



**HOST**  
INTERNATIONAL  
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023-2024**



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# FOREWORD

The UNHCR estimated that by the end of 2023, the number of people forcibly displaced exceed 117.3 million for the first time in recorded history. This includes over 31.6 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate and an additional 6 million Palestinian refugees.

The work of HOST International Aotearoa New Zealand<sup>[1]</sup> (HOST) is more important than ever, and we were delighted to welcome the first sponsored refugees in the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Our commitment to supporting the settlement of former refugees and migrants is rooted in our mission to bring humanity, hope, and dignity to individuals from refugee and migrant backgrounds and to find innovative solutions that help them settle and find *tūrangawaewae*, or sense of place and belonging, in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We were privileged to collaborate closely with *tangata whenua*, particularly *Te Āti Awa* in *Te Whanganui-a-tara*, Wellington, following a *haka pōwhiri* in June 2023.

We continued to forge partnerships with communities and sector partners while participating in various alliances and networks to strengthen our advocacy efforts. This collaboration is essential for our mission to build strong communities, focusing on coaching and co-design methodologies to guide and inform our practice.

[1] Registered as HOST International NZ Ltd.

David Keegan stepped down as Board Chair and remains a member of the Board of Directors. Mai Tamimi, MNZM, was appointed as the new Board Chair. In 2023, we welcomed Jay Hikuleo Ikiua as our *Kaiārahi Cultural Advisor* to the team.

In January 2024, HOST in Australia entered voluntary administration, and HOST in Aotearoa New Zealand became an independent charity. We continue to collaborate closely with HOST in Malaysia and Thailand.

We developed a new strategy, focusing on individual wellbeing, community inclusion, and systems change through capacity building for ethnic communities, community refugee sponsorship, and addressing barriers to digital inclusion and employment.

This Annual Report provides a summary of our activities undertaken throughout 2023/24.

We extend our gratitude to the team – Giselle Iradukunda, Steph Oh, Jay Ikiua, Juan Isaza, our exceptional advisor Don Hunter, Board members, volunteers, and partners – who have contributed to our mission and shared our vision of making a difference in the lives of individuals from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Thank you all for your passion and dedication.

*He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata he tangata he tangata!  
What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people!*

Dr Mai Tamimi, Board Chair  
Birgit Grafarend-Watungwa, Chief Executive



# OUR KAUPAPA

**HOST International Aotearoa New Zealand (HOST) is a New Zealand charitable organisation that specialises in innovative integration solutions for communities with migrant and refugee backgrounds. Our mission is to foster humanity, hope and dignity for both resettled and host communities by engaging in activities that enhance individual and community wellbeing.**

We believe that social, community and economic inclusion and tūrangawaewae, having a sense of place, empowerment, connectedness and belonging, are critical success indicators for former refugees and migrants who resettle in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Our approach is human-centred, based on models of co-design and partnership and committed to the individual's right to rangatiratanga self-agency.

HOST NZ is committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its partnership, participation, and protection principles.

## Our Theory of Change

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### 1 Individual wellbeing



Promoting individual wellbeing and rangatiratanga self-agency through social, cultural, physical, psychological and economic inclusion.

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### 2 Community inclusion



Building bridges within communities to foster social cohesion, community, digital and economic inclusion, using principles of human-centred design principles and partnerships to co-create solutions.

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### 3 Systems change



Advocating for structural and systemic change at national, regional, and global levels through research, education, and advocacy initiatives.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## 1 Community Refugee Sponsorship programme



HOST has a clear and well-defined role as the umbrella organisation in the CORS programme and provides coaching and support to sponsor groups to successfully assist sponsored refugees settle into their new communities.

- # 28 sponsor groups successfully recruited
- # 151 sponsored refugees approved
- # Participation in CORS Evaluation Advisory Group

## 2 Employment & Career Support



HOST has established strong working relationships with employers across different sectors that help break down barriers to employment, career and professional development opportunities for newcomers.

