the [place of faith] and attend, but, it's very different. It is different and it can affect you. I still believe in my religion, but no one comes to visit me, to have a chat. (Lisette)

Lisette vividly describes being desolate, alone, and unhappy. Studies by Wachter et al. (2021), with Congolese women resettled in the United States, found that without pivotally important friendships, women were "alone for the first time in their lives" (p. 3). Lisette's unfulfilled expectations of welcome by people of similar faith are contrary to those described by Ikafa and Hack-Polay (2019), who considered that faith and religion have a role in supporting new arrivals. The study observed increased religious fervour "particularly in the early months or few years following relocation to Australia" (p. 103). Lisette's faith is still critically important to her but she carries a deep disappointment for the loss of anticipated solace and friendship at a time of great change in her life. Ikafa and Hack-Polay (2019) emphasised how some people turned to African associations for social support and practical assistance rather than risk rejection or discriminatory experiences from local established services.

Axlam cautiously named early experiences of discrimination, which she compared with previous encounters with white people in the African country where she had been a refugee. She also mused over her current sense of experiencing less discriminatory events after more than five years of living in North Queensland:

> For the first few months, life was very hard. It was so hard and um, like having experiences that we have never experienced, when we were in [location of displacement]. We used to see white people there and they were friendly; laughing and talking to us. In my mind, my own experience was that I used to think everyone is good. I had never had anyone discriminating [against] me because of my scarf there. Although it was scary and not safe, people in that country were not discriminatory towards women wearing the hijab. But when I came here in North Queensland, it was very different. Some people are very discriminative. I discovered that they don't discriminate

against me because I am Black. They discriminate me because of the scarf I wear on my head. When we came here; and I was new here, there was a lady who approached me one day and told me like uh: "Aren't you feeling hot? Why do you wear this scarf here?" I just don't know if they have had a bad experience about people who wear scarves. But even now [after more than five years], there are people who (pause) well, but it's not like before [when I first arrived]. It's not everyone who is bad to be honest, I have met some *very* good people here, and there are some who are not good. It's about discrimination (laugh). (Axlam)

Axlam, resettled for more than five years now, feels less conscious of discriminatory incidences:

When I was new here, I used to pay attention to all these things. Sometimes now, I ask myself "Where are these people?" "Where are they gone?" "Is it because I don't pay attention to it now?" I don't know. (Axlam)

In their study of women from different African countries resettling in America, Haffejee and East (2016) concluded that the Muslim faith is equated with terrorism by stigmatising women who wear the hijab – contributing to their "rejection and discrimination" (p. 237). Axlam being queried "Why do you wear this scarf here?" and "Aren't you feeling hot?' demonstrates the local rejection of different appearances and apparel. It is subtly aggressive. Queries asked of Axlam reflect the discourse of what Huynh and Neyland (2020) referred to as the third wave of Australian whiteness. Axlam's reflective curiosity about her experiences five years later suggests that she knows it still happens, but she is aware that she chooses to ignore it rather than have to confront the racist behaviour because she is worn down by it. Gatwiri (2021) concluded that the "black body is a worn burden" as it constantly

185

absorbs such subtle messages or "everyday microaggressions" which can have serious cumulative effects on wellbeing (p. 655). Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo (2017) emphasised how unwelcoming it is for the new "Black (African) body" to develop a sense of belonging because people must constantly negotiate belonging through sorting people's curiosity, suspicion, or indeed hostilities towards their Black body (p. 3). Axlam questioned her perceptions and experience of discrimination, yet she was more inclined to be understanding and grateful for her adopted local community rather than being seen to complain and "pay attention to all these things." I suggest that Axlam's response is a symptom of being worn down and undermined by constant white racialised hegemony (Huynh & Neyland, 2020). Significantly, the O'Donnell (2022) report that mapped social inclusion announced an increase from 9% to 20% of people reporting discriminatory experiences based on their skin colour, ethnic origin, or religion between 2007 and 2017. The report notes the "concerning level of prejudice directed towards people from different backgrounds" (p. 8).

Barkhado volunteered her experiences of public abuse and unwelcome that demonstrate the unpredictability of abusive incidences that can affect uncertainty and inconsistency to any sense of belonging:

> I see discrimination towards myself (long pause) like when I want to exercise, people are yelling from their cars or something like that. (Barkhado)

As a new arrival with no confidence in speaking English, Barkhado managed her anxiety with catching buses by repetitively naming her destination suburb in her mind before the bus pulled up, and also by making sure she had the right change. However, her efforts and the associated anxiety and stress were not necessarily rewarded or relieved:

The bus went off and the driver didn't answer; just shut the door, or

occasionally the driver would shout out "No."

In another instance, she recalled:

When I gave him [the driver] notes, maybe $5, he said: "I don't want it" and I

had to get off the bus. (Barkhado)

Now a seasoned bus passenger, Barkhado, proudly reported how she had recently

successfully asserted herself with a bus driver, who refused her request to purchase an all-day

ticket. She told him:

"I know about the zones. I'm in zone four, but I need a daily pass so please

give me one, so I can go on one to zone six or wherever I want." (Barkhado)

She then recalled her early experiences of driver's behaviour towards her:

That's terrible and that's not fair. (Barkhado)

Axlam and another sibling also used to anxiously prepare for getting the bus by

having the right coin:

They can be angry with you for nothing; you can even try to stop the bus and

it would just go. (Axlam)

Kampire's remembered experience with bus drivers is markedly different. She told of

an instance of door-to-door service by a bus driver on an occasion when she and another

woman were lost:

So we told him the suburb name and he drove around all the streets, until we

could point to the house and he took us to our house on the bus. (Kampire)

187

Similarly, Tracy appreciated welcoming gestures from a North Queensland neighbour:

They would bring us food from the shop to home (pause). This family used to love us (pause) even though we could not talk in English. (Tracy)

Joyce's experiences with neighbours varied. Her early experiences were positive and helpful, but she now talks of staying inside and avoiding interaction:

I had a neighbour who was Aboriginal. She was a good person. She helped me with groceries and we shared goods. She still remembers me if I see her. However, another person in another neighbourhood, did *not* talk. We live our own lives. Now, I don't think about neighbours. I have to stay in my own house. (Joyce)

Joyce also valued the assistance she received from a stranger when she was lost:

Getting around by bus was really hard. I had no English. One day I went to the city for an appointment and got lost. I had to ask someone and all I could say was the name of the place and the name of a building that I knew was nearby. I had to ask someone and just kept saying those two names. He pointed out one of the buildings, so then I found the place which was close by. (Joyce)

Neela's experience with neighbours changed over time. At first, she was careful to excuse a sense of unwelcome due to the neighbour's apparent busy lives and their unawareness of her family's recent arrival in Australia:

We could see them jumping into their car; jumping in and jumping out. They

didn't know that we were new in Australia, they probably thought we were

moving house. They didn't know anything. (Neela)

But later, she appreciated that they reached out to the family:

So my neighbours, the white Australians; when it was maybe six months later,

they came to us because we were led by our younger sibling, who wanted to

interact with them and went to talk and play with them. Afterwards, some of

them came to say hello and brought some toys. (Neela)

Neela's comments and her preference to think well of her neighbours and not to judge

them, threads through all of women's shared incidences of discriminatory experiences and

learning of local customs. This study illuminates that women's expectations of acceptance

and belonging have not been met but have been tenuous. They have learned to hold back

from confronting and naming fear, anxiety, racism, and rejections that are contrary to their

anticipated belonging.

Discriminatory experiences also underscore the next subtheme of gratitude.

Gratitude emerged as a theme that underscored women's remembrances of their lives in

their home country prior to conflict and flight. It is picked up now as women reconsidered

their interactions with neighbours, experiences with the public, and resettlement services in

North Queensland.

7.2.1 Continuing Gratitude

Gratitude is a continuing subtheme throughout women's experiences of resettlement

in North Queensland. Pressure to appear grateful may have been influenced by women's

awareness of my previous role in resettlement, and fear of offending me as a researcher. It

may also reflect the suggestion by Collins (2000a) that Black women's silences have served

189

their need to survive oppression throughout the globe. Decisions to express gratitude to ignore, minimise, or excuse unacceptable racialised behaviour reflect women managing fear of power and the burden of the Black body – white privilege keeping its foot on the stronghold of the ruling power. Women in this study had survived harsh refugee conditions through aversive or silently protective behaviour. This raises the question: Does the compulsion to express gratitude influence ignoring discriminative behaviour to meet the goal of integration and advance towards citizenship? (Gatwiri, 2021; Huynh & Neyland, 2020; Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017).

Robinson and Haintz (2021), who explored experiences of Syrians resettling into regional Victoria, noted participant reluctance to appear ungrateful: "There was a tension between describing this experience of discrimination and feeling fortunate to be in Australia after their experiences of war, and knowing the suffering of so many others left behind in refugee camps and destitute" (p. 319).

Throughout women's recollections of settling into North Queensland, a pattern emerged of women revising or clarifying statements that could appear to be complaints or expressions of ungratefulness. Collins (2000a) suggested that Black women's lived experiences of oppression have been the "cutting edge" distinguishing wisdom from knowledge; wisdom being the equivalent of survival in different global contexts (p. 257). It may be that expressing gratitude is women's wisdom to effect survival and a measure of peace in the new environment. Certainly, silence in the participants' previous lives as refugees was necessary for survival:

> You don't have the right to say no, that's what we were used to … you don't
> have the right to say no. (Kampire)

Kampire's initial response to resettlement was to continue being grateful for being saved, and to accept and follow all directions in the new country without question (i.e., remain silent at all costs). She shared her frustrations with having to suffer through repeated blood tests and vaccinations post arrival, despite having documented proof of pre-arrival health checks and all vaccines:

> We didn't want to fight with the system, like we said, "Maybe that is how it
> is for everyone who comes" and we can't argue much, as we are used to the
> system of government … that what they give you, you have to take it.
> (Kampire)

Even after her account of anxiety and annoyance with bus drivers, Barkhado was determined to be independent. She made hesitant gratuitous qualifications when naming incidences of discrimination:

> Some of them [bus drivers] I know, they are lovely. I know mostly they are
> really good, but some of them are really like (pause) *discriminative*.
> (Barkhado)

Claudine whimsically compared the ease of familiarity and comradeship she enjoyed with neighbours and friends in her home country before her life as a refugee with her experiences in North Queensland:

> In [home country], you can rock up at your neighbour's door without notice
> (smiling and laughing) and you would be welcome any time. You sit and talk
> and you know, ah, and ask if you need something. You can ask for whatever
> you need it and you can borrow it and you can stay for a long time without it
> being a problem and you can talk (pause). In Australia, no one has that much

time for you (pause). No one has the hours for you to visit, so you just say "hello" to people on the street and that's it. No one has much time, you know, for you to visit with them. I'm sorry (long pause), we do understand that because of time here, people are busy. (Claudine)

Clearly, Claudine felt alone and desolate but seemed careful to express understanding of the differences she experienced in customs with neighbours.

Rosie carefully couched her disappointed expectations of resettlement service personnel:

They have many people to look after and to care for; so we don't have anything to complain [about] and we don't complain (pause). We appreciate it. (Rosie)

Rosie qualified her feelings of disappointment by the custom of expressing gratitude for the support she receives from Australia's system of income security:

You are given accommodation and you are expected to pay rent. You are given some money to feed yourself, and your children (pause) so, you do not need much more. (Rosie)

Pauline also expressed gratitude for the support of the Australian Government:

The government gives us uh, what do you call it? (Pause.) Social security payment, to cover expenses. We pay electricity and rent and water. I would say that this is a big difference [from the country where I was displaced]. (Pauline)

She compared neighbourhoods in North Queensland with those where she has lived in urban fringe settings of Africa:

There are quieter streets and neighbours who lock themselves inside. (Pauline)

Within the context of resettlement, women may rethink incidents, repress feelings, and avoid naming discrimination and judging the local population in a desperate attempt to belong and avoid any potential trouble in North Queensland. It could also be understood as the "juggling" that Harrison (2013) contended to be "a primary fact in women's lives" and avoids confronting experiences of powerlessness (p. 124).

The next theme picks up the effect of losing loved ones during flight on women's resettlement.

7.2.2 Mourning for Lost Family

Family members in Australia have explored all refugee and migration pathways and feel like there is "no way" for them to sponsor their loved ones, as many of their requirements are difficult for those that have been displaced for so long. (RCOA, 2022, p. 14)

Reuniting with family is an essential part of the settlement process for refugees. Difficulties are experienced with a limit to the number of and the processes around applications for offshore family arrivals through the SHP program.

In women's stories, I hear their pain, their constant worry for loved ones who remain living precarious lives, and their commitment to continuing to support them no matter what. Lisette remembers mourning for family members on arrival and her constant anxiety during her early years of resettling in North Queensland. Despite being distressed when sharing her memories, she wanted to continue:

So when we sat in the house, sometimes we felt emotion; we would talk about other people who had arrived and say to each other, "*Oohhh look,* they have family." We wished we could have all our family here. (Lisette)

Since her arrival in Australia, Lisette has attempted to continue support for family members who remain in various countries of Africa. Not all are living as refugees, but they are living tenuous lives across different countries. Neither resettlement as humanitarian entrants nor economic migration is an option for them:

I am always trying to work hard to see if I can support those still in Africa. (Lisette)

Makiese also supports several of her adult children who remain in unsafe conditions in a camp:

I share the little I get from Centrelink; even today they [adult children], called me to ask me to buy medicine for a child (pause). I don't know if I will have enough. (Makiese)

Rosie linked her difficulties of supporting loved ones left behind with her frustrations with North Queensland employment programs that prioritise men, from her experience. She discussed employment opportunities for men compared with fewer opportunities afforded to women. At the core of her frustration was her experience that men do not prioritise supporting family as much as women. Her experience has been that different opportunities for men affect family dynamics and budgeting:

They [those left behind as refugees] need support. They need some money to buy food, but [if] the husband here goes to work and brings money home that would be good. But when he goes [to work] and he doesn't get any money or he doesn't bring any money home, it becomes a problem. When he gets a job long distance from home, and the wife stays at home, it is frustrating for the family. The job network tells you that they are going to find a job for you but

you keep *waiting, waiting*. We were not expecting to be sitting for a long time without a job, but Centrelink stops the income which has been given to you [when the husband gets work], and you tell him there is rent and another bill to pay and it becomes a problem. (Rosie)

Bisette lives with the frustrations of knowing that family members who have been interviewed for resettlement and remain in a camp will not be resettled with her in Australia. Instead, they are going to another approved resettlement country. Not having employment limits her capacity to arrange an alternative proposer arrangement for a particular visa (subclass 202) through the Special Humanitarian Program (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2024b).

Despite a UNHCR (2019) position paper that names family unity a fundamental human right, Bisette feels powerless to change the decision that would reunite her with family and ensure she and her family could share mutual support in resettlement. More than half of the humanitarian entrant respondents of the longitudinal BNLA report (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017) attributed resettling difficulties to worrying about family or friends overseas. The expectations of being able to support family, and to plan family reunification after arrival in North Queensland, motivated women's determination to survive refugee life and cross international borders to Australia. Sadly, women's experiences are contrary to their expectations.

It took Joyce more than six years, with assistance from migration agents, to arrange for a family member with dependents to join her in North Queensland. During that time, she struggled to survive here as well as to support her family members still in the camp. She continues to support family who remain in the camp, despite having expanded her own family in North Queensland:

I still have [family member] in the camp, but it is very hard now to apply for

visas. People cannot apply now. (Joyce)

Pauline talked emotionally about children who were separated during the flight and

who are now adults. They live difficult lives as stateless refugees or as repatriates in their

home country:

They are always asking me to send them some money and I want to help. I tell

them that I don't have a job. It's not easy. (Pauline)

Mylene, a single parent in rental housing commented:

There is no money left after bills to send to [family member] in the Congo. I

have little to give anyone. I thought about sending some clothes, but I do not

know how to arrange it. (Mylene)

Article 16 of the UDHR refers to the family as "the natural and fundamental group

unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State" (UN, 1948). Annual

global tripartite consultations, organised through UNHCR with states and non-government

organisations, drive the processes of resettlement. This process is one of the three UNHCR

solutions for displaced people, as shared in Chapter 1 (the other two solutions are repatriation

to the home country or integration into the host country of displacement or asylum). The

Refugee Advisory Group to the UNHCR appealed to member states at the 2023 *Annual*

Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, for renewed international efforts "to uphold the

sanctity of family, by ensuring timely family reunification" (RCOA, 2023c, p. 4). At that

same meeting, Filippo Grandi requested UNHCR affiliated States for "more resettlement

places," and called "for faster decision-making on resettlement applications, speedier

departure of refugees accepted for resettlement, and more emphasis on those at greatest need"

(RCOA, 2023c, p. 1). Complex guidelines for split family applications of SHP contribute to Bisette's frustrations.

Frustrating experiences of powerlessness related to difficulties of family reunion underline resettlement discourses of mental ill-health. A Canadian study of resettled Sudanese, who have been scattered across different approved resettlement countries, found that "the lack of social support from extended family members who are not in the [same] resettlement country contributed to a sense of loss and displacement" (Simich et al., 2010, p. 205). Doney et al. (2015), in a study across Australia, called out the difficulties of access to family reunification as a "negative and distressing human rights concern" (p. 11). Wilmsen (2016), who explored family separation due to "a conscious decision as a matter of survival or an unintended consequence of volatile circumstances," concluded that settlement policy and planning must consider the effects of family separation on members' wellbeing and capacity to plan futures in resettlement (p. 242). Family reunion across Australia currently depends on women's capacity and success in navigating systems. Women have lived under extreme conditions before arrival and have anticipated they will have access to paid work to alleviate the hardship of family who remain in refugee circumstances. They anticipate a family reunion. But Australian systems of reunion are tied to simultaneously managing daily life in resettlement and also navigating through services and a host of forms that demand English literacy. As Pauline said, "It's not easy." According to the RCOA (2022), Australia is the only member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development to include split family applications in the annual quota of offshore humanitarian entrants. This inclusion effectively derails the program's aim to unite families as part of the Special Humanitarian Program for humanitarian entrants who have immediate family or a proposer in Australia (see Section 1.2). The RCOA report on rebuilding a strategic refugee program describes the current family reunion pathway as "costly, complex and bureaucratic. Applicants face

significant backlogs causing years of delays" (RCOA, 2022, p. 14). The experiences of women resettling in North Queensland reflect the conclusion of the RCOA. Women and families are desperate, feeling powerless, and feeling that there is "no way" that they will be reunited with loved ones – as demonstrated by Bisette's experience in Section 6.3.2. The HSP goal of integration does not link strongly with hopes and plans of attaining women's goals of family reunification in resettlement. The policy belies women's connections and commitments to scattered family members. The next section examines women's fraught experiences of gaining employment soon after arrival, which again affects women's commitment to family reunions and support for loved ones left behind.

7.2.3 They Teach Us We Have to Work, But We Are Rejected

As a signatory to the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Australia has committed to taking:

> All appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men. (UN General Assembly, 1979)

The BNLA longitudinal study (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017) stated that "humanitarian migrants resettled here in Australia are here for humanitarian reasons, not because of their potential economic contribution" (p. 8). In the aforementioned study by Robinson and Haintz (2021), one of the three women participants in the same study shared her distress at being told her professional qualifications and experience were seen as "a useless piece of paper" (p. 310). Women in this study likewise anticipated paid employment soon after arrival. A few had worked in urban displacement areas. They had all laboured to support their families and to ensure their survival. Lisette talked about being

the one who was trained by her mother to assist with the care of her family while older and younger male and female siblings attended school. She shouldered responsibility for family members present and absent through refugee life and into resettlement. She recognised the need for paid employment to continue supporting family, and she was determined to seek work. Women who could not work before arrival in North Queensland anticipated getting some form of employment soon after resettlement. This thinking appears to have been influenced by word-of-mouth messages with friends or family resettled in the USA, and possibly, through attendance at AUSCO sessions on employment about Australian life before arrival (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2024c, March 15). Some women had contributed to family survival and paid for children's schooling when living in displaced urban settings (Gloria). Rosie, too, had worked in the urban centre where she had lived as a refugee:

> While displaced across a border, I was working as a cleaner in [country of displacement] and in the [service industry]. That is what I was doing and that was my career and what I was expecting here. (Rosie)

In North Queensland, Rosie was not happy with being idle, and was frustrated with unsuccessful applications:

> The problem with me in general, is that whenever I apply for a permanent job, I do not get it. After sitting in a refugee camp for a long time, we have energy to work and to do something, but when we apply for a job, we are not given an opportunity. (Rosie)

Not all arrivals into Australia have been able to attend the five-day AUSCO Program. The first section of the revised separate employment section of the AUSCO curriculum emphasises that finding employment takes time (Australian Government Department of

Home Affairs, 2024c). However, the women in this study are beyond two years of resettlement, which is a significant period to be without paid employment. During each of the two interviews I had with Mylene, she played a video clip of a friend who resettled in the USA doing assembly work. Mylene pleaded that she could do similar work here if she could get a chance. She was desperate to improve her living conditions:

> It is not easy to stay like this, because there are too many bills and I want to work. I can do any job: childcare, cleaning, helping others. (Mylene)

Kampire had heard also about the immediate employment opportunities when resettling in America:

> When people go to the USA, they put people in industries where you have to communicate. For people who have no English, there are many jobs: cleaning, gardening, different industries. (Kampire)

Time and idleness in North Queensland played on women's minds. Pauline was clearly frustrated:

> We become lazy (pause) we just want to sleep (pause) because we (pause) ahh, we have no job. And we say this is the government's problem. We are going to do what the government wants us to do. There is no way to get a job here if you don't speak English (long pause), it's very hard to get a job. (Pauline)

She was troubled by the emphasis on learning English as a prerequisite to employment:

I think I can work and learn English at the same time. I don't have to learn English first before I go to work. (Pauline)

Bisette observed a contradiction in expectations and systems:

They teach us we have to work; but (pause) we don't *get* work. (Bisette)

Rosie called out Australia's strong emphasis on English skills:

In Australia, if you don't know the language, you can't get a job. My question is: "How come my [family member] has English but still can't get a job?" My [family member] who has completed schooling, wants to work, keeps hoping, but is not able to get a job. They [job agency or employer] do not give feedback or an answer. Since we came here, no one has been able to get work. So, the thing is, that if you don't have English in Australia, you can't work. (Rosie)

Gloria emphasised the effect of unemployment on mental health:

Having to meet a requirement for 10 job searches per month is stressful. Unemployment is a major influence on the mental health of some women resettling into North Queensland. (Gloria)

Despite her ability to speak English clearly and the supportive role she has in her community, Gloria turned her frustrations on herself:

I can't help wondering if it is "not good English*"* that is preventing me from accessing work. (Gloria)

Lisette's long journey to employment and her frustrations with the systems, and herself, captured frustrations experienced by many women participants in the research. Lisette had been very pleased with the support she received on arrival. However, after being exited from the HSP, she had limited available assistance through the SETS program that supports both migrants and exited HSP clients. She was disappointed also with employment services and found life very difficult. After completing her 510 hours of English language tuition, Lisette completed training for three unique Certificate III qualifications in aged care, cookery, and hospitality. She paid for each course and childcare expenses. Lisette was disgruntled with countless refusals of employment and considered her frequent rejections of job applications as discriminatory based on being "from a background." Lisette expressed her frustrations by angrily banging her fist on the table, throughout her response:

> When [job service providers] start telling you: "*You have to look now for a job*," (banging hand on the table) that you have to do this, that your time … your hours for English is enough [limit of free 510 hours at that time]; (banging); then you are trying to study some course, they say: "That's enough (banging), you don't have any more hours to study English" (banging) and so you finish that course (banging). But when you apply for the job, and they say "No, you are from a background, you can't do this job (pause) you go and study English again!" *Ohh!!* (Pause.) *You know! You know!* (Lisette)

Lisette was further incensed when, after an unsuccessful interview for a position, her offer to volunteer at the worksite was refused:

> So I applied [unsuccessfully] for the job and then asked: "Do you mind if I can do any volunteering or any work experience?" and they said, "No we don't

need anyone for work experience and we don't have anything you can do as a volunteer." (Lisette)

Lisette continued:

You think she can't work? I know how to *work*! I know how to change nappies. I know how to feed people! *Give someone else the job to write down everything!* I know what I need to do for this old person. I have already cared for a grandmother and a grandpa. I understand their struggle to feed themselves. I know how he/she may struggle to go to the toilet. I know how he may struggle to put the clothes on, to dress themselves. I know how they struggle. I know how to assist them. I know what I have to do. If another person knows how to write the report, that person who doesn't speak English, they can do those [caring] things and then another person can write the report down. (Lisette)

Lisette felt she had met all requirements of the resettlement service program, attended English classes, completed training, and met the reporting obligations of Centrelink. But her efforts and expectations of employment and independence were thwarted. She remained unemployed for more than seven years after arrival. She was adamant that her failure to gain work was due to being an outsider, of "being from a background." Her frustrations and understanding of the obstacles she encountered mirror the experiences of Black African migrants (21 women and 42 men), including humanitarian entrants who participated in a study by Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo (2017) in NSW and Victoria. The findings concluded that "color or blackness more often than not frames their interactions with white people, making it burdensome. The burden arises from the fact that they have no control over the negativity that is attached to their bodies (blackness)" (p. 10).

Similarly, a study by Ikafa and Hack-Polay (2019), with migrant and humanitarian African entrants in Western Australia, included statements by participants who expressed frustrations at the structural "silent racism" across services: "Ah silent racism! It's especially when you go to institutions, you get that silent treatment—turning heads and treating you like you don't exist. Though they may not say anything, you can read the disdain in some people's eyes" (pp. 97–98).

Lisette finally gained employment in one of the fields she had trained for, and she felt accepted and not judged as different or "being from a background." Speaking of her manager, she commented:

> She is an amazing woman. She doesn't look at your skin, where you are from, how much you speak, what your English is like. (Lisette)

Mies (2014) emphasised the silence around oppression and also linked patriarchy and capitalism. Women resettling in North Queensland were clearly taken aback and frustrated with not being able to access employment. Their shared experiences of navigating employment, English language demands, and recruitment processes affected their sense of powerlessness and disappointed expectations of resettlement. Like many other former refugee women resettling across Australia, they had not anticipated the emphasis on English-speaking skills by potential employers or training schemes. Looking back on my practitioner years, I acknowledge now that I did not fully appreciate women's on-arrival expectations of work opportunities. I did not anticipate that women who had been unable to get paid employment in camps, for example, had such high hopes of employment soon after arrival to North Queensland. I assumed that women with no or minimal English-speaking skills did not anticipate employment. I was ignorant of and unappreciative of women's diverse linguistic skills. Moreover, my experience is that employment services and employers in North

Queensland are resistant to accessing interpreter support to explore skill sets. Failure to access interpreters effectively dismisses applicants who speak languages other than English and cannot demonstrate working experience in Australia.

Many studies confirm that employment is the primary driver of successful settlement that affects all other integration markers: secure housing, education, and community relationships (Ager & Strang, 2008; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006; Fozdar & Banki, 2017). The ability to navigate the Commonwealth Department of Social Services systems is linked with navigating employment opportunities, employment provider services, and meeting reporting requirements. The frequency of job seeker reporting requirements (after an initial exemption period for humanitarian entrants), is experienced as burdensome, stressful, and confusing. Women who have been living in North Queensland for more than five years were forthright in expressing their frustrations. They linked their difficulties in accessing employment to discrimination.

North Queensland researchers Babacan and Gopalkrishnan (2005) considered that prejudice and discrimination affect employment opportunities with "disproportionate impacts on women" and that living on the margins is a common occurrence for humanitarian entrants "in uncertain environments" (p. 153). Fozdar and Hartley (2013a), in a qualitative study exploring belonging with 77 refugees living in Western Australia, noted that "visible difference was seen as the cause of un-belonging among some respondents" and "that they are considered as guests not members" (pp. 136–137). Fozdar (2023) called out the Australian population as generally (not specific to employment) being "guilty of excluding Africans through covert and overt structural and interpersonal barriers" (p. 34). African migrants, including humanitarian entrants, name their visible racial differences as a key factor in experiencing racism and discrimination (Gatwiri et al., 2021; Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017; Udah & Singh, 2019). Racism and gender inequity are obstacles that underpin

women's difficulties in accessing employment. In addition to experiences of discrimination, including racism in seeking employment, women have to wrestle with deep feelings of ongoing anxiety and guilt for being unable to support the family left behind in intolerable conditions. Women's experiences strongly suggest that our current support systems are failing to meet our obligations of CEDAW.

The next theme addresses the experiences of past traumas that may be triggered during resettlement.

7.2.4 The Legacy of Trauma

We carry a lot of trauma in our bodies, which is reflected in the many illnesses we suffer and in many of the fractures which are destroying our communities. These contemporary challenges have instigated our consciousness as Black women. We have a deep longing for narratives and legacies of struggle as we search for our wholeness. (Moreno & Pessoa, 2021b, 10:43)

Women's experiences, shared across all themes of this study, are interwoven with traumas of the past (separation from loved ones, gender-based violence, survivor's guilt, loneliness, and frustrations) that may trigger post-traumatic experiences at any time during resettlement (Eckert & Hofling, 2008). In discussing legacies of trauma, I respect the need to avoid "trauma porn" that may be misconstrued and inflict further harm (Gatwiri & Mapedzahama, 2022, p. 272). Following the example of Kaplan(2020), I did not record some shared incidences in deference to the uniqueness of individual experiences and responses to trauma. I have based this theme on one woman's description of an incident in a North Queensland location. The incident, described below, is likely to occur only in a small regional centre rather than a major metropolitan site. I have also shared the woman's protective concerns for other women's possible triggers of trauma.

Kampire's experience demonstrates how previous trauma may impact unexpectedly in the stressful conditions of having to navigate new information in an unknown environment:

We were in the bus [two women] after school, so the driver took us from school and then we went back around all the streets (pause) now I can remember (pause) if I can see the place I will know it. We stayed on the bus, going past the [local building] and came almost back to the city again. But we *did not, and could not know where we were going*. By then, everyone had got off the bus. So the bus driver [a man], stopped the bus. He asked us (pause) when we were alone on the bus (pause) he said something (pause) and he came walking down toward us (pause) we were so *scared*. "*What are we going to do if he does something*?" But we could not understand him; not one of us knew the language and there was no interpreter, so we were so *scared*. We were there on our own and he was in a uniform (pause). Even if he was trying to be nice to us, we could not see that niceness, we were just thinking: "Is he coming to talk to us to be nice and then do some evil to us?" We had to stop thinking like that (pause) we had to think (pause) we had to think to ourselves: "But we are in the new country and people here respect their job and respect other people's rights." So, to get home, we had to think another way (pause) so we told him the suburb name and he drove around all the streets until we could point to the house and he took us to our house on the bus. It was good, but it was hell. (Kampire)

The fear that the women experienced as this man with power in uniform approached them; the anxiety and memories of past abuses and self-talk reminders of where they were, is palpable in Kampire's account. In her story, I see that the trigger for trauma was the

advancement of a man in a uniform towards herself and her female companion who are alone on a bus in the late afternoon or evening in an unknown area. He had power. What is also apparent is the stark contrast between the bus driver's kindness and willingness to assist the women compared with some women's experiences with bus drivers – albeit in different times and circumstances.

Kaplan (2020) considers that memories of survival can be either a risk factor or a protective factor in resettlement:

> In many instances, a protective factor can be understood to be the opposite of a risk factor and vice versa. For example, a family-level protective factor is 'actual or early prospect of family reunification.' Conversely, this could be included as a risk factor as 'lack of prospect for family reunification.' (p. 86)

Kampire's longer-term resettlement experiences compelled her to share her concerns for other women and her insights into the effect of trauma on women's trust in officials and the resettlement processes of learning. She suggested that women may mistrust resettlement personnel, volunteers, banking personnel, and shop assistants – anyone assisting them. For example, she recounted stories of women who firmly believed that a worker (of any service) was taking money from their bank accounts, but they resisted any evidence to the contrary:

> And I would say: "*Please* nobody can do such a thing, see the history of your bank account and you will see where your money went." (Kampire)

She explained that even if a bank clerk was writing something or printing out a record (receipt or record of transaction) and preparing to give that paper or to pass money to a former refugee woman, the woman may insist on retrieving all the papers from the clerk due to mistrust. They may become stridently demanding or attempt to take the papers from the clerk. She also considered the effects of trauma on daily living tasks such as shopping:

If for instance, small change falls down, a woman who has experienced trauma

may not trust the cashier who offers to pick it up. She will not trust that person

(pause) but may, in fact, panic. (Kampire)

Kampire suggested that an onlooker or perhaps a resettlement worker may consider

the person "mentally ill." Kampire reasoned, "It's just that her trust has gone."

