

Eastern Refugee Pathways Project Final Report

November 2009

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A project of the Eastern Refugee Pathways Project

Report written by Bianca Spence, Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne).



Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development



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Disclaimer

Eastern Refugee Pathways Project – Final Report is a project of the Eastern Refugee Pathways Project (ERPP). The Eastern Refugee Pathways Project is a partnership of Federal, State and Local Government agencies and community organisations in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) that support newly arrived and refugee young people, their families and teachers in developing realistic educational and career pathways.

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 - Youth Transitions Division
 - ESL Unit
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List of Acronyms

AMES	Adult Multicultural Education Services
BELS	Blackburn English Language School
CALD/CLD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
DEECD	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
EIEP	Eastern Industry Education Partnership
ELS	English Language School
EMR	Eastern Metropolitan Region
ENTER	Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank
ERPP	Eastern Refugee Pathways Project
ERPPO	Eastern Refugee Pathways Project Officer
ESL	English as a Second Language
EMR	Eastern Metropolitan Region
EMRYC	Eastern Metropolitan Region Youth Commitment
ESRAN	Eastern Schools Refugee Action Network
IPPS	Individual Pathway Planning Sessions
LCP	Local Community Partnerships
LLEN	Local Learning and Employment Network
MEA	Multicultural Education Aide
MIC	Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)
MIPs	Managed Individual Pathways
MYSYPN RAG	Maroondah Youth Service Providers Network Refugee Action Group
SFYS	School Focused Youth Service
SWL	Structured Workplace Learning
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VCAL	Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VIT	Victorian Institute of Teaching
VFST	Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture
VTAC	Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the Eastern Refugee Pathways Project (ERPP). It includes the specific approaches adopted by the ERPP to support newly arrived and refugee young people with pathway planning.

A separate guide for working with newly arrived and refugee young people has been prepared and provides details of approaches that may be applicable for schools across DEECD regions with a dispersed settlement pattern of refugee young people. It needs to be stressed that this is a guide only and consideration needs to be given to the diverse experience and needs of each individual case.

Background

In 2007, the Eastern Melbourne Migrant Information Centre, Gateway Local Learning and Employment Network (Gateway LLEN) and Outer Eastern Local Learning Employment Network (OELLEN) identified the need for a project officer to assist in the pathway planning and career development for newly arrived and refugee young people.

A partnership was established between the Gateway and Outer Eastern LLENs, Eastern Industry Education Partnership (Local Community Partnership), Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne), Foundation House, and Regional Industry Career Adviser (RICA) to provide funding for an eight month pilot project to be carried out between April and December 2007 in the Eastern Region of Melbourne.

Funding from the Eastern Industry Education Partnership (EIEP) enabled continuation into Stage 2 of the project from February 2008 to November 2008. The project then continued into Stage 3 with funding provided by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development – ESL Unit and Youth Transitions Division.

The Eastern Refugee Pathways Project (ERPP) has provided support to newly arrived and refugee students within secondary schools, their families and teachers in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) of Victoria. The project aim was to develop realistic education and career pathways for these students through individual pathway planning, student and parent information sessions and regular meetings with school staff.

During the initial Stage of the project, research was conducted amongst 30 refugee students in the secondary schools, as well as their parents and school staff. The information gathered informed the development of a project model which could be adopted by schools in conjunction with local agencies to support newly arrived and refugee young people. The model comprises four interconnected programs:

- Individual Pathway Planning Sessions (IPPS) which assist refugee students to access and develop individual career and transition pathways.
- A series of information sessions for students focusing on education, training and employment pathways for refugee students.
- A series of information sessions for parents to raise their level of understanding of the Australian educational system and the training and employment options available to their children.

- Regular meetings with school staff to build teacher capacity to assist refugee students and their parents with the development of career pathways.

(See Appendix 1)

Overview

During the two-year period the Eastern Refugee Pathway Project Officer (ERPPO) worked closely with newly arrived and refugee young people from Afghanistan, Cambodia, Burma, Iran, Liberia, Somalia and South Sudan and with their teachers at Wellington, Maroondah and Ringwood Secondary Colleges and Forest Hill and Mullauna Colleges.

In the initial research carried out by the ERPPO, school staff identified high aspirations coupled with minimal understanding of realistic pathways as a central issue for refugee students. The ERPPO found that many refugee students had a particular focus on University studies, although they may have had less than five years schooling prior to resettlement in Australia and were in their final years of secondary school. In addition, the students often lacked an understanding of the requirements for University courses such as ENTER scores, VTAC requirements, prerequisite studies and whether they possessed those or not.

Due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of Australian education, training and employment systems, refugee parents are not equipped to address the significant mismatch between the aspirations of their children and the reality of their situation, or to assist them in career development. In addition, their experiences are often shaped by their understanding of these systems in their countries of origin and they are often unaware of alternative education, training and employment pathways such as TAFE, vocational training, apprenticeships and traineeships.

Refugee students and their families also have multiple and significant barriers that impact on their pathways planning (i.e. housing, family breakdown, carer responsibilities, financial hardship, torture and trauma issues). It is not uncommon for refugee students to be the primary person responsible for various family matters such as securing house, caring for sick guardians, disciplining younger siblings and completing migration applications. Refugee students in senior secondary school may not have parents or guardians in Australia and may live with siblings or on their own.

