

Youth Engagement Strategy Research Report

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FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

New Zealand Red Cross Fundamental Principles

New Zealand Red Cross' mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity and enhancing community resilience. The Red Cross Fundamental Principles guide all we do, whether we're helping people in New Zealand communities or providing urgent relief in an international disaster. Our Fundamental Principles are:

- » **Humanity** - Te Ngākau Atawhai
- » **Impartiality** - Te Tōkeketanga
- » **Neutrality** - Te Whakaraupapa
- » **Independence** - Te Tū Motuhake
- » **Voluntary Service** - He Ratonga Tūao
- » **Unity** - Te Kotahitanga
- » **Universality** - O te Ao

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

We recognise that engagement with Māori is essential to our work. New Zealand Red Cross is committed to using Te Tiriti o Waitangi to guide our relationship with Māori as tangata whenua and Treaty partners. We embrace the Treaty principles of partnership, participation and protection.

Auxiliary Status and commitment to UNROC

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is the world's largest humanitarian network. Supported by millions of volunteers, it helps people affected by disasters and conflicts. Red Cross enjoys a special relationship with governments. We have special status as auxiliary partners in the humanitarian field. This means that, while we are independent, we cooperate with governments for humanitarian purposes.

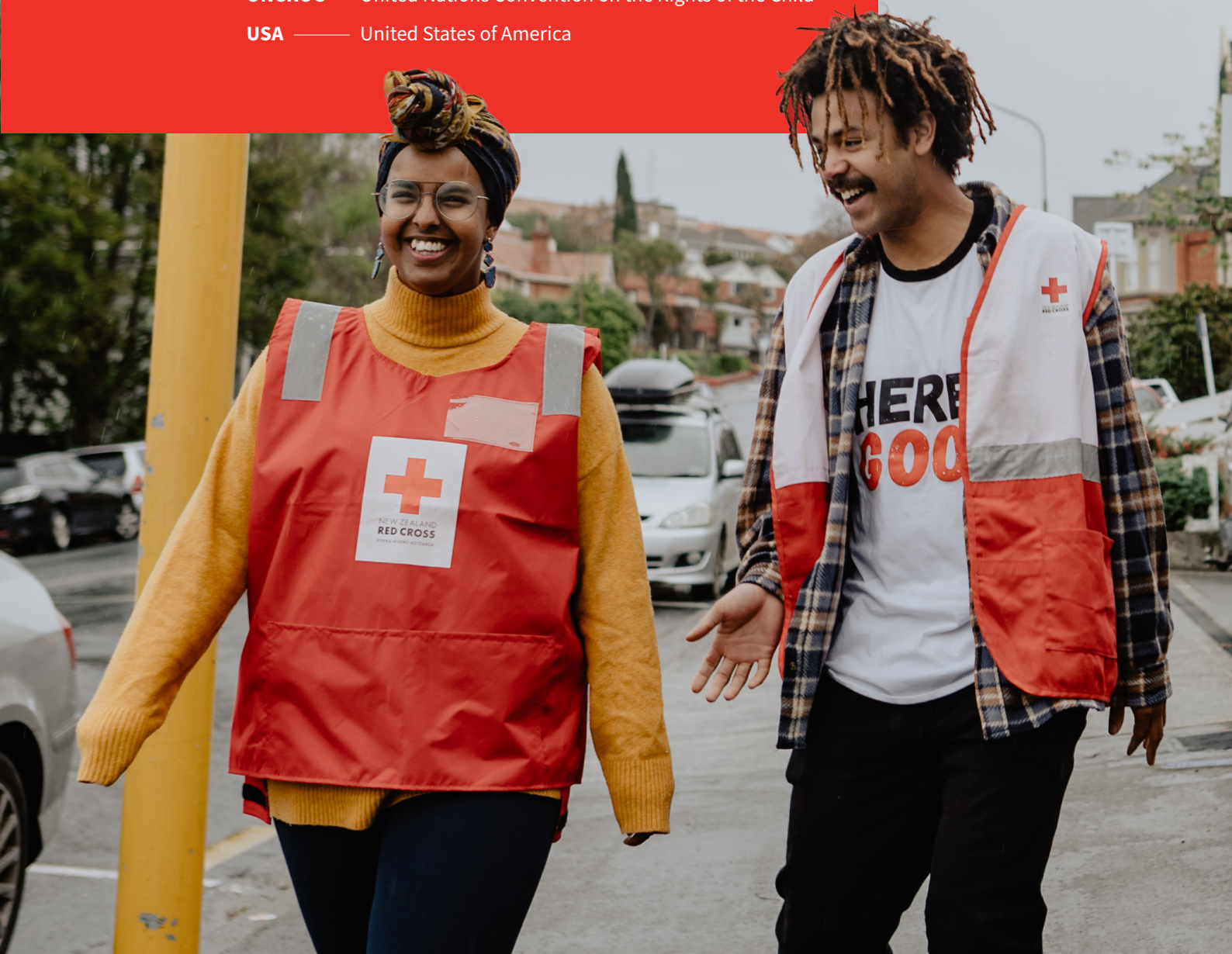
Further to this, in 1993 New Zealand ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC). UNCROC states that all young people under the age of 18 have the right to participate in decision-making. It recognises their rights to express their opinions, to have their opinions considered in decisions that affect them, and to receive and give information and ideas.

DEFINITION

For the IFRC, Red Cross and Red Crescent societies young people are defined to be 0-30 years of age

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- DRM** — Disaster Risk Management
- IFRC** — International Federation of Red Cross
- IHL** — International Humanitarian Law
- NGOs** — Non-Governmental Organisations
- NYP** — Red Cross National Youth Panel
- NZRC** — New Zealand Red Cross
- PFA** — Psychological First Aid
- PTSD** — Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- UNCROC** — United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- USA** — United States of America



1 Introduction

Young people are often found at the core of major social movements – whether it is a result of being exposed to new ways of thinking within education that leads to an interest in advocacy or by dedicating themselves to creating social change to better humanity.

Globally, young people are considered innovative and outspoken against injustice and are often at the centre of major humanitarian movements, taking local action on humanitarian issues. For example, making personal changes to live more sustainably in response to global climate change – switching to reusable coffee cups and water bottles, avoiding spending money on unnecessary items, and reducing household waste. Through online platforms, rangatahi are furthering their own education and championing things that matter to them, including the humanitarian impacts of climate change, disaster preparedness, wellbeing and resilience.

Rangatahi around the world, including in Aotearoa New Zealand, have shown throughout history that they are willing to contribute to discussions on matters that have a profound humanitarian impact. Examples of this include the Ngā Tamatoa group of rangatahi urging for the teaching of Māori language and culture in schools in 1961, the Springbok tour anti-apartheid movement of the 1980s, and the Strike for Climate Change in 2019. The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (the Movement) provide a way for New Zealand Red Cross to focus on the humanitarian impacts of issues that are important to rangatahi.

Indeed, Aotearoa New Zealand's young people have seldomly hesitated to take a stand against political, social and environmental injustice.

Despite these bold youth-led movements, New Zealand Red Cross, like many humanitarian organisations, continue to experience decreasing membership and low recruitment of younger members. As of January 2021 young people made 9.74% of our membership. It has become clear that our current membership and volunteering model is too rigid to suit the needs of young people, and is out of step in aligning with current volunteering trends.

It is for these reasons that in 2019 New Zealand Red Cross committed to developing a Youth Engagement Strategy (the Strategy) that would not only create meaningful opportunities for young people to be involved in, and contribute to humanitarian action in Aotearoa New Zealand, but that would also benefit the wider youth sector. More than ever, young people are driven by great causes. However, they do not view themselves as loyal supporters of one organisation, but as a multi-faceted, dynamic generation, who are motivated to act and create lasting change in their communities and beyond.



2

Literature Review: Social and Environmental Issues Affecting Young People in Aotearoa New Zealand and Beyond



In order to develop a strategy that engages young people in a meaningful way, it was important to use an evidence-based approach.

To do this, we began by looking at current academic and anecdotal evidence regarding the global, national and local issues impacting on youth wellbeing and engagement. Outlined below is a summary of the literature that informed the development of the Strategy, including the current landscape of the youth sector in Aotearoa New Zealand, the role of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in youth issues, humanitarian issues such as mental health and climate change, and the experiences of former refugee young people.

2.1 Young People in Aotearoa New Zealand: The Current Landscape

It is estimated that there are 1.6 million New Zealanders under the age of 25, representing about 33% of our total population. While Aotearoa New Zealand's population is growing both in number and diversity, a lack of data means that there are few references to the demographic makeup of our young people. However, we know that Māori and Pacific People are youthful populations with median ages of 24 and 22 years (respectively), compared to Pakeha/European populations (41 years); that 11% of young people under the age of 15 identify as disabled (2013 Disability Survey); and that according to the 2018 General Social Survey almost 6% of young people aged 18-24 identify as bisexual and almost 1% as gay or lesbian (Child Wellbeing & Poverty Reduction Group, 2019).

The youth sector in Aotearoa New Zealand is characterised by a range of organisations that serve young people in a variety of ways. From uniformed programmes such as Girl Guiding, Scouts and St John, to youth leadership development programmes like Outward Bound, Spirit of Adventure, Duke of Edinburgh's international award and wider youth support, development, and recreation services. There are also national, regional and local youth organisations dedicated to supporting young people who identify as being part of specific identity groups, such as former refugee young people, Rainbow young people and young disabled people.



2.2 Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Responsibilities and Implications

As inheritors of Te Tiriti o Waitangi¹ partnership, organisations that operate and engage with youth work in Aotearoa New Zealand as tauwiwi² must embrace direct and complementary relationships with whānau, hapū, marae, iwi,³ and other Māori organisations.

According to Rotarangi and Russell (2010), a key aspect of ensuring appropriate inclusion of indigenous communities is learning how to work with indigenous people for the betterment of their societies, and where requested, to work to support and strengthen their systems in response to change. Resilience is critical to societies in which people have a long-term relationship with land and resources. However, when significant proportions of those peoples have been disempowered by a dominant society, then a new tangent is required, including more culturally oriented methodologies (Rotarangi & Russell, 2010). Improved access to resources and networks is also vital for effective engagement of indigenous peoples – for example, the promotion of linkages across networks, events and shared settings, and the distribution and transformation of resources across the networks (Rasmus et al., 2014).

Including Māori and working as a true partner of Te Tiriti o Waitangi must prioritise the integration of the responses and recovery experiences of Māori within a context of historical and contemporary marginalisation. Constructive attention to these networks helps build resilience, both in regards to ongoing issues and new challenges that may arise in the future (Lambert et al., 2012).

