

DISCUSSION GUIDE

A FILM BY DEBRA KELLNER

INSIDE MY HEART

PRODUCED BY FRANK GIUSTRA, SERGE LALOU AND RICHARD COPANS

GIUSTRAFOUNDATION.ORG

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About the Film

Inside My Heart chronicles the lives of three families who were forced to flee Syria and Afghanistan at the peak of the refugee and migrant crisis in 2015. In the wake of witnessing unthinkable atrocities and having the lives they've known wrested away, these mothers, fathers, sons and daughters exhibit remarkable resilience as they fight for survival.

The fly-on-the-wall approach to filming reveals the immense emotional anguish of the families as they undertake their journeys to find safety and new homes over the course of three years. They travel through countries where they do not speak the language, where their welcome is conditional and the rules and policies are ever-changing. In bearing witness to their stories, the global refugee crisis shifts from a set of

statistics about distant places to a very human struggle for survival by people with faces and names. Any of the people featured in the film could be any one of us.

Demonstrating the same compassionate eye exhibited in her celebrated photography, director Debra Kellner delivers a vital reminder about the humans who have been swept up in the global crisis, which involves more than 68 million refugees and is the largest human exodus since the Second World War.

Inside My Heart – produced by Frank Giustra, Serge Lalou and Richard Copans – was supported by The Giustra Foundation with the aim of bridging the distance between those living in their country of choice and those forced to flee their homes in search of peace and stability. It serves as an artistic piece of encouragement to open our hearts to our global neighbours.

**MORE THAN 68 MILLION
PEOPLE HAVE BEEN FORCED FROM
THEIR HOMES, THE LARGEST HUMAN
EXODUS SINCE THE SECOND
WORLD WAR**



Both heartbreaking and inspiring, this film is a testimony to the emotional complexities that drive people to make an impossible decision in hopes of saving themselves.

ARWA DAMON

CNN, SENIOR INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT



Using This Guide

This guide will help individuals, teachers, social workers, community groups and others use *Inside My Heart* to raise awareness about the challenges faced by refugees around the world.

It is meant to help engender empathy and compassion for refugees, and to inspire individuals and communities to get involved in supporting their safe resettlement.

In addition to tips for hosting a screening event and leading constructive dialogue, the guide includes background information and context about the specific refugee crisis portrayed in the film. Event hosts can use the suggested discussion questions and engage in one of the activity ideas to explore the themes raised in the film, such as the impact of forced migration on women and girls, or the pressures and challenges of assimilation into new cultures. Links to organizations and resources will encourage event leaders and attendees to get involved in supporting refugees in their own communities and around the world.

An associated set of [classroom lessons](#) are available for use by teachers and students in educational settings.



Letter from the Director and Producer

Hello Friends,

It is our shared belief that only through understanding can we care, and only through caring can we find solutions. *Inside My Heart* is a manifestation of those beliefs, wherein we attempt to shed light on some of the stories of those caught in the refugee crisis to create greater understanding and compassion.

We have been friends for most of our lives, and in October 2015, we found ourselves on the shores of Lesbos, Greece, receiving overwhelming numbers of refugees landing daily on the island's shores. Hordes of media had descended to cover the crisis. News of hundreds of people drowning on the Aegean Sea had spread throughout the world. Thousands of refugees continued to pour in daily. There was no end to it.

We had travelled to Greece to help organizations on the ground set up emergency services. We wanted to capture the stories of those who were arriving and share that footage with others in an attempt to raise funds to build additional resource centres to support newcomers.

It seemed clear that the majority of the people coming to the shores were ordinary people facing extraordinary circumstances. In the coming months, we slowly met and got to know the families who were going to change our lives forever. We wanted to follow their journeys as they sought new lives in foreign lands.

These families had escaped unspeakable horrors in their home countries of Syria and Afghanistan, yet they exhibited remarkable resilience as they fought for survival and the chance to live in safety.

The vast number of people swept up in the refugee crisis are too often seen as a policy distraction and their stories rarely make the nightly news. It is our hope that this film will show viewers that refugees are ordinary people like ourselves – mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters – who all have dreams for themselves and their families. When given the opportunity to build a new life in a new land, they have much to offer and contribute.

Thank you for taking the time to view the film and host a screening. We hope you will share this film with your friends, neighbours, students, and colleagues and do what you can to engage with organizations on the frontlines advocating and providing services for newcomers.

Our best,
Debra Kellner and Frank Giustra



Planning a Screening Event



Tips for Hosting a Screening

Planning a screening event is a great opportunity to bring community together to raise awareness and inspire an audience to compassionate action.

Here is a suggested schedule to follow to prepare for a successful screening event:



SIX WEEKS TO TWO MONTHS PRIOR

- ☐ Set a time, date and location.
- ☐ Brainstorm and prioritize a list of possible community partners to support outreach.
- ☐ Identify your guest list, secure community partners.
- ☐ Decide on the format for your screening and post-screening event.
(eg: Will you have a panel and/or organize another engagement activity?)



ONE MONTH PRIOR

- ☐ Send out invitation with time, date, location and description of the film and the post-screening event. [Download the partner toolkit](#) for sample invites, etc.
- ☐ Coordinate with your speakers, panelists or other guests to make sure everyone is familiar with the film and can prepare and participate fully in the agenda.



DAY(S) BEFORE

- ☐ Send reminders to speakers and to guests.
- ☐ Go to GiustraFoundation.org to download a free screener of *Inside My Heart*. The film is also available on Amazon and iTunes. Be sure to test your a/v equipment on site before the event.
- ☐ Copy and assemble any discussion materials or promotional handouts.



