

Empowerment of African women in the Diaspora

Rose Mutuota

Abstract

The search for the Holy Grail to advance women's economic advancement has been long and hard. Researchers have expounded on the barriers to women's advancement and made recommendations. But figures show that more needs to be done to advance women's economic empowerment. This paper explored the strategies used in Australia to empower African women. African women in Australia fall into several categories. Category one includes professional women immigrants who hold qualifications from their home countries, such as doctors; category two contains refugee women running away from war, early marriage, domestic violence, and persecution; category three comprises African women born in Australia or who grew up in Australia. The first and third categories of women are often in well-paying jobs and do not find it hard to integrate into Australian society. This paper examined the second category, the refugees with little or no education who speak little or no English. These women face stigma, have low self-esteem, and are more often than not dependent on welfare. Journal articles, policy documents, government and Non-governmental websites related to empowerment of African women in Australia were studied. Feminist theory was employed to explore women's lived experiences and power relations. The results indicate that among the strategies used to empower African refugee women economically include collaboration with corporations such as banks and large supermarkets, which facilitate internships, facilitating provision of English-language classes, support in enrolment in training courses, spreading awareness of available services, providing driving lessons practice, and most important of all, culturally responsive support.

Keywords: empowerment, African women, Diaspora, migrants, refugees

Introduction

This study set out to investigate how the Australian society supports migrant refugee women towards economic empowerment and the barriers they face in their endeavour for economic empowerment. It explored the approaches used to empower women who have settled in Australia on humanitarian visas. The study also sought to understand which groups of people (philanthropists) and organisations in Australia are engaged in the empowerment of African women refugees and why. Findings indicate that support for the economic empowerment of migrant women comes from many sources, including the Australian government, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), philanthropic groups, and faith-based organizations. In this paper, some case studies of people who received support and have achieved success in economic empowerment are included. They include Sudanese Nyadol from Sudan, who is a commercial

lawyer, advocate, and writer; Hiwott from Ethiopia, who is a businesswoman; and Rosemary from Kenya, who is employed in the Australian Government public service. These women are now pillars of society and are active in their communities in advocating for other refugees and creating awareness among refugees about how and where to find economic support. It was not smooth sailing for these people. As their stories tell, seeking refuge in another country whose culture, language and religion differ from yours comes with many challenges that they have to navigate.

Migration from one's home country means being uprooted from the people and environment that you know, love and care about. People often describe it as a sense of loss of place, identity and sense of belonging, and it is normally felt by both voluntary and involuntary migrants alike. Australia is one of the countries that receives migrants. While some are economic migrants who are looking for better pastures, for example, the skilled group of people, there is another set of people who come to the shores of Australia on humanitarian visas. Among those who settle in Australia on humanitarian visas are women often running away from war, early marriage, domestic violence and persecution in their home countries. The humanitarian category also includes the women at risk category. Women at risk are women who have experienced rape, forced marriage, engaged in sex for survival as well as assaults from men in the refugee camps, among others (Bartolomei et al., 2014). This paper will explore the empowerment of this category of African women in Australia.

The most recent census (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021) shows that African refugees came from the following countries: Sudan, South Sudan and Ethiopia. Upon their arrival in Australia, these women face many difficulties (Jenkinson, 2017). Most of these women speak little or no English (Dantas et al., 2023; Pittaway, 2009; Whittaker et al., 2018), which is essential in integrating into Australian society, such as finding employment and pursuing education. Many of these women have come from war-torn countries and have lived in transit countries before being granted humanitarian visas in Australia. They have faced untold suffering from the authorities in their home countries and in refugee centres in host countries. Many of them carry a lot of trauma because of the experiences in their home countries and in the refugee centres, often perpetrated by people in authority. These women often regard people in Authority as the enemy. They fear police and any people in authority in Australia (Pittaway, et al., 2009).

Background information: Migration to Australia and resettlement

For many African women refugees, a humanitarian visa enabling them to resettle in a country away from war, violence and abuse is a welcome step in beginning to rebuild their lives. It gives them the opportunity to start over, enrol their children and themselves in education courses, find a job, and hopefully reunite with family members who were separated from them during their escape from their home countries.