1 Treaty of Waitangi. For further information on Te Tiriti o Waitangi go to: <https://www.waitangi.org.nz/>

2 Foreigner, European, non-Māori.

3 Family, sub-tribe, marae, and tribe.

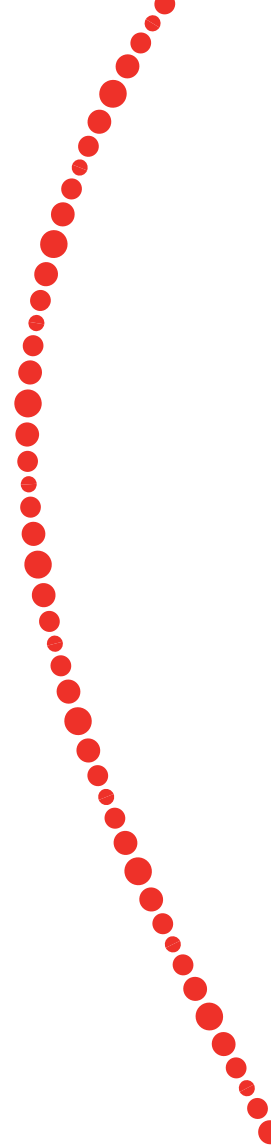
2.2.1 The Unique Experience of Indigenous Young People

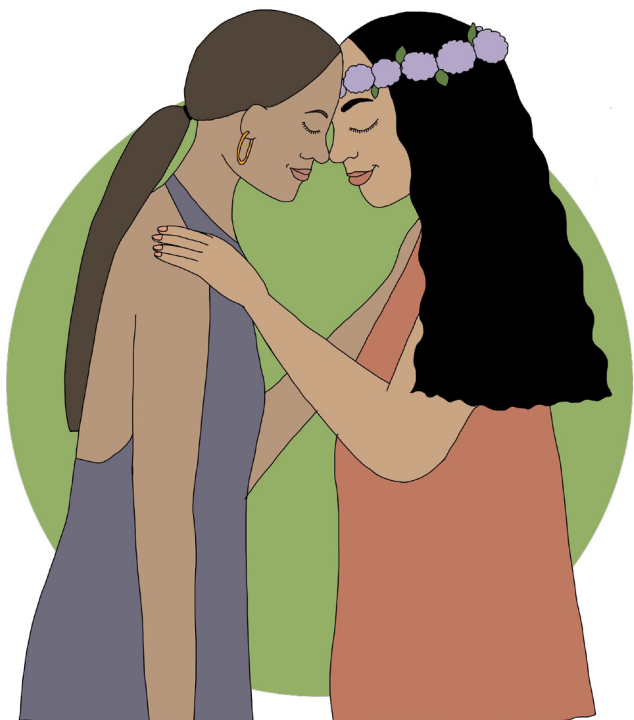
In Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori young people experience a wide range of systemic barriers that impact upon their health, wellbeing, employment and educational outcomes. For example, research shows that Māori young people have the highest annual prevalence of mental health illness (Russell, 2018), and are less inclined to seek assistance from mental health services than non-Māori (Oakley Browne, Wells & Scott, 2006). Māori young people are more likely to be uplifted from their homes and placed in State care (Whānau Ora, 2020), be arrested (New Zealand Police, 2019), taken to court (JustSpeak, 2020), expelled from education (Education Counts, 2020) and have less access to adequate healthcare when compared to their Pākehā peers (Clark et al., 2018). It is evident that young Māori are disadvantaged by disenfranchising cycles of social structures.

Youth resilience in a contemporary indigenous context involves the development of social and cultural connectedness within a supportive network of kinship relationships and enduring cultural traditions and practices (Rasmus et al., 2014). It is therefore vital to consider indigenous wellbeing within the context of youth engagement. This demands a holistic approach that Pākepromotes physical, social and spiritual health, and acknowledges that nurturing the wellbeing of young Māori is not only the responsibility of the parent(s), but of the whole community (Russell, 2018).

2.2.2 Māori Youth Development

Historically, Māori youth development has tended to focus primarily on embracing cultural identity, while doing little to address the systemic barriers that Māori young people continue to face. Māori development requires oral tradition and a focus on identity, while nurturing physical, mental, social and





communal aspects of development (Keelan, 2014). Such development must be rooted in collaboration and involve access to te reo Māori,⁴ greater engagement in whānau, hapū, and iwi practices, accessing leaders on a relationship and role model basis and being a part of succession strategies for relevant decision-making organisations (Keelan, 2014). In doing so, appropriate inclusion of te reo Māori, Māori tikanga⁵ and customs must not be carried out as a branding exercise, but with a depth of understanding and application on par with other ways of seeing and being, thus affirming belonging and validating te ao Māori.⁶ To progress the prosperity of young Māori, measures and means of redressing socio-political inequality and injustice must be led by, with, and for young Māori with consideration of the current disenfranchised power relations.

It is also important to understand that Māori youth development exists amidst the wider paradigm of Māori development,

which includes imperatives such as political self-determination, cultural revitalisation, social equity and economic autonomy. Māori youth development should, and does, differ substantially from homogenised understandings of development. Young Māori have a dual relationship with Aotearoa New Zealand as young people, and as tangata whenua,⁷ manifesting in more complicated arenas of responsibility and expectations (Keelan, 2014). While youth development strategies exist to empower the prosperity of young people, efforts will continue to be compromised by their ethnocentric approach and by continuing to disregard the unique needs of rangatahi Māori.⁸ Further to this is whānau, who are also critical in all aspects of Māori youth development and in building resilient communities (Durie, 1998).

With these factors in mind, there is a clear need to focus on the engagement of young Māori people by supporting participation, involving the wider community, and building on strengths and resilience of the collective. To do this, four key themes are imperative to empowering Māori youth development:

- emphasis on whānau and community-centred initiatives;
- greater access to information;
- catered and localised resources; and
- better incorporation of te reo Māori when engaging with youth (Keelan, 2014).

This approach requires not only intentional attention to the particular needs of young Māori, but that the means and methods empower alternative, local knowledge and collective responsibility relevant to the worldview of rangatahi Māori.

4 Māori language.

5 Māori protocol.

6 Māori worldview.

7 Local people, hosts, indigenous people, people born of the whenua (land).

8 Māori young people.

2.3 Youth Mental Health

Two significant issues affecting young people in Aotearoa New Zealand are mental illness and suicide. Although 2020 figures show a small reduction in youth suicide rates, Aotearoa New Zealand continues to experience some of the highest rates of youth mental illness and suicide in the developed world (Brazier, 2017). In 2020, there were 59 deaths of young people between the ages of 15-19, and 60 in the 20-24 age range (Coronial Services of New Zealand, 2020). These statistics exist amongst a global crisis of high youth suicide rates.

While different population groups can experience different risk factors, there are many common factors that are known to increase the likelihood of suicide, including:

- bereavement by suicide;
- access to means of suicide;
- sense of isolation;
- history of mental illness (such as anxiety and depression), addiction or substance use;
- previous suicide attempts;
- trauma; and
- bullying (Ministry of Health, 2019).

The Ministry of Health has also identified a range of protective factors that are known to reduce the likelihood of suicide and can be applied at multiple levels, such as individual, relationship, community and society levels. These factors include good whānau/family relationships; secure housing; stable employment; community support and connectedness; cultural identity; ability to deal with life's difficulties; and access to support and help (Ministry of Health, 2019). Building resilience, strong support networks, and strong community relationships are some of the key steps towards preventing youth suicide (Kirk, 2017).

2.4 Climate Change

There are many complex ways in which climate change can have an impact on physical and mental health. The physical impact of climate change on humans is wide ranging - from displacement and the loss of income or possessions, to the experience of extreme weather events and natural disasters (Charlson, 2019). For example, research shows that in recent decades climate change has contributed to increasing levels of ill health, particularly in relation to summer heatwaves: "As climate change and its effects are projected to increase, this will result in approximately 250,000 additional deaths globally per year by 2030, as a result of heat exposure, diarrhoeal disease, malaria and childhood undernutrition alone" (Royal Society Te Apārangi, 2017, p. 4).

The psychological impact of climate change on people is also extensive. The experience of extreme weather events, and loss of family, income and possessions, are all psychological triggers and stress factors that negatively impact mental health (Charlson, 2019).



For example, the increased temperature is associated with increased incidences of aggressive behaviour, violence and suicide. Hospital emergency room admissions rise when temperatures are above 18-20 degrees, due to the increased need for health and wellbeing services by people with psychosocial conditions (Royal Society Te Apārangi, 2017).

Another stress factor stems from regular exposure to images, headlines and risk messages regarding the threat of climate change. Between 2005 and 2016, an average of 422 articles per month referenced climate change across Aotearoa New Zealand news media. The impact of this on mental health can include general anxiety, pessimism, helplessness, stress, distress, sadness and guilt (Royal Society Te Apārangi, 2017). Factors such as high exposure to climate change-related media, increasing temperatures, extreme weather events, increasing rates and severity of natural disasters and displacement from homes and communities have the potential to negatively impact individual and collective mental health.

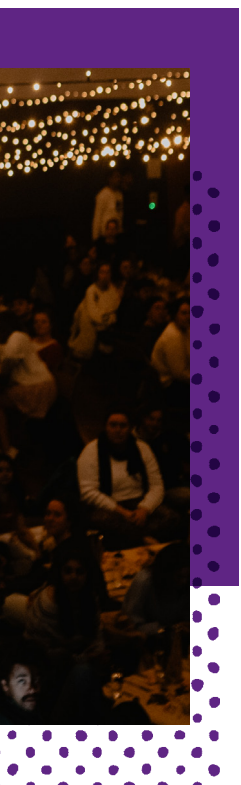
As a population already at an increased risk of experiencing mental illness, young people are at a high risk of developing mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and suicidal thoughts relating to climate change (Royal Society Te Apārangi, 2017). This is what has become known as 'ecoanxiety' (Albrecht, 2011). Ecoanxiety can be defined as an additional source of stress that originates from watching the slow and seemingly irrevocable impacts of climate change unfold, and worrying about the future for oneself, children and later generations (Searle & Gow, 2010; Clayton, Manning, Krygsman & Speiser, 2017). Ecoanxiety has become prevalent among young people, particularly as they worry about the impact that climate change will have on their futures (Daalder, 2019).

2.5 Climate-Induced Migration

The increasing impact of climate change is projected to displace millions of people globally, and disproportionately affect developing countries (Farquhar, 2015). Climate-induced migration is already being experienced, particularly within the low-lying islands located in the Pacific - a region that has been referred to by various scholars as the "climate change ground zero" (Farquhar, 2015, p. 38). Even so, those who are displaced as a result of the impact of climate change generally fall outside host country's current frameworks for supporting refugees, meaning they often do not meet the criteria for resettlement and support (Farquhar, 2015).

Climate-induced migration is considered a solution to climate change. However, migration is very much a last resort, with affected peoples preferring to continue to safely live in their home countries with dignity (Rive, 2013). This is particularly important for people who have a long-term, multi-generational connection to their ancestral land and culture (Yates, personal communication, 2020). Climate-induced migration will increase as climate-induced events and their consequences grow. For example, most displaced people who migrate to Aotearoa New Zealand will come from low-lying Pacific islands. In order to prepare for this, host countries such as Aotearoa New Zealand must acknowledge their responsibility to work alongside island nations to support their peoples (Cass, 2018).

There is limited data about the scope of climate-induced migration due to difficulties delineating the cause of migration. However, research suggests that the majority of people who leave their home countries due to the present or foreseeable impact of climate will be young people and their parents (Yates, personal communication, 2020). Many New Zealand-born Pacific people still retain strong



connections to their homelands despite many of them having never been there (Yates, personal communication, 2020). Their ability to return may be hindered by future climate impacts. In some instances, this can change young people's relationship with their ancestors. For example, the places in which their ancestors are buried are often located in coastal areas, which are now vulnerable to weather events – a further threat to their connection and identity (Yates, personal communication, 2020).