Subsequent feedback from teachers, student workshops and discussions with community leaders identified the following issues as impeding senior secondary refugee students' progress and engagement in education:

- disrupted school experience which often led to limited social competence (in educational contexts) and limited acquisition of literacy and conceptual knowledge
- limited education resulting in a poor knowledge base from which to make informed decisions and process information
- limited exposure to diverse career options compared to Australian-born students
- limited ability to make informed decisions based upon limited exposure to a diverse society
- lack of understanding of Australian work practices and Australian work culture
- low awareness of the available support services (at school and within the wider community) and difficulty accessing them
- course costs, particularly for alternative and vocational programs such as VET

- low levels of literacy and numeracy

The tracking data from students who participated in the 2007-2008 ERPP shows that many refugee young people choose to work full-time when they complete secondary school (See Appendix 3). This is particularly the case for those living independently or providing financial support to their families in Australia or overseas. The students in employment are usually in low-skilled, low paid jobs with limited opportunity for career advancement. As their immediate priority is to earn money, they rarely participate in further education or training.

Due to their diverse experiences and backgrounds, refugee young people clearly have different and very specific transitional needs. This report examines ways in which the ERPP helped to facilitate the successful transition of refugee young people from school to further education, training or employment.

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Project Implementation

During Stage 1 of the project, an ERPPO worked full-time over an eight month period. Support was provided to 30 refugee students at three secondary schools in the Eastern Metropolitan region – Maroondah Secondary College and Mullauna and Forest Hill Colleges.

During Stage 2 and 3 of the project, an ERPPO was funded to work in a 0.6 position for a total of eighteen months. Further support was provided to over 50 students at the three participating schools and two additional schools were able to access the project's support – Ringwood Secondary College and Wellington Secondary College.

Implementation during Stages 2 and 3 of the project followed the four component model developed in response to Stage 1 research into the needs of refugee students, their teachers and families. In addition to this model, the ERPPO developed careers and transitional resources that teachers could use in supporting refugee students and their families (including an electronic wiki resource, MIPs materials and PowerPoint presentations), provided cross-cultural training to youth pathway providers, facilitated visits to higher education institutes and industries, organised a careers forum for students and professional development activities for teachers, and tracked participants from Stage 1 of the project.

The funded period of the project has enabled implementation of the 3 Stages.

Individual Pathway Planning Sessions (IPPS)

During Stage 1 of the project it became evident that it is critical for refugee students to receive individual information and support to develop an understanding of the post-secondary education, training and career options available to them. Most refugee students have not received any career advice prior to arriving in Australia, and given their lack of understanding of Australian systems; need to develop their understanding of these before they can begin pathway planning.

The ERPPO scheduled regular Individual Pathway Planning Sessions (IPPS) with a total of 30 students across the three participating schools during Stage 1 of the project and over 50 students across the five participating schools during Stage 2 and 3 of the project. This included discussion regarding alternative pathways, such as TAFE, vocational training and part-time courses, VTAC requirements, prerequisite studies, and the potential employment available at the end of the chosen course. Teachers from the schools observed the IPPS sessions to build sustainability.

The ERPPO found that the main challenges for recently arrived young people in senior secondary school in relation to careers and transitions were completing forms and VTAC applications and finding work experience or structured workplace learning (SWL) placements. Without the support of the ERPPO, the students would have had struggled to find work experience/SWL placements or complete VTAC applications with their limited English skills and social networks, as well as the lack of parental support.

Regular follow-up meetings were held with the appropriate school staff to discuss students' Individual Pathway Planning Sessions and any follow-up actions required by the student or teachers. Staff were also introduced to resources available to support refugee students, i.e. out of school support programmes (such as 'Beyond the Bell', Embrace Education, MU Student Union Summer School), literacy and numeracy support, parent engagement strategies and additional non-pathways related support a student might require (i.e. housing assistance) that would ultimately have an impact on their pathway development.

Student information sessions

In addition to the IPPS sessions, small and larger group student information sessions were conducted to provide specific information. A series of information sessions were conducted at each of the participating schools and included topics such as:

- Senior secondary school options – VCE, VCAL and VET programs
- University and TAFE courses
- VTAC applications – ENTER scores, prerequisite studies and other requirements
- Apprenticeships and traineeships
- Work experience and Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) placements

The ERPPO and careers advisers at the schools met with students that required extra support during follow up IPPS and MIPs sessions.

Careers forums with speakers and industry representatives based on the students' career interests were also conducted. These further complemented the Individual Pathway Planning sessions and assisted in the development of informed career development. They further served to build teacher knowledge and thus capacity for sustainability.

Parent information sessions

Stage 1 surveys indicated that parents were keen to learn more about the education system and how they could support their children, but believed they lacked the local knowledge to make a positive contribution. Parents stated concern that without knowing where to go or who to approach for careers information, their children would miss out on opportunities and they were already facing a diversity of challenges such as disrupted education and low literacy/English and numeracy skills.

The ERPPO facilitated a number of parent information sessions with interpreters available. Training was conducted on school premises over four weeks and included classroom visits and activities to observe how students learn. The ERPPO worked in conjunction with key school contacts and the Foundation House School Support Program Worker to plan and prepare for the sessions in order to build sustainability.