In such situations, Kampire commented:

I hope and pray that workers have the heart to understand. It is not because

women are not appreciating the support they are getting; it is just the trauma

they have been through, that makes them expect to be treated in a way where

their rights are taken away; so that they have built it [mistrust] up in their

heads (pause) even if they get support, they will think it is not what they are

supposed to get, or that they are supposed to get more. They have been living

with those fears where – you know, they feel they are nobody [and have no

rights] and then it takes time, it takes time. It takes a long time for them to

come here and to build that trust again. (Kampire)

Kampire concluded that the ultimate driving fear for many women is the fear that

"they will take us back home." Kaplan et al. (2016) emphasised the importance of trust in

developing supporting relationships with people who have been refugees. The authors

suggested that developing trust may be especially difficult because of previous experiences

with officials through experiences of crossing borders and subsequent survival as refugees.

Mclellan (1995) stressed that insight into the cumulative effect of past and present

sociopolitical influences is an important value of feminist therapy that can assist women "to

understand the pressures placed upon them … and the extent to which those pressures are

affecting their mental and emotional well-being" (p. 33). Following on from the discussion

of trauma, I now consider women's continued experiences of gendered violence in North Queensland.

7.2.5 Gendered Violence in North Queensland

Women's safety from sexual gender-based violence is not guaranteed in resettlement (Segrave et al., 2021). Bartolomei et al. (2014), while focusing specifically on women with the refugee Woman at Risk visa subclass 204 who arrived in Australia, confirmed that women arrivals on other humanitarian visa subclasses (200, 201, and 202) "have often survived similar pre-arrival experiences, and that both groups encounter risks upon resettlement" (p. 47). For some of the women in this North Queensland study, the new life may be quite different from the past, but they are not free of the consequences of male abuse during or after conflict.

Laura spoke effusively about being free of danger and abuse, which impelled her anger and a desire to protect women:

> When I talk about refugee life, it makes me feel angry; it makes me feel like I want to do something to stop war (pause) I love it here. We are in peace and security. I don't have the worry of fear of sleeping or fear of being raped. Here we feel protected and with safety – that's the main one. (Laura)

Laura's passion for peace and safety is akin to the aspirations of feminist Adrienne Rich. Rich (1972) reflected that "our struggles can have meaning only if they can help to change the lives of women – whose gifts – and whose very being – continue to be thwarted" (p. 21).

Rosie hesitated to articulate incidences of abuse but engaged me as an ally when she declared her awareness of women's struggle for rights:

210

Even you: you know (pause) even *you* (pause) *you* are a woman (pause) and you know that the women sometimes they have no (long pause). They have no way, no rights. (Rosie)

Bisette spoke candidly of her husband's power and abuse before her arrival in North Queensland. She seemed to be thinking through information she had gained from workshops about women's rights to safety from violence and was considering the changes in roles between men and women in her life in North Queensland.

In Africa, I have to be patient, not to take things too seriously, because sometimes your husband may do something bad (long pause) misusing you; abusing you (pause) but here [the law] is not patient [abuse is not accepted]. Here, they teach us we have to work and help each other. For my side, I need more workshops so my husband can learn more. (Bisette)

Bisette continued forthrightly, with some interpreter assistance, demonstrating her understanding of women's opportunities and access to rights and her husband's need to learn to change his behaviour:

Here, the men want to do what they did in Africa: women do the cooking, do the cleaning, look after the children. *Men!* Here, they sit down doing zero. Nothing (pause) only when there is a house inspection do they do any helping. Here we are suffering; they have to help [in the home] but they don't. If you can teach them they have to learn (pause) *oh my god!* (Waving her hand.) *My husband!* (Pause.) Very slow, very slow. (Bisette)

Bisette had a watershed moment, naming long-held frustrations or resentments of men's power and eagerly wanting to embrace her rights in North Queensland. Her

experiences are mirrored in studies with other families that refer to changes in spousal relations and changes in parenting across continental borders. Bisette has adjusted to her husband's daily presence at home and embraced women's rights in Australia while expecting him to share household responsibilities. Doney et al. (2015), in a report that included Townsville, concluded that "family conflict contributes to the social, financial, housing and emotional pressures in resettlement" and that women may be blamed for family disruption because they are claiming their rights in Australia (p. 11). In a later analysis informed by a political, philosophical, and legal framework, Pittaway et al. (2018) argued that service providers have a major responsibility in assisting newly arrived women and men to understand that women's rights to safety are not an Australian society value that can be dismissed, but they are part of the legal framework. The women in this study confirmed Pittaway et al.'s (2018) finding that "practical difficulties and discrimination refugees face in settlement compound the challenge of adapting to Australian rights and laws" (p. 260).

Axlam recalled an initial sense of a new life on arrival in the new continent:

We started breathing. (Axlam)

However, some years after arrival, her partner was violent. She experienced frustrations with accessing support from police who minimised her concerns and prioritised her partner's account:

He started fighting and controlling and I (pause) just don't know (pause) it was very difficult because I was trying to separate in peace, but he didn't want any peace; he refused to leave and he didn't want to live with us in peace and he didn't want to leave. He's very strong and he [thinks] he can do anything he likes in this country. He chose to destroy our life. I left a miserable life to get a *good* life. I did not come here for a miserable life. (Axlam)

Axlam's experiences with police responding to her requests for help were frustrating:

> Every time I called the police to come here, he [the perpetrator], would tell them a story and they would go. Then he would start again and I would call them again and he told them a story and they would go again, and so on. In the end I didn't go to the police but to a service, which helped me. (Axlam)

The police failed Axlam. Police responses prioritised the perpetrator's story over her experiences. After a number of similar incidents, Axlam accessed support directly by attending a specialist service. She recalled that her records of incidences were valued. Axlam's experience resonates with those of many victims of domestic violence in Australia. Riga et al. (2022) reported on an inquiry into the Queensland Police response to domestic and family violence. The report included accounts of police avoiding calls and making derogatory comments in homes, and the report exposed incidences of women being turned away at the front counter of police stations. A review of African Australians' social inclusion by the Australian Human Rights Commission (2010) emphasised that any action to address domestic and family violence across these communities needs to be cognisant of the pre-arrival experiences and trauma of some entrants. Further, this report highlighted the need to be aware of culturally diverse notions of family and to avoid treating African communities as a homogenous group (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). Again, however, this does not excuse men from violence in any context, such as the pretext of diverse culture, nor does it suggest that previous trauma is a pre-condition of perpetrating or experiencing violence. Khadija Gbla, human rights ambassador and former refugee, spoke on Radio National with Paul Barclay (2019) about the scourge of violence that follows women here and the attitudes they face from support services. She emphasised that regardless of what women say and do, "violence is a choice by those who choose to use it" (Barclay, 2019,

6:54). Khadija addressed also the resistance she experienced because of her former refugee status. She discussed the difficulties of prioritising her safety while struggling with Australia's racism, family shame, and community shame. When pressing charges and being interviewed by a police representative, the representative commented: "Aren't your men more violent?" (Barclay, 2019, 9:37). Consequently, Khadija spoke of feeling divided between her need for personal safety and loyalty to her community. In response to the question, she felt pressured to consider: "In that instant, all of a sudden my need to protect my community looked quite more important than my need to be safe – isn't that funny?" (Barclay, 2019, 10:54). Pease and Rees (2008) referred to the "unambiguous conflict" between Australian law that condemns rape and violence against women, yet sides with males from diverse cultures in assuming male rights over women's rights based on cultural contexts (p. 40).

Axlam's experience with domestic violence heightened her awareness of the violence being experienced by other former refugee women. She encourages them to access support:

> I have seen many women experiencing violence. I tell them: "If this man you
> know is beating you, if he's not helpful to you, if he's making your life
> miserable; you are here in Australia; you are not happy at all; don't be scared.
> Don't be scared, just go outside there; live your own life." The women will
> often ask: "Who will help me with the children?" (Axlam)

Axlam commented that she tells them:

> "There are many services available here; you can take your children to
> childcare, they [childcare staff] are the ones who will take them to school.
> Build your life, go study, do something for yourself. You don't have to live in
> a miserable life because you are scared."

Kampire forthrightly shared her concerns about the behaviour of some men:

They don't really care. Some men will sleep with *all* refugee women who are here and you will hear: "This man is sleeping with [another person]." And it's true! They even have babies with them. Because of the cultural background, you can't talk about your husband, you can't say anything – just keep it inside, but it's no good. They may be single women. I wish services could encourage women to speak out, as you find some people crying day and night. Most of the refugee women don't know that they have rights to say "no" to their husband when they are forcing them to do what they don't want to do, or fighting in the house, or abusing them in the house. You will find them looking very beautiful, but you cannot know what is going on in their hearts. They are suffering. They have suffered *enough*, more than enough. They think it is like those refugee camps where your husband can have even 20 women because you need to eat because your husband went out and brought food, you can't leave. I direct them and tell them: "You need to feel you have had enough of your husband beating you in front of your children. You have to stand up and speak out. You can call this number" (pause) some though never can. Others will go ahead to get out of the situation. (Kampire)

Axlam and Kampire's concerns are reflected in studies that report women remaining in their marriage at the risk of violence and rape after their arrival. Pease and Rees (2008) referred to the "double jeopardy of patriarchal beliefs and world-views" that affect the rights of women before and after arrival (p. 40). A study by Machin and Shardlow (2018), on communities from the Horn of Africa living in metropolitan Sydney, reported that women who were known to have engaged in survival sex while living in displacement situations are

preyed on by single men in Australia. They remain at risk of rape. Women were often too afraid to report it. Based on a small study with four women who were single parents and former refugees in Brisbane, Lenette (2015) concluded that suspicion and mistrust from members of women's former communities of origin exacerbated their isolation and distress and added to the nuances of gendered sexual violence in resettlement. Consequently, women reported seeking support outside their known community or language groups. Lenette recommended that resettlement practices be understanding of the nuances of trust, and she recommended that practitioners be cautious in assuming the homogeneity of people from the same country where there has been civic and political conflict.

Mylene steadfastly believed that her husband's violence against her would cease on arrival to North Queensland. It did not:

> I was overwhelmed. I thought it would change, but nothing changed. I was hospitalised all the time. My heart was very painful, and I was hurting very much. After another incident and fear for the children's safety, I explained everything to the police. My children and I are now safe. Now, we are stable and at peace and the children are well. (Mylene)

Her story resonates with women individually owning and experiencing violence as their responsibility. McLellan (1995) wrote that many women place themselves "under enormous pressure to be all things to all people, to deny themselves in favour of others," which she describes as "internalised oppression" (p. 33). Now, having been supported by local women's services, Mylene likes to support other women who are living with controlling men and violence:

> I am committed to assisting, counselling, and advocating for other women. (Mylene)

She now considers violence from a broader political basis of male power.

In Africa, men are controlling of women in many ways, including with finance, and [they] are the decision makers. Women do not have anything to say in the decision-making process. On arrival here [in Australia], there is a difference. Women can get money from welfare and support for children. Some men will not control everything anymore and prefer to look for other women and do not give any more value to the wife. They do not treat them well. When I saw it happening to me, I was astonished. (Mylene)

Kampire voiced concerns for women whose rights to independent bank accounts in Australia are being ignored by some men:

I know some, many men who do these things (long pause). I can see it. When I have asked [friend] for her bank card to show her how to use it, instead of her going to pick it up in her bag, she has asked her husband, "Can I have my bank card?" I see the husband taking it out of his wallet and giving it to her … so I question why he has the bank card. Another thing you find sometimes, is that the husband is the one doing the shopping, but he doesn't know much. If she wants something personal, she must beg the husband as she doesn't have the rights to that card (pause) it's so sad. You will find that some women don't even know the PIN number of their bank card. (Kampire)

Kampire expanded on her concerns for women:

I know from friends, that women who come here who still have the belief in the culture, that all house jobs are for women and men should wake up and go and look after the cattle (pause). But now in Australia, if men don't really have

much to do, you will find him watching TV, or you may find him with other men and they will sit down and drink [alcohol]. So, many women are suffering and uh nobody really is there to go and give them counselling and to tell them, "You have rights, and you can stand up and say no to your husband." Some men are abusing them; the woman don't have rights on their own body, you find women who are having [their] first baby, second baby, every year: *baby, baby, baby*. (Kampire)

Revisiting Australia's commitment to CEDAW is relevant to the current discussion of the theme of gendered violence in North Queensland. Australia's commitment to resettling women "is predicated on the notion that the rights of those resettled will be restored and that, through effective settlement and integration support, the protection needs of refugees, including women and girls, will be addressed" (Bartolomei et al., 2014, p. 46). However, some women living now in North Queensland are not enjoying those rights and are not free of male manipulation and abuse. Doney and Pittaway (2010) emphasised that traditional patriarchal families have difficulties in adapting to social systems that include the rights of women and children. Women who claim their rights in the new resettlement environment are often accused by partners of "disrupting the balance of family life" (Doney & Pittaway, 2010, p. 9).

Bisette has previously been quoted (Section 7.2.5) for requesting more workshops to inform and support men, and for hoping that her husband would learn to respect her rights as a woman. Her request echoes Doney and Pittaway's (2010) recommendations for "more education about rights and law that is accurate and consistent for all family members and available at different times through the settlement process" (p. 24).

Experiences shared by the women participants confirm bell hook's (1989) position that feminists struggle to put an end to patriarchal domination, which she considered "the

foundation of all other oppressive structures" and one domination that "we are most likely to encounter" in everyday life, no matter the circumstances of women's material lives (p. 21).

Women who continue to experience abuse of their human rights in North Queensland are not alone. Rather, their experiences mirror the experiences of women across Australia. Summers (2022) stated that "of the estimated 311,000 single mothers in Australia in 2016, 185,700 – 60 per cent – had experienced physical and /or sexual violence by a previous partner." (p. 14). A safety and security study with over 1,300 migrant and refugee women across Australia also reported ongoing incidences of violence (Segrave et al., 2021). Notwithstanding that men may have difficulty in accepting women's rights, men must accept responsibility for abusive controlling acts of violence against women. The Australian Human Rights Commission (2010), with African Australians, recommended a need for increased education and support to understand the rights and changes in men's "traditional position as family provider" (p. 35).

This study confirms that some women who arrived on all humanitarian visa subclasses, regardless of where they lived previously and where they were displaced, have experienced and continue to experience abuses of power against their livelihood in North Queensland. Changed conditions of living have not changed men's violence against women. Some women in this study (Axlam, Kampire, and Mylene) are not afraid to speak of the ongoing violence against women. Their voices align with those of bell hooks (1989):

> Moving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle side by side a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of "talking back" that is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of our movement from object to subject – the liberated voice. (p. 9)

This section on violence links into the experiences of eight young women participants discussed below.

7.2.6 Gendered Obligations of Young Women

These moments which appear to be un-rooted and disconnected can be found to be connected back to female bodies. (Eisenstein, 2011, p. 398)

Eight of the participants were aged between 21 and 30 years. As they shared narratives, they unravelled the effect of gender on their lives. Some women observed and mused on their gendered roles. Others observed young men's experiences of life and in resettlement.

Whole-of-family survival determined what skills Joyce acquired instead of attending school. Pre-teen Joyce (who fled across borders with relatives) assumed a caregiving role within her family and thus missed access to education:

As a young girl I tried hard to look after others in the family (pause). I am a strong woman. In [a refugee camp], I was always strong: sewing; studying, and [I] attended church every morning 5.30 am. to 6.30 am. It was difficult and sad. (Joyce)

Joyce took many years to be confident in English literacy. With an edge to her voice, she shared how a younger male, who arrived in North Queensland at a similar time, quickly learned English and instructed her on what she needed to do:

He would say: "You can't live here without driving." So, after a long time, and after learning English, I did the test. I got the learner's licence, then the drivers licence. (Joyce)

Siyana was conflicted between pursuing opportunities for her future and obligations to support her family.

In coming to Australia, I thought, "My life is going to change now. I will be okay." I was thinking before – when I lived in [location in Africa], that I would have to marry when I was too young, because life was very hard. Now I look to my future. I need to study; I need to work. After study I can get a job and not have children too soon. Before, (voice dropped softly) I didn't have food, or cream (touching her arm). Yes, I needed the boys. But now I am okay. When I need money, when I need cream, I can go to Centrelink. They help me, so I can make my future better. I have a job in [industry]. (Siyana seemed perturbed, she was rolling a piece of A4 paper over and over) and I will soon be there for one year, I like it because … because my life is going to be better. I have money, yes; I help my family. I help to pay the rent and to buy food. (Pause, her tone dropped and she continued to roll paper.) You know … (lengthy pause), the job is not my all life. One day I plan another job because I need to get certificates. I need to study. But for now I need to work very hard. I need to work and help my mum and my family because my mum is getting old. So I need to help, but (voice dropped very low), I'm so sad, because I want to study to be a nurse or to work in a bank. It's very hard to know how I can start … I don't know how … I don't know how to start (voice increased in volume) because I have to go to TAFE and learn English first. (Siyana)

Siyana indignantly observed differences between her resettlement experiences and those of young men:

But boys! They speak good English because when they came here, they were

young. But for me it was very hard because I was older when I arrived. It was

very hard for me to learn to speak English too fast … but the boys did. For

now, I'm okay (pause) but boys, they can change; they can be Australian men

… but for me it's very hard for me. Already it's very hard for me now 'cos

I'm getting older. I just help my family and I am working hard for this country

because it helped me. I can work hard for this country to make the country go.

My dream for me is to make my life get better. (Siyana)

The obligation to help epitomises Siyana's experiences of responsibility as a young woman. I sensed her "precarious peripheral hanging on" (Mugo, 2008). She was struggling to navigate a sense of self through gendered expectations and obligations and feeling that her opportunities to achieve are slipping away. Siyana tentatively dreams of a better life and compares her life with what seems to be an easier pathway for boys to grow into being "Australian men." Siyana's experience mirrors that of girls and women in different forms across the world. Lauding Kate Millett's 1972 analysis of patriarchy in "Sexual Politics," Spender (1985) reflected that a woman "identifies the family as the basic unit of male rule and a primary source of women's oppression. It is in the family that women are subsumed" (p. 42). Fry, cited in Babacan and Gopalkrishnan (2005), named inherent male dominance as a major influence of cultural conflicts affecting double standards for young men and women in families. Similarly, Yohani and Okeke-Ihejirika (2018), African-Canadian researchers, noted that men continue to be principal actors in migration and settlement with more access to social opportunities while women assumed the work of recreating cultural boundaries, building identities, and sustaining family and communal links with the larger society.

The young women in this study are fully aware of different standards for young men and young women. There is limited literature on young women who are former refugees yet a

study of diverse African refugee youth in Brisbane found that the young women participants experienced "greater social constraints" and fewer freedoms and opportunities due to additional household duties and caregiving of siblings "compared to their male counterparts" (Riordan & Claudio, 2022, p. 1045). In a South Australian study with 30 young people from African countries, 15 young women shared their difficulties in accessing education before resettlement: "That's the hardest thing in Africa for a young girl, just to finish even year eleven" (Mude & Mwanri, 2020, p. 5). Some participants of the study expressed their disappointment that their life is still difficult, despite more study options, because of "limited opportunities for employment" (Mude & Mwanri, 2020, p. 6). Some of the young women, like Siyana in North Queensland, recognised that they needed encouragement to resist the pressure of family expectations and to persist with prioritising their dreams.

Kampire's life has been shaped entirely by gendered expectations and family responsibilities:

> Because of the cultural background and being a girl, and because of the way you were raised, then every responsibility at home is all yours: you cook, you clean, you do shopping, you do everything. Your mum will just support you a little, but most of the jobs you must do it. I remember myself … I am the one who woke up in the morning and cooked breakfast before going to school [before and after arrival in North Queensland]. Coming home from school, even if I have homework, I have to deal first with house chores and then homework after that. So even if I have to stay up 'til 11 o'clock or 10 o'clock it was up to me how I do it. But young men did not have to do anything. Their job was to eat and maybe go out with other kids and come back on time and find clothes washed, food ready, and everything done for them. (Kampire)

As an afterthought, she added:

To refuse to do it, would be very wrong and shameful (small awkward laugh).
(Kampire)

Lisette was the appointed caregiver and assistant to her mother instead of other family members who attended formal education:

She taught me to manage money … she was a strong woman and smart.
(Lisette)

Lisette pondered:

You know, the woman has sense … even if you are young … but the boys
don't have that (laughing). (Lisette)

Haffejee and East (2016) espoused womanism when discussing how gender-related responsibilities strengthen young women to have pride in, and to develop identities that are, "commemorative of struggles of African women" (p. 233). Patricia McFadden's radical feminist view is that feminism is "embedded in the oldest memories of human consciousness about freedom" (Moreno & Pessoa, 2021a, 24:49). McLellan (1995) considered that there is pressure on all young women to deny themselves opportunities in all living situations to please and benefit others. The frustrations and experiences shared by the young women (Joyce, Siyana, Lisette, and Kampire) speak to the macro sociopolitical pressure of patriarchy on women across continents (Collins, 2000a).

In contrast, young Davine seemed less bound by obligation. She enjoyed support from both parents and was optimistic about fulfilling her dreams in Australia:

I am excited for my future. I will commence a diploma in higher education,

and then I want to study in the health field and graduate to wear the hat. I want

to travel. I want to leave eventually. Getting citizenship will mean "I am

Australian" and I can get my passport. (Davine)

Although Davine enjoyed the multicultural mix of people in North Queensland, she

felt misunderstood and judged by older members of her home country:

Here in Australia, when you are 18 you are [an] adult. In our community and

culture if you are not married you have to follow parents, no matter what age.

My parents are supportive and encouraging but other people criticise me.

Before I came here I was worried there may be difficulties with wearing the

scarf. My relative, who resettled overseas, is not allowed to wear the scarf in

public. Scarf wearing is important. We start at seven years of age; we are not

allowed to wear short skirts. I wear long pants and my parents support me to

wear long pants but some people [from my country of origin] object and talk

about it. Also, some people in the communities of Africa here, discourage

people from getting passports. (Davine)

Olliff (2009) identified "intergenerational conflict" in her consultations with young

former refugees across Sydney, Melbourne, Shepparton, Canberra, and Perth (p. 16). Young

people in Olliff's study felt pressured by their parents who wanted them to maintain traditions

rather than adopt practices of the new culture. Kandiyoti (1999) considered the "retreat into

social and religious conservatism" of non-Muslim societies as a response to changes that are

threatening (p. 231). Furthermore, Kandiyoti (1999) suggested that "broken bargains" and, I

add, disappointments and difficulties in resettling into a new country, may "instigate a search

for culprits, a hankering for the certainties of a more traditional order, or a more diffuse

feeling that change might have gone either too far or badly wrong" (p. 231). She commented that conservative Islamic discourse "often associates moral decay with contamination by foreign, generally Western values, and assigns women what is considered a privileged role in restoring the lost authenticity of the community of believers" (Kandiyoti, 1999, p. 231). Although older community members censor her, Davine is encouraged by her parents.

Neela also expressed enthusiasm and pride in her family and how they work together as a unit:

> First of all, when we arrived here, we were relying on the support from other
> people such as transport, to buy something. We relied on someone to drop us
> somewhere and such things. So we decided that having a driver licence would
> be of benefit, would free ourselves and now we have a car. There is a family
> tendency of understanding and also a focus on our primary needs that has
> characterised us. Other young people, they just dismantle and separate from
> the family but we are united. We sit down together and plan as we conclude
> what will benefit all the family and we reduce relying on other people for
> everything. (Neela)

Laura shared her relief at feeling safer and having a sense of a future in North Queensland:

> As a young single mother, in [location in Africa], I didn't have work. Children
> can attend school only with fees which is an ongoing stress in that lifestyle and
> life was hard. In [country of displacement], English is a recognised second
> language and I learned English. It enabled me to get work here in North
> Queensland, and I have a certificate since arrival, which gives me opportunity
> to do a degree in the future. Having a job means I have to be organised and to

become more independent. I love the routine. I love that I sleep [in safety]. It

is so good. (Laura)

Laura has a sense of freedom from the oppressive gendered influences of the past. Having English on arrival helped her develop a life of routine and a sense of safety that she enjoys. Her future hope is to visit family who remain in Africa.

Women's resistance to gendered influences within Africa is not new and has been evolving for centuries (Salami, 2022a). Young women in this study have shared pride in being women and having diverse roles. Many of these young women have been appointed caregiving roles from a young age. Already, they are balancing and juggling expectations of female role definitions. They are hopeful for their futures in Australia while experiencing stronger pressures of family expectations than their male counterparts.

I turn now to consider the influence of the ancient philosophy of Ubuntu on women's experiences of resettlement in North Queensland.

7.2.7 Living Through Ubuntu

Radical feminism is contingent on "the imperative of female friendship" that respects and values women's rights (Raymond, 2001, p. 13). Raymond (2001) stressed that feminism is more than women supporting each other in struggling against male domination. Feminism's essence and radicalness are present when women are "in concert with our Selves and each other" (Raymond, 2001, p. 29). Raymond referred to Sojourner Truth's address to the 1851 *Women's Rights Convention* in Akron, Ohio as a marker of womanism among Black women in the United States. Womanism is a strong theme throughout Afrofeminist history, as discussed throughout this thesis. The theme that emerged in this research reflects Gatwiri's (2022) premise that African women "in the face of different struggles and hardship draw on their cultural and Ubuntu/Obuntu values and philosophies to ensure each other's collective

survival" (p. 125). Mupedziswa et al. (2019) described Ubuntu as a community philosophy that lends dignity and identity to individuals through "cooperation and working together" (p. 22). Ubuntu is central to some programs across North Queensland, and it emerged as a theme of women offering support to each other before and after their arrival. Bartolomei et al. (2014) observed the way former refugee women cared for each other. Au et al. (2021) also noticed the willingness of people who offered to help others with problems of accessing health support.

Joyce proudly shared the ingenuity of women who support each other. In her North Queensland location, she reflected on the strategies of mutual support that she and her women friends use. These strategies date back to when she and others survived in their previous refugee lives:

> My parents had passed due to conflict. I had to survive with some limited
> support from extended family members in a camp environment. As a young
> girl, it was expected of me to look after others in the family. I tried really hard.
> In the camp, it was hard for women and children to get clothes and food from
> the United Nations. For example, two litres of oil had to be shared with four or
> five families. Some of us pooled it and then after one month it became 10 to
> 20 litres so we could sell it to buy clothes or materials, or other necessary
> items to survive. (Joyce)

Joyce shared how women adapted the strategy learned in the camp for use in North Queensland:

> Here, some of us [a group of women], still do it here. We pool money each
> fortnight as Centrelink is good but not enough for each family. It just covers
> rent and food. It is very hard [to live] on Centrelink money. If you need to

study, there is not enough for study costs or for a car. Here, [in this town], the buses can take a long time. Then when the money grows, it is a "lucky draw" as to whom it will go to, so people can buy what they need. For example, a washing machine, or a car. (Joyce)

The process detailed by Joyce reflects the philosophy of Ubuntu and underpins her matter-of-fact advice to new arrivals:

I am not talking just to Africans about adapting the new life here. I tell them: "You must save money – open two accounts and every fortnight save $50 and then let that build up to help you pay costs. You must pay your rent. You must be on time with appointments. Ask questions and always ask me or ask the settlement agency. You must have a licence and learn to drive a car." (Joyce)

Barkhado is a member of a women's group that has evolved naturally and does not operate through a formal organisation. However, there is an established routine for women's support to each other.

Our women's group here in Australia talk each morning via a mobile phone app. We find out if someone has something they need help with. We really support each other. If someone is sick, we work out how to help her. So, when I finish work, I may then go to assist her. All of us women in the group, do this. So if something happens to me, they just visit me. But we don't have a special [formal] women's group. We support each other through the app. (Barkhado)

Barkhado's experience speaks of a shared commitment to mutual support. It has a structure of sorts that is grounded in trust.

Pauline used the word "maishabora" instead of Ubuntu. She discussed a group of women from across different countries of Africa who have met in North Queensland and support each other:

> Maishabora means "a good life." We help each other with some counselling.
> We brought our culture here. We sing our songs. We dance. (Pauline)

Mylene's previous mention of supporting women who live with domestic violence is a form of Ubuntu in operation.

Laura has developed friendships of support with women from different countries of Africa across both North Queensland sites:

> I have visited [North Queensland town] a lot and have a lot of friends there. It
> is a different type of country, but no huge differences [in lifestyle]. I notice
> that the different African communities there are so friendly. (Laura)

7.2.8 I Am No Longer a Refugee

> It is impossible to critically examine the experiences of refugees resettled from
> Africa to Australia without recognising that their resettlement takes place
> within a context of racism. (Ramsay, 2016, p. 321)

Accounts by women of their resettlement experiences suggested ambivalence in their feelings of belonging in their new home. A previous theme (Section 7.2.3) detailed women's frustrations in accessing employment across North Queensland. English monolingualism and discriminatory experiences have been highlighted as key concerns. Gatwiri and James (2024) considered that at the heart of belonging experiences is constant navigation and mediation of power through racism and shifting frames of "us and them" (p. 1). In North Queensland, similar to the previously cited Western Australian study by Robinson and Haintz (2021),

women's experience of belonging is mediated through their access to support and services. Mick McCabe, a founding member of TMSG, commented in Frazer and Beplate's (2018) study that "I have also learned that the more welcoming and supportive the community is, the easier and more positive is the refugee's experience. Settlement is indeed everyone's business" (p. 17). The manner of service reception by strangers to refugees has a primary effect on women's experiences of belonging (Baak, 2021). Much of the literature on multicultural discourse and public policy in Australia is bound by control and race (Huynh & Neyland, 2020; Jakubowicz, 2002; Moreton-Robinson, 2020; Tascon, 2011). Ramsay (2017a), in an article about the resettlement of women from the region of Central Africa, contended that belonging slides along a scale indicating personal experiences of "affective inclusion and a politicised condition of collective recognition" (p. 172). Furthermore, low English literacy affects women's capacity to pass the official test of belonging through the Australian citizenship test. Ndhlovu (2014) argued that Australia's current citizenship test maintains the racism of the White Australia policy. It normalises white cultural knowledge as integration, disregards the linguistic diversity of arrivals from Africa, and elevates the English language as superior to other languages. Just as Ndhlovu's research identified women's ambivalent experiences of peace and belonging, so too was the experience of women in North Queensland.

Kampire expressed her frustration with the enduring refugee label despite being an Australian citizen:

> Let me talk about this one. I used to be a refugee. This is another way of how
> you can get offended (small laugh). Whenever someone sees someone (pause)
> especially when you are an African, someone will see you and they don't
> know if you are refugee or not and they just call you a refugee; and maybe it
> [is meant] in a good way but it's kind of offensive for some people, because

they know what refugee means. It doesn't always make some people feel good, as someone can use it to bully you or to make you feel valueless and uh, yeah. For myself I am not ashamed to have been a refugee but I am no longer a refugee (pause) there is no war here (small laugh) no war anymore now and I am an Australian citizen (pause). So why should I keep feeling that I am a refugee in Australia when I have all the rights like anybody else and ah I can do anything I want as long as it is not uncomfortable for someone and if the law is allowing me to do those things so umm I don't think I refer myself to be a refugee anymore (small laugh) because I am not being tied in [restricted] to one area: "You can't go here; you can't do that." (Kampire)

Kampire also shared discussions she has had with other women:

They feel they are being treated still as refugees, especially if someone says something mean to them (pause) they say, "They just treated me this way because I am a refugee." They will keep quiet and remain fearful that maybe they can be taken back home. So they just keep quiet – even if someone abuses them or treats them somehow wrong. They will not speak out. (Kampire)

She recalled difficulties that women had shared with her about getting bond loans returned and women being held responsible for damages that were at the property before their lease.

