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## Refugees and Immigration Skill-Me Program

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### ABSTRACT

*The case study reflection on immigration and refugees is from the field of humanitarianism and education. The refugee and immigration international issue has become a local issue, impacting Western Sydney. The circumstance is the recent entry of Iranian Qualified Engineers to Australia, Western Sydney, shows the system is failing to employ them. Thus, professional intervention is required with Metro-Assist offering a Skill-Me program to assist migrants and refugees seeking worthwhile ongoing employment. The Skill-Me program uses third party Engineers Without Borders and their individual Professionals Engineers to assist in their voluntary mentoring Refugee and Skilled Migrants. This reflective report a case study research method seeks to find root causes and solution of Iranian refugees and migrants not gaining employment when settling in Western Sydney Australia.*

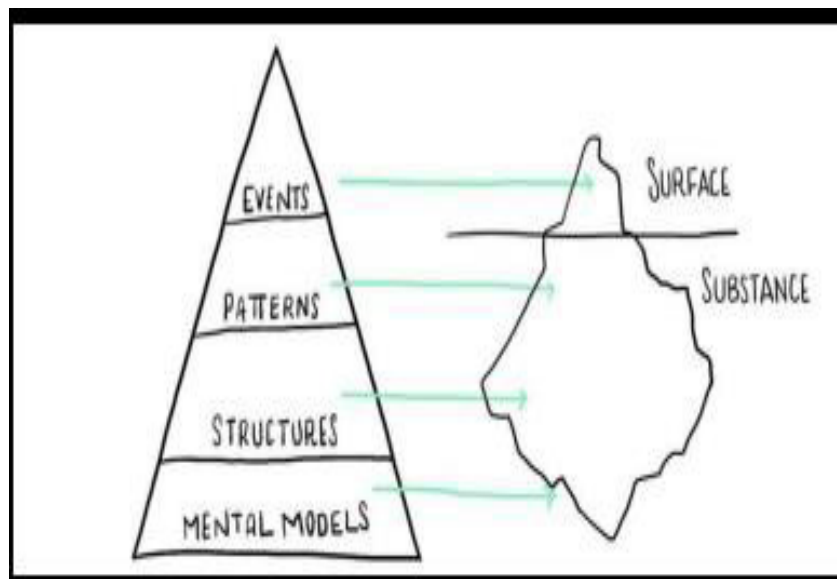
**Keywords:** Refugee, Skill-Me, migrant.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The situation Metro Assist partnership with Engineers Without Borders assistance in their Voluntary Refugee and Skilled Migrant Mentor – Skill-ME Project. The bigger picture is an international issue, due to decades under current Iranian regime. The consequence of Iranian qualified engineers migrating to local Western Sydney. Having the Australian government legitimacy allows them to enter Australia. It has since been found that intervention is required in this report case study Metro Assist to help guide them into employment (Metro Assist 2024). This intervention is Metro Skill-Me is managing versus solving with, career, support. My role as NSW Region President made decision EWB had capacity to support. Pilot Skill-Me program to mentor migrants to get employment (EWB 2023) and (Halpern 2014).

### 1.1 Iceberg Model

The Iceberg Model discusses the main points, this is done with questions to guide thinking, to overall unpack problems and solutions managing versus solving problems (Halpern 2014). It uses a metaphor of an iceberg, with questions to guide thinking (figure 1). The questions are the parts of the system. With on the surface the 1. Events (situation) to react, under the water the substance broken into 2. Patterns to anticipate, 3. Structure to design and 4. Mental Models to transform (change). Simplified use of the iceberg model shows, how 1. Event -Migrating Engineers, 2. Pattern is unemployed, 3. need to design Skill-Me program, 4. to make change have them employed.



**Figure 1: The Iceberg Model. Source Workshop 2 Slides**

## 1.2 Boundary Critique

The report will further analyse this situation and systems using the concept of Critical Systems Heuristics (CSH) a philosophical framework to underpin reflective practice. The report a reflective piece, the objectives use the following three key purposes in Table 1 (Ulrich 1983).

**Table 1: Critical Systems Heuristics (CSH)**

CSH Key Purposes
1. Understanding the situation, bigger picture, including assumptions.
2. Identifying the different perspectives using 12 boundary questions
3. Promoting Reflective Practice – to analyse situations –Background
References: Ulrich 1983.