- # Steering Group Member Ethnic Communities Employment Network
- # Internship

## 3 Digital Inclusion



HOST has developed suitable solution to accessibility, affordability and ability to breaking down barriers to digital inclusion.

- # Research on gaps in digital inclusion started

## 4 Community Capacity Building



HOST has developed a leadership and capacity-building programme in co-design with community members to activate community capabilities and build partnerships for a common purpose.

- # Support for Meaningful Refugee Participation project
- # World Refugee Day event celebration
- # Advocacy Training Development

## 5 Bicultural Foundation



HOST has developed and embedded strong bicultural practices that build the foundation and inform the work of the organisation.

- # Mana whenua engagement and training scoping

## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES



We participated in a number of external research projects, specifically some of the following:

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Comparative study of community sponsorship of refugee resettlement in Australia in comparison to Canada, the UK, New Zealand and Ireland.  
<https://law.unimelb.edu.au/research-programs/the-role-of-community-sponsorship>  
(Melbourne University)

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Exploring stories of Latin Americans and their migratory legal status in Aotearoa New Zealand.  
(Victoria University)

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Mapping Strategic Collaborations: An Ego Network Analysis of New Zealand Refugee Service Providers  
(The University of Auckland)

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National Refugee Voice - A Feasibility Study, commissioned by The Refugee Alliance



# OUR IMPACT

## INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING

### VOLUNTEERING AT HOST

We started offering volunteering opportunities at HOST for former refugee and migrant background jobseekers.

The first refugee background student did her student placement with HOST.

“ **[She] said her confidence boosted during her work experience and she found it very useful.**”

Feedback on student placement

### INTERNSHIPS

“ (...) much respect and appreciation that your organization helped me a lot providing Intern opportunities. Following the internship, I applied for a fixed term employment position (...). Since 5 months I am working in this role. This is going to be a great opportunity and experience for me (...).”

Refugee background jobseeker on his internship experience

We are working with employers to break down barriers to employment.

We started trialling another internship programme alongside interested employers.



### COMMUNITY REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

The first sponsored refugee on the Community Refugee Sponsorship (CORS) visa arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand in August 2023. Since then, 151 refugees have been approved, with 101 arriving and welcomed by 28 Approved Sponsor groups across the North and South Islands.

Several sponsored refugees have enrolled in further tertiary study, some have found employment while others are continuing their English language learning.

### 251 REFUGEES OFFSHORE

(Principal Applicant individuals & whānau)

supported through the immigration process and connected with Approved Sponsors.