Furthermore, climate migrants can face isolation, and may experience cultural and familial disconnect. They may feel isolated by the dominant cultural lifestyle in their new host country, and can experience additional stress as they navigate language and cultural barriers (Yates, personal communication, 2020). This is a common consequence of migration from the Pacific to Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly if migrants have come from communities that are physically open to the sea and sky. Homes in Aotearoa New Zealand generally do not cater for the extended family/village lifestyle familiar to many Pacific communities (Yates, personal communication, 2020). Climate migrants may also face discrimination. If people in the host country believe that their jobs and homes are being taken away from them because of climate migrants (even if not the case), they are more likely to be hostile towards climate migrants (Yates, personal communication, 2020).

Given that a significant proportion of climate-induced migrants who have, or who are, moving from the Pacific Islands to Aotearoa New Zealand are young people, it is vital that any humanitarian response prioritises the engagement of young people. For example, school and tertiary educational facilities are vital places that can help young migrants form a new sense of belonging and build relationships, and thus their peers play a great part in their resettlement (Ziaian et al., 2019).

2.6 Former Refugee Youth Settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand

Young people from a refugee background arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand have complex needs that differ to those of adults. Young refugees may arrive together with their families, or they may arrive alone, travelling with no family and no relatives in their new country. Both of these groups can be overlooked and vulnerable.

Young former refugees have the challenge of adapting to a new education system, as well as an unfamiliar culture and language (Ziaian et al., 2019). Such young people may have experienced disrupted education in the past, and have limited English language skills, both of which are factors that create barriers to settling into, and succeeding with, their studies in Aotearoa New Zealand (Ziaian et al., 2019).

According to researchers, former refugee young people can face additional barriers to success within their host countries. These include, but are not limited to:

- psychological problems associated with the stress of their experience as a refugee, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD);
- a lack of support at school and/or at home;
- being unable to access support networks and support services within their school/tertiary institution/community;
- potentially fractured family structures;
- insecurity;
- uncertainty;
- isolation, loneliness, and anxiety;
- racism and discrimination; and
- poverty, which is known to have more of an impact on refugee young people than trauma (Cummings, 2019; Ziaian et al., 2019).

Furthermore, former refugee children and young people have very specific needs, many of which are not being met, including the need to:

- learn the host country's language and develop the mother tongue;
- overcome interrupted schooling or limited education;
- adjust to a new education system;
- communicate with others;
- bond and feel a sense of belonging;
- develop a strong personal identity;
- feel safe; and
- cope with separation, loss and/or trauma (Cerna, 2019).

The challenges that former refugee young people experience have a significant impact on these needs being met, and on their ability to succeed in their new host country, particularly in school or tertiary study. School has been identified as a prime location for former refugee young people to begin building a new civic identity and sense of belonging. Therefore, supporting these young people to succeed in their education and successful transition into their new lives is vital (Ziaian et al., 2019).

2.7 Summary

This review of academic and anecdotal literature has provided a brief but broad overview of important social and environmental phenomena impacting upon young people. This included some findings on the current state of the youth sector in Aotearoa New Zealand, responsibilities and implications of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the unique needs of indigenous young people, the prevalence and impact of mental health and eco-anxiety, climate change and climate-induced migration, and the experiences of former refugee young people. By examining relevant and current literature we have been able to establish a foundational base of knowledge, from which the Youth Engagement Strategy was realised.



3

Background – New Zealand Red Cross



“Kia whakatomuri
te haere ki mua” is
a Māori Whakataukī
which means, “To
walk into the future,
our eyes must be
fixed on the past.”

Having reviewed relevant literature on the social and environmental issues impacting upon young people in Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond, it was also important to reflect on the international Red Cross movement's historical engagement with young people, for the purpose of gaining insight and learnings as we look to the next 10 years.

The next aspect of this report addresses youth engagement in the context of the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), as well as New Zealand Red Cross. Relevant strategies are examined through a youth-based lens, before the challenges of youth engagement are discussed. Having identified the challenges, the development of the Youth Engagement Strategy is proposed as a means of addressing the barriers, and ensuring meaningful and sustainable engagement far into the future.

3.1 The Wider Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and Young People

IFRC considers young people to be a vital component of the success of the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement. Young people are recognised as agents of change at all levels of operation and governance, with great potential to significantly impact the Movement. The IFRC's commitment to youth engagement is also clearly articulated throughout the IFRC Strategy 2030, which prioritises the engagement of young people across the Movement and aims to present an approach that supports young people to do more, do better and reach further in their local communities and beyond. The strategy encourages National Societies to embrace young people as enablers of people-led resilience, and as agents of change

(International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2019).

Within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, the ethos of IFRC's Strategy 2030 is reflected in New Zealand Red Cross' Strategy 2030. Developed in 2019, Strategy 2030 embraces the engagement of young people by imagining a future in which the development of new programmes provides opportunities for young people to contribute in ways that are meaningful and relevant to them, and that give them a chance to develop as young humanitarians (New Zealand Red Cross, n.d.).

3.2 New Zealand Red Cross: Where We Have Come From

Throughout its 105-year history, New Zealand Red Cross has made a concerted effort to engage young people through relevant and engaging outreach programmes and services such as internships, school-based programmes, events and fundraisers. A recent example of a successful youth programme is the Settlement Youth Workers – an innovative programme whereby young former refugees provide youth-focused orientation and support for new young Kiwis. As of June 2020, Settlement Youth Workers were successfully connecting with approximately 250 young people in five settlement locations around Aotearoa New Zealand (New Zealand Red Cross, 2020).

Alongside programmes and services, the New Zealand Red Cross National Youth Panel provides an excellent channel for youth voice at a governance level, and has developed a Youth Participation Policy that is world-leading in the context of the global RCRC Movement. The Panel leads New Zealand Red Cross' biennial National Youth Forum, which has engaged



more than 100 young leaders from around the country. The inclusion of young people in governance is vital to being a forward-thinking organisation that values the voice and contribution of young people, one that is not only youth-friendly but that is also attractive to young people.

3.3 Youth Engagement: Past and Current Challenges

New Zealand Red Cross has had some success in engaging young people in our work. However, like many humanitarian organisations we continue to experience relatively low levels of engagement with young people. For example, when young people have shown an interest in becoming involved, there have been few opportunities on offer. Many young people are ineligible for volunteering opportunities due to age, school commitments or time restrictions. At present, the number of young members in New Zealand Red Cross remains low, with only 9% of our 11,000 members being under the age of 30. This is a strong indication that something is missing for young people, something that prevents them from becoming a New Zealand Red Cross member or volunteer. According to our observations, key challenges include:

- the absence of an accessible definition of what it means to be a ‘humanitarian’;
- a lack of national focus and positioning on youth engagement, with little clarity on what our expertise is when it comes to young people, and what we can offer within the wider youth sector;
- a lack of resources and strategy for scaling localised programmes;
- the need to tighten practices and protocol when working with young people, and ensure that offerings are innovative, forward thinking and guided by current trends in the wider youth sector;



- the ‘transactional’ and ‘one-off’ nature of internship and volunteer opportunities;
- oversaturation of community organisations working in schools;
- the need to complement the work of other NGOs, rather than compete;
- the lack of a strategy when addressing age-related legal or internal restrictions for volunteers under the age of 18.

3.4 Our Response: Reimagining Membership and Volunteering

Despite the aforementioned challenges, many young people continue to share with us innovative ideas on how to contribute their own skills and talents towards delivering New Zealand Red Cross’ vision, community engagement and ongoing networking.

Young people demonstrate an overwhelming desire to seek out ways to make an impact locally and globally, but due to the unlimited choice of charities and organisations involved in this work, engagement is often prescribed to them through fundraising, volunteering, or internships designed for them to do the ‘dirty work’ with little mentoring or development. This can lead to an experience of disempowerment and disingenuous engagement. Alternatively, *Transformation Four* of the IFRC’s Seven Transformations reimagines volunteering that capitalises on the opportunities of self-organising and networked groups:

The Red Cross and Red Crescent will find creative ways to connect volunteers across countries and regions, expanding from rigid national volunteer models to a distributed network of volunteers across borders, co-creating and driving impact together. This will require a mutually transformative shift from utilising volunteers

purely to deliver services, but rather to expand and support people in their own efforts to drive the change they seek in the world (International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, n.d., para. 2).

With this in mind, in 2019 New Zealand Red Cross committed to developing an agile, evidence-based, youth-led national strategy that tackles the challenges of youth engagement directly, that promotes the meaningful engagement of young people across all facets of our work and that is beneficial for the wider youth sector. The next part of this report provides an overview of how New Zealand Red Cross approached the development of a national Youth Engagement Strategy.



4 Strategy Development (Methods and Participants)



Having considered the global context of youth engagement in humanitarian issues, the current youth sector in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the challenges of youth engagement, we set about employing a design-led process that enabled us to develop a Youth Engagement Strategy that prioritises the voices of young people alongside key stakeholders from the youth sector.

To ensure the development of the strategy aligned with current evidence and research, we were guided by two frameworks - Hart’s Ladder and Shier’s Pathways to Participation. These are two models that have proven to be useful when seeking meaningful youth engagement (Ministry of Youth Development, n.d.). We then applied a design thinking model to youth and key stakeholder engagement in the development of the Strategy itself.

4.1 Hart’s Ladder

Hart’s Ladder provides a simple way of evaluating the quality of youth engagement and participation (Hart, 1992). Hart’s Ladder encourages organisations such as New Zealand Red Cross to set aspirational goals for future partnerships with young people, particularly as we advance from the lower levels of non-participation, towards genuinely engaging young people in the higher levels of participation.

The eighth and top rung, as the ultimate ambition, is commonly referred to as ‘true partnership with young people’. It is for this reason that throughout the development of the strategy we have adopted the terminology ‘partner with young people’.

