



SHOUT! YOUNG WOMEN WITH VOICE

OVERVIEW

SHOUT! Young Women with Voice was developed and delivered for the Australian Women's Coalition, Inc. by the Think+DO Tank.. Muslim Women's National Network of Australia is one of the members of AWC, Inc and partnered in the project funded by Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

SHOUT! was designed to bring together a diverse group of women in five different places to conceive, design and deliver transformation projects in their communities, and in the process to appreciate how to collaborate fruitfully.

We reached out to more than **300** community organisations and contacts in the Australian Capital Territory; Auburn (later consolidated into Bankstown); Bankstown; Coffs Harbour; Liverpool; and Wollongong with the following results:

- 80 women registered;
- 56 women attended the opening workshop (70% of those who registered);
- 50 participants completed the program (89% retention rate from first workshop).

The participants were from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds; migrant backgrounds; and Australian-born, including Indigenous women. They were from 22 different nationalities (Afghani; Australian; First Australian; Bengali; Bolivian; Chinese; Eritrean; Ethiopian; Fijian; Ghanaian; Iranian; Karen; Kurdish; Lao; Lebanese; Palestinian; Peruvian; Nigerian; North American; Sinhalese/ Sri Lankan; Somalian; and South African).

Seven local transformation projects were developed. Four are complete and/or ongoing (Portraits of Diversity (ACT); The Shout Project (Bankstown; ongoing); Soul Food (Liverpool); SHOUT OUT Mentoring Program (Coffs Harbour; ongoing); three are still to be launched in partnership with local community partners (DAWN (ACT); Volunteer Expo (Liverpool); and Illawarra Young Women's Network (Wollongong)).

Partnerships were formed with:

- Bankstown City Council (Bankstown)
- Bankstown Women's Health Centre (Bankstown)
- Women of the World (Coffs Harbour)
- Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre (Liverpool)
- Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre (Liverpool)
- Liverpool Women's Health Centre (Liverpool)
- Bonnyrigg High School
- Liverpool City Council
- Fairfield City Council
- Illawarra Women's Health Centre (Wollongong)
- Illawarra Family Referral Service, Barnados South Coast (Wollongong)

Other partnerships were explored and solid contacts were made with:

- Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre (Liverpool)
- Migration Heritage Centre, Powerhouse Museum
- NSW Refugee Health Service



- Australian National University
- NSW Department of Education and Communities Multicultural Unit
- Wollongong City Council
- Coffs Harbour City Council
- Orara High School, Coffs Harbour

We evaluated the program qualitatively at each workshop, and at the conclusion of the program. We used written feedback and audio and video recordings at workshops. We also used a Survey Monkey survey that almost 50% of participants completed. The AWC Executive planned during the program in response to the evaluation data and the recommendations of the facilitators that were provided following each workshop or interaction with participants.

The participants who took part in the formal survey reported that:

- their participation was **affected most strongly by work and study** commitments;
- they hoped to learn more about **community development** skills, and to **connect with people** in their local communities by being part of the program, followed by learning better **collaboration and leadership** skills; and
- the program was **successful** in meeting their objectives.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO ORIGINAL PROGRAM

The following changes were made to the program in our original project plan and advised to the Department:

- Wollongong replaced Auburn as a project site. We amalgamated Auburn participants into their choice of either Liverpool or Bankstown (May 2012);
- we did not run highly structured workshops as planned for Workshop 3 but a larger number of small working groups to progress each project in the most appropriate way, at times that best suited participants;
- we were flexible about age, accepting participants from the age of 16 – 40.

SIGNIFICANT LESSONS LEARNED

As we set out in our Harmony Day Acquittal Report, the AWC learned the following lessons in the delivery of *SHOUT!*:

- in designing subsequent programs with the support of DSCP, the AWC would allocate budget for translators, child care and transport for participants to reduce the obstacles to participation.
- the AWC has learned the importance of strong facilitation and would allocate more budget for facilitation and devolve more of the funding to fund participant groups more generously.
- the AWC would reduce the geographic reach of our programming. It was too ambitious to service five locations with the funding available.

In addition,

- the AWC learned the need for strong local partnerships developed prior to the delivery of the program, particularly in the regional locations of Coffs Harbour and the Illawarra (Wollongong).

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE PROGRAM

- enthusiasm and energy of participants
- commonality of purpose in building stronger communities, increasing equity and fairness, and campaigning for social justice
- participants surprised and encouraged to be connected with other like-minded young women –



they would not have met each other otherwise

- self-growth of participants – “I can do this”, a growth in confidence
- potential to connect with other community groups/movements/ action - building and bridging social capital. Fostering an environment of collaboration and mutual support
- projects developed by participants were not deficits-oriented but were highly inclusive and inspirational.

