

Carlow Rohingya Resettlement Programme

Mid-Term Evaluation

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Section 1: Context and Background

1.1 Introduction

This research was commissioned by the County Carlow Development Board as part of their two year funding arrangement with Pobal. It provides an evaluation and assessment of the Carlow Rohingya Resettlement Programme which supports the resettlement of 15 Rohingya families into their new lives in Carlow. This assessment looks at the period from July 2010 - June 2011 and at this mid-term stage, the results are intended to contribute to refining the way the project will operate during its final year. Data was collected to explore the opinions and inputs of relevant respondents in order to provide useful feedback about the merit of the project and to enable the stakeholders to make informed choices about its future development. This report endeavours to represent the range of perspectives of those who have a stake in the programme.

1.2 Methodology

The methodological approach for the operational plan was done primarily within a qualitative framework, in order to generate meaningful insights into the opinions and recommendations of all respondents. The evaluation was formative; it examined the processes, operations and successes of the Carlow Rohingya Resettlement Programme. Desk research for the project included the review of internal project and organisational documents; reports, resources, strategies and surveys. The research benefitted from excellent record-keeping on the part of the Resettlement Programme Team and ongoing support from Thomas Farrell, St. Catherine's Community Worker. The primary data collection tool was a series of semi-structured interviews, which Guba and Lincoln (1981) describe as the 'backbone of field research and evaluation'. These interviews targeted the opinions and narratives of five schools, four Rohingya women, two Rohingya men, four Rohingya teenagers and key St. Catherine's personnel. This approach was chosen in order to make the most of the short data collection timeframe and allow education providers a greater opportunity to contribute to the evaluation than was possible last year.

1.3 Carlow Rohingya Resettlement Programme 2009-2010

In the summer of 2010, an evaluation of the first year of the Carlow Rohingya Resettlement Programme was carried out. This evaluation was also formative in nature and examined the narratives of the Rohingya families and the experiences of Carlow service providers during the initial period of resettlement (June 2009 - August 2010). The research studied the areas of religion, language, education, employment and training, housing, transport, health,

welfare, children and young people, volunteers, social and cultural needs and the future plans of the families. It also set a broader context for these experiences by looking at the human rights abuses that Rohingyas have endured in both Burma and Bangladesh¹. The report documented the initial challenges which presented themselves during the first year of the resettlement process and how the dedication and commitment shown by the Interagency Committee and St. Catherine's Community Services Centre as implementing partner contributed hugely to the success of the project. It also outlined how the Rohingya community should be acknowledged as a unique group in the context of other migrant communities in Ireland due to the complexities of their cultural history and background, the pervasiveness of their persecution and the intricacies of their identity. At the end of the first year, respondents spoke of the Rohingya community as still demonstrating significant levels of vulnerability, need and dependency despite their resilience and popularity. The report concluded that it was important to remember that the Rohingya community should not be considered a homogenous collective and that meaningful integration in this context cannot be expected overnight. To read the full report please see:

www.catherines.ie/.../Carlow_Rohingya_Resettlement_Programme_Evaluation_2010.pdf.

1.4 Carlow Rohingya Resettlement Programme 2010-2011

Therefore, while the initial period of the Resettlement Programme can be characterised by its constant efforts to balance the gulf between the 'perceived needs' and the 'actual needs' of the Rohingya community, the period under review in this report reflects a different, but equally complex period for both the families and key stakeholders. Despite the immense progress that has been made in all areas of their lives, service providers would still cite significant levels of dependency among the Rohingya community and believe there is a need for continued support in certain areas. During 2010 – 2011, the Rohingya families in Carlow were supported in their everyday lives by a full-time Resettlement Worker and full-time Intercultural Worker, with additional support provided by the Community Worker and the Director of Services in St. Catherine's Community Centre. The focus of their work this year has shifted to the promotion of greater independence among the community and the implementation of a mainstreaming strategy. Following on from their efforts from last year, the Resettlement Steering Committee have maintained a very successful interagency approach to their work and continue to meet on a regular basis to oversee the planning and

¹ In the first evaluation, a summary of research findings (2009) by the Irish Human Rights Centre in NUI Galway was included in the report to contextualise the experience of the Rohingya in Burma. At the time of writing, no similarly in-depth or up to date information was available about the camps in Bangladesh. However, desk research for this report revealed a publication which provides such an account of life in these camps. Please see: Lewa, Chris. 2010. *Unregistered Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh: Crackdown, forced displacement and hunger*. The Arakan Project: Thailand.

development of the project. Please see Appendix 1 for a full list of the Steering Committee members.