Building school capacity

While the careers adviser or MIPs coordinator may take the lead, the pathway planning program needs to be seen as an integral part of the whole school program and all teachers need to be aware of its aims. Professional development activities were implemented in Stage 2 and 3 of the ERPP for all stakeholders (schools, Youth Pathways providers, Local Community Partnerships, TAFE providers, local government and other youth specific agencies) to raise awareness of the refugee experience and the needs of newly arrived and refugee young people.

The ERPPO attended the Eastern Schools Refugee Action Network (ESRAN) meetings in order to disseminate reading materials and resources with teachers and youth providers working with refugee young people. During Stage 3 of the project, the ERPPO participated in a live discussion forum that focused on Refugee pathways and transitions through Foundation House's School's In for Refugees Online. Resources were introduced to Migrant Information Centre (MIC) youth caseworkers in order to build their knowledge of career and transitional support. The ERPPO also facilitated a meeting between the MIC youth caseworkers and the Eastern Metropolitan Region Youth Commitment (EMRYC) Project Officers at Gateway and Outer Eastern LLEN to discuss the process for referring students that may be at risk of a successful transition.

Further implementation strategies

Building partnerships

The ERPPO helped schools to develop effective partnerships and connect with a range of agencies that provide assistance to students of a refugee background. As formal linkages have been developed with these agencies, schools have a capacity to provide ongoing support to refugee students and their families.

During Stage 2, the ERPPO facilitated a cross cultural training session for the local Youth Pathways provider in conjunction with the multicultural workers at the Migrant Information Centre (East Melbourne). This session served to foster cultural awareness and understanding of their refugee clients. Referrals were given to the Youth Pathway workers by the ERPPO in order to build sustainability in the delivery of the one-on-one support to refugee students.

The ERPPO worked closely with the multicultural workers at the MIC to plan and deliver information sessions to specific community groups. The multicultural workers participated in the cross cultural training sessions for the local Youth Pathways provider and the professional learning activities for teachers and service providers. The multicultural workers also provided the ERPPO with family background and cultural information and were used as key contacts for communicating with the refugee families. By working closely with multicultural workers and the MEAs, the ERPPO was able to build their knowledge of career and educational pathways, as well as their capacity to support to the refugee communities.

The ERPPO worked together with the ERPP project partners, including the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Eastern Industry Partnership (EIEP), Foundation House, Gateway LLEN and Outer Eastern LLEN to plan for events such as the careers forum for refugee students and professional learning activities for teachers and youth providers.

As a result of discussions by the ERPPO with the DEECD, the Eastern Metropolitan Region Youth Commitment (EMRYC) Project Charter and Project Schedule has identified Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)/Refugee students as a targeted disadvantaged group within the EMR.

University/TAFE visits

In the Stage 1 final report it was recommended that refugee young people should be provided with direct exposure to career pathways options, including visits to further education providers and industry.

The ERPPO facilitated a number of out of school activities, including TAFE tasters, classroom visits, open days, apprenticeship/traineeship expos and industry tours. The ERPPO worked in conjunction with key school contacts, TAFE/University representatives and the LLENs to plan and prepare for these activities. Teachers from the schools accompanied students on these excursions and were encouraged to utilise Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) funding to support these activities and therefore build sustainability.

During Stage 2 and 3 of the project, the ERPPO successfully applied for financial assistance for refugee young people to support the ERPP work. These included the Eastern Industry Education Partnership VET scholarships for refugee students, Foundation for Young Australians Opportunity Scholarships and MU Student Union Summer School bursaries. The industry tours were funded by the Careers in Manufacturing project and coordinated by OELLEN.

Careers forum

Almost 100 students and teachers from eight secondary schools in the EMR and over 30 industry and further education representatives attended a Careers Forum held during Stage 3. This forum gave students the opportunity to interact with industry professionals and gave them insight into careers and career pathways and helped teachers to build their knowledge of career and educational pathway options. The forum was coordinated by the ERPPO and funded by EIEP.

Resource development

An electronic resource of careers and transitions information and materials to support schools and youth providers working with refugee young people was developed by the ERPPO. This wiki resource also includes support services, reports and resources and has been widely promoted by EIEP, ESRAN, Foundation House, Gateway and Outer Eastern LLEN and the Maroondah Youth Service Providers Network Refugee Action Group (MYSYPN RAG).

The ERPP developed additional resources for school staff to use when assisting refugee young people and their families with careers and pathway planning. These CALD-based resources included MIPs documents, PowerPoint presentations and information to be used during IPPS sessions, student information sessions and the parent information sessions.

A publication of case studies based upon project participants' experiences was developed to provide insight into good practice principles for working with newly arrived and refugee young people in relation to pathway planning. In this way the project was documented for schools, agencies and the wider community, to ensure links to sustainability.

Tracking and data collection

The refugee young people who participated in the 2007 project were tracked over a 6-month, 12-month and 18-month period by the ERPPO in order to collect information on destinations and the impact of the project activities. Data collected included VCE ENTER scores and post-school destinations over this period. Data was collected for refugee young people that the ERPPO worked with in schools, including demographic and senior secondary school course information (See Appendix 2-4).