Kampire's messages are that women continue to be cast as outsiders and are constantly having to negotiate and prove their worth within the local communities.

7.3 Chapter Summary

As Black Africans enter white-dominated spaces like Australia, where they are relegated to the margins due to race, class and immigrant status, the contours of their existing identities are challenged and compromised. (Gatwiri & Anderson, 2022, p. 34)

In this chapter, I explored the themes that emerged from the varied resettlement experiences of 20 women from four diverse African countries who settled in North Queensland. These women's diverse experiences challenge the myth of homogeneity in African life. Their experiences support Adichie's caution (2009) to avoid one single narrative of women from Africa. The discussed themes highlight women's sense of living in relative peace and safety that vie with mixed feelings of belonging. Competency in English affects women's anticipated employment soon after arrival, their commitment to family overseas, and their aspirations for family reunion. Women who had been resettled for more than five years looked out for those women who had more recently arrived. They voiced difficulties about continued male domination of women. They stressed the need for key services (housing, employment, education, and health) to access interpreters. Young women described their responsibilities as defined by their gender, and their family, culture, and social responsibilities. Women described their efforts to hold out against discriminatory experiences and to embrace welcome by others. They discussed their varied and continued use of Africa's philosophy of Ubuntu across North Queensland.

I turn now to Chapter 8, in which I examine the data gathered during Phase 2. After an introductory overview, I provide an account of the contributions from managers of resettlement services before discussing the findings from resettlement practitioners.

Chapter 8. Service Sector Voices

8.1 Introduction

An analysis of circumstances that involve women must take as its starting

point the relationship between the personal situation and the social context in

which it is set. The analysis must be sensitive to the state of mind of the

individual woman and the social, political and ideological climate in which

that state of mind occurs. There is a pervasive, insidious politics of everyday

life that we hardly recognize, so total is its presence. However, it shapes our

lives, it casts some as powerful and others as weak, it allows some to judge

and requires others to be judged. This political fact of life has to be identified,

analyzed and thoroughly understood before action which to be appropriate and

effective can be taken. (Howe, 1987, p. 128)

In this chapter, I address the second research question: What are the experiences of

resettlement practitioners with women refugees from diverse countries of Africa? I also share

accounts by the managers of resettlement services in North Queensland. Firstly, I review

North Queensland HSP services and populations that have been resettled in the decade

(2010–2020), avoiding identification of site or individual managers. I then detail a composite

narrative of managers' perspectives of delivering the HSP across the North Queensland

region and challenges they experience. (McElhinney & Kennedy, 2022; Nelson et al., 2014)

Organisational challenges follow with a manager's composite overview of challenges they

perceived as encountered by former refugee women from African countries. I discuss

differences across the region in a non-evaluative and non-identifiable manner to ensure

compliance with the Phase 2 ethics requirements. I then analyse and discuss data collected

from four resettlement practitioners who foreground resettled women's experiences, making

links with women's accounts of their experiences and referring to managers perspectives (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). I discuss all themes, including those that I had not anticipated through the lens of my theoretical foundation and literature review. These findings contribute to the study's conclusions and implications for resettlement policy and social work and human service practice in Chapter 9.

8.2 North Queensland Humanitarian Settlement Program Services

Kandasmay and Soldatic (2018), in a study with regional resettlement services in Victoria, considered the pressure of resettlement service contractual arrangements as a "critical site of negotiation" that may have practice implications for the level of support provided to arrivals (p. 112). As detailed in Section 1.4, the Cairns HSP service is delivered by Centacare FNQ Multicultural Services, which operates from independent offices located in the south side suburb of Manunda. Townsville HSP service is delivered through the presently named TMSG. The North Queensland sites have subcontracts with Multicultural Australia in Brisbane. Both sites are deemed outer regional areas by the ASGS. Each of the services also delivers SETS and CAMS programs that include community capacity development activities designed to benefit current and exited HSP clients and economic migrants on diverse visa subclasses. Each service engages with other local government services under respective city council administrations. These HSP services also engage with local incorporated and community African-led groups and registered associations.

The annual anticipated arrival levels of Cairns and Townsville are 400 respectively, which is more than double the peaks and troughs of arrival numbers in the initial years between 2000 and 2010. Each site welcomes those with the Women at Risk visa subclass 204. North Queensland was not exempt from a downturn in arrivals post-March 2020 due to the pandemic border closures. As noted in Chapter 4, the SCOA (2022b) describes the settlement sector workforce as a "distinct and specialised form of service"

(p. 31). The HSP *Case Management Guidelines* (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b) require workers to have tertiary qualifications in human service, including but not limited to social work.

During the decade under study (2010–2020), the home countries of most humanitarian entrants to Cairns were the DRC and Rwanda. In Townsville, entrants originated from the DRC, Rwanda, Somalia, and the CAR (as distinct from the geographic region of Central Africa). The countries of displaced life, where people have lived as stateless refugees before their arrival in North Queensland, have included Asia, Burundi, Chad, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Participants of both phases of the study indicated that there has been some social interaction between arrivals across Cairns and Townsville. I will now share an overview of the challenges discussed by the managers of North Queensland resettlement services.

8.2.1 Organisational Challenges of Humanitarian Settlement Program Services in North Queensland

According to the two managers, there are now no mass exits from North Queensland to Sydney and Melbourne: "People are dropping roots here" and "some are buying houses." Previous challenges in the early 2000s, of arrivals leaving North Queensland, have been "turned around." The managers named several current challenges of delivering HSP services in the unique geographic location of North Queensland, including managing local service narratives, overseeing tight budgets that are not commensurate with outer regional costs, responding to specific needs of women from Africa (employment, isolation, and male violence), and coordinating with local services and African community associations. The *National Settlement Framework* – a "high level structural blueprint" – includes guidelines for regular engagement and collaboration of services with stakeholders to address settlement barriers (Australian Department of Home Affairs, n.d., p. 1).

8.2.2 The Narrative of a Local Expert Service

The managers noted the influence of a "local expert service" narrative that, in their view, affects the capacity of the resettlement service to meet HSP contract deliverables such as "referral to mainstream and specialist support services" and "connections to local community groups and activities." There are variations of these difficulties across the region. The managers observed that a slow uptake by mainstream human services adds to the workload of resettlement services and their financial resources. Often, referrals "bounce back" from the mainstream service to the resettlement service, which may complicate resettlement services' capacity to achieve key performance indicators. The managers suggested that staff at mainstream human services are "overwhelmed" with the level of support that clients need, "don't feel up to the task," or are "limited in their resources." Such comments contribute to the notion of the HSP expert service narrative. These managers considered many regional human services as "limited in their resources," which sets off a domino effect of service referral refusal. They are aware that "bounced referrals" could be queried by the lead contractor, as service provision is dependent on linking clients successfully to the broader network of services. The managers were concerned that resettlement staff have been at risk of both work overload and exposure to risks of vicarious trauma and racism. They discussed prioritising "relationship building" and "innovation" in their local sites:

> We work closely with other services to increase understanding of needs across the region and to reduce the narrative of expert service. We try to be across all the networks: health, women's services, youth networks, regional councils welcoming committees and employment and some church groups which support clients, for example, the Society of St Vincent de Paul and Salvation Army. We support submissions by community groups. We have become a bit smart now in a business sense and charge other services for using accredited

interpreters who are employed at our services. Alternatively, we encourage

services to access and use Interpreter services. (Managers)

Clearly, the managers have spent time developing strategic relationships across

networks and services in both service sites to expand available support to women

humanitarian entrants (Owen & Westoby, 2012; Taylor, 2015).

8.2.3 Juggling Costs: Budget Restraints in the Region

The submission prepared by the SCOA, in response to a 2022 Australian Department

of Home Affairs *Next Steps to Improve Australia's Settlement and Integration of Refugees*

discussion paper (Commonwealth Coordinator-General for Migrant Services, 2022),

recommended a different funding model for regional services that deliver

resettlement services:

> Adopt a different funding model for regional settlement service providers
>
> which includes the following elements: greater community capacity building
>
> than contracts in other areas; allows for work to be done to attract people to
>
> regional areas; recognises that individual client services will require a greater
>
> level of intensity; recognises that administrative costs may need to be higher in
>
> regional areas. (SCOA, 2022b, p. 26)

The managers contended that, compared with the southern metropolitan cities, there

are limited employment options and limited public transport in North Queensland regions,

which affects employment options for humanitarian entrants. Fostering employment

opportunities strains regional service budgets, as some employment opportunities exist in

rural sites up to 100 km from the service sites within local government areas. Their view was

that "Southerners" who drive policy and service delivery do not understand the unique

geography of the North Queensland areas, or the associated additional time and funds

required to facilitate work opportunities in outlying rural locations (up to 100 km distance from each site). Additional costs include transport and travel costs, and time spent by managers or delegated staff to establish courteous working relations with local shire representatives and key businesses to assess conditions of work on offer. A study by Boese and Phillips (2017) in regional Victoria appreciated the unique local contexts of regional locations. These researchers recognised the complexity of developing long-term support across intersecting governments and key interest groups in regional areas: "Multiple actors in one location sharing an interest in service provision to diverse clients, engender a coordinated approach and could mitigate the risk associated with relying on a single provider" (Boese & Phillips, 2017, p. 400).

Allowing for the disparity of distances in North Queensland regional locations from larger metropolitan services, compared with the distances between Victorian regional HSP service sites and metropolitan centres, Boese and Phillips (2017) confirmed that regional services must engage with multiple actors to enable appropriate responses to complex resettlement needs of refugees. The authors noted the high degree of local government variability in responding to needs, which was a challenge experienced by North Queensland managers (Boese & Phillips, 2017). The North Queensland managers speculated that Southern contractors and HSP officials have considered Cairns and Townsville as similar, and that external rural areas of each site are also "outposts" of the North Queensland service sites rather than unique independent shires.

8.2.4 The Managers' Overview: Challenges Faced by Women From African Countries

It is very clear that gender influences employment and training opportunities. A lot more jobs are offered to men. Men are often selected by employers for work and to attend training. Employers consider them to be more reliable than

women. Women require additional service support to access opportunities, for example, to get drivers' licences. They also have difficulty understanding the workforce points system that regulates eligibility for training opportunities. Sometimes the women voice that they are discriminated in getting opportunities. Women arrive strong and determined to work and expect that their husbands will get employment immediately and not be in the home. For women, community engagement and training and employment support from the service goes hand in hand. We do a lot of capacity building with the training organisations. Literacy and numeracy and digital skills are essential, so we liaise a lot with TAFE services for training courses. A key initiative is connecting employers with grants that will enable them to access additional support when hiring some of our clients. (Managers)

Both managers emphasised that prioritising employment pathways for men relieves some pressure on women who are not used to the daily presence of partners in the home. Some people (primarily men) have accessed seasonal work opportunities on farms in regional areas outside the two city centres. For example, to Mareeba in FNQ and at surrounding mango and vegetable farms in the rural districts of Ayr and Bowen, respectively distanced 100 and 200 kilometres south of Townsville. They either pool car resources or rely on service support for bus transport.

The managers observed that women may be isolated due to the demands of child rearing and limited English-speaking skills. The services have tried to integrate work across different service streams, including those who have been referred to programs of SETS and CAMS, to reduce women's isolation:

Isolation [of women], due to language is a big issue. We strive to adapt

services and create opportunities for women to come together through social

activities including sewing, gardening, social outings, and support in

conversational English. We have adapted our services to meet the needs of

mums through SETS and CAMS programs. We also liaise with community

groups or churches who support and welcome newly arrived people, for

example, the Society of St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army. We work

with schools to influence young women to take up training opportunities as we

notice some young women are pressured to have children. (Managers)

The managers also commented on women's experience of violence at home:

There have been issues with violence in the homes. Financial independence

can assist women to remove themselves from such situations. We understand

from listening to the women and from information by established African

associations, that often before arrival, men were away a lot, and women were

managing households and being the main caregivers. We explore opportunities

for work for men, away from home, similar to a fly in fly out arrangement. We

have a program designed to help women refugees and migrants link in with

specialised women's services. (Managers)

8.2.5 Supporting Local Initiatives to Assist Women

The managers recognised that women from Africa require additional and targeted

support beyond what can be provided by HSP resettlement practitioners. They acknowledged

that women support each other in different ways across the two sites. They did not refer to the

Ubuntu philosophy. As noted, some women's groups are encouraged by SETS and CAMS

programs. Socialisation also occurs through shared religious faiths and shared languages. The

Salvation Army actively supports some families. In each site, there are active groups or community-incorporated associations formed by people from diverse African countries. The Cairns African Association conducts activities and cultural events in addition to the Maisha Bora program promoting mental health and personal support, which the Phase 1 participant Pauline previously shared as having the same meaning as Ubuntu. This association has strong links with the settlement service. In Townsville, organisations that liaise closely with the settlement agency include Tender Care, the Bright Horn of Africa Association and associations of people from the CAR. The managers shared that regional resettlement services prioritise a community approach that has developed gradually by establishing trust and mutual understanding. These managers sometimes supported local community associations in their applications for funding and grant compliance.

8.3 Resettlement Practitioner Responsibilities

Resettlement delivery by practitioners is discussed in the next section. Firstly, I discuss case management as outlined in the HSP *Case Management Guidelines* (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b), which are described in its introduction as "the process of working collaboratively with Clients to assess their needs, and deliver a tailored package of HSP services to address those needs, through the implementation of an individualised case management plan" (p. 1). As a neoliberal dovetailing term, case management is adopted across a broad spectrum of human services – ultimately assigning service outcome achievement to individual client capacities and potentially homogenising experiences of diverse groups of arrivals, including people from African countries. A case management approach minimises structural barriers unique to the local environment of North Queensland (Harris & Baker, 2008). The changes in the HSP's delivery to a state-wide HSP service in 2017 did, in effect, drive the adoption of the generic "case manager" title in service sites across the state including North Queensland. As outlined in Chapter 1, I adopted the

term "resettlement practitioners" as distinct from the broad term, "case manager." While assisting women to resettle, resettlement practitioners interact with a plethora of other human service workers, including local charities, community associations, and other social workers and resettlement practitioners. Resettlement practitioners collaborate with these workers across community and government services for health (including mental health), torture and trauma support, education, housing, income support, and employment and training. A feature of this study is that resettlement practitioner participants are former migrants or humanitarian entrants into North Queensland.

In the next section, practitioner reflections are followed by a discussion of themes that are discussed and interweaved with the entanglements of women's experiences in Chapters 6 and 7.

8.3.1 Humbling and Confronting Experiences

Witnessing women's courage has inspired and motivated practitioners to support women. Lorella referred to her working experience as "humbling":

> It has been a privilege to do this job, and to enjoy it thoroughly and to get to know the kind of people we work with, and to share in their growth in Australia. It's been a sometimes challenging profession, but it's been wonderful. I cannot think of anything negative about it. It makes me feel so humble and as you learn about all the issues that people are dealing with daily, you become humbler. There is more reflection; there is more insight. Sometimes you see people when you are doing work every day and sometimes, you know, clients can get a bit demanding and you manage their expectations. It's at those times you remember [their difficulties], understand, and think: "So this is why it's happening." (Lorella)

Lorella shared her passion and commitment and described her willingness to learn and reflect on how she works. She freely admitted to the difficulties of resettlement work, such as having to manage clients' expectations of her. The HSP *Case Management Guidelines* include "supporting realistic expectations" of clients, as part of "transitioning clients to independence, other settlement services and mainstream service systems" (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b, p. 8). The notion of supporting clients to have realistic expectations obscures structural obstacles in the broader service network systems and obscures the discriminatory effects of racism and sexism. It also denies the pressure on resettlement practitioners to meet the required HSP outcomes with little awareness of local contexts.

Self-awareness and awareness of power underpins social work practice with refugees (Cocker & Hafford-Letchfield, 2022; Ife, 2012; Global Agenda Task Force, 2022). Lorella expressed being overwhelmed by the trust that new arrivals put in practitioners:

> For people who have had so many reasons *not* to trust people, they are quite trusting and I find that really interesting … but at the end of the day, what choice do they have? Some things they want to keep private [separate bank accounts], and you respect that but on the other hand honestly, I am surprised that they have that level of trust. (Lorella)

In her work, Lorella was aware of power differentials. Indeed, all resettlement practitioners questioned their power in their practice and in the practice of the service milieu of the sites where they worked.

Susan shared her concerns for women and her commitment to assisting them in resettling:

I feel like it's so good that I can be in the position to support refugee women

because to be honest when I talk with my clients they tell me that they have

been in a refugee camp for 20 years and they just have no hope, no future, and

they experience so many terrible things over there like sexual assault and

domestic violence – all of that (pause) and it just – it just gives me like

(hesitant pause) how to say it … literally I could cry a lot. So I feel so lucky

that I am in a position to help them and then I can see the outcome we have

been through with the client. By the time we work along with the client, we

help her to build a lot of knowledge and they can apply it in their life. (Susan)

Susan was clearly sensitive to women's experiences of loss, and to women being

victims of sexual violence. Susan respected their strengths and was confident that she could

assist them in achieving an outcome. Her empathy contributed to her "awakening

consciousness" of the shared oppressions of women that Adrienne Rich (1972) – respected

feminist poet and essayist – described as "confusing, disorienting, and painful" (p. 18). Susan

brought her critical awareness of women's needs to her practice by referring to "working

along with the client," respecting the individual woman, and also respecting that the woman

faces the challenge of having to learn an overwhelming amount of information and new skills.

Jean spoke enthusiastically about the assistance offered to women:

I am excited to help people, women from the different countries, and I feel

very happy to engage with them and to know their cultures and to know their

identity as well as I am happy to share mine with them. Sometimes women

come for help with housing, sometimes to help renew their immigration card

[for identification], and they also come sometimes to apply for [a] blue card;

yeah, they come with different issues to ask for help and I am always happy to

help. (Jean)

Jean described being able to comfortably engage with women personally and professionally by sharing her cultural identity in extending acceptance and support. She assisted the clients with practical support that involved negotiating through systems of different departments.

Kerry, like Susan, discussed being aware of traumas experienced by women before arrival, including the torture of war, and feared being unable to earn their trust. Kerry posed critical questions of power to inform sensitive and respectful practice (Cocker & Hafford-Letchfield, 2022):

They have gone through trauma in refugee camps and of course some have

gone through even domestic violence and torture during the war and a refugee

experience. Sometimes you get scared (pause) "How will I work with them?

Will they feel comfortable working with me?" (Kerry)

8.3.2 There is Not One Culture in Africa

A lot of times people think there is one culture [in Africa], but people have

different cultures so for instance if you look at Somali; for instance, their

culture is embedded in Muslim faith and someone – a woman from Somali

may live quite differently than a woman from Congo. (Kerry)

The HSP *Case Management Guidelines* are, by necessity, generic to all humanitarian entrants. I was curious to explore if the diversity of women arriving from Africa influenced different styles of practitioner intervention. Some in-house lived experiences of practitioners contributed to their understanding of women's resettlement experiences. They indicated the

benefit of understanding the geographical and political landscapes of women's background experiences. The resettlement practitioners were aware of the diverse languages and associated multilingual knowledge and capacities of some arriving women, including knowledge of what foods may be familiar and available in North Queensland:

> It takes time for us to learn from them because as soon as they arrive in Australia they won't feel confident to share their experience with us, so we need time to build the trust between them and us as an organisation. The way I work with the women from where I come from is different from the way I work with women from Africa or Myanmar, for example, because they have different cultures, and I have to respect their cultures, and their values so sometimes it makes me [work] differently. But I always respect them and the way they want me to work. I will follow the rule [HSP guidelines], but before I work with them, I will always double check with the colleagues who speak their same language and from their same culture, so I will get to know what their culture is, and what is the appropriate way to approach them. I will do the research and I will prepare myself before they come to me. (Jean)

Jean's earnestness and intent to relate respectfully with women reflect studies that critique the dominance of Eurocentric influence in social work and reflect challenges of media representation that positions former women refugees from Africa as pitiful and without agency (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Gatwiri & Tusasiirwe, 2022). Jean spoke of accessing additional support for women from a diverse staff team and how she uses that support in her individual work with women:

> Women were taught that in the HSP orientation [life skills workshops] that whenever they come to the organisation [or any service], they are to smile and

to make eye contact. If any woman is not confident to share or confident to talk, they will talk to the person in the organisation who shares their language who will ask me to repeat information or they will ask me to change my voice – a bit slow or a bit louder. They always talk to the language worker. After the client leaves I double check with the language worker: "Did I do the right thing? Was I culturally appropriate?" and the language worker will give me feedback on what I need to improve the next time. (Jean)

The orientation component of HSP *Case Management Guidelines* state that orientation is designed to "provide clients with the basic skills and knowledge that will allow them to independently access services" (Department of Home Affairs, 2020b, p. 31). Jean's mention of new arrivals being encouraged to "smile and make eye contact" may put some pressure on former refugees to conform to the dominant rule and expectations of white-centric policy. Recalling women participants' retraction of candid responses, a directive to smile is unarguably an example of pressuring women to behave in a way that meets the expectations of Australians.

Susan's insights on working with women from the African continent suggest a social work practice framework that is cognisant of an "international human connection" (Ife & Tascon, 2016, p. 27). She compared support offered by North Queensland residents to refugees out of Ukraine with the support offered to arrivals from Africa:

We must be very patient when we work with refugees out of Africa, as we understand that they have spent a lot of years in refugee camps or in the country, and they have fled their country and it takes so long for them to come to Australia. I could say I am not very happy. I see a lot of offers of support from the community for white people who are out of Ukraine. They say that

they are wanting to invite Ukrainians to come here to Australia. I don't get

that for our African clients. I would prefer that they call me for African

people. When you apply for a house for Ukrainians, they get the housing

straight away. I must be objective so I cannot query, "Why haven't you called

me with offers of assistance for Africans?" I see different treatment. (Susan)

As previously mentioned, the difference between the welcome of Ukrainians across European borders was commented on by Fernandez (2022) in The Conversation (Section 3.5).

Lorella emphasised the need for practitioners and service workers to understand the nuances of different languages and dialects across Africa:

Some people feel they are not respected if you can't get an interpreter in their

language … like we assume that if someone comes from Chad, that she speaks

Arabic. However, the Arabic they speak is not the Arabic that the interpreter

speaks. So I have learned when I am booking or requesting an interpreter to

ask for an "African Arabic speaker" because if you ask for [unqualified]

Arabic, you will get an interpreter whose Arabic is Middle Eastern. A similar

problem happens with [arrivals who speak] French. It depends on which part

of Africa the woman has lived. It goes both ways. If those details are not clear

first, the interpreter has difficulty in understanding the client. (Lorella)

Lorella reflected on women's expressed frustrations with the dominance of English in employment pathways and its seesaw effects on women's sense of belonging in Australia. Lorella respectfully avoided drawing attention to some women's illiteracy. Her observations illuminated her respect for the diversity of languages and diversity of needs between entrants

from Africa (Ndhlovu, 2014). Her described practice avoids homogenising women from Africa and is deeply supportive of their desire to belong in the community.

8.3.3 They Bear With It: Assisting Women Who Live With Violence

The resettlement practitioners' reports of violence against women from Africa aligned with the Phase 1 participants' shared experiences. Kerry talked of young single women who were coerced into partnerships:

> Some single women after they have been here some time, who may be
> struggling financially, or living alone if their children grow up and their
> income gets smaller as they are unable to get work, may get involved with
> men who may be violent and then they [women] don't know how to kick them
> out or to say "Enough." They bear with it because they are scared to live on
> their own. (Kerry)

Kerry's awareness of men's exploitation of women arrivals confirmed the earlier concerns of Axlam, Kampire, and Mylene. Further, this awareness confirms the previously shared outcomes of a study by Machin and Shardlow (2018), in which women who are identified as previously engaging in survival sex are subjected to male predatory behaviour. Jean articulated her practitioner response to women experiencing domestic violence:

> When women come with the issues of domestic violence; because we don't
> deal with that, we will get all the information. First, we will get their consent.
> If so, they are happy for us to refer them to another organisation. If so, we will
> contact the other organisation and let them know what is happening. That
> organisation will take over and support the women. Every year we invite a
> guest speaker from the domestic violence sector to deliver an information
> session so everyone will know how to be safe here. (Jean)

Susan identified women's right to manage their finances as a trigger for domestic violence. She discussed the difficulties of supporting women long term and the pressures she experienced as a worker:

Women tell me that men question them: "Why does all the money go to your account?" There is a lot of conflict happening because of that and if they cannot solve it, it will escalate to violence … a lot of verbal abuse and physical and sexual abuse. (Susan)

Susan continued to outline how she resisted men's collective pressure on her practice:

The men try to explain DV [domestic violence] away as being "our culture." A woman's partner once brought along four community members – four men into my office. They tried to explain to me as a case manager, that "DV is in our culture" and they said that they want to resolve it in the family first and if the wife and husband can't solve it, then the matter would go to the community meeting. They also called the uncle and asked him to reason with me. He said to me: "You can't just support the woman you know. You must listen to us." The men tried to pressure me to have a community member present when I am with the woman. I didn't. I told them: "I cannot do that … she asked for support from me, and we cannot talk about it with you" and after that if a woman decides she is going to take action and take out a DV order, then that is another phase." Sometimes though, after a few weeks of separation from the husband, the woman feels like it's a struggle and they feel like it is difficult to get the children to school or something practical like that. (Susan)

Susan refused to be pressured by men. She recognised the daunting practical difficulties of resettling women in their new environment. Susan's experiences with men

from one community are symbolic of patriarchy. It aligns with Axlam's experience of police believing the perpetrator of violence against her, and it also aligns with Khadija Gbla's report of police questioning her complaint of violence based on race and culture. Ann Summers (2022) acknowledged the additional support needed for women to leave violent relationships and manage the transition to being single mothers: "Not only are there often tough economic consequences, health risks and other problematic outcomes for single mothers who have left violent relationships, but single mothers are themselves often at risk of continuing to endure violence-especially from previous partners" (p. 16).

The responses from resettlement practitioners demonstrate that working relationships with local women's support services are critical to supporting women in resettlement. Lorella recalled the value of research on practice and the learning she gained from a research study (that she was unable to identify) with women about their experiences in a camp before arrival:

> Something that is chiselled in my mind forever, is that because women had no security in the camp, women's response to a question on what could help them to feel safe, was "a house with a door" (long pause). It makes me cry (teary). I will not forget that. I also remember another client saying, "We hated it when it was getting dark because we knew that every day there was a potential to get attacked and raped." (Lorella)

Lorella also shared her reflections about women's rights and her observations of men collectively protecting their considered right over women:

> Everywhere in the world, the way the women are treated and the way they are expected to fulfil their commitments, when there is a domestic violence issue or a woman wanting to separate; there is pressure from the community – including from women – to stay in the marriage, to put up with whatever.

Learning to be able to tell men that it is not that your wives are becoming different and being corrupted in a Western country; but it's more that now, they have the means here to do what they would have done before in Africa; they would have left you then. It's not that your wife has changed; the circumstances have changed and they have money and if they had money before they would have left you then. (Lorella)

Lorella recalled contributing to an information session for men and women about the laws in Australia that protect women and children:

To see the women, listening and understanding, and for them to know that the men in their life were hearing the information was quite empowering. Women stood up during the session and put forward an argument, claiming their rights and it was so empowering for me to observe. I felt like "'Yes, you go girl" and the men were, "Oh you don't understand." There was one man who when we were talking about sexual violence and rape within the marriage – this man stood up and said, "If she says no for a year I will go and get another wife." Men have this sense of entitlement that "This is my right and if she won't give it to me, I will find it somewhere else." I think this attitude is across the world. It doesn't matter where you come from. (Lorella)

Lorella's deliberations on men's sense of entitlement reflected that her practice is critically informed by feminist and human rights practice (Ife, 2016; McLellan, 1995; Pittaway et al., 2016).

8.3.4 A Lot of Women Are Completely Lost

The resettlement practitioners' insights confirm women's disappointments about being unable to access work, their isolation, and their vulnerability. Jean raised concerns for women who are isolated:

> Some ladies from Africa never go out of their home; they always look after the children in their home, and they don't have any idea of outside. That is one reason why they are behind, and they don't have confidence to talk straight away; they don't have confidence to raise their issues. (Jean)

Kerry drew on the knowledge of women working, earning, and surviving in different locations of Africa – regardless of language and country differences. Her account provided firsthand insights into women's experiences in their home countries and their lives as refugees:

> I have seen a lot of Congolese women who work hard looking after their families before they come here. They work to do their business. When they get here, usually they want to do something familiar and when you tell them about doing other things, they are confused. In Africa, you have all these markets on the streets and women can do businesses such as selling fish, selling vegetables [tomatoes], goods, clothing or sewing, that help them to survive and provide for their families. If you don't know the culture … you may think they are not motivated, but it's because of the change – so different here to what they have been used to and it becomes very confusing for them. Once they realise they can't work that way [the way they are used to], they are completely lost. They get here … they don't know what to do, and because most of them have low levels of literacy, they struggle here. (Kerry)

Njaramba's (2022) findings, from a North Queensland study of 65 women originating from 26 different countries (some were secondary economic migrants who settled first in Europe or the United States), align with Kerry's experience. Njaramba concluded that migrant women who arrived on skilled visas had a higher success rate in establishing and operating a business than women who arrived on humanitarian visas. She concluded that humanitarian entrants had minimal "human and linguistic capital" (Njaramba, 2022, p. 128).

Kerry linked women's concern for loved ones left behind with their distress at not being able to find work soon after arrival, concluding that the experience compounds women's isolation and desperation to assist family members who are still living as refugees.

Women will not forget … they are different from men, so they want to earn money and try to make sure their kids there [and here] are happy. (Kerry)

Kerry then commented on how these difficulties challenged resettlement practitioners:

It can be so confusing to help women because a lot of them find they can't do anything here. They go to TAFE to learn English, but they can't master English. It's hard for them to find a job. It is hard for them to find a way to be happy. I think in the city it is easier for them to get a job. But for women in regional areas, it is harder. (Kerry)

Susan was aware of the struggles women encounter in trying to understand and navigate systems. This was particularly evident when women needed to apply for Centrelink entitlements (linked to reporting policies of employment and training services), trust in banking systems, and maintain tenancy obligations. All systems rely on English literacy and have compliance processes:

Women have no idea of what a system is in Australia. The Centrelink and employment service systems are complicated. Many of my clients from a camp or rural areas in Africa, do not know how to read or write in their first language or other languages. It causes difficulties with Centrelink letters and with using the bank where Centrelink money is deposited. It's very tough … really hard. Then there are the workforce requirements to seek employment. We will support clients to fill a lot of applications for a job and we know that they will work very hard if they get a job. Often, there is no response from employers. They fail from the first step. Maybe it is racism because of their names, or maybe they need a licence for a job. Also, they don't have private transport to get to places of employment, as public transport is difficult here. I believe in the bigger cities it is much better. Here, they require a private vehicle to be able to work. But they don't have English to get a licence. They need intensive support to find work, and the case manager cannot do that. We liaise with the Parents Next program [funded by the Australian Department of Employment and Workplace Relations that] assists women who have been working at home caring for children, to prepare for employment, for women to come here. We organise an interpreter [for] staff of Parents Next to explain all the road rules and assist women to prepare for employment in the future. We can only try and link them to employment support programs.

Another issue is supporting them to set up an account, or to have a password for the bank card and ATM and to know how to use it. The woman may have no idea. She doesn't know numbers, doesn't know what the password means, so she may give that to her children and then she always

256

worries that the money is not safe in the bank. So, she may ask her children to

put all the money under her pillow or hide it in the house. (Susan)

The resettlement practitioners' observations and experiences parallel the women

participants' expressed frustrations and the Shergold et al. report (2019) that identified an

"intrinsic link" between the economic participation of former refugees and English language

proficiency as a "major weakness" (p. 27). The report detailed that only 7% of AMEP

participants had functional English after completing the AMEP, yet most attendees did not

complete the available 510 hours (during the decade under study; see Shergold et al., 2019).

The average number of hours completed was just 289, representing "a disturbing underuse of

public funds" (Shergold et al., 2019, p. 27). Torezani et al. (2008) attributed poor

employment outcomes for former refugees to the neoliberal influences on job-seeking

processes that are delivered in a context of "interpersonal and institutional racism" (p. 139).