Hart’s Ladder

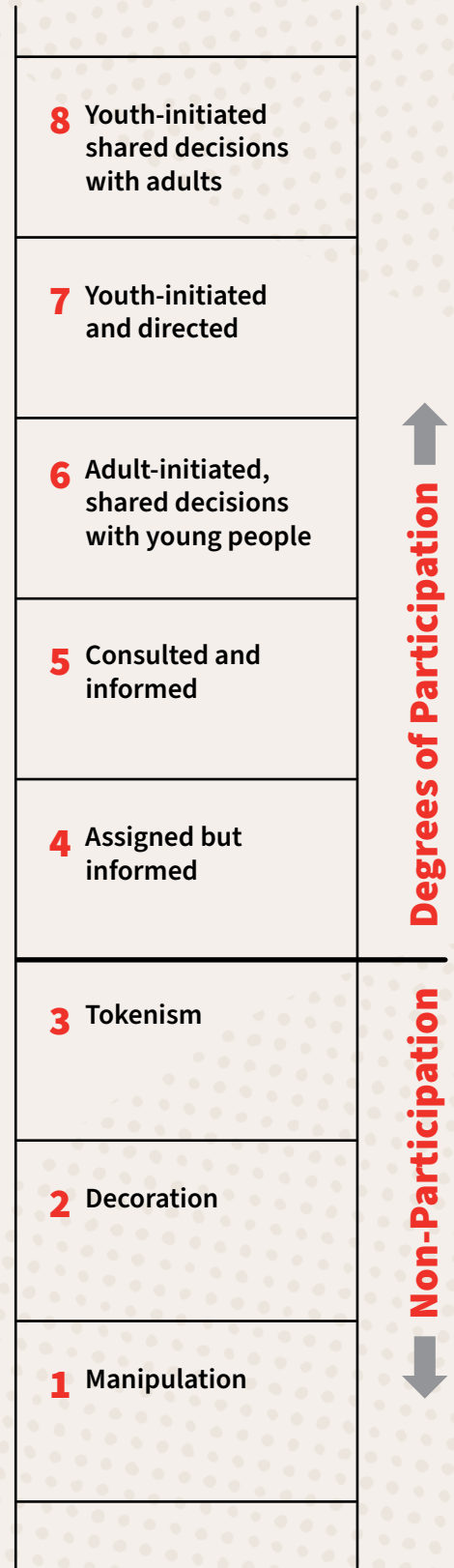


Figure 1: Hart’s Ladder (as cited in Wayne Francis Charitable Trust, n.d)



4.2 Shier's Pathways to Participation Model

The second model describes how youth participation is a process, rather than a specific event or project. Shier's Pathways to Participation Model is based on five levels of participation:

1. Young people are listened to.⁹
2. Young people are supported in expressing their views.
3. Young people's views are taken into account.
4. Young people are involved in decision-making processes.
5. Young people share power and responsibility for decision-making (Shier, 2001).

At each level of participation individuals and organisations can have different levels of commitment to the process of empowerment. The model encourages organisations, such as New Zealand Red Cross, to consider openings, opportunities and obligations at each level (Shier, 2001). Throughout the development of the Youth Strategy, Shier's Pathway to Participation guided the way in which we engaged with young people, particularly as we focused on levels one through to four. New Zealand Red Cross remains committed to levels four and five as the Strategy itself is finalised and implemented.

⁹ Shier's Pathways to Participation Model uses 'children' as the primary term. For the purpose of this report, 'young people' has been used to reflect the population engaged in the discovery phase.

4.3 Design Thinking Model: Framework for Innovation

The third model we applied was a design thinking model. While there are many iterations of design thinking models, this report drew on the Design Council's Framework for Innovation, which helps designers and non-designers tackle complex social, economic and environmental issues. At the heart of the methodology is the double diamond - a human-centred approach to exploring an issue more widely or deeply (divergent thinking) and then taking focused action (convergent thinking) (Design Council, 2019).

As shown in the double diamond image above, the Framework for Innovation is carried out over four key stages - discover, define, develop and deliver. The first 'discovery' phase helps users to understand what a problem is, rather than base their understanding on assumptions. This includes engaging with people who are directly affected by the issues being discussed. The 'define' phase collates the insights collected during the discovery phase, before defining the challenge in a different way. Innovative solutions to the defined challenge are then 'developed' and solutions to the issue are 'delivered' (Design Council, 2019).

This model helped us to challenge assumptions and redefine challenges experienced by the youth sector, before utilising Hart's Ladder and Shier's Pathways to Participation to generate alternative strategies and solutions that may not have been apparent before. This report is essentially an overview of the initial discovery phase of the Youth Engagement Strategy, which consisted of three key components: a youth survey, focus groups with young people and interviews with key stakeholders from the youth sector.

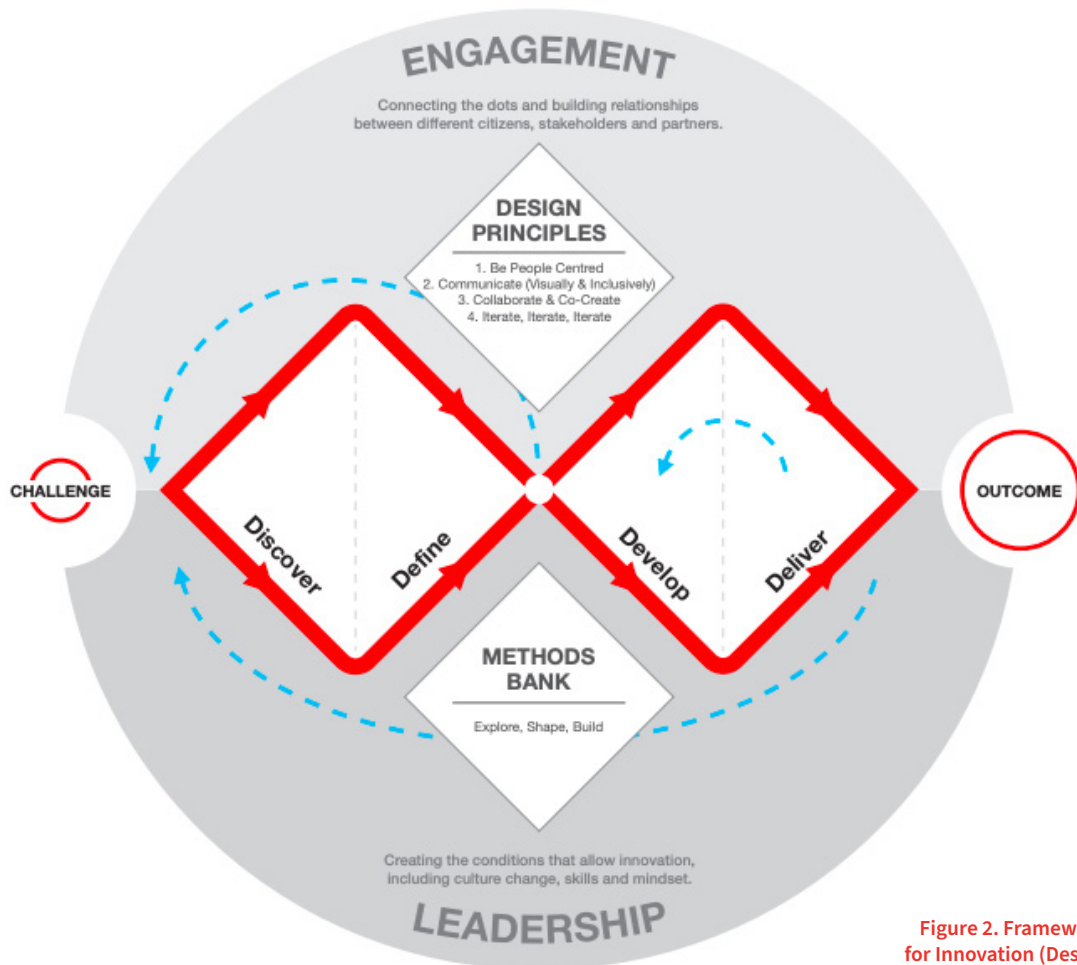


Figure 2. Framework for Innovation (Design Council, 2019)

4.3.1 Youth Engagement Survey

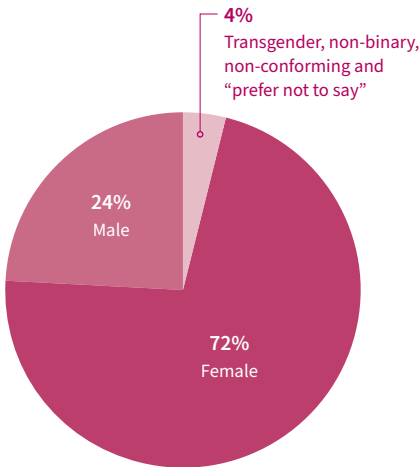
The premise of the Youth Engagement Survey was mass youth engagement, with a focus on diversity and representation. Survey questions were developed according to a list of assumptions developed by the New Zealand Red Cross team directly involved in this work. Questions were then peer reviewed by Red Cross personnel not involved in the development of the youth strategy, as well as external experts.

Participants were recruited through an advertisement that was shared on social media, as well as with an existing Red Cross volunteer database, young former refugees who are actively engaged with Red Cross and

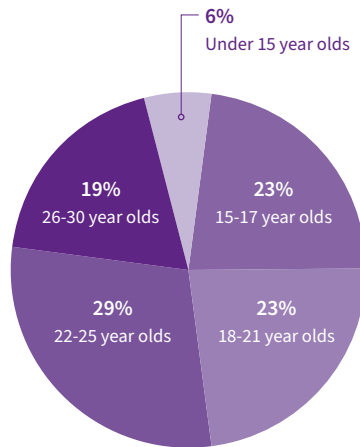
organisations working with young people, universities and polytechs. It is estimated that the survey reached more than 640 young people, before participant recruitment targeted specific cohorts including Māori, Pasifika, migrants and former refugees.

Carried out between October 2019-February 2020, the Youth Engagement Survey collected responses from 853 young people under the age of 30.¹⁰ Of these, 72% identified as female, 24% as male and 4% as transgender, non-binary, non-conforming and “prefer not to say” (see Graph 1). The age range of participants

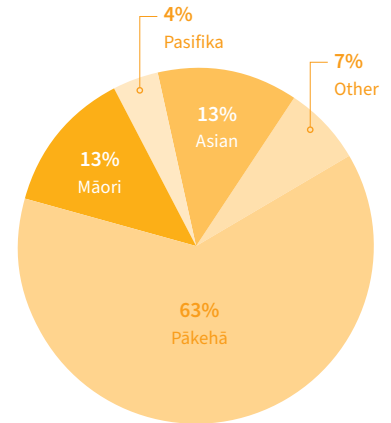
¹⁰ The responses collected from the survey were shared for external analysis purposes with the College of Education, and Health and Human Development at the University of Canterbury. For further details, please see Red Cross Youth Development Strategy Survey 2020: Data Analysis and Findings (Luo & Friesen, 2020).



Graph 1: Gender identity



Graph 2: Age



Graph 3: Ethnicity

were relatively evenly distributed across four age ranges – 15-17 (29%), 18-21 (23%), 22-25 (29%) and 26-30 (19%). A small number of participants were under the age of 15 (6%) (see Graph 2).

Of the total participants, 62% identified as Pākehā, 13% as Māori, 13% as Asian, 7% as 'I identify as' and 4% as Pasifika (see Graph 3). Participants were located throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

When asked to indicate other aspects of social identity, 52% of participants responded to the question.¹¹ Of the 440 participants who answered, 16% of respondents identified as LGBTQIA+, 8% as immigrants, 8% as having a history of living in State care, 5% as disabled, 5% as former refugees and 2% as international students (see Graph 4).

The participants were also asked where they lived in Aotearoa New Zealand: 192 people (22%) lived in Northland/Auckland, 168 (20%) lived in Otago/Southland, 168 (20%) lived in Wellington/Wairarapa, 152 (18%) lived in Canterbury, 78 (9%) lived in Waikato/Bay of Plenty, 33 (4%) lived in the East Coast, 33 (4%) lived in Taranaki/Manawatū and 27 (3%) lived in Tasman/Marlborough/West Coast (see Graph 5).

