



KENT REFUGEE ACTION NETWORK STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020



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With Thanks to our current main funders:



BACKGROUND

KRAN was established in 2003 to offer support, mentoring and learning for young people seeking refuge in Kent. Over ten years it grew from a small group of dedicated volunteers and part time staff to an established organization responding to rapidly changing and increasing demands and needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking young people. In 2014, support was given by the Cranfield Trust to facilitate a Development Plan for the future of KRAN, this was published in early 2015 by Mike Pearson, who subsequently agreed to become a trustee of KRAN. The Board and staff responded to the Plan and through a participatory consultation with young people and stakeholders in early 2016 and agreed the vision, mission and objectives of a three year strategy and the urgent need to fund for and appoint a CEO. KRAN was also chosen as one of the Rainmaker Foundation Charity Accelerator Program in 2016 which offered additional support for the Chair and Development Manager. The CEO was appointed at the end of July 2016 to take this forward and organized a strategy morning in September, a horizon scanning workshop in December and a staff training day. As a result of this and in consultation with our young people the following Strategic Objectives have been agreed, with outcomes detailed later in this report.

Vision

For young people seeking asylum and as refugees in the UK to be safe, belong and build hope for a better future

Mission

We work with young refugee and asylum seekers (RAS) who are striving to live fulfilled, independent and successful lives in our communities

Objectives

KRAN to be resilient, responsive and a reflective learning organisation

To promote greater cohesion between our RAS young people and the wider communities

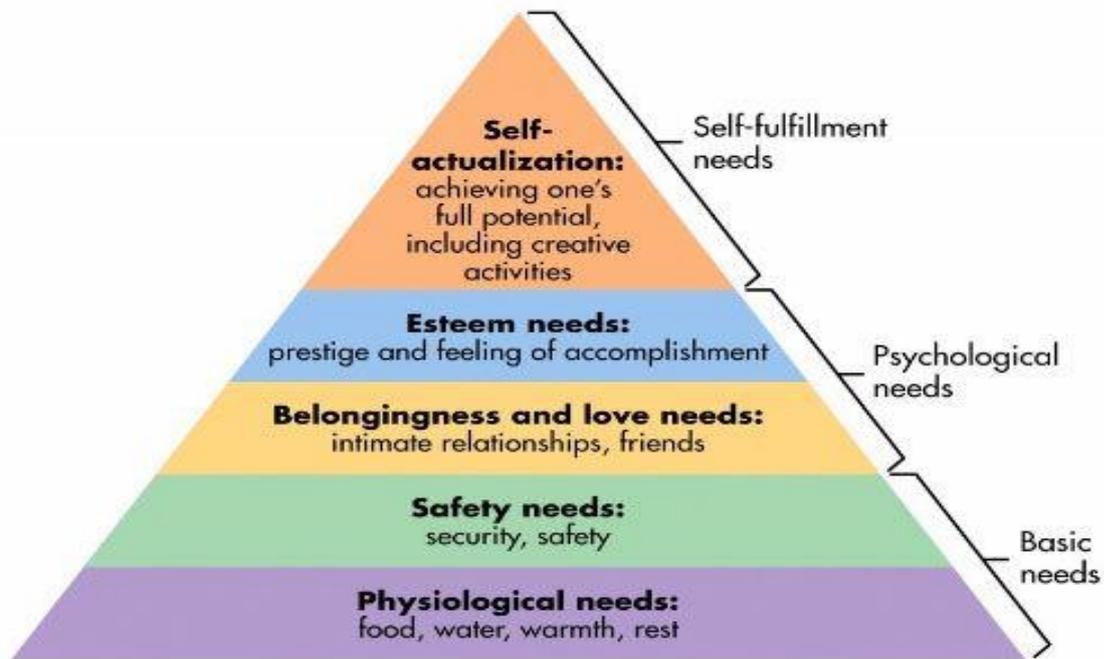
To enable our RAS young people to live fulfilled and independent lives

To recognize our RAS young people's potential and support them to make progress in their ambitions

To prioritize the voice of our RAS young people

KRAN Philosophy and Approach

The strategy development is informed by the following understanding of our young people’s needs based on Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and Erikson’s Belonging Theory Model.



