



Multicultural New Zealand Impact Stories Focus on Women's Leadership in Community Engagement



2018

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Highlights from the Annual Reports of the Regional Multicultural Councils

The full Annual Reports of the Multicultural Councils are available directly from them or from the office of Multicultural New Zealand. This document reports on some of the achievements and activities of the Multicultural Councils during 2017-18.

Contents

Foreword	4
Ann Dysart, Manager, E Tū Whānau	
Pancha Narayanan, President, Multicultural New Zealand	5
Introduction	6
Tayo Agunlejika, Executive Director, Multicultural New Zealand	
Regional Multicultural Council Highlights	7
Aoraki Multicultural Council	7
Auckland City Multi-Ethnic Council	9
Christchurch Multicultural Council	10
Dunedin Multi-Ethnic Council	11
Tairāwhiti Multicultural Council	11
Hutt Multicultural Council	12
Manawatu Multicultural Council	13
Nelson Multicultural Council	14
Multicultural Council of Rangitikei / Whanganui	15
Rotorua Multicultural Council	16
Southland Multicultural Council	18
Tauranga Regional Multicultural Council	19
Upper Hutt Multicultural Council	20
Waitaki Multicultural Council	22
Waitaki Newcomers Network	23
RMC & NZNN Locations 2018	BCVR

Ann Dysart, Manager, E Tū Whānau
Community Partnerships and Programmes
Ministry of Social Development

Kia ora koutou

At E Tū Whānau, the movement I have helped establish and nurture over the last decade or so, we have a saying: “Leave big footprints for your children to follow”. By generously sharing their stories, the women profiled in this wonderful book are doing just that.

They, along with their families and friends at Multicultural NZ, are creating a proud and enduring legacy for their sons and daughters and the generations to come. They are following in the footsteps of those Māori and Pākehā women who fought 125 years ago for the right to vote, ensuring New Zealand’s place in history as the first country in the world where women could vote. The women celebrated in this book are now part of that proud tradition.

These women are leaders in their communities and role models for their sisters. As a Māori woman I also recognise them as wāhine toa –women of strength. We share the same basic values and have much in common.

E Tū Whānau’s violence free and whānau centered kaupapa, for example, is proudly Māori but it’s proving rich and inspirational to our refugee and migrant communities as well. The E Tū Whānau values – aroha, whanaungatanga, whakapapa, mana/manaaki, kōrero awhi and tikanga – resonate with many migrant communities because their cultures are collective and family focussed, like our Māori culture.

Some women in this book have embraced the Māori culture with open arms. They’ve stayed on marae and taken part in Huarahi Hou, a Multicultural NZ initiative connecting migrants to tangata whenua through cultural immersion and storytelling.

The stories in this book prove time and again that women from refugee and migrant backgrounds can do anything they set their minds to and they can do it on their own terms. I also applaud the fathers, sons and husbands who support their efforts unconditionally and proudly stand alongside their wives, mothers and daughters to ensure that they are able to contribute their considerable talents to the wider community.

This book provides an insight into the work done by women of different ages and backgrounds to support other migrant women as they settle into their new homes. It’s an uplifting and heartening read that I hope will be shared widely by all the 23 regional councils that make up Multicultural NZ.



Pancha Narayanan, President
Multicultural New Zealand

Tenā Koutou Katoa

“Veettu pendir nalam irruppin, athan poruttu, vazham perumeh iv-vaiayagam” (Ancient Tamil proverb). I recollect that my Appathaall (grandmother), who was home schooled, always repeated this with some sadness that, “The world is well, only when the women in the family are well”.

Appathaall and aathaall (mother) I will do my best to live by this daily and make it our present.

Each year we report on the impact that our activities have made in the communities that we serve. There is a difference between being busy and making an impact. One makes up a day, the other makes a difference. We do this by being relevant, visible and active.

At our AGM last year, I promised that MNZ would make the safety of women and children in communities our primary objective. In this year’s impact report we focus on the progress we have made. Amongst these stories, you will read about activities that support women into employment, build confidence and self-esteem, empower and nurture change.

During my years as a volunteer, working with more recent migrants and refugees, I have always observed the significant impact women make through volunteering in our communities, yet are given very little support, acknowledgement and recognition. 125 years since women in New Zealand gained the right to vote, we acknowledge and celebrate the work of our women and add their stories to the history of women’s suffrage.

These impact stories also refer to our relationship with Tangata Whenua. MNZ celebrates Tikanga Māori (Māori values) that centre on the safety of women right from birth. Towards this end, we have partnered with E Tū Whānau’s violence free and family centred objectives, embracing the values of aroha, whanaungatanga, whakapapa, mana/manaaki, kōrero awhi and tikanga.

