A MIXED METHODS

EVALUATION OF THE AFGHAN EVACUEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

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COMMISSIONED BY NFACT

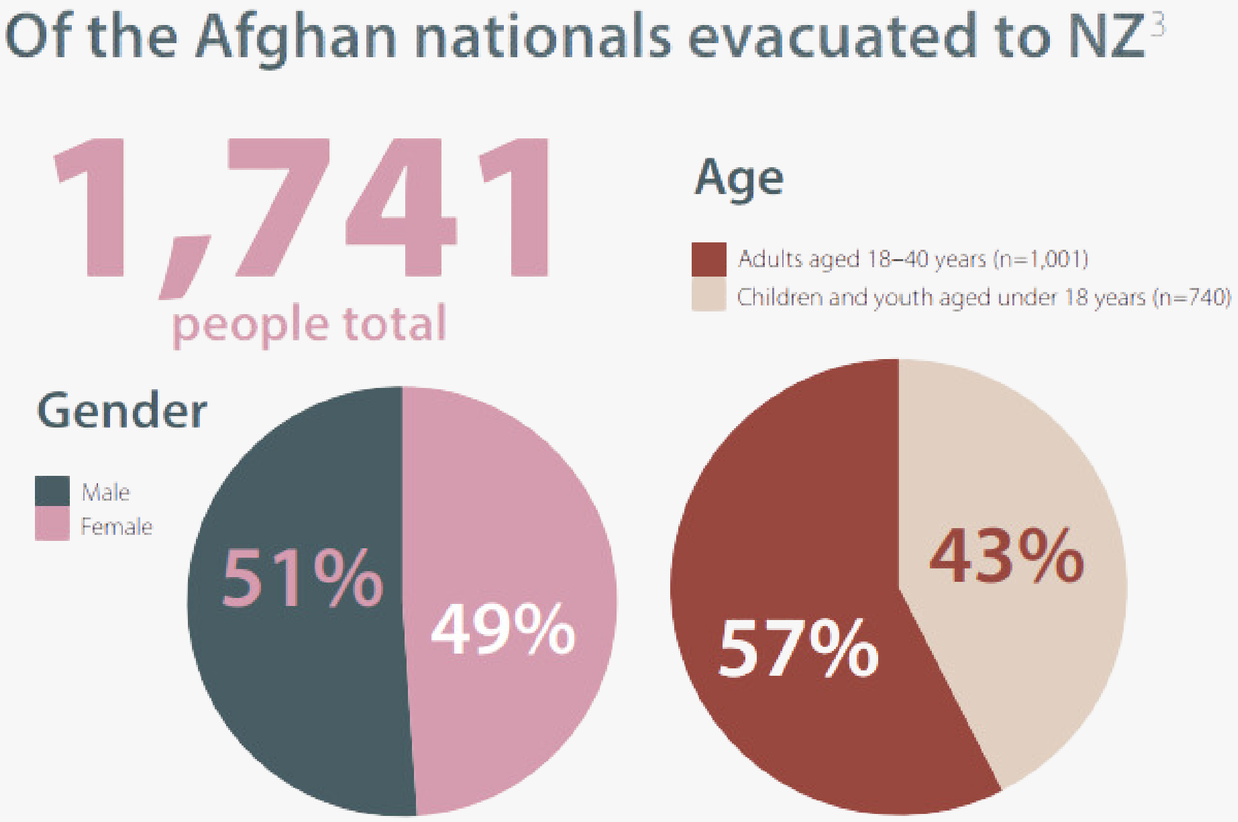
NEW SETTLERS FAMILY AND COMMUNITY TRUST

MIGRANT AND REFUGEE HEALTH RESEARCH CENTRE



OVERVIEW

- Aotearoa New Zealand welcomed Afghan nationals on emergency or temporary visas starting in 2021
- NFACT was contracted to support the resettlement of Afghan evacuees
- We evaluated NFACT's Afghan evacuee resettlement programme to inform improvements to resettlement programmes



Papoutsaki, E. &Bhana, A. (2023) Aotearoa New Zealand government evacuation and resettlement support for the 2021 Afghanistan crisis: Project findings. World Vision, ActionStation , and Amnesty International Aotearoa New Zealand. Available from: https://www.worldvision.org.nz/getmedia/9f9bd2f6-e8bc-45d3-88dd-b59361c83a72/WV-Afghanistan-Research-Report-Final-Digital_1.pdf