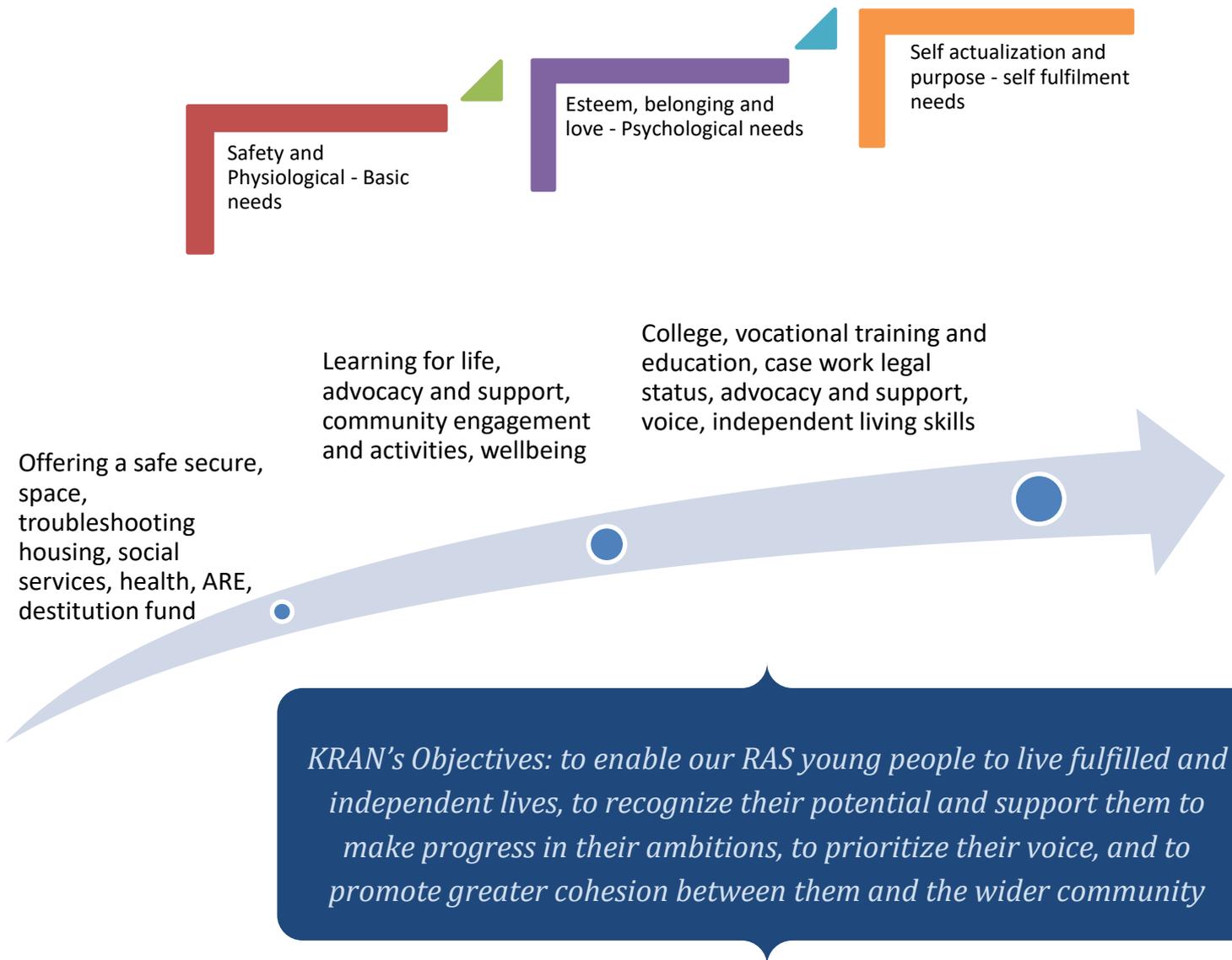
“The need is for frequent, non aversive interactions within an ongoing relational bond. Consistent with the belonging hypothesis, people form social attachments readily under most conditions and resist the dissolution of existing bonds. Belongingness appears to have multiple and strong effects on emotional patterns and on cognitive processes. Lack of attachments is linked to a variety of ill effects on health, adjustment and well-being.” Baumeister and Leary (1995)

“A greater sense of school belongingness was associated with lower depression and higher self-efficacy, regardless of the level of past exposure to adversities...improving school experiences would be particularly useful in the effort towards continued development of school-based mental health programs for young refugees” Kia-Keating and Ellis (2007)