At this year’s conference, the women’s hui will decide on how MNZ will deliver on the three top priorities identified by women. We also move to ensure that the delivery of these priorities will be the responsibilities of member RMCs.

Congratulations to you all for the countless hours you have put into this work, and the positive impact you have made on the lives of our communities. Thank you to the men in MNZ who as fathers, brothers, sons, husbands and partners support the women in their families to be leaders and to be visible, not only in their communities but in wider New Zealand

The success of women is a matter for everyone.

“The world is well, only when the women in the family are well”.

Nga Mihi



Tayo Agunlejika, Executive Director
Multicultural New Zealand

This is a special week for Multicultural New Zealand because our annual conference and AGM are on the same week as the national volunteer week. This is an opportunity each year to recognise and celebrate the invaluable contribution that approximately 1.2 million volunteers make to our communities. As a volunteer led pan-ethnic community organisation with deep connections into the community providing a collective voice and support service to ethnic migrant and refugee communities, we estimate that this financial year our volunteer contributions across the organisation total 44,356 hours per annum. This works out at 136 hours per year per volunteer – 2.6 hours/week on average. It is fitting therefore that we value the importance and essence of the national volunteer week.

Out of the many support programmes we deliver in the regions, the stories in this impact report highlight three themes (building relationships with local iwi, safety of women and children). The outcomes reflect the amount of volunteer time invested by our members. You will find some inspiring examples of asset based community development, such as: the five women from Aoraki Multicultural Council “Coffee, Tea and Chat” who joined the group to combat social isolation and gain exposure to the English language but ended up starting a jewellery making workshop and are now selling fashion jewellery at different events and markets around the Aoraki District; the Dunedin Multi-Ethnic Council’s Koru Playgroup supported by the Dunedin Newcomers Network, and the welcoming of former refugees for the last 18 months by providing an official pōwhiri. The Self Defence Course remains popular with our ethnic refugee and migrant women and is now being offered in Invercargill, Christchurch, Upper Hutt and Hutt Valley.

A highlight of this year’s impact report is that more regional multicultural councils are including a local marae visit or sleep-over to their annual work programme. This is the strong foundation on which we roll out Huarahi Hou, an initiative that MNZ developed in partnership with tangata whenua to connect migrants with their local iwi. It is our hope that Huarahi Hou will result in marae based activities being a regular event for all RMCs and other community organisations across the country.

There are too many other initiatives to mention here but what they all have in common are volunteers creating opportunities for our newcomers to experience a better pathway to settlement, to integrate through active civic participation and develop a sense of belonging in their new home.

This impact report highlights the contribution and value that the MNZ family from Whangarei to Invercargill has made in the past year. I want to acknowledge and thank all the Regional Multicultural Councils executives, volunteers and staff, New Zealand Newcomers Network Regional Coordinators, the MNZ Executives and my team for their support and hard work. It’s been a rewarding year and I look forward to the challenges ahead.

13 Regional Multicultural Council Highlights

Aoraki Multicultural Council

Timaru's economic growth attracts more and more people, in particular migrants to South Canterbury. Being new to a country, with a different culture and new language is challenging and it is so important to have a one stop shop for migrants, newcomers, employers of migrants and anyone who is interested in learning about new cultures, as well as people simply wanting to celebrate our diversity.

The Aoraki Migrant Centre helps and supports migrants and newcomers with their settlement process in South Canterbury, but also provides targeted support for employers of migrants.

Our help and support has many different faces.

We are educating employers of migrants, showing an employer what they can do to make the transition of their migrant workers into their new workplaces easier and through this they can quickly contribute to the success of their business. It will also help employers to better retain their overseas staff.

But to improve the settling experiences of migrants, it is also important that we help employers to better understand the cultural needs and behaviours of migrant employees.

We are proud that the South Canterbury Chamber of Commerce offered us free membership, in recognition of our work to create a welcoming and harmonious climate for migrants in their work environment.

To achieve best possible outcomes for migrants and newcomers, we have to collaborate with all agencies and service providers in our community.

We are part of the Timaru Safer Communities Committee, Healthy Living South Canterbury, South Canterbury Neighbourhood support, Family Violence Forum, Project Turnaround, Te Rito and the National Council of Women.

Throughout the year we organised different activities and events to give migrants and newcomers the opportunity to socialise and to exchange experiences.



Coffee, Tea and Chat for Migrants

Our Newcomers Coffee Mornings and “Coffee Tea and Chat for Migrants” are held weekly and always well attended.