Section 2: Overview of Main Findings

2.1 Achievements

This section provides a basic overview of some of the positive developments in the Resettlement Programme this year and the continued success of its organisational approach to supporting language, planning, education and training.

2.1.1 Education and Language

Formal and informal education supports to the families continued this year. The adults progressed with their English language classes in the Co. Carlow VEC Adult Refugee Programme with three of the adults in further education and the remainder placed in class groups according to their language level. This is a significant departure from the first year of the Resettlement when the Rohingya community were in segregated classes which divided along gender lines. Service providers report 'an ease of communication' that did not exist last year and the Rohingyas continue to speak positively about their experiences with these classes.

We are very happy with the classes, they are working hard, we are working hard. In the morning, lots of things done (Rohingya female, 2011).

In school there are lots of people in the class, 16 people from other countries and we meet new people through that (Rohingya male, 2011).

Everything we like about the classes, teacher working very hard for us (Rohingya female, 2011).

It is important to note however, that despite their satisfaction with the VEC classes, concern still exists among the Rohingya community as to how long these classes will continue. While day to day communication has certainly improved, there is universal acknowledgement among respondents that substantial further language study among the Rohingyas is needed to get them to a level where they are comfortable conversing in complex situations. Examples of such situations will be discussed further in *Section 2.2.3: Concern about Translation Services*. A mainstreaming survey (St. Catherine's, 2011) conducted by the Resettlement Team also shows that language is still considered to be the main barrier to integration for adults and a serious concern for stakeholders who will continue to provide mainstream services to the families in the future. Furthermore, low levels of confidence in their language ability still exists among some of the adults:

My language is basic. I understand what to do. Less than standard (Rohingya female, 2011).

If you take three parts for example, I understand one part, two parts don't understand (Rohingya female, 2011).

It is hard to concentrate. Hard. Sometimes it is difficult (Rohingya female, 2011).

In terms of non-formal education, the Men and Women's Groups ran from January 2011 for fourteen sessions with a further eight week parenting programme also organised during this time. Group attendance in general was reported to be quite good, although there was a notable drop in attendance in the Men's Group towards the end of the course. The content of these groups included a focus on practical skills such as home maintenance, horticulture, DIY and fire safety.

I would like to continue with the group, it is good for us. We need to learn the traditions of this country and other cuisines. I never made a cake before and I learnt how to make a cake (Rohingya female, 2011).

Moreover, it is also important to note that as of summer 2011, four members of the Rohingya community have also passed the Driver Theory Test, a momentous achievement for those involved and one which was highlighted in the first evaluation as an important step forward to independent living.

2.1.3 Employment and Volunteering

It is also significant to report that two members of the Rohingya Community in Carlow have started in part-time employment in the period under review. This is a considerable accomplishment due to the many potential barriers that exist in relation to refugee employment such as the current economic climate, language barriers and the difficulties in procuring work experience placements in the private sector (Service Providers, 2011). In addition to this, six members of the community were successfully placed in volunteering roles within the community. These roles included working in childcare, a charity shop and the Meals on Wheels programme in St. Catherine's Community Services Centre. Employment is considered by the UN as an important 'integration indicator' (UNHCR, 2004) and supporting members of the Rohingya community in finding appropriate work will be a challenge for the programme in the coming year. Finally, it is also important to note that some members of the community do not yet feel confident enough to enter the workforce and in interview, renewed their requests for information on employment training and further language supports.

I will try and find work but I need to learn the language first (Rohingya male, 2011).

Without training we can't do job. I would like general job training (Rohingya female, 2011).

2.1.4 Organisation and Planning

'Objective 3: To develop supports for the men and women within their own community and to identify with them areas where they can develop that will aid their resettlement'.

