

To:	Minister of Immigration, Hon Iain Lees-Galloway
From:	The Core Community Partnership (as represented by: the Anglican Diocese of Wellington, the Baptist Union of New Zealand, and Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand).
Date:	12 November 2018
Action:	Please agree to partner with the Core Community Partnership to transition the community sponsorship pilot into a permanent pathway

Proposal to confirm Community Sponsorship as a Permanent Pathway for Resettlement

Purpose

1. This paper proposes that Community Sponsorship of Refugees be confirmed as a permanent pathway for refugee resettlement. It further proposes investments and commitments by Government and the Core Community Partnership to facilitate this, including the formation of a 'catalyst entity', jointly funded by government and the community sector. The catalyst would provide coordination and capacity building for community sponsors, and a channel for dialogue between Government and sponsors.

Vision

2. The permanent pathway responds to growing community interest in sponsoring refugees to settle well into New Zealand and the catalyst entity facilitates the growth of resilient communities throughout NZ that are capable and empowered to sponsor refugees.

Proposals

3. The Core Community Partnership proposes that you:
 - a. **Note** that there are a range of faith-based and secular community organisations which have expressed genuine interest to participate in community sponsorship, as evidenced in Appendix A
 - b. **Agree** to meet with representatives of the Core Community Partnership in February 2019 to discuss how:
 - the current community sponsorship pilot could be turned into a permanent pathway to enable additional refugees to be sponsored by existing and newly participating community organisations in more locations
 - Community sponsors could be empowered through the establishment of a catalyst entity which would be a communications channel and capacity builder.
4. If discussions result in mutual agreement to embed community sponsorship as a permanent pathway for refugee resettlement, we offer to work with Immigration NZ (INZ) officials, so they can confidently:

- a. **Approve more community organisations to participate**
- b. **Support the establishment of a jointly funded catalyst entity** that would empower community organisations to sponsor by coordinating information, building capacity in the community sector and engaging with INZ to develop the parameters of a permanent programme.

Executive summary

5. At a meeting with members of South West Baptist Church in August 2018, you signalled your interest in community sponsorship and offered your views on things that should be considered prior to a presentation of a proposal from the community sector. This proposal confirms that there is a broad range of interest in community sponsorship and considers how that interest might be translated into a permanent and sustainable resettlement pathway.
6. The Core Community Partnership propose that community sponsorship should be a permanent pathway for resettlement of refugees in New Zealand, as an addition and alternative to the quota pathway. The establishment and success of the pilot demonstrates that there is considerable support for the Government to do this. This paper proposes several specific actions to assist this transition from pilot to permanent pathway to occur.
7. Community sponsorship has already shown its ability to mobilise parts of the community sector that have not previously been engaged in refugee settlement. By tapping into these resources, community sponsorship can access additional resources, utilise new locations, and trial new approaches to settlement.
8. There is growing interest in sponsorship from communities in areas not currently utilised for settlement, as well as opportunities to support refugees with much needed skills to settle into regional communities that have skills and labour shortages.
9. The function of a catalyst entity would be to build capacity in the wider community through advocating for sponsorship, supporting sponsors through coordination of resources and information, and connecting sponsors and other organisations that wish to offer support. The catalyst would also provide a forum for government and community partners to communicate, share learnings and work together to continually improve our ability to undertake our respective roles.
10. By making this catalyst entity a jointly funded venture, government and the community sector would have equal standing to work in true partnership to facilitate the establishment of a permanent community sponsorship refugee resettlement pathway. This partnership approach would ensure that the voices of the settled refugees, refugee communities, host communities, and supporting organisations can inform INZ's planning and service delivery.

Context

11. When Cabinet agreed to pilot the community sponsorship model in August 2017, they invited the Minister of Immigration to report back to Cabinet on the results of an initial evaluation of the pilot intake in the second half of 2018. Criteria were set for this initial evaluation and it was proposed that this initial evaluation of the new category would inform decisions on any future intakes under the new category. This initial evaluation is currently being conducted by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

12. The initial evaluation is looking at the experiences of the six refugee families (comprising 23 people) who arrived in New Zealand by July 2018 and is focussing on the sponsorship processes. The Core Community Partnership looks forward to considering the findings of this evaluation so that learnings can be factored into adjusting the processes for future cohorts of community sponsored refugees (subject to approval of this proposal).

