



Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Refugee Sponsorship

18 July 2021



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HIKINA WHAKATUTUKI

Intended audience

This document has been produced for use by Immigration New Zealand's Refugee and Migrant Services branch to assist in the implementation of *Refugee Sponsorship*.

The document will be used to guide the development of communication materials about the programme and will ensure key principles and objectives of the programme are enabled.

All photos used in this document have been provided by Immigration New Zealand's Refugee and Migrant Services branch.

Family pictured on front cover:

Ihab M A Milhem, Shaymaa SN Ahmed, Omar Milhem, Ranya Milhem and Aysha Milhem



Glossary

Approved Sponsors

Organisations that have been approved by Immigration New Zealand to sponsor refugees in their community

Community member

An individual, New Zealand resident

Community groups

An informal group of friends, family or individuals who have come together and partnered with a legal entity to become Approved Sponsors and support refugees settling in their community

Former refugee community

An informal network of people that have the common experience of being displaced from their home and coming to Aotearoa as refugees or asylum seekers

INZ

Immigration New Zealand

Mana whenua

The indigenous people (Māori) who have historic and territorial rights over the land in a specific area. It refers to iwi and hapū (Māori tribal groups)

Outcomes agreement

The legal agreement that an Approved Sponsor enters into with Immigration New Zealand when they take on an Approved Sponsor role

Refugees

Individuals who are offshore and are considering different pathways to resettlement in New Zealand. These individuals are potential applicants for the *Refugee Sponsorship* programme

Sponsored refugees

Refugees who have arrived in New Zealand and are currently part of the *Refugee Sponsorship* programme

Tangata whenua

Indigenous people of Aotearoa, at a national level

Umbrella organisation (to be called by its name once appointed)

This organisation will be appointed by Immigration New Zealand to administer and coordinate the programme. It will have national reach and resources available to support the approved sponsors

Contents

Introduction

- 06. Background
- 07. Who was involved in the development of the programme
- 08. Process of this work

The programme

- 10. Programme overview
- 11. Connection to the community and place
- 12. Programme vision
- 13. Programme principles
- 14. Approved Sponsor requirements
- 15. Approved Sponsor case study 1
- 16. Approved Sponsor case study 2
- 17. Community architecture
- 18. Roles and responsibilities
- 20. Approved Sponsor process map
- 21. Programme evaluation approach

Appendix

- 23. Policy Criteria



Basam Abaza and Iman Abaza



Sofonias Tesfaye and Kisanet Zere



Introduction

Background

The extended *Refugee Sponsorship* programme (formerly Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship) will enable up to 50 sponsored refugees to be resettled in New Zealand in each of the three financial years from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024. This will result in a total of 150 sponsored refugees over the next three financial years, with settlement support provided by Approved Sponsors.

MBIE recognises the importance of working in partnership with community organisations, key stakeholders and mana whenua in developing a sustainable model to support the community sponsorship programme.



Jalil Tafur Rodriguez and two friends

The previous CORS pilot

In June 2016, Cabinet approved the piloting of the Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship Category (CORS) as an alternative form of admission for up to 25 refugees in 2017/18.

The aims of the pilot were to:

- provide an opportunity for community organisations to more actively engage in supporting successful refugee settlement
- enable sponsored refugees, with the support of community organisations, to quickly become independent and self-sufficient
- provide an alternative form of admission for refugees to complement New Zealand's Refugee Quota Programme.

The pilot was implemented within a relatively short timeframe. A Cabinet decision was made on the design of the pilot in August 2017, sponsors were selected in November and December 2017, and sponsored refugees arrived in New Zealand in May and July 2018.

Who was involved in the development of the programme

The model for *Refugee Sponsorship* was developed in partnership with a range of stakeholders and communities. Over a four-month period, a cross-sector and cross-community working group co-designed areas of the programme and tested these in online workshops with wider stakeholders. Areas that were designed and tested included how to:

- build capability and capacity in Approved Sponsors
- create robust information sharing channels between parties and support overall wellbeing and safety of sponsored refugees
- have a national support model for the *Refugee Sponsorship* programme
- and enable promotion of *Refugee Sponsorship* .

