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# ***Ka Hura te Tai (The Tides of Transition)***

## ***Former refugees finding a sense of belonging within Kaupapa Māori organisations***

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## **Abstract**

Refugees experience stressful, dangerous and overall life-changing events from the cause of their flight from home to their transit, and even through till their (re)settlement. It is through their difficult journeys where their sense of belonging needs to be renegotiated, even when they may be perceived as 'safe' and out of danger within their new place of settlement, and a sense of belonging may not occur automatically. With New Zealand taking in 1500 quota refugees annually through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, the country seeks to help these refugees (re)settle and make Aotearoa New Zealand their new home and regain a sense of belonging. Within the context of New Zealand, while there are various organisations involved in refugee (re)settlement this research focuses on Kaupapa Māori organisations that have set out to support former refugees to eventually lead healthier, happier and self-sufficient lives within their communities. Therefore, the aim of this research is to explore whether, and how former refugees' sense of belonging is supported by interacting with Kaupapa Māori led organisations. Through this research, qualitative approaches were utilised by way of one-on-one interviews with staff members that work with former refugees from a Kaupapa Māori organisation based in Auckland, New Zealand called Kahui Tū Kāha. Through application of a value-based approach and belonging conceptual lens, this research highlights the various cross-cultural connections that can be seen between the diverse cultures of former refugees and how these then intersect with Kaupapa Māori framings. These findings support the idea that Kaupapa Māori values and cultural factors help refugees better connect to a new country and respective community, while also highlighting the role of belonging as a key contributor to positive well-being outcomes.

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# Abbreviations

**ANZ** Aotearoa New Zealand

**ETW** E Tū Whānau

**INZ** Immigration New Zealand

**IOM** International Organisation for Migration

**KM** Kaupapa Māori

**KTK** Kahui Tū Kāha

**NZRC** New Zealand Red Cross

**UNHCR** United Nations High Commission for Refugees

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

“Migration is as old as humanity itself” and throughout history, people have migrated in search of better lives to seek new opportunities, but also out of necessity to flee conflict or to find safety (Pope, 2024, p.xiii). A subset of migration flows includes those of refugees, who become displaced due to a wide range of causes encompassing various forms of persecution, economic deprivation, conflict, experiences of trauma and loss of livelihoods (Marlowe, 2018, p.7). The importance of addressing refugee’s experiences and issues, is displayed in the growing numbers; with there being 43.7 million displaced people globally as of June 2024, with an estimated 2,420,000 refugees needing (re)settlement (UNHCR, 2024, p.9; UNHCR, 2024, p.6). Finding a safe space where they can carve out a new life and gain a sense of belonging is therefore crucial. As such, this research project focuses on former refugees<sup>1</sup> and seeks to explore how a sense of belonging for refugees can potentially come about by spending time with Kaupapa Māori (KM) organisations within the (re)settlement process in Aotearoa New Zealand (ANZ). From this point, I will now outline the rationale for this research, presenting a brief literature overview.

## 1.2 Rationale for the Research

ANZ has a history of supporting refugees since 1870 and currently contributes to the resettling of refugees by allocating a quota of 1500 UNHCR approved refugees per year (Bellamy, 2020, p.1). After their displacement and relocation, (re)settlement can offer refugees a chance to rebuild their lives by providing them with legal status and international protection (UNHCR, 2024, p.6). However, refugees not only experience geographical displacement, but also face social displacement (Bascom, 1998; also see Marlowe, 2018, p. 39). Therefore, gaining legal status and the opportunities that come with (re)settlement, for example, having paid employment or receiving education, does not automatically guarantee

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<sup>1</sup> I follow the approach of Marlowe (2018) in ‘belonging and transnational refugee settlement: Unsettling the everyday and the extraordinary’, in referring to *former refugees* or people of refugee background as *refugee* for the remainder of this research report (unless otherwise specified). I do this strictly for consistency and readability purposes while also remaining mindful of the sensitivities that surround labelling.

a sense of safety or security; nor secure access to inclusion into society; access to rights (Hovil, 2016, p.11), or positive well-being outcomes.

With a focus on refugee well-being, there are various scholars such as Marlowe (2018), Hovil (2016), Rameka et al., (2023) and Mahmud (2021) who collectively advocate a sense of belonging as a concept that is closely linked to well-being and thus is especially crucial for refugees during the (re)settling process. Belonging can happen “in many different ways and to many different objects of attachments” (Yuval-Davis, 2016, p. 5). Thus, belonging can vary from person to person, with Yuval-Davis (2016, p.5) referring to it as a dynamic process, rather than a reified fixity. Developing a sense of belonging is significant as it can lead to positive outcomes such as enhance contributions to society and form the foundation of cultural identity, which can be seen as a strong human motivational need and is considered a crucial component for all human beings (Guo & Dalli, 2016; Mitchell & Bateman, 2018; Sumison & Wong, 2011; Rameka et al. 2023 p.255; McCallum, 2022, p.54). In fact, Marlowe (2018, p.6) coordinates the usage of belonging within refugee (re)settlement as a simultaneous process, and also conveys that there is a need to address how refugees can meaningfully integrate within receiving society, with Hovil (2016) adding that there is a call for broader notions and more flexible interpretations of belonging to be explored (p.24).

In summary, by framing the processes of refugees’ finding a sense of belonging in ANZ during their (re)settlement in light of a KM lens, this may demonstrate “how multiple stories and histories come together in dynamic and unexpected ways” (Marlowe 2018 p.3).

### **1.3 Positionality**

Since I can remember, I have always had the strong drive and desire to explore and understand places, people and cultures, and the happenings of the world, whether they be good or bad. Besides reading and seeing things in books and online, it wasn’t until I travelled and had international exposure where my awareness and desire to understand the world grew. Eventually, this interest directed me to follow a path into tertiary study. During some of my studies I was working as a tour guide at the Waitomo Caves, while also working as a contractor for the Department of Conservation where I was liaising with Iwi and Hapū on a daily basis, as well as international visitors. This experience helped me gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the benefits that connections with visitors and the

community hold, as well as approaches that can facilitate sustainable practices and strengthening business and conservation systems. This was also happening simultaneously with my university studies that explored more in-depth topics and issues within my international relations and political science papers. Together with my university, workplace experiences and perspectives I gained, plus my bicultural background with a Dutch mother and a father with Samoan heritage, this has intimately shown me the collaboration between Western and Indigenous worldviews. This has shaped my understanding of how different approaches influence everyday life, relationships and social structures. I have also witnessed firsthand the socio-economic disparities that exist between both sides of my family, which I believe reflect the complex realities and inequalities present in many societies around the world. As of recently, I have also recently discovered I have *tangata whenua* from a few generations back and I am in the process of exploring my *whakapapa*, which this study may help deepen my understandings.

#### 1.4 Research Aim, Questions and Objectives

The aim of this research is to explore whether (and how) former refugees' sense of belonging is supported by interacting and spending time in the environments of Kaupapa Māori led organisations in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. The research questions and objectives are as follows:

<b>RQ 1: How do Kaupapa Māori-led organisations support former refugees through the (re)settlement process?</b>	
<i>Objective 1.1: To understand how Māori values are drawn upon to support refugees during the (re)settlement process</i>	<i>Objective 1.2: To explore how programmes are designed and describe the types of activities and experiences which are drawn upon as part of the (re)settlement process</i>
<b>RQ2: How do Kaupapa Māori led organisations help support former refugees gain a stronger sense of belonging?</b>	
<i>Objective 2.1: To explain how values and experiences help build connections for former refugees</i>	<i>Objective 2.2: To understand how being involved with a Māori-led organisation helps former refugees feel a sense of belonging.</i>

## **1.5 Research Report Outline**

This research report has begun with an introduction, providing the rationale and overview of my research, stipulating also the research aim, questions and objectives. Chapter Two will explore the conceptual framing of belonging, including transnational belonging, mātauranga Māori contributions, and the value of connections in fostering a sense of belonging. Chapter Three provides more context by examining migration and refugee dynamics, alongside the ANZ immigration landscape. This chapter concludes by overviewing three key organisations who work with refugees in Aotearoa; New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC), E Tū Whānau (ETW) and Kāhui Tū Kaha (KTK). Chapter Four moves on to outline my research methodology, inclusive of methods of data collection and analysis and ethical considerations. Chapter Five presents the findings from the fieldwork, with Chapter Six offering a discussion of these findings, as well as concluding remarks.

## **Chapter 2: Conceptualising Belonging**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter conceptualises belonging and links this concept to refugees, first in a transnational context then by focusing on KM values. The aim is to expand the understanding of belonging within the refugee context, while acknowledging the significant role that mātauranga Māori can hold within this discourse, as well as incorporating a KM lens. Themes of well-being, which are closely related to the notion of belonging, will also be considered throughout this chapter. The chapter is structured in three sections. Firstly, section 2.2 will overview the significance of belonging through transnationalism; secondly 2.3 will look to the importance of mātauranga Māori; thirdly, section 2.4 looks at creating a stronger sense of belonging through various means. Section 2.5 will summarise this chapter.

### **2.2 The Significance of Belonging in the Context of Transnationalism**

Belonging is not simply a concept and can encompass a wide range of collective elements. Mahmud (2021) in undertaking a review of literature highlights three main areas of 'belonging'. Firstly, Mahmud (2021) explains "belonging as 'fitting in' and being accepted" (p.9); with Allen (2021) adding that individuals have a desire for interpersonal connection and have a need for positive regard (as cited in McCallum, 2022, p.55). Secondly, a sense of belonging is one of the strongest motivational needs within humans, with an innate psychological drive to be part of something, and "membership akin to feeling 'at home'" (McCallum, 2022, p.54-55), which Mahmud (2021) explains as "belonging as feeling at home" (p.10). The notion of home is diverse and can be conceptualised in different ways, with Morely (2001, p.425) sharing that the idea of 'home' can be a physical, virtual or a rhetorical space. However, it can generally refer to a sense of place, of emotional attachment, comfort, security and familiarity (Yuval-Davis, 2016, p.4; Antonsich, 2010, p.646; see also Mahmud, 2021, p.10). This sense of home can be generated around four key issues: subjective well-being, feeling welcomed, constructing home, and durable safety (Mahmud, 2021, p.157). These very notions are closely associated with belonging in a migrant or refugee context (Yuval-Davis, 2011 as cited in Marlowe, 2018, p.40). This sense of belonging can also be extended to an embodiment of religious practices, familiar sounds, particular

foods, shared creation myths, and much more (Marlowe, 2018, p.40), which links to Mahmud's third idea of "belonging as an ontological state" (Mahmud, 2021, p.9). This sees belonging not as something that is given, or even granted by national or international 'permission' through policies, but rather as a connection to the world; connection to other people; a particular community or society; a specific place; dwelling or physical environment, or even connections to a tradition or past (Mahmud, 2021, p.9-10; Hovil, 2016, p.76). Thus conveys a more emotional construction (Hovil, 2016, p.145).

The need for belonging, especially in a migrant context, has become more crucial than ever as society works to address some of the most complex social challenges of our time, such as racism (Allen, 2021, as cited in McCallum, 2022, p. 55), which actively tells people they do not belong and are not welcome. Although belonging is crucial to human existence, generating spaces for belonging can take place on multiple, interconnected levels, and can be both a variable and a complex process. It is not something that happens automatically (Hovil, 2016, p.155). From this point forward, the focus will shift to belonging and the refugee context, as forced migration not only brings about adversities, but disrupts an individual's sense of control, connections with others, and their structures of meaning (Marlowe, 2018, p.65).

Over time it has been recognised that refugees who settle in a new environment maintain simultaneous connections to both the 'here' and 'there'. Unfortunately, the reality has been a one-way integration aimed at full assimilation into the host society (Marino, 2021, p.88), which was often driven by top-down policy pressures (Jaschke, 2022, p.1). Because of the advances in technology and the internet during the 1990s, migrant belonging was broadened at a transnational level, as the age of interconnectivity began to grow (Mahmud, 2021, p.6). The methods and means to achieve a sense of belonging have shown to be far-reaching, especially with the emergence of theoretical approaches to transnationalism, which has shifted perspectives (Mahmud, 2021, p.6). Now, it is more widely recognised that it is possible to maintain connections and a sense of belonging with the 'there' (place of origin) while simultaneously building new ties within the 'here' (the newly (re)settled home).

The scholarly work by Marlowe (2018), Hovil (2016), Cabalquinto (2022) and Mahmud (2021) who have engaged with the idea of belonging on a transnational scale, showcases how a sense of belonging, however determined by an individual (such as fitting in, feeling at

home, or connecting to a community), is not restricted or bound by borders and can in fact be gained or retained without physical proximity and over geographical distance. Being able to connect through the usage of modern technology and media is crucial for families and communities to reassert a sense of belonging and home among their dispersed family members and others of close relation or significance (Cabalquinto, 2022, p.30). This requires alternative ways of connecting across borders, through the usage of mobile phones, social media and internet usage, as well as the sending of remittances. These modes of connecting will be explored with more detail within the next section.

### *2.2.1 Transnational connections*

Within today's technological advancements, corporeal travel and crossing physical borders is relatively easy and affordable. People are able to enter different countries within only a couple of hours, or even less in some cases. Despite migration becoming more affordable and accessible, these opportunities may not be accessible or possible for some. Thus, through virtual and communicative travel via modern technology, this phenomenon transcends borders entirely, effectively reshaping social relations by extending, sustaining, or producing new connections for an individual or community (Hannam et al., 2006, p. 2-3; see also Cabalquinto, 2022, p.26). Within the last fifteen years two communication medias have had a dramatic impact on people's lives: the mobile phone and the internet (Love, 2005, p.221). Karner (2023, p.121) speaks of "technological innovations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" that enables family members and friends to share money, information and emotions in real time. These and scheduled activities and meet-ups are not determined by distance (Ling & Yttri, 2002; Ling, 2004; see also Cabalquinto, 2022, p.34). Devices such as mobile or smartphones, along with internet access and social media, serve as a mode of connectivity that overcome geographical distance. The ability to connect via the aforementioned ways allows individuals to stay connected with friends, family, and communities that may be physically distant, but can still enable a sense of fellowship, community and belongingness (Carey, 1989, as cited in Cabalquinto, 2022, p.30), simultaneously transforming these spaces into a "hybrid of co-located and remote social contact" (Ito, 2005; see also Cabalquinto, 2022, p.30).

Through the integration of digital cameras with mobile phones and other devices such as iPads, tablets and laptops, photography has also extended its use to be more commonplace

(Rivière, 2005, p. 168-171). By sharing photos and videos through devices that have these digital capacities, images become more central to interpersonal communications and transforming its everyday social function beyond being something that used to be reserved for special occasions (Rivière, 2005, p. 168). Videos can be captured, with moments recorded shared instantaneously. The use of video calling enables a firsthand, physical view, while sharing of digital imagery cradles the idea that there is a co-presence by proxy (Baldassar, 2008, see also Cabalquinto, 2022, p.83).

Another method regarded as a transnational practice and form of networking is the sending of remittances. Even though remittances are generally understood as economic flow, with money being transferred by migrants to their families back in their country of origin (Carling, 2020, p.117-119), there can also be social remittances. Vari-Lavoisier (2020) emphasises that along with material resources, such as money and goods, migrants also participate in the circulation of immaterial resources, such as ideas, knowledge and practices between their home and host societies (p.125). These circulations effectively help maintain political, relational, and cultural links with their families and country of origin (Marlowe, 2018, p.11). Therefore, migrants may be able to claim recognition and visibility, continued social membership and sustained relationships through transnational financial and social engagement (Boccagni, 2020, p.251; Carling, 2020, p.117-119).

Scholars such as Marlowe (2018), Cabalquinto (2022) and Grace (2017) have agreed on the transformative potential of technologies and usage of diversified media channels and contents, and its power of radically transforming the role and structure of social networks. Transnational connections offer the potential for new social networks and configurations, while maintaining deep and meaningful connections with home (Castells, 2013; Wilding, 2012; as cited in Marlowe, 2018, p.11; Marino, 2021, p.69; Cabalquinto, 2022, p.71). Thus, connecting through transnational links can foster or sustain a sense of belonging for an individual or a community, with the significance of these benefits to be explored in greater detail in the next section, with a specific focus on the refugee context.