To belong is to matter, a sense of belonging enhances our meaning of life. There is a strong correlation between our sense of belonging and a meaningful life. Lambert et al (2013)

Need for lasting, positive and significant interpersonal relationships, which are frequent and positive, in a stable and enduring framework of effective concern for affection. Baumeister and Leary (1995)

KRAN THEORY OF CHANGE



THREE YEAR STRATEGY

Objectives and Outcomes

Objective One:

KRAN to be resilient, responsive and a reflective learning organization

5.1 Structures and processes are in place and ensure quality and performance in all our work

5.2 Volunteers and staff are supported in a positive and productive working environment with opportunities for continued development and progress

5.3 KRAN is aware of and reviews its activities in relation to the changing context and has the ability to respond effectively to it to best meet the needs of our young people

5.4 KRAN ensures that it has implemented a robust funding strategy for a sustainable future

5.5 KRAN ensures that it monitors, reviews and evaluates its activities, and reports on them on a regular basis to funders and stakeholders

5.6 KRAN to explore the possibility of expansion and diversification of our services in Kent and beyond in response to the needs of RAS young people and our capacity to deliver

Objective Two:

To enable our RAS young people to live fulfilled and independent lives

2.1 Our young people have an holistic assessment, are supported and feel more prepared for all eventualities including destitution, Appeals Rights Exhausted (ARE) and return.

2.2 Our young people understand their rights and responsibilities

2.3 Our young people are supported and empowered to make informed decisions

2.4 KRAN works collaboratively with KCC and other stakeholders to prevent crisis in our young people's lives

2.5 KRAN continually strives to improve communication, consistency and access in relation to internal and external services for our young people

Objective Three:

To recognize our RAS young people's potential and support them to make progress in their ambitions

- 3.1 Our young people's potential and ambitions identified and a greater understanding of realistic options developed*
- 3.2 Our young people's capacity built and they are supported in accessing suitable academic, vocational and interest pathways*
- 3.3 Empower young people to realize their talents, and increase confidence in achieving their personal goals*
- 3.4 Wider community opportunities for our young people and more opportunities for them to use their skills through proactive talent scouting and bridging.*

Objective Four:

To prioritize the voice of our RAS young people

- 4.1 Our young people feel there is a safe space, and are empowered to express themselves freely and share their thoughts and ideas without being judged*
- 4.2 Establishment of a Youth Forum as a platform to amplify the voice of our young people and to enable greater representation of the interests of RAS young people in Kent*
- 4.3 Facilitating the consultation of our young people to give feedback on the services they receive by KRAN and other service providers, including raising emerging issues*
- 4.4 Using social media as a platform to amplify the voice of our young people in the wider community*
- 4.5 Provide more opportunities for our young people to celebration their achievements, their cultural heritage and identity*

Objective Five:

To promote greater cohesion between our RAS young people and the wider communities

- 1.1 Confidence gained by our young people in accessing and engaging with out of hours activities in collaboration with wider community activities*
- 1.2 Facilitate wider youth to youth engagement between our young people and wider communities*
- 1.3 Greater diversity among our volunteer networks*
- 1.4 Raising greater awareness and more advocacy activities undertaken in the wider community about RAS issues*

Consultation Feedback

We requested feedback from our volunteers and mentors through our Autumn newsletter and held consultations with three focus groups with our young people. The feedback below is recorded in the voice of the young people, and does not necessarily reflect the views of KRAN, the points are regarding priority areas of needs for our young people:

Finance – The funds are not enough to live on, clothes and food are really expensive, especially for the winter. Also the delay in getting the bus pass was a real problem. The cost for resources for studies eg laptops and computers, and for other activities eg the gym is beyond their reach.

Housing – Issues regarding the condition of the property, the lack of facilities, and non-responsive landlord Also foster carers who don't understand their issues. Some also would like to move to other parts of UK because of friends but are not allowed to.

Legal system – There are long waiting times even for interviews. Age disputes create problems and complications. For some no solicitor is appointed, and timeframes are not met. There are also issues regarding status as a refugee or humanitarian status or having to go through the appeals process.

Social services – They are non-responsive, giving limited contact, and frequently changing. They don't know their rights and expectations. They have a loss of trust in the system as they don't keep their promises and don't act when they should. They make the same mistake each time, eg delay's in issuing bus passes. They should learn from their mistakes.