METHODS

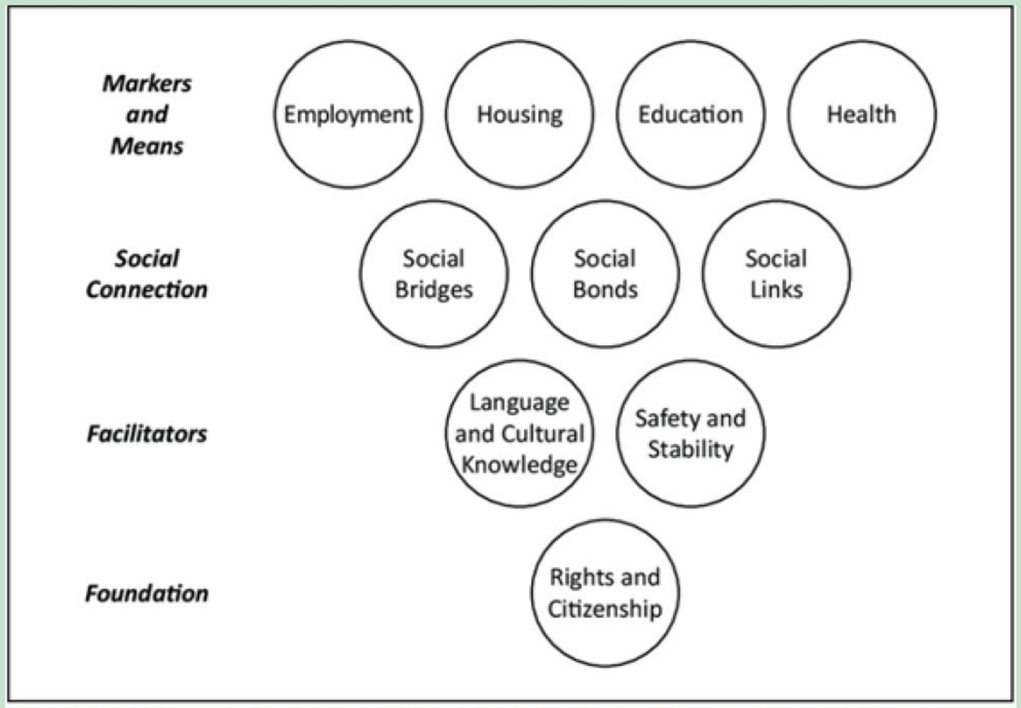


Figure 1 - Conceptual model of core domains of refugee integration based on Ager and Strang (2008) (Williams et al., 2024)

- Strong community - academic partnership between NFACT and MRHRC
- Parallel convergent mixed - methods design
  - Principles of participatory evaluation
- Advisory Group
- Supported by professional translators and interpreters
- Guided by the 10 domains of refugee integration (Ager & Strang, 2008)

Ager, A., & Strang, A. (2008). Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework. Journal of Refugee Studies, 21(2), 166 - 191.

Williams, K. E., McMahon, T., Grech , K., & Samsa, P. (2024). Resettlement Factors Associated with Subjective Well - Being among Refugees in Australia: Findings from a Service Evaluation. Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies, 22(1), 52-67.

METHODS

QUANTITATIVE PHASE

- Cross-sectional survey (n=101)
- Descriptive statistics, Cochran -Armitage Trend Test, and generalised logistic regression
- Summative content analysis

QUALITATIVE PHASE

- Semi-structured interviews with Afghan evacuees (n=12)
- Focus groups with NFACT staff (n=11)
- Conventional content analysis

