



A LONG WAY TO EQUAL

AN UPDATE OF "QUARTER WAY TO EQUAL:
A REPORT ON BARRIERS TO ACCESS TO
LEGAL SERVICES FOR MIGRANT WOMEN".

A Long Way to Equal

An update of “Quarter Way to Equal: A report on barriers to access to legal services for migrant women”
July, 2007.

© *Women's Legal Resources Ltd trading as Women's Legal Services NSW*

Cover Design by Archer Press

Layout and Design by Archer Press

ISBN 978-0-646-47817-3

A Long Way to Equal is an initiative of Women's Legal Services NSW.

Women's Legal Services is a community legal centre providing statewide legal assistance services and a feminist voice for women in NSW. WLS seeks to foster legal and social change in order to redress the inequalities faced by women and to promote women's access to justice through the provision of face-to-face and telephone legal services, law reform and community legal education.

If you would like further information about any aspect of this report, or to obtain a copy, please contact:

Women's Legal Services NSW

PO Box 206 Lidcombe NSW 1825

Ph: (02) 9749 7700

womens_nsw@clc.net.au

www.womenslegalnsw.asn.au

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	4
ACRONYMS USED	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS	7
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	10
1.1 BACKGROUND	10
1.2 QUARTER WAY TO EQUAL	10
1.3 RESPONSES TO QUARTER WAY TO EQUAL FROM 1994 - 2003	12
1.4 THE CREATING PATHWAYS TO ACCESS REPORT	13
SECTION 2: THE LONG WAY TO EQUAL RESEARCH	15
2.1 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY	15
2.2 PROJECT PARTICIPANTS	16
2.3 MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN	16
2.4 COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDERS	17
2.5 MIGRANT SERVICE PROVIDERS	18
SECTION 3: FINDINGS OF THE LONG WAY TO EQUAL RESEARCH	19
3.1 LEGAL PROBLEMS FACED BY MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN	19
3.2 BARRIERS TO MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN IN ACCESSING LEGAL SERVICES	19
SECTION 4: OVERVIEW OF CONCLUSIONS	31
4.1 INTRODUCTION	31
4.2 INTERPRETING SERVICES	31
4.3 THE LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF LEGAL RIGHTS	32
4.4 LITERACY LEVELS AMONGST MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN	32
4.5 THE NEED FOR A LONG TERM AND CO-ORDINATED APPROACH	32
4.6 CONCLUSION	33
APPENDIX A - Recommendations from <i>Quarter Way to Equa</i>	34
APPENDIX B - Recommendations contained in <i>Creating Pathways to Access</i> report.	43
APPENDIX C - Examples of initiatives and strategies to address access to legal services by migrants and refugees	48
APPENDIX D - List of Participating Service Providers	52

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project is the result of the combined effort of many people. In particular, acknowledgement and thanks are extended to the following individuals and organisations:

At Women's Legal Services: Olivia Wellesley-Cole for project management, research and report preparation; Anthea Vogl for research, data analysis and report writing; Janet Loughman for editing. Chandrika Subramanayan, a student volunteer, for providing research assistance.

Margot Rawsthorne provided invaluable assistance with research as well as in her role as a member of the Advisory Committee.

Pip Davis, principal solicitor with Hawkesbury Nepean Community Legal Centre, provided external review on the draft report and assistance with editing.

Members of the Project Advisory Committee, who generously provided their skills in a wide range of areas, in particular Eman Sharobeem (Immigrant Women's Health Service); Margot Rawsthorne (Education Department, University of Sydney); Rochelle Braaf & Rugmini Venkatraman (Violence Against Women Specialist Unit, Attorney Generals Department); and Sara di Giglio (Refugee Advice and Casework Service).

Sataralla Said, Delilah Shinko and Shaperai Jallya for their assistance in promoting the project and facilitating the focus groups.

The migrant service providers who participated in the project, including the Immigrant Women's Health Service (Fairfield); Migrant Network Services (Hornsby); Macarthur Diversity Services (Campbelltown); Illawarra Multicultural Services; St George Migrant Resource Centre; Newcastle & Hunter Region Migrant Resource Centre; Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre; Canterbury Bankstown Migrant Resource Centre; Auburn Migrant Resource Centre; Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre; Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre and Baulkham Hills, Holroyd & Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre.

The legal service providers who participated in the project, including the Consumer Credit Legal Centre; the Refugee Advice and Casework Service; the Elizabeth Evatt Community Legal Centre; South West Sydney Community Legal Centre; Women's Legal Services NSW; Illawarra Community Legal Centre; Marrickville Legal Centre; Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre; and the Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme (Bankstown).

The NSW Attorney General's Department for permission to use the unpublished report *Creating Pathways to Access*.

The Law and Justice Foundation of NSW which funded the original *Quarter Way to Equal* research.

Finally, warm thanks to the migrant and refugee women who shared their stories and experiences. This project was possible because of their generous participation.

Reg Graycar
Chairperson
Women's Legal Services NSW

ACRONYMS USED

Acronym	Meaning
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CLE	Community Legal Education
CCLCG	Combined Community Legal Centres' Group
CLC	Community Legal Centre
CPA	Creating Pathways to Access: A review report on the status of recommendations from the Quarter Way to Equal Report, 2004
DIMIA	Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.
DIMAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DV	Domestic violence
DVCAS	Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme
EAPS	Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement
IARC	Immigration Advice and Rights Centre
IWSA	Immigrant Women's Speakout Association
MRC	Migrant Resource Centre
NAATI	National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
NACLC	National Association of Community Legal Centres
NES	Non English speaking
NESB	Non English speaking background
QWE	Quarter Way to Equal: A Report on Barriers to Access to Legal Services for Migrant Women (1994).
RACS	Refugee Advice and Casework Service
TPV	Temporary Protection Visa
VAWSU	Violence Against Women Specialist Unit
WLS	Women's Legal Services NSW.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1994, Women's Legal Services NSW (then known as the Women's Legal Resources Centre) published a report '*Quarter Way to Equal: A Report on Barriers to Access to Legal Services for Migrant Women*'.¹ The report documented the experiences of newly arrived migrant and refugee women and the difficulties they had in accessing legal services.

The difficulties included limited finances to fund their own legal cases; low levels of English language; lack of knowledge about the legal system and legal services; the availability of legal aid; difficulties with the provision of interpreters and translations; and generally a lack of sensitivity to the needs of NESB women.

Ten years later, both the NSW government Violence Against Women Specialist Unit (VAWSU) and Women's Legal Services (WLS) set out to revisit the *Quarter Way to Equal* report, in order to gauge how much progress had been made in addressing the barriers facing migrant and refugee women accessing legal services and to identify any new or emerging issues experienced by migrant and refugee women in NSW. *A Long Way to Equal* primarily documents the results of the Women's Legal Services research but also describes and documents the recommendations from the VAWSU research.

The VAWSU review of the status of the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations focussed on government and court based agencies. The results are documented in an unpublished report *Creating Pathways to Access*.² Overall, the review found that about half of the recommendations had been implemented, but that some of this work had been 'one off' projects with little follow up. There had also been a lack of monitoring of any on-going work.

The *Long Way to Equal* research showed that while the needs of migrant and refugee women are by no means static, overwhelmingly the legal access barriers identified by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report remain significant sources of difficulty for migrant and refugee women in their interactions with the Australian legal system.

An overriding theme has been the need for co-ordination, monitoring and sustained activity over time in order to address the recommendations made. The development of new collaborative arrangements in NSW, such as the NSW Legal Assistance Forum and the NSW Law and Justice Foundation's Legal Referral Forum, provide new opportunities for the justice sector to work together to improve access to justice for migrant and refugee women. A fresh commitment by the NSW government to co-ordinate and monitor progress in a sustained manner is also needed.

¹ Women's Legal Resources Centre, '*Quarter Way to Equal: A Report on Barriers to Access to Legal Services for Migrant Women*' (1994) [QWE].

² Violence Against Women Specialist Unit, "'*Creating Pathways to Access*": *A Review Report on the Status of Implementation of Recommendations from the Quarter Way to Equal Report*', NSW Attorney-General's Department (unpublished, 2004) [CPA].

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Information about community legal centres and other legal service providers be developed and distributed to all migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers in appropriate community languages and other suitable formats for migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; Legal Aid Commission; community legal centres; migrant resource centres.

Recommendation 2

The Combined Community Legal Centres' Group provide all migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers with the Community Legal Centre Directory, and make themselves known as a point of reference for migrant resource centre inquiries.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group.

Recommendation 3

Community legal education workshops be regularly provided for migrant and refugee women and migrant service providers about the Australian legal system, the legal aid system and how and where to access free legal advice for a range of common legal problems faced by migrant and refugee women. Funds for the provision of interpreters for these CLE activities be provided by Legal Aid Commission.

Responsibility: Women's Legal Services; Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; Legal Aid Commission; migrant resource centres.

Recommendation 4

Community legal centres strengthen their relationships with ethnic community radio organisations so that community legal centres and legal aid services can be promoted on foreign-language radio programs that have wide culturally and linguistically diverse audiences.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; community legal centres; Legal Aid Commission.

Recommendation 5

An online database be created and maintained listing the audio-visual and other legal education resources available that are relevant to the legal needs of migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; Legal Aid Commission.

Recommendation 6

Interpreters employed by the NSW Community Relations Commission and the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship be provided with regular training on:

- legal issues and the Australian legal system;
- cross-cultural issues; and
- gender issues, particularly as they relate to domestic violence and sexual assault.

Responsibility: Community Relations Commission; Department of Immigration and Citizenship; Violence Against Women Specialist Unit; Women's Legal Services.

Recommendation 7

The Combined Community Legal Centres' Group continue to lobby state and federal governments and other bodies such as the NSW Community Relations Commission and Legal Aid Commission for adequate funding and service provision guidelines for interpreters so that:

- interpreters are made available to migrant and refugee women for telephone and face-to-face interviews in community legal centres across all legal problem types and for both advice sessions and legal representation; and
- free interpreters are made available for community legal education activities for migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; Legal Aid Commission; NSW Legal Assistance Forum; Community Relations Commission.

Recommendation 8

Information about the availability of free interpreters and the Telephone and Interpreting Service's telephone number be included in any promotional material about CLC services.

Responsibility: community legal centres; Combined Community Legal Centres' Group.

Recommendation 9

The NSW Community Relations Commission and the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship ensure that efforts continue to recruit and train more women interpreters and interpreters in new and emerging community languages.

Responsibility: Community Relations Commission; Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

Recommendation 10

The Combined Community Legal Centres' Group and the National Association of Community Legal Centres assist with the development of resources and provision of training to CLC staff and volunteers in the effective use of interpreters.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; National Association of Community Legal Centres.

Recommendation 11

In providing written materials to migrant and refugee women, all agencies ensure that translated materials are from plain English, explain the legal terms used rather than make a literal translation and consider the use of pictorial material to overcome barriers faced by women with low literacy skills in their first language.

Responsibility: all agencies providing written information about the law and legal services to migrant and refugee women.

Recommendation 12

The NSW Law and Justice Foundation assist with improved collaboration and dialogue between community legal centres and other legal service providers and migrant resource centres through the NSW Legal Referral Forum.

Responsibility: NSW Law and Justice Foundation.

Recommendation 13

The Combined Community Legal Centres' Group foster closer understanding of the respective roles and capacities of migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers and community legal centres by organising training seminars and or meetings. As part of this, consideration be given to developing referral protocols.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group.

Recommendation 14

The DVD, 'Getting off the Referral Roundabout' be redistributed to all migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers.

Responsibility: Kingsford Legal Centre; Women's Legal Services.

Recommendation 15

All translated brochures of legal service providers include clear directions on how to reach the legal service, including suitable public transport connections.

Responsibility: community legal centres; Legal Aid Commission.

Recommendation 16

In making decisions about the provision of outreach services, and/or seeking funding for the provision of outreach services, that CLCs take note of the need for and positive value placed on outreach services provided to migrant and refugee women at migrant resource centres.

Responsibility: community legal centres; Combined Community Legal Centres' Group.