Bridging programs

During Stage 1 the ERPP steering committee identified the need for a bridging program to accommodate the needs of newly-arrived and refugee young people who cannot access secondary school in Australia due to age or low levels of English and general education, or those who would like to study in a non-school setting. The ERPPO recommended that such a program should increase the refugee young person's knowledge about the Victorian education, training and employment system, language and literacy skills and information on the world of work and future career pathway options.

During Stage 2 and 3 of the project, the ERPPO identified successful bridging and transitional program models operating in schools and TAFE institutes in other regions of Melbourne to present at the ERPP Professional Learning activities.

Negotiation is underway for Swinburne TAFE to add a bridging program to their scope in 2010. A tour of the Young Adult Migrant English Course (YAMEC) program at Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) was conducted to facilitate this and enable teaching staff and stakeholders to gain an understanding of the curriculum, teaching methods and learning environment.

Project Evaluation

Research

During Stage 1, surveys were conducted with refugee parents, students and their teachers in the initial three participating secondary schools - Maroondah Secondary College and Mullauna and Forest Hill Colleges. This research included identifying refugee students and parents' current understanding of further education, training and/or employment options post-secondary school; their knowledge and understanding of the Victorian educational, training and employment system. Teacher surveys were also conducted to determine the support and information school staff perceived as necessary for them to effectively support refugee students with career and transition pathways.

Stage 1 research with students, parents and school staff indicated the need for students and parents to increase their understanding of the available education and/or employment options. The ERPPO's ability to provide one-on-one assistance was seen as an asset in the schools as teachers lacked the capacity to provide the intensive work necessary to ensure successful long-term outcomes for refugee young people. Teachers required further information on the options available to refugee young people, and support from people with expertise in both working with refugee young people and pathways.

The input provided by refugee students, refugee parents and school staff regarding their needs and type of support required informed the project development for Stage 1 of the project (See Appendix 1). The research and findings of the pilot project was documented in a final evaluation report. A copy of this report is available for download at

<http://www.miceastmelb.com.au/documents/FinalProjectEvaluationReportDecember2007.doc>

Evaluation

Individual pathway planning sessions were successful in providing over 70 students with assistance through the development of career and pathway plans. A key factor in the success of the project was the individualised approach provided by the ERPPO, as reflected in the uptake of the students studying VET and VCAL courses (See Appendix 4). During stage 2 and 3 of the project there was a significant increase in the amount of refugee students studying VET and VCAL courses due to the individual assistance and financial support sourced by the ERPPO to cover student's VET course fees and material costs.

The intensive support required by refugee young people meant that the support was only available to a limited number of students. The project received constant requests to conduct IPPS with greater numbers of students by participating schools, MIC staff, local agencies and additional schools in the Eastern Metropolitan region. Careers advisers would have benefited from further training on how to conduct IPPS with refugee students, however due to time constraints this was not possible.

The Stage 1 ERPPO recommended approaching the local Youth Pathways provider to deliver one-on-one support and the Local Community Partnerships provider to support refugee parents and schools. In 2010, Youth Pathway providers will have different requirements and LCP as a funding source will no longer exist. Youth Pathway providers will become Youth Connections, with new guidelines and requirements which will impact upon service provision for refugee young people. Whilst there are existing support systems in place at the schools for providing careers and MIPs assistance, unless accountability mechanisms are put in place for schools to meet the specific needs of refugee students this is unlikely to be self-sustaining.

The development and delivery of student and parent information sessions was another key component of the project. The information sessions were successful in increasing students' and parents' understanding of the educational system in Australia and the training and employment options available, as well as building the schools' capacity to assist refugee students and their families in the planning and delivery of the sessions.

During Stage 1 the student information sessions were held during lunchtime, however due to a number of activities for refugee students (e.g. Connect, Homework support) at the schools the worker found that in Stage 2 and 3 of the project it was more beneficial to integrate them into existing transitional/bridging programs or during an ESL class period. At schools with smaller refugee populations the information was given to students during their IPPS instead. Out of school activities such as open days and information sessions often clashed with other commitments (e.g. church meetings, VCE examinations) and as they often took place in the evenings or on the weekend it was difficult for students that relied on public transport to attend.

The ERPPO delivered information sessions at schools to groups of parents from a number of language backgrounds and to larger cultural groups in the wider community. These sessions complemented the student information sessions. The assistance of the MEAs at the school and multicultural workers at the MIC in communicating with the parents was invaluable and resulted in a significant increase in attendance at the sessions during Stage 2 and 3 of the project.

The need for translated careers and transition resources for refugee families was identified as an issue by the ERPPO and school staff. Translated careers and transition resources and forms that are available do not include all current major refugee languages (e.g. Burmese, Karen and Chin) and documents that have been translated into refugee languages are often translated literally without considering the cultural context (e.g. the concept of apprenticeships and traineeships is foreign for many of the community groups).

The ERPPO's meetings with teachers increased the awareness among school staff regarding the pathway planning needs of refugee students and their ability to provide this support. Due to the part-time restrictions of the ERPPO's role during stage 2 and 3 of the project, it was challenging at times to find an appropriate time to meet with school staff. The ERPPO found that targeted network meetings, such as ESRAN, were an efficient way to provide resources to teachers and youth providers working with refugee young people. The ERPPO sourced speakers for the Professional Development sessions that met the teacher's requirements for information on existing models and resources available to support new arrival and refugee young people. Teachers were also introduced to service providers to support their work with refugee students.