### *2.2.2 The importance of networking and connecting across borders within a refugee context*

The challenges of living transnationally can be amplified for refugees due to the nature of their forced displacement and root cause of their flight. Refugees' circumstances range from conflict-, to climate-, disaster- or development-induced displacement (Miller, 2020, p.263), posing significant risk to people's lives and well-being (Martin, 2020, p.396). These displacements and refugees' circumstances can lead to split and dispersed families and communities. Further to environments of displacement, the journey itself can be dangerous, with the possibility of some refugees needing to attempt their journey numerous times before reaching their final destination. Some of these experiences can be met with starvation, torture, prison or other personal extreme experiences (Mahmud, 2021, p.18). However, their journey does not end upon arrival within a host country. Even though refugees may be invited by a country to resettle, their arrival does not necessarily mean that they are entirely welcome in the host country (Marlowe, 2018, p.13). Some groups within the receiving society are purposefully excluding those who do not 'fit' (Roffey, 2013, p.41). This harmful sentiment and exclusion can confront refugees with a variety of "forces that reject all their claims of belonging at all levels" including belonging to a country, a place, religion, culture or even memory, making refugees question their own claims of belonging (Mahmud, 2021, p.10). This rejection from host societies highlights not only the geographical displacement refugees might experience, but their social displacement as well (Bascom, 1998 as cited in Marlowe, 2018, p.39).

Refugees' whole way of life has been abruptly severed, with all that was once routine and familiar becoming a space of having to negotiate and adjust to society and foreign culture not chosen by them (Slade & Borovnik, 2018, p.104-105). This can lead to the (re)settlement experience being just as, if not more, traumatising than the forced migration itself because refugees are traversing a new, unfamiliar social reality (Marlowe, 2018, p.80). Therefore, the view that a refugee's journey ends upon arrival within the host country can overlook the ongoing struggles and challenges they may continue to face as they adjust to their new 'home'. Like all citizens, refugees have certain needs, yet their situation is different. There are humanistic, political, cultural and social challenges associated with refugee (re)settlement, with social exclusion manifesting as either complete or partial

marginalisation of groups, households or individuals (Almohamed & Vyas, 2016, p.1; Millere & Dobelniece, 2018, p. 351). The harmful understanding and assumptions from the wider receiving society thus adversely influences the roles and opportunities refugees can assume within their new home. This can cause significant implications and also disregard the difficulties they may face within their new society (Marlowe, 2018, p.37-52). Whereas civic engagement and social connectedness are vital in producing social trust, maintenance of their culture and a sense of belonging (Almohamed et al., 2016, p. 2).

Hovil (2016) illustrates through their case study on Burundian refugees living in Tanzania that, although refugees recognised that gaining citizenship could legitimise their right to access resources and services, they still found gaining citizenship unappealing. This was because through obtaining Tanzanian citizenship, it would require the Burundian refugees to relocate, which would jeopardise the existing sense of belonging they had cultivated within their existing communities (p.8-116). Thus, citizenship for many was not seen necessarily as a goal or motivation and even if citizenship gave access to certain rights and resources refugees did not have before, the benefits of citizenship are limited within the country's borders, as Brubaker explains it as being "internally inclusive" and "externally exclusive" (Brubaker, 1992, p.21; Hansen, 2014, p.255). The example of the Burundian refugees' in Tanzania reinforces the idea why creating or maintaining a sense of transnational belonging through networks such as mobile phones, social media and internet usage have been highlighted, as they not only act as a connector, but also play an important role in facilitating safety (Binder & Tošić, 2005; see also Grace, 2018, p.126). Technology is not bound by borders. The utilisation of technology is coupled with the possibility that going back to see family and friends in their original homes may not be feasible for most refugees. Yet, despite these circumstances, "refugee communities have the tools and knowledge to respond to profound difficulties" (Marlowe, 2018, p.165), even though experiences of exclusion, limited opportunities and social affordances (Valaneti & Gold; 1991; Wellman et al., 2003, as cited in Marlowe, 2018, p.5). Transnational networking and connections are in this context an effective means of maintaining or developing a sense of belonging for refugees, with the significance and value of these connections being addressed next.

### *2.2.3 The value of connections and networks for a sense of belonging in refugees*

Despite the challenges of (re)settlement for refugees, the sense of belonging to both the 'here' and 'there' simultaneously, may have the opportunity to increase through transnational networks. In fact, the strong need to belong is showcased "powerfully in the success of online networks and the Facebook phenomena" (Gangadharbatla, 2008; as cited in Roffey, 2013, p.42) in addition to other online platforms and mobile applications (Cabalquinto, 2022, p.28). These online platforms and technologies generate opportunities for refugees to not only practice family and friendship in a manner beyond accepted spatial and social boundaries (Elliot & Urry, 2010; Urry, 2007; see also Marlowe, 2018, p.11), but also exchange information in ways to alleviate symptoms, sharing of folk remedies, creating support groups online, as well as engaging in mediation, prayers and other rituals online (Gordon, 2007; Figer & De Torres, 2012; Figer & Ynion, 2010; see also Cabalquinto, 2022, p.72-159). Being able to renegotiate spaces while maintaining cultural and perhaps religious practices and traditions is important for not only fostering a safe space but also developing a sense of belonging within a new country (Slade & Borovnik, 2018, p.104).

Although Collins (2009) and various scholars caution that increased connectivity through digital platforms can promote exclusion, as well as reinforce hierarchy, power structures and a general divide through a global society – which are important aspects to be mindful of and should not be brushed aside. However, it does not necessarily outweigh the positives completely, as these transnational ways of connecting remain to foster inclusivity as well (Marlowe, 2018, p.12). Connections and social networks are crucial, as they allow refugees to enrich their lives during a stage that encounters so many variables and challenging experiences, as well as helping those who seek "safety and opportunities outside their region of origin" throughout a constantly changing environment (Castles & Miller, 2003, p.32; Klvaňová, 2010 as cited in D'Angelo, 2021, p.489). These include finding employment, language learning, general education and adjustment to a new community and society, finding solidarity in hard times, and even managing the consequences of health issues, natural disasters or other emergency situations (Cabalquinto, 2022, p.158). Collectively, fostering a sense of belonging through transnational connections enabled by usage of technology play a significant role in maintaining family and friendships overseas, fostering local connections, as well as the "exchange of ideas, practices and resources," without

restriction of national borders (Levit & Schiller, 2004; see also Marlowe, 2018, p.10). Thus, refugees are able to exercise “their agency by activating, re-shaping and re-building connections through space and time” (D’Angelo, 2021, p.496).

### **2.3 Mātauranga Māori**

The foundations of *mātauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge) are intricately holistic and are deeply interconnected within the natural world (Marques, Freeman & Carter 2022), “where one aspect cannot be solved without the consideration of another” (Marques, McIntosh & Hatton 2018 p.87). This rich knowledge base and the array of approaches associated with it provides the basis of *Te Ao Māori* (Māori worldview) (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013, p. 275). It has allowed Māori to thrive within their environments, “adapting and developing as a collective society for more than 800 years” (Marques, McIntosh & Hatton 2018 p.82), which continues to enable “people to survive and to live well in a changed environment” (Durie, 2017, p.16).

Since the colonisation of ANZ, and what Rua et al. (2021, p.42) term as the “European colonial civilising” project, led to changes for tangata whenua through lived experiences of marginalisation, deprivation, brutality and injustices that have been transferred through multiple generations (Moewaka Barnes & McCreanor, 2019, p. 23). Throughout these experiences, there was a presence of denial of “validity of Māori ways of being, knowing, relating to the world and solving” their own problems (Rua et al., 2021, p.42). Consequently, some argue that mātauranga Māori was “trapped in a time warp”, static, ancient and not relevant to modern times and issues (Durie, 2017, p.15), and that it was strictly traditional (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013, p.275). When in fact, mātauranga Māori is an ever-evolving form of knowledge and wisdom that, although based upon traditional knowledge, has contemporary forms through the environmental and social shift that occurred within Aotearoa in the 1980s (Durie, 2017, p.16; Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013, p.275; Rua et al., 2021, p.48). Mātauranga Māori is constantly refined and enhanced, incorporating aspects of present-day comprehensions, aspirations, culture and understanding of everything invisible and visible (Durie, 2017, p.16; Hikuroa, 2016, p. 5; Winiata, 2001, as cited in Mead, 2016, p.256). Mātauranga Māori is relevant to everyday life and in more formal ceremonies such

as a *tangihanga* (funeral) or a *pōwhiri* (welcoming ceremony). It will continue to expand and grow for generations to come, with no definitive end (Mead, 2016, p.256).

Emerging from mātauranga Māori is *Kaupapa Māori*, a philosophical approach that encompasses communal and holistic concepts and principles, “grounded in the critique of assumed rightness” (Love & Tilley, 2014, p.34). Just as mātauranga Māori, “KM is an evolving set of specific practices based on traditional knowledge” that is ever developing (Love & Tilley, 2014, p.39). KM centralises Māori ways of thinking and engaging with the world (Rua et al., 2021, p.40). To differentiate mātauranga and KM, Durie (2017) describes mātauranga Māori as the way of *understanding* things, and KM as the way of *doing* things (p.16). In Section 2.2, the concept of belonging was explored. This will now be revisited through a KM lens.

### *2.3.1 Belonging within a Kaupapa Māori context*

KM has “emerged within the wider context of Māori rejuvenation” through the shift of thinking of the Māori position within New Zealand society during the 1980s (Durie, 2017, p. 13-14). Durie (2017) notes that not only can KM have different meanings in different contexts, but it has also extended to arenas of research (2017, p.15), where Māori scholars have developed this approach “to guide research that engages with Māori cultural contexts and people” (Love & Tilley 2014 p.39; see also Smith, 1997). Going beyond research, KM is also used within arenas of caring, healing, parenting, learning and teaching (Durie, 2017, p.15). The extensive range that KM has and can be utilised is far-ranging, especially in understanding, gaining or maintaining a sense of belonging.

Although Te Reo Māori does not have a single or direct translation for the term ‘belonging’, this does not diminish its presence and importance within mātauranga and KM framing. A similar case can be seen with the term ‘ecosystem’ (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013, p. 274), which also lacks a direct translation in *Te Reo* (Māori language). However, the ecosystem and its close associations with the environment remain to be deeply significant and play a vital role within Māori culture. Rameka (2018), Stebletsova and Scanlan (2023) draw from *Te Whāriki (the woven mat)*, which is a metaphor for the Early Childhood Education Curriculum, to highlight that alongside the four strands - *Mana Atua* (well-being), *Mana Reo* (communication), *Mana Aotūroa* (exploration) and *Mana Tangata* (contribution) – there is a

fifth strand, *Mana Whenua* (belonging), which specifically emphasises the development of identity and a sense of belonging (Rameka, 2018, p.368; Stebletsova & Scanlan, 2023, p.43).

The term *mana whenua* conveys the deep and intrinsic connections between belonging and the land. 'Whenua' also means placenta, which serves as a metaphor for the interconnectedness of birth and the land, symbolising the bond between a newborn and their roots, with connection between the two often being likened to an umbilical cord (Mead, 2016, p.208). The link between land and placenta further emphasises that the land is profoundly interconnected with an individual and one's being, being a fundamental element of Māori identity. Marques, McIntosh and Hatton (2018) extend the interconnectedness to the environment, where healing the landscape and maintaining natural ecosystems holds direct connections to fostering a strong sense of belonging and shared identity, as well as linkages to positive improvement to health and well-being (p. 83-84).

Overall, KM rejects the assumptions that have been underpinned by colonisation, where Indigenous models are considered 'different' and Western models are 'normal' (Love & Tilley 2014, p.40). Concepts such as *mana whenua*, amongst others, should be celebrated, especially with services that "have utilised KM in positive ways" and have led to better outcomes (Durie, 2017, p.15). KM has the potential to involve the deepening of comprehension and enrichment of knowledge bases in ways that will benefit everyone (Smith, 2015, p.50). Following this pathway, fundamental holistic components of overall well-being will be addressed next to build a more comprehensive overview of an Indigenous lens.

### 2.3.2 *Hauora: Holistic concepts of well-being*

It is important to point out that Māori *iwi* (tribes) sometimes have variant differences in language, beliefs and traditions, and should not be seen as a homogenous group. However, central themes emerge collectively, such as their cultural perspectives having deep-rooted views based upon the importance and balance of the *tinana* (body), *hinengaro* (mind) and *wairua* (spirit) (Marques et al., 2022, p.3).

'Belonging' was referred to by Rameka (2018), Stebletsova and Scanlan (2023) as '*mana whenua*', which showed direct physical and spiritual connections of the land and the placenta. Similarly, key pillars to overall well-being also share holistic concepts, highlighting a

deeper display of world views and approaches that are based upon the natural environment, genealogy, kinship relations and spirituality. Durie (1985) showcases these far-ranging holistic concepts that encompass well-being through a metaphorical usage of a *wharenui* (meeting house) called the *Te Whare Tapa Whā* model (as cited in Hamley & Le Grice, 2021, p.72). This *wharenui* consists of four walls; *te taha wairua* (spiritual), *te taha hinengaro* (psychic/mental), *te taha tinana* (physical) *te taha whanau* (family) (Hamley & Grice, 2021, p.72), with some scholars including a fifth dimension; *te taha whenua* (land), as the ground floor or the land that the *whare* stands upon (Stebletsova & Scanlan, 2023, p.42). If one of these key dimensions is damaged or missing, this will lead to an imbalance of the overall *hauora* (health) and may lead or result to negative health outcomes (Rochford, 2004, as cited in McIntosh et al., 2021, p.147).

From the pillars of health; mind, body and spirit, the extended concepts of *whenua* (land), *taiao* (environment), *whakapapa* (genealogy), *spirituality* (*wairua*) and *whānau* (family/kinship) can be experienced in a multitude of ways, and can be collectively conveyed through a *pōwhiri* (welcoming ceremony) or referred to by some scholars like Rameka et al. (2023) as a “ritual of encounter”. These will be looked at more intimately to create a deeper understanding as to why these stages can be valuable in connecting and gaining a sense of belonging.

### *2.3.3 Pōwhiri: The welcoming ceremony as an important connector*

Ceremonies within Māori culture are embedded in *tikanga* (protocol, custom) that relate to birth, marriage, sickness, death and life itself (Mead, 2016, p.13). One event, or ritual that can be used as a connector is through the welcoming ceremony of a *Pōwhiri*. A *Pōwhiri*, or *Pōhiri*, is a ceremony that welcomes *manuhiri/manuwhiri* (visitors, guests) in an appropriate way (Mead, 2016, p.94) and guests are treated with respect and care (Love & Tilley, 2014, p.43). By this ceremonial welcoming meaning is reinforced making ordinary gestures and actions as a ritual of symbolic expressions (Smith & Stewart, 2011, also see Rameka et al., 2023, p.258). The order of *Pōwhiri* will vary (Mead, 2016, p.95) from *Iwi* to *Iwi* but the main concept of welcoming visitors remains the same. Rameka et al. (2023) share the sequence of a *Pōwhiri*, and its related significance, *mana* (spiritual power), *whanaungatanga* (connection), and meaning received for each step. They are as below:

- 1) **Karanga (the call of welcome):** *Mana Atua* (*mana* from spiritual powers) *ki ngā atuatanga* (connecting our spiritual selves). A process of weaving energies from the physical and spiritual worlds, as well as recognising the visitor’s genealogy by calling to their ancestors.
- 2) **Whaikōrero (speeches/oratory):** *Mana Reo* (*mana* from language) *whanaungatanga ki ngā reo* (connecting our languages). “A spoken search for bringing people together” (Smith, 2016). This sustains feelings of identity between people and communities (Kelly, 2017) by transmitting knowledge, valued beliefs and customs.
- 3) **Waiata tautoko (support songs):** *Mana Whenua* (*mana* from land); *whanaungatanga ki ngā whenua* (connecting our lands). The sharing of songs is an expression of acknowledging the spiritual and physical relationship to the land, as well as an expression of individual and collective identity.
- 4) **Hongi (the sharing of breath):** *Mana Tangata* (*mana* from people) *whanaungatanga ki ngā tangata* (connecting our people). This physical gesture acts not only as a greeting but a coming together to share the essence of life (Smith, 2016). This especially provides a sense of belonging through strengthening of kin groups (Berryman, 2008; Mead, 2003; Pere, 1984), reinforcing the commitment, obligations and responsibilities individuals have to each other (Berryman, 2008, p.223).
- 5) **Hākari (the feast):** *Mana Aoturoa* (*mana* from environments) *whanaungatanga ki ngā aoturoa* (connecting our cultures and environments). Through this display of hospitality, it signifies the binding and connection between the hosts and visitors. This stage also relates to the sharing of cultural worlds, with aspects such as religion, music, arts, language, cuisine, amongst others.