Rationale for establishing a permanent pathway now

13. Transitioning from pilot to permanent pathway now would help to realise the many benefits of community sponsorship sooner, including:
- a. Helping more refugees to rebuild their lives, and develop resilient communities in the process;
 - b. Providing a tailored reception to refugees to enhance their settlement outcomes;
 - c. Keeping the momentum in the community sector to build capacity to sponsor refugees;
 - d. Trialling the formation and implementation of a jointly funded catalyst entity;
 - e. Making best use of the current expansion of INZ's capacity to receive more refugees; and
 - f. Generating additional data to inform future improvements to the programme.
14. See below for further explanation of each of these benefits.

Helping more refugees to rebuild their lives, and building resilient communities

15. The primary objective of a community sponsorship programme is to help more refugees to rebuild their lives by settling in a safe country. The sponsorship approach aims to build communities' understanding and compassion so that refugees are welcomed and supported to settle well. This approach is supplementary to, and not a substitute for, the Government's established Refugee Quota Programme. Instead, community sponsorship provides an alternative refugee resettlement pathway that is evolutionary in nature. This pathway can function as a testing ground for innovations in settlement support. Participating community organisations can learn from the Government's established Refugee Resettlement Strategy, while also providing Government with learnings from community organisations' and refugees' experiences of different trials of settlement support techniques and approaches.
16. Settling refugees into New Zealand builds resilient communities by bringing people together around a shared goal. Experiences reported by all the pilot sponsors are that existing relationships are deepening, new ones are being formed and that this has occurred across a wide demographic. People of all ages and backgrounds have found a place to share their skills and resources, and in doing so, they have found additional meaning and purpose. Establishing a permanent pathway will enable more people to have these enriching experiences and build stronger more resilient and engaged communities.

Providing a tailored reception to refugees to enhance their settlement outcomes

17. It is important to learn as much as possible about how to enhance the experience of the incoming sponsored refugees so that they are offered the best chance at good settlement. A key way to achieve this best chance is to ensure that the receiving

communities have a good understanding of the refugees' culture and language. There is an opportunity for host communities to tailor settlement supports directly to refugees who have specific cultural and/or language linkages with the host community.

18. Initial feedback from community organisations involved with settling the intake of refugees in the pilot confirms that cultural understanding and language ability has significantly helped with communicating with the refugee families. Designing a permanent programme that encourages immediate connections between refugee and sponsor is an important aspect of resettlement that can have a positive and measurable impact on settlement outcomes.

Keeping the momentum in the community sector to build capacity to sponsor refugees

19. Our work demonstrates that there is considerable interest from organisations to participate in a sponsorship programme. Support and interest are coming from a wide range of organisations, including some that are not historically associated with refugee resettlement. Interested organisations were invited to endorse a letter of support (refer Appendix A).
20. The Core Community Partnership presenting this proposal seeks to engage with the Government in a collaborative endeavour to support the establishment of community sponsorship as a permanent pathway for refugee resettlement. We consider that the existing momentum in the community sector can be maintained by:
 - a. **Expanding the range of community organisation participants.** Our engagement with a wide range of organisations indicates there is support from groups that would like to directly sponsor refugees and interest from groups that wish to support others that may sponsor. Establishment of a programme at this time will harness this momentum by making it more visible and creating the necessary connection points.
 - b. **Increasing visibility of refugee resettlement and creating more welcoming communities.** Community organisations whether they are directly sponsoring, or indirectly supporting sponsors, will raise awareness with their respective networks of people and businesses about the role of sponsorship; the benefits that refugees contribute to their communities, such as skills and diverse perspectives; and ways communities can be welcoming, inclusive and assist refugees to settle well.
21. Establishing a permanent programme would also allow the participating community organisations to:
 - a. **Try 'naming' again.** A few of the participating organisations tried 'naming' in 2017/2018 and one was successful. Naming is the process where a participating community organisation seeks to sponsor an individual or group that they feel an affinity with, for example refugees with language/cultural links with the sponsoring community. Naming can also **assist** with settlement outcomes by seeking to connect refugees that have specific characteristics or skills with sponsoring groups of different interests or capacity.

