



The global refugee crisis is the worst humanitarian disaster in the world today.

Roughly 12 million Syrians have been forced from their homes by a brutal civil war. Nearly 5 million have fled to nearby countries, close to a million are seeking asylum in Europe, and over 6 million are still surviving within Syria. **Twelve million people: that's like every person in New York City and Los Angeles becoming homeless.**

And Syria accounts for only *one-fifth* of the number worldwide. Over 65 million people are displaced from their homes—the most in recorded history. **One of every 113 people in the world is now a refugee.**

Background on the crisis—and why the church must respond

Why do people become refugees?

They are forced to flee—from war and violence; from natural disasters; from religious persecution, political oppression, and ethnic injustice; from food crisis, drought, and famine.

They have no choice but to leave behind their land, their homes, their belongings, and their sense of identity. **They run in fear for their lives**, either within their own country (*internally displaced people*) or to another country entirely (*refugees*). **And the heaviest toll is felt by the children.**

Children make up more than half the world's displaced people.

They have little stability, and virtually no resources. They live in settlements, underserved refugee camps—some in nothing more than leaky tents—or overcrowded apartments.

Most children can't go to school anymore, and their parents often aren't allowed to work.

They lose family members to conflict, or on the dangerous journeys. Because of their desperate circumstances, these children face threats of early marriage, child labor, and recruitment into armed groups.

Many children spend their entire adolescence displaced, as crises drag on with no end in sight. The youngest, born in exile, have no memory of anything but life as a refugee. **The oldest have witnessed death and destruction, and it has stolen their innocence.**

An entire generation is at risk of losing their childhoods.



We cannot be silent.

We serve a God who so loved the world that He came down to suffer alongside us, and for us. A God who is firmly on the side of the outcast. The Creator of the universe, who became a child—and for a while, a refugee.

The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. —Psalm 9:9 (NIV)

God's heart is with the poor. His heart is with the brokenhearted and the refugee in the midst of their lament. *You shall not oppress a sojourner*, God said to Israel in Exodus 23:9 (ESV). *You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.*

How will our hearts respond?

Become a Refugee Responder for \$29 a month

Becoming a Refugee Responder is a powerfully effective way to help children and families impacted by the global refugee crisis. **Your monthly gift will help provide critically needed essentials like food, clean water, education, health assistance, shelter, emergency supplies, and safe places for children to play, learn, and begin to heal from their traumatic experiences.**

Since the Syria conflict began in 2011, World Vision has reached nearly 2.4 million affected people in Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Serbia. In the decades before that, and in other refugee

crises around the world today, we've helped millions more displaced people. Your gift provides life-saving assistance, such as:

- » Delivering survival basics like blankets, heating fuel, and clothing
- » Helping families get shelter, nutritious food, and clean water
- » Providing Child-Friendly Spaces, where children can play, learn, and most importantly feel safe and begin to recover emotionally
- » Helping refugees learn job skills
- » Offering basic healthcare services
- » Supporting the work of local churches, wherever they exist, to care for the displaced

Preparing your church for Refugee Sunday

1 week ahead

- » Show the video "Hear Their Stories" (can be found at [worldvision.org/refugeesundaytools](https://www.worldvision.org/refugeesundaytools)).
- » Prepare your congregation by letting them know that the following week they will learn more about the need and how they can provide life-changing help as Refugee Responders for \$29 a month.

Event day

- » Show the video "Adel's Story" (can be found at [worldvision.org/refugeesundaytools](https://www.worldvision.org/refugeesundaytools)).
- » Encourage your congregation to make a lasting difference for children and families in need by becoming Refugee Responders (see below).

How to call your church to action as Refugee Responders

- » If you've shown the video "Adel's Story," give more details on how this crisis is having the greatest impact on kids like Adel and his sisters.
 - › Half of all refugees are children—innocent victims of violence.
 - › Many refugee kids spend their entire childhood displaced from their homes; half of all refugees have been in exile for over 10 years.
- » Personalize the mission: explain why YOUR church in particular is called to serve refugee children.
- » Clarify that being a Refugee Responder is not the same as child sponsorship, because the unstable situations mean families are often on the move. It's our prayer that these children and families find long-term security—or are able to return to their own homes.