*(Adapted from Rameka et al., 2023, p.258-263)*

These stages all hold significance in a variety of ways, each connecting to spiritual and physical aspects. Through “sharing, hospitality, generosity, relationship development, acceptance, respect and celebration” (Rameka et al., 2023, p.264), ceremonies like the Pōwhiri become a necessary part of culture within ANZ (Mead, 2016, p.104) and can also help support and develop a sense of bicultural belonging for refugees entering ANZ (Rameka et al. 2023, p.259). The sense of connection and belonging is reflected in the experiences of refugee participants in Rameka et al.’s (2023) study, where they expressed feelings of

cultural relatedness, familial bonds, a warm welcome, and a strong sense of belonging in Aotearoa. These concepts that have briefly been highlighted are only a grain of sand in showcasing the breadth of KM knowledge (Love & Tilley, 2014, p.45), with KM laying down the foundations for significant transformations (Durie, 2017, p.13) especially when developing a sense of belonging. The development of a sense of belonging will be further examined within the next sections.

## **2.4 Creating a Stronger Sense of Belonging**

Earlier, it was iterated that belonging is an essential part of human functioning as it facilitates and determines the quality of one's life. In fact, belonging is an essential component that builds connectedness and serves as a protective factor in enhancing resilience and overall well-being (Benard, 1991, Blum, 2005, Libbey, 2004, as cited in Roffey, 2013, p.38), including benefits of cognitive performance and overall life satisfaction (Croucher, 2018, as cited in McCallum, 2022, p.55). Hovil (2016) notes that “humanitarian categories tend to ‘fix’ belonging into rigid categories that are not only inefficient but can create harm for those they are supposed to protect” (p.12). However, in the context of refugees it was also acknowledged that individuals or groups do not necessarily negotiate their sense of belonging based upon national or international ‘permission’, but at times can rely on the locality in which they live (Hovil, 2016, p.76), as well as be adaptable to their environments they live within. Examples have been shown within sections 2.2 and 2.3, displaying that a sense of belonging can be sustained or established through transnational connections via various types of technology, as well as through KM approaches rooted in holistic concepts such as connections to land, which are closely linked with components of well-being that focus on mind, body, and spirit. In this section, belonging will be further unpacked in relation to the ways it may be gained or sought. Although individuals can gain a sense of belonging through multiple and fluid ways (Schein, 2009, p.813), which can range from having an innate psychological drive to be part of something, to familiar sounds or shared practices, rather than a set of prescribed ‘ways or approaches. This section aims to focus upon how a sense of belonging may be gained through concepts of land and the environment, and community ties.

#### 2.4.1 *Belonging through connection to land and the natural environment*

Land is often seen as important and can evoke strong emotions among the people who are linked to or live upon it, which can create powerful cultural mechanisms of bonding (Mead, 2016, p.208). Hovil (2016) adds to this notion within the context of the Great Lakes region in Africa, conveying that land is much more than an economic commodity or physical capital (Pool, 2015, p. 10), but also “an affirmation of belonging and inclusion” for many (p.82). Aspects of the environment are seen as important, with people frequently referring to geographical features such as rivers and mountains to solidify and recognise their intimate connection to the land (Mark & Lyons, 2010, p.1760; Rameka, 2018, p.373). These connections are also recognised in *Te Ao Māori* in the concept of *whenua*. Connecting to land has direct connotations to one’s ancestry, with land in many Indigenous contexts seen as a gift from the ancestors, which should be passed down to descendants (Hovil, 2016, p.83). The notion of belonging to land can be extended through the idea of what some scholars refer to as *place attachment*, the “emotional bond between people and their environments” (Brown & Raymond, 2007; Jorgenson & Stedman, 2001 as cited in Anton & Lawrence, 2014, p. 452). Such connections may be formed with spaces like hiking trails, National Parks, wilderness areas, or even cars, houses and cities (Anton & Lawrence, 2014, p. 452-453). Despite disparities and differing views of land between Indigenous and Western cultures, land remains central to individual well-being and belonging in both contexts (Schein, 2009, p.815).

However, when moving away and/or living within an urban environment, gaining a sense of belonging through land can become more complex (Rameka, 2018, p.373) or be lost completely. Hovil (2016) has found, for example, that Burundian refugees that settled in Tanzania felt that they did not feel they properly belonged to their new environment, as they were landless, and their status and connections to the community were strongly undermined (Hovil, 2016, p. 83). Lentz (2007) reinforces this aspect by sharing that “rights to land are intimately tied to membership in specific communities” and without this connection, it can result in exclusion and a struggle to assert belonging (p.37-38).

Yet, a separation between individuals and the land and environment they deeply identify with, does not mean that the sense of belonging cannot be gained. Scholars such as Cabalquinto (2022) and Mahmud (2021) relay that even when connections to land is absent, there is a possibility to connect through community and help alleviate a lack of sense of belonging. This element of connecting through community will be looked at next.

#### *2.4.2 Belonging through community*

Familial and other kinship ties are important for one's well-being and sense of belonging because of the positive feelings of support and solidarity. The idea of close connections draws closely upon the sense of community, building and maintaining bonds through social contact, interaction, support and affective exchanges that are pinnacle to basic human needs (Damásio et al. 2012, p.128). To feel belonging within or to a group can engender feelings of being proud within one's group and feelings of being valued (Damásio et al., 2012, p.128). Through sharing cultural and religious practices, cooking, sharing, and eating traditional foods, they can foster feelings of home, being with family, or connecting with locals (Mahmud, 2021, p.144-145; Hovil, 2016, p.166). Even the ability to share the same or similar linguistic skills, whether locally or internationally, or perhaps the telling of stories about oneself and places of origin can be central to identity and enhance feelings of belonging as well (Hovil, 2016, p.167; Schein, 2009, p.812). Essentially, community and communal activities or spaces are crucial as refugees can rebuild and maintain new social networks to "recreate elements of the lost home" (Taylor, 2009, p.253), share life experiences (Slade & Borovnik, 2018, p. 102) as well as reflect on memories of the past and shared histories (Hovil, 2016, p.166).

However, building a sense of community does not necessarily always occur in-person. As mentioned already in Section 2.2, social media groups and other online communities have mobilised across urban and geopolitical boundaries, reshaping how belonging is formed and experienced (Joseph, 1999; Fortier, 2000; Franz, 2003; Secor, 2002; Tolia-Kelly, 2006 as cited in Hannam et al., 2006, p.11). Even documents, videos and pictures can be conduits of keeping these connections alive (Mahmud, 2021, p. 138-145) and can create a sense of togetherness (Cabalquinto, 2022, p.84). Slade and Borovnik (2018) emphasise that safe spaces of fostering connections with community can alleviate stress and increase the ability

to cope in challenging environments (p.102; Hovil, 2016, p.167). Social connectedness and collective affiliation contribute to increasing adaptive resilience for individuals and communities (Marlowe, 2018, p. 111). Relationships that are built on a shared connection or identity can create solidarity within a community, which can validate the role of family when familial connections are not available. To be a part of 'something' acts as the bedrock of belonging (Grace, 2018, p.134; Hovil, 2016, p.85), either through face-to face interaction or with the mediation of technology (Damásio et al., 2012, p.129). Marlowe (2018) highlights that through the presence of community there is the opportunity for a greater sense of belonging due to communities coming together and providing support when needed, not only in daily life and activities, but also in times of common adversities or hardships such as natural disasters (p.75-114).

## **2.5. Chapter Summary**

The mass movement of people due to economic and cultural dislocation, forced removal or conflict, among others, has seen a powerful shift in social change within the last few centuries (Digital History, 2021; as cited in Kothari & Klein, p.77). People are not only able to cross borders relatively more easily, but the connection through mobile phones, the internet and the usage of social media has increased, which has led to social relations being renegotiated to have a positive impact on gaining a sense of belonging. No matter the circumstances and reasons for migrating, connections are undeniably important for leading a sustainable and good life – however defined by an individual. Although “refugees are not the only people who determine what constitutes their opportunities to belong” (Marlowe, 2018, p.47), their experiences of forced displacement and the challenges they may face during and after (re)settlement make it essential not to overlook or undervalue the methods that help them gain a sense of belonging.

Te Ao Māori and mātauranga Māori offer deeply holistic ideas that recognise a certain order to the human and non-human world and the interconnectedness of the body, mind, and spirit, thus demonstrating that crucial facets such as well-being and belonging can be nurtured in multiple ways. Despite a dominant Eurocentric focus of language domination and cultural subordination (Rameka & Stagg Peterson, 2021, p. 310), Māori have been through immense *hiringa* (perseverance) and *rangatiratanga* (self-determination), with

mātauranga Māori being able to be passed through the generations and provided the movement for KM to be born, leading to Māori revitalisation of language, approaches, cultural practices and traditions (Berryman, 2008 as cited in Rameka & Stagg Peterson, p.310). It is through this revitalisation that broader concepts of well-being and a sense of belonging are being acknowledged slowly within mainstream scholarship and awareness, with ceremonies like a Pōwhiri becoming part of New Zealand culture and acting as a connector to newly arrived visitors such as refugees. These concepts that have briefly been highlighted are only a grain of sand in showcasing the breadth of KM knowledge (Love & Tilley, 2014, p.45), with KM laying down the foundations for significant transformations (Durie, 2017, p.13) especially when developing a sense of belonging.

Throughout this chapter it was shown that belonging to a place and to a community (Schein, 2009, p. 813) could be gained through a wide range of components from connecting to land and the natural environment, as well as connections within a community, or community spaces where religious, linguistic or even cultural elements such as sharing of food and traditions can bring about belonging. These are just a small set of examples that enhance feelings of connectiveness and should be looked at further going forward, especially within the context of refugees. Within the next chapter, a contextual framework of the migration environment will be provided, as well as the refugee environment within ANZ.

## Chapter 3: The Aotearoa New Zealand Context

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyse the significance of migration in a global context, and specifically focus on refugees, as well as the issues they can face such as crossing borders, navigating migratory routes, as well as issues of discrimination within host countries. The focus will then shift to quota refugees that the UNHCR have referred to New Zealand for (re)settlement. This chapter will also provide a brief overview of key organisations that collaborate with the government in refugee (re)settlement, such as The New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC), E Tū Whānau (ETW) and Kāhui Tū Kaha (KTK).

### 3.2 Global Migration

Migration refers to a change in the distribution of populations within and between states (Bastia & Skeldon, 2020, p.1). As noted in Chapter One, Pope (2024) recounted “migration is as old as humanity itself. Throughout history, people have migrated in search of better lives, to flee conflict or seek safety, or simply to find new opportunities” (p. xii). Migration, as stated by the IOM, has become associated with the attainment of the “social and economic progress of individuals, of families, of communities and of nations” (IOM, 2024, p.135), and it can require significant cultural, economic and social resources in the form of knowledge (human capital), connections and money (de Haas, 2020, p.17).

The significance and scale of migration is reflected in global statistics, with an estimated 244 million people worldwide living in a country other than their birthplace (Sabate-Wheeler, 2020, p.261). Although the proportion of international migrants has only risen from 2.8 per cent to 3.6 per cent from 1995 to 2020, this translates to an increase of approximately 161 million migrants, to 281 million migrants (IOM, 2024, p.123). Many people within families, communities and societies are affected in some sort of way by migration (de Haas, 2020, p.25). This statistic displays the ever-growing need or desire for migration to take place.

Migration plays an important role in the Sustainable Development goals (SDGs), especially transitioning from the Millennial Development Goals (MDGs) which were seen as more ‘top down’, whereas the current SDGs are seen as having a more ‘bottom-up’ approach (McGregor, 2020, p.291). Migration is explicitly mentioned under Goal 10 ‘reducing

inequality', target 7 and c; Goal eight 'promoting decent work and economic growth' target 8; and goal 17 'partnerships for the goals' target 18 in the context of data disaggregation (McGregor, 2020, p.289). Altogether, goals 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 16, as well as 27 targets convey the goal of 'for all', therefore includes migrant populations (McGregor, 2020, p.289).

However, the 2024 UN SDGs report finds only 17 per cent of SDG targets to be on track, with nearly half of them showing minimal to moderate progress, and over one third of the targets have completely stalled or regressed (Guterres, 2024, p.2). This reflects that the impacts of migration have changed with ongoing globalisation and transformations in technological, environmental and geopolitical domains (IOM, 2024, p. 52). With the effects of "the COVID-19 pandemic, escalating conflicts, geopolitical tensions, and growing climate chaos" are hurting the progress of the SDGs (Guterres, 2024, p.2) which in turns exhibits the lack of positive progression and protection of all people that are affected by migration.

People migrate in pursuit of education and employment, or to seek refuge or asylum due experiences or fears of persecution. Miller (2020) proposes that one way to think about categories of migrants is based according to their level of choice; with refugees fleeing persecution, meaning they have little to no choice; whereas others who migrate for education opportunities have a significantly greater level of choice; and perhaps an 'economic migrant' may fit theoretically in the middle of these two levels (Miller, 2020, p. 364). Although all migrant groups can experience some sort of vulnerability at different points and degrees within their journeys (Sabates-Wheeler, 2020, p.261), when people experience forced displacement, these vulnerabilities are exacerbated. Although not all forcibly displaced people are refugees, as of June 2024 there are currently 43.7 million refugees globally (UNHCR, 2024, p.9), showing how crucial this area of migration stands to be. The refugee environment will be looked at next.

### *3.2.1 Overview of the refugee environment*

"In 2023, the number of forcibly displaced and stateless people rose to record highs" (Grandi, 2023, p.4), with the UNHCR declaring 43 emergencies in 29 countries. There is also a continuation to protracted situations around the globe (Grandi, 2023, p. 4). Out of the 122.6 million recorded displaced people which encompass "asylum-seekers, international displaced people, returnees and stateless people" (UNHCR, 2023, p.6), over 31 million of

these people are refugees – making 26 per cent of all forcibly displaced and stateless people (UNHCR, 2023, p. 12).

What sets refugees apart from other displaced individuals is the nature of their displacement. They are forced to flee due to lack of protection or safety in their home country, often facing threats if they would remain. The UNHCR terms a refugee to be someone that has a “well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, memberships of a particular social group or political opinion” (UNHCR, 2010, p.14), therefore, some situations may become an act of desperate departure. Forcibly displaced people are often compelled to move without the opportunity for prior planning or adequate resources, leaving them with little to no control over their circumstances. Unlike other migrants who may be in a deliberate and rational position to gain access to better opportunities (de Haas, 2020, p.22). Therefore, moving away from their home countries, for refugees is out of necessity for their own safety and livelihoods. Some refugees may flee to a neighbouring country, with “86% of the world’s forcibly displaced people hosted in countries in the Global South.” This places a significant burden in accommodating such large numbers of fleeing people (Tshimba, 2022, p.722; Carens, 2013 as cited in Briskman, 2020, p. 101), nor are refugees always safer in these neighbouring states. However, others may undertake far more dangerous journeys such as trekking through thick, mountainous jungles or crossing vast oceans over thousands of kilometres. These precarious journeys expose refugees to a wide range of challenges and can cause negative physical and psychological effects (Siegel, 2020, p.227), which can sometimes be fatal. Even entry into a host country that is regulated by the UNHCR is not easy, especially with refugee’s who may have to endure waiting in refugee camps for prolonged time. The migratory routes, discrimination and other border issues will be looked at next.

### *3.2.2 Issues facing refugees*

This section will highlight some key challenges, including difficulties crossing borders and navigating migratory routes, as well as discrimination, all of which can negatively impact their well-being and can contribute to a lack of human security. Crossing borders and seeking refuge in other countries is challenging and made even more dangerous by conflicts, treacherous terrain, and often unfit or unsafe modes of transportation, or in some cases, the

lack of transportation options altogether. Furthermore, migratory routes can be dangerous for differing reasons, from difficult climates to danger of armed forces. The IOM reports that between 2014 and 2022, more than 20,000 migrants died or disappeared in the central Mediterranean route alone (2024, p. 61). However, not only are sea routes dangerous, but land routes also hold risks. In 2022 alone close to 800 people lost their lives within the route between Yemen and Saudi Arabia (IOM, 2024, p. 75). These risks can be extended with a greater distance, when between 1980 and 2018, the average distance that refugees travelled increased from approximately 1,000km, to around 1,500km; roughly a 40 per cent increase (Fransen & de Haas, 2022, p. 116). In fact, refugees that have resided in Africa and Asia travel away from problematic areas on average approximately between 1,000 to 1,200 km, whereas the number of refugees who travelled to Europe from their origin countries sits at around 4,000 km (Fransen & de Haas, 2022, p.122). Although these distances will vary globally, the distances remain to display the lengths at which refugees may be willing to travel for safe refuge.