ATTACHMENTS

In addition to our interim project report and our Harmony Day report, the AWC now attaches the following documents and media:

- Participants’ self-generated reports of their projects (**Attachment A**)
- Video reflections of participants (**Attachment B**)
- Survey Monkey results (**Attachment C**)
- Media of the program (**Attachment D**); and
- Harmony Day Report, April 2013 (**Attachment E**).

ACTIVITY ONE (March – June 2012)

Promotion, community engagement and recruitment

The AWC produced a flyer that was approved by DIAC for circulation. It was used from March – April to promote *SHOUT!* through community networks in each of the target sites.



THE YOUNG WOMEN WITH VOICE PROJECT

Got something to say, but don't like the idea of actually saying it?

Feel comfortable with your community, but not sure how to work with people from somewhere else?

Sick and tired of hearing from outsiders about what people from your community are really like?

Got ideas about how to make things better, but don't think anyone will want to listen to you?

IT'S TIME TO FIND YOUR VOICE.

**WHAT'S
IN IT
FOR ME?**

The Australian Women's Coalition is excited to invite you to turn up the volume on your voice. We are helping to grow a community of young women in NSW and the ACT between the ages of 18-30 who can't be ignored. We will help you to **shout!** out as a dynamic, pro-active and confident leader. You will learn life-long skills that will put you in a powerful position in your personal life, in your school or university, in your workplace, in your community and in Australian society.

So if you live in or close to Wollongong, Bankstown, Liverpool, or Coffs Harbour in NSW or anywhere in the ACT and you want to **shout!**, hurry as places are limited.

- You will be mentored, and learn how to be a mentor to others.
- You will come up with stuff that you want to change, and be supported to make those changes.
- You'll learn how to persuade others in your own community and beyond.
- You'll learn self-defence skills.
- You will connect with other young women from lots of other cultures and backgrounds and learn how to make great things happen together by using your differences creatively.
- You will explore and start the conversations of issues and concerns to you and other young women.

To download the application form, please visit www.awcaus.org.au



Australian Government
Department of Immigration
and Citizenship



Community engagement with DIAC-funded & other community services providers

More than **300** direct community contacts were made to recruit participants by the AWC and the facilitator including DSCP service providers in each area; and services and community groups in each area. There were also many more indirect contacts. As AWC is a national organisation members contacted their local branches, who then disseminated the information through their community and business networks. For example the Salvation Army contacted their Canberra contacts who linked up with their own youth and community networks and sent the flyer out. The Bosnian Women's Network encouraged some of their young women to attend Bankstown and Girl Guides sent information to all their leaders in their 'Olive' program for 18-30 year olds. The Zonta Breakfast Club of Canberra used their connections in Federal Government Departments, local libraries and business groups to announce the program among their contacts. Other large women's groups were also involved with distributing flyers such as the National Council of Women, ACT branch. This level of distribution is very difficult to narrow down into a figure and the above is only approximate. The Multicultural Unit of the Department of Education and Communities linked the AWC to all the Community Liaison Officers in the high schools in the selected areas encouraging them to distribute and recommend the program for young women they were in contact with.

The AWC wrote to local Mayors, State and Federal Members of Parliament, and the DIAC's Minister and Parliamentary Secretary, in a form approved by DIAC in **March 2012** Replies were received from the Mayors of Liverpool and Bankstown, both congratulating AWC and offering support. MP for Bankstown, Jason Claire and Federal Government Member for Frazer, Andrew Leigh MP provided strong support in their media releases. Local MP of Shoalhaven Sharon Bird MP contacted AWC President to offer support after listening to the interview on the Illawarra ABC radio broadcast.

The program was promoted in the local newspapers (*Coffs Harbour Express*, *Liverpool Leader* and *the Cumberland Newspapers*) and at least one participant reported attending as a result of that.

It was promoted on community and sector websites, including Women's Centre for Health Matters in the ACT (www.wchm.org.au), Office for Communities: commission for Children and Young People NSW (www.kids.nsw.gov.au), NSW Labour Senator Ursula Stephens Twitter page, Andrew Leigh MP website, Hindu Association of Australia website, Greek women's Association of Australia, Arts Mid North Coast, The Australian Women Against Violence Alliance and the NSW Women's Legal Services also promoted the workshops in their weekly updates to their extensive list of member organisations.

With support from Rabbi Zalman Kastel Director of the Multicultural organisation promoting harmony between faiths, *Together for Humanity*, an article about SHOUT was presented on their website and linked it to their Facebook page as well. Carers Australia ACT for Mental Health services advertised the program demonstrating how far the SHOUT program was filtering out into the community through the AWC networks.

It was promoted on local radio including Illawarra Local ABC and commercial radio, ACT Multicultural radio and the SBS Audio and Language Arabic Radio broadcast in Sydney (www.sbs.com.au). The University of Wollongong television program promoted SHOUT as a new community program advocating for women wanting to lead a community project.

