



**Belong**  
Aotearoa

# Strategic Intent & Theory of Change

January 2022

## **Belong Aotearoa drives transformational change to improve inclusion, belonging and wellbeing for refugee-background and migrant communities.**

Our focus is on 'systems change'. This means disrupting the 'upstream' conditions that are the source of inequity and exclusion for refugee-background and migrant communities – including institutional racism and discrimination; and transforming the 'downstream' experiences of people on the ground towards inclusion, belonging, connection and intergenerational wellbeing.

To achieve this, we need to work upstream with government and the resettlement sector and downstream with people in communities. We work directly with refugee-background and migrant families and communities to understand their lived experiences and co-design scalable solutions. This feeds the work we do upstream to influence wider shifts in attitudes, policy and practice at a national scale.

We target our efforts on achieving change for refugee-background and migrant communities that are the most marginalised, with a particular focus on women. This is an evidence-informed approach, based on research that highlights the poverty burden and social isolation experienced by women in these communities and the importance of lived experience driving systemic change.

We collaborate and partner strategically with those who have shared aims, interests and values.

Our values, vision, mission, priorities and overall theory of change are described below, supported by diagrams that describe our context and summarise what we are doing to achieve change.

## Our values

### Empowerment

We work in ways that are empowering to ethnic communities. We ensure that the people most affected by a systemic issue are at the centre of redesign. We amplify voices that are otherwise marginalised.

---

### Manaakitanga

We understand the value of a warm welcome. We work in ways that are warm, caring and supportive, so that our communities and partners are valued and included.

---

### Whanaungatanga

Forming connections can help people to feel like they belong. We work in ways that focus on understanding people's shared experiences and values, and use these to build strong connections.

---

### Courageous disruption

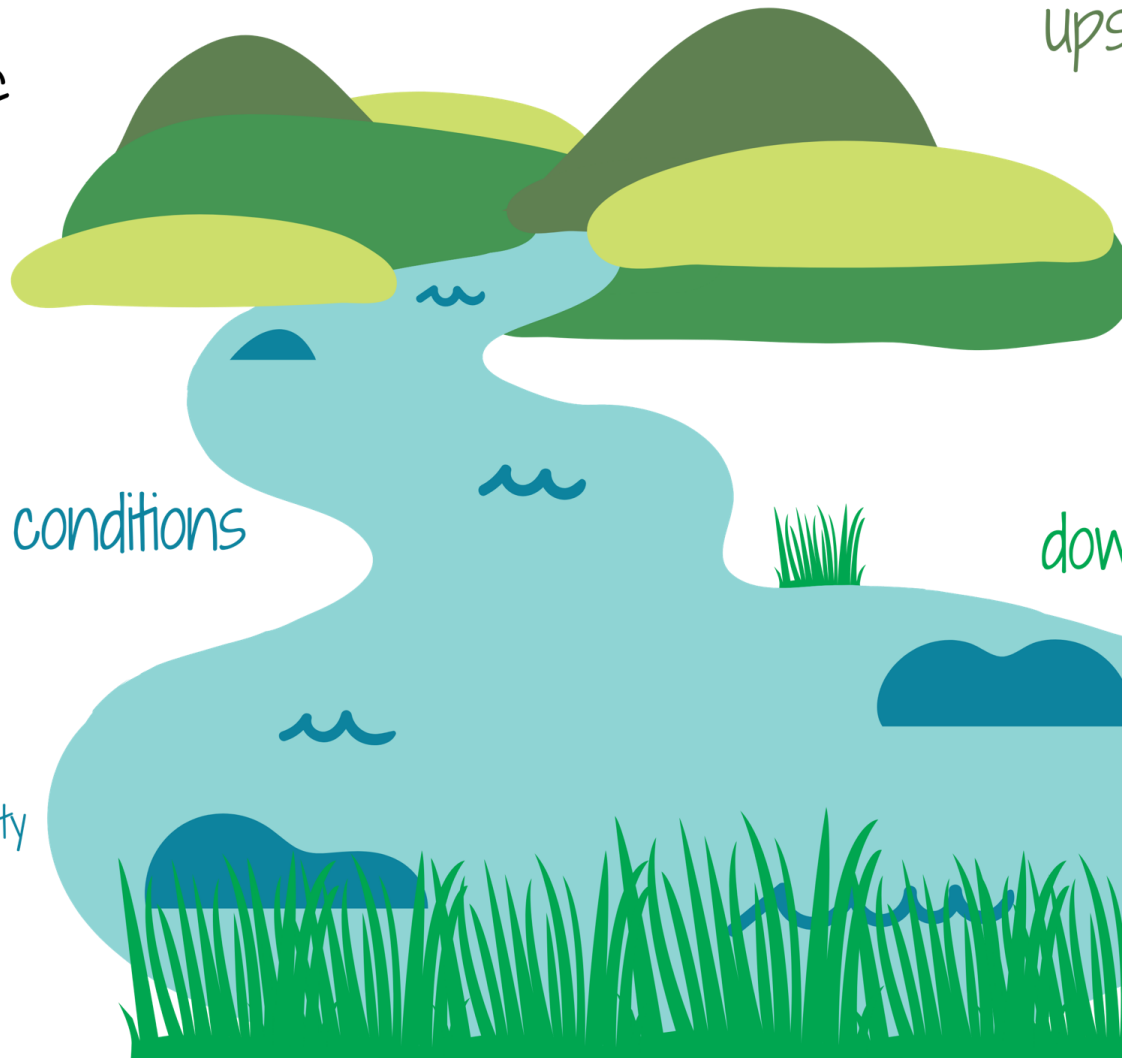
We recognise that new solutions are needed for us to be able to achieve our vision. We are prepared to be bold, brave, disruptive and innovative in our approach.