The “Coffee, Tea and Chat” for migrants only, held at our base at Community House, brings together all of the ethnicities to help them combat their social isolation and to give them more exposure to the English language.



Fundraising and Creativity

Last winter, five ladies from our “Coffee, Tea and Chat” for migrants started a jewellery making workshop where jewellery was made or re-designed from old jewellery donated to us.

This gave them another opportunity to socialise, gain confidence and to feel valued.

We are now selling our fashion jewellery at different events and markets in the Aoraki region.

To help migrants gain a better understanding about their current situation we organised in collaboration with a licensed Immigration Adviser, four “Immigration Advisory Workshops” in South Canterbury (including one in Ashburton).

Over the last year we gave presentations and speeches to a large number of community groups, businesses, agencies and employers. These workshops and presentations give our community a better understanding of the cultural differences and the cultural needs of migrants. We will continue to deliver these workshops and presentations in order to bridge the gap between host people and migrants in our community for best settlement outcomes.



Auckland City Multi-Ethnic Council

Auckland City Multi-Ethnic Council has been engaging with local iwis for nearly a decade through different activities. We are grateful to our late founder and president Mr Ganges Singh QSM, JP for his initiatives and contacts for our achievements in this venture.

Franklin Multicultural Festival

The 11th Annual Franklin Multicultural Festival - to commemorate the Race Relations Day - was once again held on Saturday 7th April 2018 at the Pukekohe Intermediate School. Incidentally it was through our efforts this festival commenced in Pukekohe and still has huge support in the region.

In 2007, we were the first to organise this event at the Pukekohe Town Hall through the support of Franklin District Council and had local iwi participation mostly kapa haka presentation of school children. From the following year we combined with the Puni Primary School in hosting this event on a much higher level. The local iwi, particularly the school staff and children, have been the highlights through their active participation in all aspects of the event; sports, management and cultural presentations.

This event is now the greatest multicultural festival in the Franklin district.

Celebrating Waitangi Day

Robert Hita of the Huakina Development Trust and Br Ganges were personal friends for a number of years. In 2013 Huakina Development Trust were granted funds to celebrate the Waitangi Day on 6 February, the designated holiday. Robert requested that we also join the celebrations that were held at the Rugby Grounds in Pukekohe. We took this opportunity with open arms and since then have been part of these celebrations. Our contributions have been varied: ethnic cultural dances, opening prayers from multi-faith communities including Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and Sikhs.

These are annual events in which we participate and from our participations in these two events we have fortunately built a good relationship with the local iwi. However, we still can do better by engaging with other groups in Auckland.



Christchurch Multicultural Council

Christchurch City Council's (CCC) Multicultural Strategy

Since the launch of the Christchurch Multicultural Strategy in May last year, we have been supporting the CCC for the development of an action plan for the implementation of the strategy. Some of the key areas requiring education and training are Treaty-based multiculturalism, *Te Reo Māori*, barriers to adoption of multiculturalism, cultural competency, for which we are keen to work with the CCC and other groups. We presented our views to the CCC Multicultural Sub-Committee. CMC was pleased to present a Certificate of Appreciation to the CCC for their work towards the Multicultural Strategy.

CMC has proposed to NZFMC to campaign for all the city and district councils to have their multicultural strategies.

Self-Defence Courses: We organised self-defence courses for ethnic women at Riccarton Baptist Church Hall and Christchurch City Plunket rooms. Forty women attended.

Living Between Two Cultures: We made further progress with the project “Living Between Two Cultures” which involves interviewing diverse ethnic women about their experiences, hardships and challenges in living their lives in “two worlds”? The project is nearing completion. The survey questions were sent to the women in Canterbury region and Waimakariri district. We have 35 case studies.

Race Relations Day celebrated with Festival of Colours (Holi) and St Patrick's Day (17, 21 and 24 March)



The 3-in-1 celebration: Holi – Race Unity Day – St Patrick's Day.

Everyone attended had a lot of fun with colours, music, dance, food and getting to know others. The Christchurch and Rangiora Festivals of Colours (Holi) exhibited harmony, happiness, social inclusion, cross-culture participation, inter-culture awareness, and appreciation of multiculturalism in culturally diverse New Zealand. This is in line with the significance of Race Unity Day (21 March). CMC is proud to support these events as they promoted harmony, equality, friendship and happiness within multicultural and wider communities.

Dunedin Multi-Ethnic Council

Araiteuru Marae:

We welcomed former refugees for the last 18 months by providing an official powhiri which we are now happy to announce is being continued by Mana Whenua and the Mayor's Office as a full Civic Reception.