DAY OF SCREENING

- ☐ Arrive at least an hour prior. This allows for enough time if you need to set up the room, test the a/v equipment, greet guests and panelists, and review your agenda.



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*“If you ever forget refugees
are real people, not a policy
abstraction – see this film.”*

LORD MARK MALLOCH-BROWN
CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL
CRISIS GROUP

Tips for Facilitating Constructive Dialogue

Inside my Heart is a powerful story that invites audiences to better understand the lives of three refugee families. Their journey may evoke an emotional response from the audience. Reviewing these guidelines beforehand will help you prepare for your event and promote constructive dialogue.

50%

HALF OF ALL
DISPLACED PEOPLE
WORLDWIDE ARE
UNDER AGE 18

- UNHCR



SPOTLIGHT HOPE AND SOLUTIONS: The stories in the film chronicle the lived experience of people, and as such are messy and complicated and often difficult in their emotional intensity. And yet the film itself and your screening offer the opportunity to bring these stories into public view to engender empathy and support. Your event can shine a light on the ways everyone can act to support refugees in your community and around the world.



DETERMINE YOUR GOALS: Watch the film, read through the guide and reflect on why the issue and film are important to you. Share your passion and interest in the film to engage your audience and frame the conversation toward empathy and action.



MAKE IT RELEVANT: Though *Inside My Heart* takes place in Europe and focuses on the experience of refugees from Afghanistan and Syria, forced migration is a global issue and the film's themes are universal. As a facilitator and event planner, think about ways to connect your event and discussion to displaced people in your community, or to support efforts to help others around the world.

For example, an American audience may wish to examine relevant issues of refugees and forced migration on the southern border. Canadian audiences may wish to examine the changing policies around refugee resettlement in Canada.



ALLOW FOR DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES: Audience members may arrive at your screening with varying and passionate feelings about refugees and immigration. As a facilitator, your role is to encourage audience members to mirror the film in focusing on the personal experiences of individuals, rather than the political whirlwind of refugee and immigration policy. It is reasonable that not all audience members leave the theatre in agreement, but hopefully will have the opportunity to hear and engage with different points of view.



FOCUS ON LISTENING: Invite your audience to see the conversation as one that is meant to create understanding, rather than change minds. In order to do that, ask them to focus on listening with the intention to deeply understand, rather than to respond with their own point of view.



INCORPORATE EXPERT AND COMMUNITY VOICES: Inviting a diverse panel of community stakeholders is a proven way to engage your group after a screening. Local activists, community-based organizations, community centres that support refugees and other migrants and academics focused on the issue are a great place to start looking for panel participants. There are organizations in many communities that provide speakers bureaus or other programs that encourage refugees in your community to share their own personal experiences.

Language Matters

Given the charged political atmosphere around refugees and immigration in many parts of the world, it is often helpful to clarify terms and definitions. Share these important terms and work with your group to arrive at consensus definitions, or use these definitions adapted from UNHCR's [fact sheets](#) as a reference:

REFUGEE

A person who is forced to leave their country because of violence or persecution. Refugee status is defined in international law by the 1951 Geneva Convention.

ASYLUM

Legal protection and material assistance offered to refugees who are fleeing persecution in their own country.

MIGRANT

A person who moves from one country to another. This term is often confused with “refugee,” but is not the same. Migrants can be moving for any reason, including violence or abuse, but also for education, economic or other opportunities, whereas refugees do not have a choice. The UN Refugee Agency has stated, “conflating ‘refugees’ and ‘migrants’ can undermine public support for refugees and the institution of asylum at a time when more refugees need such protection than ever before.”¹

FORCED MIGRATION

Movement of people who are forced from their home for any reason, from threat of violence or persecution, to climate crises or other causes.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Forced movement of people within a country. For example, people in a city under siege might flee to a rural area within their nation's borders.

RESETTLEMENT

The process of helping refugees adjust to life in their new homes. Resettlement services may include housing, material support, health care, language and/or vocational training and social support services.

IMMIGRATION

The movement of people from one country to another. “Immigration” is an umbrella term that can describe forced migration as well as the movement of populations for economic, environmental or other reasons.

¹ United Nations. “UNHCR Viewpoint: ‘Refugee’ or ‘Migrant’ – Which Is Right?” *UNHCR*, 11 July 2016, www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html.



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“I promised you we’d make it. Here we are, we succeeded. After all the suffering, we finally made it. Do you remember how we suffered? And how afraid I was for you? In the camps, on the boat ... do you remember? On the boat, I held you in my arms, do you remember? I put you inside my heart. I put you inside my heart, and hid you from the water.”

ZAHRA TO HER SON
INSIDE MY HEART

Get to Know the Families



Before you begin your dialogue it is helpful to remind yourself and the audience of the names and stories of the people in the film, to keep the nature of the conversation very personal and focused on the human aspects of the refugee experience.

SAGHAR AND SAHAR - THE TWINS

The Saghar and Sahar, their siblings Yasamin and Feisal, and their parents Samee and Baryalei, were forced to flee Afghanistan because they were threatened with death if they didn't surrender their family land to the Taliban. After the brutal murder of a family member they began their journey, which led them through Iran, where they picked through and sold trash to pay smugglers to take them to Turkey, and then on a boat to Greece. The family arrived in Europe shortly after a terrorist attack in Paris, and fearing backlash against refugees, they made their way quickly to Sweden where they applied for asylum. The family was granted a room in a boarding house and schooling for the children as they awaited the government's review of their asylum application. Though they are welcomed in the Swedish village where they initially settle, they are plagued by uncertainty of what the future will bring.



