

“Ordinary people, extraordinary circumstances”: Addressing food security among vulnerable asylum seekers

100 years

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redcross.org.au/centenary

the
power of
humanity



100 YEARS
PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE
1914-2014

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge:

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- All the community members, volunteers and clients involved in “A New Place to Taste”

Power of humanity

Australian Red Cross vision:

- To improve the lives of vulnerable people in Australia and internationally by mobilising the power of humanity.
- Red Cross has been providing support for people seeking asylum in the community in Australia for over 20 years



*Stock images used to protect the identity of the individual.

Fundamental Principles

Our services are guided by seven Fundamental Principles: Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality.



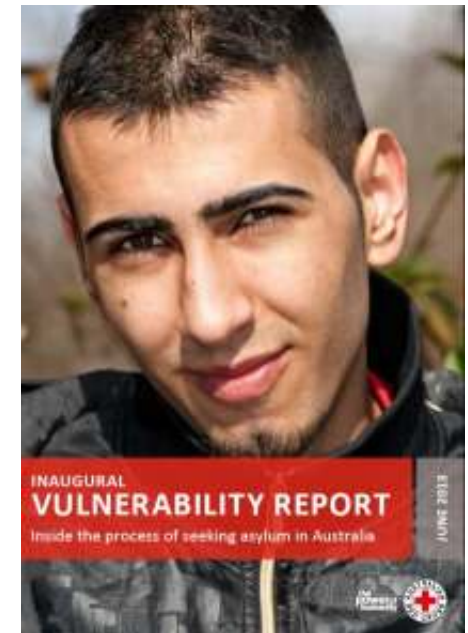
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The issue: living in poverty

People seeking asylum live in the Australian community in a state of poverty

“four of us are living in the same room in the hotel ... We have been here for 7 weeks, now we are paying ... it’s really expensive and we don’t have much money left after we pay for food or clothes or transport ... we can’t afford food and you know, we are borrowing money from friends ...”

Source: ARC Inaugural Vulnerability Report
“Inside the process of seeking asylum in Australia” 2013



The issue: food insecurity

In 2013 - 40% of people seeking asylum had experienced food insecurity in the preceding 12 months

“After paying the rent we have \$35 left for two weeks ... we are eating noodles and eggs ... normally one sometimes two meals a day. We realise this is not good for us ... the body is not getting what it needs.”

Source: ARC Inaugural Vulnerability Report
“Inside the process of seeking asylum in Australia” 2013



The issue: anecdotally



Afghani Kitchen



Australian Kitchen



The program: A New Place to Taste



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The program: aims

A New Place to Taste aimed to support Migration Support clients to:

1. Access healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food
2. Have knowledge of basic nutrition principles to maintain a good health status in Australia
3. Be equipped with basic cooking skills to prepare nutritious, hygienic and low cost meals for themselves and others
4. Connect with food outlets, services and community groups in Adelaide

Sessions: cooking



Australian Red Cross
Minestrone Soup



Ingredients

- 2 carrots, peeled, chopped
- 2 celery sticks, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, peeled, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 onion, sliced, drained
1 finely chopped tomato
peas

1 vegetable stock cube
1 high flame

1 onion, potato and garlic in the slow cooker and stir in
the minestrone, then the stock cube, for 2 hours.

Transfer to another slow
cooker, for 30 minutes or until the vegetables are soft
to high heat. Add the peas and onion, uncovered, for 2
hours.

COOKING EXPERIMENT



Sessions: shopping



Adelaide
**CENTRAL
MARKET**



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Sessions: gardening



“I’m very much enjoy the gardening and learn a lot of knowledge about plants. Also meet a lot of friends and had great fun” (quote from participant)



The program: more than cooking and gardening

- Address the impact of migration
- Overcome social isolation
- Practice English
- Time to forget worries and problems at home
- Build confidence to access community facilities and services in a new country

“I am very thankful to Red Cross especially my caseworker for organising these sessions that have enable me to learn more about Australian society and also meeting new friends from different cultural backgrounds. Now I can prepare pizza and eat with my family”.

(quote from participant)

The program: 2013 data

Number of ANPTT sessions	Total sessions	19
	Supermarket tours	5
	Cooking sessions (inc. final celebration event)	8
	Gardening workshops	6
Overall attendance	Client participants	310
Repeat attendance	Client participants	90
Red Cross volunteers	Facilitators	28
	Interpreters	8
Community volunteers		10

The program: impact on food insecurity

More confident to:

- shop in the markets and supermarkets
- shop within a budget
- growing their own vegetables...and had started to do so

Increased knowledge about:

- where to find fresh fruit and vegetables in their area
- healthy cooking and that they intended to incorporate more vegetables into their meals

The program: strengths

- Strong partnerships across range of external partners and sectors (including Adelaide City Council grant funding)
- Collaborative working between internal Red Cross teams
- Community development model
- Strengths-based approach
- Skills, good nature, passion and commitment of everyone involved

The program: challenges

- Language barriers
- Consistency of client attendance
- Availability of interpreters
- Availability of resources in appropriate languages
- Evaluation
- Cultural awareness and considerations
- Transport
- Weather

Additional outcomes: “Putting Down Roots”

Gardening is an activity which provides clients with a sense of purpose, meaningful engagement and assists to ease their concerns.

*Stock images used to protect the identity of the individual.



*“As I
water the
garden it
washes
my mind
and clears
my
worries”*

*(quote from
participant)*

The program: future directions

- Recent changes in Government policy and tenders have seen significant reductions in jobs and capacity across Australian Red Cross
- A grant for \$10,000 was recently received to develop a larger garden site
- Sustainability???
 - Plans to incorporate components of A New Place to Taste into the garden project
 - Expand volunteer and mentor opportunities
 - Strengthen community development approaches

To finish...

- Given the current global context, people seeking asylum will continue to be a focus for Red Cross.
- Red Cross have been working in this space for 20 years and will continue to find a way to do so.....



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Video:

- I would like to acknowledge Adelaide City Council for their support of “A New Place to Taste” and for the production of this short video
- The video can be viewed at the Adelaide City Council website:

<http://www.adelaidecitycouncil.com/inside-adelaide/article/a-new-place-to-taste-for-migrants-and-refugees>