We are now developing with Interfaith, NGOs, Government departments and other interested groups, the provision of a community powhiri for all migrants (from within Aotearoa and elsewhere).

In addition to this, we are committed to the annual DMEC Noho Marae to strengthen our relationships, as outlined in our 25-year strategic plan.



Tairāwhiti Multicultural Council

The Tairāwhiti Multicultural Council (TMC) is a small voluntary organisation that has been developing a large following across Tairāwhiti. The main focus for TMC has been helping to build the Opportunities without Discrimination (OWD) brand. OWD was launched at the 2016 NZFMC AGM and has been growing ever since. It aims to promote inclusion, diversity and opportunities for all while eliminating discrimination and celebrating differences. OWD uses the wearing of odd socks to promote the message that "It's OK to be different".

Activities:

We have successfully partnered with the Gisborne Harriers Club to deliver 3 very well attended colour runs. These colour runs have proven to be a great way to promote the OWD message "that it's OK to be different" – once everyone is covered in paint we are all the same.

In keeping with our theme of 'opportunities without discrimination' and 'bringing people together,' the Tairāwhiti Multicultural Council donated three picnic tables to Gisborne Hospital to provide staff, patients and their whanau quiet places to relax. With help from the Community Organisation Grants Scheme we were able to run a very successful appreciation



dinner for volunteers from various community organisations across Tairāwhiti. Once again the Tairāwhiti Multicultural Council supported the Bahai faith community to host the Race Unity Speech Contest with competitors from each of the secondary schools in our district.

Hutt Multicultural Council



Self - Defence Naenae:

Hosted by Team Naenae Trust, Hutt Multicultural Council & Andre Maritz, Krav Maga

The Self - Defence Course that was held in Naenae in February and March was run by Andre Maritz who taught the Krav Maga Self Defence. There was an average of 7 women in attendance each week for 6 weeks. The course assisted women to gain skills to practise self defence in a real situation. They found it useful and learned techniques for a wide variety of situations. The participants felt confident to act quickly and the skill and tactics that were learned helped them feel safer when out on their own. It was requested from the group to run more courses and participants said to me that they were looking for a self defence course and were glad that they found one. It was good to work with Hutt Multicultural Council and Krav Maga to give the women in our community a chance to use skills to feel safe in our community. Team Naenae will look at partnering with Krav Maga and Hutt Multicultural council to provide more Self Defence classes for our community.

Dr Pushpa Wood of Massey University conducted a Financial Literacy Workshop at the Lower Hutt War Memorial Library under the auspices of National Council of Women, Lower Hutt Branch and HMC.



Manawatu Multicultural Council

A year has gone by since we last met for our annual meeting in Dunedin. I am glad to say that this year went very smoothly without any negative correspondence from the Federation.

The Manawatu Multicultural Council is actively doing its part in equipping and empowering migrant and refugee women in our community.



A number of the women have gained employment after attending our conversational English classes, and willingly volunteered their time in organising various events. One of our Bhutanese migrants and a Filipino migrant obtained full time employment while working as volunteers.

Last year the MMC took the responsibility of helping obtain funding to continue the Women's Only Zumba classes and we are happy to have up to 20 women taking part in this important exercise twice a week. Our dance project has been greatly encouraged by and participated in by many women from different cultures.

Part of the MMC's annual activities is a trip to a marae. For a number of years, we have taken busloads of migrants and refugees to visit a marae and learn about the Māori culture and the importance of the Treaty of Waitangi. We have established a firm relationship with the Rangitane Iwi, our local iwi, who willingly give migrants and refugees a Treaty of Waitangi orientation during the year.



Nelson Multicultural Council

Nelson Multicultural Council's work during 2018 was guided by a strategic plan (2016-2017), defined at the end of 2015, after a round of consultations with members, collaborators and partner organizations, including experts in business and organizational matters.

That plan defined four areas of work: Leadership, Collaboration, Delivery and Capacity Building. It aimed to guide our efforts towards the achievement of outcomes that were relevant to our organization's mission and vision, compiled in our motto: 'Unity Within Diversity.' In that way, we develop programmes, events and other initiatives, sometimes leading them and sometimes collaborating with other agencies and organizations within each area of our plan's framework.