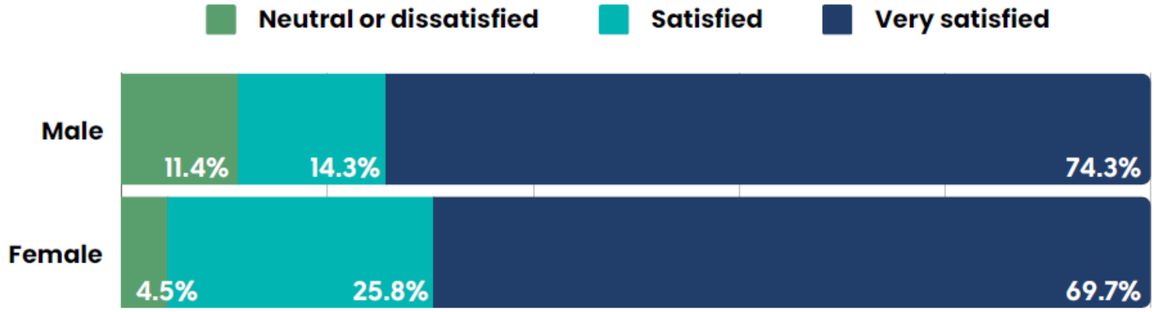
Ethical approval to undertake this study was granted by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (23/160).
This study was funded by Auckland University of Technology and Foundation North. The funding agencies had not role in the study design, collection and interpretation of the data, or the decision to submit outputs.

SURVEY FINDINGS

AFGHAN EVACUEES (N=101)

- Participants (93%) were very/satisfied with NFACT's services
- High ratings across all domains of integration

Figure 2a. Overall programme satisfaction rating by gender



	Number		Rating			
Support service or programme	**N**	**Percent**	**Mean**	**Min**	**Max**	**Median (IQR)**
Employment, education, and training						
Enrol child(ren) in school	84*	83.2%	4.9	4	5	5 (5 – 5)
Enrol in English classes	80*	79.2%	4.8	3	5	5 (5 – 5)
Ongoing learning (e.g. sewing, parenting or family resilience programmes, etc.)	75	74.3%	4.7	3	5	5 (4 – 5)
Programmes to support employment (e.g. digital literacy, business starter course, etc.	43*	42.6%	4.5	3	5	5 (4 – 5)
Health						
Enrol with general practitioner	96	95.0%	4.8	3	5	5 (5 – 5)
Health and wellbeing programmes (e.g. migrant family resilience programme, counselling, etc.)	86	85.1%	4.6	2	5	5 (4 – 5)
Social connections, language and cultural knowledge						
Programmes and events to make friends and be more familiar with the community (e.g. cultural festivals)	82	81.2%	4.7	2	5	5 (5 – 5)
Facilitators						
Orientation programme	90	89.1%				
Health	85	94.4%				
Education	82	91.1%				
Work and Income	78	86.7%				
Housing/Tenancy obligations and rights	70	77.8%				
Police	68	75.6%				
Road Code (driving programme)	47	46.5%	49	3	5	5 (5 – 5)
Rights and citizenship						
Understand rights and responsibilities	69	68.3%	4.8	2	5	5 (5 – 5)

*missing n=1 (1.0%) as not applicable/support not needed/unsure. SD = Standard deviation. Min = Minimum. Max = Maximum. IQR = Interquartile Range. Likert scale 1 = not helpful, 2 = slightly helpful, 3 = moderately helpful, 4 = very helpful, 5 = extremely helpful

Table 4. Evaluation of NFACT's resettlement programme



SURVEY FINDINGS

AFGHAN EVACUEES (N=101)

- Participants who spoke English and were younger found it easier to make friends
- Participants (97%) would recommend NFACT’s services

INTERVIEW FINDINGS

AFGHAN EVACUEES (N=12)

- Challenging standstill
- Guiding the way
- Support to cultivate dreams and sense of purpose



> *"But when I came here, I found that managing life was very difficult for the first days when I arrived here. I felt that I'm like a tree, to take out from the root and plant somewhere else. Up to that time it become again rooted and become green, it takes a lot of time. So, when I came here, I felt that I lost everything … how can I manage all these problems?"*
> (Interviewee #7)



FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

NFACT STAFF (N=11)

- Supporting evacuees to overcome challenges
- Grappling with resourcing
- Successes and future directions

> *"Most of the staff have lived experience as refugee or asylum seeker or like a migrant, but they have lived experience, they've been through a lot of their settlement journey. So therefore they are very understandable of what those people are facing and how they could overcome their challenges." (Focus group 1)*

DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Settlement is a journey
- Services need to cater to diverse and changing priorities
- Culturally-appropriate services and workforce

1. Improve readiness to respond to humanitarian crises
2. Extend and expand resettlement programmes
3. Invest in community-led organisations and professional workforce with lived experience