Thank you to the working group who contributed their time and expertise to the development of the *Refugee Sponsorship*:

- Afnan Al-Rubayee (former refugee, The National Refugee and Migrant Forum of Aotearoa)
- Batoool Arif (former refugee, Changemakers)
- Jay Marlowe (academic researcher)
- Joanna Viernes (previous CORS pilot sponsor, Caritas)
- Nick Regnault (previous CORS pilot sponsor, South West Baptist Church)
- Sandra McCallum (Changemakers)
- Sara Kondon (academic researcher)

MBIE project team:

- Sarah Ward (project lead)
- Elsa Pacheco (project team)
- Suzanne Malan (project team)

ThinkPlace co-design facilitators:

- Avara Moody (Senior Designer)
- Peter Harrison (Director)

38

people from the community were involved in the development of *Refugee Sponsorship*

26

attended information sessions

12

attended co-design workshops

Representatives from the following groups were engaged in an information session and/or workshops:

- Canterbury Refugee Council
- Changemakers Refugee Forum
- The National Refugee and Migrant Forum of Aotearoa
- New Zealand National Refugee Association
- Waikato Refugee Forum
- Ngāi Tahu refugee and migrant sector advocate
- Muaūpoko Tribal Authority
- Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand
- Presbyterian Support Services (South Canterbury)
- Southwest Baptist church
- Gleniti Baptist Church
- Chaldean Catholic Church Waikato
- Society of Saint Vincent De Paul New Zealand
- Starfish Collective
- Rainbow Path
- Auckland University
- Victoria University
- Independent researchers and academics
- Amnesty International

Process of this work

December 2020 – January 2021

1

Forming the working group

Convening and establishing the working group to start the co-design

- Developing a team charter, how we work together as a team
- Reviewing what we learnt from the first CORS pilot and from overseas programmes
- Sharing existing knowledge and expertise in the working group
- Development of early artefacts to communicate and test the potential of *Refugee Sponsorship* programme
 - Programme vision
 - Principles
 - Criteria
 - Journey map
- Planning approach to engaging stakeholders

February 2021 – March 2021

2

Stakeholder engagement

Testing what we developed as a working group through stakeholder engagements

- Two online information sessions for stakeholders to attend
- Two online community workshops exploring a) the sponsored refugees resettlement experience and b) the potential Approved Sponsor experience
- Individual conversations with community members and stakeholders to receive feedback and iterate upon ideas
- Regular email communications with programme stakeholders to gather feedback

April 2021

3

Consolidating the pilot model

Refining detailed elements of the programme as a working group

- Community architecture (what the programme looks like at a national and local level)
- Roles and responsibilities
- Approved Sponsor process map
- Considerations for programme evaluation
- Programme overview



The programme

Programme overview

Refugee Sponsorship
Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Our mission

To welcome and support the resettlement of sponsored refugees in Aotearoa, through empowering and connecting communities.

Our vision

3-year There is a network of diverse Approved Sponsors within *Refugee Sponsorship*. The programme has enhanced relationships between sponsored refugees, local communities and mana whenua.

10-year *Refugee Sponsorship* is a well-recognised and established programme that complements other humanitarian pathways. Welcoming sponsored refugees into our communities is a core New Zealand value.

Our design principles

- 1 Support the aspirations of mana whenua and seek proactive involvement from them
- 2 Recognise the contributions sponsored refugees have to share with their communities
- 3 Connect sponsored refugees with mana whenua, local communities, and services that help them live fulfilling and meaningful lives
- 4 Former refugees and Approved Sponsors have access to trusted sources for questions or when issues arise
- 5 The programme enables a diverse range of Approved Sponsors
- 6 Approved Sponsors existing skills are utilised and supported to grow
- 7 The programme is designed to have space to grow, evolve and become self-sustaining and self-managing
- 8 The programme proactively shares its growth and success stories
- 9 There is clarity of where responsibilities lie between everyone involved in the programme

Who we work with

Mana whenua, to inform the programme design

Sponsored refugees, those who are resettling in Aotearoa

Former refugee community to support incoming sponsored refugees to settle in Aotearoa, and connect with their local community

Umbrella Organisation, at a national level, supporting Approved Sponsors

Approved Sponsor, at a local level, welcoming sponsored refugees

Community group, at a local level, partners with a legal entity to be able to become an Approved Sponsor

Other government departments or support organisations to support the programme by connecting and sharing learnings and resources

What we create & run



We facilitate a quality experience for sponsored refugees through a local support network which is connected and empowered



We foster mutually beneficial partnerships between mana whenua, sponsored refugees, the Umbrella Organisations, Approved Sponsors and Community groups



We help Aotearoa learn how the programme complements initiatives such as the refugee quota programme, refugee family reunification, and Welcoming Communities

How we deliver value



Gathering and responding to regular feedback from sponsored refugees, Approved Sponsors, the Umbrella Organisation and mana whenua to drive continuous improvement of the programme