Our 2016-2017 plan stated the goal of identifying and delivering services that will support migrants and ethnic communities towards their settlement, integration, safety, well-being, mutual understanding and harmonious relations. This past year, our focus was on defining what works, how we should develop existing services further and what new services we could deliver. To achieve that, we decided firstly to strengthen existing services and broaden their reach. In that way, we engaged experienced professionals who delivered very successful Intercultural Awareness Workshops and have continued developing our interpreters list as well as delivering the events already mentioned.

Linked with our building capacity goal, we successfully completed the Meeting the Needs and challenges of Migrants and former Refugees in the Nelson Tasman Region, which has given us a map of what our strategy will be for the next five years at least. Also, in tune with our collaboration goal, we will be making this research publicly accessible online so people, agencies and organizations can have full access to the valuable information contained there about the situation of the migrant and ethnic communities of the region, so it can inform not only ours but anyone else's decisions on the matter.

This research marks an end to the stage we initiated as an organization with the strategy process at the end of 2015, and opens a new challenge for the years to come. We now have to develop our strategic planning, following the wisdom of the communities we serve, that are compiled in the findings of the research. This will be a process where we hope all of our members will feel motivated to engage with us and we welcome any suggestions and feedback. You will soon have the complete report available to you to read. From now, we can advance that our plan for the future should consider the thematic areas defined in the report: Communication, Culture and Identity, Inclusion and Connectedness, Systems and Services, Economic and Employment and Health and Wellbeing.

The research also revealed that the vast majority of the participants want to be educated and engaged about the Treaty of Waitangi and that we contribute to develop stronger and better relations with Tangata Whenua. That we take as a mandate and engage in a dialogue with local Iwi to develop ways for us, migrants and ethnic communities, to understand and be part of New Zealand's bi-cultural society.

The findings and recommendation of the research were the basis of Nelson Multicultural Council's submission to Nelson City Council's long term plan. We proposed to the Council to develop, with us and Tangata Whenua, a Welcoming Communities Strategy for the City, based in the pilot experiences implemented in nine other cities and in the results of our research.

In November this year, our organization will be 25 years old. We hope that this will be not only a calendar milestone, but an occasion that gives us the opportunity to reflect on our mission, and how to continue to make a solid contribution to a better life for all.



Multicultural Council of Rangitikei / Whanganui

It gives us a great pleasure to share with you all the success of Multicultural Council of Rangitikei / Whanganui Inc. We are small but very active in the region. We are known as “one stop shop” for new migrants and anyone else who is moving to Whanganui.

Local Iwi

For the past four years we have been visiting different marae in Whanganui trying to embrace the culture and tradition of the local iwi. This year we visited Koriniti marae. The theme was “Cultural Awareness” and we had some very good speakers who were quite motivational, encouraging audience participation. The importance of Whanganui River was also a part of the discussion. To our surprise there were a few local Māori people who have never visited the marae before and thus took the opportunity to do so. We have got a very strong link with our local Iwi where there are no barriers when it comes to discussion and open forums.

Working with women in our communities

Multicultural Council of Rangitikei / Whanganui had to work very hard to break through some barriers that the migrant community faces. It is very difficult to get through to our ladies especially in the Indian and Island communities to get together and take a lead role due to shyness and their upbringing.

Initially, we encouraged at the beginning by talking to individuals. We encourage them to be motivated and develop self-confidence. This is shaped around self-awareness, exploring values and building self-confidence. It is getting transformed due to their engagement with the regular meeting programmes. Once the



barriers have been removed, they feel free to meet because they finally believe in themselves and in the opportunities available to them. It is a reminder of something we have always believed in for a long time. That is, being empowered and equipped to make healthy, positive life choices which is the biggest key to development and the ability of young women particularly, to not only work their way out of poverty, but to become agents of change within their families and later the communities at large.

Most migrant women are initially very shy and were confined to their homes, particularly those from other origins where English is not a medium of communication are the ones who suffer the most. With the help of a few dedicated and talented ladies they formed a very strong bond and they have formed a group in Whanganui. They practice traditional dance and they have travelled up to Wellington to show off their very colourful and vibrant art. Multicultural Council of Rangitikei / Whanganui helps to pay for the travel and in some cases help with costumes for the activities.



