



Responding to CALD Learners:

Cultural Diversity in Action

Responding to CALD Learners: *Cultural Diversity in Action*

A report prepared by AMES for the ACFE Board

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Foreword

As culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities increasingly settle in both rural and metropolitan regions in Victoria, the Adult, Community and Further Education Board is aware of the challenges facing Learn Local organisations as they respond to these learners' needs.

The *Responding to CALD Learners* project was conducted over four years to build the capacity of Learn Local organisations in Victoria to deliver education services to CALD learners. Led by Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES), it provided research, professional development and action research for Learn Local practitioners.

This resource is a culmination of the research and learning undertaken by AMES and the participating Learn Local organisations. It is work that has practical application for organisations providing programs for CALD communities. It emphasises the role of culture in successful provision for communities, provides suggestions for professional development to ensure practitioners can better support the cultural and linguistic needs of their CALD learners, and offers many insights into the meaning of good practice.

This interesting and useful resource will assist further understanding of the implications of cultural differences for teaching practice and improve the quality of learning experiences for CALD learners.

The ACFE Board is proud to have funded this project and acknowledges gratefully the funding assistance from the Victorian Government which made this project possible.



Rowena Allen

Chairperson

Adult, Community and Further Education Board



Introduction

The resource

This resource has been developed to support the delivery by Learn Local organisations of quality education and training to people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

The resource was developed as part of the *Responding to CALD Learners* initiative funded by the Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board and managed by AMES.

The resource contains:

- a framework of good practice with strategies for achieving and maintaining a whole of organisation approach to CALD learners
- an exploration of the good practice principles of Engagement, Supportive Learning Environments and Supported Pathways
- case studies of Learn Local practice illustrating the good practice principles
- a guide to implementing collaborative action research to improve decision-making and achieve whole of organisation change
- extracts from the collaborative action research undertaken by Learn Local organisations to investigate aspects of the good practice principles
- key messages and insights from the action research projects together with suggestions for professional development and further capacity building
- a guide to resources to support professional development, planning and the delivery of services to CALD learners
- an exploration of the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in Victoria, which provides context for the framework and the action research.

The resource is complemented by the full reports of the Learn Local action research projects funded by the *Responding to CALD Learners* initiative.

To read these reports, visit www.acfe.vic.gov.au

Because refugees and migrants are different groups of people, with different pre-arrival experiences, it is important that the distinction be made in the services provided. Refugees have needs distinct from and additional to migrants.

Refugee Council of Australia (2012)

The CALD learners

This resource focuses on addressing the needs of CALD adults of working age who, for a range of reasons, need specific support to successfully access education, training and appropriate employment opportunities.

These CALD adults may be unemployed or in the workforce but in low-paid occupations that under-utilise their skills.

The past experiences of refugee entrants often leave them with very high support needs. They may have little or no education and work skills because of war and civil unrest, or years living in refugee camps. They may have experienced trauma resulting from human rights abuses and loss or separation from family members.

Small and emerging communities may be even more vulnerable than more established refugee communities because they lack established support systems and community resources relative to more established communities (FECCA 2010:12).

The less formal and more personalised service delivery of Learn Local organisations is ideal for responding to these needs.

As the action research projects show, engaging with CALD learners and providing appropriately for their needs can be particularly challenging in:

- areas of settlement by new and emerging CALD communities
- areas of rapid growth in cultural and linguistic diversity
- areas of new CALD settlement.

Victoria's population continues to diversify through our skilled migration program with each new wave of refugees and as CALD communities increasingly settle in regional and rural Australia.

As a result, Learn Local organisations will increasingly face the challenge of responding to the changing demographics of their local communities in order to appropriately address the needs of new CALD residents.



Introduction cont'd

The education and training context

The *Responding to CALD Learners* initiative has aimed to build the capacity of the Learn Local sector to deliver effective services to CALD learners within the refocussed Victorian Vocational Education and Training (VET) system.

Learn Local organisations have a vital role in the delivery of this training to CALD learners because of the sector's expertise in providing for marginalised communities and individuals.

Customised courses and the pre-accredited courses delivered by Learn Local organisations provide valuable support for engaging with CALD communities and in supporting CALD learners along education and training pathways (DPCD 2009:11).

This resource provides guidelines and insights into establishing and maintaining a whole of organisation approach to assisting CALD learners to access and move along these pathways into employment and productive community engagement.

In particular, the resource emphasises the role of culture in successful communication and in shaping expectations of education, training, the workplace and ways of gaining employment.

The resource provides insights into what this means in practice and suggestions for professional development so practitioners can better support both the cultural and linguistic needs of their CALD learners.

For migrant and refugee job seekers finding paid work is vital to their successful settlement and integration into the Australian community. Meaningful employment also ensures that they can be part of the social and economic life of the communities in which they settle.

AHRC (2010:15)

Case study

A supported pathway to employment

'Joanna' completed Year 10 in a camp on the Thai–Burma border and then worked as a primary teacher in the camp. She arrived in Australia in May 2006. Two years later, after completing her federally funded entitlements, she moved into ACFE-funded ESL classes at Wyndham Community and Education Centre (WCEC) — a Learn Local organisation. In 2009, she did a bridging course into Certificate III in Children's Services, an online ESL class and also volunteered at our centre whenever an interpreter was needed.

Joanna also joined WCEC's Community Kitchen Program in 2009. This Community Learning Partnership Project targeted newly arrived refugees mainly from the Karen and Sudanese communities and provided informal training in the workings of a commercial kitchen. In June 2009, Joanna became a paid employee as the group branched out into catering. She received her Level I Certificate in Food Safety that year.

Saffron Kitchen and Cafe now operates five days a week providing delicious vegetarian lunches, coffee and cake to the wider community. Joanna works on a permanent part-time basis with WCEC and now mentors other recently arrived refugees.

Judy Bowman: Manager of Training Services, Wyndham Community and Education Centre

Action research

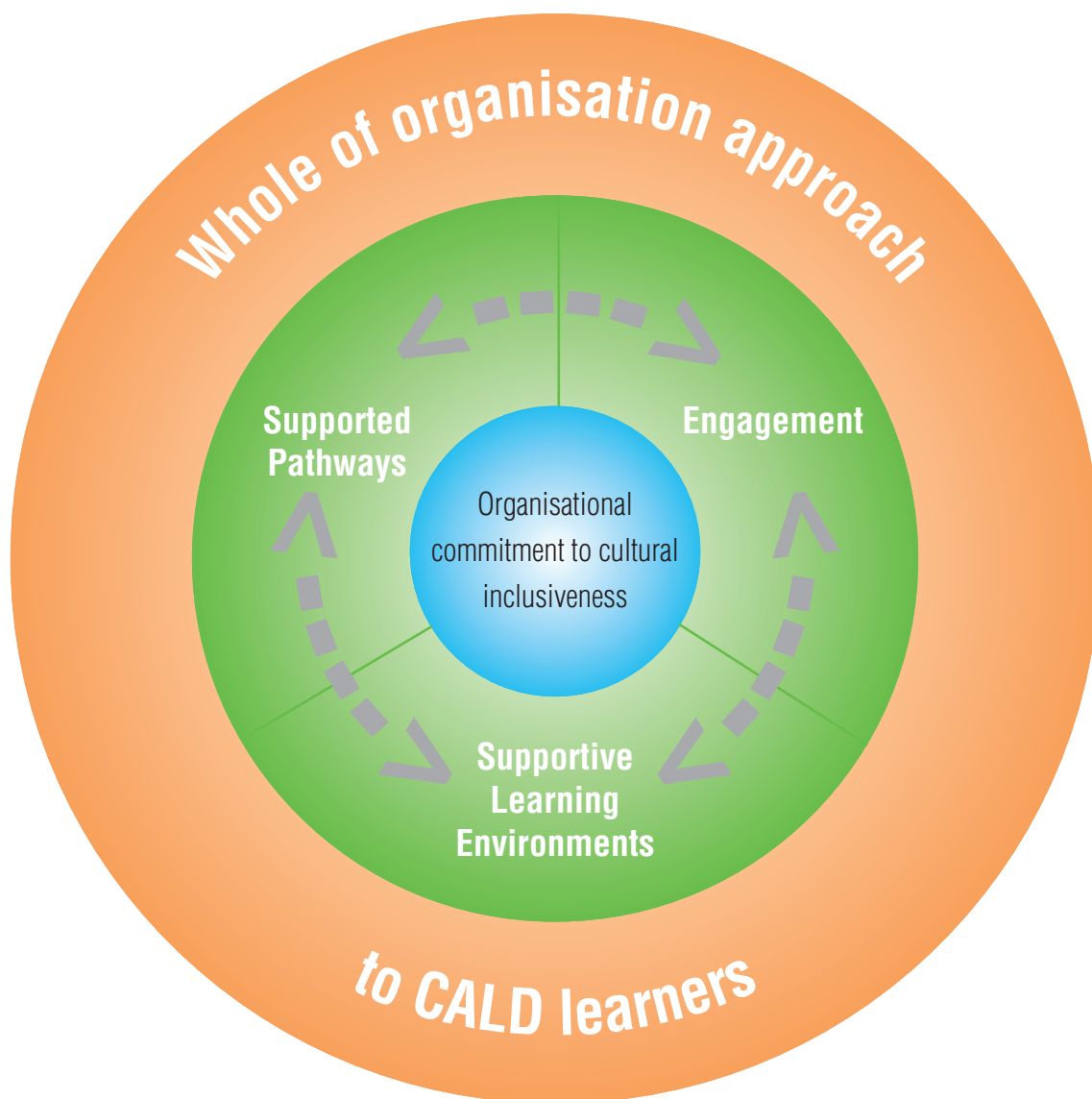
Partnering for engagement (extract)

Dynamic changes in the demographics of the eastern suburbs of Melbourne are demanding that practitioners in Learn Local organisations think about how we engage and support CALD learners along pathways to employment. With established communities of skilled migrants, the eastern metropolitan region of Melbourne is rapidly diversifying both culturally and linguistically through the recent movement into the region of former refugees. As a result, it is becoming imperative to change or adapt our practice to meet the diverse needs of our new learner groups. The question of how to do that and what constitutes good practice focused our attention in the action research project. ...

Leanne Fitzgerald & Debbie Whitehead: Coonara Community House



Framework of good practice



Engagement

This principle relates to the initial connections made with local CALD communities. Emerging CALD communities and CALD communities in areas with changing settlement patterns can be particularly hard to reach.

Supportive Learning Environments

This principle addresses both the language and cultural needs of CALD learners in education and training courses. Achieving this component of good practice may involve re-evaluating teaching and assessment practices.

Supported Pathways

This principle is concerned with maximising CALD learners' awareness of, and opportunities to participate in, further education, training and meaningful employment. It involves recognising that employment and ways of gaining it are intrinsically cultural.