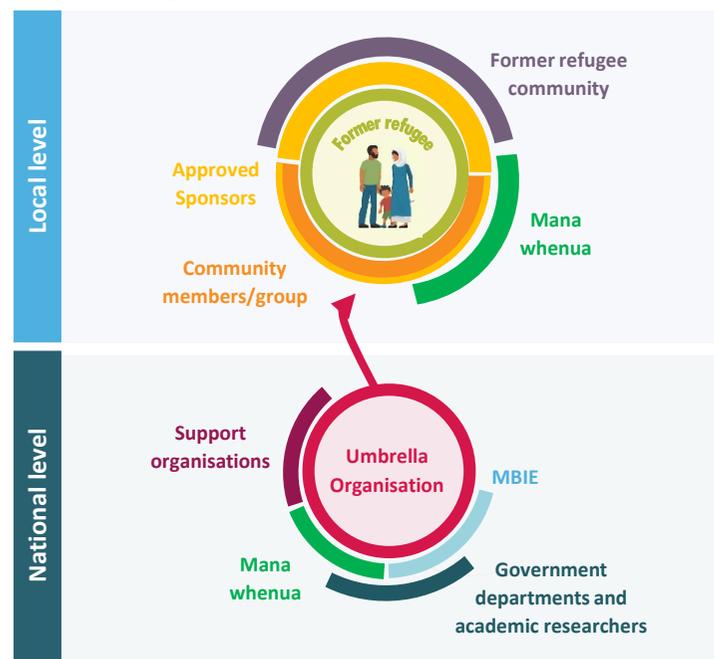


Creating a network of Approved Sponsors who are deeply connected in their community and supported by the Umbrella Organisation and other local and national organisations



We build in training and support for Approved Sponsors to grow their capability and connect and learn with one another