Charania, N. A., Zeng, I., Kumar, P., Gaylor, C., & Holroyd, E. (2025). A Mixed-Methods Evaluation of the Afghan Evacuee Resettlement Programme in Aotearoa New Zealand. *J Immigr Minor Health.*

TRANSLATION & IMPACT







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ORIGINAL PAPER

A Mixed-Methods Evaluation of the Afghan Evacuee Resettlement Programme in Aotearoa New Zealand

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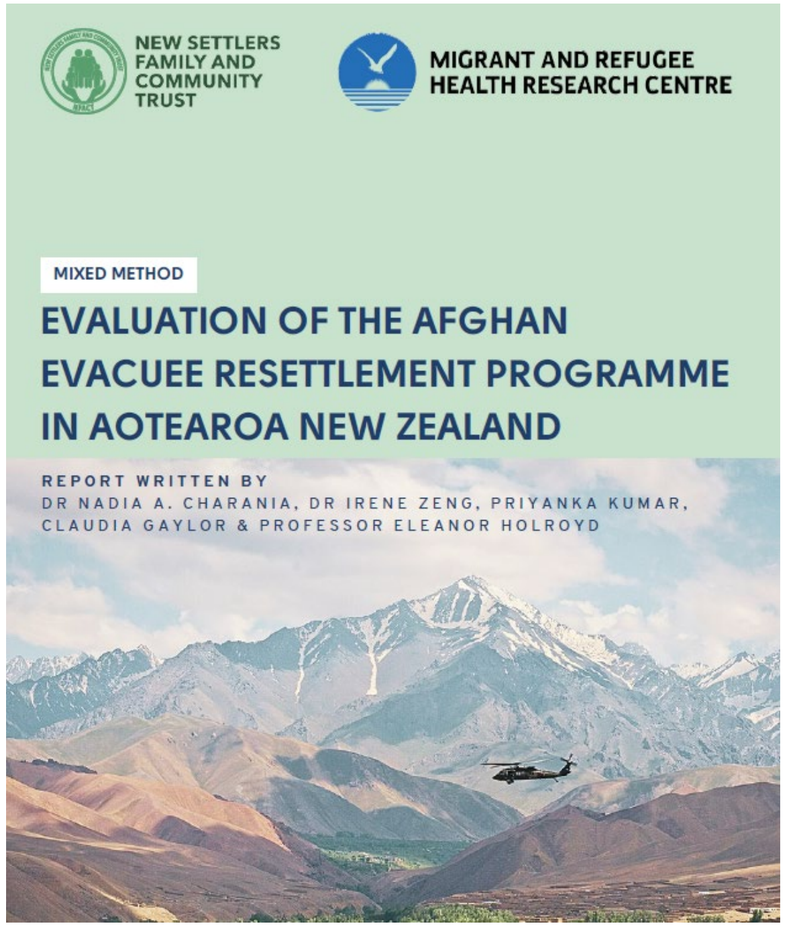
Abstract
In 2021, following the Taliban's control of Afghanistan, Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) welcomed over 1,700 Afghan nationals at risk due to their association with NZ agencies. The New Settlers Family and Community Trust (NFACT) was contracted to provide tailored resettlement support. This study evaluated NFACT's Afghan evacuee resettlement programme using a mixed-methods approach, including a cross-sectional survey, interviews, and focus groups with Afghan evacuees and NFACT staff. Of the 101 surveyed evacuees, most (93.1%) expressed satisfaction with the support they received, and almost all (97.0%) would recommend NFACT's programme to newcomers. Analysis across integration domains revealed consistently high ratings for services and support. Qualitative findings from Afghan evacuees (n=12) highlighted the challenges of adjusting to new systems, the crucial guidance provided by NFACT, and the need for ongoing, tailored support to foster their dreams and sense of purpose. NFACT staff (n=11) emphasised their dedication to support evacuees beyond contractual obligations, how limited resourcing constrained their efforts, and how their shared values and experiences underpinned the success of the programme. The findings underscore the need for comprehensive, culturally sensitive, and sustainable resettlement programmes. These findings have implications for governments to strengthen support for humanitarian evacuation responses within the evolving geopolitical landscape.

Keywords Aotearoa New Zealand · Mixed-methods · Afghanistan · Evaluation · Humanitarian evacuation · Resettlement





Ngā mihi nui!

Thank you!

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