UPDATE: Since filming wrapped, the family has received asylum status in Sweden. Everyone in the family is in school and doing well adjusting to their new life.



ZAHRA AND HER CHILDREN

Zahra married young, at sixteen, and subsequently had five children. As the civil war in Syria escalated, her husband disappeared. In his absence, ISIS began breaking into her home and trying to recruit her eldest sons to join them. Airstrikes were happening daily in her neighbourhood outside Aleppo and Zahra became desperate, afraid for the lives of her children. She fled to Turkey with her children, where she worked and saved enough money to pay smugglers for the journey to Europe. The family braved the Aegean Sea crossing to Greece, but arrived just as the Macedonian border closed. Life in the refugee camp became intolerable, but she was turned back by police when she paid to be smuggled into Macedonia. She and her family were moved to a different camp and later were assigned by the EU to apply for asylum in Portugal. Multiple traumas and the pressure of single parenthood take their toll on the effervescent Zahra.



UPDATE: As filming ended, Zahra and her family had left Portugal to connect with and be closer to extended family in Northern Europe. They have since returned to Portugal and are awaiting a decision on their asylum status. Their home in Aleppo was destroyed in the war.

MOHAMED AND HIS FAMILY

Mohamed fled Syria when ISIS overtook his family's village. Determined to seek out the safety and democracy of Europe, where he and his wife Huda believed their sons could receive a good education, they smuggled themselves across the Syrian border and made the often deadly sea journey to Greece. They, like Zahra and her children, were trapped in the Idomeni refugee camp when the border to Macedonia was closed. They endured a cold winter in a tent, hoping the border would re-open, but as they ran out of money, and terrorist attacks across Europe made the hope for asylum more bleak, they borrowed money to return to Turkey. One son stayed in Greece to try to make his way, and the family, living in abject poverty in Turkey, struggled with the separation and the loss of their dreams.



UPDATE: Mohamed and his family are still living in Turkey, but dream of one day returning to Syria. They are doing their best to acclimate and are all currently working in a factory.



A young girl with dark hair and a worried expression is the central focus. She is wearing a dark blue jacket with a light purple hood. In the bottom left corner, she is holding a plush toy of Minnie Mouse, which is wearing a red and white striped bow. The background is slightly out of focus, showing several police officers in dark uniforms and helmets. One officer's vest has the words "MIA" and "LICE" visible. The overall tone is somber and urgent.

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*“Without hope, we can’t survive...
You and I and all the refugees
wandering about, we’re alive
thanks to what? We’re alive
thanks to hope. Is there anyone
who lives without hope?”*

HUDA
INSIDE MY HEART

Background Information: The Global Refugee Crisis



Event planners and facilitators can use the information in the following sections to increase their background knowledge and print out and share relevant portions with their audience.

Global Refugee Crisis

The story of our destiny is that we're meant to suffer. Did you understand? Our destiny is to suffer. Everything is a question of luck.

Zahra, *Inside My Heart*

Right now, there are 68.5 million people in the world who have been displaced from their homes by war, persecution, violence or other threats – the highest number on historical record.

Approximately half of this population are children. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "If this were the population of a country, it would be the 24th largest country in the world."²

In addition to those statistics, 203.4 million people were displaced by natural disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes between 2008-2015. The risk of being displaced by a natural disaster has doubled since the 1970s and research shows that climate change is likely to increase both the number of catastrophic natural events and conflicts over resources like water in ways that will continue to increase the number of displaced people over time.³

In September, 2015 a photograph of Aylan Kurdi, a young Syrian boy who drowned when his family attempted to cross the Aegean Sea in a life raft to seek asylum in Europe, appeared in newspapers around the world. The devastating photo galvanized global awareness and humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees in Europe. [Studies show](#) this kind of humanizing imagery effectively calls attention to humanitarian crises over short periods of time.

The families featured in *Inside My Heart* are seeking safety from two of the three countries from which the most refugees are fleeing, Afghanistan and Syria.

² Parater, Lauren. "10 Infographics That Show the Insane Scale of Global Displacement." *UNHCR*, 22 May 2018, www.unhcr.org/innovation/10-infographics-that-show-the-insane-scale-of-the-global-displacement-crisis/.

³ "United Nations. "Climate Change and Disaster Displacement: An Overview of UNHCR's Role." *UNHCR*, 2017, www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/environment/5975e6cf7/climate-change-disaster-displacement-overview-unhcrs-role.html.

Did You Know ... What Refugees Bring To New Communities

There are many misunderstandings and common myths that can unduly influence both policy and the ways that refugees are accepted into communities. These important facts about refugees are drawn from EU⁴, US⁵ and Canada⁶ data sources:



NOBODY CHOOSES TO BE A REFUGEE. Refugees are, by definition, fleeing violence, persecution or other threats to their lives. They do not have a choice to stay in, or return to, their home countries.



REFUGEES CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO THEIR NEW COMMUNITIES. Once refugees are settled, they pay taxes, start businesses and contribute to their communities in many ways. They also act as cultural and economic bridges to their home communities, where many send support and income to family who remain behind. Though refugees need immediate support for housing, food and medical care, those temporary costs are the same as for citizens in need of emergency support services.



REFUGEES SUPPORT GROWING ECONOMIES. New refugees are likely to take jobs that are otherwise unfilled or unwanted, and as they settle in to their new communities, they often create businesses that provide work to others.