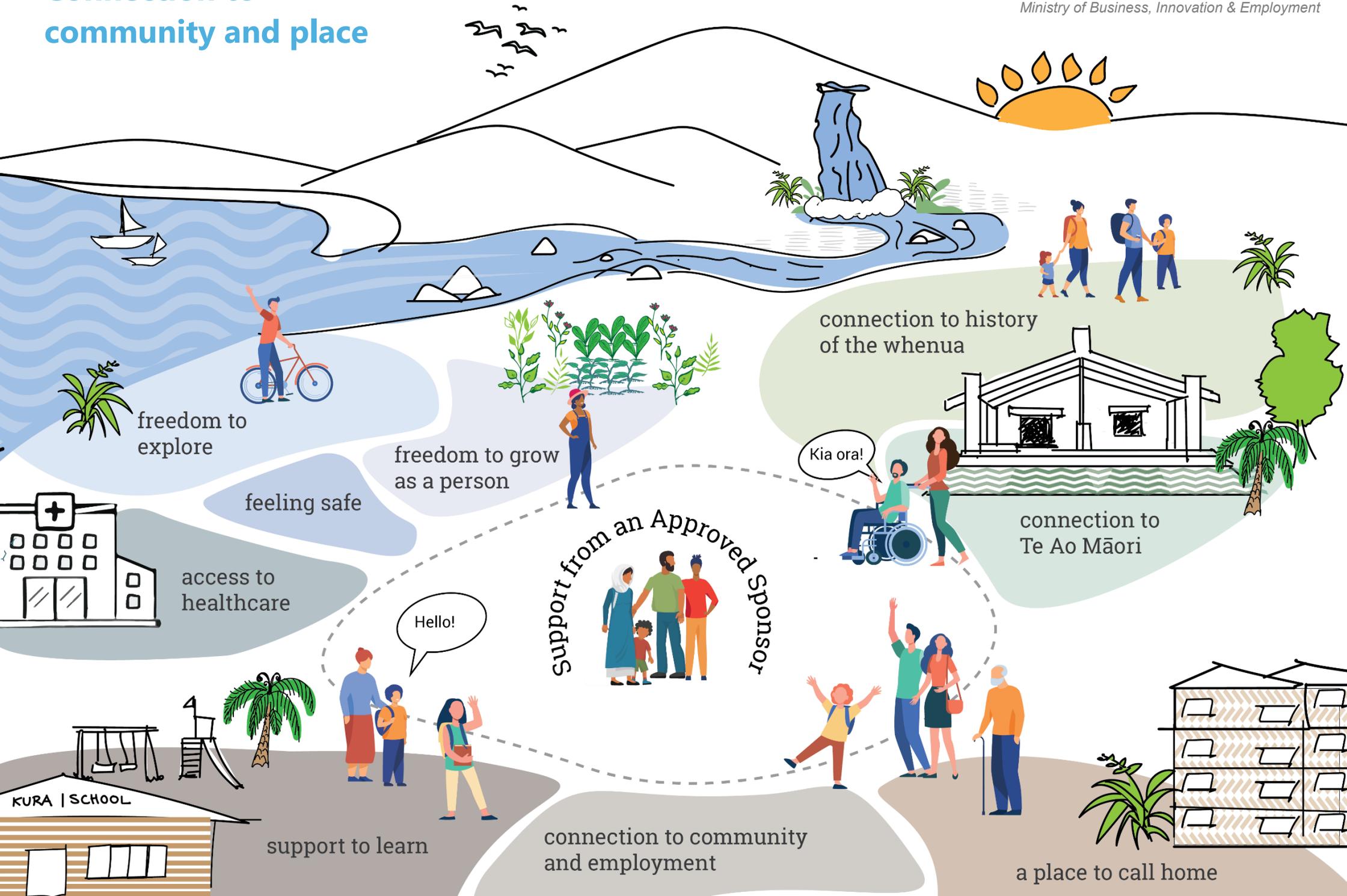
Community Architecture



Approved Sponsor criteria

1. Approved Sponsors must be a legal entity and have the financial capacity to meet their settlement responsibilities
2. Connected to the community and pull together the skills and capabilities of a group of individuals to support the settlement of sponsored refugees
3. Have the skills and capabilities to provide settlement support, including sourcing accommodation, and connecting to education and employment pathways for 24 months
4. Have worked with vulnerable communities before and are willing to continue to participate in training and development to enhance their own skills in sponsored refugee resettlement
5. Understand the importance of building connections between mana whenua, sponsored refugees and other Approved Sponsors

Connection to community and place



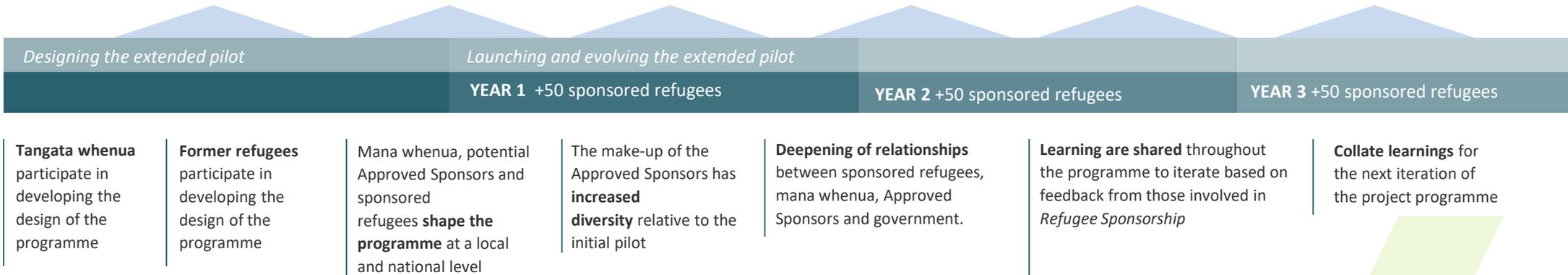
Programme vision

3-year vision

There is a network of diverse Approved Sponsors within Refugee Sponsorship. The programme has enhanced relationships between sponsored refugees, local communities and mana whenua.

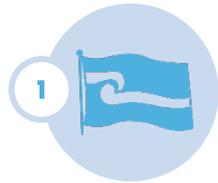
10-year vision

Refugee Sponsorship is a well-recognised and established programme that complements other humanitarian pathways. Welcoming sponsored refugees into our communities is a core New Zealand value.



Programme principles

The principles that will guide the 3-year extended pilot programme



1 The programme supports the aspirations of mana whenua and seeks proactive involvement from them



2 The programme recognises the contributions sponsored refugees have to make to their communities



3 The programme enables the connection of sponsored refugees with mana whenua, local communities, the whenua, and services that help them live fulfilling and meaningful lives



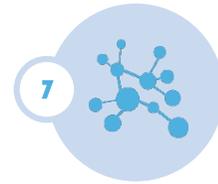
4 Sponsored refugees, Approved Sponsors and the Umbrella Organisation have access to trusted sources for questions or when issues arise - there are clear channels of communication



5 The programme enables a broader range of Approved Sponsors who are diverse in experience, skill, age, culture, ethnicities, sexuality, gender, religion and abilities



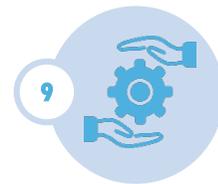
6 The programme recognises the skills Approved Sponsors bring to support sponsored refugees and enable them to grow and develop further



7 The programme is designed to have space to grow, evolve and become self-sustaining and managing (to avoid becoming a complicated, slow system that experiences bottlenecks)



8 The programme is proactive in documenting its growth and success stories, and sharing it with our stakeholders



9 There is clarity of where responsibilities lie between sponsored refugees, Approved Sponsors, the Umbrella Organisation, mana whenua and the government

Approved Sponsor requirements

When selecting Approved Sponsors, the policy criteria will be minimum requirements, while the qualities will be considered also by the Approved Sponsor selection panel.