Findings of a subsequent review of AMEP by the Department of Home Affairs (2023b)

underscored reforms that were put into place mid-2021. The limit of 510 hours on functional

English is now lifted and eligibility criteria for people to attend vocational English has been

changed (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2023b). The changes may

create more opportunities for women who participated in this study to access AMEP. Gaining

employment continues to be a key marker of successful humanitarian entrant integration. The

next section discusses practitioner frustrations with applying the HSP policy.

8.3.5 Walking a Practice Tightrope

The resettlement practitioners' experiences of arranging support for women

converged with women's lived experiences of trying to navigate through systems in their new

environment. Harrison and Turner (2011) talked with social workers – many of whom

stressed the need for social workers to be able to work in uncertain environments while being

vigilant of personal assumptions and ignorance of cultural variations. One social worker discussed the incongruence between hospital social work systems and working with people of diverse backgrounds: "So, there's a lot of external pressure on us to perform, that isn't necessarily congruent to the way we need to work with people from different backgrounds" (Harrison & Turner, 2011, p. 340).

Resettlement practitioners' experiences with implementing the HSP required them to interact with multiple mainstream services and human service personnel to arrange women's entitled support. These practitioners faced obstacles:

> So, my client, she was a single mum. The relevant policy within Centrelink
>
> requires that the single parent attempt to get child support from the father. I
>
> found out that one of her children was a child of rape as the result of day in
>
> and day out abuse. She showed me her scar (long pause as the practitioner was
>
> teary). Firstly, I remember, the woman having to share that she was raped. But
>
> then I recall that in my role as the resettlement practitioner, I had to intercede
>
> between my client and the Department. *I* [Lorella's emphasis] had to explain
>
> to the client, the obligations of the policy of the *other* service and, in effect,
>
> put pressure on the client to conform to that service's requirements for her to
>
> name the father and discuss details of how the department could contact him
>
> in an effort to be seen to seek financial contribution from him. That is the
>
> policy. (Lorella)

Lorella explained how she managed the difficulty:

> Well, as resettlement practitioner, I explained the policy to the client –
>
> stressing that [it is] the rule of the department who will provide her with
>
> finance. I explained that we all [Australians] need to abide by the rules of

departments. But sometimes you think to yourself: "What the department

wants and what support we are trying to deliver is sometimes not in sync," you

know! (Lorella)

In this example, Lorella provided support to the client but also had to mediate

between the departmental officer to explain departmental policy. Lorella experienced being

conflicted by being there to assist the client but having to explain an external service policy

that imposed inflexible and oppressive rulings in the name of "compliance." Lorella was very

aware of her client's previous trauma and abuse by a man acting with impunity. She was also

aware of the policy's potential to cause more harm to her client. Furthermore, Lorella's

intervention obscured the responsibilities and duty of care of the departmental worker to

consider the inappropriateness of the policy and exercise a role as an internal advocate for

departmental policy change.

Lorella shared another example of working through difficulties caused by poor

communication of related policies across government departments:

You hope that the government can work as a whole and not be so split into

departments. But one hand doesn't know what the other is doing kind of thing.

For example, when the Department of Home Affairs changed the

identification documents from previous documents [certified copy of a visa],

to an ImmiCard [sole identification on arrival], it caused confusion as other

departments had difficulty accepting that change. You [the practitioners] end

up having to educate those people [department personnel] and their

departments to catch up with the rules. Staff of different government

departments are not in sync. (Lorella)

Lorella's experiences reflect the recommendations of Drolet et al. (2018): "Work with immigrants and refugees requires awareness and recognition of structural racism, political practices that oppress, and the impact of historical and ongoing colonial processes" (p. 631). Lorella shared examples of her work to ensure women's rights to privacy, confidentiality, and respect. She discussed her struggles with the inconsistencies and obstacles in women's access to government programs. She also worked closely with the Parents Next program (Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2024), acting in an intermediary role with departmental personnel to advocate for clients' needs. Lorella shared her frustrations with the demands of the transactional nature of the work that demands time and focus, reducing her attention away from rights-based work. Susan also provided additional examples of system inconsistencies:

> What makes me unhappy with the resettlement service [design] is the way the department … set up this project … they call it case management. Yes, I understand that we cannot provide everything for the client, and that we must empower them and help them to be independent, so they can contribute back to Australia. But with just one year to 18 months of a case management plan, it's hard for us to get that outcome. In addition, we must support clients to reflect the financial claims outline of completed services. So, we are expected to practice as social workers, but we need to think like machines! I think to myself: "I cannot do this," because the support that the client needs, is outside of the scope of the claim under the system, so that sometimes makes us feel a lot of conflict. We feel like that some of the services should not finish; she needs more. For instance, the department guidelines include eight service claims only, for health support. Women have so many health needs. However, support for health of the women refugees is huge, involving general

practitioners, hospitals, specialists, countless X-rays and tests. Women need many more than the HSP guideline of a cap of eight instances of support to access health needs that we [the service provider] can claim. I think we can do it better and one way is to change the financial processes and make sure that case managers' plans are not cluttered with undue attention to claims and the need to then apply for SIS. (Susan)

Susan went on to explain the process of applying for SIS services for a woman, commenting that she preferred the former system where HSP-completed services were claimed in bands. In the former system, there was no need to detail each service claim according to finances:

To apply for SIS, we must outline and consider what exactly the client needs into the future, and we draw up a picture of how many appointments the client may need. We also must consider the consequences of a non-approval. We work together and send an application [through the lead contractor] to the Department of Home Affairs to apply for another capped additional service. It is assessed. The client's assigned tier level may have to change. We don't talk with the client about these processes but if she expresses that she cannot do [a task], stating "I can't do [the task], please support me." We believe it is our job to respond. We assess the situation and decide to try for an additional cap to the service provided. (Susan)

Responding to women's needs, although considered a woman's right by practitioners, is dominated by economic rationalism through a contract that is ultimately managed by a distant metropolitan-based service. Mindful of the uniqueness of outer regional North Queensland services, Gopalkrishnan (2021), a North Queensland researcher, decried the

effects of neoliberal structures in government and non-government services. He observed the dominance of financial accountability and managerialism in social services. Gopalkrishnan (2021) argued that often "a façade of quality" of services is maintained, yet the reality is that it is increasingly difficult for social workers to interact with and respond to the needs of clientele (p. 105).

Kerry commented about the bureaucratic environment that resettlement practitioners must work with:

> More than half of the Australian population has a parent born overseas, so that means that they should make the systems easier. To me everything is bureaucratic. For instance, changes made in the new contract for the humanitarian program means that you start all over again, from zero. Australia keeps changing policies and whole systems, but the way changes are made to whole systems – in many countries, where I have lived and worked, the government would be continuing to fund. They do not make changes so readily. It is not as complicated as in Australia. I don't know if the changes are good for the economy; they keep changing things. Nothing is durable. I think it is a problem. They should work on improvement, not overhauling the whole system. (Kerry)

Susan expressed frustrations with the limited ability to assist women with understanding tenancy expectations in Australia and the lack of support from rental agencies:

> Another issue is when clients have a house, so many things happen such as maintenance issues and tenancy support. But we cannot claim for all the assistance clients need in understanding tenancy. There is no financial claim point for the work, which is disappointing. It is as if the department expects us

to provide enough support for clients, but not pay the organisation to do the

job. (Susan)

Resettlement practitioners situated women at the centre of their practice, but they are hampered by frustrations with the accountability demands of policy. I move on now to consider practitioners' experiences of linking women to services within the local and broader mainstream human service network in North Queensland.

8.3.6 Encountering Resistance From Local Services

Instead of seeing social work practice as about the assessment and meeting of

human needs, we can see it as about the defining, realizing and guaranteeing

of human rights. (Ife, 2012 p. 125)

Needs is the mantra of resettlement practitioners when considering women's resettlement. Practitioners assess a woman's needs on arrival, and then they develop a case plan and continually reassess how the woman's needs can be met through the resettlement service and other available local services. However, in establishing local support for newly arrived women from African countries, the resettlement practitioners in this study shared the resistance they encountered from human services. Their experiences expanded on the managers' observations of a local "expert service narrative" across the region. Considering the slow but steady increase in arrivals of former refugee women to the region between 2010 and 2020, I viewed local difficulties in service responses as disappointing but not surprising, given the managers' insights into under-resourced regional services. Resistance is counter, however, to the aims of the *National Settlement Framework* (Australian Department of Home Affairs, n.d.), which touts Australia as a "stable, democratic and welcoming" society (p. 2). The framework emphasises "effective collaboration" and coordination across all levels of

government, service providers, and non-government services (Australian Department of Home Affairs, n.d., p. 1). As explained by Susan:

> Workers in other services, just work according to how they work with everyone else who they assist, but it doesn't work [for humanitarian entrants]. So a lot of persons end up coming back to our service. We understand that most services are businesses so [it] must be efficient. Using interpreting services is an issue. For example, my client had a booking for an appointment at the hospital. I had informed the appropriate department that an [African language] interpreter would be needed, but when the client presented in the clinic over there, the staff couldn't access the interpreter. The staff member claimed she had booked an interpreter. I took a call and was told: "We booked but now we cannot accept the interpreter" (pause) that's what they said – so now, "I want your client to go home and … can you try to tell your client to go home." I was upset by this request. The staff there did not communicate with the client. My first language is not English but it is not the language of this client. I said "I only speak English as well as you." The staff did not seem to try to speak with the woman or assist her, so that is a negative point. (Susan)

Susan was frustrated with what she perceived to be a lack of care and respect for the client. She also experienced a lack of respect directed towards her from the human service worker. She referred a client for assistance; the referral was accepted but when the worker encountered challenges, she put the responsibility back on Susan. The worker has made a broad assumption, based on race, that Susan speaks the same language as the presenting client (Gatwiri & James, 2024; Huynh & Neyland, 2020; Tascon, 2011). It would seem that human service practitioners qualify their service with former refugee women using the " 'Ifs',

'Buts', or 'Howevers' " that are decried in the *Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists* (African Women's Development Fund, 2007, p. 3).

Linking women with general practitioners for long-term health support is also problematic for resettlement practitioners. Lorella shared her difficulties:

> One of the difficulties we have here is access to general practitioners at medical centres. Luckily, we have a refugee health nurse who can connect with the various GPs [general practitioners]. A medical centre may agree to do initial health assessments and accept our patients for a while, but then they get overwhelmed and say they can't do it anymore. Then you have difficulties with the staff and management and reception. But in Brisbane they seem to have a place where everyone gets their health assessment and then gets referred to a general practitioner. (Lorella)

In North Queensland, Susan witnessed a widespread reluctance by services to engage with new arrivals to the region:

> Many services to whom you refer a client later ring case managers and ask them: "This is what I want you to tell your client." Asking *me* – who referred the client, to "tell the client!" This is not professional. I feel like the clients struggle with this too and it's hard. My understanding is that if we refer a client, provide a lot of information in the hand-over [including which interpreter] and if you accept the client, you are the ones to carry on the work! (Susan)

Susan also discussed her frustrations with real estate agencies that have free access to interpreters but rarely use them:

You just cannot refer clients to estate agents by themselves. So we do a lot of training with the clients and help clients set up the email, then they can report the maintenance issue to the real estate agent. But other issues are that staff of real estate agencies don't use interpreters. They don't want to talk directly to the clients so it takes many tasks [and time] to assist them. (Susan)

Lorella talked about being on the margins of a network of services:

You constantly feel that you are imposing on people. It can't be just in our heads … somehow you are being made to feel that way. For example, at community network meetings, where there may be up to 90 different services attending with their stalls. Other service workers don't think they will even have to deal with our clients or have to interact with them (pause) so they show no interest in what the settlement agency does, and no interest in our client group. Things are changing though, in other fields. For example, when I travel to other cities, I see a Muslim girl, wearing a hijab, working at the airport or at the bank. The workforce there is starting to represent the population. Honestly, I think other services here, think that our clientele is in the too-hard basket and just send them back to the settlement agency. I think people become anxious and they don't know how to deal with the unknown. They think, "How do I communicate with this person" (long pause). It doesn't occur to them to deal with the challenges and get an interpreter – honestly (frustrated tone) in Australia, the majority of workers assume clients know how to read and write in English. For their service to even consider that a person may be preliterate and not know how to read and write (pause) that is a

big barrier to them. They do not have the time or want to take the time, to consider this and to adapt their service delivery. (Lorella)

Lorella made it clear that there are exceptions of individuals in services who are willing to go out on a limb to assist people:

I had a particularly good experience with a nurse in the children's ward at the hospital. She went out of her way to prepare a little folder with pictures and words so that it was easier to communicate with the patient. But that was like one in a hundred chance, and we had a real estate agent who actually wanted to go and speak with an interpreter with the family and she didn't want us in the middle – that was fantastic. So we do get those occasional instances of assistance, but most of the time, we are the first contact and the referral bounces back. We are a bit wary about pushing back because we don't want to ruin our relationship; because they are providing a service, but everyone has a right to be supported and to have equal access to everything, but if we keep doing push back, I worry that they will say (long pause): "This is too difficult to deal with" and in relation to accessing housing, we may not be given any properties. (Lorella)

Pittaway and Bartolomei (2022) emphasised the importance for workers to "understand how dominant structures and ideologies marginalise people" (p. 83). Lorella's experience demonstrates a layer of dominance of the white-centric practice across human services that parallels women's struggles of surviving in a monocultural, monolinguistic patriarchal system (Hawthorne, 2020; McLellan, 2010; Salami, 2022a). Lorella considered the differences in metropolitan workforces:

One of my friends who recently got a job in the [metropolitan] city, told me she can see Muslim people working everywhere but you cannot see that here in regional areas. I was so happy when one refugee got a job here in the bank. I don't see migrants working here in all the services either, I don't see them and all the services, I don't see them – it would be great if we have refugees in the reception of the GP services. I see a lot of refugees or migrants and [people] from [an] African background, working in different places but not here. (Lorella)

Kerry shared a similar view:

From my position, other cities have more services available to migrants and refugees. Refugees who are settled in other places, are getting more external support. There are services who will chip in and help them. Here in North Queensland, there is a lack of real interest by some services to really engage. They do not want to disrupt their working conditions. They are reluctant to engage with anyone outside of their usual conditions. Some people don't want to put more effort into really helping or working with other people. It's not only [about] managing the different languages, but it's also about being flexible to work with different people from other experiences and cultures. If we do a referral to participate in a service or activity, we are not always able to provide an interpreter to be involved in the group. There is a barrier of language and then you mingle with people who don't know how to socialise with or to work with another culture and it becomes a big challenge. I have always found in North Queensland, that even if support is there, clients don't get it on time; or sometimes the [services] say, "We don't have capacity to

help" even if someone is eligible. I have seen that limitation. For me this is one of the big issues. It is regional. We try our best here in North Queensland, but the challenge is to connect people with appropriate services that are ready to help effectively. It must, however, be effective. (Kerry)

Resettlement practitioners worry about a system shaped by patriarchy and neoliberalism that is failing to respond to resettling women's needs in North Queensland. Jean's approach to supporting workers when referring women is an interim measure. It may not always be possible, nor does it always lead to sustained referrals. These practitioners' experiences reflect Monani's (2018) contention that the social work profession is broadly fearful of embracing the new emergent multicultural Australia. She concluded that many service workers find it just too hard to work outside their comfort zone. Thus, women may be pushed to the margins affecting their opportunities and hopes for a new life. Resistance to accessing remote interpreters is an effect of white privilege, racism, and patriarchy (Gair et al., 2011; Huynh & Neyland, 2020). Access to interpreters and the necessary confidence in working with remote interpreters can be learned by social workers and human service providers.

Kerry voiced frustrations with service personnel who constantly insisted on knowing if the referred client had a refugee background:

Sometimes you are trying to describe a situation of need [to other service providers], and they cannot understand, unless you identify the client as a refugee. If I make a call to refer a client, the worker always asks: "Is the person a refugee?" Someone is a refugee when she is running away from her country. Once a refugee is assigned permanent residency, you should not call her a refugee. "Refugee" has a negative connotation. It does not sound okay

269

for some people. For people from Africa, the word is taken negatively,
because once you flee your country for another one, you are treated as a
second citizen (in a displacement country or location). Here though, the term
refugee is used everywhere, without people's understanding. It is something
that many people ask. Here in North Queensland if you talk about refugees
you talk about Central African Republic, Congolese, Somali. They have all
gone through the process. Many people do not want to be called refugees.
They just want to be called something else. Having been a refugee is not
something people are proud of; you have fled your country, you have left
everything, so it is not something you are proud of, and in many instances, it
has negative connotations. (Kerry)

Kerry also shared being questioned by skilled migrants from Africa who have asked:

"Why do people here think that every African is a refugee? We are not all
refugees." (Kerry)

Kerry identified an issue of constant othering by other services towards HSP clientele.
This issue again reflects the discourse of racism and colonialism and the experiences of
othering that block experiences of belonging. Human services that subject women to
additional scrutiny contribute to reinforcing the perpetual label of refugee to women. It
positions women for further discrimination.

An emerging finding related to practitioners' difficulties with service support is
worthy of further independent research. This finding is an exploration of how practitioners,
being previous migrants or refugees, experienced the rebuttals and resistance of referrals
from service personnel in the region. Gatwiri (2021) identified "constant patterns of racial
microaggressions" in the workplace (p. 669). This author concluded that these experiences

contribute to "psychological distress and racial battle fatigue" (Gatwiri, 2021, p. 655). Gatwiri (2012) further suggested that microaggressions reignite colonialism of both Australian and Africans histories, and burden individuals with "hypervisibility" (p. 658). Udah and Singh (2019) and Gatwiri et al. (2021) also expressed concerns about racism and difficulties of belonging in Australia experienced by highly skilled and professional African immigrants. Rebuttals of referrals made by resettlement practitioners and possible associated "psychosocial stressors" could influence a form of "vicarious trauma," and I suggest, could be the focus of further research (Kaplan, 2020, p. 398). The next section explores practitioner's responses to prompters about self-care.

8.3.7 Self-Care

All resettlement practitioners were conscious of the impact that their work has had on their lives. They relied on each other for support and access to in-house service organisational programs and externally contracted services.

> I am responsible and I make sure that I do the job on time. I aim to solve work issues at work. Sometimes though, I do think about work when I go home, and a family member may say: "Why are you so quiet?" If there is something that I struggle with, then I access internal supervision. Sometimes I access external supervision. I am very stressed, but I think I am lucky with the support I have [at home] and I have a very beautiful colleague who I talk with. We work very well together. (Susan)

> My principle has been so far, that you can do what you can. You must do whatever you can to make sure you help someone, but also remember that you cannot solve everything and there are some things that are beyond your scope of work and your capacity to help. I go by the practices and the policies and

the procedure of the organisation where I work. Also, I remind myself: "You have to look after yourself because if you don't, then you won't be able to help and you will get burnt out and feel overwhelmed and you could end up quitting your job." (Kerry)

Jean commented that she seeks support from colleagues:

Sometimes it is overwhelming as well, so I always go to my colleagues and share with them, or if I think … oh no, I will go to the team leader and talk or to my manager because she is female and she will understand me. Apart from talking to them, I also get professional supervision and access to training, so that has helped me a lot. Some training courses gave us more knowledge and more skills as well and helps us to manage boundaries with the client and to follow ethics. What we have learned from training, has been very helpful. (Jean)

Lorella has used a range of methods to support herself personally and professionally:

I attend external supervision, but I see a counsellor outside of work … that's my work and personal issues all mixed up. I don't think I am a very good example of self-care. Just the idea of self-care is stressful for me. People talk about going for a walk and doing this activity and that activity, but when do I have time to do that activity? I have chosen to do certain things that are a more passive way of self-care … watching my favourite show day in and day out. It's a short-term fix. (Lorella)

The settlement practitioners have supported each other and accessed support from other team members. Their work was perceived as more than an employment position. These

perspectives are underpinned by their personal experiences of migration (as refugees or migrants). They talked about the women they have assisted with passion, respect, and dignity. Their own experiences of belonging within the community have been affected by difficulties when they encouraged a whole-of-service community response to former refugee women's needs.

My final discussion with resettlement practitioners was based on a hypothetical question about a wish list for resettlement service support in North Queensland and for women refugees from African countries in particular. Two practitioners responded:

> We are expected to provide enough support but the organisation is not paid for us to do all that the job entails. For instance, you cannot leave clients on their own in some service offices, as they may not use interpreters and provide the service. I would like to see an end to the claims system and an increase in funding to influence more employment opportunities for women. (Susan)

> There are many things that could be done to reduce bureaucracy and the one challenge with Australia is that the government tells you that they will not fund other services, but the problem is, that mainstream services are currently not equipped to work with former refugees and perceive them as "other people." I think there is little effort to ensure that those mainstream services are committed to justice. It is complex but Australia is increasingly multicultural. The government should make the system easier. It may be a general problem across Australia. To me everything is bureaucratic … for instance, the changes to HSP that occur after five years and changes in services and contracts. The result is that services and workers change with

new contracts. So instead of improving existing services, you start from zero again. (Kerry)

8.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I outlined an overview of the HSP and shared the composite narrative of managers from the resettlement service sites in Cairns and Townsville, which together form the HSP contract region of North Queensland. The managers detailed their concerns for the region and shared their perceived narrative of resettlement services being regarded as local experts. They recognised that women continue to experience violence and require additional support to access their rights to services. The managers have worked to build relationships across government and non-government services to influence improved broad local service support for women humanitarian entrants. These managers have valued the work of the local associations representing diverse African groups.

Data gathered from the resettlement practitioners reflected the nuanced layers of their experiences. They were passionate about their work but also experienced a sense of "walking a tightrope" (Susan) to balance HSP policy requirements for women to integrate with the community – despite resistance and restraint caused by human service responses and limited resources. Practitioners were very aware of women's experiences of violence, issues of trust, and risks of isolation. They shared their frustrations with the resistance of services to access and engage with interpreters, which contributed to practitioner experiences of being marginalised. The next concluding chapter moves through a summary of the thesis to a discussion of conclusions and implications for resettlement policy and social work and human service practice.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

9.1 Introduction and Review of Research Aim and Questions

In this final chapter I review the thesis that explored, with women from diverse countries of Africa, their resettlement experiences in regional North Queensland. Further, I present the conclusions and implications of the research that I sought to inform and strengthen resettlement policy and social work and human services practice. My research was directed by the following questions:

1. What are the resettlement experiences of women refugees from diverse countries of Africa to tropical North Queensland?

2. What are the experiences of resettlement practitioners with women refugees from diverse countries of Africa?

3. What are the implications of these experiences (women refugees and sector personnel) for resettlement service planning and delivery?

In this thesis, I used feminist qualitative research to explore the experiences of "being and belonging" of 20 former refugee women from four diverse countries of Africa who resettled in North Queensland (Nyadol Nyuen, National Press Club of Australia, 2021). Their voices have been missing in regional resettlement literature. The study focused on the decade between 2010 and 2020. I have also provided the accounts of managers and explored the resettlement practitioners' experiences with Cairns and Townsville services that deliver the HSP.

I first introduced the study from a global perspective. This was achieved by outlining the UNHCR Convention 1951 and its 1967 Protocol and the *Global Compact on Refugees*, which includes commitments to protecting the rights of women followed by changes in Australia's national humanitarian policy since the 1970s. I introduced the outer regional

North Queensland service contract region, locating the Queensland service sites of Cairns and Townsville as outer regional areas. The research focused on challenges to the region and human service providers as refugee policy changes moved away from a volunteer focus to a business contract environment. Such changes affected the increasing number of humanitarian arrivals to North Queensland post-2000, and escalating global events required social workers to examine their practice (Dominelli, 2012; IASSW, 2020).

9.2 A Layered Theoretical Approach

Theoretically, I applied feminism as "a radical thinking tool" in my study to get to the root of constructed patriarchal myths about women and global structures of power that protect and impugn men (Moreno & Pessoa, 2021a, 2021b). In privileging women, I represented them with feminisms and theorists within Africa and the diaspora to deepen my understanding of universal and unique experiences of patriarchy of women's struggles. I engaged with universal human rights, critical social work, and decolonialism to understand the experiences of women's "racialised bodies" as they journeyed through national and international borders (Gatwiri & Anderson, 2022, p. 34). I also focused on the struggles and complexities across the life contexts of former refugee women from African countries (Asante, 2007; Salami, 2022a). Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2021) and Bagele Chilisa (2017) facilitated my decolonial approach to the research, and they exposed me to "new ideas and ways of looking at things" that helped me navigate the ethical challenges of conducting research with women who can be easily identified in regional locations (Smith, 2021, p. 68). Critical social work theory and human rights theories supported the research insight into structural barriers that may impede women's access to human rights and influence important practice considerations for social workers and human service workers (Ife, 2016; Pittaway & Bartolomei, 2022).

9.3 Literature Review

The reviewed literature worked in partnership with the theoretical foundation as an appropriate lens to inform and interpret research findings and data analysis. I heeded advice to "critique global power constructs, situating both feminism and social work within their historical and political context" (Gatwiri & Tusasiirwe, 2022, p. 123). Linking colonial histories of Africa and Australia contributed to shaping discussions of Australian policy and public discourse that affect women's experiences of belonging in North Queensland. I sought literature on regional resettlement that prioritised the experiences of former refugee women from Africa. I found only one North Queensland research piece by Babacan and Gopalkrisnan (2005) that focused on a former refugee woman from Africa. Regional literature from other Australian sites provided some context to broader themes of former women refugees' struggles in accessing their rights across Australia (Doney & Pittaway, 2010; Penman & Goel, 2017; Robinson & Haintz, 2021). I found no literature across health, feminist, or social work disciplines that centred solely on women refugees from Africa living in North Queensland, establishing the need for this unique research. Reviewing global and national resettlement policies and social work literature contributed to my understanding of the research findings.

9.4 Listening to Women and Resettlement Practitioners

The research methodology focused on decolonising difficulties posed by my monolingualism and ontological whiteness (Moreton-Robinson, 2020; Smith, 2021). Using a pragmatic two-phase approach to answering the three research questions, I engaged in face-to-face semi-structured interviews with women, resettlement practitioners, and managers of settlement services. I strove to ensure participation in the study by women who may otherwise have been excluded (Chilisa, 2012; Shope, 2006; Smith, 2021). I explicitly confronted the challenges of regional research with relatively small populations of former

refugees and I detailed use of remote interpreters. I engaged in ceremony processes and respected women's right to consent and their right to refuse audio recording (Block et al., 2013; Hugman et al., 2011). As male interpreters were more accessible than female interpreters, I encouraged women to assist me in managing interpreters' contributions during interviews. The predominance of male interpreters reflected inequities of access to learning English by former refugee women. I respected women as insider knowers, making the personal political (Reinharz,1992). Unique narratives of women in this study included young women whose knowledge of their home country relied solely on women-held knowledge of languages, female roles, and cultural practices (Adichie, 2009). My analytical lens was also informed by a layered theoretical foundation and literature. I heeded warnings by Gross (1986) and Smith (1999) regarding the risks of abstracting information about women's lived experiences.

Findings from both phases of the study were discussed with the support of literature and theory across Chapters 6 to 8. An appreciation for Afrofeminisms guided my analysis of women's experiences in their home countries and through their changing settings across borders as they left their home countries and lived as refugees before arriving on humanitarian visas in North Queensland.

9.5 Conclusions

Globally, the minutiae of women's lives are affected by patriarchy (Collins, 2000a, Hawthorne, 2002; Smith, 1990; Thompson, 2001). I now outline the conclusions I have reached from the findings and discuss the implications of the research to fulfil the research aim. In drawing conclusions, I have continued to remain mindful of my embedded colonial-white history and the risks of universalising women's experiences. I have woven in resettlement practitioners' contributions where they extend understanding of a conclusion relating to women's experiences.

9.5.1 Women's Resettlement Experiences are Entangled With Their Diverse Remembered Experiences and Histories

My first conclusion is that women's resettlement experiences in North Queensland are entangled with their diverse histories before arrival. Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) and Minnie Salami (2022b) maintained that tradition and history help to distinctly contextualise the unique narratives of women from Africa as a means of understanding the present and the future. Throughout the study women's remembrances were deeply associated with the diverse life contexts and experiences in their countries of origin and countries of displacement. Most women remembered their former lives like "mutterings in their veins" which surfaced when reflecting on specific resettlement experiences (Nivyabandi, 2022, p. 660). Some women recalled living in houses of comfort in their home countries when discussing limited housing options in North Queensland (Barkhado). A few women's direct memories were of their contributions to family income, including farming and agriculture contributions that were affected by globalisation, civil disruption, and war – causing them to flee (Shiva, 2009; Shiva & Bedi, 2002). While some young women (Davine and Neela) recalled comfort, security, and having future goals in their home countries that included education, other young women recalled being selected from their siblings or, if they were the only female, having to automatically assume responsibilities in the home (Lisette and Kampire). Patricia Collins (2000a) argued that Black feminist knowledge values are experienced in different social situations. Dorothy Smith (1999) warned against the risks of objectifying and abstracting people's life accounts in a detached manner that may limit understanding of lived events. Rather, Smith valued an "engaged involved account" which positions women at the centre of their life events (Smith, 1999, p. 51). This behaviour avoids relying solely on a few abstract words that for resettlement practitioners may begin with a brief referral from an offshore office to onshore HSP officials, a metropolitan contractor, and finally to a North Queensland

resettlement site. Rather, an engaged position of understanding the entanglements and complexities of women's lives is important in resettlement.

My conclusion questions the capacity for services to deliver the HSP goal of sustainable client settlement outcomes in North Queensland (Section 3.7). The entanglement of women's resettlement experiences with the past lends a deep sense of fragility to women's experiences of peace, belonging, and safety in North Queensland. Women's memories of previous life contexts intertwined with feelings of being overwhelmed with navigating access through a maze of services in North Queensland, including banking and finance systems, public transport, real estate and tenancy, AMEP education, childcare, children's education, and health services. Some women shared difficulties adjusting to men's daily presence in the home in North Queensland (Alzina and Bisette). Longer-term resettled women worried for women who may be isolated, victims of domestic violence, or living with the effects of trauma and mistrust when relating to service personnel in their new environment (Axlam, Barkhado, Joyce, Kampire, and Joyce).

Women's isolation at home with young children, difficulties with trusting officials, and challenges when navigating services due to limited English may affect mental wellbeing (Gloria, Kampire, Kerry, and Lorella). Although no participant from either phase specifically named mental wellbeing as an issue, it emerged as an important issue to be explored in future research. Certainly, the shared caring that occurred through the philosophy of Ubuntu has the capacity for mutual support to enhance women's wellbeing.

A caregiving role continued throughout women's refugee lives and into resettlement, but it was confined to the home and tied with the frustration of being unemployed. The women's isolation was imposed by the monolingualism of English expectations in every daily life experiences, their concerns and anxieties for the survival of loved ones lost or left

behind, and their experiences of racism and abuse underscored a sense of women's fragility in resettlement.

My conclusion that women's resettlement experiences in North Queensland are entangled with their diverse remembered histories has implications for policy and for practice to value women's wholeness of life experiences across different contexts. These conclusions will be developed further in the implications section. In essence, by adopting a macro perspective to social work, social workers and human service providers practice will ensure they are informed of the effects of global displacement and its influences on the contexts of women's lives (Brough et al., 2012; Dominelli, 2014; IFSW, 2014). Support provided to women must consider women's strengths, experiences, and agency. Women's lives through the changing contexts of their experiences across borders, into refugee living, and after arrival in North Queensland are the basis of a second conclusion.

9.5.2 Women Bring Their Survival Wisdom, Ubuntu Philosophy, and Resourcefulness into Resettlement

> Knowledge without wisdom is adequate for the powerful, but wisdom is
>
> essential to the survival of the subordinate. (Collins, 2000a, p. 257)

I have concluded that women in this study brought with them the inherited strengths of the women before them – old feminisms of the protofeminist era, philosophies of Ubuntu, contemporary feminisms, and knowledge of their human rights through their various life contexts before arrival (Salami, 2022). They lived. They were resourceful. They survived refugee existence and were determined to create new lives for their families by accepting the option of resettlement in Australia.

