
The Marlborough Migrant Centre



Four generations & four ethnicities, Marlborough Migrant Centre 2012

A Scoping Report compiled by Marnie Campbell, April 2013

Foreword from the Chair

The Marlborough Migrant Centre (MMC) is facing an uncertain future due to a possible loss of support and funding that we have been receiving since 2006 from Ministry of Social Development through the Family and Community Services initiative Settling In. MMC's annual operating budget is \$71,000 and the organisation stands to lose 50% of our operating funds if the Settling In support is withdrawn.

The Marlborough Migrant Centre came into existence in January 2007 following the release of the 'Settling In Marlborough' report. At the time Marlborough was one of seven regions in New Zealand chosen to be part of the Ministry of Social Development's Family and Community Services initiative that aimed at helping migrants and refugees settle in New Zealand. The initiative involves:

- an analysis of key issues and priorities for refugees and migrants
- the identification of needs and gaps in services
- the purchase of services to meet those needs
- the support of capacity and capability building for refugee and migrant communities.

The Settling In report focused on Marlborough and the challenges and opportunities this community was experiencing as more migrants chose to make New Zealand and the Marlborough region their home. The report clearly identified a need for an entity to support Marlborough's increasingly diverse community and the Centre is recognized as a credible and unique entity in Marlborough that assists newcomers' successful resettlement.

Critical to our operation has been the ongoing support, guidance and financial assistance received from Ann Dysart and her team under MSD's Settling In; this support has been fundamental to the success of the Centre's operation to date.

The current global economic climate is having a serious impact on our migrant community and the call to support our newcomers is challenging.

The attached report provides an insight into the work of the Marlborough Migrant Centre. Highlighting the work we do in the community focusing on host community education, reduction in social isolation & family violence, and providing an advocacy support network for the protection of vulnerable children to ensure the provision of 'wrap around' services to support and facilitate integration into a new community.

The likely loss of the Settling In support will have a serious impact on the level of service delivery, which will consequently impact on the Marlborough community.

Chris Cookson

The Marlborough Migrant Centre (MMC)

“Given the fact that 1:4 New Zealanders were born overseas, one of the highest [migration] figures in the developed world, and given the focus on the need to attract and retain migrants to contribute to employment in New Zealand we must do all we can to help migrants settle in and to stay for the longer term.”

(Labour & Immigration Research Centre, 2011.)

Summary

This report reviews the ‘work’ of the Marlborough Migrant Centre and its role in responding to the changing (migrant) demographics of the Marlborough region. It has sought to gather and condense key information not otherwise readily available about the operation of the Centre. It has been found that the Centre delivers effective engagement strategies, not provided elsewhere, for its clients and for the Marlborough community as a whole. It provides government and other funding agencies with a case for the Centre’s sustainability, particularly in the context of the advice from the Labour & Immigration Research Centre, as cited above.

This report looks at the work of the Centre from the following three perspectives:

- 1. The changing face of the Marlborough community.**
- 2. The way the Centre engages with its clients, and the Marlborough community.**
- 3. The effect on other key agencies if the Centre did not exist.**

1. The changing face of Marlborough

Most Marlborough residents are of European origin, predominantly of British, Irish, German and Dutch descent. Māori and Pacific Island communities exist but are smaller. However, ethnic diversity has increased in recent years with the arrival of large numbers of South Americans (mostly Brazilians) and Asians (mainly Indonesian, Japanese, Korean and Filipino) who work in the expanding viticulture and horticulture sectors. (*Stats NZ, regional profiles.*)

Between June 2006 and June 2010, natural increase (births over deaths) was the principal contributing factor to population growth in many regions in New Zealand. However, importantly, in Marlborough net migration had an equivalent contribution to overall population growth to natural increase.

In addition to this feature of the permanent residential population, Marlborough also experiences significant seasonal inflows of migrant workers. These seasonal flows are not generally accounted for in population figures, therefore discussions around the impact of the movement of people in this paper are conservative.