When they are resettled in Australia, they are unprepared for the barriers that they have to overcome. Many of the refugees find it hard to build a sense of belonging in the new country. They are usually offered houses where they are available without considering language barriers and cultural differences between them and their new neighbours. Yet some of the refugee women speak little or no English.

Research (Wa Mungai et al., 2019; Kuyini & Kivunja, 2020; Vromans et al, 2017) shows that African women refugees find it hard to reconcile African and Australian cultures. While many were homemakers in their home countries with family responsibilities of caring for the husband, children and extended family, these women who have adhered to cultural gender roles all their lives are expected to fit into the Australian culture and contribute to their family's financial well-being. Vroman et al (2018, p.153) argue that

while Australia's intensive resettlement programs promote independence, the expected advance to independence may be too rapid. The requirement that women undertake unaccustomed gender roles may be destabilizing for newly resettled women, who likely retain culturally constructed gender roles. Furthermore, although employment is financially optimal and in their strategic interests for gender equality, many women at risk may prioritize their gendered practical need to shoulder childcare responsibilities.

Some of the African refugee women also find it hard to secure employment in Australia. One of the reasons is that when they leave their countries, they often do so in a hurry. This means that many of them arrive in Australia without documents, such as academic certificates showing their education or experience (Migration Council of Australia, 2024). As a result, the employment available to them in Australia is low-paid casual work (Major et al., 2013). Those who find

employment are usually in lower-paid and casual and temporary positions unlike women born in Australia (Gower, et al., 2022)

Furthermore, many of the resettled women refugees often struggle to secure employment because they speak little or no English. Others lack the skills required in Australian job markets. Campbell (2018) reported that there is often a mismatch between the skills that some of them have and those needed in Australia. There are also cases of those who have qualifications in various fields but find that those qualifications are not recognised in Australia (Campbell, 2018), while for others, the skills they possess are not transferable to the Australian context. This is one source of frustration for migrant refugee women which affects their wellbeing and their settlement journey. According to Pittaway et al. (2009), employment is crucial to a person's well-being. Pittaway et al., (2009), p. 2) add that "gaining employment affects identity, status and a feeling of worth".

The African refugee woman in Australia finds herself torn between accepting the Western culture, which liberates her so much that she can seek employment outside the home and be financially independent, and her patriarchal culture, which denies her a voice and relegates her to caring family responsibilities, (Maturi, 2024). The African migrant families bring their culture with them to Australia, and the African culture dictates gender roles. Various support services help women find employment, get health care, and, in turn, have a voice and break free from the bonds of patriarchy. The men often view the support provided to women as turning the tables on men against cultural expectations. This causes a major shift in power relations between men and women among African refugee families (Doney et al, 2010). For example, child support from Centrelink in Australia is paid to women, giving women more financial power than the men in the households (Kuyini & Kivunja, 2020). In other cases, the women secure employment while the men do not. This brings tension in marriages, and the men sometimes choose to return to Africa, leaving their wives and children behind (Kuyini & Kivunja, 2020). The loss of power for men has led many to separate from their wives. This adds to the woman's burden as she has to single-handedly care for the children while she works.

Refugees from any country are viewed as a burden by some sections of Australian society who claim that refugees use taxpayers' resources, which should go to Australians. Refugees and other migrants are also blamed for the shortage of housing in Australia (Sky News, 2024). Some

members of the population have raised concerns that African refugees and migrants do not integrate easily. These Australians could be said to be nostalgic for the old times under the white Australia policy that prohibited the migration of non-white people to Australia. The White Australia policy was introduced in 1901 and abolished in 1966 after “it became obvious that British migration was not providing the desired numbers, and that strict adherence to the White Australia policy was an impediment to population growth” (National Museum Australia).

In addition, Muslim women refugees are viewed by some people in Australian society with suspicion. They are conspicuous because of the hijab (head covering) and the traditional long clothing that they wear. The negative attitude towards the Muslim community is sometimes perpetuated by people in power in Australian society. In her maiden speech to parliament, Pauline Hanson, who was a senator in the New South Wales Parliament (YouTube, 2016), stated, “Now we are in danger of being swamped by Muslims”. Another Australian senator, Fraser Anning, stated on Twitter after the Christchurch massacre in 2019 that “the real cause of bloodshed on New Zealand streets today is the immigration program which allowed Muslim fanatics to migrate to New Zealand in the first place.” Press Association, (2019). Unfortunately, these anti-Muslim sentiments have a large following. It is not uncommon to read in the daily papers that some people were hurling abuse at African refugee Muslim women.

