

# 2022/2023: A year in review

## Our work alongside migrants

Australian Red Cross is part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, which operates in over 191 countries.

We work with people seeking safety and migrants experiencing vulnerability all over the world – in countries of origin, transit, and where people may settle temporarily or the places where they seek to build a new life.

We aim to **change lives** by meeting critical humanitarian needs and supporting social and economic participation; **change minds** by increasing inclusion and a sense of belonging; and **change the rules** through advocacy on issues of systemic and individual humanitarian concern.

Through partnerships, research and service delivery we base our work on direct experience and evidence and aim to empower people and communities to speak out and take action.

### In financial year 2022–23 our Migration Support Programs have:



Supported more than 19,700 people on temporary visas or without a visa with direct support, including 3,820 people and their families who don't have access to a safety net and are experiencing hardship.



Supported people from 125 different nationalities, highlighting the broad reach and impact of our work.



Distributed over \$2.4 million through 7,345 payments to meet basic needs including food and groceries, housing and utilities.



Supported 3,111 refugees and humanitarian entrants from 43 countries to settle in Australia, including people evacuated from Afghanistan and people impacted by the conflict in Ukraine.



Held community education sessions with over 8,000 people nationally in schools, communities and workplaces to create a more welcoming Australia.



Conducted confidential interviews with 806 people in immigration detention during 24 visits to monitor conditions and treatment of people in immigration detention.



Actively sought 1,912 people through our global family links network, resolving 82 cases where the missing person was located, or we were able to determine their fate.

# Key policy priorities in the area of migration

Good progress against key advocacy priorities
  Exceptional progress against key advocacy priorities

## Increase protections and provide a safety net

- Set maximum limits to the length of immigration detention**, prohibit the held detention of children, and expand alternatives to detention.
- Ensure support for the re-integration of people released from immigration detention** back into the community.
- Expand protections from human trafficking and modern-day slavery**, including through an additional referral pathway for the Support of Trafficked People Program without being conditional on engagement with police.
- Provide a **paced increase to the humanitarian intake** of refugees and humanitarian entrants.
- Expand pathways to protection** through community and employer sponsorship.
- Strengthen capacity and consistency for **emergency and crisis humanitarian intakes**.
- Provide durable solutions** for the estimated 1,000 people impacted by offshore processing, in Nauru, PNG, and Australia.
- Ensure access to supports in times of crisis** and severe hardship for migrants in transition, in particular people seeking asylum.
- Establish an ongoing safety net and access to supports for people on **temporary visas experiencing family and domestic violence**.

## Empower through safe and dignified employment

- Support safe, dignified and sustainable employment** for migrants in transition and refugees through specialist employment programs such as 'Connect. Match. Support.', and employer programs such as Welcoming Workplaces.
- Strengthen awareness, protections and support related to labour exploitation of migrant workers**, in particular people on the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme and other people on temporary visas, including by harnessing Australian Red Cross expertise and regional presence, such as the **Work Right Hub**.
- Grant work rights** for the estimated 2,200 people seeking asylum on a Bridging Visa E, and other temporary visa holders, who don't have work rights.
- Extend the length of bridging visas** to provide greater certainty and opportunity to engage in employment while awaiting an immigration decision.
- Ensure **government employment programs**, including Workforce Australia, contain specialist migrant support services.
- Expand eligibility criteria** for government employment programs, including Workforce Australia, to temporary visa holders.
- Remove barriers to work** to meet labour shortages by expanding mainstream training concessions, subsidising childcare for temporary visa holders, improving access to driving licences, and improving recognition of overseas qualifications for newly arrived migrants.

## Invest to build welcoming communities


- Strengthen efforts to acknowledge and **celebrate the benefits of diversity** and the socio-economic contributions of migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum to Australian society.
- Ensure communities are truly able to **use their own voice and represent themselves**, and that voice and representation is heard and acted upon.
- Support and fund the development and implementation of an Anti-racism Framework**, and work with Australian Red Cross to implement community-driven solutions to build welcoming communities, including **In Search of Safety community education** sessions to support schools, communities and workplaces.
- Strengthen socio-economic participation of newly arrived migrant women** and families, including through the Australian Red Cross flagship **Connected Women** program.
- Establish pathways to permanency** for over 18,000 people on **Temporary Protection Visas and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas**, with settlement support from Australian Red Cross and other providers.
- Strengthen family reunion** by (a) setting a target to consider all applications for family reunion within 6 months (b) a paced increase of humanitarian intake.
- Continue to build, strengthen and learn from welcoming communities** across Australia, aligned with government's Building and Strengthening Welcoming Communities pledge with Australian Red Cross.