---

### Collaborative impact

We know that other organisations and groups share our values and goals and have diverse strengths and resources that complement our own. We work in partnership with others to achieve stronger, collaborative impact.

The context of our work:



upstream conditions

societal + institutional racism, discrimination, bias

Colonial/western-centric policies + decision-making models

downstream conditions

inadequate, inappropriate + inaccessible services

funding centred on services/agencies rather than community responses

downstream impacts

exclusion from:

- income
- opportunities to achieve wellbeing
- communities of support

# What we are doing to bring change:

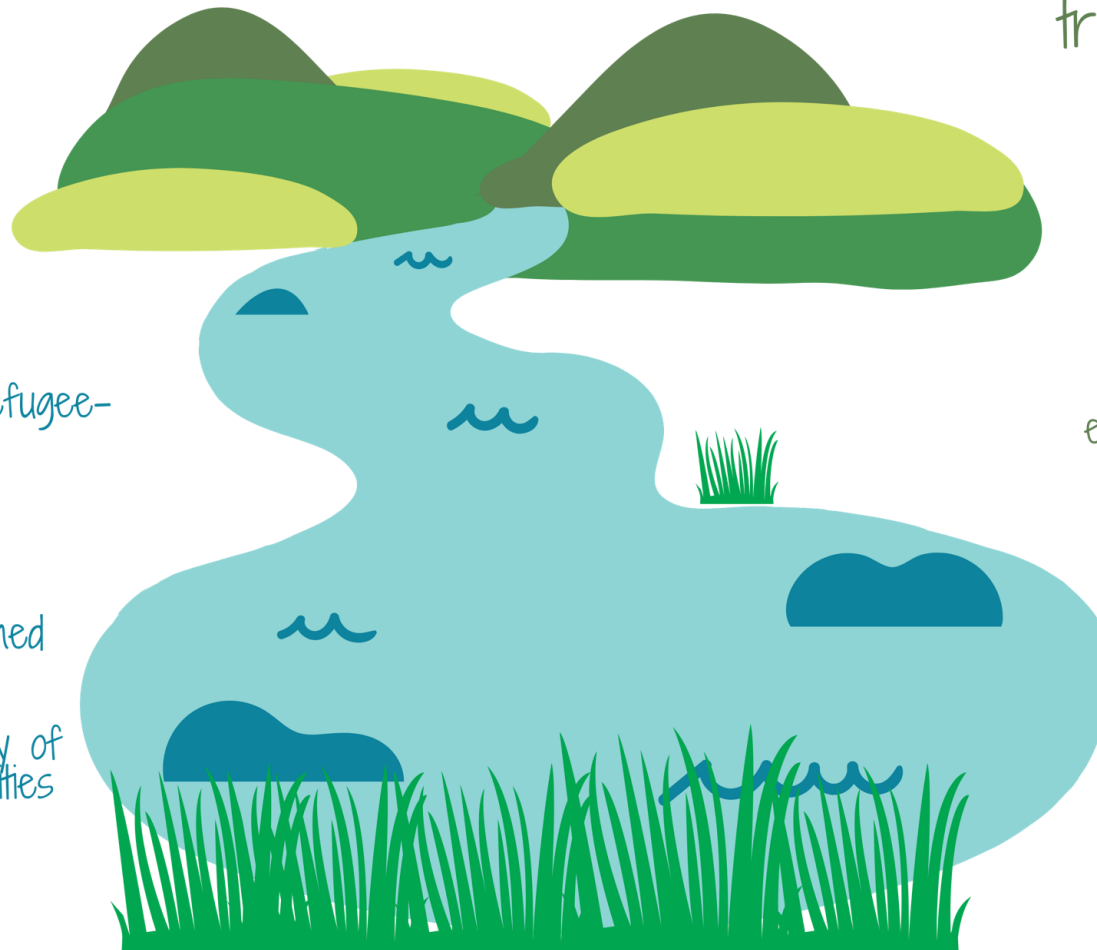
Working downstream, to influence change upstream

nurturing and enabling refugee-background + migrant changemakers

developing compelling alternatives that can be scaled up and mainstreamed

working collectively to strengthen a local ecology of social support + opportunities

lifting household income



Advocating to directly transform upstream conditions

changing mindsets + behaviours by changing narratives about refugee background and migrant communities

working with institutions, employers and government to create equity of access and inclusion

sharing what we learn and being a platform for the voice of lived experience, to advocate for changes to policy, funding and practices

