



africause
Youth and Community Services

2023 Annual Report





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Our Mission

Africause supports African–Australian youth and their families around education and training and economic participation and social inclusion; aiming to maximise school engagement and employment outcomes and enhance mental health and wellbeing.

We facilitate positive resettlement outcomes through partnerships with youth focused organisations, education providers, and employers and work collaboratively with refugee and migrant community organisations to maximise our reach and capacity.

Our Vision

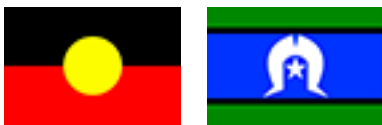
To support and facilitate an engaged African–Australian community across all areas of life, by fostering resilience and participation. We aim to Connect, Communicate, Coordinate, Collaborate, Create and Celebrate with the diverse Australian community for a more positive and inclusive Australian society.

Our Theory of Change works toward the ultimate goal of ensuring young African–Australians and their families settle well in Australia and experience improved life outcomes.

Our History

Established in July 2013, Africause has spent the past decade building a team of 65 bilingual volunteers and a small team of paid staff led by strong governance to respond strategically using a strengths-based approach to the needs of African–Australians in all of their diversity across Melbourne’s north and west.

Acknowledgement



We acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first inhabitants of this nation and the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live. We pay our respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging. We express our gratitude for the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and hope that we may move forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

We also acknowledge the countless women who have experienced family violence, and in particular, women from migrant and refugee backgrounds. We recognise the courageous path they have travelled to rebuild their lives and honour their stories which continue to inspire and drive our work.

Africause is an organisation that values and celebrates diversity, and that is respectful of a person’s culture, identity and beliefs.

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Overview

About Us



Connect, Communicate, coordinate,
Collaborate, Create, & Celebrate

Africause began working with African-Australians across Melbourne's north and west in 2013 and since that time we have built a team of 65 volunteers and a small team of paid staff. Led by a strong Board, we have developed a range of diverse partnerships with multicultural and other organisations to sustain our efforts to connect, communicate, coordinate, collaborate, create and celebrate with African-Australians and the broader community, including First Nation peoples.

Our Patron



The Honourable Ted Baillieu
Former Premier of Victoria

Our African-Australian community makes an extraordinary contribution to our State. Victoria is a proudly multicultural society. We treasure our Indigenous foundations and the diversity of those who have chosen this country as their future home or been born here from diverse backgrounds.

The story of Victoria is one of opportunity, youthful energy and selfless enterprise. In Victoria anything is possible, for anyone. We care for those in need and we celebrate excellence, achievement and creativity. But we know that it is not always easy for first generation migrants.

Africause seeks to not only welcome African-Australians but to reach out and support, in particular, younger members of the African-Australian community. I am proud to be the Patron of Africause. I know personally the great work that is done by Dr Berhan and his team. Education and health care are essential ingredients, but so too is learning how to get assistance, how to get a job, how to start a business and where to turn for housing and, of course, the thrill of starting and raising a family.

As I have said many times, I have every confidence in the capacity of young African-Australians. And I have every confidence that it won't be long before we see African-Australians in prominent leadership roles in business, in the public and community sectors. And as former Premier of Victoria I know some younger ones are sometimes shy in community. That is natural and humility is an asset. But relish your background, stand tall, open your arms to the support of others. Africause is here to help. Victoria and Australia are here as safe havens and, most importantly, home. Your home. Look after your home and your home will look after you. Waltzing Matilda is a traditional Australian song, mischievous but nurturing. It simply means we are all in this together. And "We are one but we are many." Warmest best wishes to you all.

Our Board



Phil Brooker
**Board
Chairperson**



Dr Irene Bouzo (PhD)
Deputy chairperson



Kennedy Weldemariam
Board Treasurer



Keletso Niebling (MEDL)
Board Secretary



Dr Berhan Ahmed
CEO and Board Member



ACP Luke Cornelius
Board Member



Sampurana Bangaar
Board Member



Dr. Ancy Gamage
Board Member



Robert Aduer
Board Member



Lorelle Said
Board Member

Community Advisory Committee

Awan Bangkok Mashak
John Mashar
Tehiya Umer
Yasseen Musa
Ferdos Osman
Samia Baho
Lem Baguot
Bedellu Desta
Yadata Saba
Ana Bol
Zahra Mustafa

Youth Advisory Board

Nick Hatzoglou
Jorge Jorquera
Sobur Dhieu
Dual Malual

Celebrating our Culture

Australia Day Dinner



International Womens Day



Nelson Mandela Day



Ethiopian New Year



Ramadan Iftar



Girls Soccer Tournament, April 2023



A Snapshot of the Africause Story

The Africause story began in 2013

We are proud to share some of our achievements with you.

The Empowering African Well-Being and Engagement Program is a new program that fosters well-being, inclusivity, and recognition among African-Australian students and their families in school communities.



Our Homework Club in Flemington continues to support African-Australian primary and secondary students and their families with after school learning, sporting and capacity building activities.

The Work and Development Permit (WDP) Scheme provides vulnerable and disadvantaged people with a non-financial option to address their fine or debts with Fines Victoria. WDP enables an eligible person to work off their fine or debts by participating with an approved charity like Africause. This financial year, Africause sponsored 34 people to participate in the scheme by converting fines totalling \$227,114 to non-financial obligations. To learn more about this scheme go to <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/wdp>

Since the **Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program** commenced in 2018, 44 places at the academy have been offered to participants in Police, Protective Services Officers (PSO) or Police Custody Officer (PCO) roles.



Africause works with school leadership teams in Melbourne's northern and western suburbs to provide **in-school mentoring** to support school engagement.



Africause has **65 volunteers** who selflessly provide support across all levels of the organisation; from participation on the Board and patronage to the delivery of programs on the ground. We thank all of our volunteers for their dedication to our cause - Africause!



Board members, staff and volunteers at the 2022 Annual General Meeting



Board members at the Victorian Multicultural Gala



Governance & Service Delivery

Structure & Management

Africause is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) as a registered charity holding an endorsement for charity tax and we operate under an independent board of directors as an incorporated organisation. Legally we operate as an Other Incorporated Entity with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status and Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) exemption. Our Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) status enables us to accept tax deductible donations which can be made directly via the Africause website.

Chairperson's Report



Phil Brooker

Africause Chairperson

Managing Director, Bellajack Consulting

2023 has been a year of strategic progress for Africause and I would like to thank my fellow board members and our tireless staff for their amazing contributions to keeping us always improving in everything we do. The board have looked to accomplish this through an externally facilitated strategic review which focussed upon the overall direction of Africause and the agreed program focus for the coming three to five years; while the board, staff, volunteers and key stakeholders all contributed

to a comprehensive 360-degree internal review process. review process is, at the time of writing, ongoing and we expect to be able to deliver the results by the end of the current calendar year. It is critical for us as it is targeting how we can better deliver the critical programs that we provide to the community and, given the resources we possess, how we can maximise our impact This within the refugee and migrant communities in Victoria.

Without revealing all of the outputs of this review, one of the key themes that was echoed across the majority of our stakeholder community is that we, and the people we serve, will benefit from greater focus. The aim for Africause is to have maximum positive impact with everything we do. Sometimes this may mean not doing some things we would like to so we can concentrate on making sure that what we are doing, is as effective as it can. Sometimes it may mean that we partner with others or outsource delivery of a program if that will get the best outcome for the community. Either way Africause is renowned for delivering high quality services to refugees and recent migrants and there is a recognition that, if we are to continue to improve our service delivery year-on-year, we need to focus on doing what we do best and then bringing in skills in those areas where others are better positioned to deliver to those needs.

From an operational perspective in 2023, as has been the case each year I have had the privilege to be on the board of Africause, our team has done more positive, impactful work in the community than ever before.

You will be able to read about these programs from the board and staff members who have so brilliantly overseen them in the pages that follow.

The key area of delivery I have personally had the privilege of being involved with this year is the Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program. This program was born in the Africause boardroom when myself, our CEO Dr Berhan Ahmed, the Assistant Commissioner for Victoria Police, Andrew Crisp, our former board member, Inspector Adrian Healy from Victoria Police and Kerry O'Neill from Victoria University met to discuss the challenge young African Australians were having getting through the recruitment process for Victoria Police. From that meeting an idea grew for a program to both .

- i) improve the recruitment process to remove areas of unconscious bias against people of non-European background, and
- ii) create a means to provide African-Australians with the skills they may lack that were required to get through the process.