Rotorua Multicultural Council

Winning the Rotorua Community Organisation Business Excellence Award

The Rotorua Multicultural Council entered the Rotorua Westpac Business Excellence Awards. After a presentation by our Executive Committee to two of the judges, we became finalists and were given 20 minutes to tell our success stories to the panel of 12 judges. We did this by presenting nine short tableaux, bringing together our migrant members and partner organisations. Examples included a Plunket nurse with young Chinese parents and their baby; a job interview role play by Professional Speaking for Migrant Students; a Rotarian mentoring a Japanese migrant; Filipino dancers; planting a community garden; a knitting group at a retirement village; and Rotorua Girls' High School students reading Treaty of Waitangi Articles in their own languages. The Award Ceremony, where we were announced as the winner of the Community Organisation Westpac Business Excellence Award, was a highlight of the year



Building relationships with Māori

During the year we held two very successful three-hour workshops presented by Tania Te Whenua of Te Whenua Consulting titled *The Treaty in Your Workplace* and *Building Relations with Māori*. Over fifty migrants attended the second workshop at Teal Kitchen. There was a lively discussion and the migrants clearly grasped the importance of the Treaty of Waitangi, knowing some Māori greetings, and pronouncing Rotorua's street names correctly. The workshop was attended by three Māori kaumatua and their response to the migrants' thirst for more knowledge was most positive.

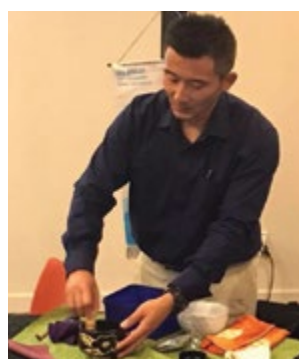
Each of the participants received a Te Whenua Consulting and RMC Certificate of Attendance. One enthusiastic participant in the *Building Relations with Māori* workshop was Ineke Jansonius from the Netherlands who also volunteered to help organise the event. Special thanks goes to Ineke for the efficient way in which she job-shared the position of Executive Officer with Waitsu Wu while Waitsu was in Taiwan over the summer.

Leadership development among young migrants

We continue to support organisations that run programmes that fit with our philosophy of encouraging the development of leadership among the young migrants in our community. We sponsored the Cultural Youth Leader Award in the One Chance Youth Awards. Beatriz Bae from the Philippines was nominated by Rotorua Girls' High School for this award and became a finalist. Ali Al Omari, also from the Philippines, was nominated by Western Heights High School as the Most Amazing Visual Youth Artist and was also named a finalist.

Mandarin and Japanese classes

The Mandarin classes for children, which started out under the umbrella of the Rotorua Multicultural Council, are running successfully at The Arts Village. Although the Mandarin and Japanese classes are not activities of the Rotorua Multicultural Council, we are proud that we had a hand in getting these courses underway.



Southland Multicultural Council

“Southland Multicultural Women’s Group is to see multicultural women from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds as well as age groups work together in an interactive environment with the shared vision of building on natural leadership qualities demonstrate in all areas of their lives – being wives, mothers, workers and community members.”

Our Step in 2017/18: As the Women’s Group of Southland Multicultural Council we keep our members busy with the activities and events thought the year. We have diversity of women as members with all the cultures joining our workshops.

International Women’s Day Celebration on March 2018 & Immigration Policy Changes Seminar February 2018:

We arranged a get-together with members of Women’s Group for celebration of International Women’s day with fun games and activities, and entertainments to make them feel special on that day.

Women’s group arranged an Immigration seminar on 18 February 2018. The topic was so informative and the audiences engaged so well that the topic went over 3 hours. Our thanks to Immigration Lawyer Werner van Harselaar, who came down from Dunedin and delivered such a comprehensive information session about immigration matters.

Multicultural-Women’s Self - Defence Course November 2017:

Our thanks to Ana Pereira, a remarkable teacher, who taught the self-defence techniques in an effective, simple and to the point, as well as fun and realistic way. We run this course in association with Women’s Self Defence Network Wāhine Toa. We are sure that all the participants learned so much from the course.

Spa Party October 2017 & National Council of Women Southland, Annual Suffrage Day September 2017: SMC

Women’s members get a golden opportunity to have a Spa Party with Rachael. All members received free facial and beauty tips.

We proudly represent the Southland Multicultural Council Women’s group in the National Council of Women Southland, Annual Suffrage Day – Guest Speaker Dr Diana MacLean.

SMC Women’s Group Cooking Demo August 2017, Hokonui

Culture Feast July 2017: Southland Multicultural Women’s Group met 5th August to witness the Healthy cooking demo of the Sri Lankan dishes Potato Bonda and Fish Cutlet by Grace Peries. The recipes were healthy, kid-friendly and delicious.



Southland Multicultural Council Women’s group was delighted to attend the Hokonui Culture Festival and having a stall as a fund raiser with curries and rice. The variety of food and such diverse audience was the highlight of the evening including the different performances from different ethnicities.

