

II. SEEKING REFUGE.

IDP Camps & Informal Settlements

WHY.

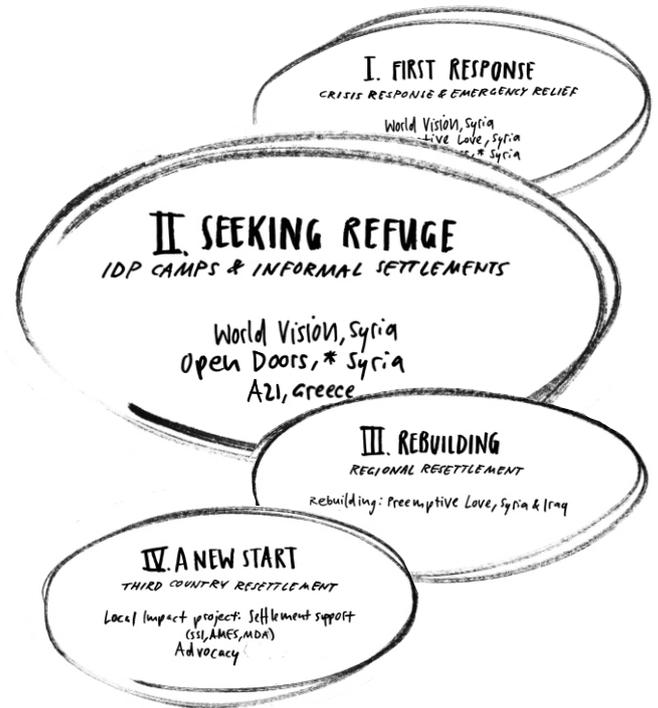
The Syrian conflict is the deadliest conflict the 21st century has witnessed thus far and it has caused the largest displacement crisis in the world. Over half of the population has been forced from their homes, and many people have been displaced multiple times (UNOCHA). There are over 4.8 million Syrian refugees and 6.3 million internally displaced people (IDP) (UNOCHA). In 2016 between January and August, an average of 6,150 people were displaced every day. Reasons for fleeing reported by civilians include food and water shortages, insecurity due to mortar attacks, shelling, bombing and snipers. In west Mosul, conditions continue to worsen and families arriving at camps report having left their homes as a result of shelling, shooting, incidents of armed groups taking over houses, serious food shortages, as well as lack of medical care and basic services. Children fleeing from Mosul are severely distressed from their experience of living under the rule of Islamic State for 2 years. Some children may have been taught radical ideologies and there has been a 99% increase in reported violations of child rights across Iraq (World Vision). 13.5 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance (UNOCHA). Neighbouring countries Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey (UNHCR) are hosting a disproportionate share of Syria's refugees, placing state social services under strain, creating tensions between communities and risking destabilisation of society.

WHO.

Syrians have been displaced within their country and others are refugees who have crossed the borders into neighbouring countries. Iraqis have been displaced by ISIS occupation and the conflict in Mosul and many other parts of Iraq. Children are at particular risk. Families have been displaced for up to 5 years and many children have no memory of Syria. Children face physical safety and health risks as well as vulnerability due to lack of protection if they've lost their parents, carrying high risk of exploitation and abuse. Families have had to adopt negative coping strategies whilst trying to protect their children and high rates of child marriage and child labour are being seen (World Vision). Children face restrictions to accessing formal education and more than 2.5 million Syrian children are missing out on school. Children outside of school are exposed to multiple forms of violence, especially child labour.

When kids are young that's when their brains are developing the fastest, that's when the foundations for adulthood are being formed. So if your childhood is informed by violence and conflict and distress, that puts children at great risk in terms of their long term development.

Erin Joyce - World Vision International



WHERE.

Syria: 6.3 million Syrians are internally displaced within the country.

Iraq: approximately 250,000 Syrian refugees and 3.2 million internally displaced people since 2014 due to conflict and ISIS occupation.

Lebanon, Jordan & Turkey: The vast majority of Syrian refugees (86%) are being hosted in developing countries. Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey have struggled to cope with the influx. At the beginning of 2017, 10% of Syrian refugees were living in camps and 90% in urban, peri-urban and rural areas (UNHCR-1). In Lebanon, the Syrian refugee population has reached at least 1 million, making Syrians now almost a third of the total Lebanese population (The Atlantic). As Jordan and Turkey have increasingly restricted admission to their territory, hundreds of thousands of people have been left stranded on Syria's borders in deplorable and dangerous conditions. These people include some 100,000 IDPs in Azaz and an estimated 70,000 people living in makeshift settlements on the border between Syria and Jordan. The majority of those stranded on the south-eastern border are women and children. Many have been displaced within Syria before arriving at the border.

Europe: A relatively low proportion of refugees have journeyed to Europe however the influx has created political division and many are living in terrible conditions in camps, including many across Greece. More than 1 million people, mostly refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, have crossed into Greece since the start of 2015 (UNHCR-2).

WHAT.

Displaced populations face multiple risks and live in harsh conditions. Humanitarian agencies are facing shortfalls in providing vital assistance including health, education and livelihoods support.

Amnesty International <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/02/syrias-refugee-crisis-in-numbers/>
The Atlantic <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/12/understanding-syria-from-pre-civil-war-to-post-assad/281989/>
UNOCHA-a <http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/2017-humanitarian-needs-overview-syrian-arab-republic-enar>
UNHCR-1 <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>
UNHCR-2 <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/news/latest/2016/3/56e9821b6/million-refugees-travel-greece-since-2015.html>

THE COLOUR SISTERHOOD RESPONSE

We are partnering with *World Vision*, *Open Doors*, and *The A21 Campaign* to provide age-appropriate support and access to education for children who have been displaced by the conflict in Syria and also to prevent trafficking among refugee populations in Greece.

