

With a history of compassion and advocacy dating back to the 1950s, **Centre for Refugees** (CFR) was established in 2004 by Christian Action and remains today the only drop-in community centre for refugees arriving in Hong Kong. The Centre provides some of society's most vulnerable people, including victims of torture, war, genocide and other acts of persecution, with a comprehensive support system that increases social, financial, cultural, and mental wellbeing.

Our focus is on filling a vital gap in humanitarian welfare by providing emergency shelter, food, education, counselling and community support, while our long term vision is to see refugees become **empowered, engaged and valued** members of our Hong Kong community.



## Who is a Refugee?

A person outside of his/her country of nationality with a well founded fear of persecution for reasons of **race, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion**. They cannot return home without risk of extreme violations of their human rights, including torture or even death.

*\*1951 UN Refugee Convention*

## Who is an Asylum Seeker?

Someone whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed. Every year, around one million people seek asylum.

*\*UNHCR*

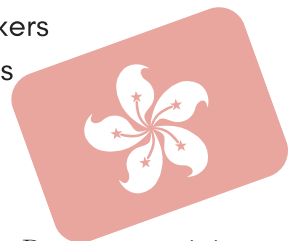
**68.5** Million forcibly displaced worldwide

- 25.4 million refugees
- 40 million internally displaced people
- 3.1 million asylum seekers

*\*UNHCR Global Trends 2017*

## Local Picture

- About 5,000 asylum seekers
- 200 recognised refugees



*\*Hong Kong Immigration Department statistics*

## Why Hong Kong?

- 2 - 3 month visa on arrival
- Can apply for asylum with Hong Kong Immigration Department after Visa expires
- Most asylum seekers did not choose to come to Hong Kong



## HK Gov't Provides

- Access to local hospitals for emergencies
- Access to local schools for kids 18 and below
- HK\$1,500 allowance for accommodation
- HK\$1,200 food allowance
- HK\$200 travel allowance
- HK\$300 for utilities



*\*all provisions are in-kind*

## Employability Programme

The aim of the Employability Programme is to assist recognised refugees get back into the workplace in Hong Kong and beyond.

### Objectives

Most refugees come with a set of skills and knowledge that would be valuable in a variety of workplace contexts. However, they may have not been able to work for a considerable period of time given the restrictions placed upon them in Hong Kong. Our objectives are to:

- **Identify those recognised refugees with the desire to work**
- **Assess their skills and needs**
- **Provide any training necessary to prepare them for re-entering the workplace**
- **Assist them in securing a permanent role**

\*1951 UN Refugee Convention

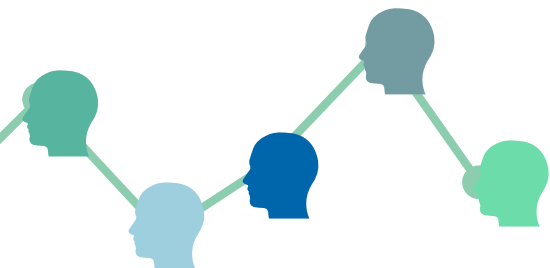
### Benefits

Given the recent flexibility shown by the Director of Immigration, CFR recently decided to direct some of our limited resources to getting recognised refugees back to work. The benefits are obvious:

- **The ability to work makes refugees independent and free to take charge of their lives**
- **Allows them to contribute to Hong Kong in a productive manner, whilst helping to restore sense of routine, purpose and dignity.**
- **In the event that they are permanently resettled at some future point, the refugee will be well prepared to re-enter the workplace**

### How it works

CFR staff contact known recognised refugees on our database and discuss their interest in returning to the workplace. They will then invite the refugee to an initial interview to assess their skills and training needs.



### Full-time Employment

Once sufficient training has been provided, CFR will look for partner employers who will offer recognised refugees a full-time, permanent role where the refugee's skills meets their business' operational requirements. We are looking for employers who will be empathetic with the refugee's situation, and are willing to provide good quality support and training.



### Partners

CFR has partnered with Macquarie and other volunteers to run Employability Workshops with an aim to prepare recognised refugees to get back into the workplace. The workshops focus on the following:

- CV writing
- Interview skills and mock interviews
- Basic computer skills
- Individual Action Plan to get "work ready"

## Process

For a full-time role, an application needs to be made to Immigration Department for a work permit. This can either be done by the employer or by a law firm familiar with the process on the employer's behalf. The initial process can be quite rigorous, taking roughly 9 to 12 weeks to complete. CFR will assist the recognised refugee in compiling the information required for the application.

Though the work permit is only granted by Immigration Department for 6 months at a time, the renewal process is much more straight-forward. The employee and employer are both required to produce documentation, which will then be submitted to Immigration Department. The renewal process is significantly quicker than the initial application.

**CFR is committed to making this work and offers post-placement support for both employers and employees.**

IF THIS  
INITIATIVE  
SPEAKS



TO  
YOU

## Speak to us

**Programme Manager**

**Kevin Harber**

**Phone:** +852 5500 3519

**Email:** kevin.harber@volunteer.christian-action.org.hk

**Centre Manager**

**Jonnet Bernal**

**Phone:** +852 3176 6256

**Email:** jonnet.bernal@christian-action.org.hk

Keeping  
Hope  
ALIVE

Giving  
refugees a  
CHOICE