Tauranga Regional Multicultural Council

We have benefitted greatly from the time and effort our General Manager Jim Datson has put into our organization. Without his guidance this would be a very different report. He has changed the business model of the Bay of Plenty Interpreting Service from one which was making an annual loss to one which now has made a profit and is on the way to being self-sustaining. He has also turned around our deficit into a positive.

Loyal members of our Newcomers Network Group have continued to support the coffee mornings, as well as new newcomers continuing to use this service. The Living in Harmony evenings continued last year after the festival with a different host country every month. They began again this year in May and we have promise of enough countries to see us till the end of the year.



Upper Hutt Multicultural Council

UHMCC continues to have a strong presence in the community and with on-going support from our partners, local organisations and community groups (Upper Hutt City Council, Ministry of Social Development, local Tangata Whenua and members of the community). As part of our commitment to helping recent migrants settle into their new life in Aotearoa, we have been involved with a number of projects. This report focuses on our endeavour with women from the Syrian community in their journey towards achieving a great settlement outcome for themselves and their families.

Upper Hutt: Goal setting course and shared lunch

Goal setting: One of the success stories for the UHMCC this year has been the development and implementation of a new program called the “Pathway to successful settlement and employment workshop”. This was piloted in 2016 and the outcome of this program exceeded our expectations for the women – they gained confidence by setting personal goals and working towards accomplishing these. The results from this program have since attracted more Syrian women in the community wanting to participate in future workshops. Therefore the second phase of the goal-setting programme for Syrian Women began to take shape this year.

The programme is a 5 week course funded by E Tu Whanau. This has been managed by Pohswan Narayanan, who oversees the programme and manages the relationship between the Syrian women, stakeholders and UHMCC. Pohswan encourages the women to be open and frank about what they need help with to settle into their new lives. Then, with input from Maureen Fox and Carley Bentley, they jointly design and co-facilitate the learning opportunities to achieve these goals.



The Pathway course covers many helpful tips and new skills that the women can use in their everyday life. The course also includes group outings and activities for the women such as go-kart racing, ten-pin bowling and visiting iconic sites in Wellington. This allowed the women to get to know their new surroundings, build their self-esteem by learning how to work in a tea environment and build confidence outside of their home while having fun with other women from the community.

Shared lunch: After the women had successfully completed their goal setting course they took it upon themselves to organise a shared lunch for friends and people whom they’ve met from volunteer organisations and in the community, for a “Taste of the Middle East”. Some of the women came from families where women were not expected to engage with the outside world - to see them step outside their comfort zone and organise an event of this calibre was a huge accomplishment not only for the women, but also for our volunteers who were very proud of how far the women had come. Needless to say, the shared lunch event was a great success and was enjoyed by everyone who attended. We were also lucky enough to hear from some of the women who stood up and spoke about their experiences from the course and even shared their journey of how they came to Aotearoa.

Porirua – Pathway Course for Porirua Syrian women:

Porirua is another city that has been experiencing an influx of new migrant and refugee families from Syria. These families are supported by the Red Cross for the first 12 months of arriving into the country and most families still require on-going support. Due to the success of the “Pathway to successful settlement and employment” in the Hutt Valley, this programme has been trialled with the Syrian women in Porirua.

The 5-week workshop has been running from April to May 2018. The feedback from the women so far has been positive and we have even seen one of the women, Esra Qatarneh, taking the initiative to submit a proposal to the Porirua City Council on their long-term plan (with support from the Porirua Multicultural Council) to encourage the local pools to set aside a “women’s only” session for women. The request also includes having an all-female staff roster to allow Islamic women and women of all faith, shapes and sizes to be able to swim comfortably in a safe environment. Esra motivation is leading her to play a more active role in the newly formed Porirua Multicultural Council.

Women’s Defence Course in the Hutt Valley: A request came from women in the community with the need to learn self-defence to build confidence, feel empowered and to feel safe in the community. Some women have become aware of the importance of keeping themselves and their children safe, especially after a number of the women were hurt in violent circumstances in the Auckland area. Their partners also thought this was a good idea. We continue to collaborate with Wahine Toa and worked with a woman instructor who facilitated 4 sessions for the Lou, Chinese & Sikh communities. We had over 60 participants in total take part with the ages ranging from 20 – 70 years old. The course catered to all levels and the feedback that we have received has been positive with more requests to continue the classes – an indicator that this was of the success of the course.



