

Overview

Group Mentorship Program #2

July 2021

Overview – GMP#2



In 2020, our initiative designed and coordinated a pilot 'Group Mentorship' program to test, demonstrate and develop elements of a future community sponsorship program for refugees in Australia.

Given the success of that program, and while we continue to await news from the federal government on the outcome of its review into private refugees sponsorship in Australia, CRSA intends to run the Group Mentorship Program for a second time in 2021 to:

- Further prepare Australian community groups and supporting community organisations to engage in refugee sponsorship
- Test additional elements, tools and processes to inform the design of a future sponsorship program
- Mobilise practical support for additional refugee families who are seeking to establish themselves in Australian communities



About CRSA



1. The Community Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (CRSI) was formed in April 2018 as an unincorporated joint project of the Refugee Council of Australia, Save the Children Australia, Amnesty International Australia, Welcoming Australia and Rural Australians for Refugees. Since that time, CRSI has worked to develop and promote a model for a future community refugee sponsorship program in Australia, inspired by the successful Canadian program that has operated since the late-1970s and a similar program that operated at a smaller scale in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s.
2. From 2018 to 2020 CRSI established itself as the leading civil society voice on community refugee sponsorship in Australia. CRSI became recognised by government and civil society stakeholders as having unparalleled subject matter expertise on community sponsorship in the Australian context and has made significant inroads in securing the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders around a shared vision for a future Australian program, including through the successful implementation of a pilot Group Mentorship Program in 2020.
3. In late 2020, the founding members of CRSI incorporated a new non-profit company (a public company limited by guarantee) to carry forward the work of CRSI – ‘Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia Ltd’ (CRSA).
4. CRSA is now registered as a Public Benevolent Institution by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and, from July 2021 onwards, the joint initiative known as CRSI will come to an end and CRSA will carry forward the work previously undertaken by CRSI.

Background and initial GMP pilot (GMP#1)



In mid 2020, CRSI launched a pilot 'Group Mentorship Program' to test, demonstrate and refine core elements of a future community sponsorship model in Australia, while Australia's borders were largely closed to refugees and other international migrants.

2020 Pilot - Group Mentorship Program

21 volunteer groups across five states, from regional and metropolitan areas, have been screened and trained to provide practical settlement support to refugees who arrived in Australia before the pandemic. 12 of those groups are now actively supporting refugee households in their local area. The program will be formally evaluated in mid 2021 but to date, mentor groups have shown themselves capable of helping refugee newcomers to:

- ✓ Find suitable employment / self-employment
- ✓ Enroll and better participate in education
- ✓ Practice English
- ✓ Learn to drive
- ✓ Understand how to have overseas qualifications recognised
- ✓ Access previously unknown local services
- ✓ Make new friends
- ✓ Secure housing in a regional area lacking local migrant services

Refer to GMP Interim Report for further information on project design and initial learnings

21 mentor groups (172 individuals) across 5 states
(62% regional) recruited, screened and trained








6 months free support provided by groups
to refugee newcomers

15 refugee households receiving free mentor support (26 adults plus 11 children)

12 groups now actively supporting
one or more refugee households (30% regional)

\$1,000 to \$3000 small fundraising component to provide mentor group budget

Key Tools/Processes developed through GMP#1

-  Training program
-  Digital collection of mentor resources
-  Peer learning forums, including 'top up' training (bi-monthly)
-  Mentor Support Plan
-  Integration Star Assessment tool
-  Surveys and onboarding processes
-  Digital chat platform for mentor groups (WhatsApp)



View video of pilot program in action.

Watch 5 minute video: youtube.com/watch?v=nvpAHpAczdAp

Watch 2 minute video: youtube.com/watch?v=KydcUCvnUA

Program objectives – GMP#2



Building on the successful initial pilot program launched in 2020 CRSA will coordinate a second iteration of the Group Mentorship Program in 2021 featuring key improvements that refine and further enhance the model for a future community refugee sponsorship program in Australia, inspired by the successful Canadian program



Deliver settlement and social cohesion benefits to refugee households and local communities in metropolitan and regional areas



Further refine the group mentorship/sponsorship model and tools for future scale up in Australia (including partnering with other organisations in the development relevant tools)



Maintain and build mentoring/sponsoring capacity (including in areas not represented in GMP#1)



Introduce role of Supporting Community Organisations to enable future scale and build sector capacity



