

World Renew –Syria Conflict Response – FAQ (September 21, 2015)

1. What is happening in Syria that is causing a mass exodus of refugees?

- The current civil war in Syria began in 2011 following pro-democracy protests during the Arab Spring to challenge the government of President Bashar al-Assad. With brutal military crackdowns on the protesters by the Syrian army, the conflict between government and rebel forces expanded. Extremist groups Al-Qaeda and ISIL became involved, efforts recently revealed to be backed by military equipment supplied by Russia.
- More than a quarter-million people have been killed in the violence in Syria since 2011, and it's estimated that half of the country's residents are displaced from their homes within Syria or have fled to countries in the region that were already experiencing economic strain.
- This summer, thousands of Syrians began streaming into Europe as well, causing a humanitarian crisis that the United Nations says "has not been seen since World War II."
- In all, more than 12.2 million people – nearly half of Syria's 23 million citizens – are in need of humanitarian assistance: 6.5 million are internally displaced within Syria; more than four million are refugees with half of these children.
- Food, water, shelter, medical care, and appropriate clothing are in short supply. In addition, 2,500 Syrian refugees died trying to reach Europe by sea over the summer, and those who did arrive alive received a varied, sometimes deadly, reception, and news reports that chronicled this humanitarian disaster have brought worldwide attention to the crisis.
- World Renew has worked in the Middle East for decades, responding to chronic unrest, hunger, and displacement as needed. In the current conflict, there has been an immense loss of human life and great suffering within the Syrian refugee population.

2. How is World Renew responding to the needs of Syrian refugees?

- World Renew has been providing food and other assistance to displaced families in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan for the past three years.
- To date, we've provided more than \$7.5 million in assistance. Visit worldrenew.net/syriacconflict for more information.
- We are also working to help resettle refugees in Canada through our refugee resettlement office
- The scale and duration of our continued response will depend on the level of financial support received.
- Those who wish to donate should mark their gift "Syria Conflict Response" (515144 WR - Syria Conflict)

3. What specific assistance is World Renew providing in the region?

- **In Syria**, World Renew is working with the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development (LSESD) and the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches (FMEEC). Between April 2012 and June 2015, World Renew provided:
 - Food assistance for 16,025 families, totaling 83,000 monthly food packages or vouchers

- Rent and fuel subsidies for 575 families
- 6,450 blankets for 4,300 families
- Medical assistance to 133 people
- 4,884 hygiene kits to 3,314 families
- 2,000 kitchen kits
- 2,000 emergency heaters, plus fuel for heating and cooking
- **In Jordan**, World Renew is working with a local partner, Arab Woman Today / Arab Centre for Consulting and Training Services (AWT/ACCTS). Of the 1,000 families, 850 are Syrian refugees and 150 are vulnerable and poor Jordanian families.
- **In Lebanon**, World Renew is working closely with its local partner the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development (LSESD) to provide food assistance to 1,825 households. These food vouchers are provided monthly at 18 different locations, mostly churches, throughout Lebanon.
- **In Canada**, from January 2014 to June 2015, World Renew helped to sponsor 49 Iraqi refugees and 23 Syrian refugees as they began a new life in Canada. The CRC partners with PARA, which is now part of Bethany Christian Services, in the U.S. to assist with refugee resettlement.

4. Who are World Renew's partners in Syria?

- World Renew is working with the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development (LSESD), the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches (FMEEC), and Arab Women Today / Arab Center for Consulting and Training Services (AWT / ACCTS).
- These networks connect World Renew with around 1,000 local churches who identify and register refugees in need, and also coordinate the monthly distributions of food
- World Renew is coordinating its efforts with the Integral Alliance, a global network of 19 Christian disaster response and community development organizations, and with the members of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

5. Are you doing anything to help refugees in Europe? Why not?

No. The plight of refugees in Europe is serious and requires our prayers and attention, however, World Renew has a limited amount of funds available and must choose how to use them in a way that will be most impactful to those most affected – those displaced within Syria and those living as refugees in surrounding countries with few resources on which to live. We have chosen to focus our Syria Conflict response in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan where the vast majority of Syrian refugees continue to reside and where we have an existing church partner to carry out the work. While the situation in Europe is also crucial, we trust that European governments and non-profit organizations have the structures and resources to be able to handle this challenge.