This objective, taken from the Project Plan (2010) identifies the importance of working in partnership with the families to prepare for more independent living and become more familiar with mainstream services. The resettlement plans designed by the Resettlement Team in November 2010 and updated in May 2011 were identified to have been very successful. The development of these plans involved individual consultations with the families, discussions about the role and capacities of the Resettlement Programme and accessing mainstream services in the future. An important part of this work was also demonstrating to the families how far they have come since they arrived in Ireland and to build self-esteem about their past accomplishments. Their regular needs in areas such as education, health, social welfare, legal and household responsibilities were examined and analysis was carried out about what levels of independence existed and what areas of support were still required. For a full list of the areas covered in these resettlement plans, please see Appendix 2.

Another important success in this area was the organisation of an eight week parent support programme in conjunction with Barnardos and the Child Psychology Department and Parent Support Programme in the HSE. This course was devised specifically for the Rohingya parents and provided the adults with an opportunity to discuss problems they might be having with younger children and teenagers and develop practical skills for coping and communication. The course was attended by 18 adults and an indicator of its success has been the fact that some of the families have continued to access mainstream child psychology services.

2.1.5 Increased independence and confidence

As a result of this comprehensive planning and day to day consultation undertaken by the Resettlement Team, there has been a demonstrable increase in levels of independence and confidence among the Rohingya community in Carlow. Service providers report that the families have a greater understanding of what St. Catherine's Community Services Centre can offer and a better idea of the responsibilities they will face when the programme is phased out. There has been an improvement in how services are accessed and how much the families are willing to take on themselves. Descriptions of a more positive demeanour among some of the community were also reported:

Happier and more secure in themselves (Research respondent, 2011)

More comfortable in their own skin (Research respondent, 2011).

Last year I was finding it a bit difficult, I am speaking quite well this year (Rohingya young person, 2011).

2.2 Main challenges

The year 2010-2011 presented new challenges for both the Rohingya community and the members of the Resettlement Team. This section outlines some of the issues which will require planning and interventions in the final phase of the programme.

2.2.1 Interpersonal issues

Unfortunately, this year of the Resettlement Programme saw a series of interpersonal issues between certain families cause tension and stress among the wider community. It is not the intention of this report to go into the specifics of these incidents, but merely to highlight the need for monitoring and mediation as a result. Research respondents spoke of how cultural differences have played a part in misunderstandings and have a knock on effect on the length of time it takes for issues to be resolved. It is important to remember that integration is a long-term process and the families are still adjusting to a new culture, society and ways of interacting with each other. In addition to this, they are also dealing with the effects of serious trauma in their past and figuring out how best to process this. There have been further issues within the community in relation to the behaviour of the teenagers and appropriate parenting responses and in addition, the resettlement staff have also had to deal with some serious child protection issues. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that these types of clashes may play a part in decision making when it comes to some individuals staying in Carlow in the long-term.

Understandably, the Resettlement Team have therefore spent a lot of time dealing with child protection issues, interpersonal conflict and challenging family dynamics. This has been a very labour-intensive endeavour for the staff and as a result they have spent a disproportionate amount of their time working on these issues. It is recommended that in the final year of the programme, the Resettlement Team research and source culturally appropriate conflict resolution workshops for the families to participate in and link with service providers who have niche expertise in this area, for example SPIRASI. Further development work, potentially organised through the Men and Womens' Groups is also needed to promote team building and better community cohesion.

2.2.2 Need for ongoing psychological support

Objective 4: To provide the opportunity for the families to process the past and to develop coping mechanisms to deal with the present and focus on the future.

The evaluation report of the first year of the Resettlement Programme details some of the mental health issues experienced by the Rohingya community as a result of prolonged

trauma in their country(ies) of origin. This would still be the case according to service providers who work closely with the families. They have identified a need for counselling and/or therapeutic work in relation to past trauma again at both a group and individual level and it is essential that work is supported in this area. The need for appropriate translation supports for this work will be discussed further in the next section.

In addition to this suffering and ongoing vulnerability, members of the community are also experiencing stress about a number of issues. The absence of a mosque and Islamic graveyard in Carlow, well documented in the first evaluation, continues to be a concern for some of the families. There is anxiety about what will happen when a member of the Carlow Rohingya community dies and traditional rites cannot be followed. As an orthodox Muslim group, established religious practice is of paramount importance to them and it should be noted that in one interview in particular, a substantial portion of the time was taken up with discussing this issue. This reveals that religious rights continue to be a pressing concern for the families. However, it is also evident that the Rohingya community have not linked in with the existing Muslim community in Carlow in order to research possible avenues of collaboration on this issue. It is recommended therefore, that representative members of the Rohingya community be supported once more in arranging a consultation with key stakeholders in order to discuss their options in the area.

