

Reimagining Volunteering Summary report of University of Canterbury findings



Background

The Reimagining Volunteering project is a key deliverable of Strategy 2030, New Zealand Red Cross ten year strategy. It will present a refreshed approach to volunteering within New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) that will facilitate improved outcomes across our three core service areas – Disaster Risk Management, Migration Programmes, and International Programmes, as well as our foundations and enablers such as International Humanitarian Law, First Aid, Retail, and Fundraising.

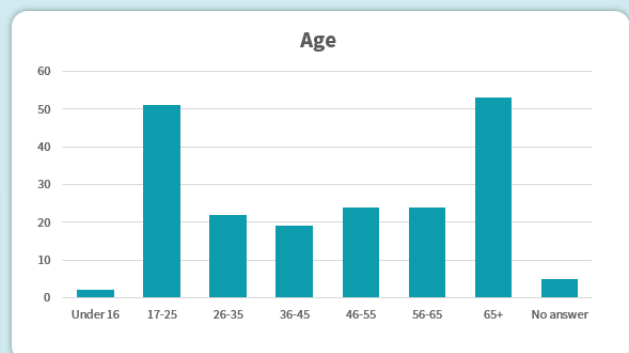
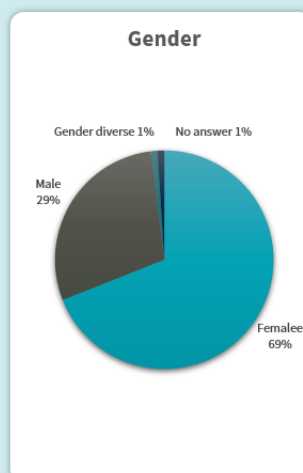
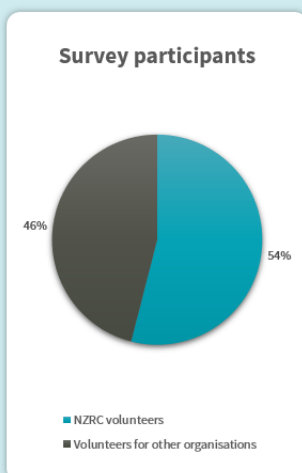
A comprehensive consultation was completed including desktop research, interviews with other National Societies and volunteer organisations, internal focus groups, and a nationwide survey and focus groups in partnership with the University of Canterbury.

This report summarises the results of the survey and focus groups delivered in partnership with the University of Canterbury.

Survey respondents

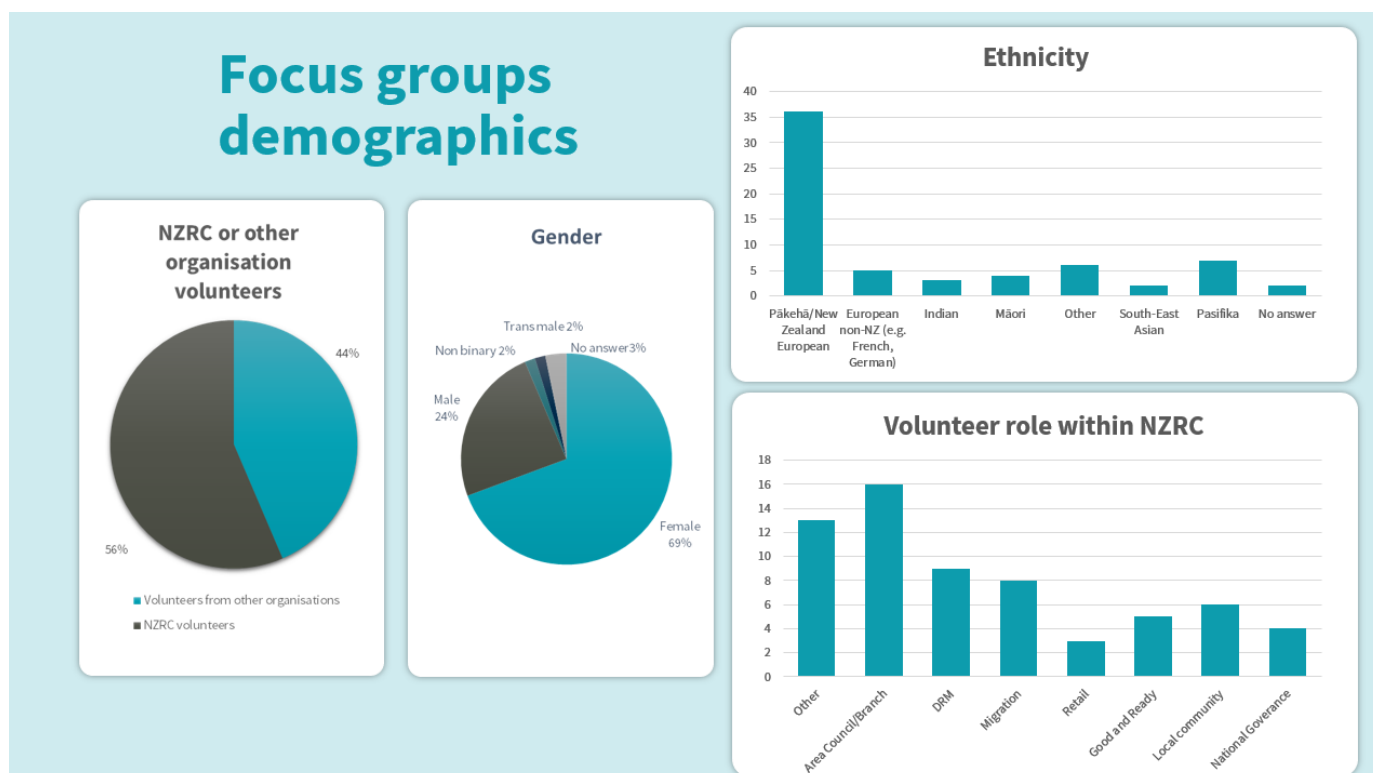
A total of 1,011 people completed the survey with 54% of participants being members and volunteers of NZRC and 46% having no relationship with NZRC. Thirteen focus groups were held with 62 people participating. There was a wide range of ages with significant contributions from the 65+ and 17-25 year groupings. There was a variety of ethnicities with 62% Pākehā/New Zealand European, 11% Asian and, 6% Māori, 2% Pasifika and 12% Other. The majority of respondents were female (69%) with 29% male, 1% gender diverse and 1% gave no answer. Eleven percent of respondents identified as part of the Takatāpui and/or Rainbow community with a further 3% unsure. Eight percent identified themselves as part of the disability community with a further 2% unsure.

