



The Refugee Crisis in Europe and the Middle East

A Comprehensive Response

International Rescue Committee | SEPTEMBER 2015



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Table of Contents

3	Introduction
5	The Refugee Crisis in Europe
6	Root Causes of the Crisis: Syria and the Middle East
7	Perilous Transit: Refugees Risk All to Enter Europe
9	The Eye of the Storm: The Humanitarian Needs in Europe
13	Humanitarian Needs in Syria and Neighboring Countries
17	Advocacy, Communications and Operations
19	A Model for Refugee Resettlement: The IRC's Experience
20	Required Funds

FRONT COVER: Newly arrived refugees on the island of Lesbos, Greece, wait for a bus that will transport them to a ferry to the mainland. PHOTO: MYRTO KOUTOULIA/IRC.

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Dear Friends,

There is a refugee crisis in Europe. More than 381,000 desperate and vulnerable people have fled to Europe across the Mediterranean in 2015, the vast majority seeking safety from harm.

The tide of desperate people from the Middle East arriving in Europe in recent weeks has awakened the world to the Syrian refugee crisis. No one can fail to have been shocked by the appalling pictures of refugees trying to escape to Greece and Italy in flimsy boats. Yet even as the global conscience has been pricked by the images and stories that have been conveyed around the world, European governments have fallen into squabbling over “border fences,” “border security” and “burden sharing.” At the heart of this crisis, however, are human beings in danger who seek only a safe haven and a compassionate and helping hand.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is in a unique position to offer that helping hand. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, the IRC’s core mission is to serve people forced to flee from war, conflict and disaster, and help them to survive, recover and gain control of their lives. In this current crisis, the IRC is the only international relief agency working simultaneously in Syria; in the neighboring countries of Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon and Iraq; in Greece, where thousands of refugees are arriving on Europe’s shores; and in the United States, where the IRC resettles refugees from the Middle East and from around the world.

The IRC has the opportunity—and responsibility—to ensure that meeting humanitarian needs remains at the center of the response to the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War. This document sets out the IRC’s aspirations for responding to the refugee crisis in Europe and the Middle East. It represents the IRC’s best thinking on the appropriate response to the symptoms and causes of the crisis as of today. It is intended for individuals, foundations and corporations who want to help and who want to ensure that their support will be put to good use.

We hope you will join us in this common cause, the cause of humanity.

Sincerely,



David Miliband,
President and CEO



The Refugee Crisis In Europe

The refugee crisis in Europe is dominating global headlines for good reason. More people are fleeing war and conflict than at any time since the Second World War and millions of people are at risk of serious and lasting harm.

As increasing numbers of desperate and vulnerable refugees reach the shores of Europe, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) is mobilizing its expert staff to meet the challenge. Because so much needs to be done to address the needs of refugees, both in Europe and in the Middle East, the IRC is asking its corporate and private sector partners and supporters to help the IRC expand and deepen the impact of its work in three key areas:

1 Emergency response to the refugee crisis in the Syria region and in Europe

Since the conflict in Syria began more than four years ago, an estimated 11.5 million people—one half of the country's population—have been forced from their homes. Some 4 million Syrians have fled to neighboring countries, overwhelming their capacity to host the refugees. As a result, millions of people are now seeking refuge outside the Syria region, especially in Europe. The IRC is the only international nongovernmental aid organization whose relief and development efforts address the needs of displaced people inside Syria, of refugees living in Syria's neighboring countries and refugees in Greece, and that resettles refugees in the United States while offering advice on resettlement to European governments.

The IRC is committed to expanding and deepening its emergency response to the European refugee crisis in the months ahead.

2 Long-term programs in the Middle East and other regions

Since the start of the Syrian crisis, the IRC has carried out crucial lifesaving programs in the Middle East that aid refugees and displaced people and provide support to local "host" communities, which bear the burden of assimilating millions of Syrians. More than 3,000 IRC aid workers and local volunteers operating inside Syria and in four neighboring countries have reached more than 3.3 million Syrians fleeing violence with support, including: health care, protection services for vulnerable women and children, education, and economic recovery programs. The IRC also carries out long-term health, education, women's empowerment, economic development, and other programs in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Ethiopia and other countries

Tents filled with families dot the pier where the ferries to mainland Greece embark. PHOTO: TYLER JUMP/IRC

from which smaller, but significant, numbers of refugees have fled to Europe. Expanding funding and support for these programs will help create more sustainable and dignified conditions for millions of people who might otherwise join the refugee flow to Europe.

Whether in the Middle East, Europe or Africa, the success of IRC programs is determined by measurable improvements in the lives of the people we serve, especially as seen by increased access to health, personal safety, education, economic wellbeing, and increased control and power over the circumstances of one's life.

3 Advocacy, communications and operations

This fall, the IRC has played a crucial role in focusing international attention on the refugee crisis in Europe through robust advocacy and a multi-media communications strategy. Our work has focused on influencing international institutions and governments, informing and facilitating access to the story for local and international media, and producing compelling original video, reports, and on-the-spot digital content. These efforts have already had a demonstrable impact on public opinion and government policy.