While the specifics of individual incidents cannot be corroborated in a report such as this, members of the community also shared their worry about various anti-social behaviours they have witnessed and experienced. Rohingyas in interview reported incidents of name-calling, the kicking of doors, lack of understanding among the local community about being a Muslim/ refugee and problems with houses in certain areas. These incidents have caused tension and nervousness among both the adults and the children. Finally, the Rohingya respondents reiterated their fears from last year's report about their relatives who remain in the camps in Bangladesh. While information about family re-unification has been given to the families on numerous occasions and through the OMI, it is recommended that another refresher course about their rights and entitlements as refugees, in particular in relation to family reunification might be warranted in the upcoming phase of the Resettlement Programme.

2.2.3 Concern about translation services

It is important to note that evaluation research is greatly influenced by the nature of the context in which it is performed. The main phase of data collection took place at the end of May/ start of June 2011 and as a result of this timeframe there was one issue which emerged time and time again.

Respondents expressed concerns about how the end of contract of the Intercultural Worker would impact on development in the future. It should be noted at this early juncture that

respondents were very understanding about the long-term logic of removing translation services in order to reduce dependency and foster independent living among the Rohingya community. However, there was also concern that a complete withdrawal of these services, without a part-time or temporary phased out period might be detrimental to the progress that was being made by the families. The most common sphere where these concerns were raised was in the area of health. The need for the removal of everyday translation was acknowledged by respondents, however they felt that for complex or sensitive issues, or situations which involve technical or precise language, appropriate translation supports were still an essential requirement. Furthermore, while language skills have improved immeasurably among the families, regular support for reading official letters is still needed and staff in St. Catherine's still spend a lot of time ensuring there is accurate comprehension of such communications.

In general the families appear satisfied with the access to, and quality of their health service providers. However, they acknowledge that when it comes to communicating with HSE personnel, it is essential for accurate translation to be available for them. In the past, it has proved difficult to source translators who have the correct Rohingya dialogue. In addition, anecdotal evidence would suggest that translators are not always reliable about showing up on time to appointments and can be overstretched with their responsibilities in other areas. Other complex situations in need of accurate translation which were cited by respondents were interacting with the guards, handling child protection incidents and dealing with changing circumstances in social welfare.

It is difficult to explain the problems sometimes, they need more information and there is a communication gap (Rohingya female, 2011).

We are worried when (Intercultural Worker) leaves. Of course we still do need the support. Like in the doctor, if we explain the basic it's okay, but if we get the wrong medicine it might affect our health (Rohingya male, 2011).

For basic things will be okay, but for something serious or important I need to know exactly what is going on. We need to get that opportunity for us (Rohingya male, 2011).

Furthermore, as was outlined in the previous section, there is an ongoing need for substantive issues to be addressed through counselling and therapeutic work. Progress in this area will suffer from lack of appropriate translation. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that service providers in this area would have ethical reservations about continuing counselling and work on mental health issues unless there is sensitive and appropriate translation provided in conjunction with these sessions.

In this context, it is important to remember the heterogeneity of the Rohingya families. While there is undoubtedly a shared history and cultural background, every family member

has responded differently to their new life in Carlow and varying levels of dependency still exist among the group. Therefore, some families are more vulnerable than others and it follows that they will suffer more from the withdrawal of translation supports, which in some cases are still being used for everyday interactions. It can be argued that the withdrawal of interpretive support at this stage of the integration process for them might be a significant setback in their progress and extra work might be needed to get them to continue to engage.

In some places we really need help. Some families a husband will help or a son will help. But some families will need help in some places (Rohingya female, 2011).

Communication is difficult with some individuals without an interpreter present (Service Provider, 2011).

Aside from the impact on the community itself, the departure of the Intercultural Worker will also have a tangible effect on the remaining workers in St. Catherine's Community Services Centre. Tasks which in the past were relatively straightforward, such as filling in forms or dealing with the schools and general enquiries, will become more time-consuming. This could potentially divert time and resources away from the long-term target of implementing the exit strategy. Therefore, communication with agencies needs to be clear during this period, so that there is collective understanding that patience and co-operation may be needed during this transition period.

