

IN RESPONSE TO THE GLOBAL REFUGEE CRISIS: COMPARISON STUDY OF USA AND INDONESIA



BACKGROUND

“We are witnessing a paradigm change, an unchecked slide into an era in which the scale of global forced displacement as well as the response required is now clearly dwarfing anything seen before,” said UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres. *“It is terrifying that on the one hand there is more and more impunity for those starting conflicts, and on the other there is seeming utter inability of the international community to work together to stop wars and build and preserve peace.”*

- **Highest level of displacement from wars, conflict, and persecution ever recorded by UNHCR is in this present time, and it is accelerating fast.**
- **In 2014, an average of 42,500 people became refugees, asylum seekers, or internally displaced every day.**
- **Definition of refugees according to the 1951 Refugee Convention: *Someone who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.***
- **Refugees crisis closely connected with human trafficking, sex trafficking, and child labor crisis.**
- **Personal experience:**
 - Inability to look away from the news
 - Meeting refugees in my neighborhood
 - Involvement with my church—Bayou City Fellowship
 - Mission trip to Mafraq, Jordan, serving Syrian refugees
 - Realizing myself as an immigrant
 - Indonesia is a host nation for refugees from various nations

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES ON REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT

- **Refugees/asylum seekers/immigrants are persons created in God's image, and their lives matter (Genesis 1:26,28).**
- **God's people have the heritage of being refugees and immigrants**
 - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob moved from the Promised Land on several occasions in search of food (Genesis 12:10; 26:1; 41:57; 42:6; 43:1-7).
 - In the Book of Ruth, Naomi and her family crossed borders between Judah and Moab couple of times because of economic situation.
 - Joseph, Daniel, Moses, David, and the baby Jesus were refugees themselves, to escape persecutions.
- **God's instruction in the Old Testament**
 - "The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:34).
 - He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigners residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt" (Deuteronomy 10:18-19).
 - Moses was instructed to set aside 6 cities as City of Refuge: Golan, Ramoth, Bosor on the eastern side of and Kadesh, and Sechem, Hebron on the western part (Deuteronomy 4:41, Deuteronomy 19:2, and Numbers 35:6).
 - Be a refuge to Moab—Israel's enemy (Isaiah 16:4). To not turn our back to "our own flesh and blood" (Isaiah 58: 7).
- **God's instruction in the New Testament**
 - To love the stranger or the alien (Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9).
 - Jesus' command: To welcome people who had no social standing, such as the poor, the sick, and the outsider (Luke 14:12-14).
 - Jesus' ministries have been to many nations: Samaritan woman (John 4:1-30), Canaanite woman's daughter (Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30), Centurion's servant (Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10)

- **Why USA**

- It has been the largest resettlement nation in the world for many years.

- **Limitations:**

- There are still big number of hosting countries need to be studied, not enough data available online on Indonesian community involvement in receiving refugees (other than Rohingya refugees), and there are different political situations and government systems in mid 70s with ones in mid 2000s, and current one.

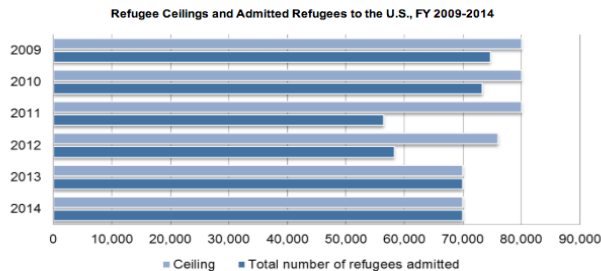
- **Questions:**

- How did USA and Indonesia welcome and handle refugees, how was it compared to the Biblical blue print?
- Out of this conference, we should be equipped to help our nation navigate through globalization era, per God's blue print. God's promise of blessings to Israel as God handed them the Promised Land, was in fold with Israel's oath to care for refugees. So, as Jesus' follower, what are we called to do, in Indonesia context?

REFUGEES IN USA ...

