



MERCY WELCOME & HOSPITALITY

THROUGHOUT OUR PUBLICATION, THE THEMES OF 'WELCOME AND HOSPITALITY' ARE INTEGRAL AND REFLECT THE SPIRIT OF OPENNESS, WARMTH, AND ENCOUNTER EXTENDED TO PEOPLE ON THE MOVE THROUGHOUT THE MERCY WORLD

A CULTURE OF ENCOUNTER WITH PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

- Pope Francis call us to **create inclusive communities** that embrace migrants and refugees and foster unity and a sense of belonging
- We are **inspired by Catherine McAuley** to welcome the stranger and provide hospitality and support to people on the move and those at borders
- We envision a world where **human rights are a reality** for everyone, everywhere



HOSPITALITY AND CARE PROVIDED TO MIGRANTS DEMONSTRATES A WILLINGNESS TO KEEP DOORS OPEN TO THOSE LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO CALL HOME

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF FRIENDSHIP & HUMAN CONNECTION

- **Building supportive relationships and friendships** with migrants and refugees can be transformational to support newcomers settle into communities and cultivate hope for the future
- **Fostering positive interactions** with people on the move applies a **whole-of-society approach** that promotes equality, belonging, and a **culture of encounter**
- Many members of the Mercy community have provided **accompaniment and support to those detained** while others have organised **social and leisure activities, provided support with language learning, and arranged befriending schemes**



THE MERCY WORLD RECOGNISES THE INHERENT DIGNITY OF EACH PERSON AND EMBRACES THIS UNIQUENESS, ACKNOWLEDGING THAT EACH PERSON'S JOURNEY HAS ITS OWN DISTINCT MEANING AND CHARACTERISTICS

Take Action!

- **Welcome the Stranger:** Extend a warm welcome to help immigrants, migrants, refugees and people on the move. Build paths of solidarity and respect and create safe spaces of encounter, listening, and understanding
- Pray for people who are leaving their homes in search of new beginnings and safety
- Share gratitude and appreciation for staff and volunteers ministering to people on the move
- Reframe attitudes to migration by emphasising what we have in common and promoting positive, inclusive and hopeful messages that can challenge racism, xenophobia, and negative narratives of migration
- Call on policy makers to condemn harmful and dehumanising narratives of fear and exclusion about migrants and migration
- Take action for change using the UN #StandUpForMigrants Toolkit

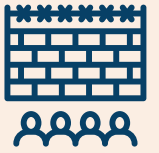




Supporting Migrants at Borders and in Detention



Assistance in Transit and at Borders



At land, sea and air borders around the world, migrants can experience discrimination, violence, prolonged or arbitrary detention, and even death. People around the Mercy World encounter migrants throughout every aspect of their journey and many support migrants who have recently crossed borders. For some, that means providing companionship and immediate assistance, including medical care, food and water, blankets, clothing, sanitary items and an opportunity to rest.



Criminalization of Solidarity



There is a worrying and growing trend of 'criminalization of solidarity' in recent years, as governments try to deter migration by threatening, harassing, and prosecuting people and organizations who have helped refugees and migrants by providing food and water, temporary shelter, or rescue at sea.



Assistance to Migrants in Detention



For migrants and asylum seekers, the experience of immigration detention has many damaging and long-lasting physical and psychological effects. Detention and strict immigration laws perpetuate fears based on systematic intolerance, xenophobia, and racism. Through their advocacy and friendship with migrants, people around the Mercy World have been able to create a 'ministry of presence' that provides migrants comfort, companionship, and access to housing, employment, and legal assistance in times of uncertainty.



Alternatives to Detention



Community-based alternatives to detention better respect the human rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, and prove that detention is not necessary during the immigration process. An end to immigration detention is not only possible, it is beneficial to states, and necessary to ensure the dignity and rights of people on the move.



Take Action!



- Examine the relationship between racism and migration policies
- Raise your voice to make sure policies and practices are human-rights based and non-discriminatory. Call on governments to:
 - Decriminalize irregular migration
 - Demilitarize border enforcement against migrants & asylum seekers
 - Stop and reverse border externalization
 - Decriminalize humanitarian assistance to migrants & asylum seekers
 - Prioritize alternatives to detention, end child immigration detention, and use detention of adults only as a measure of last resort

MEETING NEEDS & UPHOLDING RIGHTS



MERCY
INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION



Seeking asylum is a legal right for all individuals. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

Refugee, migrant, asylum-seeker, undocumented, citizen, or stateless does not reflect a person's whole identity.

What Contributes to a Person's Legal Migration Status?

Many factors influence a person's decision to start a journey to build a life in a new country. Some factors encourage a person to leave a place of origin, and others that draw a person to a particular destination.