Borders are more than just a 'line in the sand' and are extensive areas (Bastia & Skeldon, 2020, p.15) that are politically and socially formed. Marino (2021) notes that "borders act as geographical and symbolic lines separating the deserving from the undeserving slices of humanity" (p.44), with Schiller (2020) referring to them as "dehumanising border walls" (p.39). Increasingly states are seeking to secure their borders through various means, from physical walls and border guards to using high-tech infrastructure such as biometric databases and surveillance (Amoore, 2006 as cited in Collyer, 2020, p. 65; Bastia & Skeldon, 2020, p.15). Although components such as walls and modern technologies are not an absolute barrier to unauthorised movement, it can make refugee's journey more difficult to traverse and become more time-consuming (Collyer, 2020, p. 65). This idea of borders acting as a barrier for incoming refugees was supported by the President of the European Commission, Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen, who in her speech referred to Greece being a 'shield' for Europe, which confirmed "Europe's intention to retreat behind walls". Von der Leyen also suggested that Europe needed to be protected from an incoming attack or danger in direct reference to the unwanted refugee flows seen at the time (Marino, 2021, p.173). Von der Leyen's speech was also made after thousands of refugees attempted to reach Greece after the Turkish President Erdoğan opened the country's border due to Turkey's

inability to manage the large number of refugees fleeing from Syria. This led to Greek border guards using grenades, tear gas and live ammunition to prevent people disembarking from the vessels and entering into Greece from Turkey (Marino, 2021, p.171-172). Unfortunately, as Squire (2016, p.2) notes, migrant deaths and border violence has become defining features of contemporary migratory politics (see also Vullnetari, 2020, p. 56), underscoring both the frequency of such occurrences and the heightened risks faced by refugees.

While border controls pose significant safety risks for refugees, both physically at the border and due to the restrictive systems they encounter, the attitudes held by citizens of countries that have signed the 1951 Refugee Convention can often be just as harmful. With the idea of (smart) borders acting as a system designed to determine the inclusion of those who belong, and the judgement of those deemed not to belong (Collyer, 2020, p. 65), there is discrimination that can be faced when refugees enter a country as well. Once refugees are admitted by a state, discriminatory behaviour and attitudes can impact their day to day lives through education, employment and even within their own communities. Discrimination can even be brought about by conservative legislative policy reforms which can be fuelled by anti-immigrant sentiment (Abdi, 2015; Terrio, 2015, as cited in Miller et al. 2020, p.191). An example of this was shared through Parker's (2017) research on a group of refugees and asylum seekers who had lived in Wales for periods ranging from one month to 12 years. It was revealed that many of them downplayed or trivialised their experiences of racism and discrimination in order to avoid making criticisms of the host society to avoid "risking their status as a person in need of protection" (p. 120). This was also found in an earlier study by Goodman et al. (2014), where they found asylum seekers were unhappy with their treatment within the UK. However, refugees diminished these feelings as they did not want to appear ungrateful (as cited in Parker, 2017, p.112). Parker (2017) and Goodman's et al. (2014) research found that many refugees mitigated their experiences of racism and discrimination, put their safety before happiness, and managed their complaints in ways that prevented challenges to their refugee status to the existing tense relationship between them and the host society (Goodman et al. 2014, p.30; Binder & Tošić, 2005, p. 610). This lack of voicing and sharing of experiences shows that many cases are not publicised or made aware to the public, covering up the fact that refugees may at times not feel comfortable or safe in their host societies. And yet, these discomfoting experiences and the continuing lack of

human security perceived by refugees has consequences of negative well-being outcomes. These experiences also can further disadvantage refugee groups by preventing them to access necessary support in regard to their fairer treatment (Goodman et al. 2014, p.31) with McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten (2019, p.2) calling for the advocacy and greater attention to their human rights. The next section will examine ANZ's (re)settlement environment, providing a more focused lens on the specific context in which this research report is grounded.

### **3.3 Refugee (re)Settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand**

As of September 2023, the country saw 237,100 migrant arrivals which was up by 183 per cent from September 2022 (Statistics New Zealand, 2023, n.p). These statistics show that migrant inflows have been increasing throughout recent years, with exception during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the majority of migration is people entering and residing on student, temporary worker and skilled migrant visas (MBIE, 2024, n.p), ANZ “has a rich history of resettling people” (Marlowe et al. 2014, p.60), and “has supported refugee (re)settlement in various forms since 1870, and on a regular basis since 1979” (Bellamy, 2020, p.1).

Past Immigration policies, especially between the 1940s to 1980s, have had a quota composition that largely followed selections from primarily European countries such as Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic (Stephens, 2022, p. 15). However, in the 1990s, the quota diversified with the arrivals from Middle Eastern and African countries, and by 2008, people from Latin America were also given opportunities for settlement (Stephens, 2022, p. 15). However, Marlowe et al. (2014) reported that over the past decade, 7,305 people from 55 different countries have been resettled in ANZ (p.60). This highlights the diverse experiences of different cultures and ethnicities that are adjusting to life in the country, which has also enriched ANZ. There is now a large demographic diversity, which had been minimal until the late 1980s (Marlowe et al. 2014, p.60-64). Refugees, among other migrants, offer varied cultural traditions, age-related considerations, social histories, gender and family roles and expectations, linguistic competencies and varying levels of social, cultural and human capital (Marlowe, 2014, p.60).

Because of ANZ's geographical isolation, the country is less likely to encounter a mass influx of asylum seekers at its borders (Hilpold, 2018, p. 1198), unlike nations that share borders with other countries, or are more accessible from the refugee's country of origin. The majority of ANZ's asylum claims come from people who already live within the country, with a minority of others claiming asylum upon arrival at the airport (Stephens, 2022, p.27). As a result, the New Zealand government can be more selective in its refugee intake process and maintain a relatively lower annual quota and asylum applications. A stark comparison can be shown back in 2012, Australia received 17,420 claims and the USA received 83,430 claims for asylum, and ANZ only received approximately 300 applications, with approximately a third of them being approved, which is considered low following international standards (Stephens, 2022, p.27; Bloom & Udahemuka, 2014, p. 70).

The asylum seeker applications that are approved are then considered as 'Convention Refugees' and have not "yet been processed in accordance with United Nations refugee law" (Stephens, 2022 p.24). Whereas 'Quota Refugees' are refugees that have had a formal referral to the New Zealand government by UNHCR, to which they are considered in accordance with the New Zealand's annual resettlement plan (Stephens, 2022 p.24; Bloom & Udahemuka, 2014, p. 70; Immigration New Zealand, 2018, p. 1). Convention Refugees are also not eligible for the resources, services and settlement support that quota refugees are entitled to and can have a completely different (re)settlement experience. In comparison, quota refugees are assisted by the government and the UNHCR throughout the (re)settlement process (Bloom & Udahemuka, 2014, p. 70). For the purposes of this paper, 'refugees' within the context of ANZ will be in reference to quota refugees and will be the main focus throughout.

### *3.3.1 Aotearoa New Zealand's resettlement policy*

Although New Zealand has a history of supporting refugees, it was only in 1987 that the New Zealand Government adhered to a formal annual quota of refugees, which currently stands at an intake of 1500 a year and is reviewed in three-year cycles (Bellamy, 2020, p.1). Refugee quotas have gained popularity in the Geneva Convention of Refugee signatory countries as a more 'balanced' solution, where it is ensured that the state would not be overburdened, while also fulfilling their treaty obligations (at least partly) (Hilpold, 2018, p.1197). According

to the New Zealand Immigration Act 2009, Section 136 states that every refugee that enters the country is subject to determination by a refugee and protection officer within INZ, and they are to make judgment whether the claimant is a refugee or protected person set on the ground of Section 129 as 'recognition of a refugee' in accordance within the meaning of the Refugee Convention and cannot be deported except for certain circumstances listed in Section 164 of Immigration Act 2009; as well as Section 130 "recognition as protected person under Convention Against Torture", and Section 131 "recognition as protected person under Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" (Immigration Act, 2009, n.p). ANZ is a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees, the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1984 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the 1966 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Therefore, New Zealand is obliged and must adhere to protect refugees under their arranged annual quota (INZ, 2018, p.1). The goals that are set by INZ are supported by other government ministries and agencies such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), as well as international agencies and organisations, such as the UNHCR, the IOM, as well as foreign governments and entities (INZ, 2024, n.p). Collaborations are also extended to service providers, and civil society (INZ, 2018, p. 1).

The New Zealand Human Rights Commission (NZHRC) extends these immigration goals by having their primary functions from the Human Rights Act 1993 section 5(1), with a few key takeaways being the advocacy and promotion of respect for human rights, the encouragement of the maintenance and development of harmonious relationships between individual and among diverse groups, and the promotion of racial equality and cultural diversity (Human Rights Commission, 2024, p. 3). Although these rights are not exclusive to refugees and apply to all people living in New Zealand, they do encompass people with refugee background living in New Zealand. Therefore, the importance of having a (re)settlement strategy that fosters suitable environments and support for everyone is highlighted by these agreements. The following section will provide an overview of INZ's (re)settlement strategy.

### *3.3.2 (Re)settling refugees within Aotearoa New Zealand*

Refugees spend their first six weeks in the Māngere Refugee Resettlement Centre in Auckland, where they “participate in a comprehensive reception programme that prepares them to live and work in the community” (INZ, 2018, p. 2). Services and programmes that the (re)settlement centre provides are: English language lessons, health assessment, initial treatment and health promotion, preparation for working age adults for employment and children for school, as well as orientation of New Zealand and settlement planning (Stephens, 2022, p.17). The New Zealand Settlement Plan is developed for each of the refugee families which outlines the types of services they will be connected with to support their successful settlement in their community (INZ, 2018, p.2) and are placed in one of 13 locations around the country to settle (NZRC, 2022, p.15).

INZ highlights the need to integrate former refugees into their communities, and through settling successfully, to achieve their goals and thrive within ANZ (2024, n.p). It is iterated by the Ministry that this includes participation and contributing to social, economic, cultural and civil aspects of life. Incoming refugees also should feel safe and develop a sense of belonging (INZ, 2024, n.p). As mentioned earlier, the wide range of refugees from diverse backgrounds can make achieving these goals more challenging because of the variety of cultural differences and needs. This is where Kaupapa Māori led organisations may be able extend their support in areas that may not be covered within standard, Eurocentric based practices and approaches within the (re)settlement strategy and will be covered within the next section.

### **3.4 The Red Cross and Te Ao/Kaupapa Māori led Organisations and Involvement with Refugee Resettlement in Aotearoa New Zealand**

ANZ is seeing an increasing number of KM led organisations leading community services in multiple areas, including the health and well-being sector, in housing, education and (re)settlement. Although for this research report the KM led organisation that is based in Auckland, Kāhui Tū Kaha takes the key focus, while being supported by the NZRC and ETW, there are other organisations that do similar work around the country. Examples are Host International (n.d), based in Wellington, and Pōwhiri Refugee Family Support Settlement Service (2022) in Christchurch. It is also important to acknowledge ANZ’s largest refugee

(re)settlement support provider, the Red Cross. While not strictly KM-led, efforts have been made by the Red Cross to incorporate a KM - informed strategy in their services, which will be discussed later. Given that Auckland is the largest city in New Zealand and the primary entry point for quota refugees when they begin their (re)settlement journey, it makes sense that there are multiple organisations offering a wide range of support services in this city.

#### *3.4.1 The New Zealand Red Cross*

The Red Cross is a global humanitarian organisation, a branch of which has been operating within New Zealand since 1915 and became officially recognised by the government in 1932 (NZRC, n.d, para 2-3). Although the first tasks of the organisation were to “collect funds, food parcels and medica supplies to send to troops overseas” (NZRC, n.d, para 2), the NZRC now oversees a multitude of services, which include basic services, such as delivering meals, and more specific services, such as dealing with emergencies and disasters. The NZRC also offers refugee support under their migrant support services programme (NZRC, 2023, p.2-4). In 2023 the organisation supported 880 people from 23 different countries towards settling into their new homes. The NZRC also helped 498 former refugees find employment or work experience opportunities (The Red Cross, 2023, p.2-4). The NZRC is a very experienced actor in refugee (re)settlement, with a history of supporting refugees ranging back to 1944 with the arrival of Polish Children to the Pahiatua, Wairarapa Region (NZRC, 2022, p.7). In 2023 The Red Cross launched their Te Ao Māori programme, which led to changes and implementations into the operating model in order to build a stronger understanding of Te Ao Māori, and forge stronger connections with iwi, hapū and mana whenua, which is recognised as essential engagement to the work through the launch of the Aronui training programme. The implementation of the training programme has created the beginning stages of understanding of Te Ao Māori, Te Reo Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi (NZRC, 2023, p.2-10). This implementation has also helped with their approach and understanding to their key principles which are as below:

1. Humanity (*te ngākau atawhai*),
2. Impartiality (*te tōkeketanga*),
3. Neutrality (*te whakaraupapa*),
4. Independence (*te tū Motuhake*),

5. Voluntary service (*he ratonga tūao*),
6. Unity (*te kotahitanga*)
7. Universality (*o te ao*)

(NZRC, 2023, p.4)

All these principles are collectively significant in shaping their work and the experiences of those receiving their services, whether it involves basic assistance or more urgent relief efforts. In these contexts, the Red Cross acknowledges that “individual efforts contribute to collective outcomes” (NZRC, n.d, p.5). Although The Red Cross is no longer contracted for refugee services within the Auckland region as it stands, the work the organisation has done has set out the pathway for other organisations that have since taken over from May 2022 (NZRC, 2022, p.19).

#### 3.4.2 E Tū Whānau

ETW is a strong whānau based organisation where community-led solutions are utilised for community-level social change, as well as pride in identity and connection to culture (ETW, 2020, p. 2). ETW was founded in 2008 and was developed by Māori, for Māori, having tikanga and Māori values that are the touchstone for everything they do to effect positive change within communities (ETW, 2020, p.14). Since ETW was founded, it has operated as a Māori/Crown partnership with support from the Ministry of Social Development, which has helped establish the organisation not only in Auckland, but nationwide (ETW, 2020, p.14-18). The organisation is run according to key values, which reflect deep KM underpinnings. These are:

1. *Aroha*: Giving with no expectation of return
2. *Whanaungatanga*: It’s about being connected
3. *Whakapapa*: Knowing who you are and where you belong
4. *Mana Manaaki*: Building the mana of others, through nurturing, growing and challenging
5. *Kōrero Awhi*: Positive communication and actions
6. *Tikanga*: Doing things the right way, according to our values

(E Tū Whānau, 2020, p. 15)

The organisation was created initially to deal with domestic violence within Māori families, as Māori currently experience high family violence due to a range of factors from weak social capital and inclusion, poverty and economic inequalities, to ongoing negative effects of colonisation (ETW, 2020, p.24). It was in 2013 where the domestic violence focus was expanded to include support of migrant communities and refugees. ETW relay that KM has resonated with the migrant and refugee communities and have found it not only relevant, but enabling and inspiring (ETW, 2020, p.19). The migrant and refugee communities come “from collective, family-focused cultures that have much in common, spiritually and socially with Māori”, which highlights the significance of this Kaupapa in supporting communities, highlighting cultural strengths and diversities, positive family values, working together to pool ideas and resources, as well as fostering social connections, community involvement and a sense of belonging (ETW, 2020, p. 36).

### 3.4.3 *Kāhui Tū Kaha*

KTK is an organisation based in Whangārei and Auckland providing mental health, social housing and social services (Kapua, 2023, p.5). KTK is an organisation that upholds Indigenous knowledge and applies it within their practices and models that are used to deliver services to diverse population groups, which also upholds a key principle of Indigeneity which is reciprocity (Kapua, 2023, p.5). KTK has been allocated the service of the Refugee Settlement Support Service for the Auckland area, replacing the NZRC, which has extended the organisation’s role in welcoming *manuhiri*. KTK also has growing relationships with agencies such as MBIE, Oranga Tamariki, Ministry of Social Development, Kāinga Ora, Auckland Council and Department of Corrections (Browne, 2023, as cited in KTK, 2023, p.6). The range of ethnicities that KTK serves and supports is shared in their annual report; showing diverse results with 37.7% Māori; 21% Asian; 20.1% Pasifika and others at 21.3% (2023, p. 9) under their services being supported. A wide range of people with different cultural backgrounds within the Auckland community is being looked after through their Te Mātāwai public housing service. The Kahurangi mental health service, responds to homelessness and natural disasters and the organisation’s refugee settlement support (Kāhui Tū Kaha, 2023, p.13-17). When KTK began their services within refugee (re)settlement support in July 2022, they intended to support 165 quota refugees, but they subsequently ended up supporting 378 people during a 12-month period (KTK, 2023, p.16). This data

displays that despite their young age as an organisation, their reach is already far-reaching. KTK recognises in their report that refugees do not choose to move to ANZ and may not necessarily want to leave their origin country, which can make the settlement journey understandably more difficult. However, being KM based and led, KTK emphasises that through three core values, settlement goals and appropriate support can be achieved, these are:

1. *Manaakitanga*: Enhancing the mana of the tangata whenua
2. *Whakawhanaungatanga*: Establishing relationships, a sense of belonging, family connections and kinship for the tangata receiving services
3. *Rangatiratanga*: Supporting self-determination of the tanga receiving our services

*(Kāhui Tū Kaha, 2023, n.p)*

KTK shares that among the former refugees that have been supported, there is sense of feeling connections and similarities between their own cultural values and with Māori (KTK 2023, p.16), which highlights the cultural significance and similarities that this organisation offers by working with people on a cross-cultural level.