Recommendation 17

Regular training and information be provided to migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers to better equip them to identify immigration and other legal issues and where to seek appropriate legal assistance for migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Women's Legal Services; Immigration Advice and Rights Centre; Refugee Advice and Casework Service.

Recommendation 18

The NSW Legal Assistance Forum formally receive and consider *A Long Way to Equal* and consider ways in which it can assist in seeking resources for and promoting the co-ordination of public justice sector agency responses to recommendations.

Responsibility: NSW Legal Assistance Forum.

Recommendation 19

The NSW government establish and resource an interagency taskforce or other appropriate mechanism to co-ordinate and monitor progress of the recommendations made both by Women's Legal Services in *A Long Way to Equal* and the Violence Against Women Specialist Unit in the *Creating Pathways to Access* report.

Responsibility: NSW Attorney General.

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In 1994, Women's Legal Services NSW (then known as the Women's Legal Resources Centre) published a report titled '*Quarter Way to Equal: A Report on Barriers to Access to Legal Services for Migrant Women*'³. The report documented the experiences of newly arrived migrant and refugee women and the difficulties they had in accessing legal services and provided a comprehensive set of recommendations addressing the systemic legal access difficulties for migrant and refugee women.

Ten years later, both the NSW government's Violence Against Women Specialist Unit (VAWSU) and Women's Legal Services (WLS) set out to revisit the issue in order to gauge how much progress had been made and to identify new or emerging issues for migrant and refugee women.

In 2004 the VAWSU conducted an audit of the status of the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations, focussing on government and court based agencies. The VAWSU consulted key stakeholders including women's and legal services, refuges and migrant and refugee services; conducted a literature review; interviewed relevant agencies to get formal feedback about implementation of the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations and surveyed a sample of women's domestic violence court assistance schemes to identify gaps between policy and practice. The results of the VAWSU work are documented in an unpublished report *Creating Pathways to Access*⁴.

In 2005 Women's Legal Services conducted qualitative research that focussed on the community sector and migrant and refugee women themselves. *A Long Way to Equal* primarily reports on the results of this research, but also refers to the *Creating Pathways to Access* report to draw conclusions and make recommendations that aim to keep active the long term and consistent work that is needed to bring equality of access to justice for migrant and refugee women.

1.2 QUARTER WAY TO EQUAL

Although in the early 1990's there was growing recognition of the problems faced by people from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) in accessing legal services, there had been little analysis of the particular difficulties faced by NESB women and almost no analysis of those considered to suffer the greatest disadvantage, namely newly arrived migrant and refugee women (QWE: 1994, 2).

Quarter Way to Equal set out to remedy this. In the absence of any similar research, *Quarter Way to Equal* played a crucial role in revealing, recording and raising awareness of the problems experienced by migrant and refugee women in relation to their attempts to access legal help.

³ Women's Legal Resources Centre, '*Quarter Way to Equal: A Report on Barriers to Access to Legal Services for Migrant Women*' (1994) (*QUARTER WAY TO EQUAL*).

⁴ Violence Against Women Specialist Unit, "*Creating Pathways to Access*": A Review Report on the Status of Implementation of Recommendations from the *Quarter Way to Equal* Report', NSW Attorney General's Department (unpublished, 2004) [CPA].

The *Quarter Way to Equal* five primary objectives were:

- to identify the legal needs of newly arrived migrant and refugee women;
- to assess their knowledge of available legal services and their ability to access these services;
- to assess the views of the women, key informants and legal service providers as to the adequacy of current legal services and their responsiveness to the needs of newly arrived migrant and refugee women;
- to identify access barriers and gaps in services facing newly arrived migrant and refugee women; and
- to develop recommendations to address the legal access and service provision needs identified. (QWE:1994, i)

Quarter Way to Equal focussed on women who had been resident in Australia for 5 years or less. Consultations were held with over 90 relevant service providers, as well as discussion groups and interviews with 35 newly arrived migrant and refugee women.

Quarter Way to Equal found that the greatest **areas of legal need** faced by migrant and refugee women were:

- family law,
- immigration law and
- domestic violence. (QWE: 1994, 33-71).

To a lesser, although still significant extent, the women also had legal needs in the areas of:

- housing;
- social security; and
- employment law (QWE: 1994, 73-92).

The research identified a number of **barriers** faced by migrant and refugee women to accessing legal services, which included:

- a limited financial ability to fund their own legal actions;
- a lower level of English language proficiency, compounded at times by difficulties in accessing government-provided English classes;
- the absence of availability of legal aid for certain legal matters, in particular, divorce proceedings;
- a lack of knowledge of the legal system and available legal services;
- difficulties in obtaining access to female interpreters, female bilingual workers and female lawyers within the legal system;
- limited access to interpreters at certain points in the legal system;
- a lack of available translated information about legal rights and the legal system; and
- a legal system which has often demonstrated little sensitivity to the particular needs of NESB women both in terms of the provision of culturally appropriate services and in the dissemination of information about the legal system and how to access available services (QWE: 1994, 127).

The findings of *Quarter Way to Equal* were used to develop a set of 53 key recommendations that were aimed at a range of government and non-government agencies and other service providers. The recommendations were organised according to the following key areas of reform:

- improving access to interpreters;
- improving sensitivity and use of interpreting services to NES women;

- improving access to legal aid services, community legal centres and to private legal practitioners;
- improving the level of police and court assistance to domestic violence cases involving NES women;
- improving ethnic community workers' knowledge of legal issues and access points;
- developing a more co-ordinated approach to legal service delivery to NESB women; and
- increasing the effectiveness of access and equity statements, and ethnic affairs policy statements (QWE: 1994, 129-141).

A full list of the 53 recommendations is listed in Appendix A.

1.3 RESPONSES TO QUARTER WAY TO EQUAL FROM 1994 - 2003

The publication of *Quarter Way to Equal* was met with enthusiasm and interest. The Attorney-General established an independent committee in 1995, named the 'Attorney-General's Committee,' to co-ordinate the activities of organizations that had undertaken to adopt recommendations and to oversee and chart the implementation of the recommendations made by *Quarter Way to Equal*.⁵

In 1996, the Committee found that most of the recommendations had not been implemented. One explanation for this failure was the lack of coordination across service providers and agencies.

To address this lack of co-ordination, the Attorney-General's Committee recommended the establishment of a 'Quarter Way to Equal Interagency Taskforce,' comprising representatives from private, government and community legal service providers. The Taskforce objectives were to continue to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations and provide feedback to government on issues affecting the provision of legal services to people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

In September 1996⁶ the Taskforce was established and it first met in January 1997. The Taskforce included representatives from the following agencies:

- NSW Attorney-General's Department
- NSW Police Force
- Department for Women
- Ethnic Affairs Commission (now the Community Relations Commission)
- Legal Aid Commission
- Judicial Commission
- Law Society of NSW
- Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- Anti-Discrimination Board
- NSW Ethnic Communities Council
- Combined Community Legal Centres Group NSW
- Immigrant Women's Speakout Association Inc
- Andean Associates (CPA: 2004, 5)

⁵ Much of this chronology is drawn from the 'Creating Pathways to Access' report, which documents the developments that have occurred in response to the publication of the *Quarter Way to Equal* report: see (CPA: 2004, 4-6).

⁶ Jeffrey W. Shaw (Australian Labor Party), NSW House of Assembly, *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, 12 September 1996.

The Taskforce ceased operation in 1998. However, it produced a report that identified a number of impediments to the successful implementation of the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations. These included a lack of status or authority to compel adoption of the recommendations and funding constraints. The Taskforce recommended 2 concrete strategies for future implementation:

- that all government agencies develop an Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement (EAPS) that incorporates the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations targeted at that particular agency and establish a process to monitor the implementation of the EAPS; and
- that the then Ethnic Affairs Commission establish a regular forum for justice agencies to discuss legal and justice issues directly impacting on the provision of services to culturally and linguistically diverse clients (CALD).⁷

Neither of the above strategies has been fully implemented.

1.4 THE CREATING PATHWAYS TO ACCESS REPORT

It was against this background, that in 2003 the VAWSU set out to conduct its own review into the status of the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations.

The objectives of this review were to:

- ascertain the status of the implementation of the *Quarter Way to Equal* report recommendations within government and non government agencies;
- assess whether the existing recommendations remain relevant or whether new recommendations need to be developed;
- identify the barriers and constraints to implementation;
- prioritise the recommendations based on the current needs of women trying to access legal services; and
- develop a process for ensuring that priority actions identified for consideration are referred to the relevant agencies (CPA: 2004, 6).

The *Creating Pathways to Access* project carried out the following tasks:

- consultation with key stakeholders including legal services, refuges and migrant and refugee services;
- a literature review;
- interviews with member agencies of the original taskforce and other relevant agencies; and
- a survey of a sample of Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes and their clients to identify gaps between policy and practice. (CPA: 2004, 6)

The central focus of the *Creating Pathways to Access* report was to assess the responsiveness of government and court-based services and agencies, rather than the community sector, to the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations. In particular, the report examined the implementation progress made by each member of the Quarter Way to Equal Taskforce.

The *Creating Pathways to Access* research charts many of the specific projects, initiatives and improvements made by a number of different agencies in direct response to the legal needs of migrant and refugee women (see CPA:2004, 19-49). One of these initiatives was the establishment of the Women's Domestic Violence

⁷ The Quarter Way to Equal Interagency Taskforce, 'Draft Report' (unpublished, November 1998).

Court Assistance Scheme specialist CALD workers. The report also documents that while there have been improvements in policy, this has not always followed through into practice. For example a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been developed between the Attorney General's Department (for Local Courts), the Police and the Community Relations Commission for the booking of interpreters for a first appearance in court in apprehended domestic violence order (ADVO) matters. However in practice it is not always the case that interpreters are organised for the first return date in ADVO matters.

Overall, the *Creating Pathways to Access* review found that about half of the recommendations had been implemented, but that some implementation work had been "one-off" projects with little follow up. There had also been a lack of monitoring of any on-going work.

The 24 recommendations of the *Creating Pathways to Access* report are listed in Appendix B.

One of the main findings of the review was the need for a collaborative, interagency approach so that a systematic strategy for implementing the recommendations of the *Quarter Way to Equal* report is developed and monitored.

In response, the NSW Attorney General's Department approved a new interagency taskforce. The role of the taskforce, established in 2005 and set to run for 18 months, was to restart the process of systematically implementing the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations as well as the recommendations made in the *Creating Pathways to Access* report.

The first meeting of the taskforce was convened in early 2005 and included representatives from the Attorney General's Department, the Violence Against Women Specialist Unit, the Law Society of NSW, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Local Courts, Victims Services, the Community Relations Commission, NSW Police, Office for Women, the Judicial Commission and the Anti-Discrimination Board.

The taskforce has not met since this first meeting in 2005 and no action was taken as a result of that initial meeting. Thus, it is the case that currently neither the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations, nor the recommendations made by the 2004 *Creating Pathways to Access* report are being addressed or overseen by any government department or interagency committee.

SECTION 2: THE LONG WAY TO EQUAL RESEARCH

2.1 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

In 2005 Women's Legal Services NSW undertook research into the current experiences of migrant and refugee women in accessing legal services.

Like the original *Quarter Way to Equal* research, the *Long Way to Equal* research is based on an understanding that the particular experiences of migrant and refugee women create a series of legal problems and barriers to access that are specific to this group of women. The *Quarter Way to Equal* report expressed this neatly, noting:

The settlement experience can be very stressful for migrant and refugee women. Financial difficulties, unemployment, isolation from family and other support networks, language problems, culture shock and discrimination are some of the problems they may face in their first few years in Australia. Shifting family and economic roles may place an additional strain upon families and often on women in particular. This initial period may be even harder for refugee women: they may not be in this country by choice; they may be suffering emotionally over the fate of relatives and friends in their country of origin; they may themselves still be traumatised from torture or incarceration (QWE: 1994, ii).