Enhance the effectiveness of other aligned national, state and local initiatives (eg in areas of employment, regional settlement, social cohesion, support for women)



Engage with indigenous stakeholders to secure local involvement and welcome

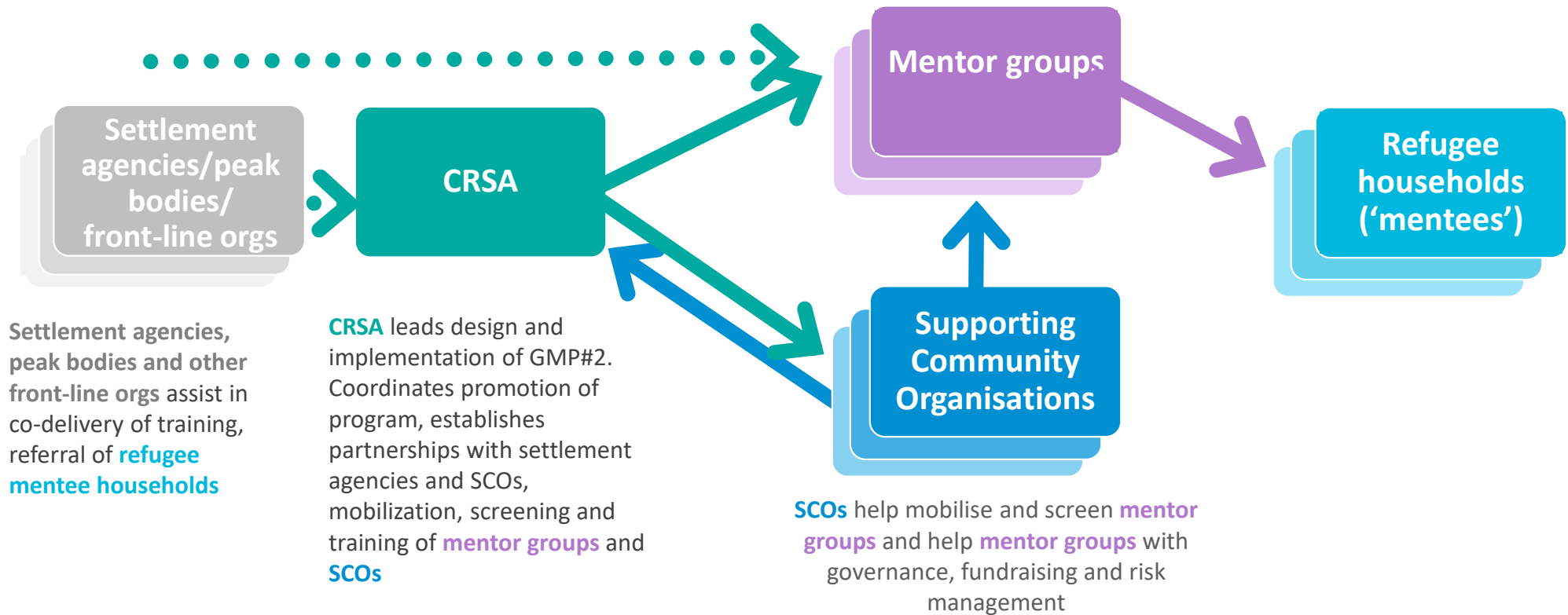
Program Targets



- At least **6 large community organisations** involved as partners in mobilising, screening and/or co-training mentor groups (to develop sector capacity)
- At least **30 mentor groups** in 7 states and territories mobilised, trained and supported to provide settlement support to refugee individuals/households using the group sponsorship/mentorship model in 2021 (with at least 30% of these groups being located in regional areas)
- At least **15 of these groups** paired with refugee households in early 2022 to provide at least 6 months of mentorship support ('activated groups')
- At least **70% of adult mentees reporting significant progress** against one or more self-identified settlement goals connected to the support provided by the mentor group (eg education, employment, housing, language, social connectedness etc)
- At least **80% of the activated mentor group members** reporting that their participation in the program has resulted in **new and enduring cross-cultural connections** being made in within their community

Stakeholders involved GMP#2

*With regular coordination group meetings



Key Criteria & Responsibilities



Refugee households (‘mentees’)