Interestingly swimming was on both lists then, and is still on the required skills list, yet the success we have had in getting potential recruits up to the necessary skill levels, both for swimming and the others required has been exceptional.

Since its inception some seven years ago, the program has now seen a total of 12 x 15-week courses run by Victoria University which in turn has seen over 50 people successfully enter the Victoria Police Academy and many more working towards that aim. Our success at raising up the skill levels of aspiring police recruits has been exceptional, and our strike rate of success has also been steadily increasing which has shown we are learning as we go and delivering a better product that delivers better outcomes. This is something the teams at Jesuit Social Services and Victoria University who are delivering the training should be immensely proud of, as are we.

I have had the honour of co-chairing the Steering Committee of the Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program since its inception, first alongside Kerry O'Neill of Victoria University and now with Kate Bosniak of Jesuit Social Services. This is a critically important program, for Victoria Police, for refugee and migrant communities and for the Victorian community as a whole over the past five to six years. When we can see a police force that is more reflective of the community it serves, especially when we can do this while ensuring entry standards are maintained at their highest levels, we are all better off.

The barriers are being broken down between police and the community, particularly in among African-Australians. By having people who understand the culture and speak the same language of the people they are working to protect it removes a layer of apprehension on both sides and fosters better understanding on all sides.

2023 has also been a watershed year for the Diversity Recruitment Program in that, for the first time we have seen major progress in driving positive changes to the recruitment process itself. This is largely thanks to our own board member, Assistant Commissioner Luke Cornelius. Luke was given the unenviable task of addressing the blockages in the recruitment process and he has been instrumental in making it far more efficient as well as being more consistent and more culturally aware. I cannot thank Luke enough for his amazing efforts. He has streamlined the recruitment process, halving the average length of time to navigate it while at the same time keeping standards at their previous high levels. This has had an enormous impact on the program and the positive impact this will have on Victoria Police and the communities it serves will be profound into the future.

Our Team

I can't stress enough how much of an honour and a pleasure it is 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 engage with all of our incredible African-Australian communities is a great privilege. Led by our indefatigable CEO, Dr Berhan Ahmed, our paid and volunteer staff have continued to grow in 2023 in response to the growing needs in the community. We have seven staff and 65 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. Julia McAllister, Sara De Caen, Keletso Niebling, Mukarram Mohammed, Yaseen Musa, Guy Robinson, Abdalla Geberabi, Lorelle Said, Claire Connell, Abaas Abukar, Khaled Messoudi, and Ms. Fathi Hassan. And to our permanent part-time volunteers; Ms. Lorelle Said, Dr Sarah Tartakover, Ken Betts, Lauretta 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, and 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. Thank you to; Our Patron, The Hon Ted Baillieu, Our Deputy Chair, Dr Irene Bouzo, Our Secretary, Keletso Magano Niebling; Our Treasurer, Kennedy Waldamariam; Assistant Commissioner of Victoria Police, Luke Cornelius; Sampurana Bangaar, Dr Ancy Gamage, Lorelle Said and Robert Aduer.

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. Even if we continue to strive to be more efficient and to focus our efforts on those areas where we can have the greatest impact for each unit of time and money spent, the demand for our services continues to rise and this needs funding to keep pace with that demand.

Africause fulfils a critical role in Australia's 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 three years we have seen year-on-year growth in both government and private, philanthropic funding (donations). 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. Thus, without private funding sources, the more successful Africause is at attracting funding and in delivering community changing programs, the more money we need to find from other sources.

We have had more 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 down those in need. So, to ensure that we can continue to deliver this vital work, I would ask you 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 would like to discuss how you can contribute, please reach out to me, our CEO Dr Berhan Ahmed or to any of our board members and we will be happy to help you to help Africause.

Similarly, if you should 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.



Dr Berhan Ahmed
CEO

Reflections

As the CEO of Africause, I am deeply committed to our mission of addressing the pressing challenges facing our community members in Victoria. Our unwavering dedication has led us to focus on three key areas: children's school dropout (disengagement) rates, justice system engagement, and employment opportunities. In reflecting on our achievements and ongoing efforts, these challenges are interconnected, and we must approach them with comprehensive strategies.

In the last 12 months, according to Africause reports received from mothers and other family members, over 15 school children and young people were stabbed by knife in the Western suburbs; around 4 killed and more than 7 with series injuries and their families have been raided at night and they are looking to move from the house to save their other children because the criminal threat remains serious. Countless families with children are living with fear every day following when their child had been killed or injured. As one mother said, "when we were at refugee camp, we were safer than we are here. We lost control of our children, and our children are living in fear of returning to their home every day."

School engagement

The problem of school children discontinuing their education is a significant worry within our families and communities. These children often struggle due to racism, lack of support and resources. I have been involved in efforts to help school children facing difficulties in various Melbourne schools, having attended more than seventeen of them. After consultation with school, families, and children to understand the challenge facing each student/school and family,

Africause decided support fifty-one families, which includes financial support for educational costs, including laptops but not limited and other families' necessities, such as Wi-Fi bills. We are grateful for the support of our invaluable partners, such as Igniting Change for Financial Support, in making this possible.

This challenge continues to grow, and we recognize the urgency of the situation. To address this issue, Africause is actively engaging professionals, consulting community leaders, and members to tackle the root causes of school dropout and to stop youth involvement in criminal activities. We believe that by working collaboratively, we can create lasting solutions that benefit our children, families, and communities as a whole.

Research partnership with University of Melbourne

In early 2023, Africause engaged two University of Melbourne interns to undertake research to shed light on the causes of the high dropout rate of African Australian students in Victoria. To achieve this, surveys were conducted amongst multiple African Australian students to gather their thoughts and experiences on the matter. The findings of this research are essential in understanding the difficulties that students faced and in



When we were at refugee camp, we were safer than we are here. We lost control of our children, and our children are living in fear of returning to their home every day.

identifying ways to improve the education system to better meet their needs. We specifically targeted African students from year 7 to year 12 across Victoria, including Brimbank City, Wyndham City, City of Casey, City of Hume, City of Whittlesea, Melton City, and others, to ensure a diverse group of participants. We received a large number of responses from students, and their feedback has provided us with valuable insights into how we can improve services and support for these young students.

Justice system engagement

Unfortunately, school children engaging with police and the justice system is the direct outcome of school disengagement. Our commitment to fostering positive relationships with the justice system is another cornerstone of our work. We have worked closely with the Victoria Police, the Department of Justice, families, and communities to enhance communication and empower families. Through youth engagement and support, we aim to prevent involvement in the justice system and provide support and mentoring to those in need.

So far, Africause has provided support to more than fifty-seven families, benefiting sixty-one children and young people who have faced various crises. Our aim is to tackle these issues at the foundational level, with the goal of creating a significant positive influence on the lives of our community members and breaking the cycle of their involvement with the justice system. To help youths stay committed to improving their lives, by employing a range of approaches including Mentorship Programs, Community Engagement, Life Skills Training, and other skills to be employable.

By implementing crucial strategies, we aim to empower young people to make positive choices, to stay focused on personal growth, and ultimately build a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

Employment opportunities

Securing employment is of paramount importance to the well-being of our community members, and noteworthy progress has been made in this regard. Through collaboration with partners like Jesuit Social Services, Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, and various employers, Africause has assisted approximately 121 individuals in accessing employment and essential training. Notably, 53% of those we have aided are females, while 47% are males.

Nevertheless, we acknowledge that employment continues to be a challenge, particularly for young individuals with minor criminal records. The stigma associated with these records can serve as a barrier to entry into the job market. Consequently, Africause, in conjunction with our partners, has taken proactive measures to train 21 community members in sectors such as security and cleaning for self-employment. We passionately believe that offering opportunities for employment and skill development constitutes a crucial step in breaking the cycle of youth involvement in criminal activities.

Closing message from the CEO

The persistent issue of children dropping out of school in Victoria has posed a significant challenge for families, schools, and communities. This problem will persist unless we address it comprehensively, addressing not only the educational system but also the justice system and employment opportunities. This holistic approach is necessary to alleviate the ongoing youth group-related crime issues in our communities.



Our Programs & Activities

Africause delivers a range of programs focused on African-Australian children, young people and their families across education, employment and mentoring.



Education

Education

Africause education programs include our Flemington Homework Club, Adult English Basic Life Skills (speaking, reading and writing) and direct support to primary and secondary schools including in-school mentoring.

Consistent with our Theory of Change, our most important priority is to ensure African-Australian children and young people remain engaged in school to achieve positive life outcomes.