Naming can be beneficial in that it engages a wider range of potential sponsors and enhances relationships between sponsor and refugee. Within a permanent programme, community organisations may have the opportunity to try naming again to determine when this is workable and what barriers are faced when naming is attempted. The community sponsor who 'named' in the current pilot has found that due to there being existing cultural links and understanding, welcoming the refugee family into the community was straightforward. There was a richness in the cultural

knowledge that the sponsoring community already had which enhanced their ability to communicate well with the family.

- b. **Demonstrate the concept of ‘additionality’.** The community sponsorship pilot tested the sponsorship concept in New Zealand alongside the Refugee Quota Programme. The sponsorship concept provides a supplementary pathway which adds to the total number of refugees a country receives each year. As well as increasing the number of refugees, a permanent pathway can establish new processes and capacity to settle refugees well while also testing new techniques and approaches to settlement, as described in the next two points.
- c. **Trial new settlement techniques and approaches and learn from them, fast.** Lessons will be learnt along the way and where any changes are made to the community organisations’ settlement service design, or approach to care and connection, these will be recorded so changes can be factored into as programme improvements. The value-add of the community sector is the ability to trial new techniques and approaches in a short timeframe and to implement changes based on findings with limited delay. A catalyst entity would facilitate the capture and transmission of improvements.
- d. **Engage with international counterparts and learn from their experiences.** There are a range of countries and international organisations with experience or interest in the community sponsorship model. Much can be learned from them, and in turn they are looking at New Zealand to determine how the pilot evolves as they may have much to learn from the New Zealand experience also. Establishing a permanent programme now would allow for a deeper level of engagement to commence with international partners to share learnings.

Trialling the formation and implementation of a catalyst entity

- 22. A potential structure for ensuring that information is captured and shared across government and community partners is the formation of a catalyst entity, which would work with sponsoring organisations to coordinate networking, information sharing and capacity building. A jointly funded catalyst entity could provide the necessary infrastructure for:
 - a. Providing a meaningful forum for government and the community sector to engage;
 - b. Capturing both current and future learnings about effective implementation of the community sponsorship model to inform capacity building with sponsors.
- 23. This catalyst entity could initially be embedded within an existing community organisation under the leadership of the Core Community Partnership, as we have the necessary organisational infrastructure and experience as participants in the pilot.
- 24. The insights of the participating and supporting community partners, and the experiences of refugees themselves will generate valuable feedback to inform the further development of the permanent pathway. In addition to building the capacity of the community sector to develop the infrastructure and resources needed to provide meaningful support to participating community organisations, a catalyst entity could also work with the Government to streamline and simplify approval, monitoring, and reporting processes that then inform programme improvements.

Making best use of the current expansion of INZ's capacity to receive refugees

25. In September 2018, the Government announced that the Refugee Quota Programme would increase from 1,000 to 1,500 places in 2020. This was enabled by a significant boost in funding for refugee services in Budget 2018. It is anticipated that the Government's increased financial commitment will enhance both INZ's processing infrastructure for refugees and its funding of service delivery for settlement support by community organisations. This represents an opportunity for the community sponsorship pathway. While INZ looks to scale up its capacity to administer a larger refugee quota programme, it can also consider the needs of a permanent community sponsorship pathway when looking to forecast the necessary processing capacity INZ needs to build to meet the needs of incoming refugees.

Allowing additional data to inform future improvements to the pathway

26. The transition to a permanent programme would be informed by the current evaluation being undertaken by MBIE. Future design changes would also be informed by future evaluations and could also be used for collaborative design phases to evolve the permanent scheme, with government and the community sector continuing to work in partnership to ensure that the permanent scheme meets the needs of all invested parties and incoming refugees.
27. Increasing the number of refugees introduced to New Zealand through the community sponsorship pathway would increase the sample size of refugees' experiences of community sponsorship for future evaluation of the concept. As noted earlier, this would enable the community sector to trial sponsorship in a wider range of community settings, while also building more resilient capacity and infrastructure to underpin the settlement care and connection community organisations provide to their sponsored refugees. In this way, a wider range of qualitative and quantitative data can be evaluated and used to inform further innovations.