Waitaki Multicultural Council

The Waitaki Multicultural Council is part of the Safer Waitaki Coalition and sits on the management group. It is a 'whole of community' development initiative, involving over 127 organisations and covers key areas of community safety around family whanau, violence prevention – including family violence, workplace safety, road safety, mental health and addictions and older people. Areas of focus for the Waitaki Multicultural Council have included running the Community Self Defence Course targeting rural, migrant women with the support of Safer Waitaki. Twenty three women attended a one day course at Pembroke School Hall. Participants feedback – “I really appreciated having such a safe place to discuss sensitive situations and stories as well as practise the techniques”. “Excellent course. I would recommend every girl and woman do a Wāhine Toa course to empower themselves, increase their confidence and knowledge to use self defence techniques.”

Youth Film Event: WMC and Safer Waitaki worked with High Schools, Youthline and Police with funding from Etu Whanau to enable and facilitate a youth film event with the assistance of local film makers guiding year 9/10 students with the challenge of producing a film in a day which resulted in the production of 10 violence prevention awareness videos which have been uploaded to Safer Waitaki and other websites. The learning outcomes for students were: awareness of family violence, cinematography and editing skills, health and safety planning and working in small teams and to explore their creativity. The films were screened as part of the White Ribbon Ride Event in Oamaru to the wider community.

Newcomers Being Socially Connected: Newcomer Activities continue to evolve with a total of 188 events consisting of regular coffee groups, walking groups, mothers groups, book group, Friday Night pub catch ups, Migrant Meet and Share Gatherings, Young Newcomers Gatherings, Games Nights, Group Dinners, Daffodil Picking Day, Visits to Steam and Rail and Community Gardens, organised bus trips, shows and various workshops and outings. We would like to acknowledge the many volunteers who help to coordinate these many activities and newcomers helping other newcomers. Women's Group had two activities – Karaoke and Filipino Cooking demonstration of two traditional Philippines dishes in which food bring people together.



Supporting Community: One of our members recognised a specific need for migrants. Maria arrived as a migrant in 2003 from Uruguay and understands the challenges and difficulties settling into a new place. Maria set up Migrants Meet and Share, a fortnightly gathering to educate migrants about New Zealand life, social conversation, addressing issues and providing support. It is due to celebrate a year in progress. Christine Dorsey – Newcomers and Migrant Support Coordinator continues to respond to various enquiries regarding housing, employment, drivers licensing, volunteering, English language, immigration, friendship, health, legal advice and other queries. WMC continues to support and be represented on Literacy North Otago and Family Violence Network. The establishment of an Online Community Directory Website– for Clubs and Groups was made possible by Otago Community Trust funding – the benefit is that it is accessible online and is in one place to find what is happening in Oamaru.

Waitaki Newcomers Network

Dina's Story

It is hard enough for any child to move towns and change schools when you are seven. It is even harder when you wear a head scarf and you are the first person at your new school who wears one.

Dina's family also has two pre-schoolers and a new baby, so Dina walked to school on her own, but there was a big dog roaming in the neighbourhood and Dina was petrified, so getting to school was an everyday worry and a safety issue.

Luckily, the Waitaki community is a supportive place with great caring people, willing to work together and one thing led to another to solve these difficulties for Dina and her family.

Helen, manager of Literacy North Otago happened to be outside her house when Dina and her Mum Zana were going past one day. Helen is also on the Waitaki Multicultural Council and understands the challenges of settlement, so she got Zana's phone number, found out where she lived and passed her details onto the Newcomers and Migrant Support Coordinator. Christine went and visited Zana and discovered the problem with Dina getting to school. Christine approached the school office staff, who thought about which other families lived close to Dina's house and may be willing to take her to school. The Finn family came forward and a gathering was held where all the parents, Zana, Noah, Kate and Grant, organised a plan for the new school term. The great thing about Kate and Grant Finn is that they already have three children and both work, but they believe in children walking, scootering and biking to school and every morning Grant takes on this role.

So, what could be better than that? A scooter was donated from Fiona and Ben Stratford, so Dina can scooter with the family every morning and feel part of the group. Everyone gets some exercise and starts the day in a positive way. Thanks to the amazing Finn family, the issue of getting Dina to school safe and happy is solved, but so much more has happened here.



Zita Finn is only five, but she has many friends and when Zita's friends saw Dina arriving at school with her, it changed everything. Zita is just a little girl, but due to her kindness, she modelled acceptance, and this was very powerful. Suddenly, Zita's friends became Dina's friends and they looked past the head scarf and saw Dina as a new friend.

Now Dina belongs, she is accepted, she has friends and she is happy!

Christine Dorsey, Waitaki Newcomers and Migrant Support

RMC & NZNN Locations 2018

● RMC: MNZ Regional Multicultural Council

● NZNN: New Zealand Newcomers Network



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