These women's capacity to converse in more than one language assisted their survival. Across 20 participants from four different countries, women spoke nine different

languages other than English (Section 5.2). Four women were conversant in English and had some English literacy skills on arrival. Women have collaborated for their rights across countries within Africa for many years, including African countries from which women in this study have fled and where they have lived as refugees (African Women's Development Fund, 2006; Global Fund for Women, 2015). Women's acquired survival wisdom strengthened their belief in themselves and their goals to "be independent," to live more freely, "to start breathing," and to embrace life as permanent residents and members of communities of North Queensland (Barkhado and Axlam).

As a distinct Black African indigenous principle of living, the Ubuntu philosophy developed out of Afrocentric theories thousands of years ago. It is strongly emphasised in social work education and practice across the African continent and is emerging in social work and settlement literature in the diaspora (Mugumbate et al., 2023; Mungai, 2014; Gatwiri & Tusasiirwe, 2022). The philosophy rests on the belief that every human being is part of a larger community and a relational spiritual world where everyone works together to solve common problems. Ubuntu, I am because you are, underscores some initiatives that women shared in their accounts of survival while living in refugee situations in Africa (Asante, 2007). Gatwiri and Tusasiirwe (2022) propose that Ubuntu is a resource for social power and autonomy.

In North Queensland, women have carried forward their vital survival wisdom, including Ubuntu, in different ways. For example, through self-formed, unstructured groups of friends who check in with each other using a mobile phone app every morning (Barkhado). Others have pooled resources to assist each other in purchasing household items or learning necessary driving skills (Joyce and Sheera). Some women actively looked for women who have been struggling, offering to support them with English and accessing services (Axlam, Barkhado, Joyce, Mylene, and Kampire). Others participated in and enjoyed the benefits of

Ubuntu philosophy within African associations – where it is purposefully operative through support programs. The philosophy of Ubuntu, born of the wisdoms of Afrocentric, Afrofeminisms, and decolonialism, is now a resource applied by some women individually (Pauline). Further, Ubuntu is applied through local associations in North Queensland as a strong advocacy tool within regional resettlement. I conclude that the experiences and survival wisdoms that women bring with them to resettlement need to be honoured and respected through broad resettlement policy, service guidelines, and social work and human service practice.

9.5.3 Past and Present Inequalities and Inequities Affect Women's Access to Rights in North Queensland

Pittaway et al. (2018) argued that women's experiences of unequal access to rights eschew the fundamental assertion that human rights are universal and apply equally to everyone. I have concluded that women's resettlement experiences with accessing rights in North Queensland are affected by past, continuing, and additional inequalities and inequities. Ama Ata Aidoo (1992) who challenged portrayal of women from Africa in the media, believed that regardless of their level of education, women are by no means as free and equal as men. Few older women shared their experiences of education in their lives. Younger women under 30 years of age had either no schooling or interrupted years of schooling. Alone or not, as refugees, the women's primary focus was to protect children, ensure their family's survival, and locate lost family members. Despite their aspirations, access to education was not always prioritised or possible due to gender expectations. Rajaram (2002) maintained that patriarchal power dominates UNHCR and world aid processes. One woman (Kampire) spoke of having to negotiate for cancelled ration entitlements by approaching select UNHCR officials. Women minimised their personal health needs and access to education for whole-of-family needs (Forced Migration Research Network, 2017). Women

who lived in urban displacement areas (Uganda, Zambia, Kenya, and one unnamed country) worked as cleaners or marketed goods to support families, such as paying for their children's ongoing education. Some barely survived on limited UNHCR refugee funding in cities. Living in constant "fear of being raped" was another form of inequality that affected women's lack of sleep (Laura) – with the potential for accumulated long-term effects of poor health.

McFadden (2007) emphasised that women's inequalities and inequities are rooted in "critical notions of supremacy and impunity" (p. 551). The trail of supremacy and domination affecting inequities and inequalities did not cease in North Queensland. The gender-dominated family and household expectations of women before and after arrival, and the dominance of English in all service access, have affected women's resettlement. In North Queensland, past inequity of some women's access to education is exacerbated by the limitations of a monolingual focus across all service access (e.g., health, education, family, and employment supports). For example, Alzina, a young woman who had never attended school, was not able to attend English class in North Queensland due to the demands of young children. Furthermore, young women experienced "greater social constraints" and fewer opportunities than young men before and after resettlement in Townsville and Cairns (Riordan & Claudio, 2022, p. 1045). The difficulties that I experienced in accessing accredited female interpreters to conduct research interviews indicate the accumulated gender inequities encountered by women that affect their capacity to access training and employment opportunities in North Queensland.

Women's initial fears and sense of being overwhelmed on arrival into North Queensland were resolved by the immediate welcome and support of humanitarian resettlement services who "took charge" (Neela). With some exceptions, women experienced improved material conditions (housing and regular income support). However, the HSP

policy assumes that women can independently access services after completing the program, that all regional services have capacity, and that personnel are willing to respond to former refugee women's needs. According to one resettlement practitioner (Susan), however, services "fail at the first step."

English monolingualism is dominant in resettlement policy and service delivery. I have emphasised this as a demonstration of the importance of decolonialism in social work practice (IFSW, 2014, Knowledge section). Monolingualism practice exacerbates the effects of women's accumulated inequities. Women's previous inequities and current frustrations are compounded when navigating services that are available only in English in a region where access to remote female interpreters is limited and general service commitments to use interpreters are unreliable. The managers asserted that insufficient regional funding was one cause for inequalities and inequities of local service support for resettling women. At the root of inequalities and inequities is the Australian resettlement policy's failure to recognise women's "language repertoires" gained through their determination to survive (Ndhovlu, 2014, p. 153). I am not claiming that people do not need to learn English. However, I argue we can value linguistic diversity as one way of addressing isolation and safety risks to contribute to, rather than detract from, mental wellbeing opportunities for women to access employment and training. Lorella, a resettlement practitioner, advocated for respect by recognising the nuances of languages across Africa and women's right to access appropriate interpreters. Frequent dismissal of women's employment goals and training applications frustrated Kerry, who understood that women are familiar with working hard to survive and they are adept and industrious in businesses (selling fish, vegetables, goods, clothing, or sewing). Kerry emphasised that once women realise they cannot access work here in North Queensland, "they are completely lost." Unemployment affects women's commitment to supporting their family overseas and meeting their family's needs.

I have illumined the implicit patriarchal and neoliberal influences on service worker responses to former refugee women's needs across North Queensland (Brough et al., 2012; Gatwiri & James, 2024; McLellan, 1995; Steady, 2014; Tascón & Ife, 2019). Resettlement literature tends to frame women's resettlement experiences in discussions of barriers encountered by women. Barriers are detailed as binaries, highlighting women's lack – not their strengths. They focus on women's difficulties with English, their lack of recognisable skills, women's poor health, women's cultural differences and shock, women's family problems, and women's mental health concerns (Curry et al., 2018; Fozdar & Banki, 2017; Ikafa & Perry, 2020; Ochala & wa Mungai, 2016). In effect, the approach may pathologise, blame, and diminish the strengths and wisdoms that women bring to resettlement. It is an approach that denies women's accumulated oppression. It denies the effects of continuing inequities through structural racism and systems in North Queensland that first benefit men.

9.5.4 Women's Experiences of Violence Continue in Resettlement

My research concluded that previous violence by men against women continues in resettlement. Resettlement in North Queensland is not an automatic protection against this violence. Doney et al. (2015) discussed how women's expectations of gaining their rights in Australia are perceived by men to disrupt family life and cause conflict in resettlement (impugning themselves of any responsibility). Findings from the women in this study included women being considered second place to men and women continuing to experience fear and trauma associated with violence. Some women spoke candidly of previous abuse and power by spouses, and they wanted more education for men about women's rights (Bisette). Women's expectations that violence would cease on arrival resonates with reports from other migrant and former refugee women around the world who were frustrated with experiences of continued violence across borders (Romero, 2021). Kampire advised women who were subjected to violence: "You have to stand up and speak out." Resettlement practitioners'

experiences confirmed that supporting women to access their rights to safety is part of a critical feminist and rights-informed practice. Susan, a resettlement practitioner, maintained her commitment to women despite being confronted by a group of men from one community. Lorella reported being affected by an unidentified study that informed her of former refugee women who felt safe from potential abuse by the protection of a dwelling with a lockable door, and who were grateful to be able to sleep at night and feel safe. This study confirmed that practitioners and resettled women have been able to access support and services from women's services in North Queensland. Women's interactions with police varied, yet one woman was frustrated by police collusion with the perpetrator (Axlam). Pittaway et al. (2018) stressed that men need to be told clearly that women's right to safety in Australia is their legal right – not a value of society that is disputable.

9.5.5 Women's Experiences of Belonging are Elusive and Fragile in North Queensland

Women's experiences of direct personally addressed discrimination and broader structural discrimination in service responses affect a fragile sense of belonging in regional North Queensland. Collins (1999) considered it inevitable that Black women confront the uncomfortable reality of racism and sexism because of the ruling power of dominant groups and hegemonic images. Women's experiences of welcome from neighbours or community groups varied on a spectrum of no contact, or friendliness with little interaction, through to shared meals and friendship. One woman was deeply disappointed with the lack of anticipated traditional welcome from her faith community. Some women simply experienced belonging through feeling safe at night without fear of rape. Women experienced different interactions with neighbours. Some neighbours were not unfriendly but simply exchanged a nod with new arrivals, which was a big change for women who had been accustomed to a great deal of contact with their neighbours in Africa (Claudine and Pauline). Other women had neighbours with children who played together and neighbours who offered support and

friendship (Davine, Sheera, Barkhado, and Neela). Women's experiences with bus drivers differed. Axlam and Barkhado experienced anxiety and a fear of being abused over their incorrect change or not knowing when to get off the bus. They reported feeling unwelcome due to other discriminatory experiences, including being yelled at from cars or being questioned about wearing the Muslim hijab scarf. Their experiences contrasted greatly with Kampire and a family member who were assisted by a bus driver. This driver went beyond his duty to locate and drop them off at their home.

Women's experiences of belonging across North Queensland are similar to those of Syrian women in Western Australia (Robinson & Haintz, 2021). The women in Western Australia were anxious to acknowledge experiences of discrimination, yet also felt obliged to focus on being grateful for Australian life (Robinson & Haintz, 2021). More than seven years later, Axlam questioned her perceptions and understandings: Had she grown accustomed to incidences of discriminative comments? Barkhado was proud that she was now comfortable with being assertive to bus drivers. However, she continued to feel threatened and unwelcome by experiences of being yelled at and told to go back home when she exercised. The first action of women during occasions of abuse or a sense of threat was to blame and question themselves (Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017). Kampire was fearful of the man in the uniform and mentally talked herself into trusting the goodwill of the bus driver. Fortunately, he was trustworthy. However, such experiences of anxiety and uncertainty are considered by Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo (2017) as the burden of the Black body in a white dominated society. Gatwiri and James (2024) also commented on the anxiety associated with constantly having to negotiate interactions within the community. Longer-term resettled participants shared feedback that recently resettled former refugee women often choose to stay quiet about any incidences of discrimination or violence for fear that their visa may be cancelled.

Belonging for former refugee women from Africa who arrived in North Queensland continues to be elusive – waxing and waning as women experience interactions with different individuals in a range of environments. The elusive feeling may disappear when women are invited to attend a workplace social event. A sense of belonging may disappear, however, when women are confronted with dialogues of pity: "Did you live in a mud hut?" or "Tell us your story," which reflect undertones of women from Africa as "mute beasts of burden" (Aidoo, 1992). Gatwiri and Mapedzahama (2022) decry these questions as "trauma porn" (p. 272). The ups and downs and uncertain anxiety associated with women's experiences of belonging align with contentions from Gatwiri and James (2024) that belonging is a "*felt-and-embodied* experience" (p. 1). These experiences with belonging also reflect Mbembe's (2001) notion of experiences being non-static and dynamic. One resettled woman's response was to ignore incidences of discrimination and manage it: "I have lived with difficult people and different characters and I know how to live peacefully with different characters. It is about respect" (Sheera). Kampire considered such personal incidences as political, prejudicial, and reflective of a broader Australian attitude that has kept her tied to being identified as a refugee (of which she is not ashamed, but she has left behind). Kampire wants to be valued for her presence as a fully contributing member of the community and not as an object of curiosity. A closer examination of integration through the literature concluded that race underscores challenging experiences in a new environment. Integration is ruled by undertones of racism and anticipated gratitude to Australia for being saved and accepted from across borders. For example, the Australian citizenship test requires compliance with a standard of English and acceptance of Australian values that reflect colonial history (Ndhlovu, 2014).

I move on now to discuss conclusions that have emerged from the analysis of voices from North Queensland resettlement services.

9.6 Conclusions From North Queensland Resettlement Services

9.6.1 North Queensland Resettlement Services Have Supported Women From

African Countries

I have concluded that services in both sites of North Queensland have supported former refugee women from Africa who arrived between 2010 and 2020 to re-establish their lives. The managers and resettlement practitioners shared their commitment to supporting women and indicated appreciation for their diverse backgrounds. They observed that women and other arrivals remain in the area and have broken the pattern of previous decades when arrivals immediately transferred to larger Southern metropolitan cities. These participants acknowledged that women face additional difficulties of isolation and accessing employment due to the monolingual environment of service delivery in accessing employment. Services support women by working closely with SETS and CAMS programs and arranging for presentations by other service personnel for resettled women's gatherings. Across the region, the managers strove to develop collaborative relationships with services, church groups, and associations of African groups to enable broader community engagement and support. Differences across the region related to service engagement with employment and training programs and working relationships with newly formed groups and African communities that support and advocate directly for women's needs to regional associations. My next conclusion relates to the contractual demands that risk responsiveness to women's needs.

9.6.2 Neoliberalist Managerial Focus Limits Regional Responsiveness to Women's Needs

So, we are expected to practice as social workers, but we need to think like machines! (Susan)

I have concluded, from the findings of this research, that the transactional business framework of HSP service delivery undermines workers' capacity to effectively engage with

resettling women. Resettlement practitioners across the region have been committed to working within the HSP framework, yet they experienced frustrations with its overwhelming administrative demands that diminished their time available to support women. Additional frustrations with the limited capacity of local human services to access interpreters, and the lack of available female remote interpreters, compounded resettlement practitioners' experiences. Case management guidelines that are tied to a service payment for each service reframes support as a transaction. As a transaction, responding holistically to women's individual needs is at risk (Tascón & Ife, 2019; Robinson, 2014; Smith, 1999). The resettlement practitioners were frustrated with HSP guidelines that they considered to be task-oriented and hindered their time to engage with women's wisdom and experiences. Practitioners considered policy and practice as out of sync with women's needs and the constraints of regional mainstream service resources. Necessary referrals for additional intensive support (SIS) for women have added another layer of accountability, and these referrals are associated with anticipated support from external human services. English dominates every communication across all services – many of which hesitate to access interpreters. Lorella's experience in accompanying and supporting a woman to access family support payments demonstrated the emphasis on accountability across systems that disempowered the woman and affected the woman's capacity to independently access that service. A transactional frame of delivery risks a strong support relationship between the resettlement practitioner and woman, and it risks pathologising individual women for their difficulties with integration. This transactional frame ignores the inequities and inequalities within service structures and divisions, obstructing the call to social workers and human service workers to reflect on oppressive influences within organisations (IFSW, 2014; Monani, 2018; Monani et al. 2021; Westoby & Ingamells, 2010).

My conclusion about the effect of a business contract environment connects with the next conclusion relating to the availability of adequate support within the regional environment.

9.6.3 North Queensland Generic Human Services Resist Supporting Former Refugee Women

I have concluded that HSP outcomes in North Queensland are limited by a generic human service system that resists and is not adequately resourced to respond to women's support needs. I note, however, that the women reported they were well supported by local women's services, which is a turnaround from complaints by Maria Suehrcke (Casson, 1996).

HSP policy is grounded in expectations that new arrivals move toward independence, and it anticipates appropriate support from local service support networks and local communities. This policy assumes resourced professional knowledge, skills, and capability to respond appropriately to former refugee women from diverse African countries. Frustrating experiences informed resettlement practitioners who deliberated that human service personnel are constrained by time and willingness to assist resettling women. External service workers regularly questioned a resettlement practitioner (Kerry) about the proposed client's background before accepting their referral of a former refugee woman. The practitioners felt they were "imposing" on other service personnel and that they had to entreat mainstream human services to accept a referral. The resettlement practitioners acknowledged that general service personnel are also working with budget constraints and demanding accountability frameworks. Practitioners had little time available for strategic advocacy and community networking to influence broader mainstream responses across the region. The recurring multicultural discourse that celebrates differences (cooking, dress, culture, and song) can obscure the need to confront oppressive systems (Baak, 2021; Huynh & Neyland, 2020; Huynh, 2023).

HSP policy fails to support the resourcing of broader regional knowledge and skills; thus, the policy contributes by default to continuing structural barriers that limit women's ability to resettle. Policy confines therefore affect women's experiences of elusive belonging. I expand these conclusions to include an observation relating to the experiences of resettlement practitioners who are former migrants or refugees.

9.6.4 Resettlement Practitioners are Professionally Isolated in Regional North Queensland

I have concluded that resettlement practitioners experience isolation and marginalisation across some human service networks in North Queensland. In striving for external support for clientele, these practitioners were confronted with unacceptable statements or assumptions. For example, external service workers made assumptions that the practitioner would speak the language of a client, queried if the referral was for someone of former refugee status, failed to engage interpreters, and lacked interest in the resettlement service operations at community network occasions. The resettlement practitioners' experiences are similar to the racism experienced by social worker Simangaliso Brenda Nyoni who felt "not equal in so many ways" (Fooks & Nyoni, 2020, p. 71). Practitioners conveyed a sense of being isolated and subjected to what Gatwiri (2021) refers to as "microaggressions" through colleagues' privileged ignorance and assumptions (p. 487). I have suggested in the findings that resettlement practitioner's experiences of being marginalised may add extra stress and contribute to experiences of vicarious trauma. However, it is not my intention to pathologise the practitioner. Rather, I emphasise that the experiences reflect a deep core of racism that continues through the veneer of multiculturalism and echoes the sound of colonial arrogance in social work practice. These experiences do not represent the social work profession's commitment to human rights and social justice (AASW 2020; Blackdeer & Ocampo, 2022; Moreton-Robinson, 2020).

9.7 Implications of the Study for Resettlement Policy

The final research question asked: What are the implications of these experiences (women refugees and sector personnel) for resettlement service planning and delivery? The analytical lens, afforded by the literature review and layered theoretical foundation that guided my analysis and conclusions, have informed implications for general and regional resettlement policy, social work, and human service practice.

9.7.1 Resettlement Policy Needs to Prioritise Women's Wisdom and Needs

Pittaway and Bartolomei (2022) recommend that women be written into policy. An implication from the study conclusions is that Australia's humanitarian policy acknowledges women's survival wisdom as potentially vital wisdom, in addition to current documentation that emphasises vulnerability: "Women may be particularly vulnerable and face barriers to full economic or social participation based on cultural or family related factors" (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020b, p. 9). Furthermore, case management guidelines must clearly state that practitioners may encounter structural barriers within services that restrict women's access to their rights of service and protection. Guidelines could also include that incidences of rights violations form part of service reporting, and inform local network advocacy teams and committees.

9.7.2 Resettlement Policy Needs to Reduce the Transactional Focus of Service Delivery

I recommend a move from current structured service claims to a broader banded system that limits the risks of abstracting women's lives. Current accountability systems required by the HSP clearly affect resettlement practitioners' time to engage responsively with resettling women and to advocate responsively with mainstream workers for additional support from service networks. A return to a former band system will reduce individual service transactions and accountability demands, giving social workers more time to engage

respectfully with women's wisdom and to appreciate their life contexts. Social workers and resettlement practitioners will be able to provide more time to include women's voices and needs, acknowledge their survival wisdoms, and be cognisant of the effects of accumulated inequities on women's lives. Reduced transactional accountability may leave time for practitioners to inform and support their professional colleagues across the broader human service network.

9.7.3 Resettlement Policy Needs to Resource Strategic Regional Resettlement Development Plans

Shergold et al. (2019) recognised that "valuable experience of community-based organisations is inadequately utilised" (p. 2). The conclusion that generic regional services resist supporting women in resettlement, and the managers' perspectives that regions are under-resourced, and depend on an 'expert' local resettlement service, has implications for HSP policy. Resettlement policy needs to include resourcing regional-specific and strategic service development initiatives that support "multiple actors" and enable operationalising resettlement development plans specific to the region (Boese & Phillips, 2017, p. 400). Upskilling local human services may include resourcing opportunities to increase local community groups and services' understanding of the effects of global human movement on human service practice responsibilities.

9.7.4 North Queensland Resettlement Service Policy: Explicitly Respecting and Including Afrocentric Philosophies

This study has valued survival wisdoms that women from Africa bring into North Queensland. It has highlighted women's Afrocentric traditions existing in various forms, including Ubuntu, which is being adopted by women from Africa resettling in North Queensland. By leaning on traditional philosophies and Afrofeminsims, women have gained

strength and used collective wisdom through formal or informal groups and associations. The managers shared their various means of engaging with African associations and groups of women by welcoming and supporting new arrivals, supporting groups in funding applications, and supporting groups in their advocacy for women's rights. An implication for HSP local services is to explicitly name and respect Ubuntu in their policy directives as a way of extending support to women. I believe that respecting Ubuntu will contribute to an office culture within services and in interaction with external organisations that reflects Bagele Chilisa's (2012) emphasis on relationality and respectfulness in accountability and representation of women's rights.

9.7.5 Resettlement Policy That Actively Supports Opportunities for Women Interpreters

An implication for resettlement policy is to specifically name the need for women interpreters as fundamental for the effective resettlement of women. Access to female interpreters is imperative and can contribute to increasing women's ability to navigate various systems that currently limit women's capacity to engage meaningfully and independently with local community services. Javanparast et al. (2020) named accessing appropriate interpreters as a "major concern" for regional and remote areas (p. 2). I experienced difficulties in reliably accessing remote accredited female interpreters to conduct the interviews. Remote interpreters by telephone are generally the only source of accredited interpreters in Cairns and Townsville. Local bilingual people may not be trained at any NAATI level and they may be limited by the type of information and services they can assist in providing. One manager referred to a local service initiative of outsourcing accredited interpreters who are service staff to external services.

I recommend that the resettlement policy adopt a strategy of enabling access to resources to train eligible migrant and former refugee women, to engage in baseline pre-requisite NAATI training. This study verifies that the proposed strategy is feasible. As

previously recorded, four of the 20 female participants were conversant in English on arrival. Two were employed soon after arrival but not trained as accredited interpreters. My practice experience has been that proactive resourcing and supporting women to access the requirements of NAATI accreditation serves two needs. It actively supports women's employment opportunities and extends practical support to resettling women. Furthermore, it limits risks to clientele by community individuals (particularly males) who may exploit women. This proposal directly supports women who arrive from Africa and are keen to contribute to their immediate family, family members left behind, and to the local community.

9.7.6 An Alternative to "Resettlement Policy"

In detailing the research questions and aims in Chapter 1, I spoke of my awkwardness and un-comfortability in using the terms "resettlement" and "settlement" (Section 1.6). These terms have continued to concern me throughout the study. Mick McCabe commented on the essentialness of a "welcoming" community (Frazer & Beplate, 2018, p. 17). Inspired by the *Uluru Statement From the Heart*, I conclude that the "Australian Humanitarian Settlement Program" be replaced with the "Australian Humanitarian Welcoming Program" (HWP instead of HSP) – subject to approval and endorsement by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elder peak bodies (The Referendum Council, 2017). I recommend the term "welcoming," as it reflects Australia's reputation and participation in the UNHCR convention on refugees in the offshore humanitarian policy. The suggested term directly supports women participants of this study who arrived with hope of a future. "Resettlement" or "settlement" policy can colloquially convert to "welcoming policy" with reference to both migrants and former refugees. Accordingly, services and personnel would be "welcoming services" and "welcoming practitioners." The term detracts from the continued use of the refugee label. However, I caution that replacing "resettlement" with "welcoming" does not diminish, in any

way, the hard labour of women, practitioners, and human service workers who advocate for resettling women's rights and structural reforms.

Having considered conclusions from women's experiences, I now share implications informed by my conclusions to strengthen social work and human services practice.

9.8 Practice Implications for Social Work and Human Service Workers

Social work seeks to redress historic Western scientific colonialism and hegemony by listening to and learning from Indigenous peoples around the world. In this way social work knowledges will be co-created and informed by Indigenous peoples, and more appropriately practiced not only in local environment but also internationally. (IFSW, 2014, Knowledge section)

It is imperative, as social workers and human service workers, that we be persistently mindful of our privileges and engage in practice from a decolonising perspective. Alongside a decolonising perspective are the practice implications for bringing a "feminist consciousness" that supports women's resettling and addresses multiple limiting oppressions (Stanley & Wise, 1979, p. 359). In a foreword to a joint publication by AASW et al. (2022), Jim Ife reminded social workers that we are capable of devaluing refugees and former refugees, as we have done with Indigenous people of Australia. The implication is important for regional service managers, resettlement practitioners, and all social workers and human service workers. Developing critical reflection that is sensitive to diverse ways of doing social work may challenge Eurocentric thinking. This general directive underscores and guides the study's implications for practice.

9.8.1 Valuing Dialogue with Women: Guarding Against Abstraction of Women's Voices

The decolonial approach values the experience and wisdoms of former refugees who are now social workers and colleagues (Tascón & Ife, 2019). As previously discussed, a

major implication of this North Queensland research is the recommendation to develop a macro perspective and to mindfully centre women's experiences and interpretations of their life context, including the obstacles they encounter when claiming their rights (Dominelli, 2012; Ramon & Maglajlic, 2012). I am not suggesting that practitioners need to know every detail of women's experiences or that they need to ask women for their "stories," which would be intrusive, insensitive, and potentially contribute to "trauma porn" (Gatwiri & Mapedzahama, 2022, p. 272). Heeding the voices of feminists through the ages, across every continent and at every border crossing, we have to honour that "everyone has a voice but not everyone gets given equal opportunity to use it" (Fooks & Nyoni, 2020, p. 43). This same maxim must be followed in every step of responsively supporting newly arrived women humanitarian entrants, professionally acknowledging and supporting resettlement practitioners, supporting human services workers, and developing a local regional response plan that supports former refugee women's advocacy for meeting their needs within the local community.

9.8.2 Owning the Need for Using Interpreters

An implication from this study is that social workers and human service workers must recognise the need for interpreters and commit to developing skills in using interpreters regardless of service type and location. Openly acknowledging one's monolingualism and professional need for an interpreter when communicating with a former refugee is an important decolonial strategy. The barrier is ours – first and foremost. Acknowledging the need for interpreters encourages the professional's responsibility to advocate for service policies that emphasise access to interpreters as a human right. As social workers, we can support human service colleagues to learn how to use interpreters. We can also encourage individuals with diverse linguistic skills to undertake NAATI interpreter training.

9.8.3 Respect Ubuntu in Local Regional Response Planning

An implication for service practice is to document service policies that name, acknowledge, and respect African philosophies in policy documentation. Service policies must also identify the need for social workers to respectfully and collegially work with associations and women leaders across diverse groups of African communities. However, social workers and community developers must consciously avoid the risk of colonising knowledge through unconscious Eurocentric privilege (Smith, 2021; Chilisa, 2017). Respectfully engaging with the wisdoms of Afrofeminsim and Afrocentricity may add resources to the region and provide some direction for unique strategies that are site informed and appropriate to the wider North Queensland region (Kivunja et al., 2014).

9.8.4 Support Women in Their Advocacy for Resettling Women's Needs

I recall an earlier reference I made to Adams (2002):

[Critical social work practice] makes links between the particular situation and wider social structures and the way power operates, so as to get beneath the surface. This includes the way that ideology operates to cloak oppressive structural relationships, including class, gender, race, disability, age and other forms of oppression. (Adams, 2002, p. 84)

Gopalkrisnan (2021), Pittaway and Bartolomei (2022), and Robinson (2014) advised that social workers and human service workers have a responsibility to support former refugee women in their community development work and strategic advocacy for structural changes. As social workers, we have a responsibility to ensure the representation of former refugee women in their advocacy for rights and inclusion in their local communities. The SCOA considered "targeted community capacity building" an important pathway to a strong locally informed regional response (SCOA, 2022b, p. 10). In this study, the managers of

resettlement services in North Queensland discussed their collaborative work with emerging community groups from African backgrounds and associations. The ultimate implication for social workers and human service workers is that we support direct representation of women for women within our local communities.

9.9 Significance of the Research and Future Directions

My thesis has presented qualitative feminist-inspired research that makes a significant contribution to regional resettlement literature. The study has privileged the resettlement experiences of former refugee women from diverse African countries who moved to North Queensland. Further, the study methodology explicitly confronts the challenges of research in outer regional centres with small groups of identifiable participants. The study also describes these women's experiences in the unique outer regional resettlement sites of Cairns and Townsville, which comprise the North Queensland contract region of Australia's HSP. Using a layered theoretical foundation of feminism, human rights, critical social work, and decolonialism, I monitored my Eurocentric privileges as a former manager of a resettlement service and an emerging researcher.

The research contributes to the overarching aim of exploring experiences with women and informing resettlement policy and social work and human service practice. Each of the research questions has been answered. I have disrupted images of former refugee women from diverse African countries as poor beggars with no agency (Aidoo, 1992). I have revealed women's frustrations and disappointments with inconsistent access to services, including their rightful access to female interpreters and employment opportunities. I heard women's yearning for being and belonging as an experience of fragility – affected by patriarchy and racism, continued experiences of violence by men, being able to trust officials, a persistent refugee label, and conditional welcome from generic human services. Under-resourcing of regional locations affected social work and human service work commitment to

human rights practice. I have listened to the experiences of resettlement practitioners and explored managers' perspectives on working in the region. I have argued that the experiences of women from diverse African countries cannot be homogenised. Rather, it is important to appreciate women's life contexts that form unique single stories across national and international boundaries. I observed risks to resettlement practitioners' support offered to women that were influenced by neoliberal management guidelines promoting a transactional basis to service support and case management. The current humanitarian settlement environment risks pathologising women and ignores institutional structural obstacles.

Having considered the experiences of women from African countries, and the experiences of resettlement practitioners, I arrived at conclusions and made recommendations that have the potential to strengthen resettlement policy. I have also drawn implications from conclusions to inform social work and human service practice when working directly with former refugee women or working in generic services in regional North Queensland. I will now outline future research recommendations. First, I recommend that outer regional locations, such as North Queensland, be included in national longitudinal studies. Second, I recommend research that explores how Australia can value linguistic diversities of arriving former refugees and research that considers appropriately linked employment pathways suitable for regional applications. Third, I recommend research that explores mental wellbeing support for former refugee women through programs that align with resettlement services, PASTT services, and community associations of former refugee groups. Fourth, I recommend deeper research into the experiences of regional resettlement practitioners and the implications of those experiences for strengthening social work and human service practice. Finally, I suggest that independent research with human service networks in outer regions explore workers' views on the effects of global events on their practice regime.

9.10 Conclusion

I began this research from my sense of unfinished business after a career in social work within North Queensland – the last 22 years as manager of a resettlement service. My research highlights the unique region's capacity to support former refugee women to resettle with relative safety and peace, which can be further improved through policy that recognises, and adequately and directly resources, the region. The research also draws attention to the influences of diverse life contexts from women's home countries and time spent in countries of displacement. Furthermore, the research highlights these women's fragile sense of belonging throughout resettlement that can be relieved by policy directives that are cognisant of racism and discrimination. I have recommended renaming the resettlement policy to embody welcome and be respectful of the sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. I have also recommended future research that focuses on women's resettlement in regional locations. The research has demonstrated that the globally informed, region-centric, feminist, human rights, and decolonised approach to critical social work and human service resettlement is necessary and possible.

References

Acker, J., Berry, K., & Essevald, J. (1991). Objectivity and truth: Problems in doing feminist research. In M. M. Fonow & J. Cook (Eds.), *Beyond methodology: Feminist scholarship as lived researc*h (pp. 133–153). Indiana University Press.

