



africause
Youth and Community Services

AFRICAUSE ANNUAL REPORT

2022

COMMUNITY APPROACH TO
YOUTH JUSTICE' FAIR, EFFICIENT
AND PRODUCTIVE

STRONG COMMUNITIES ARE THE
BACKBONE OF HEALTHY, HARMONIOUS
AND WEALTHY SOCIETIES



ABOUT AFRICAUSE

Africause is a not-for-profit and registered charity organisation, incorporation in July 2013 Registration (# A0059689G), and ABN 81107115107. Africause led by CEO, who reports to 9 Board members, which includes members with professional backgrounds in Victorian Police, business, community development, education, professional services. The Board meets five times a year and prepare the Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the end of each financial year. The CEO is supported by admin, secretary and other staff supporting youth, refugee, women and job placement (employment), with data entry and a part-time accounting and financial management staff. Financial management is overseen by the Board and the treasurer, and independently audited each year. Moreover, Africause has different community advisory committees such as Youth advisory communities, women advisory committee, Seniors (Positive ageing) advisory committee, etc

THE AIM AND STRATEGIES OF OUR COMMUNITY IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

Africause children & youth advancement is essential, and it is our priority. The whole idea of this initiative is to mobilise African children & youth and forge relationships between each other and with all other Australian communities. The strategy behind this is to occupy the youth from non-social activities particularly during the school holidays. We must light the paths and lighten the load for each other and provide light at the end of the tunnel. Each of us has something to contribute that is unique and enlightening. As a community, we have very qualified members who

are dedicated and willing to help and organise activities that engage children and youth during the school holidays and after hours during the semesters.

Whether it is through keeping our feelings to ourselves and using our quiet strengths and resources to advance our issues or a burning passion through anger fuming in the blood that moves some of us to resist the injustices that take place.

Thoughts give you permission to make changes or accept present realities. Each of us progresses along the road of life differently. We are all conduits for the sharing of knowledge. We control the power within us to change ourselves and inspire others.

VISION

Africause's vision is to support and facilitate African Australian community to participate in all areas of life, and build a community of active, resilient citizens who can identify and manage any impediments to their full participation as members of the broader Australian society.

AIM

Our aim is to Connect, Communicate, Coordinate, Collaborate, Create and Celebrate with the diverse Australian community for a more positive and inclusive Australian society.



Africause is dedicated to the wellbeing of all people regardless of race, religion, creed, or gender. Our aim is to challenge, equip and strengthen the character of our young people to build successful, productive members of Australian society

 **MISSION**

Our mission is to facilitate greater engagement with youth and families through a range of partnerships including youth specific organizations, education providers, and employers. And to enable sustainable development goals for our young people, understanding the impact of the journeys that refugee or migrant families took to arrive in Australia.

 **KEY PRIORITIES**

1. Advocacy to enable equitable access, particularly in areas of education and information.
2. Participation in the labour market.
3. To help minimise contact with the Criminal Justice System.
4. Africause is working to minimise barriers and improve access to life- changing opportunities and services.

 **OBJECTIVES**

Africause works with a holistic and comprehensive

community building approach addressing the following seven key areas:

1. Employment and Entrepreneurship.
2. Education and Youth Development
3. Human Rights and Responsibilities (particularly justice and equity for youth and families)
4. Community Engagement
5. Family Violence Prevention and Intervention
6. Healthy Families and general counselling
7. Arts, Culture, History, and Media/Communications

Website: africause.org.au
Facebook: facebook.com/africause.au
Instagram: [@africause.au](https://instagram.com/africause.au)



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The Honourable Ted Baillieu
PATRON

"The post settlement story of Victoria is the story of opportunity, of migrants from across the world, of high aspirations, of families, of businesses and in particular of the young.

The Victoria story is the Africause story. There is nothing that can't be achieved in this State.

There is nothing that young Australians of African background can't achieve. Our African community, in all its forms, makes an extraordinary contribution. That is evident across all parts of our community.

Some communities achieve outstanding things. Some communities do so quietly. Some stand out.

The great communities embrace both. Africause exists to ensure that is the way forward for young Australians of African background, to provide support, advice, and resources. It is an honour for me, like many others, to stand with you and beside you in this great endeavour.

For those in need of some extra support, some guidance, or some encouragement, I urge you to contact Africause and to stay in touch. It isn't always easy. But, in Victoria anything is possible. And the best is ahead of us all.

As I said during the recent Election Campaign, it won't be long before we have a Premier of African descent. And when it happens it won't be unexpected, because that is the Victoria story."



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:



Mr. Phil Brooker
CHAIRPERSON

After two particularly challenging years where Africause was forced to react to the unexpected rapid rise in the need for additional services as a result of Covid-19, one which had a disproportionate impact on the lives of migrants and refugee communities, 2022 has been one where we have been able to focus upon our core activities again.

That is not to say that our team has been able to relax and take things a little easier in 2022. On the contrary, our team has done more positive, impactful work in the community than ever before. We have run all of the same core programs of the past as well as taking on some new work in the youth justice area which we believe will have positive impacts across the entire state. Some highlights of our core programs in 2022 include:

- Taking a lead role in the design and delivery of the Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program (VPDRP)
- I have the great privilege of having Co-chaired the VPDRP since its inception and this year we farewelled

Kerry O'Neil in the other Co-Chair role and welcomed Kate Wadsworth into that role as the program has shifted from being a solely African focused recruitment program to now including the wider Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities along with also scheduling 2 dedicated Indigenous program rounds.

- 2022 saw the conclusion of the first set of 6, Purely African, VPDRP programs and gave Africause the opportunity to host a celebration of the success of the program. The celebration was superbly MC'd by Katinda Ndolo with standout speeches provided by our CEO, Dr Ahmed, our Patron Ted Baillieu, The Minister for Higher Education, The Hon Gayle Tierney, Deputy Vice Chancellor of Victoria University, Dianne Semmens, along with entertainment provided by some wonderful community dance groups. The celebration was a wonderful opportunity to recognise everyone who has contributed to the enormous success of the program to date, including our board, the program's steering committee, the Vic Police mentors, the VU staff who delivered the course and the participants themselves.



DELIVERING THE FLEMINGTON HOMEWORK CLUB

Thank you to the long-time efforts of Tehiya Umer for her contribution to getting the Flemington Homework Club and the online homework support to be as successful as it now is. Also thank you for the continuing hands-on efforts of our volunteers Ms. Emma Fitzgibbon, Yasseen Musa, Jemal Ahmed, Hanan Sulieman and Sherin Hazboun who, now that things have returned to a more normal footing, have ensured that the Africause homework club can continue to provide local children with expert help with their schoolwork.

FACILITATING THE FREE COMMUNITY LEGAL ADVICE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MAURICE BLACKBURN LAWYERS

Once again in 2022 we owe a huge debt of thanks to Maurice Blackburn who have once again come to our Footscray offices one a week to meet with members of the community who have legal questions. Regardless of the legal matter, the volunteers from Maurice Blackburn have provided, free of charge, advice and legal guidance that has been invaluable for many people who would otherwise have not been able to receive it. We are extremely grateful for this service as the Australian legal landscape, while fair, can be very confusing and is often vastly different to the systems our community members have lived under previously.

WORKER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Thank you to the long-time efforts of Tehiya Umer for her contribution to getting the Flemington Homework Club and the online homework support to be as successful as it now is. Also thank you for the continuing hands-on efforts of our volunteers Ms. Emma Fitzgibbon, Yasseen Musa, Jemal Ahmed, Hanan Sulieman and Sherin Hazboun who, now that things have returned to a more normal footing, have ensured that the Africause homework club can continue to provide local children with expert help with their schoolwork.



EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In partnership with Jesuit Social Services, spectrum migrant resource Centre and Thrive Refugee Enterprise Africause has continued to pro-actively help people to find gainful employment and to set themselves up in their own business. Our thanks to Julie Edwards and Stephen Ward of JSS, Lorelle Said and Judith Atkinson from Spectrum and Arie Moses of Thrive for their continued support and assistance in making these programs the huge success they have been.

It is often stated that it takes a village to raise a child. Unfortunately, when the village balloons into a city the size of Melbourne, or even Dandenong, Brimbank or Hume, many of those village connections are lost and children can miss out on some of the more important life lessons. That is why Africause has put a large emphasis upon working with all stakeholders across Victoria, including Parents, Police, Correctional Facilities, Legal Aid, Councils, Community Leaders, and the young people themselves, to find ways to solve the current problems with youth justice.

The African-Australian population is over-represented within Victorian correctional institutions, and this is especially the case for young offenders. There are many reasons for this and Africause are working to implement programs that;

- 1) help prevent young people from entering the system in the first place, and
- 2) provide effective off-ramps from the system for those who have found themselves incarcerated, want to get out and are keen to make a positive contribution to society.

The impacts of effective programs are profound. It costs approximately \$120,000 per year to keep each Victorian prisoner in custody. When you consider there are just over 100 African Australians currently in youth justice correctional centres in Victoria (19% of the total population) that means the cost of keeping these young people incarcerated is around \$12 million per year. Therefore, any program that can reduce the number either entering or currently in the system will not only have major social benefits, it will also save the state millions of dollars – money that could be spent on programs that promote positive community engagements.

Each of Africause's efforts work on adopting a holistic approach to the problem. Typically, young people's issues start early on. There is a clear link to a lack of student engagement at school, conflict in the home and negative interactions with the justice system. Our primary aim is to stop young people from entering the justice system in the first place. This is best tackled by keeping kids in school and in providing them with positive role models and mentors who can

help them navigate the tricky challenges of adolescence. . It is also important to ensure that young people have places where they can be creative and engage with others in a positive environment as a lack of these opportunities leads to young people finding other, less desirable ways to occupy their time.

“Our society is not well designed to help former offenders to reintegrate and, as a result our rate of recidivism is almost 50%”

Where we see young people who have already found themselves on the wrong side of the youth justice system, it is critical that we engage with them, finding pathways for them to take on meaningful, productive work when they are released. All too often when someone is released, they are simply left to their own devices. Our society is not well designed to help former offenders to reintegrate and, as a result our rate of recidivism is almost 50%. Small things like making sure, on release young people have a photo ID, helping them to write a resume, connect them with their families and siblings, introducing them to potential employers, coaching them on how keep a job, introducing them to community leaders and mentors who can provide practical guidance and life lessons, are all things that have a major impact.

It sounds very simple. It is once you have built up the trust needed to get the buy in from these young people. That is why our teams' efforts have been so effective. We have team members who talk their language – in every sense of the word.



OUR TEAM

I can't stress enough how much of an honour and a pleasure to Chair the Africause board. The opportunity to work with the rest of our dedicated board members, with our hard-working staff and volunteers and of course to have the great privilege of engaging with all our incredible African-Australian communities.

Led by our indefatigable CEO, Dr Berhan Ahmed, Africause's paid, and volunteer staff have grown dramatically over the past 3 years as the output of our charitable organisation has also expanded in response to a growing need in the community. We now have over 70 staff and volunteers working to deliver practical outcomes in health, employment, education, and legal assistance to those who need it, every day.

A huge thankyou to our office staff;

- Ms. Natasha De Almeida, Ms. Julia McAllister, Jemal Ahmed, Ms. Hanan Sulieman, Ms. Suzan Agoer, Abaas Abukar, Khaled Messoudi, Bedellu Desta, Ms. Nevin Saad, Ms. Rachel Sumich-Antonik, Ms. Teyra Jasso, Byron Price, Ms. Daniela Lapez, Ms. Siobhan Allen, Ms. Fathi Hassan and Ms. Madalyn Picaro.
- And to our permanent part-time volunteers.
- Ms. Lorelle Said, Dr Sarah Tartakover, Ken Betts, Loretta Dixon, Ms. Tahiya Umer, Ms. Emma Fitzgibbon, Ms. Ferdos Osman, Ms. Samia Baho, Dr Apollo Nsubuga-Kyobe, Lem Bagout, Bashar Abdi, Ms. Ana Bol, Yadata Saba, Ms Muna

Fshaya, Godefa Berhane G'her, Dr Mohamed Ibrahim, Guy Robinson (IT), Abdirizak Abdi, Ms. Melanie Sheppard, Ms. Jackie Polonsky, Ms. Jane Tewson, Cr Jorge Jorquera.

I also need to thank our amazing board. None of these people ever say no when asked to help with a task and they have all been willing to take on both the strategic input role, which is the function of a board, as well as jumping in anytime some practical community work was required. Be it organising catering, speaking at Africause events, interviewing for new staff, serving food and drinks, helping out in the office or mentoring young people, they are always happy to contribute to the greater good.

2022 see a bit of a changing of the guard too when it comes to the Africause board as we are renewing a few positions. This means unfortunately that some much loved and respected people will be stepping down from the board and it also means that we will have the opportunity to welcome some new faces with new ideas and renewed enthusiasm.

On behalf of Africause, a huge thankyou to our retiring board members. Three of whom, were on the board when I joined, were very welcoming and have been a pleasure to work with every day over the past 6 years

- Aban James: Aban has been on our board for the past 2 and a half years. Aban has been a great link for the board to the younger generation, through sport and also to the communities of South-East of Melbourne. While no longer on the board, Aban will continue his work within the community and will still be very visible.

- Summayyah Sadiq: Summayyah has always been the voice of reason on the board. She has been willing to challenge all of us and to ensure we have kept on track, ensuring that all programs deliver their desired outcomes.

- Dr Mohammed Aba-Bulgu: Mohammed has been the board Treasurer for Africause since our inception. He is passing that baton onto his mentee Julie McAllister who has been deputising for him off and on whole Dr Aba-Bulgu has been spending increasing amounts of time overseas.

- Yasseen Musa. Yasseen: is the hardest working person I have ever met (although Dr Berhan does give him a good run for his money). Yasseen has decided to step back from his board responsibility and will be concentrating on his phenomenal volunteer work. Yasseen has been at the forefront of our AFL refereeing initiative, the homework club, our Covid response to the housing commission flat lockdown, our efforts for feeding the homeless, the Maribyrnong youth activity centre and has front and centre at every Africause event. Yasseen assures me that none of this will change. We will all still see plenty of him, he just won't be attending board meetings any longer. He has graciously also agreed to chair our Community Leaders Advisory Committee, so his workload certainly won't be any lighter!

FUNDING OUR FUTURE

My final thoughts this year, as they are every year, revolve around the critical issue of how Africause can continue to do all the amazing work we do with and for the community.

Africause fulfill a very important role in society. Our staff, volunteers and members have a far greater connection with the community than any government led initiative could ever have. That is because our people are part of that community. They live in it, work with it and are

deeply affected by all of those things that affect the community.

In the last 2 years we have seen year-on-year growth in government funding, which is very much appreciated. Typically, however, government funding is tied to very specific program inputs with specific activities that money can be spent on. Overall programs to be effective require additional operational expenditure, which is typically not funded so, the more successful Africause is at attracting funding and in delivering community changing programs, the more money we need to find from other sources.

Most of our day-to-day administration is also not covered by government funding, some has been on a short-term basis, but most is not.

We have had some wonderful support this year and to see the enthusiasm with which people have reached into their pockets to ensure that Africause can continue to do what we do is heart-warming. We are being asked to do more each year and we do not intend to let those in need down. So, to ensure that we can continue to deliver this vital work, especially as we continue to grow, I would ask everyone to think of Africause when considering who to support with your charitable donations. As a registered charity anything you donate or bequeath to Africause, is tax deductible. If you are or know of a foundation who are looking to make a major positive impact upon the lives of recent migrants and refugees, then we would love to talk to you/them about a mutually beneficial partnership that can deliver those positive outcomes.

Thank you all for your support to date and thank you in advance for your future support – it is very much appreciated, and it makes the world of difference to a lot of people's lives.



