

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER UPDATE

12 October 2021

Update on NZRC Support

Support for Afghan Evacuees

The Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment has asked a small number of organisations to assist in the distribution of food vouchers for recent evacuees from Afghanistan who are in New Zealand on temporary visas. Last week NZRC began distributing these food vouchers on behalf of MBIE in Auckland, Christchurch and Palmerston North. Other organisations have been asked to distribute vouchers in other locations.

Over the past few weeks, NZRC has provided evacuees based in Auckland with a range of essential items, including shoes, clothing, hygiene kits and children's activities. Further clothing and essential items have been sourced and pre-packed and are ready for distribution to Afghan evacuees when they next arrive in MIQ.

Support for Afghan community youth in New Zealand

To promote greater wellbeing and resilience among Afghan youth in this time of crisis, we are delivering three online training sessions focused on the basics of youth psychological first aid. All Afghan youth in New Zealand **aged 14-24** are welcome to attend for free. To register, please email latifa.ali@redcross.org.nz

Restoring Family Links (RFL)

The RFL service has received 27 enquiries related to the situation in Afghanistan, four of which are in relation to enquirers who have missing family. Enquirers are reluctant to make tracing requests at this time due to the uncertainty of the situation and the possible risks that an active search may create for their family members. The majority of enquiries have been in relation to evacuation and visa assistance and have been referred to appropriate agencies.

If contact has been lost with family members in Afghanistan:

- Contact the Restoring Family Links team by email at familylinks@redcross.org.nz and we will respond as soon as possible.
- Please note: We are unable to assist with visa applications or to advocate directly to Immigration New Zealand for permission to bring family members

to New Zealand. Please do not send us sensitive personal information and documentation unless advised.

Latest News Update

News in New Zealand:

A Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) spokesperson on 5 October announced that Immigration New Zealand granted critical purpose visa applications to allow 1253 people to enter New Zealand from Afghanistan. MFAT also announced that the government is sending a special representative to the Middle East to help about 825 visa holders to leave Afghanistan. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/political/453076/new-zealand-afghanistan-special-representative-to-support-evacuations>

For those still in Afghanistan or in a third country trying to connect with MFAT, you can contact:

- Consular.MiddleEastandAfrica@mfat.govt.nz if you or your family are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents
- VisaHoldersAfghanistan@mfat.govt.nz if you or your family are an Afghan national with a valid New Zealand visa

For the latest information from MFAT, please check: mfat.govt.nz

News from abroad:

Canada has recently doubled their intake to 40,000 Afghans. The United States has doubled their total refugee quota to 125,000 from October 1 and many of these places will be used for Afghans.

In Afghanistan, an agreement has been reached between the Taliban and the Afghan National Society – Afghan Red Crescent to allow humanitarian assistance to continue. There has been confirmation that all female staff of Afghan Red Crescent are still working. The International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) has emphasized to the Taliban that Red Cross work is non-conditional. They will continue to respond to humanitarian needs in Afghanistan.

Humanitarian support in Afghanistan from the IFRC and ICRC includes:



AFGHANISTAN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

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- Emergency food distribution
- Mobile health teams
- Cash grant assistance to 40,000 displaced households
- Improving water and sanitation services
- Strengthening the Afghan Red Crescent Society

For more information, please visit:

- <https://www.ifrc.org/emergency/afghanistan-humanitarian-crises>
- <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/icrc-afghanistan-overview>