Policy criteria

- ✓ Must be a registered entity
- ✓ Have demonstrated experience of working successfully with refugees/sponsored refugees or other vulnerable people
- ✓ Have the financial capacity to meet their settlement responsibilities
- ✓ Have the capability and capacity to deliver settlement services for sponsored sponsored refugees, in particular the ability to arrange accommodation and support refugees to enter an employment pathway
- ✓ Enter into an outcome agreement with INZ for the provision of services
- ✓ Can demonstrate community outreach (connections with the broader community)



Qualities of an Approved Sponsor

- ✓ Willing to develop *cultural competency** to support their work
- ✓ Motivations to participate in sponsorship are authentic, and they want to help sponsored refugees have a meaningful settlement experience
- ✓ Can demonstrate resilience and the ability to be flexible and adaptable
- ✓ Show willingness and intent to engage with mana whenua before the arrival of sponsored refugees and to show reciprocity for cultural support shown by mana whenua
- ✓ Can demonstrate they understand key requirements around child protection processes and protection of privacy
- ✓ Are collaborative and easy to work with
- ✓ Show good emotional intelligence and are willing to grow through the sponsorship programme

*See page 27 for description of what the programme sees as proficient cultural competency

Approved Sponsor case study 1: Individuals and organisations partnering for sponsorship

The 2017 CORS pilot provided examples of how community members and groups could partner with a legal entity to be able to support sponsored refugees. This will enable community members, such as former refugees themselves, to become a part of an Approved Sponsor group.

Nelson community members partner with Society of St Vincent de Paul

- Three individuals had an interest in participating in the community sponsorship programme and wanted to partner with a larger community organisation to ensure they had the capacity and capability to succeed.
- St Vincent de Paul had already been talking at a regional conference about what, as an organisation, it could do to support refugees, so when approached by these three people, it readily agreed to work in partnership and apply to become an Approved Sponsor.
- The group became Approved Sponsors and a team of six individuals, three from the community and three from St Vincent De Paul, undertook the sponsorship role.
- The combination of individuals and group networks helped to expand the scope of support and connections available to the sponsored refugee family.

(referenced from the *MBIE Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship Pilot: Process evaluation report*)



What this experience was like for Muaz Al-Dairi who was welcomed to Nelson alongside his wife from Syria

“Saralinda, Susan, Anna, Mick, Margaret and Peter – very, very nice people. Very helpful. We get on, quickly. Now we are...friends. They are doing everything to help us. Playing squash, hiking, some sports. And some conversation, yes.

This is a wonderful programme. It’s a mutual benefit, both for the people on the other side of the world – the Syrian refugees – and New Zealand. So it’s good for both sides if this programme continues. The strength of this community is in diversity. It’s good to have people from different backgrounds. Different skills. Different knowledge.”

(excerpt from the Amnesty International Community Sponsorship of Refugees: New Zealand’s pilot programme and its potential)

Approved Sponsor case study 2:

Ethnic communities and faith-based organisations partnering for Sponsorship

A Chaldean community partners with faith-based organisations

- The Chaldean community, Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand, Catholic Dioceses of Hamilton as well as the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem formed a partnership to sponsor a refugee family in 2017.
- Together, the organisations met the criteria to become an Approved Sponsor and chose to nominate a Chaldean refugee family.
- Working in partnership allowed the different organisations to share skills and resources. The Chaldean community was able to share their cultural knowledge and expertise, whilst the larger organisations were able to support with governance and financial management.
- The sponsored refugee family were welcomed by a community who understood their religious and cultural background, as well as how to navigate life in New Zealand.
- The combination of different organisations ultimately resulted in a strong support model, as individuals brought their different expertise and training to the sponsor team.



What the sponsor experience was like for Ghassan Basheer who coordinated the settlement support in Hamilton

“The experience I have had through the pilot trial was amazing and fulfilling, despite the challenges. Leading the community to achieve a noble cause might seem easy, as community buy-in and support is almost spontaneous, however, the challenge is to maintain support and ensure our community all participate and share the load when help is required.