To carry out all of these programs, the IRC must lead complex, multi-country projects that require managing international and local staff, collaborating with national and international counterparts, and managing donor funds. The IRC's financial management systems ensure that projects are implemented cost-effectively and that financial reporting is accurate, timely and compliant. The IRC is consistently awarded high marks by charity watchdog groups and respected publications for the efficient use of our financial support and the effectiveness of our work. Of every \$1 the IRC spends, 93 cents goes to programs and services that directly benefit people affected by crisis.

The remainder of this document outlines how the IRC intends to scale up its response to the refugee crisis in the Middle East and in Europe.

The period reflected in this proposal is 12 months. Due to the fast moving and volatile context of the crisis—including variables such as weather conditions as winter approaches and the shifting policy responses of European governments—budget figures are based on the IRC's best current estimate of the services that will have the most positive impact.

Root Causes of the Crisis: Syria and the Middle East

The main reason for the dramatic acceleration in displacement has been the continuing conflict in Syria, which has made the Middle East simultaneously the largest producer and host of forcibly displaced people in the world.

Four and a half years of violence have uprooted an estimated 7.6 million people within the country, and driven more than four million people across Syria's borders and into neighboring Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq.

These countries can no longer cope with the strain of hosting such large numbers of refugees. Turkey, which has taken in more than 1.9 million Syrians since the beginning of the conflict, has become the biggest refugee-hosting country in the world. It has put the annual cost of hosting Syrian refugees at \$4.5 billion. In Lebanon, Syrians constitute between a quarter and a third of the population; the World Bank estimates that Lebanon's basic infrastructure will need investment of up to \$2.5 billion just to be restored to pre-crisis levels. Iraq, already suffering from massive internal

Without support from the international community, refugee-hosting countries can no longer provide for this vulnerable population. This, coupled with renewed violence inside Syria, has forced millions of Syrians to seek refuge elsewhere, including Europe.

displacement, is hosting approximately a quarter million people. And Jordan, one of the most water-starved nations on the planet, hosts more than 630,000 registered refugees, which is proportionally equivalent to the United States absorbing the population of the United Kingdom. It put the cost of hosting refugees in 2014 at \$871 million.

At the same time, the United Nations' Syria Regional Refugee Response Plan is only funded to 35 percent of the \$1.3 billion needed to support refugees, both in refugee camps and by providing funding for the countries hosting them.

Without support from the international community, refugee-hosting countries can no longer provide for this vulnerable population. This development, coupled with renewed violence inside Syria, has forced millions of Syrians to seek refuge elsewhere, including Europe.

Yet, as the number of refugees has surged, it has also become harder for them to travel to Europe legally. European countries have restricted visas once available to refugees,



A father and child after landing on the beach in Lesbos, Greece. PHOTO: TYLER JUMP/IRC

and few offer humanitarian visas, which allow persons in need of international protection to access a third country in order to apply for asylum. European countries have the legal tools to bring in refugees safely and legally, but they use these tools infrequently. One such tool is resettlement, the process by which very vulnerable refugees are moved from one country where they have sought protection to another. Another tool is humanitarian admission, which resembles resettlement but can be either permanent or temporary. European countries can also bring in refugees through academic scholarships, family reunification admission, and private sponsorship schemes. The European Union (EU), however, makes limited use of these tools.

With few safe and legal routes into Europe, refugees are left with no option but to embark on dangerous and illegal journeys by sea and land to Greece and Italy.