In May 2012, the AWC decided to relocate to Wollongong in preference to Auburn to

increase the regional reach of the SHOUT! program, and to avoid the risk of overservicing south-western/western Sydney. All but two participants registered to attend in Auburn attended



workshops in either Bankstown or Liverpool.

Recruitment in the Illawarra was particularly slow and challenging. Project partner, Illawarra Women's Health Centre (Carol Berry, CEO), pamphleted the TAFE Shoalhaven and Wollongong University campuses, and arranged media. AWC executive also contacted Wollongong council multicultural services as well as utilising their own local networks through the Catholic Women's League, Zonta International and social services particularly domestic violence agencies with limited success.

The AWC thought carefully about its public message. We worked to refine and simplify the message, and to promote the program as something fun. Our message was not about racial harmony *per se*, rather we communicated an opportunity for young women to make change and to have their voices heard on their own terms. We sought to send a plain English message that young women were invited to join a high-energy group of people to make real-world change.

Women registered to participate using a form available on the AWC's website. Eighty women registered, less than the AWC's aspiration's of up to 100, but a strong level of interest nonetheless.

The first round of workshops were held as follows:

- 28 April 2012 – Coffs Harbour
- 6 May 2012 – Bankstown
- 19 May 2012 – ACT
- 26 May 2012 – Liverpool
- 27 June 2012 – Wollongong



An original Wollongong SHOUT! participant, and a stayer - Faoziyah

A. EMPOWERMENT

We want people, especially women, here to be educated, skilled, knowledgeable about their rights, able to go where they choose to go (socially not literally). In particular, we want to see women strengthening and supporting one another and to break through structural obstacles – “to break the glass ceiling and not take the ladder with us”.



B. MULTICULTURALISM

We want to engage the awareness of the community about the value of differences, to celebrate differences and to bust “labels” open.

C. COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

We want to generate a sense of strength, together; solidarity; standing together; common interests and respect; women *and communities* coming together.

Participants’ responses

Here are what our two brave participants said:

“Hi, I’m Faoziyah Lawal. I’m here for the SHOUT! leadership program with Carol, Sharyl, Millie, and Jane. We’ve had a fabulous time today sharing ideas, and coming up with some concepts which we’ll hopefully develop into projects. I think it’s going to be a fabulous opportunity for young people to develop a leadership role and hopefully make change in our communities.”

“Hi this is Millie from SHOUT! at Wollongong. We’ve just had our first meeting today, our first workshop with Jane and Carol and ... sorry Sharyl, I always say your name wrong! And we had a really good time. We mapped out some of the themes that we want to address in our community. Empowerment was the main one that we want to address. And I had a really good time! And I can’t wait for the next workshop. And there was great catering! Ha!”

When we consider the action we’d like to take in the world, or the changes we might like to see, what holds us back?

<GENERATE DISCUSSION>

Fear? Attack? Gender roles? Expectations? Lack of self-belief?

How can we harness the feelings of power, strength, control and courage or self-confidence in the face of a threat or a challenge?

How can you draw on your own strengths, the strengths of those who might stand against you and your part in the “mess” that you are trying to affect?



Coffs Harbour, ACT and Bankstown women practising self-defence (August 2012)



Everyone has the same journey, it just might take a different path

How will we do it?

Social networking - facebook, twitter

Using our community contacts

Partnering with other organisations

Using mainstream media to promote our project

What are we trying to achieve?

To empower women by enabling them to see the success of others. Ours is a forum for women to share their stories of achievement and learn from others.

A project will culminate in an online artwork made up of the images and stories of women achieving their goals and overcoming their fears.

This is a work in progress, so if you have any ideas or inspiration you want to share, please post it for us all to see.

I can't wait to see what we come up with!

Project progress/development

The following themes were developed:

Domestic violence – it crosses all cultures and classes and occurs in every part of society.

Refugees – “I get angry about people who live in a bubble as though other people don't matter. People who are like, ‘the only thing I care about is money’.”
Changing people's attitudes towards difference.

Empowering and mentoring young women – body image, career choice, timing of study/work/family, building self-confidence and agency.

Storytelling – storytelling has the power to change behaviour, ideas, mindsets – it can be a tool for change.

Creativity – two things:

- (a) there is not a lot of support for creatives (architects, graphic designers, designers, photographers, artists). Eg, How to establish yourself as a business/entrepreneur?
- (b) How to make creativity part of the regional development strategy – the current vision is to make Wollongong a centre for innovation and entrepreneurial activity in IT.
Rather than focusing solely on IT, there might be an important role for creativity in rejuvenating Wollongong's economy. Investing in the creativity of young people (education, programs and mentoring) might be the future of the region (independent thought, curiosity, problem solving, collaboration).