Importantly, *A Long Way to Equal* is also based on an understanding that the needs of migrant and refugee women are neither homogenous nor static. The decision to look at 'migrant and refugee women' as a group does not signify a belief that other characteristics such as ethnicity, migration status and class do not impact in differing ways upon the experience and needs of these particular women. Instead the grouping is used in recognition of the commonality of experience within the group, without denying or ignoring the differences and particularities of their legal needs.

A Long Way to Equal has the following key objectives:

- to update *Quarter Way to Equal's* research into the experiences of migrant and refugee women in accessing legal services and the barriers faced by them in accessing such services;
- to assess the extent to which the recommendations made by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report have been implemented and the extent to which access by migrant and refugee women to legal services has improved since 1994;
- to identify any new legal issues and access barriers facing migrant and refugee women;
- to assess the extent to which the recommendations made by *Quarter Way to Equal* continue to be relevant to the needs of migrant and refugee women; and
- based on findings in each of the above areas, to create a revised set of recommendations to improve the access by migrant and refugee women to legal services in NSW.

The *Long Way to Equal* research used a qualitative research approach, namely:

- a series of focus groups conducted with migrant and refugee women from different ethnic backgrounds living in greater Sydney; and
- consultations with migrant and legal service providers regarding the nature of their service provision to migrant and refugee women.

This project also undertook a review of models of best practice and successful initiatives for addressing the legal access barriers experienced by migrant and refugee women. The aim of this limited but focussed research task was to identify initiatives and strategies to address barriers to access to legal services for migrant and refugee women. This information provides a number of useful and practical strategies that service providers could use within their organisations. The results of this review are listed in Appendix C.

As outlined above, *Creating Pathways to Access* primarily reviewed the status of the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations that were aimed at government and court-based agencies. In light of this, and to avoid duplication of research, this project's inquiry was confined to reviewing the status of the *Quarter Way to Equal* recommendations that were aimed at community-based legal and migrant service providers. It is hoped that this approach will mean that when read together, *A Long Way to Equal* and *Creating Pathways to Access*, will paint a detailed picture of the current legal needs and barriers to legal access facing migrant and refugee women.

The methodology for *A Long Way to Equal* is similarly structured to that of the *Quarter Way to Equal* project. As noted in *Quarter Way to Equal*, investigating and reporting on 'the links between gender and ethnicity and their relationship to legal needs and access to legal services is a complex task, and not one that could be captured in a survey or questionnaire' (QWE: 1994, 5). Thus, using a qualitative research method allowed for the identification of broad concerns, common experiences and relevant observations of migrant and refugee women and legal and migrant service providers.

There is a key point of divergence from the *Quarter Way to Equal* report. While one of the objectives of *Quarter Way to Equal* was to identify the main types of legal issues faced by migrant and refugee women, *A Long Way to Equal* looks in less depth at the *type* of legal problems faced by this group and focuses instead on examining the current *barriers* they experience in accessing legal assistance.

2.2 PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

The consultations with migrant and refugee women concentrated on the types of legal issues faced by them, their knowledge of legal service providers and the services they would approach if they were faced with a legal issue.

Community legal service providers and migrant service providers were chosen because of their experience in working with refugee and migrant women at the coal face of service provision. Interviews focussed on the current status of the recommendations made by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report both within and outside their organisations and the perceived impact of these recommendations on the nature and quality of legal services provided to migrant and refugee women.

Set out below is a brief description of each group involved in the research and the method of inquiry used for the consultations.

2.3 MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

Focus groups were conducted with migrant and refugee women from a broad range of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. As with the *Quarter Way to Equal* study, the focus of the research was on recently arrived migrant and refugee women, defined as women who had been living in Australia for 5 years or less and who were experiencing the initial and extremely difficult stages of the immigration process.

Sixty migrant and refugee women took part in the focus groups. The participants were from fifteen different countries including Afghanistan, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo (DRC), Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan and Tanzania.

Sixty percent of the women had been living in Australia for 5 years or less, 21% for 5 to 10 years and 18% for over 10 years. Approximately 67% of the participants had entered Australia under the refugee and humanitarian program, while the remaining 33% entered under skilled or family migration programs.

A total of 5 focus groups were conducted in one of the following four languages: English, Assyrian, Farsi (Persian) and Sudanese Arabic. The focus groups were held with the assistance of migrant service providers and migrant community organisations. A bilingual community worker, under the supervision of the project's primary researcher, facilitated each group.

The consultations addressed the following topics:

- understanding of the Australian legal system;
- knowledge and understanding of available legal services and how to access them;
- understanding of 'where to start' when dealing with legal problems in Australia;
- the nature of the legal problems faced by the participants; and
- the challenges, problems and difficulties encountered in attempting to access legal help.

2.4 COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

Representatives from 9 community legal service providers were consulted, 8 of which were community legal centres and one of which was a domestic violence court assistance scheme. The community legal centres involved in this study were located in metropolitan Sydney and regional NSW and provided either general or specialist community legal services (see Appendix D: List of participating service providers).

At the time of writing, 41 community legal centres were operating in NSW.⁸ Federal and/or state government funds community legal centres. CLCs provide advice, casework, community legal education and law reform work either in general areas of law to local communities or in specialised areas of law, or to a targeted client group as statewide services.

Interviews were conducted by telephone using a standardised survey. The main areas of inquiry were as follows:

- accessibility of the organisation to migrant and refugee women;
- perceptions of current legal problems and on-going barriers to legal assistance experienced by migrant and refugee women;
- methods of service promotion and outreach undertaken by the organisation;
- relationship of the service provider to other key organisations that work frequently with migrant and refugee women;
- the ongoing relevance of the recommendations made by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report;
- the status of implementation of the recommendations made by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report and their relevance to that particular service provider; and

⁸ See Combined Community Legal Centres Group (NSW) Inc.: <<http://www.nswCommunityLegalCentre.org.au/CommunityLegalCentres.html>> (16 February 2007).

- recommendations for improving service provision to migrant and refugee women and any suggestions as to models and examples of strategies to improve the access of migrant and refugee women to legal services.

2.5 MIGRANT SERVICE PROVIDERS

Consultations took place with representatives from 12 migrant service providers (see Appendix D: List of participating service providers).

Migrant resource centres, who made up the majority of migrant service providers interviewed, are funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIMAC) formerly Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA). Services offered by each migrant resource centre vary according to size, location and resources available, but generally include:

- multilingual information, orientation, advice and referral services to newly arrived migrants;
- the provision of a resource base for the settlement activities of migrant communities;
- promotion of the needs of migrants and refugee entrants to Australia;
- assessment and review of settlement needs of migrants and refugees;
- strategic planning and co-ordination of DIMAC-funded settlement services in partnership with mainstream and other settlement services providers;
- fostering, advising and coordinating community organisations involved in community capacity building; and
- the provision of appropriately targeted outreach services to ensure optimum coverage to meet client needs, without duplicating existing services.⁹

Telephone interviews were conducted by way of a standardised survey and the key areas of inquiry were broadly similar to those made of community legal service providers.

⁹ See Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia (FECCA), 'National Council of Migrant Resource and Settlement Agencies': <<http://www.fecca.org.au/Organisations/NCMRSA.html>> (17 February 2007).

SECTION 3: FINDINGS OF THE LONG WAY TO EQUAL RESEARCH

3.1 LEGAL PROBLEMS FACED BY MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

The research revealed that the areas of legal need experienced most frequently by migrant and refugee women have remained similar to those identified in 1994 by *Quarter Way to Equal*. These areas of law are:

- family law;
- migration law; and
- domestic violence.

The research also showed that other areas of law in which migrant and refugee women experience legal problems include:

- credit and debt;
- discrimination;
- employment issues;
- housing;
- child sexual and physical abuse;
- interactions with child protection authorities;
- consumer issues;
- social security;
- neighbourhood disputes; and
- traffic and public transport offences, particularly in relation to offences committed by the children of migrant and refugee women.

3.2 BARRIERS TO MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN IN ACCESSING LEGAL SERVICES

3.2.1 *Lack of knowledge among migrant and refugee women of the legal system, their legal rights and how to access legal help*

Newly arrived migrant and refugee women's lack of understanding of the Australian legal system or how to access legal help was expressed as a problem by each of the groups consulted. The lack of knowledge was articulated in two ways: firstly, in relation to confusion about the law itself and secondly, in relation to an understanding of their rights to legal assistance and where to go in order to gain legal assistance.

Migrant and refugee women reported that they regularly find themselves in a position where they do not understand their legal rights and do not know who to approach for assistance in order to clarify what rights they have. In response to the question, "where would you go if you needed help answering a legal question?" one focus group member responded:

We don't know where to start, that is the problem.

During the course of the focus groups, participants commented:

I have no idea what the legal system is in Australia and what kind of legal services they have. You are asking me about the legal system in Australia but my question also is what kind of help the legal system can provide for me in this situation.

We know there are legal services available but we don't know how to access them.

Our knowledge about the legal services is really limited because of the language barrier and because of lack of information about services available.

The responses of legal service providers echoed those made by the migrant and refugee women. Several legal service providers stated that one of the most significant barriers faced by migrant and refugee women is their lack of comprehension of what legal rights are and their difficulties in identifying when they have a legal problem. One service provider stated:

Their lack of understanding of their own legal rights, or rights as a concept, and their preconceived ideas about what the legal system does based on their own past experiences, means that they just don't turn up on the radar for many of our services.

Migrant and legal service providers reported that clients often had difficulty in finding appropriate legal services and that the delay caused by this lack of information frequently had an adverse effect on the particular legal problem at hand. One migrant service provider reported instances of women enduring abusive relationships based on the misconception that reporting any kind of abuse that they were experiencing might result in their children being taken away from the family. It was reported that these women often did not know where to go to ask for help with violence or even who to approach to investigate whether their assumptions were in fact true.

A number of migrant service providers noted the great success of programs, which involve community legal centres and/or pro bono solicitors providing legal outreach services within the premises of migrant service providers. It was reported that this legal help was regularly accessed and utilised by the target group. However, one migrant service provider also criticised the fact that such services were usually only offered on a weekly or fortnightly basis, which was often not enough to deal with the legal needs of the target group or to provide continuity of legal assistance for the migrant client-base of these outreach services.

The research shows that there is a need for the target group to have greater access to information regarding where to go for legal assistance once a potential legal problem has been identified. Since many migrant and refugee women 'did not know where to start' it is important that such information is made available to them in places which they are already familiar with, are accessible to them and known to be points of information and assistance.

3.2.2 The perceived cost of legal services

Closely related to the women's lack of information about where to get legal help is the perceived cost of legal services. Focus group participants were often unaware of the availability of free legal advice. The participants who were aware of the availability of free legal services often did not know how to access such advice or held misconceptions about the type of advice that was available at no cost.

This problem was further compounded by the lack of legal aid funding available in some key areas of legal need experienced by migrant and refugee women. A number of women reported that they had approached the Legal Aid Commission for free legal advice, only to find the legal aid guidelines did not cover the kind of legal help they were seeking.

Thus, the responses of focus group participants revealed the need for more accessible information, which clearly states that there are free and/or affordable sources of legal advice available. One participant exemplified this problem when she stated, “*we don’t think to go to lawyers because we don’t have the money to pay the lawyers*”.

Recommendation 1

Information about community legal centres and other legal service providers be developed and distributed to all migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers in appropriate community languages and other suitable formats for migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres’ Group; Legal Aid Commission; community legal centres; migrant resource centres.

Recommendation 2

The Combined Community Legal Centres’ Group provide all migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers with the Community Legal Centre Directory, and make themselves known as a point of reference for migrant resource centre inquiries.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres’ Group.

Recommendation 3

Community legal education workshops be regularly provided for migrant and refugee women and migrant service providers about the Australian legal system, the legal aid system and how and where to access free legal advice for a range of common legal problems faced by migrant and refugee women. Funds for the provision of interpreters for these CLE activities be provided by Legal Aid Commission.

Responsibility: Women’s Legal Services; Combined Community Legal Centres’ Group; Legal Aid Commission; migrant resource centres.