COMMUNITIES THAT WELCOME REFUGEES REMAIN SAFE.

Refugees are fleeing dangerous and hostile situations of violence and sometimes terrorism. They are urgently seeking out peaceful and secure lives, and they commit fewer crimes than citizens in most communities where they live.



DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BEAR THE LARGEST GLOBAL BURDEN OF REFUGEES.

85 percent of refugees worldwide are housed by developing countries.



REFUGEES COME FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE. The crises that force refugees to flee affect people from all aspects of society – regardless of ethnicity, education, class, or religion.

⁴ "Myths, Facts and Answers about Refugees and Migrants." *Fighting Against Human Trafficking | Country Office for Belgium and Luxembourg*, belgium.iom.int/myths-facts-and-answers-about-refugees-and-migrants.

⁵ "Three Common Myths About Refugees." *Justice for Immigrants*, 2016, justiceforimmigrants.org/2016site/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/refugee-myths-FINAL.pdf.

⁶ "Infographic: Refugee Myths Busted! Choosing Facts over Fear." *Canada's Compliance with Convention against Torture*, Sept. 2016, ccrweb.ca/en/refugee-myths-busted-choosing-facts-over-fear.





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“In a world where desperate refugees are used as pawns for often violent political ends, this poignant film shows us that refugees are ordinary mothers, fathers, boys, and girls – people like you and me, who usually uplift and enrich their new communities.”

**CHRISTINE AMANPOUR, CNN, CHIEF
INTERNATIONAL ANCHOR**
ABOUT INSIDE MY HEART

Nations of Origin

It can be helpful to have some geographical context and understanding around why individuals and families flee their home countries.

THE VAST MAJORITY

OF SYRIAN REFUGEES ARE
BELOW THE POVERTY LINE

- UNHCR

AFGHAN REFUGEES MAKE
UP HALF THE GLOBAL
POPULATION OF PEOPLE
DISPLACED FOR

**FOR MORE
THAN
20 YEARS**

- UNHCR

CHILDREN WHO ARE
REFUGEES ARE

5X LESS LIKELY

TO BE IN SCHOOL THAN
THEIR PEERS

- UNHCR

Focus on Syria



The film opens with images of the featured families and others arriving on the beaches of Greece in boats, including yellow life rafts. The Peabody Award winning short film *4.1 Miles* chronicles the life-threatening journeys of people fleeing war-torn Syria for the perceived safety of Europe.

During the filming of *Inside My Heart* (2015-2017), the largest number of refugees entering the European Union were from Syria. Zahra, Mohamed and their families fled from Syria due to the conflict.

Syria is an ancient country with a highly literate and educated population and a rich cultural history, containing many world historical and cultural sites and treasures.

The Syrian conflict began in 2011 when, as part of the Arab spring, widespread protests against the oppressive Assad regime were met with government violence. Civil war erupted, and during ongoing violence ISIS claimed part of eastern Syria and the Kurds in the north declared independence. The Assad regime's use of chemical weapons against the Syrian population and the ISIS invasion compelled international involvement from the U.S., Russia and others. Since the beginning of the conflict, more than half a million Syrians have been killed or are missing, and more than half of Syria's population has been displaced. Six million Syrians have been internally displaced and more than five million have fled to other countries.⁷

For a description of major events and international players in this complex conflict, read the BBC article, [Why is there a war in Syria?](#)

Alternatively, this [six-minute video from the online news agency Vox](#) offers a more complete explanation of the Syrian crisis.⁸

SYRIAN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Many of the six million internally displaced Syrians are living in temporary shelters provided by international aid organizations and are at risk of hunger, thirst, and exposure during winter months, as well as further displacement due to continuing violence.

Most Syrian refugees are living in the surrounding nations of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. Their situations vary. For example, in Turkey and Jordan, international aid organizations have built extensive semi-permanent refugee camps, while in Lebanon, refugees are spread throughout urban areas with no formal support.⁹

About 10 percent of Syrian refugees have attempted to flee to the European Union. During the earlier years of the Syrian civil war, many fled to Greece and other border nations which themselves were facing financial crises and unable to support the large and sudden influx. European nations responded in different ways. In 2015, Germany pledged to receive all asylum seekers, while Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia closed their borders entirely. Changing public perception of refugees, strained relations between nations, and a few violent attacks by asylum seekers in Europe have complicated resettlement efforts.¹⁰

The UNHCR and other international aid organizations estimate the need for more than \$8 billion US dollars to meet the humanitarian need of displaced Syrians around the world.¹¹

⁷ "Operational Portal." *Situation Syria Regional Refugee Response*, UNHCR, 7 Feb. 2019, data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria#_ga=2.217737686.192918062.1549303183-1045214526.1548449576.

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFpanWNgfQY>.

⁹ United Nations. "Syria Emergency." UNHCR, www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html.

¹⁰ Dockery, Wesley. "Two Years since Germany Opened Its Borders to Refugees: A Chronology | DW | 04.09.2017." *DW.COM*, Deutsche Welle, 9 Apr. 2017, www.dw.com/en/two-years-since-germany-opened-its-borders-to-refugees-a-chronology/a-40327634.

¹¹ United Nations. "Syria Emergency." UNHCR, www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html.

Focus on Afghanistan



Saghar, Sahar and their family – featured in *Inside My Heart* – fled Afghanistan.