CEO'S REFLECTIONS:



Dr Berhan Ahmed
CEO

Over the last ten years when there were expectations of a growing community of people of African descent in Australia, and greater understanding, the opposite happened. Open hostility towards young people of African descent across the landscape driven through continued and relentless negative media portrayal. The organisation was created to enable the labelled and young people under siege to find some place where they could be encouraged and listened to.

Africause was created solely to give voice to young people of African descent and their family. It made sense to drive the organisational agenda increasingly through community engagement, defined as “the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people.

Central to this approach was the goal to build trust, enlist new resources and allies, create better communication, and improve overall life outcomes as for young people of African descent”.

The rationale for community-engaged was to set up all our work reflective of action-research to enable informed and evidence-based input to relevant policy making. This “ecological” view is consistent with the idea that inequalities have their roots in larger socioeconomic conditions. If health and wellbeing is socially determined, then the constant attack on the young people were bound to compromise their/family health and wellbeing. The commitment to addressing issues was/is only possible by engaging community partners who bring their own perspectives and understandings of community life. Whatever ideas, strategies or actions then approaches to improvement take into account the concerns of families and communities and be able to benefit linguistically/culturally diverse African populations.

This emphasis on our commitment to community engagement has encouraged collaborating service providers, community leaders, and the young people themselves to imagine new opportunities as they new challenges.

Moreover, community engagement for us is grounded in the principles: of fairness, justice, empowerment, participation, and self-determination.

AFRICA USE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Increasing Level of Community Involvement, Impact, Trust, and Communication Flow.

Outreach

- Some Community Involvement Communication flows from one to the other, to inform and provide community with information.
- Outcomes: Optimally, establishes communication channels and channels for outreach.

Consult

- More Community Involvement Communication flows to the community and then back, answer seeking
- Gets information or feedback from the community.
- Entities share information

Outcomes: Develops connections

Involves

- Better Community Involvement Communication flows both ways, participatory form of communication
- Involves more participation with community on issues.
- More cooperation with each other.

Outcomes: Visibility of partnership established with increased cooperation.

Collaborate

- Community Involvement Communication cyclical flow
- Forms partnerships with community on each aspect of initiatives from development to solution.

Outcomes: Partnership building, trust building.

Shared Leadership

- Bidirectional Relationship with decision making at community level.
- Strong partnership structures are formed.

Outcomes: Broader outcomes affecting broader community with strong trust built.

SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT – HEALTH & WELLBEING

A ten-week program for women and their daughters (Southern Metro). The aim of the project was to give young women an introduction to human rights and their relevance to their lives. In respect for family, their mothers were invited to participate as a sign of respect as well as ensuring the values imparted would create a better understanding about human rights and how they add value, rather than break up families.

THE PROGRAM EXPLORED

- safety for women in the home and outside the home
- sexual and reproductive health
- education
- access to services



The group had access to Victoria Police personnel to explain how to access their services and hear how their safety was a priority. Women's health services also provided an overview of what is available and how it can be accessed. Most importantly the women saw value in the process and from a group of 12 women, at the end of the 10 weeks there were 30 women who brought their daughter. The importance was elevated to a point where a number of the women took time off work, just to be with the group.

YOUNG PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT INTERACTION WITH THE POLICE

A human Rights and responsibility one day workshop was provided for young people in Southern Metro Region. 31 young people attended and 6 elderly men. The day explored several issues including obligations of a number of services such as schools in enabling schooling for children coming out of refugee camps. The key take away was the emphasis on

- seeing themselves as deserving of respect as full members of the community
- finding a place in the community to contribute
- finding their voice
- making sure the services were not processing them as a "charity" but as full deserving members of the community.

The success of the group was measured by observing how the young people continued to meet weekly independent of the project to give each other support. From that group one went on to gain his MBA and start a sports mentoring business, while another person gained a place as a youth advisor with a university working group. Notably the young people were from across the African continent.

A similar forum/workshop were run in Carlton & Footscray for the Northwest Metro region. The focus for the Footscray workshop was more around Human Rights and the Justice System, while the Carlton workshop was around Human Rights and Responsibilities – Finding a Voice as a young black man in the face of cosented

media vilification of people of African descent. This workshop addressed human rights as well as existing protections. From that group the community gained strong advocates who work through sports/art to counter stereotypes of the "Black Criminal Angry Young Man".



COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS.

Africause has established itself as a trusted entity by young people, as well as their parents. Where there have been serious matters their young people have presented to the organisation to broker being handed over to the authorities. Parents trust the legal advice provided through the volunteer legal, as well as allies of the organisation who endeavour to provide services to the community.

During the Covid emergency, community members turned to Africause, for basic needs, particularly after the perceived unfair treatment of their families living in the Flemington/North Melbourne Public Housing Estate. To date Africause has continued to be responsive as an agency to support the creation of a "safe" environment for young people and their siblings. The work with families is focused on enabling Food Security/School Education/Safety/Psychosocial Health and wellbeing all of which are minimum human rights for young people to attain their potential.

ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

Africause has been involved in working with women entrepreneurs (sole parents), by connecting them with relevant support to unravel the complex business

environment to operate in Australia. These are women who sustained themselves in refugee camps with their entrepreneurial activities. This is the work that is done through leveraging existing local programs to minimise women's dependency on the welfare system. The covid shutdown adversely impacted families depending on such small businesses, resulting in more demand for our service to broker support.

PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET:

A program to identify and contextualise barriers to employment for young people of African descent was initiated. This also included some mothers who had school-aged children and were keen to get back. Africause brokered several successful initiatives, but there is more work that needs to be done to minimise the exclusion of young people from school dropout and chosen career paths because of discrimination.

CONCLUSION

Successful in their effort because Africause is committed to honouring an understanding that:

- Communities have been engaged across all the goals of the effort.
- The effort is taken to know the community, including its norms, history, and experience with engagement efforts, unlike services that ignore the socio-cultural complexities of people of African descent.
- Building trust and relationships and getting commitments from formal and informal leadership (this is critical because mainstream services often believe people nominating themselves community leaders with no reference to the community itself)
- Collective self-determination is the responsibility and right of all community members.
- Partnering with the community is necessary to create change and improve family health and well-being which includes young people.



In the next three-years, Africause intends to deliver more human rights education as the UN Human Rights Council 55th Session noted that "Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance....." (Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Elaboration of Complementary Standards on its twelfth session" - can only be addressed through robust human rights education.

- Recognize and respect community cultures and other factors affecting diversity in designing and implementing approaches.
- Sustainability of results from mobilizing community assets and developing capacities and resources.
- Being prepared to release control to the community and flexible enough to meet changing needs (as demonstrated in not doing the football -camps and homework club during the lockdown but focusing on food security).
- Community collaboration requires long-term commitment, and Africause has demonstrated its flexibility and adaptability with its advocacy, lobbying, and direct brokerage efforts.

Currently, Africause priority is to create a safe street for our youth to return home. Unfortunately, on average at least one youth is killed or stabbed every week in Melbourne, according to the families losing their child reporting to Africause. These is very series and requires an urgent action.

According to Africause families and community information received, there are over 200 young people in Collingwood, Flemington, Carlton, North Melbourne, Sunshine, Werribee, Dandenong, on the path of crime gangs unless they supported.



OUR PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

AUSTRALIA DAY 2022 CELEBRATION

2022 Australia day African cultural and music celebration at Yarraville Garden in Yarraville with an amazing gathering of families, children and mainstream neighbours at the Park. It was a resounding successful event despite the weather hot weather which failed to dampen the happy, fun, and vibrant atmosphere of the festival attended by over 450 people, from all backgrounds. The mothers with children added special colourful taste with endless dance and show from the different artists and comedians.

It was remarkable success and our experience at Yarraville was a positive one, which would engage the local communities and neighbours to share and network for good neighbourhood. We thank the Maribyrnong council for their invaluable support and contribution to the festival and the Australia day funding committee for financial support. . We will be the largest African Festival in Western suburb with strong local government support and engagement, the local business and community support. Community leaders and members has an





exemplary role and contributions to the festival due to their tireless effort to make the event success and look forward to continuing this vibrant celebration of African culture in western suburb an event in the colander of the west into the future.

We are grateful to all the volunteers, sponsors, the city of Maribyrnong council, local Businesses, the Camera and video from Australian Multicultural Media centre and the neighbours who attended and participated to make the event part of their Australia day celebration with the multicultural society.

STATE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESS

Maribyrnong council in partnership with Africause made a successful grant application to improve the image of the Nicholson St business district to attract shoppers for the restaurants, coffee shops and the mosaic African boutique and African hair braiding mall. The local MP Katie Hall and the minister of small Business Hon. Anthony Carbine launched the fund of \$300k to decorate Nicholson St Footscray with automated lighting of different colours to brighten the street artistic design displays at night live.

The fund has been a welcome by the local businesses and communities for creating a safe street at night to assist shoppers post COVID pandemic lockdown business encouragement.

VICTORIA POLICE DIVERSITY RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

The Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program Pilot commenced in 2018 to support and nurture engagement and relationship between African-Australian communities and Victoria Police. The program provides an opportunity for Victoria Police to reflect and represent the community it serves. The delivery partners are Jesuit Social Services, Victoria University and Victoria Police. Victoria Police also worked with a wider Steering Committee including members from Africause, AMES, Matchworks, and Maurice Blackburn. **(Thanks goes to JSS for providing the report).**

The pilot has now been continued and expanded to include other under-represented cultural communities. This includes, but is not limited to, First Nations Peoples of Australia applicants, Maori or Pasifika applicants and applicants who are of Middle Eastern, East Asian, South Asian, South American and African heritage.

In 2022 there have been 3 recruitment rounds, Round 3 recruitment targeted applicants from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background.

Key messages and stats for Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program as of 16 November 2022.

Previous funding (Round 1-6) + new funding (Round 1-3)

168

Participants enrolled in the Program (24 African countries represented)

47

cultures represented (24 African countries represented in previous funding and new funding rounds)

58

Participants successfully passed the Victoria Police Entrance Exam

51

Participants identify as female

22

22 Participants have been offered places at the Academy in Police, PSO or PCO roles

**12 Police, 5 PSO and 5 PCO
18 graduated and 4 in the academy
(13 African countries represented in the Force)**

132

Participants completed the 15 week Course in Policing Recruitment Pathways at Victoria University



A further 16 Participants have secured work through alternative pathways including the Army reserve, Border Force and Corrections services

Round 1: 20 Participants enrolled in

Round 2: 23 Participants enrolled in

There are currently 4 active participants in Round 1 and Round 2 of the new funding rounds 2022–2023.

Round 3: 8 Participants enrolled in Round 3 (Aboriginal Participants)

22 Participants have now been offered roles at the Victoria Police Academy:

18 Participants who have graduated from the Victoria Police Academy and are now stationed across Victoria.

And, **4 Participants** are currently training at the Victoria Police Academy

And, **1 Participant** is in the candidate pool awaiting a start date at the Academy.

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

72 Participants supported and referred to various alternative pathways.

78 referrals including:

- 3 Job Advocates

- 28 to JVES/ Major Projects

- 4 to Vline/Metro

- 2 to VPS

- 1 to CDP at JSS

- 30 to VU Foundation Course

- 12 to Job Actives

- 3 to PCO pipeline prior to be included as outcome

- 2 to health services

Highlights of employment via our Program support or referrals:

- 12 – JVES/ Major Projects/ Job Actives/ Job Advocates

- 1 Army

- 1 Border Force

- 1 Bus Driver via Africause partnership with TransDev

- 1 SES (volunteer role)

- 1 Prison Officer at Barwon (via JVES)

- 1 Corrections Officer

The following comments by African–Australian program participants are quotations from the Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program Pilot Program Evaluation, December 2021:

“Being in this role has made a massive difference to my family, especially I see with my kids, the way they behave and the way they interact with people and the Police when they see them, they say ‘Oh my Dad is in Police’ ... They are not scared of the Police... For me growing up in Nigeria ... we did not have that. When you see the Police, you run away.... but my kids here have a completely different mentality. And I think also (in) my community it ... changed some of the attitudes of the people. Some of them begin it have a different mindset in what they do and what they think is the right thing and how they interact with the Police.” Successful VPDRP Recruit ¹

“I want to be a role model with my youth community. ... me wearing the Victoria Police uniform is a message for them that they can ... be anyone that they want to be ... any job ... any dream that they have. There are a lot of misconceptions between Victoria Police and youth. The youth always, they don’t have trust with the Victoria Police, so I want to build that trust. So me wearing the uniform will change a lot of misconceptions.” Successful VPDRP Recruit ²

¹ Participant A, Constable Victoria Police, feedback October 2021.

² Participant B, Protective Service Officer Victoria Police, feedback October 2021

“Being a member of Victoria Police means a lot to me because Victoria Police ... is a respectable organisation. It is good for me because coming from where I am from ... the Police ... are not as respected as Victoria Police. That is a core reason it represents an opportunity to act as a role model to other members of my community, especially the young ones. Because when they see people like them in the organisation, they are more receptive, and then they understand that Victoria Police is there to do a job for every member of the community.” Successful VPDRP Recruit ³

“When they (young people in my community) see me wearing the uniform or people in the Victoria Police, their misconceptions, their misunderstandings completely change. They ask me a lot of questions. Some of them want to join the Police. ... so I see that as having improved ... I want to be a role model for them.” Successful VPDRP Recruit ⁴



Arsène's Story

“Africause has been actively contributing to the wider Victorian society for several years; especially to the lives of countless African Victorians (including by significantly helping them to settle successfully in Australia). One such contribution is its proactive involvement in the “Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program” whereby would-be candidates of African heritage are up skilled (TAFE training) so that they can pass the police entrance exam. Indeed, Africause spearheaded this tremendous initiative alongside Victoria Police, the Jesuit Social Services and Victoria University a couple of years ago. Today, many African Victorians who attended said program have joined Victoria Police as either “Police Custody Officers” (PCOs), “Protective Service Officers” (PSOs) or Police members.

On a more personal note, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to its CEO and founder, Dr Berhan AHMED, for his ongoing tremendous leadership that continues to greatly benefit the manifold African-Victorian and African-Australian communities. Dr Berhan AHMED and the Board of Africause are indeed doing a fantastic job and I wish them well”.

Senior Constable Arsène Juste (AJ) BOUNDA 41524, chairperson Victoria Police African Employee Network (VICPOLAEN), Victoria Police.

³ Participant A, Constable Victoria Police, feedback October 2021.

⁴ X'X

FAMILY VIOLENCE VICTIMS SUPPORT (WOMAN AND CHILDREN)

Africause office has been inundated with women and children seeking help with financial, accommodation and housing. Thanks goes to our Partners in Igniting change for their unwavering support financially and with continued shopping support to families and children. Africause Holistic approach helping families include providing children continued support with their schooling and provide necessary support to stay with their families support and care. Our Partners at Igniting change also provide computers, children's clothing, games and books. Thus, this helped many children to continue their schooling and remain within their mother's care.

The Igniting change financial support of \$1,000 with immediate furniture's and other home items provides the children less disruption in their schooling and their school friends. This support and other similar support has saved many children and their families to remain intact. The school dropout has been minimised and the interaction with justice system reduced with such children. In the last 6 years Africause helped over 164 families with domestic violence with an average of 5 children aged under 18 years of age.

According to Africause experience with victims of domestic violence of women and children, it is always advisable to provide immediate support to minimise the exposure of the children to unnecessary trauma and uncomfortable environment.



In the last 6 years Africause helped over 164 families with domestic violence with an average of 5 children aged under 18 years of age.

ANTI-RACISM PROJECT

An important aspect of our life in Australia that we as African often don't pay attention to, and that is the problem of racism. Children/Youth from migrant families feel such racism but the family don't understand, how to deal with it.

Africause received funding from Victorian State Government's Department of Families, Fairness and House (DFFH), under the Local Anti-Racism Initiatives Grants Program 2021 - Community Harmony Stream. Africause's is "to support and facilitate an engaged African-Australian community in all areas of life". Its mission is to support the building of resilient, active citizens who are directly involved in identifying and managing pathways to full participation in Australia.