3.2.3 *The absence of information available in a form that is accessible to migrant and refugee women*

Mode of Communication

One of the most significant findings of the focus group consultations was the low level of literacy among migrant and refugee women in their first languages. These low rates of literacy indicate that the strategy of simply translating all available legal material into community languages is unlikely to be effective and so it must therefore be accompanied by the provision of legal information in other forms, including audio and visual resources. Some women reported that pictorial pamphlets had been helpful to them and allowed them to better understand the intended message.

A number of women also reported that oral presentations were very useful in helping them to understand the Australian legal system, as long as the information was presented in their own language and at locations and times suitable to them. They reported that it was easier to hear things spoken in their own language, with the opportunity for questions to be asked about words and phrases they did not understand. Members of one focus group specifically requested that legal services, such as the Women’s Legal Services or other lawyers, run a face-to-face information session about the different places they could go to get legal assistance and what kind of help would be available to them if they sought it out.

Migrant and legal service providers mentioned the success of projects involving pictorial information kits and radio information services as a method of communicating important information to illiterate or partially

literate populations. However, it was also noted that such projects seemed to occur on an ad hoc basis and often without communication between different service providers, and that as such, useful resources are not widely distributed or used.

The language of available legal information

It was reported that there is still no legal information available in some of the languages spoken by focus group participants. It was also found that even where translated information is available, focus group participants often did not know how to access it.

It is clear from the consultations that despite low levels of literacy among many migrant and refugee women, there is a persistent need for legal information to be translated into a range of community languages for those with literacy skills in their first language. Positively, community legal centres and migrant resource centres reported that a number of their key information brochures were available in several community languages. This was especially the case for the community legal centres located in areas with large culturally and linguistically diverse populations. While this is clearly a positive step forward, the need for clearer and more readily available information persists, as does the need for audio and visual-based resources.

Content

Overwhelmingly both migrant and legal service providers and the focus group participants expressed the need for legal information, where it is presented in English, to be in *plain* English. One participant stated:

Even though I can read English, there are so many legal words that I cannot understand, so it does not help that I can read English.

Migrant and refugee women and service providers alike also reported difficulty in directly translating some legal terms. The term 'apprehended violence order' was given as an example by one focus group member, who expressed that she had much difficulty in understanding what this term meant. One focus group participant noted she did not know of any concepts such as 'domestic violence' and 'sexual harassment' existing in her own language, and that these ideas needed to be carefully explained (rather than simply referred to) in order for women to understand what they meant.

Another focus group participant noted:

It is hard for us to understand everything about the system here and what your law is, because we are coming from different worlds and we need some time to understand how the system is working.

One community legal centre respondent also commented:

A regular difficulty faced is our inability to find a definition or correct translation for a number of legal concepts.

The need to avoid legal jargon in information targeted at non-lawyers, including migrant and refugee women, is a simple but important requirement that should guide the provision of any kind of legal information to the target group.

Recommendation 4

Community legal centres strengthen their relationships with ethnic community radio organisations so that community legal centres and legal aid services can be promoted on foreign-language radio programs that have wide culturally and linguistically diverse audiences.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; community legal centres; Legal Aid Commission.

Recommendation 5

An online database be created and maintained listing the audio/visual and other legal education resources available that are relevant to the legal needs of migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres Group; Legal Aid Commission.

3.2.4. Poor translation and interpreting services

Translating and interpreting issues were a significant issue raised in the 1994 research and continue to be a problem, particularly with respect to the provision of face-to-face interpreters.

All three groups consistently reported that existing interpreting and translation services were a source of difficulty in relation to the capacity of migrant and refugee women to access legal assistance.

Some of the difficulties identified by focus group members included:

- no interpreters available in particular languages;
- interpreters being provided by interpreting services who do not speak the language of the client. For example, an Arabic interpreter was provided for an Assyrian speaking client and a Lebanese-Arabic interpreter was provided for a Sudanese-Arabic client; and
- interpreters making incorrect translations.

The focus group participants also told of experiences of mainstream service providers not knowing how to access appropriate interpreters.

Legal service providers reported their concerns about the high cost of interpreters to the service provider, interpreter services not being provided in a timely manner, especially at court hearings, and interpreters failing to meet appointment times. One legal service provider reported:

I have witnessed problems to do with interpreters to such an extent that women ultimately gave up on their attempts to access legal services.

There was also evidence of family and friends frequently being asked to provide informal interpreting services. There are obvious problems associated with this practice, including the lack of confidentiality and privacy in such arrangements. This practice is in direct conflict with the need for strictly disinterested and professional interpreting services and also feeds a fear, reported by focus group participants, that their legal problems will become known within their communities if they access legal assistance.

Concerns about interpreters being unprofessional or not trusted to maintain confidentiality were raised several times throughout the focus group interviews. This problem appears the most acute in situations where there are only a very limited number of interpreters who are available to translate into some community languages. Highly significantly, in small and emerging migrant and refugee communities, it was reported that clients and interpreters were often known to each other, knew of each other, or at the very

least, had colleagues in common. Such a circumstance, if other options are not made available, may result in clients opting out of seeking assistance on sensitive matters (such as child protection issues), because they do not trust the interpreter to maintain confidentiality and are fearful that they will be publicly humiliated as a result of seeking legal help.

Both the migrant and legal service providers felt that telephone interpreter services were generally reliable and available to clients at their services, with the notable exception of women from small and emerging communities, where it was reported that telephone interpreters are in limited supply. This is significant in light of the fact that often these women have relatively few experienced and long-term community members who they can approach for advice and help.

Feedback from participants in all groups illustrated that the situation with face-to-face interpreters was uniformly difficult irrespective of the community group in need of translation services. The legal service respondents indicated that the cost of face-to-face interpreters often meant that services could not afford to use them, or at best could use them only sparingly. Service providers from non-metropolitan areas had additional costs, as interpreters had to be flown to their locations. There were also suggestions from legal service providers that interpreters should have a better understanding of legal issues, legal terminology and court procedures. Legal service providers noted that difficulties arise if there is not at least some basic knowledge of these concepts. Additionally, a number of service providers noted the need for interpreters to have greater sensitivity in cases involving emotionally difficult legal problems, such as domestic violence, sexual assault or harassment. All groups also expressed the need for female interpreters to be automatically available for migrant and refugee women, especially in cases involving family breakdown, domestic violence and child abuse.

The migrant service providers reported that they have found various ways to mitigate some of the problems associated with the lack of available interpreters. Some migrant service providers target employment of bilingual community workers or bilingual community educators who speak particular community languages. These workers are often located in migrant resource centres and provide settlement services to migrants and refugees of their language group and, where needed, provide interpreting services for those same clients when accessing other services provided by migrant and legal service providers.

Legal services also reported strategies employed in their organisations to combat problems associated with a lack of interpreters. One community legal centre relied almost exclusively on volunteer interpreters, who they trained and who signed confidentiality agreements prior to each interaction with a client. Other organisations resorted to asking clients to bring family members or friends as interpreters. This practice was particularly prevalent with women from small and emerging communities with a noted lack of interpreters, though as noted above, this can give rise to difficulties with regard to confidentiality. One of the problems with this system is captured by one respondent who noted:

The competency of friends who are used as interpreters is always questionable and there is no way for the service provider to check this.

Legal and migrant service providers were asked about any training that their staff had received in the use of interpreters. One-third of legal service respondents stated that existing staff had received training in the effective use of interpreters. Two-thirds stated that they expected new staff to undergo such training in future.

Further questioning revealed that despite this expectation of future training, there did not appear to be any processes or strategies in place to achieve this.

All of the migrant service providers stated that they expected all current and future staff to receive training in the use of interpreters and cross-cultural issues. Eighty three percent of migrant organisations could confirm that existing staff had received such training, however only 58% stated that it was a job requirement.

Service providers were also questioned as to whether information about accessing interpreters was included in their promotional material. Seventy five percent of migrant service providers and 67% of legal service providers had information about access to interpreters on their brochures.

Recommendation 6

Interpreters employed by the NSW Community Relations Commission and the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship be provided with regular training on:

- legal issues and the Australian legal system;
- cross-cultural issues; and
- gender issues, particularly as they relate to domestic violence and sexual assault.

Responsibility: Community Relations Commission; Department of Immigration and Citizenship; Violence Against Women Specialist Unit; Women's Legal Services.

Recommendation 7

The Combined Community Legal Centres' Group continue to lobby state and federal governments and other bodies such as the NSW Community Relations Commission and Legal Aid Commission for adequate funding and service provision guidelines for interpreters so that:

- interpreters are made available to migrant and refugee women for telephone and face-to-face interviews in community legal centres across all legal problem types and for both advice sessions and legal representation; and
- free interpreters are made available for community legal education activities for migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; Legal Aid Commission; NSW Legal Assistance Forum; Community Relations Commission.

Recommendation 8

Information about the availability of free interpreters and the Telephone and Interpreting Service's telephone number be included in any promotional material about CLC services.

Responsibility: community legal centres; Combined Community Legal Centres' Group.

Recommendation 9

The NSW Community Relations Commission and the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship ensure that efforts continue to recruit and train more women interpreters and interpreters in new and emerging community languages.

Responsibility: Community Relations Commission; Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

Recommendation 10

The Combined Community Legal Centres' Group and the National Association of Community Legal Centres assist with the development of resources and provision of training to CLC staff and volunteers in the effective use of interpreters.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group; National Association of Community Legal Centres.

Recommendation 11

In providing written materials to migrant and refugee women, all agencies ensure that translated materials are from plain English, explain the legal terms used rather than make a literal translation and consider the use of pictorial material to overcome barriers faced by women with low literacy skills in their first language.

Responsibility: all agencies providing written information about the law and legal services to migrant and refugee women.

3.2.5. The lack of effective referral processes between migrant service providers and legal service providers

One focus group participant reported that in the case of her particular legal problem:

I have gone round and round in circles with no-one providing an answer.

Members of the focus groups who had sought legal help in the past reported that it had taken a long time to resolve where they could get this assistance. They were passed from one person to another, often without knowing the role played by each service provider and the relationship between different organisations to which they were referred.

Migrant service providers who were interviewed also identified the lack of effective case management, or supported referrals, as a barrier to migrant and refugee women accessing legal help. Migrant service providers noted the frustration and long delays caused by wrong referrals. One interviewee noted that:

It takes a lot of effort for newly arrived migrant and refugee women to seek legal help in the first place, and false or unhelpful referrals can act as a deterrent to seeking further assistance.

The consultations revealed that migrant and refugee women were much more comfortable with visiting and using the services of migrant resource centres as a first point of contact for most matters, including legal inquiries, rather than community legal centres. A number of migrant and refugee women mentioned migrant resource centres as a source of legal information. In one consultation, roughly three quarters of participants stated that they expected that migrant resource centres would assist them with their legal problems. One focus group participant stated:

For us the migrant resource centre is the first place we go to if we have any kind of problem.

By contrast, only one woman mentioned community legal centres as a place where one might seek legal help. Notably however and of concern, in mentioning legal centres as a place to obtain legal advice, she stated:

A visit to a legal centre - but language could be a problem.

In light of this, it is crucial that the referral services provided by migrant resource centres are efficient and appropriate and that migrant resource centre workers are well-informed of the roles and limits of community and government legal service providers. The consultations revealed however that incorrect referrals are often made by migrant resource centres because their workers are not aware of the correct source of legal assistance for particular legal problems, or are not aware of the role played by different legal service providers.

All of the migrant service providers stated that they offered a range of legal referral options to their clients, with approximately two thirds of respondents stating that they refer clients with a legal problem to local community legal centres. Other places of referral included the Legal Aid Commission, the chamber registrar, migration agents, solicitors who will take on a client with a grant of legal aid and specialist community legal centres such as the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre, Women's Legal Services and the Welfare Rights Centre.

