African Think Tank Inc.

WORKING WITH VICTORIA'S AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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REPORT OF THE AFRICAN-AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY'S INITIATIVE WORKSHOP ON ISSUES AFFECTING THE RESETTLEMENT OF AFRICAN

Thursday, 16 February 2006

Hilton on the Park– Melbourne

Auspiced by:

AFRICAN THINK TANK Inc.

18 April 2006

Dr. Berhan M. Ahmed

Workshop sponsored by the Victorian Department of Immigration, Victorian Multicultural Commission, and the Department of Victorian Communities.

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than two thirds of the migrants who settle in Victoria under Australia's humanitarian and refugee programs now come from African nations, and for many of these groups the resettlement process is confusing, even traumatic. It is increasingly important that new arrivals are given support to successfully integrate into the broader Australian society, however.

Issues affecting resettlement and integration of African migrants were identified by representatives of African communities at an Initiative Workshop Auspiced by the African Think Tank Inc in Melbourne on 16 February 2006. Participants stressed that many families experience 'culture shock' on their arrival in Australia and, without appropriate support, find it difficult to understand and adapt to mainstream Australian values and norms. Cultural differences increase pressures on families and communities, and have serious implications for refugees' on-going physical and psychological wellbeing and for their engagement with other Australians and mainstream institutions.

The workshop highlighted the following interconnected themes for consideration at the forthcoming national conference on African re-settlement:

- ✓ African values, and the positive contributions African-Australians can make to Australia;
- ✓ cultural differences and how these impact on family and community life;
- ✓ gender, role differentiation and family relationships as they affect both men and women;
- ✓ content and delivery of health education and services, especially around mental health, communicable diseases, diet and lifestyle, and vitamin D deficiency;
- ✓ specific problems African-Australian youth face in being "caught between two cultures";
- ✓ adult education, training and employment opportunities;
- ✓ educational needs of African children, from pre-school to tertiary; and
- ✓ the ignorance of the broader Australian community about Africa and African-Australians.

Guest speakers and workshop sessions at the proposed national conference on African resettlement will explore these issues. A list of recommendations to address them will be compiled for the consideration of Commonwealth, State, Territory and local government authorities, and other agencies.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This Report covers the outcomes of the African Community's Initiative Workshop held in Melbourne on 16th February 2006 to define issues to be covered in the national conference on African resettlement to be held later in the year. This conference will explore these issues in greater depth and develop recommendations for consideration by the Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local governments and their relevant agencies.

Please see Section 7.0 for a draft conference program.

3.0 BACKGROUND TO THE CONFERENCE PROPOSAL

In late 2005, African community leaders in Victoria formed The African Think Tank Inc (ATT) to create a forum for developing a united African voice to inform, influence and promote the well-being of African-Australians.

The Vision of the AAT is a "self-reliant, sustainable and flourishing African communities in Victoria." A key priority of the ATT is the diverse and complex needs of new and recently arriving Africans to Victoria.

This report provides a summary of the key outcomes from the Workshop, which will form the basis for the program for the national conference. The outcomes from the national conference will form the basis of recommendations and strategies to be presented to Commonwealth, State and Local Governments for consideration and implementation in collaboration with the ATT, the various African communities and other service providers to achieve the overall objective of assisting African communities to participate fully and effectively in the socio-economic life of Victoria.

The Workshop was made possible by the financial support of the Victorian Office of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs' (DIMA), the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs (VOMA) of the Department of Victorian Communities and the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC).

4.0 THE PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

4.1 Program

Extensive consultations were held with the African communities in Victoria prior to the Workshop. This ensured that the Workshop's Program adequately covered priority issues the communities wanted to address. A copy of the Workshop Program is at **Appendix A.**

4.2 Publicity and promotion

The Workshop was extensively publicised and promoted via the Somali TV Channel 31, the Tigrian and Ambassador Newspapers, and by radio broadcast in Amharic, Arabic and English, to encourage participation by representatives from all the African communities in Victoria.