- The first refugee legislation enacted by the U.S. Congress was the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 in the wake of World War II and after opening doors to 250,000 displaced Europeans. This legislation provided for the admission of an additional 400,000 displaced Europeans.
- In 1975 the U.S. resettled hundreds of thousands of Indochinese refugees through an ad hoc Refugee Task Force with temporary funding. Since 1975, the U.S. has resettled over 3 million refugees, with annual admissions figures ranging from a high of 207,000 in 1980 to a low of 27,110 in 2002.

Each year the President, in consultation with Congress, determines the numerical ceiling for refugee admissions. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, the [ceiling is 70,000](#).



(Source: [Refugee Processing Center](#); [Congressional Research Service](#), 2014)

- Almost half of all refugee arrivals ([46.4 percent](#), or 32,450) in FY 2014 came from the Near East/South Asia—a region that includes Iraq, Iran, Bhutan, and Afghanistan.

- Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980, which incorporated the United Nations definition of “refugee” and standardized the resettlement services for all refugees admitted to the U.S.
- The Refugee Act provides the legal basis for today’s [U.S. Refugee Admissions Program](#) and is administered by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (BPRM) of the Department of State in conjunction with the Office of Refugee Resettlement in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and offices in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

... CONTINUED

- The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), has resettled over 58,000 refugees in the United States in 2012.
- Largest resettlement country in the world, yet the number has been declining in the past decade—since September 2001.
- Refugees in the States:

Table 1.

Refugee Admissions Ceilings: 2010 to 2012*

Region	Ceiling		
	2012	2011	2010
Total	76,000	80,000	80,000
Africa	12,000	15,000	15,500
East Asia	18,000	19,000	18,000
Europe/Central Asia	2,000	2,000	2,500
Latin America/Caribbean	5,500	5,500	5,500
Near East/South Asia	35,500	35,500	38,000
Unallocated Reserve	3,000	3,000	500

* Ceiling numbers reflect revisions made each fiscal year.

Source: U.S. Department of State, Proposed Refugee Admissions for FY 2013—Report to Congress.

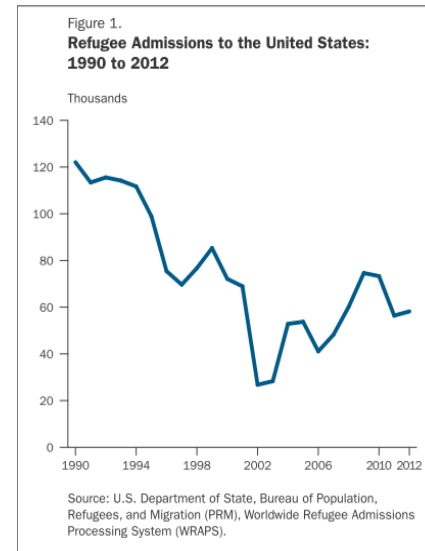


Table I
 Refugee Admissions in FY 2013 and FY 2014,
 Proposed Refugee Admissions by Region for FY 2015^[2]

Region	FY 2013 Actual arrivals	FY 2014 Ceiling	FY 2014 projected arrivals	Proposed FY2015 Ceiling
Africa	15,980	15,000	15,800	17,000
East Asia	16,537	14,000	14,500	13,000
Europe and Central Asia	580	1,000	900	1,000
Latin America/Caribbean	4,439	5,000	4,300	4,000
Near East/South Asia	32,389	33,000	34,000	33,000
Regional Subtotal	69,925	68,000	69,500	68,000
Unallocated Reserve		2,000		2,000
Total	69,925	70,000	69,500	70,000

... *CONTINUED*

- **Why do they come to the U. S.?**

- Resettlement opportunity
- Religious freedom
- Refugee access to welfare on the same basis as a U.S. citizen has made the program a global magnet.