Despite this range of legal referral options provided to clients, it remains apparent from other responses that the full range of legal service providers and the actual services provided by each of them is not known to many migrant service workers. For example, only one migrant resource centre interviewee mentioned domestic violence court assistance schemes as a source of legal assistance for migrant and refugee women experiencing violence. One migrant resource centre interviewee indicated that migrant resource centres often assist clients with 'simple' law-related matters such as freedom of information (FOI) requests rather than referring the client to another service. The difficulty with this approach, as identified by another migrant resource centre interviewee, is that it perpetuates a view that migrants and refugees are the responsibility of specialised migrant service providers and not of mainstream legal organisations or other service providers. This interviewee also recounted that:

There are instances where clients with clear legal problems approach migrant resource centres, because there was the need for an interpreter that the appropriate legal service was either unable or unwilling to provide.

Instances such as these create a dependency among migrant and refugee women on migrant resource centres and a perception by migrants and refugees that they are different from other Australians who have direct access to some form of community legal assistance. It also limits their ability to learn about the system and other service options that may be available.

From the perspective of the legal service providers, two thirds of the community legal centre-based respondents felt that the system of referral from migrant-focussed organisations to legal organisations was working relatively well. However, one interviewee commented that there were:

definitely still problems with the system because other organisations regularly believed that community legal centres were able to do everything.

Others indicated that there needed to be more clarification of the role and capacity of community legal centres and other legal service providers. Worryingly, one legal service provider noted that their service chose not to distribute information to key ethnic service providers because, "we can't cope with the demand for our services that this results in."

Based on these comments, and the centrality of migrant resource centres in providing services to migrant and refugee women, it would be highly beneficial for legal service providers and migrant service providers to understand each other's roles and improve cross-referral processes. Instituting regular meetings and creating channels of communication between migrant resource centres and local community legal centres in which important information about each service can be exchanged is one such strategy for strengthening the relationship between these key service providers.

Recommendation 12

The NSW Law and Justice Foundation assist with improved collaboration and dialogue between community legal centres and other legal service providers and migrant resource centres through the NSW Legal Referral Forum.

Responsibility: Law and Justice Foundation.

Recommendation 13

The Combined Community Legal Centres' Group foster closer understanding of the respective roles and capacities of migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers and community legal centres by organising training seminars and/or meetings. As part of this, consideration be given to developing referral protocols.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres' Group.

Recommendation 14

The DVD, 'Getting off the Referral Roundabout' be redistributed to all migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers.

Responsibility: Kingsford Legal Centre; Women's Legal Services.

3.2.6 Physical location and accessibility of community legal centres and other legal services

Some migrant service providers identified the physical location of legal services as one of the factors impacting upon the capacity of migrant and refugee women to seek legal help. They expressed concern about the current location of legal services in their local area and noted that often migrant and refugee women do not have access to a car and may have one or more children in their primary care during the day. Legal services need to be accessible by public transport, close to train and bus stations and well signposted. Migrant service providers noted that their clients were very reluctant to attend legal centres if they were not easily accessible.

This is a difficult problem to remedy immediately, but a starting point may be for community legal service providers to ensure that translated brochures include clear directions and public transport links required to reach their offices and to ensure clear signage where offices are located. It is also a factor to be taken into account by legal service providers when considering outreach services.

Recommendation 15

All translated brochures of legal service providers include clear directions on how to reach the legal service, including suitable public transport connections.

Responsibility: community legal centres; Legal Aid Commission.

Recommendation 16

In making decisions about the provision of outreach services, and/or seeking funding for the provision of outreach services, that CLCs take note of the need for and positive value placed on outreach services provided to migrant and refugee women at migrant resource centres.

Responsibility: community legal centres; Combined Community Legal Centres' Group.

3.2.7 Lack of knowledge and misconceptions among migrant and refugee women about their immigration status

One of the significant barriers to accessing legal services mentioned by all participants was the lack of understanding by migrant and refugee women about their own immigration status and their misconceptions and misunderstandings regarding the rights they have as either a refugee or migrant woman. This problem is compounded by the fact that a number of women did not know where to go to find out about the rights attached to their immigration status and feared that making such inquiries may, in some circumstances, result in them losing their right to remain in Australia. There was also some confusion expressed by both migrant service providers and the migrant and refugee women about the role of the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre, with a number of responses revealing that there is a common belief this service was the main place for migrants to receive advice about any kind of legal issue. There were also responses from migrant service providers that indicated that some service providers believed that all community legal centres were able to provide immigration advice.

The consultations revealed that many of the women interviewed were not the primary applicant for refugee or migration status. Where their male partners (often the primary applicant) had not divulged the relevant information, these women were very unsure as to the legality of their status. Migrant service providers reported cases of men telling their wives that they were illegal immigrants and that they could be deported if they approached the authorities to report violence, thereby forcing these women to remain in abusive relationships. Women on temporary spouse visas reported feeling particularly susceptible to this. One of the non-metropolitan migrant resource centres provides specific services to women on spouse visas in cross-cultural marriages and one of their workers had direct experience of women remaining in relationships they wanted to leave but did not because they did not have knowledge of the rights attached to their immigration status and avenues of assistance available to them. This migrant resource centre worker was herself aware of the various options available to women who are secondary applicants on joint refugee/migration applications with an abusive partner, however she lamented that such information was not more readily available and that women were not more aware of their options in these circumstances.

It is clear from these findings that information on legal services available to migrant and refugee women with queries regarding their immigration status needs to be made available to migrant service providers and migrant and refugee women.

Recommendation 17

Regular training and information be provided to migrant resource centres and other migrant service providers to better equip them to identify immigration and other legal issues and where to seek appropriate legal assistance for migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Women's Legal Services; Immigration Advice and Rights Centre; Refugee Advice and Casework Service.

3.2.8 Fear of interaction with the Australian legal system

Refugee women who are seeking legal help may have suffered persecution or significant human rights abuses at the hands of government and state officials in their home country. As a result, such women may find it difficult to place trust in government officials (including police and judges) and to discuss certain matters or divulge personal details to anyone associated with the government or government services. Women in the focus groups expressed reservations about discussing their legal problems with *strangers* or *the government* and a number of women articulated fears about unwanted government intervention into their lives if they sought out legal help.

Precisely because of such fears, there is a strong need for relationships of trust between service providers and members of the target group. Focus group responses showed that women look for a solution from trusted or familiar sources. One woman reported that she was more comfortable to go to a service if another community member or friend has already used a particular service or visited a particular organisation. This familiarity with a service and trust for service providers is especially important in light of fear toward people in authority and also fears about a loss of privacy and confidentiality as a result of accessing legal advice.

The kind of trust discussed here is not easily established by way of a recommendation or direct strategy. Rather it is hoped that more accessible and consistent service provision, achieved through a series of key recommendations and relationship and capacity building between legal and migrant service providers, will be able to foster and create strong relationships between community legal centres, migrant service providers and migrant and refugee women.

3.2.8 The absence of a co-ordinated approach to access and equity strategies for culturally and linguistically diverse women

Access and equity strategies refer to the policies and practical strategies that service providers need to put in place in order to attempt to ensure that *all* people who are eligible to use their services can do so comfortably and easily.¹⁰

The legal and migrant service providers were all asked whether they had a requirement for access and equity strategies in their organisations in order to meet their funding criteria. All service providers, with the exception of one legal organisation, confirmed that they had such a requirement. Interviewees listed several different ways that their organisations attempted to meet these requirements, including the provision of multilingual brochures, strategic access and equity plans, giving priority to culturally and linguistically diverse clients where possible, and the employment of migrant and multilingual staff. However, while respondents were aware of different access and equity initiatives that had been established, one respondent noted that often these initiatives were not on going or co-ordinated with other services. This respondent expressed the view that:

Community legal centres are meeting the letter but not the spirit of access and equity requirements.

It is clear that there needs to be a co-ordinated and strategic approach to ensuring legal and migrant service providers are accessible to migrant and refugee women and that these processes are ongoing and reviewed at regular intervals to ensure compliance and currency.

¹⁰ See NSW Community Legal Centres Secretariat, Management Support Group, 'The Access and Equity Resource Kit for NSW Community Legal Centres' (1998) at 15.

SECTION 4: OVERVIEW OF CONCLUSIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1994, several attempts have been made to implement the recommendations made by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report. Some of these attempts have certainly yielded results, particularly in relation to the availability of translated legal information, the development of access and equity policies and the increase in general awareness about the particular needs and difficulties faced by migrant and refugee women in accessing the Australian legal system.

In relation to 'progress' made since the *Quarter Way to Equal* report, the *Creating Pathways to Access* research charts many of the specific projects, initiatives and improvements made by a number of different agencies, in direct response to the legal needs of the target group (see CPA: 2004, 19-49). Overall the *Creating Pathways to Access* review found that about half of the recommendations had been implemented, but that some implementation work had been "one off" projects with little follow up.

The *Long Way to Equal* research not only sought to determine the extent to which the recommendations made by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report had been implemented, but also aimed to determine the ongoing relevance of the *Quarter Way to Equal* findings and to identify any new barriers to legal access that have arisen for migrant and refugee women. The research showed that while the needs of migrant and refugee women are by no means static, overwhelmingly the legal access barriers identified by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report remain significant sources of difficulty for migrant and refugee women in their interactions with the Australian legal system. The main obstacles and gaps in legal service provision that were identified by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report were once again raised by the people consulted.

4.2 INTERPRETING SERVICES

A broad finding of the *Quarter Way to Equal* research was that we had a legal system which often demonstrates little sensitivity to the particular needs of culturally and linguistically diverse women, both in terms of the provision of culturally appropriate services, and in the dissemination of information about the legal system and about how to access available services.

The *Creating Pathways to Access* review found that the Community Relations Commission and Attorney Generals Department had provided training to interpreters about the legal system. However, the review also found that at the service provision level there are still problems surrounding the booking of interpreters for initial court dates in AVO matters, the appropriate and effective use of interpreters and the training of the judiciary and legal profession about issues of domestic violence, sexual assault and cross cultural and gender issues affecting migrant and refugee women.

Overwhelmingly the *Long Way to Equal* consultations show that serious and systemic difficulties persist in relation to the cost and availability of interpreters, as well as the quality of interpreter services provided to culturally and linguistically diverse women. In particular, members of smaller and emerging migrant communities in NSW either cannot access an appropriate language interpreter at all, or the small population of a particular migrant/refugee community means that the interpreter is likely to be known to the client, sparking fears about the maintenance of client confidentiality.

The need for more trained interpreters in certain languages still needs to be addressed, as does increasing the number of female interpreters.

In many respects access to interpreters in community legal centres has gone backwards over the past 10 years – with commonwealth and state areas of law being used to identify service entitlement rather than adopting a client focussed approach. Also, there is still no capacity in CLCs to have free interpreters provided off site or at community legal education sessions.

4.3 THE LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF LEGAL RIGHTS

As well as the persistent need for better interpreting services, the research also revealed that migrant and refugee women's lack of access to basic information about how to get free legal help continues to be a serious barrier to them knowing and asserting their legal rights. The need for ongoing and strategic community legal education is clear. Such education needs to be carefully planned and made available in appropriate and accessible locations, in a number of key community languages. It also needs to be maintained in a sustained rather than ad hoc way.

4.4 LITERACY LEVELS AMONGST MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

The *Creating Pathways to Access* report identified that a significant amount of translated materials had been developed over the past 10 years. For example the Legal Aid Commission had printed legal information translated into many community languages. Many community legal centres have had their brochures translated into community languages.

However, the low levels of literacy among migrant and refugee women in their first language features consistently as a barrier to accessing information about the Australian legal system and where to gain legal assistance. The focus of many services on translating relevant *written* legal information fails to adequately address the need for non-written information to be made available among migrant populations with low levels of literacy. A significant number of women in the focus groups reported that translated information was not extremely helpful to them, especially where translations contain difficult or unfamiliar legal concepts.

4.5 THE NEED FOR A LONG TERM AND CO-ORDINATED APPROACH

Both the *Creating Pathways to Access* report and the *Long Way to Equal* research revealed a commitment among the agencies involved in implementing the recommendations of the *Quarter Way to Equal* report to bring about positive outcomes for migrant and refugee women who use their legal services. There was a strong sentiment among community legal centre and migrant resource centre workers to work more closely together. Migrant resource centres play a key role as a first point of contact for many migrant and refugee women and accordingly, the importance of strong and well-informed referral practices between migrant resource centres and other community legal service providers is imperative.