4.3 Workshop Facilitation

To ensure issues were adequately discussed, and all participants were given the opportunity to present their views, a facilitator, Mr. Leon Levy, was engaged to assist in running the Workshop.

4.4 Participants

A list of participants to the Workshop is at **Appendix B.** The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments were represented at the Workshop by Mr George Lekakis, Chairperson,

Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) and, Mr Zafer Ibrahim, DIMA Community Liaison Officer, respectively.

4.5 Opening address

The Workshop was officially opened by Dr Berhan Ahmed, Chairperson of the ATT, who welcomed the participants and noted the apologies of those unable to attend.

In his opening remarks, Dr Ahmed noted that the large numbers of African community representatives at the Workshop was an indication of how highly the communities regarded the opportunity presented to canvass issues affecting the well-being of Africans in Australia in general and Victoria in particular.

He encouraged the participants to be creative in their thinking, and assist in identifying and formulating strategies to inform effectively policies related to African settlement. Dr Ahmed commented that underpinning any strategy for success would be education aimed at raising public awareness and facilitating better understanding and relations between African-Australians and mainstream Australia.

4.6 Keynote address

The keynote address was presented by Mr George Lekakis, Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission. Mr Lekakis informed the participants of the high priority his Commission attaches to its work on African settlement in Victoria. He also referred to the increasing demand for his Commission's advocacy by communities including those of African origin. He commented that over the last 12 months, African nations had comprised 11 of the top source countries and 68% of Victoria's Humanitarian and Refugee migration intake.

In reaffirming the Victorian Multicultural Commission's commitment for its continued and vigorous advocacy on behalf of Victoria's African communities, Mr Lekakis entreated the workshop to seize the extraordinary opportunity offered by the Workshop, and work toward a common position on issues affecting the African communities for consideration by his Commission and other relevant government organisations and agencies.

5.0 WORKSHOP OUTCOMES AND ISSUES IDENTIFIED

The Workshop participants identified a number of issues which are elaborated below. Additional issues arising from workshop groups are summarised in **Appendix C.**

5.1 Differences in culture and cultural practices

Differences in culture and cultural practices between mainstream Australian society and African communities were identified as a major priority issue for immediate attention.

Participants pointed out that culture and cultural differences were affecting family values. It was recognised that there was need for communities to critically examine their culture and cultural practices with the aim of preserving those that could make a positive contribution to the cultural experience of mainstream Australia, while changing or modifying those that were broadly inconsistent or at odds with the values of their adopted country.

5.2 Gender and role differentiation

A major challenge for many African men was acceptance of the differing yet complementary roles of women in mainstream Australian society. Participants identified that there was need to educate African men, particularly new arrivals, and assist and support them in adapting to mainstream Australian values and belief systems on some of these issues which may be different to what they were used to in the home countries.

5.3 Health

Priority health issues identified included:

- influencing the content and delivery of community education programs on:
    - communicable diseases;
    - diet and lifestyle; and
    - vitamin D deficiency;
- assistance to better understand and appreciate the relationship between lifestyle and its impact on health;
- extensive and inclusive consultation on assistance to the communities to help them to understand the causes and impacts of mental health;
- addressing the under representation of African mental health professionals in the public health system;
- investigating the relationship between migration and mental health; and
- developing programs to better assist and support African arrivals fleeing from trauma and torture.

5.4 African Youth

The major issue identified was the dilemma facing African youth in Australia as they are often caught between two cultures. Suggested strategies included:

- developing and promoting a mentoring system based on African values and experiences; and
- identifying and using African role models to influence the behaviour of the youth.

5.5 Employment and Training

Priorities included:

- influencing the reduction of time taken to assess and recognise overseas qualifications;
- investigating business opportunities in relation to market needs; and

- investigating the development of co-operatives.

5.6 Education

Priorities included:

- providing early start educational programs for African children, including home-based education;
- providing adequate and timely information on educational programs to communities and
- improving the overall educational outcomes for the communities including retention and reducing school dropout rates.