Power relations between the refugees and the mostly white privileged service provider staff are characterised by unequal and paternalistic power relations- the white saviour syndrome. In their effort to provide support to African women refugees, they sometimes alienate the already marginalised group. There is usually a misalignment between what service providers think are the needs of the refugee communities and the refugees’ needs. Writing about the lived experiences of African American women in America, Crenshaw (1991, p. 1246) points out that “where systems of race, gender, and class domination converge, as they do in the experiences of battered women of colour, intervention strategies based solely on the experiences of women who do not share the same class or race backgrounds will be of limited help to women who because of race and class face different obstacles”.

In her research, Manturi (2023, p. 254), found that some organisations invite refugee women and reprimand them on drug and alcohol use as the main causes of gendered violence. But to African

refugee communities, the cause of the problem is “loss of culture, changing gendered norms, and other challenges in settlement such as unemployment and language barriers”. For African refugee women’s empowerment goals to be fully realised, men must be invited to meetings addressing women’s empowerment. This will provide a platform for the meeting organisers to discuss the current structural and cultural barriers.

Access to support services that are designed to empower African refugee women and provide support in removing barriers towards resettlement and empowerment is not easy. There are large distances between where they live and the location of support services, as refugees are housed in poor suburbs on the outskirts of major cities or in regional areas far away from support services. Those refugee women who would like to attend English classes, TAFE, university or other services find that childcare is prohibitively expensive and there is a big competition for the available spaces. These refugee women are usually resettled away from family. Without available childcare places or family networks to care for their children, African refugee women opt to stay home and provide care to their children and, therefore, miss out on the services available to them.

Objectives.

The research objectives were:

1. To explore the empowerment avenues/approaches. For African women refugees in Australia.
2. To understand the barriers faced by the African women refugees in their endeavour for empowerment.

Research question

This research explored the range of approaches used to empower women who have settled in Australia on humanitarian visas. The study also sought to understand which people and organisations in Australia are engaged in the empowerment of African women refugees and why. The research addressed the following question.

1. What approaches are employed to empower African refugee women in Australia?

Theoretical orientation.

This paper will use an intersectional approach to discuss the quest for freedom and empowerment for African refugee women. According to Feminist literature, intersectionality allows us to see the lives of women through multiple, complex, and intersecting relations (Crenshaw, 1991). This paper explores how African refugee women experience oppression at various levels in Australia and the consequences of their resistance. According to Crenshaw (1991), race, gender, political and cultural structures intersect to oppress women. This oppression is layered and can happen concurrently. Crenshaw (1989, p. 149) aptly explains the multidimensional experiences of the black woman,

The point is that Black women can experience discrimination in any number of ways and that the contradiction arises from our assumptions that their claims of exclusion must be unidirectional. Consider an analogy to traffic in an intersection, coming and going in all four directions. Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in the intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them. Similarly, if a Black woman is harmed because she is in the intersection, her injury could result from sex discrimination or race discrimination.

The lived experiences of African refugee women and power relations within patriarchal cultures are discussed. Power relations between the African refugee woman and the mainly white staff members of the support services are explored. As will be discussed later in the paper, support services whose role is to empower refugee women sometimes reproduce disempowerment, marginalisation and further oppression of these women. Crenshaw (1991, p. 1262) explains this phenomenon thus:

Women working in the field of domestic violence have sometimes reproduced the subordination and marginalization of women of color by adopting policies, priorities, or strategies of empowerment that either elide or wholly disregard the particular intersectional needs of women of color. While gender, race, and class intersect to create the particular context in which women of color experience violence, certain choices made by "allies" can

reproduce intersectional subordination within the very resistance strategies designed to respond to the problem.

The attitude of some sections of Australian society and political rhetoric from some politicians undermine African women's efforts at empowerment.

Methodology

The study examined reports by governments, non-governmental organisations, philanthropic and community groups, journal articles, Newspapers and websites. Only literature about African refugee women resettled in Australia was considered. Thematic analysis was used to identify the themes that emerged from the various literature that was studied. Some themes that emerged included support services used to empower African refugee women, peer mentorship, internships, stories of African refugee women who had succeeded in Australia and the barriers faced by the African refugee women which slow or limit their ability to achieve empowerment.