- **Life for refugees in the U.S**

- The nine sponsoring agency is responsible for placing refugees with one of its affiliated offices and for providing initial services, which include housing, essential furnishings, food, clothing, orientation, and assistance with access to other social, medical, and employment services for the refugees' first 30-90 days in the United States.
- During the refugees' initial transition period, programs funded by the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement and administered either by the states or resettlement agencies provide cash and medical assistance, employment services, English language training, and other support services.
- Most local communities welcome refugees: Church outreach, free ESL classes, business as missions in Detroit area (betterlifebags.com), in Houston area (thecommunitycloth.org), etc.

REFUGEES IN INDONESIA

- In 2009, there were 2,571 refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia

Table 1: Nationality and gender of persons of concern to UNHCR in Indonesia at 31 December 2009

Nationality	Category	Males	Females	Subtotal	Total
Afghan	Asylum seekers	1341	70	1411	
	Refugees	175	45	220	1631 (63 per cent)
Burmese	Asylum seekers	8	1	9	
	Refugees	153	1	154	163 (6 per cent)
Iraqi	Asylum seekers	121	11	132	
	Refugees	137	72	209	341 (13 per cent)
Iranian	Asylum seekers	45	15	60	
	Refugees	17	8	25	85 (3 per cent)
Somali	Asylum seekers	12	9	21	
	Refugees	26	18	44	65 (2.5 per cent)
Sri Lankan	Asylum seekers	96	3	99	
	Refugees	113	8	121	220 (8.5 per cent)
Other ¹⁴	Asylum seekers	36	5	41	
	Refugees	15	10	25	66
Totals		2295 (89 per cent)	276 (11 per cent)		2571

- In 2010 the number increased to 3,434, mostly due to unending war in Afghanistan
- As of June 2015, Indonesia hosts some 13,000 refugees and asylum seekers (10,429 or 80.22% increase from year 2009) throughout the country
- Between 1999 and 2001 an estimated 4,800 Iraqis headed to Australia, transited Indonesia and has been living in Indonesia for 10 years.

**Other are made up from Algeria (1), Burundi (1), Cameroon (2), China (4), Cote d'Ivoire (4), Democratic Republic of Congo (11), Egypt (2), Guinea (15), Lebanon (1), Liberia (1), Kuwait (6), Pakistan (9), Palestine (1), Sierra Leone (3), Syria (3), Tunisia (1) and Western Sahara (1)*

... *CONTINUED*

- **Why do they come to Indonesia**
 - Majority planned to settle in Australia (cheaper cost and influenced by smuggler as destination), but were caught by Indonesian authorities and imprisoned on their way.
 - A few ran out of money to pay smugglers or were unable to get a passage on a smugglers' boat before the trade all but finished in late 2001.
 - Others preferred to register with UNHCR in the hope of being resettled.
 - Some changed their minds about travelling on smugglers' boats to Australia after bad experiences on such boats.

... *CONTINUED*

- **Government Policy**

- Indonesia never signed the Refugees Convention
- Indonesian government is in the process of drafting the Presidential Regulation on Refugees and Asylum Seekers, which is 12 years late. The only national tool to govern refugees and asylum seeker status is the much-needed ratification of UU No. 37 Tahun 1999.
- Red Cross Indonesia (PMI) and UNHCR are working together to protect these refugees and help restore family links among refugee families that are separated. Unrest in the Middle East and Rohingya persecution influenced the increased number.
- Indonesia—International Organization for Migration—received funding from Australia to care and prevent these refugees and asylum seekers to reach Australia and New Zealand, through Regional Cooperation Arrangement (RCA).

...CONTINUED

- **Life for refugees in Indonesia**

- Indochinese or known as “Boat People” in Galang Island in from mid-1970s to mid-1990s
 - The Indochinese refugees were stored away in an isolated island, prevented from integrating to their host country
 - The refugees with some money they carried, started commercial activities (bakeries, markets, coffee shops, video parlours, discotheques, cinema, gambling spots) inside the camp. They also built temples, churches, jail, and cemetery.
 - Received social resentments from the local people.
 - By 1995 there were a total of 145000 refugees transited in Indonesia.
 - Widespread allegations of corruption, bribery, and demands for sexual favors in order for refugee status to be granted for the new waves of arrivals.
 - People in Galang were not allowed to use private lawyers or advocacy groups (Bari, 1992) and were encouraged to voluntarily return to Vietnam.
 - In the mid-1980s, the Indonesian military launched operations and also engaged in joint maritime patrols with Malaysia and Singapore to prevent the arrival of additional refugees.
 - Government built second camp after 1987 in the same island.
 - <https://youtu.be/BK9ly7tOPrk?t=50s>