A whole of organisation approach to CALD learners

This framework of good practice has evolved from activities conducted during the ACFE *Responding to CALD Learners* initiative, from the insights of people who participated in those activities and from the academic literature.

The framework provides a guide to developing and maintaining a whole of organisation approach to CALD learners—an approach that demonstrates commitment to cultural inclusiveness in management practice and service delivery.

Our adult refugees often live underachieving lives of quiet despair. They are unemployed, driving taxis or cleaning buildings, struggling to understand English, battling money pressures, depression and traumatic memories. We need to help these people to find realistic messages of hope, optimism, encouragement and renewal in all their activities from English classes to employment support.

Ahmed (2008:26)

Three key principles of good practice in responding to CALD learners have been identified:

- Engagement
- Supportive Learning Environments
- Supported Pathways.

The framework presents strategies to be considered when translating the principles into practice and describes aspects of those strategies. Aspects of some strategies appear in more than one location. This reflects the overlapping nature of the key principles.

Case studies of good Learn Local practice illustrate the strategies and the key principles of the whole of organisation approach to CALD learners.

When using the framework it would be useful to refer to the ACFE publication *A-frame: A framework for quality pre-accredited teaching and learning* (ACFE 2009), as pre-accredited courses have an essential role in supporting CALD learners' pathways into formal learning and employment.

It would also be useful to refer to the ACFE publication *Hard to reach learners: What works in reaching and keeping them?* (Nechvoglod & Beddie 2010), because, as the action research projects vividly demonstrate, connecting with some CALD communities can prove difficult.

Refer also to the 'Guide to resources' in this publication.

Framework of good practice cont'd

Principle 1: Engagement

What is it?

Engagement refers to the *initial* connections made with local CALD communities. Emerging CALD communities and CALD communities in areas with changing settlement patterns can be particularly hard to reach.

Related action research projects:

- Diamond Valley Learning Centre
- Coonara Community House and Mulgrave Neighbourhood House
- Robinvale Network House

Strategies to achieve Engagement are:

Strategy 1: Identify the changing demographics of your local communities

- Local organisations and institutions, e.g. schools, your council, employment agencies and faith-based groups, can provide information about who is moving into your neighbourhood.
- State Government agencies, e.g. the Department of Planning and Community Development, and the Office of Housing, have information on local demographics.
- Census data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) website and many local council websites have statistics on local ethnic diversity and languages spoken.

Strategy 2: Understand the cultures and backgrounds of new CALD communities

- Traumatic pre-arrival experiences may continue to reverberate through the lives of individuals, families and communities.
- Experiences prior to arrival in Australia may have resulted in little or no schooling and/or fractured work histories for many refugees. Others may be highly educated but need English language skills and cultural orientation to employment suited to their qualifications.

- Cultural backgrounds affect people's expectations of the learning context, e.g. time-keeping requirements and the level of formality between teachers and students. CALD learners may need time and assistance to understand and adjust to Australian expectations.
- 'Oral culture' does not necessarily mean an absence of literacy. It is a cultural preference for the way information is conveyed and received. Culturally appropriate transmission of information will increase the effectiveness of the communication.

Strategy 3: Develop innovative ways to reach new CALD communities

- Provision for adult learning may be unknown in some cultures or in war-ravaged or impoverished countries. A proactive approach is required to reach such groups.
- Openness towards a new cultural group, a readiness to learn more and a willingness to listen will go a long way towards engendering the trust required for building relationships with new CALD communities.
- Building relationships with key stakeholders within CALD communities or with organisations in existing relationships with the community can lead to productive engagement with new communities.
- Language, literacy, educational backgrounds and cultural preferences impact on the effectiveness of using written promotional materials. Explore a range of interpersonal modes of sharing information when attempting to reach communities from highly oral cultural backgrounds. Even amongst literate members, this is often the preferred mode of communication. Consequently, flyers etc. (the impersonal and non-interactive products of a highly literate society) may not achieve their goal.

Case study

Connecting with new CALD residents

Cloverdale Community Centre is a Learn Local organisation in central Corio, a suburb of the regional Victorian city of Geelong. In partnership with Diversitat, another Learn Local organisation, we looked at ways of working with people from South Sudan who were newly settling in our area. There was concern that the women, in particular, were experiencing social isolation and a degree of racism. At Cloverdale, we had never previously specifically engaged with CALD communities.

We organised an African Open Day. Flyers (in English with a map of Africa) were printed and distributed both to the Sudanese community by Diversitat and locally through Cloverdale's networks. No-one came. We then had meetings with some of the South Sudanese women who lived nearby and had been introduced to the centre. It emerged that what the women wanted was to learn to 'cook like Australians'. The issue of food had become fraught for them: the women travelling weekly to Melbourne to shop for ingredients that were not available in Geelong; a feeling of disempowerment when they entered an Australian supermarket; and their children refusing to take food cooked at home to school.

We developed a series of cooking classes, informally called 'Cooking Australian'. Times and dates were set in consultation with the women to ensure there were no clashes with school drop-offs and English classes. The women were recruited in partnership with Diversitat, transport was provided, a crèche worker was provided, and a qualified chef employed. We incorporated weekly reminder calls. The course was developed collaboratively and included quick family meals, school lunches, healthy foods and a balanced diet, food hygiene and how to integrate Sudanese food and techniques into Australian cooking. We made a recipe book of meals with photographs.

Over time it became apparent that what the women had really wanted, but had been unable to articulate while relationships were still new, was to learn how to use the appliances found in an ordinary Australian kitchen and learn about readily available ingredients. They also wanted to meet people from the wider community in a social space that was welcoming, non-threatening and celebrated their cultural identities.

Cooking Australian was the beginning of our engagement with South Sudanese women that still continues. Since the cooking program, a larger group of women have participated in a sewing and textile project, formed a fundraising group to provide water wells in South Sudan, and have started to video and record their activities. And this year Cloverdale hosted a South Sudan Day and many came!

Sue Hartigan: Manager, Cloverdale Community Centre

Framework of good practice cont'd

Case study

Engaging Sudanese women in training

As a Learn Local Organisation, Wyndham Community and Education Centre has provided an English as a Second Language (ESL) class for Sudanese women at an outreach centre over many years. The class was timetabled to allow learners to have access to child care for their children. This option was not taken up by all the women—they either brought their children to class or were continually leaving class to check on them.

In response to this we developed a course called 'Starting Out in Child Care' aimed at developing the women's understanding of the rules and regulations that child care centres are bound by—they would become familiar with what happens in child care and, hopefully, become more confident in leaving their children there so that they could concentrate on their English class.

The ten-week course was conducted in the child care room by a qualified child care worker. Mothers and children attended the classes together. Topics included child care procedures, e.g. signing in and out, phoning if not coming, activities related to medicine labels, snacks to send with children (and what not to send), allowing children to develop independence, party invitations and how to respond to them, reading to children and games to play.

The course greatly allayed the women's fears of leaving their children with strangers and also, for some, turned out to be the beginnings of a pathway towards employment in the Children's Services industry.

Judy Bowman: Manager of Training Services, Wyndham Community and Education Centre

Strategy 4: Consult with communities about their needs

- Community members themselves are a prime source of information about their educational and social needs. Consult women about their needs and men about theirs. Gender appropriate investigators will usually give more effective results, e.g. women talking to women.
- Gaining the trust of community leaders is essential for consultation when community members are unaccustomed to the notion of adult education, have limited English language skills or have a general distrust of authority because of their previous experiences of oppressive regimes.
- Community leaders can be a bridge into the community, but not the voice of the community. Communities do not speak with one voice.

Strategy 5: Promote social inclusion

- Reflect the cultural diversity of your local community throughout your organisation—in classrooms, in staffrooms, and on boards and committees. This will help to build trust among CALD communities and the confidence to contact your organisation. Feelings of belonging will be enhanced by the use of graphics that reflect the cultural diversity of the local community.
- Evaluate your organisational practices and procedures, such as enrolment, to ensure they are non-discriminatory.
- Contact between the mainstream and CALD communities in all social, educational and training services will help to foster understanding between communities. It will provide CALD communities with a chance to interact in English, make social connections and explore work possibilities.

- Social inclusion activities can be a first step on a pathway to more formal education and training. Social inclusion activities can sit alongside pre-accredited and accredited courses so that learners can shift between courses and activities and remain engaged with your organisation.

Inclusion is imperative to successful settlement and achievement. Refugee communities are marginalised and disempowered by distance from the mainstream. All refugee settlement and education services must be structured to maximise contact with the mainstream and to minimise partitioning. Shared social space has to be established from the outset. The more refugees interact and connect with the mainstream, the greater the tendency to natural friendship formation, acceptance, integration and access to the crucial word-of-mouth job market.

Ahmed (2008:26)



Framework of good practice cont'd

Principle 2: Supportive Learning Environments

What is it?

Supportive Learning Environments address both the language and cultural needs of CALD learners in education and training courses. Achieving this component of good practice may involve re-evaluating training and assessment practices.

Related action research projects:

- Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE)
- Diversitat
- Portland WorkSkills

Strategies to achieve Supportive Learning Environments are:

Strategy 6: Develop the intercultural skills of staff

- Evaluation of staff needs for dealing with cultural and linguistic diversity should be on-going and include input from CALD communities.
- Quality in-service training in cultural and linguistic diversity for all staff includes such things as cultural competence training for board members and strategies for communicating with people with limited English language skills for administrative and training staff.
- At least one staff member skilled in assessing English language levels is invaluable for course placement and for ascertaining the support needs of CALD learners in VET and other mainstream classes.

Strategy 7: Acknowledge the cultural nature of education and training

- Classroom expectations and ways of learning differ from culture to culture. For example, in many cultures people are accustomed to learning by watching and doing. People from oral cultures are likely to appreciate an interactive learning environment in which they engage with others.
- Employability skills are fundamentally culture-specific. Activities that enable CALD learners to become familiar with and internalise these new cultural expectations and behaviours can be built into all course levels. Courses need to be of sufficient duration for intercultural communication skills and new cultural understandings to be acquired and internalised.
- Training approaches that draw on the experiences of CALD learners make valuable contributions to the development of intercultural understanding so essential in today's multicultural society and workforce.

... successful communication in multicultural workplaces is not just a question of people from other cultural backgrounds fitting in. It is a two-way process in which members of majority cultures need to develop intercultural competence, to display empathy and support for colleagues who are not fully conversant with local communication norms.

Riddiford & Newton (2010:8)

Case study

Work-related ESL

Community West is a small but dynamic Learn Local organisation in the Brimbank local government area. We have a large cohort of learners from CALD communities and about 90% of our delivery is ESL. Within that, more than 55% of our learners are Vietnamese speakers who have experienced long-term unemployment or only informal employment.