Key findings:

Empowerment of African women in the Diaspora: Support services

Australia recognises the problems faced by migrant women and has some mandated services that support refugees. Other organisations that support refugees include non-governmental organisations (NGOs), philanthropic groups and faith-based organisations. Some of these organisations are: The UN Refugee Agency, Refugee Council of Australia, STARTT (the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors), and the Australian Red Cross, among others.

The above organisations provide support, including settlement services, accredited English language classes, family and domestic violence services, parenting support, education services, mental health services, counselling, legal services, housing support, and financial support. All these services contribute towards the empowerment of African women in the diaspora. Below I discuss some of the services provided to African refugee women.

Peer mentorship programs for African refugee women

Peer mentoring programs have enabled refugee women to get experience and skills requirements for entry into the job market. These peer mentoring sessions also allow the mentees to practice their English. The programs also increase the mentees' self-esteem and confidence (Gower et al. (2022). One such project is the Empowerment and Peer Mentoring of Migrant and Refugee Women Study (Empower) project run by Curtin University and community partners (Dantas et al., 2023, p. 4). The project provides “opportunity for migrant women who have established lives in Australia to mentor migrant and refugee women seeking support”.

Another peer mentoring organisation is the Empowering Migrant and Refugee Women project, run by the Multicultural Council (AMC). This organisation aims to provide “practical strategies to empower migrant and refugee women” (Jenkinson, p. 1, 2017). According to both the mentors and mentees, the peer mentoring exercise is usually a complex and time-consuming activity that does not follow a linear process. Although mentorship aims to discuss work-related matters, the mentees and mentors talk about many other issues because of the interconnected nature of the mentee's experiences and their ability and opportunities to secure employment. For example, some women are so traumatised by their experiences and daily struggles of settling in a new country with few family networks to provide the support that attending English classes proves difficult and sometimes adds to their misery. Such women require many hours of counselling before they are comfortable enough to proceed with any other service.

Support for refugee women entrepreneurs

Some organisations in Australia support women to start small enterprises. Often the women who start these entrepreneurial enterprises do so because they face barriers in securing employment. ‘Stepping Stones to Small Business’ is one such organisation that supports refugee women with business training, mentoring, and networking (Brotherhood of St. Laurence 2017). Stepping Stones offers “training and advice, and teaches the prospective business owner the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to improve microenterprise” (Van Kooy, 2016, p. 72). Van Kooy (2016) adds that women refugees face many problems even after obtaining business entrepreneur training that hinders them from starting up businesses. These include “difficulties acquiring start-

up capital, a lack of financial skills, limited access to affordable childcare, and fewer market-relevant support systems and networks than men” (Van Kooy, 2016, p. 73). Those women who succeed in starting up a business are also expected to meet their family and cultural obligations, such as caring for the family. They also have to overcome the attitudes of the family and community towards women running businesses. Women are still expected to fulfil their caring responsibilities even as they attend empowerment workshops or start small businesses. Stepping Stones takes into consideration these complexities faced by African refugee women. Consequently, this program offers a flexible nature of training. They offer training in times that don’t conflict with the women’s caring responsibilities. At the completion of the training, Stepping Stones to Small Business links the refugee women to mentors in the community.

Internships for migrants and refugees

Various Australian companies occasionally offer internships and scholarships to support African women, including refugees. Below are two organisations that offer internships to African refugee women.

Victorian Government refugee and asylum seeker internship program.

The Victorian government runs a refugee and asylum seeker internship program which aims to connect university students seeking real-life work experience with Victorian Public service departments. This program helps this category of university students to build their networks within the public service.

Community organisations supporting African women

Afro Australian Student Organisation, AASO

The Afro-Australian Student Organisation, AASO, is a student-led organisation that supports women from African countries studying in universities in Australia (Afro-Australian Student Organisation, AASO (2024). The organisation provides a platform for students of African descent to advocate for themselves and each other and to have their voices heard. The organisation offers mentorship, internship programs, and leadership programs, among others.

Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency (HARDA)

Africans in the diaspora realise that help from the government is not enough and is usually not culturally responsive. Support from the government is also seen by the African refugees as an extension of the hegemonic practices of the global North. As a result, there are some organisations initiated and run by African communities to support refugees and other newly arrived migrants to settle in Australia and give them the necessary guidance for a successful resettlement. One such organisation is the Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency (HARDA) (HARDA, 2024). Although the projects that they run are not specifically targeted at women refugees, refugee women are some of the beneficiaries.

Success stories of refugee African women

Sudanese Nyadol Nyuon

While some refugees have struggled to resettle in Australia, others have excelled in education and in made inroads into the Australian employment market. An example is Sudanese Nyadol Nyuon, a commercial lawyer, advocate and writer who says that,

The Entry Visa stated that I was stateless on my travelling document to Australia. I arrived without a home. I am now a citizen. I am Australian. This drastic change captures how my life has been transformed due to resettling in Australia. Like most South Sudanese persons my age, I was born and raised in refugee camps. I was born in a refugee camp called Itang in Ethiopia. A few years after I was born, the entire population of Itang was displaced by another conflict. We were scattered across Sudan, Uganda and Kenya. Eventually, I ended up in Kenya. Years of conflict meant that I knew little of my own country: South Sudan. In Kenya, we lived in Kakuma Refugee Camp. My existence and that of my entire family depended on the United Nations (UN), which provided food, medical services, and education at an elementary level. Without the UN, my family, many others, and I would have, without exaggerating, perished (Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia, 2017, p. 16).

Ethiopian refugee Hiwott

According to the Department of Home Affairs website (2024), Hiwott arrived in Australia on a humanitarian visa in 2010, having spent years in Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp. Upon her arrival she was supported in her resettlement in Alice Springs by Multicultural Community Services of Central Australia Inc (MCSCA). When she decided to start her business selling Ethiopian cuisine at the markets, MCSCA and the Alice Springs council provided the necessary support.

Kenyan Rosemary Kariuki

Rosemary arrived in Australia on a humanitarian visa in 1999, escaping abuse and tribal violence (Kariuki et al., 2023). Rosemary supports other humanitarian refugees resettle in Australia. She has been awarded the Order of Australia and received a local Hero award in 2021 for her advocacy (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2024).

There are many success stories of African refugee women. These women are pioneers and have become a beacon of light for other newly arrived African refugee women in Australia.

Discussion

Support for African refugee women offered by resettlement organisations includes education, financial, housing, food and cultural integration. As stated above, the literature is replete with stories of successful African migrant refugee women in Australia. These women have embarked on supporting other African migrants in Australia and the women they left behind in their home countries. Their goal is to see as many women empowered as possible. Through the funds they send back to Africa, other women are enabled to start businesses and join educational institutions to gain skills and knowledge.

Literature shows that there are still some lessons that the support providers can learn about providing culturally responsive and trauma-informed support. Training women from the African communities to deliver the services would break the distrust that African women feel towards the mostly white service providers. Another way would be to partner with African women during presentations so that the African refugee women can build trust in the services.

The service providers also need to view the communities from a strength-based perspective so that the women are able to provide some solutions to the barriers they face in resettlement, for example, in childminding and employment. The women's voices need to be heard. Sometimes, the solutions to problems lie within the community, but unless the refugee women are heard, the service providers continue to present solutions based on white women's perspectives.

Men need to be part of the solution if women's empowerment is to be realised. Men have reported that they are not informed about the programs that their wives are engaged in. By informing the men about the Australian culture and expectations, they may change their attitudes towards losing their positions as the head of families and as the only bread winners.

Resettling several families close together in the same suburb may also help alleviate the lack of support networks for African refugee women. When African refugee women from the same country are resettled far away from each other, they are denied the support network used in African families for childcare and domestic duties (Dagistanli, et al, 2020). This affects their ability to attend services offered in the community by the resettlement teams. According to (Dagistanli, et al, 2020, p. 11)) the lack of support networks

has two main consequences: there was less practical support for domestic duties and the raising of children, and the second consequence was isolation and lack of support, which was directly related to cultural codes of trust, silence, shame, and respect that are important if and when the relationship becomes abusive.