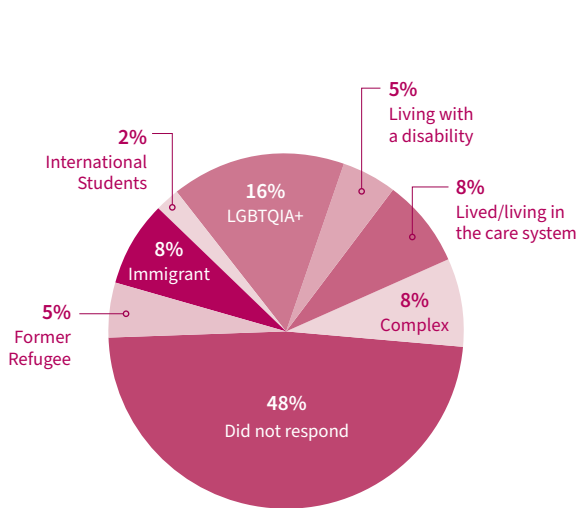
4.3.2 Focus Groups with Young People

Another aspect of gathering insights from young people involved 10 focus groups in different locations around Aotearoa New Zealand. This was led by the New Zealand Red Cross Youth Team and supported by the National Youth Panel. Focus groups were held both in the main hubs of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, as well as smaller towns. This ensured the inclusion of rural voices along with representation from young people with diverse backgrounds and lived experiences:

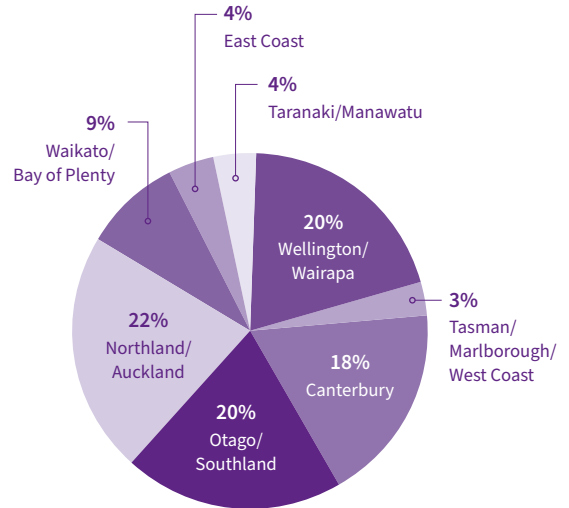
Focus group number and locations	
LOCATION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Dunedin	23
Whakatane	16
Christchurch	15
Wanaka	14
Greymouth	11
Nelson	11
Auckland (YES Disability Trust)	6
Palmerston North	6
Wellington	5
Zoom (Deaf and hard of hearing)	3

Table 1.

¹¹ This question was not mandatory. The lower response rate is due to participants choosing not to respond, and/or not wanting to disclose this information.



Graph 4: Social identity



Graph 5: Geographic region

Focus group participants came from a range of backgrounds, and were between 12 and 25 years of age. During the focus groups, participants were asked to reflect on the statistics derived from the Youth Engagement Survey, as well as identify specific issues and discuss their root causes and possible solutions. Recordings from the focus groups were transcribed and analysed by the New Zealand Red Cross team.

4.3.3 Consultations with Youth Sector Organisations

Over a period of 12 weeks, interviews were conducted with 40 youth sector organisations. Organisations were also asked to participate in a survey pre- and post- focus group interview. The types of youth sector organisations that participated included:

Sector focus group numbers and types	
ORGANISATION TYPE	NUMBER
Diverse Community Groups	7
Youth Services and Programmes	6
Disaster Risk Management / Preparedness/ Responders	4
Race Relations	4
Human Rights / Internationally focused	3
Government department ministries	3
Youth work collective	3
Community Organisations	2
Wellbeing and Mental Health	2
Uniformed Youth Programmes	2
Environmental and Climate Action	2
Volunteering Organisations	2

Table 2.

5 Discovery Phase Findings



Outlined below are summaries of the findings from the three aspects of the discovery phase (Youth Engagement Survey, focus groups with young people and youth sector consultations). Derived from the responses of more than 1,000 diverse young people and youth sector organisation representatives, participants offered a wealth of insight into their perspectives on what is, and is not, working when it comes to meaningful youth engagement, their desires for the sector and what a youth engagement strategy might look like in the future.



5.1 Insights from the Youth Engagement Survey

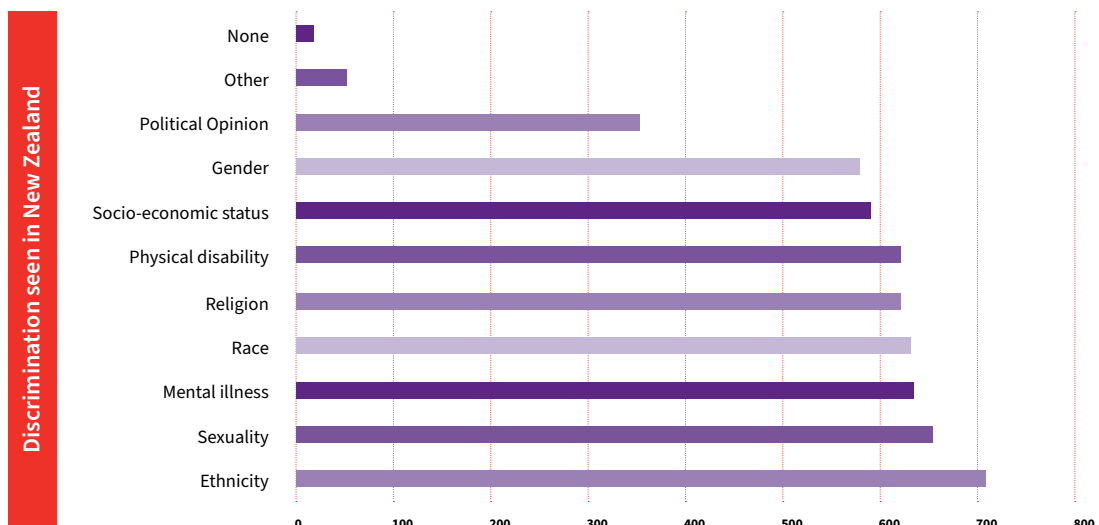
5.1.1 Isolation and Discrimination

The first key theme that was identified was participants' sense of isolation. Participants responded by selecting a single point from an 11-point Likert scale anchored from 'Not at all' (0) to 'Neutral' (5) to 'Very' (10). When asked if they ever felt isolated because of their identity, participants who identified as non-binary and/or LGBTQIA+ reported the highest degrees of perceived isolation (7.65 and 6.29 respectively). Pasifika, Asian, Māori and other ethnicities also experienced higher isolation when compared to Pākehā participants.

When asked about having witnessed discrimination, findings indicated that age was a key factor, with younger participants (under 15 years of age) having witnessed less discrimination than older participants. Former refugees reported witnessing fewer acts of discrimination than all other groups (3.95), and participants with experience of State care

witnessing the most (6.2). In terms of ethnicity, Māori (6.54) reported witnessing discrimination significantly more than Pākehā (5.32), Asians (5.32), Pasifika (5.9) and individuals from other ethnicities (5.95).

Participants were also asked, "Do you feel that some young people in Aotearoa New Zealand are discriminated against based on...", before being presented with a list of 11 categories they could choose from, including ethnicity, religion, physical disability, mental illness, race, sexuality, gender, political opinion, socio-economic status, no discrimination and other. As shown in Graph 6, ethnicity was the main reason for discrimination by a clear margin, followed by sexuality, mental health, race, religion, physical disability, socioeconomic status and gender. 2% of participants (17 out of 853) chose, "No one is being discriminated against based on the above". Discrimination based on political view had the lowest rating, at 41%. Other reasons for discrimination posed by participants included age, appearance, height and weight, accent, language proficiency, assumed life experience, hobbies, dietary requirements, financial situation and regions they live in.



Graph 6. Discrimination seen in New Zealand

Survey responses also revealed that some participants believed discrimination is common across all facets of life in Aotearoa New Zealand:

- “Everything. People can make fun out of everything.”
- “People are discriminated against for everything under the sun.”
- “(The witnessed discriminations are based on) any point of difference.”
- “People are discriminated against based on all of these and more.”
- “I know young people everywhere are being discriminated against even if I may not see it in my own community.”

When asked about their own personal experiences of discrimination, disempowerment and disconnection, Māori participants reported the highest experience of discrimination (54%), followed by Pasifika (53%), Asian (46%), other ethnicities (45%) and Pākehā (42%).

When frequency of discrimination, disempowerment and disconnection were considered alongside social identity, however, there appeared to be greater differences across the social identity categories. Over half of participants who identified as immigrants (53%), disabled (52%) or as experiencing/with experience of State care (52%), said they had experienced discrimination.

Frequency of experienced discrimination, disempowerment, and disconnection by ethnicity	
ETHNICITY	EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION
Māori	54%
Pasifika	53%
Asian	46%
Other ethnicity (I identify as)	45%
Pākehā	42%

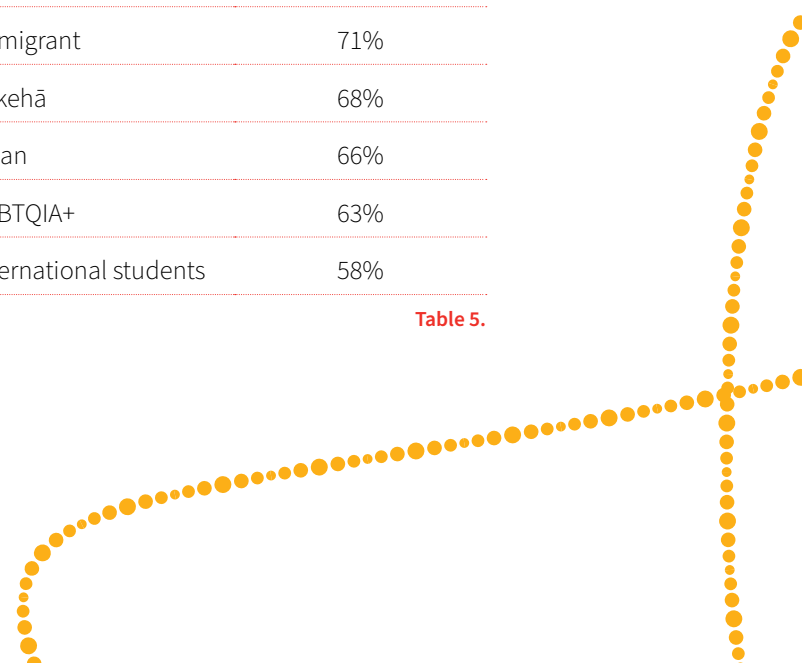
Table 3.

Frequency of experienced discrimination, disempowerment, and disconnection	
SOCIAL IDENTITY	EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION
Immigrant	53%
Disabled	52%
People living or lived in the care system	52%
LGBTQIA+	46%
Former refugees	39%
International students	37%

Table 4.

Youth voices by ethnicity and social identity	
CATEGORY	YOUTH VOICE IGNORED
People living or lived in the care system	78%
Other ethnicity (I identify as)	76%
Disabeled	73%
Māori	73%
Pasifika	72%
Former refugee	71%
Immigrant	71%
Pākehā	68%
Asian	66%
LGBTQIA+	63%
International students	58%

Table 5.