Perilous Transit: Refugees Risk All to Enter Europe

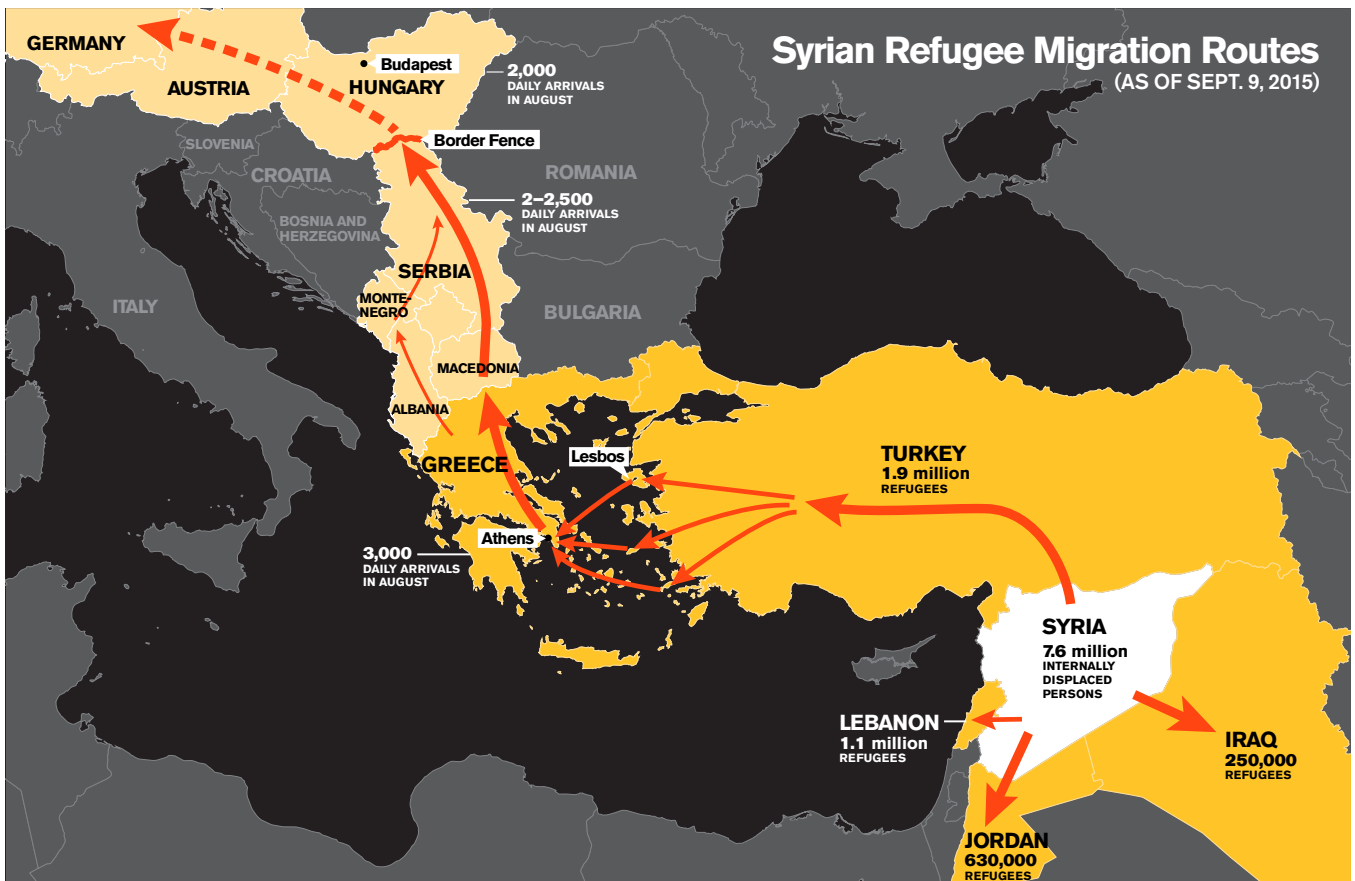
“In Syria, I dreamed to go to Germany, because of four years of war. In Turkey, the smugglers say, ‘I have a boat, and you will reach the beach without any problems.’ I saw the boat was a dinghy. It only seated 40 people but there were 54 of us. The smugglers had lied. They only want your money. They don’t care if you die. We travelled on the sea for an hour. [Then] the boat was punctured and we fell in the water. I was in the sea for 45 minutes before they pulled me out. I will never forget it.”

—A 34-YEAR OLD SYRIAN REFUGEE MAN IN LESBOS, GREECE.

As the above account makes clear, the route through Turkey into Greece is extremely dangerous. After crossing the border from Syria, refugees are smuggled by vehicle and foot across the country to the coast. Once at the coast, they embark on journeys like the one described, in dangerously overcrowded and unseaworthy boats. Existing search and rescue operations are ill-equipped to cope with the huge number of arrivals. Tiny vessels can sink in a matter of minutes; even if they issue a distress call, help may not arrive in time. It is estimated that 2,850 people have died in crossings this year alone.

Increasingly, refugees are targeted by organized criminals and smuggling gangs throughout their journey. The IRC has witnessed refugees—including children—arriving with broken bones after being attacked as they board dinghies for Greece.

Refugees taking either the sea or land route to Europe are at high risk of being trafficked. Women and girls, in particular, are vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation. By the time refugees have escaped, many have experienced severe physical and mental trauma.



Source: Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) – ECHO Daily Map, 09/09/2015, Refugee Crisis – Western Balkan route



The Eye of the Storm: The Humanitarian Needs in Europe

More than 381,000 people have arrived in Europe by boat already this year. Italy has struggled to provide shelter and services for the arrivals, but Greece is overwhelmed.

Around 258,000 refugees have arrived in Greece, with as many as 200,000 more expected before the end of 2015. This represents a greater than 1,000 percent increase in arrivals to Greece compared to 2014.

In late June, the IRC deployed an emergency response team to assess the situation and respond to the crisis, primarily on Lesbos. Information was gathered through observation, semi-structured interviews with refugees and meetings with key informants—including the U.N.'s International Organization for Migration (IOM), international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), local volunteers and partners, and government authorities—to determine whether protection concerns were being appropriately addressed.

The priorities identified were:

- › **Protection services for vulnerable people**
- › **Provision of survival kits and other basic items**
- › **Provision of emergency medical services**
- › **Provision of clean water and sanitation**

There is virtually no organized government response in Greece to the daily arrival of thousands of refugees. Most refugees arrive on the island of Lesbos, with around 3,000 to 4,000 making the journey from Turkey daily. IRC staff members who have worked in some of the most difficult places in the world say that conditions in the Lesbos refugee camps are the worst they have ever seen. Many refugees lack food, water, shelter, or information about where to go and how to find help. The transit camps are overcrowded and unsafe. The threat of disease is constant.