When we asked the staff at a local Job Services Agency what their clients (our learners) needed, the answer was: the ability to speak in the workplace. They told us that clients are often sent for work trials and/or work experience but are too shy to speak English, don't know how to ask for clarification, or don't have work vocabulary (e.g. rosters) or small talk for interacting with workmates in the tea room.

We now include a range of authentic work-related language activities in our ESL classes. For example, we have a class roster for the week with people taking on different roles and responsibilities such as collecting homework and giving out dictionaries. A Find Your Partner activity could use sentences such as: 'It's been a long day!' / 'Sure has, time to go home' and 'Sorry, can I just check I've got that right?' / 'Yeah, sure, let's go over it again'.

For more small talk practice we convert the classroom into the 'tearoom' and have prompt 'starters' on slips of paper, e.g. 'How was your weekend?', 'How are things?', 'Wasn't the traffic hopeless this morning?' and 'My kids have gone to camp—the house is so quiet without them'. Others have to think of ways of continuing the conversation.

We also set homework at places like Bunnings where they can wander around for hours without being looked at askance. Learners listen to staff talking to customers and staff talking to staff. They report back to class and the authentic oral texts they collect are analysed and role played.

Feedback from our learners is that they see these workplace language activities as relevant to their lives and job-related aspirations. They give meaning to their learning.

Lindee Conway: Manager, Adult Education Program, Community West

Framework of good practice cont'd

Strategy 8: Establish support programs for CALD learners in VET

- Support programs for CALD learners need to focus on the development of both language skills and cultural understandings. Support models include 'bridging courses' conducted before VET training, team teaching by a VET trainer and ESL teacher in the same room, or pre-accredited and accredited courses running concurrently.
- Support programs need to embed the language, literacy and cultural skills development in the training context, and recycle industry-specific language and concepts in a variety of contexts relevant to the training. Support models that link directly and immediately to the training are the most effective.
- Close working relationships between ESL teachers/tutors and VET trainers increase the skills and understandings of both specialists. Team teaching can enhance the development of language and literacy skills of all learners as well as the development of cultural understandings of Australian workplaces.
- When CALD learner numbers are small, trained ESL volunteer tutors can support learning needs in mainstream classes. In some rural areas the spouses of skilled migrants find it difficult to gain employment—some may appreciate the opportunity to take on the role of ESL volunteer tutors.

Case study

Volunteer support for VET

Based in Melbourne's east, where CALD settlement has grown in recent years, the Learn Local organisation Waverley Adult Literacy Program has shaped its long standing volunteer tutor program to provide for changing needs. Each year, up to twenty volunteer tutors are trained, starting with an initial twenty-hour training program followed by opportunities to observe trained teachers in classrooms. To equip volunteer tutors to work with CALD learners, the initial training includes sessions on working with CALD learners and follow-up sessions on topics such as pronunciation, conversation, and supporting CALD learners in VET.

After training, volunteer tutors are placed in a range of situations: matched for one-on-one work or timetabled to provide classroom support; and volunteer tutors work with adult literacy learners, people with mild intellectual disabilities, basic computer trainees who have language or literacy needs, as well as with CALD learners.

Our flourishing volunteer tutor program enabled us to respond quickly and effectively when a large Registered Training Organisation approached us for help with five CALD learners who were unlikely to complete Certificate III in Aged Care without additional language support. We set up a support program where each CALD learner was matched with a volunteer tutor, and all five pairs met to work under the guidance of an experienced teacher. All five gained the certificate, four got work shortly afterwards and one stayed on to enrol in a language and literacy class with us.

Gloria Parker: Coordinator, Waverley Adult Literacy Program

Strategy 9: Re-evaluate teaching and assessment practices

- The relevance of ESL classes will be maximised when authentic work-related language and employment awareness-raising activities are integrated into the course.
- ESL classes with learners with similar levels of English enable teachers and tutors to more successfully address the language learning needs of CALD learners.
- Particular difficulties face those with little or no formal education. Strategies may need to be developed to raise learner awareness of the importance of time-keeping and regular attendance in training courses. Abstract graphics such as maps and charts may be unfamiliar to some learners—some learning support materials may, in fact, confuse learners.
- Delivery and assessment practices that reflect preferred learning modes lead to more productive outcomes, e.g. hands-on learning opportunities can develop and demonstrate job-related skills, while non-written assessment tasks can concretely demonstrate competency.
- Ensure VET training delivery and assessment tasks are culturally and linguistically inclusive, i.e. they do not assume a cultural knowledge or vocabulary beyond industry requirements, and written tasks do not use complex grammatical structures.



Framework of good practice cont'd

Principle 3: Supported Pathways

What is it?

Supported Pathways maximise CALD learners' awareness of, and opportunities to participate in, further education, training and meaningful employment. It involves recognising that employment and ways of gaining it are intrinsically cultural in nature.

Related action research projects:

- North Melbourne Language and Learning
- On-Track Training and Employment

Strategies to achieve Supported Pathways are:

Strategy 10: Embed pathways support into program delivery

- Assisting students to understand their options and to plan to achieve their goals is essential for their navigating of the funding system and making the 'right' training choices. Adopt a holistic approach to pathways support that encompasses the reality of individual learner's lives and commitments.
- It is never too early to begin raising learners' awareness of pathways options and possibilities. Incorporating pathways support into all levels of delivery will build reluctant learners' motivation to move along a pathway. Awareness of pathways into suitable employment will ensure that skilled refugees do not remain trapped in entry-level employment.
- Role models and mentors help to build CALD learners' confidence to pursue goals. Rewarding achievement, e.g. through a small ceremony on course completion, will maintain learner enthusiasm for movement along a pathway towards individual goals.
- Focus on existing strengths and 'resilience' rather than barriers to gaining employment.

- Expectations of ways of gaining employment differ from culture to culture. Implement strategies to improve CALD learners' knowledge of the labour market, local employment opportunities, and how to gain employment.
- Develop partnerships with other organisations to provide effective pathways.

Strategy 11: Explore the culture-specific nature of workplaces

- Even where the same industry exists in the CALD learner's country of origin, there may be differing cultural understandings of how that industry operates, e.g. customer service expectations differ greatly from culture to culture. CALD learners need orienting to these cultural differences and need to participate in activities to raise awareness of Australian cultural expectations.
- Unpack workplace expectations and explore cultural differences in these expectations during training and before work placement. This includes such things as culturally appropriate ways of relating to supervisors and colleagues. Unlearning previous socialisation does not come easily, and needs to be explicitly examined and practised in training.
- 'Incidental chat' and humour play an important role in the workplace, e.g. in teamwork. Build into courses the opportunity to experience and practise these culture-specific ways of interacting.

Cultural knowledge is not something that learners can just pick up. In fact, cultural differences may often go unnoticed by learners until they actually create a problem. If learners are going to develop their cultural knowledge about the target language group, they need to be helped to notice when their own culture differs from that of others and they need to notice this before it creates problems.

Liddicoat (2000:10)

Strategy 12: Maximise opportunities to experience the Australian work context

- The inclusion of work placement in courses increases CALD learners' potential to gain employment. It provides the relevant local experience frequently required by employers and provides CALD learners with opportunities to come to terms with workplace expectations and experience employability skills in action.
- Orientation to the workplace before work experience helps learners to adjust their expectations. Debrief with CALD learners after work placement to continue unpacking cultural differences in workplace expectations.
- Training that mirrors the workplace provides hands-on practice of specific work tasks and a safe environment for coming to terms with culturally different work practices and expectations, e.g. working in teams, working to a schedule and OHS.
- Volunteering in local organisations also provides opportunities to gain valuable experience of Australian workplaces. Develop relationships with local employers to increase the volunteering opportunities for your CALD learners.
- Contact between employers and CALD learners helps to nurture intercultural understanding, social inclusion and productive community engagement.

Learn Local collaborative action research

Good Practice Principle	Learn Local organisation	Title	Action Research focus
Engagement	Diamond Valley Learning Centre (DVLC)	Paddocks to pathways: Connecting with new CALD communities	Situated in a growth corridor, DVLC's research documents a search to identify and reach CALD communities in order to provide appropriate courses for the CALD settlers moving into their rapidly growing catchment area.
	Coonara Community House and Mulgrave Neighbourhood House	Partnering for engagement	Located in an area of changing CALD demographics, the two organisations investigated how they could best identify and meet the training needs of their new CALD communities.
	Robinvale Network House	Church, choir and kava: Consulting Pacific Islander communities	In the hope of improving retention rates and opening up pathways to further study, Robinvale Network House identified and trialled strategies for enhancing their provision for local Pacific Islander communities.
Supportive Learning Environments	Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE)	Team teaching for language and culture	The PRACE research documents an ESL teacher's growing awareness, as she team taught with a VET trainer, of the linguistic and cultural needs of the CALD trainee cleaners in an Asset Maintenance course.
	Diversitat	Cultural hurdles in aged care work	This study identified cultural and linguistic issues impacting on the work placements and subsequent employment of CALD learners in Certificate III in Aged Care. This led to the trialling of a range of support initiatives.
	Portland WorkSkills	Working with cultural and linguistic diversity in Portland	With growing numbers of CALD learners, Portland WorkSkills focused on enhancing the way the organisation as a whole engages with and provides for cultural and linguistic diversity.
Supported Pathways	North Melbourne Language & Learning	Positive pathways	This action research focused on how to best provide systematic and consultative further study and vocational pathways advice, especially to women from the Horn of Africa who often present particular challenges.
	On Track Training and Employment	Bridging the employment gap in Bendigo	On Track researched the needs, expectations and attitudes of local employers in order to develop training strategies to improve the work readiness of CALD learners from the newly emerging Karen community in Bendigo.

A critical component of the *Responding to CALD Learners* initiative was the identification and implementation of collaborative action research projects by Learn Local organisations. The action research projects shed light on aspects of the good practice principles of Engagement, Supportive Learning Environments and Supported Pathways.

The research was conducted by Learn Local managers, coordinators, VET trainers and ESL teachers. It was conducted in diverse locations ranging from inner-city Melbourne with its high density CALD populations, to outer Melbourne growth corridors, and to the South West, North East and Central regions of Victoria.

While no two organisations, locations or issues are identical, the findings and processes of these action research projects will provide valuable directions for other service providers.