Africause's key priorities are:

1. Advocacy: provide information and education to the broader community in ways that will enable equitable opportunities for all African Australians.
2. Participation: provide information and training on Australian work-place cultures and expectations.
3. Support: assist communities to minimise young people's contact with the criminal justice system.

Designed to reduce racism, this Africause project aligned to aspects of the following three DFFH antiracism thematic areas:

- a) Increase tolerance and understanding of marginalised groups in the community, through open dialogue with organisations and individuals.
- b) Encourage the integration of marginalised groups into the broader community by developing empathy and support through shared cultural knowledge.
- c) Proactively address the need for youth from these communities to avoid activities that will see them become part of the justice system.

FINDINGS

1. In total, twenty-nine (n=29) participants, aged 16 years and older, who represented Ethiopia, South Sudan, Somali, Eritrea, and other unspecified African groups, participated in the workshops.

2. Of the twenty-nine (n=29) participants, twelve (n=12) completed both the pre and post surveys. Nine (n=9) completed only the pre surveys and seventeen (n=17) completed the post surveys.

3. The findings presented below, focus on only the twelve (n=12) participants who completed both pre and post survey questions.

o Pre and post survey responses: feelings, knowledge, and attitudes of young African Victorians towards police community engagement programs.

o What does police community engagement look like?

Participants were given three options when asked what police community engagement looked like:

- Joint activities between different police agencies to achieve a desired law enforcement outcome.
- Joint activities between police and communities that aim to achieve a desired outcome, give communities greater voice in what police do and improve relations.
- Shared activities between different community groups to improve community relations.

Nine (n=9) of the twelve (n=12) indicated joint activities between police and communities that aim to achieve a desired outcome, give communities greater voice in what police do and improve relations (point 2.) was preferred, pre and post.

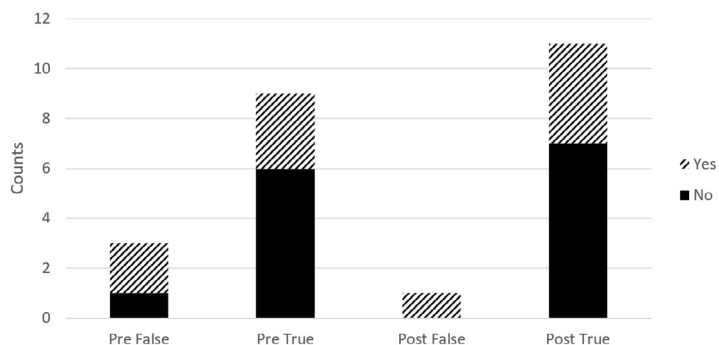


Table 1: Sport and recreational police-community engagement programs aim to help people feel less isolated from society with - Have you had contact with police in the last 12 months?

Of those who had had contact with the police in the twelve months prior to the workshop, a similar number believed it was both true and false that the aim of police-community sport and recreation programs was to help people feel less isolated. After the workshop far more thought it was true rather than false.

AFRICAUSE CLIENTS AND UNIQUE SERVICES

ANNEMARIE AGBORCHI & DR. BERHAN AHMED

“Strong communities are the backbone of healthy, harmonious and wealthy societies”

For more than six years, Dr Berhan has been listening. Listening to over 5000 mothers, fathers, young people, elderly, and community leaders on the challenges facing them as individuals, families and communities. Stories filled with grief, stress, pain, frustration, and despair. For many, the Africause office in the heart of Footscray is one of the last and only places to which clients can turn to whilst struggling to deal with the complexities of the Australian social, educational and justice system. Oftentimes, they have been referred by their friends or community members/leaders who have shared stories of how Africause has positively impacted their lives.

Dr Berhan knows each client by name, not by their client number. The reasons for the visits are all different; each story is unique and needs a different intervention. At the heart of each interaction with a mother, young person, or family is the desire to understand the underlying problem and contributing factors. Most of the stories are complex and impacted by aspects such as country of origin, language, cultural customs, religion, illiteracy, lack of network, home situations, lack of role models, and current area of residence. Fortunately, most of the clients can communicate in their own language, as Dr Berhan speaks several languages. This enables the clients to share their stories and express their requests for help clearly and avoids misinterpretations resulting from incorrect and inconsistent translation services. Most of the time, the clients feel relieved when they share their

problems with Dr Berhan, because, for the first time, they can express their problems to someone who genuinely understands and wants to assist them.

A significant number of visits are linked to issues related to young people facing school dropouts and the involvement of young people in the Youth Justice system. Oftentimes, there is a lack of understanding regarding the Australian Youth Justice system, personal rights, and misconceptions about the role of the police. Africause works together with individual families, community leaders and mentors, as well as mainstream services and government institutions, such as the Department of Education and Training and Victoria Police. The main focus of Africause is on prevention and early intervention, and several programs and workshops are provided to inform, guide and instruct. Furthermore, programs with Victoria Police aim to build trust between young people of African backgrounds and the police. A lack of trust is frequently caused by observed and experienced racial profiling of young African-background people by the police, which is often based on racist and discriminatory assumptions. Similarly, this occurs within school settings where young African Australian students experience racism and discrimination and are often considered “inherent troublemakers” who need to be suspended or expelled. Added to this are negative media portrayals and an educational deficit approach by teachers, which negatively impacts the young people’s school attendance, engagement and feelings of belonging to educational settings.



Consequently, these young African-background people refuse to attend school or drop out altogether and often become involved with alcohol, drugs, petty theft or other criminal activities. This frequently leads to involvement with the Youth Justice system and, unfortunately, many of these marginalised and vulnerable young people end up in juvenile detention. Therefore, it is imperative that effective preventative initiatives are developed and delivered in collaboration with educational stakeholders, mainstream services and Victoria Police. Africause is highly committed to informing and assisting families, young people and community members to prevent the involvement of young people in the Youth Justice system.

Besides prevention and early intervention, Africause also offers remedial assistance to young people detained in juvenile detention and correction centres. For example, incarcerated young people are linked up to mentors that often originate from the same cultural background and have experienced similar issues and were able to overcome them. The mentors assist the incarcerated young people with their schoolwork, career planning and mental health, and continues to do this after being released. Africause also mentors the impacted families as it fosters a “whole family approach” and prepares them for the release of their children. When required, Africause arranges financial assistance (from donors such as Igniting Change) and mentoring services related to parenting skills, family violence and conflict management.

The role of the families and the cultural communities is extremely important in the rehabilitating process. This is where the approach of Africause differs from the mainstream justice system’s approach. Africause strongly believes that the key to success is bringing the released young people back to their families and cultural communities where they can receive support. This community approach allows the young people to reconcile with their families while receiving assistance from Africause with further schooling, training and employment. The holistic programs offered by Africause are implemented based on the observed needs of individual clients, families and communities, and there are many amazing and inspiring stories on how Africause has changed the lives of its hundreds of clients.



EDUCATION: WORKING WITH SCHOOL CHILDREN & SCHOOLS

It is critical that education support African Australian children in school and youth to gain language and academic skills to prepare and position them for the workplace. Coordinated and systematic and research-based action in education is needed to improve school retention rates, i.e., to drastically lower current dropout rates which are too high. The News Bulletin (no 10, Oct. 2017) entitled Fresh Voice, issued by AAMYES, carried an article entitled "School Expulsion Goes Against Society's Standards" which tracks the difficult issue involved for some African Victorian students and the critical need for a much better understanding of a response to the needs of such students so that they can remain in school and succeed there.



Adongwot's Testimony

I was introduced to Dr Berhan Ahmed and the Africause organisation through one of their many workshops aimed at facilitating cultural cohesion. I was invited by a community leader to join a panel to share my experiences navigating the Australian education system as a young South Sudanese woman.

Following the workshop, Dr Berhan exposed me to many people and opportunities within the community development, academic, and media space. That single workshop resulted in me applying and being awarded a 2019 Winston Churchill Fellowship- moving me from a passive contributor to a position to actively contribute to improving educational outcomes for minority youths in Victoria.

This is a testimony to the kind of support Africause provides the community. Not only does Africause offer services for disadvantaged and marginalised members of the community, but Dr. Berhan also goes above and beyond. Working tirelessly to bring a large variety of communities, organisations, law enforcement, and everyday together to cultivate constructive conversations that serve to strengthen the Victorian community.

Africause is an organisation of endless opportunities for those who need support and advocacy with matters such as education, employment, criminal justice services among others to those who seek networking opportunities to further their ambitions.

Such children need education that is much more sensitive to their unique circumstances, cultural background, pre-migration, or Australian life experiences as well as literacy, English as a Second Language and mother tongue support initiatives tailored to their needs. Whatever level of learning and development such African Victorian children are experiencing it is incumbent on the education system to research their distinctive needs and to support these young people, their teachers and parents much more robustly to ensure they are able to achieve success in core learning areas, literacy, English and academic skills, and to become independent learners able to follow post-schooling education, training or work options according to their needs, desires and abilities. Because many of these children and young people have experienced disrupted schooling, often trauma in pre-migration settings, this challenging objective needs to be based on solid and credible research, comparing support program delivery options from diverse systems catering to such students' needs, and best practice innovation as a result. Linked to actions to support schools and teachers to design and deliver appropriate teaching and learning experiences there is an urgent need to improve communication with and involvement of parents.

A wider question of curriculum innovation to bring about greater cultural awareness, representation of Africa and African experiences in mainstream curriculum, anti-racist education and related multicultural education initiatives should accompany these measures. Careers guidance and subject choice decisions should also be based on concrete and practical consultation with young people and their families.

While all these measures are important the priority should be literacy and English language acquisition, both of which are linked closely to cognitive abilities of children in the mother tongues, whether they or their families have literate traditions or rely on oral literacy practices. While this is especially true for younger and infants' years children's teachers of African children of all ages in schooling will benefit and be able to support these children better with access to information, professional development support and best practice-based innovation in home language, bilingual and ESL/ literacy support.

Recently Africause in partnership with Victoria University has established a project to train African Australian teachers to assist and support African Australian children in schools and be a role model. The project is commencing soon.

Similarly, Africause in Partnership with Igniting change sponsorship of an international renowned south Sudanese artist Emmanuel Jal invited and visited to school with high number of African Australian students, namely Melton secondary college in Melton and St John's Secondary college in Dandenong. Thus, these activities and engagement helps the students to be inspired and connected to their roots to have self-esteem and confidence.

According to Africause the continued engagement and support provided from our partners such as igniting change with computers, fortnightly shopping, games, clothing for the families has help the children and created a positive school engagement of the target students and minimised school dropouts.



**MESSAGE FROM THE
CHAIRPERSON, VICTORIAN
MULTICULTURAL COMMISSION**

Vivienne Nguyen

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Africause board, management, staff, and volunteers for their hard work and contribution in the past year.

I admire the approach Africause has undertaken in putting the lived experience of their members, the allyship, and leadership of the board and the firm belief in the role of community at the heart of the organisation, which mobilises and leverages our collective experience to achieve better, more sustainable and culturally acceptable outcomes for people in need and the broader community.

The advocacy efforts Africause leads, amongst the executive and board members, does not contain to the organisation, but extends to the sector more broadly, which is much needed as we learn to navigate into the recovery on a higher threshold of equity, inclusion and representation.

A socially harmonious and cohesive society where we can all feel proud to be a part, a contributor, and a participant of is fundamental to multicultural Victoria. I am grateful and appreciative of the work Africause does and extend my congratulations to all members of the organisation on their efforts.

YOUTH RESILIENCE BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Africause has been engaging African Australian youth in employment, sport and other activities to build resilience, such as:

- i) Africause dedicated mentors from same culturally background.
- ii) On Track field marathon Program in Partnership with Melbourne University, for year 10, 11 and 12 with potential scholarship at the university.
- iii) Introduction to human right workshop (Workshop involved 16 youths from the African Community, in an interactive session where they were educated on their "Rights & Responsibilities).
- iv) Africa Day Celebration Footscray Park. Africause participated in soccer tournament by fielding a team of youths and came Second in that Tournament.
- v) New and Emerging Communities Soccer Tournament. Africause participated and fielded a team of disengaged youths who Won that Tournament among many multicultural teams. Additionally, organised a soccer tournament of mix girls and boys in Clifton Hill Private soccer ground.
- vi) Africa Day Celebration Raven Hall Correctional Facility. Africause second annual Celebration at Raven Hall Correctional was larger and more engaging than last year. Africause invited both sporting codes, AFL and FV (Football Victoria) to the prison. Africause also took two full African Australian Youth Football Teams from both Sunshine and Reservoir to participate in an Indoor Soccer Competition held inside the Correctional Facility.

It was the first-time sport had been used as a vehicle for engagement in this exercise. Music and Lunch was also provided by Africause, and the Inmates engaged to reach out to our Organization for assistance with employment. Thank goes to management, particularly to Mr. Godefa Berhane (Faith and culture coordinator), and Ms. Claire Yeatman (manager transition and reintegration, Ravenhall Correction Centre).

vii) Africause and Football Victoria (FV) both venture in Referees Course which was held at Darebin International Sporting Complex. 18 Referees completed the one-day course and all gained employment with FV.

viii) Africause and FV both venture a two full day Course for Coaching "C" License at Darebin International Sporting Complex. 16 Coaches graduated the Course, making Africause the pioneer and the first Organization to engage the local African Community and integrate them not only as players, but also as part of the implementation and management of the beautiful game (Soccer) with the governing body of the sport, Football Victoria.

ix) Africause took Youths to the AFL North Melbourne Kangaroos game as an exercise during the school holidays for engagement, thank you to AFL Multicultural group, particularly Mr. Xavier Maloney and his team.

x) Africause took Youths to the RAAF Air-show in Avalon to engage them into Défense Force Recruiting.

xi) Africause Youth participated in the Annual Ramadan Dinner and soccer competition.



xii) Africause Youth Participated in the FAIR PLAY Tournament which raises funds for Cambodian Youth. Africause entered two teams of youths into that Event which was sponsored by Melbourne Victory and Football Victoria. Africause Won that competition as well.

xiii) Agri Skills MILDURA RELOCATION EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM. We had 22 participants take place in the relocation program this year to work as Fruit Pickers in Mildura. Africause funded \$3000 for the two weeks accommodation to assist our at-risk youths and members of the community relocate. First experience in regional employment for Africause. Plenty of room for improvement.

xiv) Connect the Dots Program: Africause Employment program also leveraged of this unique employment program which was held in Flemington Community Centre. We recruited over 50 participants for AFL SportsReady through this partnership.

xv) Australian football umpiring training of African Australian youth has been very successful with over 33 youth (boys and girls completed). Thus, created weekend employment.





ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT:

Africause is uniquely placed, as a well-established and well-connected organisation operating in inner-West Melbourne, to achieve the aims of youth engagement. We have strong and existing links with Somali, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Oromo, South Sudanese and other minority communities (such as Denkely, Harari and Djiboutian community), working with individuals, youth and adults, families and businesses to assist and support them through the range of challenges commonly facing

African Australians (employment, education, legal assistance, mental health, managing and minimising risk behaviours in the community, racism and disadvantage). We have built strong links and relationships with local employers (such as Kennedy Tax, Dream Homes Real Estate, Victoria Police, AFL umpiring, fencing company, security industry, etc), and industries (meat factory, Cleaning, Newform Aluminium factory, Aged care and NDIS industry employment, etc), in recent years Africause created a small businesses support services and data base to enhance co-operation and engagement of businesses and mentoring of youth.

“Our work with BSL in Flemington has been referring and connecting youth/adult to develop skills and access employment and support with access to small businesses.”