Conditions on other Greek islands are not much better. On the island of Kos, local authorities have harassed refugees and resisted efforts by outside aid agencies to provide refugees with assistance. Other Greek islands receive fewer people than Lesbos and Kos, but they have fewer resources and cannot cope. Food is the most pressing need.

Many local residents have responded generously. But this mostly informal response is under severe strain. Even before the latest developments in the Greek financial crisis, the dramatic increase in refugees has strained local assistance

efforts to the breaking point. Local Greek responders need assistance and coordination in order to provide help that meets international standards.

On Lesbos, there is no formal process in place to receive boats or to address the urgent medical needs of arriving refugees. Local volunteers have organized some food and water distribution, as well as medical assistance and shelter, but they lack the capacity to respond adequately. The municipality has not provided adequate shelter. Toilet and shower facilities are insufficient.

In Greece, all arrivals are automatically determined to be “illegal migrants.” As a result, refugees must be arrested and registered by police before than can leave Lesbos. To be registered, refugees must travel 63 kilometers (40 miles) from the coast to Mytilini. With bus services overwhelmed, many refugees—including children and pregnant women—have to walk. Refugees are given virtually no information about where they are going or why. The IRC has arranged for emergency buses to safely transport new arrivals to Mytilini.

Once in Mytilini, refugees present themselves to the port police for registration. The theory is that their papers are produced the same day and then they can catch the ferry to the mainland. Sadly, the small number of processing facilities

Many local residents have responded generously. But this mostly informal response is under severe strain. Even before the latest developments in the Greek financial crisis, the dramatic increase in refugees have strained local assistance efforts to the breaking point.

and ferries cannot prevent at least one overnight stay in the port or on the streets of Mytilini town. There are no formal shelters, food distributions or sanitation facilities in either of these places.

Kara Tepe is typical of the camps that have been hastily erected to house refugees. It was built to hold a capacity of 500 people, but now holds more than 2,000 in squalid, unsanitary conditions. Security is poor, posing risks for already-vulnerable refugees. Refugees can wait up to ten days in Kara Tepe before they are transferred.

Zenab, 10, and Tabalik, 9, sit on a makeshift swing in Kara Tepe camp, to pass the time while they wait to receive their documents and officially enter Europe. PHOTO: TYLER JUMP/IRC



TOP: To alleviate the crowding on Lesbos, the IRC helped arrange for buses to transport refugees to the north of the island where they can take a ferry to the mainland. ABOVE LEFT: Water points at Kara Tepe camp are often filled with trash and surrounded by dirty pooling water. ABOVE RIGHT: An IRC aid worker collects trash at Kara Tepe camp. PHOTOS: TYLER JUMP/IRC.

Only half of the families at Kara Tepe have any shelter. Women and girls have no private or safe spaces. Relief workers attempt to identify vulnerable people, such as victims of human trafficking, but conditions are so cramped and chaotic that it is extremely difficult to do so. There is only one other camp (run solely by volunteers) available for vulnerable refugees, like unaccompanied children, and water and sanitation conditions there are deficient.

It is at Moria detention center that most refugees are registered and receive their first health screening. The registration process can take over five days. Doctors

performing health screenings say they are so rushed that it is very difficult to provide any meaningful care.

Once registered, refugees are released and wait for a ferry at the port to Athens. For refugees who manage to make it to Italy or Greece, EU asylum policies present yet another obstacle to finding safety. Most refugees arriving on Aegean or Mediterranean shores want to travel to western or northern Europe to be reunited with family, receive greater protection, or find a better opportunity to make a living. To get to western or northern Europe, however, most people resort to being smuggled through the Balkans at enormous cost and danger to their lives.

The Eye of the Storm: The Humanitarian Needs in Europe (cont'd)

Planned IRC Solutions:

Response to the European Crisis

HEALTH

› Increased access to water

In collaboration with local authorities, the IRC plans to increase access to safe water for refugees in camps and transit points according to standards prescribed by the Sphere Project (which sets minimum standards in core areas of humanitarian assistance). This could include the extension and/or renovation of water systems for drinking and hygiene purposes, along with the provision of appropriate drainage. These activities would be implemented either by local authorities or contractors, and guided by technical supervision and support from the IRC's environmental health coordinators.

HEALTH

› Improved sanitation

To complement improved water access within the transit centers, the IRC intends to expand sanitation facilities, including refuse control. Priority needs within the centers might include the construction of emergency latrines or the rehabilitation of existing facilities, to ensure the availability of hand-washing stations. The IRC may also facilitate the employment of local contractors for the daily cleaning of all toilet and shower facilities, and provide financial support to local authorities for daily refuse collections, to ensure that transit centers are kept clean and public health risks reduced.

HEALTH

› Better access to basic hygiene and shelter

The IRC may provide cash, vouchers or materials, including hygiene or “dignity” kits containing items such as soap, laundry powder, toothpaste, shampoo, disposable razors, bath towels, disposable nappies, baby wipes and sanitary towels, as well as equipment such as waste bins, rubbish bags, disinfectant, brooms, shovels, and buckets. Shelter and “winterization” kits may be provided at all sites. These kits include items such as mattresses, sheets, pillows, blankets and electric heaters. While it is currently hot in the day, evening temperatures are cooling, and in mid-to-late September the rains will start, bringing down daily temperatures. Snow is not uncommon in Europe, even as far south as Lesbos. Refugees will require additional aid during the winter months.

