

## Defining Refugee Youth Settlement and Why it Matters

*Sandy Gifford and Edmee Kenny*

*I am here now in Australia ... I will be able to be (an) Australian citizen and not (a) refugee. (16-year-old woman, born in Iran)*

*I am alone ... and not successfully settled right now. In the future I can adjust my life as an Australian ... so I can live as a common person. (22-year-old man old born in Sri Lanka)*

### 1 Introduction

Refugee resettlement is a project of protection. Refugee settlement on the other hand, is a project of belonging. While refugee resettlement is relatively well defined and understood (see, for example, Piper et al, 2013), refugee settlement remains elusive. There is now a large body of scholarship published in the academic and grey literature about refugee settlement, much of which focuses on youth (see, for example, Neumann et al, 2014). Yet, what settlement is, how it is measured, experienced and achieved remains contentious. In Australia, there are tensions between objective and subjective definitions of settlement and in this chapter, we argue that both matter. Objective definitions of settlement identify the fundamental social services and resources required for refugees to take up the opportunities available to all Australians with outcome measures defined in terms of factors such as participation in education and employment. Subjective definitions of settlement are also important because they identify the less tangible emotional feelings of coming to belong in a new country. The opening quotes from two young people who participated in a study about what settlement in Australia means to them highlight the importance of leaving behind the identity of

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