

# Refugee Resettlement in New Zealand

## FACT SHEET THREE: Settlement support

New Zealand Red Cross is contracted by Immigration NZ to set up services and resources in the community and provide settlement support to refugees for 12 months after they leave the Mangere Centre. This includes assisting refugees to manage finances, understand New Zealand systems, access Work and Income benefits (if required), and manage household tasks. Some furniture is provided. Each refugee or family is also assigned a key worker and a refugee support volunteer/s to help them for their first 12 months in New Zealand.

When refugees arrive in their areas of resettlement, they are supported by Red Cross qualified social workers, refugee-background case workers, cross cultural workers and volunteers who help the refugees understand Kiwi culture, learn to manage systems and ultimately find suitable work. Social workers work with the families on complex issues such as parenting in a new environment or addressing trauma, and provide appropriate support and referrals to other services. Individual Catholics who wish to help can be part of this process, and help will be welcome.

### Ongoing Support

The Red Cross co-ordinates the volunteers who accompany refugees and help them settle in to life in New Zealand. A training programme (up to seven 3-hour sessions) is required for this, and volunteers commit to a particular refugee family or individual. Volunteers generally work together in teams, with each volunteer taking on a role that best suits their availability.

The volunteer role includes participation in the following:

- setting up a home for a refugee family/individual before they arrive
- helping the family enrol with schools and doctors
- budgeting, shopping and how to use an ATM machine
- showing the family how to use public transportation
- social visits
- and generally explaining how things work in New Zealand

Time commitment will depend on volunteer availability and the family's needs. The first two to four weeks after arrival are quite busy but after the first few weeks, much less volunteer time is required. Volunteers work in teams in order to help spread out tasks.

### Volunteer Training

All volunteers are required to complete a comprehensive, multi-day training programme prior to being placed with an incoming refugee family.

Training occurs every two months – usually between 5 – 7 sessions in the evenings or on the weekends. After training you will be placed with a team of volunteers and will start preparing for the next group of arrivals. A volunteer placement is for up to 6 months of support.

Each training programme covers a range of topics including:

- introduction to the refugee experience
- role of the refugee support volunteer
- teams and teamwork
- refugee health, well-being and education
- key support services
- culture

Some details of training dates and locations and contacts are in Fact Sheet Five.