SAFETY AND PROTECTION

› An improved protection environment

Vulnerable individuals and groups need to be identified and receive information, support and services in line with minimum international standards.

Coordinating among partners including UNHCR, IOM, and local volunteers and officials, the IRC proposes to disseminate clear and relevant information to refugees and conduct protection and awareness-raising activities. Information might include procedures for registration, asylum and access to legal and medical services. IRC staff will personally respond to new arrivals' inquiries and provide vital information. This critical first point of contact will help identify the most vulnerable refugees and will be particularly important when new transit sites are opened in the north of the island.

Many refugees land near Molyvos, a resort town in the north, but must walk 40 miles south to Mytilini to register. The IRC is looking at ways to facilitate the flow of people traveling south, including providing safe transportation services.

SAFETY AND PROTECTION

› Protection for refugees traveling within Europe

We acknowledge that there are also urgent humanitarian needs in other transit countries in Western Europe—mostly in western and northern Serbia. In September, the IRC consulted local officials, partner organizations and volunteers in Serbia about how the IRC could help.

The IRC is considering conducting similar assessments in Bulgaria, Croatia, Albania and Slovenia. The IRC is committed to providing assistance to refugees wherever local communities and authorities lack the intent or capacity to help.

WOMEN'S PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT

› Reduce risk of violence and provide a safe, healthy environment

The IRC will work with women and girls to understand their specific needs and vulnerabilities, offer them a safe space and crisis counseling, connect those who have experienced violence with health and psychosocial support, and distribute basic goods to reduce their risk of violence and harm.



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Humanitarian Needs in Syria and Neighboring Countries

Last year set a world record for the number of people uprooted by conflict, war and natural disaster. According to the United Nations, in 2014, nearly 60 million people were displaced.

Syria alone accounts for nearly 12 million of those displaced people. As a result of these simultaneous crises, the U.N.'s humanitarian agencies are on the verge of bankruptcy and unable to meet the basic needs of millions of people because of the size of the refugee crisis in the Middle East, Africa and Europe. Deteriorating conditions in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq have made life next to impossible for some 4 million people who have fled Syria. Even wealthier and economically better-off Turkey is buckling under the strain.

The IRC's Proven Track Record

The IRC delivers emergency services and long-term support to displaced Syrians inside their own country and to Syrian refugees throughout the region. Since the end of the Iraq War, the IRC has also aided tens of thousands of people displaced inside Iraq, including most recently the Yazidi minority group attacked and displaced by ISIS in 2014.

Since 2012 alone, the IRC and its partner organizations have aided 3.3 million Syrians and Iraqis affected by conflict.

The regional environment is constantly in flux. The IRC meets this challenge by coordinating programs, operations and funding across five countries—Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Beneficiaries move easily between our programs thanks to co-located services, mobile units, and a strong referral system. Community members play a central role in our program planning and implementation.

SAFETY AND PROTECTION

› Protecting children

In Iraq, the IRC works closely with the government and local organizations to ensure that refugee children who have been separated from their parents or family receive vital social services and assistance in reunifying with their families. In Jordan and Lebanon, the IRC works with unaccompanied minors in refugee camps and host communities to ensure that children are safe from abuse, cared for, and can attend school. In Lebanon, the IRC focuses on services for street and working children.

Salih Musa, an IRC child protection officer, talks to a 10-year-old refugee who was separated from his parents and who now lives with his grandfather in the Domiz camp in Iraq. PHOTO: PETER BIRO/IRC

HEALTH

› Primary and reproductive health care

In the first half of 2015, the IRC has reached 400,000 people across the region with primary health, pre-natal, trauma, surgery and dialysis care. Inside Syria, the IRC and local partners keep 50 primary care clinics, a trauma center and a dialysis center up and running. In northern Jordan, IRC mobile clinics reach some 18,000 Syrians and Jordanians who otherwise would have no access to health care. In Iraq, the IRC has worked with the public health system to address the needs of refugees and displaced people. Throughout the region, the IRC works with a large network of community health volunteers to identify people who are not receiving care and connect them to health services.

EDUCATION

› Schooling and educational opportunity

In a crisis, education is a lifesaving necessity, providing a sense of normalcy and stability while helping children heal. Schools also disseminate critical health and safety messages so that children are protected from harm.

“The [IRC] course showed me new ways of teaching, and it taught me how to help deal with displaced children and children who are victims of war and violence.”

—SUZAN, A TEACHER IN ERBIL, IRAQ

The IRC ensures children have access to education through programming that offers what is needed: classes and facilities, teacher training and community mobilization.

The IRC runs schools in 13 camps inside Syria that serve some 5,000 children. In Lebanon—where 350,000 Syrian children have no access to education—the IRC offers high-quality education programs to refugee children, ages 3 to 14. Meanwhile, the IRC provides teachers and educators with the skills they need to promote the psychosocial recovery, well-being, and social and emotional learning of children during and after the current crisis.

