

REFUGEE CRISIS: HOW TO HELP

This comes to other denominations from The Church in Wales, 10.9.2015, via CYTŪN

Since the UK Government announced that Britain would open its doors to more Syrian refugees, many people have contacted the Church in Wales to ask if we are doing anything specific to address the crisis, and to offer practical help – including accommodation.

Enquiries confirm that roll-out arrangements for how to handle new refugees have not yet been decided. It is likely that there will be a national 'resettlement board' involving various government departments, possibly including faith groups and Third Sector organisations. Implementation will then come down to Local Authorities. If child refugees are prioritised, they will be the responsibility of Social Services departments.

Although we are aware of the urgent nature of the problem, the UK is not facing the same situation as some countries on the borders of Europe, where people in immediate need are arriving daily on the streets. Arrivals to this country will be planned, so there is time to organise an appropriate response.

Key points:

- **The Church in Wales will keep abreast of developments, but is not planning to do anything independently of other organisations who have more expertise. In due course we will be able to direct people to Local Authorities or local partnerships who may be offering help.**
- **If you have accommodation to offer, it is better to wait until we know where refugees will be sent for re-settlement before contacting your Local Authority. (If you are planning to offer church premises, please contact the Church in Wales property department in the first instance.)**
- **The best way to help now is to give MONEY to the main NGOs active in this field: the Red Cross helps refugees and asylum seekers, including in Calais and in the UK; Christian Aid, Embrace the Middle East, Oxfam, Save the Children all work with refugees in the Middle East and elsewhere. Equipment, food and clothing are NOT required at present – there is sufficient in situ and there are problems storing the surplus.**
- **Campaigning – eg to pressure government to take more refugees, to take refugees already in Europe, and to maintain international development aid – is also worthwhile. Many of the NGOs have campaigning sections of their websites.**
- **Prayer and reflection is valuable, and helps to keep the issue at the forefront of people's minds. Some specific materials are available from Christian agencies (see below) – in the present circumstances, resources are constantly being updated.**

Further information, resources, and opportunities to give:

CHRISTIAN AID: <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/index.aspx> (*Christian Aid is our main partner for all overseas aid.*)

EMBRACE THE MIDDLE EAST: <http://www.embraceme.org/mattress>

BRITISH RED CROSS: <http://www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/Refugee-support>

OXFAM: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/en>

SAVE THE CHILDREN: <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/>

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY: <http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/> (*The Children's Society does not work overseas and does not currently work in Wales, but has relevant campaigning actions on its website.*)