However, it is also clear that progress has been significantly hampered by the lack of ongoing oversight of various attempts to address needs of the target group. The robust program of recommendations made by the *Quarter Way to Equal* report spanned across community, government and private sectors, and the recommendations were relevant to a very large number of organisations and service providers. In light of this, the lack of a body to oversee the carrying out of these recommendations most certainly impeded their implementation and also negated the impact of certain positive initiatives as they were not sustained over time but rather were 'one-off' projects.

One of the hopeful findings in the *Creating Pathways to Access* review was that '[t]he agencies involved in implementing the recommendations of the *Quarter Way to Equal* report expressed a commitment to bringing about positive outcomes for migrant and refugee women who use their legal services' (CPA: 2004, 7). However, the *Creating Pathways to Access* report simultaneously observed that 'the absence of a monitoring body in the implementation of the recommendations has meant that approaches have been uncoordinated and ad hoc' (CPA: 2004, 7). This observation echoes the findings of the *Long Way to Equal* consultations and represents the need for a long-term and co-ordinated commitment to the specific needs of migrant and refugee women if the quality of their access to legal advice and assistance is to improve in NSW.

The development of new collaborative arrangements in NSW, such as the NSW Legal Assistance Forum and the NSW Law and Justice Foundation's Legal Referral Forum, provide new opportunities for the justice sector to work together to improve access to justice for migrant and refugee women. A fresh commitment by the NSW government to co-ordinate and monitor progress in a sustained manner is also needed.

Recommendation 18

The NSW Legal Assistance Forum formally receive and consider *A Long Way to Equal* and consider ways in which it can assist in seeking resources for and promoting the co-ordination of public justice sector agency responses to recommendations.

Responsibility: NSW Legal Assistance Forum.

Recommendation 19

The NSW government establish and resource an interagency taskforce or other appropriate mechanism to co-ordinate and monitor progress of the recommendations made both by Women's Legal Services in *A Long Way to Equal* and the Violence Against Women Specialist Unit in the *Creating Pathways to Access* report.

Responsibility: NSW Attorney General's Department.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The *Quarter Way to Equal* Report provided a strong foundation from which to advocate for improvements in access to justice for migrant and refugee women. The needs of migrant and refugee women are neither homogenous nor static and so regular review and assessment of emerging issues will always be appropriate. *A Long Way to Equal* provides a current account of the issues and barriers faced by migrant and refugee women in accessing legal services as well as some suggested ways forward.

Although migrant and refugee women's experiences show that it's a long way to equality before the law, the two reviews have already begun to reopen dialogue and discussion about the barriers to accessing legal help. Key community and government service providers, as well as migrant and refugee women themselves have identified clear and ongoing problems that need to be addressed in order to improve their access to justice. The recent work by both the Violence Against Women Specialist Unit and Women's Legal Services creates a positive platform from which government and non-government legal service providers can continue to address, in a systematic and coordinated manner, the needs of migrant and refugee women in their interactions with the legal system in NSW.

APPENDIX A

Recommendations from *Quarter Way to Equal*

10.2 A PROGRAM FOR CHANGE

AIM IMPROVING ACCESS TO INTERPRETERS

IN THE LOCAL COURTS

It is recommended that:

- 1 Local Courts introduce a system of appointments for people who speak little or no English so that interpreters can be made available for advice services with Chamber Magistrates.
Responsibility: Department of Courts Administration.
- 2 That Local Courts establish a system to promote access to interpreters for first appearances in apprehended violence orders, and that Chamber Magistrates, police, community legal centres, lawyers and other service providers be advised of how to access this system.
Responsibility: Department of Courts Administration.
- 3 In order that TIS may be used in emergency situations, access to phones be provided to lawyers appearing before the local court.
Responsibility: Department of Courts Administration.
- 4 That clear guidelines be developed and made available to appropriate legal and women's services on the availability of interpreters for women seeking an apprehended violence order (either as an informant or witness).
Responsibility: Department of Courts Administration.
- 5 That procedures be developed whereby Police ensure that the local court is notified in advance of the need for an interpreter, when initiating an apprehended violence order on behalf of a woman who speaks little or no English.
Responsibility: New South Wales Police Service.
- 6 Arrangements for the provision of interpreters in local courts be better coordinated, in line with the proposal emanating from the Cross-Cultural Issues and the Law Symposium.
Responsibility: Department of Courts Administration; Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; New South Wales Police Service; Ethnic Affairs Commission; Combined Community Legal Centres Group.

IN THE FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA

It is recommended that

- 7 The Family Court establish a system to provide and/or use interpreters for all stages in family law proceedings, including the filing of documents and first return dates.
Responsibility: Family Court of Australia.

8 Registries develop formal procedures to identify the need for an interpreter for any stage of family law proceedings.

Responsibility: Family Court of Australia.

9 That, in accordance with the recommendations of the Commonwealth Attorney General's Report on Access to Interpreters in the Legal System, 'federal legislation should be enacted to ensure an entitlement in a party or witness to use an interpreter in Federal Courts and tribunals subject to a judicial decision to dispense with an interpreter if it appears that the party or witnesses can adequately understand and express himself or herself in English', and that, furthermore Federal Courts should liaise with ethnic communities to develop guidelines regarding the assessment of such English language proficiency.

Responsibility: Parliament; Commonwealth Attorney General's Department.

IN THE CHILDREN'S COURT

It is recommended that

10 Guidelines on the availability of interpreters for children and parents in the Children's Court be made available to service providers.

Responsibility: Department of Courts Administration.

11 The availability of interpreters for children and parents be displayed prominently in the Children's Court.

Responsibility: Department of Courts Administration.

POLICE

It is recommended that

12 Police develop procedures to regularise the use of interpreters for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Responsibility: New South Wales Police Service.

13 Police be trained in the use of face to face and telephone interpreters when attending a domestic violence incident or investigating a sexual assault report, including the desirability of requesting a female interpreter.

Responsibility: New South Wales Police Service.

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES

It is recommended that

14 All community legal centres include information about the availability of free interpreters in any promotional material about their services.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres Group.

- 15 Community legal centres with ‘drop-in’ advice services establish an appointments system for NES clients to enable face-to-face interpreter services to be arranged.
Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres Group.
- 16 Commonwealth and State interpreting services clarify the criteria used to determine their respective responsibilities regarding the provision of interpreters to community legal centres (eg regarding centre, location, type of legal matter).
Responsibility: Translating and Interpreting Service; Ethnic Affairs Commission; Combined Community Legal Centres Group.
- 17 Clarification be provided by TIS about the confidentiality of all dealings with TIS interpreters regardless of the client’s immigration status, and that interpreters be directed to inform clients of their position.
Responsibility: Translating and Interpreting Service; Combined Community Legal Centres Group; Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales.
- 18 That the interpreting services establish guidelines to allow interpreters to be available to community legal centres for community legal education sessions, and free advice sessions by staff and volunteer solicitors ‘off site’.
Responsibility: Translating and Interpreting Service; Ethnic Affairs Commission; Combined Community Legal Centres Group.

PRIVATE LEGAL PRACTITIONERS

It is recommended that

- 19 Private legal practitioners receive additional training regarding the positive benefit of using interpreters and of the availability of interpreting services.
Responsibility: Law Society of New South Wales; Translating and Interpreting Service; Ethnic Affairs Commission.

AIM IMPROVING SENSITIVITY AND USE OF INTERPRETING SERVICES TO NES WOMEN

It is recommended that

- 20 In accordance with the recommendations of the Cross-Cultural Issues and the Law Symposium, the Commonwealth Attorney General’s Report on Access to Interpreters and also the ALRC Report on Multiculturalism and the Law, that interpreters receive significant additional training on legal issues and the legal system.
Responsibility: Translating and Interpreting Service; Ethnic Affairs Commission.
- 21 Major users of interpreters in the legal system assist in the development and/or provision of legal and cross-cultural training of interpreters to familiarise interpreters with procedures in particular courts, with legal aid and with legal terminology. Gender issues

should be an essential aspect of such training, particularly as they relate to domestic violence and sexual assault proceedings.

Responsibility: Ethnic Affairs Commission; Translating and Interpreting Service; Legal Aid Commission; Department of Courts Administration; Combined Community Legal Centres Group; Family Court of Australia; Law Society of New South Wales; New South Wales Police Service; Judicial Commission; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission; Anti-Discrimination Board.

- 22 That with the assistance of interpreting agencies, major users of interpreters in the legal system receive significant training on the effective use of interpreters (both by telephone and face-to-face) and related cross-cultural issues, such training to be compulsory for all public contact staff. Gender issues should be an essential aspect of such training.
Responsibility: Ethnic Affairs Commission; Translating and Interpreting Service; Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; Department of Courts Administration; Combined Community Legal Centres Group; Family Court of Australia; Law Society of New South Wales; New South Wales Police Service; Judicial Commission; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission; Anti-Discrimination Board.

- 23 In accordance with Recommendation 3 of the Commonwealth/State Council on Non-English Speaking Background Women's Issues report on Women and Language services (1992), that 'Attorneys-General should amend current legislation to include the services of a competent, preferably female and accredited interpreter for women in cases of domestic violence, sexual assault and family breakdown in all Australian Court systems as a matter of urgency'.
Responsibility: Attorney General.

- 24 Unless otherwise requested, interpreting services provide female interpreters for female clients in domestic violence or sexual assault cases.
Responsibility: Translating and Interpreting Service; Ethnic Affairs Commission.

- 25 Significant efforts be taken to develop strategies to increase the availability of accredited female interpreters in Turkish, Arabic and Vietnamese languages in particular.
Responsibility: Translating and Interpreting Service; Ethnic Affairs Commission.

AIM IMPROVING ACCESS TO LEGAL AID SERVICES

It is recommended that

- 26 The adequacy of legal aid guidelines regarding the provision of assistance for dissolution proceedings, immigration applications and family law property disputes be reassessed to take account of the severe disadvantage faced by women who speak little or no English and who have no financial means to pay for the cost of legal proceedings. Also the adequacy of current guidelines be reassessed regarding the availability of legal aid for summons matters where the defendant has little or no English language ability.
Responsibility: Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales.

- 27 Steps be taken to better market available Legal Aid Commission publications (eg translated pamphlets and videos, newsletters, legal aid eligibility guidelines, policy manual, legal aid referral manual) with services assisting newly arrived migrant and refugee women.
Responsibility: Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.
- 28 Strategies be developed to address ethnic communities' lack of knowledge and/or common misconceptions about legal aid (regarding, for example, the availability of legal aid for domestic violence and also victim's compensation, financial contributions, the system of referral to private practitioners, what is covered by a grant of legal aid, the distinction between services provided by legal aid offices and other legal services).
Responsibility: Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; Combined Community Legal Centres Group.
- 29 All legal aid lawyers receive training on the use of interpreters, cross-cultural issues and also issues relating to the client's gender and newly arrived and/or refugee status.
Responsibility: Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; Immigrant Women's Speakout; Service for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma.
- 30 Steps be taken to increase the visibility of legal aid branch offices, (particularly those off street level), to members of ethnic communities (eg by perhaps advertising at street level in local community languages the availability of free legal advice).
Responsibility: Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales.
- 31 The Legal Aid Commission train its practitioners in the specific needs of non-English speaking people, and women in particular, and in recognition of these needs, allocate sufficient time in advice/interview sessions.
Responsibility: Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales.
- 32 Strategies be developed to better inform ethnic community groups and other contacts used by women about the specialist legal services provided by the Legal Aid Commission. Particular attention should be given to the Child Support Service.
Responsibility: Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales.
- 33 In consultation with ethnic communities and other specialist services familiar with ethnic community networks, a comprehensive program of legal aid seminars be conducted to which key service providers and identified community leaders used by newly arrived and refugee NESB women be invited to attend.
Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres Group; Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; Immigrant Women's Speakout; Service for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma; Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs; Ethnic Affairs Commission.
- 34 the National Legal Aid Director's Public Awareness Strategy Committee makes as a priority the development of strategies targeted at non-English speaking communities.
Responsibility: National Legal Aid Directors Public Awareness Strategy Committee.

