

Refugees in Our Communities

Preparation of Communities

It is very beneficial to prepare receptive communities with host people who will support the pathway to independence for refugees. The best way is to support and walk alongside to enable self reliance and self-sufficiency to develop.

The role of host communities is not a clinical role – the Red Cross provide 'resettlement' work that includes professional mental health and clinical services.

Taking care of making community services available is the best orientation for host communities, to support the involvement of new settlers into activities and communities. Support for new settlers to participate in their communities contributes to the goal of independence, which a priority for new settlers.

Some communities work with Mana Whenua – this offers an orientation to cultural and Treaty of Waitangi, and Maori context.

It is respectful to support refugees in their own beliefs

A strengths-based approach

This is an important orientation for hosting as it recognizes that if a refugee has got to New Zealand, they are resilient and strong. It is important not to take a deficit approach which emphasizes victimization.



Photo credit: Milos Bicanski/AJ Jazeera
Courtesy Action Stations

Host community roles include:

- An orientation to Aotearoa NZ, including Maori, and Pacific communities.
- Making positive links between new arrivals and communities
- English as a second language – some communities run regular English learning activities
- Teach how to use buses and public transport
- Support with inter-generational tensions. These often arise after a while when children settle into school and take on customs and expectations of NZ children and youth.
- Host community develop a policy on managing trauma and confidential information
- Volunteer help with mobility and getting to appointments – hospital appointments, Dr and housing and work appointments. Transport to swimming.

- Water safety programmes. (eg a Maori group provided a programme on water safety).
- Mother and children groups
- For young people:
 - School holiday programmes
 - Mentoring
 - Tutoring for school kids
 - Camps

Items that Parishes Might Provide

- Items that Parishes might provide:
- Lawnmowers
- Bicycles (maybe a voucher for repairs at 'Recycling Bicycles for Refugees'
www.rasnz.co.nz/bicycle.html)
- Donations, to agencies are a way of making it possible for professionals and trained volunteers to meet additional needs and services
- Refugees receive a Resettlement Grant of \$1200 per year (might use for frig, washing machine, pots, towels, rugs)



Things to Find Out in Your Community

Areas of interest and need for the new arrivals
 Availability of mentors and tutors for University students
 Opportunities for girls to participate in sports
 Sewing /knitting groups
 Men's Sheds

Wellington Contacts

Wellington host communities might contact :

Rachel O'Conner, Red Cross National Programme Development Manager, Wellington. Ph. 04 471 9106 / 021 228 2066.
 Email: rachel.oconner@redcross.org.nz

Change-Makers Refugee Forum: <http://crf.org.nz/>



Agencies with Responsibilities for Resettlement and Resources

Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre, Mangere. Six weeks orientation.

Red Cross: Pathways to Resettlement. Six intakes per year in resettlement areas. Syrian refugees only going to Wellington and Dunedin. Red Cross reports on health and wellbeing. www.redcross.org.nz/what-we-do/in-new-zealand/refugee-programmes/

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – immigration, settlement, housing, quota: <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/publications-research/research/migration/new-land-new-life-longterm-settlement-refugees-main-report.pdf>

Immigration new Zealand Quota Programme:
<http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/generalinformation/refugee-protection/newzealandrefugeequotaprogramme.htm>

Ministry of Health – Auckland Public Health. www.health.govt.nz/our-work/populations/refugee-health

The Refugee Council and Multicultural Centres throughout NZ, and other Service agencies offer services to refugees: See: <http://www.rc.org.nz/> and www.familyservices.govt.nz/my-community/network-and-service/networks/refugee-and-migrant-networks.html

NZ Refugee Policy. See www.immigration.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/1F4F5231-0974-430F-AE7A-CD11CAE76227/0/RefugeeResettlementStrategy.pdf

Refugee Resettlement. Literature Review: <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/publications-research/research/migration/resettlement.pdf>