This year we have chosen to highlight our range of holistic wrap-around education support services that promote school engagement and learning to increase the number of African-Australian young people who complete Year 12 or equivalent.

School engagement program

Overview

This Empowering African Well-Being and Engagement Program, a nine-week initiative, aims at fostering well-being, inclusivity, and recognition among African-Australian students and their families in school communities. The program was developed to address challenges related to cultural disconnection, identity, and mental health, providing a comprehensive solution to empower African-Australian students and their families in educational settings.



Sarah de Caen
Education Coordinator

School engagement program

Increased Engagement: A more inclusive environment leads to increased engagement from African Australian students and families, enhancing school community participation.

Improved Cultural Competence: Schools become more culturally competent, equipping staff and students to engage with diverse perspectives.

Positive Outcomes: Focus on well-being and emotional support results in improved academic performance and stronger community ties.

Program Benefits

This Africause Wellbeing school program structure is meticulously designed to provide a comprehensive and engaging educational experience for African-Australian students in our school communities. Comprising six or nine weeks, the program is a dynamic blend of cultural exploration, well-being enhancement, leadership development, and advocacy training. Each week delves into specific thematic areas, from fostering inclusivity and recognizing cultural diversity to building leadership skills and driving social change. Through a series of workshops, interactive activities, hands-on projects, and enlightening discussions, students embark on a journey of self-discovery, empowerment, and cultural enrichment. This program structure not only fosters a deeper understanding of African cultures but also equips students with the tools to enhance their emotional and social well-being, enabling them to emerge as confident, informed leaders who can make a lasting impact on their schools and communities.

Conclusion

This program addresses well-documented disadvantages and challenges within the education system for African students and their families. We wholeheartedly recommend the implementation of the Empowering African Well-Being and Engagement Program as a strategic pathway to rectify these educational disparities, providing a transformative learning environment that empowers African students and their families while benefiting schools through improved engagement, recognition, and enhanced student well-being.



Africause School Programs

Our main role is creating a safe environment for both African students and their families to develop emotional resilience and language when communicating to others (Brown, 2021). According to David (2016, p. 85) when people have developed capacity to clearly express their emotions to others, it allows them to regulate their emotions in a healthy manner.

All students who have managed to communicate their fears, anxieties, and concerns to us in detail, appear to have navigated emotional challenges well with minimal support. This is highly instrumental in assisting them to stay in school and, additionally, reduce behavioural outbursts. African families have also received school directives with greater cultural respect from one of our Africause school liaison members who has worked alongside them.



Keletso Niebling (MEDL)
Youth Programs Manager

When the second language (in this case, English) limits expression, it can limit the way in which people receive spoken or written messages from others. Africause has been able to empower families and students with skills and language to express their feelings to school leadership. This has been meaningful during disciplinary meetings to enhance understanding.

Africause has a strong team of staff and volunteers that African families and students can relate to; this has been our primary strength. We have provided advocacy by assisting families to recognise what is required of them by school leadership. Students have been able to describe their feelings freely without fear of being punished by the school. Africause appreciates the welcoming gesture from schools who have invited us to share our expertise to support school engagement. The high level of engagement the schools have afforded us, has helped us to counsel and advise school staff on respectful ways to communicate with African families. It has also given the school leadership some insight about African cultures and values.

Africause was recently approached by some schools to run an African cultural course for African students. The requests came directly from the students in the schools, which means that African students are beginning to show an interest in their African roots.

We've had excellent results working with a northern suburbs school, where we have been doing lunch hangouts with primary aged students. Students from non-African backgrounds participated in the creation of a canvas for the school entrance with African textiles and fabrics. This age group has been presenting some challenges as some students were communicating with their African peers in an unkind manner. When the students see an African facilitator, it creates positive connections. This has reduced the number of unkind comments toward African students.

We are currently actively supporting three schools with programs, mentoring and lunch hangout programs. The programs are successful because of the active involvement of the school leadership who initiated our involvement in school engagement activities. Whenever school leadership is not engaged with our programs, we find it challenging to continue the program without their support. This sometimes happens when teachers reach out to us rather than school leaders.

References

Brown, B. (2021). Atlas of the heart, mapping meaningful connections and the language of human experience. Great Britain: Vermilion

David, S. (2016). Emotional Agility: Get Unstuck, Embrace Change, and Thrive in Work and Life. New York: Avery. p.85

Case Study 1: A single mother of three children aged 6, 8 and 13 years.

Scenario

The Wellness Coordinator of a school in an inner-northern Melbourne suburb, reached out to us requesting a mentor a student (6 years of age) who was highly disengaged in the classroom. He appeared to only engage for a maximum of five minutes in the classroom with his peers. This placed pressure on the school to provide additional supervision for the student who was unruly.

Strategy

Africause assisted by providing long-term support for both the family and the school. This enabled the school to communicate to the mother with great clarity and explain in detail the gravity of the student's behavior. Africause school liaison, Kel, was able to provide support for the mother to make sense of the issues with ease. The school (principal, wellness coordinator and classroom teacher), the parent and Africause were able to develop a learning plan to reduce the student's attendance hours to two hours each day for three days a week. This plan was developed to encourage active learning and participation. Hours were gradually added to the student's attendance schedule according to his performance and response.

Challenges

- Mother was forced to cease work for the whole term, so Africause CEO, Dr Berhan wrote a support letter to her workplace requesting to hold her position until the end of the term.
- Africause connected the family with other organisations to provide support with living expenses and food until the end of term, as the mother was supporting her family with reduced working hours.
- Africause School Liaison, Kel, supported the mother with home and school visits. She encouraged the mother to read with her son and encourage and reward his positive behaviours at home and at school. This created a drastic change in the son's behaviour. The mother recognised that she was the prime influencer in her son's life, as her son responded positively to her directives and encouragement.

Outcome

By the end of the school term, the student was able to attend school for the full school day like his peers.

Case Study 2: Two students, aged 13 and 14 years attending an eastern-suburbs school, both of whom were highly disengaged from school.

Scenario

One student had numerous suspensions and was on the verge of leaving school. The other student was following her friend's lead and was being influenced by her.

Strategy

The School Coordinator invited Africause to mentor the students face-to-face, which proved helpful. Both students were able to share openly their challenges and were willing to receive feedback and encouragement from us.

Challenges

- Financial support was not provided by the school to support service delivery by Africause.
- We were unable to connect with the families of both students, which may have improved mentoring outcomes.
- The School Coordinator appeared not to be supported by the school leadership, hence communication stopped when we requested financial support from the school to support service delivery.

Outcome

Overall, this case demonstrates that unless families and school leadership are involved in student learning, efforts by Africause alone will not sustain student engagement and retention.

Case Study 3: An Assistant Principal of a western suburbs school requested that Africause develop an African cultural program for African students attending the school.

Strategy

Six African-Australian guest speakers, distinguished in their own fields, featured in the program.

Outcome

We were amazed by the level of positive interactions the students displayed from the outset. They actively participated, asked questions and displayed a great deal of interest in what they were learning. The Assistant Principal advised that she had never seen them engage in this manner, and said she is looking forward to hosting more programs. This is important as some of the students missed out as participant numbers were capped at 15. The school leadership supported and paid for the program, which enabled Africause to reimburse speakers and pay program facilitators. Most importantly, students and families endorsed the program.

Mentoring



Africause has been implementing the Africause In-school Mentoring Program across Victorian primary, specialist, and secondary schools. This transformative program has been designed to facilitate school engagement and foster intercultural understanding among students, creating a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment.

Homework Club



After-school learning-focused activity for students from non-English speaking backgrounds supports school engagement and family involvement in student learning.

The Africause Homework Club give students a place to study in a helpful and supportive environment. The homework club runs in Flemington from 5pm to 7pm each Tuesday during school terms.

More information about Africause programs and activities can be found on the Africause website at <https://www.africause.org.au>



Victoria University and Africause Inc Partnership

RE: Postgraduate course on Master of Applied Teaching (EMAT)

'African graduate teachers are role models for African Australian children and young people in education settings' (Dr Berhan Ahmad).

The Master of Applied Teaching (Secondary Education) at Victoria University is a new and exciting teacher education program that is funded by the Department of Education. The program offers an **employment-based, fast-tracked teaching career pathway that allows students to graduate within 18 months**. In this program, preservice teachers prepare for a career as a secondary school teacher through intensive study and real work experience.