Because data from the 2013 census will not be available until Dec 2013, this report has accessed regional school enrolment figures to illustrate the changes in proportions of ethnic

Ethnic group	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	Difference Over 8 Yrs.
Maori	14.42	15.3	16.5	17.5	18.6	>4.24%
Pasifika	2.09	2.29	2.90	3.4	3.4	>1.4%
Asian	0.09	1.1	1.6	1.7	2.2	>2.17%
Other	.87	.89	1.37	1.55	1.59	>0.72%
European	80%				73.6%	<6.8%

groups (Table 1).

Table 1: Snapshot of Marlborough School Enrolments by ethnicity 2004 – 2012

(M Campbell, extrapolation of Ministry of Education data, April 2013)

Table 1 above illustrates that the numbers of Maori children enrolled in Marlborough schools has grown significantly as have the number of Asian and Pacifica students. Given the Marlborough economy is dependent on viticulture and horticulture, it can be anticipated the trend towards a fluctuating and transient population in Marlborough will be maintained into the foreseeable future.

Africa	Asia	Pacific Islands (Oceania)	South America	Europe	Middle East
Zimbabwean	Indian	Papua New Guinean	Brazilian	British	Jordanian
Malawian	Malaysian	Samoan		Bulgarian	
Botswanan	Japanese	Fijian		Polish	
	Indonesian	Tongan		Belgian	
	Thai	Kiribatian		Czech Republic	
	Chinese	Cook Islands		German	
	Korean			France	
	Cambodian			Russia	
	Filipino			Romania	
	Vietnamese				

Table 2: Ethnicities accessing the Marlborough Migrant Centre in 2013

The economic wellbeing of Marlborough hinges on its ability to keep its migrant people. As suggested by the Labour & Immigration Research Centre (2011), agencies providing settlement support can be key to such retention. And, it follows; such agencies need to be resourced. Table two shows the diversity of cultural populations visiting and accessing the Centre programs in 2013.

2. The way the Centre engages with its clients, and the Marlborough community

The Marlborough Migrant Centre is a not for profit organisation. The major source of funding comes from Settling In, Family & Community Services Ministry of Social Development which is likely to cease in June, together with the Department of Internal Affairs, Lottery Board and the Community Organisation Grants Scheme, and the Marlborough District Council. Other, smaller amounts of funds are received from various community service organisations including Canterbury Community Trust, NZ Post Community Post, Zonta Club Marlborough, and Soroptimists Marlborough.

The Centre opened in 2007 in response to findings from a Family & Community Services Settling In migrant community social service report, 'Settling In Marlborough' which identified a need for a *"point of contact for newcomers, for information and advice and some mechanisms for linking newcomers with existing networks and agencies."* (1)

This report clearly identified a gap in the way existing service providers related and provided services to the migrant community.

Between 2007 and 2012 the Centre was operated by two part time staff. In early 2013 in response to an anticipated reduction in the MSD, Settling In, FAC funding the Marlborough Migrant Centre had to reassess the organisation's viability. The changes made resulted in the loss of one of these positions meaning the Centre is now staffed by one paid manager (25 hours of work per week) and a small team of volunteers which includes the governing body who donate their time when they are able. The Centre manager regularly contributes at least ten hours per week additional to her paid employment.

The Centre which operates from (Marlborough House) and is open to the public from 10am – 2pm week days shares a building with three other 'not for profit' organisations; English Language Partners, Volunteer Marlborough & Literacy Marlborough. The cost of rental of the building is met jointly by the tenants from various funding sources. It is centrally located in Blenheim close to shops and other amenities.

A particular strength is the close working relationship between English Language Partners and the Migrant Centre who work in synergy to support successful resettlement in the Marlborough migrant community.

The Marlborough Migrant Centre has regular interactions with twenty nine different ethnic groups in Marlborough (see Table 2 above).

Footnote (1) (The Settling in Marlborough: Migrant Community Social Service Report. How minority ethnic New Zealanders can be seen, heard and accepted, Ministry of Social Development, October 2006

The Centre provides an extensive range of services. One of its key roles is in the linking of migrants to information and services related to settlement. In the month of March 2013 the Centre recorded 64 contact visits requiring information most typically related to:

- How service providers can obtain assistance with migrant matters
- How to obtain advocacy support
- How to access day to day services such as shopping for specific foods or for children's needs
- How to access local community amenities and government agencies
- Health entitlements and issues
- How to meet with and interact with other migrants who may have a shared experience
- Links to English language support and interpreter and translation services.