## Support migrants from the local to the global

- Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** and engage Australian Red Cross as a key implementing partner to strengthen protection of 7.6 million migrants in Australia.
- Increase understanding and responses to the impact of climate change** as it forces people from their homes and lands, particularly across the Pacific. In 2020, over 21 million people in the Asia Pacific were displaced by climate and disaster related events.
- Invest and implement **regional protection mechanisms** to ensure Australia understands, is prepared for, and addresses current and future humanitarian challenges relating to migration.
- Strengthen Australia's leadership role in improving regional responses and protection measures** to 65 million migrants and 9 million refugees/people seeking asylum in the Asia Pacific including through the **Bali Process**, the **Global Compacts for Refugees and Migration**, and country specific responses, such as Afghanistan and Ukraine.
- Support Australian Red Cross work to increase assistance for migrants experiencing vulnerability** across the region and globally through our **Asia Pacific Migration Network** and the **Global Migration Lab**, and partnerships in the Pacific on the intersect of climate change, displacement and migration, aligned with the government's Protection of Migrants pledge with Australian Red Cross.

# 2022/2023: A year in review

## Migration Support Programs




### Safety Net – Emergency Relief

- A co-designed program supporting people on temporary visas, people seeking asylum and people without visa, who don't have access to mainstream social services supports (i.e. Centrelink or Medicare) with access to a [safety net](#) to meet basic needs in times of crisis and emergencies.<sup>1</sup>
- We provided over 3,800 people with \$2.48 million in financial support for housing, food, and utilities, and supported over 10,000 people with food relief items.
- Over 40,000 people accessed our website information.



### Safety Net – Family and Domestic Violence Pilot

- The [Temporary Visa holder Family and Domestic Violence pilot](#) supports people on temporary or uncertain visa status who are experiencing family or domestic violence and financial hardship.<sup>2</sup>
- We supported 1,454 households through the distribution of over \$4.2 million of emergency relief payments of up to \$3,000 per applicant, to meet urgent needs including housing, food, and transport.
- 71% of people who received this support reported feeling heard, understood and better able to deal with issues for which they sought help.
- In response to unmet need evidenced through this program, the government announced an increase in the payment from \$3,000 to \$5,000 commencing 1 July 2023.



### Human trafficking, forced marriage and labour exploitation

- We supported 204 people who had experienced, or were at risk of, [human trafficking](#) or [forced marriage](#). The people we worked with included girls, women and men from 39 countries.<sup>2</sup>
- During the year, we received 76 new referrals from the Australian Federal Police.
- Following co-design with migrant workers and frontline responders across Australia, Australian Red Cross launched the online '[Work Right Hub](#)' in March 2023. It aims to empower migrants and communities to prevent and combat criminal labour exploitation and it received over 10,000 visitors.



### Supporting our newest Australians to settle

- As a [Humanitarian Settlement Program](#) provider, we supported 3,111 humanitarian entrants and refugees from 45 countries (including Afghanistan and Ukraine) to settle in Perth, ACT and Albury, Wagga Wagga and Wollongong, through one-on-one casework, on-arrival support, orientation, housing as well as linking people with mainstream supports.<sup>3</sup>
- This year, with the re-opening of international borders following COVID-19, we committed to strengthening our local programs for refugees and humanitarian entrants.
- We welcome migrants and refugees across all States and Territories, including through the Growing Regions of Welcome (GROW) pilot in regional NSW.<sup>4</sup>



### Restoring Family Links

- This service is a unique and integral part of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and helps [connect family members](#) who have been separated as a result of war, disaster or migration.
- Through our international network, we actively sought 1,912 people for 856 clients through our service to determine the fate or whereabouts of their missing family members.
- We responded to 950+ hotline enquiries and were able to resolve 82 cases.