The Master of Applied Teaching (Secondary Education) is made up of three intensive phases, each lasting six months. In the first phase, preservice teachers learn from expert teachers at Victoria University, who interrogate and investigate principles of effective teaching and learning practices. The internship component involves preservice teachers being employed in schools as an Education Support Officer (Phase 2). In phase 3 preservice teachers are employed under a Permission to Teach (PTT) employment agreement. Participating in an internship model of teacher education provides preservice teachers with greater exposure to the lived realities of school communities.

The Master of Applied Teaching (Secondary Program) has established an innovative partnership with African Australian Communities. Dr Berhan Ahmed (Director of Africause) has also been instrumental in assisting with the marketing campaign. Dr Berhan's marketing campaign has attracted a strong number of African preservice teachers who are enrolled in the first delivery of the program. African preservice teachers engage in online university classes and engage in face-to-face teaching opportunities within secondary schooling contexts. All African preservice teachers complete a compulsory unit of study that enhances their skills and knowledge of trauma sensitive teaching and learning approaches.

Africause will help to lead a series of Cultural Professional Development (PD) sessions with its African cohort. The PDs will centre on extending their skills and knowledge on socially just teaching and learning standpoints.

This initial teacher education program prepares graduates to register as a teacher and involves significant learning in the workplace.



A/Prof. Marcelle Cacciattolo
EMAT Course Chair



Annemarie Agborichi
EMAT Co-ordinator



Dr. Sara Gaul McKee
EMAT Co-ordinator

For further information please contact Marcelle Cacciattolo. Her details are below:

Associate Professor Marcelle Cacciattolo

Phone **+61399195903**

Mobile 0402472550

Email: marcelle.cacciattolo@vu.edu.au

Supporting migrant and refugee employment

The Africause office in Footscray has up to 25 community members using our services every day. Approximately 20% of those people are seeking employment support. Thanks to the Victorian State Government an employment grant has been provided under the Victorian African Communities' Action Plan (VACAP) community employment broker fund. Africause has received this funding for the past three years to support our community, particularly young people, and women.

In the 2023 financial year, Africause supported and connected over 137 members of our communities to employment with special thanks to our JAVEN employment partners, namely Jesuit Social Services and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre for their support and assistance in helping our communities to secure employment opportunities.

Moreover, Africause supported 20+ members, within a culturally appropriate training environment to complete in-house security and cleaning industry training courses in-house, enabling them to attain relevant qualifications to work as security officers and cleaners. As Australia has moved from a manufacturing economy to a knowledge and service economy, we have modified our employment support approaches and it is incumbent upon the authorities to help this transition for recently arrived refugees and migrants.

Unfortunately, the lack of job opportunities for young people and women of African descent has been very challenging and this is one of the reasons they turn to the informal sector to seek employment as a means of survival, particularly women. History of insecurity in their home countries that brought them to Australia has not dampened their desire to innovate and to run their own commercial enterprises. Many women regard the informal sector as an automatic panacea for unemployment and poverty. Some women view this avenue of employment as attractive as it does not require specific qualifications or licenses for them to become entrepreneurs. The informal sector is seen as offering economic solutions that provide adequate and secure alternatives to mainstream employment.

Moreover, some young people have been forced in to such situation due to having a police record which makes it hard to find mainstream employment opportunities. It serves as a means of subsistence rather than profit-making for most women and provides a platform for income generation for daily transactions for domestic purposes. Of course, this is not unique to African men and women as it is common in other parts of the world for men and women to participate in entrepreneurship. The individual intrinsic motive for starting a business depends on whether it is necessary to alleviate poverty and provide for daily transactions or whether it is possible to pursue business opportunity for profit. It can be a challenge for seasoned informal sector entrepreneurs to adapt to a formal commercial environment such as is the case in Victoria, Australia. It was a great relief to receive support from the Victorian State Government for this purpose.

Barriers facing young people and women of African descent as entrepreneurs, besides the formal institutional maze, include cultural norms that still impact negatively on women. The continued maligning of women can make them feel inadequate because the business context demands assertiveness. Such enterprises involve considerable risk and effort for entrepreneurs, particularly in view of the complex regulatory and legislative compliance regime. Perhaps the risk is higher for women entrepreneurs who may be vulnerable as virtual outsiders. There are other barriers too, such as a lack of education and the complex number of challenges required to run and grow a business which may be compounded by the unwillingness of banks to grant credit, a lack of support, negative socio-cultural attitudes, and sex discrimination or gender bias.

The Way Forward

Africause plans to address each of the following challenges through education and Information activities, as well as soliciting volunteer mentors for young people and women.

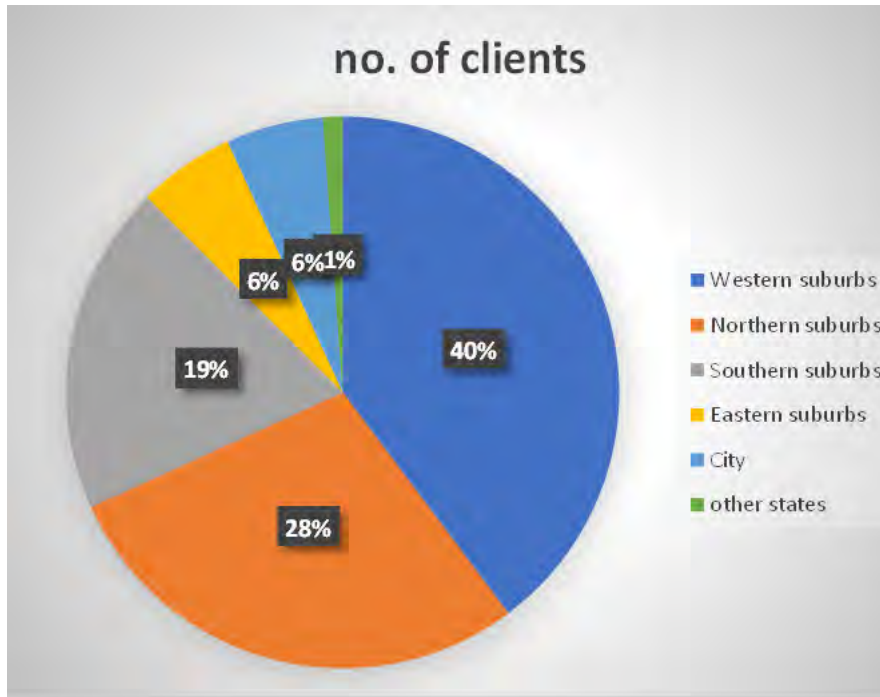
- The regulatory environment: Training will be provided about the Australian business regulatory environment including insurance, taxation, industrial relations, occupational health and safety standards, etc.
- Cultural attitudes: We will create a Womens Circle where experiences can be shared about succeeding in business and breaking down cultural barriers.
- Tradition and financial collaterals: Information will be collected and shared to support women negotiating their access to financial resources via financial institutions.
- Lack of education: Information will be provided (audio visual where possible) about Australian business expectations in languages and level easily accessible to women.
- Lack of information dissemination: Africause will liaise with government to facilitate women's access to information about federal, state and local government small business support programs.
- Annual small business development event: community engagement activities specific to women will be made available.

Security Training Course, November 2022



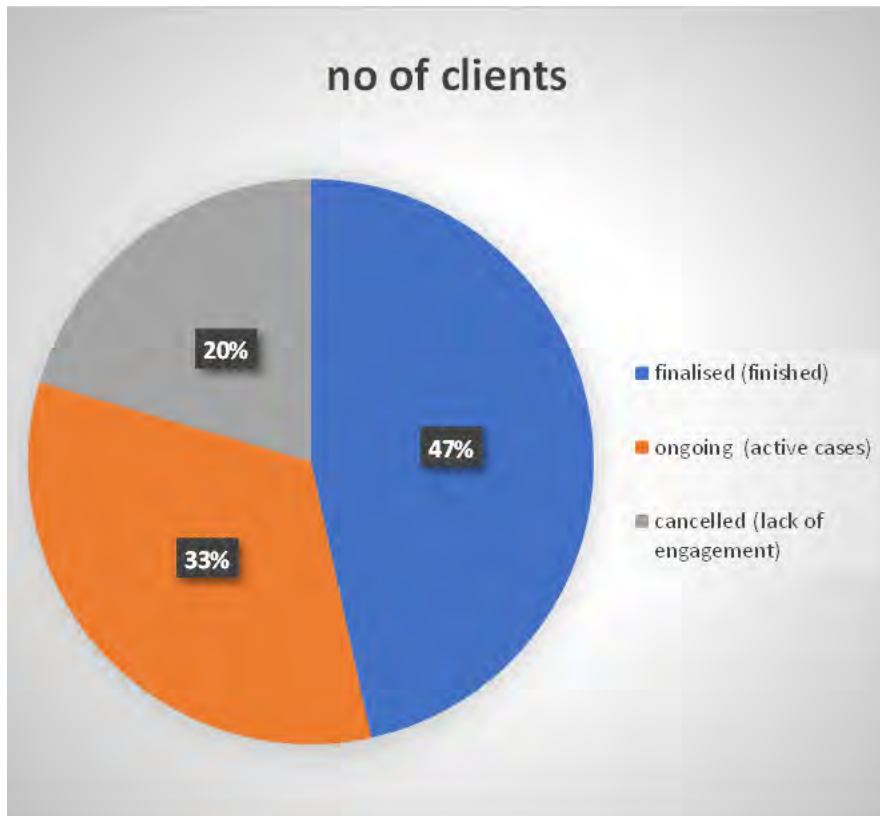
The Work and Development Permit (WDP) Scheme