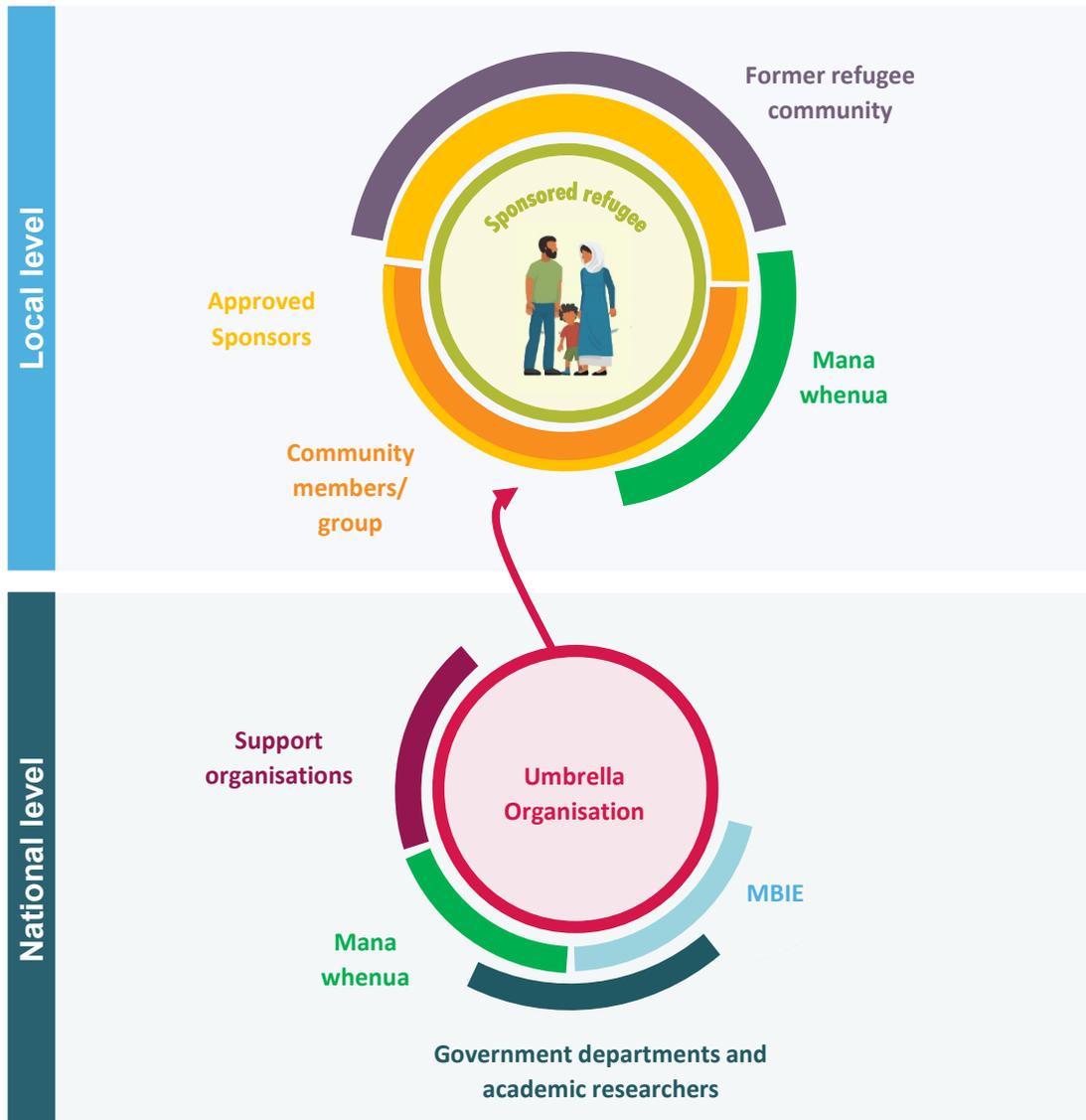
I also note that without the help and ongoing support of the INZ officers, local WINZ officers and refugee support programmes, we couldn't have done it on our own.

The experience has brought the community together around our core values of love, care and compassion for a family of our own who was uprooted from our home country.

It is pleasing to see the family integrate with the New Zealand way of life, especially children, who have picked up the English language quickly and are learning and living the values of freedom and kindness.”

Community architecture

How the programme will be structured at the local and national level. The level of involvement from each party is indicated by the position and alignment of circles. This structure maximises participation and builds scalability by connecting with other groups through Approved Sponsors.



Sponsored Refugee

the person(s) being resettled to Aotearoa

Former refugee communities

a loose network of people that have the common experience of being displaced from their home and coming to Aotearoa as former refugees or asylum seekers

Community members/group

e.g. any group of New Zealand residents can be a community group for the purposes of sponsorship. This includes groups of friends, family, neighbors, or acquaintances who aren't a legal entity but can partner with an Approved Sponsor to be eligible for sponsorship and get the support they need

Approved Sponsors

e.g. a legal entity such as a school, workplace, NGO, church, sports club, or similar that wants to support a sponsored refugees(s)

Umbrella Organisation

e.g. a organisation(s) such as an NGO or an iwi group, with strong community connections and resource to support Approved Sponsors

Mana whenua/tangata whenua

e.g. Māori cultural advisors at a national level who provide direction for the programme, and local hapū or iwi of regions that want to be involved in welcoming sponsored refugees