To achieve the expected outcomes would require communicating a united African voice on these issues to all three levels of government and their relevant agencies.

5.7 Identity and integration into multicultural Australia

Participants agreed that while it was important for Africans to embrace mainstream Australian culture, it was equally important to facilitate understanding by the broader community of African cultures and values. In this regard, participants noted the urgency in defining and communicating "African values" to the broader community.

Participants recognised that the issues identified were not specific to only African communities, but they apply equally to all new arrivals, particularly those from non-Anglo-Saxon backgrounds.

As influencers of public opinion, the Workshop noted the media's important role in changing negative community views and perceptions about Africans by also reporting "good news" stories about the various communities. Some of the strategies suggested included:

- creating opportunities for sharing experiences and information;
- developing mechanisms for providing support to individuals and groups which are meaningful, appropriate and accessible;
- developing mechanisms for better utilising African knowledge, skills and experience;
- developing programs and activities which will engage the youth in discussion and involving them in planning and implementing community-related projects; and
- identifying African leaders and using them as mentors and positive role models for African youth.

6.0 WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Participants used a pro forma evaluation form (**copy at Appendix D**) to evaluate the Workshop. Overall the responses of participants indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Workshop's planning and organisation and the outcomes achieved. Many respondents indicated that the Workshop had achieved its objectives. Comments were also provided to

assist in improving future Workshops, which will be taken into consideration by the ATT in planning the national conference.

7.00 DRAFT CONFERENCE PROGRAM

The proposed conference will be an invaluable opportunity to explore the issues that affect the resettlement of African migrants in Australia and their integration into the broader society, and to develop some firm recommendations to address the many challenges they face.

To ensure that the conference remains futures-focussed, African Think Tank Inc suggests that all speakers and participants be invited to respond to the following questions (as first proposed by Imagine the Future Inc) in addressing their particular issues:

1. How have we got to where we've got? (historical context/analysis)
2. Why change? (identification of issues/problems)
3. Where do we want to get to? (solutions, goals, objectives)
4. How do we get there and when do we start? (planning, strategic thinking)
5. Who's going to do it? (Personnel)
6. How do we know we've got there? (Indicators)

Guest speakers will be nominated by African Think Tank Inc in consultation with the conference sponsors, the Victorian Department of Immigration, Victorian Multicultural Commission, and the Department of Victorian Communities.

The preliminary draft conference program is as follows.

DAY ONE (late afternoon and evening only)

4.30 – 6pm **Conference registration** for delegates

4.30 – 5.30 **Press conference** and photo ops for international guests

5.30 – 7.00 **Public reception** for conference delegates at the conference venue.

7.30 – 9.00 **Welcome concert**, including a Welcome to Country by representatives of the Kulin nation and performance by African-Australian musicians and other artists

DAY TWO

8.00 – 9.00 Registration continues

9.00 – 10.30 Opening and keynote address

***African Values*:** proposed speaker …..

10.30 – 11.00 Morning tea [opportunities for networking]

11.00 - 12.30 Invited speakers Session 1:

"Culture shock": the challenge of adapting to Australian life

Two high profile guest speakers on cultural change and the problems African-Australians face,, with time for questions and comments

12.30 - 1.30 Lunch

1.30 – 3.00 Concurrent session 1: ***Male and female roles***

The conference will break into two concurrent facilitated sessions exploring the roles of men and women in African and Australian societies, and the problems many families have in adjusting to Australian norms.

3.00 – 3.30 Afternoon tea

3.30 – 5.00 Plenary to report back on the concurrent sessions and develop recommendations to address the issues raised.

DAY THREE

9.00 – 10.30 Plenary session with guest speakers on health and wellbeing, and the needs of adults.

10.30 – 11.00 Morning tea

11.00 – 12.30 Concurrent session 2 ***Health and wellbeing***

The conference will break into three concurrent sessions to explore the themes of mental health, drugs and alcohol, communicable diseases, and diet and lifestyle issues, including Vitamin D deficiency.