Residential locations of scheme participants



Service Area	Clients
Western suburbs	35
Northern suburbs	25
Southern suburbs	17
Eastern Suburbs	5
City	5
Other states	1
Total	38

Residential locations of scheme participants



Status	Clients
Completed	41
Active	29
Cancelled	18
Total	88

The Work and Development Permit (WDP) Scheme

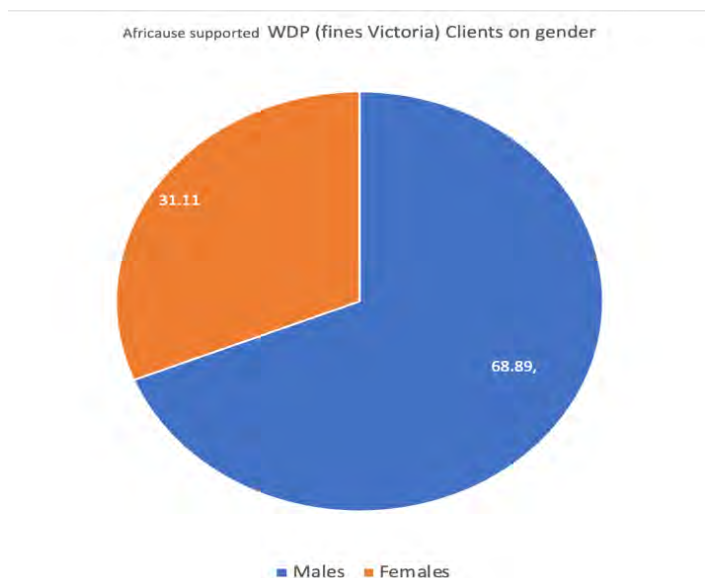
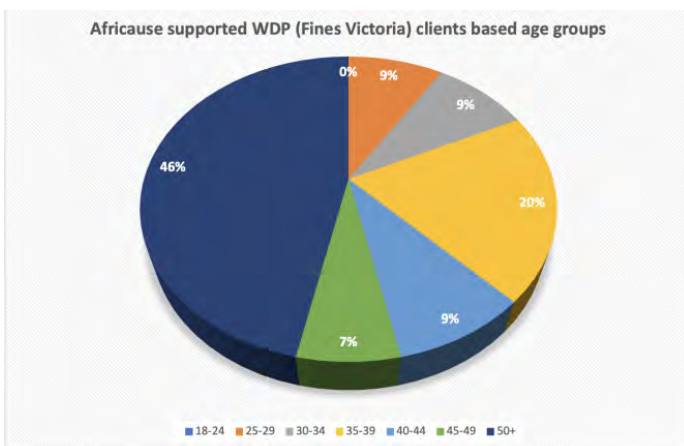
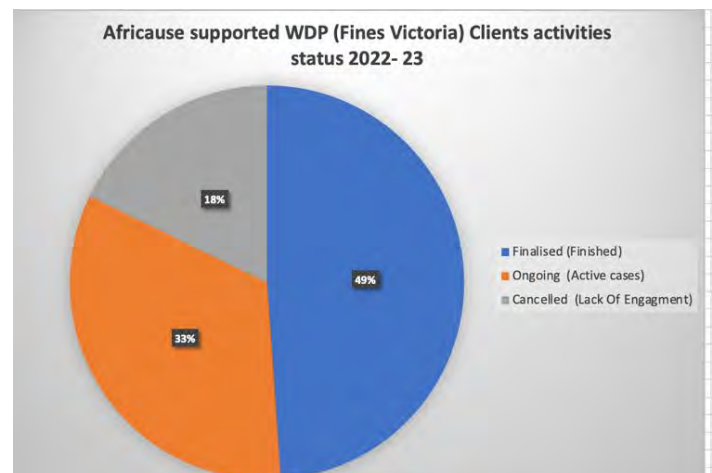
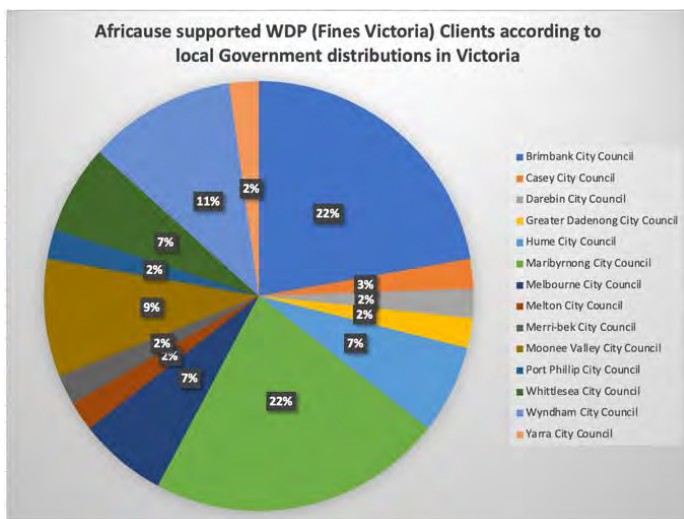
Africause support for clients facing financial hardship

Africause services include the Work and Development Permit (WDP) Scheme to support disadvantaged members of our communities struggling with financial hardship to convert their fines to non-financial options to address their debts owed to Fines Victoria.

Africause acquired a license from Fines Victoria to sponsor members experiencing financial hardship who are unable to pay their fines. As the cost of living is rising, compounded by increasing bills and higher rents, many community members are struggling to provide food and shelter for their children.

The conversion of fines has special requirements including being required to undertake a number of hours of unpaid work based on the total amount of fines incurred. During the financial year 2022–23, Africause sponsored over 45 members of our communities to work in lieu of paying their fines totalling \$217,000.

This opportunity enables our community members to reduce their financial burdens, retain their employment and keep their families intact. The clients who participated in the scheme are described in the graphs below and comprise their residential location, gender, age, and the status of the non-financial activity they have undertaken in lieu of paying their fines.





From a refugee camp to ensuring the safety of community across our public transport system, Protective Services Officer, Yasac Abdullahi, leads by example. Arriving in Australia with limited English, Yasac's first interaction with Victoria Police was during his time as a Youth Manager at the Australian Muslim Social Service Agency (AMSSA).

"As part of my role, I organised youth events and invited Victoria Police liaison officers to help break down barriers and challenge stereotypes," says Yasac. "A significant cultural barrier exists within the Somali youths. Some believe that the police and PSO's are present solely to discriminate against them."

When Yasac asked the officers about serving members from Somali backgrounds, he quickly learned there were none. "Seeing one of your own wear the uniform changes the perception of individuals within my community who may have felt marginalised or discriminated against through personal experience. Seeing their (the liaison officers) genuine commitment to engage and build relationships with the youths inspired me to join."

Yasac believes that despite the ingrained beliefs of his community, encouraging steps are being taken in the recruitment process at Victoria Police to shift the perspective of policing in the state. Initiatives like the Victoria Police Diversity Recruitment Program support the organisation's commitment to increase the representation of people from cultural backgrounds.

Since his initial exchange with Victoria Police liaison officers at AMSSA, PSO Yasac Abdullahi hopes he will continue to build rapport between his colleagues and his community, even encouraging some to consider a career in policing. "I am the first Somali background PSO. If they see that I can do it, that will encourage them to follow their dreams."