Investments and commitments required by Partners

Investments

28. To establish a permanent community sponsorship programme, both the Government and the community will need to make specific investments. The August 2017 Cabinet paper outlined the financial commitment that INZ was able to make to the pilot (ie from Vote Immigration) and the likely impact on other government agencies. Costs were forecast based on the 2017/2018 intake of the planned 25 - 30 refugees. No specific government funding was allocated for future actions in respect of the pilot.
29. Six families (23 people), were sponsored to come in 2017/2018. The approved community organisations fund pastoral care arrangements for the families (and the people caring for them), including provision of furnished housing, among other set up and ongoing costs for their health, wellbeing and social and economic connections to their communities. The costs incurred by all parties has not yet been calculated, although estimations will form part of the current evaluation by MBIE.
30. The Core Community Partnership acknowledges that establishing a permanent pathway would incur additional, and currently unforecast costs to INZ and other government agencies. It is hoped that most of these costs can be absorbed in the current expansion of INZ's capacity to settle the additional quota refugees provided by Budget 2018, and within other agencies' baselines. The additional costs to INZ would be in both sourcing some of the refugees on the selection missions, processing the additional visas and

bringing the additional cohorts of refugees to New Zealand (including their international airfare costs), and supplementary administration as needed.

31. In order to forecast the additional costs, the Core Community Partnership suggests that a first step in establishing a permanent programme is to undertake the following:
- a. The Core Community Partnership facilitates the formation and implementation of a catalyst entity, with an agreed contribution funded by the Government
 - b. The Core Community Partnership and the Government work together to design a permanent programme informed by the pilot and based on the capacity of parties (being the community sector and the Government) to undertake their respective roles.

Commitments

32. The following commitments are proposed from the Government and the Core Community Partnership to establish a permanent pathway.
33. The Core Community Partnership offers:
- a. An opportunity for dialogue and engagement with the community sector for the establishment of a permanent community sponsorship pathway;
 - b. Community reception and delivery of wraparound settlement support services to incoming refugees;
 - c. Care and support for the sponsoring communities;
 - d. To lead the design and formation of a catalyst entity;
 - e. Trialling new and internationally recognised approaches to providing settlement support to sponsored refugees;
 - f. Monitoring and evaluating settlement outcomes (alongside and contributing to MBIE evaluations; and
 - g. Sharing the learnings and experiences of community sponsorship.
34. To match this commitment, the Government is invited to make the following commitment:
- a. Establish community sponsorship as a permanent and additional pathway for settlement of refugees in New Zealand;
 - b. Approve more community organisations to become sponsors (the number of which has yet to be agreed);
 - c. Process the visas and other required administration, including payment of the international airfares, for the refugees to come to New Zealand;
 - d. Contribute ongoing funding for the formation of a catalyst entity, led by the Core Community Partnership; and
 - e. Provide the opportunity for the community sector to participate in the design and delivery of a permanent programme.

Invitation to discuss establishment of a permanent programme

35. The Core Community Partnership invites you to meet to discuss this proposal and to determine the needs of all interested parties to enable it to progress to implementation. We request that this meeting take place in February 2019, when the discussions can be informed by the findings of MBIE's initial evaluation of the pilot.

Appendix A

The Core Community Partnership invited community organisations to sign this letter, either as a potential sponsor or in support. There are 47 signatory organisations. These groups span secular and faith organisations, urban and rural communities, and communities from one end of the country to the other.

To: Minister of Immigration and the New Zealand Parliament

JOINT OPEN LETTER ABOUT COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP OF REFUGEES

We applaud the Government's support of a pilot programme to allow community organisations to sponsor refugees.

We have experienced and heard the positive settlement stories - of lives being changed as ordinary kiwis come together to assist refugees to settle into New Zealand life.

We know there is a strong desire for the pilot programme to be expanded because people and organisations we have talked to have told us.

These organisations have signed this letter.

We have some ideas about how to expand on the pilot.

We invite the Government to join us in a spirit of co-operation to jointly develop a strengths-based policy framework for community sponsorship that empowers each party to do what it does best - for the collective good of all of us.