A person's migration status is complex. It can be determined by:

- Who they are, why they move, or how they migrate.
- A person's migration status is also not fixed – it can change over time

The Need for Regular Pathways and Paths to Permanency

Many migrants remain limited in their options to migrate safely, regularize their status, or in an irregular situation. Without safe and dignified regular pathways, migrants are often left with only precarious and irregular migration options. Others may be granted a temporary stay in a country and then be left unable to adjust to permanent status, leaving them in limbo and unable to access education and employment opportunities.

The Importance of Documentation in Accessing Rights

Although the question of identification and documentation is conceptually distinct from legal status in a country, it is increasingly inseparable in practice. At the most basic level, a person lacking identity documents cannot travel through legal channels, which increases a person's vulnerability.

If registration and identification procedures are not implemented with rigor and integrity, people may face greater difficulties proving their entitlement to nationality or refugee status.

Take Action!

Consider the needs of migrants and people on the move in your country
Raise your voice to ensure policies and practices are human-rights based and non-discriminatory. Call on governments to:

- **Improve access to legal identity and adequate documents**
- **Ensure access to basic services**
- **Address the negative drivers of migration and forced displacement**
- **Expand regular migration pathways**
- **Create alternatives for people on never-ending temporary visa status**



SOCIAL INCLUSION

Rooted in Mercy hospitality, people and organizations around the Mercy World engage in ministries to welcome migrants into their new communities and help them to adjust to their new surroundings. Social inclusion is a process by which migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers become accepted into society as individuals and as groups.

Integration

In addition to helping migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers access labor markets and basic services, people around the Mercy World contribute to social inclusion by offering opportunities to learn the host community's language, traditions, and customs and **empowering migrants to become engaged in their new communities**.



Hi!

嗨

Hola!

Language Barriers

For some migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, **language barriers can delay their integration into a new society**, which may lead to further exclusion. Learning the host community's language is important in a practical sense – to access public information about healthcare, housing, education, employment, and more. But more importantly, for the ability to engage in the community and build new relationships and meaningfully connect with their new communities.

Meeting Physical & Emotional Needs

*"We have developed a real focus on facilitating social networks through various activities, events, and gatherings that bring people together across cultural and religious divides. In many instances, **we have witnessed real, supportive, caring relationships develop**."*
(Meredith Evans rsm Australia)



WELCOME



Welcoming Spaces

The Mercy World offers an opportunity for encounter, support, and sharing between migrants and host communities. **Mercy ministries play an important role in focusing on the voices of migrants** and the people who welcome them and creating spaces for welcome, connection, and understanding.

Cultivating Partnerships

Collaboration between governments and Church and civil society partners is necessary to address the many needs of migrants and refugees in their new communities, including access to essential services and decent work to foster inclusive societies and empower migrants and refugees to live to their fullest potential.



Call to Action!

- **Promote** the meaningful participation of migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless people in policy development, delivery, and reviews.
- **Pursue policies** to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including racism, systemic racism, xenophobia, and related intolerance, and challenge and reframe misleading narratives that generate negative perceptions of migrants and refugees.
- **Ensure migrants can access** basic services and exercise their human rights regardless of their migration status and without fear of immigration enforcement.
- **Be involved** with groups that support asylum seekers in your local community,
- **Create and participate in spaces of encounter**, sharing and understanding between migrants and refugees and local communities



BELONGING & SOCIAL INCLUSION

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Pre-Departure

Even before migrants, refugees or asylum-seekers leave their countries of origin, they might encounter trauma, such as war, human rights violations, torture, or sexual violence. This is especially the case for people in forced migration flows.



On the Journey

In transit, migrants might experience exhausting journeys, dangerous travel conditions (e.g. exposure to extreme temperatures, perilous modes of transport, lack of basic health necessities, etc.), or traumatic events, abuse and violence.



At Destination

In their host communities, migrants may face exclusion or discrimination from healthcare systems and policies due to their migration status, language and/or cultural values. They might also experience abuse, exploitation, or unsafe working and living conditions.



How Mercy Responds



Mercy hospitals, shelters, and other ministries fill important gaps in healthcare coverage, continuing the long tradition of Mercy care which began with Catherine McAuley and the first Sisters of Mercy. Excluding migrants from a rights-based approach to health is a poor public health practice and a violation of migrants' rights. Addressing the health needs of migrants can improve health status and outcomes, facilitate integration, and contribute to social and economic development.

Take Action!

Contact your elected representatives at local and national level to ensure migrants can access basic services and exercise their human right to health, regardless of their migration status, and without fear of immigration enforcement.