Adams, R. (2002). Developing critical practice in social work. In R. Adams, L. Dominelli, & A. M. Payne (Eds.), *Social work: Themes, issues and critical debates* (pp. 84–95). Palgrave Macmillan. https://tinyurl.com/4shsd6ua

Adichie, C. N. (2009). *The danger of a single story* [Video]. TED Conferences. https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

Adogame, A. (2004). The Berlin-Congo Conference 1884: The partition of Africa and implications for Christian mission today. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, *34*(1–2), 186–190. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581486

Adusei-Asante, K., & Adibi, H. (2018). The 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' (CALD) label: A critique using African migrants as exemplar. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, *39*(2), 74–94. https://doi.org/10.22160/22035184/aras-2018-39-2/74-9

Africa Social Work & Development Network. (n.d.). www.africasocialwork.net

African Union. (2009, October 23). *African Union convention for the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons in Africa (Kampala Convention)*. https://au.int/en/treaties/african-union-convention-protection-and-assistance-internally-displaced-persons-africa

African Women's Development Fund. (2007). *Charter of feminist principles for African feminists.* https://awdf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/AFF-Feminist-Charter-Digital-AcA_A_-English.pdf

Ager, A., & Strang, A. (2008). Understanding integration: A conceptual framework. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *21*(2), 166–191. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fen016

Aidoo, A. A. (1992). *The African woman today*. Black Agenda Report.

https://www.blackagendareport.com/essay-african-woman-today-ama-ata-aidoo-1992

Ajayi, K., Das, S., Delavallade, C., Ketema, T. A., & Rouanet, L. (2023). *Which socio-emotional skills matter most for women's earnings?* World Bank.

https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/39622

Akosah-Twumasi, P., Alele, F., Smith, A. M., Emeto, T. I., Lindsay, D., Tsey, K., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2021). Prioritising family needs: A grounded theory of acculturation for Sub-Saharan African migrant families in Australia. *Social Sciences*, *10*(2), 17.

https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0760/9/2/17

Alexander, A. (2010). The family violence challenges for CALD women and women living in remote areas. *Parity*, *23*(10), 19–20.

https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.818007052354597

Alinsky, S. (1971). *Rules for Radicals*. Random House.

Allan, J. (2009). Loss and grief: Weaving together the personal and the political. In J. Allan, B. Pease, & L. Briskman (Eds.), *Critical social work: Theories and practices for a socially just world* (2nd ed.). Allen & Unwin.

Alston, M., & Bowles, W. (2018). *Research for social workers: An introduction to methods* (4th ed.). Allen & Unwin.

Anderson, J. (2015). Townsville: From strength to strength. *North Queensland Newspaper Company Limited*.

Anderson, L. C., Cumings, R., & Gatwiri, K. (2019, October 14). 'I'm a local…': Negotiating belonging with former refugees in regional Australia through inclusive partnerships. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies*, *11*(2), 21–36.

https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v11.i2.6665

Asante, M. K. (2007). An afrocentric manifesto: Toward an African renaissance. Polity.

Au, M., Anandakumar, A. D., Preston, R., Ray, R. A., & Davis, M. (2019). A model explaining refugee experiences of the Australian healthcare system: A systematic review of refugee perceptions. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, *19*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12914-019-0206-6

Au, M., Preston, R., Ray, R. A., & Davis, M. (2021). Refugee healthcare perceptions in regional northern Australia: transition through engagement, access, trust, privacy, the old and the new. *Australian Journal of Primary Health*, *27*(5), 382–390 https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1071/PY20265

Australian Association of Social Workers. (2020). Scope of Social Work Practice: Refugees and people seeking asylum.

Australian Association of Social Workers. (2023) AASW Practice Standards. https://www.aasw.asn.au/practice-standards-2023

Australian Association of Social Workers, New South Wales Refugee Health Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors, & New South Wales Health Service. (2022). *Working with people from refugee backgrounds: A guide for social workers* (2nd ed.). https://www.startts.org.au/media/Working-with-people-from-refugee-backgrounds-A-guide-for-social-workers-2nd-Edition_2022.pdf

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2018, March). *Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 5 - Remoteness Structure, July 2016* (No. 1270.0.55.005). https://tinyurl.com/2kdjkte4

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2021). *Statistical Area Level 4: Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Edition 3*. https://tinyurl.com/yck8mbd2

Australian Government. (2023, August 11). *The Hon Andrew Giles MP Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs*. Increase to Humanitarian Program Retrieved June 5, 2024, from

https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/AndrewGiles/Pages/increase-to-humanitarian-program-11082023.aspx

Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. (2024, March 15). *Parents Next*. https://www.dewr.gov.au/parentsnext

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (n.d.). *The national settlement framework*. Immigration and Citizenship. https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settlement-services-subsite/files/the-national-settlement-framework.pdf

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2019). *Settlement reports.* Immigration and Citizenship. https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/settlement-reports

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2020a). *Australia's offshore humanitarian program: 2019–20*. https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-stats/files/australia-offshore-humanitarian-program-2019-20.pdf

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2020b). *Case management guidelines: Humanitarian Settlement Program*. Retrieved December 1, 2023, from https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/foi/files/2021/fa-210200051-document-released-p1.PDF

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2023a). *Discussion paper: Australia's Humanitarian Program 2023–2024*. https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/australias-humanitarian-program-23-24-discussion-paper.pdf

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2023b, December 7). *Reform of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)*. https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-publications/submissions-and-discussion-papers/reform-of-the-adult-migrant-english-program

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2024a, February 29). *Subclass 202: Global special humanitarian visa*. Immigration and Citizenship. https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/global-special-humanitarian-202

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2024b, March 14). *Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)*. https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/humanitarian-settlement-program

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. (2024c, March 15). *Australian Cultural Orienta*tion *(AUSCO) Program*. Immigration and Citizenship. https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/ausco

Australian Government Department of Social Services. (2013). *Getting settled: Women refugees in Australia*. https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settlement-services-subsite/files/getting-settled-women-refugees-in-australia.pdf

Australian Government Department of Social Services. (2017, November 27). *Building a new life in Australia (BNLA): The longitudinal study of humanitarian migrants*. https://apo.org.au/node/130866

Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council & Universities Australia. (2018). *National statement on ethical conduct in human research 2007 (updated 2018)*. (Original work published 2007). https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2010). *In our own words - African Australians: A review of human rights and social inclusion issues (2010)*. https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/projects/our-own-words-african-australians-review-human-rights-and

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2018). *Anti-racism in 2018 and beyond: A report on the activities of the National Anti-Racism Strategy (2015-18)*. https://apo.org.au/node/187006

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2021, December 10). *Free and equal: A reform agenda for federal discrimination laws*. https://apo.org.au/node/315602

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2023, December 8). *Free and equal: An Australian conversation on human rights.* https://tinyurl.com/3nbwbu6z

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2024). Free + Equal Human Rights Conference 2024 https://tinyurl.com/ydkwypvm

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2023, June 13). *Culturally and linguistically diverse Australians*. https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/population-groups/cald-australians/refugee-and-humanitarian-entrant-health

Baak, M. (2021). Once a refugee, always a refugee? The haunting of the refugee label in resettlement. In J. Silverstein & R. Stevens (Eds.), *Refugee Journeys* (pp. 51–70). ANU Press. https://doi.org/http://doi.org/10.22459/RJ.2021

Babacan, H. (2006). Locating identity: Sense of space, place and belonging. *International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations, 5*(5), 113–124. https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/17902/

Babacan, H., & Gopalkrishnan, N. (2005). Posttraumatic experiences of refugee women. In C. L. Rabin (Ed.), *Understanding gender and culture in the helping process: Practitioners' narratives from global perspectives* (pp. 149–166). Thomson Wadsworth.

Babacan, H., & Gopalkrishnan, N. (2020). *Situating racism: The local, national and the global*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Banwell, S. (2014). Rape and sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A case study of gender-based violence. *Journal of Gender Studies*, *23*(1), 45–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2012.726603

Barclay, P. (Presenter). (2019, April 12). Refugee women and domestic violence with Khadija Gbla [Audio podcast episode]. In *Big Ideas*. ABC Listen. https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/bigideas/pamela-denoon-lecture/10884966

Bartolomei. L. (2009). Struggling against the silences: Exploring rights based responses to the rape and sexual abuse of refugee women and girls [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. University of New South Wales. https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/22997

Bartolomei, L., Eckert, R., & Pittaway, E. (2014). "What happens there … follows us here": Resettled but still at risk: Refugee women and girls in Australia. *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, *30*(2), 45–56. https://doi.org/10.25071/1920-7336.39618

Bashir, N. (2023). Community gatekeepers: Power, pitfalls and possibilities when recruiting and researching Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) participants. *The Qualitative Report*, *28*(5), 1501–1519. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.5549

Bauman, T., Carter, R., Harding, M., Kelly, T., Smith, S., Sweeney, A., McKeague, B., Meegan, M., & Weepers, J. (2013). Towards: A community of practice. *Native Title Newsletter* (3), 12–14. https://search-informit-org.elibrary.jcu.edu.au/doi/pdf/10.3316/informit.178029224006708

Bawa, S., & Adeniyi Ogunyankin, G. (2018). (Un)African women: Identity, class and moral geographies in postcolonial times. *African Identities*, *16*(4), 444–459. https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2018.1474340

Beck, S. W. (2008). *Maritime mechanisms of contact and change: Archaeological perspectives on the history and conduct of the Queensland labour trade* [Doctoral

thesis, James Cook University]. Research Online@JCU.

https://doi.org/10.25903/5ed6da5799c62

Beddoe, L. (2019). Social work education: Shifting the focus from reflection to analysis. *Australian Social Work*, *72*(1), 105–108.

https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2018.1533028

Bellamy, K., Ostini, R., Martini, N., & Kairuz, T. (2017). Perspectives of resettled African refugees on accessing medicines and pharmacy services in Queensland, Australia. *International Journal of Pharmacy Practice*, *25*(5), 358–364.

https://doi.org/10.1111/ijpp.12324

Berman, R. C., & Tyyskä, V. (2011). A critical reflection on the use of translators/interpreters in a qualitative cross-language research project. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *10*(2), 178–190. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691101000206

Bessarab, D., & Ngandu, B. (2010). Yarning about yarning as a legitimate method in Indigenous research. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies*, *3*(1), 37–50. https://ijcis.qut.edu.au/article/view/57

Bigby, C. (2015). Preparing manuscripts that report qualitative research: Avoiding common pitfalls and illegitimate questions. *Australian Social Work*, *68*(3), 384–391.

https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2015.1035663

Bilotta, N. (2021). A critical self-reflexive account of a privileged researcher in a complicated setting: Kakuma refugee camp. *Research Ethics*, *17*(4), 435–447.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/17470161211037386

Birks, M., Chapman, Y., & Francis, K. (2007). Breaching the wall: Interviewing people from other cultures. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, *18*(2),150–156.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1043659606298617

BlackDeer, A. A., & Ocampo, M. G. (2022). #SocialWorkSoWhite: A critical perspective on

settler colonialism, white supremacy, and social justice in social work. *Advances in

Social Work*, *22*(2), 720–740.

https://advancesinsocialwork.iupui.edu/index.php/advancesinsocialwork/article/view/

24986

Block, K., Riggs, E., & Haslam, N. (2013). Values and vulnerabilities: The ethics of research

with refugees and asylum seekers. Australian Academic Press.

Boese, M., & Phillips, M. (2017). The role of local government in migrant and refugee

settlement in regional and rural Australia. *The Australian Journal of Social Issues*,

52(4), 388–404. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.26

Briskman, L. (2012). Integrating migrants and refugees in rural settings. In J. Maidment & U.

Bay (Eds.), *Social work in rural Australia* (pp. 146–160). Allen & Unwin.

Brixi, H., Rawlings, L., & Koechlein, E. (2021). Unleashing women and girls' human capital:

A game changer for Africa. International Monetary Fund.

https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2021/12/Africa-Unleashing-

Women-Girls-Human-Capital

Brough, M., Schweitzer, R., Shakespeare-Finch, J., Vromans, L., & King, J. (2012).

Unpacking the micro–macro nexus: Narratives of suffering and hope among refugees

from Burma recently settled in Australia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *26*(2), 207–225.

https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fes025

Burnard, P. (2004). Writing a qualitative research report. *Accident and Emergency Nursing*,

12(3), 176–181. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aaen.2003.11.006

Bush, B. (2017). 'Britain's conscience on Africa': White women, race and imperial politics in

inter-war Britain. In C. Midgley (Ed.), *Gender and Imperialism* (pp. 200–223).

Manchester University Press.

Butler, R. (2016). Local kids, 'refugees' and publics of privilege: Children's mediated and intercultural lives in a regional Australian city. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *37*(4), 339–354. https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2016.1190694

Caperchione, C. M., Kolt, G. S., Tennent, R., & Mummery, W. K. (2011). Physical activity behaviours of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women living in Australia: A qualitative study of socio-cultural influences. *BMC Public Health*, *11*(1), 26–26. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-11-26

Capire, (n.d.). *About us*. Retrieved October 7, 2021, from, https://capiremov.org/en/about-us/

Carmichael, T., Gautherot, M., Geddes, M., Jones, P., McLean, C., Sceriha, M., Thomson, J., & Thorpe, R. (1989, July 2–7). *Gender, race and class: Reclaiming the radical tradition in Australian social welfare practice* [Conference session]. Social Work in the Australian Context: Proceedings of the Twenty-First Biennial Conference of the Australian Association of Social Workers, James Cook University, Townsville, QLD, Australia.

Carrington, A. (2016). Feminism under siege: Critical reflections on the impact of neoliberalism. In B. Pease, S. Goldengay, N. Hosken, & S. Nipperess (Eds.), *Doing critical social work: Transformative practices for social justice* (pp. 226–240). Allen & Unwin.

Casson, L. (1996). *Congress of ethnic communities of North Queensland: Report.* Women-Community Presentation, James Cook University Special Collections, Townsville, QLD, Australia.

Centacare Far North Queensland. (2016). *2016 Annual Report.* https://www.centacarefnq.org/site/user-assets/Resources/2016_Annual_Report_FINAL_WEB.pdf

Centacare Far North Queensland. (2017). *2017 Annual Report.* https://tinyurl.com/ysrbxfca

Centacare Far North Queensland. (2018). *Annual Report 2017–18.*

https://tinyurl.com/yc8zb2kj

Centacare Far North Queensland. (2019*). Annual Report: Centacare FNQ 2018 - 2019.*

https://tinyurl.com/38vpyk96

Centacare Far North Queensland. (2020). *Annual Report 2019 - 2020.*

https://tinyurl.com/2s3hh2wv

Chen, W., Wu, S., Ling, L., & Renzaho, A. M. N. (2019). Impacts of social integration and

loneliness on mental health of humanitarian migrants in Australia: Evidence from a

longitudinal study. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 43(1), 46–*

55. https://doi.org/10.1111/1753-6405.12856

Chigevenga, R. (2022). Decolonising research methodologies in the Global South:

Experiences of an African social scientist. *African Journal of Social Work*, *12*(4),

199–206. https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajsw/article/view/241552

Chilisa, B. (2012). *Indigenous Research Methodologies* (1st ed.) Sage publications

Chilisa, B. (2017). Decolonising transdisciplinary research approaches: An African

perspective for enhancing knowledge integration in sustainability science.

Sustainability Science, *12*(5), 813–827.

https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11625-017-0461-1

Chilisa, B., & Ntseane, G. (2010). Resisting dominant discourses: Implications of Indigenous,

African feminist theory and methods for gender and education research. *Gender and*

Education, *22*(6), 617–632. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2010.519578

Chingaipe, S. (Journalist, Producer, & Presenter). (2021, October). Our African roots [Film].

Chemical Media, Special Broadcasting Service Australia.

https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/tv-program/our-african-roots/1952984643554

Chung, D., Fisher, C., Zufferey, C., & Thiara, R. (2018). *Young women from African backgrounds and sexual violence* [Report to the Criminology Advisory Council]. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14094.61768

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *12*(3), 297–298. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262613

Cocker, C., & Hafford-Letchfield, T. (2022). Rethinking feminist theories for social work practice. In C. Cocker & T. Hafford-Letchfield (Eds.), *Rethinking feminist theories for social work practice* (pp. 1–14) Springer. https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-94241-0

Colic-Peisker, V., & Tilbury, F. (2006). Employment niches for recent refugees: Segmented labour market in twenty-first century Australia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *19*(2), 203–229. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fej016

Collins, J., & Reid, C. (2018, August 13). *Refugees are integrating just fine in regional Australia*. The Conversation. https://theconversation.com/refugees-are-integrating-just-fine-in-regional-australia-101188

Collins, P. H. (1999). Learning from the outsider within: The sociological significance of black feminist thought. In S. Hesse-Biber, C. Gilmartin, & R. Lydenberg (Eds.), *Feminist approaches to theory and methodology* (pp. 155–178). Oxford University Press.

Collins, P. H. (2000a). Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment. Routledge.

Collins, P. H. (2000b). Gender, black feminism, and black political economy. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *568*(1), 41–53. https://www-jstor-org.elibrary.jcu.edu.au/stable/1049471?seq=2

Commonwealth Coordinator-General for Migrant Services. (2022). *Next steps to improve Australia's settlement and integration of refugees*. Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-pubs/files/next-steps/next-steps-discussion-paper.pdf

Correa-Velez, I., Spaaij, R., & Upham, S. (2012). 'We are not here to claim better services than any other': Social exclusion among men from refugee backgrounds in urban and regional Australia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *26*(2), 163–186. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fes003

Cotterill, P., & Letherby, G. (1993). Weaving stories: Personal auto/biographies in feminist research. *Sociology*, *27*(1), 67–79. https://journals-sagepub-com.elibrary.jcu.edu.au/doi/pdf/10.1177/003803859302700107

Covid worse for refugees. (2023, July 8). *The Townsville Bulletin,* p. 3.

Cox, D. (1983). Refugee settlement in Australia: Review of an era. *International Migration, 21*(3), 332–344. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.1983.tb00081.x

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Identity politics, intersectionality, and violence against women. *Stanford Law Review*, *43*(6), 1241–1299. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1229039

Crotty, M. (2020). The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process. Routledge.

Curry, O., Smedley, C., & Lenette, C. (2018). What is "successful" resettlement? Refugee narratives from regional New South Wales in Australia. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, *16*(4), 430–448. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1358410

Daly, M. (1978). Prelude to the first passage. *Feminist Studies*, *4*(3), 81–86. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3177539

Davies, C., & Graves, A. A. (1986). *Ngambika: Studies of women in African literature*. Africa World Press.

Davis, M. (2015). Developing a community field: A network to assist settlement issues. In J. Taylor (Ed.), *Working with communities* (pp. 58–62). Oxford University Press.

Day, C. M. (2001). Research as a religious experience: Conducting a case study in a Catholic school organisation. In S. McGinty (Ed.), *The politics & machinations of education research: International case studies* (pp. 113–131). Peter Lang Pub Inc.

De Beauvoir, S. (1989). *Le deuxième sexe*. Vintage.

Dominelli, L. (1997). *Anti-racist social work*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Dominelli, L. (2002). Values in social work: Contested entities with enduring qualities. In R. Adams, L. Dominelli, & M. Payne (Eds.), *Critical practice in social work* (pp. 15–27). Palgrave Macmillan.

Dominelli, L. (2012). Globalisation and indigenisation: Reconciling the irreconcilable. In K. Lyons, T. Hokenstad, M. Pawar, N. Huegler, & N. Hall (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international social work*, (pp. 39–55).

Dominelli, L. (2014). Internationalizing professional practices: The place of social work in the international arena. *International Social Work*, *57*(3), 258–267. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872814522671

Dominelli, L. (2017). *Anti-racist social work*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Dominelli, L., & McLeod, E. (1989). Creating a feminist statutory social work. *Feminist Social Work*, 101–130.

Doney, G., Baughan, R., Bartolomei, L., Pittaway, E., & Hugman, R. (2015, September). A step in the right direction: The meanings of rights across cultures: An exploration of the interpretation of the human rights framework in refugee settlement. Centre for Refugee Research, University of New South Wales.

317

https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/1_ARCLP_A_step_in_the_right_direction_midproject_report_Sept_2015.pdf

Doney, G., & Pittaway, E. (2010). *Its not all right: Rights in refugee families in Australia*. Centre for Refugee Research, University of New South Wales. https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/2_AMES_families_report_251010.pdf

Drolet, J., Enns, R., Kreitzer, L., Shankar, J., & McLaughlin, A.-M. (2018). Supporting the resettlement of a Syrian family in Canada: The social work resettlement practice experience of social justice matters. *International Social Work*, *61*(5), 627–633. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872817725143

Due, C. (2008). 'Who are strangers?': 'Absorbing' Sudanese refugees into a white Australia. *Australia Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association journal*, *4*(1), 1–13.

Duncan, G., Shepherd, M., & Symonds, J. (2010). Working with refugees - a manual for caseworkers and volunteers. *Rural and Remote Health*, *10*(4) 1–12. https://search-informit-org.elibrary.jcu.edu.au/doi/pdf/10.3316/INFORMIT.396267418374591

Eckert, R., & Hofling, J. (2008). Breaking the silence: Women and girls at risk and children of rape. *Australian Refugee Rights Alliance*. https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=902a7d0ed7037a05132486dc15e7c4ba8e060beb

Eisenstein, Z. (2011). Audacious feminisms: Newest sexes, races, genders and globes. Keynote address for the Australian National Women's Studies Association, Adelaide, Australia, 30 June 2010. *Australian Feminist Studies*, *26*(70), 393–412. https://www.tandfonline.com/action/showCitFormats?doi=10.1080/08164649.2011.621174

Emecheta, B. (1982). A Nigerian writer living London. *Kunapipi*, *4*(1), 114–123.

Essed, P. (1991). *Understanding everyday racism*. Sage publications.

Evans, N. M., Spates, K., Kirkland, C., & Kabesele, C. M. (2022). Voices of refugee women: A Qualitative exploration of challenges associated with resettling in Ohio. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *35*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/feab068

Falvo, A. (2018, June 15). For Maria Sifa moving to Cairns has given her the chance to build a better life. *The Cairns Post.* https://andreafalvo@news.com

Family: Akuch Kuol Anyieth and Mary Achol Anyuon. (2022, May). *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 36–37.

Fernandez, B. (2022, March 7). Refugees, reporting and the far right: How the Ukraine crisis reveals brutal 'everyday racism' in Europe and beyond. *The Conversation*. https://tinyurl.com/3v3asxsc

Firestone, S. (1970). *The dialectic of sex: The case for feminist revolution*. Bantam Books.

Fonow, M. M., & Cook, J. A. (1991). *Beyond methodology: Feminist scholarship as lived research*. Indiana University Press.

Fook, J. (2014). Reflexivity as Method. *Annual Review of Health Social Science*, *9*(1),11–20. https://doi.org/10.5172/hesr.1999.9.1.11

Fooks, A., & Nyoni, B. (2020). Intersectional conversations. In Dulwich Centre (Ed.), *Intersecting stories: Narrative therapy reflections on gender, culture and justice* (pp. 43–74). Dulwich Centre Publications.

Forbes, A., & Van Rossum, A. (2016). *Celebrating Townsville: The city's visual history drawn from the JCU art collection* [Creative Work]. James Cook University, Townsville, QLD, Australia. https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/51730/

Forced Migration Research Network. (2017, October). *The world's biggest minority? Refugee women and girls in the Global Compact on Refugees.* University of New South Wales. https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/59e5bcb77.pdf

Fors, M. (2018). Geographical narcissism in psychotherapy: Countermapping urban

   assumptions about power, space, and time. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, *35*(4), 446–

   453. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/pap0000179

Fozdar, F. (2023). Belonging in the land down under: Black Africans in Australia.

   International Migration, *61*(1), 23–38. https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12862

Fozdar, F., & Banki, S. (2017). Settling refugees in Australia: Achievements and challenges.

   International Journal of Migration and Border Studies, *3*(1), 43–66.

   https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.1504/IJMBS.2017.081197

Fozdar, F., & Hartley, L. (2013a). Civic and ethno belonging among recent refugees to

   Australia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *27*(1), 126–144.

   https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fet018

Fozdar, F., & Hartley, L. (2013b). Refugee resettlement in Australia: What we know and

   need to know. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, *32*(3), 23–51.

   https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdt009

Fraser, N. (1989). Unruly practices: Power, discourse, and gender in contemporary social

   theory. University of Minnesota Press.

Frazer, I., & Beplate, M. (2018). *Heartache, strength and hope: Celebrating 25 years of

   migrant and refugee resettlement in North Queensland through the Townsville

   Multicultural Support Group Inc.* Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc.

   https://triangle-kale-p746.squarespace.com/s/20181001-TMSG-Newsletter-

   September-2018.pdf

Gair, S. (2012). Feeling their stories: Contemplating empathy, insider/outsider positionings,

   and enriching qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, *22*(1), 134–143.

   https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732311420580

Gair, S., Thomson, J., Miles, D., & Harris, N. (2011). It's very white isn't it! Challenging

mono-culturalism in social work and welfare education. *Advances in Social Work and

Welfare Education*, *5*(1), 37–55.

Gair, S., & Van Luyen, A. (Eds.). (2017). *Sharing qualitative research*. Routledge Taylor &

Francis Group.

Galvez, E. (2009). Telephone interpreters: Vital link. *Health Affairs*, *28*(2), 602–602.

https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.28.2.602

Gatwiri, K. (2021). Racial microaggressions at work: Reflections from Black African

professionals in Australia. *The British Journal of Social Work*, *51*(2), 655–672.

https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcaa145

Gatwiri, K., & Anderson, L. (2022). The politics of Blackness: Theorising afrodiasporic

identities and experiences. In K. Gatwiri & L. Anderson (Eds.), *Afrodiasporic

identities in Australia: Articulations of Blackness and Africanness* (pp. 33–47).

Springer Nature Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-4282-2_3

Gatwiri, K., & James, S. (2024). What do we know about the experiences of belonging for

[Black] Africans in Australia? A systematic scoping review. *Australian Journal of

Social Issues*, 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.312

Gatwiri, K., & Mapedzahama, V. (2022). Pedagogy or "trauma porn"? Racial literacy as a

prerequisite for teaching racially dignifying content in the Australian social work

context. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, *16*(3), 272–282.

https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-11-2021-0205

Gatwiri, K., Mwanri, L., & McPherson, L. (2021). Afro-diasporic experiences of highly

skilled Black African immigrants in Australia. *Australian Social Work*, *74*(4), 480–

491. https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rasw20

Gatwiri, K., & Tusasiirwe, S. (2022). Afrocentric feminism and ubuntu-led social work practice in an African context. In C. Cocker & T. Hafford-Letchfield (Eds.), *Rethinking Feminist Theories for Social Work Practice* (pp. 123–139). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94241-0_7

Geuss, R. (1981). The idea of a critical theory: Habermas and the Frankfurt School. Cambridge University Press.

Gichunge, C., Harris, N., Tubei, S., Somerset, S., & Lee, P. (2015). Relationship between food insecurity, social support, and vegetable intake among resettled African refugees in Queensland, Australia. *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition*, *10*(3), 379–389. https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2014.929544

Gilligan, C. (2015). The listening guide method of psychological inquiry. *Qualitative Psychology, 2*(1), 69–77. https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000023

Gissi, A. (2018). 'What does the term refugee mean to you?': Perspectives from Syrian refugee women in Lebanon. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *32*(4), 539–561. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fey046

Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. White Plains.

Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. Pearson.

Global Agenda Task Force. (2022). *Global agenda for social work and social development IASSW, IFSW, ICSW report: Theme one (2020–2022)*. https://www.iassw-aiets.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Regional-Reports-for-Theme-1-Ubuntu.pdf

Global Fund for Women. (2015, July 8). *Women's groups in the DRC are demanding justice*. https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/latest/article/womens-groups-in-drc-demand-justice/

Goel, K., Hudson, C., & Cowie, J. (2018). Building research capacity for social work practitioners: A regional perspective. *Social Work Education*, *37*(8), 1028–1043. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2018.1481205

Gopalkrishnan, N. (2008). Anti-racist cultural competence: Challenges for human service organizations. In *The Complexities of Racisms: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Racisms in the New World Order* [Paper presentation]. University of Sunshine Coast, QLD, Australia.

Gopalkrishnan, N. (2021). The critical role of community development in social work education. In I. Ponnuswami & A. P. Francis (Eds.), *Social work education, research and practice: Perspectives from India and Australia* (pp. 99–114). Springer.

Grenier, L. (1998). *Working with Indigenous knowledge: A guide for researchers*. International Development Research Centre.

Gross, E. (1986). What is feminist theory? In C. Pateman & E. Gross (Eds.), *Feminist challenges: Social and political theory* (pp. 355–369). Routledge.

Haffejee, B., & East, J. F. (2016). African women refugee resettlement: A womanist analysis. *Affilia*, *31*(2), 232–242. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109915595840

Harris, N. & Baker, (2008). Connecting, collaborating and surviving: The story of a women's studies centre in the Australian tropics. *Outskirts*, *19*,1–29. https://www.outskirts.arts.uwa.edu.au/volumes/volume-19/harris

Harris, N., Ponnuswami, I., & Harvey, D. (2013, November 5–8). *Teaching research methods to social work students: A transnational critical reflection* [Conference session]. De Novo '13 International Social Work Conference: International Social Work: Crossing Borders, Building Bridges, Cochin, Kerala, India. https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/34208/

Harrison, G., & Turner, R. (2011). Being a 'culturally competent' social worker: Making sense of a murky concept in practice. *British Journal of Social Work*, *41*(2), 333–350 https://academic.oup.com/bjsw/article/41/2/333/1629671

Harrison, J. (2010). Colonial immigration to Queensland. *Queensland Historical Atlas*. https://www.qhatlas.com.au/content/colonial-immigration-queensland

Harrison, R. (2013). *Telling lies to little girls: The sexual politics of mothering girls* [Doctoral thesis, James Cook University]. ResearchOnline@JCU. https://doi.org/10.25903/xty4-7a74

Harvey, D. (2007). *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.

Hawkes, C., Norris, K., Joyce, J., & Paton, D. (2021). Professional mental health support seeking in women of refugee background resettled in Australia: An exploratory study of facilitators and barriers. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, *29*(6), e440–e456. https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.13370

Hawthorne, S. (2002). Wild politics: Feminism, globalisation, bio/diversity. Spinifex Press.

Hawthorne, S. (2020). *Vortex: The crisis of patriarchy*. Spinifex Press.

Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2012). *Handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis*. SAGE publications.

Hesse-Biber, S., & Leckenby, D. (2004). How feminists practice social research. In S. Hesse-Biber & M. L. Yaiser (Eds.), *Feminist perspectives on social research* (pp. 209–226). Oxford University Press.

Hesse-Biber, S. N., Leavy, P., & Yaiser, M. L. (2004). Feminist approaches to research as a process. In S. Hesse-Biber & M. L. Yaiser (Eds.), *Feminist perspectives on social research* (pp. 3–26). Oxford University Press.

hooks, b. (1981). *Ain't I a woman?* South End Press.

hooks, b. (1989). Talking back: Thinking feminist, thinking black. South End Press.

hooks, b. (2000). Feminist theory: From margin to center (2nd ed.). Pluto Press.

Hornsby, C. (2013). *Kenya: A history since independence*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Hosseini, K. (2017, July 26) '*Welcome to Uganda*'. United Nations High Commissioner for
Refugees. Retrieved February 15, 2024, from
https://www.unhcr.org/africa/news/stories/welcome-uganda

Howe, D. (1987). *An introduction to social work theory: Making sense in practice* (1992 ed.,
Vol. 24). Ashgate Publishing.

Hugman, R., Bartolomei, L., & Pittaway, E. (2011). Human agency and the meaning of
informed consent: Reflections on research with refugees. *Journal of Refugee Studies*,
24(4), 655–671.

Hugo,G. (2002). From compassion to compliance? Trends in refugee and humanitarian
migration in Australia. *GeoJournal*, *56*(1), 27–37.
https://www.jstor.org/stable/41147664

Hugo, G. (2008). Immigrant settlement outside of Australia's capital cities. *Population, Space
and Place, 14*(6), 553–571.