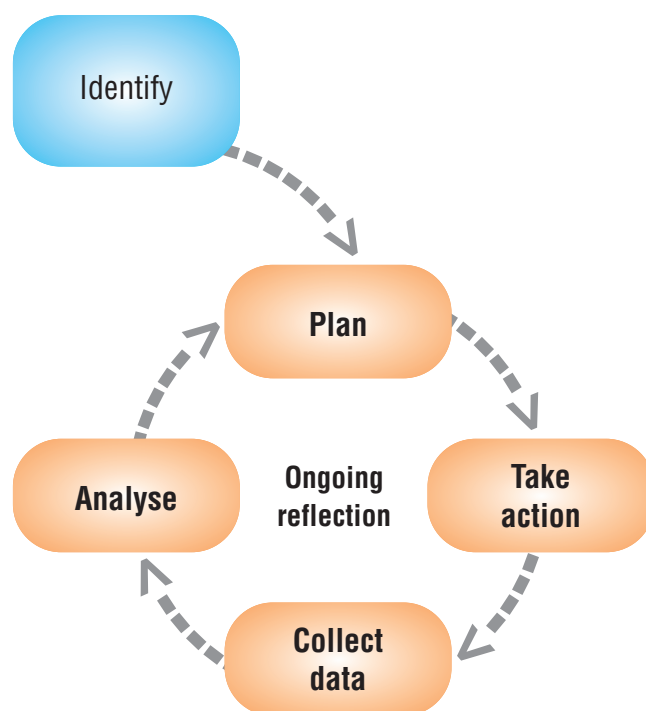
Reflection on action

Action research is a process of reflective engagement with one's own professional practice. Staff identify an issue affecting the organisation's provision for CALD learners, then begin an ongoing cycle of reflection on action. This involves planning how to investigate the issue, taking action by implementing those plans, collecting information through both observation and formal data gathering techniques, and then analysing the information in order to plan for the next cycle of research.

Critical reflection

A critically reflexive approach involves questioning one's own assumptions and acknowledging that there may be other (cultural) perspectives. Critical reflection essentially involves asking the question: 'Are we part of the problem?'

Action research cycle



Action research

Working with cultural and linguistic diversity in Portland (extract)

Located on the south-west coast of Victoria, not far from the border with South Australia, Portland is a city of over 10,000 people. ... A few months before this project began, we at Learn Local organisation Portland WorkSkills were experiencing growth in our enrolments of CALD learners. ... Engaging and catering for these learners in training at WorkSkills is underpinned by the WorkSkills Managing Diversity Policy. As a collaborative team we were proud of how we had put this policy into practice. However, we believed we could do better. We decided that a major focus in our strategic planning for 2012 would be on our delivery to CALD learners. However, we didn't want to base this planning on assumptions about what worked and what was needed—we wanted to build a reliable picture of our current situation.

Anne Mountford: Portland WorkSkills

Whole of organisation change

Collaborative action research involves a group of researchers working together or an individual researcher working with a collaborative team. The teams are actively involved in decision-making, planning and analysis. This provides support for the researchers and deeper understanding through discussion. The collaboration improves decision-making around identified issues and provides a powerful tool for whole of organisation change. Organisational capacity is strengthened by sharing the research and seeking feedback from colleagues throughout the process.

Information not assumption

Action researchers use multiple ways of collecting information including interviews, focus groups and journal keeping to record observations and reflections. They gather information from a range of sources, including CALD learners and CALD communities. This provides a range of perspectives and, by comparing and contrasting these perspectives, gives a sound basis on which to make decisions.

Ethical considerations

It is important that participants give their informed consent before taking part in interviews or other information gathering activities. Care must be taken that all participants understand the purpose of the research and that their involvement is voluntary. Researchers must take into consideration CALD participants' language levels and be sensitive to their backgrounds and any other concerns that may impact on their willingness to participate in an information gathering process.

Action research

Paddocks to pathways (extract)

Over the past three years, Learn Local organisation DVLC had put considerable effort into raising its profile in the northern growth corridor. Flyers were inserted into newspapers and letterboxes, and pressed into the hands of residents at community festivals. A variety of courses were also advertised, but failed to spark sufficient interest among CALD clients. It was this lack of success which led us to apply to do a research project related to the good practice principle of Engagement. ...

[End cycle 1] We had been focusing on the adults, but now realised it was *children* who were the key to making connections in these growth areas. With this new direction we identified the schools closest to DVLC in the target area and considered our tactics before picking up the phone. Sympathetic to the work load of school principals and the impatience of most people towards phone canvassing, we prepared a brief and to the point script outlining the background to the project and our involvement; our long experience at DVLC offering ESL classes; and our interest in offering adult classes in their area. And then came the critical question: *Is there a need for English classes in your school?*

[Cycle 2] We were heartened by the response of the seven schools we rang. All listened to our briefing and three expressed interest. But our spirits really lifted when one principal responded to our critical question with, 'I'd love that!' Her response inspired us—a way forward at last. Wasting not a minute, a meeting was organised at the school with the principal and specialist coordinators.

As we write, the organisational wheels are turning: a memorandum of understanding (MOU) is being drawn up by the school, a morning tea at the school is being arranged for CALD parents to meet DVLC teachers and we are planning an A-Frame curriculum with a focus on primary school issues. In the new year, classes will be publicised via the school's website and newsletters, and at an information evening and welcome barbeque. The prospects look extremely good for making real connections with CALD learners in the growth corridor in 2012.

Sue Paull & Julie Johnston: Diamond Valley Learning Centre

Key messages from the action research

Summary of learning	Key messages	Particular challenges	Good practice
	Initial connections require persistence and patience	Areas of demographic change Gaining community trust	A holistic approach Connect with communities through activities valued by the community
	The interaction of culture and language is complex and subtle	The 'Australian way' of communicating Employability skills are fundamentally culture-specific	Staff aware of intercultural communication issues Explicit awareness-raising activities incorporated into training and ESL classrooms
	Organisations need to foster close cooperation between specialists	Facilitating working relationships between ESL teachers and VET trainers Accessibility to CALD learners of training materials and assessments tasks	Whole of organisation commitment and support Audit training materials and assessment tasks for their cultural and linguistic inclusiveness
	Pathways support for CALD learners is essential	Many CALD learners need pathways advice to be provided by someone known and trusted CALD learners with limited educational backgrounds	On-going upgrading of staff knowledge of the training system, training options and employment possibilities Partnerships with organisations that can offer adequate support
	CALD learners need cultural orientation to Australian work practices	Explicitly unpacking cultural differences in work practices and expectations CALD learners with little, if any exposure to employer and employee relationship	In-class activities combined with practical and concrete experience Practical and concrete experience
	Organisations can foster employment possibilities	Raising employer awareness of benefits of employing CALD workers Countering misconceptions held by employers	Proactive advocacy Promote contact between local employers and potential CALD employees

Engagement

The action research projects investigating ways of connecting with CALD communities vividly show how challenging initial engagement can be for organisations.

Key message 1: Initial connections require persistence and patience

- In areas of changing demographics it can be difficult to even know *who* the potential learner groups are or *where* to find them.
- Networking with other organisations that already have connections with new CALD groups is essential.
- Potential CALD learners may be unaware of the services available to them, unaware of the role of a Learn Local organisation, or feel that they are not in a position to benefit from education and training, as was the case with the Pacific Islander groups in Robinvale.
- Trusted community leaders, either from within the community itself or from another organisation already working with them, may be the gateway to the community.
- Positive outcomes can result from connecting with people through activities, places and services important to their lives. As the Diamond Valley Learning Centre researchers found, connecting with CALD women through organisations and activities associated with their children can be particularly effective.
- Consultation enables the organisation to put into place a holistic approach that takes into account broader factors of peoples' lives.
- Small things, such as phoning to remind learners that their class is on, can be important in maintaining the engagement of CALD learners with limited educational experience or expectations.

Action research

Church, choir and kava (extract)

Our conventional methods of promoting our courses weren't reaching the Islander communities so we needed to try a more innovative approach. For the Tongan community, this meant a meeting at the Uniting Church following their evening worship. The Fijians invited us to join them in their evening choir practice which was held in a local home decorated in a traditional Fijian style. Our discussions took place over soup and kava following the singing. ...

We need to continue to listen to and consult with our CALD communities to develop other courses that specifically address their needs. Our Committee of Management has already endorsed a more consultative approach and we want to continue to build on our new and enhanced relationships. We value their opinions and have established an increased level of trust from both CALD communities, but particularly with the Fijians.

Through this project we have learnt a great deal both on a personal and an organisational level. We have seen how important it is to begin to engage our hard to reach Islander communities by reaching out to them, by going to where they are, and by talking to them about what is important to them. In this way—in showing that we are interested in them and their lives—we can begin to build relationships and trust. We have learnt the value of flexibility at the individual and the organisational level and we have learnt that small things—like texting learners to remind them that class is on—can make a big difference. Lastly, but very importantly, we have a greater cultural awareness of the communities that we are trying to engage but at the same time we are aware of how much more there is to learn ... and we realise our journey is only just beginning!

Andrea Manna: Learn Local organisation Robinvale Network House

Key messages from the action research cont'd

Supportive Learning Environments

The action research projects highlight the importance of addressing the 'cultural' component of cultural and linguistic diversity. They provide valuable insights into what this means in practice.

Key message 2: The interaction of culture and language is complex and subtle

- CALD learners in the Coonara and Mulgrave research pointed out that the 'Australian way' of communicating is challenging. As reasonably competent speakers of English, they were not referring to the grammar or the vocabulary but to a culturally defined understanding of appropriate and successful communication.
- Language is more than words and grammar. If, for example, CALD learners use formal language or omit the expected language 'softeners' they may be perceived as arrogant, unfriendly, demanding or as 'overstepping boundaries'. Alternatively, it could give the impression that the CALD learner's language skills are not adequate, even though the communication is grammatically correct.
- Communication as an employability skill encompasses 'being assertive' and 'persuading effectively'. How these are achieved differs from culture to culture. Even 'speaking clearly and directly' is culture-specific. As the Diversitat research clearly showed, training that makes the 'secret rules' of such communication explicit can be highly beneficial.
- To optimise CALD learners success in their chosen industry, role-plays and other activities for assisting CALD learners to internalise the 'secret rules' of successful communication will be most effective when based on authentic workplace situations.

Action research

Cultural hurdles in aged care (extract)

Another cultural hurdle encountered by our CALD learners was the 'hidden hierarchy' of the aged care workplace—a hierarchy obscured by workplace communication that has an aura of equality about it. Workers, and even the manager or director of nursing, call each other by a first name or nickname in a friendly fashion. This caused confusion in determining the line of command for some CALD learners. For example, a CALD learner reported that when instructed by a workplace 'buddy' to clean up the dining room tables, she thought, 'Why should I do that? I am the just same as her.' Yet when she questioned her about the fairness of the instruction, the buddy turned into a (not very pleased) superior!