### **3.5 Chapter Summary**

Humans have held innate migratory instincts and have traversed continents and new lands since the beginning of human history. Migration is prevalent, and a global phenomenon with increasing numbers as “peoples and nations are more interconnected than ever before” (Sachs et al., 2024, p.2). Although the various populations of migrants face their own challenges, forcibly displaced people are shown to be more disadvantaged. Refugees are challenged throughout their desperate journeys when crossing borders, navigating migratory routes, as well as facing discrimination within host societies. Highlighting these issues is crucial to understanding the New Zealand refugee (re)settlement strategy and its priorities surrounding (re)settlement. The work of established organisations, like the NZRC, and KM-led organisations, such as ETW and KTK, underscores the significant effort put into supporting refugees as they settle into their new homes. It also highlights the positive outcomes that have emerged so far from incorporating KM into these collaborations. Overall, with ongoing support, whether through strictly community-based or Kaupapa-led initiatives, positive outcomes are hopefully leading to stronger feelings of inclusion for

refugees settling in ANZ. The following section will outline the methodology adopted for this research.

## Chapter 4: Methodology and Methods

### 4.1 Introduction

Literature and past research has established the importance that belonging has on the well-being for every human being, especially with refugees who face arduous journeys and experiences. This research explores whether (and how) refugees' sense of belonging is supported by interacting and spending time with Kaupapa Māori led organisations in Auckland, New Zealand. The organisation I have collaborated with, as outlined in Chapter Three, is KTK due to their current work with refugees, but crucially for being KM-based and led. This is a key factor explored in my research, that is investigating the ways Kaupapa-led organisations seek to incorporate appropriate practices and approaches which facilitate refugees' sense of belonging. My first research question asks how KM-led organisations support former refugees through the (re)settlement process, and is followed with my second research question, which researches how KM led organisations help support refugees gain a stronger sense of belonging.

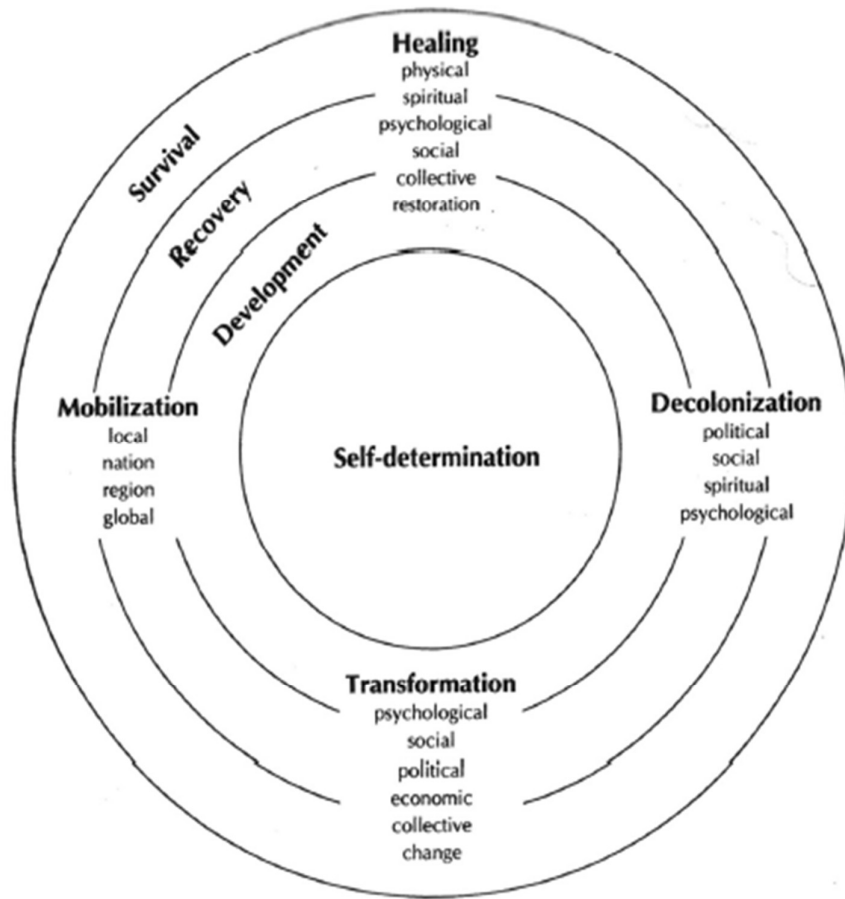
This chapter is set out in three parts. First, it details the methodology, including my qualitative approach and the incorporation of Indigenous methodologies which are particularly appropriate given the focus of this study. Thirdly, it describes the methods used during fieldwork, including an overview of the ethical considerations that informed and guided the research. This will be followed by research limitations and conclude with a brief summary.

### 4.2 Methodology

“Qualitative research is characterised by flexibility, openness, and responsivity to context” (Busetto et al. 2020, p.2) and uses techniques and methods to elicit answers about people's meanings, perspectives and experiences from the standpoint of the participant (Hammarberg et al. 2015, p. 499). Therefore, for this research I relied on a qualitative methodology, which encompasses a variety of methods such as participant observation, keeping fieldwork diaries and semi-structured interviews (Stewart-Withers et al. 2014, p.63). In terms of my own research, only the latter two methods were utilised within my fieldwork. Through semi-structured interviews, I attempted to “gain an intimate understanding of

people, places, cultures and situations through rich engagement” (O’Leary, 2021, p.150), while fieldwork diaries helped document certain ideas and nuances observed throughout the interviews. A qualitative approach was considered essential, especially when having awareness and sensitivity to Indigenous methodologies, as the research closely looks at Kaupapa-led organisations and practises, as well as refugees who also come from diverse and vast backgrounds.

There is also a presumption among some researchers “that qualitative methodologies and Indigenous methodologies are natural partners,” (Walter & Suina, 2018, p.333; see also Walter, 2005 & Walter & Andersen, 2013) due to sharing similar or same processes and approaches to research. However, both qualitative and Indigenous methodologies stand independent of one another. Although they can complement, there are many differences regarding Western and Indigenous knowledge for example, other examples can be seen in views of nature, authority, family dynamics and healing (Smith, 2021, p. 50). Smith discusses and shares an example of how Indigenous communities have developed their own research agendas and guidelines. These important Indigenous aspects and perspectives are highlighted in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Indigenous Methodology Agenda (Smith, 2021, p. 133).

With reference to Figure 1 (Smith, 2021, p.133), Indigenous methodologies tend to possess an inclusive and participatory approach that is inherently beneficial and non-exploitative. Smith (2021) goes on to share that four directions of healing, mobilisation, transformation and decolonisation represent processes, rather than end goals. These processes “connect, inform and clarify the tensions between the local, the regional and the global” (p.133). As for the four major tides of survival, recovery, development and self-determination, these are referred to as states of being and conditions through which Indigenous communities are moving, encompassing aspects such as the survival of languages and spiritual practices and the recovery of a process responding to an immediate crisis (Smith, 2021, p. 134). Similarly, these tides not only relate to the journey of refugees, but they also highlight the importance of understanding the differences between Indigenous and qualitative methodologies. Therefore, it is important to show an appreciation for values such as those seen in KTK,

including *manaakitanga*, *whakawhanaungatanga*, and *rangatiratanga* as shared in Section 3.4.3. Respecting and adhering to these values is an illustration of respect when working with Indigenous communities and organisations.

## **4.3 Methods**

Use of the methods described in more detail below were contingent upon gaining permission from the staff members at KTK, and I was guided by their advice on when to conduct fieldwork to fit around their busy schedules. I was very conscious of the fact that I was in the position of learner and so I was committed to respecting and adhering to potential participants suggestions regarding the appropriateness of my chosen methods and adjusting these accordingly. Initially I had intended to partake in observations at the organisation with refugees, however due to the intake of refugees into their programmes not happening till later in the year, I decided semi-structured interviews with staff members was completely sufficient, as this method was where I intended to gain the bulk of my primary data. I now look to explain in more detail the methods I used.

### *4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews*

I conducted semi-structured, one-to-one interviews, with four participants from various roles and backgrounds within KTK. Although I intended to have a more random sampling strategy with my participants, I ended up having a gatekeeper that provided me with convenient non-random purposive snowball sampling. Through semi-structured interviews, my aim was to gain depth via rich and deeper insights about a set of participants and their experiences, rather than breadth (Knott et al. 2022, p. 2). By utilising a combination of an unstructured and structured interview approach, I was able to facilitate free-flowing discussion, while guided by questions written prior in attempt to maintain focus during the interviews (Bergelson et al. 2022, p. 320). It was also important to use a guide of themes of the topics I wanted to explore, which helped keep the interview focused and relevant. However, it was crucial for the interviews to remain flexible enough to allow participants to introduce new ideas they deemed relevant for their answers through the sharing of extended reflections or elaborated responses (Knott et al. 2022, p.3). Having this flexibility through the interview process meant I learned more than what perhaps might have if I had used a fully structured set of questions (Hammarberg et al. 2015, p.499).

#### 4.3.2 Fieldwork diaries

Throughout the process, I kept a detailed record of my observations, experiences and reflection as fieldwork notes. “Reflexive journaling can facilitate understanding of unexpected research encounters and improve awareness of researcher positionality in order to render a more complete understanding of interview data, to contextualise findings, and support development of independent researchers” (Meyer & Willis, 2018, p. 3). Technology such as an iPad and iPhone was utilised and was especially necessary with the recording of interviews, and although journalling within the research process does not itself result in reflexivity, it can facilitate reflexivity, as well as help the researchers recall experiences through observations or interviews that might be forgotten or dismissed if not recorded through the journal (Meyer & Willis, 2018, p.4). Overall, field notes and having a research journal served as a “repository for the important and even not-so-important data of field research” (Bailey, 2007, p.113).

#### 4.4 Ethics

Throughout my research, it was my responsibility to uphold ethical principles such as informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and reciprocity. This required of me to think about the various documents, for example, *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* and the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct when working with Human Participants (Massey University, 2017). With reference to *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* obligations, this speaks to the principles of partnership, participation and protection of Māori interests (Burns et al., 2024, p.18). It was especially crucial within this research that Māori ethical perspectives, values and tikanga were observed in all applicable instances (Massey University, 2017, p.5) as I engaged within a KM environment. This meant that *karakia* (prayer) occurred before and after each interview, alongside the gifting of a *koha* (gift) as a gesture of appreciation. I also maintained awareness of Indigenous methodologies and the values that underpinned them and tried to ensure the research was respectful and culturally appropriate. Researcher values are crucial, for example showing respect for people (*aroha ki te tangata*), looking and listening, then maybe speaking (*titiro, whakarongo, kōrero*) and not to flaunt your knowledge (*kaua e mahaki*) – these are just a few principles that were highlighted (Smith, 2005; see also

Massey University, 2017, p.4-8). Collectively, “the principles of respect, responsibility, reciprocity and relationships” (Stewart-Withers, 2016, p.33) were all practiced.

Participation and signing of consent was completely voluntary. Participants were not pressured or coerced into making a decision and also had the option to withdraw their consent at any time. The comfort and interests of the respondents remained at the forefront of any decision-making (O’Leary 2021 p.75). It was crucial for the fieldwork not having negative implications for the participants (Banks & Scheyvens 2014, p. 162) as the research should help solicit positive change and empowerment of participants (Banks & Scheyvens 2014, p.162). I also avoided situations that could result in unequal power relations and the appropriation of knowledge (Ermine et al., 2004, p.16) through ongoing clear communication and transparency by regular checking in before, during and after the interviews took place, as well as providing updates. I was in the position of a researcher being an active learner, rather than the “expert” who passed judgement on participants (Stewart-Withers, et al., 2014 p.61).

#### **4.5 Limitations**

This study was carefully constructed in a way where working with participants was as smooth and convenient as possible, while also being able to maintain rigorous and ethical processes. With data from only four participants, the intention was not to be representative of broader experiences but rather focused on gaining a more in-depth understanding. Steps were thus taken to mitigate any possible inconvenience, considering interviews took place at the participants’ workplace.

#### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

My qualitative approach to the fieldwork was ethically informed, and I ensured that every part of the process had been clearly and coherently articulated to the participants (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008, p. 333). Through the semi-structured interviews and the keeping of fieldwork diaries, I gained the data I required for this report while upholding the Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and the researcher values. Although limitations were not confronted, I remained mindful and aware throughout the fieldwork to ensure participants were not confronted with negative consequences or outcomes. Due to the participant’s willingness

and passion to participate, I hold a deep gratitude. The following chapter will go onto explore the research results derived from the interviews at KTK.

# Chapter 5: Research Findings

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of my research which looked to explore how KM-led organisations can support refugees in developing a sense of belonging within ANZ. The findings are drawn from the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with staff members from KTK, a KM service provider that is involved in refugee (re)settlement.

A thematic analysis was undertaken to identify the key patterns and insights emerging from interview data. This process involved both inductive and deductive approaches. The inductive aspect of the analysis allowed themes to emerge directly from the participants' narratives, without being constrained by pre-existing ideas. Simultaneously, the deductive approach was guided by the research aim, questions, and objectives. Collectively, these approaches allow for a nuanced and grounded understanding of the participants' experiences, while also situating the findings within the broader theoretical and cultural framing of KM. Four key themes were identified in the data and will be discussed in depth throughout this chapter:

1. Kaupapa Māori Values
2. Cross-cultural Connections between Māori and Refugees
3. Programme Design
4. Institutional Challenges

Each theme includes subthemes, which will be outlined in the Section 5.3. Their significance will also be considered in relation to how they shape refugees' sense of belonging in Aotearoa. However, before exploring the themes of this data, the upcoming section will introduce the participants who contributed their insights to this research.

## 5.2 Participants

For this research I was able to interview four participants from KTK. Together participants had a variety of roles, experiences and backgrounds which they were able to speak to. While

anonymity has been provided for all participants throughout the reporting of data, some details are shared to provide a richer context with permission from the participants.

***Participant 1:***

- Came to ANZ as a refugee
- Is a Social Worker
- Has a background in mental health and refugee services

***Participant 2:***

- Came to ANZ to pursue studies
- Is a Community Support Worker
- Has a study and research background in psychology

***Participant 3:***

- Came to ANZ for career opportunities
- Is an acting Service Manager of the refugee team
- Has a medical background, as well as a background in mental health, social work and counselling

***Participant 4:***

- Born and raised in ANZ
- Is an Operation Manager of housing and refugee resettlement
- Has a background in mental health and addiction

All participants were interviewed on-site at their work office as I wanted them to not only be comfortable, but I also wanted to minimise their time and inconvenience as much as I could. Despite their differing backgrounds, they all shared the desire and collective effort to help refugees lead better lives as best as they could. Next, I will share the main themes and their respective sub themes that were communicated via interviews.

### **5.3 Thematic Analysis**

As mentioned earlier, these interviews were conducted with themes in mind such as KM approaches and belonging, which helped guide the interviews. However, there were also other themes that emerged from the interviews.