Aside from the time constraints, there is also concern among the service providers that many of the interpersonal issues which have arisen between families will be more difficult to engage with without reliable translation supports. The Intercultural Worker was capable of picking up on such issues at an early stage and this level of preventative work will not be possible for the remaining staff. This could lead to a situation where issues present themselves to the Resettlement Team at a 'crisis point', rather than at a stage where it might be possible to arrange interventions or appropriate supports. It is evident from the narratives of the respondents that the Intercultural Worker provided valuable expertise to the project, not just in relation to language skills, but also because of the cultural skills and sensitivity which he brought to the position. This is a resource that will be lacking for the project in its final year. Therefore, it is recommended that a budget be provided for access to technical and emergency interpretive support on a regular basis. This support should be evenly distributed among the families and relevant agencies and will build capacity within the programme to concentrate on the roll out of other mainstreaming supports.

Section 3: Schools and Young People

3.1 Introduction

'To facilitate the children and young people from the Rohingya community to access education, supports and to integrate within the local community'.

This section looks at the schools' contributions to this evaluation. It should be noted that the schools were very eager to participate in the research and were very generous with their time. It should also be noted that the heterogeneity of the Rohingya adults mentioned in an earlier section, applies equally to the young people in this context. However, for the purposes of the report, some general observations are included in this section. Last year's evaluation outlined how schools reported 'that the younger the student, the easier the transition and the fewer problems in general they were encountering in school'. The interviews with schools this year would appear to confirm that finding. Representatives of the primary schools reported fewer issues in relation to behaviour, emotional problems and attendance than the representatives of the secondary schools.

Furthermore, it is important to remember the broader education context here as well. Schools are operating in a climate of significant cutbacks and uncertainty about future resource allocation. All of the schools who participated in the research were about to lose at least one teacher, if not two, by the start of the new academic year (September, 2011) and some were already planning their appeals due to the detrimental impact this would inevitably have on the day to day running of the school. Respondents cited how the loss of EAL and resource teachers would have a negative impact on students who are vulnerable or marginalised, and this would apply to many of the Rohingya young people in Carlow.

Without generalising too much, the majority of the young people appear to have settled well into schools and speak very positively about their teachers and their experiences.

Teachers are very good. I understand a bit, but it takes time (Rohingya young person, 2011).

We are very happy in school. There is nothing we don't like. No problems. If we had no school we would feel bored, we like to go to school every day (Rohingya young person, 2011).

3.2 Communication and Translation Supports

Unsurprisingly, the common themes which emerged from the school interviews related to communication issues and their requests for support from the Intercultural Worker to remain in place. Schools immediately expressed their concern about how they were going to communicate effectively with parents about logistics, wider concerns about the students and general school updates without accurate interpretive support. They felt that while the parents have improved a lot in their language skills, that communication is still not perfect and the intricacies of certain messages are lost on them when they try to converse without

the interpreter. Examples of these incidents that came up several times revolved around trying to make arrangements for extra-curricular activities and school tours. If students are used to deliver messages, with their own language levels as an issue as well, schools believe there is huge scope for communication breakdown along the way.

Parents come and they are lost in their shell. They can't communicate with us. We would have always needed the interpreter to convey messages to them. We were also conscious that we don't want to inadvertently upset them about a cultural issue and needed the guidance in that area (Education Service Provider, 2011).

In addition, respondents believed that many of the students are still particularly vulnerable and in need of ongoing monitoring and support.

Taking (*the Intercultural Worker*) away at this stage of the game is like rowing the children out into lake and saying you don't need the boat anymore. They still need massive support and more than any other children, they will flounder without those translation supports (Education Service Provider, 2011).

The single biggest issue as far as I'm concerned is the loss of (*the Intercultural Worker*). Without him it will be catastrophic. Taking him away sends out a negative message about the commitment we have to their wellbeing. He acts as a lifeline to that community (Education Service Provider, 2011).

Schools spoke very highly of the Intercultural Worker and credit him for early intervention on several behavioural issues and ensuring that the students did not misrepresent school incidents when they went home to their parents.

3.3 Issues arising

Teachers and Principals interviewed for this report in general spoke in very positive terms about the Rohingya students. They were described as 'beautiful students', 'clever and artistic' and that they 'never had a minute's trouble with them'. However, the school representatives also frequently commented on their worries for the students in the future, due to their vulnerability and capacity to deal with their past trauma. This section provides a brief overview of some of the issues cited by schools in interview.