Africause already collaborate with two large JVEN providers, the Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre and Jesuit Social Services in relation to JVEN employment and training services to members of our communities and connections (eg VicPol recruitment diversity initiative, Flemington Homework club, security training, hospitality training for our small Businesses, housing support). Thus this connection has provided employment for over 152 members and over 45 pathway to employment. Moreover, Africause partnership with Thrive Refugee enterprise to assist and support members with self-employment and connection with Australia Post as a delivery, cleaning franchise, etc. This opportunity has provided over 23 members with self employment opportunity.

Africause has the source of potential participants who are not yet job ready into pre-accredited and accredited training to improve literacy, numeracy, and employability skills to Jesuit Community College, and have established pathways and connections to refer potential participants to Jesuit Social Services JVEN funded EmployXpress program. Our work with BSL in Flemington has been referring and connecting youth/adult to develop skills and access employment and support with access to small businesses.

We have additional existing relationships and collaborations with a range of government and community organisations, for example

- * Vic government depts./agencies etc]
 - Working with Victorian Multicultural commission, The Victorian Department of Roads, Westgate Tunnel Project link; The Department of Justice and Regulation (Juvenile justice). Victoria Police and corrections, department Human Services Victoria (Housing)

* other govt agencies/programs]

- Department of Home affairs (Australian Federal Police), Federal government employment agent with employment agencies, such as MatchWork, AMES, Maribyrnong city council, Brimbank city council, Melbourne and Moonee valley city councils, etc

* education and training organisations such as

- Victoria University, the University of Melbourne, Monash University, Jesuit community college, International Security Training Academy, International Security Training Academy.

* social and community support services such as [name of service] for [type of service], [name of 2nd service] for [type of service],

•Housing, health, disability, family support, drug and alcohol and corrections/justice services

- Umpiring training and employment with AFL
- Skills and Jobs Centres in TAFE institutes
- Free legal advice with Maurice Blackburn lawyers

- Free immigration advice with Aumlawyers
- Local Councils and council workers (Maribyrnong, Moonee valley and Brimbank council)

•Co-Partners of Unity cup with Australian Federal police and AFL

•Regional Workforce Management (RWM), Meat Processing, based in regional area

•Several other local businesses and industries, especially restaurants, butchers and hair salon; bakery etc.

•The Horn of African communities, such as Somali, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Sudanese, Haraian etc

•African organisations, Africa day, Nelson Mandela celebration, African Think Tank, African Australian Communities leadership forum, etc

VICTORIA POLICE DIVERSITY RECRUITMENT CELEBRATION DINNER

Africause in partnership with our stakeholders organised a successful Victoria Police diversity recruitment dinner at Layla Reception, in Brunswick. The dinner was attended by dignitaries, state and federal government MPs, our stakeholders, Victoria Police members, new recruits and community leaders and members participated. The celebration was a milestone achievement for Victorian African communities for a handful members joined the police, which is a good sign of integration and participation. The celebration was opened by the Victoria state government minister for Police and others to advance the recruitment program with additional fund to include other multicultural communities and rural and regional to participate.

The highlight of the celebration was one of the new



graduate recruit has said, the “joining Victoria Police was a dream and it became reality”. The many guests including community leaders has welcomed this opportunity to continue and allow many more members of the target communities to engage and participate at the Victoria Police to assist our youth and mentor for great and bigger dreams for the future.



HOMELESS & MENTAL HEALTH CLIENTS SUPPORT

Africause actively been engaged helping and support with our partners (igniting change) and the state government support to reach out to members of our communities impacted by the Lockdown and social isolation. Moreover, the lockdown created many families cries and divorce which impacted on children and youth. Single mothers with school children have been experiencing financial hardship, social isolation and lack of technology affected the engagement of mothers, families and the school children.

Thus, Africause with the support of Igniting change and state government department of families has reached to each family during and after the lockdown with necessary shopping and other necessary items. Moreover, Africause agreed with some local restaurants to provide fresh meals to the homeless, which are drug and alcohol affected and some with mental health problems. The fresh meals for



elderly people and homeless young people made a significant help for some of them to survive in an environment of social isolation and lockdown.

This is a noble project, which has an immediate outcome for members of our society to thrive and survive. Currently, this project costs about \$3250 to feed the many homeless with mental health and single mothers with children in time of their need. It is important to continue with this project as the mental health situation of many clients is seriously affected and looking for help. Donating for this project or even sponsoring would keep one person remain alive.



AFRICAUSE HOME TUTOR PROGRAM UPDATE SUMMARY

Until the end of last 2021, we had many students over 72 students receiving online tutoring, unfortunately, experienced short of tutors to provide each student with one tutor and mentor. It has been very challenging year to meet the demand and continue until the new school year. The number students start to drop, due to many reasons, including lack of tutors. Recently, we have 11 students receiving online tutoring support mainly in the subject areas of English and Maths with one Humanities. Two of these students who are high school year level are still looking for support with additional subjects – Computers and Maths, sometimes it just depends on the tutor's subject choice and the subjects the students want support with, it can be hard to get everything, but they are kept on the waiting list for the remaining subject/s if a suitable tutor comes available.

We have 11 volunteer tutors who are all allocated to students. Overall, the status quo has remained the same since the last update provided in August of this year. We have not had any issues raised regarding attendance or lack of student engagement.

Also, communication has not been an issue, and allocations have been very smooth with minimum involvement from coordinators which is very positive and shows engagement in the program.

On our waiting list, we have 64 students listed as requesting tutoring support for mostly English and Maths; however, the older year levels are looking for additional subjects – Science, Chemistry, Humanities, Computers, and others. Once we receive a tutor who is available we try to work from the top of the list but unfortunately, this is not always possible depending on the suitability of the match regarding year level/ subject and day/ time, so some students are on the list for some time. Although to note whilst it hasn't happened too often when we have reached out to a student/s when a suitable match came available they were no longer interested in receiving tutoring support.

All in all, the uptake with volunteer tutors has been slow this year in comparison to last year, which is understandable, it was very different circumstances. On the plus, we have 12 students receiving support from tutors and we have received no feedback regarding any concerns or difficulties from the tutors or the families requesting a follow-up from our end either. However, it is noted that communication from tutors is low in ascertaining how things going or if the tutor-student relationship continues to be positive.

Perhaps a fresh approach or reset would be a good option to explore in the new year to determine the exact number of students requiring tutoring and if the current allocated students are engaged with their tutors.



Another Homework support program in partnership with skyline Hatch (Skyline Education Foundation Australia) private tutoring specialised supporting year 11 and 12 students for over 15 students (girls only) with private tutoring on subjects including math, English and other subjects of importance. This tutoring has helped VCE students with their year 12 exams to excel.



TESTIMONY

WDP FINE VICTORIA SPONSORSHIP

John's Testimony

"My name is John Diwo Mashar, from South Sudan background. I had financial problems which were exacerbated by my ADHD. I was perpetually forgetting fine due dates plus struggling to stay on top of my finances.

Thankfully, a friend told me about how Africause was helping members of their community pay off their fines through volunteer work. In addition to helping pay off my fines as an accredited sponsors, Africause has enabled me to:

- Further develop my marketing content creation skills - As a marketing and social media enthusiast, I was overjoyed to have been given the opportunity to create social media content and make updates to the organisation's website.
- Introduced me to more like-minded people, community programs, leaders plus genuine people that I can lean on
- I will be enrolling in a financial literacy course that was recommended to me by Africause
- Using my creativity at the service of my people gave me a sense of purpose and routine, both of which were needed during the lockdowns"



Ms. Marisa Manini's Testimony

My experience with Africause was positive. From the very first moment I contacted Africause I understood that the company was willing to sponsor me for the WDP. I had contacted other companies, but they gave me the run around. One registered company that I contacted took my details and told me that I would receive a call from them, but they never called me. On the other hand, Africause took matters in their hands immediately. They had great communication skills and they quickly made me feel comfortable and reassured me that they would sponsor me. My fear of not finding a sponsor finally ended. All the staff of Africause were great to work with.

07/11/2022

To whom it may concern,

I write this letter of support to confirm that Melton Secondary College is backing the Africause' "Community approach to youth justice system prevention and remedial; working with schools to stop children and youth dropout of schools with the parents and schools". Melton Secondary College has a long established partnership engagement with the Africause through their youth outreach programs to increase with the retention and capacity building, especially with the students of African heritage.

Melton Secondary College has benefited from a recent visit of prominent South Sudanese former child soldier, actor and musician known as Emmanuel Jal who performed to the students and staff. Emmanuel has personally struggled with the hardship through long civil war in South Sudan/Sudan to become a successful international figure, now a peace ambassador living in Toronto, Canada. Emmanuel Jal was able to attend and offer motivational speech to our students, as students felt very inspired by his lived experiences.

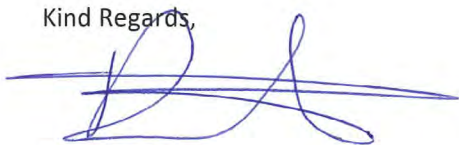
Emmanuel's school outreach engagement session was organised by the Africause, as an opportunity to build the resilience and cultural connect for the students of African heritage, while raising cultural awareness and understanding for other students and teachers of diverse background about journey that refugee families endured, including intergeneration gaps in the host countries.

Through school engagement programs with the Africause, our College community able to connect with their outreach activities including Cultural Diversity Week celebrations which happens each year in Term 4, Week 2 each year, as Dr. Berhan has attending the event since 2017 representing his organisation. Melton Secondary College acknowledges the Africause' various youth engagement programs, including their youth justice system prevention strategies and outreach to prevent youth dropout of schools by working with the local schools, parents and young people.

We will continue to engage and partner with the Africause through their outreach programs that empower student engagement, wellbeing and retention as proven with this year 2022 with Emmanuel Jal's school tour. The platform has offered many of our students with opportunity to learn about their parent's journey, including other diverse student cohorts and staff members who benefitted from the initiative.

We look forward to building onto our partnership and achieving positive outcomes through any future projects and outreach support with the Africause term, as this benefits our students through pro bono community and youth outreach.

Kind Regards,



Robert Aduer
Community Liaison Coordinator



21/11/2022

To whom it may concern.

My name is Matthew Hyde and I am the Executive Principal of Parkville College. Parkville College is a specialist school that delivers education within all Youth Justice Centres across Victoria, and at a small number of other Secure service sites that support vulnerable cohorts. I have been fortunate and have worked with the College since its inception in 2012 and have had the privilege of being College Principal for the past 6 years.

I am writing a letter of reference for Africause to highlight the incredible support and care they have willingly afforded our children.

Youth Justice is heavily overrepresented by children of colour. The latest Youth Parole Board report highlighted these overrepresentations and noted specifically the large number of Young African children in custody. Predominantly of South-Sudanese background, on average approximately 50% of children in Youth Justice on any given day are of African descent.

Connection to culture and community is imperative in being able to alter these statistics. Research and history tell us that the more connected a child is to who they are, and where they come from, the less likely they are to arrive at a Youth Justice facility, or return.

As a college we are constantly looking at new and innovative ways to make these connections, and to create pathways and opportunities for children to grow and excel. For a considerable period of time, Africause has been present, open and willing to partner in such initiatives.

A recent example of this was the employment and mentoring of young leaders leaving our system. Alongside Campuses inside the Youth Justice Centres in Victoria, Parkville College also operates a Flexible Learning Centre in the community. A school for students that leave Youth Justice without an appropriate transition point in place, that need something bespoke and supportive as they map and plan their next pathway.

As could be imagined, children in Youth Justice generally have a strained relationship with education. One where schools have not been a place of empowerment and support.

Creating an education space where this is different, is always a goal and aspiration.

To support in developing a space like this, we looked at employing two former students, that had not been in Youth Justice for some time to work onsite at the Community Campus as mentors and advocates for children. Two individuals that knew what it was like to walk inside custody, and the challenges and complexities that come with both school and Youth Justice. These were two exceptional young people that were natural leaders, but two young people that were also still dealing with the challenges of navigating their education and future.

Through Berhan Ahmed, Africause offered to be the conduit for employment for these young people, and provide mentoring, coaching, and development whilst they undertook these roles in classrooms.

Africause met with them regularly, encouraged, supported and went above and beyond to provide the platform they needed to lead the initiative.

The program was successful and grew, with more young people joining the team. As mentors, they played a pivotal role in encouraging more children to come to school and utilise the supports available at the Campus to plan and prepare for transition to their desired pathway.

Africause continued to offer cultural competency, education, and support that we as a college could not. It helped the program immensely, and more importantly those involved to flourish and thrive.

Whilst all mentors that were involved have finished their roles with the College, all mentors involved in the program are currently in the community and either working or engaged in higher education.

The program would never have been successful without Africause's involvement.

This is just one example of Africause's strength and willingness to be involved with our (and many other) children in need of support.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you require any further information at all as I would only be happy to oblige and talk to the support Africause offer.

Matt



Matthew Hyde
Executive Principal | Parkville College
Department of Education and Training

FOUNDATIONS OF JUSTICE FROM BENEATH NEW GENERATIONS

First and foremost, my continued thanks and appreciation go to your organization and its networking partners for the services provided, in promoting educational programs and contributing to humanity in Victoria. Through my studies and work experiences, I believe the measures of crime prevention are an essential part of community, in acknowledging that success depends on cooperation and collaboration, so as to develop partnerships with community and government organisations to educate and implement strategies for crime prevention; involving education, training and

employment, plus settlement and community building.

Authenticating on the many comments and observations pertaining to the experiences of Africans with the legal and justice system, which have come through my work experiences and Bachelor of Justice Studies, I acknowledge that a demanding concern for Africans is child protection system and family law. African parents have been reporting on how the lack of discipline is leading their children to run into problems with the police. They suspect that some of their children

are ending up in jail because the law is not giving the parents the chance to control them. The leaders within the community are saying that they don't understand what leads youth to imprisonment. As said by Pope Francis, "The family remains the basic unit of society and the first school in which children learn the human, spiritual and moral values which enable them to be a beacon of goodness, integrity and justice in our communities".

The young people in the African Australian communities are seen as the main troublemakers in Australia. Parents are not having control over their children, and these teenagers are drinking and fighting in public, having all night parties and running battles, and shuffling around the city in groups late at night like they are heading for trouble. Usually what the parents and leaders within the community hear about is just how badly many of the African children are traveling, how jobs and education and stability are passing them by. The leaders get told that the youth are dropping out of school and turning to drinkers and drugs users. Teenage girls are falling into pregnancy and their parents are rejecting them.

The argument parents are having is that the government took away their right to discipline their children in traditional ways, and now the children are going out of control. The parents are blaming the system. Parents have even been trying to send their children back home because of their unruly behavior. Community leaders have noticed trends in the number of teenagers being isolated from their parents. Most people don't want to admit the real reasons they are separated from them. They are afraid of risking their job, and are embarrassed that their children are going off the rails.

It has come to the point where some of us leaders and members are recognising how State governments, particular in Victoria and New South Wales, are working

towards engaging local communities to deliver their crime prevention message, by running projects in partnership with some multicultural agencies, in order to build trust and enhance relationships between police and young people from African backgrounds. Part of these projects have involved social and sporting events that the police, youth workers and local youths attend, as well as larger events that the families of the participants attend. This is one of the strategies that is helping police to get to parents of these teenagers and better understand the African communities in general, in addition to maintaining effective communication on important crime related issues.

by running projects in partnership with some multicultural agencies, in order to build trust and enhance relationships between police and young people from African backgrounds. Part of these projects have involved social and sporting events that the police, youth workers and local youths attend, as well as larger events that the families of the participants attend. This is one of the strategies that is helping police to get to parents of these teenagers and better understand the African communities in general, in addition to maintaining effective communication on important crime related issues.

Providing legal information and education for the entire African communities will effectively increase their knowledge of the law and inspire better access to the legal system and a more just outcome. Leaders and members recommend that increasing their knowledge of the law is a key priority. The most important information that Africans would require are child protection and family law, plus domestic violence laws. (R v COTTON [2014] SADC 164) This is different for young people. They are particularly interested in receiving information about police powers.