The ERPPO also utilised technology, through the creation of a wiki resource and by partaking in an online discussion forum, to support and broaden professional learning communities. These formats were successful in that they enabled teachers to participate during a time that was convenient for them and provided support to teachers outside the EMR. Ongoing professional development is required to improve teachers understanding of the careers and transitional needs of refugee students. Sustainability will also be ensured through the existing structures such as performance reviews and the VIT requirements for professional learning and performance.

Careers Forums for newly arrived and refugee students were held during Stage 2 and 3 of the project. The sustainability of this event in the future could be ensured through existing networks, such as the ESRAN. The Careers forum was successful in providing students with information on a variety of career pathways specifically tailored for their needs. Students participated in follow-up industry tours that complemented the forum and schools have developed stronger linkages with industries and industry brokers, such as the LLENs.

The ERPPO had to prioritise needs due to the limited time available to implement the project activities. The immediate need was to assist the refugee students, families and teachers through the individual pathway planning sessions, student and parent information sessions and professional development activities and this restricted the time available to produce resources. However, despite this, the ERPPO produced a pathway planning guide for working with newly arrived young people, a wiki resource, PowerPoint presentations for use in the student and parent information sessions and Managed Individual Pathways and career resources.

Students that participated in the project during Stage 1 and Stage 2 were tracked by the ERPPO. The tracking process ensured that the participants were connected with support services at the TAFE or University providers, including financial, literacy and numeracy support. However, an inhibiting factor was the need to establish a relationship for ongoing contact. As there had been a different ERPPO working during Stage 1 of the project the Stage 2 worker had not built a relationship with the participants, which made it difficult to ask for personal information. Some participants were unable to be contacted, as they frequently moved house and changed phone numbers.

The ERPPO found that students would have benefited from ongoing support as once they left secondary school they were unsure how to re-engage in employment, education or training. This is demonstrated by the gradually increasing figures of unemployment (Appendix 3). The ERPPO also discovered that those participants that went onto further education were unfamiliar with tertiary systems, such as enrolment, deferment, fees and scholarships; as a result those systems were explained in more detail to participants exiting Year 12 during Stages 2 and 3 of the project.

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Inhibiting Factors

Demand for service:

- There was limited time available to meet the overwhelming demand for the one-on-one support requests made by refugee students, parents and schools – particularly given the part-time constraints of the role during Stage 2 and 3 of the project.
- Most students that participated in the one-on-one sessions would have benefited from further support. However, due to the project timeframe and time available to implement the various project activities within schools this was not possible.

Time and flexibility:

- The IPPS were time intensive as the refugee students had a low, and at times inaccurate, comprehension of the education, training and employment options. In addition, participants had other barriers that negatively impacted on their pathways planning.
- Due to the geographical distance between the five schools there was a considerable amount of travel time during Stage 2 and 3 of the project.
- The work involved in contacting parents for information sessions and obtaining parental permission for students to be involved in out of school activities was an extremely time consuming process for the school staff, MEAs and the ERPPO.
- As many careers activities are held out of school hours (e.g. University Open Days, Compulsory Information Sessions for VET and TAFE courses) the ERPPO was often required to work after hours and on weekends.

Other limitations:

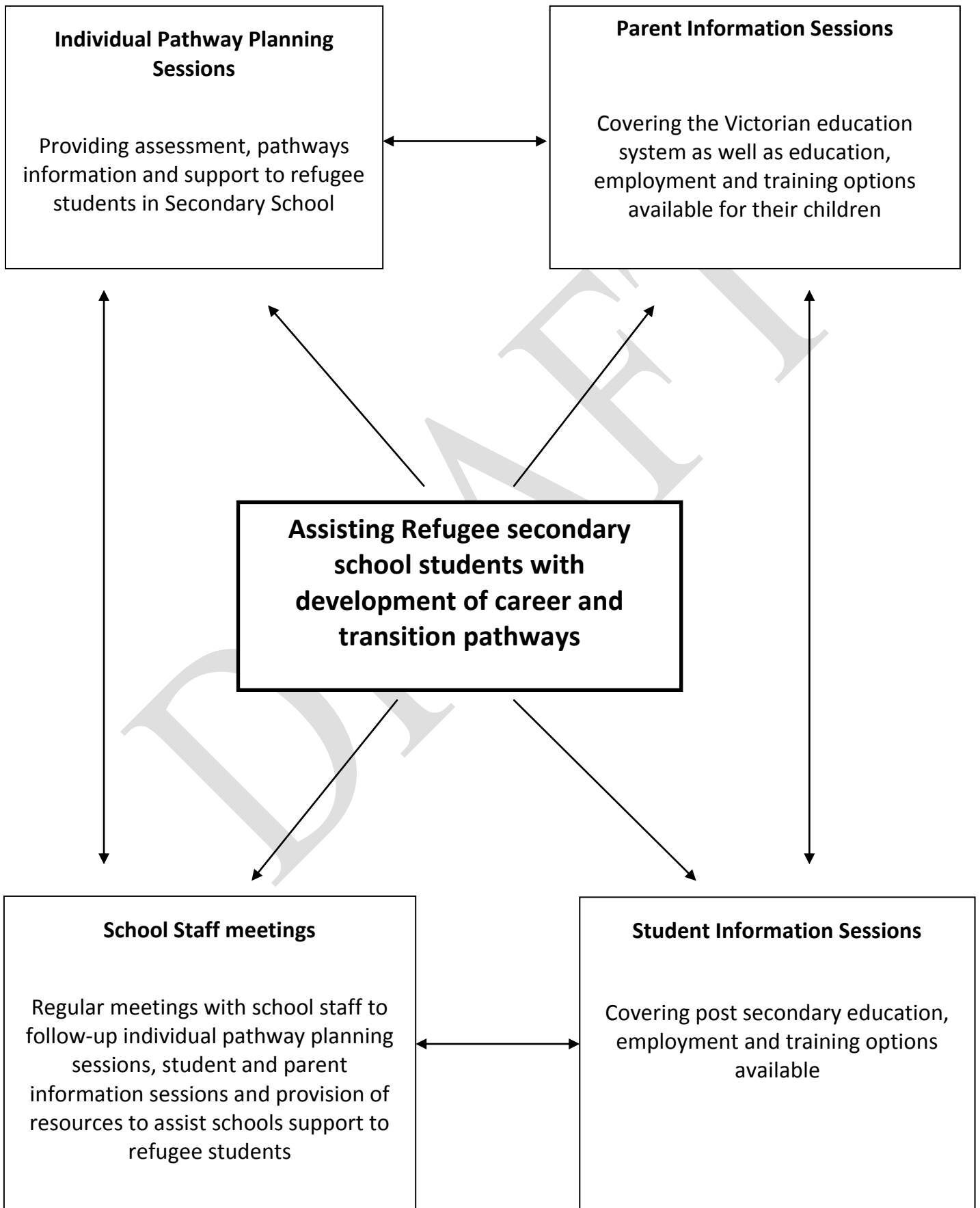
- The appointment of a different project worker during Stage 2 and 3 of the project meant that existing relationships had to be re-established with the participants, schools and project partners.
- Lack of additional funding meant that the ERPPO had to source funding for the careers forum and professional learning activities for teachers (e.g. venue, transportation and catering).
- Many of the students referred to the local Youth Pathways provider did not fulfil the eligibility criteria due to age restrictions. The change in guidelines and requirements for 2010 will have an impact on the amount of referrals given to the Youth Pathways provider by the ERPPO.
- Parent information sessions - parents would have liked to receive information particular to their children's pathway progress. However, only general information could be provided in the information sessions. Regular meetings with parents of the refugee students participating in IPPS would have been beneficial.
- Students that took part in activities during school hours (e.g. TAFE Tasters and Careers forum) needed to be accompanied by a teacher - this required a high level of commitment by schools.
- In order to attend professional learning activities during the school day, teachers had to obtain time release from their schools. As the activities were not compulsory, not all key teaching staff that would have benefited from the sessions attended.

Recommendations

- That the Migrant Information Centre write to the Regional Director of DEECD Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) seeking clarification on the accountabilities that are in place to measure how effectively schools are meeting the needs of refugee students within existing career and transition resources and support services such as MIPs programs and funding.
- That EMR DEECD survey schools on how current careers and transition resources are being used by career advisors to assist them in working with students from diverse cultural background and providing appropriate education/employment pathways information for refugee students. EMR DEECD to analyse the survey results to identify areas where services provided by careers advisors could be strengthened through professional development and to work with other providers to deliver appropriate professional development to meet any identified gaps.
- That the Migrant Information Centre write to the General Manager of Youth Transitions Division requesting that information for parents and students about work experience and structured workplace learning be translated into the languages of newly arrived communities. This information should include a guide to completing the forms associated with workplace learning activities.
- That Central DEECD ESL and Youth Transitions Division staff investigate how further CALD based curriculum resources for workplace learning including Occupational Health and Safety activities could be developed.
- That the Migrant Information Centre write to the General Manager of VCAA requesting that information on senior secondary options be translated into the languages of newly arrived communities.
- That the Migrant Information Centre request that the provider of Youth Connections services include the visa number of students in student destinations data.
- That Local Learning and Employment Networks (Gateways and Outer East) continue to track the students who have participated in the ERPP project.
- That the Local Learning and Employment Networks (Gateways and Outer East) coordinate the planning and delivery of an annual Careers Forum for newly arrived/young people.
- That the ESL area of EMR DEECD coordinate an annual Professional Learning session for teachers working with refugee young people.
- That Central DEECD ESL and Youth Transitions Division staff make the careers and transition resources developed by the ERPP available on the DEECD website.
- That Central DEECD ESL and Youth Transitions Division staff investigate how the electronic resource (wiki) developed by the ERPP can be made available in a centralised, readily accessible way, such as through the DEECD Ultrahome or FUSE portal.
- That the Local Learning and Employment Networks (Gateway and Outer East) continue the negotiation to establish a bridging program for refugee young people of post-compulsory school age (17-26 years old) at a TAFE institute in the Eastern Metropolitan Region be continued to ensure that a program is implemented. The TAFE Institute should work together with local communities and stakeholders to develop the program that should be based on successful models operating in TAFE institutes in other regions of Melbourne.