The Centre is the umbrella agency for a range of social, community, educational and event based programs.

The **community program** includes a fieldworker component , working in the community towards a reduction in social isolation, family violence , and providing an advocacy support network for the protection of vulnerable children to ensure the provision of 'wrap around' services to support and facilitate integration into a new community.

The **social program** includes family gatherings; drop-in morning and afternoon events, pot luck teas, information stalls at local community events and informal gatherings. These social gatherings are regularly attended by approximately fifty people from the migrant and more established communities.

The **education program** include regular Intercultural Communication & Awareness training Seminars delivered by the Migrant Centre under a programme developed by the Office of Ethnic Affairs, with participants coming mainly from the health, volunteer and educations sectors, Women's Health and Wellbeing seminars, Census Information Evening for Migrants and a Confidence Building Seminar for Migrant Women. The Women's Health and Wellbeing Seminar in June 2012 was attended by 58 women and included topics such as budgeting and women's sexual health.

The Centre produces, publishes and circulates an information booklet for new arrivals (*Useful Tips for Migrants*) and is currently producing a Migrant Women's Health booklet in conjunction with the Office of Public Health.

The **events program** includes a regional multi-cultural festival, attended this year by over 4,000 people; an International Women's Night dinner; and a Songkran ceremony to celebrate the Thai New Year.

The events program is regarded as a key platform in fulfilling the Centre's role in linking the migrant community with the broad more general community in Marlborough. This in turn is seen as crucial to the successful long-term settlement and engagement of new arrivals to Marlborough. The positive public face is a major aspect of the strength of the Centre. The following are examples of feedback received about the annual cultural day firstly from the Marlborough Police and secondly an email from a member of the public.

1. *"It (the multicultural day)is the single most important event which brings together Marlborough established and migrant communityit does more to promote a common understanding of migrant people than any other event ". (R. Smith, Marlborough Police)*

2. *"(Dear ...M)*

..... The Migrant centre is always a most interesting environment and obviously a much needed place for newcomers in our community to visit.

I was most interested to hear that you do much of the planning for the annual Multicultural Festival. This special day, now in its eighth year, is always a remarkable celebration. Blenheim people who attend, maybe for the first time, are always very vocal in their surprise that our community is so vibrant and varied. As a teacher of English for Speakers of Other Languages at Marlborough Boys College and a home tutor for the English Learning Partnerships, I have a real interest in promoting this day to those I teach. Pasifica students always take part and it is very gratifying to be able to commend them on their participation. This connection helps me build good relationships for me and my colleagues with our ESOL students. There is a huge variety of entertainment and information and I do commend you for your efforts to stage the day. It deserves plenty of public recognition and support.

I wish you well for the continuing success of this festival. Kind Regards...(JY)"

The Centre delivery

It is important to establish how the centre operates and why it is effective in its delivery of services.

1. The Marlborough Migrant centre is the only centre in Marlborough which offers a service specifically dedicated to the needs of migrant people. Although coming from a range of different cultures migrants have a shared experience in the difficulties faced when moving from another country to New Zealand.

Migrant clients suggest that:

"No matter what the issue is, this is where we can come. There is so much I didn't understand when I first came here (Blenheim) and I am an educated woman I have a lot to offer this community but it is not what I expected, there is a lot of problems with misunderstanding both ways." (Fadia Mouhsen Jordanian community)

2. The centre builds trust and is seen as a welcoming and safe place.

The migrant experience is frequently one which results in a distrust of government and government services. This means that migrants can be ill prepared to access the institutional services in NZ to which they are entitled. Willingness to access these services requires not only knowledge of their existence but also a level of trust. The depth of service provided by the Centre specifically seeks to build such trust through an on-going relationship, personal welcoming and attention, with individual and cultural rights valued. Continued visitation to the Centre shows that migrants are appreciative of this service.