# Theory of Change

What we're responding to	What we're doing to bring change	Current priorities	Changes we are seeking		What we are learning about
			Now	Longer-term	
<p>Refugee-background and migrant communities commonly experience exclusion from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- income</li> <li>- opportunities to achieve wellbeing</li> <li>- community support</li> </ul> <p>This is driven by intersecting issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- societal and institutional racism and discrimination</li> <li>- colonial/western-centric policies and decision-making models</li> <li>- support services that are inadequate, inappropriate and inaccessible</li> <li>- lack of resourcing for joined up local community support systems</li> </ul>	<p>Working downstream to influence change upstream, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- nurturing and enabling refugee-background and migrant changemakers (including youth)</li> <li>- developing compelling alternatives that can be scaled and mainstreamed</li> <li>- working collectively to strengthen a local ecology of social support and opportunities</li> <li>- lifting household income</li> </ul> <p>Working upstream, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shifting mindsets and behaviours by changing narratives about refugee-background and migrant communities</li> <li>- working with institutions, employers and government to create equity of access and inclusion</li> <li>- sharing what we learn and being a platform for the voice of lived experience, to advocate for changes to policy, funding and practices</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lifting income:</b> Working with families, communities, employers and government to raise household income for refugee-background and migrant families</p> <p><b>Inclusion, social connection and wellbeing of women:</b> Social connectedness, access to opportunities and communities of support for refugee-background and migrant women</p> <p><b>Changing attitudes:</b> Changing attitudes towards refugee-background and migrant communities through positive narratives and storytelling</p> <p><b>Embedding Te Tiriti principles and practices</b> Capacity building and finding ways to strengthen out work</p> <p><b>Reflective practice:</b> Strengthening our reflective learning practices to accelerate our efforts</p>	<p>Upstream change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More inclusive employment practices and pathways</li> <li>- More connected ecologies of support for women and families</li> <li>- Compelling alternatives are tested and scaled</li> <li>- Positive narratives about refugee-background and migrant communities have more public visibility and reach</li> </ul> <p>Downstream change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raising aspirations for self and family</li> <li>- Increased household income for families</li> <li>- Increased changemaker capacity and influence</li> </ul>	<p>Upstream change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More inclusive policies</li> <li>- Inclusive service design and accessibility</li> <li>- More inclusive attitudes and behaviours towards ethnic communities</li> </ul> <p>Downstream change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More equitable access to income and opportunities that support wellbeing</li> <li>- Increased resourcing of local community support systems for refugee-background and migrant communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are compelling alternatives towards our priorities?</li> <li>- What are we learning about what works, what it takes, about practice and scaling?</li> <li>- What are we sensing and intuiting about how change happens and what is required?</li> </ul>

## Signs of Progress

We have developed signs of progress aligned to the outcomes in our theory of change. Monitoring these signs of progress will enable us to track tangible short-term changes that show we are progressing towards achieving our intended impact.

<b>Downstream changes</b>	<b>Signs of progress</b>
<b>Raising aspirations for self and family</b>	Participants/families set goals and aspirations
	Processes are in place to review goals and aspirations
<b>Increased household income for families</b>	New sources and pathways to increase household income are developed
<b>Increased changemaker capacity and influence</b>	Changemakers and their capacity needs are identified
	Capacity support aligned to capacity needs is provided
<b>Upstream changes</b>	<b>Signs of progress</b>
<b>More inclusive employment practices and pathways</b>	Engagement with interested employers
	New practices and pathways are tested
<b>More connected ecologies of support for women and families</b>	Families are aware of and accessing wider support networks
	More intentionally joined up support services/programmes
<b>Compelling alternatives are tested and scaled</b>	Alternatives are co-designed with communities with lived experience
	Reflective practice and learning processes are active
	Belong Aotearoa builds an evidence base for scaling what works
<b>Positive narratives about refugee-background and migrant communities have more public visibility and reach</b>	Sharing stories and raising voices of lived experience
	Collective advocacy

## Vision

An inclusive, connected New Zealand where refugee-background and migrant communities enjoy and contribute towards collective wellbeing

## Mission

Driving transformational change to improve inclusion, belonging and wellbeing for refugee-background and migrant communities

## Priorities 2022

- **Lifting income:** Working with families, communities, employers and government to raise household income for refugee-background and migrant families
- **Inclusion, social connection and wellbeing of women:** Social connectedness, access to opportunities and communities of support for refugee-background and migrant women
- **Changing attitudes:** Changing attitudes towards refugee-background and migrant communities through positive narratives and storytelling
- **Reflective practice:** Strengthening our reflective learning practices to accelerate our efforts