The child protection system and family law are a demanding concern for Africans. Child protection agencies need to develop culturally sensitive approaches to assessment and intervention. The parenting issues families from other countries are facing in Australia; not only African parents, there are many lawful recommendations pertaining to how the issues can be determined. In all cultures, the environment in which young children are growing up has a powerful impact on their health, wellbeing and development towards grown person. It comes where the relationships between health, physical growth, psychological development and parental caregiving are significant. (AE v Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian [2014] QCAT 185) Parents provide the main guidance for their children’s wellbeing; for that reason, it is necessary to provide services and programs to support parents, in order to strengthen their confidence and encourage the families to share their wonderful cultural practices and traditions.

According to research information, and what I believe, future programs will need to explore ways of encouraging parents to allow their children more independence in a way that does not reject their traditional and cultural identity, and incorporate training in Australian family laws and how they relate to parenting. They need to create improvements in parental expectations, parental empathy towards their children’s needs, awareness and acknowledgement of alternatives to corporal punishment and parent-child family roles. They need to consist of skills development and education sessions designed to help parents raise their children confidently and understand their children’s needs in the new cultural, social and educational environment in Australia.

Tim Jessey
Liberian community leader.



WHAT SETS AFRICAUSE APART FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

MS. KELETSO MAGANO-NIEBLING & DR BERHAN AHMED

It is an African Australian service for Africans run by Africans. When our African members attend our office, they feel a sense of belonging as they can communicate without assistance of translators due to our staff and volunteers' ability to speak the language effectively. At this stage there are four main languages that Africause staff can communicate with the community at large without the translator's assistance. These languages are Amharic, Tigrigna, Arabic and Tigre.

Actively Support families, children, youth, and elderly in areas they need. This is done in a manner that they feel valued, listened, and understood during the consultation process. Offer multiple opportunities and options for clients to navigate challenges they are facing. So far over 5000 families have been assisted in diverse programs and services that Africause offers.

According to Liana Buchanan, Victoria's Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People as well as part-time Commissioner of the Victorian Law Reform Commission, 2018, "We think of ourselves as a civilized society that looks after children but what I see as commissioner tells me we routinely fail the most marginalized and vulnerable children, and most people in the community have no idea about that." It has been clear to services like ours that for a small cohort of the Victorian population the Australian young people of African descent are grossly over-represented in juvenile detentions. What is concerning is that there seems to be systematic failures starting with schooling for children and young people arriving in Victoria as re-settled refugees, with no prior education. Those born in Australia, having normal schooling experience systematic exclusion in the job market.

As an agency created to support young people to actively participate through schooling and the labour market, Africause is keen to:

- Identify challenges
- Support collaborative processes to address systematic failures
- Confront complacency of public institutions who currently are not willing to confront the cost of their failures to young people's life outcomes.
- Growing up with high levels of truancy and school drop out

Having a greater understanding of what contributes to young students being disinterested by schools and teachers is critical to better supporting these students. There are numerous factors that contribute to students leaving school early such as:

- Seeking support from peers especially when there has been family breakdown and dad and mum has separated, and or mum is working longer hours and unavailable.
- Seeing peers ending up in prison, often with drug and alcohol issues from friendship influences and loyalty to them.
- All of which destroy hopes of being anybody your parents and community would be proud of, despite being born and bred in Australia.
- Political expectations placing demands on family's living conditions. Therefore this expectation places unnecessary pressure and stress on both family and children.
- Unchecked racist attitudes of teachers that manifest through lack of respect of teachers towards young people of African descent, contemptuous attitudes

demonstrated by comfort in asking young people about criminal records based on their race and ethnicity.

- Student recognition as individuals with individual needs, just as much as the rest of the student population, rather than teacher's decisions based on the popular media racist narrative. Follow up mechanism for current policies, reflections and grounded evidence-based assessment of policies, strategies or any other initiative seeking to enhance education outcomes.

- Complex nature of leaving family behind in refugee camps, the burden of still having to support them, thus expecting the children to contribute financially as well as in child rearing of younger siblings.

- Expectations on children to support negotiating the new environment when they themselves are not able to thus continue tensions in the home. Young people being victims of exclusion outside the home and misunderstood by parents and family due to conflicting definitions of "child/childhood and responsibilities.

OVERARCHING CHALLENGES FOR OUR CLIENTS HAS BEEN;

- Lack of knowledge and understanding of the Australian laws and expectations. Language barriers where communication with other organisations, such as Police, Lawyers, mainstream services etc has been tricky. This has been highlighted by the loss of translation of the message during conversations. Often hired translators have displayed lack of portraying conception of verbal cues from the clients and that has brought frustration to the clients.

- Lack of communication skills and understanding that when matters arise need to be addressed immediately. This has been paramount to most cases who reach us as the last resort when initial connection would have eliminated children/youth ending up in juvenile justice, higher fines and drastic consequences most of them faced when they reach us. If communication was activated earlier, matters will have ended differently than what they are when they reach us.

- Ignorance of the cultural expectations in Australia – the norm of living in Australia. Things we take for granted such as awareness required communicating with police, schools, car insurance, banking, lawyers, judges, courts, etc.

- Lack of paying attention to the written communication from the government agencies and relevant offices. This type of communication is not expected nor regarded as important as all paper communication is viewed as junk. Therefore, when it is received it is automatically treated as such and placed in a bin.

- Lack of network with those who understand their challenges and able to connect them with relevant agencies and appropriate services to assist them with their problems.

- Lack of Literacy education where clients cannot read nor write English. This is typical among single mothers who are at risk. This intensified when they are expected to communicate with people who are expecting them to fully communicate in a desired manner in Australia. In most cases they will not inform others that they cannot read nor write, however their hesitancy can be a tell sign that they are struggling in this area.

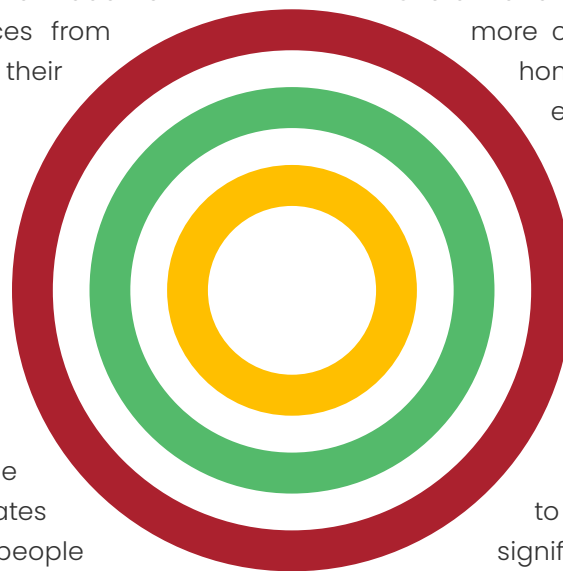
- Our clients generally come to us when the issues have escalated to authorities, which can be challenging. If they came earlier, it could have been easily solved, however mostly they did not know what steps and options were available for them to navigate the issues.
- Lack of support for single parent families, where they feel overwhelmed and resourced to face challenges as they arise in their children (future taxpayers).
- Mostly the clients want to fix issues themselves however they don't know how to approach these issues.
- Inaccuracy of translators who are interpreting flawed information to clients (Translating words and not concepts), therefore decisions are made from what they tell them. Consequences from these actions are felt by clients and their children in the long run.

Inconsistency in integrating new arrivals with no prior schooling diminishes their education and employment outcomes. In some areas, such as Flemington, Footscray, and Dandenong, unemployment of the youth in question is three times (3x) the average national unemployment rates for the same age cohort. Young people know firsthand the blocks, or the attitudes that destroy their dreams and ambitions. How else would a young person trust when a potential employer tells them that “we can't employ you because we can't make jokes freely in your presence” – the statement was made to a young Australian engineering graduate of African descent.

During the interview with VicPol representative, he recognised past failures of their employees were racial profiling was a norm, which they have been work hard at eradicating it as part of their cultural practice. Therefore, this practice was very important to get rid of due to the

impact it had on African young people. For examples vary from young people reporting racial profiling, being prevented from entering department store, abuse on public transport and in the streets. This of course has heightened alienation of young people who for the first time are reporting feelings of not belonging.

Where young people had previously identified as Australian this can have traumatic effects as often with refugee parents they cannot go to the countries of origin, thus being in limbo with regards to identity.



Overall and notably the challenges are much more complex as young people are not a homogeneous group, thus far there are examples of resilience demonstrated by success despite the enormous socio-linguistic and cultural challenges. A better understanding that slotting new arrivals students into school based on age rather than ability, has some underlying challenges such as,

1. No schooling or minimal prior to arrival in Australia, which plays a significant role in early years education for young children formation and growth.
2. Current Australian approach sets young people to fail because it favours only born and bred Australian students.
3. Isolation due to bullying and or inability to cope/ comprehend expected functional literacy. This can be tricky to navigate because children and young people have more access to the dominant culture, therefore expectations are different from those of – experience of how family and immediate community parent versus mainstream causes conflict.

Culture Challenges, are prevalent across settler communities because children and young people have more access to the dominant culture, therefore expectations different from those of - experience of how family and immediate community parent versus mainstream causes conflict.

Possible Recommendations.

1. Make the problem everybody's problem
2. Call out racism and any issue that is prevalent in our society. Empowering communities to advocate for children at risk passionately is necessary.
3. Engage with newly arrived families to enable and support health transformation to the new country including appropriate schooling.
4. Fostering of strong community connections to sustain positive settlement experience.
5. Build on the resilience and strength of those young people who have succeeded despite the challenges
6. Partner with organizations such as Africause who are trusted by the young people in question.
7. Basic education pathways to enable functional literacy, as well as to minimize scapegoating of young people in the school system – State, Education
8. Skills Training and/or Targeted "Steppingstones" to enable developing required Capabilities (VicPol Model)
9. Employment Pathways

Africause and partners to seek expressions of interest in the three areas to form working groups, with the intent to advise both State and Federal accountable departments as well as the Young Person and Children's Commission.

OUR APPROACH

At Africause we pride ourselves as a service that can do the following.

- Accept our clients without prejudice and judgment upon arrival in our office.
- We listen to them without preconceived ideas of what the issues are.
- We work tirelessly in gaining a deeper understanding of the root causes of the issues.
 - o We do things through creating a safe environment for our clients to communicate in their native tongue, so that free expression can take place (to solve a problem is first listening and understanding the root causes of the problems and not dealing with symptoms).
 - o We listen to clients telling their story in their own way in an uninterrupted manner.
 - o We look for cues and desires of the clients, which in all cases is clients saying " I am stuck, I need help to solve my problem". We work alongside them by offering options that clients can experience solutions to their problems.
- We work hard at finding solutions that enable and support families to stay together so that families are not fractured and separated during crisis season (where violence is not accepted). This is very important as it helps the relationships between families, communities and authorities to have better relations. This process then results with children remaining with their loving families relating with authorities in a respectful and honourable manner as they perceive better treatment for their families. This is critical as when the opposite takes place then children are negatively affected, and this behaviour is extended to the streets and authorities out of the families. Africause saved over 175 adult children and youth from ending

in Juvenile justice and prison and with more than 357 to continue their education, after communication with schools such as Victoria University Secondary college, Melton secondary college, Caroline Chisolm Catholic College, Parkville Juvenile Justice college, Mount Ridley College (Craigieburn), St John's Secondary college (Dandenong), Tarneit Senior college, Hoppers Crossing Secondary college, etc.

Africause offers Prevention and Remedial measures opportunities to assist children to continue their education and/or employment pathway. Over the 5 years of community support over 1075 children and youth supported and assisted in prevention and remedial measures directly or indirectly. On average, it costs about \$17,450 for a child/youth to keep them at school with necessary support and follow-ups and about \$21,570/young person to help in remedial support to avoid recidivism and help the child/young person in normal lie standard.

Prevention Measures: This part of our work has been very central to our work with our communities, due to the heightened need in our future generations. We recognise the need for preventive measures to be in place for strengthening next generations and ensuring that they stay out of juveniles and serve our communities well. Due to a high level of African juveniles in jail we recognise that if we do nothing as an organisation to interrupt the system these high numbers will only rise and cost taxpayers even higher cost in maintaining these young generations in juvenile systems. Therefore, we are intentional about getting to the bottom of early drop off in school, young people doing crimes and family breakups that heightened these challenges. Africause pride themselves in digging deep one layer at a time by sitting with families, listening to their stories, and unpacking solutions together as one team



We recognise that if preventative measures are not in place for minimizing our young children in the juvenile cycle from a young age by working alongside families, we will lose them to early deaths, juvenile and unnecessary negative outcomes. Therefore, our methods are heavily considered to effectively impact our communities and serve them in a manner that can assist them positively. Reality is there are many services out there however they fail our communities at times because they offer generalized services, whilst families require specialized services at times to deeply attend to their problems.

Africause works towards creating a bright future for their clients through offering the following.

1. Appropriate and Targeted Education Pathways – Tangible Programs such as Employment and mentoring, Prison Support and Advocacy are offered to clients.
2. Functional Literacy, Skills and Capabilities – where marginalized and at-risk youth are supported with skilled and experienced mentors are sought out to understand existing protections of these young people's human rights.

3. Employment through Inclusion and Contribution
- Support greater understanding of accountability mechanisms such as the human rights commission (State and Federal), the Children and Young People Commission, Ombudsman's Office etc.

REMEDIAL MEASURES: HELPING AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUTH TO AVOID CONTINUED CONTACT WITH JUSTICE SYSTEM

Scenario 1 - A family kicked out of their rented home, and family violence victims, etc

Listening to families, father, mother, the child, siblings, helps better understand the problem and helps to stop other siblings from going through a similar pathway. Africause open policy "as one stop shop" for members to attend and share their problems and challenges with their language and cultures/beliefs makes the family feel relieved. Our Partners such as Igniting change helps with \$1,000 for family violence victims for immediate help and also shopping materials, clothing and computers for the school children eases the pressure of the family transition into a new life, without much paperwork. Our partner legal firms such as Maurice Blackburn, Armor legal, other volunteer lawyers provide legal aid to help the mother with the children settle their domestic violence issues peacefully. Moreover, Africause also assists with community advisory group members to assist the mother, the father, and children to minimise the disruption of the school children's attendance and participation with their homework and other activities. A family in such a situation requires \$21,450 as an immediate assistance and support to move with their life.

An example of this scenario: A family was paying their initial agreed rent between the agency and them (as tenants). However, over time the rent increased, and the agency communicated through formal written letters to the family. The family was not able to read and understand the letter and unaware of the increase in rent, and as no one from the agency has physically contacted them and informed them verbally of the increase. Additionally due to lack of understanding of the letter and no expectation of the increase of the property, or verbal communication from the agency, their letters were ignored and treated as junk mail. As repeated written communication from agency and VCAT authorities for court hearing was naively ignored by the family, the Police came on Sunday morning and the family were evicted from their rented property without any consideration.



Solutions: Africause was able to pinpoint the lack of verbal communication between the agency and the clients (tenant) how it could have eliminated the problem from the onset. This was a preferred manner of communication which could have effectively worked between them. Agency assumed written communication was reasonable for all clients, without educational consideration for these tenants' understandings of the letter and cultural/religious backgrounds. If verbal communication was established with the family to inform them about the increase, the whole situation could have been avoided.

Possible Recommendations:

- For services to understand new arrivals and people with little or no language including Police, courts, real estate agents,
- The services and government departments and institutions to view nonresponsive behaviour from refugee and asylum clients as something to be followed through with a verbal phone call, rather than defiance on their behalf.
- For additional communication to be applied rather than one common communication measure for all.
- Victoria Police may need to consider dealing with new refugee arrivals and migrants and require some consideration of their status.
- Literacy capacities to be considered when writing letters to clients. Awareness that not all clients can read or write as some may need additional assistance in reading their formal letters, etc.
- Face to face meetings to be introduced for these clients via zoom, phone calls, etc to inform clients or any changes in their existing agreement. This will allow opportunity for questions, clarifications, and better understanding of what is needed on their behalf.
- Schools dealing with children is important to accommodate the new arrivals with special support, instead of considering “based on their age directed to the school grade”. Thus, this is the major cause of school children dropout of schools and family break-ups due to the lack of managing the normal life.