Afghanistan, located in the heart of Central Asia, is a proud nation featuring many ethnic groups and languages, and it plays a central role in ancient and modern world history. Afghanistan has been a crossroads of cultures and trade since the famed Silk Road passed through bringing art, religion, and political influence from Asia, India, the Middle East and Europe.

During the filming of Inside My Heart, thousands of people were fleeing war in Afghanistan and seeking safety in the European Union. There are 2.5 million registered Afghan refugees around the world, and with continuing violence and tensions, that number is expected to increase in 2019.¹²

The current war in Afghanistan began with the U.S. invasion of the country after the September 11th attack in 2001. However, violent hostilities and instability have plagued Afghanistan for decades, beginning with a 1979 Russian invasion that lasted for nearly 20 years and only stabilized after the takeover of the oppressive Taliban regime in 1996. As a result of so many years of violent conflict and the absence of a stable government, Afghanistan is rife with ethnic conflict, corruption and violence around the drug trade.¹³

This [five minute video](#) from Now This offers a brief history of the current U.S. conflict in Afghanistan.

The Council on Foreign Relations' interactive web platform features a timeline about [The U.S. War in Afghanistan](#).

AFGHAN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

After nearly four decades of conflict in Afghanistan, Afghans represent 13 percent of refugees globally. Currently, about 90 percent of Afghan refugees reside in Pakistan and Iraq, and about half of those are children under the age of 18. One million people are estimated to be internally displaced within Afghanistan.¹⁴

Many Afghan refugees have sought refuge in Europe since 2001, though the rising tolerance for asylum seekers that resulted from the Syrian conflict in 2015 increased those numbers. The overwhelming numbers of Afghans and Syrians seeking refuge, and the spike in terrorist attacks within Europe began to change policies and resettlement efforts. Afghan asylum seekers in the EU were less likely than Syrians or other asylum seekers to be received because the threats they faced in Afghanistan were perceived to be lower than those faced by Syrians or others, and were difficult to prove. Many asylum seekers have been deported since 2015, and are living in poverty within Afghanistan.¹⁵

Within the last two years, as violence has continued to increase in Afghanistan, growing numbers of people are fleeing and seeking refuge elsewhere in the world. They are in need of food, healthcare, housing, safety and stability.¹⁶

¹² United Nations. "Afghanistan." *UNHCR*, www.unhcr.org/afghanistan.html.

¹³ Witte, Griff. "Afghanistan War." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 23 Jan. 2019, www.britannica.com/event/Afghanistan-War.

¹⁴ "Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees." *Reporting.unhcr.org*, UNHCR, Oct. 2018, [reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2018-2019 Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees - October 2018.pdf](http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2018-2019%20Solutions%20Strategy%20for%20Afghan%20Refugees%20-%20October%202018.pdf).

¹⁵ Constable, Pamela. "Returned to a Land of War and Want." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 25 May 2018, www.washingtonpost.com/news/world/wp/2018/05/25/feature/europe-is-rejecting-thousands-of-afghan-asylum-seekers-a-year-but-what-awaits-them-back-home/?utm_term=.0fb3e57f6de7.

¹⁶ "Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees." *Reporting.unhcr.org*, UNHCR, Oct. 2018, [reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2018-2019 Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees - October 2018.pdf](http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2018-2019%20Solutions%20Strategy%20for%20Afghan%20Refugees%20-%20October%202018.pdf).

Evolving Refugee Resettlement Policies

2016

THE YEAR ALL MEMBER STATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SIGNED ON TO THE NEW YORK DECLARATION FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS THAT OFFERS SOLIDARITY TO AND PROTECTS THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS.

Refugees who are forced to leave their countries do so in different ways. Many who have little money or resources do so on foot and wind up elsewhere in their own country or right outside its borders. How they are received in new communities varies widely in different places, depending on the receiving countries' resources and policies.

In 2016, all member states of the United Nations signed on to the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#) that offers solidarity to and protects the rights of refugees and migrants. It also provides a framework for providing support and aid to the countries most affected by forced migration, particularly in the developing world.

In 2018, the UN member states finalized the text for the [Global Compact on Migration](#), which lays out a framework for international cooperation to protect the human rights of refugees and to share the economic burden of their humanitarian and resettlement needs across member nations.

Despite this international commitment, support and services for refugees vary. International aid agencies such as the UNHCR, the International Red Cross (ICRC) and others often attempt to provide temporary housing, food and medical care in the case of humanitarian crises in response to war, persecution or national disasters.

Use this [interactive tool](#) from the UNHCR to identify countries of interest to your community, and the resettlement policies that exist where you are.





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“We’re not terrorists. On the contrary we’re educated and love life even more than them. We came to ask for protection from the West. We were already morally exhausted where we came from. Now they’re killing us and making it worse. We would have died quickly in Syria. But here, we’re dying a slow death.”

ZAHRA
INSIDE MY HEART

Discussion Questions



PRE-SCREENING QUESTIONS

It is often helpful to open a screening event with some pre-screening questions. These questions can help to focus your group on the themes of the film, and can help identify new ideas and learning after the screening.

- What brought you here to watch this film?
- What do you think of when you think of “home”?
- Why do families uproot their lives, leave their homes and emigrate (or flee) to another country?

POST-SCREENING QUESTIONS

Offer the audience a few moments after the film has ended to process their thoughts before sparking dialogue. It is often helpful to start the dialogue with general questions about responses to the film before focusing in on specific themes or topics.