Our research responses in the first cycle demonstrated that our CALD learners were unaware of what Yates (2008) refers to as the 'secret rules' of communication. By unpacking these culture-specific 'rules', we hoped to help our learners build the intercultural skills they would need for the aged care sector with its patterns of communication vacillating between formal and informal, direct and indirect. Without knowing the right way to express themselves, CALD learners can come across as hesitant and as not showing initiative. Alternatively, without the appropriate language 'softeners', they can be perceived as brusque or crossing a boundary in the sense of 'rising above one's station'. Adding 'please' to what is otherwise a demand ('Sign my time sheet') is simply not enough. CALD learners need to know how to use phrases that 'soften', i.e. how to apply a 'secret rule', such as, '*When you have time, could you sign my timesheet, please?*' or '*I was wondering if I could observe the resident of the day?*'

To put such communicative tasks into practice, I worked with a wide variety of unscripted role-plays contextualised in aged care. One learner reported that the role-play practice and the 'secret rules' of communication were the most beneficial support of all. In fact, she kept begging for more of these.

Lizzy Bilogrevic: Learn Local organisation Diversitat

Key message 3: Organisations need to foster close cooperation between specialists

- The Portland WorkSkills, PRACE and Diversitat research findings contribute valuable insights into the challenges that CALD learners can face in VET classes. As well as specific workplace vocabulary, learners can encounter difficulties with, for example, reading lengthy class handouts, written assignments and assessments, the speed of spoken delivery and with colloquial language. The PRACE research also demonstrates how assessment tasks can assume cultural knowledge that discriminates against CALD learners.
- ESL teachers can critically appraise the accessibility of VET training materials and assessment tasks for their language, literacy and cultural inclusiveness. They can analyse written materials to ensure they do not demand a language and literacy level above the requirements of the job.
- Moreover, the culturally defined nature of effective communication necessitates close working relationships between communication specialists (ESL teachers) and industry specialists (VET trainers). This will enable organisations to establish the most appropriate support for their CALD learners.
- Team teaching by a VET trainer and ESL teacher can be a powerful support tool. As the PRACE and Diversitat research point out, the CAVSS model (see VETinfont 2011; McHugh 2011) allows for support to be provided as it is needed within the context of the training. How this can be put into practice is well illustrated in the PRACE research.
- In a team teaching situation, the VET trainer remains responsible for the vocational training. The ESL specialist explicitly teaches language, literacy, numeracy and

cultural skills in a way that is fully integrated into the vocational training. Each member of the teaching team needs to be clear of their roles.

- When team teaching, the ESL specialists' skills are not confined to assisting only CALD learners. Their specialist expertise in language, literacy, numeracy and intercultural communication can be relevant to all learners in the course.
- Organisations need to provide support in the form of preparation time, particularly for new teams and new courses.

Action research

Team teaching for language and culture (extract)

The new group of trainees is made up of mostly CALD learners. This has created a very rich learning environment for both John and me, allowing us to consolidate and extend our understanding of how to cater for the cultural needs of our CALD learners and, in so doing, build the intercultural communication skills of *all* our learners. I continue to assist all trainees with literacy and numeracy where needed. John continues to deliver the course information in a real, practical and relevant form, repeating and refreshing the information regularly. In this way we are perfecting a 'tag-teaching' approach in which we take turns as the main instructor each contributing our specialist knowledge, while nevertheless, 'the industry lecturer is clearly in charge and is the subject specialist' (McHugh 2011:12).

Tina Vlahos: Learn Local organisation Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE)

Key messages from the action research cont'd

Supported Pathways

The projects illuminate the kinds of support needed by many CALD learners to articulate and achieve their goals. They also provide insights into how best to foster two-way understanding between employers and CALD communities.

Action research

Positive pathways (extract)

When surveyed about the experience of meeting with the careers professional, the results were not as positive: our CALD learners rated this strategy 'moderately useful' to 'not useful at all'. Although one of the learners said that you get good ideas from different people, meeting the unknown careers professional was stressful for the other two learners. One said, 'First meeting with new people is worrying' and the other learner said 'It made me more stressed'.

Learners indicated that they might find it useful to see a professional every six to twelve months. But on the whole they preferred to talk with their teacher—a person they know and trust—rather than a professional careers counsellor who does not know them.

Feedback from the student survey showed the most useful pathways strategies were those that were practical in nature and would acquaint them with the real world of work. A workplace visit and work placement were both rated 'extremely useful' or 'very useful' by all participants. The next most popular strategies were: meeting with a teacher; a practical tool they could use to plan their future with their family; and meeting with a peer mentor. This finding has shown us that we need to re-frame the way we have traditionally thought of pathways support as a two-dimensional learner plan.

Kat Sullivan: Learn Local organisation North Melbourne Language and Learning

Key message 4: Pathways support for CALD learners is essential

- Many CALD learners need support to identify their potential career options and to understand the education and training opportunities that will help them achieve their goals.
- Organisations need to assist CALD learners to understand the funding system and to select providers who can offer the support needed for them to reach their employment goals. Organisations need to raise awareness, particularly among learners with limited educational experience, that a short course is not necessarily going to meet their needs.
- Partnerships with other service providers can provide supportive and trustworthy pathways so long as they are regularly reviewed for success and shared expectations.
- Pathways planning is best provided by someone known and trusted by learners. As the research by North Melbourne Language and Learning (NMLL) found, many CALD learners prefer to engage in pathways planning with people they have built up relationships with, such as their teacher. They may be uncomfortable discussing aspects of their lives with people they don't know, particularly if they are unsure of their own skills and knowledge.
- The most useful pathways strategies are concrete and practical.
- Assisting learners to plan their pathways necessitates keeping an open mind about learners' aspirations.

Key message 5: CALD learners need cultural orientation to Australian work practices

- Culture influences how decisions are made; when it is appropriate to voice opinions; what we believe teamwork to be; how deferential we are to people in authority; and how we show that deference.
- The ‘hidden hierarchy’ is an aspect of Australian workplaces that can be highly confusing to CALD learners, with potentially damaging consequences in terms of employment prospects. Diversitat’s study of CALD learners in aged care courses clearly illustrated this.
- The On Track research, in particular, demonstrated how confusing a workplace can be to those who have little knowledge of not only the Australian workplace but *any* workplace.
- Practical experience provides the greatest insights into workplace expectations. Classrooms can be set up to mirror the workplace. Hands-on learning provides opportunities to develop and demonstrate employability skills. Trainees experience first-hand such things as maintaining a schedule and what is meant by teamwork in the Australian work context.
- Work placement provides the most authentic experience of Australian workplace expectations. To optimise the success of work placements, CALD learners need to be well prepared beforehand.
- Work placement is a pathway to employment—it can provide the learner with the crucial Australian work experience demanded by many employers or it can lead directly to an offer of work from the host employer.

Key message 6: Organisations can foster employment possibilities

- The On Track research illustrates the vital role Learn Local organisations can play in advocating for the employment of members of their local CALD communities.
- Direct contact through workplace visits and work placements play a valuable role in dispelling the misconceptions of some employers, who perhaps perceive insurmountable difficulties in employing CALD workers and may hold ill-informed views of local CALD communities because of limited previous contact.

Action research

Bridging the employment gap in Bendigo (extract)

Alongside the training, we instigated a ‘road show’ to take to employers to help them understand the Karen people’s lives, culture, experiences and understandings.

It is important that our training be in line with the culture of specific workplaces, and it is with this in mind that we developed the Bendigo Employment Working Group—so that we can ascertain the needs of each employer. The CALD learners need to understand the way the workplace functions, and the processes and procedures involved, and this functionality is determined by consultation with the employers. In this way, problems can be solved before they become issues, and understanding can take the place of recrimination.

The training and the Bendigo Employment Working Group feed into each other in a cyclical process. The employment group has, in fact, become part of the holistic approach to the training. Not only does it enable us to more easily consult employers in order to focus our training, but the formation of the group has opened up opportunities for orientation visits so that what we teach our Karen learners can be experienced directly, not just in abstract.

Chris Moore: Learn Local organisation On Track Training and Employment

Key messages from the action research cont'd

Further capacity building opportunities

The issues raised by the action research projects suggest areas for further capacity building for the most effective application of the framework of good practice in responding to CALD learners. Challenges relate particularly to:

Connecting with new CALD communities in areas of demographic change

Organisations facing similar challenges in the same region will benefit from specialist and collegiate support.

Addressing cultural as well as linguistic needs

The role of culture in successful communication and in shaping expectations is emerging as a central concern in education and training. Input from intercultural communication specialists will benefit both VET trainers and ESL teachers. Workshops aimed at auditing materials for their cultural and linguistic inclusivity will also be useful for some organisations.

Team teaching to maximise support for CALD learners

Teachers and trainers usually work alone so professional development will assist them to take on these valuable team teaching roles. Inevitably, team teaching will broaden the skills and teaching repertoires of both the ESL teacher and the industry trainer. ESL teachers may need to develop a greater understanding of the VET context they are supporting.

Providing pathways support

Pathways support and advice delivered by known and trusted individuals, such as teachers, is the most effective for many CALD learners. Teaching staff will require skills and information for providing timely and accurate pathways advice. Professional development will add depth to the learning environment by up-skilling teachers to integrate career assistance into classroom work.

Providing cultural orientation to workplaces

Cultural differences in work practices and expectations mean that many CALD learners need explicit input and concrete experience to acquire new cultural understandings. CALD learners with no previous experience of a paid workforce need considerable support. Professional development will assist staff to incorporate explicit support into their teaching and training repertoires and assist organisations to identify the most appropriate practical support for their learners.

The positive feedback from the action research projects suggests that well-supported and collaborative action research can be a valuable professional development and capacity building tool at individual, organisational and sector levels. Participating organisations reported that:

- their collaborative research contributed positively to organisational change
- they were able to make informed decisions rather than ones based on assumption
- working closely with a collaborative team, having research mentors and coming together with other action researchers provided vital support and motivation
- presenting their research to a broader audience gave them the opportunity to both refine and share their findings.

The framework of good practice will assist individual organisations to identify their own particular professional development needs.

To read the full action research reports, written by the action researchers in the participating Learn Local organisations, visit www.acfe.vic.gov.au

Case study

Learning about workplaces

Breaking Down Barriers is an Employment Pathways Program funded by the Inner Northern Community Foundation. It grew out of our Job Club that helps people write resumes and job applications. We started the program because we realised that many of the newly arrived refugees and migrants in our local community were not yet at the stage of attending interviews and applying for work, and that they didn't have any networks to supply references and referrals. What they needed was to understand more about the Australian work context through concrete first-hand experience.

