

# **Influencing Policy Development and Service Delivery**

**Phase 1: Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy**

## Introduction

Successful settlement is a two-way process. It requires host communities to be welcoming and responsive towards newcomers and for public institutions to meet the needs of a diverse population.<sup>1</sup> Migrants and refugees have a role in familiarising themselves with the New Zealand environment and established members of their communities can assist with this process. In particular, they can play an important role in contributing to the development of settlement-related policies and services and in delivering these services.

The Auckland region has New Zealand's highest proportion of migrants and refugees, so settlement issues are more visible there than anywhere else. Consequently, migrant and refugee communities recognise the importance of an 'Auckland voice' for addressing regional issues and offering these insights New Zealand-wide.

Policy development and service delivery are distinct activities, requiring different skill sets. The link between policy and service delivery is cyclical and inter-dependent. Policy development influences where future energies and resources will be focused which, in turn, influences service delivery. Responsive service delivery that addresses communities' needs should make the policy development process more robust.

Migrants and refugees can be involved in settlement-related service delivery in two ways:

- as employees of mainstream government and non-government providers delivering direct services; and
- as workers in community-based organisations contracted or funded to deliver services to migrant and refugee communities.

This chapter is presented in two parts. The first part discusses how migrants and refugees can contribute to the development of settlement-related policy. It identifies the barriers migrants and refugees face in doing this, as well as existing engagement processes currently used in Auckland. It also identifies opportunities for central and local government to take a co-ordinated approach for developing a collective voice on shared settlement issues through a common point of contact.

The second part discusses the barriers and challenges faced by migrants and refugees in accessing responsive, settlement-related services and in being involved in community-based service delivery. It provides examples of current practice in this area and identifies opportunities to enhance the responsiveness of mainstream agencies and the capacity of communities to deliver appropriate settlement-related services.

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<sup>1</sup> Refugee Resettlement, Part 1, Putting Principles into Practice.

## **PART ONE: POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

## **Barriers and challenges: what migrants and refugees said**

Migrants and refugees identified the following challenges that prevent them from meaningfully engaging in a collective approach to policy development:

- a lack of co-ordination between agencies, including the absence of a central point of contact with central government agencies or with councils in the Auckland region;
- consultation processes that lack credibility and are not representative; and
- poor use of existing knowledge, skill and expertise within migrant and refugee communities.

### ***Lack of a coordinated approach***

Migrant and refugee communities believe that in the Auckland region:

- information-gathering processes are duplicated across the plethora of central and local government agencies and non-government organisations. This places unfair demands on communities and their representatives and impacts upon the breadth and quality of information gathered by agencies.
- their contact with different central and local government agencies has been with a changing range of individuals. The resulting duplication and gaps in information have led to frustration and concerns about the lack of a central and constant point of contact for central and local government and communities in the Auckland region. It has also hindered the building of sustainable relationships and the development of a robust regional information base on settlement issues.

### ***Consultation processes not always perceived to be credible and inclusive***

Migrants and refugees are often asked to take part in a number of central and local government consultation processes at short notice. This places an unrealistic expectation on refugee and migrant community representatives who also have other commitments. It often results in a limited number of migrants and refugees being involved. It fails to provide a representative view of settlement issues for wider migrant and refugee communities and can lead to perceptions of selective, divisive and unrepresentative processes. This raises questions within these communities on the credibility of the information gathered.

### ***Poor use of existing knowledge, skill and expertise***

Migrants and refugees do not believe government agencies are capitalising on their expertise and knowledge to develop robust and effective settlement policies. For example, established community members with strong links with their communities, who are settled in New Zealand and who understand the New Zealand environment, have an important contribution to make to settlement-related policies. They can also be an important bridge for promoting understanding between migrant and refugee communities and government agencies.

There are also many people from migrant and refugee backgrounds with considerable knowledge in specialised areas such as health, education, employment and women's issues who have lost the impetus to participate through general migrant or refugee forums. This means their input and expertise in their specialist areas is not incorporated into the policy development process.

### **The context for community input**

The Office of Ethnic Affairs has a mandate to consult with ethnic communities and incorporate their perspectives into the formation of policy and services. For this reason, migrants and refugees<sup>2</sup> have proposed a role for the Office of Ethnic Affairs to lead the development of a collective community voice and to provide a central and constant point of contact between communities and government agencies.