- What specific moments or scenes stood out to you in the film?
- What did you see or hear that was new or surprising to you?
- Reflect on what you thought of as “home” prior to the screening. Was there anything you saw in the film that changed that concept? Why or why not?
- Was there anything in the film that changed the way you think about refugees or the refugee crisis?
- What person or situation in the film could you relate to, and in what way?
- Have you ever had a moment in your life when you faced uncertainty about your future? What was challenging about that time in your life? What was helpful to you?
- What factors do you think influence policies about refugee resettlement?
- What do you know about refugee resettlement in your community?
- What resources or opportunities would you like to see in your community to support refugees?

Audience Engagement Ideas



1. PANEL DISCUSSION

A post-screening panel discussion is an excellent way to gain insight into a film, to learn from experts and scholars in your area, and to elicit dialogue. Here are some avenues to identify and contact local panelists:

- The UNHCR [#WithRefugees Campaign](#) has a coalition of over 450 NGOs, foundations, universities, businesses, faith-based groups, UN agencies and youth groups that are all working to support refugees. See who might be in your community and invite them to participate.
- Nearby colleges and universities may have scholars on international refugee policy.
- Your local municipal or state refugee resettlement agency.
- Faith communities who support refugee resettlement are active in many communities.
- Community-based organizations that assist with refugee support.

Once you have engaged panelists, it is helpful to speak with them ahead of time to share the details and logistics of the event, including the amount of time they will have to speak or answer questions. Providing them with a link to the film, information about other panelists, and your pre-planned questions will help them prepare.

Some questions you may consider include:

- What is your involvement with refugees or refugee resettlement?
- What is happening around this issue in our community?
- What are some common myths or misperceptions about refugees?
- What resources and supports do you think people need most to thrive in a new life after forced migration?

FOR EVERY TEN REFUGEE BOYS IN CLASSROOMS, THERE ARE ONLY SEVEN REFUGEE GIRLS.

- UNHCR

2. DISCUSSION STARTERS: IMPACT OF FORCED MIGRATION ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

Women and girls generally make up about half of the number of refugees around the world, but they are particularly vulnerable during times of conflict and displacement, particularly if they must rely on smugglers or other dangerous modes of transportation:



- One in five refugee women and girls experience sexual assault.
- Women and girls in transit are at extremely elevated risk for human trafficking.
- Refugee women and girls have decreased access to food and water because of higher expectations for caretaking.
- Refugee women and girls have higher rates of child marriage, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and maternal mortality with little to no access to reproductive health care.¹⁷

Despite these overwhelming dangers, a very small percentage of refugee programs include gender-specific programs or interventions. Explore [this infographic](#) for more information about how forced migration affects women and girls.

The increased risks for women who are forced to migrate is a reflection of the larger risks for women in societies that lack gender equality. In order to address these inequalities, all refugee programs must address the specific needs of women and girls, including the need for protection from physical and sexual violence, the need for access to family planning, prenatal and birth support, access to feminine hygiene products, and the chance to get a safe and quality education.

In 2017, the United Nations Population Fund testified in front of the 73rd UN General Assembly. They called upon the UN to add language that specifically addressed the needs of women and girls in the New York Declaration and the Global Compact on Safe and Orderly Migration. They also demanded that gender-based questions about violence and sexual health be in UN needs assessments and other research about the needs of refugees.¹⁸

Read these quotes aloud from that testimony:

"The acute vulnerability of women and girls on the move is not a sign of weakness – it's a sign of inequality."

-Crown Princess Mary of Denmark

"We have to adapt our services and our policies to their reality."

-UN Population Fund Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem

Discussion Questions:



- What are the particular risks that women and girls face when they become refugees?
- Why do you think these risks have not been adequately addressed in international aid structures?
- When Princess Mary says vulnerability of women and girls is a sign of inequality rather than weakness, what do you think she means?
- Given these comments and statistics, what kinds of focused support for women and girls forced to migrate do you think are necessary?

Possible Actions:



- [UN Women](#) has several campaigns to improve the care and protection of women and girls:
- [HeforShe](#) is a call for men and women to publicly commit to work together to decrease gender inequality.
- [UNiTE to End Violence Against Women](#) is a global policy campaign to end gender-based violence.
- Explore community agencies in your area who work with refugees to ask how they are supporting women and girls.

¹⁸ "A Call to Protect Women and Girls on the Move." *United Nations Population Fund*, 5 Oct. 2018, www.unfpa.org/news/call-protect-women-and-girls-move.

44,500 PEOPLE ARE FORCED TO FLEE THEIR HOMES DAILY BECAUSE OF CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE.

- UNHCR

3. STARTING LIFE IN A NEW PLACE

Refugees who settle in new communities must not only learn to cope with a new language and culture, many are also coping with trauma, loss and grief from being forced to leave their homes and the people they love.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Read these quotes from the film aloud. Consider splitting into small groups or as a large group discuss the following with regard to each quote:

- What emotions do you hear?
- What about this quote can you relate to? Has there been a moment in your life when you have experienced a similar emotion, even if the circumstances were different?
- What kind of support do you think might help?
- What can our community do to help refugees overcome these kinds of challenges?

“*Mohamed:* There is no humanity. We came here because the Europeans talk about democracy and freedom. We Syrians ... and Iraqis are treated less than human. Even dogs are treated better. They hardly give us food. Is that a life? We should have stayed under the bombs of Bashar Al Assad, it's better than here.

“*Zahra:* Everything is so difficult. So difficult. I feel so alone. I miss my mother. I miss having someone in my family near me. Someone who understands me. Someone who can hold me in their arms. Someone who I can talk to... Anyone with little kids must feel the same as I do. I feel so lost.