Breaking Down Barriers, which began in 2011, provides participants with this experience by organising visits to local workplaces to get an insight into aged care, child care, office work, gardening, hospitality and clothing manufacturing. For more in-depth work experience, participants are placed as volunteers for a six-month period with local organisations to gain skills and understanding of office work, customer service and horticulture. Volunteer mentors play an important role in supporting and encouraging participants. Support has included assistance with using public transport, explaining the Australian workplace culture, outlining the importance of teamwork within a workplace, answering questions, explaining procedures, and assistance during the initial few weeks of attending the workplace. Volunteer mentors liaise with the workplace supervisors and the program clients, and meet regularly with the clients at the Fitzroy Learning Network and on the job at the workplace. An essential aspect of preparing employment pathways is to continue with English lessons, so the participants attend English classes each morning. In the classes they share their experiences of the work placements with their classmates.

It has been wonderful to see our CALD learners gain confidence in using their English, working as part of a team and learning about workplaces. They now have the beginnings of a resume. They have work experience and industry contacts they can use as referees in the future. Several of the graduates have gone on to training courses in 2012, while others have continued their English classes. Many continue to volunteer their time with a community organisation. This provides them with productive community engagement while they continue to develop their employability skills and increase their chances of future employment.

Colleen Duggan: Executive Officer, Learn Local organisation Fitzroy Learning Network

Guide to resources

Community directories

Directories providing contact details for a large range of CALD-related organisations and services can be searched on:

Department of Justice website

www.justice.vic.gov.au/multidirectory

Institute for Cultural Diversity website

www.culturaldiversity.net.au

Cultural information

Community profiles to assist service providers to better understand the backgrounds and needs of refugees and migrants are available from:

Centre for Multicultural Youth

www.cmy.net.au/PublicationsandResources

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-planning/community-profiles.htm

New Hope Foundation

www.newhope.asn.au/publications

South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre

www.sermrc.org.au

Professional development training

Professional development and training for organisations and individuals working with CALD learners can be accessed through:

AMES

The Community Volunteer Tutor Training Program is a DIAC-funded program to up-skill and support volunteer ESL tutors working with community groups

www.ames.net.au/volunteer-training-for-community-organisations

Centre for Culture Ethnicity & Health

Cultural responsiveness training in a range of topics including cultural competency training

www.ceh.org.au

Centre for Multicultural Youth

Training programs for those working with migrant and refugee youth

www.cmy.net.au/ProfessionalDevelopment

Foundation House – The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture

Professional development for organisations involved in community service delivery to refugees and asylum seekers who have experienced torture and trauma prior to their arrival in Australia

www.foundationhouse.org.au/professional_development/index.htm

Spectrum Multicultural Resource Centre

Cultural competency training and cross-cultural training through community profiles

www.spectrumvic.org.au/Cross-Cultural-Training

Professional development resources

Professional development resources for organisations and individuals working with CALD learners can be downloaded from:

AMEP Research Centre

Fact Sheets about teaching CALD learners with minimal education, learners from oral backgrounds, CALD youth, employability skills and other topics

www.ameprc.mq.edu.au/resources/amep_fact_sheets

Professional development resources about English language assessment and teaching pronunciation

www.ameprc.mq.edu.au/resources/professional_development_resources

Centre for Culture Ethnicity & Health

Cultural competency tip sheets

www.ceh.org.au/culturalcompetence.aspx

Centre for Multicultural Youth

Information sheets and good practice guides for working with CALD Youth

www.cmy.net.au/Publications

National Centre for Vocational Education Research

Good practice guide on teaching learners from oral cultures and other resources can be found by searching the NCVER catalogue by theme

www.ncver.edu.au/publications/search.html

Victorian Interpreting and Translating Services

The publication 'We speak your language: Guide to cross cultural communication' provides a useful starting point for those engaging in cross-cultural communication

www.vits.com.au/downloads/guide.pdf

Public speakers

Public speakers can be booked through:

Foundation House – The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture

Speakers raise awareness of the needs of refugees and survivors of torture

www.foundationhouse.org.au/professional_development/public_speaking_requests.htm

Statistical information

Statistics related to immigration, CALD settlement patterns and CALD census data that can assist with planning are available from:

Adult, Community and Further Education

The publication CALD settlement and ACE possibilities provides an overview of CALD settlement and employment opportunities in each of the ACFE Regions in Victoria

www.skills.vic.gov.au/learnlocal-acfe/acfe-publications-and-research/acfe-publications-and-research

Australian Bureau of Statistics

National and regional statistics based on census data
www.abs.gov.au

Australian Bureau of Statistics

The National Information and Referral Service responds to email and phone enquiries for specific Australian statistical information

client.services@abs.gov.au phone: 1300 135 070

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

The Settlement Reporting Facility provides the public with statistical data on permanent arrivals to Australia

www.immi.gov.au/settlement

Department of Planning and Community Development

Victorian demographics

www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/home/publications-and-research/urban-and-regional-research/Demographics-and-Population

Teaching and learning internet resources

Classroom resources can be downloaded from:

AMEP Research Centre

Beginning readers to raise awareness of basic safety around the home, plus topic-based classroom resources for youth
www.ameprc.mq.edu.au/resources/classroom_resources

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

The citizenship test resource, Australian citizenship: Our common bond is available in English and 37 community languages

www.citizenship.gov.au/learn/cit_test/test_resource or phone 131 880

Foundation House – The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture

Teaching resources, including resources to enhance understanding about raising children in Australia, and food and nutrition in Australia

www.foundationhouse.org.au/resources/publications_and_resources.htm

Teaching and learning publications

English language and literacy resources, VET resources and settlement resources for CALD learners can be ordered from:

AMES

www.ames.net.au/bookshop

AMES NSW

<http://ames.edu.au/content/publications.aspx>

Bookery Education

www.bookeryeducation.com.au

Protea Textware

www.proteatextware.com.au

Sound English

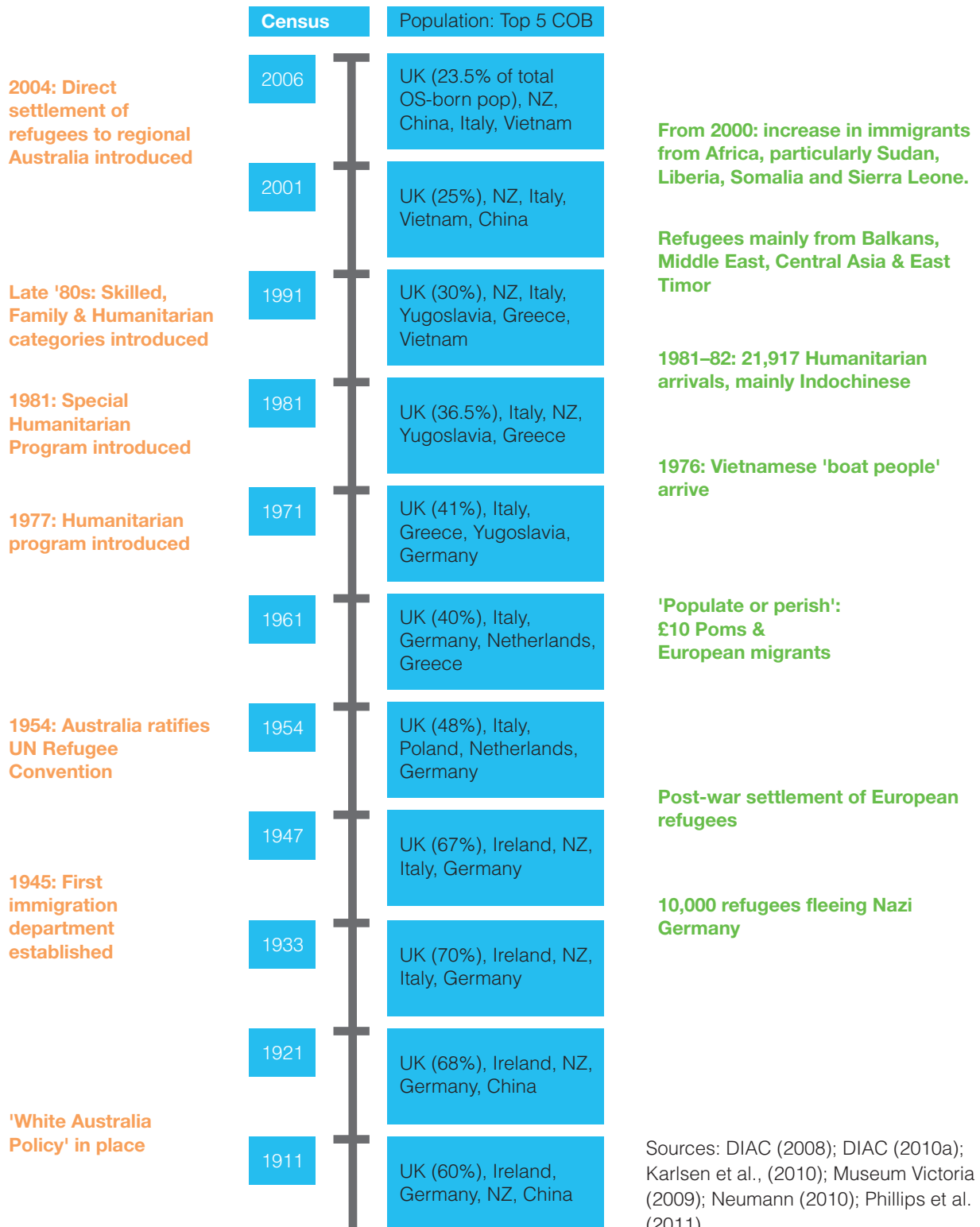
www.soundenglish.com.au

TAFE SA

<https://shop.tafesa.edu.au>

Cultural and linguistic diversity in Victoria

A century of increasing diversity in Australia



Sources: DIAC (2008); DIAC (2010a); Karlsen et al., (2010); Museum Victoria (2009); Neumann (2010); Phillips et al. (2011)

Refugee and economics

People seeking refuge from war and civil strife have played a significant role in increasing the multicultural make-up of our population. So too have Australia's policies for economic prosperity. After World War II, Australia was a sanctuary for thousands of refugees from Europe, who, from the first arrivals from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (Neumann 2010:1), brought cultural and linguistic diversity to the predominantly Anglo-Celtic population. Over the next few decades, the fear that Australia was insufficiently populated to defend against invasion, plus the need to stimulate the post-war economy, saw the Federal Government sponsor thousands of British and European migrants (Phillips et al. 2010:4).

The focus on Europe shattered with the arrival, in 1976, of the first 'boat people' fleeing the aftermath of the war in Vietnam. With global obligations as a signatory of the United Nations Convention on Refugees, Australia responded to this humanitarian crisis by setting up, for the first time, a specific refugee program—the Humanitarian Program. Shortly after, the Special Humanitarian Program was introduced to assist people who 'did not fit neatly into the "refugee" category but who were subject to human rights abuses and had families or community ties in Australia.' These programs saw 130,000 refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos resettled in Australia over the next decade and a half (Karlsen et al. 2010:3). By the 1991 census, Vietnamese migrants were the sixth largest overseas-born group in Australia (Phillips et al. 2010:28).