Health and Wellbeing – Many have headaches that are not seriously investigated. They don't know how to deal with emotions, they can't sleep at night, and are worried about family and friends. How can they build relationships in the UK, without a better cultural understanding. How to meet and get to know local young people. The system doesn't resolve ongoing issues by investigating them properly eg constant headaches, vision, limb aches.

Education – don't know what needed for college and what the options are for the future, need smaller group teaching, they don't know how to access college places and what the choices are for subjects etc not give IT support, laptop access or help in the college in the library with interpreters. They would prefer to learn in mixed groups with local young people.

Activities – The young people get very bored in the evenings and weekends and can feel isolated. They would welcome free opportunities to join local boxing, gym and sports centers, local cricket teams, or have musical evenings, film outings or other activities. They would like to have musical evenings, be taught how to play their own countries instruments through peer to peer learning. They have nowhere else to meet apart from each other's homes, outside in parks as they don't access the local youth club provision.

Horizon Scanning Discussions

The trustees discussed the implications of dispersal, the tightening of border controls, the shifting age profile, new Government resettlement schemes, and legislative changes in immigration and the Children in Care Act 2016 and educational funding on KRAN.

Kent has had 357 UASC in the first ten months of 2016, compared with 856 in 2015. Kent will see a reduction in the number of UASC because of the new dispersal program where new arrivals will be dispersed to other local authorities until the number of UASC, as they grow older are reduced, the closure of the Calais Camp and the tightening of Boarder controls. As a consequence the age profile of UASC in Kent will change to having many more over the age of 18. It is estimated that Kent will not receive UASC for at least another two years, or until the numbers on their systems have gone below the 0.07% of the population, Kent currently has 881 UASC, where they should not have more than 230.

There are new schemes being introduced which mean that the bulk of new arrivals of young people will be primarily with their families or close relations e.g. the Syrian Resettlement Program where 150 families will be resettled in Kent over the next three years, the Dublin Convention on family reunification which means that many young people in camps in Europe can claim asylum in the UK because they have a relative already in the UK. Some UASC will be eligible to enter the UK through the Dubs Amendment but most will probably be dispersed. Therefore families with children will still need support and help in Kent, but there will be no new UASC's for a while in Kent

The immigration Children in Care Act 2016, Immigration Act and changes in Education funding for asylum seekers aged over 18 will have implication on the demands by young people to access support and advice to ensure that they receive they benefits and entitlements they have a right to, but also an increase in ARE (all rights exhausted) where the statutory sector no longer has a legal obligation to support them. This could potentially lead to an increase in the number of destitute young asylum seekers in Kent needing out help in a care package of support, temporary accommodation etc.

Strategies discussed for KRAN included:

- I. Diversification of services
- II. Geographical spread

- III. Age focus shift and vocational pathways
- IV. Family focus for Refugee and Asylum Seekers (RAS)
- V. Consultancy and trading
- VI. Resource sharing with other local organisations

These were then considered in relation to the following:

- Relationships with the statutory/education sectors
- Effect of changes on structure of organisation
- Effect of changes on staffing and volunteering – impact on mentoring for 18-24 group
- Effect of changes on funding & financing
- Effect of changes on KRAN's profile

Currently KRAN's funding balance is 68% Trusts and Foundations, 10% Private donations and 22% statutory sector commissioning and grants. In the short term we need to aim for a shift towards income generation and donations at 15%, 25% Statutory sector and 60% Trusts. In the long term the ideal would be 40% Trusts, 30 % statutory sector and 30 % income generation and donations.

YOUNG PEOPLE CENTRED

Believing in the young person
Learning from the young person's experience
Ensuring that young people are in an environment where they can feel safe
Developing young people's trust with the KRAN community
Offering activities that enlighten them, support their resilience and enriching their lives

RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOURS

Confidentiality and transparency in all that we do
Facilitating mutual respect within and between staff, volunteers and young people
Being inclusive and overcoming barriers to engagement
Valuing others in actions, not just words, and celebrating good work
Having integrity, being open minded and communicating

EMPOWERING ATTITUDES

Being welcoming, fair, positive and giving hope
Showing compassion and humanity
Being polite and cooperating with others
Ensuring reflective practice, learning and improving what we do
Building confidence, self-development and potential in young people to reach their aspirations

KRAN Organisational structure and ways of working