It is also interesting to note the reported lower experience of discrimination of the two groups who are relatively new to Aotearoa New Zealand - former refugees (39%) and international students (37%). This finding is inconsistent with the New Zealand Red Cross' observations which shows that former refugees and international students experience high rates of discrimination. One interpretation of this finding is that former refugees may have lower expectations of what 'good' living conditions are when compared to their former living conditions, as well as more limited understanding of what constitutes discrimination, especially the hidden and imbedded forms of it.

While intersectionality was not analysed, it is expected that participants who have had experience of more than one marginalised identity (for example, identifying as disabled as well as LGBTQIA+ and/or living/lived in State care) will have experienced compounding forms of discrimination (intersectionality).

Participants were also asked two questions about Te Tiriti o Waitangi and their perception of whether Māori young people are provided with equitable opportunities compared to other young people. Using a Likert scale (0 = 'Not at all'; 5 = 'Neutral'; 10 = 'Very'), responses to the first question indicated that Māori participants were the most confident in their knowledge around Te Tiriti o Waitangi (7.0).

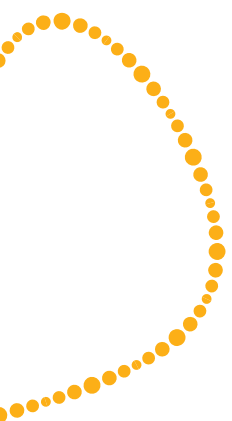
In regards to the second question, Māori, Pasifika, Pākehā, non-binary, older young people, LGBTQIA+, participants experiencing/with experience of State care and migrant participants reported a higher level of disagreement with the statement that Māori young people *are* provided with equitable (fair and impartial) opportunities.

5.1.2 Belonging, Wellbeing and Voice

When thinking about their sense of belonging, participants generally felt that they belonged to Aotearoa New Zealand. Participants who identified with a non-binary gender category reported the lowest sense of belonging (7.41), as well as 15-17 year olds (7.95) when compared to younger and older participants. Pākehā (8.67) and Māori participants referenced (9.12) indicated a significantly higher sense of belonging than Pasifika (7.4), Asian (7.1) and other ethnicities (8.0).

The survey also posed three questions to assess whether the participants feel good about themselves, whether they regularly take time to do the things they enjoy and whether they have been connecting well with others. Responses were again scored on an 11-point Likert scale from 'Not at all' (0) to 'Neutral' (5) to 'Very' (10). Participants who identified with a non-binary gender (5.25) reported lower subjective well-being compared to both males (6.63) and females (6.39). Participants identifying as other ethnicities reported lower subjective well-being compared to participants from all other ethnic groups (5.78), and participants who identified as disabled (5.55) reported significantly lower subjective well-being compared to all other social identity groups.

The survey also asked participants to describe the limitations preventing collective wellbeing in their communities. First and foremost, lack of support was mentioned 116 times within the context of mental health, child support, youth support, childcare for low socio-economic groups (for example solo parents and/or homeless), as well as a lack of support in organising collective and inclusive community events. Mental and physical health featured strongly, primarily in reference to accessibility, cost, quality and timeliness of healthcare. For example, one participant stated, "I'm in pretty desperate need of a psychologist and I have been let down by the public system on five separate attempts so I



decided to go private. I have contacted four different private companies and they have all been full with 12-24 week waitlists.” Stigma, socioeconomic conditions, living costs, cost of food, housing costs, low incomes, education, generational divides, youth inclusion, racism, cultural barriers, lack of communal spaces, individualism, judgement and lack of community identity were also listed as limitations preventing collective wellbeing in communities.¹²

Another aspect of wellbeing concerned youth voices. Participants were asked to select from pre-determined statements that they felt applied to them, such as, “I have felt like my voice as a young person didn’t matter.” When disaggregated, 78% of young people experiencing/with experience of State care indicated that they felt their voices did not matter. This was followed by disabled people, at 73%. International students had the lowest rate at 58%.

5.1.3 Engagement with the New Zealand Red Cross

The next set of findings relate to youth engagement with New Zealand Red Cross as an organisation, as well as the issues that New Zealand Red Cross is focused on as part of Strategy 2030.

5.1.3.1 Disaster Preparedness

Questions about disaster preparedness were designed to understand how prepared participants felt to respond to a natural disaster, their interest in attending activities for disaster preparedness, and their interest in attending activities that promote wellbeing and resilience. Using a Likert scale, participants

were asked to respond by indicating their feelings on a scale that ranged from ‘Not at all’ (0) to ‘Neutral’ (5) to ‘Very’ (10).

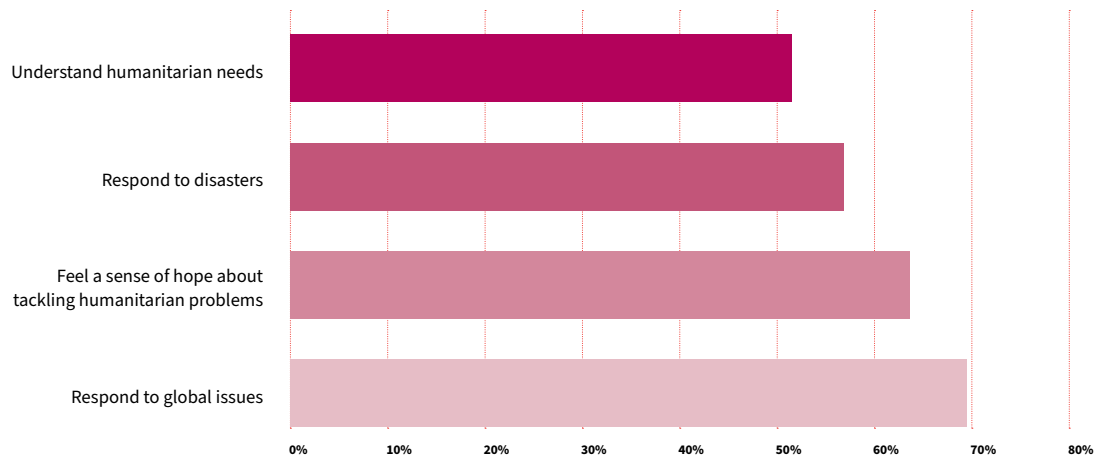
Overall, participants only felt somewhat prepared to respond to a natural disaster. Female participants (5.29) were slightly less confident in their preparedness than male participants (6.25). Interestingly, younger participants felt more prepared than their older peers (decreasing from 6.47 to 5.50). When disaggregated by identity group, Pākehā (5.69) reported a significantly higher score than Pasifika (4.65) in levels of preparedness. Māori (5.40) felt less prepared than Pākehā to respond to a natural disaster, with immigrants (4.69) reporting significantly lower preparedness than everyone else.

When asked about their interest in disaster preparedness training, activities, programmes and resources, most participants were somewhat interested (7.06). While there was little variation according to gender or age, participants who identified as other international students (8.26) reported the highest interest in attending activities and training on disaster preparedness, alongside former refugees (8.03). Disabled participants were amongst the least interested in disaster preparedness training (6.98).

Following this, participants were asked about their interest in attending workshops, activities, and receiving resources that promote wellbeing and resilience. Similar to the previous question, in general participants were somewhat interested (average of 7.07). Female participants (7.29) reported a significantly higher level of interest than male participants (6.39) in wellbeing workshops and resources, and the other ethnicity category (8.11) expressed more interest than Pākehā (6.78). Finally, in terms of social identity, disabled participants (6.12) were significantly less interested in these opportunities than participants who were/had experiencing/ed in out of home care (7.55), international students (8.11), and former refugees (8.26).

¹² See Red Cross Youth Development Strategy Survey 2020: Data Analysis and Findings (Luo & Friesen, 2020, p. 16) for further considerations of these findings (such as concept overlapping and interpretation of the question).

Motivation to become involved with New Zealand Red Cross (overall)



Graph 7.

Motivation to get involved in New Zealand Red Cross (disaggregated)

	RESPOND TO GLOBAL ISSUES	HOPE IN TACKLING HUMANITARIAN ISSUES	DISASTER RESPONSE	UNDERSTAND HUMANITARIAN ISSUES
Pākehā	69%	60%	57%	50%
Māori	63%	66%	49%	45%
Pasifika	63%	69%	69%	56%
Asian	70%	58%	55%	62%
Other ethnicity (I identify as)	55%	63%	47%	37%
Former refugee	71%	51%	54%	49%
Immigrant	69%	65%	54%	56%
International students	47%	53%	47%	58%
LGBTQIA+	64%	64%	55%	49%
Disabled	70%	55%	70%	30%
People living or lived in the care system	75%	60%	49%	55%

Table 6.

5.1.3.2 Motivation for Involvement in New Zealand Red Cross

Participants were asked to complete the following sentence, “For me the top motivations to be involved with Red Cross would be...”, by selecting between one and four pre-determined prompts. The most common answer was to respond to global issues (67%) followed by the sense of hope in tackling humanitarian problems (61%), to respond to disasters (55%) and to understand humanitarian needs (50%). 7% of participants also chose the ‘Other’ category.

Across demographics, most participants indicated that responding to global issues was a primary motivator for becoming involved in New Zealand Red Cross. Alternatively, Māori, Pasifika, and other ethnicities were motivated by the hope of tackling humanitarian issues, with international students being motivated by increased understanding of humanitarian issues.

5.1.3.3 Interests, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Volunteering

Participants were then asked to arrange 11 humanitarian issues based on interest (1 = most important to 11 = least important). Climate change was the most popular subject, with more than three quarters of participants rating it in the top five issues they are most interested in. This was closely followed by human rights at 73%. There was a substantial gap between these two issues and the next three (humanitarian aid, gender equality, diversity and eliminating cultural discrimination), with no significant differences between them. Concerns for refugee crises and displacement ranked sixth, followed by a tie at seventh between concerns for upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and disaster readiness. Finally, on average, participants were least concerned about issues around rules of war, rights for rainbow/LGBTQIA+ people and the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Of note, Pākehā participants reported humanitarian aid as being of high interest, suggesting an underlying interest in macro international humanitarian issues. Alternatively, non-Pākehā participants were more interested in diversity and eliminating cultural discrimination, suggesting that micro and local focus were of more interest to that particular cohort.

Another open question explored what issues the participants are already taking action on and why. Climate change was of great concern, reflecting the findings from the ranking exercise described above. Climate change was considered to include environment protection as a large number of participants indicated that they would like to “avoid plastic products when possible”, “reduce waste”, or “change the diet to lower the consumption of dairy and cattle products”. One respondent described a wide range of practical actions regarding climate change/environment protection:

“My family and I are taking action on climate change and pollution [...] I bike places rather than getting my parents to drop me off in the car; we buy from the farmers market to support local producers; my family has started to buy shampoo bars rather than shampoo in plastic bottles... we own chickens for eggs and have a vegetable garden; we eat packaged food minimally; we buy nuts, seeds, grains, flours, and organic butter in bulk to reduce packaging; we buy second hand from local charity stores... Why? It’s the best way to live! [...] We are all human, and we all deserve to be looked after.”