Humanitarian Needs in Syria and Neighboring Countries (cont'd)

LIVELIHOODS AND CASH PROGRAMMING

› Skills training and direct cash assistance

Livelihoods and cash programs provides emergency cash assistance, cash for work and cash for training. The goal is not only to help families make ends meet, but to develop long-term job skills.

In Iraq, the IRC provides career services and training to displaced Iraqi and Syrian refugee youth. In Turkey, an IRC youth center supports vocational and informal education for Syrian refugees and vulnerable local people. In Lebanon, IRC livelihoods centers provide refugees and local communities with vocational training, small business development and job placement. In Jordan, emergency cash assistance is provided to women at risk so they can meet vital basic needs.

WOMEN'S PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT

› Counseling and essential services for women and girls

The IRC offers case management, psychosocial services and social networks for women and girls throughout the region. In northern Syria, the IRC opened eight Omniah ("Hope") safe spaces for women to provide gender-

based violence case management, individual and group counseling, work and educational opportunities, and recreation. The IRC provides similar services to women and girls in Syria's neighboring countries, as well as vocational and business training. In all five countries, the IRC hosts community discussions on gender equity.

Planned IRC Solutions

The Middle East and the Syria Region

SAFETY AND PROTECTION

› Protecting at-risk refugee children

The IRC intends to expand child protection services throughout the region by identifying unaccompanied minors and other at-risk refugee children, assessing their needs, and ensuring that they have access to case management, education and other services. All services will be tailored to local conditions: in Iraq and Turkey, children will have access to safe places to play and learn. In Lebanon, programs will address the special needs of street children. In Lebanon and Jordan, efforts will be made to find foster families to care for unaccompanied children in refugee camps.



Five generations of the same family from Syria are now living as refugees in Northern Lebanon. PHOTO: PETER BIRO/IRC.



LEFT: An IRC community health volunteer speaks to a Syrian refugee living in Jordan about the IRC's health services. PHOTO: ALAA KHANJI/IRC.
RIGHT: Syrian refugee children at an IRC education center in Lebanon. PHOTO: SAM TARLING/FT.



HEALTH

› Improved access to primary and reproductive health care

The IRC will continue to provide primary and reproductive health care to refugees and displaced people in Syria, Jordan and Iraq. In Syria, the IRC provides essential medicine and health care to thousands of displaced families. In Jordan, the IRC will continue to operate primary care clinics in the northern border cities of Mafraq and Ramtha, while expanding its mobile health clinics in order to reach thousands more people. Finally, the IRC plans to expand its network of community health volunteers who so far this year have reached 80,000 Syrian refugees and local Jordanians.

EDUCATION

› Increased Access to Quality Schooling

The IRC plans to expand programs for Syrian refugee and displaced Iraqi children, providing specially trained teachers, tailored educational materials and a safe place to learn. IRC-organized parent-teacher associations will offer support when and where appropriate.

In Lebanon, the IRC plans to guarantee school access for one year to Syrian refugee children ages 6 to 13, in more than 30 communities. In Iraq, the IRC will continue to support the educational system by training teachers and providing educational materials and other resources to refugees and internally displaced children. In Turkey, we plan to add youth centers and support temporary education

centers and government schools that offer a formal education to Syrian refugees. In Syria, the IRC will explore operating more schools in displaced persons camps.

WOMEN'S PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT

› Expanded services for refugee and host community women and girls

Throughout the region, the IRC offers social, economic, legal and health services to women in refugee camps and host communities. The IRC is looking to expand these services to thousands of women and girls who are currently on waitlists for programs, such as livelihoods and life-skills training. In Lebanon, the IRC proposes to expand access to these services through its existing IRC-supported women's and girls' community centers. Similarly, in northern Syria, the IRC will continue to operate its Omniah ("Hope") safe spaces for displaced women.

LIVELIHOODS AND CASH PROGRAMMING

› Expanded cash distribution and skills training programs

The IRC proposes to continue its livelihoods support, including providing cash. Cash enables refugee families to acquire what they need while providing positive benefits to local communities and markets. Cash programming might also include cash for work and cash for training.

In Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey, the IRC is committed to providing livelihoods programs for young people—from skills center-based training to apprenticeships.



Advocacy, Communications and Operations

Europe and the European Union are unable to respond to the mounting humanitarian crisis within its borders. Any effective European approach must involve a humane response to the refugees arriving in Greece and Italy while also working to find ways to tackle the root causes of displacement in the Middle East.

The IRC continues to push for meaningful solutions through its work with governments and policymakers in Europe, while working to build consensus around pragmatic ways to help refugees. At the same time, the IRC is focusing international attention on the European refugee crisis through a multi-pronged, multi-media communications strategy.

The IRC's Proven Track Record

Earlier this year the IRC was among the first INGOs to send an emergency team to Italy and Greece to assess the emerging refugee crisis. Since then we have recognized the need to provide clear and objective information about the crisis, both as a way to engage the European and international public, and to galvanize political attention and action. At the same time, the IRC strongly believes in empowering and giving voice to the people we seek to help. We have done this by being a vehicle through which refugees can tell their story—through first-hand reports and video on our website and by providing international media access to refugees and their stories.