AIM IMPROVING ACCESS TO COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES

It is recommended that

- 35 Community legal centres, as a group, develop and distribute a profile of their services to key ethnic community service providers/leaders working with newly arrived migrant and refugee women.

Responsibility: Combined Community Legal Centres Group.

- 36 Community legal centres providing assistance to migrant women in family law, domestic violence or immigration develop some special joint ventures or cross-training to improve the access to and quality of legal services provided by their respective services and also by other legal service providers.

Responsibility: Women's Legal Resources Centre; Domestic Violence Advocacy Service; Immigration Advice and Rights Centre; Refugee Advice and Casework Service.

AIM IMPROVING ACCESS TO PRIVATE LEGAL PRACTITIONERS

It is recommended that

- 37 Upon completion of the Law Society's new computerised Community Assistance Department Data Base, strategies be developed to ensure that ethnic communities (especially at the local level), legal aid commission staff and community legal centre staff are fully aware of the Law Society's ability to identify, at no cost, solicitors according to such factors as gender, bilingual ability, area of law practised and if pro bono work is undertaken (keeping in mind that policy is that 3 names must be provided for the purpose of referral).

Responsibility: Law Society of New South Wales.

AIM IMPROVING THE LEVEL OF POLICE AND COURT ASSISTANCE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES INVOLVING NESB WOMEN

It is recommended that

- 38 Police staff training on domestic violence include a component on cross-cultural issues with a view to eliminating any stereotyping of women on the basis of their ethnicity or culture.

Responsibility: New South Wales Police Service.

- 39 Police develop procedures and strategies to ensure that women on whose behalf they are initiating an apprehended violence order are fully informed about their respective roles in the proceedings, the terms and conditions of the order and what will happen in court. These strategies will emphasise the need to use interpreters (female if possible).

Responsibility: New South Wales Police Service.

- 40 Written and/or audio visual material be developed to explain to NES women in their own language, domestic violence court proceedings including their role, right to legal aid etc.
Responsibility: New South Wales Police Service; Department of Courts Administration.
- 41 Existing and any future Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes take steps to recruit bilingual workers, work with local ethnic community agencies to train more bilingual court support personnel and promote their existence more extensively within ethnic communities.
Responsibility: Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes.

AIM IMPROVING ETHNIC COMMUNITY WORKERS' KNOWLEDGE OF LEGAL ISSUES AND ACCESS POINTS

It is recommended that

- 42 Grant-in-aid workers, other community workers and agencies involved in assisting newly arrived migrant and refugee women receive additional training on the law and legal issues regarding the role of the lawyer, lawyer-client relationships, professional indemnity issues, available legal services and other information to assist with more accurate problem identification and referral (the use of the LAC's Legal Aid Referral Manual may be of great assistance).
Responsibility: Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs; Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; Combined Community Legal Centres Group; Law Society of New South Wales.
- 43 The National Legal Education Working Group establish as a major priority the development of strategies to ensure that ethnic community services are aware of and have access to the National Community Legal Education Register.
Responsibility: National Legal Education Working Group.

AIM DEVELOPING A MORE COORDINATED APPROACH TO LEGAL SERVICE DELIVERY TO NESB WOMEN

It is recommended that

- 44 Key players in the legal system adopt a more coordinated approach to legal service delivery and, within the context of implementation of A&E/EAPS and enhancing gender equality, develop strategies aimed at increasing the access of NESB women to legal services and the legal system, community legal centres, the Legal Aid Commission, private legal practitioners, the police and the courts. To this end, these bodies should cooperate more frequently in developing strategies crossing their service-delivery boundaries. It is recommended that A&E/EAPS Coordinators from key legal service organisations in conjunction with EAC and OMA develop a 'legal access' network to facilitate communication and to identify areas of common concern and possible joint-ventures regarding the provision of information or services to newly arrived migrant and refugee women.
Responsibility: Ethnic Affairs Commission; Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs; Combined Community Legal Centres Group; Office of Multicultural Affairs; Legal Aid

Commission of New South Wales; Law Society of New South Wales; Department of Courts Administration; New South Wales Police Service; Family Court of Australia.

- 45 Steps be taken to encourage similar networking at the *local level* and to use existing structures such as the local domestic violence committees.
Responsibility: Ethnic Affairs Commission; Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs; Combined Community Legal Centres Group; Office of Multicultural Affairs; Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; Law Society of New South Wales; Department of Courts Administration; New South Wales Police Service; Family Court of Australia.

AIM INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACCESS AND EQUITY/EAPS

It is recommended that

- 46 Legal service providers prepare *detailed* A & E/EAPS including specific tasks, responsibilities, timetables, implementation and evaluation mechanisms.
Responsibility: Government / Community Service Providers.
- 47 In the development, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of A&E/EAPS, all legal service providers seek input and feedback from ethnic communities.
Responsibility: Government / Community Service Providers.
- 48 While recognising that ‘mainstreaming’ is the predominant concept, resources be provided for a person to ‘drive’ the implementation of A&E/EAPS within government organisations, to be a key access point for advice or information for staff and ethnic communities, to organise and develop policy, consultation and communication strategies for the organisation.
Responsibility: Government / Community Service Providers.
- 49 Staff training in A&E/EAPS, the use of interpreters and cross-cultural issues be of the highest priority, and compulsory for public contact staff.
Responsibility: Government / Community Service Providers.
- 50 Government service organisations A&E/EAPS reporting and accountability requirements be monitored more vigorously.
Responsibility: Office of Multicultural Affairs; Ethnic Affairs Commission.
- 51 Consideration be given to amending community legal centre funding guidelines to include a requirement regarding A&E/EAPS.
Responsibility: Office of Legal Aid and Family Services; Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales; Combined Community Legal Centres Group.

- 52 The development of A&E principles, policies and training be made a priority within the CLC Management Support Project.
Responsibility: CLC Management Support Project.
- 53 Government and community legal service providers obtain additional training regarding the dissemination of information to newly arrived migrant and refugee women, particularly those from NES countries, and should be encouraged to make more use of ethnic media, in particular ethnic radio, which is a key strategy for newly arrived migrant and refugee women. The ECC's current MAPS project may be a considerable assistance in this regard. Use should also be made of organisations skilled in using ethnic community networks used by women.
Responsibility: Government / Community Service Providers; Combined Community Legal Centres Group and the CLC Management Support Project; Ethnic Communities Council; Service for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma; Immigrant Women's Speakout.

APPENDIX B

Recommendations contained in *Creating Pathways to Access* report.

Chapter 4 – Table Summary of Review’s Recommendations for the QWE Taskforce consideration

This chapter consolidates into a table the Review’s recommendations for consideration and action by agencies to improve access and equity for migrant and refugee women seeking assistance from legal services. The table also correlates with original QWE recommendations. Many of these proposed strategies require interagency and collaboration between agencies, whilst others are the sole responsibility of particular agencies.

The recommendations number/s from QWE Report are given in the first column for reference.

QWE No:	Review Recommendations / Actions for Consideration	Responsible Agencies
	NSW AGD to reconvene Taskforce and/or appropriate mechanisms to coordinate and monitor the progress of the implementation of the actions suggested by this review.	As the lead agency NSW AGD must involve key stakeholders in developing a process whereby access and equity for refugee and migrant women seeking legal support and services is ensured and monitored.
Revised	<p>RR1 - Monitor the contents of the training materials for interpreters to ensure that gender and cross-cultural issues in general, and in relation to domestic violence and sexual assault proceedings in particular, are included.</p> <p>RR2 - Ensure that all service delivery staff receive training on cross cultural issues and the use of interpreter services and include this as a reporting item in EAPS reports.</p> <p>RR3 - Ensure that refugees and humanitarian entrants are acknowledged as a legitimate client base in access and equity strategies and the training of direct service delivery staff through EAPS reporting.</p>	Anti-Discrimination Board, NSW Legal Aid Commission, Community Relations Commission, Judicial Commission, NSW Attorney General's Department.

1-6 Revised	<p>RR 4 - Local Courts and CRC develop a protocol for interpreters that include:</p> <p>(a) Interpreter to wear the identity card/identification tag,</p> <p>(b) Realistic time to arrive at court, (giving enough time to meet with the appropriate parties),</p> <p>(c) A formalised check-in system at the court reception to find out which courtroom to attend,</p> <p>(d) Arrangements to meet with CAS/police/victim before going to court, and</p> <p>(e) Formalised check-out system at the reception after the court proceedings.</p>	Local Courts, NSW AGD, Community Relations Commission
46-49, Revised	<p>RR 5 - That the Cultural Diversity Resource Kit be reviewed and updated and training be provided to court staff on cross cultural issues and the use of the kit.</p>	Local Courts, NSW AGD
46-49	<p>RR 6 - That victims Services:</p> <p>(a) Establish an Access & Equity plan that includes migrant and refugee women, as special needs group to ensure continuity and consistency in the delivery of Access & Equity strategies,</p> <p>(b) Promote its service via ethnic media, particularly community radio, and</p> <p>(c) That the right to have access to an interpreter be included in the Charter.</p>	Victims Services
6	<p>RR 7 -</p> <p>(a) That the MOU on booking interpreters between NSW Attorney General's Department, the Community Relations Commission and NSW Police is well publicised to the staff and appropriate training is given to police and court about booking and using interpreters.</p> <p>(b) The MOU be included in police induction training.</p>	NSW Police, Local Courts (NSW AGD) & Community Relations Commission
20-25 Revised	<p>RR 8 -</p> <p>(a) A component on interpreting in domestic violence and sexual assault matters, which incorporates issues of both gender and ethnicity, be included in the training manual for interpreters.</p> <p>(b) That VAWSU and Immigrant Women's Speakout Association be consulted during the development of this component.</p>	Community Relations Commission, NSW AGD VAWSU, IWSA
24, 25 Revised	<p>RR 9 - That CRC work in partnership with NSW AGD to establish scholarships for women from selected communities to undertake interpreting training to encourage women to enter the profession. Scholarships for training could be offered to the more disadvantaged communities, having consideration for the size, the number of male and female interpreters already available for that community and the need/demand for interpreters from those particular communities.</p>	Community Relations Commission, NSW AGD

44-45	<p>RR 10 - That the CRC in conjunction with other key legal service organisations, consolidate the legal access network and develop strategies to:</p> <p>(a) Provide information to migrant and refugee communities in general, and to women in particular,</p> <p>(b) Identify gaps in information provision,</p> <p>(c) Address these gaps, and</p> <p>(d) Monitor the provision of information.</p>	Community Relations Commission, Legal Aid Commission
50	RR 11 - That the QWE Recommendations and this Review's Recommendations become part of the EAPS reporting on annual basis.	CRC, ADB
53 Revised	<p>RR 12 - IWSA affirm and strengthen its leadership role in supporting and promoting ethnic community networks used by women by:</p> <p>(a) Holding regular consultations with migrant and refugee women's groups and workers to identify access and equity issues for these women. A significant part of this consultation will be in relation to access to legal services.</p> <p>(b) Convening an interagency on a half yearly basis of the agencies undertaking to implement QWE recommendations to follow up on identified issues and to monitor the implementation of these recommendations.</p> <p>(c) IWSA to take a lead role in training rural WDVCSs on working with NESB women in rural and remote regions, with funding and assistance from LAC.</p>	Immigrant Women's Speakout Association Inc; supported by other Taskforce agencies
22, Revised	<p>RR 13 - That judicial staff be strongly encouraged to attend annual training/refresher courses on domestic violence and sexual assault, including gender and cross-cultural issues.</p> <p>Agencies such as ECAV, IWSA and VAWSU should be involved, in an advisory capacity, in planning and developing the contents and in the delivery of such sessions.</p>	Judicial Commission
19, Revised	<p>RR 14 - That a separate module be developed and delivered to College of Law students on the effective use of interpreters and translators; this module to include cross cultural and gender issues, with particular focus on interpreting in domestic violence and sexual assault matters.</p> <p>The module to be developed in consultation with the Violence Against Women Specialist Unit.</p>	Law Society with support from NSW AGD & CRC
44, Revised	RR 15 - That an MOU be developed between the Community Relations Commission and the Law Society in relation to the provision of free telephone interpreter services for calls made to the Solicitors' Referral Service.	Law Society, Community Relations Commission