3. The Centre provides a tailored and tiered service with a holistic approach.

Typically this service starts with assistance around immediate settlement needs including referral to other agencies. This progresses, where necessary, to a comprehensive “wrap-around” support service for individual clients and families. The individuals and families experience social isolation, issues of poor health, complexities related to settlement such as immigration and employment difficulties. In one example this more comprehensive service, as offered one family, included access to legal experts, the St Vincent DePaul Society, the Office of Child Youth & Family, the Community Law Office, Social Service organisations such as Bread of Life. Case management sessions such as these require staff skilled in intercultural communication and negotiations.

The Centre manages a small team of volunteers who with the manager, manage on-going home visits and pastoral outreach to migrant families in need.

3. The Centre aims to develop a context in which migrants are empowered to help themselves. For example migrant women run stalls, are encouraged through the Centre to speak at diversity forums and local government events. Such two way exchange promotes community awareness and increases participation and engagement across the migrant and general community.

Further to this the Migrant Wellbeing Group, a group that embodies relevant agencies and service providers, takes a lead role in migrant issues that are likely to impact on the host community.

3. The effect on other agencies if the centre did not exist.

A somewhat hidden aspect of the Centre’s operations is the extent to which other service providers within the Marlborough community rely on its work. The following is an indication of the number and type of agencies involved.

The Ministry of Social Development, Office of Child Youth & Family, Works & Income NZ

& the Community Links Program

The Public Health Office

The New Zealand Police

The District Health Boards

The Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology

Schools

The Marlborough District Council

The New Zealand Department of Immigration

The Community Law Office

Social Service organisations including Bread of Life & St Vincent de Paul

Mataa Waka

The office of the Local Members of parliament

Fijian entities

Women's Refuge

Recognised Seasonal Employment Scheme (RSES)

Tangata Pasifika

Church support groups

To better understand the nature of this interaction between these groups and the possible effect on these other agencies if the Centre no longer existed, a number of short interviews were conducted in person or by telephone with prominent members of selected local agencies. It is a selection of interview material.

1. Conversations, The New Zealand Police, Blenheim .

"In terms of policing ...my job would be much, much harder if I didn't have the Migrant Centre acting as liaison. They play a huge role in representing the needs, of migrant people and in preventing them from becoming victims."

The impacts of social isolation and disempowerment of minority populations is well documented in literature and through media globally.

The Marlborough Police describe some of the problems caused by the misunderstanding and assumption held by the general community about migrant populations. These assumptions have led to victimisation of migrant people.

- *"There are many assumptions made by the (Marlborough) community about what they (the established community) of Marlborough think might happen as a result of having more migrants. Some of these assumptions have resulted in migrants being refused accommodation of any kind and in facing great difficulty entering the work force.*
- *Lots of agencies, including the police, do not understand the difficulties faced by people who do not speak English as their first Language. At a crime scene it is very difficult to get an accurate report with people from non-English speaking backgrounds – the Migrant Centre is called on to identify people in the suspect or victims community who may be able to provide support. This is necessary in addition to the language and interpreter links the police can provide for us to do a good job.*

-
- *When migrants come into a community there is a lot of misunderstanding about what those people might be going to take away from the local community. A lot of migrants who are not familiar with local practices may be and have been taken advantage of.*
 - *In addition to this “They (Migrant Centre) provide social support, legal and justice related support. It also provides a place where people with similar experiences can meet.*

I understand since the global economic downturn that many not for profit organisations are in need of money but this one , (MMC) is crucial **...the ripple effect if we were to lose them would really affect our ability to do our work in Marlborough.”**

(Senior Constable Russell Smith, NZ Police, Blenheim, April 2013).

2. Conversations with the Principal, Blenheim School

The Blenheim School, enrolling children from years 1 to 6 has responded to an increase in Pasifika children and families attending the school. These families are frequently transient and struggling financially and student attendance and performance can lag behind age peers. The school has been assisted with intercultural training and awareness strategies by the Migrant Centre and has run a most successful initiative which relied on the personal invitation of the families of Pasifika children by a member of the relevant Pasifika community. The program had a 100% attendance and included introducing the parents to strategies to encourage their children to read. As a result of this program

- *“There was a significant improvement in the Pasifika children’s attendance and some children had achieved a six level improvement in their reading scores.”*
- *“We will definitely run this program again but it takes a huge amount of school time to find the appropriate people within the Pasifika community to endorse the program and invite families to attend and then significant time and effort to run the program.”*

The program included a crèche, pick and home transportation, food and the provision of a mini library. This program illustrates the importance of culturally appropriate linkage, intercultural training and practical support necessary to ensure migrant program success.