The IRC strongly believes in empowering and giving voice to the people we seek to help.

Supporters of the IRC in the United States and Europe and members of the public have responded to this message. We have actively tried to channel their compassion toward activities that can make a difference for refugees arriving in places like Greece. The IRC seeks to involve private sector organizations and members of the public in a way that allows them to make informed choices about the kinds of programs they want to fund, and to know what impact that has on the lives of refugees.

The IRC is also highly experienced and effective in calling the attention of policymakers to the needs of refugees and displaced people. Because of our hands-on work in over 40 countries, members of our headquarters, field staff and country teams speak knowledgeably and authoritatively

A refugee waiting for transport from Lesbos, Greece, displays an image of his destroyed home in Syria. PHOTO: TYLER JUMP/IRC.

about the issues—and global leaders do listen and respond as has been demonstrated during the current crisis. The IRC has launched an ambitious plan to ensure that all of our humanitarian programs are evidence-based and evidence-generating, which has only enhanced the organization's credibility and influence.

In this crisis, the IRC's expertise is unique in that it enables us to respond throughout the Middle East and Syria region and to advocate on behalf of refugees and internally displaced people through our European offices in London, Brussels and Geneva.

Planned IRC Solutions

The Refugee Crisis in Europe and the Middle East

The IRC proposes to advocate for the following with the European Union and its member states:

SAFETY AND PROTECTION

› **Improve conditions for newly arrived refugees, especially in Greece**

Living conditions for refugees arriving in Greece are deplorable, especially for women and children. The IRC continues to urge policymakers in Brussels and London to ensure basic humanitarian standards in caring for refugees.

SAFETY AND PROTECTION

› **Increase safe, legal routes to and through Europe for refugees**

This means EU member states should use all possible tools to ensure that refugees can safely enter Europe without having to undertake hazardous journeys by sea or be exploited by illegal smugglers. These tools include refugee resettlement, facilitating family reunification and providing humanitarian visas. The EU also needs to make it easier for refugees to move safely through Europe from their point of entry. This may mean reforming or replacing the Dublin System, which leaves refugees no option than to travel through Europe irregularly. Finally, the EU needs a comprehensive, common asylum policy with minimum standards of protection.

Advocacy, Communications and Operations (cont'd)

Ayman Al Awad, 37, lives with his family in a ramshackle room built on a roof for which he pays 100 dinars a month. A refugee from Deraa, he would migrate if he could, but will only do so if it is legal. Without help to pay his rent, he has been selling his food vouchers at a loss to cover the cost. Since the cut in the WFP's food vouchers, however, he no longer has enough to cover the payments.

“We steal bread and live on bruised vegetables that we can find,” he says. “We survive on scraps. I used to own a supermarket. I had a small farm and a car.”

—PETER BEAUMONT, *THE GUARDIAN*, Sept. 14, 2015

› Fund programs for refugees in the Syria region

With aid funding cut for countries hosting up to 4 million refugees in the Middle East, and decline in support for refugees, many refugees are faced with the stark choice of returning to their war-torn homes or seeking safety elsewhere.

The EU and its member states must greatly increase their support for Middle Eastern countries that host the majority of Syrian refugees. The IRC will continue to advocate for greater support to refugees in these countries so they may be allowed to live with dignity.

› Provide field-based policy advice and analysis

To change European policy toward refugees, the IRC will look at targeting all key policymakers and implementers—the European Commission, European Parliament, the European Council and European External Action Service—and the actors that influence these bodies, such as EU member state delegations and governments. Our communications work can support this effort by building a public consensus for supporting refugees, thereby increasing pressure on policymakers to act.

› Provide accurate information on the crisis utilizing IRC field coverage

Through its communications teams in the Middle East and in Europe, the IRC will strive to provide quick, accurate information about the crisis, while telling the story of the refugees themselves, those who are working on behalf of refugees and all those people affected by the crisis.

› Engage the private sector in supporting solutions to the refugee crisis

The IRC intends to reach out and appeal to the private sector and the public to play a greater role in responding to the largest refugee crisis in Europe since the Second World War. Collaborative activities with the IRC might include school fundraising drives and corporate partnerships. The IRC has a long history in forging such partnerships.

› Provide technical assistance and best practice training

The IRC looks to partner with national and local governments, local European nonprofit organizations and the private sector to provide technical assistance and training in case management, employment language interpretation and programs for refugee integration and acculturation. These partnerships may take place both through visits to IRC offices in the U.S., through remote technical assistance, or through seconding staff to European offices and organizations to provide day-to-day mentorship.

A Model for Refugee Resettlement: The IRC's Experience

According to the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, 1 in 10 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees are in need of resettlement—some 400,000 people. UNHCR has called on the world's industrialized nations, including the United States, to resettle this number of refugees over the next several years.

