

# Refugees



## Who are refugees?

Refugees are people who have left their homeland because they fear that they will lose their lives or their freedom if they stay. People become refugees because one or more of their basic human rights has been violated or threatened.<sup>1</sup>

Human rights include the right to life, liberty and education, freedom from torture, and freedom of thought and expression.

Refugees are threatened and targeted because of who they are (their race or tribe) or what they believe (religious or political opinions). They become refugees when they cross a border and ask for safety in another country.

80% of the world's 12 million refugees are women and children.

Only 1% of the world's refugees move to a developed country like the United States, Canada, Australia, or England.

<sup>1</sup> [http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit189/lesson4\\_attachments/1.html](http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit189/lesson4_attachments/1.html)



## What is it like to be a refugee?

Before they leave their country, refugees and their families live in danger of being hurt or killed. Often, refugees have to run away very quickly and leave everything behind.

They may be separated from their family and they may not know where their parents are or if they are alive.

Refugees may have to walk a very long distance for many days to get to safety in a refugee camp in a nearby country. They may not be able to speak the language of that country. The camps often have no jobs. Refugees depend on food donations to survive. Some refugees live there for many years until they can go back to their home or are resettled.

## Meet Abraham

When I was around 8 years old, I was playing in a field with my brothers and sisters when we heard gun shots coming from our village. Everyone was running in different directions and we became separated from our parents. We thought that we would return to our village the next day. We didn't realize that the war had come to our village and that we would not be going back there for a very long time.

With other boys, we walked over a thousand miles to arrive at a refugee camp. We were always hungry, thirsty and afraid. Years later, I was allowed to come to America. I was happy. Now, I would get an education and would be able to help others.

## How can you help?

- Invite them to your home to share a celebration or a meal.
- Collect donations: books, school supplies, or clothing or household items.
- Stand up for them if someone is disrespectful or unkind.
- Celebrate World Refugee Day, June 20<sup>th</sup>.