Hugo, G. (2009, December). Migration between Africa and Australia: A demographic
perspective. *Australian Human Rights Commission*.
https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/africanaus/papers/africanaus_pa
per_hugo.pdf

Huynh, K. (2010). On being a refugee: Refugeeness – what's good and not so good about
being persecuted and displaced? *Local-Global: Identity, Security, Community, 8*(52),
54–74. http://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.594448663664375

Huynh, K. (2023, September 21) *Can we rescue refugee politics — and redefine who belongs
in Australia, while we're at it?* ABC. https://www.abc.net.au/religion/kim-huynh-
beyond-stop-the-boats-rescuing-refugee-politics/102871300

Huynh, K., & Neyland, S. (2020). Australian whiteness and refugee politics. *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, *66*(1), 111–129. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajph.12638

Ife, J. (1997). Rethinking social work: Towards critical practice. Melbourne Longman.

Ife, J. (2001). Human rights in a globalised world. In J. Ife (Ed.), *Human rights and social work: Removed one colon towards rights-based practice* (pp. 122–123). Cambridge University Press.

Ife, J. (2012). *Human rights and social work: Towards rights-based practice*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139164689

Ife, J. (2016). Human rights and social work: Beyond conservative law. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, *1*(1), 3–8. https://tinyurl.com/bdcmxn6k

Ife, J., & Tascon, S. M. (2016). Human rights and critical social work: Competing epistemologies for practice. *Social Alternatives*, *35*(4), 27–31.

Ikafa, I., & Hack-Polay, D. (2019). Deliver us from evil: The role of faith and family in coping with stress among African migrants in Australia. *Social Work and Social Sciences Review*, *20*(3), 88–107.

Ikafa, I., & Perry, L. (2020). Resettlement experiences of African migrants in Australia and how they affect mental health. *Mental Health Practice*, *22*(5), 27–33. https://tinyurl.com/2uxd6dkt

In memoriam: Micere Githae Mugo 1942-2023. (2023, August 8). *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*. https://jbhe.com/2023/08/in-memoriam-micere-githae-mugo-1942-2023/

Ingvarsdotter, K., Johnsdotter, S., & Östman, M. (2012). Lost in interpretation: The use of interpreters in research on mental ill health. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, *58*(1), 34–40. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764010382693

International Federation of Social Workers. (2014, July). *Global definition of social work.*

https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/

International Institute for Qualitative Methodology. (2019, February 14). *Ten top tips in qualitative data analysis for new researchers - Jude Spiers* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x81wOnnQioI

Jackson, K., & Bazeley, P. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis with NVIVO*. Sage.

Jacobsen, K., & Landau, L. B. (2003). The dual imperative in refugee research: Some methodological and ethical considerations in social science research on forced migration. *Disasters*, *27*(3), 185–206.

Jakubowicz, A. (2002). White noise: Australia's struggle with multiculturalism. In C. Levine-Rasky (Ed.), *Working through whiteness: International perspectives* (pp. 107–125). University of New York Press.

Jakubowicz, A. (2010, May). *Australia's migration policies: African dimensions*. Australian Human Rights Commission.

https://supportingworkingparents.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/africanaus/papers/africanaus_paper_jakubowicz.pdf

Jakubowicz, A. (2018). They must not talk: Multicultural Australia as a field of power. *Griffith Review*, *61*, 51–64.

https://doi.org/https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.761298697237337

Javanparast, S., Naqvi, S. K. A., & Mwanri, L. (2020). Health service access and utilisation amongst culturally and linguistically diverse populations in regional South Australia: A qualitative study. *Rural and Remote Health*, *20*(4).

https://www.rrh.org.au/journal/article/5694

Kalantzis, M., & Cope, W. (1992). Multiculturalism may prove to be the key issue of our epoch. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *39*(11), B3–B5.

https://www.proquest.com/docview/214635983?accountid=16285&sourcetype=Trade%20Journal

Kandasamy, N., & Soldatic, K. (2018). Implications for practice: Exploring the impacts of government contracts on refugee settlement services in rural and urban Australia. *Australian Social Work*, *71*(1), 111–119.

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0312407X.2017.1357079

Kandiyoti, D. (1999). Islam and patriarchy. In S. Hesse-Biber, C. Gilmartin, & R. Lydenberg (Eds.), *Feminist approaches to theory and methodology* (pp. 219–235). Oxford University Press.

Kaplan, I. (2020). Rebuilding shattered lives: Integrated trauma recovery for people of refugee background (2nd ed.). The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc.

Kaplan, I., Stow, H. D., & Szwarc, J. (2016). Responding to the challenges of providing mental health services to refugees: An Australian case report. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, *27*(3), 1159–1170.

https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2016.0134

Kenyatta, J. (2015). *Facing Mount Kenya: The traditional life of the Gikuyu*. East African Educational Publishers.

Kenny, S. (2011, January). Towards unsettling community development. *Community Development Journal, 46*(S1), i7–i9. https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsq050

Kimeu, C. (2023, July13). Ugandan president and son accused of sponsoring violence in ICC testimony. *The Guardian.*

https://www.theguardian.com/globaldevelopment/2023/jul/12/uganda-president-son-yoweri-museveni-muhoozi-kainerugaba-accused-sponsoring-violence-icc

Kivunja, C., Kuyini, A. B., & Maxwell, T. (2014). Settlement experiences of African refugees: A case study of the Armidale, Tamworth and Coffs Harbour regions of New

South Wales, Australia. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, *49*(1), 64–79.
https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909613478399

Knight, A. (2007). Radical media in the deep north: The origins of 4ZZZ-FM. *Queensland Review*, *14*(1), 95–105. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1321816600006188

Kong, E., Harmswoth, S., Rajaeian, M. M., Parkes, G., Bishop, S., Almonsouri, B., & Lawrence, J. (2016). University transition challenges for first year domestic CALD students from refugee backgrounds: A case study from an Australian regional university. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, *56*(2), 170–197.

Lal, J. (2018). Situating locations: The politics of self, identity, and "other" in living and writing the text. In D. L. Wolf (Ed.), *Feminist dilemmas in fieldwork* (pp. 185–214). Routledge.

Larner, W. (2000). Neo-liberalism: Policy, ideology, governmentality. *Studies in Political Economy*, *63*(1), 5–25.

Larsen, K., Dwyer, K., Hartwig, C., Whop, J., & Wyles, V. (1977). *Discrimination against Aborigines and Islanders in North Queensland: The case of Townsville*. Australian Government Publishing Service.
https://www8.austlii.edu.au/au/other/IndigLRes/1977/1.pdf

Lenette, C. (2015). Mistrust and refugee women who are lone parents in resettlement contexts. *Qualitative Social Work*, *14*(1), 119–134.
https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325013517924

Lengwe-Katembula, J., Kreitzer, M., & Kreitzer, L. (2012). Social work in Africa. In K. H. Lyons, T. Hokenstad, M. Pawar, N. Huegler, & N. Hall (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international social work* (pp. 393–406). Sage.

Liamputtong, P. (2010). Cross-cultural research and qualitative inquiry. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, *1*(1), 16–29.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.

Lokot, M. (2019). The space between us: Feminist values and humanitarian power dynamics in research with refugees. *Gender & Development*, *27*(3), 467–484. https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2019.1664046

Lord, A. (1988). I am your sister. *Women & Therapy*, *6*(4), 25–30. https://doi.org/10.1300/J015V06N04_03

Lucas, J. (2018, July 26). Place of peace. *The Townsville Bulletin.*

Lynn, R., Thorpe, R., Miles, D., Cutts, C., Butcher, A., & Ford, L. (1998). *Murri way! Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders reconstruct social welfare practice*. Centre for Social Research, James Cook University.

Machin, H. E., & Shardlow, S. M. (2018). Overcoming ethical barriers to research. *Research Ethics*, *14*(3), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1177/1747016117739938

Mackenzie, C., McDowell, C., & Pittaway, E. (2007). Beyond 'do no harm': The challenge of constructing ethical relationships in refugee research. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *20*(2), 299–319. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fem008

MacKinnon, C. A. (1989). *Toward a feminist theory of the state*. Harvard University Press.

MacKinnon, C. (1996). From practice to theory, or what is a white woman anyway? In D. Bell & R. Klein (Eds.), *Radically speaking: Feminism reclaimed* (pp. 45–54). Spinifex Press.

Macknight, C. C. (1986). Macassans and the Aboriginal past. *Archaeology in Oceania*, *21*(1), 69–75. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40386713

Macey, D. (2000). *The penguin book of critical theory*. Penguin Books

Maher, F. A., & Tetreault, M. K. T. (2001). *The feminist classroom: Dynamics of gender, race, and privilege*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Maietta, R., Mihas, P., Swartout, K., Petruzzelli, J., & Hamilton, A. B. (2021). Sort and sift, think and shift: Let the data be your guide an applied approach to working with, learning from, and privileging qualitative data. *Qualitative Report*, *26*(6), 2045–2060. https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol26/iss6/20

Manderson, L., & Vasey, K. (2009). Cooking alone: Social capital and wellbeing among Iraqi women refugees in rural Victoria. In G. Woolcock & L. Manderson (Eds.), *Social capital and social justice: Critical Australian perspectives* (pp. 229–244). Charles Darwin University Press.

Mangazva, V. (2011). "I was traumatised and yet this is another trauma": Exploring resettlement challenges facing 'female heads of households' settling in Western Australia from Africa 2001-2006 [Master's thesis, Curtin University of Technology]. Espace, Curtin University. https://espace.curtin.edu.au/bitstream/handle/20.500.11937/1307/185615_Mangazva2011.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

Mapedzahama, V., & Kwansah-Aidoo, K. (2017). Blackness as burden? The lived experience of Black Africans in Australia. *SAGE Open*, *7*(3), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017720483

March, S. (Reporter & Producer) & Davis, M. (Producer). (2023, March 23). Surviving in Somalia [TV series episode]. In M. Ramsay (Executive Producer), *Foreign Correspondent.* ABC News. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-03-23/life-in-one-of-the-most-dangerous-places-on-earth/102138046

Marchand, M. H., & Parpart, J. L. (2003). Part I: Exploding the canon: An introduction/conclusion. In M. H. Marchand & J. L. Parpart (Eds.) *Feminism/postmodernism/development* (2nd ed., pp. 15–36). Routledge.

Mbembe, A. (2001). *On the postcolony*. (Vol. 41). University of California Press.

McDonald, C. (2006). Challenging social work: The institutional context of practice. Bloomsbury Publishing.

McDonald-Wilmsen, B., Gifford, S. M., Webster, K., Wiseman, J., & Casey, S. (2009). Resettling refugees in rural and regional Australia: Learning from recent policy and program initiatives. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, *68*(1), 97–111. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8500.2008.00611.x

McElhinney, Z., & Kennedy, C. (2022). Enhancing the collective, protecting the personal: the valuable role of composite narratives in medical education research. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, *11*(4), 220–227.

McFadden, P. (2004, July 11–18). African feminist interpretations of post-coloniality. In Coalition for a Feminist Agenda (Organiser), *A feminist agenda for the 21st century* [Symposium], Winter Institute for Women, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia.

McFadden, P. (2007). African feminist perspectives of post-coloniality. *The Black Scholar*, *37*(1), 36–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/00064246.2007.11413380

McIntosh, P. (2012). Reflections and future directions for privilege studies. *Journal of Social Issues*, *68*(1), 194–206.

McLachlan, R., Gilfillan, G., & Gordon, J. (2013, July). *Deep and persistent disadvantage in Australia*. Australian Government Productivity Commission. https://www.pc.gov.au/research/supporting/deep-persistent-disadvantage/deep-persistent-disadvantage.pdf

McLellan, B. (1995). Beyond psychoppression: A feminist alternative therapy. Spinifex Press.

McLellan, B. (2010). *Unspeakable: a feminist ethic of speech*. Otherwise Publications.

McMahon, A. (2003). Redefining the beginnings of social work in Australia. *Advances in Social Work and Welfare Education*, *5*(1), 86–94. https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/1684/

McMahon, A., & Allen-Meares, P. (1992). Is social work racist? A content analysis of recent literature. *Social Work*, *37*(6), 533–539. https://tinyurl.com/mu747tay

McPhatter, A. R. (2004). Culturally competent practice. In M. J. Austin & K. Hopkins (Eds.), *Supervision as collaboration in the human services: Building a learning culture*, (pp. 47–58). Sage.

McQuire, A. (2018, March 6). *Mainstream feminism still blind to its racism*. IndigenousX. https://indigenousx.com.au/amy-mcquire-mainstream-feminism-still-blind-to-its-racism/

Mekgwe, P. (2006). Theorizing African feminism(s). *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy*, *XX*(1-2), 11–22.

Mercer, P. M. (1981). *The survival of a Pacific Islander population in North Queensland, 1900–1940* [Doctoral thesis]. The Australian National University.

Mies, M. (1983). Towards a methodology for feminist research. In G. Bowles & D. R. Klein (Eds.), *Theories of women's studies* (pp. 117–139). Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Mies, M., (2014). What is feminism. In M. Mies & S. Federici (Eds). *Patriarchy and accumulation on a world scale: Women in the international division of labour* (pp. 6–43). Bloomsbury Academic and Professional. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350221703

Miles, D. (2004). *With women, for women: A study of women's experiences as workers in feminist organisations* [Doctoral thesis, James Cook University]. ResearchOnline@JCU. https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/1152/2/02whole.pdf

Miller, J. (2024). *For social betterment: Social work education in Australia 1900–1960*. Monash University Publishing.

Minichiello, V., Aroni, R., & Hays, T. N. (2008). *In-depth interviewing: Principles, techniques, analysis*. Pearson Education Australia.

Mlauzi, K., & Small, M. (2019). Is the global compact on refugees fit for Africa's purposes? *South African Institute of International Affairs*. https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep25889

Mohanty, C. T. (2003). *Feminism without borders: Decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*. Zubaan.

Mohanty, C. T. (2013). Transnational feminist crossings: On neoliberalism and radical critique. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *38*(4), 967–991.

Mohanty, C., & Martin, B. (2003). What's home got to do with it? In C. Mohanty (Ed.), *Feminism without borders* (pp. 85–106). Duke University Press.

Monani, D. (2018). At cross roads: White social work in Australia and the discourse on Australian multiculturalism. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, *10*(2), 87–98. https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v10i2.6077

Monani, D., Smith, J. A., O'Mara, B., Rung, D., Ireland, S., & Dube, M. (2021). Building equitable health and social policy in Australia to improve immigrant health literacy. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, *32*(2), 152–154. https://doi.org/10.1002/hpja.481

Moreno, T. & Pessoa, B. (2021a, August 6). *Patricia McFadden: Through 500 years of colonialism, African women have fought for freedom* [Interview]. Capire. https://capiremov.org/en/interview/patricia-mcfadden-african-women-have-fought-for-freedom/

Moreno, T. & Pessoa, B. (2021b, August 31). *Contemporarity and the possibilities of building alternative societies* [Interview]. Capire.

https://capiremov.org/en/interview/patricia-mcfadden-contemporarity-and-the-possibilities-of-building-alternative-societies/

Moreton-Robinson, A. (2003). *Researching whiteness: Some reflections from an Indigenous woman's standpoint* [Paper presentation]. The Australian Women's Studies Association Conference, '(Other) Feminisms,' University of Queensland, St Lucia, Australia.

Moreton-Robinson, A. (2020). *Talkin' up to the white woman: Indigenous women and feminism* (2nd ed.). University of Queensland Press.

Morrow, J. (Presenter). (2022, June 19). *Where are the refugee crises in 2022*? [Audio podcast]. ABC Listen. https://tinyurl.com/yc8c27a2

Mosby, V. P. (2015). *Torres Strait Islanders' experiences of contemporary out-movement: A grounded theory of 'living in two worlds'* [Doctoral thesis, James Cook University]. ResearchOnline@JCU. https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/42367/

Mott, C., & Cockayne, D. (2017). Citation matters: Mobilizing the politics of citation toward a practice of 'conscientious engagement'. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *24*(7), 954–973.

Moyo, D. (2009). Dead aid: Why aid is not working and how there is a better way for Africa. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

Mude, W., & Mwanri, L. (2020). Negotiating identity and belonging in a new space: Opportunities and experiences of African youths in South Australia. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(5), 1–13. https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/17/15/5484

Mugerwa-Sekawabe, M. (2022). Increasing access to education for refugees in Uganda. *Law, Democracy & Development*, *25*(1), 546–574.

Mugo, M. G. (2008). Prosaic poem. In R. L. Riley, C. T. Mohanty, & M. B. Pratt (Eds.), *Feminism and war: Confronting US imperialism* (pp. 264–265). Zen.

Mugumbate, J. R., Mupedziswa, R., Twikirize, J. M., Mthethwa, E., Desta, A. A., & Oyinlola, O. (2023). Understanding Ubuntu and its contribution to social work education in Africa and other regions of the world. *Social Work Education*, *17*(15), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2023.2168638

Mungai, N. (2021) Adopting Ubuntu in teaching social work. In Kumar, M. Welikala, wa Mungai, Ndungi (Eds.), *Teaching and learning in higher education: The context of being, interculturality and new knowledge systems*. (221–236*)* Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org: 10.1108/978-1-80043-006-820211017

Mupedziswa, R., Rankopo, M., & Mwansa, L.-K. (2019). Ubuntu as a pan-African philosophical framework for social work in Africa. In J. Twikirize & H. Spiitzer. (Eds.), *Social work practice in Africa: Indigenous and innovative approaches* (pp. 21–38). Fountain Publishers. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2tp73vt.8

Murray, K. E., Lenette, C., Brough, M., Reid, K., Correa-Velez, I., Vromans, L., & Schweitzer, R. D. (2022). The importance of local and global social ties for the mental health and well-being of recently resettled refugee-background women in Australia. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *19*(17), 10917. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191710917

Museveni, Y. (2000). *What is Africa's problem?* University of Minnesota Press.

Nasri, N. M., Nasri, N., & Talib, M. A. (2020). Cross-language qualitative research studies dilemmas: A research review. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *21*(1), 15–28. https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2019-0093

National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (2024). *NAATI Certification System.* https://www.naati.com.au/certification/

National Press Club of Australia. (2021, July). *Nyadol Nyuon on "Australia reimagined":*
National Press Club address [Video]. YouTube.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9QN0XO8NAg

Ndhlovu, F. (2011). Post-refugee African Australians' perceptions about being and becoming
Australian: Language, discourse and participation. *African Identities*, *9*(4), 435–453.
https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2011.614417

Ndhlovu, F. (2014). Becoming an African diaspora in Australia: Language, culture, identity.
Springer.

Ndimurwimo, L., & Mbao, M. (2015). Rethinking violence, reconciliation and reconstruction
in Burundi. *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal / Potchefstroomse Elektroniese*
Regsblad, *18*(4), 848–900. https://doi.org/10.4314/pelj.v18i4.04

Nelson, D., Price, E., & Zubrzycki, J. (2014). Integrating human rights and trauma
frameworks in social work with people from refugee backgrounds. *Australian Social*
Work, *67*(4), 567–581. https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2013.777968

Neuman, W. L. (2019). Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.
Pearson.

Neumann, K., Gifford, S. M., Lems, A., & Scherr, S. (2014). Refugee settlement in Australia:
policy, scholarship and the production of knowledge, 1952−2013. *Journal of*
Intercultural Studies, *35*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2013.864629

Nguyễn-Nalpas, K. K. (2023). Deep listening: What Afghan refugee women's narratives
reveal about social and political dynamics of power. *Qualitative Psychology*, *10*(3),
471–490. https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fqup0000247

Nivyabandi, K. (2022). Home. In M. Busby (Ed.), New daughters of Africa: An international
anthology of writing by women of African descent (2nd ed., pp. 658–661). Hamish
Hamilton.

Njaramba, J. (2022). Understanding small business entrepreneurship among migrant African

women in North Queensland: A feminist study of lived experience and learning.

[Doctoral Thesis, James Cook University]. ResearchOnline@JCU.

https://doi.org/10.25903/svgq%2Dsb93

Njaramba, J., Chigeza, P., & Whitehouse, H. (2015). Financial literacy: The case of migrant

African-Australian women entrepreneurs in the Cairns region. *Entrepreneurship and*

Sustainability Issues, *3*(2), 198–208. https://doi.org/10.9770/jesi.2015.3.2(7)

Nkealah, N. N. (2006). Conceptualizing feminism(s) in Africa: The challenges facing African

women writers and critics. *The English Academy Review*, *23*(1), 133–141.

Noble, C. (2017). Whither feminism in social work: What is the outcome of four decades of a

feminist agenda in social work in Australia? In C. Noble, B. Pease, & J. Ife (Eds.),

Radicals in Australian social work (pp. 144–162). Connor Court Publishing Pty Ltd.

Nsubuga-Kyobe, A., & Hazelman, C. (2007). Diversity management strategies: Community

driven employment initiatives - Congolese experience in Shepparton. *Migration*

Action, *30*(2), 25–34. https://tinyurl.com/8snkp6ns

Oakley, A. (2015). Interviewing women again: Power, time and the gift. *Sociology*, *50*(1),

195–213. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038515580253

Oakley, A., & Cracknell, J. (1981). *Subject women*. Pantheon Books.

Obijiofor, L., Colic-Peisker, V., & Hebbani, A. (2018). Methodological and ethical

challenges in partnering for refugee research: Evidence from two Australian studies.

Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies, *16*(3), 217–234.

https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2016.1250977

Ochala, Y., & wa Mungai, N. (2016). The challenges facing single female parents of African

background in regional Australia. *Australian Social Work*, *69*(3), 311–322.

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0312407X.2014.993671#abstract

O'Donnell, J. (2022, November 24). *Mapping social cohesion 2022*. Scanlon Foundation

Research Institute. https://scanloninstitute.org.au/mapping-social-cohesion-2022

Olliff, L. (2009, December 3). *Amplifying the voices of young refugees*. Refugee Council of

Australia. https://apo.org.au/node/19907

Owen, J. R., & Westoby, P. (2012). The structure of dialogic practice within developmental

work. *Community Development*, *43*(3), 306–319.

https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2011.632093

Ozolins, U. (2011). Telephone interpreting: Understanding practice and identifying research

needs. *The International Journal of Translation and Interpreting Research*, *3*(2), 33–

47. https://www.trans-int.org/index.php/transint/article/view/136

Padgett, D. K. (2017). *Qualitative methods in social work research* (3rd ed.). Sage

publications.

Parke, E. (2024, 31 March). *Gold teeth and a broken heart*: *Dirrikaya's adventure unravels

Australia's hidden history*. Compass, ABC News. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-

03-31/odyssey-erin-parke-makassar-connection/103476888

Pavlich, M. & A. Quinn, R. (Hosts). (2024, 6 May). Talking point: The history of the White

Australia policy [Audio podcast episode]. In *Overnights*. ABC Listen.

https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/overnights/overnights-wap-

290324/103648880

Pease, B. (2009). From evidence-based practice to critical knowledge in post-positivist social

work. In J. Allan, L. Briskman, & B. Pease (Eds.), *Critical social work*. (2nd ed.,

pp. 45–57). Allen & Unwin.

Pease, B. (2010). Undoing privilege: Unearned advantage in a divided world. Zed.

Pease, B. (2017). Introduction: The changing socio-political context and theoretical frames of

radical social work in Australia. In C. Noble, B. Pease, & J. Ife (Eds.), *Radicals in

Australian social work: Stories of lifelong activism (pp. 1–16). Connor Court Publishing.

Pease, B., & Rees, S. (2008). Theorising men's violence towards women in refugee families: Towards an intersectional feminist framework. *Just Policy: A Journal of Australian Social Policy,* (47), 39–45.

Penman, J., & Goel, K. (2017). Coping and resilience of rural and regional Australian immigrants: Imperatives for successful settlement. *Rural Society*, *26*(2), 178–193. https://doi.org/10.1080/10371656.2017.1339406

Perkins, R. (Director). (2022). The story of Australia's first wars, calling for the nation to acknowledge the First Peoples who died in these conflicts and for the Australian War Memorial to recognise them (Season 1, Episode 1) [TV series episode]. *The Australian Wars*. SBS On Demand. https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/tv-series/the-australian-wars

Persian, J. (2018). Displaced persons in Queensland: Stuart migrant camp. *Queensland Review (St. Lucia)*, *25*(2), 239–251. https://journal.equinoxpub.com/QRE/article/view/21688

Peshkin, A. (2001). Angles of vision: Enhancing perception in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *7*(2), 238–253. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040100700206

Petruchenia, J., & Thorpe, R. (1990). *Social change & social welfare practice*. Hale & Iremonger.

Piantanida, M., & Garman, N. B. (2009). *The qualitative dissertation: A guide for students and faculty* (2nd ed.). Ringgold, Inc.

Phillips, J. (2017). *Australia's humanitarian program: A quick guide to the statistics since 1947*. Parliament of Australia, Department of Parliamentary Services. https://tinyurl.com/49y4u6cj

Phillips, J. & Karlsen, Elibritt. (2014) *Migration and humanitarian programs: Budget Review 2014–15 Index.* Parliament of Australia, Parliamentary Budget Office. https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/BudgetReview201415/Migration

Piper, M. (2017, October). *Refugee settlement in regional areas: Evidence-based good practice*. New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet. https://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/wp%20content/uploads/2022/11/Refugee_Settlement_In_Regional_Areas.pdf

Pittaway, E. (2004, July 11–18). Lives in limbo: An exploration of the experience of refugees and asylum seekers*.* In Coalition for a Feminist Agenda (Organiser), *A feminist agenda for the 21st century* [Symposium], Winter Institute for Women, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia.

Pittaway, E., & Bartolomei, L. (2013). Doing ethical research: 'Whose problem is it anyway?'. In K. Block, E. Riggs, & N. Haslam (Eds.), *Values and vulnerabilities: The ethics of research with refugees and asylum seekers* (pp. 151–170). Australian Academic Press.

Pittaway, E., & Bartolomei, L. (2018). Enhancing the protection of women and girls through the Global Compact on Refugees. *Forced Migration Review*, *57*, 77–79. https://www.fmreview.org/syria2018/pittaway-bartolomei

Pittaway, E., & Bartolomei, L. A. (2022). Only rape! Human rights and gender equality for refugee women: From refugee camps to the United Nations. Springer Nature.

Pittaway, E., Bartolomei, L. A., Pittaway, E. E., & Doney, G. (2018). Freedom from persecution or continued abuse? An analysis of the meaning of rights in refugee communities. *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, *10*(2), 248–267.

Pittaway, E., Bartolomei, L., & Rees, S. (2016). Gendered dimensions of the 2004 tsunami and a potential social work response in post-disaster situations. *International Social Work*, *50*(3), 307–319. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872807076042

Pittaway, E., Muli, C., & Shteir, S. (2009). "I have a voice—hear me!": Findings of an Australian study examining the resettlement and integration experience of refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa in Australia. *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, *26*(2), 133–146. https://doi.org/10.25071/1920-7336.32084

Pugh, R., & Cheers, B. (2010). Rural social work: An international perspective. Polity Press.

Pybus, C. (2006). Race relations and early Australian settlement. *The Sydney Papers, 18*(3/4), 38–48. https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/ielapa.412179364415807

Queensland Government Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. (2021, May). *Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS) program: Program guidelines 2022–2024*.

Queensland Government Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services. (2024, April 15). *Multicultural affairs Queensland: Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS) program. https://tinyurl.com/2vc2zp95*

Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma. (2021, December 16). *Celebrating 25 years: QPASTT in Townsville.* https://qpastt.org.au/qpastt-in-townsville/

Quinn, M. (2009). Towards anti-racist and culturally affirming practices. In J. Allan, L. Briskman, & B. Pease (Eds.), *Critical Social Work* (pp. 91–104). Allen & Unwin.

Radford, D., Krivokapic-Skoko, B., Hetz, H., Bandara, Y., & Tan, G. (2022). *Learning from Leeton: A case study of refugee settlement in rural Australia – full report*. University of South Australia, Adelaide. https://tinyurl.com/23bhudmj

Rajaram, P. K. (2002). Humanitarianism and representations of the Refugee. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *15*(3), 247–264.

Ramazanoglu, C., & Holland, J. (2002). *Feminist methodology*. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Ramon, S., & Maglajlic R. A. (2012). Social work, political conflict and displacement. In K. Lyons, T. Hokenstad, M. Pawar, N. Huegler, & N. Hall (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of international social work* (pp. 311–324).

Ramsay, G. (2016). Black mothers, bad mothers: African refugee women and the governing of 'good' citizens through the Australian child welfare system. *Australian Feminist Studies*, *31*(89), 319–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/08164649.2016.1254021

Ramsay, G. (2017a). Central African refugee women resettled in Australia: Colonial legacies and the civilising process. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *38*(2), 170–188. https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2017.1289904

Ramsay, G. (2017b). Impossible refuge: The control and constraint of refugee futures. Routledge.

Ramsay, G. (2020). Humanitarian exploits: Ordinary displacement and the political economy of the global refugee regime. *Critique of Anthropology*, *40*(1), 3. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X19840417

Raymond, J. G. (2001). A passion for friends: Toward a philosophy of female affection. Spinifex.

Redman-MacLaren, M., Turner Anmatyerre/Jaru, N. N., Taylor, J., Laycock, A., Vine, K., Thompson Gurindji, Q., Larkins, S., Carlisle, K., Thompson, S., Bailie, R., & Matthews Quandamooka, V. (2021). Respect is central: A critical review of implementation frameworks for continuous quality improvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care services. *Frontiers Public Health*, *9*(Article 630611), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.630611

Rees, S. J., Mohsin, M., Kuowei Tay, A., Moussa, B., Klein, L., Nadar, N., Hussain, F.,

    Krishna, Y., Khalil, B., & Yousif, M. (2023). COVID-19 stressors and mental health

    problems amongst women who arrived as refugees and those born in Australia. *PLOS*

    Global Public Health, *3*(7). 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0002073

Referendum Council. (2017, May 26). *Uluru statement from the heart*.

    https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement/view-the-statement/

Refugee Council of Australia. (2017, August 18). *Speaking up in international discussions on*

    refugee protection: Report on Australian advocacy in Geneva 2017.

    https://apo.org.au/node/137581

Refugee Council of Australia. (2020, May 10). *Refugees and international law: The Global*

    Compact on Refugees. https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/international-law/

Refugee Council of Australia. (2022, August). *Rebuilding a principled and strategic refugee*

    program: Response to the Australian Government discussion paper on the 2022–2023

    humanitarian program. https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-

    content/uploads/2022/08/RCOA-2022-2023-Humanitarian-Program-Submission.pdf

Refugee Council of Australia. (2023a). *Post-WW2 refugee arrivals to pass 950,000 in 2023*.

    https://tinyurl.com/57866dxm

Refugee Council of Australia. (2023b, November 24). *Refugee Council welcomes life-*

    changing expansion of Australia's refugee program.

    https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/expansion-of-refugee-program/

Refugee Council of Australia. (2023c). Report on annual tripartite consultations on

    resettlement 26–28 June 2023: Australia takes on leadership of resettlement dialogue

    as UNHCR appeals for more support. https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-

    content/uploads/2023/07/ATCR-Report-2023.pdf

Refugee Council of Australia. (2024, February 6). *Australian government makes 23 pledges at 2023 Global Refugee Forum.* https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/australian-government-pledges-at-the-2023-global-refugee-forum/

Reinharz, S. (1992). *Feminist methods in social research*. Oxford University Press.

Reviere, R. (2001). Toward an Afrocentric research methodology. *Journal of Black Studies*, *31*(6), 709–728. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2668042

Reynolds, H. (2003). North of Capricorn: The untold story of Australia's north. Allen & Unwin.

Reynolds, H. (2013). *Forgotten war.* UNSW Press.

Reynolds, H. (2022). On the Queensland frontier: Tragedy in the tropics. *Griffith Review*, (76), 142–153.

