

## COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER UPDATE

2 December 2021

### Update on NZRC Support

#### Welcome to Ann Hood

New Zealand Red Cross is excited to welcome Ann Hood as the new Project Coordinator to lead the NZRC work related to the Afghanistan humanitarian crisis. Ann is a Clinical Psychologist who works in private practice and provides supervision for a range of professionals. Ann worked for Refugees as Survivors New Zealand (RASNZ) as a psychologist between 2006 and 2007 and was CEO between 2015 and 2020. Over the last 15 years, Ann has also worked for Whirinaki Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health and ProCare Psychological Services in leadership positions.

#### Ongoing Support for Afghan Evacuees

- A team in Auckland continues to prepare essential items for any further evacuees arriving in New Zealand. These have been delivered to Immigration New Zealand who will distribute them to Afghans arriving in New Zealand as needed.
- Thanks to everyone who has generously contributed to the Afghan Appeal <https://www.redcross.org.nz/donate/afghanistan-humanitarian-crisis/>. Donated funds have provided essential items like hygiene kits, shoes, adaptor plugs and children's activities to new families arriving from Afghanistan.
- Thanks also to De Paul House in partnership with The Warehouse for donations of new warm clothing, shoes, and accessories for Afghan evacuees. Thanks also to Hanes for the large donation of quality new undergarments, outerwear, and other essential items.
- Our NZRC teams in Christchurch, Dunedin, Palmerston North and Auckland continue to distribute food vouchers to evacuees based in the community on behalf of MBIE, while residence applications are processed. Other agencies have been supporting MBIE to distribute vouchers in Wellington and Hamilton.

#### Community Leaders Meeting

- On 22 November, NZRC staff involved in the response, met with leaders from the Afghan community to provide an update and hear about issues that community members are facing.
- Afghan leaders were invited to contact Ann directly at [ann.hood@redcross.org.nz](mailto:ann.hood@redcross.org.nz) to provide feedback about community needs and priorities in relation to the settlement of evacuees.
- Afghan community leaders shared their concerns about the suitability of housing for some evacuees moving into the regions, and the need for visa processing to be expedited as far as possible. Community leaders also reported that some evacuees who are already in the community are struggling to meet essential costs such as transport and medical care, while they wait for visas and related entitlements to be processed.
- Leaders stressed the importance of clear and regular communication by all agencies involved in supporting evacuees, so that communities can provide collaborative, wrap-around support for evacuees when they are being settled in the regions.

## **Stress & Wellbeing Sessions for Afghan Young People**

Below are links for the Stress and Wellbeing sessions for Afghan young people (14-24 years old). These sessions will all run for 1 hour and are open to any young people affected by the Afghanistan humanitarian crisis. The first session was hosted on 1 December targeting Auckland and Hamilton-based young people. Two additional sessions are being hosted; details are down below. If you know of any young people who would like to attend, even those located outside of these regions, please email [latifa.ali@redcross.org.nz](mailto:latifa.ali@redcross.org.nz).

The webinar includes:

- Understanding what stress is
  - Being aware of different types of stress
  - Developing some ways to improve wellbeing
  - Tools to help manage stress and wellbeing
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- **Palmerston North/Wellington: Wednesday 8 December 7:00-8:00pm**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89449062547?pwd=Zy9TZ0RzeTNyRGxHdjFKMXFUbDh5QT09>  
If needed, the meeting ID is 894 4906 2547 and the passcode is **955591**

- **Christchurch/Dunedin: Wednesday 15 December 7:00-8:00pm**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82135581499?pwd=V3laRUFiMENCWGQ5NG1HcFU1WDJGdz09>  
If needed, the meeting ID is 821 3558 1499 and the passcode is **019686**

## Latest News Update

- On Monday 22 November, [the High Court accepted the key parts](#) of a Community Law judicial review of Immigration New Zealand's decisions on the Refugee Family Support Category (RFSC). Immigration New Zealand has been asked to reconsider their decisions on whether to issue residence visas through the RFSC.
- More on the outcome of the judicial review can be found here:  
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/126926375/afghan-nationals-win-case-to-have-visa-applications-considered>
- According to [a recent interview](#) with the Foreign Affairs Minister Nanaia Mahuta, 769 people with New Zealand visas have left Afghanistan; 635 of these are already in New Zealand. The [latest Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade update](#) notes that approximately 1,000 New Zealand citizens, permanent residents and visa holders are still in Afghanistan and may require assistance.