

REFUGEES ACTION GUIDE



Refugees land on the beach at Lesbos. They have paid around €1,000 per person and risked their lives to cross the sea between Turkey and Greece in an inflatable boat. More than 4,000 people died making this journey in 2015.

Photo: Pablo Tosco/Oxfam GB

INTRODUCTION

In 2015 violence and conflict forced 65.3 million people around the world to flee their homes and seek safety elsewhere. Around 21.3 million of these people crossed an international border and became refugees in a different country. The remainder were internally displaced within their own countries.

Three countries alone stand out as departure points for the world's refugees; they are Syria (4.9 million refugees), Afghanistan (2.7 million refugees) and Somalia (1.1 million refugees). However, there are also many "forgotten" refugee emergencies occurring across the world, in countries such as Burundi, South Sudan and Colombia. These are mainly out of the public spotlight.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

Half of all refugees are hosted by poorer countries, which share only 2% of the world's wealth. Meanwhile the six wealthiest nations host only 9% of the world's refugees. All countries need to play a much more equal role in making sure that the human rights of people forced to flee are protected and respected.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING NOW?

International human rights law was written in the 1940s to assist the millions of people forced to flee their homes following World War 2. So refugee crises are not new. However the aftermath of the war in Afghanistan (2001-14) and the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, have led to the largest movement of refugees in Europe since World War 2. In addition millions of people in the Global South face worsening insecurity caused by climate change and extreme poverty. Many of these people, too, are on the move.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Inform

Teach others about the topic and support them to think critically about this issue.

2. Broadcast

Get creative and raise awareness in your school and community.

3. Influence

Think about how to persuade important decision makers to do something to help.



Muddy conditions facing refugees as winter approaches in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. Refugees now make up one-third of tiny Lebanon's population.

Photo: Sam Tarling/Oxfam GB