



Information sheet

Australia maintains a commitment to African refugees

Community concerns

African community leaders in Australia have raised concerns that the African component of the resettlement program has been suspended.

The community can be assured that applications from the African region continue to be considered and successful applicants will be resettled through the course of this program year.

Arrivals from Africa continue

From 1 July 2007 to 31 January 2008 there were 2120 people from the African region who arrived in Australia under the Humanitarian Program. Of these, 1337 were refugees and 783 were Special Humanitarian Program entrants, from countries including Sudan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone.¹

How the program is determined

Given the fluidity of the global environment, resettlement needs are constantly changing. The Humanitarian Program must be flexible to ensure that Australia can respond to emerging humanitarian crises.

The Australian Government decides every year how many new humanitarian entrants Australia is able to accept and which groups of people are in most need of resettlement. The government considers international events, consults with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and refugee and community groups in Australia when deciding on the size and composition of the program.

In 2007–08 there are 13 000 places available for people applying both inside and outside Australia. Offshore places are divided more or less evenly among applicants from Africa, the Middle East and Asia regions.

Planned program for 2007–08



Application rates

Each year there are many more applications received than there are places available – for example in 2006–07 around 80 000 persons applied globally, and around 11 200 visas were granted under the offshore component of the program.

¹ Figures extracted from the Settlement Database 15/3/2008