

Afghanistan

Refugee quota factsheet

New Zealand Refugee Quota Afghan Refugees

The New Zealand Government works with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to offer permanent resettlement solutions in New Zealand for 1000 refugees annually.¹ Refugees from Afghanistan are included in the 2017/2018 refugee quota and will be resettled to New Zealand throughout the year.

Prior to their arrival to New Zealand the Afghan refugees were living in Indonesia and Pakistan recognised as refugees by the UNHCR.

Before settlement in the community all refugees accepted under the annual refugee quota programme complete a six week reception programme at Auckland's Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre.

In order to become successfully resettled, refugees will be accessing the assistance of mainstream services such as health, education, housing and Work & Income. The New Zealand Red Cross is the key agency responsible for assisting quota refugees in their initial community settlement.

This document aims to provide New Zealand's community-based professionals with general information about Afghanistan, the human rights situation in Afghanistan, the Afghani culture as well as some general information on supporting successful refugee resettlement in your community.

Humanitarian situation and needs

Insecurity linked to almost four decades of conflict in Afghanistan is increasing as fighting persists between government forces and armed opposition groups.

Since spring 2016, a drastic shift has been observed in the dynamics of the conflict. Ground offensives launched by Armed Opposition Groups against government forces have increased both in intensity and frequency; they now include urban centres with high population density. The civilian population is paying an increasing heavy toll through both civilian casualties and population displacements. The situation can no longer be considered a "stabilisation phase", but has rather reverted to an increasingly acute humanitarian crisis.

The UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) estimates that in 2016 623,000 people were newly displaced in the country. However, there could be many more as accurate data is missing due to the lack of access to some provinces.²

Conflict displacement has continued into 2017 with 160,000 new Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the first half of the year. While this represents around a 16 per cent reduction compared to those displaced by fighting in the same period in 2016, a rising insurgency and increased insecurity are exacerbating existing humanitarian needs while simultaneously generating new ones. The number of IDPs located in hard-to-reach areas constitutes 15 per cent (23,460) of the newly displaced caseload while more than 55 per cent of those displaced are reported to be children who face particular risk of abuse and exploitation. During the first six months of 2017, 5,243 civilian casualties (1,662 dead and 3,581 injured) were also recorded.³

¹ This figure includes an additional intake of 250 Syrians in the 2017/2018 quota year before the permanent quota increase to 1000 refugees takes effect from 2018/19.

² European Commission: European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), May 2017, *Afghanistan – ECHO Factsheet*

³ United Nations: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 11 September 2017, *Afghanistan: Humanitarian Dashboard (as of 30 June 2017)*

Devastated by the long-drawn conflict, people living in affected areas are reliant on humanitarian assistance and need protection from violence. Basic services like health care, drinking water and shelter are urgently needed in many areas. At the national level, eight million Afghans are food insecure, and a strong need for livelihood support remains throughout the country.⁴

Cultural communications:⁵

■ MEETING & GREETINGS

- › When meeting someone the handshake is the most common form of greeting. You will also see people place their right hand on their chest hands when greeting each other.
- › Hospitality is highly valued in Afghanistan. One should always enquire about things like a person's health, business, family, etc.
- › Women and men will never shake hands.
- › Eye contact should also be avoided between men and women.

Supporting successful refugee resettlement:

- › Be aware of differences between yourself and your client / student in terms of customs, values and belief systems, as well as perceptions of service delivery and treatment. It may be advisable to obtain the assistance of a cultural adviser, or someone familiar with the culture of your client's home country to help you develop culturally appropriate forms of service delivery when working with a new refugee community in your area.
- › Many adult refugees will have only had limited formal education so communication styles may need to be adjusted accordingly.
- › Refugees may also have difficulty comprehending the importance New Zealand society places on official documentation. Some refugees may associate the recording of personal information with suspicion because of past experiences in their home country. As such, it is important to ensure refugee clients understand why you are recording information, where it will be stored and with whom it will be shared.
- › Explain your role carefully to the client and always use a professional interpreter if the client is not proficient in English. If your organisation does not have established procedures for using interpreters, interpreting services can be found through the following organisations: Interpreting New Zealand <http://www.interpret.org.nz/> and Language Line <http://ethniccommunities.govt.nz/browse/language-line>.
- › The Citizens Advice Bureau Language Connect provides free and confidential support in different languages. Advice on settlement needs, such as housing, renting, health, education and any other settlement issues. They can also help with immigration questions. Please call 0800 788877 (free phone) or email: language@cab.org.nz

⁴ ECHO, May 2017, *Afghanistan – ECHO Factsheet*

⁵ Source: Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, January 2012, *Hazara cultural orientation*, p.20-

Language

Their main language is Dari, with some limited English.

■ BASIC DARI:⁶

Hello – *salam*

Welcome – *khosh amadin*

Thank you – *tashakor*

Yes – *bala*

No – *na*

Ethnicity

The group are of Hazara ethnicity.

Religion

This group of people are Shi'ite Muslims.

⁶ Clammer, Paul, [2007], *Afghanistan*, Lonely Planet, Footscray, Victoria, p.228

New Zealand is one of thirty seven countries that take part in the United Nations Refugee Agency's regular refugee resettlement programme. Our annual refugee quota of 1000 refugees is a reflection of the government's commitment to fulfilling its international humanitarian obligations and responsibilities to provide protection to refugees.

The New Zealand Government and a number of local organisations, such as New Zealand Red Cross, are helping these families to resettle, and to access the goods and services they need to restart their lives.



* Sourced from United Nations: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 11 September 2017, *Afghanistan: Humanitarian Dashboard (as of 30 June 2017)*

Additional Resources

- › New Zealand Immigration has factsheets and videos for refugees and family members settling in New Zealand which are available at <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/our-strategies-and-projects/supporting-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/information-for-refugees-settling-in-new-zealand>
- › Detailed UNHCR guidelines for working refugees are available in a publication called *Refugee Resettlement: An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration*, see <http://www.unhcr.org/4a2cfe336.html>
- › BBC, 30 October 2017 [last updated], *Afghanistan country profile*, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12011352>
- › Encyclopaedia Britannica, 16 November 2017 [last updated], *Afghanistan*, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/7798/Afghanistan>
- › Every Culture, [2017], *Afghanistan, Afghanis, Hazaras, Pashtun*, <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Afghanistan-to-Bosnia-Herzegovina/Afghanistan.html>
- › Human Rights Watch, 2017, *World Report 2017: Afghanistan*, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/afghanistan>
- › United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), [2017], *Afghanistan: 2017 UNHCR country operations profile*, <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/4505?y=2017#year>
- › United States Department of State, 3 March 2017, *2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Afghanistan*, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/58ec8a7fa.html>

Contact Information

For more information about New Zealand's Refugee Quota programme, or New Zealand's Refugee Policy, please contact:

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Refugee Quota Branch
New Zealand Immigration
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If you require further information or support on any health or education issue for the refugees recently resettled in your region, please contact the following specialist agencies located at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre:

Refugees as Survivors New Zealand (RASNZ)

(09) 270 0870
www.rasnz.co.nz

Refugee Health Screening Service

(09) 276 6719
www.refugeehealth.govt.nz

AUT – Centre for Refugee Education

(09) 921 9366
www.aut.ac.nz/community/aut-in-the-community/centre-for-refugee-education

INZ Resettlement Team

(09) 928 2648
www.immigration.govt.nz

New Zealand Red Cross

0800 RED CROSS
www.redcross.org.nz

Please note: No personal information will be released without written consent from the client.