“*Samee:* When it comes back to me, looking at my children pains me. I think I have wonderful kids, they are polite and understanding, they've known so much hardship. I can open my heart up to my girls.

“*Yasamin:* It's been nearly two years, we've only just learned the language, imagine if we have to go to another country, where we know nothing.

Feisal: Do you think we'll have to go back to Afghanistan. For life?

Yasamin: I can't even begin to imagine that. We cannot live there. What will happen to us? If we have to go back and something happens again, either to us or to dad? It's really terrible. Going back is no longer an option. Life is good here.

“*Saghar:* You're my best friend. I never knew anyone like you. I had friends in Afghanistan, but we were never this close.

Her Friend: Same for me. The Iranian friends I had always looked down at me. They didn't want to play with me because I was Afghan. Maybe we won't get asylum. I hope God doesn't let that happen.

Saghar: Surely we'll get asylum. If we get asylum we can travel anywhere we want to.

Her Friend: We can go to Afghanistan, Iran. Or anywhere in Europe.

Saghar: I hope Afghanistan becomes like Europe, where schools have swings in their playgrounds.

Her Friend: Not having swings is okay as long as there is peace.

Saghar: Yeah, as long as there is no war.

CONTINUUM EXERCISE

For smaller groups, consider setting up space for people to move along a continuum, where one side of the room is marked “Strongly Agree” and another side is marked “Strongly Disagree.”

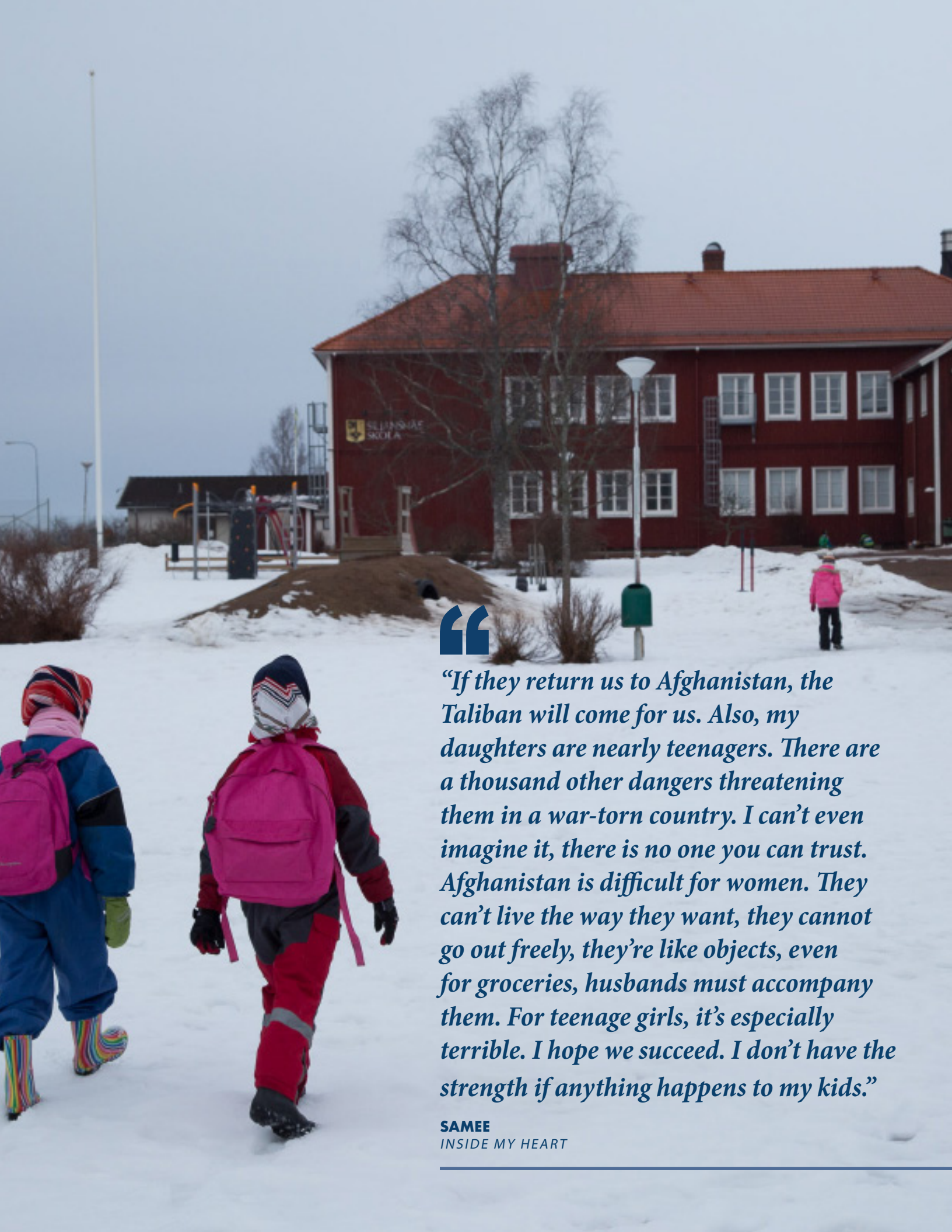
Ask group members to place themselves along the continuum according to their beliefs as you read each of the following statements. After each statement, offer one or two people the opportunity to share why they chose where they did along the continuum. During your instructions, share with the group that the idea of the exercise is not to argue or convince, but just to reflect on your own ideas and see where others in the group are in their thinking. After all the statements are read, there are suggested discussion questions for the group.