Rich, A. (1972). When we dead awaken: Writing as re-vision. *College English*, *34*(1), 18. https://doi.org/10.2307/375215

Riga, R., Jones, C., O'Flaherty A. (2022). *Commission of inquiry into Queensland police culture and responses to domestic violence report handed down*. ABC News. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-11-21/qld-police-domestic-violence-commission-inquiry-report-release/101677316

Riordan, T., & Claudio, F. (2022). Personal and community agency: Factors associated with increased wellbeing amongst African refugee youth in Brisbane, Australia. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *25*(8), 1034–1051. https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2021.1939282

Robinson, K. (2014). Voices from the front line: Social work with refugees and asylum seekers in Australia and the UK. *British Journal of Social Work*, *44*(6), 1602–1620. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bct040

Robinson, K., & Haintz, G. L. (2021). Is anyone listening to us? 'They're given feedback and there's no outcomes': Settlement for newly arrived Syrians in regional Australia.

Ethics and Social Welfare, *15*(3), 311–327.

https://doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2020.1802502

Rodgers, B. L., & Cowles, K. V. (1993). The qualitative research audit trail: A complex

collection of documentation. *Research in Nursing & Health*, *16*(3), 219–226.

https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.4770160309

Romero, B. (2021, December 6) *Refugee women: Unpacking gender-based Violence* [Virtual

Panel Discussion]. World Refugee & Migration Council.

https://wrmcouncil.org/publications/event-report/refugee-women-unpacking-gender-

based-violence-event-report/

Rowland, R., & Klein., R. (1996). Radical feminism: History, politics, action. In D. Bell & D.

R. Klein (Eds.), *Radically speaking: Feminism reclaimed* (pp. 9–36). Spinifex Press.

Royal Automobile Club of Queensland. (n.d.). *Trip Planner*.

https://www.racq.com.au/leisure/travel/trip-planner

Sackeyfio, R. A. (2023, August 9). Micere Mugo: A literary treasure of Kenya. *The Elephant*.

https://www.theelephant.info/reflections/2023/08/09/micere-mugo-a-literary-treasure-

of-kenya/

Salami, M. (2022a). *A historical overview of African feminist strands*. House of African

Feminisms. https://houseofafricanfeminisms.org/A-Historical-Overview-of-African-

Feminist-Strands

Salami, M. (2022b). Searching for my feminist roots. In M. Busby (Ed.), *New daughters of

Africa: An international anthology of writing by women of African descent* (2nd ed.,

pp. 683–691). Penguin.

Sanderson, T., Kumar, K., & Serrant-Green, L. (2013). "Would you decide to keep the

power?": Reflexivity on the interviewer–interpreter–interviewee triad in interviews

with female Punjabi rheumatoid arthritis patients. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *12*(1), 511–528. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691301200126

Sandner, P. (2018, February 27). *Protests and hunger in refugee camps*. Deutsche Welle. https://p.dw.com/p/2tHBN

Segrave, M., Wickes, R., & Keel, C. (2021). *Migrant and refugee women in Australia: The safety and security study.* Monash University. https://bridges.monash.edu/articles/report/_/14863872

Settlement Council of Australia. (2015, June). *National Settlement Outcomes Standards*. https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/NSOS-2020.pdf

Settlement Council of Australia. (2021). *Who we are.* https://scoa.org.au/who-we-are/

Settlement Council of Australia. (2022a, 5 January). *Settlement in practice: Regional settlement* [Webinar]. https://scoa.org.au/webinars/settlement-in-practice-regional-settlement/

Settlement Council of Australia. (2022b, June). *Submission: Next steps to improve Australia's settlement and integration of refugees*. https://scoa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/SCOASU1.pdf

Shepley, C. (2007). Regional settlement in Australia: Research into the settlement experiences of humanitarian entrants in regional Australia 2006-07. Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Settlement and Multicultural Affairs Division. https://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/986/1/evaluation-regional-settlement-australia.pdf

Shergold, P., Benson, K., & Piper, M. (2019, February). *Investing in refugees, investing in Australia: The findings of a review into integration, employment and settlement outcomes for refugees and humanitarian entrants in Australia*. Commonwealth of

Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2019-11/apo-nid268836_1.pdf

Sherval, M., & Askew, L. E. (2012). Experiencing 'drought and more': Local responses from

rural Victoria, Australia. *Population and Environment*, *33*, 347–364.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s11111-011-0149-x

Shiva, V. (2009). Women and the gendered politics of food. *Philosophical Topics*, *37*(2), 17–

32. https://doi.org/10.5840/philtopics20093722

Shiva, V. (2012). *Making peace with the earth*. Spinifex Press.

Shiva, V., & Bedi, G. (2002). Sustainable agriculture and food security: The impact of

globalisation. Sage Publications.

Shope, J. H. (2006). "You can't cross a river without getting wet": A feminist standpoint on

the dilemmas of cross-cultural research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *12*(1), 163–184.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405282792

Silverman, D. (2020). Collecting qualitative data during a pandemic. *Communication &

Medicine, 17*(1), 76–84. https://doi.org/10.1558/cam.19256

Simich, L., Este, D., & Hamilton, H. (2010). Meanings of home and mental well-being

among Sudanese refugees in Canada. *Ethnicity & Health*, *15*(2), 199–212.

https://doi.org/10.1080/13557851003615560

Smith, D. E. (1990). The conceptual practices of power: A feminist sociology of knowledge.

University of Toronto Press.

Smith, D. E. (1999). *Writing the social: Critique, theory and investigations*. University of

Toronto Press.

Smith, D. E. (2003). Making sense of what people do: A sociological perspective. *Journal of

Occupational Science, 10*(1), 61–64. https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2003.9686512

Smith, L.T. (2021). Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Spender, D. (1985). For the record: The making and meaning of feminist knowledge. Women's Press.

Spitzer, H. (2019). Social work in East Africa: A mzungu perspective. *International Social Work*, *62*(2), 567–580. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872817742696

Sprague, J., & Kobrynowicz. (2004). A feminist epistemology. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & M. L. Yaiser (Eds.), *Feminist perspectives on social research* (pp. 78–101). Oxford University Press.

Squires, A. (2009). Methodological challenges in cross-language qualitative research: A research review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, *46*(2), 277–287. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2008.08.006

Stanley, L., & Wise, S. (1979). Feminist research, feminist consciousness and experiences of sexism. *Women's Studies International Quarterly*, *2*(3), 359–374.

Stanley, L., & Wise, S. (1983). Back into the personal or: Our attempt to construct feminist research. In G. Bowles & R. Duelli-Klein (Eds.), *Theories of women's studies* (pp. 192–209). Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Stauffer, J. (2015). Ethical loneliness: The injustice of not being heard. Columbia University Press.

Steady, F. C. (2014). Women, climate change and liberation in Africa. *Race, Gender & Class*, *21*(1/2), 312–333. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43496976

Stearns, J. K. (2012). Dancing in the glory of monsters: The collapse of the Congo and the great war of Africa (1st ed.). Public Affairs.

Stewart, S., Haynes, C., & Deal, K. (2020). Enacting inclusivity in the preparation of

emerging scholars: A response to programme reform in higher education. *Learning*

and Teaching, *13*(1), 24. https://doi.org/10.3167/latiss.2020.130103

Strazdins, L., Shipley, M., Clements, M., Obrien, L. V., & Broom, D. H. (2010). Job quality

and inequality: Parents' jobs and children's emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Social Science & Medicine, *70*(12), 2052–2060.

Summers, A. (2022). *The choice - violence or poverty: Domestic violence and its*

consequences in Australia today. University of Technology Sydney.

https://apo.org.au/node/318487

Sutherland, C. (1986). Feminist research: A voice of our own. In M. H. & B. Wearing (Eds.),

Gender reclaimed – women in social work. (pp. 147–156). Hale & Iremonger.

Taranto, C. (Producer). (2021, October 4). You are not alone - Stella Nyanzi Uganda's rudest

writer [Audio podcast]. In *Earshot*. ABC Listen. http://tinyurl.com/4ramywmj

Tascon, S., & Gatwiri, K. (2020). Towards cultural humility: Theorising cultural competence

as institutionalised whiteness. *Social Work & Policy Studies: Social Justice, Practice*

and Theory, *3*(1), 1–16.

Tascon, S. M. (2011). Refugees and the coloniality of power: Border-crossers of postcolonial

whiteness. In A. Moreton-Robinson (Ed.), *Whitening race* (3rd Rev. ed., pp. 239–

253). Aboriginal Studies Press.

Tascón, S. M., & Ife, J. (2019). *Disrupting whiteness in social work*. Routledge.

Taylor, J. (2015). *Working with communities* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Thompson, D. (2001). *Radical feminism today*. SAGE Publications.

Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. (2016). *Annual report 2015-2016.*

https://tinyurl.com/4tkynrma

Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. (2017). *Annual report 2016-2017.*

https://tinyurl.com/bdhtnzdw

Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. (2018). *Annual report 2017-2018.*

https://tinyurl.com/mzmwbusf

Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. (2019). *Annual report 2018-2019.*

https://tinyurl.com/5p6rax5t

Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. (2020). *Annual report 2019-2020.*

https://tinyurl.com/4atd97h6

Torezani, S., Colic-Peisker, V., & Fozdar, F. (2008). Looking for a "missing link": Formal

employment services and social networks in refugees' job search. *Journal of*

Intercultural Studies, *29*(2), 135–152.

Triggs, G. D., & Wall, P. C. (2020). 'The makings of a success': The Global Compact on

Refugees and the Inaugural Global Refugee Forum. *International Journal of Refugee*

Law, *32*(2), 283–339. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijrl/eeaa024

True, J. (2010). The political economy of violence against women: A feminist international

relations perspective. *Australian Feminist Law Journal, 32*(1), 39–59.

https://doi.org/10.1080/13200968.2010.10854436

Truell, R., & Jones, D. (2023). *The global agenda for social work and social development:*

Extending the influence of social work. International Federation of Social Workers.

https://www.ifsw.org/wp-content/uploads/ifsw-cdn/assets/ifsw_24848-10.pdf

Tusasiirwe, S. (2022). Is it indigenisation or decolonisation of social work in Africa? A focus

on Uganda. *African Journal of Social Work*, *12*(1), 1–11.

https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajsw/issue/view/20627

Tuteja, A., Riggs, E., Sanci, L., Mascarenhas, L., VanVliet, D., Sangster, K., McGuinness,

K., & Temple-Smith, M. (2021). Interpreting in sexual and reproductive health

consults with Burma born refugees post settlement: Insights from an Australian

qualitative study. *Frontiers in Communication*, *6*(2), 509–538.

https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5158

Udah, H. (2020). Negotiating the challenges of everyday life: The African immigrant

experience in Queensland, Australia. *African Identities*, *19*(2), 1–18.

https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2020.1792272

Udah, H., & Singh, P. (2019). Identity, othering and belonging: Toward an understanding of

difference and the experiences of African immigrants to Australia. *Social Identities*,

25(6), 843–859. https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2018.1564268

Udah, H., Singh, P., Hölscher, D., & Cartmel, J. (2019). Experiences of vulnerability and

sources of resilience among immigrants and refugees. *Australasian Review of African

Studies, 40*(1), 81–100. https://doi.org/10.22160/22035184/ARAS-2019-40-1/81-100

United Nations. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/

United Nations. (2018). *Global Compact On Refugees*. UNHCR.

https://www.unhcr.org/media/global-compact-refugees-booklet

United Nations Development Programme. (2024). *United Nations Development Programme.*

https://www.undp.org/

United Nations General Assembly. (1979, December 18). *Convention on the elimination of

all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW)*.

https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-

elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2010). *Convention and protocol relating

to the status of refugees*. https://www.unhcr.org/au/media/convention-and-protocol-

relating-status-refugees

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2013). *UNHCR's dialogues with refugee women: Progress report on implementation of recommendations.* https://www.refworld.org/docid/5231b1214.html

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2017, May) *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework UGANDA: Translating New York Declaration Commitments into Action.* https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/63267

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2018) *Global trends: Forced displacement in 2018.* https://www.unhcr.org/5d08d7ee7.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2019). *Protecting refugees in Australia and globally.* https://www.unhcr.org/au/media/protecting-refugees-australia-and-globally

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2021) *Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan January – December 2021.* https://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2021%20Burundi%20regional%20RRP%2014%20february%202021.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2022). *Mid-Year Trends 2022.* https://www.unhcr.org/africa/media/mid-year-trends-2022

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2023a). *Global Appeal 2023.* https://reporting.unhcr.org/globalappeal-2023

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2023b). *Mid-Year Trends 2023.* https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/Mid-year-trends-2023.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2023c, April). *Uganda Population Dashboard as of April 2023.* https://reporting.unhcr.org/uganda-population-statistics-dashboard

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024a). *Burundi situation map – 31 March 2024*. https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/107875

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024b, January 7). *Refugees and asylum-seekers in Kenya*. https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/ken

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024c, March 27). *Regional Bureau for East, Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes: Burundi Situation: Population of concern to UNHCR (as of 29 Feb 2024)*. https://reliefweb.int/report/burundi/regional-bureau-east-horn-africa-and-great-lakes-burundi-situation-population-concern-unhcr-29-feb-2024

Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission (n.d.). *Australia's human rights framework. https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/legal-and-policy/australias-human-rights-framework/*

Vromans, L., Schweitzer, R. D., Farrell, L., Correa-Velez, I, Brough, M., Murray, K., & Lenette, C. (2018). 'Her cry is my cry': Resettlement experiences of refugee women at risk recently resettled in Australia. *Public Health*, *158.*149–155. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0033350618300982?via%3Dihub

wa Mungai, N., Langat, K., Kelly, B. (2014). *Refugees and new migrants: The Riverina experience.* [PowerPoint slides] Charles Sturt University.

wa Thiong'o, N. (1986). The writer in a neocolonial state. *The Black Scholar*, *17*(4), 2–10. https://doi.org/10.1080/00064246.1986.11414415

Wachter, K., Gulbas, L. E., & Snyder, S. (2021). Connecting in resettlement: An examination of social support among Congolese women in the United States. *Qualitative Social Work, 21*(2), 349–366. https://doi.org/10.1177/14733250211008495

Wachter, K., & Gulbas, L. E. (2018). Social support under siege: An analysis of forced migration among women from the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Social Science & Medicine*, *208*, 107–116.

Wachter, K., Heffron, L. C., Snyder, S., Nsonwu, M. B., & Busch-Armendariz, N. B. (2016). Unsettled integration: Pre- and post-migration factors in Congolese refugee women's resettlement experiences in the United States. *International Social Work*, *59*(6), 875–889. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872815580049

Wadham. (2004). Differentiating whiteness: White Australia, white masculinities and Aboriginal reconciliation. In A. Moreton-Robinson (Ed.), *Whitening Race* (3rd Rev. ed.). Aboriginal Studies Press.

Walter, M. (2019). *Social research methods* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Walter, M., Taylor, S., & Habibis, D. (2011). How white is social work in Australia? *Australian Social Work*, *64*(1), 6–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2010.510892

Wanless, J., Michou, H., Peyre-Costa, T., Schembri, K., Karstad, I., Olivesi, M., Foster, M., Toure, M., Taylor, J. Skarstein, T. (2022) *The world's most neglected displacement crises 2021.* Norwegian Refugee Council. Retrieved 27 July, 2022 from https://www.nrc.no/news/2022/june/the-worlds-ten-most-neglected-crises-are-all-in-africa/

Watego, C., Whop, L. J., Singh, D., Mukandi, B., Macoun, A., Newhouse, G., Drummond, A., McQuire, A., Stajic, J., Kajlich, H., & Brough, M. (2021). Black to the future: Making the case for indigenist health humanities. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*(16), 1–10. https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/18/16/8704

Watts, L. (2019). Reflective practice, reflexivity, and critical reflection in social work education in Australia. *Australian Social Work*, *72*(1), 8–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2018.1521856

Weber, B. (2020). Intersectionality and refugee justice: Feminist approaches to insecurity and precarity. In S. A. Hamed Hosseini, J. Goodman, S. C. Motta & B. K. Gills (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of transformative global studies* (pp. 444–456). Routledge.

Weeks, W. (1988). De-professionalisation or a new approach to professionalism? *Australian Social Work*, *41*(1), 29–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/03124078808550030

Weeks, W. (2003). Women: Developing feminist practice in women's services. In J. Allan, B. Pease, & L. Briskman (Eds.), *Critical social work: An introduction to theories and practices* (pp. 107–123). Allen & Unwin.

Westoby, P. (2008). Developing a community-development approach through engaging resettling Southern Sudanese refugees within Australia. *Community Development Journal*, *43*(4), 483–495. https://doi:10.1093/cdj/bsm017

Westoby, P., & Ingamells, A. (2010). A critically informed perspective of working with resettling refugee groups in Australia. *The British Journal of Social Work*, *40*(6), 1759–1776. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcp084

Willey, S., Blackmore, R. P., Gibson-Helm, M. E., Ali, R., Boyd, L. M., McBride, J., & Boyle, J. A. (2020). "If you don't ask … you don't tell": Refugee women's perspectives on perinatal mental health screening. *Women and Birth*, *33*(5), e429–e437. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wombi.2019.10.003

Wilmsen, B. (2016). Family separation and the impacts on refugee settlement in Australia. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, *48*(2), 241–262. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1839-4655.2013.tb00280.x

Windle, J. (2008). The racialisation of African youth in Australia. *Social Identities*, *14*(5), 553–566. https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630802343382

Wong, J. P.-H., & Poon, M. K.-L. (2010). Bringing translation out of the shadows: Translation as an issue of methodological significance in cross-cultural qualitative research. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, *21*(2), 151–158. https://doi.org/10.1177/1043659609357637

World Bank Group. (2024a). *Population, total.* Retrieved February 20, 2024, from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL

World Bank Group. (2024b). *Africa Gender Innovation Lab (GIL),* Retrieved May 26, 2024, from https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/africa-gender-innovation-lab

Yelland, J., Riggs, E., Szwarc, J., Casey, S., Duell-Piening, P., Chesters, D., Wahidi, S., Fouladi, F., & Brown, S. (2016). Compromised communication: A qualitative study exploring Afghan families and health professionals' experience of interpreting support in Australian maternity care. *BMJ Quality & Safety*, *25*(4), 1–9. https://doi:10.1136/bmjqs-2014-003837

Yohani, S., & Okeke-Ihejirika, P. (2018). Pathways to help-seeking and mental health service provision for African female survivors of conflict-related sexualized gender-based violence. *Women & Therapy*, *41*(3–4), 380–405. https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2018.1434302

Zuchowski, J., Zuchowski, I., Karatasas, K. & Achiek, D. A. (2018). Exploring the perspectives of practitioners on the needs and experiences of young refugees settling in regional Australia: Practitioner's response. *Developing Practice: The Child, Youth and Family Work Journal,* (49), 63–85.

Appendix A

Phase 1 Ethics Approval

This administrative form
has been removed

Appendix B

Information Sheet

Study: "Women refugees resettling in North Queensland"

An exploration of the experiences of women from diverse countries of Africa who have arrived in North Queensland as adult refugees since 2010.

You are invited to take part in a research project about what it is like as an adult woman from a diverse country of Africa, to have settled in North Queensland since 2010, for more than 2 years, having arrived through Australia's off shore Humanitarian Service program.
Women refugees are subject to many experiences and influences in a new life in Australia.
This research will explore these experiences and it is hoped that the information gathered will be useful in supporting future women refugees who come to North Queensland.

The study is being conducted by myself Margaret (also known as 'Meg') Davis and will contribute to the research project for my PhD thesis for a Doctor of Philosophy (Arts, Society and Education) at James Cook University.

If you agree to be involved in the study, you will be invited to take part in an interview that may take up to 2 hours and possibly a follow up interview that may take up to 1.5 hours. You can participate in one or both interviews. It is up to you.

If you require an interpreter, an accredited Interpreter through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) will be arranged.

Each interview, with your consent, will be audio-taped.

The interviews will take place in a public location such as a library room, a public meeting room or a room at the James Cook University campus.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you can stop taking part in the study at any time without explanation or prejudice.

Your personal details and all content of the discussions will be strictly confidential.
As researcher, I am committed to doing no harm. I commit to respecting your experiences, your ownership of stories and cultural knowledge through all processes of the research study.
The data will be used in my thesis and in research publications. Your personal details and details of the discussions will not be identifiable in any way in any publications.

This study may explore some sensitive issues and experiences. Should you feel distressed or anxious at any time, you can contact the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) on: (07) 33916677(24 hours service) or Lifeline on 13 11 14 (24 hours service) and request support.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Meg Davis or Dr. Nonie Harris

Principal Investigator:	**Supervisor:**
Meg Davis	**Name: Assoc. Professor Nonie Harris**
College: Arts Society & Education	**College: Arts, Society & Education**
James Cook University	**James Cook University**
Phone: TBC	**Phone:**
Email: margaret.davis@my.jcu.edu.au	**Email: nonieharris@jcu.edu.au**

If you have any concerns regarding the ethical conduct of the study, please contact:
Human Ethics, Research Office
James Cook University, Townsville, Qld, 4811
Phone: (07) 4781 5011 (ethics@jcu.edu.au

Appendix C

Phase 1 Consent Form

This administrative form
has been removed

Phase 1 Interview Prompters

SOCIAL

Whether or not an interpreter is required will have been established in the telephone

discussion prior to setting the appointment. If interpreter is required; ring once social

ceremony activity of inviting to tea or water and to take a seat is completed.

Access Interpreter; introduce interpreter; detail use of interpreter, explain that I need the

interpreter too (encourage that participant look at me … not the phone and do not hesitate to

ask a question or ask information to be repeated … it is okay to interrupt myself or the

interpreter).

Further ceremony / chat initially … sharing something of myself and how long I have been

in NQ my previous work history and what I am doing now as a segue into announcing that

we could now move into the research as discussed previously

INTRODUCTION

1. summarise what I said in the initial contact – background to the study
- awareness of little North Qld information in research
- awareness of many people coming now AND STAYING in NQ so interest in woman's perspective of resettlement has been
- possibility of second interview or follow up
- it will be quite a long time (three years) for all the research to be finished.

Confidentiality:

- that I do not discuss or share what she says to me with anyone else
- that notes and recordings are kept in a locked filing cabinet at the university
- your personal details and details of the discussions will not be identifiable in any way in any publications
- that if I quote her I do not provide identifying information alongside of the quotation

- that her real name is changed in my notes and in any written material such as thesis that I have to submit to the university
- that if I refer to anything she says individually or any circumstance she describes, I will not use any potentially identifying information (such as family size or country of origin, or her specific language.

Acknowledge her wisdom, that she is the expert of her own experience; not me … I am here to understand her experiences so that the research will hopefully be useful for future women who arrive to North Qld.

Firstly, if it seems comfortable for the woman, I will access some factual information:

- date of arrival
- visa number (if known)
- who arrived and what relation he/she is

I have prepared some general possible areas for discussion but do not wait for me to ask a question if there is something you wish to discuss … I will be guided by you and what has been important to you.

DISCUSSION PROMPTERS

2. PRE-ARRIVAL AND ARRIVAL

JOURNEY TO SAFETY

I understand from reading and listening to the news from around the world and during my working life, that to get to safety and to a country for resettlement takes a long time and that as a woman it takes a lot of courage. I wonder if that is something you would like to comment on?

Options:

- I have a map of the world … are you able to show me on the map, where your home country is and where you have lived since leaving your country? (can use coloured narrow page markers)
- If you would like to can you share with me what your life was like prior to leaving your country? What was a typical day for you?

362

- I have observed that many of Australians refer to people from Africa as being from one country. Is there anything about my observation that you would like to discuss?
- I am also aware that sometimes Australians don't know much about ways of life in different countries of Africa. Has that been your experience? How do you feel about that?

RESETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES

- I recall that a lot of people remember their day of arrival in Australia … what was it like for you?
- Are there any standout memories that you have?
- Was it like anything you expected? Were there some surprises? Any disappointments?

SUPPORT FROM SERVICES AND PROFESSIONALS

- Can you tell me what help you received in making a new life here in North Queensland?
- What were your greatest support needs in your first and second year?
- Was there any type of help you wanted and maybe have not been able to get in the time you have been here?
- Who could you turn to for help in that first year or second year?
- and who do you turn to for help now?
- Which service or people could you rely on then … what about now?
- Have there been or are there still any services or ARE any services difficult to get help from? DISCUSS
- Are there ongoing difficulties that still take your time or make you worry?

POINTS of SIGNIFICANCE and INTEREST

- As a woman, are there or have there been any needs you have had or still have that have affected how you experience resettlement?
- Influence of **culture**? Are there ways of life or traditions that you have done or part of your life before coming to Australia, that you miss or are very different? If you miss them how do you manage that feeling?
- What about language? Influence of **language and literacy** in your first language
- Influence of having **children**?

- Influence of being **single**?
- Influence of being **married or having a partner**?
- Influence of **Age**?

FRIENDSHIPS

- Tell me about the relationships and support that were important to you … prior to having to flee; during displacement.
- What did those relationships mean to you at the time?
- Tell me about the most important relationships in your life now.
- What made these relationships possible? How did they form?
- What do they mean to you?
- Do you have new friends here in Australia? Have you been able to make friends with lots of people and how has that happened?
- Is making friends in Australia very different to the way you used to make friends in your country or during the time you were in xxxx waiting to be resettled? DISCUSS

LIFE NOW

- I know that people arrive in Australia with dreams of a new life. I imagine that you may have had some ideas and hopes or dreams of what to expect of life in Australia.
- Is Townsville/Cairns similar in any way to your country of origin … environment/way of life/are there things you can do here that you used to be able to do?
- Looking back now from those first days in Australia, can you share what you think now about your life in Townsville/Cairns?
- Do you think you have changed? How do those changes make you feel?
- How has your family changed?
- If someone of your friends or family still in your country of origin or waiting to come to Townsville/Cairns ask you about life here … what do you say??
- Do you have a sense of belonging in Townsville/Cairns?
- Can you describe your typical day now in Australia?

- There are stories sometimes in the newspapers or TV or social media of women of all ages in all countries who have experienced discriminations in their life in Australia. Do you have any comments to make about that?
- In an ideal world, what help or supports, would you recommend for future women refugees from countries of Africa who settle in North Queensland and Australia in general?
- How do you feel about your future in Australia now compared with before your arrival?

Inviting women who arrived in Australia through the humanitarian refugee program to participate in an important study

Are you:

- a woman originally from a country within Africa?
- who arrived as an adult on a refugee visa (humanitarian types 200-204)?
- who resettled in either Townsville or Cairns during 2010 or since 2010? and
- has lived in Townsville or Cairns for 2 years or more?

My name is Meg and I am a social work researcher who is passionate about resettlement supports for newly arrived women refugees. I would love to talk with you about your experiences resettling into North Queensland. **Your contributions can make a difference!** Individual discussions* are confidential and can be at a place and time convenient to you. There is also the option of a second interview.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact Meg Davis
Email: margaret.davis@my.jcu.edu.au
Mobile:

* Interpreter arranged on request.

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

Appendix F

Phase 2 Ethics Approval

This administrative form
has been removed

Appendix G

Recruitment Process

Phase 2 of study: "Women refugees resettling in North Queensland" An exploration of the experiences of women from diverse countries of Africa who have arrived in North Queensland as adult refugees 2010–2020.

Initial Telephone Script to CEOs of respective services after ringing reception and requesting a suitable time for a telephone discussion.

Good morning xxxxxxxxxxxxx

This is Meg Davis speaking … exchange of pleasantries/courtesies

You may recall that we have met on several occasions during the past 12 months with reference to the study that I am doing into resettlement of women refugees from Africa 2010–2020. I really appreciate the support you have provided over the past 12 months when I was recruiting women refugee participants for Phase 1 of the study.

I am ringing now to invite **you** as CEO … or a delegated nominee, to participate in the next important phase of the research. I am aware of your enthusiasm for the settlement service. I would like to gather information from yourself as a key person in a management role of a service in North Queensland. This Phase 2 of the project has the Ethics approval of the James Cook University **(H 8773).** I am subject to regular supervision from my principal supervisor Associate Professor Nonie Harris.

As the CEO of xxxxxxxxxxxxx I invite you to participate in an interview, to discuss your role in managing a service of such great value to North Qld. I am interested to explore how it is for you as CEO, to be responsible for overseeing the organisational environment of a

settlement service that meets the needs of women refugees arriving to the region of North Qld.

I would also like to recruit experienced practitioners (preferably two) with a minimum five years' experience in direct resettlement work). I have prepared a flier inviting practitioner participation but will be guided by you for the most appropriate way of circulating the flier.

I understand that you may need time to consider my request and may have protocols with the organisation's governing body to consider. I will happily forward you an email inclusive of all relevant information which you can peruse. We could schedule a follow up discussion now for a suitable time in the next fortnight before (date). I will be able to answer any questions you may have before you commit the organisation to participate (follow up email script below).

EMAIL SCRIPT: (Use of JCU email address)

Dear XXXX

It was great to speak with you (date and time) and to share information with you about the research I am conducting. As discussed, I am providing you with further information in relation to Phase 2 of the study as per the following attachments:

- a detailed Information Sheet about the research

- a recruitment flier for an interested experienced (five years) practitioner

- an informed consent form for yourself and a practitioner to complete should you and a practitioner who meets the criteria, consent to being part of the research

- a pre-interview participant form with basic information which can be completed and emailed to me prior to an interview or handed to me in person at a scheduled interview time.

I am keen to have a relaxed open semi-structured discussion with yourself (preferably) or a nominated delegate. I am seeking to understand the organisational and 'working environment' of a busy regional service tasked with implementing delivery of the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) in North Queensland.

I would also like to arrange an interview with a practitioner who has a minimum five years' experience in resettling refugees into North Queensland. The recruitment flier (attached) may be amended if you have any suggested changes. I would also appreciate your advice on how and / where to display and circulate within the service.

I thank you for this opportunity to provide you with further details of the research study. I am really excited by the prospect of engaging directly with the service.

Please do not hesitate to ring me if you have any questions. I am happy to be contacted by email or phone by (insert projected date) to arrange a suitable time and location for an interview. Alternatively, I can ring or call in to see you in person on (same date).

Thank you again for your time and interest and I look forward to further communications.

Kind regards

Margaret (Meg) Davis

PhD candidate James Cook University

Bebegu Yumba Campus

James Cook University

Appendix H

Phase 2 Recruitment Flyer

My name is Meg and I am a social work researcher who is passionate about resettlement supports for women refugees.

I would love to hear about your experiences, of resettling women from diverse countries of Africa who have arrived as adults into North Queensland during the decade 2010-2020.

Your contributions can make a difference.

Individual discussions are confidential and can be at a place and time convenient to you.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact Meg Davis

Email: margaret.davis@my.jcu.edu.au

Mobile:

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

Appendix I

Phase 2 Pre-Interview Questionnaire

PRE-INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT INFORMATION   **Date:**

Name of Organisation: ………………………………………………………………………………

Are you a Manager/General Manager/CEO of a Re Settlement Service? ('Yes' or 'No') ………………………………………………………

How long have you been employed in your current role?……………………………………………

What is your professional background? ………………………………………………………………

Do you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person from the local community?

…….

What is your first language? ……………………………………………………………………………

Do you speak any languages of the countries of Africa? (Please name)

………

Thank you

Meg Davis

Appendix J

Phase 2 Consent Form

This administrative form
has been removed

This administrative form
has been removed

Appendix K

Phase 2 Prompters for Interview

Tell me a little about the management of a resettlement service for humanitarian entrants/former refugees in the region of North Queensland.

How does the policy of the Humanitarian Service Program meet the local regional context?

How has delivery of resettlement services to women from Countries of Africa changed any service structure and operations? How have these responses changed over time and what policy settings the agency was responding to?

What supports and from whom, has service management in North Qld accessed in the process of planning and delivering resettlement services to women from diverse countries of Africa?

If you were appointed Minister for the Department of Home Affairs, are there any policy changes you would make that are relevant for resettlement of women refugees from countries of Africa to North Queensland?

PROMPTERS FOR INTERVIEW with a Practitioner of Settlement Service

Can you share with me your experiences of resetting refugees to North Queensland?

Is there information or knowledge of women's experiences prior to their arrival that affects your resettlement practice?

Are you able to reflect on any experiences that stand out to you? (for instance, moments of professional insights, literature accessed, a conference or training attended) learning curves, challenges during the years of your experience?

Tell me about the way you have adapted your practice when resettling women from Africa. What supports have you accessed throughout your practice?

I imagine the work to be demanding. How do you sustain yourself in your work?

As a resettlement practitioner, what would be at the top of a wish list for resettlement service support for women refugees in general and for those from countries of Africa in particular?