World Vision is a child-focused organisation that has been working in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Northern Syria to provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable Syrians and communities hosting Syrian refugees. Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) are safe places provided for children to learn and have fun. As a Sisterhood we are supporting CFS in IDP camps in Northern Iraq for children who have fled Mosul & surrounding areas. The targeted remedial education provided for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon through Early Childhood Education (ECE) helps children catch up on missed learning and reenrol in school at World Vision-managed remedial classes in schools and community centres.

Open Doors have been working with local partners prior to the Syrian conflict, establishing a network of relationships, including with local churches, which meant they could respond quickly to support the needs of displaced populations and host communities. Non-formal education is provided for children through community centres established by a local church, where children receive breakfast and lunch as well as education and counselling. The centres also facilitate sewing courses for women to provide income generation opportunities and a laundry hall for families to access for washing clothes.

The A21 Campaign have been responding to the refugee crisis in Greece, with a focus on providing clean water and warm showers, preventing trafficking through awareness activities, providing a hotline and aftercare for identified victims of trafficking, and training front line professionals in trafficking identification. Training in identifying victims of human trafficking will be provided for 400 front line professionals in refugee camps in 8 key locations across Greece. In an effort to prevent incidents of trafficking within a high risk environment for refugees, Stay Safe awareness campaign material will be printed, shipped and distributed in 40 locations across Greece, reaching 25,000 refugees.

WORLD VISION

Child Friendly Spaces

\$200AUD \$154USD €143 £124 R1,958

Could provide 6 refugee children a promise pack including school supplies such as backpack, notebook, pens and eraser and toothbrush, blanket and note of encouragement so they know they have not been forgotten.

Early Childhood Education

\$500AUD \$386USD €359 £311 R4,895

Could help 1 refugee child go through a targeted remedial education program.

OPEN DOORS (NON-TAX DEDUCTIBLE)

\$50AUD \$38USD €35 £31 R489

Can provide one month of informal education for a Syrian refugee child, supporting general schooling costs including running of the centres, paying staff salaries, and providing books and other resources.

A21

Training Trafficking Identifiers

\$1,440AUD \$1,080USD €1,004 £872 R13,706

Can train 50 people in trafficking identification in refugees camps.

Trafficking Awareness & Prevention

\$188AUD \$145USD €135 £117 R1,840

Can produce and distribute trafficking prevention material to over 600 refugees across Greece.

For more information on the above projects please refer to individual Project Fact Sheets.

PRAY.

Together we are praying for safety and protection for those who have been displaced and are seeking refuge in camps and temporary shelters. We pray for the protection of children and for healing and healthy development after experiencing the horror of war. We pray for compassionate responses from host countries and for displaced people to have access to services and employment opportunities. We pray for hope to be maintained and for peace to come to the Middle East region so families can return home and rebuild.

13-year-old Ahmad, a Syria war child survivor, had images of streets in ruins, broken trees, and totaled houses engraved in his mind throughout his first two years in Lebanon. He was the eldest among his three brothers and remembered the conflict the most. He was worried and sad the day his parents decided it was time to leave Syria. He didn't want to leave home.

“I had a daily thought, every morning, that this day would be our last day alive. I was always scared of my parents or brothers dying, but going the distance to Lebanon frightened me as well.” Ahmad recalls.

In Lebanon, Ahmad's mother struggled with his distress to a point where she became desperate to find a solution to make him feel better.

“I had nothing to do here, no friends to talk to, nowhere to go, and I missed home”, Ahmad admitted, “My mother sensed what I was feeling and I worried her the most.”

She was well aware that what her son had seen and been through was distressing for a 10 yearold, even if he didn't talk about it much.

Two years later, Ahmad's mother learned of the World Vision Child Friendly Spaces (CFS). The spaces provide children aged from three to six with Early Child Education and young refugees aged from six to twelve, like Ahmad, with psycho-social support. The activities are conducted in four community centres in Beqaa, Lebanon where these kids can learn, play, sing and spend valuable time with children of their own age. Ahmad's mother enrolled all three children in hopes that they, especially Ahmad, would get the support they need.

“People here tried to help us forget the brutality of the war, and they succeeded.”

Ahmed recalls how thrilled he was to participate in the drawing competitions that allowed the winner to hang his drawings on the wall. It took Ahmad one month at the CFS to realise that drawing and painting were his favourite activity. He enjoyed all the games and songs, but drawing became very dear to his heart. Ahmad engaged in the art activities and took them home to show his mother what he had been up to during the day.

Even after finishing his year at the CFS, Ahmad still works on his drawing skills by practicing daily.

“It still takes my mind off the big things; like where will we be in a couple of years? Do we still have a house in Syria to go back to? Drawing helps me stop thinking”, he admitted.

Ahmad still visits the center from time to time, offers to help younger children and draws funny faces to help cheer up the ones who are sad.

“I am much more confident now than before, because I know I'm good at something.”

With a small shy smile he explained that not only did he learn new skills and games, but also started having new friends in Lebanon and excelling academically.

Ahmad's childhood was saved by the love of art, a couple of games, and a caring environment. Those colourful walls and friendly environment became a safe haven for 150 refugee children who are now optimistic and joyful just like Ahmad.