

# Social Inclusion: Closing the gap

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## Background

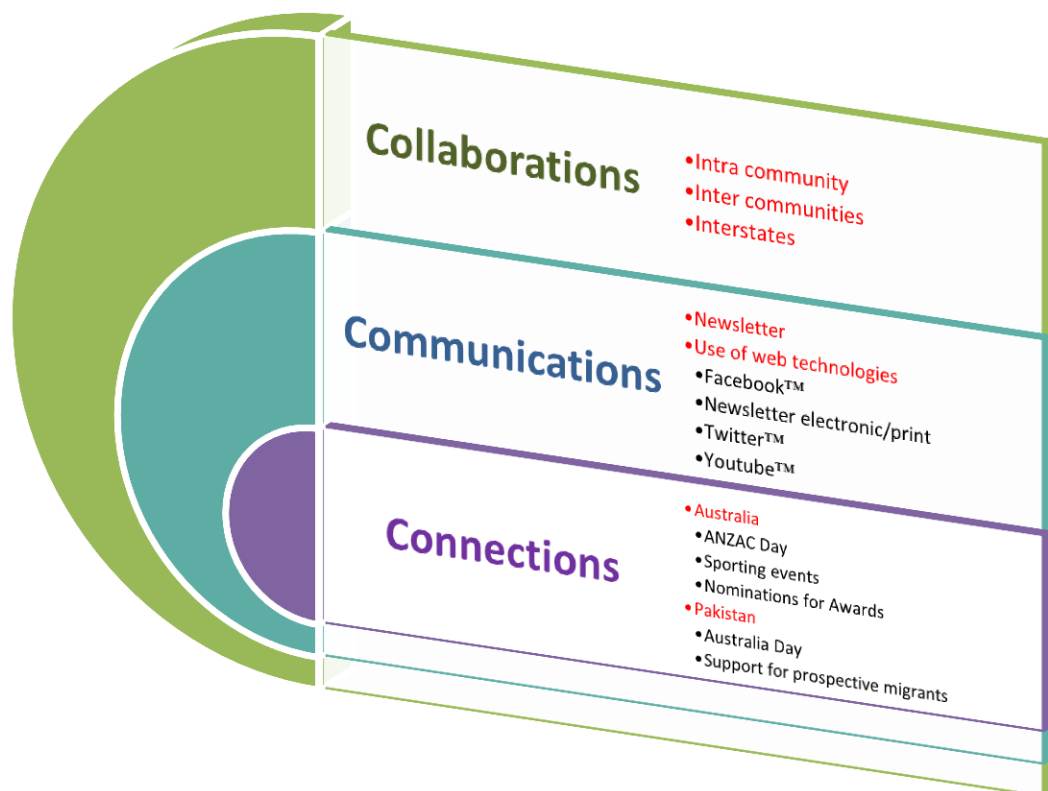
A major feature of community organisations is to organise events related to days of significance in their homelands and their culture. While this has a positive effect to keep in touch with the homeland, it also confines migrants to some extent. There has also been realisation post 9/11 that the community needs to integrate more actively within the broad multi- cultural framework of Commonwealth of Australia.

At the same time the younger generation who have been raised here identified difficulties in participating in activities that are dominated by values of a particular age cohort.

## Innovation

Hence this group was formed with main objective to promote social cohesion and a roadmap with three key features was developed.

- a. Collaborations
- b. Communications
- c. Connections



## A. Collaborations

### *Intra community:*

- Established two urdu book collections
- Arrange events for new migrants so they can mix with other community members.
- Provide support in settlement to students and migrants

### *Inter-communities*

Involvement with other groups to promote awareness through

- Pakistan cultural day with Australian Asian Association
- Cultural awareness with Zonta club international Perth division
- Participation in Fitness on Run Project with Ethnic Communities council of WA
- Screening of Pakistani movies on Mega screen
- Interstates
- Participation and nominations in committees and organisation working at State levels

## B. Communications

- Use of web 2.0 technologies has made it easier for us to reach a wider community with tools like Facebook™.
- Introducing the fortnightly newsletter both in electronic format and hard copy to keep members informed of what's happening. Available at [http://www.scribd.com/PIA\\_Group](http://www.scribd.com/PIA_Group)
- Work in progress also include establishing Twitter™ and Youtube™ account

## C. Connections

This is by far most difficult and important part of our road map which included participation of the community in events that are significant to Australia like ANZAC day and Australia Day. This year for the first time the Pakistani community celebrated ANZAC day in Australia. As 30<sup>th</sup> April is commemorated as day for Pakistani armed personnel who have sacrificed their lives in War against terror we combine both events as one and was an emotional day.

The other important initiative is celebrating Australia Day in Pakistan which was originally idea of a young high school student and is an opportunity to support an organisation in Pakistan every year.

## Outcomes

This increased more involvement of the younger generation and new migrants as well as provides a sense of belonging to older community members to Australia.

## Roadblocks

What we believed as the easiest initiatives deemed to be most difficult ones and was related to integration with mainstream Australia. The ANZAC day event was only attended by Pakistani community members and a priest.

Australia Day was by far most resisted one as initially the community members could not find relevance as to its celebration in Pakistan. Yet, after four consecutive years the acceptance is increasing.

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