- **Transition from primary to secondary:** Respondents frequently spoke of their fear of Rohingya students getting 'swallowed up' or 'falling through the cracks' during the transition from primary school to secondary school. This period can be difficult for all students, but it is made even more problematic when students are at risk or marginalised. Teachers spoke of their concern about how rights to additional supports are not automatically carried over to secondary school and that frameworks would have to be put in place to deal with the students specific needs. The change from one teacher to many teachers as well as the expectation of taking on many new subjects were all identified as being potentially difficult for some of the Rohingya students due to make this transition in the next few years.

- **Personal Development:** Issues relating to personal hygiene, appropriate dress and sex education were also raised by teachers. There were concerns that if the young people were not given appropriate guidance in these areas that they may be vulnerable to social exclusion by their peers in the future.
- **Attendance:** While it is difficult to report in general on this issue, it should be noted that schools reported significant problems with attendance and time-keeping in relation to some of the older students. Communication difficulties with the parents mean that notes about this issue often go unsigned.
- **Broader integration:** Teachers reported that the majority of the Rohingya students have mixed well with their peers and have friends in their year or class groups. However, they also observed that the Rohingya students tended to socialise almost exclusively within their own community and play with each other during break time, regardless of age.
- **Ongoing Language Support:** High levels of ongoing support will still be needed to assist the Rohingya students in their educational career. Schools have been proactive in ensuring that students have access to as much English language learning as possible, giving extra classes where feasible and providing additional resource support when the timetable allowed. Some schools even have separate social skills groups within the school day and some Rohingya students have availed of these sessions. However, schools were keen to point out that it is not always resource support that is needed for the students; it is language learning and as a result it is recommended that afterschool support for the students should continue to be resourced for as long as possible. As their parents are also in the process of studying English, not all are in a position to help with homework and the fact English is not spoken at home limits their exposure to language learning. Mechanisms for supervised study or assisted study will become essential in order for the students to progress smoothly through formal education. Teachers felt it was important to mention that two years is a very short space of time when it comes to learning an additional language and ideally additional English instruction would last for five years to improve their level to a satisfactory degree.
- **Inclusive policies:** Schools were asked about the inclusive policies of their schools and how they went about supporting and celebrating the diversity within the student population. It is positive to note that many schools have official inclusive policies such as an intercultural policy. Other schools had arranged intercultural awareness workshops with the staff from St. Catherine's, International Day Celebrations or had devised a school anthem with a inclusive theme. All schools have strong anti-bullying policies and it is positive to note that a 'zero tolerance' approach is employed to any incidents considered to have racist undertones. However, it is still important that schools formalise their efforts in this area and they should be encouraged to devise an official anti-racism policy, as recommended by teacher unions. Schools should be supported in their efforts to contextualise intercultural

celebrations as part of their broader efforts in the area and not have them as 'stand-alone' or 'once-off' events.

- **Teenage boys:** As outlined in last year's report, some of the teenage boys were considered 'at risk' and displaying challenging behaviour in their first year in Carlow. It is important to note that in their country of origin, teenage boys would be considered adults and would soon be starting families of their own. As a result, this confusion about their identity and role in society is difficult for them to come to terms with. Respondents spoke of ongoing issues with this group, including poor attendance in school, incidents happening outside of school and oppositional behaviour in general. It should be mentioned that an Garda Síochána and the Youth Services have done extensive work with the boys and there have been numerous meetings arranged with the school to discuss their situations. Schools spoke of some of the older boys reacting badly in situations and at times being a negative influence on one another. It is evident that targeted approaches to needs of this group will need to be arranged while the formal Resettlement Programme is still in place.

3.4 Informal education

It should be noted that due to time constraints, it was not possible to collect sufficient data about the youth service supports in place in the period under review. Students received one day a week of afterschools the young people also had a support group in the youth services one day a week. A significant priority for the young people is to improve their English language skills and they are eager to have as much English support as possible in order to improve their comprehension and communication skills. However, during the research there were reports of some problems in the English classes. These include excessive talking, behavioural problems, not listening to the teacher, conflict between students and problems with punctuality which all contribute to negativity in the class.

'We are not happy, there is tension in the class. Nearly every day there is some problem' (Rohingya young person, 2011).