The use of identifying purpose is to change them for the better. A framework developed from the (CSH) definition termed The Idea and Practice of Boundary Critique, which is to improve systems, boundary judgements informing a system of interest, are in Table 2 (Ulrich and Reynolds 2020).

**Table 2: Sources of Influence**

Sources of influence
1. “Motivation
2. Control
3. Knowledge
4. Legitimacy” (Ulrich and Reynolds 2020).
References: Ulrich and Reynolds 2020.

This framework using four sources of influence unpack three questions each in total twelve questions to make specific answers to understand situations and systems thinking thus to design systems for improving them.

The boundary categories and questions of CSH				
Boundary judgements informing a system of interest (S)				
Sources of influence	<i>Social roles (Stakeholders)</i>	<i>Specific concerns (Stakes)</i>	<i>Key problems (Stakeholding issues)</i>	
Sources of motivation	1. <i>Beneficiary</i> Who ought to be/is the intended beneficiary of the system (S)?	2. <i>Purpose</i> What ought to be/is the purpose of S?	3. <i>Measure of improvement</i> What ought to be/is S's measure of success?	The involved
Sources of control	4. <i>Decision maker</i> Who ought to be/is in control of the conditions of success of S?	5. <i>Resources</i> What conditions of success ought to be/are under the control of S?	6. <i>Decision environment</i> What conditions of success ought to be/are outside the control of the decision maker?	
Sources of knowledge	7. <i>Expert</i> Who ought to be/is providing relevant knowledge and skills for S?	8. <i>Expertise</i> What ought to be/are relevant-knowledge and skills for S?	9. <i>Guarantor</i> What ought to be/are regarded as assurances of successful implementation?	
Sources of legitimacy	10. <i>Witness</i> Who ought to be/is representing the interests of those negatively affected by but not involved with S?	11. <i>Emancipation</i> What ought to be/are the opportunities for the interests of those negatively affected to have expression and freedom from the worldview of S?	12. <i>Worldview</i> What space ought to be/is available for reconciling differing worldviews regarding S among those involved and affected?	The affected

Adapted from Ulrich (1996, p. 44)

Figure 2: CSH: The Idea and Practice of Boundary Critique Ulrich & Reynolds (2020)

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Australian Migration

A migrant for Australia, means people who move to Australia to live permanently. An “economic migrant” is an individual with aim to move to Australia for economic reasons, such as employment opportunities. Asylum seeker has applied for asylum and is waiting for a decision. While a refugee has a decision in their favour already (Ketchell 2015). Australia immigration has many categories of types of visas (Aust Govt 2024).

### 2.2 Legislation

The Australian Government has a Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) which uses Migration Act. This Act includes Asylum Seekers and Refugees. DIAC is a party to refugee convention with United Nations, and the principal of non-refoulement. The definition of a refugee is “person who is outside their own country and is unable or unwilling to return due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their, race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” (DIAC 2024). Moreover, Australia has obligations to protect human rights, not to repatriate people no matter how they got here under the following conventions, these are:

**Table 3: Human Rights Conventions**

Human Rights Conventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refugee Convention and Protocol (UNHCR 1951) and (UNHCR 1967).</li> <li>• International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (OHCHR 1966).</li> <li>• Convention against Torture (CAT) (Danelius 1984).</li> <li>• Convention on Rights of Child (CRC) (OHCHR 1989).</li> </ul>
References: DIAC 2024

### 2.3 Rights-based solutions to critical social issues

The contemporary Australian government migration system looks broken. The impact an oversight, for which overseas IT and Engineers cannot find employment. The Skill-Me program is needed as an intervention. International issues effect local issues, example this case study, Iranian women qualified engineers regarding migration, seeking Australia where they can live with more freedom and safety (de Hoog and Morresi 2023). Other examples War in Gaza, Australian domestic violence, juvenile justice, housing crisis, indigenous discrimination, transgender violence and Disability Royal Commission (AHRC 2024).

This contemporary system of human rights issues has meant Australia needs to have discussion on human rights-based solutions to critical social issues. The outcome is Free + Equal Human Rights Conference over 6 and 7 June 2024 during Sydney Vivid Conference. This conference will set to explore varied approaches and strategies for human rights in Australia. The conference is the culmination of project taking five years to overhaul Australia's human rights framework, including the introduction of a Human Rights Act and reforming Australia's Race, Sex, Disability and Age Discrimination Acts (AHRC 2024).