12.30 – 1.30 Lunch

1.30 – 3.00 Concurrent session 3: ***Adult education, skills training and employment opportunities***

The conference will break into three concurrent sessions to explore the themes associated with the needs of adults and their families, and the support services they need to help them integrate into the broader society.

3.00 – 3.30 Afternoon tea

3.30 – 5.00 Plenary to report back on concurrent sessions and develop recommendations to address the issues raised.

7.30 Conference dinner – African theme

DAY FOUR

9.00 – 10.30 Plenary session with guest speakers on issues relating to youth and children.

10.30 – 11.00 Morning tea

11.00 – 12.30 Concurrent session 2: ***Our children are our future***

The conference will break into three concurrent sessions to explore the themes around the special needs of pre-schoolers, primary school-age children, and teenagers and their families..

12.30 – 1.30 Lunch

1.30 – 3.00 Plenary to report back on concurrent sessions and make recommendations.

3.00 – 3.30 Afternoon tea

3.30 – 4.00 Plenary to finalise recommendations, to attend to unfinished business, and to give feedback on the conference.

4.00 – 5.00 Closing comments, an overview of the issues raised, and facilitated discussion.

5.00 – 6.30 Refreshments and closing performance by African musicians and other artists.

Conference budget

The budget for the proposed conference and the report to government agencies will be developed in consultation with partners and sponsors, the Victorian Department of Immigration, Victorian Multicultural Commission, the Department of Victorian Communities, etc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

African Think Tank members are indebted to the Department of Victorian Multicultural Commission, Department of Immigration Multicultural Affairs, and the Department of Victorian Communities for their collaboration and generous funding for the workshop and for preparing this paper.

It is a great honour to discuss, share experiences and knowledge with leaders of the African communities in Victoria. The African communities in Victoria have a vast pool of talented and skilled leaders ready to co-operate and work in partnership with other communities and service providers under transparent and accountable systems, which would strength, improve and advance the future of African communities in multicultural Australia. The workshop achievements would not have been met without the dedication and commitment of all African community leaders. This workshop is first of it's kind in Victoria, due to the grass root communities participation and the African communities' media. Special thanks go to the African communities' media for assisting to reach the workshop discussion and outcome to the members of African communities in their respective languages. In future, we will try to maximise African communities' media participation for greater communication with grass root members of our communities.

We would also like to express our special thanks to the Mr. Leon Levy for the excellent and unbiased workshop facilitation and Ms. Kate Hely for recording the workshop discussion for the workshop report. Thanks also goes to workshop opening speakers Mr. George Lekakis (chairperson of VMC), Mr. Zafer Ilbahar (Community Liaison Officer, DIMA,) and Ms. Barbara Mountjouris (Director, VOMA). Last but not least our special gratitude also goes to Mr. Haileluel Gebre-Selassie for his dedication and immense contribution to the workshop and to this report.

On behalf of Executive Committee, an award goes to African Community leaders for their continued support and participation to the workshop above and beyond the call.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: AFRICAN COMMUNITY'S INITIATIVE WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Thursday, 16 February 2006
10.00am - 5.00 pm

PROGRAM:

CHAIRD BY:	**Dr. BERHAN AHMED**	
FACILITATOR:	**Mr. LEON LEVY**	
CONSULTANT:	**Ms. KATE HELY**	
COMMUNITIES MEDIA:	**Various African Communities Radio, Newspapers, Web sites and Channel 31 Community TV – (Namely, Somali TV Program) were invited**	
1. Welcome and introduction	**10.00 - 10.05**	**Dr Berhan Ahmed**
2. Speech	**10.06 - 10.10**	**Mr George Lekakis (VMC) and Zafer Ilbhar (DIMIA)**
3. African family issue	**10.11 - 11.00**	**Benjamin Dawom and Theresa Sali and Morlai Sankoh**