Survey demographics



Focus group participants

Sixty two people attended the 13 focus groups around the country or online. Of these, 56% were NZRC volunteers and 44% were volunteers from other organisations. 55% were Pākehā/New Zealand European, 11% Pasifika, 6% Māori and 9% Other. Many people had multiple roles within the organisation and participants were able to select all the volunteer roles they were involved in, see graph below. There were specific focus groups held for people from the following communities Pasifika, Māori, people with a refugee background and Takatāpui and/or Rainbow communities.



Motivations

A key aspect that contributes towards making a volunteer's role meaningful is that it aligns with their motivation to volunteer. As part of the Reimagining Volunteering survey, people were tested to see which functional approach motivates them to volunteer. American researchers Clary, Snyder, and their colleagues¹ developed this functional approach to the motivations underlying involvement in volunteer work.

¹ Clary, G. & Snyder, M. (n.d.). *The Functional Approach to Volunteers' Motivations*. https://generosityresearch.nd.edu/assets/13636/clary_snyder_volunteer_function_inventory_scale.pdf

The motivational statements that more than 70% of respondents considered important were:

- I am genuinely concerned about the particular group I am serving.
- I can do something for a cause that is important to me.
- I feel compassion toward people in need.
- I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself.
- I feel it is important to help others.

The three most important statements for NZRC respondents, with more than 80% selecting them was:

- This experience of volunteering with NZRC has been a worthwhile one.
- I am enjoying my volunteer experience.
- Through volunteering here, I am doing something for a cause that I believe in.

New Zealand Red Cross respondents

Participants were asked about their experience at NZRC. They were provided with 12 statements to which they were able to agree or disagree using a 7-point scale. From this 66% of respondents felt that NZRC clearly communicated their expectations and 70% felt that NZRC provided clear and accurate information about volunteer work. Over 80% of respondents felt NZRC had volunteers from different backgrounds and the NZRC celebrates diversity and inclusion. Over 70% of respondents agreed that NZRC provides volunteer opportunities that are meaningful to them and that organisation makes a difference in society. Over 60% of respondents agreed that NZRC upholds the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Respondents were less positive about NZRC supporting them to start new initiatives for their community and about NZRC being supportive of their development and growth as a humanitarian leader.

Participants were asked to select the three characterises of NZRC that they thought were most important. Respondents associated NZRC with being trustworthy, working globally and locally and being helpful during a disaster. The least popular option was that NZRC provides opportunities for career and professional growth with only five respondents selecting this.

Most people (87%) were likely to recommend NZRC volunteering to other people, with 5% unlikely to do so. To understand volunteers' perceptions about their feelings and experience with NZRC, they were offered 12 statements using a 7-point scale to express their agreement. Overall participants reported having a positive experience with NZRC, 70% of respondents felt welcomed, valued as a person and felt their wellbeing was recognised as important. Most respondents' felt part of a team and had a sense of belonging and felt their role was important. A little over half of respondents agreed that they have received support with technology or equipment to complete their role while 30% of respondents disagreed with this. Fifteen percent of respondents had experienced barriers to participation and discrimination.

Respondents with no relationship to NZRC

When respondents were asked if they had considered volunteering with NZRC, 53% reported that they have never considered volunteering for NZRC while 32% reported they had.

These participants were asked about the type of volunteering they associate with NZRC. Disaster response and local humanitarian work were chosen by almost 70% of respondents. More than 60% associated NZRC with international humanitarian work and with people from a refugee

background. Participants were less likely to associate NZRC with youth initiatives, international humanitarian law and social justice/inclusion work.

These participants were also asked which type of volunteering they would consider undertaking within NZRC. The most popular type of volunteering was local humanitarian (42%), disaster response (33%) and working with people from a refugee background (29%). A quarter of respondents were interested in youth engagement and social justice initiatives.

Almost half of respondents became involved in volunteering through word of mouth with 18% becoming involved due to advertising including social media or television and a further 18% searched for volunteering opportunities.

Participants were given 18 statements related to important characteristics for choosing to volunteer for an organisation and were asked to rate these from very important to not at all important. More than 80% wanted to volunteer for an organisation with a good reputation and that represents values that are important to them and allow them to make a difference.

The ideal volunteer experience would include meaningful work that would allow volunteers to actively engage with and contribute to the community. People wanted to be helpful, whether this was helping people or the environment. Respondents also mentioned the work environment, utilising their skills, and helping humanitarian causes was important to them. Training and time flexibility would be considered when choosing a volunteer role. The main reason people were unable to volunteer was time and availability due to other commitments including professional work.