**151** Approvals

**51** Pending cases

### COMMUNITY REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

**101**

CORS introductions to refugees offshore, involving

**254** Individuals

**26** Interpreters

#### REFUGEE ARRIVALS

**101** Arrivals of sponsored refugee individuals & whānau

**12** Locations

**18** Independent visits (3-months post arrival check-ins)

#### APPROVALS

**67** Sponsored Refugee Cases Approved

**151** Sponsored Refugee Individuals & Whānau

**103** Individuals + Whānau

**48** Individuals



#### WELLBEING CHECK-INS

with sponsored refugees post arrival

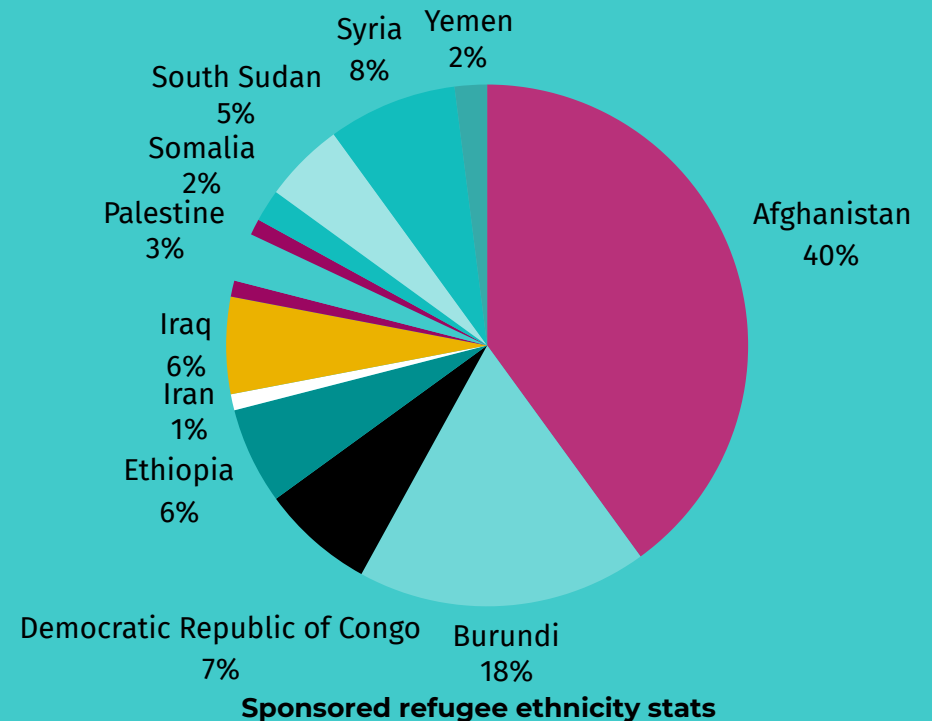
**146** Times

“ I have learned to love the local food, like fish and chips and pavlova. I made friends with colleagues and neighbours, and we shared stories and laughter over barbecues and dinners. I have embraced the Kiwi culture, valuing adventure, equality, and kindness.

As I look to the future, I am filled with optimism. My dreams include pursuing a career in my field, contributing to the community through volunteering, and exploring entrepreneurial opportunities.

To fellow refugees and migrants, I offer these words of encouragement: stay resilient, embrace new opportunities, cultivate gratitude, and connect with your community.”

**Sponsored refugee, CORS programme**



# OUR IMPACT

## COMMUNITY INCLUSION

### COMMUNITY REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

As the umbrella organisation for the Community Refugee Sponsorship (CORS) programme, HOST continued implementing the extended pilot in collaboration with Immigration New Zealand, the programme's funding partner.

We also continued providing coaching, guidance, and training to Approved Sponsor groups. A Mana Ako training programme was developed and implemented to prepare Approved Sponsors for the arrival of sponsored refugees.

### SPONSOR GROUP TRAININGS



**10** Sessions delivered  
**199** Participants  
**8** Webinars created  
**438** Times watched

Training content included intercultural competency, whanaungatanga, group considerations, safe engagement, hauora wellbeing models of care, reflective practice, and Q&A sessions with INZ.

### DIVERSITY OF SPONSOR GROUPS



### COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A Community of Practice enables Approved Sponsor groups from various backgrounds and regions to collaborate, support one another, and exchange valuable information and advice.

In 2024, HOST began monthly online sessions to facilitate this collaboration.

**5** Online Community of Practice sessions, attended by  
**109** Group members

### CHECK-INS

with Approved Sponsors post arrival

**74** Weekly check-ins

**55** Monthly check-ins



**241** Sessions

Number of interactions with organisations

**523** Times

### Matters Discussed

Orientation, housing, Work and Income, IRD, core group members, education, and employment, among others.