#### **1. *Kaupapa Māori Values and the Implications for Belonging***

- i. Manaakitanga
- ii. Whakawhanaungatanga
- iii. Rangatiratanga

#### **2. *Cross Cultural Connections Between Māori and Refugees and the Implications of Belonging***

- i. Shared histories of oppression, discrimination and resilience
- ii. Stereotyping of refugee and Māori
- iii. Collectiveness: Family and community-centred approach, karakia and sharing of food

#### **3. *Programme Design and the Implications for belonging***

- i. A holistic support model
- ii. Proving navigation and practical support

#### **4. *Institutional Challenges and the Implications for Belonging***

- i. Criticism of Māori-led support
- ii. Expectations and disappointments with NZ's systems and opportunities

### **5.4 Theme 1: Kaupapa Māori Values and the Implications for Belonging**

With KTK being KM led, the values of the organisation were a very strong theme throughout the fieldwork, which highlights the relevance they hold to not only the work the organisation does particularly with refugees, but also personally to each participant. Participant 3 acknowledged that before coming to ANZ, they knew nothing of New Zealand or Māori culture. However, they then went on to explain that by coming to New Zealand this helped them learn more about Māori culture and important things such as such as the traditions, knowledge about the *marae*, the different ways of welcoming people, like refugees, and understanding values from a Māori perspective. Similarly, Participant 2 was drawn to work for KTK due to the organisation being Indigenous led - which they supported and even noted

back in their home country Indigenous people are not respected and can even be viewed as “bad people.” All participants expressed a strong connection to KM approaches, particularly the organisation’s values of manaakitanga, whakawhanaugnatanga and rangatiratanga. They also linked these values to a growing sense of belonging, noting how these values were reflected and reinforced in everyday life. Participant 1 specifically relayed that all these values also relate to refugees, and there is a connection between them (refugees) and Māori. This idea builds on Participant 2’s point:

*“the Kaupapa, it’s aligned with human rights and human injustice... it’s cross cultural, or like the culture is different, those values [values of KTK] are like a foundation to respect the other, to work with the other people”.*

This comment conveys that KM values may be able to be shared and valuable to all, regardless of being Māori or not. The very basis is grounded in the belief that human rights and injustice should be extended.

Each value will now be looked at more closely in the sections which follow.

#### *5.4.1 Manaakitanga (hospitality, care and support)*

Manaakitanga was shown to be the most referenced value by all participants and is connected closely to the support and care of refugees within the service of KTK, as well as aspects of making them feel welcomed and respected. Manaakitanga was seen as a basis for the foundation of building relationships with the tangata (refugees within the service of KTK). Participant 4, who is tangata whenua, shared that through their life these values were not really something that was thought about consciously, but was a more intuitive aspect that was implemented and practiced every day, being a part of who they were, and what they did.

*“...one thing that I have sort of had instilled in me by my parents is the concept of manaakitanga... there’s always been this natural instinct to put others or our guests ahead of ourselves”.*

Participant 4 also added that this is an obligation that is carried throughout the organisation with KTK, with the *kaumatua* (elders) and cultural advisors talking about how manaakitanga is a sacred obligation of all Māori. This shows that the organisation takes this very seriously

and recognises the impact of having refugees experience their hospitality. Overall, manaakitanga is a value closely interlinked with making refugees feel welcome and looked after appropriately.

#### *5.4.2 Whakawhanaungatanga (connections and building relationships)*

Whakawhanaungatanga was shown to be a value that connected and built relationships between staff members at KTK and refugees, as well as between refugees and their communities. Participant 1 highlighted whakawhanaungatanga as being key in building the relationship of trust between them and the refugees, which eventually led to refugees opening up and being able to work with staff members. Participant 2 connected whakawhanaungatanga with the action of believing in them, and without developing that connection through whakawhanaungatanga, then that link between them and the refugees cannot be made. Although the concept of whakawhanaungatanga is not isolated in Māori culture, Participant 4 made the point,

*“Building relationships is common for all cultures. But then sort of the deepness or the depth that you go into, understanding where people come from, is unique in Maoridom in terms of where you’re from, and how does that link back to your ancestors. There’s a layered understanding of who you are, where you have come from, and that’s always been an important thing”.*

They also added that whakawhanaungatanga holds power and places emphasis on the whole rather than just the entity, or the person/people that are physically present, displaying a deeper understanding of connection. Whakawhanaungatanga can be key in establishing relationships with refugees through a broader acknowledgement of themselves and their places of origin.

#### *5.4.3 Rangatiratanga (self-determination)*

As for rangatiratanga, this value showed the importance of self-determination and supporting refugees in a way they were able to eventually become independent and lead their own lives self-sufficiently.

*“[rangatiratanga] is to provide that self-determination... if you don’t believe in the people, there is nothing that you are doing. The first thing is to believe that the person is able to learn, is able to do their own thing”. (Participant 2)*

Participant 3 highlighted that within their culture, women traditionally have less independence with roles related to autonomy and decision-making typically assigned to men. However, they also shared that through increased education, many women have been able to develop greater independence and learn to rely on themselves. Participant 1 compared rangatiratanga as “showing them the way,” as well as empowering them to do things for themselves and the staff providing guidance in the right direction, while Participant 4 voiced that refugees can “lead the way” and the importance of meaningful participation while staff at KTK are there for support.

### **5.5 Theme 2: Cross-cultural Connections between Māori and Former Refugees and the Implications for Belonging**

Throughout the interviews, it was consistently acknowledged the difficult journey refugees have taken to reach the host country, which can lead to them having feelings of mistrust.

*“They do have mistrust, they don’t feel like they belong anywhere, they have a different religion, they look different. The culture is different. Everything is different”. (Participant 1)*

Arriving to a new society where they have to learn and adapt to a different system and culture is no easy task, which can cause a hinderance in creating a sense of belonging in itself. Participant 1 highlighted the difficulties that can be faced through differences of culture and religion and looking different, via their own first-hand experience. Within an environment where such crucial aspects of one’s being are so different, can hinder one’s feelings of belonging immensely, as shared by all participants. However, collectively participants believed that having a Māori-led organisation such as KTK bridged the gap between refugees and New Zealand society through having some shared cultural similarities.

*“There is the similarity of the cultures”. (Participant 1)*

*“I believe we are made up of different cultures, but we have similar stuff inside... when you know more about Māori culture, you [may] find we have that in our culture as well”. (Participant 3)*

Participant 4 expanded upon this idea adding

*“they’re very similar in many ways in terms of how they support each other, you know collective action, very similar to Māori”.*

Although cultural similarities, such as collective action were acknowledged, the values of manaakitanga, whakawhanaungatanga and rangatiratanga were also recognised by Participant 2 as being a foundation to respect others and to work with other people, despite cultural difference. What was also voiced was a theme of shared histories and similar experiences of oppression and discrimination.

#### *5.5.1 Shared histories of oppression, discrimination and resilience*

Participants 1, 2 and 4 compared the idea that having a Kaupapa-led organisation working with refugees was central in possessing a deeper understanding of a similar history and shared experiences. To a certain extent, both refugees and Māori have been placed in situations that they have not had any control over, and in many instances, being within a society that does not necessarily want you to belong and thus positions you as “other.”

Participant 1 highlighted that despite there being many people with a “beautiful heart” who support and guide refugees, a refugee’s experience is very unique and anyone who has not experienced it would not understand it to its full extent. Participant 2 shared an example that resonated with the experiences of Indigenous communities in their home country, where there are approximately 63 languages. Despite this rich linguistic diversity, native speakers have not been permitted to speak their own languages, highlighting a history of cultural suppression and marginalisation. This was the reality of Māori prior to *Te Pire Mo Te Reo Māori 1986* (the Māori language bill 1986), where Māori were actively discouraged or even punished for speaking Te Reo Māori due to colonial assimilation practices and policies (New Zealand Parliament, para 2-7, 2022). Participant 4 also conveyed a shared history of discrimination and hardship:

*“...people feel mamea, hurt from a system that has sort of failed our communities. And that’s the same with a lot of our refugees. They’re coming from situations [out of their control] where suddenly they are looked upon a certain way, and they’re discriminated against, and so we can relate to them in that standpoint”.*

It is through this shared experience of leaving one’s country, as well as Māori who were forced to assimilate within their own country into a culture that was markedly different, while being treated as the outsiders within their own lands. This is backed up by Participant 1 (a former refugee), who spoke of recognising ongoing unequal treatment within society, noting that Māori were often the most understanding of this journey, not only because of shared experiences, but because these experiences of marginalisation continue today. Therefore, Māori have more motivation to help refugees because

*“They know, they go through it. They have been through it”.* (Participant 1)

This concept invites exploration of stigma that both refugees and Māori face through communities.

#### *5.5.2 Stereotyping of refugees and Māori*

Stigma and stereotyping was something raised by each of the interviewees. All participants acknowledged the stigma that is attached to refugees and Māori, especially the assumptions that they are not employed because they are lazy or are not trying hard enough. Participants 1, 3 and 4 also spoke about the fact that Māori face similar stereotyping as refugees. Participant 3 highlighted this by sharing that the stigma within Māori communities is similar to Muslim communities.

*“Māori, they do have stigma that they don’t like to work. They sit and they like to be on the benefits, all that stuff. And then guess what? Like that’s what the refugee are getting”.* (Participant 1)

However, another issue raised was the presence of stigma towards Māori within some migrant communities, stemming from stereotypes that have been passed on to them – often before they’ve had the opportunity to engage directly or form their own understanding.

*“I’ve seen migrant communities or ethnic communities, the ones that we support, sort of stereotype ideas that they have about Māori, because all they see is Māori*

*committing crime, Māori drunk out there in the public doing this and doing that”*

(Participant 4)

Because of these stereotypes and the associated stigma, Participant 4 relayed that some people miss out on the real beauty and deeply layered culture of Māori that is there.

Similarly to Māori, it was also underscored that various factors can contribute to refugee unemployment, including mental health and well-being challenges, as well as language barriers, and discrimination based on foreign-sounding names during the hiring and employment process. Participant 1 shared that they had experienced this form of discrimination when it came to finding a job prior to working for KTK, despite having the appropriate qualifications and experience. It was only through them changing their name to an English name that their employment experiences became more positive. Therefore, Participant 1 has a deeper understanding of the experiences of refugees through their own personal journey. And even within the present day, as well as being in New Zealand for many years, Participant 1 still encounters stigma where on multiple occasions they were mistaken for one of the *tangata* (refugees) during their visits to social services. So, despite ongoing efforts to help refugees secure employment, there remains a lack of success in many cases due to the stigma often attached to them – stemming from misconceptions, biases, or lack of understanding about their backgrounds and capabilities.

*“If they don’t give them an opportunity, how are they going to find a job?”*

(Participant 1)

There was also a perception that some refugees were not grateful for being in the country, which entirely overlooked their journey to New Zealand. When in reality, the majority would likely have preferred not to leave their homeland in the first place.

### *5.5.3 Collectiveness: Family and community-centred approaches, Karakia and the sharing of food*

However, there were more uplifting elements of these shared cultural connections, with community and family-based approaches being a recurrent theme spoken about by participants, relaying that a sense of community is crucial to having a sense of belonging. Another commonality is refugees tend to come from a society which are more family

oriented, Participant 1 pointing out that Māori family structures are similar to their culture, as well as the ability to be independent while also respecting one's parents.

When Participant 2 spoke about belonging, they mentioned that not only being respected and accepted was important, but also being a part of a community where one is heard without being judged, as well as the ability to contribute to a community. For Participant 4, belonging to a community was seen to improve well-being, which they said could happen by having a local fish and chip shop, or going to the same supermarket every day. It was important that the community needed to feel safe and have a sense of familiarity.

Participant 4 spoke of this aspect of familiarity, the interconnectedness of the river flowing from the mountain to the sea, and how it is a living entity and is a part of who they are back home. The community and cultural connections are a large aspect of who they are and their sense of belonging to the whenua.

One participant drew upon similarities to the *hāngi*, and how food can bring people together, as they also practice in their home country, drawing upon the sense of coming together.

A final aspect that was mentioned was the use of *karakia* in the workplace for the staff members. *Karakia* is used on a daily basis and is used as a form of asking for protection. Staff at KTK have removed references to gods and other entities so that the *karakia* becomes individualistic to each person and not necessarily tied to theological components.

*“So our opening prayer, it’s “as I pull on the cloak before I walk out” and asking for protection. So, the “who” we’re asking is individualistic. So even though it’s in Māori, it can be anything, it could be Jesus, it could be Allah, it could be anything. So it’s [the karakia] not singling out [anything or anyone] but is something that works for diverse groups instead of working against them or challenging them and creating tension”.*

(Participant 4)

Participant 1 specifically emphasises their appreciation for beginning and ending their days in the office with *karakia*. They highlighted the significance of this practice, as it carries a message of well-being – hoping that everyone not only has a good day and remains safe throughout their *mahi* (work) but also returns safely. This reflects the broader idea of

collective safety and unity, reinforcing a sense of belonging and connection within the workplace which can then be reflected within their work with the tangata.

### **5.6 Theme 3: Programme Design and Implications for Belonging**

When working with refugees, there is a level of sensitivity, awareness and understanding required. However, refugees do have strength, they just need the guidance and support rather than being told what to do. They have all gone through experience of being told where to go, what to do, when to eat, and when to go to sleep.

Through Participant 1's background as a former refugee, they conveyed that they have personally seen the difference in services and support given to refugees, from today to 22 years ago when they went through the process themselves. It was through seeing this change that they expressed their relief at KTK having the contract, as there was no guidance during their time as a refugee, compared to today. The refugees tell the organisation and the staff what they want, rather than being told by others what they need or want. Participant 2 shared that in a previous role at another organisation, refugees were often treated like children, with everything being done for them. This approach reflects a lack of trust in their capabilities and ultimately underestimates their potential and independence. It is important to provide support in a way that can enhance their *mana* (strength) and desire to develop themselves which can aid one's sense of belonging within their new home.

Participant 4 highlighted that although KTK is Indigenous led, the people that drive the refugee services are from the same communities as the refugees themselves. Having staff who share the same culture and language fosters a collaborative approach that involves everyone, rather than a process that is dominated by people of a different culture to the refugees. With reference to manaakitanga, collectively

*"It's that sacred obligation to host. We are as people, we're hosts. So when they come into our country that's what we do best... we have an obligation to them to be able to create that space so that they can flourish". (Participant 4)*

#### *5.6.1 A holistic support model*

As KTK is a Kaupapa-led organisation, some of the approaches that they take are slightly alternative and differ from standard practices that maybe seen in other refugee's

(re)settlement programmes. An example was shared through the use of the *Te Whare Tapa Whā* model, where Participant's 1 and 3 spoke of not understanding this model of wellbeing.

*"At the beginning, I will tell you the truth. When I did my study, I didn't understand what Te Whare Tapa Whā was". (Participant 1)*

After some time and implementing it into their work they came to understand how and why this model is used for refugees. They recognised that everyone has differing needs to fulfil their well-being requirements, such as connecting with nature, connecting with family or the community, or even having a place to pray. Thus, they realised how crucial it is to connect the physical, mental and spiritual components for an individual.

*"This model will connect the refugees with Kaupapa Māori; literally it goes hand to hand". (Participant 1)*

Participant 2 also noted that having them partake in marae visits and having traditional food is also important, which can help learn about the traditions and *whānau* (family/kinship) systems.

It was also noted that a client led agency was essential in being the best way forward.

*"Because then you're creating a unique intervention for every single person based on their needs". (Participant 4)*

Therefore, although models like the *Te Whare Tapa Whā* model are utilised and are seen as all encompassing, KTK does not restrict its approaches and practices by one set model, but as a guide, while also recognising Indigenous led practices have a place in refugee (re)settlement.

#### *5.6.2 Providing navigation and practical support*

The staff at KTK assist refugees in accessing essential services, such as visiting the GP, navigating public transport, and going to the bank. Additionally, they offer cultural and language support by pairing refugees with support workers who speak their language.

*"The refugees, they are supported by the refugees. Yeah, [someone] who knows the journey, [someone] who knows the language, who knows the culture and the beliefs."*  
(Participant 1)

This tailored approach significantly improves the (re)settlement experience – something that was not available when Participant 1 first arrived as a refugee, highlighting the progress made in providing more inclusive support. This is especially crucial because volunteers from other refugee focused organisations assigned to newly resettled refugees typically provide support for only three months. Despite this initial assistance, most refugees still struggle with basic tasks such as navigating public transport or accessing essential services. This is where KTK steps in, offering continued guidance and support to help bridge these gaps. However, KTK goes even further by not only providing navigation for transportation but also transport to urgent appointments which is not specified through KTK’s contract with the government. Because of the values of manaakitanga, whakawhanaungatanga and rangatiratanga, as well as the beliefs that KTK is passionate about, they can’t

*“Bring them [refugees] from overseas and dump them in the community”.*  
(Participant 3)

At KTK, it is something that is at the forefront of the organisation, with it being reiterated that it is the tangata who are most important, and even if the task is not specified within the contract, it is done because of the values and shared goals of the staff to help refugees resettle within their new home.

Another essential service that KTK provides is orientation to,

*“The health systems, the education system, the library, school activities, how to go to the Doctor’s, how our hospital works, all of this”.* (Participant 4)

This knowledge of the country, community and even history of Māori and colonisation helps create a sense of belonging through familiarity of the systems, as well as guidance on accessing and navigating these services.