#### ***Collective community voice***

All parties involved in the development of the *Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy* want to ensure shared responsibility and accountability for the *Strategy* between government agencies, non-government organisations, and migrant and refugee communities. Migrant and refugee communities were involved in defining the problems and identifying solutions during the development of the *Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy*. This was achieved by adopting a robust process, drawing on a wide range of refugee and migrant community perspectives, to ensure collective agreement on the issues identified.

Migrant and refugee communities believe that providing a collective voice on settlement-related issues to those involved in policy development will both improve the quality of information and strengthen community involvement in these processes. A mandate was given for a small group of community members to work together, on behalf of the wider communities, to develop options to achieve this<sup>3</sup>. So far they have agreed that any options developed must adhere to the following key principles. They should:

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<sup>2</sup> This refers to the group of migrants and refugees given the mandate by their wider communities involved in the engagement process.

<sup>3</sup> This work would then be presented to communities for their consideration, including the opportunity to raise any issues and make necessary amendments with the ultimate outcome to agree a process endorsed by the majority.

- offer an inclusive process that enables a wide range of communities to develop a collective voice on settlement issues by consensus;
- provide clear communication and feedback loops between communities contributing to the shared voice and those representing their views in settlement-related, policy development processes;<sup>4</sup>
- allow sufficient timeframes to provide feedback to government agencies on settlement-related issues so that migrant and refugee communities have time to agree on a collective view to feed into relevant policy development issues;
- ensure those representing the shared voice of migrants and refugees in the policy development process be selected for:
  - their understanding and ability to take a wider view on shared refugee or migrant settlement issues, rather than championing individual community issues; and
  - their expertise and ability to accurately represent and articulate the views of communities in a way that positively influences government and non-government policy development initiatives.
- ensure the agreed collective process does not cut across the ability of individual communities to develop relationships and engage on their own behalf to obtain access to funding and support to meet the needs of their specific communities; and
- ensure central and local government and non-government organisations work together to resource this process and the migrant and refugee voice is represented on the governing body.

### ***Central and constant point of contact***

Local authorities have statutory responsibilities in common established by the Local Government Act 2002, and carry out many of the same functions and activities, and face similar challenges. Their responsibilities include the requirement to identify community outcomes<sup>5</sup>. This can provide opportunities for councils to involve migrant and refugee communities developing policy and planning service delivery.

The Controller and Auditor-General note that working together can be a practical and cost-effective way for local authorities to share their experience and resources and to co-ordinate their services. For example, collaboration enables them to provide affordable access to expertise, strengthen organisational capability and better align council policies so they can work together.<sup>6</sup> The Local Government Act provides for this kind

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, one option identified is to plan forums in advance (say 3 – 4 over a year) when migrant and refugee community representatives will meet. In order to have a meaningful discussion on the relevant policy issue, papers would need to be circulated to allow sufficient time for representatives to have sought feedback from their own communities.

<sup>5</sup> Community outcomes are identified through the process of developing Long Term Community Plans.

<sup>6</sup> Drawn from the Controller and Auditor-General's Foreword to *Local Authorities Working Together*, May 2004.

of collaborative approach by emphasising partnerships with other local authorities and public bodies.

Similarly, there is an expectation that central government agencies working on cross-sectoral issues with shared outcomes will also co-ordinate their processes.

## **Current government engagement processes**

Central and local government recognise the importance and benefits of drawing on local community expertise and have developed guidelines and processes to achieve this<sup>7</sup>. Some central government agencies and councils have their own processes for engaging with migrants and refugees at local, regional and national levels<sup>8</sup>. The key issue is that these processes are not co-ordinated, nor are they representative of the wider range of migrant and refugee communities.

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<sup>7</sup> For example the Long-Term Council Community Plan under the Local Government Act 2002, Good Practice Participate, Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector.

<sup>8</sup> For example, the Waitakere Ethnic Board and the national consultation Migrant Forums and Refugee Resettlement Forums coordinated by Department of Labour.