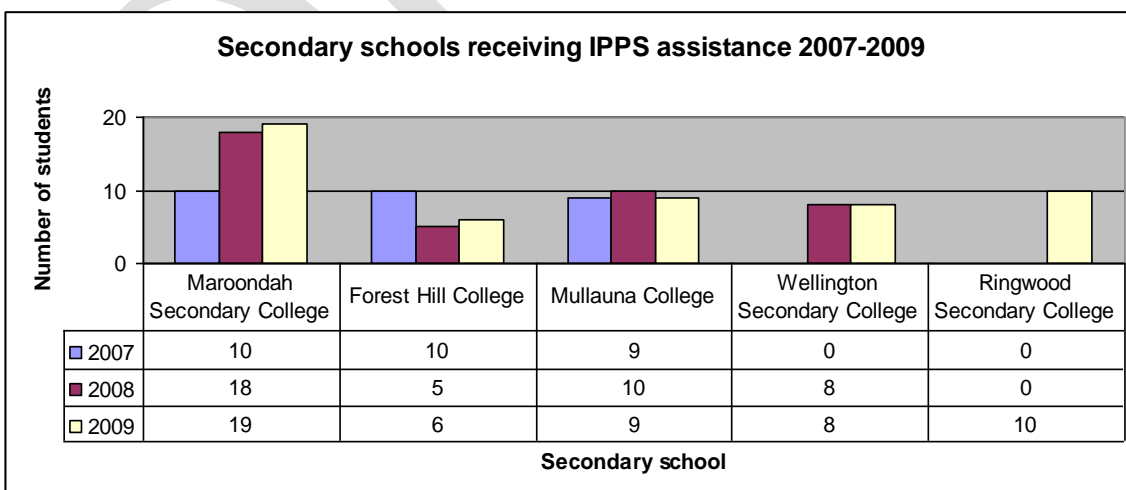
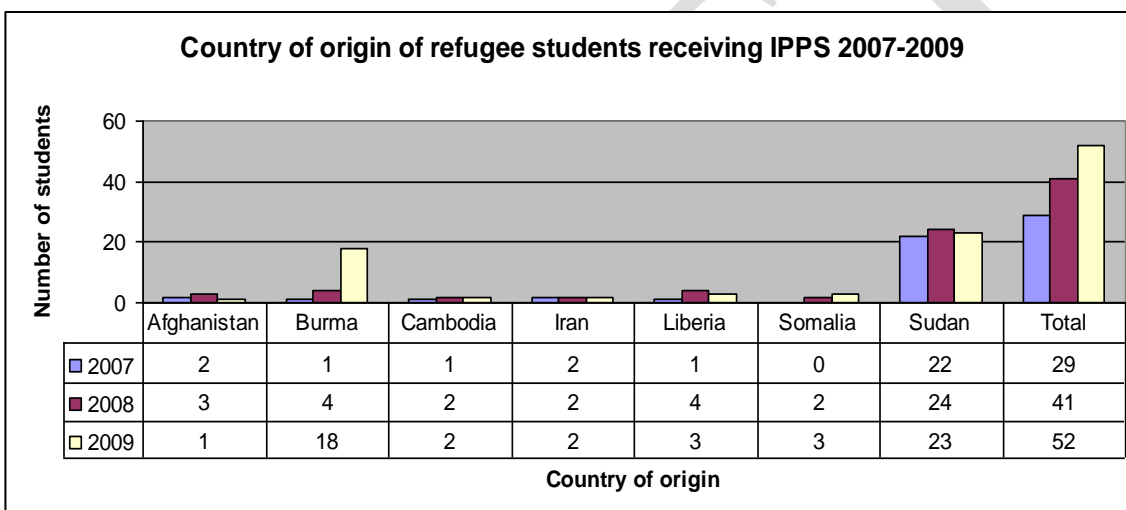
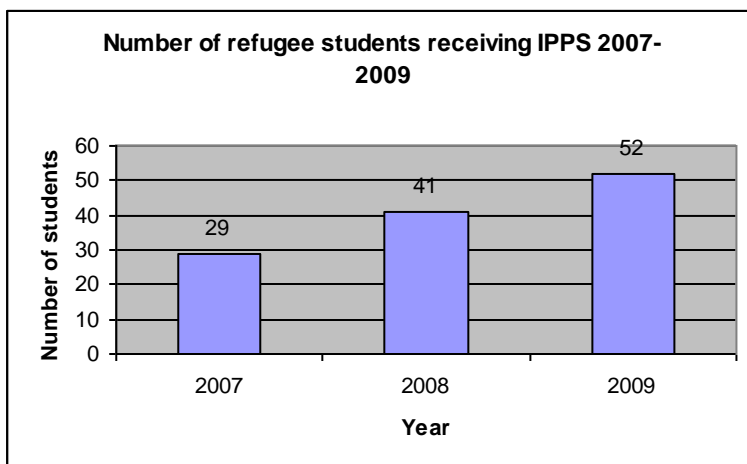
Appendices