#### **5.7 Theme 4: Institutional Challenges and Implications for Belonging**

Participant 4 conveyed they have enjoyed learning about the different cultures of the refugees which has given them great awareness, which has also improved their interactions with the refugees out in the community too. However, this level of awareness and positive cultural engagement has not been consistently demonstrated by all service providers that refugees interact with. Participants 1, 2 & 3 specifically highlighted that refugees encounter

numerous challenges – not only language and cultural barriers but also negative attitudes from individuals working within these services.

*“You leave everything, and then you come here. What you need here when you come is to be protected, [you want people] to show you the love. You want these types of people around you because of what you go through, [the service providers] don’t know what the refugee goes through”. (Participant 1)*

*“Some people who are working in the sector do not know much about refugees. They don’t know about the trauma before coming here. For example, the trauma from war, being isolated here, [having] their family overseas, they don’t have anyone here”. (Participant 3)*

It seems there is a lack of understanding from some service providers within the sector, which results in refugees feeling misunderstood, unheard and discriminated against which undermines their ability to resettle comfortably and to feel like they belong. There also appears to be a lack of effort in trying to understand the needs of people from refugee backgrounds. This was particularly evident in an example shared by Participant 3 regarding the re-establishment grant which refugees can use to purchase essential household items. In some cultures, a rice cooker is a crucial household appliance due to rice being a staple in their diets. However, some service providers failed to recognise its significance and subsequently rejected claims for its purchase. A similar situation was experienced regarding the purchase of a fan, because within some cultures they prefer not to use air conditioning. Yet again this need was not acknowledged. Therefore, a denial of something as simple as a rice cooker or a fan, can have harsh consequences on the individual or family that relied so much on them back home. Not all service providers possess this negative approach and attitude, as comments were also shared about more positive experiences as well. But the general consensus from the participants was that there was a lack of understanding, knowledge and overall awareness, if there was some sort of education or brief information, they argued this would probably make a real difference. The responsibility of cultural education and awareness of refugee’s experiences was seen to fall on the employer, rather than the employee themselves.

### 5.7.1 Criticism of Māori led support

There were comments made about how there is criticism and resistance as to a Māori-led organisation having the contract with the New Zealand government for refugee (re)settlement. Participant 1 shares the comments they receive such as

*“[Māori] don’t know anything about refugees. How can Māori [organisations] support refugees? They don’t know the culture. They can’t even help themselves”.*

Through this sentiment, Participant 4 also challenges this train of thought by posing the same question back, with asking how Western organisations would know about refugees more than Māori.

*“I always challenge [this idea], are you questioning our effectiveness because [we are not] refugee’s or is it because we’re Māori?”.*

Participant 2 stated that back in their home country there is an attitude where Western approaches and ways of understanding are still seen as the “better” or “correct” way to do and see things. This sentiment is circulated through the education system, with the message of

*“He [Columbus] came and saved us. He brought civilisation, he brought development. He brought everything. He just brought a lot of sicknesses, illness. He killed everyone... in the schools we are still learning those things”.* (Participant 2)

The notion that Western ways are superior remains a persistent and deeply rooted challenge to have to work with.

### 5.7.2 Expectations and disappointments with New Zealand’s systems and opportunities

Another aspect that came up was the issue of some refugees having expectations of what life is going to be like in New Zealand. Some expect to be completely looked after with a free house and free food, which is an expectation that seems to be imbued on them overseas prior to arrival. Participant 3 notes that this expectation will be an ongoing issue, and something will need to change, as this expectation will only cause disappointment.

Another issue was regarding employment. Many refugees come here with such vast and rich experience and skills, as well as the drive to be able to work to provide, which was noted as helping one's sense of belonging. However,

*“When they come here, they want to work, they want to work and they want to work, and so that’s the first barrier, no work because no English. They don’t feel like they’re doing anything with their lives. Like, if I’m not working, I’m not living a life”.*

(Participant 2)

This was coupled with the difficulties faced within the English classes. Although people had difficulties finding employment, the lack of relevance of the English classes also hindered refugees.

*“[In the English classes] we’re learning just a, b, c, d or hello, goodbye and they want to learn how do you say, “I want to work”, “I am looking for a job”, “I am giving you my CV,” some kind of things related to work. So, the English classes should be more focused on that and to help people so they can look for jobs”.* (Participant 2)

Participant 1 shared the experience of one of her tangata who has struggled to find employment and expressed feeling as though she is begging MSD for work. This reflects Participant 1's own experience, where she felt she needed to change her name in order to secure a job.

*“Finding employment, it was not an easy thing. You know I have to change my name to get an interview. If they see foreign names, you might not get a job interview”.*

(Participant 1)

This kind of situation shows that through bias and discrimination that is held against refugees, they can be left disappointed and unsupported – which understandably can make refugees feel like giving up, which can completely hinder their ability to belong within the country and their community.

## **5.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented key findings from interviews of four staff members at KTK. Through the main themes of KM values, cross-cultural connections, programme design and institutional challenges, a broader understanding was presented in regard to factors that

either hinder or facilitate former refugee's sense of belonging. Through highlighting these aspects aforementioned, the following chapter will further discuss and expand on these findings with relevance to existing literature, and the ideas raised in the framing this research, as well as provide concluding remarks to the overall research.

## Chapter 6: Discussion and Concluding Remarks

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter now looks to consider how KM-led organisations such as KTK support refugees in their (re)settlement journeys, and how they contribute to fostering a deeper sense of belonging. Drawing on the conceptual framing presented in Chapter 2, this chapter outlines the key insights gained from this research and their wider significance. Specifically, this chapter discusses points related to:

1. *Kaupapa organisations as a decolonial site*
2. *(Re)settlement as a relational and embodied practice*
3. *Manaakitanga, whakawhanaungatanga and rangatiratanga as foundations of belonging*
4. *Belonging as situated in the whenua and shared spaces*
5. *Challenges and tensions*
6. *Honouring strengths of refugees*
7. *Theorising belonging through a Kaupapa Māori framework*

The chapter then concludes by reflecting on these findings in light of the research aim, questions and objectives, as well as proposing directions for further research and practice.

### 6.2 Discussion

#### 6.2.1 *Kaupapa organisations as a decolonial site*

As a KM organisation, KTK offers support to refugees through Indigenous knowledges which is inherently holistic and integrative, with foundations of human experiences and sensory awareness acting in a way of understanding and interacting within the natural world (Bruchac, 2014, p. 3819). Within the context of refugee (re)settlement, it then becomes a journey of kinship, hospitality, relationality and self-determination within the host society. Through this approach, it repositions refugee support within an Indigenous knowledge framework, instead of being a practice of Western assimilation that is often perpetuated through a legacy of colonialism (Murphy & Vieten, 2025, p.2105). Having a Eurocentric foundation to refugee (re)settlement in Aotearoa in the past has led to the implementation

of more Western practices of a one-way integration aimed at full assimilation (Marino, 2021, p.88) with colonial undertones that can be reductive and transform “complex human experiences into quantifiable metrics” (Murphy & Vieten, 2025, p.2106). By this I mean that a refugee gaining employment or access to education, verses very important non-tangible things like feeling safe, wanted or connected becomes privileged. In section 3.4 it was noted that NZRC has in recent years adopted a more inclusive approach through the integration of Te Ao Māori practices, teachings and workshops. Participants acknowledged the impactful work of NZRC through the years, however, NZRC’s history and foundation remains rooted in Eurocentrism. Marshall (2021, p.281) extends on this idea as being highly important conveying that “Western [healing] methodologies often present as foreign concepts to some refugee populations.” Instead, the inclusive and self-empowering means through KTK and their emphasis on overall well-being of the tinana, hinengaro and wairua has seen positive impacts.

However, it is also important to note that Participant 4 believed that by being a KM led organisation, it is not an attempt to remove Western models or approaches completely, as they still hold relevance in certain realms, and can even be complimentary and do not necessarily need to stand in opposition (Bruchac, 2014, p. 3819). Instead, it presents an opportunity to open more doors for Indigenous perspectives and approaches to be applied in a wider range of environments, beyond those that are strictly connected to Māori contexts. There is a great “importance in acknowledging traditional or Indigenous perspectives,” (Marshall, 2021, 282) with Bruchac (2014, p. 3823) noting that Indigenous knowledge systems are not static or fixed and are in fact capable of responding to new data and within new environments. Following this line of thought, Indigenous knowledge, or KM approaches can be supportive in a range of settings – but particularly (re)settlement.

### *6.2.2 (Re)settlement as a relational and embodied practice*

Through mātauranga Māori being intricately holistic and deeply interconnected within the natural world (Marques, Freeman & Carter 2022), broader forms of hauora and overall well-being can be considered, extending past the perception of a person being just a physiological being. An example of mātauranga Māori being conceptualised within a well-being framework was indicated by Hamley and Le Grice (2021, p.72) with Durie’s (1985) Te Whare

Tapa Whā model. This model takes the form of a *whareni* (communal meeting house), it has four walls representing spiritual, psychic/mental, physical and familial aspects, in conjunction to the fifth dimension as the ground floor, representing the land to which one belongs to (Motu et al., 2023, p.2). It is important to note that Participants 1 and 3 did not initially understand this framework, nor did they know anything about Māori culture before entering Aotearoa. With their initial lack of understanding, it highlights that mutual cross-cultural understanding does not necessarily occur instantly or automatically but rather develops gradually through exposure and learning. Over time, both participants came to understand the significance of the model and why it is consistently referenced in their mahi, recognising its strong relevance to the (re)settlement journey of refugees through its all-encompassing application and teachings, especially through the welcoming of pōwhiri, knowledge of the marae and learning of traditions.

Thus, through the usage of traditional knowledge, (re)settlement is transformed into a relational and embodied practice through utilising the preservation of beliefs, traditions, communication and relationships with culture and landscape through time (Bruchac, 2014, p. 3814). The usage of Te Whare Tapa Whā model, as well as connecting through a pōwhiri, visiting the marae, and even the incorporation of karakia and hāngi can all collectively engage refugees within their new environment. For example, with the pōwhiri acting as a connector to the manuhiri and tangata whenua, guests are treated with respect through a ceremonial welcome with gestures of symbolic expressions (Love & Tilley, 2014, p.43; Smith & Stewart, 2011, also see Rameka et al., 2023, p.258), which can bring about a sense of home and bicultural belonging through a combination of these expressions and actions (Rameka et al., 2023, p.259). One participant also reflected on how the hāngi brings people together, noting that a similar practice existed in their home country. This aligns with Momir et al. (2015) who state that “traditional food speaks the same language, irrespective of nationality, religion or political preferences” (p.728). Taking this stance, it not only brings about the action of sharing, but the hāngi, or sharing of food acts as another way of communication and connection among diverse groups. Karakia can also be seen as a “culturally responsive practice” (Rātima et al., 2020 as cited in Motu et al., 2023, p. 2), which was also noted by participants as being important, as the intention is to create a sense of safety and unity among the staff at KTK. Thus, karakia serves as a meaningful practice that

can unite surrounding individuals in the moment of reflection, with the unity having a lingering positive effect on cohesion (Thom et al., 2018, p. 138-139; see also Motu et al. 2023).

### *6.2.3 Manaakitanga, whakawhanaungatanga and rangatiratanga: A foundation of belonging*

Values are essential to any society, as they form the foundation of norms and spiritual principles that guide behaviour within communities (Momir et al., 2015, p. 724). The data showed that upholding values such as manaakitanga, whakawhanaungatanga and rangatiratanga not only resonate for Māori (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013, p.274), but were also pivotal to KTK staff's personal experiences, shaping how they approached their work with refugees. The data showed that by implementing these values, it helped connect not only themselves, but also the tangata to the staff and their respective communities – helping generate a stronger sense of belonging. Although these values may be presented in a variety of ways interculturally and are not exclusive to Māori, especially the emphasis placed on hospitality and importance of kinship relations, their relevance seemed particularly significant in this context. As Participant 4 relays there is the responsibility to uphold hosting refugees entering the country as tangata whenua, as it is their sacred obligation to host and create a space for refugees to flourish, which is officially acknowledged through the welcome via pōwhiri (Mead, 2017). Marlowe (2021, p.7) considers the concept of manaakitanga (among others) and what it stands for, as an opportunity to provide a better basis of conceptualising refugee (re)settlement experiences. Marlowe (2021, p.7) has called for Māori to lead the response welcoming and integrating refugees to New Zealand, with Mead (2017) reinforcing this idea by stating how manaakitanga, the welfare of the visitor or the guest, is seen as the most important consideration.

Whakawhanaungatanga was seen as an aspect that helped staff engage and build strong connections to their tangata, as well as the tangata to their communities. Participant 1 also mentioned that this was key in building trust with the tangata. Creating trust between staff members and the tangata may invoke “a willingness to be vulnerable, where individuals are prepared to take risk, with and understanding that the environment and those around them will ensure their safety” (Matheson & Sutcliffe, 2018, p. 33). Matheson and Sutcliffe (2018)

also go on to mention that with feeling safety as per Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs including physiological needs is important to belonging, will allow people to be able to achieve their full potential (p. 32). However, *whakawhanaungatanga* does not only act as a building block for trust or a connector for human relationships but also can be extended to relationships to the *whenua* (land), *moana* (large body of water), *awa* (river), *maunga* (mountain) and *atua* (sacred and revered being) (Hamley et al. 2023, p. 178). This component showcases once again the interconnected relationship that Māori have with the natural environment, both physical and spiritual (Marques et al. 2022, p. 426). Overall, participants expressed that without *whakawhanaungatanga*, the strong connection between staff and refugees would not be established. They emphasised that this sense of relational connection is key to building the trust and comfort needed for refugees to open up, in turn forming the foundation for meaningful and effective relationships.

The third value, *rangatiratanga* represents the self-determination and self-development of an individual. Although KM has an approach founded upon community and working together, it remains important that the individual does indeed lead their own lives self-sufficiently, attaining an acceptable level of functioning within life-domains such as social support and daytime activities (van den Toren et al. 2020, p. 2). This is especially important within a country where both Māori and refugees alike, both past and present, feel like they have been placed in situations they have had little to no control over. An example of this was seen through a movement in the 1980s and 1990s, when large numbers of Māori people shared a gradual shift of the mindset, where emphasis was placed upon doing things themselves for their own self-development (Smith, 2017, p.3). This became a time of Māori revitalisation and movements focussing on "Te Reo Māori, cultural philosophies, preferences, aspiration, and practices" (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Mahuika 2008 as cited in Rameka & Peterson, 2021, p.311). *Rangatiratanga* is an important concept in Māori culture and coincides closely to their history and journey of regaining autonomy within a colonised land (New Zealand Productivity Commission, 2022, p.1-2). This is echoed with KTK's work with refugees, with the idea of providing a type of support later enabling them to live a life of self-sufficiency or one determined according to their own aspirations and values; by doing so this helps retain their *mana* and to not be undermined.

#### *6.2.4 Belonging as situated in whenua, shared spaces and community*

Participant 4 communicated the significance of the river, the mountain and the land back home as being important to their whanau's sense of belonging. This aspect is reflected in Mead's (2016, p.208) message, sharing that the land and other important geographical features such as mountains and rivers can evoke strong emotions. Through connections such as these, they can lead to powerful cultural mechanisms of bonding, solidifying the connection to the whenua even more (Mark & Lyons, 2010, p.1760; Rameka, 2018, p.373), with Schein (2009, p.815-824) adding that land and landscapes work to constitute belonging and is central to well-being. Through Lewicka's (2011) research, they shared that people with a strong sense of attachment to place or land, demonstrated higher satisfaction, stronger social capital, secure neighbourhoods, as well as an overall higher sense of coherence compared to non-attached persons (as cited in Kale, 2019, p.1). Mesch and Manor (1998) further cite that there is greater social and political involvement within communities when people feel place attachment (as cited in Anton & Lawrence, 2014, p. 451). Connections to land is important within every part of the world – albeit to differing degrees. However, Albers et al. (2021) and Kale (2019) do emphasise this cruciality with refugees as they experience a journey of navigating unfamiliar environments and reconnecting with new lands due to them being forced to leave their own behind.