Scenario 2 - Intervention at schools and prison (Africause Faith advisory)



Emam Abdishakur Hagiomar– (Somali) Community worker in Prison and Schools.

He has been working intensively with young people and their families both in prisons and schools. His role has involved mediating between families, the youth and schools/ prison to sort any arising issues.

Schools:

Children/youth from grade 5 to grade 12 were supported and connected. This help and support is mainly for identified children with challenging behaviour at school. The children are with behaviours challenging including t listening, interruption, talking in class and disturbing in their class while teachers which made teaching moments difficult.

Families who were identified as mothers at risk and fathers who were absent or had minimal participation in their children’s upbringing were the ones who needed most support.

This was critical as Abdi enabled the families to communicate with ease with the teachers. Their desires and needs were communicated accordingly to the teachers. Students were also being made aware of the impact their behaviour had on their class, which assisted with change of heart and behaviour from the students. Both families and students indicated that Abdi’s presence made them feel respected, understood, and listened to, hence they positively engaged with the process.

The following challenges were discovered by Abdi while dealing with both families and teachers:

- Parents were unable to make schools accountable about their children's interactions at school. This was due to lack of understanding that it was within their rights as parents to question and ask the school questions regarding their children's education.
- Language barrier made it challenging for families to communicate with ease with the teachers. Some of the parents did not want to rely on school translators due to past negative experiences with translators, therefore this service was not utilised. Abdi was approached after gaining family's trust from consistent being seen at school.
- Families felt overwhelmed with the education system and expectations, especially for those with minimal education. Most of them were unaware what was expected of them, hence they have little participation in the school activities. This affected their children at school, which families if they knew would have adjusted their behaviour accordingly.
- Communication with families was not consistent from teachers, therefore families were not regularly updated about their children's behaviour and educational status. This kind of communication gave families the impression that their children were doing well at school, only to discover that it was the opposite. This was important for Abdi to clarify with families that behaviour of their children was still challenging regardless of the teachers' communication updates. The families were eager to do what was necessary to help their children to have a positive desired behaviour.

Possible Solution and Recommendations for Schools:

- Better encouragement for parents' involvement in the schools' life. Such as participating in the school's committee, fundraising committee, etc. this will help them understand what the school system is like in Australia.

- Language differences to be acknowledged as a possible hindrance from family's participation and interest in school activities. Tor recognizes that translators may be ineffective depending on their level of experience and skills. Therefore, critical information can be missed due to the translator's experience and expertise.
- Parents role in their child's life at school to be explicit and constantly explained for families to be ease on what is expected of them, and when it is expected of them. This could assist the families in engaging with school in a positive manner rather than a stressful approach.
- Teachers are empowered to communicate with families as many times as needed without feeling that they are a burden and unnecessary. This could assist families to engage with their children's behavioural challenges from the beginning.

In Prisons:

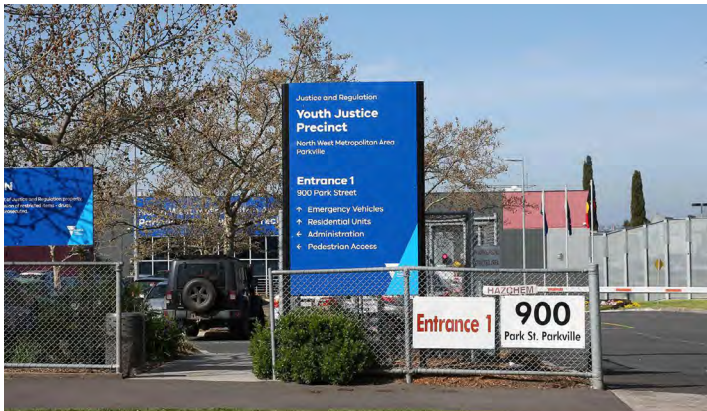
Abdi discovered that African background youth are highly represented in prisons and require intense support and guidance. At first this has been challenging as they were not open to him, however over time he was able to gain their trust and confidence as they sought him out. His role was to advise them and consult with them privately as they require him.

- Some of the prisoners gave inaccurate information upon arrival in prison. This was highlighted during the Ramadan time where some of them wanted to be identified as Muslims however forgot that they indicated initially that they had no religious affiliation.
- There was a bit of shame and stigma among them and their families. Families will ignore him totally with fear that he will alert others in the community that they had children in prison.

Recommended Solutions:

Abdi recognised that both families and prisoners craved to be communicated with respect, care and understanding in their dealings. Meaningful remorse from young juveniles came out of interaction with him after deep reflections about their actions.

Juveniles were able to disclose their personal addictions such as drugs etc, which enabled Abdi to speak to them



about possible services for assistance. Some families were able to trust and open up to Abdi after some time.

Possible Recommendations:

- Recognising that both families and young juveniles require intentional respectful interactions in all the judicial systems, such as arrest, acceptance in jail, etc. This approach will promote different views from the young juveniles and gain required information with ease.
- Families' encouragement of services support as a

Scenario 3 – Business woman Ana B

A high school boy in a family of 8, with a single mother, who attended school for 7 months without a computer. The mother was pressured to provide for all children and financial hardship made it impossible for her to buy the computer. This created pressure and stress on the entire family.

She previously owned a business (pre covid) in Footscray to support her young family. During covid she was unable to provide her children a computer and she also notified that other mothers were in the same boat like her. As an elderly woman in her community with influence on younger women she recognises that she needs to invite Dr Berhan to come and advise these women about supportive services for they can rely on for their different needs.

Recommended Solutions:

Africause was instrumental in giving her critical advice in running her business. During covid she was able to lean in Africause assistance and support with her family needs. Africause assisted the family and



offered a boy the computer which encouraged him to stay in school. This was critical in ensuring that he was able to have tools like his peers in his class to reduce bullying. This also promoted a sense of belonging for the

student in the school. It lastly eliminated pressure from the mother as well, as she was unable to finance her child's new computer at the time as it was financially not viable. The essential support received was school needs such as computers, clothes and food etc. In addition, she was able to bring other women who were experiencing financial hardship like her to sort support and assistance from Africause. Africause appears to be a reliable and supportive service for all Africans to seek out when they are experiencing hardship and challenges. Therefore, Ana will be using Africause through Dr Berhan to address the women soon.

Scenario 4 - Community worker supporting youth justice - Mohammed

Young Africans are offending at a very young age average starting from 12yo. This affects them as they are still at their developing stages. Therefore, learnt behaviours of breaking the law becomes their way of living and outlook on life. They reoffend easily and end up going in and out of the system at a faster rate than their peers who have never offended at a young age.

The offences are around; gangster involvement, home evasions, arm robberies, car thefts, shoplifting just to mention a few. This is encouraged by the broken family cycle when the father is no longer part of the family. Older kids end up setting a cycle and role model for the younger siblings who end up following in their footsteps if necessary measures are not in place to interrupt this cycle. The underlying challenges for these young offenders are that they come from single parents' backgrounds, where the mothers have other children to care for. This places restraints on visitation opportunities for these kids.

This is deeply identified as most African families find co-parenting after separation difficult. This is due to the nature of how separation took place and restrained orders which at times may make the father disengage with the family altogether.

This happens due to power shifting to the mother and the father giving up his role as a father and abandoning the ship altogether. Some of the fathers conclude after trying their best to reconnect with their children without success and constant rejection and noncooperation from the mothers.

The fathers are not easily accessible to do prison visits. Financial hardship plays a significant role in families being unable to provide their children, especially boys with extracurricular activities that could provide positive experiences for their time. Parents are caught between choosing between buying milk and bread and paying sports membership for their children and choosing the latter.



The most challenging aspect for families is the lack of understanding of how the juvenile system works. The fact that the juvenile system only works with the young offender. This means the parent is kept out in the dark and only offered information about what their child says, which can be half-truths at best. When the parents find out the whole story it is normally late and little can be done to remedy the situation.

Recommended Solutions:

Africause recognises the fact that when these young juveniles are part of the systems, are labelled in such a

way that makes it challenging at times for them to reenter the community.

Therefore, at Africause ensured that ID cards are issued immediately to the youth to give them something for them to use as an identification. When families interact with Africause, one of the major things they get from Africause is education of the Australian system laws where they are being made aware that the law exists to protect everyone, therefore it separates everyone and gives them rights. This is always unheard of with families and are always discouraged and resent this law. This is because their family value believes that they have a major input and rights to know about their children's wellbeing and health as primary carers regardless of if they are in prison or not. Reconciliation of this belief is a very tricky and hard pill to swallow for most families.

Africause encourages visits from families to their young juveniles and explains to them the impact it has on their children. This needs to be highlighted as parents' humiliation and disappointments can make them withdraw from visiting their children in correctional services.

Dr Berhan always reminds the families that, "your young boy in your eyes is a child but to the system when offends he is a criminal" These truths to make families aware of it is critical in driving home the nature and aggressive nature of the system on those that break the law.

The biggest challenge at times with families is the shame-factor- where the community views them different due to having a child in prison. Therefore, this challenges the families to engage with supportive services such as counselling, etc. Africause recognises that communities still require skills regarding these issues,

- as opening up the tissue that exists and putting a light on it - families to feel safe to open up about their children in juvenile

- Identifying the root of the issue - what drives our young children to offend
- Recognise that African culture can be strengthened through sharing stories together - talking about the issues is a strength
- Culture needs to be treated with care, respect and sensitively - for high care and dignity to be part of this process.
- Relevant and culturally appropriate approach to be applied - families to be approached in a manner that is appropriate and acceptable to them culturally and religiously.

In addition to the recommendations could include;

- Schools to be skilled with teachers who specialize in education and dealing with students at risk.
- Recognition of the fact these kids already view the world as no one cares for them due to the absence of their fathers' presence at important events of their lives, such as Father's Day, parents interviews, etc.
- Fathers' involvement in their children's lives should be encouraged regardless of the problems with the mother. The system supports this as children crave for their father's engagement.
- Mothers to be supported in a manner that fathers can still be part of their children's lives. Centrelink support can come across as heavenly supporting the mothers and they feel no need for fathers and no need to work extra hours as it will affect their benefit.
- Mental health issues to be considered as critical to the children's wellbeing. For families to be educated on positive ways to deal and interact with their children when they have this disorder.
- Families' involvement to be encouraged and to be viewed as part of remedial for their children out of the system.
- Family backgrounds, education, and skills to be considered when dealing with them to ensure that appropriate and relevant measures are in place for each family respectively.

Scenario 5 – WDP Intervention testimonies – John and Joanne

My name is John Diwo Mashar (young Sth Sudanese); I had financial problems which were exacerbated by my ADHD. I was perpetually forgetting fine due dates plus struggling to stay on top of my finances. Thankfully, a friend told me about how Africause was helping members of the community pay off their fines through volunteer work. In addition to helping me pay off fines as an accredited sponsor.

Africause has enabled me to:

- Further develop my marketing content creation skills – As a marketing & social media enthusiast, I was overjoyed to have been given the opportunity to create social media content & make updates to the organisation’s website.
- Introduced me to more like-minded people, community programs, leaders plus genuine people that I can lean on
- I will be enrolling in a financial literacy course that was recommended to me by Africause
- Using my creativity at the service of my people gave me a sense of purpose and routine, both of which were much needed during the lockdowns.”

Above is a personal testimony from John about his interactions with Africause. His gratitude description highlights the following:

- His life has found more purpose since coming to Africause.
- His debt of fines through WDP has been eased.
- His network friends who are connected to Africause and were able to refer him also was a blessing to him,
- His contribution to social media and marketing to the organisation brought him great joy. This enabled him to work hours which added towards necessary hours to remove the debt he owned.

My name is Ms. Joanne G testimony; With regards to how I feel before and after WDP support received to waive my fines: Before WDP given the difficult financial situation I am in it was tough & stressful, as I would like to fulfill the financial obligations re: traffic fines but cannot because of the mandates placed in Victoria and can’t even go back to work in the hospital.

After WDP: I felt very relieved with the financial obligations set out before me, and the people in WDP were very helpful and accommodating. Sometimes in life we have to reach out for help when we really need to, and I’m definitely thankful for WDP especially to Carlos for the big help. Thank you so much. I will not forget it.

This testimony displays the gratitude Joanne feels from the WDP program and the impact it has had on her life.

Possible Recommendations;

- Services to have workers who can effectively interact with clients with additional needs, including undiagnosed cases.
- Different opportunities to be offered to people with additional needs, so that they can contribute to society with ease.
- A deeper understanding that some fines need to be reconsidered due to personal challenges on some individuals.
- A greater consideration of financial hardship that can drastically make it uneasy for fines to settle immediately. The additional fines due to lateness only adds unnecessary stress and anxiety to these clients. This is due to the fact that the client’s willingness and desire does not always equate to paying fines.

- Additionally fines and financial management training is necessary to help these clients to be aware of future parking restrictions and personal expectations from them. Ultimately ongoing funding of WDP offers personal freedom for these clients financially.

Africause running WDP program in our service has been the most powerful tool to alleviate financial stress from our clients. We have had over 80 clients, with over \$230,000.00 debt owing in fines etc. All of our clients have been referred to us by word of mouth, through other organizations or through their lawyers. We pride ourselves in serving a wide range of clients from Sudanese, Eritrean, Ethiopian as well as other nationalities like Anglo Saxons, Jewish and Southeast Asians, Afghani, and Turkey.

After Liwan discovered us and we were able to help him with his fine, this is what he said, **“now I can go home and sleep tonight”**. What a comforting thing to know that we were able to contribute to this feeling of Liwan.

Africause Possible Recommendations.

- Continue to offer WDP for genuine clients who really need the assistance.
- Continue to run road safety training alongside with the VicPol personnel.
- Continue to allow stringent processes to be in place to sift applications accordingly. This is to continue to ensure that those who need to be in the program do not miss out.

Scenario 6 – A Victoria Police view and feedback from a local police station.

An experienced Police officer who is a leader of his team – Inspector VicPol has had ongoing interactions with Africause. This has been made police with the VicPol Diversity Program which has included the African police personnel in the fold. These new additional team members had brought great insight and input to the

VicPol community where African community challenges were understood with first hand interactions. Additionally, these members have ensured better interactions with families during the arrest of their children, where African team members are able to explain with care to families the processes of the arrest.



Overarching challenges for young offenders were;

- Absence of one parent, mainly fathers
- Boredom where youth engaged with gang groups;
- Crimes infused behaviours – burglaries, shoplifting, etc
- Disconnection with schools and leaving school early.

Overarching challenges with families.

- Families have limited exposure with VICPol, except for negative rumors they hear from the community members with negative experiences. When arrests are made families are caught off guard and emotions are high, and undesired behaviors are observed. Due to the nature of the arrest VICPol sometimes can react in a manner that is highly vigilant and may create unnecessary tensions. This is sometimes lessened by the engagement of an African VicPol member assisting the team during the arrest.
- Family disputes intervention can be tricky. The VicPol process on approaching family disputes/ violence is to remove the male or female depending who offended upon arrival. This is necessary due to their primary focus

on providing safety for the family member for the family from the onset. After this step, the family can reach out to supportive services to engage with them to reconcile their marriage and relationship. Most African families find it challenging to reconcile after this step has been taken as shame, stigma and embarrassment has attached itself to the VicPol attending to the family call. Therefore, the fathers mainly disconnect with family and find it difficult to reconnect with families again.

- Translators not being welcomed as some have bad rapport on their inaccurate information to clients. Therefore, communities choose to suffer in the client by working out information on their own even though it is inaccurate.