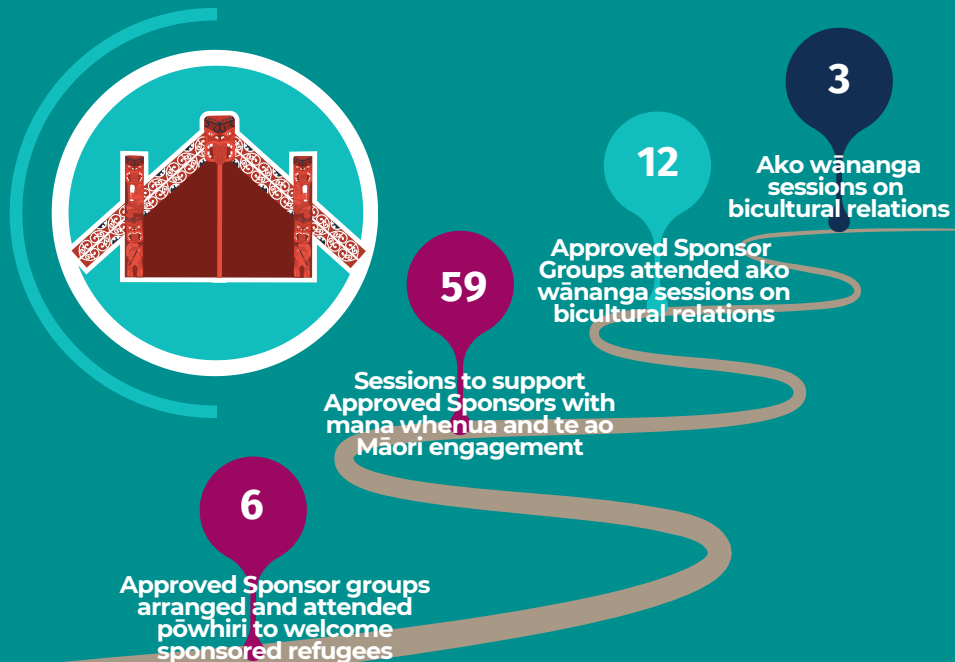


# OUR IMPACT

## CORS PROGRAMME MANA WHENUA ENGAGEMENT

“On June 22, I went to the Marae to learn about the Māori people. There were a lot of people there and I was a new experience for me. I got to experience a hongi where they touch noses to say hello. After the speeches we then had to introduce ourselves and where we came from. A few of us had been in New Zealand only 1 month and some, only two days. We then went to the dining hall to share a meal together. I want to visit the Marae again, maybe after a few more months. I am learning a lot and my community group are very supportive and allowing me time to settle.”

**Sponsored refugee**  
CORS programme



## COMMUNITY INCLUSION

## MANA WHENUA ENGAGEMENT

In July 2023, Jay Hikuleo joined HOST as the Kaiārahi Cultural Advisor. Her work to date has included:

- Developing a bicultural framework and deepening tikanga practices.
- Fostering and strengthening relationships with tangata whenua.
- Offering coaching and training for Approved Sponsors as they engage with tangata whenua, te ao and mātauranga Māori.

Following HOST's haka pōwhiri at Waiwhetū Marae with Te Āti Awa Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika Trust, we continued to nurture and expand our relationships with tangata whenua throughout the motu. This was to support and facilitate local engagement within the CORS programme.

We also offered a series of Ako wānanga training sessions on te ao Māori and bicultural relations for interested community partners.



# OUR IMPACT

## SYSTEMS CHANGE

As a member of both the Refugee Alliance and Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga, HOST collaborates to implement relational and institutional changes that foster impactful, sustainable social transformation for our communities.



## TE OHU LAUNCH

Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga  
Launch with  
**400 PEOPLE**  
in September 2023

Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga (Te Ohu) is a broad-based community organisation that fosters active citizenship and civil society leaders with the ability to negotiate with decision-makers toward systemic and structural change.

## THE REFUGEE ALLIANCE

First in-person hui held  
in October 2023

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED

towards creating public and cross-party political support to drive meaningful policy changes in three areas:

- 1 Family Reunification**
- 2 Equity and equality of access for all refugees**
- 3 Enhanced and extended settlement support**

The Refugee Alliance comprises NGOs and community groups united in their support for former refugee communities. Through the Alliance's collective voice, we have successfully produced position statements, recommendations, and policy contributions that would not have been possible individually.