- I believe my community has something to gain from welcoming refugees.
- I believe cultural differences make it difficult for refugees to resettle in new communities.
- Refugees should try to dress according to the norms of their new communities.
- In order to settle into their new home, refugees should try to embrace the culture of the their new community.
- In order to help settle into their new home, refugees should proudly share their own cultural identities.
- People in my community are welcoming to refugees.
- People in my community are curious about the countries and cultures of refugees that are settling here.
- There is something I can do to support refugees.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Is there anything you heard or saw during the exercise that you have questions about?
- Did watching the film or our follow-up change the way you thought about any of these statements?
- In what ways do you think fears and assumptions about cultural differences influence refugees’ experiences in their new communities?
- How do you think cultural differences can be addressed as refugees resettle in new communities?





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“If they return us to Afghanistan, the Taliban will come for us. Also, my daughters are nearly teenagers. There are a thousand other dangers threatening them in a war-torn country. I can’t even imagine it, there is no one you can trust. Afghanistan is difficult for women. They can’t live the way they want, they cannot go out freely, they’re like objects, even for groceries, husbands must accompany them. For teenage girls, it’s especially terrible. I hope we succeed. I don’t have the strength if anything happens to my kids.”

SAMEE
INSIDE MY HEART

Get Involved



- ✓ **SPREAD THE WORD:** *Inside My Heart* reveals the human experience of the people behind the numbers and the headlines of the refugee crises all around the world. Encourage others to watch and share this film in an effort to educate their networks and communities. The screening license has been covered and the film is available for free to any individual, school, NGO, faith group or business to host a screening and engage their communities in dialogue. Visit GiustraFoundation.org to download the film and learn more about how you can take action with groups on the frontlines supporting refugees. In addition, the film can be accessed via Amazon and iTunes.
- ✓ **WORK LOCALLY:** Learn about the organizations and services that are supporting the resettlement of refugees in your community and get involved.
- ✓ **SUPPORT UNHCR:**
Go to <https://www.unrefugees.org/how-to-help/> to learn how to support the UN's efforts to support refugees in your community and around the world. Options include monetary support, sharing these [social graphics](#) on social media and elsewhere and signing the [#WithRefugees](#) petition to break down stigma and support refugee resettlement programs.
- ✓ **SUPPORT THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE:**
Visit help.rescue.org to learn more about supporting the IRC's work helping refugees at the U.S./Mexico border, in Syria, Yemen and beyond.
- ✓ **LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE:**
Visit <http://refugeesponsorship.org> to learn how the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative, a partnership between the University of Ottawa's Refugee Hub, the Open Societies Foundation, the Government of Canada, UNHCR, and the Giustra Foundation, draws on Canada's experience and leadership in private sponsorship and works to spread the successful model to other countries. It also aims to improve the narrative about refugees, and offers education about the many benefits of community-based sponsorship.

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“I got involved in these people’s lives. Before they became refugees they had ordinary jobs, they liked to joke and laugh, they’re proud. They don’t want to be in this situation. Zahra is funny and outgoing, loves to laugh. Mohamed organized weddings. Lots of people want to help, but they don’t know what to do or they don’t have money. But there are so many ways to galvanize people in support of newcomers.”

DEBRA KELLNER, DIRECTOR
INSIDE MY HEART
INTERVIEW WITH BLUESHIFT



Resources for Further Learning



UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER ON REFUGEES

www.unhcr.org

The website offers extensive research tools, data, policy recommendation and reports on refugees and refugee resettlement around the world.



INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF MIGRATION

www.iom.int

The UN's IOM keeps track of the movement of populations all around the world for multiple reasons, including violence and persecution, conflict, environmental or natural disasters. It also offers research, data and policy recommendations.



REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN CANADA

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/canada-role.html>

This government website offers information on refugee resettlement and policy in Canada.

This report from the [Migration Policy Institute](#) offers historic details on the Canadian refugee resettlement systems.

Explore the work of [The Refugee Hub](#) who are fostering justice and human rights for refugees through innovative research, programs and partnerships in Canada.

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REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN THE EU

<https://www.resettlement.eu/>

The EU's Resettlement Network intends to harmonize resettlement efforts in the EU.



REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN THE U.S.

<https://www.state.gov/j/prm/ra/>

The Department of State's website on refugee policy and programs.

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/how-does-us-refugee-system-work>

The Council on Foreign Relations backgrounder on the full system for refugee policy and resettlement in the U.S., past and present.



INSIDE MY HEART

Inside My Heart and the accompanying discussion guide were supported by the Giustra Foundation. At the Giustra Foundation, we invest in innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing humanitarian and economic challenges. When crisis hits, we strive for immediate action. But we also believe in trying to prevent a crisis before it happens or expands.

Working with people on the ground, we're always willing to try new approaches. Our goal is lasting and measurable impact – to help people build their lives, support and protect their families, often while they are living through a humanitarian crisis.

We bring a global, local, and entrepreneurial perspective to philanthropy, whether it be assisting a family fleeing a war zone, farmers in El Salvador trying to get a better return on what they grow, or someone who is homeless in Vancouver. With our agents, we have successfully catalyzed innovative programs in poverty alleviation and job creation, ensured quick responses to humanitarian crises, and invested in long-term strategies and research into conflict prevention.

When our programs and innovations succeed – thanks to our partners and volunteers – nothing makes us happier than scaling and sharing these solutions. It's all about building a better world.

Unless otherwise noted, all photos in the guide were taken by Debra Kellner.