Interestingly, the second and third most common responses were taking “no action” and dealing with “personal issues” (for example, personal depression, settling down in a new environment, improving time management, hiking with friends to enjoy the good environment, and so on).

5.1.3.4 Vision for Aotearoa New Zealand

As the survey came to an end, participants were asked to think about the meaning of key terms and their vision for Aotearoa New Zealand's future. First, they were asked what it meant to be a humanitarian. While answers were limited in their descriptions, collated responses suggested that it means to be a caring, helping, compassionate and a loving person who actively seeks to make changes for the good of humanity. A humanitarian should keep "human" in mind, always consider others and fight for others' rights.

A second question inquired into participants' understanding of the term 'resilience', the responses of which could mostly be categorised into three broad themes: recovery, perseverance and adaptability. Interestingly, most participants described it as an individual ability, strength or capacity, rather than in relation to community or as a process.

Recovery:

- "The ability to recover from bad times very fast."
- "Resilience is the concept of bouncing back from defeats and issues at hand. It is the concept of coming up with new ideas and improvisation."
- "Resilience is being able to go through challenges and grow stronger out of those challenges."

Perseverance:

- "To keep trying even if things don't go your way."
- "Resilience is carrying on doing something you believe even when few others are doing it as well."
- "The ability to withstand hardships."

Adaptability:

- "Community, adaptability, connectedness, resourceful, courage and irreplaceable."
- "Willing to learn and grow from any situation that you encounter."
- "Resilience means being able to cope when unexpected things happen, stressful things happen, or when things just don't quite go to plan."

A further question inquired as to what participants would like to see New Zealand Red Cross focus on in the future in regards to youth engagement. The top three key words that emerged from the survey responses were youth (545 mentions), involvement (254 mentions), and education (191 mentions).

Youth:

- "Youth will be the future generation of leaders" to tackle these humanitarian issues and "need to be taught the basics" such as disaster response, first aid, environment protection, and so on. At the same time, they need to "have more input and involvement with the changes of society". To achieve these, Red Cross is expected to "help youth in the care system", "recruit youth and teach them life skills", empower youth in "seeking employment", "create a stronger voice for the youth", and eventually increase the engagement of youth in all the activities contributing to human wellbeing.

Involvement:

- Participants wanted to be involved in activities rather than "just be consulted".
- "To actually involve youth rather than just consult them."
- "More engaging activities that get youth involved in the community whilst having fun."
- "Offering more opportunities to get involved, both within the school and in the community."

Education:

- Education needs were mentioned in the context of a variety of humanitarian issues such as disaster preparation, climate change, gender equality, racism and so on. Some participants proposed that this education needs to take place within volunteering organisations, which enables “young people to gain experience as well as fun.” Other participants preferred education for practical use, such as the “explanation of employment and education system.”

Other topics included community, health, volunteering, climate, disaster, mental health, refugee issues and the environment. Of note, responses from participants already involved in New Zealand Red Cross¹³ emphasised community growth, the connection among young people in communities, basic health training, volunteering opportunities, climate change, disaster preparedness, mental health assistance, refugee rights, integration of former refugees and environment protection.

With these terms and desires in mind, participants were asked to complete the statement “My vision for Aotearoa New Zealand is for it to be...”. Collated responses suggested that it is to be a fair, safe, resourceful, sustainable and welcoming country. Ideally, Aotearoa New Zealand is a place that accepts everyone without racism or discrimination, and that is environmentally friendly. Examples included:

- “Inclusive and safe for those who respect and make it safe for themselves and all others. Collectively in New Zealand we can achieve and solve problems we all face as humans, whilst nature and animals are worshipped and respected, being prioritised so all things can thrive.”
- “My vision for Aotearoa New Zealand is for it to be a place in which everyone feels safe and belonged.”



- “A place where all are welcome and safe and can be who they are with no fear of judgment, and where no one is disadvantaged by things they cannot control.”
- “Even more diverse and more supportive of mental and physical health of young people.”
- “Respectful of everyone’s uniqueness and make no-one feel obsolete because of their roles.”
- “Where everyone is welcome despite the identify.”
- “A place where positive opportunities exist for every person.”
- “Without poverty or injustice.”
- “Environmentally sustainable.”
- “A place that is safe and people are not scared to seek help.”

5.1.4 Summary

These findings illuminate not only the challenges that the young people of Aotearoa New Zealand face and the barriers to engagement in humanitarian work, but also their desires for future opportunities within their communities and beyond. Key themes that emerged from the findings included resilience, inclusion, voice, hope and impact.

¹³ Eight young people from the New Zealand Red Cross National Youth Panel.

5.2 Insights from Focus Groups with Young People

The next collection of findings was derived from the 10 focus groups that were held with young people throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Outlined below are summaries of the key findings.

5.2.1 Reflection: Findings of the Youth Engagement Survey

During the focus groups, 13 A3 posters outlining quotes and statistics from the Youth Engagement Survey were presented around the room. Focus group participants were asked to reflect on the poster content, with most agreeing with the findings of the Youth Engagement Survey. The meaning of resilience sparked many conversations - primarily its definition and when it is needed, but not so much the importance of it. As stated by one participant from a disability focus group, "If you are still alive you are resilient!"

When reflecting on the statistics concerning belonging and isolation, some participants highlighted the dual sense of belonging and isolation due to their social identities. Racism and discrimination against people of colour and Māori were also raised in most focus groups, with some even praising New Zealand Red Cross for seeking out the voices of Māori and Pasifika. One participant proposed that "we need to decolonise our minds, language and the system" - a statement that generated agreement by all participants in that particular focus group. Some participants were surprised to see that Youth Engagement Survey participants wanted to uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Overall, there was a general consensus that much more work needs to be done to improve the numbers and statistics from the Youth Engagement Survey, especially

when it comes to the voice of young people being heard. As articulated by one participant, "we [young people] need to remain loyal to the truth and what is right even when what is right is not the popular opinion."

5.2.2 Whakawhanaungatanga and Belonging

'Whakawhanaungatanga'¹⁴ and 'belonging' were also subjects that were discussed during the focus groups. Many of the non-Māori or Pasifika participants indicated that they felt no strong ties to specific spaces or land. Instead, they formed connection and meaning personally, and through personal relationships. On the other hand, Pasifika and Māori participants both acknowledged links to their family, friends and peoples, as well as a connection to spaces. One former refugee participant stated that they felt they belonged to a place where they are made to feel safe. In focus groups where participants did not reflect on the question 'where/what do you belong to?', some introduced themselves by talking about their interests, passions and work they are involved in, which contributed to a process of whakawhanaungatanga - allowing all who were present to know who was in the room and acknowledge their different experiences.

5.2.3 The Magic Question

Participants were then asked: 'If you have a magic wand with one wish to gift something to young people, what would it be?' This question frequently resulted in a period of reflection, before wishes were suggested: hope, courage, kindness, embracing diversity as a strength rather than a threat, to be validated, confidence, self-love and unconditional love. Other participants suggested the importance of living conditions, wishing each other a good and supportive family environment, equal

14 Process of establishing relationships, relating well to others.

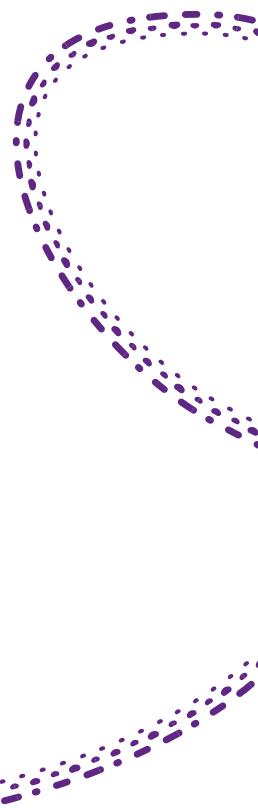
socio-economic status, equity and the absence of child poverty. Valuing mental health and wellbeing as being equal to physical health was another wish that was suggested by most focus groups. Another interesting wish that was raised - especially for participants living in rural areas or young disabled people - was that of safe, accessible and friendly public spaces. Young people across the country appeared to struggle to find spaces where they can regularly meet to socialise, learn and discuss important issues that matter to them.

5.2.4 Issues, Root Causes and Solutions

The next aspect of the focus groups required participants to break into smaller groups to discuss the top issues identified through the Youth Engagement Strategy. In this exercise, participants were invited to envision a tree and identify the main issue (tree trunk), root causes of that issue (tree roots) and the solutions to that problem (tree branches and leaves). The results were insightful and informative. Outlined below is a summary of these discussions:

Environmental Sustainability - Issues, Causes and Solutions		
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY		
Main issues	Root causes	Solutions
Waste management	Corporate vested interests for private profit gain	Rethink, refuse, reduce, rinse, repurpose and recycle
Fast fashion	Political systems designed to support profit over sustainability and capitalism	Industrialisation heals people but working with the land heals the soul
Lack of public transport	A lack of general awareness of environmental issues	Sustainable business networks
Lack of advocacy	Individualisation of issues	Food sharing (brings people together)
Lack of awareness and education around climate change	Fast fashion	Public transport
Habits and attitudes towards change	Baby boomers	Education/awareness
	'Me' versus 'we'	Incentives for businesses
	CO2 emissions	Grassroots movements/ awareness
	Consumerism	Supporting sustainable practices
	Oil drilling	Planting more trees
		Renewable energy

Table 7.



Equity - Issues, Causes and Solutions

EQUITY

Main issues	Root causes	Solutions
<p>Access to education (one size fits all, affecting former refugees, and other minorities)</p> <p>Income inequality</p> <p>Access for Deaf people (jobs and other opportunities)</p> <p>LGBTQIA+ community (the consequences of not being fully accepted)</p>	<p>Cultural barriers</p> <p>Colonialism and colonisation without reparation</p> <p>No willingness to change or accept help</p> <p>School curriculum limitations</p> <p>Debt</p> <p>Thinking that we have solved the problem</p> <p>Patriarchy</p> <p>Historical oppression</p> <p>Poverty</p> <p>Ignorance and lack of awareness around refugee experiences</p> <p>Needs of refugees not prioritised</p> <p>Culture</p> <p>Religion</p> <p>Assumptions around mental health and the transitioning process</p> <p>Patriarchy</p>	<p>Education</p> <p>Analysis of the way things are taught</p> <p>Strengths and values-based education</p> <p>Co-creation</p> <p>Critical thinking</p> <p>Training</p> <p>Community programmes</p> <p>Targeted support programmes</p> <p>Education on historical oppression</p> <p>Reparations</p> <p>Policy changes and government accountability</p> <p>Empathy and understanding</p> <p>Education around privilege</p>

Table 8.



Social Inclusion - Issues, Causes and Solutions

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Main issues	Root causes	Solutions
Racism	Colonisation	Sharing stories and culture
Homophobia/transphobia	Power dynamics	Tolerance and understanding
Lack of diversity and accurate representation in the media	Misinformation/ misunderstanding	Advocacy
Exclusion of the LGBTQIA+ community, especially by migrant and former refugee communities	Lack of connection and isolation (especially for disabled people)	Give Nothing to Racism campaign
Exclusion of Māori and Pasifika	Casual racism (microaggression and “casual” “funny” jokes that normalise racism)	Education
	Disabled people fear trying new things	Challenging the status quo
	Isolation due to disability	Redefining who a ‘Kiwi’ can be
		Young generation (is the solution)
		Breaking down barriers to participation
		More awareness around disability
		Accessibility
		Clear transitioning pathways for young people from school to work, university, life, and so on
		Treating drug use as a health issue and not a criminal issue

Table 9.