These behavioural issues will need to be addressed in order to foster an environment more conducive to learning. These could be addressed by making the classes smaller in size, promoting co-operation and collaboration through team-building exercises and short suspensions for those displaying disrespectful behaviour in class.

Section 4: Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1. Priorities for Carlow Rohingya Resettlement Programme 2011-2012

Objective 5: To monitor the programme with respect to the programme of actions and finances, evaluate the programme and to focus on mainstreaming activities to ensure that the families are engaged in services and in a position to support themselves after the lifespan of the programme

The over-arching strategic aim of the programme at this juncture is to ensure that the Rohingya families are supported to achieve higher levels of self-sufficiency in time for the end of the official resettlement project. Below is a summary of the priorities identified for the programme next year.

Independent living: The Resettlement programme will focus on achieving greater independence for the families across all the main areas of life, i.e. dealing with social welfare, landlords, schools, health providers etc. It will focus on encouraging the families to become accustomed to dealing with issues on their own and having the confidence to identify how far they have come in their time in Ireland and what they can still achieve. As the year goes by, the families will experience a lessening of contact with the Resettlement Team in order to prepare them for the full withdrawal of supports in 2012. The programme will also need to pay special attention to the families which have been categorised as being particularly vulnerable and work towards removing any barriers to integration that have been identified. Networking with other groups, to ensure exposure to new contacts, such as mainstream men's, women's or intercultural groups will be arranged.

Mainstreaming strategy: Independent living will be largely achieved through the realisation of the mainstreaming approach as the most coherent exit strategy. As per the Project Plan, the mainstreaming and exit strategy will be carried out by a sub-committee of the Resettlement Steering Committee so an immediate priority for the programme will be its establishment. 'The mainstreaming and exit strategy will identify key targets for a co-ordinated, sustainable approach to supporting beneficiaries by the end of the year' (St. Catherine's, 2010a). Members of the sub-committee will work with project partners and local agencies to ensure that this mainstreaming strategy is implemented. Further training and up-skilling of stakeholders will also be arranged during this time. Finally, the Steering Committee will work in partnership with key stakeholders and service providers to emphasise the unique circumstances of the Rohingya community and to foster an environment of understanding, support and realistic expectations within the given timeframe.

Targeted interventions for young people: The focus on the children and teenagers should ensure that they are supported in accessing mainstream youth services in the future. The difficulties the young people experience in relation to their identity should be acknowledged and regular monitoring of their progress should be form a significant part of the resettlement plans. Translation supports should be made available for schools to communicate more effectively with parents at parent/ teacher meetings.

Sourcing Emergency/ Additional supports: At a programmatic level, the Steering Committee should ensure that through the existing financial plan or through additional funds, a budget will be set aside from which emergency interpretive support can be sourced. This translation service will be needed for counselling and therapeutic work, linking with health service providers, emergency telephone consultations and dealing with other relevant organisations, for example an Garda Síochána. This budget should not be used to support day to day living, but reserved for situations where precise translation of complex or technical conversations is crucial.

Refresher courses: Findings from last year's evaluation revealed a demonstrable need for 'refresher' courses for the Rohingya community in a variety of social, economic and cultural areas. This is still the case. The families have undergone drastic changes in all areas of their lives and have received an 'overload' of new information. In order to achieve greater autonomy in their lives, information sessions are needed in areas such as citizens rights and responsibilities, financial management, Irish society and culture and education and employment opportunities. The Resettlement Programme should link with a variety of partner organisations, such as Citizen's Information, MABS, Social Welfare, Solas, NEWB and the Migrant Rights Centre to arrange these sessions. Factsheets in plain English should be distributed at these meetings so that the families have resources available to them when the official programme has ended.

Preparation for summative evaluation: It is important to remember that while the reports in 2010 and 2011 were formative evaluations, a summative evaluation will be expected in 2012 in order to assess how efficient and effective the project was in implementing its activities over time. As a result, it is recommended that the work-plan for the coming year allows for the generation of baseline data in preparation for this evaluation. A blended approach should be taken to choosing appropriate quantitative and qualitative indicators against which to collect monitoring data. It is evident that a lot about the experiences and narratives of the Rohingya in Carlow is more suited to longitudinal research rather than these type of short-term evaluations. However, there is still a need to demonstrate the effectiveness of the work being carried out and this can be done by strategic monitoring and planning. In 2012, the summative evaluation will be important for assessing the overall efficacy of the Resettlement Programme, it will provide accountability to the funders and it will assist with developing good practice which can be then shared with service providers

who continue to work with families, as well as other relevant programmes around the country.