(D Ahradsen, Principal, Blenheim School, April 2013.)

3. Conversations with Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology, (NMIT). Marlborough campus,

“The Migrant Centre is vital to us, it is the only place we can send our international students for help and for referral to services related to English language support.”

The Department of Labour reports suggest that between 2010 and 2011 approximately half of the people receiving permanent status in NZ have done so having previously entered New Zealand on a student or temporary work visa and it raises the question of how prepared this group are to enter

the workforce and therefore how likely they are to retain jobs and to stay. (Department of Labour 2012).

The NMIT staff relates the difficulties in meeting the needs of the international student body. Funding cuts have meant the closure of English classes and as NMIT staff put it clearly.

“We have to turn migrant people away if their English is not up to standard to access our programs. Without the Migrant Centre there is nowhere for these people to go, I cannot endorse their (The Migrant Centre’s) services strongly enough. “

(Andria Johnston- Taylor, MNIT, Marlborough Campus, April 2013)

4. Conversation with Colin King, Local member of Parliament,

“We really have a changing (ethnic) population in Marlborough and we have a long way to go before we have programs and resources which truly reflect the shape of this community...we have only just begun.”

The local Member of Parliament describes the importance of the Migrant Centre as a primary linkage agency.

“They (Marlborough Migrant Centre) is important to my office and to my role ... I use them as a sounding board and as a first point of call for advice related to the migrants in this community, they deal with sensitive and confidential issues and I can rely on them. They provide me with advice which is like an early warning system alerting me to potential issues for people in these communities. They provide the links for me with the right people in these communities. I also use them to give credibility to aspects of migrant’s applications for residency.”

(MP for Kaikoura, Mr Colin, King, April 2013.)

5. Conversation with Kathy Middleton, Midwives Marlborough

“It is fair to say that if the Migrant Centre wasn’t there and the individual and ongoing support wasn’t there then the health outcomes for these (migrant) women and their babies would not be as positive.”

(K. Middleton, April 2013).

Kathy Middleton of Midwives Marlborough describes her personal experience with the Migrant Centre and the intensive antenatal, birth and after birth support provided in the case of the Kiribati women and their babies. As new migrants these young women were facing pregnancy and child birth removed from the usual support of family and community life.

The support provided by the Centre in this case illustrates the intensive, detailed and ongoing nature of the support needed. This involved transportation to antenatal classes and health appointments including visits to the obstetrician and support at births. The manager worked with the women to

simplify and reiterate health messages and brought the women to follow up visits to the midwife after birth. It also involved negotiating with the client's employer to arrange an extension of out of work period for a mother faced with an unwell, newly born baby.

This example illustrates the importance of the quality of the role of the manager in establishing relationships of trust with the client, in this case, the Kiribati women and their babies. The centre was approached by these women as a trusted, known entity and as the manager had established a relationship with the clients was familiar with the family circumstances of the young women involved.

“The Migrant Centre improves the delivery of this (midwifery)health service by ensuring that the women attend before and after the birth and because their English isn't good helping them understanding the health requirements and the crucial aspects of the care of newly born and in this case unwell babies. “

(K. Middleton, April 2013).

6. Conversations with Robin Mortimer, Service Centre Manager, Work & Income, Ministry of Social Development, NZ.

Robin Mortimer, Service Manager for Work & Income, Marlborough, was a member of the working party providing guidance to the Settling in Marlborough, Family & Community Services Report in 2006 and so has been involved with the Centre since its inception.

During the interview conducted for this report Robin Mortimer discussed the impacts of changing ethnicity in Marlborough but suggested that a more important impact was that of the movements of people more generally, from the North to the South Island. Marlborough, as a primary producer relies heavily on seasonal labour for its workforce. This workforce, he suggests, includes increasing numbers of people who decide to settle beyond the season. It is this group that Work and Income are called on to provide assistance to during the work stand down period.