Migrants are people who make a conscious choice to leave their country to seek a better life elsewhere. Before they decide to leave, migrants can seek information about their new home, study the language and explore employment opportunities. They can take their belongings with them and say goodbye to the important people in their lives. They are free to return home at any time if things don't work out as they had hoped, if they get homesick or if they wish to visit family members and friends left behind.

Refugees are forced to leave their country because they are at risk of, or have experienced, persecution. They are concerned about human rights and safety, not economic advantage. Refugees have been forced to leave behind their homes, most or all of their belongings, family members and friends. Some are forced to flee with no warning and many have experienced significant trauma or been tortured or otherwise ill-treated. The journey to safety is fraught with hazard and many refugees risk their lives in search of protection. They cannot return unless the situation that forced them to leave improves.

Refugee Council of Australia (2012)

Cultural and linguistic diversity in Victoria cont'd

Our population has continued to diversify with each new wave of refugees fleeing war, civil unrest and persecution. By the second half of the 1980s, over forty nationalities had sought refuge in Australia including significant numbers from Latin America and the Middle East (DIAC 2008:69). Since then, the humanitarian intake has included people from the Balkans, the Middle East, Central and Southern Asia, Southeast Asia, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. The largest intakes in the last decade have been from Afghanistan, Iraq, Burma and Sudan (DIAC 2010b:26). By 2009–10, over 30% of Humanitarian arrivals had been born in North or Sub-Saharan Africa (DIAC 2010b:3), most significantly in Sudan, but also Horn of Africa countries as well as smaller numbers from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo), among others.

Economic considerations have also continued to play a major role in our diversification, with current policies having a strong focus on targeting those with skills to fill shortages in the Australian workforce. As a result, by far the greatest numbers of those who come to Australia do so through our Migration Program for skilled and family migrants. While this has not increased diversity to the same extent as the Humanitarian Program, it has attracted large numbers of migrants from China and India so that by 2010 these two countries had become the second and third top countries of birth after New Zealand (DIAC 2010b:27).

Victoria's recent arrivals

More than a quarter of all migrants to Australia state that they intend to live in Victoria, making it the most common destination after New South Wales (DIAC 2010b:19). Table 1 shows the top ten countries of birth (COB) of migrants settling in Victoria in the 2009–10 financial year. The settlers from these top ten countries were primarily skilled and family stream migrants, with numbers from China, India, the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam having steadily increased, and numbers from Sri Lanka having almost quadrupled over the previous decade. (DIAC 2010a:26–27).

Table 1: Top 10 COB of migrants settling in Victoria

	Top 10 COB (2009–2010)	Migrant numbers
1	China	5,969
2	India	5,346
3	NZ	3,696
4	UK & Ireland	2,904
5	Sri Lanka	2,018
6	Philippines	1,364
7	Malaysia	1,226
8	Vietnam	1,055
9	South Africa	920
10	Iraq	669

Source: DIAC (2010a:24–30)

Only 7.2% of the settler numbers in Table 1 were refugees (DIAC 2010b:19). The largest group of humanitarian migrants was from Iraq which is the tenth country on the list. Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) statistics also record small numbers of refugees amongst the primarily skilled and family migrants from Sri Lanka. However, because DIAC records show country of birth rather than ethnicity, there are

other, much smaller, numbers of refugees 'hidden' in these figures, such as Uighurs and Tibetans who are Chinese nationals.

In the next six months, there was a sharp increase in Sri Lankan-born humanitarian settlers in Victoria as the Tamil ethnic group, in particular, fled by boat fearing reprisals following the official cessation of the long-running civil war. By the second half of 2010, they had become the fourth largest group of humanitarian settlers in Victoria (see Table 2). In the same timeframe, there was a sharp rise in the arrival of boats carrying Afghani asylum seekers. The majority of these were Hazara who differ ethnically from the dominant Pashtun tribe and claim intense and sustained persecution (Chadbourne et al. 2004).

Table 2: Top 10 COB of Humanitarian arrivals in Victoria

Top 10 COB (Jun '10–Jan '11)	Humanitarian arrival numbers
1 Afghanistan	347
2 Burma	309
3 Iraq	195
4 Sri Lanka	121
5 DR Congo	72
6 Bhutan	57
7 Ethiopia	55
8 Sudan	49
9 Iran	48
10 Burundi	21

Source: DIAC HEMS stats generated 01/01/11

Ethnic groups fleeing Burma's ruling military regime were the second largest number of humanitarian arrivals. These were primarily Chin and Karen peoples, but also included small numbers of Karenni, Shan, Burmese and Rohingya. Their actual numbers are higher if we include those who born in Malaysia or in Thai

refugee camps where many refugees from Burma have lived for decades to escape systematic human rights abuses.

As Table 2 shows, after the top four countries of birth, the numbers of humanitarian arrivals in Victoria dropped considerably. Some—such as the Iranians, Ethiopians and Sudanese—joined substantial communities already in Victoria. In fact, Sudanese refugees were the largest group to be resettled under Australia's offshore program in the last decade (Neumann 2010:2). In that time, more than 8,000 Sudanese were resettled in Victoria with more than half of these arriving between 2002 and 2006.

Others, such as the 72 arrivals from the DR Congo, the 57 from Bhutan and the 21 people from Burundi contributed their numbers to newly emerging communities in Victoria. New and emerging communities have been defined as communities of 'less than 20,000 in Australia, most of whom have been in Australia for less than ten years' (HREOC 1999:3). The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia includes in their definition that new and emerging communities show 'a significant increase in numbers over the last five years' (FECCA 2010:2). Table 3 shows the arrivals contributing to small and emerging communities in Victoria over the last few years.

However, because DIAC records entrants by country of birth rather than ethnicity, the range of communities that are emerging are not adequately portrayed in the table. For example, the ethnicity of entrants recorded in the DR Congo statistics may be Hutu, Tutsi, Luba, Kasai or Bantu (DIMA 2006:4), to name just a few. With between 200 and 250 ethnic groups in the DR Congo 'people are likely to identify themselves in relation to their tribal or ethnic backgrounds' (DIMA 2006:9).

Cultural and linguistic diversity in Victoria cont'd

In July 2011, the Republic of South Sudan became the world's 193rd nation when Sudan was officially divided after five decades of wars and interethnic conflict ... In 2001, the Sudanese population of Australia was slightly less than 5,000, most of whom were refugees. By 2006, the number had grown to just under 20,000; a rate that put enormous pressure on the fragile community structures established by earlier arrivals ... The vast majority are Christians with a smaller group of Muslims. The largest settlement is in Melbourne.

Ethiopia has experienced over thirty years of disruption, with refugee communities scattered through Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti and Kenya ... The 2006 census recorded the community [in Australia] at about 5,000, with 60% living in Victoria ... with a significant group of 350 (comprising Christian women with children at risk) arriving in 2004.

In 2001, there were about 1,600 Eritreans living in Australia—again mostly in Victoria—with the number growing to 2,000 by 2006. Almost all Eritreans in Australia are either humanitarian or family entrants; over half identify as Muslims, with a smaller number being Coptic and Eastern Orthodox.

Somalis began arriving in the 1980s and established community organisations early on. Most gravitated towards Melbourne ... In 1996 there were 2,061 Somalis, a number which increased to 3,713 by 2001... The community has grown only slightly since. Most Somalis are Sunni Muslims and their religious practice has helped them establish links with other Muslim communities in Australia. Somalia was an attempted amalgam of former British and Italian colonial territories and has experienced constant civil war and tension.

From: Jakubowicz (2010:15–16)

As acknowledged by DIAC (2011), all humanitarian entrants 'typically arrive having experienced high levels of disadvantage', including not only trauma caused by human rights abuses and loss or separation from family members, but possibly also low levels of schooling and work skills caused by the disruption of war or civil unrest, and years living in refugee camps or urban poverty in another country. Of all new arrivals to Australia, humanitarian entrants are, therefore, generally acknowledged to be the most in need of post-arrival support. However, small and emerging communities may be even more vulnerable than more established communities, precisely

because of the group having little or no previous history of migration to the country. Lacking established family networks, support systems and community resources relative to more established communities, they also tend not to have community infrastructures and organisations that can attract funding (FECCA 2010:2). This, as Whittlesea Community Connections (2008:7) points out, 'impacts on their ability to seek support from more established community members, reducing access to culturally and linguistically appropriate support networks'.

Table 3: New and emerging communities: Victorian arrivals by COB

Birthplace	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11*
Azerbaijan	3	3	3	–	–	–	6	–
Bhutan	–	–	–	–	1	40	115	57
Burundi	1	58	67	20	16	4	13	21
Congo	7	11	21	7	2	1	3	17
Djibouti	1	6	1	5	1	3	1	–
DR Congo	2	3	41	44	31	19	62	72
Liberia	2	176	54	69	47	68	83	11
Rwanda	–	6	2	4	3	15	12	–
Sierra Leone	9	15	35	44	26	11	36	6
Togo	–	–	1	10	24	3	4	7
Uzbekistan	11	6	15	19	14	12	6	–

Source: DIAC (2010a:24–30) and DIAC HEMS stats generated 01/01/11 (*6 months only)

Cultural and linguistic diversity in Victoria cont'd

CALD settlement in Victoria

Whether part of a newly emerging community or joining a more established community, the majority of recent arrivals to Victoria settled, at least initially, in metropolitan Melbourne—as most have always done. DIAC settlement figures show that although all metropolitan local government areas (LGA) hosted the initial settlement of significant numbers of new arrivals (most particularly skilled migrants), the numbers settling in the southern municipality of Greater Dandenong are far greater than in any other LGA. Moreover, while Dandenong is the initial home of many migrants in all visa categories, the numbers of humanitarian migrants are strikingly larger than in any other municipality (see statistics compiled by Newcombe & Achren, 2010). As a result, the City of Greater Dandenong enjoys the status of being the most culturally diverse municipality in Victoria. With 56% of its population born overseas and 51% from non-English speaking countries, the birthplaces of its residents are a microcosm of Victoria's economic and humanitarian migration over the decades (City of Greater Dandenong 2011).

Among the newer arrivals, Dandenong is home to significant communities of Sri Lankans, Afghans and Sudanese. It is, in fact, home to the largest Afghani community in Australia (SERMRC 2009:24). Amongst Sudanese communities, Nuer and Shilluk speaking Sudanese people tended to initially settle around Dandenong and nearby Monash, and Dinka speakers in the western suburbs of Melbourne (Taylor & Stanovic 2005:10). Other communities emerging in Greater Dandenong and the neighbouring LGA of Casey are Muslim Burman, Karen and Chin refugees from Burma, although the outer suburban fringes of Melbourne's west are home to the largest Karen community in Victoria (Newcombe & Achren 2010).