- » Explain how the gifts of Refugee Responders will provide critical support for refugee families, using details from the “Become a Refugee Responder” section on pages 2–3.
- » Give a word about World Vision and our financial accountability (see page 5).

Your monthly commitment is vital for families caught in impossible situations.

Syrians are continuing to suffer—now and for many years to come—as the war destroys lives, homes, and futures:

- » After five years of war, families are still being forced to flee their homes.
- » Most refugees must wait many years to be able to go home to rebuild.
- » Parents struggle to find jobs, or aren't allowed to work—so it's desperately difficult to keep their children safe and healthy.
- » Children suffer the most, as turmoil, instability, and lack of resources affect their formative years.
- » Many kids will spend their entire childhood as refugees.



Your ongoing gift helps keep the lines of support open for families who have been forgotten by the world.

And you'll be ministering through the worldwide church.

The church plays a crucial role in testifying to the love of God for people far from home. In many countries, tensions can flame up between religious and ethnic groups as refugees stream in to communities—a **perfect opportunity for the church to manifest God's grace and peace**. Where local churches exist, your monthly gift will support their work to care for refugees by helping them deliver aid, act as peacemakers in the community, and provide safe environments for children.

We're all created and loved by the same God. Every one of us.

Many Syrians and other displaced people worldwide are Muslim—and **this crisis is a chance for the church to show the love of Christ to all God's children**.

Christian churches in Lebanon, for example, are freely sharing supplies and resources with Syrian refugee families. “We have overcome our fears,” says one Lebanese church leader. “It has not

been easy, but through it **God has broken down barriers between communities** and encouraged both Christians and Muslims to **see each other in a more compassionate light.**”

“How will you respond?” he asks. “Is Christ for Christians only?”

About World Vision’s work

As a Christian humanitarian organization, we’ve been working alongside the poor and oppressed since 1950. Your gifts will support our current and future work with displaced people in places like South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Iraq, and the Syria region. **Since 95 percent of our staff are based in their home countries or regions**, they bring critical expertise on—and sensitivity to—local customs and culture. Our “first-in, last-out” approach helps us anticipate a community’s needs ... and stay as long as we’re needed. And our **more than 65 years of experience** help us bring about lasting change for children, families, and communities worldwide who are oppressed by poverty and injustice.

Accountability and financial stewardship are essential to us. In 2015, 84 percent of our total operating expenses were used for programs that benefit children, families, and communities—and thanks to our diverse funding sources, each dollar donated achieves, on average, \$1.30 in impact.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I sponsor a specific refugee child or family?

No, your gift will be used to help where it’s needed most by refugee families. Because many displaced people live in unstable situations, launching standard sponsorship programs is not possible. But these children and families are in dire need of long-term support, which is why your ongoing help as a Refugee Responder is so vital.

Can I write to or connect with a refugee in need?

Because of the unstable situations—and because many displaced people are often on the move—it is not possible to write to or connect with a specific refugee. But your prayers can move mountains! Please pray:

- » For war, conflict, and other crises to end
- » That refugees and displaced people will be able to return to their home communities to rebuild in peace and safety
- » For comfort for families who are grieving the loss of loved ones
- » For protection, health, and brighter futures for children growing up in the midst of conflict

Is World Vision working to resettle refugees in the U.S.?

As an international relief and development organization, we serve refugees and displaced people in the most vulnerable communities overseas. The vast majority of Syrians plan to stay in the Middle East and return to their homes in Syria if at all possible. We strive to support them in their current circumstances, with the goal of helping them reach their God-given potential.

Will I receive any updates on how my monthly gifts are being used?

Yes! We are excited to share with you about how you are bringing hope to displaced children. You'll receive a prayer card, quarterly email updates featuring the latest news about refugees around the world, and a yearly report on how you are caring for refugee children and families with your monthly gift.



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World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people.