Appendix 1 - Eastern Refugee Pathways Project Model

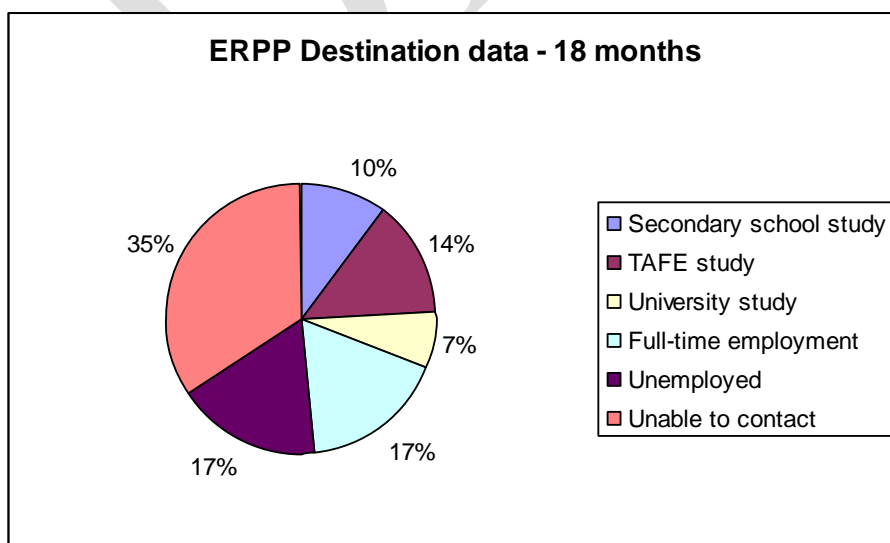
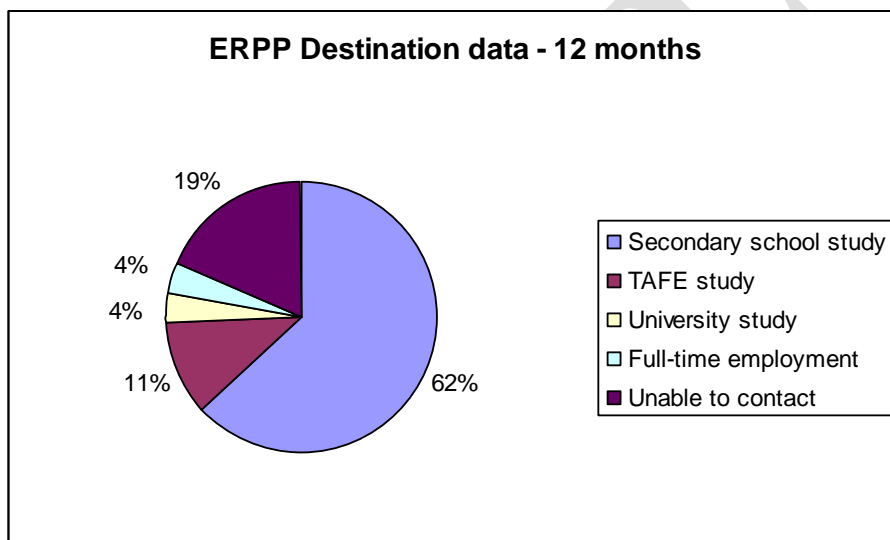
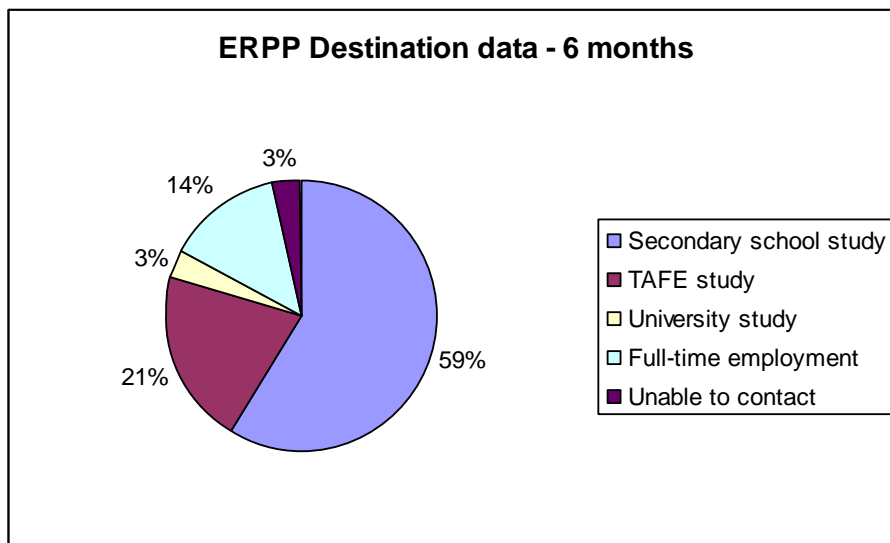


Appendix 2: Eastern Refugee Pathways Project Final Report

Demographic data 2007-2009



Appendix 3: Eastern Refugee Pathways Project Final Report
Tracking data: ERPP Stage 1 destination data (6 months, 12 months, 18 months)



Appendix 4: Eastern Refugee Pathways Project Final Report
VCE, VCAL and VET course data 2008-2009