Overarching challenges with community leaders:

- Leaders are currently reluctant in talking about family violence support measures. There is still a stigma in publicly acknowledging its existence in the community. VicPol is aware of the necessary time and patience needed for this to take place. They are happy working with leaders in small steps and stages to accomplish goals.

- VicPol reference services have not been taken as a necessary supportive measure for the community. There is a need for communities to be trained and educated in this area. VicPol is still building repertoire with communities, which is time consuming and requires understanding of the power of word of mouth within our communities.

VicPol Initiative Programs with communities:

These programs have been introduced as measures to break communication barriers with the community. This has been important to assist and support young Anglo police members who needed training in African cultural diversity. VicPol has been working hard at integrating their teams with communities with diverse backgrounds, religions and life experiences. This has been paramount in assisting the young VicPol teams to have a greater understanding of past experiences of African

communities in Australia. This critical information has been powerful for the VicPol to interact with the community with ease and sensitively because of their traumatic backgrounds that made them leave their country of origin etc. Recognising the African families barriers and challenges of the past assist the VicPol to positively engage with families with ease.

- Lunch program with the community leaders and communities.
- VicPol soccer team playing against African Team
- RoadSafetyandFinesTraining.Teachingthecommunity of the road safety and expectation required of the communities. This has been unpacked in a manner that communities can ask questions, and fully comprehend their role when they are fined. VicPol are able to answer questions regarding speeds, fines and any questions with accuracy to inform the communities accordingly.

African communities still need to be educated in the following with VICPol intervention is not about;

- Breaking the marriage nor separating relationships,
- Bringing shame and embarrassment on families and communities,
- Separation of families with children,
- Keeping children in prison,
- Arresting communities for no reason

Possible Recommendations:

- Africause to play a critical role as a mediator between African communities and VicPol, to act as a buffer between both parties. This is necessary as Africause has a great rapport with Africans so far. Information access for all within Africause space can be viewed as a safe environment for all.
- Male Africans to be educated and trained in supportive programs and services available for them.
- Women Africans to be fully informed of supportive services that can help them with various needs and challenges such as intervention, judicial system, family

violence etc.

- Arrest processes to be culturally sensitive and offer options for families. If possible, to be done with African personnel as part of the team so that families can have someone in the team to offer explanations and clarity during a challenging and confusing season.
- Follow up with families after arrest to be introduced so that services required by families can be captured and reinforced as necessary to positive engagement with families. Therefore, VicPol can impart needed supportive measures to the families.
- Continuation of employing African personnel in the VicPol teams. This is seen as a necessity and importance for strengthening society. This involvement promotes pride within the communities. Additionally acts as role models for the upcoming generations.
- African leaders training and upskilling VicPol at their training days, by highlighting topic issues within the communities at the time.

Scenario 7 - Hussein and Leyla with additional needs children

This is a family with a New Zealander with an Asylum Seeker spouse. They have 2 boys aged 5 years and 7 years who have additional needs. The boys' conditions make it difficult for them to engage in normal school or kindergarten programs without assistance. This has been challenging as families are unable to access the support the government offers for the families with children like them. This has been challenging for the family and placed a great demand on the family both financially and psychologically. This means all medical expenses including specialists' visits had to be paid off from parents' pockets because they cannot access Australian medical benefits. This is a case even though these children are born in Australia.

The family structure has been deeply impacted where the father had to work alone to provide for the family. In

addition, the mother cannot work even if she may desire to due to the need to focus on the children as a sole primary provider especially during the day, while the father works. Presently the father cares for the children at night to ensure that the mother has 8hours sleep. This arrangement affects the parents' intimacy and family dynamics. This has meant the parents are only coparents and nothing more, which means this arrangement has affected their relationship as a couple also.

Services that have attempted to assist the family have been accompanied by translators that lacked empathy to the family. They displayed a lack of not understanding of what family needed and how to support them during the visits. This aggravated the family and made it extremely difficult for them to be understood.

Solutions

- Upon being referred to Africause they were given an opportunity to tell their story and their challenges with Dr Berhan.
- It was apparent that they felt listened, understood and cared for by the team at Africause.
- They reported how since contacting Africause, Leyla's diabetic has gone down and healthy managed. In addition, they feel like they have gained hope and believe that they are better days ahead.

Recommendations

- There is a need to consider that translators are not always helpful. Empathetic translators to be enlisted especially for families with children at risk.
- There is a need for special consideration for families with children at risk to be specially considered for medical benefits. This will alleviate unnecessary pressures that these families are experiencing so far.
- Respite care needs to be a mandatory given to all families with children with additional needs regardless of their citizen status. This will assist families to cope and navigate this challenging season with ease.

BOARD MEMBERS

Scenario 8 - Young adult man dies at 23yrs

A young man aged 23 was killed at home around 1am by a 33yo in front of the family. The man that killed him was homeless and had been released from jail 8 weeks earlier. His family rejected him and asked him to leave the home, which meant he had no support to navigate in his new season out of prison. He passed away on September the 16th 2022 and for the duration of 2months the family was not allowed to see their deceased body. This caused the family great distress and pain whilst they were grieving their son's loss.

When they were allowed to see their deceased body it decayed and some parts of the body were donated without the family consent. This brought another level of hurt as they felt disrespected and dishonoured by the police. They are yet to meet the detective who are present at the crime scene upon the murder taking place. Surprisingly they family had been encouraged not to attend the proceedings at the court, which they do not understand the reason for exclusion.

Solutions

- The family was afforded time and space to tell their story.
- They were able to explain to the Africause staff with ease as he spoke their language.

Recommendations

- When prisoners are released from jail, the government ensures that there is vital support for them to transition into the community.



THE HONOURABLE TED BAILLIEU
Former Victorian Premier



Mr. Phil Brooker
Africause Board Chairperson



Dr Irene Bouzo (PhD)
Deputy chairperson



Dr. Berhan Ahmed
CEO and Board member



Dr. Mohammed Aba-Bulgu
Board Member (Treasurer)



**Assistant Police Commissioner
Luke Cornelius**
Board Member



Ms. Summayyah Sadiq
Board Member



Mr. Yassin Musa
Board member (Assistant Treasurer)



Aban James Fadalla
Board Member



Mrs. Keletso Magano-Niebling
Med

FINANCIALS

Profit and Loss

For the year ended 30 June 2022

	2022 \$
REVENUE	
Donations and Sponsorship	2,375.00
Grants	435,396.00
Igniting Change Partnership	13,000.00
Jesuit Social Services Partnership	66,720.00
Other Revenue	2,940.00
Spectrum Partnership	33,600.00
Wage Subsidies	9,090.90
Total Trading Income	563,121.90
Gross Profit	563,121.90
OPERATING EXPENSES	
Bank Fees	67.67
Community Engagement	23,765.57
Consulting Expenses	31,243.15
Cultural Contractors	22,777.83
Events and Festivals	37,284.30
General Expenses	8,823.07
Insurance	8,360.06
Office Expenses	4,927.29
Phone, Internet and IT	28,411.58
Printing and Design	7,919.96
Professional Subscriptions	138.00
Rent Expenses	33,960.76
Research	8,907.31
Staff Wages	169,972.76
Superannuation	16,523.01
Utilities	3,158.98
Total Operating Expenses	406,241.30
Net Profit	156,880.60

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2022

	2022 \$
OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Receipts from partners and clients	565,560.30
Payments to suppliers and employees	(420,248.92)
Cash receipts from other operating activities	26,898.00
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities	118,413.38
FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Other cash items from financing activities	(192,011.51)
Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities	(192,011.51)
Net Cash Flows	(73,598.13)
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	380,929.18
Net change in cash for period	(73,598.13)
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	307,331.05

Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2022

	2022 \$
ASSETS	
Bank	
Club Account	287,596.36
Business Transaction Account	19,734.69
Total Bank	307,331.05
Current Assets	
Accounts Receivable	16,800.00
Total Current Assets	16,800.00
Fixed Assets	
Total Assets	324,131.05
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
Auspices Fund – CAW	65,208.51
Auspices Fund – UCA	13,342.73
GST	1,706.33
PAYG Withholdings Payable	8,222.00
Superannuation Payable	11,451.97
Suspense	3,939.13
Wages Payable – Payroll	(34,410.56)
Total Current Liabilities	(69,460.11)
Total Liabilities	(69,460.11)
Net Assets	254,670.94
EQUITY	
Current Year Earnings	156,880.60
Retained Earnings	97,790.34
Total Equity	254,670.94

AFRICAUSE YOUTH COMMITTEE



Khaled Massoudi
Youth Employment facilitator
(Part time and volunteer)

Khaled is currently the leading the JVEN project, which is the division of Africause (AAMEYS) responsible providing employment support services, especially helping people with pathways to a desired career.



Nick Hatzoglou
Head Of Community
Projects(Football Victoria) – Youth
Advisory Committee

Nick Hatzoglou is the head of Community Projects with Football Victoria.

Nick is an Australian-born with Greek heritage and has a passion for cultural diversity and sport. He combines experience gained within the multicultural sector, local government, Australian Football League and Football Federation Victoria with his appreciation of the positive role sport plays in a vibrant multicultural Australia.



Jorge Jorquera
Maribyrnong City Councillor – Youth
Advisory Committee

Jorge Jorquera is a first-time Councillor of the City of Maribyrnong.

He calls Santiago Chile and Footscray both home and has raised two boys with his partner here in the West. Cr Jorquera is a socialist, unionist, anti-racist and advocate for migrant community

Cr Jorge Jorquera is a first-time Councillor of the City of Maribyrnong. He calls Santiago(Chile) and Footscray both home, and has raised two boys with his partner here in the West. Cr Jorquera is a socialist, unionist, anti-racist and advocate for migrant communities, working class families and young people. An educator and former School Council President at Footscray Primary, Cr Jorquera is passionate about reinvigorating the spirit of community solidarity that runs deep in the West.



Sobur Dhieu
Youth Advisory Committee

Sobur Dhieu is a first-year law student, policy intern at the Centre for Multicultural Youth and the project officer for the South Sudanese Business Response at Lander & Rogers law firm.

Sobur Dhieu is a first-year law student, policy intern at the Centre for Multicultural Youth and the project officer for the South Sudanese Business Response at Lander & Rogers law firm. She is a young community leader who is passionate about addressing issues impacting African young people, including education, mental health, racism and sport.



Dual Malual
Youth Advisory Committee

Dual is a young person from African background, who is Passionate to help, support and make difference to other people's life, In order to do that he works as a youth and family worker.

Dual is a young person from African background, who is Passionate to help, support and make difference to other people's life, In order to do that he works as a youth and family worker.



Mariam Kosley
Youth Advisory Committee

Is a former Fairfax media journalist and the creator of African Kings. She is a poet, writer, and social worker, and social worker, who by profession works what a humbling and eye-opening experience.

AFRICAUSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Ms. Tehiya Umer
(Oromo, Ethiopian)

Ms. Tehiya is a mother of beautiful children, successfully completed schooling. She was the first African women to stand for the Victorian state Election 2014 to empower young African women in Australia; Ex-Chairperson of the Oromo community and is well-known to many Africans residing in inner Melbourne, through her commitment on marginalized women's issues. Ms. Umer manages community media speaking on women's issues and the challenge of family violence in the new and emerging communities. Ms. Tehiya managed Africause homework club in Flemington since 2013, with many children benefited.



Ms. Ferdos Osman
(Ethiopian)

An inspiring community and business leader within the migrant and refugees communities. She is a mother, wife and coaching and training RTO manager. Ferdos is known among the Ethiopian and horn of African communities as a "doer and genuine woman".



Mr. Lem Baguot
(South Sudanese)

Lem is the founder and chairperson of the Society of South Sudanese Professional Australia, a father and community leader with a vision to create a safe and conducive environment for children and youth in our society. Lem is a well respected community leader and a role model for many youth in the community.



Mr. Yadata Saba
(Oromo, Ethiopian)

Yadata is the founder and ex-chairperson of the Oromo community in Victoria. Yadata is known for his compassionate and dedication to help new arrival refugee families and children in Victoria. He is well known to the mainstream services and the African Australian communities at large. He is a father, worker and community leader with so many experience on the challenging facing African Australian children in Victoria.



Mr. Bedellu Desta
(Ethiopian)

Bedellu is one of the first African Australians arrived in Melbourne, with knowledge and experience with Australian social, political and economic challenges. Bedellu was one of the few in the Ethiopian community supported and founded the Ethiopian Orthodox church and sponsored priest for the church from Ethiopia. He laid the foundation for the Ethiopian communities and he has been a mentor and role model for many in the Ethiopian community.



Ms. Ana Bol
(South Sudanese)

Ana is a single mother with children and had the life experience with the challenges African children facing in school, streets and employment. Ana is the founder of the South Sudanese mothers group and has been working tirelessly with mothers and their children to avoid the children school dropout. She is well known and respected community leader in metropolitan Melbourne and regional areas with single mothers and children.



**Ms. Samia Baho
(Eritrean)**

Samia is well known and respected in the African communities for over 20 years of services, she is known as “the mother Theresa” among the communities. She is the founder and Director of Centre of Advancing Women (CAW) helping women victims of domestic violence and their children from abuse and dropout of schools. CAW provides hope and necessary support for women victims of domestic violence and their children



**Dr Mohamed Ibrahim
(Somali)**

Dr. Mohamed is an inspiring leader and role model for young Africans in Australian and worldwide. He is a father and community leader in Australia and internationally known for his contributions. Hon. Mohamed Ibrahim was a Minister of Post and Telecommunication in Somalia. His professional experience spans academia and public and private sectors of business and administration. Previously he has been both an ICT practitioner and member of both the Australia Computer Society (ACS) and the Australian Professional Engineers, Scientists, Managers Association of Australia (APESMA). Over the last twenty five years he has worked in the ICT industry in Australia, in the energy sector in Papua New Guinea and in Kuwait as a senior business analyst; he has also worked in the education sector as a lecturer and education technologist in Australia and the UAE.



**Mr. Yasseen Musa
(Eritrean)**

Yasseen is the current Multicultural Community Ambassador for AFL. He was recognised by AFL as Multicultural Community Ambassador of the Year 2013 for his support to AFL and African Community. Yasseen currently leads the community safety group to evening & night foot patrolling/walk with Victoria Police & African community members in the Flemington, Kensington, North Melbourne Housing Estates, Stations, flats, main roads in the local area. This has made the local area safe and trust on police has increased from the community.



**Ms. Zahra Mustafa
(Somali)**

Zahra is a mother of two wonderful, self-motivated young adult children, currently studying. She volunteered in various committees in local communities such as Ivanhoe Primary School, Kew High School, Ivanhoe Junior Football Club, was team manager for Ivanhoe Knights Girls Basketball team. Currently she serves on the at Kew High Chaplaincy committee. She also encourage her children to volunteer and her son is a volunteer coach for Ivanhoe Knights Basketball Club. She has an Advanced Diploma of Building Design (Architectural) and a Bachelor of the Built Environment. As a qualified women work in well-respected Melbourne Architectural offices, such as Peddle Thorp, Thomson and Adsetts and Pertridis Architects.



Mr. David Kuel (south Sudanese)
Youth view representative

David Kuel is a Sudanese humanitarian entrant current living in Victoria. Upon his arrival in Australia in 1999, Mr. Kuel decided to complement his experience as a social worker by undertaking study at University of Tasmania. Mr. Kuel is widely recognized within local, State and National Government for his advocacy role on behalf of youth refugees, especially those from Sudan. He has extraordinary social skills and networking. He is in high demand in community consultation processes within Victoria. He has established a good reputation with Federal Ministers Ruddock and Hardgrave and the State Premier, the Late Hon. Jim Bacon.