“In terms of Work & Income service delivery “for me it is difficult to get the message across to the community who need it especially to some members of the Pacific community who find it difficult to ask for help. **We (Work & Income) can only provide a service based on information. We need to be understood and we need to understand our clients... If the centre was not there I doubt if we would get these messages across.**” (Robin Mortimer, April 2013)

Robin Mortimer describes the Centre as providing a “positive and proactive profile of migrant people” through its Multicultural festival. Through this event the wider community has an opportunity to get to know its newer members as contributors to the community. In this way many stereotypes are broken down.”

This interviewee adds that the location of the Centre as a positive factor in its success. “They are centrally located in Marlborough House, co-located to other agencies and in close proximity to Barnardo's and others.”

(Robin Mortimer, April 2013.)

Conclusion

There is a clear message which resonates from reviewing the work of the Marlborough Migrant Centre and that is that the loss of this agency would be deeply felt by the Marlborough community.

In 2006, *the Settling in Family & Community Services 'Settling in Marlborough' Report* clearly established the need to assist migrant people as they settle and participate in community life. This need has continued and increased as Marlborough continues to diversify and grow.

Migrant community members and agency representatives consulted for this review make two important points. Firstly that the services which the Centre provides improve the lives of migrant people and the general community alike and secondly, that if we were to take away these services we are unlikely to see the same improvements. Links, appropriate facilitation and advocacy are needed in order to ensure positive engagement with and between the wider community and the migrant community. It is however, with the limited amount of operational resources, difficult to detail the intricacies of this support and greater resources are needed to provide the data which details connection of services directly to specific outcomes.

The centre is under resourced. Limited revenue means that it is essentially operated by one highly committed staff member who works many additional hours; she is assisted by a small team of competent, experienced committee members and members of the migrant community. Although her efforts are described by community as exemplary a system which relies on voluntary commitment is ultimately not sustainable.

Recommendation

The report recommends that the existing framework and support systems Established by the Centre be maintained and strengthened and that they form the basis for a future, expanded Marlborough Migrant Centre operation.

Reference List

1. Settling in Marlborough: Migrant Community Social Service Report. How minority ethnic New Zealanders can be seen heard and accepted; Ministry of Social Development, October 2006.

2. Migration Trends & Outlook 2010 – 2011; Department of Labour.

<http://www.dol.govt/publications/research/migration-trends1011>. Uplifted April 2013.

3. Migrants in New Zealand: Retention and Onward Migration 1998- 2011; Labour & Immigration Research Centre, 2011. Government Press, Wellington.

[http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/research/reports & articles/ Pop Projections](http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/research/reports%20&%20articles/Pop%20Projections), uplifted April 2013

4. Statistical Analysis and Summary of Themes related to Family Violence and Death 2004-2011; New Zealand Police.

[http://www.police.govt.nz/sites/default files](http://www.police.govt.nz/sites/default/files) uplifted April 2013.

5. The Changing Face of New Zealand Population, Population Projections; Statistics New Zealand.

[http://www.stats.govt.nz/reports/articles/Pop projections](http://www.stats.govt.nz/reports/articles/Pop%20projections).

6. Subnational Population Estimates 30 June 2012; Statistics New Zealand.

[http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_Statspopestimates &projections/subnational](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_Statspopestimates%20&%20projections/subnational).

7. New Zealand Ministry of Education, Pivot Tables 2004-2012; & personal communication Ministry of Education, April 2013.

Unpublished material

Reading Together; Board of Trustees Report, Blenheim School, Oct 2012

Marlborough Migrant Centre Newsletters & Field Workers Report; October, Dec 2012 & March 2013.

Appendix:

Sum of Students	July Roll Year Marlborough								
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Ethnic group									
Māori	970	1028	1029	1108	1097	1157	1134	1179	1189
Pasifika	2	151	154	158	192	204	223	226	216
Asian	64	77	75	93	104	112	111	132	146
Other	59	59	60	75	91	104	100	112	102
IFP	78	46	42	51	43	44	30	30	25
Grand Total	6725	6684	6706	6668	6614	6624	6451	6451	6380

Marlborough School Enrolment Pivot Tables, Regional data, Data supplied M.O.E