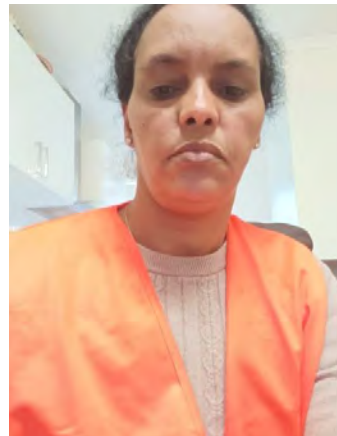
Single mother, Frewyne Nugusie expressed her thanks for support from Africause in her time of need including material support that was provided to buy essentials including groceries and the provision of a laptop for her Grade 5 daughter. Freyne wrote **“dear Africause board and staff, I am grateful for your help for my daughter and for my family. Please accept my gratitude and you have my heartfelt appreciation. Thank you very kindly.”**



Mr Fahmi Yusuf is a young Ethiopian (Oromo) man who appreciates the support and mentoring provided by Africause which included provision of his basic settlement needs, developing an understanding of Australian work culture and assistance into employment. He has been employed since August 2022. Fahmi, said, **“From the bottom of my heart, I thank you, and appreciate all you have done for me. Your generosity has given me new hope in my life.”**



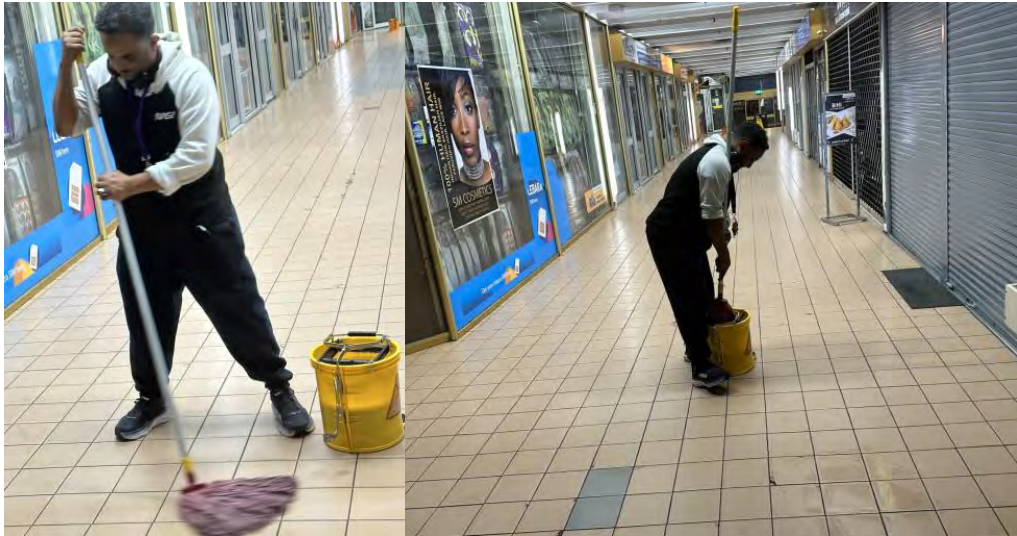
Mr Sebt Belal, who is from South Sudan, was unemployed for two years and after completing Africause security training and helping him to complete the required paperwork to apply for a security licence, he was also assisted financially to pay his rent for a short time after being evicted. Sebt is currently working and earning income. **“Africause support has been a source of strength for me. Thank you for being a constant source of hope, support and encouragement. Your support has been greatly appreciated.”**



Ms Shewit Yemane was an asylum seeker, who had no knowledge of the written or spoken English. As a client of Africause, she was offered a range of supports including with her visa application process and training to become a cleaner. Shewit recently became employed with a cleaning company and she is now working to build her own cleaning business.

Self-employment Success Story

Mohamed Abdu, is a family man with five children who arrived in Australia two years ago. He was initially unemployed and was supported by Africause to establish his own cleaning business after completing the Africause cleaning course. Mohamed is excited to be a good role model for his children and support his family to dream big. He has been self-employed now for over six months.



Testimony from a young woman

Ms Veronica is a young Africause volunteer mentoring other young people with her vast experience and seeking a second chance to participate in employment, due to some bad choices she made that resulted in offending behaviour that caused her to enter the justice system.

Veronica wrote:

"I am writing to express my utmost remorse for my past actions. I fully acknowledge that my behaviour was unacceptable and had a profound impact on my life. During my younger years, I endured severe abuse, which resulted in my forced departure from home at the age of 14, leaving me devoid of stability or support. Consequently, I developed a defensive mindset due to being constantly used and mistreated by those around me. I lacked the necessary knowledge to navigate such circumstances effectively. Taking complete responsibility for my actions, I am wholeheartedly committed to making amends. I have actively taken steps to improve myself and ensure that similar incidents never recur. Currently, I face considerable challenges in finding employment and lack the financial means to progress and become a better member of society. My present circumstances are exceedingly difficult, and I deeply yearn for the opportunity to rewrite my past if given a second chance. Sincerely, Veronica."



Ms. Veronica is not the only African-Australian young woman seeking a second chance to access and participate in employment. Every job she has applied for requires a police check, which due to mistakes she made in her teens results in repeated rejection, and denying her the opportunity to prove that she has the willingness and capacity to be a reliable and productive member of society.

John said; **"I don't know where we'd be without your support. It has been difficult to continue my dreams. You showed up in my life, just when I needed a shoulder to lean on, and it means so much to me. There aren't enough words to express what Africause support means to me."**

13th October 2023

Subject: Testimony Letter

Dear Dr Berhan Ahmed, CEO of Africause,

I am writing to express my heartfelt appreciation for the exceptional services and support provided by Africause, an organization dedicated to empowering the African-Australian community, especially the youth and families.



As an Australian citizen with a South Sudanese background, I have had the privilege to witness the positive impact of Africause's efforts firsthand. I want to extend my gratitude to Dr Berhan Ahmed, the dedicated CEO of Africause, the exceptional staff, the selfless volunteers, and the esteemed Board members, including The Honourable Ted Baillieu, former Victorian Premier.

Their tireless efforts and unwavering dedication have significantly contributed to nurturing an engaged African-Australian community, covering crucial aspects of life such as socio-cultural, economic, and sporting domains.

Africause's initiatives, particularly their emphasis on creating a supportive educational environment, deserve special recognition. Their proactive approach in implementing early intervention strategies to minimize school dropouts and providing mentoring and homework support for students within a family-oriented framework are truly praiseworthy. Additionally, Africause facilitates effective communication and support between schools, students, and families, addressing language barriers that might hinder educational progress.

Furthermore, Africause has been instrumental in providing job training opportunities, including security training licenses, to combat youth unemployment within the community. Their efforts to connect young individuals with internship services and various job opportunities showcase their commitment to empowering the youth and preparing them for a successful future. However, I strongly believe that to fully realize their goals and significantly contribute to reducing youth crime, Africause requires substantial financial support. It is crucial for individuals, the community, government entities, state government, and local organizations to come together and provide the necessary financial backing to enable Africause to continue making a meaningful impact on the community.

One of Africause's notable initiatives involves fostering community cohesion by organizing gatherings and barbecue events. These events serve as a valuable platform for the African-Australian community to come together, share thoughts, discuss pressing issues, and educate our youth, single mothers, and single fathers.

In conclusion, Africause remains an indispensable force in empowering the African-Australian community. Their dedication, hard work, and innovative programs undeniably enhance the lives of many, promising a brighter future for all.

Sincerely
More Machok

Reference

Testimonial

2 November 2023

Dear Dr Berhan,

Compliments of the day to you. I am returning from a practical training which took place in Gisborne, and I thought I should use the opportunity to touch base with you.

Thanks for introducing me to Jesuit Social Services. I was enrolled in the age care program, and it has been 4 months down the line and the training is going well.

I hope more opportunities will open for me during my life. I wish to you all the best now and in the future.

Best regards,

Adeniyi S Adediran

References

(03) 9977 9000

Level 5, 61 Riggall St
Dallas, VIC 3047
www.spectrumvic.org.au
ABN 38 080 845 787



To Whom It May Concern;

This is to certify that Africause has been a close partner of Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre over the last two years in relation to the Victorian African Communities Action Plan (VACAP) Program.

Africause has been an important partner in referring African Australian job seekers (longterm unemployed as well as those who are at risk of long-term unemployment) for support through the program.

Over the two years Africause has referred several eligible clients. A few of them have got employment outcomes thanks to the partnership and the culturally appropriate referral and service provision.

With kind regards,

Gebreselasie Gebru
Education & Employment Facilitator
Social and Economic Inclusion Team
Ph: 0428013087 Email: gebreselasieg@spectrumvic.org.au

August 28, 2023

I am writing to confirm that Africause has been a significant referral source of African Australian jobseekers to Jesuit Social Services JVES programs.