Individual and Community Resilience - Issues, Causes and Solutions

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Main issues	Root causes	Solutions
Racism and discrimination	Upbringing	Long term responses
Adversity towards minorities and people of lower socioeconomic status	Connections	Garden-to-table
Lack of resources accessible/available to different groups	What we value in life (economic value)	International friendship club to help break down barriers of minority adversity
Deaf people's attitudes	Mental distress, including illness	Using proper resources to respond
Lack of youth activism	Trauma	Community programmes
Health care system	War and conflict	Accountability from the government
		Making time for each other
		Peer support groups
		Safe spaces for support

Table 10.

Wellbeing - Issues, Causes and Solutions

WELLBEING

Main issues	Root causes	Solutions
Overworking/unhealthy work-life balance	Societal pressures of success	Education
Personal wellbeing	Fear of exclusion/being left behind	Support groups/events
Suicide rates	Lack of education	Training on proper self-care
Access	Unaffordable care	Easier access to services like counselling
	Access to healthcare	Valuing young people and their wisdom
	Negative environments (home or elsewhere)	Five ways to wellbeing

Table 11.

As highlighted in the tables above, the issues that were discussed ranged from waste management, fast fashion, access for disabled people, discrimination, racism, lack of youth activism, personal wellbeing, lack of youth-friendly public spaces and more. The focus groups, however, were unique in that they took a targeted approach that enabled dialogue on what is missing for young people in a local context. Through this targeted line of questioning, common themes were identified such as advocacy, access, diversity, education and wellbeing.

5.2.5 Wellbeing

When analysing the focus group discussions, it was evident that wellbeing was almost always linked to other important issues impacting upon young people. Young people, especially those living in rural areas, reported many challenges in advocating for themselves and other social identity groups. In particular, participants viewed a lack of support, training and opportunities to upskill as key issues that were limiting their ability to advocate for themselves.

The absence of public youth-friendly spaces was also raised repeatedly as an issue that had led to a lack of socialisation and diversity, the inability to have fruitful and courageous conversations, and a sense of disconnectedness. In turn, this sense of disconnectedness was negatively impacting on the wellbeing of young people. Many participants spoke of issues in accessing health and wellbeing services due to barriers such as cost, a lack of specialist training in youth work, long waits, and diminished trust due to confidentiality and privacy breaches (even in the absence of immediate danger to self and others). Exposure to diversity, lack of support services for migrants and former refugees and cross-cultural activities/events were also missing in many of the locations where focus groups were held.

5.2.6 Collaboration with Services and Organisations

Participants were asked what they thought successful collaboration with service providers and organisations would look like, and what the barriers are to achieving it. The majority of the focus group participants reflected on the importance of establishing connections with young people that were built on trust, respect and genuine collaboration. Barriers, on the other hand, were underpinned by the assumption that young people lack experience and knowledge, which means their roles are often tokenistic and built on false representation, leading to disempowerment. Participants wanted to ensure that their voices are heard and responded to. They wanted their contributions to be valued both through application and compensation, and to be included at all stages of the planning and implementation of projects on topics that concerned them.

Many participants spoke about tense relationships with services due to broken trust. They felt a lack of empowerment, independence, skills to advocate for themselves and the ability to speak up about what is missing in services and organisations, and what can be done about it.

Funding grants for Māori and Pasifika were also discussed as either being inaccessible or that the application process did not cater to their different needs and approaches. The participants also stressed the importance of organisations listening to them as young people and taking action (as opposed to listening for the sake of reporting). They also expressed the need to create safe spaces that are inviting for young people, where they can actively contribute, and for organisations to consistently reach out to them. Participants wanted youth agencies to clearly state their objectives and goals when collaborating with young people. They also requested a support network that would facilitate connection and partnership across the sector with their peers. And for all of this to be done with humility.





5.2.7 Fear and Isolation

Focus group participants also reported that they feared judgement due to their age, which overshadowed their experiences. This fear had caused many to lose the motivation to participate and be active. For those who were active and participating, they did not know who to go to for support and resources. Some participants mentioned that the cycle they felt trapped in was intentional - an attempt to prevent young people from having a strong voice and taking action. One focus group participant summarised, “young people won’t always be right, but they should still be listened to.”

Finally, many of the young people participating in the focus groups highlighted that their sense of isolation existed even before COVID-19 and the lockdowns.

5.2.8 Summary

The focus groups with young people highlighted many recurring and important themes as to what the main issues and barriers are when it comes to youth engagement. Most importantly, however, participants provided insights into the type of collaborative, inclusive relationships young people want to have with humanitarian organisations, so that they too can build resilience, develop their voices and take action on humanitarian issues. Many participants concluded the focus groups by appreciating the space provided, which had allowed them to share freely and openly - an experience that was new for many of them.

5.3 Insight from Youth Sector Consultation

As part of the Discovery Phase it was important to understand what New Zealand Red Cross could offer the wider youth sector, by exploring opportunities for collaboration and meaningful partnerships with other organisations around the key themes identified throughout the Youth Engagement Survey and focus groups with young people.

The purpose of interviewing other youth sector organisations was to gauge their understanding of New Zealand Red Cross, their interest in collaborating with us in the future, and to discuss their perceptions of the current status of youth engagement. To do this, we asked representatives from 40 different community organisations that work with or involve young people to participate in an interview, as well as a pre- and post-interview survey.

5.3.1 Interview Findings

When asked about offerings and gaps in the youth sector, participating organisations recognised that there were many useful programmes and projects in existence, particularly in regards to personal wellbeing, community resilience, disaster readiness, response, and recovery, leadership development, advocacy, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, refugee settlement or migration and equity. Identified gaps, however, included:

- leadership development for care-experienced young people;
- honouring the Treaty;
- mental health toolkits and curriculum;
- capacity building, agency and advocacy;
- climate change skill-building and support with eco-anxiety;
- disability education;



- equitable access to services/programmes;
- cultural training and opportunities for young people of different ethnic backgrounds;
- community resilience;
- youth organisation succession plans and sustainability;
- increased connection of young people in rural communities and from minority backgrounds;
- depoliticization of climate change (reframed as a humanitarian issue);
- a ratio of 1:1 frontline staff, youth worker training;
- inclusion education; and
- cross-pollinating opportunities.

When participating organisations were asked where they saw New Zealand Red Cross making the biggest impact with young people, disaster preparedness was the most common answer, followed by psychological first aid (PFA), social inclusion, former refugee and migrant young people and community resilience. More than 70% of participating organisations saw

a natural alignment with the work of New Zealand Red Cross, particularly in areas such as advocacy on the humanitarian impacts of climate change, eco-anxiety support, PFA and wellbeing education, social inclusion, advocacy for minority groups and out of school education programmes. When asked what the organisations would do for young people if they were not limited by time or resources, common responses were:

- creating inclusive and welcoming spaces for young people;
- 1:1 ratio of support, mentoring and coaching;
- connecting young people with wider community support;
- leadership opportunities; and
- expanding local programmes nationally.

Finally, organisations were asked to provide advice for working in the youth sector. Listed below are a small selection of the responses.

- Start doing stuff. Do not get caught up in the details or trying to tick boxes. Challenge the status quo.
- Do not make assumptions.
- Leadership and development of young people is a crowded space with a lot of players. Understand your reasons for being there, in the eyes of the key stakeholders.
- Engage with young people, driven by young people.
- Mana whenua – engage with them.
- Gender-neutral bathrooms, space to share pronouns, space on badges to write pronouns.
- Regularly reflect, review and evaluate.

5.3.2 Survey Findings

Participating organisations were also asked to complete a survey pre- and post- interview, for

the purpose of understanding how attitudes shifted throughout their engagement with New Zealand Red Cross in the context of youth engagement strategy development. Thirty-one organisations completed both surveys:

- Between the pre- and post- interview survey, participants indicated an overall 9% increase in their interest in collaborating with New Zealand Red Cross (post-interview total of 86% interest).
- In the post-interview survey, participants were asked to rate on a scale of zero to 100 New Zealand Red Cross's likelihood of being a future player in the youth sector. Participants rated New Zealand Red Cross at 83, an 18% increase from the same question in the pre-interview survey.
- Consulting with youth sector partners during the development of the Youth Engagement Strategy saw a significant increase in the trust of our New Zealand Red Cross brand. There was an average of a 69% increase in trust reported in the post-interview survey.

5.3.3 Summary

In summary, the results of the pre- and post-interview surveys demonstrated both an increase in awareness of New Zealand Red Cross, and an increase in the desire to collaborate. Throughout the interviews personal wellbeing, leadership development and community resilience emerged as key themes that are already in existence, but that are also missing within the sector. It was also clear that the key areas that were perceived as areas where New Zealand Red Cross could make a difference, were strongly aligned with our three pillars: Disaster Risk Management, International Programmes and Migration Programmes. This consultation process provided us with valuable information, based on the experience and expertise of other youth organisations, all of which will inform our strategy development process.

6 Where to from here?

As discussed in the literature review, young people around the world continue to experience global, national and local issues that impact upon their wellbeing and engagement - issues that also reflect the social, political and environmental realities of the communities they live in.

These include ecoanxiety, mental health issues, the impact of climate change and systemic racism. Despite Aotearoa New Zealand being ranked second in the Global Peace Index (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2020), this report has shown that our young people are not immune to pressures and vulnerabilities. Moreover, these experiences are hindering their engagement with their communities and also in humanitarian work.

However, this report also shows that young people are in the best position to inform, shape and determine their place in society. They bring fresh ideas and new ways of doing things to long-standing humanitarian organisations such as New Zealand Red Cross. Prioritising the voices of young people also ensures the longevity and sustainability of organisations, and in turn, provides opportunities for young people to grow into the future leaders of our organisations, communities and our country.

Drawing on Hart's Ladder (Hart, 1992) and Shier's Pathways to Participation (Shier, 2001) we consulted with over 1000 young people and youth sector representatives about their experiences, desires, and visions for youth engagement in Aotearoa New Zealand. The findings of this Discovery Phase were not only insightful, but useful as we think about what the future of youth engagement looks

like. Throughout the findings four key themes emerged, which have, and will continue to underpin our efforts:



Resilience: Building personal and community resilience.



Inclusion: Partnering with all young people, particularly those who are vulnerable and excluded from access, support and opportunity.



Voice and hope: Representing hope through humanitarian activities.



Impact: Mobilising the power of humanity and young people to create positive local and global impact.

But now that we have completed the Youth Engagement Strategy the work has only just begun. We have used these findings to 'define', 'develop' and 'deliver' a Youth Engagement Strategy in partnership with young people (Design Council, 2019). That is, a Strategy that not only embodies the hopes and desires of the young people of Aotearoa New Zealand, but that also builds resilience, upholds a culture of inclusivity, amplifies the voices of young people and delivers the impact we wish to see within our communities and beyond.



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“We will continue to embrace change and, honouring our history, always look forward.”

NEW ZEALAND
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