- **Family issues**
- **Community capacity building**
- **Women issues**

4. Speech Welcome	**10.00 - 1057**	**Mrs. Barbara Monutjouris (VOMA)**
5. Health issues	**11.06 - 12.00**	**Kofi Osei and Adamu Tefera and Ibrahim Adam**

- **Refugee health issues,**
- **Mental health**

5 minutes break

6. Employment & Training and opportunities	**12.06 - 1.00**	**Hilary Bucumi, Dr Negassa Badasse and Rashid Mpota**

- **Employment and training issues**
- **Business opportunities**

1.00 - 2.00 PM Lunch

7. Youth	**2.00 - 2.45**	**Isaac Achol and Faten Mohamed and Dr Moses Adepoju**

- **What are the major concerns with our youth?**
- **Is there any support for the grass root communities to address the problems?**
- **Is there any best practice model? What can be done?**

2.45 – 3.00 PM AFTERNOON TEA

8. Support services	**3.00 - 3.45**	**Aden Ibrahim, Halakhe Ganyu and Sarah Berberi**

- **The role of counselling in the African context…**
- **What are the major areas African seeking counselling services?**
- **Conflict, mediation, substance abuse etc**

9. Education **3.45 - 4.30** **Andrew Cunningham, Abraham Hadgu and Julius Mukhwama**

- **African youth in transition - from English class to mainstream schools**
- **What are the problems parents facing?**
- **What can be done to address these problems?**

5 minutes break

10. Open discussion **4.35 – 4.55**

11. Closing remark and the next steps **4.55 - 5.00** **Haileluel Gebre-selassie**

APPENDIX B: AFRICAN THINK TANK PRE CONFERENCE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Name	Community
Aden Ibrahim	Somali Cultural Association Inc
Paulino Jouth	Geelong Sudanese Community Association Inc
Agigayahu	Ethiopian Community
Ahmed Abderahim	Eritrean Community in Australia Inc (Youth)
Dr Berhan Ahmed	Eritrean Community in Australia Inc
Isaac Achol	Sudanese Youth Association
Ibrahim Adam	Oromo Community
Dr Moses G Adepoju	CARE Africa Inc – Nigerian Community
Mohamed Ali	Al-nahda website (Erit. Community)
Ghbremedluis Atsebalis	Ambassador Newspaper
Dr Negassa Badasse	Ethiopian Community
Sarah Berberi	Sudanese Women in the West
Amelwork Bezabih	Tigrian Community Association in Victoria Inc
Hilary Bucumi	Australian Burundian Community in Victoria Inc
Eggie Chanyalew	Ethiopian Community Women Group
Andrew Cunningham	ACDC Community Leaders
Umalkher Dalmar	Somali Community
Benjamine Dawam	Sudanese Communities Council in Australia Inc
Bedullu Desta	Ethiopian Community
Halakhe Ganyu	Oromo Community, Drummond St Counselling
Afewark Getacheww	Ethiopian Community
Haileleul Gebre-selassie	Ethiopian Orthodox Community
Arhat Geserat	Eritrean Community in Victoria
Bekelech Habte	Ethiopian Community
Abraham Hadgu	Eritrean Community in Victoria Inc
Yusef Haibe	Horn of Africa Relief & Development Association
Zafer Ilbahar	Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
Berhan Jaber	Eritrean Community
Faten Mohamed	ACDC Community Leaders and Youth
Rashid Mpota	Eastern and Central African Communities (Tanzanian)
Julius Mukhawama	Eastern and Central African Communities (Kenyan)
Winnie Ng'ang'a	Diversitat, Sudanese

Abdisebur Omar	Representing ACDC Community
Paulino Jouth	Geelong Sudanese Community Association Inc
Morlai Sankoh	Sierra Leonean Community in Victoria Inc
Theresa Sali	Eastern and Central African Communities (Ugandan)
Adamu Tefera	Ethiopian Community in Victoria Inc