Holder of permanent or temporary refugee/humanitarian visa

Two or more settlement goals that mentor group could assist with

Priority access for those more recently arrived (2019, 2020, 2021)

Mentor groups

5 or more adults (citizens or PRs) (>10 years in Australia)

Able to pass screening (police and WWC checks)

Able to provide 6-12 months practical mentorship support

Willing to raise \$1000-\$3000

Willing to adopt basic standards of conduct developed by CRSA

Access to group bank account and public liability insurance (independently or via an SCO)

Supporting Community Organisations

Established entity with active membership base of volunteers

Willing to mobilise individual members to form mentor groups

Able to assist mentor groups with bank accounts and insurance

Able to undertake informal ‘check ins’ with groups and mentees and help troubleshoot day to day problems that may arise

Role of CRSA



CRSA remains a coordinating body for the Group Mentorship Program providing training, tools and resources, onboarding support and program evaluation.



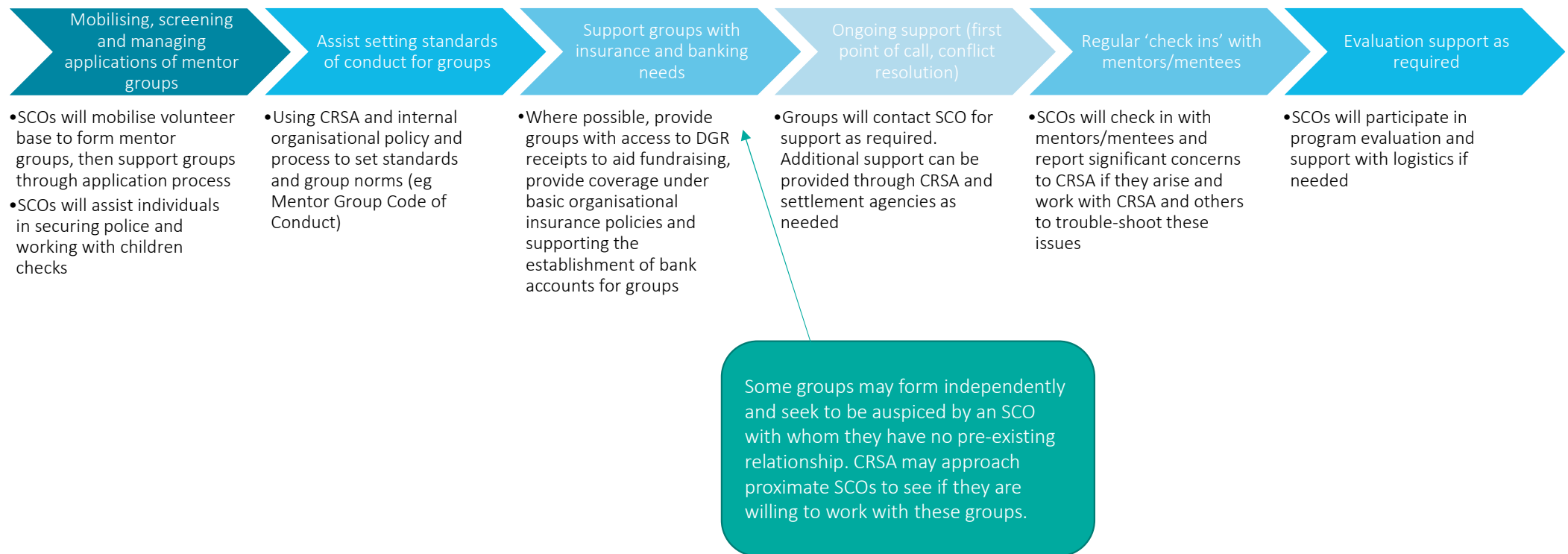
Still from CRSA: Group Mentorship Pilot Program. Watch [here](#).

CRSA	In collaboration with Referring Agencies	In collaboration with Supporting Community Organisations (SCOs)
Coordinate program (incl. convening coordination group)	Oversee matching of groups with refugees in collaboration with referring agencies	Work with SCOs to mobilise, screen, train and onboard mentor groups
Develop operational tools (incl. basic training, mentor handbook, template support plan, Code of Conduct, community of practice, mentor group resources)	Train mentor groups (in collaboration with settlement agencies where possible)	In collaboration with SCOs, provide ongoing support to mentor groups (program queries, troubleshooting difficulties, advice on settlement issues)
Onboard mentor groups and mentees		
Work with evaluation partner to evaluate & document program		
Identify, screen, onboard and conduct check-ins with non-SCO supported groups		

Role of Supporting Community Organisations (SCOs)



SCOs will provide support to mentor groups from mobilisation through to program conclusion.