### 2.4 Legal Reforms

The introduction of the Australian Human Rights Act needs alignment with the many existing Acts. Therefore, we need law reform, these reforms will impact many sectors example Australia's, Government, Business, Justice, Legal, and Civil society. Human rights commission is significantly interested in alignment update to Australia's anti-discrimination laws especially bullying to do with states for sex discrimination, "including pregnancy, marital or relationship status including same-sex and de facto status, breastfeeding, family responsibilities, sexual harassment, gender identity, intersex status and sexual orientation". Further disability discrimination states "including temporary and permanent disabilities; physical, intellectual, sensory, psychiatric disabilities, diseases or illnesses; medical conditions; work related injuries; past, present and future disabilities; and association with a person with a disability". Including race discrimination states "colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, immigrant status and racial hatred". Plus, age discrimination, covering "young people and older people". Moreover, discrimination for "sexual preference, criminal record, trade union activity, political opinion, religion or social origin" (AHRC 2024).

### 3.0 PURPOSE

Metro Assist queried Engineers Without Borders NSW Region if we had capacity to assist in their Voluntary Refugee and Skilled Migrant Mentor – Skill-ME Project. My involvement was as the interim President NSW Region, I was in charge and accepted to get involved I felt this intervention was required and EWB had human resources. Pilot Skill-Me program to employ migrants was of a scale for our capacity. (Thuraisingham and Lehmacher 2013). This was important for Skill-Me as the selected suitable migrant cohort was living in Western Sydney mostly graduated qualified engineers from Iran. These engineers came to Australia under migrant, refugee, and economic migrant status as Engineers. They wonder why the Australian Government allowed them to come to Australia if there is no work for them. Having government selected them for the professional qualifications (Metro-Assist 2023).

The Pilot Skill-Me program to employ migrants was relevant to EWB charter. The idea was made easy as the EWB Vision and Missions align with this service. EWB Australia Our Vision: “a world where technology benefits all”. What better way to adapt qualified overseas trained engineers to Australia, through mentorship (EWB 2024).

The decision to collaborate was made easy as Skill-Me provides the other services with Metro Assist Western Sydney based company have an assorted offering of community services including financial support, accommodation, tenancy and settlement, family support and community belonging. Skill-Me program assists Migrants and refugees seeking worthwhile ongoing employment (EWB, Skill-Me and Metro-Assist 2023), (EWB 2023),

The decision was straightforward as the EWB Vision and Missions align with this service. Engineers Without Borders impact is through engineering cross sector collaboration and partnerships. This is a case of the like-minded companies EWB and Metro Assist and like-minded individuals’ migrants and mentors working together making social impact. The aim is to employ migrant and refugee engineers already in Australia to assist Australian economy. Metro Assist Skill-Me program is interventionist, essentially assessing suitable migrants, mentees for the program. Success is served with a mentor from EWB walking person through attaining employment (EWB, Skill-Me and Metro-Assist 2023). NSW Region decided to get involved as it had support of its Australian parent with Metro Assist Skill-Me program. This was through involvement of the program and would like to explore the following short- and long-term strategies (Posniak 2023).

### 3.1 Stakeholders

**Table 4: Actual stakeholder map of natural resource appraisal in Western Sydney 2024**

Actual stakeholder map of natural resource appraisal in Western Sydney 2024		
No.	MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS	Major stakeholder roles (primary concerns of the institutional agents)
1	Government	Allowing Migrants with Engineering Qualifications into Australia.
2	Metro Assist (Intervention)	Decision Maker: Setting up the SkillMe Program and arranging resources
3	SkillMe Program	Selecting suitable volunteer unemployed refugee or migrant engineers.
4	Engineers Without Borders Australia (Third Party)	Expert Professional: Mentors for knowledge and guiding mentees motivation to gain employment.

5	EWB NSW Region Chapter	Observer, kick started partnership as third party.
6	Engineers Without Borders Individual Professional Engineers	9 Mentors selected and allocated. The partnership with EWB, is providing much needed assistance for SkillMe's clients to further help them in their job searching journey.
7	Western Sydney Iranian migrants	11 Individual Mentees volunteer unemployed refugee or migrant engineers

**References: Jonathan Posniak (2023) and Farah Sulaiman (2024)**

#### 4.0 SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF A SYSTEM

This reflective report a case study research method seeks to find root causes and solution of Iranian refugees and migrants not gaining employment when settling in Western Sydney Australia. To do these analyses of a system use two modes of inquiry, 1. Iceberg Model and 2. Boundary Critique.