Breaking Boundaries: A Mercy Response to People on the Move

Access to Housing



“Migrants are particularly vulnerable to human rights violations, the enjoyment of housing being among the most endangered rights.”

~ Raquel Rolnik, Former UN Special Rapporteur to Adequate Housing



People on the move face many barriers to adequate housing due to their migration and economic statuses



- Growing research has found migration to be among the structural drivers causing homelessness
- Public funding for housing and homeless services is often not provided to those with an irregular migration status
- Mercy ministries globally are called to enable support services and facilities for migrants experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity

Many migrants and refugees are often forced to live in overcrowded and insecure housing conditions

- Migrants who work in low-paid and informal jobs have less stability and often struggle to compete in the housing market, which increases their likelihood of poverty, homelessness, or living in substandard housing conditions
- For those under temporary or irregular migration status, exclusion from the housing market is exacerbated due to a lack of affordable housing and limited access to social safety nets



Discrimination in accessing housing based on language, ethnicity, religion, size of their family, and legal status affects many migrants and refugees globally

CALL TO ACTION

Advocate for governments to:

- Improve access to adequate housing for asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants. With the aim of reducing the number of migrants at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, implement public policies for holistic supportive housing arrangements and services that take into account the specific needs of migrant groups.
- Uphold the principles of non-discrimination and equity in housing provision and homeless services.

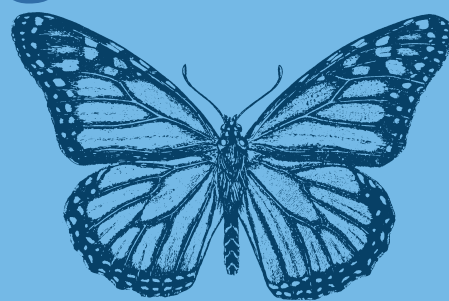
1 NO POVERTY



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



BREAKING BOUNDARIES ACCESS TO EDUCATION



The Right to Education

Articles 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognize the right of everyone to education. States Parties agree that education "shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity" and it "shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups."



Barriers to Education

Often people on the move, especially those who have undergone forced displacement, experience significant gaps in education. Consistent and quality schooling is often unattainable due to unforeseen and uncertain circumstances. Barriers to schooling can be further exacerbated when newly arrived migrants do not fit the criteria for certain educational programs. States have an obligation to protect and promote the right to education.



Access in Australia

In Australia, while the government provides migrants on temporary visas with a secondary education, it does not provide assistance for them to continue onto tertiary education, leaving them at a great disadvantage to their peers. Despite living domestically in the country, with many graduates completing their entire secondary education in Australia, they are classed as international students. Due to this, to attend university they are required to pay exorbitant international fees upfront. This is unaffordable for the vast majority of people on temporary visas.



Formal & Informal Education

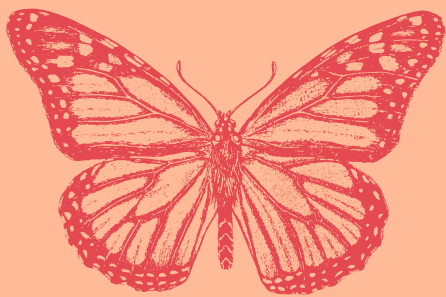
The Mercy World recognises the need for migrants to be accommodated in formal education systems and also supported through informal education to flourish intellectually and socially. Some refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants can often find themselves excluded from formal systems. Education, both formal and informal, is critical to a person's development, inclusion and contribution to society. Importantly, education is recognized as an inherent and inalienable human right meaning that no one's access to education or to educational institutions should be excluded or limited based on their migratory status.



Call to action!

Prioritize access to education at primary, secondary and tertiary level for all migrants, regardless of status. The human right to education should be given the highest priority for all children, adolescents and adults, as a pathway for development both socially, communally and financially.





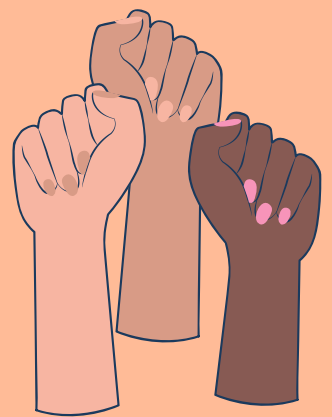
ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT & DECENT WORK