31	RR 16 - LAC provide regular and updated training to its staff on domestic violence and sexual assault, including gender issues and cross cultural issues and use of interpreters in these matters.	NSW Legal Aid Commission
44	RR 17 - That a legal access network be established amongst key legal agencies, peak ethnic community organisations, and other organisations that work closely with migrant and refugee communities. This network can have representations at other State-wide committees, for example, the Apprehended Violence Order Legal Issues Committee, to promote access issues for NESB women.	NSW Legal Aid Commission
44 - 45	RR 18 - That LAC develop a coordinated community legal education strategy for NSW that addresses the special needs of people from culturally diverse backgrounds and their advocates.	NSW Legal Aid Commission
44 - 45, Revised	RR 19 - That training and additional resources be provided to existing WDVCSs in regional and rural centres to work with migrant and refugee women.	NSW Legal Aid Commission
46 - 49, Revised	RR 20 - (a) Information about ODPP and WAS be translated into the major and emerging community languages, (b) Translated material to be available on line, (c) ODPP establish a panel of experts, representative of a multicultural community, to provide advice on access and equity issues of migrants and refugees in the criminal justice process as per the statement of intent in relation to Charter of Principles for a Culturally Diverse Society, and (d) The WAS liaise with local domestic violence, sexual assault, child protection and multicultural networks in order to identify service access issues for women in general and NESB women in particular and address them appropriately.	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
49, Revised	RR 21 - (a) All GDOs and DVLOs receive cross-cultural training on a regular basis. (b) Police cross-cultural training to include a detailed section on issues of refugees and humanitarian entrants and good practices of working with these women.	NSW Police

<p>5, 12, 13, 21, 22 38 & 9, Revised</p>	<p>RR 22 - (a) Police develop and conduct training, and train the trainer programs for ECLOs to include conflict resolution, domestic violence and sexual assault, (b) Police to maintain data on ethnicity and language spoken by victims of crime in the different LACs in order to identify the dominant language groups in those areas, and develop appropriate strategies to work with them and enable them to access legal services.</p>	<p>NSW Police</p>
<p>44 - 45, Revised</p>	<p>RR 23 - Local or Regional area command to actively participate at the Regional Violence Prevention Specialists' Reference Group meetings to identify and resolve issues arising at a regional and local area command level in relation to migrant and refugee women's access to legal services.</p>	<p>NSW Police</p>
<p>Revised</p>	<p>RR 24 - That the Office for Women, NSW Premier's Department, ensure that the database of legal services and ethno-specific services for NESB women are updated regularly and where possible with information in different languages made available on-line. Law Access NSW and Office for Women collaborate to ensure that these databases are user friendly for people of non-English speaking background.</p>	<p>Office for Women & Law Access NSW</p>

APPENDIX C

Examples of initiatives and strategies to address access to legal services by migrants and refugees

A Guide to the Police in Australia

This booklet was produced by the Australasian Police Multicultural Advisory Board to provide prospective and newly arrived migrants with a general understanding of some legal and policing concepts and processes. It was a starting point to lead towards additional information and assistance and other services. It is available in eight languages - English, Arabic, Afghani (Dari), Bosnian, Chinese (Mandarin), Farsi, Somali and Vietnamese and can be downloaded from the web at www.apmab.gov.au in those languages.

This booklet was developed under the Commonwealth government's Living in Harmony (LiH) initiative.

The Access and Equity Resource Kit (1998)

This kit was produced on behalf of the NSW Community Legal Centres Secretariat Management Support Group. The development of the kit was motivated by the recognition that community legal centres simply adopting Access & Equity (A&E) policies was insufficient to achieve A&E goals, and that community legal centres needed to be more proactive in implementing A&E strategies. The project aimed to help community legal centres by providing practical information and resources that would promote A&E goals and the information in the kit was drawn directly from community legal centre experiences, as well as other A&E resources. It looks at ways in which access and equity can be improved in a number of areas of service operation, including staff awareness and training, management and decision-making, policies and procedures, and community involvement. It also usefully provides an A&E policy in relation to each service area, which centres may use in order to help them identify barriers to access.¹¹

The Law in Australia: A Community Education Project for Women of Non- English Speaking Backgrounds (1999 - 2001)

This project was conducted by the Women's Legal Centre (ACT & Region) Inc with the explicit aim to raise the level of knowledge about the Australian legal system, the law and legal services among culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the ACT.

The project's main strategy was to train bilingual community workers to run education sessions for communities in their first language. The sessions covered the Australian legal system, family law, domestic violence law and how to access legal services.¹²

The 'Safe Families Kit' (2002)

A number of organisations¹³ worked together to develop the Safe Families Kit. The Kit aimed to enhance the level of awareness among people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds of the criminal nature of domestic violence and to inform culturally and linguistically diverse women of their legal rights and the services available to them. The kit uses plain English and illustrations to convey clear messages and facilitate communication.

¹¹ This information is drawn from NSW Community Legal Centres Secretariat, Management Support Group, 'The Access and Equity Resource Kit for NSW Community Legal Centres' (1998) at 1-7.

¹² Drawn from Women's Legal Centre (ACT & Region) Inc., 'The Law in Australia: A Community Education Project for Women of Non-English Speaking Backgrounds' (Canberra, 2001).

¹³ This kit was developed by the following organisations: Fairfield Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network; Fairfield Domestic Violence Committee; Fairfield City Council; and the NSW Strategy to Reduce Violence against Women Regional Violence Prevention Specialist Unit.

Talking Money in Today's Language: The Arabic Radio Project about Credit and Debt (2004)

The Consumer Credit Legal Centre developed the Arabic radio project, which involved a series of pre-recorded audio segments in Arabic for use on community radio stations. The radio segments, each between 5-8 minutes, deliver simple but practical messages about consumer rights, pitfalls and problem-solving tips in the context of credit, debt and banking.

The project was developed by the Consumer Credit Legal Centre to meet the need for information about banking, credit and debt issues to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, in particular recently arrived migrants and refugees. Radio was chosen as the distribution method because:

- it is able to reach a wider audience than print media
- it is able to reach people who may not be literate in their first language
- numerous research reports and consultations indicated that ethnic radio was a key information source for recently arrived migrants and refugees.¹⁴

In addition to the actual pre-recorded radio scripts, an accompanying kit was produced containing, amongst other things, the script for the radio segment in English and Arabic. The kit was made freely available to other community and government organisations. The radio plays are available in audio CD format from the Combined Community Legal Centres Group.

Funding was obtained from the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, the Ian Potter Foundation, the Australian Securities and Investment Commission and the Macarthur Legal Centre.

Audio Plays about Domestic Violence in Community Languages (2005)

This project involved the production of two plays entitled “DV is not OK” and “Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs)” in audio CD format in five community languages. The plays were developed by the Immigrant Women’s Speakout Association (IWSA) to increase awareness within migrant communities of DV and the availability of AVOs and each play runs for approximately five to six minutes. Following consultations with Migrant Resource Centre workers, the plays were translated into five community languages determined by those communities that most needed non-written information in their own languages.¹⁵ The plays had a 3-stage distribution strategy:

- a limited run on SBS radio over a 2-week period
- distribution on audio CD from IWSA at the launch
- available for download from IWSA website www.speakout.org.au

This project was developed with funding from the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW

¹⁴ Reeda Kassis “Talking Money in Today’s Language” Consumer Credit Legal Centre (2004) at 6.

¹⁵ These languages are Dari (Afghanistan), Krio (Sierra Leone), Somali (Somalia) and Dinka (Southern Sudan) and Sudanese Arabic.

Illawarra Community Legal Centre Regional Community Development Project- PhotoVoice (2006)

Illawarra Legal Centre conducted a project entitled PhotoVoice. The project involved 40 Muslim families who were provided with disposable cameras to record and reflect on their community's strengths and concerns. The project was set up as an attempt to create an innovative approach to educating a culturally diverse group of women and their families.

The photos produced by the participants were a starting point for discussions about both legal and non-legal topics, and the images helped identify the legal needs and community issues faced by Muslim women and their families. The discussions sparked by the photos were responded to by providing the group with legal education and services to empower them and address some of their legal issues. The issues raised by the women included workplace discrimination, domestic violence, anti-terrorism laws and concerns about dealing with the police. One of the final stages of the project was an exhibition in Wollongong in 2005 featuring 80 photographs and entitled "Past, Present & Future-A unique photography exhibition from the eyes of the Illawarra Muslim community."

Kingsford Legal Centre : 'Getting off the Referral Roundabout' (2006)

Kingsford Legal Centre produced a DVD resource and workbook kit entitled 'Getting off the Referral Roundabout'. This resource kit seeks to show how anyone working with clients who may require legal advice can make effective referrals and thus avoid clients being sent from agency to agency without finding the service that can assist them with their problem. The DVD addresses identifying a client's information and referral needs, knowledge of service providers, basic knowledge required about the law, legal system and legal service providers and how to find plain language legal information online.¹⁶ Widespread distribution of this DVD would be useful in relation to the referral difficulties discussed above. The DVD is a useful resource, which acknowledges and attempts to address ongoing difficulties faced by all service providers needing to make referrals for legal advice.

"Welcome to Legal Aid" - Legal Aid Commission of NSW (2006).

The Legal Aid Commission of NSW launched a multilingual CD aimed at Afghan and African communities. The CD is an introduction to Australian law and in particular, Legal Aid services and was produced in Amharic, Dari, Dinka, Pushto, Somali, Swahili and Tigrinya. The aim of the CD was to improve the accessibility of the legal system and legal aid to new migrants and their communities and it was produced in specific response to the growth of African and Middle Eastern migrant populations. It was produced in partnership with the Auburn Migrant Resource Centre and this partnership allowed Legal Aid to identify an information gap in certain emerging migrant communities, which despite being relatively small had a very high level of legal need. The CD aims to communicate clear information about legal rights and sources of legal help, and an audiovisual medium was chosen so that the information was more readily able to reach communities with low literacy levels.

¹⁶ For more information and how to access this resource, see 'The Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales- Grant Projects': <<http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/app/69BCE5E38F8FF669CA256F4800100B12.html>> (18 February 2007).

Streetwise Pictorial Pamphlet- Women's Legal Service NSW (2007)

Women's Legal Services NSW, with Streetwise Communications, produced a pamphlet about the telephone legal services of Women's Legal Services NSW. The pamphlet was specifically produced for women who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse or Aboriginal and for women who have minimal English literacy. The pamphlet uses only pictures to depict situations where women may need legal support offered by WLS NSW.

Law and Justice Foundation of NSW resources

The Law and Justice Foundation of NSW produces and publishes a range of useful free resources. These include guidelines such as the:

- Quality publishing guidelines
- Legal referral competencies
- Checklist for writing in plain English

Available from the Law and Justice Foundation website: www.lawfoundation.net.au

APPENDIX D: LIST OF PARTICIPATING SERVICE PROVIDERS

1. Legal service providers

- Consumer Credit Legal Centre
- Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme (Bankstown).
- Elizabeth Evatt Community Legal Centre
- Illawarra Community Legal Centre
- Marrickville Legal Centre
- Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre
- Refugee Advice and Casework Service
- South West Sydney Community Legal Centre
- Women's Legal Services NSW

2. Migrant service providers

- Auburn Migrant Resource Centre
- Baulkham Hills, Holroyd & Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre
- Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre
- Canterbury Bankstown Migrant Resource Centre
- Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre
- Illawarra Multicultural Services
- Immigrant Women's Health Service (Fairfield)
- Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre
- Macarthur Diversity Services (Campbelltown)
- Migrant Network Services (Hornsby)
- Newcastle & Hunter Region Migrant Resource Centre
- St George Migrant Resource Centre