# OUR IMPACT

## SYSTEMS CHANGE



## FORMER REFUGEES STAKEHOLDERS NETWORK

Wellington Regional Network

115 people

**56 ORGANISATIONS**

Co-facilitation of the Wellington Region Former Refugees Stakeholders Network. Current priority for action: **Advocacy and work on housing solutions for former refugees.** Other priorities for the network: Mental health, sense of belonging and inclusion, meaningful employment, family reunification, language barriers.

## CIVIC PARTICIPATION

General Election 2023

Videos in

**24 LANGUAGES**

2,600 views

“ (...) incredible show of community, manaakitanga (caring) and dedication that many organisations like yourselves brought to this year's 2023 General Election.”

**Electoral Commission**

HOST collaborated with ChangeMakers Resettlement Forum, supported by the Electoral Commission and Belong Aotearoa, to create videos in various languages for the 2023 General Election. These videos share community members' first voting experiences in Aotearoa New Zealand and aim to encourage others to vote.







“In conclusion — we face more complex challenges and a much greater demand on the protection system, requiring both, an enduring commitment to resettlement, as well as, the additionality of complementary pathways that embrace the enrichment that refugees could bring to countries that welcome them — labor mobility pathways that enable economic self-sufficiency, and add to the vitality of economies (win-win), educational pathways, which upskill refugees and build socially cohesive societies (win-win) — we must acknowledge that the protection needs of refugees are diverse, and a one-size-fits-all approach will rarely be sufficient; and, barriers such as travel documents and visas and bureaucratic red-tape, must be overcome, to fully realize the promise of complementary pathways.”

**Mohammed Naeem**  
Representative, UNHCR  
Refugee Advisory  
Group

# OUR GLOBAL WORK

## **Global Gathering for Sponsorship** in Lisbon, Portugal

Three-day conference on exploring significant developments in community sponsorship and welcoming, shifts in narratives and their implications for our collective efforts, alongside opportunities for the expansion and diversification of sponsorship.

**Communications and Mobilization Skills Share Network Working Group**, focusing on developing a work programme for the network and creating a resource on Group Formation.

## **Melbourne University Research**

Collaboration with Professor Susan Kneebone from Melbourne University on her research into community refugee sponsorship practices in Australia, Canada, the UK, New Zealand, and Ireland.

We also maintained communication with providers of Community Refugee Sponsorship programmes in other countries for mutual support and learning.

## **Consultations on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways**

Five-day Working Group in Sydney, Australia, and Auckland, followed by the Consultations on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways in Geneva, Switzerland. The theme for this year was *Solutions in Action: Advancing the 2030 Roadmap*.

While in Geneva, we participated in the international launch of the **Global Solidarity Run for Refugees**, led by Sanctuary Runners.

## **Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees**

We participated in the summit via the Wellington hub at Victoria University.

We continue to work closely with HOST in **Malaysia** and **Thailand**.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## OUR GRATITUDE AND SPECIAL THANKS TO:

2Degrees  
Ali Houpapa, Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika  
All Accounted For  
Amnesty International  
Approved Sponsors in the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme  
Areej Arif  
Belong Aotearoa  
ChangeMakers Resettlement Forum  
DJH Consulting  
Dr Marieke Jasperse  
Electoral Commission  
English Language Partners New Zealand  
Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI)  
Hope Worldwide Pakistan  
Immigration New Zealand | MBIE (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment)  
Inclusive Aotearoa  
Interpreting New Zealand  
Ministry for Education  
Ministry for Social Development  
New Zealand Police  
Nikko Asset Management New Zealand  
PaySauce  
Radio New Zealand  
Smalls Consult Limited  
Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga  
The Refugee Advisory Panel  
The Refugee Alliance  
UNHCR  
Volunteering New Zealand  
Waiwhetū Marae  
Our sector partners  
Our staff and volunteers

*Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi,  
engari kē he toa takitini.*

*My success should not be bestowed  
onto me alone,  
it was not individual success  
but the success of a collective.*



## CONTACT

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