Training Modules

1/ Basic Training (6-8 hours in total)*

Module 1 - Principles of Refugee Sponsorship/Mentorship and Refugee Experiences

- Overview of Australia's Humanitarian Program
- Values and guiding principles (GRSI) and GMP overview
- Refugee Experiences
- Key themes of settlement (NSOS)
- Role of mentor groups and other stakeholders
 - Settlement responsibilities and engaging with HSP providers
 - CRSA and other stakeholder responsibilities
- Mapping needs and strengths (including Mentorship Plan and other tools)

Module 2 - Managing expectations and considering culture & trauma

- Managing expectations and identifying assumptions
- Impacts of trauma
- Considering culture, personal values and their impact

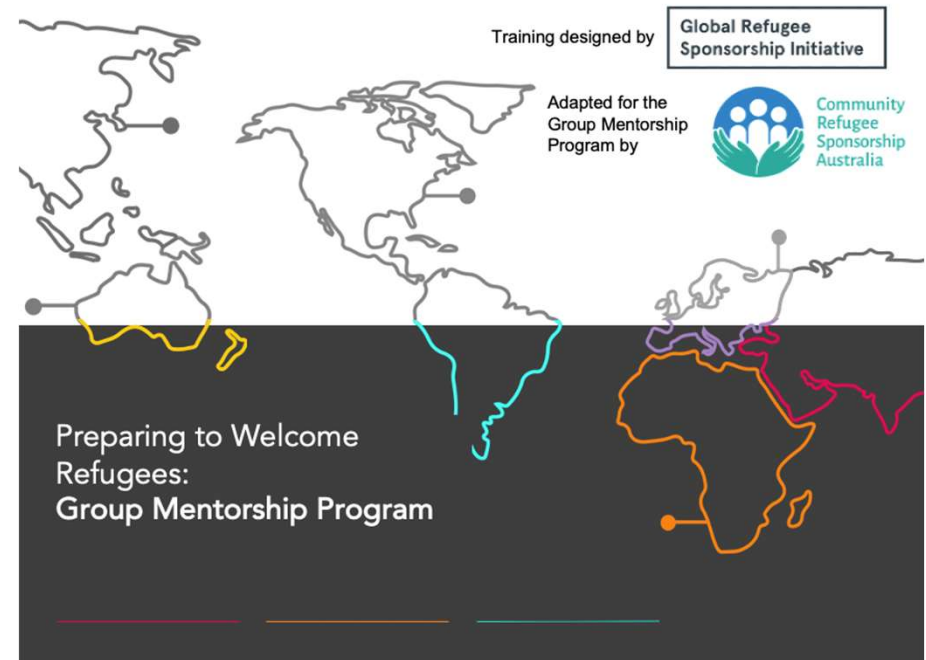
Module 3 - Group responsibilities and roles

- Effective group dynamics
- Strengths and skills of group
- Effective communication and use of technology

Module 4 - Considering power, privacy and confidentiality

- Overview of power and agency
- Overview of privacy and confidentiality and how to provide this
- Privacy and confidentiality in the public domain
- Wrap up and next steps

**Training to be delivered either on-line or in person, depending on location of participants, COVID-19 restrictions and other considerations*



2/ Specialist training

(Depending on needs of household after matching process - Maximum 1.5 hours each)

- Employment module
- Housing module
- Complex health needs (including torture and trauma)
- Engaging and supporting refugee youth
- Domestic and Family Violence
- Identifying and Responding to Child Protection concerns
- Storytelling
- Vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and self-care

Timeline



1. Online Public Information Sessions
Individuals – 22 July, 2 and 26 August 2021
Community Organisations – 12 August 2021

2. Mentor Group Applications open – 31 July 2021

3. Mentor Group Training: September – December 2021 (please see website for details)

4. Decision point for mentor groups: Ask to be paired with refugee/family already in Australia OR wait to support someone coming from overseas in the future. Post-training; to December 2021

5. Matching of groups with refugees: CRSA will call on a range of organisations and mentor groups themselves to assist with this process. October – December 2021.