## **The way forward: *Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy***

### ***Goal for involving migrants and refugees in policy development processes***

The Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy's goal for involving migrants and refugees in policy development processes is to *improve settlement outcomes through co-ordinated and sustainable contact between central and local government agencies and communities by:*

- *minimising the number of processes migrants and refugees are asked to contribute to;*
- *maximising their ability to obtain a collective and credible migrant and refugee voice on shared settlement issues; and*
- *gathering quality information for developing co-ordinated settlement-related policy.*

### **Opportunities for input to policy development**

It is recommended that the longer-term work programme for the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy reflect a co-ordinated approach for involving migrants and refugees in policy development by:

#### ***Development and representation of a collective voice***

- central and local government agencies agreeing to adopt the principles recommended by migrants and refugees for developing options for a collective voice on shared settlement-related issues and to strengthen community involvement in relevant policy development processes;
- the Office of Ethnic Affairs being resourced to lead agency efforts to develop a collective migrant and refugee voice and ensure that it is represented on the governing body for the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy;

#### ***Promoting a central and constant point of contact***

- councils in the Auckland region developing and adopting a co-ordinated approach and a common point of contact for involving migrants and refugees in local government settlement-related policy development;
- the Office of Ethnic Affairs, with its mandate to incorporate ethnic communities' perspectives into the formation of policy and services, acting as the constant point of contact for central government agencies in Auckland.

## **PART TWO: SERVICE DELIVERY**

## **Barriers and challenges: what migrants and refugees said**

Migrants and refugees identified the following barriers that prevent them from being involved in developing and delivering responsive mainstream services and community-based services that support their settlement in Auckland:

- insufficient opportunities and barriers for migrants and refugees from cultural and linguistic diverse backgrounds to gain employment in mainstream services;
- a lack of familiarity and insufficient support for migrants and refugees to increase their knowledge, skills and understanding of the requirements needed to deliver community based services; and
- the unavailability of long-term funding for consistent, ongoing, community-based service delivery.

## **The context for involving migrants and refugees in service delivery**

Mainstream services, many of which are provided directly by the Government or through non-government organisations, will continue to be the main providers of settlement-related services for migrants and refugees. It is therefore important that government and non-government agencies that deliver services to all New Zealanders are also responsive to migrants' and refugees' needs.

There are also opportunities for migrant and refugee communities, who have the capacity, to apply for government funding to provide community-based settlement support services<sup>9</sup>. Community-based programmes cover a range of services, including social, health, ESOL, early childhood, as well as services for specific demographic groups such as youth, older people and women. Services delivered in partnership with communities help to build community strength and capacity. They do this by providing opportunities for people and communities to increase their skills, confidence and knowledge and to learn through experience and influence decisions that affect them.

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<sup>9</sup> Government funding is prioritised to meet the needs and demands of a wide range of diverse cultural groups. Maori have this right as Tangata Whenua and Pacific peoples, as longstanding migrants to New Zealand, also have settlement needs that must be addressed.

Services developed and delivered by communities and/or interest groups with knowledge and expertise about community needs, are more likely to reach people in marginalised communities. In some instances, these services can also bridge perceived gaps in the responsiveness of government and non-government organisations. Existing community-based organisations are also providing volunteering opportunities for migrant and refugee community members which build the capacity of both organisations and communities and provide a platform for employment.

## **Government Support**

### ***Employment opportunities***

The Government acknowledges that the public sector works to deliver services to all New Zealanders. The Public Service and wider State Services therefore need to reflect the diversity of New Zealand and to attract talented people from a range of backgrounds<sup>10</sup>. This is consistent with the *New Zealand Settlement Strategy* goal of ensuring access for all to responsive services.

Central and local government organisations are, collectively, New Zealand's largest employer group. They can provide leadership in building settlement support capacity by providing employment opportunities for members of migrants and refugees communities and by increasing the service capacity of agencies, workers and communities.

Presently the Public Service employs 2.5% of the labour market (as at June 2005) of which 20.2% or 8,177 public service employees work in Auckland. Over the period 2000-2004 the numbers of Asian people employed nationally in the Public Service was 1,557 of which 43% or 669 people are employed in the Auckland region (an increase of 11% over this period). This increase was larger than for any other ethnic group in the same period<sup>6</sup>. There were 595 members of the 'Other' ethnic groups<sup>11</sup> category employed in the Public Service at 30 June 2004 - equivalent to 1.8% of the Public Service. Of these, 28% or 166 people were employed in the Auckland region.