**The Academy Exercise**

Map a system using the iceberg model

- In pairs
- Pick a recent event/problem to map
- Answer the questions

What was the event? – React	What patterns or trends lead to this event? - Anticipate	What underlying structures influenced these patterns? - Design	What values or assumptions do people hold about the system that lead to the event? - Transform
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*Note: we haven't changed anything yet, this is a structured thinking process*

**Figure 5: The Iceberg Model Questions to Guide Thinking**

##### 4.1.0 The Event

The Iranian Islamic Revolution 1979, led to traditional and religious lifestyle. Since 2000, seeking lifestyle change, there has been a wave of Iranian migration to Australia, especially engineers and doctors, through skilled migration program.

##### 4.1.1 Pattern

Minority groups have been singled out and persecuted, ie Kurdish, Mandaeans and Zoroastrians. Totalitarianism regime features are strong central rule that attempts to control and direct all aspects of individual life through laws of Shia religion being oppressive and suppressive. It persecutes liberties.

##### 4.1.2 Structure

The underly structures influenced these patterns. The patterns of unrest show system breakdown. Example mapping Iran's unrest demonstrates how Mahsa Amini's death.



### **4.1.3 Mindset**

Minority groups Kurdish who has different culture and religion this mindset is against the imposed beliefs and values. The mindset since inception of the Islamic revolution has had a steady group of skilled migrants and refugees seeking political asylum.

**Table 5: Critical System Heuristics (CSH):**  
The Idea and Practice of Boundary Critique Ulrich & Reynolds (2020)

Boundary judgements informing a system of interest (S)				Boundary judgements informing a system of interest (S)				Boundary judgements informing a system of interest (S)				Boundary judgements informing a system of interest (S)			
Sources of influence	Social roles (Stakeholders)	Specific concerns (Stakes)	Key problems (Stakeholding issues)	Sources of influence	Social roles (Stakeholders)	Specific concerns (Stakes)	Key problems (Stakeholding issues)	Sources of influence	Social roles (Stakeholders)	Specific concerns (Stakes)	Key problems (Stakeholding issues)	Sources of influence	Social roles (Stakeholders)	Specific concerns (Stakes)	Key problems (Stakeholding issues)
1. Beneficiary Who ought to be in the intended beneficiary of the system (S)?	2. Purpose What ought to be the purpose of S?	3. Measure of success? What ought to be S's measure of success?	The involved	4. Decision maker Who ought to be in control of the conditions of success of S?	5. Resources What conditions of success ought to be under the control of S?	6. Decision criterion What conditions of success ought to be outside the control of the decision maker?	The involved	7. Expert Who ought to be providing relevant knowledge and skills for S?	8. Expertise What ought to be relevant knowledge and skills for S?	9. Guarantor What ought to be regarded as assurance of successful implementation?	The involved	10. Witness Who ought to be representing the interests of those negatively affected by S?	11. Zonemarker What ought to be the interests of those negatively affected to have expression and freedom from the world-view of S?	12. Worldview What ought to be an allowable reconciling world-view regarding S among those involved and affected?	The affected
Answer: Metro Assist deemed suitable - Refugee or migrant Engineers from Iran.	Answer: The purpose is to have Qualified Engineer from Iran employ d.	Answer: Improve metro Assist or migrant qualified engineer gets invite to interview s. The measure of success is they get employed.		Answer: Metro Assist offering voluntary skilled Migrant Mentor- program in control	Answer: financial support, successful outcome, family and settlement, and community belonging, skills, program assists migrants and refugees seeking sustainable employment.	Answer: Inside Metro Assisted stakeholder from Engineers Without Borders (Professionals) who are suitable mentors which are seeking employment.		Answer: Engineers Without Borders Australia seeking Professional Qualified Engineers from across Australia to mentor suitable mentees which are refugee and migrant engineers from Iran.	Answer: Volunteer Professional Qualified Engineers from across Australia to mentor suitable mentees which are refugee and migrant engineers from Iran.	Answer: Metro Assist Skills Mentor Coordinator Farah interview prospective mentor volunteers before mentoring refugee and migrant engineers from Iran.		Answer: Australian Government More proactive approach of job placement	Answer: Australian Community projects with success of integrating into workforce.	Answer: These engineers come to Australia under migrant, and economic migrant status as Engineers. They wonder why the Australian Government allowed them to come to Australia if there is no work for them. This is demoralizing. There should be a pace of job placement when entering Australia.	