Participants shared that a sense of belonging could be strengthened not only through place-based practices but also connecting to a community. Connecting with a community can not only solidify family and kinship connections but also plays a role in recognising the importance of values and diverse worldviews (Marshall, 2021, p. 284), as well as facilitate resilience (Fielding & Anderson, 2008 as cited in Albers et al. 2021, p.3) and “play a healing role in their lives (Puvimanasinghe et al. 2014 as cited in McIntosh & Cockburn-Wooten, 2019, p.2). Restoule (2019) adds that through their work within Indigenous education, there was a need to have a strong emphasis on community building and findings ways to connect participants to place and community (p. 1314), which in turn promotes social capital and overall participation (Roffey, 2013, p.41). Activities such as marae visits, karakia and sharing of food (hāngi) played a role for refugee's connecting to a community and a having a sense of unity. However, as discussed earlier within the literature review, community ties do not necessarily need to occur in person. Through the mediation of technology and the internet

(Damásio et al., 2012, p.129) refugees can also feel included and gain a sense of belonging by exercising “their agency by activating, re-shaping and re-building connections through space and time” (D’Angelo, 2019, p. 496; McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2019, p.2).

#### *6.2.5 Challenges and tensions*

Through separation and forced migration, living transnationally and traversing new environments can be difficult to manage, especially moving to a country where one has had little to no choice about coming. Often refugees report they do not feel welcome or feel accepted by the host society (Albers et al., 2021, p. 2). Participant 1 reiterated these difficulties through their own personal struggles when they arrived 22 years ago as a refugee. However, participants also shared that both refugees and Māori were similarly stigmatised within communities and society, especially with reference to unemployment and being viewed as “lazy”. These negative perceptions resonated further through cultural differences, coming from Western dominant practices, as Smith (2021, p.54) terms it as a cultural ‘force field’ which has proved to have challenges. This ‘force field’ has been seen within historical contexts as well, with Indigenous peoples across the world “living in a hostile atmosphere that made it difficult for traditional communities to maintain cohesion” through social and political disempowerment (Bruchac, 2014, p.3819).

Another factor was a lack of care and understanding of someone’s background, which made the tangata’s feel discouraged and not heard. This aspect was shared to hinder the tangata’s ability to find employment, thus restricted self-sufficiency, which can “affect daily functioning by limiting personal” and social life (van den Toren et al. 2020, p.6). It was a prominent factor within the data that external service providers did not always show the same care, understanding and respect towards the tangata, with some also having negative attitudes. Through the negligent approach from certain service providers, it simultaneously ignored refugees “distinctive life histories, reasons for escape, and personal goals and needs” (D’Angelo, 2019, p.489). It is also notable that some refugees enter the country with high expectations, which at times proved to be discouraging or harmful. For example, while many refugees are eager to work, a lack of sufficient language skills often becomes a major barrier, especially when language acquisition is critical to integration (Sellars, 2023, p.

p.530). Encountering such obstacles can lead to feelings of frustration or hopelessness, causing some to give up, ultimately disrupting their journey toward belonging.

#### *6.2.6 Resistance to deficit framing: Honouring the strengths of former refugees*

Despite the challenges faced within this context, it is essential to highlight the strengths and resilience of refugees, actively resisting deficit framing that focuses solely on their hardships. Participant 4 shared that through the diversity of refugees, cultural enrichment was not only enjoyable to learn about but also brought about great awareness and improved interactions with people in the community. The sentiment of Participant 4 was cited similarly by Momir et al. (2015, p. 728), relaying that “enhancing intercultural awareness and understanding will not only reduce cultural misunderstandings and conflict but will create a good [working] atmosphere”, which I extend to a day-to-day environment.

A notable point relayed through the research was that through a KM led approach, this was not an attempt to remove or replace refugee’s own beliefs and culture, but to create an environment that supports one that does – with one example being through karakia. Although karakia itself has roots in Te Ao Māori and is spoken in Te Reo, Participant 4 relayed that the usage of God and deities are removed so that karakia is more individualistic to each person. The karakia acts as a message of well-being and the hope of everyone to have a good day and remain safe. In this environment, this then can be interpreted however the individual wants, which opens the door to various meanings, rather than prescribing individuals to a set of beliefs. Within this example, it builds more support for KM approaches because it is not static, nor is it strictly for Māori. It is open and respectful to relational changes, just as karakia in the workplace aforementioned, showcasing the ever-evolving form of wisdom and knowledge that mātauranga Māori holds (Durie, 2017, p.16-17).

Further to this, through self-directed learning and guidance, refugees at KTK are both able and encouraged to embrace their own culture and religion. Rather than facing pressure to assimilate or leave their cultural identities behind, they are supported in maintaining and celebrating them. Hidas believes that people should come into synergy with the wealth of talent and human capital (2017, p. 68) through living or working within a multicultural environment, which encourage spaces for transmitting group feelings and reminding people about their own cultural heritage (Trisnawati, 2017, p.13).

Connections were also made between shared experiences of refugees and Māori. Multiple participants noted that through a KM led organisation such as KTK, it was central in a deeper understanding of a shared similar history and experiences between Māori and refugees. I argue that through Smith's (2017) relaying of Māori struggles not being one-dimensional, but in fact multiple struggles arising in various contexts at once, also holds relevance within the context of refugee and Māori shared history and struggles previously discussed.

#### 6.2.7 *Theorising belonging through a Kaupapa Māori framework*

Throughout the literature, belonging is shown to be gained in multiple ways, with some of these being through ways of gaining legal status, employment, or access to education. In fact, attaining employment, establishing economic independence and becoming productive members within the community are often viewed as goals by refugee families (Dubus, 2017, p.3), as well as indicators of successful integration (Hovil, 2016, p.11). However, with belonging being understood through a Kaupapa framework, belonging extends well beyond conventional notions aforementioned. Participants highlight the importance of these factors and the role they play within (re)settlement, yet their emphasis on a refugee's pathway to belonging is much more intricate. Belonging is understood as a multi-faceted and inextricably linked with being (Rameka, 2018, p.367), with inseparable connections to the spiritual, genealogical and natural world with human well-being interwoven with the very health of the environment (Moewaka Barnes & McCreanor, 2019, p.26). The term shared by Rameka (2018) and Stebletsova and Scanlan (2023), *mana whenua*, itself shows the connections to the whenua (land), reflecting the multidimensional approach of Indigenous knowledge. Through the holistic understandings of the spiritual, psychic/mental, physical, familial and land elements, it is an approach that is refined and enhanced through the incorporation of present-day comprehension, aspirations, culture and understanding of everything invisible and visible (Durie, 2017, p.16; Hikuroa, 2016, p. 5; Winiata, 2001, as cited in Mead, 2016, p.256).

Furthermore, belonging is not something that can be given such as giving someone a job or a tangible item - it is a phenomena that can be enacted through multiple ways such as connections to community and land, experiencing a pōwhiri, visiting a marae, sharing a hāngi and partaking in a karakia, or through direct support from KTK staff implementing

collective and empowering values. Participant 2's comments on KM aligning with human rights and human injustice, acts as the foundation to work with other people and mutual respect, irrespective of one's gender, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic status or culture (Devere et al. 2006, p. 343). Participants reflections on previous refugee (re)settlement support comparatively to KTK's approach feels different. Through KTK, there is shared knowledge and values, some form of relationship and commonality of experiences, as well as mutual respect and consideration of other perspectives, beliefs and worldviews (Sellars, 2022, p.578-579). Overall, highlighting a more sustainable process and enduring outcomes as a result.

### **6.3 Concluding Remarks and Future Directions**

Refugees who arrive in Aotearoa often face significant challenges throughout their (re)settlement journey. It can be a time where one needs to “negotiate the necessity of living in two worlds” (Das, 2019; Gibson, 2010; Rove et al., 2020 as cited in Sellars, 2023) and navigating a sense of belonging is a key part of the process. This research report has highlighted the importance of belonging and how it can be encompassed in a multitude of ways, especially within a refugee context and the crucial role that Indigenous knowledge and approaches hold. Through mātauranga Māori, KM has provided the framework through which belonging has been examined, revealing outcomes that support cross-cultural and value-driven practices. Through the discussions, the overall research aim, questions and respective objectives below have been answered.

1. *1.1 to understand how Māori values are drawn upon to support refugees during the (re)settlement process*
2. *1.2 to explore how programmes are designed and describe the types of activities which are drawn upon as part of the (re)settlement process*
3. *2.1 to explain how values and experiences help build connections for former refugees*
4. *2.2 to understand how being involved with a Māori-led organisation helps former refugees feel a sense of belonging*

Through the qualitative data collection, it provided a small, yet intimate insight into the significant work that is done at KTK and refugees. Although there is a substantial amount of data regarding migration and refugees, I believe that approaching belonging within a

(re)settlement context through an Indigenous lens is a cause to delve into for the future, and what little has been explored so far, should be recognised. We are living in a time where certain systems and attitudes are gradually being decolonised, and Indigenous voices are increasingly being recognised and included. This research on refugee belonging in collaboration with KTK highlights the immense potential for cross-cultural collaboration between refugees and KM-led organisations. It is equally important to recognise and honour the strengths of both groups and their valuable contributions to society. Essentially, the focus should remain on supporting the well-being of individuals and communities by fostering these meaningful aspects such as belonging.

*He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tāngata, He tāngata, He tāngata*

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Ethics Approval: Low Risk Notification



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

28/11/2024

Dear: Kim Gisa

**Re: Low Risk Notification - 4000030005 - Ka Hura te Tai (The Tides of Transition): Do Kaupapa Māori based programmes lead to former refugees finding a sense of belonging to Aotearoa?**

Thank you for submitting a low risk notification for your research/teaching/evaluation.

This email is to acknowledge receipt of the low risk notification and to inform you that the details of your project have been recorded in our database for inclusion in the annual reports to the Health Research Council Ethics Committee (HRCEC) and the Massey University Research Committee (URC).

You may proceed with your research, though it is advisable to provide a couple of weeks before commencing, as all low risk notifications are checked for completeness and clarity by a Research Ethics Advisor. You may be contacted if your application is incomplete and/or further clarification is required.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis.

*If a sponsoring organisation, funding authority (e.g., the Health Research Council) or a journal require evidence of ethical approval from a Human Ethics Committee (with an approval number), you need to complete a full Massey University Human Ethics application to be reviewed and approved by one of our Human Ethics Committees. Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of the research.*

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

*If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the Research Ethics Office, email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz).*

*Please include the following statement on all public documents (e.g., information sheet, consent form) related to your project:*

***This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk.***

**Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.**

**If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Massey University Human Ethics by email: [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz).**

I wish you all the best in your research, teaching or evaluation activities and appreciate your thoughtful consideration of ethics principles and practices.

Ngā mihi nui,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tracy Riley', is centered on the page.

Professor Tracy Riley

Acting Chair, Research Ethics Chair's Committee

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise

Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand T 06 951 6841; 06 951 6840 E [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz); [animalethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:animalethics@massey.ac.nz); [gtc@massey.ac.nz](mailto:gtc@massey.ac.nz)

## Appendix 2: Information Sheet



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

### **Ka Hura te Tai (The Tides of Transition): Do Kaupapa Māori based programmes lead to former refugees finding a sense of belonging to Aotearoa?**

#### **INFORMATION SHEET**

**Kia ora,**

My name is Kim Gisa, and I am a Master student in International Development at Massey University. I am approaching you to ask whether you would like to participate in my study. My research seeks to explore whether (and how) former refugees' sense of belonging is supported by interacting and spending time in the environments of Kaupapa Māori organisations.

#### **Project Description and Invitation**

Former refugees often need to reassess their sense of belonging, even after or during their (re)settlement when it may be perceived that they are 'safe' and out of danger. However, as the literature shares, belonging is not something that happens automatically, even in an environment that offers security. Nor do particular settings equate to an automatic sense of belonging for all. Belonging is a dynamic process that requires navigating ones journey of settling, whether through cultural, religious, social, or similarly meaningful connections.

In the environment of Kaupapa Māori organisations that support former refugees, and with the help from staff members, I would like to explore, how belonging for former refugees may be connected with Indigenous perspectives and ways of understanding the world. Through using a value-based approach, my project seeks to highlight the potential cross-cultural connections between the diverse cultures of former refugees and how they may intersect within Kaupapa Māori organisations.

This study will utilise a qualitative research approach which will include kōrero and interviews with staff members. If possible, and with your permission, I would also like to engage in observations at your organisation.

I am approaching you respectfully with this invitation to participate in this research as I believe that you would be able to share your knowledge and experience working within a Kaupapa Māori organisation towards supporting former refugees. Connecting with your expertise will help my understanding immensely, and I would like to follow your lead on what may be an appropriate way to approach activity observations, and/or kōrero with fellow colleagues within the organisation. I estimate each interview to take between 30-60 minutes.

#### **Data Management**

The information you will provide will be kept confidential and stored safely. I will be the only person able to access the information, and I will share a selection of data with my supervisor during the process. All interview transcripts and notes will be kept in a locked folder only accessible by me. These folders can only be accessed by face recognition or passcode, and once my final research report has been submitted, I will permanently delete all interview recordings.

#### **Participant's Rights**

I would very much appreciate it if you would agree to participating in my study. However, there is no pressure or obligation to do so. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question
- Ask any questions about the study at any time
- Withdraw from the interview or observation processes at any time
- Ask for the recording device to be turned off during anytime of the interview
- Decide whether to give consent on the use of your own name and position, or agree to a pseudonym
- Have selected transcripts provided to you within 1 week time from interview, to edit or change your information
- Be given access to a summary of project findings once research is concluded

### **Project Contact**

If you have any questions about this research, please contact me or my supervisor (see details below).

#### **Student Details:**

Kim Gisa

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

#### **Supervisor's Details:**

Prof Rochelle Stewart-Withers

Head of Programme: Institute of Development Studies and  
Professor of Indigenous and International Development

P: 0800 627 739 Ext: 83657

M: 0275594662

Email: [R.R.Stewart-Withers@massey.ac.nz](mailto:R.R.Stewart-Withers@massey.ac.nz)

Private Bag 11222

Papouia Palmerston North, 4442

Aotearoa New Zealand

*This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director (Research Ethics), email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)*

## Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

### **Ka Hura te Tai (The Tides of Transition): Do Kaupapa Māori based programmes lead to former refugees finding a sense of belonging to Aotearoa?**

#### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL**

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I would like to be referred to in this study in the following way (fill in your preference):

- My name and title i.e. ....
  - (e.g. John Doe, Kāhui Tū Kaha event coordinator, Auckland)
  
- My title or a descriptor i.e. ....
  - (e.g. Kāhui Tū Kaha events coordinator, Auckland)

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

I would/would not like a summary report of the findings sent to me on completion of this research.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

.....

**Full Name - printed**

.....

**Email address:**

.....

## Appendix 4: Interview Questions for Participants



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
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TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

### **Ka Hura te Tai (The Tides of Transition): Do Kaupapa Māori based programmes lead to former refugees finding a sense of belonging to Aotearoa?**

**Go through consent form**

**Opening Karakia**

**Theme One: Introductions**

- *Before I start asking some questions, which I am so grateful for you giving your time, I would like to remind you of the privacy and confidentiality that we have here. There may be a chance that my supervisor will hear snippets of this recording, but only myself will be listening to this recording, as well as have access to it. I have given you the consent form to fill out prior (just now), but I would like to let you know that you can withdraw or alter it after you have finished the interview.*
- My name is Kim, I come from a Dutch and Samoan background and was born and raised here in Aotearoa. I have recently discovered that I have tangata whenua from my father's side, but I am still in a journey of discovery.
- Tell me about yourself, hobbies, work experience, your Iwi/Hapu (anything you are comfortable with sharing about yourself).
- What brought you to work in this space.
- Your journey into entering the organisation.

**Theme Two: Kaupapa Māori and working with former refugees**

- Thoughts on Kaupapa Māori and the values that you personally feel are especially important to you.
- Thoughts on having a Kaupapa Māori approach with former refugees.
- How did work with former refugees come to be?

- Why is this a positive thing? Are there any challenges?
- Personal observations on former refugees that have been involved with the organisation over time.

### **Theme Three: Belonging**

- I am really interested in this idea of belonging... what are your Ideas/thoughts on belonging?
- Through my literature review I have done so far, for example, we see that belonging is not an automatic process. Within the refugee context especially, just because one may enter a particular country or community, it does not automatically mean they feel a sense of belonging. One example was citizenship, although citizenship may be the goal for many refugees, it also was shown to not be a goal for a large amount of people as well as it was seen in particular contexts to possibly bring about 'unbelonging'...
- How does 'belonging' fit into Kaupapa Māori values? Or perhaps, how does the model of the organisation enable people to belong?

### **Theme Four: Context**

- Exploring the collaboration of the organisation with other organisations and/or the government regarding former refugees (i.e Red Cross, Māngere Refugee Resettlement Centre).
- Moving forward, are there any aspects or things you would like to see in the future at the organisation working with former refugees?
- Any last thoughts that may be added.

### **Closing Karakia**