A total of 1,557 Asian people were employed in the Public Service as at 30 June 2004 - equivalent to 4.7% of the Public Service<sup>6</sup>. This compares with Asian people making up 16% of the population across the Auckland region<sup>12</sup>, with a significantly higher proportion in the metropolitan areas.

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<sup>10</sup> EEO Progress Report 2000-2004: The Data Stories, State Services Commission.

<sup>11</sup> 'Other' ethnic groups category includes ethnicities that do not fall within European, Maori, Pacific peoples and Asian ethnic groups. It includes Arabs, Iranians, Somalis and Latin Americans, accounting for 0.7 percent of New Zealand's population, and is the smallest ethnic group in the Public Service.

<sup>12</sup> This compares with approximately: 17.3 percent of Public Service employees who are Maori, 20 percent of whom are based in Auckland; 7.1 percent who are Pacific peoples, 49 percent of whom are based in Auckland; 76.2 percent who are Europeans who predominantly work in Wellington. Source: EEO Progress Report 2000-2004: the Data Stories, State Services Commission.

### ***Responsive policies and practices***

The *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy* resource, developed by the Office of Ethnic Affairs, is a useful tool to help the public sector develop responsive policies and practices. It provides information about ethnic diversity in New Zealand, defines government departments' roles, and provides guidelines for government agencies to develop policies and services that are more responsive to ethnic communities' views and needs. It also provides a range of tools to help agencies develop services for ethnic communities.<sup>13</sup>

The Government has indicated that key departments whose work significantly impacts on migrant and refugee settlement<sup>14</sup> will develop ethnic responsiveness strategies to help their agencies focus activities on ethnic communities and, in so doing, support the *New Zealand Settlement Strategy's* goals. These ethnic responsiveness strategies are in various stages of completion.

### ***Community-based services***

Many central and local government and non-government agencies are involved in community development at local levels through a range of activities including funding, skill development, establishing support networks and making subsidised venues available<sup>15</sup>.

The Ministry of Social Development's *Community-Based Social Services to Refugee and Migrant Communities* project has a specific focus on migrants and refugees to ensure they can access appropriate social services and build capacity within their communities to develop and deliver these services (see Appendix 2). Knowledge gained through this initiative will provide a refugee and migrant perspective to another government initiative, the *Building Capability in the Community Sector* project.<sup>16</sup> This project aims to improve community and voluntary groups' access to information and advice that supports their internal systems. It can provide useful guidance for agencies involved in community development.

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<sup>13</sup> These include Language Line, Consultation Guidelines, and resources to support intercultural competency training.

<sup>14</sup> Child, Youth and Family, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Housing, HNZC, Department of Labour, Tertiary Education Commission).

<sup>15</sup> For example, see Department of Internal Affairs and local government provision in Appendix 1

<sup>16</sup> This project is coordinated by the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector administered by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and Family and Community Services.

## **The way forward: *Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy***

### ***Goals for involving migrants and refugees in service delivery***

The *Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy's* goals for involving migrants and refugees in service delivery are to ensure:

- *mainstream agencies are responsive when providing services to migrants and refugees; and*
- *support and resourcing is available to develop and deliver appropriate community-based settlement services in Auckland.*

### **Opportunities for service delivery**

It is recommended that the longer-term work programmes for the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy and the New Zealand Settlement Strategy increase central and local agency capability by:

#### ***Responsiveness of mainstream agencies***

- mainstream agencies enhancing their responsiveness to migrant and refugee needs through workforce development that focuses on:
  - increasing the capability of the current workforce through training and development;
  - actively recruiting employees from migrant and refugee communities.
- mainstream agencies developing and/or reviewing workforce policies and practices to support responsiveness, considering inter-cultural awareness training where appropriate, and providing employment opportunities through work experience,<sup>17</sup> short-term work placements, cadetships, secondments between government and community organisations, mentoring and opening up in-house training programmes;
- the Office of Ethnic Affairs working with other agencies to develop processes which evaluate and review the impact of ethnic responsiveness strategies at both community and agency level;

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<sup>17</sup> An example of a government agency work experience scheme is the *Work Experience Opportunities for Migrants and Refugees* scheme. This is a joint venture between Wellington City Council and the Ministry of Social Development to provide work experience opportunities for 15 trainees from migrant and refugee communities at Wellington City Council for a 12 month period.

