

Refugee Crisis Update- Summer 2019



Refugees Worldwide (Source-UNHCR):

- There are 70.8 million people who have been forcibly displaced around the world.
- There are 25.9 million refugees worldwide (and 3.5 million asylum-seekers) who have fled their countries
 - Over 6 million Syrians have fled as refugees (there are a total of 13 million displaced Syrians)
 - 48% of the world's refugees are women and girls
 - More than 62% of the 2+ million refugees who have fled South Sudan are children
 - 17 years is the average length of time a refugee spends as a refugee until they are resettled
 - A very small percentage of the world's refugee population was resettled in 2018 (less than 1/2%)
- There are 41.3 million Internally Displaced People (IDP), including 7 million Syrians and 3 million Yemenis
- 84% of the world's refugees are hosted by developing nations. The top five countries hosting refugees are: Turkey, Pakistan, Uganda, Sudan, Germany (each with more than 1 million).

Refugees in the United States (Source-U.S. State Department):

- From 2002 to 2018, the U.S. admitted 415,000 Christian refugees and 310,000 Muslim refugees. 46% of all refugees who have entered the U.S. during this time were Christian; 33% were Muslim (Pew Research Center).
- Over 3 million refugees from all countries have arrived in the U.S. over the past 30+ years. Over 100,000 refugees from 100 countries have resettled in Minnesota. (Refugee Program Office, State of Minnesota)
- Since 2011, 70% of the refugees who been resettled in the U.S. were women and children.
- 18-24 months is the average security screening time required for a refugee before arriving in the U.S.
- Refugees in the United States are protected by U.S. law. Refugee status does not expire, and they can apply for Green Cards (after 1 year) and for U.S. Citizenship (after 5 years).

Refugees and U.S. Policy:

Tens of thousands of refugees continue to be impacted by current U.S. resettlement policies.

- The White House lowered the ceiling on the number of refugees who can come to the U.S. to a record low of 30,000 for PY2019 (from 45,000 in PY2018 and 110,000 in PY2017). This means that fewer refugees are being helped and many family reunification cases are being put on hold indefinitely.
- Currently the U.S. is on pace to welcome only 70 refugees for every 1,000,000 residents in our country.
- PY2018 saw the lowest number of refugees admitted in recent U.S. history: 22,491.
- Only 62 Syrian refugees were resettled in the U.S. in PY2018 compared to 6,587 in PY2017 and 12,587 in PY2016. This is a 99.5% decrease in the number allowed into the U.S.
- There are special restrictions on refugees from seven countries (including Christians and other minorities). In the first half of PY2019 the U.S. admitted 48% fewer Christians and 90% fewer Muslims as well as 100% fewer Jewish refugees from Iran and 96% fewer Yazidi refugees from Iraq and Syria.
- Further restrictions have been placed on refugee reunification (family members not being allowed to join those in the U.S.). This impacts many, especially from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

- Statistics show that the refugee resettlement program is the safest U.S. immigration program. No one in the U.S. has been killed by a terrorist act committed by any of the 3 million+ refugees resettled since 1980. Yet, we are excluding many refugees, including many persecuted Christians.
- In PY2018 Arrive Ministries resettled 104 refugees (previously we averaged around 400 per year). In PY2019 Arrive Ministries is seeing new refugees primarily from Burma, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Ukraine.
- Arrive Ministries has expanded its outreach to those refugees who are already in Minnesota and to asylum-seekers. We have experienced a burgeoning number of volunteers in our Somali Adult Literacy Training (SALT) and Refugee Life Ministries (RLM) programs for which we are grateful.

DACA/Dreamers:

- **What is DACA?** The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, better known as DACA, temporarily shielded certain child immigrants (often called Dreamers) from deportation and made them eligible for work permits. It was considered a temporary measure until Congress addressed immigration reform.
- **Who is eligible for DACA?** To qualify, immigrants had to have been under 31 at the time the program was announced (2012), have come to the U.S. before reaching their 16th birthday, have lived in the U.S. continually since June 15, 2007, and have no criminal record. About 1.6 million children qualified for DACA, but not all registered for the program.
- **Has DACA ended?** The U.S. Administration announced an end to DACA in March 2018 in a move to force Congress to find a substitute for DACA. Congress has not passed new legislation. Due to nationwide injunctions in the courts, USCIS is currently required to accept DACA renewal applications to prevent deportations. New DACA applications are not being accepted. Without immigration reform, many dreamers are in limbo.
- **How many people have DACA?** The total number of DACA recipients, reported by Department of Homeland Security, is around 800,000.

How to respond:

- **Above all “love your neighbor as yourself.”**
- **Pray** for our nation’s leaders, refugees around the world, and for the church to respond with compassion. Pray that Congress would act and pass immigration reform.
- **Love** your friends, neighbors, and coworkers who are refugees, asylees or DACA recipients. They are feeling disheartened and fearful right now and unsure of the future of their loved ones still overseas.
- **Advocate** for refugees overseas, for a compassionate response to refugee resettlement in the U.S. from our leaders in Washington. Please advocate on behalf of Dreamers who have no country to go back to and have no other way to become legal residents of the U.S.
 - For more information visit <http://evangelicalimmigrationtable.com>
- **Volunteer and Support Arrive Ministries.** We still have refugees being resettled and many families already here who desire friendship, ESL/tutoring help, employment mentors, and other practical support.
 - Please visit www.arriveministries.org

We believe that we as a country can have both safety and compassion as we welcome refugees and immigrants in the name of Jesus.

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