The service providers should work together to ensure that the services provided to refugee women are coordinated and cover many spheres of life, including legal rights, gender relations in Australia and the criminal justice system (De Maio et al., 2017). De Maio et al. (2017) also indicated that African refugee women preferred services with bilingual staff. This will allow the refugees to build trust in the services and the providers. According to Nasser-Eddin, (2017, p.143), "Women and men experience refugeehood, asylum, conflict, post-conflict situations and displacement differently". Therefore, the services provided to refugees need to be gender and culturally sensitive and trauma-informed (Nelson, 2014) and need to address the unique needs of each refugee. For example, some refugee women come from villages where their main form of income was farming

and selling farm produce. Resettling such women in cities in Australia often brings a feeling of displacement at a second level- not only are the women displaced from their homelands, but they are also placed in environments that are dissimilar to what they know or have experienced. Many of these women want to not only grow crops to sell at the local markets but also feed their families. Resettling them in high-rise buildings is isolating and denies them the opportunity to have small gardens. The Africans, women or men, refugee or not, have a strong connection to land.

The organisations supporting African refugee women in resettlement must start by helping the women build social networks because with a strong social capital base, the women can build confidence and gain mentors and confidants. Social connectedness also enables women to cultivate self-esteem and a sense of belonging (Walker, 2015). According to Whittaker et al. (2018, p.76), “Social capital refers to the actual and potential accumulation of social contacts that enable access to information and decision-makers”. Many African cultures rely on the community for support and this needs to be recognised in resettlement and used to support them.

Many of the African refugees come from countries that were formerly colonised by Western countries. Although they have been given refuge in Australia, their perspective of the white people is usually that of an oppressor. They distrust the hosts. Hence, the reluctance of the African refugees to open up to white service providers. Having some knowledge about the history of the countries where these African refugees come from is important in improving the relations between the service providers and the African refugee women.

Conclusion and recommendations

In Australia, African refugee women receive support from the government, NGOs, philanthropic organisations and church groups. The support comes in the form of legal services, access to education, counselling and mental health services that empower women in many ways including having a vote and voice in their homes and in the community.

In spite of this, African refugees still experience barriers in their resettlement which in turn affect any efforts put to empower them. Some of the barriers relate to cultural differences between their country of origin and the host country- Australia. Other barriers arise as a result of the complex nature of resettlement, the expectations of the Australian society on them and the baggage,

including trauma, that the African women refugees bring with them. Some African refugee women have overcome some of the barriers and have succeeded in starting their own businesses or gaining employment in senior roles in large corporations.

Despite the barriers faced, many refugee African women go on to live happy and fulfilling lives in Australia. They overcome the initial culture shock, enrol in educational programs and gain employment. Their empowerment comes in various forms, some of which are often confusing and, therefore, cause conflict in families.

It is recommended that successful African refugee women migrants proactively engage with the service providers so that the service providers can provide culturally responsive and trauma-informed services. This researcher recommends that service providers also endeavour to understand the space that an African women refugee occupies in Australia at the intersection of race, gender, political and cultural structures. This knowledge will enable them to gain a better understanding of the African refugee women in Australia.

References

- Afro Australian Student Organisation, AASO (2024). *Who we are*. <https://www.aaso.org.au/what-we-do>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023). *Australian Migrants and Census Integrated Dataset (ACMID)*. Australian Bureau of Statistics. <https://www.abs.gov.au/>
- Australian Council for Educational Leaders. (2022). *Inspiring hope, leading our future*. Australian Council for Educational Leaders. https://www.acel.org.au/ACEL/ACELWEB/Events/2022/Conference/Bio/Rosemary_Kar_iuki.aspx
- Bartolomei, L., Eckert, R., & Pittaway, E. (2013). "What happens there... follows us here": resettled but still at risk: refugee women and girls in Australia. *Refuge*, 30, 45.
- Brotherhood of St. Laurence. (2017). *Stepping Stones to Small Business*. Brotherhood of St. Laurence. <https://www.bsl.org.au/get-involved/building-better-lives-together/stepping-stones-to-small-business/>
- Campbell, S.C. (2018). 'What's a sundial in the shade?': Brain waste among refugee professionals who are denied meaningful opportunity for credential recognition. *Emory Law Journal*. 68, 139–181.

- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color, *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299.
- De Maio, J., Silbert, M., Stathopoulos, M., Rioseco, P., Jenkinson, R. & Edwards, B. (2017). *Empowering migrant and refugee women: Supporting and empowering women beyond five-year post-settlement*. (Research Report No. 38). Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.
- Dagistanli, S., Umutoni Wa Shema, N., Townley, C., Robinson, K. H., Bansel, P., Huppertz, K. E., ... & Mufumbiro, K. (2020). *Understandings and responses to domestic violence in the African Great Lakes communities of Western Sydney*. Western Sydney University. <https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws:57944/>
- Department of Home affairs (2-024). *Refugee and Humanitarian Program*. Author. <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/refugee-and-humanitarian-program/about-the-program/success-stories>
- Dantas, J. A. R., Gower, S., Hallet, J., & Jeemi, Z. (2023). *Empower: Empowerment and Peer Mentoring of Migrant and Refugee Women Study Report*. Curtin University. <https://empower-project.com.au/>.
- Doney, G., & Pittaway, E. (2010). *Its not all right: Rights in refugee families in Australia*. Research Report. Centre for Refugee Research, UNSW, Sydney.
- Gower, S., Jeemi, Z., Wickramasinghe, N., Kebble, P., Forbes, D., & Dantas, J. A. (2022). Impact of a pilot peer-mentoring empowerment program on personal well-being for migrant and refugee women in Western Australia. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(6), 3338.
- Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency (HARDA) (2024). *Welcome to HARDA*. HARDA. <https://harda.org.au/>
- Jenkinson, R., Edwards, B., De Maio, J., Silbert, M., Stathopoulos, M., & Rioseco, P. (2017). *Empowering migrant and refugee women: Supporting and empowering women beyond five-year post-settlement*. Australian Institute of Family Studies.
- Kariuki, R., & Land, S. (2023). *A Joyful Life: One Woman's Story of Triumph Over Trauma to Build a Life of Hope and Gratitude*. Hardie Grant Explore. <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/a-joyful-life-one-womans-story-of-triumph-over-trauma-to-build-a-life-of-hope-and-gratitude/>
- Kuyini, B., & Kivunja, C. (2020). African refugee spouses' experience of resettlement in regional Australia: disempowering and empowering narratives. *International Social Work*, 63(4), 431-444.
- Magazine of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia the (FECCA). (2017). *Shared Experience and Learning from African Communities in Australia*. FECCA. <https://fecca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Issue-46.pdf>

- Major, J., Wilkinson, J., Langat, K. & Santoro, N. (2013). Sudanese Young People of refugee background in rural and regional Australia: social capital and education success. *Journal of Refugee Education*, 23(3), 95-105.
- Maturi, J. (2024). Revisiting empowerment through critical praxis: Perspectives of front-line workers supporting refugee women experiencing gendered violence in Australia. *Affilia*, 39(2), 245-264.
- National Museum Australia. (2024). *White Australia Policy*. [White Australia policy | National Museum of Australia \(nma.gov.au\)](https://www.nma.gov.au/white-australia-policy)
- Nasser-Eddin, N. (2017). Gender performativity in diaspora: Syrian refugee women in the UK. In *A Gendered Approach to the Syrian Refugee Crisis* (pp. 142-154). Routledge.
- 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/Refuge*, 26(2), 133-146.
- Sky News, (2024). Dutton promises to slash migration. Sky News. <https://www.skynews.com.au/australia-news/politics/dutton-promises-to-cut-migration-and-refugee-intake-to-reduce-housing-pressure/video/2ec59c0cb25b0e51656a9b6449dbeab0>
- Van Kooy, J. (2016). Refugee women as entrepreneurs in Australia. *Forced Migration Review*, (53).
- 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.
- wa Mungai, N., & Gitau, L. W. (2019). African Refugee Women in Australia. In Kalunta-Crompton, (ed) *Violence against Women of African Descent: Global Perspectives*, (pp 211-228). Lexington Books
- Walker, R., Koh, L., Wollersheim, D. & Liamputtong, P. (2015). Social Connectedness and mobile phone use among refugee women in Australia. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 23(3), 325-336.
- Whittaker, L., Hughes, M., & Rugendyke, B. (2018). ‘I would call it a social capital building exercise’: the nature of networks that enable women with a refugee background to access sustainable employment in regional Australia. *Journal of Social Inclusion*, 9(2).
- YouTube, (2016). Pauline Hanson 2016 Maiden Speech. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krEPTyYO6l8>