6. What about refugees coming to Canada? Are you doing anything to help them?

Yes. World Renew is a registered Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) with the Government of Canada and regularly helps refugees from all over the world begin a new life in Canada through family or church sponsors. These sponsors agree to financially support (in whole or in partnership with the Canadian government) a refugee family for at least a year after their arrival in Canada. To date, we've helped 49

Iraqi and 23 Syrians come to Canada and several additional applications are in the works. If you, your church or your community are interested in sponsoring a refugee, please visit worldrenew.net/refugeesponsorship for more information.

7. **Can I donate to support refugee resettlement in Canada?**

The family members and churches that act as sponsors for refugees are required to financially support that refugee family for at least one year. If you are interested in supporting this kind of refugee resettlement but don't want to actually sponsor a refugee yourself, we encourage you to talk to churches in your community to find out if any of them are involved in sponsorship and could use your financial support. Unfortunately, the refugee office does not have the capacity to link individuals and churches with financial support to those who are doing sponsorship.

If you really want to support refugee resettlement through World Renew, you may give your gift to our Refugee Resettlement office for their increased expenses during this year of large numbers of refugees. To do this, mark your gift for the "emergency fund" (505908 WR - Refugee Program Settlement Emergency Fund), which will be used by our refugee resettlement office to cover unexpected legal fees and other costs that might come up beyond what a church or family sponsor has expected to pay.

8. **Will my donation be matched?**

- Yes, but only in Canada and only for donations given to the Syria Conflict response (fund code 515144 WR Syria Conflict). Every eligible donation made by individual Canadians (not businesses) to registered Canadian charities from **September 12 to December 31, 2015**, for humanitarian assistance in Syria and the surrounding region will qualify for a 1:1 match from the Canadian Government.
- All such donations will be matched by the Canadian Government, and the matching amount will be deposited into The Syria Emergency Relief Fund. This fund will be managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD). The maximum matched donation that can be given from an individual is \$100,000. See also: <http://www.international.gc.ca/media/dev/news-communiques/2015/09/12a.aspx?lang=eng>
- World Renew is eligible to apply for funding to The Syria Emergency Relief Fund. We expect to apply as part of a joint Canadian Foodgrains Bank application. Please note, however, that it is a competitive process and there is no guarantee that World Renew will receive funding. However, all funds in this DFATD-managed account will be used by similar registered Canadian agencies to assist people affected by the crisis in Syria.
- Donations made by individual Canadians must be received by World Renew on or before December 31, or be postmarked by December 31, in order to qualify.
- Church offerings held prior to Sunday, May 27 should be sent to the Burlington office by December 31.
- Church offerings taken on Sunday, December 27 must be sent to the Burlington office as soon as possible, along with a copy of the church bulletin for that day to verify that the offering was taken on or before December 31.
- Donations in support of refugee resettlement will not be matched.



- Donations to World Renew's Canadian Foodgrains Bank account for our Syria relief effort will not be eligible for matching through the Syrian Emergency Assistance Fund but may qualify for a match through CFGF.

9. I live in the US, is my donation eligible for matching?

- No, unfortunately, the 1:1 match only applies to donations made by Canadian citizens. Churches and individuals in the US should send their donations to our US office. Donations from the US are crucial to our total response and will be used wisely and effectively.
- A Canadian citizen living in the US who pays Canadian taxes is eligible for the match. Their donation should be sent to our Canadian office with a note explaining that they are eligible to receive a Canadian tax receipt.