While Melbourne's northern, western and southern suburbs have the densest populations of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) settlers, the eastern suburbs are the most rapidly changing. For some time, the eastern suburbs have been locations of choice for skilled migrants and their families, and have become home to many Chinese-speaking, Korean and Indian migrants. In contrast, the initial settlement of humanitarian migrants has been small. However, the eastern metropolitan region is becoming increasingly culturally and linguistic diverse as a result of secondary migration into the region, i.e. the voluntary relocation of people from their place of initial settlement. Among these have been Sudanese people, who, as the South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre points out, 'are a highly mobile set of communities ... Numbers rise and fall across statistical regions due to shifting employment patterns, availability of housing and secondary migration associated with family and tribal trends'. (SERMRC 2007:15) The eastern suburbs are now also home to the second largest community of refugees from Burma (SERMRC 2011:22) who are settling around Ringwood, Bayswater, Croydon and in the Yarra Ranges where there is the possibility of employment. The presence of a Chin Baptist pastor has been significant to the emergence of the large Chin community in the area.

The Chin are an ethnic group living by subsistence farming in the west of Burma (also known as Myanmar). Most are Christian but some are Buddhist or animist. For decades, the Chin and other ethnic minorities have been subjected to systematic human rights abuses by the oppressive military regime. Abuses include maiming, killing, rape, forced labour, the burning of villages and destruction of crops. Many Chin have sought refuge in India, but militarisation along the border makes the crossing extremely perilous. Consequently, many make their way to Malaysia, where in 2009, official statistics recorded more than 61,000 refugees from Burma. Neither India nor Malaysia are signatories to the UN Refugee Convention, so have no procedures for providing protection or benefits to refugees. Unable to work legally in either country, the Chin live precarious lives of extreme poverty, limited access to health care and inadequate schooling for their children. As the numbers are large, gaining registration as an asylum seeker with the UNHCR is a very lengthy process. But it does, at least, give hope of eventual resettlement in a third country.

Information based on Alexander (2008).

Secondary migration is not, of course, confined to the eastern suburbs but occurs throughout the metropolitan area. Employment and housing are the main drivers of these moves. As a result we are seeing cultural and linguistic diversification in a greater number of locations, and in locations further from the city centre. For example, Newcombe and Achren (2010) write of CALD migrants and refugees who, having initially settled in public housing in the northern suburb of Broadmeadows, now have the resources to buy into new housing estates such as Craigieburn and Roxburgh Park on the outer suburban fringes. Another example is the City of Whittlesea, in the outer north eastern suburbs of Melbourne, which has one of the fastest growing populations in Victoria (ABS 2011) with a high percentage of CALD settlement as people move to affordable housing on new housing estates.

Cultural and linguistic diversity in Victoria cont'd

Rural and regional Victoria has also increased in cultural and linguistic diversity as a result of secondary migration. Many areas of rural Victoria have long histories of migrant settlement. For example, in the post-World War II period, many Italian, Greek, Albanian and Turkish migrants made Greater Shepparton their home, having been attracted by employment possibilities in the fruit growing industry (Taylor & Stanovic 2005:5). More recently, in 1997, there was a spontaneous movement of large numbers of Iraqi refugees from metropolitan Melbourne—where many had difficulties finding work—to Greater Shepparton because of perceived seasonal fruit picking employment possibilities (McDonald et al. 2008:43).

Case study

Work takes Karen people to Nhill

In 2010, a group of Karen people moved to Nhill, a small town half way between Melbourne and Adelaide. After the general manager of the Luv-a-Duck company heard about Karen families settling in nearby Horsham, he decided to offer the community employment and a new future in regional Victoria. Working with AMES, the manager spoke at an information session in Werribee, the home of the largest Karen community in Victoria. Next, a visit to Nhill was organised for interested Karen to meet members of the local council, police and health services. Ten members of the Karen community, including three teenagers, decided to move to Nhill where they were initially housed in transitional accommodation supplied by Luv-a-Duck. Since then, the Karen community in Nhill has grown with more families making the move as jobs became available. Many of the new Karen residents have enrolled in English classes and computer training at the Learn Local organisation, Nhill Neighbourhood Learning Centre.

Nanthu Kunoo: Community Liaison Officer, AMES

As the Shepparton example suggests, a significant driver of secondary migration out of the metropolitan area has been employment opportunities in regional Victoria. These have often been promoted by rural employers themselves or through Melbourne-based employment services (McDonald et al. 2008:16).

Such initiatives have seen Sudanese move to locations in Gippsland to work in the local meat works, to Colac in the state's south-west, again to work in the meat works, and to Swan Hill in the north-east to work as fruit pickers (VRNH 2007:4–5). Some employment-related secondary migration has also been supported by philanthropic organisations, community groups, multicultural service providers or local councils. These include the relocation of a number of Sudanese and Burundians to Castlemaine to work in the local meat processing factory (VRHN 2007:5), the relocation of Sudanese to Warrnambool, again to work in meat processing (McDonald, 2008:47), and the relocation of Karen to work in a duck processing factory in Nhill.

As well as supporting secondary migration, human rights groups, faith-based groups and other community organisations have also been sponsoring and supporting direct migration from overseas to rural and regional Victoria. For example, the Bendigo Friends and Mentors group (formerly the Bendigo Karen Refugee Program) has sponsored and supported Karen refugees from Thai refugee camps. Following the arrival of the first family and three Buddhist monks in 2007, the community has continued to grow (Couch et al. 2010:4). A Karen community that began through direct sponsorship is also growing in Wonthaggi.

Direct migration of humanitarian migrants to regional Victoria was initiated in 2004 when the Federal Government announced it would focus

on 'unlinked' refugees (i.e. those without strong ties to family and friends already settled in metropolitan areas) in the hope of encouraging their direct migration from overseas or detention centres to regional Australia. This was part of federal, state and territory governments' attempt to address the labour shortages associated with declining and ageing rural populations by increasing the number of migrants and refugees settling outside of the capital cities (Phillips 2005:3). Direct migration of English-speaking skilled migrants to address skilled worker shortages in regional Australia had been in place since 1996 (Western & Boreham 2010).

In Victoria, the first location to pilot direct refugee settlement was Shepparton which hosted the planned settlement of ten families from the DR Congo in 2005. To maximise the potential for successful settlement, the families were selected on the basis of there being two parents, four or fewer young children, at least one family member with English, reasonable employment prospects and no complex medical or other needs (McDonald et al. 2008:43). The success of this pilot was attributed 'not least to the entrants themselves, who have shown great resilience and openness' but also to Shepparton's 'long history of "making space" for newcomers' along with existing volunteer networks and an established mechanism for settlement planning (Piper 2007:6).

Since that time, direct migration has continued to expand to other regions of Victoria. Geelong has now been a direct settlement site for a number of years, with new settlers reflecting the waves of refugees arriving in Australia. Among them have been refugee groups from Africa, Karen from Burma and, more recently, single Afghani men. Another government-initiated direct settlement location is Mildura in the state's north which has, in recent times, hosted the settlement of relatively large numbers of Afghanis and Iraqis

(VRNH 2007:5). Not all direct settlement attempts have been as successful. A Ballarat pilot, for example, involving twelve families from Togo in West Africa, proved to be fraught for a range of reasons including: the planning process itself; the challenge of learning about a group of refugees with whom no one (locally or nationally) had previous experience; the high levels of torture and trauma in the families' backgrounds; the complexity of their family relations; and divisions within the community itself (Piper 2009:6).



Keys to successful settlement

The Shepparton and Ballarat examples, along with others discussed in this chapter, illustrate the complex nature of settlement, and that successful settlement depends on the individuals, the attitudes of the host communities, and on the provision of services that address the specific needs of migrants and refugees. Taylor and Stanovic (2005:52) point out that there are some needs common to both refugees and other migrants. These include the provision of language services, understanding of their cultural background, and assistance in understanding the Australian system at local, state and national levels. However, they also point out that refugees have distinctive needs because of their pre-migration experiences, which may include torture and trauma, long periods of time in refugee camps, disrupted schooling, limited work experience or loss of family and friends. These pre-migration experiences have lingering effects on individuals, their families and the settlement process.

The availability of suitable employment is a primary key to successful settlement. However, for many refugees the pathway to employment can be long, particularly when the individual has little or no schooling or limited work experience. Needing to acquire not only language skills, study skills and industry-specific skills, CALD learners seeking employment need assistance in gaining a set of culture-specific skills required for the Australian workplace (see Yates 2008). Moreover, refugees, particularly those with limited formal education in their own language, need assistance in understanding the pathway to employment itself. Learn Local organisations, with their long history of providing educational services that cater for the disadvantaged, have a significant role to play in the settlement experience of such refugees.

Other, often highly skilled refugees take on low-skilled jobs because they have high financial obligations. For example, many must repay sponsoring relatives here in Australia, or those who loaned money for their escape from persecution. Others may be trying to sponsor relatives to join them in Australia, or financially assist families who remain behind in refugee camps or in other precarious situations. However, skilled and educated refugees often view such jobs as temporary stepping stones to more suitable employment. For example, Taylor and Stanovic (2005:31) report that 'while in the early days of settlement the Sudanese were pleased to get work in the meat works ... some saw this as a stage on the way to higher education and job prospects'. This, coupled with the low wages and insecure incomes associated with seasonal work, means that stable communities can be difficult to establish, particularly in the smaller rural towns, as people move again because of higher education opportunities in larger towns. Learn Local organisations can participate in the settlement process through the provision of further study opportunities for those in their local CALD communities who are currently engaged in entry-level employment not commensurate with their skills (see Farah 2007).

A recent report commissioned by DIAC found that while agencies tended to define successful settlement in systemic terms, humanitarian entrants define settlement in terms of life outcomes such as personal happiness and community connectedness (Australian Survey Research 2011:64). Learn Local organisations are well placed to foster connections between host communities and newer CALD community members through a whole of organisation approach to CALD learners founded on the good practice principles of Engagement, Supportive Learning Environments and Supported Pathways.

Glossary

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACFE	Adult, Community and Further Education
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
AMEP	Adult Migrant Education Program
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CAVSS	Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills
CCEH	Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health
COB	Country of Birth
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DIMA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (now DIAC)
DPCD	Department of Planning and Community Development
DR Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo
DVLC	Diamond Valley Learning Centre
ESL	English as a Second Language
FECCA	Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
HACC	Home and Community Care
HEMS	Humanitarian Entrants Management System
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (now AHRC)
LGA	Local Government Area
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRC	Migrant Resource Centre
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NMLL	North Melbourne Language and Learning
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PRACE	Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education
SERMRC	South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VRNH	Victorian Refugee Health Network
WCEC	Wyndham Community and Education Centre



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