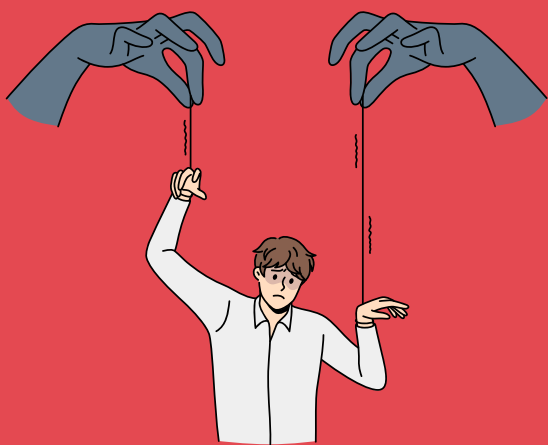
Access to Employment Opportunities and Decent Work Inclusion of migrants and refugees in the labor market is essential for their successful integration into host societies. Many people migrate to escape poverty and unemployment. Providing employment opportunities to migrants in countries of destination is not only beneficial to the individual and their families, but contributes to the overall economic growth and development of the destination country.

Breaking the Stigma

"The government could also help to break the stigma of being a 'refugee' that acts as a barrier to accessing employment and rental properties, particularly through using more positive and humane language in discussion, and shape policies based on a sense of duty and pride in providing welcome and support towards people from different countries. The government's leadership in offering a welcoming and fair stance towards refugees would surely flow on through other sections of society." Ada Snell, Young Mercy Links, Australia



Exploitation in the Workforce



Carmen Rosa Callomamani rsm on situations of labor exploitation of Venezuelan migrants in Peru: "The population in the host countries began to see them [migrants] as cheap labor, even in some cases they stopped hiring people from their own country to give work to migrants since they could pay much less, or sometimes they were not paid at all ... many young people have been captured for sexual exploitation and labor exploitation"

Access to Decent Work

For migrants and refugees, decent opportunities in the labor market are usually hard to come by and many barriers exist for them to secure employment in both the public and private sectors. Due to the shortage in mainstream employment opportunities for people with a migrant background, migrants and refugees are often overrepresented in "low-wage labor sectors." Migrants and refugees in low-wage labor sectors are especially vulnerable to situations of exploitation where they are overworked in hazardous conditions, underpaid, and under-protected by social policies.



Take Action!

- **Promote the right** to just and favorable conditions of work and fair remuneration.
- **Address issues of discrimination** and exclusion in finding stable and well paid employment with safe, equitable and humane working conditions for migrants and refugees.
- **Implement policies which address the pay gap** for migrants, promote opportunities to upskill, and improve the safety of working and living conditions.
- **Recognize the need for effective policy measures** to improve recognition of migrant skills and migrant integration in the workforce.



BREAKING BOUNDARIES

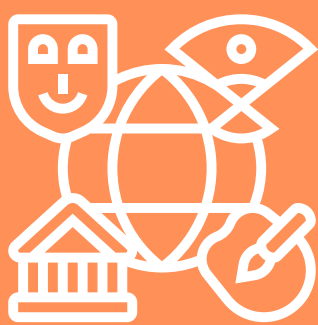
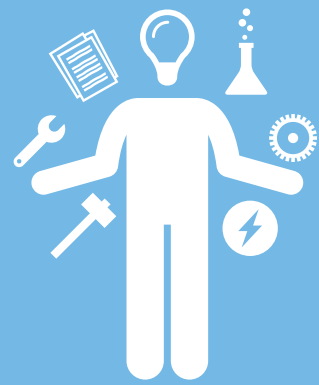
CONTRIBUTIONS OF

MIGRANTS

A MERCY RESPONSE TO PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

Both low- and high-wage migrant workers bring skills and knowledge to fill labor shortages, addressing market needs and facilitating increased productivity in key sectors. Migrants and refugees also bring new ideas and ways of thinking, contributing to innovation and entrepreneurship.



CULTURAL RICHNESS

Migrants and refugees share new foods, music, habits, traditions and beliefs with their new neighbors. Resilient, creative and hopeful, they have undertaken challenging journeys to build better lives, not only for themselves, but for their children and their communities.

ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

"I want to become a productive citizen of Australia, a person helping other people in this country that offers so much to me and I want to be a person who will leave a positive mark in this world."

Fadi, Iraqi refugee in Australia



INSPIRATION & SUPPORT

"Being a Sister of Mercy is an amazing gift as through these many years of ministry a bit on the fringes we have been encouraged, loved, and supported. We are grateful to God, the Mercy Community and our immigrant sisters and brothers."

Pat Murphy rsm & JoAnn Persch rsm, United States

TAKE ACTION!

- Reflect on the ways that migrants & refugees enrich your life. What products do you use, what cuisines & music do you enjoy, and what relationships do you have that are thanks to migrants and refugees?
- Advocate for policies that enable migrants to contribute fully to the social, economic, and political lives of your country/community.