Over the last two years Africause has referred many members of their community to our education and employment programs. Africause has also worked collaboratively with our organization by providing us with cultural advice and support to our participants of African descent.

As it is not a requirement of our JVES contracts to keep official records of how many referrals come directly from Africause, we are not in a position to provide a report.

Kind regards,

Rob Auger

Operations Manager - Employment Services
1 Langridge Street (PO Box 1141) Collingwood VIC 3066
M 0438 607 959
E Rob.Auger@jss.org.au



Finances

Treasurer's Report



Kennedy Weldemariam

Board Treasurer

Master of Business (Professional Accounting)

On behalf of Africause, I am pleased to present the treasurer's report for the financial year ending June 30 2023. Over the past 12 months, we have maintained our dedication to our mission to support the community through our various initiatives and projects spanning education, employment, justice, multiculturalism, refugee and migrant support. In financial year 2023, Africause's primary source of income continues to be grants from state and federal departments. However, it is acknowledged that there has been a positive increase in generous donations from local community individuals, businesses, and organisations compared to prior years.

Against this income, our operating expenses were diligently managed across project, administration, occupancy, and employee costs. Therefore, we are delighted to report that in financial year 2023 Africause achieved a small operating profit. This financial success is a result of the unwavering support of our funding and grant partners, donors and supporters, complimented by strong governance and sensible executive management.

Looking ahead to the financial year 2024, Africause remains steadfast in our commitment to uphold strong governance, ensuring transparency and accountability in all our operations. Our dedication to ensuring effective financial oversight, by maintaining best practices aims to safeguard the trust placed in us from our funding and grant partners, donors and supporters. This dedication to transparency not only contributes to our stable financial position but also ensures that every dollar received is effectively supporting our mission.

Africause expresses our heartfelt gratitude to our funding and grant partners, donors, supporters, volunteers, board, and staff for their vital contributions to our cause. Their generosity fuels our ability to affect a lasting impact and we are enthusiastic about the continued growth and positive change we can achieve for the community together.

A special thank you for the project funding and grants received from: Victorian Department of Transport Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Australian Department of Social Services, Australian Department of Home Affairs, Maribyrnong City Council, National Australia Day Council.



CEO Dr Berhan Ahmed welcoming Federal MP Dr Daniel Mulino to Africause to celebrate receiving the Australian Department of Home Affairs Fostering Integration Grant.

Financial Statements

Below is a summary of our financial position in 2023. Our full Annual Financial Report and Annual Information Statement will be available to access via the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website in December 2023.

Profit and Loss Statement

For the year ended at 30 June 2023

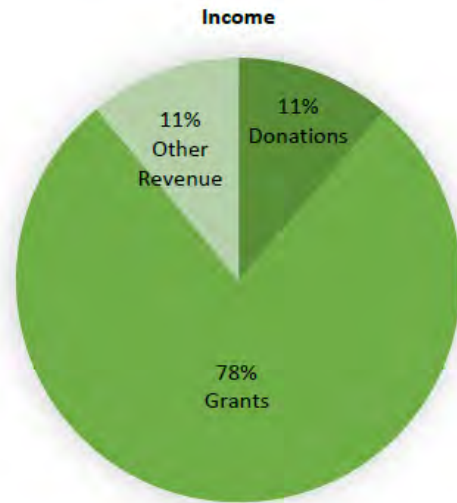
Income	\$
Donations	36,170.10
Grants	248,087.00
Other Revenue	35,171.32
Total Income	319,428.42

Gross Profit	319,428.42
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Operating Expenses

Administrative Expenses	22,929.64
Occupancy Expenses	38,295.15
Projects Expenses	64,049.39
Employee Expenses	170,201.91
Total Operating Expenses	295,476.09

Total Profit	23,952.33
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Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2023

Assets	\$
Bank	
Cash at Bank	363,781.63
Total Bank	
Fixed Assets	363,781.63
Office Equipment	2,580.91
Total Fixed Assets	2,580.91
Total Assets	366,362.54

Liabilities

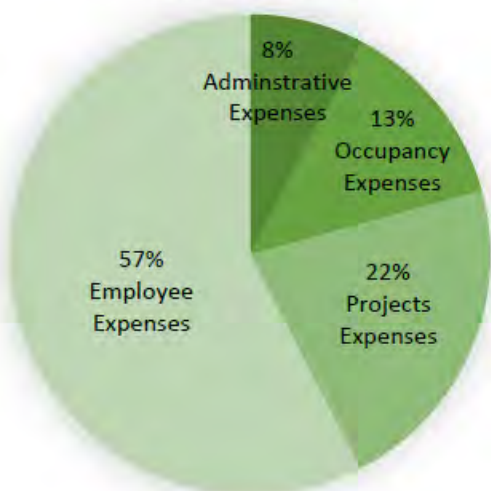
Current Liabilities	
GST	20,479.98
PAYG Withholdings	
Payable	4,866.00
Superannuation Payable	4,083.40
Total Current Liabilities	29,429.38
Total Liabilities	29,429.38

Net Assets	336,933.16
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Equity

Current Year Earnings	23,952.33
Retained Earnings	312,980.83
Total Equity	336,933.16

Operating Expenses



Other Important Information

Acknowledgements

Without the financial and in-kind contributions of our supporters, Africause would be unable to provide a diverse range of community supports and we thank each of you for your contribution. In particular, Africause would like to thank our volunteers, partners and funders who collectively support our efforts to ensure young African-Australians and their families settle well in Australia and experience improved life outcomes.

Volunteers

Hon Ted Baillieu: Patron
Dr Irene Bouzo: Board member
Mr Phil Brooker: Board member
Mrs Kel Niebling: Board member
Mr Luke Cornelius: Board member
Ms Smaporana: Board member
Ms Ancy Gamage: Board member
Mr Kennedy Weldemariam: Board member
Mr Robert Aduer: Board member
Ms Lorelle Said: Board member
Dr Mohamed Aba-Bulgu: ex-Board member
Ms Summayyah Sadiq: ex-Board member
Yasseen Musa: ex-board member
Awan Madding: South-Sudanese community
Mr Berhe Tewoldeberhan: Eritrean community
Mr Makonnen Weldo: Eritrean community
Mr Rashidi Somali: Congolese community
Mr Khadija Somali: Congolese community
David Kuel: South-Sudanese community
Tehiya Umer: Oromo community
Mr Yadata Saba: Oromo community
Mr Ken Betts: community advocate
Mr Bedellu Desta: Ethiopian community
Ms Ferdos Osman: Ethiopian community
Ms Doum Bol Kunjok: South-Sudanese community
Ms Samira Osoli: Oromo community
Ms Teresa Adhan: South-Sudanese community
Ms Shaze Ali: Sudanese community
Mr Bol Buoi: South-Sudanese community
Dr Mohamed Ibrahim: Somali community
Ms Zahra Moustafa: Somali community
Basher: Somali community
Ms Mmaskepe Sejoe: Botswana community
Dr Sarah Tartakover: Victoria University
Cr Jorge Jorquera: Maribyrnong City Council
Ms Dalia Elturabi: Sudanese community
Mr Jamal Ahmed: Eritrean community
Mr Khaled Messoudi: Eritrean community
Mr Abdella Geber Rebi: Eritrean community
Ms Ayan Hersi: Somali community

Mr Byron Price: African-American community
Ms Fathi Hassen: Somali community
Mr Kerollos Faltaous: Egyptian community
Ms Neven Saad: Egyptian community
Ms Kinzi Kabadeh: Student
Mr Mapiou Nyang: South-Sudanese community
Ms. Siobhan Allen: Social Worker
Ms. Susan Agoer: South-Sudanese community
Ms Zalihe Mehmet: Turkish community
Mr Abdurahman Abdi: Somali Community
Mr Gafer Mahmoud: Sudanese community
Mr Hussien Hubedin: Eritrean community
Mr Ibsa Hassen: Auditor, Oromo community
Mr Khalil A Khalil: Eritrean community
Ms Mariam Kosley: Ethiopian youth volunteer
Ms Shewit Yemane: Eritrean community
Mr Temesgen Marko Gashay: Eritrean community
Mr Taeb Musa: Youth volunteer
Mr Usman Jaiyeola: Nigerian community
Mr Wael Osman: Eritrean community
Jacqueline Stephanie Kos: Volunteer teacher
Zahra Daghagheleh: Volunteer teacher
Aakarsh Sharma: Volunteer teacher
Paul Abu-Elias: Volunteer teacher
Michael Robertson: Volunteer teacher
Katherine Tsagaris: Volunteer teacher
William John Brun: Volunteer teacher
Peter Farmer: Volunteer teacher
Sang Dinh: Volunteer teacher
Katherine Tsagaris: Volunteer teacher
Aakarsh Sharma: Volunteer teacher
Kehkashan Kamran: Volunteer teacher
Felicity Hernandez Gonzalez: Volunteer teacher
Trudi Duong: Volunteer teacher
Jo Williams: Volunteer teacher
Adele Mehmet: Volunteer teacher
Paul Dooley: Volunteer teacher

Volunteer Recognition

Ms Regina Agany is a well-known and respected community leader who has experienced many challenges raising her children. Africause stood by her to manage family issues by providing material, financial and emotional support. Regina is now giving back to others as a highly valued Africause volunteer by supporting other mothers to overcome the challenges of bringing up their children in a new country.