Multiculturalism - how can we foster an appreciation of differences? Eg, fashion exchanges/ dinner parties.

The Islamic Women's Association of Illawarra is hosting a Women of the World & Fashion event at the end of September.



Renew Port Kembla – learn from Newcastle and the ReNEW program (Marcus Westbury). Using disused/underused premises. We know that Wollongong is a hard place to put down roots, particularly as a new migrant/refugee arrival. Not enough work anymore to make money upon arrival whilst translating existing qualifications into something Australian systems recognise.

HOW?

Engage young people?

Create a space?

Partner with WIN TV /UOW TV program

Create a process to reimagine Wollongong/or a suburb? Social mapping

Open invitations for storytelling – remember some people won't want their photos/videos shown

Independent Facebook groups created

As mentioned already, each locale made its own Facebook page to plan and progress their own work.

SHOUT! projects formulated and shared amongst SHOUT! groups

The facilitator worked to connect the projects by promoting crosscutting project ideas between groups, and suggesting ways in which the groups could cross-fertilise.

Connections with local community sector

The facilitator worked to build the capacity of participants to forge collaborations with local community services. A list of partnerships are noted in the Executive Summary above.

EVALUATION POINT #2 (August - September 2012)

Participants at the ACT, Bankstown and Coffs Harbour workshops and the Liverpool and Wollongong dinner workshops reported feeling re-inspired and re-energised. They felt it was difficult to keep the momentum of making a project alive between workshops, noting work/study commitments. However, in all three locations, some (not all) participants had succeeded in meeting to progress projects without facilitated workshops or meetings.

The AWC made significant adaptations to its program of work to respond to the participants' feedback. We signalled to DIAC that we were committed to serving the needs of the participants and to developing the program iteratively in our application, and we continued to do this as we delivered the program. For instance, we shifted the format. Instead of insisting on full day workshops that were poorly attended, we shifted to afterwork/after-uni/TAFE dinner meet-ups or more concise weekend lunch meet-ups that were far better attended. We also shifted into working with small project groups, instead of the entire cohort at once.

Group projects emerged from the Workshop Series #1 and #2, rather than individual projects. This was the direction set by the participants – they were interested to make more welcoming communities, and to build social capital in their communities. That meant learning how to work together in groups.

As part of this ongoing process of monitoring and review, we did **not** offer online skills development to participants. Rather, we delivered customised skills development to small project groups by making the facilitator available to participants as they needed her. This meant that the facilitator attended many more get togethers than originally imagined, in less formal settings. It also meant that the facilitator was in regular email and telephone contact with the participants as they progressed their projects.

The role of the facilitator also changed in light of the capacity of the AWC. Instead of beginning a process, and checking in on it as the AWC members stepped in to mentor participants' projects, the facilitator became the driver of the program, supporting participants and guiding them to deliver their



projects independently.

From a resourcing point of view, this meant that the facilitator delivered far greater value for equivalent remuneration, a factor to be considered should the AWC deliver this program again by ensuring there is adequate budget to pay the facilitator adequately.

The AWC also understood that it could catalyse the projects by offering small cash grants to allow the participants to buy basic materials to deliver their projects. Each project was allocated \$300 in cash to kick start it, and all projects could apply for auspicing to seek other funds if required.

Participant feedback, 2013

I just wanted to thank [facilitator] and [AWC President] for your loving support and passion. It is a real inspiration. I believe the project is worthwhile and precious. I hope there are more projects like this to come. Keep in touch. Lots of love, Emmy

ACTIVITY THREE & FOUR

The AWC's approach changed to deliver Activity Three and Four.

To be clear, we did **not** deliver Workshop Series #3. A workshop was planned, however we abandoned it to work more often in small groups with participants on the following dates:

- 6 October – Bankstown long lunch and project planning
- 13 October – Bankstown working party
- 23 October – dinner in Wollongong with community representatives
- 18 January – breakfast in Wollongong with community representatives
- Coffs Harbour group met fortnightly and checked in with facilitator
- ACT Women's Portrait project meeting regularly and checked in with facilitator
- 5 March – SOUL FOOD workshop
- 18 March – Bankstown The Shout Project working party to assemble bunting
- 19 March – SOUL FOOD cooking session

In addition, regular work was done by email, Facebook and phone.

Three projects were formally auspiced by the AWC.

All projects received a seed grant of \$300.

The AWC has outlined the projects that were delivered comprehensively in our Harmony Day report, a copy of which is annexed to this acquittal and marked **Attachment F**.

Please accept our thanks for the Department's support of this work.

On behalf of all AWC member organisations

Sharyl Scott
President
Australian Women's Coalition Inc.

May 2013