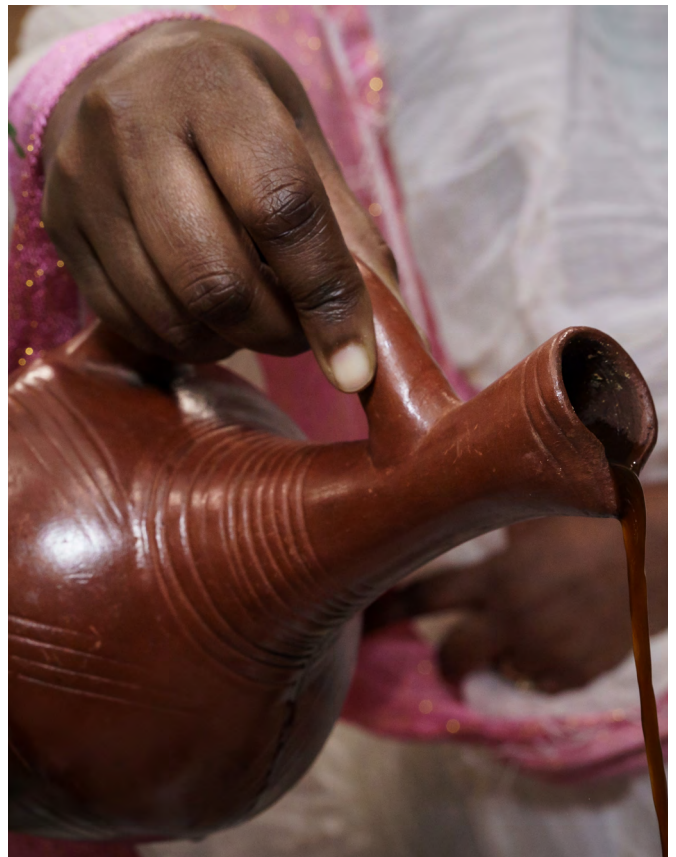
Ms. Adongwot Manyoul
(south Sudanese) Youth view representative

Ms. Adongwot has been an inspirational and motivational speaker and advocate for young people of African decend. She is a qualified and knowledgable young woman with many social network within the communities and the mainstream. Ms. Adongwot is founder of youth voice in local media and her involvement with local different communities has create and environment of social cohesive and understanding, particualrly in Brimbank. has increased from the community.



Ms. Mariam Kosley (Ethiopian)
Youth view representative

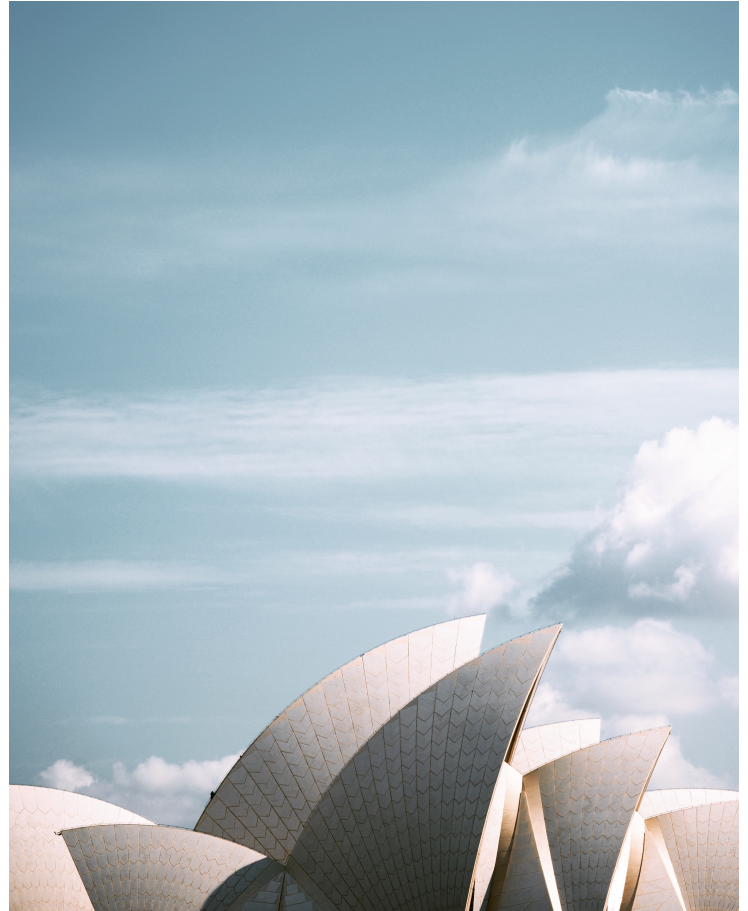
Ms. Marian is an inspiring young girl with so much skills and knowledge about the challenges facing youth in detention Centre and beyond. She has worked at the Parkville youth detention Centre with first hadn experience and passion, she is the founder of the African kings program to inspire and engage youth with their roots. She is ex-fair fax journalist and prolific writer. Marian is an energy source to participate a meeting with her.





EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Mr. Dawit fled his Mother Country, Ethiopia, at young age. It was 2015. He paid a smuggler to get him across the border. He stayed in refugee camp and arrived in Melbourne, Victoria. in 2011. He spoke no English and travelled on a plane as a refugee, with no passport. He was put into temporary housing. Shortly after arrival, he was asked to rent independently. His caseworker was helpful. Mr. Dawit Weldeselasia arrived with his young family received Employee award on his commitment and reliability at work. Africause supported many members of the African communities to access to employment regardless of their age, gender, and country of origin.



The employee of the year award for Mr. Dawit Weldeselasia was a heart-warming and a good role model for others. Africause helped over 250 unemployed members. Thus, Dawit's award will encourage many others to dream to achieve recognition in their workplace. Dawit was employed with ISS facility Services, and he was found to be reliable and team players among his peers. The company awarded Dawit to continue employment in their company despite his position was casual employ.

“Dr. Apollo was a visionary leader in the African Australian community who worked tirelessly. A humble, witty notable public intellectual. He led with unparalleled wisdom and compassion to influence positive change selflessly across our multicultural”
sister Rebecca Mphande

REMEMBERING OUR LATE GREAT LEADER AND FRIEND DR APOLLO NSUBUGA – KYOBE



Late Dr. Apollo Nsubuga – Kyobe

In late October 2022, we mourn the loss of a great leader, friend, mentor, an unsung hero, of the African communities in Victoria. Dr. Apollo Nsubuga-Kyobe departed. He leaves a great legacy for humanity with his selfless and tireless contribution for over three decades for the disadvantaged members of our communities. It is with heavy heart, sorrow, and great sadness to write his remembrance message as sister Rebecca Mphande said, “Dr. Apollo was a visionary leader in the African Australian community who worked tirelessly. A humble, witty notable public intellectual. He led with unparalleled

wisdom and compassion to influence positive change selflessly across our multicultural”. Also, the Hon. Ros Spencer, MP said, “Short in stature, but a giant among the African Australian community, I am saddened to learn of the passing of Dr Apollo Nsubuga-Kyobe. Dr Apollo was a pioneer for the African community in Victoria and devoted himself to support the settlement of African refugees and migrants across metropolitan and regional Victoria. An honourable, empathetic and diligent advocate, whose serviced and impacted span many generations and organisations including the Victorian African Communities Action Plan Implementation Committee, African Think Tank Inc, Mandela foundation, Ethnic Communities’ Council of Victoria, African Studies Association of the Australasia and the Pacific, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Eastern and Central African Communities of Victoria, Goulbourn Valley African Communities Association, Pan African Australasian Diaspora Network, Ugandan Association of Victoria, and Africa Day Australia. He leaves a fine legacy, and we send our heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and members of our African and multicultural families.

Dr. Apollo was a true Academic and mentor to many members of the African Australian communities. He was instrumental in helping and enhancing the visibility of the African Community through his Leadership, foresight, and wisdom. May his soul Rest In Peace and be always remembered for all what he has done and gave. Our condolences to his family on behalf of Africause leadership and the entire African communities in Victoria, African Australian communities big loss.

AFRICAUSE 2022



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 7th December | 3pm-5pm

@Footscray Community Arts Centre

45 Moreland St, Footscray VIC, 3011

Mariam Kosley

Keynote Speaker

Mariam Kosley is a former Fairfax media journalist and the creator of African Kings. She is a Poet, Writer and Social Worker who by profession works What a humbling and eye opening experience



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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I pay my respect and acknowledge Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land which we work and live on (Injustice Somewhere----- Is injustice everywhere). All individuals, organisations, corporations, and government departments that have helped Africause this year are too numerous to thank. There are so many who have helped us. But there are few that deserve a special mention.

The many Volunteer tutors, the admin (particularly Emma Fitzgibbon) and the families at the homework club deserve special thanks. The Skyline foundation and the skyline team for their continued support with special private classes for our students has been very encouraging and helpful for the school children access by sponsorship. So does our community advisory committee – Mr Khalil A Khalil, (Eritrean) Mr Lem Baguot (Sth Sudan Dinka), Dr Mohamed Ibrahim (Somali), Mr Yadata Saba (Oromo), Mr Samir Yusuf (Harari Community), and our Youth Advisory, Ms Mariam Kosley (Ethiopia), Mr Taeb Musa (Eritrean), Mr Abdikarim Ibrahim (Somali), and Ms Adongwot Manyoul (Sth Sudanese). We are grateful to Mr. Hussein Zamzame and the Australian Multicultural Media Centre for their continued coverage our activities.

Thank you to Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, Igniting Change, Scanlon Foundation, Ms Meghan Sheehan (Associate Lawyer Sunshine office), Armor Lawyers, Michael Pena-Rees, AUM lawyers, Ms Kate Coffee, International Organisation of Migration, Spectrum Migrant recourse centre, the Victorian African Chamber of Commerce and African Small Business. Special thanks to our partner The Centre for Multicultural Policy and Program Evaluation (CMPPE), did an excellent collaboration on racism workshop evaluation report.

Our special thanks go to our Patron Hon. Ted Baillieu, a tireless and passionate supporter of Africause, and a role model for our community and the organisation. Africause was also privileged to be partnered with Skyline Hatch (known as Skyline Education Foundation Australia), which has made a significant contribution to African Australian students at year 11 and 12 offered private tutors on subjects for their final year 12 exams. Also, our special thanks go to Thread Together group for donating brand new clothing and shoes to members of our communities. Thread Together addresses the uncomfortable truth by saving new clothing from going to landfill and providing these clothes to people in need. These groups were introduced by our unwavering partners Igniting change, which have been the leading partner with donating cash to victims of domestic violence (\$1,000) for immediate need and toys, computers, vegetables, shopping etc on regular bases. Moreover, igniting change introduced us to many other organisations such as Thread Together and Skyline Hatch. One other special thanks also to Igniting change for introducing Africause to an inspiring South Sudanese artist (Emmanuel Jal) and mentor from Canada on his visit to Australia to speak to troubled children and youth in schools in Dandenong (St John's secondary school) and in Western Suburbs at Melton Secondary college. The visit of Emmanuel Jal with his manager Ms. Tania Campbell Golding was inspiring and motivational to over 2,000 African Australian students in Victoria.

Thanks to the Australian Football League (AFL), especially Mr Xavier Maloney for his leadership with African Youth Umpiring training, Unity Cup, and continued support for our community members through employment and access to AFL Games. Thanks also to the Western Bulldogs for their continued partnership and support, particularly Mr Kashif Bouns and his team at the Foundation.

Our special thanks also go to The Ravenhall correction Centre, management, and staff for their continue communications and sharing information to assist and support African Australian inmates at Ravenhall Correction Centre, particularly Ms. Claire Yeatman, Manager Transition and Reintegration (Ravenhall Correctional Centre) and Mr. Godefa Berhane, for their dedication and commitment to connect inmate with their cultures and mentors to avoid recidivism. Our special thanks also go to our outgoing board member and selfless community leader Mr. Yasseen Musa and extend our special gratitude to our sister and leader Ms. Tehiya Umer. Both Yasseen and Tehiya have been dedicated volunteers managing the Flemington home club for over 10 years with many children completed grade 12.

We thank our community leaders, colleagues, and friends in Somali, Ethiopian, Oromo, Tigrayan, South Sudanese, (Dinka, Newar, etc) Assay Australian Saay Harari Association, Eritrean communities, the Sudanese, Eritrean Jeberti, Yemeni Communities of Victoria; the Oromo Community, especially to Mr Yadata Saba, Horn of African mothers; Ms Amina Melekin; and other community members. We'd like to thank Mr Ken Betts, our committed and passionate volunteer, and Justice of the Peace, helping of our members tirelessly. Thanks to Mr Michael Maloney, head of Victoria Police Brunswick Police station and Mr Peter Scherer, Victoria Police, Faulkner for their dedication, and Mr P Parsu Sharma-Luita JP for his contribution and leadership helping members of our communities in time of their need.

Thanks to our State MP Katie Hall and staff, including Mr Sel Sanli. Thanks also to our independent state Upper House MP, Dr Catherine Cumming, and her staff. And to Federal member MP Bill Shorten and his staff for their continued support. Special thanks to the Maribyrnong Council for their commitment to provide access to facilities for free for the next 12 months, and continued support and collaboration with the community and on business matters. We would like to thank Mr Stephen Ward, Ms Kate Wadsworth, Mr Stephen Mutton and the

team at Jesuit Social Services for their continued support and partnership.

Thanks to the Victoria Police diversity recruitment stakeholders, namely Victoria University (Ms Kerry O'Neill, Ms Kate Savage, Ms Gabriella Zibell), Maurice Blackburn (Ms Dimi Ioannou), Match work (Ms Isabel Pavez), Victoria Police (Ms Rebecca Draper-Schultheiss, Ms Rachel Mithen,) and AMES (Mr Peter Harrison) for their commitment, leadership, and support. Thanks to Youth Justice, Parkville College staff and the volunteers. And to Swinburne University, University of Melbourne and Monash University for their support and partnerships.

Thanks also to Youth Activating Youth, namely Mr Ahmed Hassan and Ali Ahmed for their leadership and commitment. Thanks to Ms Lorelle Said for advising and assisting with employment support and network and for reaching out members of our communities, particularly with Bus driver and Transdev recruitment process. Ms Judith Atkinson an expert on grant writing and application is a committed and dedicated supporter of Africause and special thanks to Spectrum management and staff for their continued support. Our special thanks also goes to Victoria University Vice Chancellor and the dean of education Prof. Rob Strathdee, for their partnership and support to train African Australian Teachers. Moreover, special thanks goes to Victorian government department of education Mr. David Howe. Our special gratitude also to Victorian Multicultural commission chairperson Ms. Vivienne Nguyen. Also our friend and colleague Mr. Parsu Sharma-Luita for his continued support and engagement.

Special thanks is due to Ms Loretta Dixon and Ms Emma Fitzgibbon for their selfless contribution to the Fines Victoria (WDP) work and the homework club management. It is also very important to thank our dedicated staff and volunteers, namely Ms Natasha De Almeida, Mr Jemal Ahmed Hagos, Mr Khaled Messoudi, Ms Julia McAllister, Mr Byron Price, Ms Rachel Sumich-Antonik, Ms Varsha Thapar, Ms Susan Agoer, Mr Hanan. Thanks also go to Ms Annemarie Agborchi for her contribution to the annual report.

Suleiman, Mr Abaas Abakur for their dedication and commitment in making Africause a source of welcome and hope for many in the communities. Special Thanks to our Board of Directors, namely our Chairperson (Mr Phil Brooker), Deputy Chair Dr Irene Bouzo, Mr Luke Cornelius APM, Ms Summayyah Sadiq- Ojibara, Mr Aban James (youth representative), Ms Keletso Magano-Niebling; our Treasurer.

Dr Mohamed Aba-Bulgu and Mr Yasseen Musa. With our special thanks goes to our outgoing Board member Mr Adrian Healy. On behalf of the Executive Committee, an award goes to our team of volunteers (such as Mr Ken Betts) for their continued support and participation in Africause above and beyond the call of duty. Thank you one and all for responding, so generously when it has most been needed to build a strong community for today and for our future generations.





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