MBIE

Immigration New Zealand's Refugee and Migrant Services branch

Government departments and academic researchers

Partners involved in designing, iterating and evaluating the programme and providing services to sponsored refugees

Roles and responsibilities

Sponsored refugee

- Meet the policy criteria for the programme
- Meet with the Umbrella Organisation to ensure informed consent is given to participate in programme
- Complete and sign the Expression of Interest (EOI) with support from the Umbrella Organisation and/or the Approved Sponsor
- Complete the English language assessment
- Participate in an immigration interview with INZ following an invitation to apply (ITA) to the programme

Former refugee communities

- Participate in the decision-making panel to approve potential Approved Sponsors
- Participate in the decision-making panel to match Approved Sponsors with refugee families
- Advise/contribute towards the cultural competency training for Approved Sponsors
- Participate in ongoing project evaluation and monitoring

Mana whenua

All interaction from mana whenua is based on the local iwi/hapū readiness to participate and resource to do so. MBIE and the Umbrella Organisation will work on a case-by-case basis to support Approved Sponsors to connect with mana whenua respectfully.

- Welcoming sponsored refugees at an appropriate time and way for them
- Sharing local knowledge with sponsored refugees about the history of their people, the whenua and taiao

Community members/group

- Partner with an Approved Sponsor to be able to deliver resettlement support
- Agree specific roles and responsibilities with the Approved Sponsor to ensure a cohesive resettlement experience for sponsored refugees

Approved Sponsor

- Work in partnership with the Umbrella Organisation to help potential and confirmed sponsored refugees to clearly understand the sponsorship programme, New Zealand and Te Tiriti o Waitangi and make an informed choice about participation
- Apply to INZ to become an Approved Sponsor (includes the submission of an application, a settlement plan, evidence of financial viability, police clearance and having child protection policy/processes in place)
- Demonstrate financial resources to support the resettlement process
- Enter into an outcomes agreement with MBIE
- Work with the Umbrella Organisation and INZ to coordinate travel logistics prior to arrival
- Ensure appropriate accommodation is arranged prior to arrival in New Zealand
- Welcome and reception of the family/individual
- Connect sponsored refugees to community and services
- Connect sponsored refugees to the local whenua, te ao Māori and history of the whenua and provide kōha for mana whenua for sharing their knowledge and time in welcoming sponsored refugees
- Support for sponsored refugees for 2 years
- Participate in planned monitoring and programme evaluation
- Participate in community of practice of Approved Sponsors
- Ask for support from the Umbrella Organisation if they receive requests from refugees offshore to help them apply for the programme.

Roles and responsibilities

Umbrella Organisation

Umbrella Organisation and sponsored refugees interaction

- Work in partnership with INZ to support potential sponsored refugees to clearly understand the sponsorship programme, New Zealand and Te Tiriti o Waitangi and make an informed choice about participation
- Support potential sponsored refugees to complete an EOI for the *Refugee Sponsorship* programme
- Support potential sponsored refugees to undertake an English language assessment
- Carry out independent check-ins of sponsored refugees

Umbrella Organisation and Approved Sponsor interaction

- Provide information (produced by MBIE) to interested people about the programme to give consistent and accurate and the commitment and responsibilities required
- Participate in the decision panel on Approved Sponsor applications
- Participate in the matching panel between sponsored refugees and Approved Sponsors
- Organise and develop Approved Sponsor capability training
- Support and advise people through the application process to become Approved Sponsors
- Support Approved Sponsors to develop child protection protocols and policies, and act as a point of contact for any child protection concerns during the sponsorship period
- Support Approved Sponsors to undergo required police clearances
- Provide ongoing support to Approved Sponsors during the resettlement process, including regular check-ins and visits
- Connect Approved Sponsors in with existing community resource during their induction, e.g. Work Navigator, mana whenua
- Establish and support a community of practice of Approved Sponsors
- Participate in monitoring and evaluation of the programme
- Support Approved Sponsors to manage any requests from refugees offshore who are interested in the programme

MBIE

MBIE and Umbrella Organisation interaction

- Contract and funding of an Umbrella Organisation through a government procurement process
- Develop of information and resources (including communication/promotion materials) for the Umbrella Organisation to use - this material will ensure Approved Sponsors, sponsored refugees and communities have consistent and accurate information about the programme

MBIE and Approved Sponsor interaction

- Lead the decision-making panel to appoint Approved Sponsors
- Participate in the matching panel between Approved Sponsors and sponsored refugees