A few words from Regina: **“I value the help you've given me & I am so thankful for Africause timely support in my life journey. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you, and appreciate all you have done. Your generosity has given me new hope”.**



Igniting Change Statement for Africause Support

We love walking alongside Berhan, Abass Abukar and the team at Africause who show such care, forethought and unwavering dedication to every member of their community. Africause are true advocates for their community not talking for people but working with them. Their kindness stretches to all those around them and we are proud of our small investments ranging from financial support to goods in kind.

Warmly Jane,
Igniting change

Special Thanks

The people that have helped Africause are too numerous to thank, but there are few that deserve special mention. Ms. Keletso Magano-Niebling & Doum Kunjok has been working tirelessly with the school children's mothers, schools, and the school children voluntarily. Ms. Tehiya Umer and Mr. Yasseen Musa volunteers dedicated their time and energy with the homework group. Their dedication and commitment have done the homework program very trusted and reliable source with most children successfully progressing with their study. Special thanks to the Volunteer tutors and the mothers at the homework club as well.

Thank you to the Mr. Bruce Wong (Food solutions Pty Ltd); Ms. Jane Tewson & Ms. Jackie Polonsky (Igniting change); African small Business. Also, our special Thanks go to Hon. Ted Baillieu (former premier of Victoria) our Patron. His dedication and commitment have been overwhelming. Especial thanks also go to the Victoria Police, namely senior Inspectors Ash Dixit and Darren Paterson, from Faulkner Police station, always been available for community members to meet and assist anytime during the years. Australian Federal Police and the AFL for their leadership and continued support for our community members.

Our colleagues and friends from Somali, Ethiopian, Oromo, Tigrayan, South Sudanese, Hararian community, Sudanese, Eritrean Jeberti, Yemeni Communities of Victoria; especially Mr Yadata Saba (Oromo Community), Mr. Farah Warsema (Somali Community), Ms. Fartun Farah (East African women's Foundation); Ms. Shaza Ali, (Sudanese Women Empowerment Organisation), Mr. Tesfahun Tsegay, (Tigray community Association in Victoria (Ethiopian), Mr. Awan Bangok Mashak, (Dinka (jieng) community council of Victoria inc.), Ms. Samia Baho, (Centre of Advancing women), Ms. Teresa Adhian, Sudanese Woman's Association, Mr. Alwan Feki, (Australian Saay Harari Association (Ethiopian); Mr. Khalil Khalil (Eritrean Jeberti), and other community leaders.

Our special thanks also go to Mr. Ken Betts, our committed Volunteer, and Justice of peace helping of our members tirelessly. Also, special to go to our local state MP Katie Hall, Footscray MP and her staff including Mr. Sel Sanli. Also, our special Thanks to our Federal MP Dr. Daniel Melino (Frazer), and his staff have been very helpful and supportive. Special thanks also go to the Maribyrnong council and Brimbank council for their continued support and collaboration with community and business. Also especial thanks to Youth Justice "Parkville College" staff and the volunteers. Special Thanks to Victoria University for the Partnership on Postgraduate scholarships for African & Multicultural teachers training, and special thanks to Dr Sarah Tartakover and Mr. Jorge Jorquera for continued support and advisory role. Special thanks to our Volunteer for the Annual report 2022/23 designer and selfless individual Mr. Usman Jaiyeola. His work and commitment have always been shining.

Our local Partners such the Flemington and Footscray Police Station for their cooperation and support. Also, special thank is due to Homework volunteers for their selfless contribution to the homework club for few years and have contributed and supported our activities including the homework club member. It is also important to thank our dedicated Africause staff and volunteers, 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, Ms. Keletso Magano-Niebling; Treasurer Mr. Kennedy Weldemariam; Mr. Luke Cornelius, Victoria Police assistant commissioner, Mrs. Sampurana Bangaar, Dr Ancy Gamage, Mr. Robert Aduer Ring and Ms. Lorelle Said. also special thanks to our Partners in Victoria Police diversity recruitment, Jesuit Social Services (JSS), Victoria Police, Victoria Police, Maurice Blackburn, AMES, Match works (employment agent), with special thanks to the leadership provided by Mr. Stephen Mutton, and the staff at JSS. I like to thank many members of our communities for their trust and support throughout the year and always without such support and commitment nothing would have achieved. My sincere apology for people missing on the above list, due to bad memory.

Community, government and corporate partners

AMES Australia
Australian Department of Home Affairs
Australian Federal Police
Australian Football League, Football Victoria & Western Bulldogs
Australian Multicultural Media Centre
Brotherhood of St Laurence
Centre for Multicultural Program Evaluation
Commission for Children and Young People (Victoria)
Department of Education and Training (Victoria)
Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (Victoria)
Department of Justice and Community Safety (Victoria)
Department of Transport (Victoria)
Dream Homes Real Estate
Igniting Change
International Organisation for Migration
International Security Training Academy
Jesuit Social Services and Jesuit Community College
Kennedy Tax and Business Services Pty Ltd
Legal services: Armour Legal, AUM Lawyers, Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, Victoria Legal Aid
Local Government City Councils: Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley
Matchworks
Parkville Juvenile Justice College & Ravenhall Correctional Centre
Secondary Colleges across Melbourne's west and south-east
Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre
Thrive Refugee Enterprise
Unity Care Australia
Universities: Melbourne, Monash, Swinburne and Victoria
Victorian African Chamber of Commerce & African Small Business
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
Victorian Law Reform Commission
Victorian Multicultural Commission & Victorian Ombudsman
Youth Activating Youth

Funding and sponsorship

Africause warmly acknowledges and thanks all of our donors including but not limited to the following:

- Microsoft for continuing to provide free Microsoft 365 Business Premium software licences for staff
- Foot Solutions for providing \$3,500 sponsorship for our International Women's Day event
- Igniting Change Foundation for providing various donations totalling \$26,500 for emergency community support to address domestic violence, homelessness and delivery van repairs.
- Kennedy Tax and Business Services for providing a \$1,000 sponsorship for Africause and the EJCA Iftar Dinner event
- Angel Care Victoria (Khaled Messoudi) for the generous donation of \$1,000 to support Africause service delivery.

How can you Help

Volunteer your time

Africause welcomes volunteers from all walks of life and backgrounds to support our work. Volunteers must have a current National Police Check and Working with Children Check.

You can register to volunteer at the Contact Us tab via our website: <https://www.africause.org.au>



Make a donation

If you would like to make a financial donation, no matter how small, please go to the Donation button on our website at [Donation Form - Africause](#)

Become a community or corporate partner

If you are interested in becoming a community or corporate partner, please send a brief email to Dr Berhan Ahmed at harmony@africause.org.au





Africause extends its hand in friendship to all Australians including First Nation peoples and other culturally and linguistically diverse communities, who experience marginalisation and barriers to social and economic participation.

Over the coming years, Africause plans to consolidate and strengthen existing key programs and continue to advocate on behalf of African-Australian communities in all of their diversity to enhance school engagement, employment opportunities and positive life outcomes for young people and their families.

Africause has strong governance, a highly skilled CEO, a high-profile patron, a small team of paid staff and many volunteers; yet the sustainability of Africause depends on our ability to attract funding to build organisational capacity to meet growing demand.

Dr Berhan remains committed to Africause and asks philanthropists and government to provide financial support to build the capacity of the organisation to employ key staff across all programs, enabling Dr Berhan to focus on strategy in collaboration with the board to increase the Africause impact.

If you would like to learn more about Africause, please go to <https://www.africause.org.au>

Photo Gallery