### Monitoring Immigration Detention

- Through regular visits, we monitor immigration detention facilities in Australia. Our teams inspect detention facilities, speak with people in detention, and meet with departmental officials and detention service providers to try to resolve issues of humanitarian concern to prevent and reduce harm.
- Our work aims to ensure that the safety, health, dignity and wellbeing of people in detention are upheld and protected regardless for the reason for their detention and is guided by our [Guiding Principles of Monitoring Immigration Detention](#).
- We conducted 24 visits (physical and virtual) to immigration detention facilities and undertook in-depth interviews with 806 people to identify any issues of humanitarian concern, including the impact of the pandemic on people in detention.

# 2022/2023: A year in review (cont.)

## Migration Support Programs



### Economic participation<sup>5</sup>

- Our [Connected Women program](#), operating in NT, TAS, and NSW, strengthened the socio-economic participation of migrant women, attracting over 2,815 participants. In the NT, with 2,585 participants, this included four major public events and 117 diverse gatherings, 55 of which were dedicated to capacity building to enhance participants' skills and knowledge. The Community Connect Social Enterprise Food Truck in NT provided 18 women with hands-on experience in the realm of food business using the mobile food trailer model.
- We helped migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum into safe, dignified and sustainable work. Through our [Connect.Match.Support](#) and [Growing Regions of Welcome](#) employment programs we directly strengthened employment capacity of over 647 migrants.
- Our learner driver program in Mount Gambier and Coffs Harbour continued to support people to get their license.



### Building welcoming communities<sup>5</sup>

- To educate, dispel myths and help create a more welcoming Australia, we spoke to 8,256 people in schools, community groups and workplaces in [In Search of Safety](#) sessions.
- The [Bi-cultural health program](#) (TAS) and [Health in My Language program](#) (TAS + SA) delivered health information sessions to over 5,000 participants, increasing skills to understand and access the health care system. 95% of people participating in our bi-cultural health program increased their ability to manage their health, including how to access health services.



### Humanitarian diplomacy & advice – Auxiliary to public authorities on humanitarian affairs

As auxiliary to public authorities on humanitarian affairs, we regularly provide neutral, independent and impartial advice directly to governments and departments at the federal, state and territory level. Our focus included continued efforts to:

- Ensure support for people on temporary or without visas who don't have access to a safety net during/following disasters or times of hardship, such as the QLD/NSW floods.
- Empower people through safe and dignified employment.
- Build welcoming and inclusive communities.
- Support migrants from the local to the global.

#### Key roundtables & consultations:

- National Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery.
- Consultation on Review of Australia's Migration System.

#### Selected public submissions:

- [A Migration System for Australia's future](#)
- [Review of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Next steps to improve Australia's settlement and integration of refugees](#)

#### Selected key reports:

- [Trust in Humanitarian Action: Migrants' Perspectives](#), Australian Red Cross report on data collected for the Global Migration Lab study.
- [Refugee Adjustment Study](#) – impact of uncertainty was published in the Australian and NZ Journal of Psychiatry. The study was a partnership between the Refugee Trauma and Recovery Program at the School of Psychology, UNSW, Australian Red Cross, Settlement Services International, and Phoenix Australia at the University of Melbourne, funded by an Australian Research Council grant.



### Regional and Global work

We are working to increase the broader International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's impact on migration.

The [Global Migration Lab](#), hosted by Australian Red Cross:

- Published [Migrants' perspectives: Building trust in humanitarian action](#). Nearly 17,000 migrants shared their stories as part of the research including over 1,800 migrants surveyed by 15 National Societies in one-on-one interviews.
- Reached more than 60 national societies, IFRC and ICRC delegations in every region, and shared evidence at five global policy events organised by United Nations bodies and academic institutions.
- Developed IFRC advocacy messages for the International Migration Review Forum and informed global WHO guidance on COVID-19 vaccine access for migrants.
- Commenced the development of a [Movement Strategy on Migration](#).

#### Other examples of global activities:

#### Key regional activities:

- Hosted the Secretariat of the [Asia Pacific Migration Network](#) (APMN), which includes 26 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- Supported peer-to-peer capacity with sister National Societies both regionally and globally on access to services for migrants, restoring family links, protection matters, refugee resettlement, immigration detention monitoring, and humanitarian diplomacy.