Apologies

Godefa Gehar	Tigrayan Community in Victoria
Mohammed Mohammed	Hararian Community
Abraha Mamo	
Khdija Musse	Somali Community Council
Kofi Osei	Ghanaian Community
Clyde Salumu	Angola Congo Community in Victoria
John Sandy	Liberian Community in Victoria Inc

African Think Tank Inc. Volunteers

Kate Hely, Optimum Consulting Services Pty Ltd

Leon Levin, Workshop Facilitator, Evolutionary Intelligence

APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

FAMILY ISSUES

- Applying African communal approaches to addressing family violence in collaboration with the authority(ies).
- Co-operation between law and order agencies and African community leaders.
- Addressing cultural shock.
- Making refugee families aware of their individual roles in a new environment which is vastly different from their original roles in their home countries.
- Enhancing community consultation, which is a key tool to working with Africans.
- Can we be African Australians?
- Building on our culture.
- Community education must be ongoing not just in the first 3-6 months during which new arrivals are preoccupied with survival and cannot grasp the issues well.
- Orientation programs must be delivered by people who are well versed with both African and Australian values.
- Need for CULTURAL ATTITUDINAL CHANGE: in African men and women:
    - recognition of the large cultural differences in Africans and Australians;
    - Hybrid values – blending good African and Australian values
    - Respect for elders and the community;
    - Need to educate the youth about family relationships.
- Creating opportunities for newly arrived African men to learn from the experiences of fellow African men who have succeeded in keeping their families together and achieved their goals.
- Absence of an older generation due to restrictions like visa, health checks which has resulted in younger people assuming the roles traditionally played by the elders in the community.

WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES

- Lack of knowledge about the health system.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) awareness.
- Women's traditional role in the family (maintaining a household) vis-à-vis the man's bread winning responsibilities.
- Lack of culturally appropriate conflict resolution programs.
- Adopting the positive aspects of African communal approaches to caring for communities which works well in traditional African societies.
- Valuing equally the respective roles of the husband and wife in the family.

- Re-orienting Government support programs so that they aim at keeping families together rather than encouraging separation, as is often the case with how these programs are delivered currently.

SUPPORT SERVICES

- While there are cross culturally trained counsellors, there is also need for trained African care workers and establishment of counselling centres staffed by trained African professionals.
- The immigration program should make it possible to bring in elders from Africa to assist in creating counselling curriculum in Australia for Africans.
- Create self learning and behavioural change programs through plays, soap operas, movies etc.
- Encouraging communities to make use of existing directories and networks where appropriate.
- Encouraging service providers to inform the community leaders when there are new arrivals, particularly for new emerging communities. This will enable the family to be better supported and assisted. Resettling newly arrived families in communities far away from members of their own community makes it difficult for service providers to better assist and support them. Being closer to people they can relate to culturally is important in helping them adjust to their new circumstances.

HEALTH

- Lack of prevention services – especially social rehabilitation appropriate for Africans.
- Understanding the causes of mental health in African communities.
- Lack of culturally appropriate support programs.
- Lack of services providers who understand African attitude to mental health problems.

YOUTH

- Lack of understanding by families of how the educational system works in Australia. In most traditional African societies where both parents may be illiterate, children are sent to school to be educated and their education is fully the responsibility of the education system. In Australia, parents are required to contribute to their children's education by helping them with their homework. This creates added pressure for some newly arrived families, particularly those with little or no formal education.
- Families face major dilemmas. On the one hand, they aspire for their children to receive Australian education but are concerned about their children adopting Australian way of life or cultural values which are often different from their own.
- There is need for more positive recreational programs for the youth such as sport rather than the existing alternatives of drugs, drinking, gambling etc.
- Empowering parents and children to work for common benefit.
- There is need for transitional educational programs for children who have missed five or more school years because of dislocation prior to arrival in Australia.

- Community leaders to create attractive activities for the youth e g yearly youth day/ week for all Africans.
- Encouraging the Installation of teaching aid for African children in Melbourne schools.
- The numbers of community teachers and elders of African background should be increased.

