

## **FACT SHEET - "RESPONDING TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS"**

### **THE SITUATION**

- SYRIA - Syria's complex and cruel civil war has been compounded by the Islamic State (ISIS) and 4 million people have left their nation. Millions more are displaced internally.
- LEBANON - 1.3 million Syrian refugees, 300,000 Palestinian and 100,000 Iraqi refugees. 25% of Lebanon's population are now refugees. The situation is tense and untenable.
- CANADA - The UN has called on developed countries to alleviate this strain. Canada has pledged to receive 3,000 Iraqi and 10,000 Syrian refugees over the next one and three years respectively.
- LEBANESE BAPTISTS - Lebanese Baptists (32 mostly small, struggling churches) have been caring for 20,000 Syrian refugees. Lives have been transformed by Christ's love.

### **OUR RESPONSE**

- **"Sponsoring and Settling 50 refugee Families in Atlantic Canada."**
- This is one of the most significant missional undertakings we have attempted. Currently the CABC sponsors about one family a year. 50 in 3 years is huge! We can do this together.

### **SPONSORSHIP**

- Only Canada has a private sponsorship program and the CABC is one of only a few Sponsorship Agreement Holder organizations in Atlantic Canada.
- Sponsoring churches apply for, welcome and provide refugees with 12 months of settlement support, including housing, food and clothing. They are the refugees' first community in Canada.
- Sponsorship allows refugees to land as Permanent Residents and to build new lives.

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

- Partnerships will be the key.
- Our commitment is part of larger undertaking by CBM, the other Canadian Baptist Conventions, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, and over a dozen more denominations in Canada.
- Citizenship and Immigration are aware of our intentions and have pledged their support in expediting processing.
- Some churches will be able to sponsor a family by themselves, but dynamic partnerships are better: several CABC churches in both rural and urban settings, churches of different denominations, churches and community groups.
- We can serve our neighbours by giving them the opportunity to positively respond to this crisis.

### **MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS**

**- Remember you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this. Deut. 24:18**

- Nothing determines sponsorship success more than our motivations and expectations.
- We sponsor refugees because it is the right thing to do.
- We sponsor refugees to benefit Christ and others.
- **We mostly sponsor refugees out of thankfulness!** We were husbandless, fatherless and homeless foreigners (enemies even) and God, in Christ, brought us into his family.
- The people we bring are people with their own histories and dreams. They land as permanent residents with full volitional rights.
- Sponsoring rescues people from dangerous and hopeless situations. It brings people to Canada. It offers the opportunity of a new life and gives dreams a chance.
- Sponsoring enlarges our hearts and worlds for it takes us into God's heart and world.

## FAQs

### What are the steps? (not necessarily in this order)

1. Affirmation by the congregation to pursue sponsorship
2. Identify core committee that would be tasked with leading
3. Identify partners: other Baptist churches, other churches in your area, community groups, etc.
4. One or two people take the on-line Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (optional)
5. Coordinate with CABC in identifying and applying for refugees.
6. Prepare for arrival.
7. Work towards settlement and integration.

### What are the channels or sponsorship tracks? Through Citizenship and immigration Canada, CABC can participate in 3 sponsorship programs:

#### Joint Assisted Sponsorships

- Refugees identified by CIC (very limited choice for the sponsor)
- Refugees have exceptionally high resettlement needs (physical or psychological health issues.)
- CIC covers 100% of basic costs
- Refugees are travel ready and can arrive within months.

#### The Blended Visa Office Referral Program

- Refugees identified by CIC (somewhat limited choice for the sponsor)
- CIC covers 50% of costs
- Refugees are travel ready and can arrive within months.

#### Full Private Sponsorship

- Refugees identified by the sponsoring group.
- Sponsor covers all costs.
- Refugees arrive in about a year of application (longer from locations other than Lebanon)

### What does it cost?

- A full private sponsorship for a family of 4 costs about \$27,000. Up to 40% of this can come from in-kind donations like (housing, furniture and clothing). Additional dependents @ about \$2500.

## RESOURCES

- Stats and news  
<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14703995>  
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-to-resettle-10-000-more-syrian-refugees-over-3-years-1.2892652>
- **Best site for info on Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program**  
<http://www.rstp.ca/en/>
- Info on the Blended Visa Office Referred Program  
[http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Blended-VOR-FAQ\\_2014.pdf](http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Blended-VOR-FAQ_2014.pdf)

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