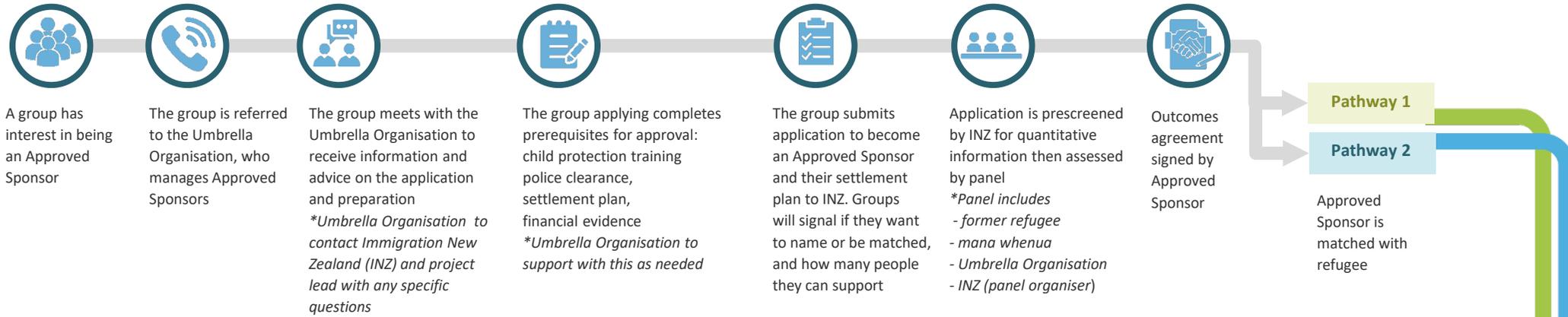
Additional MBIE responsibilities

- Commitment to ongoing development and engagement of relationships with Tangata Whenua around *Refugee Sponsorship*
- INZ decision-making of who can become sponsored refugees through the programme
- Arrangement of international travel and health-processing for sponsored refugees
- Ongoing international cooperation on aspects of the programme and selection and identification of sponsored refugees
- Development of operational tools to support the monitoring and reporting of the programme
- Lead the monitoring and evaluation of the programme

Other government departments and international partners

- MSD: ensure front line staff have clarity about the rights and responsibilities of *Refugee Sponsorship* sponsored refugees
- IRD: issue IRD cards to new arrivals
- MoE: support sponsored refugees with school enrolment and Computers in Homes
- International organisations: Increase collaboration that supports INZ's international operations and infrastructure. Increase information-sharing across international programmes including referrals to *Refugee Sponsorship*.

Approved Sponsor process map



Pathway 1: Named pathway



Pathway 2: Matched pathway



Programme evaluation approach

Evaluation intent

- Identify issues for improvement through an iterative approach throughout the programme
- Communicate to stakeholders the impact of the programme

General considerations

- As the programme will be iterating and developing over time, there needs to be specific questions relevant to different stages, e.g. pre arrival, first month, first 6 months, first year
- It would be beneficial to provide different ways for people to express themselves non-verbally during the evaluation, especially due to English being the second or third language of many sponsored refugees that will come through the programme
- Indicators should be developed with sponsored refugees, mana whenua and the community to ensure the right indicators are focused on to get an accurate measurement

Evaluation areas

General

- What level of awareness of the *Refugee Sponsorship* programme is there in supporting government departments and in the general public?
- Is the programme creating enough opportunity for genuine involvement and support from mana whenua?

Sponsored refugees

- How welcome, heard, valued, respected, enabled, needed, confident, safe and secure do they feel?
- Do they feel like they are able to contribute their skills and knowledge to Aotearoa?
- How cohesive does the experience feel for them?
- Strength of social networks for sponsored refugee

Community groups/members

- Are relationships and connections within the existing community being strengthened?

Mana whenua

- Are mana whenua able to be genuinely involved in and influence the programme?
- Do they experience positive outcomes and benefits from being involved in the programme?

Approved Sponsors

- Is there increasing diversity of the Approved Sponsors
- How supported did Approved Sponsors feel throughout the two years?

Umbrella Organisation

- How easy was it to get support from MBIE when necessary?



Appendix

Appendix: Policy Criteria

Policy criteria to be eligible to be a sponsored refugee through *Refugee Sponsorship*

Be a mandated as refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention

- residing in a country which is identified as a UNHCR priority area and one of the regions INZ humanitarian programme resettles in (Asia Pacific, Africa, Middle East, America's)
- pass security and risk and settlement assessments (same as Refugee Quota Programme)
- have the same acceptable standards of health that is required of residence class visa applicants
- not be eligible to be sponsored for residence under another family category, including RFSC

The principal applicant must also:

- demonstrate English language ability that is sufficient to read, write and speak in basic English
- have a minimum of 3 years' work experience in their field, or a tertiary study qualification
- be aged 18 - 45



Sakineh Mehdizadeh and Shokriyeh Mehdizadeh