Signatories

Groups Interested in sponsoring:

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand (Pilot sponsor)

Gleniti Baptist Church (Pilot sponsor)

South West Baptist Church (Pilot sponsor)

The Society of St Vincent de Paul Nelson (Pilot sponsor)

The Archbishops and Primates of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia (see attached letter)

The Anglican Church Diocese of Wellington (see attached letter)

St. Addai's Chaldean Parish (Auckland)

Chaldean Community of Hamilton

St Joseph's Parish, Takapuna (Auckland)

All Saints Church (Palmerston North)

Our Lady of Victories Parish (Christchurch)

St Anne's Manurewa (Auckland)

Mercy Parish (Dunedin)
Sacred Heart Parish North East Valley (Dunedin)
Pastoral Area of St Peter Chanel, Green Island and St Mary's, (Dunedin/Mosgiel)
Our Lady of the Rosary (Waiwhetu, Wellington)
St Brigid's Parish (Fielding)
Gateway Church (Hamilton)
Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem NZ (Auckland)
Mums 4 Refugees NZ
Oxford Terrace Baptist Church (Christchurch)
Ilam Baptist (Christchurch)
Mt Albert Baptist Church (Auckland)
Lifepoint (Whangarei)
Wanganui Central
Hamilton Central
Darfield Baptist (Canterbury)
Welcome Bay Baptist (Tauranga)
Lyllall Bay Baptist (Wellington)
New Plymouth Baptist
Tauranga Central Baptist
Invercargill Central Baptist
Hope Presbyterian Hornby (Christchurch)
Wellington Independent Arts Trust
Vogelmorn Community Trust (Wellington)
ChangeMakers Refugee Forum

Groups interested in supporting (and possibly sponsors)

Amuri Rural Women (a branch of Rural Women NZ)
NZ Council of Trade Unions Te Kauae Kaimahi
Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions (Religious Order, Wellington)
St Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish African Community (Auckland)
Te Raranga Trust (Christchurch)

Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Catholic Diocese of Hamilton

Christchurch Resettlement Services

Manawatu Reuniting Refugee Families Trust

Amnesty International NZ

World Vision New Zealand



The Anglican Church

In Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia
Diocese of Wellington

9 November 2018
Hon Iain Lees-Galloway
Minister of Immigration
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

Dear Minister

Re: Community Refugee Sponsorship Programmes

Greetings to you on behalf of the Anglican Diocese of Wellington.

As bishops of a network of over 60 churches, representing thousands of constituents reaching through the lower North Island as far north as Ruapehu, we applaud the Government's support of a pilot programme to allow community organisations to sponsor refugees.

We have experienced and heard the positive settlement stories – of lives being changes as ordinary kiwis come together to assist refugees to settle into New Zealand life.

We know there is a strong desire for the pilot programme to be expanded because people and organisations we have talked to have told us so. This initiative is a natural expansion of the work which our Diocese already takes part in, alongside Catholic and Red Cross colleagues, in establishing refugee families in their new homes in Wellington.

We would like therefore to express our strong support for an expanded and improved Community Sponsorship Programme.

We invite the Government to join us in a spirit of co-operation to jointly develop a strengths-based policy framework for community sponsorship that empowers each party to do what it does best – for the collective good of all of us.

Yours in Christ

+Justin

The Right Reverend Justin Duckworth
Bishop of Wellington

+Eleanor

The Right Reverend Dr Eleanor Sanderson
Assistant Bishop of Wellington

We are family, we are disciples, we care for the last, the lost, the least



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**The Archbishops and Primate
of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia**

9th November 2018

To the Minister of Immigration and the New Zealand Parliament,

I am writing as Primate and Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

Our Church has had a very long history in refugee resettlement in Aotearoa New Zealand having been a founding partner of the Inter-Church Commission on Immigration and Refugee Resettlement following the Second World War.

In 2016 we prepared a detailed submission on the rationale and means to significantly increase the refugee quota. This included proposals around Community Sponsorship schemes. We cited considerable experience involving the Anglican Church in such schemes in both Canada and Australia and offered those learnings.

The Anglican Church has been and continues to be ready to support refugees across Aotearoa New Zealand. We have a long history of doing so and we also have a track record of maintaining these relationships over time.

We continue to be committed in principle to a comprehensive and well-structured Community Sponsorship scheme. We would wish to see the current pilot significantly enhanced, refined and extended. We believe that we can contribute to this process and stand ready to do so.

Yours in Christ,

Philip Richardson

Archbishop and Primate

On behalf of the Primacy of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia



The Anglican Church

in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

Te Hāhi Mihinare ki Aotearoa, ki Niu Tīreni, ki Ngā Moutere o te Moana Nui a Kiwa