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The case study reflection on immigration and refugees is from the field of humanitarianism. The refugee and immigration international issue has become a local issue, impacting Western Sydney. The situation is the recent entry of Iranian Qualified Engineers to Australia, Western Sydney, shows the system is failing to employ them. Australian Government is meeting Australia’s shortage of engineers allowing beneficiaries of refugees and migrant qualified engineers from Iran into Australia. The system is broken with refugee and migrant engineers not finding employment (EWB, Skill-Me and Metro-Assist 2023),

Intervention is required through Metro Assist setting up the Skill-Me program. My perspective as NSW Region Chapter President to get on board, as I knew we had sources of knowledge with necessary expertise with our membership of expert Professional Engineers (Hodgson 2020). This program in partnership with third party Engineers Without Borders Australia allows human resource volunteering mentor engineers understand that their profession can play a critical role in restoring dignity for people and the regeneration of our planet. Dignity to overseas qualified engineers from Iran to support through mentoring with career motivation, to gain employment. We are educating current engineers so that they develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to engineer sustainably (EWB 2024).

Therefore, systems thinking in a turbulent world with new perspectives (Hodgson 2020). A perspective metaphor is “to be in one’s shoes” (Churchman 1968/79). The concept is called Critical Systems Heuristics (Ulrich 1983).

This reflective report a case study research method seeks to find root causes and solution of Iranian refugees and migrants not gaining employment when settling in Western Sydney Australia. The analysis sets questions to unpack the problem, of migration system and government system of selecting skilled migrants to Australia though still do not find employment. A measure of success is if they get employed. This intervention by guarantor Metro Skill-Me is managing verses solving with career support.



An in-depth analysis that included the main components of the system was provided. To do these analyses use two modes of inquiry, 1. Iceberg Model and 2. Boundary Critique.

The Iceberg model components 1. Event, 2. Patterns, 3. Structure and 4. Mindset allowed one to understand root causes and the problem in Iran, why Iranian Engineers want to come to Australia. (Hall 1976). With example Kurdish women died in custody (de Hoog and Morresi 2023).

The Idea and Practice of Boundary Critique, which is to improve systems, boundary judgements informing a system of interest, have sources of influence, the components are “1. Motivation, 2. Control, 3. Knowledge, 4. Legitimacy” (Ulrich and Reynolds 2020). This framework using four sources of influence unpack three questions each, in total twelve questions to make specific answers to understand situations and systems thinking thus to design systems for improving them. Thus, Boundary Critique makes questions needing asking for going forward with Skill-Me program (Ulrich and Reynolds 2020). The interdependency of the two models allows for evidence-based support in making recommendations.

## 6.0 Recommendation

Following recommendations are made:

- The importance of Human Rights
- To act on obligations of the following conventions.
  - a. Refugee Convention and Protocol (UNHCR 1951) and (UNHCR 1967).
  - b. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (OHCHR 1966).
  - c. Convention against Torture (CAT) (Danelius 1984).
  - d. Convention on Rights of Child (CRC) (OHCHR 1989).
- An overhaul Australia’s human rights framework, including the introduction of a Australian Human Rights Act.
- Australia needs to have discussion on human Rights-based solutions to critical social issues.
- Australian Human Rights Act and reforming Australia’s Race, Sex, Disability and Age Discrimination Acts
- Law Reform – Australian Human Rights Act aligns or revises existing relevant Acts.
- Permanent and Business Migration and Skilled Migration is important for Australia.
- Migrant arrivals need support and intervention program such as Metro-Assist Skill-Me program for refugees and migrants.
- EWB NSW Region Chapter Executive Committee add more mentors to existing Skill-Me program, and additionally the Committee could do further Pilot with mock interviews, job search or general Resume’ preparing.
- Government funded or and outsources to continue Intervention programs focus on groups to have best use of resources i.e. interpreters.
- Intervention is managing verses solving with career support.

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