4.2 Conclusion

This report has looked at the inputs, outputs and outcomes of the Carlow Rohingya Resettlement Programme during the period 2010-2011. It has assessed the design, implementation, reception and merits of the programme and has shown how St. Catherine's Community Services Centre as implementing partner have adopted a comprehensive, well-thought out and culturally sensitive approach to their work in this area. From an organisational viewpoint, the Programme has progressed well with the aim of embedding a mainstream approach to services and a successful exit strategy is firmly on the agenda for the coming year. However, the level of need still evident among the Rohingya community should not be underestimated and the Resettlement Programme will have a challenging final year ahead as it focuses on implementing an ambitious mainstreaming strategy with fewer supports and resources than have been available in the last two years.

3.3. Recommendations

- The Resettlement Programme should carry out a fact-finding exercise of the formal language classes and informal language support that will be available to the Rohingya community in Carlow when the VEC classes come to an end.
- Resettlement plans should continue to be updated and developed in partnership with the families. Emphasis on positive achievements should remain a significant part of these consultations.
- Culturally appropriate and context specific conflict resolution workshops should be sourced to deal with interpersonal issues which have arisen within the Rohingya community.
- A series of 'refresher' courses should be organised in St. Catherine's Community Services Centre where the Rohingya community are provided with up to date information about employment and training opportunities as well as their rights and entitlements as refugees.
- Representative members of the Rohingya community should be supported in their efforts to engage in consultation meetings with members of the wider Muslim community in Carlow as a way of taking ownership over their religious rights.
- A separate budget line should be provided from Pobal to ensure that emergency translation supports are made available for situations which require complex or technical explanations.

- Schools should be encouraged and supported to devise an official anti-bullying policy.
- Afterschools programmes with an emphasis on homework support and English language learning should continue to be provided for the young people, at both a primary and secondary level.
- Young people should join mainstream youth service programmes in the coming year.
- The Mainstreaming Sub-Committee of the Steering Committee should be established immediately.
- A simple list of indicators should be generated in preparation for the summative evaluation in 2012. Progress and effectiveness can be then measured against these indicators. It is also important that interpretive supports are made available for this final evaluation.

Section 5: References and Appendices

5.1 References²

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5.2 Appendices

Appendix 1: List of agencies represented on the Steering Committee

- Carlow Local Authorities
- Carlow County Development Partnership
- St Catherine's Community Services Centre
- Department of Social and Family Affairs
- Carlow Regional Youth Services
- Health Service Executive
- Carlow County Childcare Committee
- Department of Education and Skills
- An Garda Síochána
- Carlow Women's Aid
- Barnardos

² Please see (Titley, 2010: 131-135) for a full bibliography of sources which informed this report.

- County Carlow VEC
- Carlow and South Leinster Rape Crisis Centre
- National Education Welfare Board
- MABS
- Integration Centre
- Carlow Adult Learning Centre
- Carlow Women's Aid
- Department of Social and Family Affairs
- Carlow Citizen's Information Centre
- National Education Welfare Board
- Primary Care & Child Psychology Service

Appendix 2: Headings and Sub-headings for Resettlement Plans

- Social Welfare: signing on, child benefit letters, lone parent letters, general letters, general queries, CWO, information requests, responsibilities.
- Health: Making appointments, GP visits, repeat prescriptions, hospital transport, outpatients KK, outpatients WD, Outpatients Dublin, Ambulance, out of hours, inpatient stays, day hospital/ clinic, PHN, Dentist, Optician, letters, medical cards and information.
- Housing: Calling landlord, self-repairs, council letters, paying rent, hygiene, care of appliances, information, responsibilities.
- Household bills/ Finance: Electricity, gas/oil, internet, bank accounts, bins, information.
- Education: Letters from schools, absence notes, PT meetings, school rules, grants, buying school books, uniforms, extra-curricular activities, lunches, enrolment, responsibilities.
- Childcare: Paying fees, dealing with staff.
- Shopping: Food, household.
- Other/legal: Calling the Gardaí, emergency services, child protection, internet safety, documentation, signatures.