

# COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

## TALKING POINTS

*Talking points are designed to be used in conjunction with Community Conversations Presentation.*

### **Slide 1: Stand With Refugees**

- It is nearly impossible to turn on the news or read a newspaper today without hearing, seeing, or reading a story about refugees. Awareness of the global refugee crisis is high. Understanding and engagement is not. We can change that.
- The more people know – beyond the headlines – and the more they can connect on a personal level to refugee experiences, the more they – you – will be willing to take action to support refugees.

### **Slide 2: 60 Million**

- Today, there are 60 million forcibly displaced people worldwide. That is the highest number on record. This is a number equivalent to the populations of New York State and California combined.
- There are currently more than 20 million refugees worldwide. That is equivalent to the population of Florida.
- Refugees are not only from Syria and other Middle Eastern countries, as many people think. They come from all over the world, including places like Colombia, Guatemala, Mali, South Sudan, Ukraine and many other countries in Africa, Asia, South and Central America.
- People are fleeing for many reasons, including war, drug violence, sexual discrimination, climate change, and more.

### **Slide 3: 42,500**

- 42,500 new people flee their homes every day.
- If Boston lost that many people every day it would be a ghost town in 15 days. Chicago would be emptied in nine weeks. Los Angeles in 13 weeks. [You can do the math for your city/town to make it local and personal. See link on book club resources page for census data on city populations]
- The scale of this daily population movement puts enormous stress on infrastructure and resources for host countries.

### **Slide 4: 1 in every 122 people across the world has been forced to flee their home**

- Fleeing is not a choice. It is a matter of survival.
- As Americans, we are very lucky to not have to worry about being forced from our homes due to violence or war.
- But what if we were in danger? What if people we know – families, children – had to flee their homes, taking only what they could carry in their hands? What if you had to flee? Where would you go? What would you take? How would you get there?
- Every five minutes, 150 additional people are forced to make these hard decisions and flee their homes, leaving everything behind.

### **Slide 5: 50% of the refugee population is children under the age of 18**

- Half of the refugee population is younger than an American high school senior.
- Only 50 percent of refugee children of primary school age attend, one in four of secondary school age, and just one percent of youth refugees are enrolled beyond secondary school.
- If current trends continue, 43 percent of out of school children – 15 million girls and 10 million boys – are likely to never enroll in school.

### **Slide 6: Refugees are just like us**

- Refugees are mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers. They are teachers, lawyers, homemakers, students, doctors, engineers and business owners.
- These people have embarked on a dangerous journey, leaving a home they may never see again, to have a chance at safety and survival.
- It takes an average of 17 years for a refugee to return home to his or her country of origin. Imagine leaving everything you know behind and not being able to return for 17 years.

### **Slide 7: George Washington Quote**

- America was founded by people who were seeking freedom from religious persecution. Helping those in need is inherent in who we are as Americans and an essential part of our value system.
- In 1768, George Washington proclaimed: “America is open to receive not only the opulent and respected stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations and Religions; whom we shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and privileges.”

### **Slide 8: President Obama Quote**

- While many leaders try to inject fear into the American people, it is important to remember that this is not a political issue, but a humanitarian one. You don't have to support resettlement in the United States in order to support refugees. We cannot turn our backs on those suffering across the world.

### **Slide 9: America has a history of helping solve the most complex problems in the world.**

- Americans can help solve the global refugee crisis. No other nation has the same level of strength and conviction, the compassion, or the creativity and will to make change. Reading a book/watching a film/looking at art/attending a presentation is just the beginning.

### **Slide 10: How You Can Help**

- There are many ways you can help. Awareness is not enough. We must continue to learn about the situation, spread the word so others too can understand the enormous challenges that refugees face. The goal is to get more people thinking and talking about the global refugee crisis and eventually participating in some way.
- Armed with knowledge and a willingness to act, together, we can create a ripple effect and make a real difference for refugees around the world.
- Email [erin@unrefugees.org](mailto:erin@unrefugees.org) for resources and more information on organizations helping refugees.
- To spread the word, call or email a friend, share what you've learned today on social media or through other means.
- To join us, sign up to host a presentation, book club, or other community engagement event.

### **Slide 11: URL/brand/logo/mission**

- [Hand out sign-in sheet – people can choose any of the three options or none at all.]
- No matter which option you choose, we would be happy to send you more information to help you learn more and give you more information on how you can help.
- Thank you so much for participating today! Please let us know if you have any feedback.