This number is still a fraction of the more than 4 million refugees who have poured into the countries bordering Syria. But if the industrialized nations agreed to meet or better this goal, it could help ease the chaotic flow of refugees into Europe and save lives. The IRC stands ready to facilitate the resettlement of Syrian refugees in the U.S. and to help them integrate into their new communities. Over many decades, the IRC has resettled tens of thousands of refugees around the U.S. Our experience teaches us that refugees prosper and thrive when offered a welcoming environment and a chance to learn and make a living. Of the 1,752 Syrian refugees who have so far been admitted to the U.S. since 2013, the IRC has resettled 320. The IRC has called on the U.S. government to resettle 100,000 Syrian refugees in 2016.

The IRC's Proven Track Record: Refugee Resettlement

The IRC has over 80 years of experience working in refugee resettlement. During the last 40 years, the IRC has resettled more than 329,000 refugees from 50 countries. The IRC also manages the Resettlement Support Center in East Asia. The IRC's U.S. Programs Department (USP) runs refugee resettlement offices in 26 American cities. In 2014, these offices resettled nearly 11,000 newly arrived refugees and provided services to promote self-reliance and integration to over 36,000 refugees, asylees, victims of human trafficking and other immigrants.

The IRC has a long history of aiding and resettling refugees from Europe. In the 1950s and 1960s, the IRC helped refugees from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union who made their way to IRC offices across Europe. During the Balkan wars of the 1990s, the IRC launched one of its largest aid programs, which provided extensive humanitarian aid and repaired thousands of homes, electrical facilities, roads, hospitals and schools. During the wars, the IRC ran resettlement support centers in Zagreb and Split, Croatia, and since 1993 has resettled 21,804 refugees from the Balkans in the U.S.

The IRC ensures that newly arrived refugees in the U.S. receive a roof over their heads, access to English classes, support in navigating the health and education systems and help finding a job in order to become self-sufficient as

soon as possible. The IRC is the primary partner of the U.S. government for all U.S. cultural orientation for refugees both in the U.S. and internationally.

The IRC recognizes that it has a responsibility not only to refugees, but also to the communities in which they live. That is why we work closely, not only with the U.S. federal government, but with state and local government, community volunteers, refugee mentors, civic organizations, student groups and faith communities to help refugees integrate. The IRC has found that this approach has also proved to be effective among non-refugee, low-income immigrant populations as many of the challenges faced by refugees are common to all immigrant and low-income families. Of all the people served in the U.S. by the IRC last year, 20 percent were non-refugees.

The U.S. government has said that it will increase the number of Syrian refugees admitted to the country to 10,000 in fiscal year 2016. The IRC will continue playing a leading role in advocating for admitting a greater number while continuing to resettle and provide ongoing services to new arrivals. The IRC's experience and technical expertise means it is well prepared to help resettle more Syrian refugees if the numbers should increase, including:

- › **Providing immediate services** such as housing, job placement and skills training, support for navigation of education and health systems, English-language classes and cultural orientation.
- › **Providing comprehensive immigration services** including help in becoming permanent residents and citizens.
- › **Providing access to nutrition education, farming, financial literacy and other educational opportunities.**
- › **Support for women and girls** who have experienced sexual violence.

Required Funds

To meet the needs of people fleeing to Europe, as well as to respond effectively to the casual factors triggering displacement in the Middle East, a total of \$33 million is being sought from October 2015 to September 2016.

PROGRAM NEEDS

Emergency response to the refugee crisis in Europe	
HEALTH: Increased access to water	\$1,000,000
HEALTH: Improved sanitation environments	2,500,000
SAFETY AND PROTECTION: Improved protection environment	500,000
SAFETY AND PROTECTION: Protection for refugees traveling to Europe	500,000
WOMEN'S PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT	500,000
General health services	1,000,000
Emergency assistance through cash & non-food items	7,500,000
Camp management & transportation support	1,500,000
TOTAL	\$15,000,000

Long-term programs in the Middle East and the Syria region	
SAFETY AND PROTECTION: Risk reduction for children	\$1,500,000
HEALTH: Primary and reproductive health care	3,000,000
EDUCATION: Increased access to quality schooling	1,500,000
WOMEN'S PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT	1,000,000
LIVELIHOODS AND CASH PROGRAMMING	3,500,000
TOTAL	\$10,500,000

Advocacy, Communications and Operations	
Communication and content	\$500,000
Policy creation, advice, dissemination	750,000
Operational support	3,250,000
TOTAL	\$4,500,000

U.S. Programs work to support refugee resettlement	
Support for resettlement of refugees from the Middle East	\$3,000,000

Total Funding Request	\$33,000,000
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* Budget for monitoring & evaluation of our programs is included within the program needs.

The IRC will produce a report of our progress and expenditures on the crisis, against the work outlined in this appeal, which will be made available on our website and to all requesting donors.

About the IRC

The IRC responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises, helping to restore health, safety, education, economic well-being, and power to people devastated by conflict and disaster. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, the IRC is at work in over 40 countries and in 26 U.S. cities helping people to survive, reclaim control of their future and strengthen their communities.

The IRC leads the humanitarian field by implementing high-impact, cost-effective programs, and by using its knowledge and experience to shape both policy and practice. The IRC's robust systems allow for frequent re-evaluation of the program environment and the integration of best practices. The IRC works in direct partnership with international and local partners and in consultation with local governments and communities to ensure responsive and timely results.

For more information please contact:

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