RACISM

- Authorities should better address issues of racism whenever they are reported. Ignorance about such issues is the root cause of aggression at individual and group levels.
- There is need to work on the negative public perceptions of Africa and Africans promoted by the media and aid agencies.

EDUCATION

- The current situation where the children of refugee families are ineligible for HECS until they become citizens should be addressed, as it is a barrier to accessing tertiary education.

APPENDIX D: AFRICAN COMMUNIYTIES WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Total survey rating

Excellent ----------**Poor**

Rating	5	4	3	2	1	Total rating	Average rating
Information presented	20	48	6	0	0	74	4.11
Usefulness of information	30	36	9	0	0	75	4.17
Quality of presentation	25	52	0	0	0	77	4.28
Achievement of aims	35	24	15	0	0	74	4.11
Workshop facilities	35	40	3	0	0	78	4.33
Total rating	**145**	200	**33**	**0**	0	**378**	**4.2**

General Comments/ feedback

1. A valuable day for net working. The communities have been trying to advocate for African communities to discuss issues of common, enthusiasm and action from all parties concerned for sometime it is good to see it happing.
2. Credit to the organization/organizers
3. We have made significant progress but need to make sure the momentum is maintained
4. Very useful and well organised and presentation
5. More time/structure needed for workshop, too rushed
6. Too divisive a group, too many interests represented to form a coherent view or strategy. No focused enough on youth and education issues.
7. … Provided some very good insight into the main African family value and community problems, causing community divisions.
8. …future meetings should involve other community groups with similar experiences (Asians, Greek, Italians etc.) at the community levels. Generally a useful day.
9. …'African community conference' focus needs to assist policy makers/funding organisations to avail necessary resources for community empowerment and family building.
10. Too much wrong information should have had made it's way to local, state and federal government bodies. Would have been much better if a focus group/organisations like (ATT) had workshopped it more to highlight the resources available within this communities.
11. Good effort looking forward to report
12. Very good & informative workshop
13. Good conference-clear action forward required
14. A very well, worthwhile exercise, which will result in more fines out comes.
15. In future, you have to involve more women.
16. Much time spent covering old ground in the morning. Enjoyed the youth presentation most as covered new ground and the intergenerational gap.
17. Productive, interesting workshop, participation was very good, and the moderator was good.
18. Time keeping in the afternoon was not good.

19. Too much topics up front, not enough time to workshop, Should have been more opportunity for questions/comments from the floor on all topics.
20. Involve more of our professional African workers and Office bearers.
21. Invite law makers to listen to communities. Education should be given more time to discuss.
22. In future try to brief African Think Tank background and input for conference planning.
23. Our communities are more interested in community empowerment and funding resources.
24. Quality of presentation was outstanding, personally felt uncertain about the objectives of African Think Tank and the workshop and uncomfortable that the conclusions of it difficult to implement. The benefits of such workshop are more general long term improvement…

- Profession of Survey respondents include:

Community development Officer/worker, community leader and Researcher, writer, teacher and Interpreter, social worker, Healthcare worker, Accountant, Public service officer, Librarian, Construction, Administrations Officer, Academic.

- Community organisations represented in survey:

Somali Community, Ethiopian Community, Oromo Community, Sudanese Community,, Eritrean Community, Sierra Leonean Community, Eastern and Central African Communities (Ugandan), Eastern and Central African Communities (Kenyan), Eastern and Central African Communities (Tanzanian), ACDC Community Leaders and Youth, Geelong Sudanese Community Association Inc, Somali Cultural Association Inc, Eritrean Community in Victoria Inc, Ethiopian Orthodox Community, Sudanese Communities Council in Australia Inc., ACDC Community Leaders, Australian Burundian Community in Victoria Inc., Tigrian Community Association in Victoria Inc., Sudanese Women in the West, CARE Africa Inc – Nigerian Community, Sudanese Youth Association, Eritrean Community in Australia Inc (Youth), Ethiopian Community Women Group, etc.