### ***Community-based services***

- central and local government agencies, non-government organisations, and migrant and refugee communities scoping opportunities to develop and resource community-based services, run by and for migrants and refugees.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### ***Types of capacity-building support provided by central government***

The Department of Internal Affairs provides community funding and advisory services that supports community development. It administers:

- Lottery Grants;
- Community Grants schemes;
- grants on-line;
- several Trusts.

It also provides a range of community development support advisory services such as community net Aotearoa, and through community advisors in regional offices in Auckland. Further information is available on [www.dia.govt.nz](http://www.dia.govt.nz).

### ***Types of capacity-building support provided by local government***

#### *Direct funding - grants*

These tend to be focused on projects/events but some councils do provide funding for 'infrastructure'. For example, the groups can apply to the Auckland City Council Community Group Assistance Policy for costs associated with increasing the capacity of their group.

This might include volunteer costs, one-off administration costs, training of staff and volunteers, networking, business planning, promotion and marketing and small equipment purchases. The Manukau City Council Social Investment Fund provides support for salaries and operations costs for particular programmes/projects.

Sometimes this is undertaken through a funding partnership but this tends to be with larger community organisations or trusts.

#### *Indirect funding*

Councils, (mainly through community advisers or similar) assist groups to access funding, help them prepare business cases/funding applications. They may also advocate on behalf of funding applications (where appropriate).

#### *Skill Development*

Community advisers run workshops or one-to-one on a range of skills, including managing volunteers and governance training for management committees etc.

#### *Brokerage*

Community advisers may act as a broker/facilitator/negotiator between groups e.g. to leverage resources, and encourage joint use of facilities.

*Supporting networks*

Support networks for information exchange, joint advocacy etc.

*Subsidised venues*

Community groups are heavy users of community centres, halls, libraries and other subsidised venues provided by councils.

## Appendix 2

### ***Ministry of Social Development (Family and Community Services) community-based, social services to the refugee and migrant community***

This initiative recognises the significant difficulties refugees and migrants face in settling in New Zealand and the need to take a whole-of-government approach to developing social services for these groups.

Initial work focused on completing a need and services analysis, purchasing additional services to meet immediate needs, and capacity-building where gaps have been identified. This initiative will focus on assisting refugee and migrant communities to develop and deliver social services where appropriate for their own communities.

#### *Who will benefit?*

This initiative will assist refugee and migrant communities to develop and deliver social services to meet the needs of their communities.

#### *What is the cost of this investment?*

The Government is investing \$1.7m over four years commencing from 2003/04.

#### *Examples of the work undertaken*

Information provision, skill development and brokerage are core components of this community development project. The project draws on experiences from other communities including Maori and Pacific peoples. The following are some examples of the work undertaken.

#### *Somali parenting programme*

This programme, run by the Somali community, offered Somali mothers in Auckland information about parenting in New Zealand. It included information about nutrition for children, early childhood development, the school system, mental health issues, and ways to guide and teach children and young people to achieve good outcomes. A range of government and community agencies, including the Ministry of Education, Public Health Group, Special Education, Early Childhood Education (including Hippy, the Kauri Centre and On TRACC) participated in the programme.

#### *Training and development programmes*

These programmes provided the opportunity for ethnic community organisations to understand the project planning process from the start through to implementation. Project staff provided support during the training and ongoing support and monitoring continued as people

progressed with their projects. Help was also provided with funding applications

### Strategic business planning

Support to enable a charitable trust aimed at supporting South Asian senior citizens from diverse cultural backgrounds to further develop its service provision. The trust focused its efforts on older people who had been living in Auckland for a long time, as well as new migrants. The founder of this group, having previously worked in mainstream organisations providing services to older people, recognised that 'while some South Asian senior citizens settled adequately, others, particularly the older adults, faced difficulties in adjusting to the New Zealand society due to barriers'.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Shanti Niwas Charitable Trust Website [www.shantiniwas.org.nz](http://www.shantiniwas.org.nz).