... *CONTINUED*

- **Refugees in Lombok, Makassar, Cisarua, Jakarta, and other area in the mid 2000s to present**
 - No work permit
 - Impact of having no Presidential Regulation on refugees and asylum seekers situation, many labeled as illegal immigrants and held at the Immigration Detention Center for long period of time. The psychology state living in a limbo—living in fear, insecurities and powerlessness—created number of dangerous-run-away and suicide attempts
 - Distance from detention center to UNHCR and IOM offices hindered refugees to follow up on their cases.
 - Prior year 2007, refugees were pressured by IOM to return to their country of origin, one of the method is family separations.
 - Prior to 2004 refugees were not allowed by IOM to speak with journalists, researchers, and social workers.
 - refugees came together as a community and shared skills, in a class format for their children, but with lack of resources were not able to sustain it. Children are not enrolling in any school.
 - With Rohingya refugees, local governments in North Sumatra and Aceh showed intention to return refugees to their country of origin.
 - Indonesian Church Alliance (PGI) instructed churches in North Sumatra to provide relief for Rohingya refugees
 - No data on business as mission for refugees being set up
 - In Lombok, social tensions arose with the locals because of intermarriages, and because jealousy from the locals for the privileges refugees received. Another tension happened between Iraqis and Iranians (Sunni-Shia differences)
 - The number of Middle Eastern who were accepted as refugees after the first assessment was relatively small, leading to the belief among rejected asylum seekers that the UNCHR status determination process was merely a “lottery” that could only be overcome by those who had relatives living overseas prepared to pay for lawyers to assist them with their applications. In this situation they usually went on hunger strike or sewed their lips together.
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Qlz-KgBcXE

HOW CAN WE RESPOND TO THE CRISIS AS JESUS FOLLOWER?

- **Welcome/be friend with refugees**
 - Visit immigration detention center and refugees' shelters, sit down and listen to their stories
 - Take a photo of you with signage #RefugeesWelcome and tag your government on social media #RefugeesWelcomeHere #RefugeeCrisis #RefugeesWelcome
- **Advocate for the refugees in Indonesia**
 - Share their needs to our local churches, and mobilize church to welcome refugees
 - Sign up to volunteer/internship with local governments and local offices of international NGOs.
 - World Vision: <http://www.wvi.org/indonesia>
 - World Relief: <http://worldrelief.org/indonesia>
 - Human Rights Working Group Indonesia: www.hrwg.org
 - Indonesia Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI): www.ylbhi.or.id
 - International Catholic Migration Commission: <http://www.icmc.net>
 - Jesuit Refugee Service-Indonesia: www.jrs.or.id
 - Indonesia Civil Society Network for Refugee Rights Protection (SUAKA): suaka.or.id

... *CONTINUED*

- **Fund programs and relief efforts for the refugees**
- **Intercede on their behalf to our God**
 - For their protection (Psalm 146:7, Psalm 140:4)
 - For them to have hope (Psalm 40:1-3)
 - For their rescue (Psalm 103:6)
 - For their healing (Jeremiah 30:17)
 - For them with Scripture (Hebrew 4:12)
 - For their trafficker (Psalm 32:5)
 - For government and rulers involved (1 Timothy 2:2)
 - Pray with faith (Isaiah 61:1-3)
- **Once Indonesian government has the Presidential Regulation on Refugees and Asylum Seekers in order, more opportunities will be available for us to play bigger role. We must be ready to help refugees to be integrated into the community, to work beyond relief: Skill training, business as mission, scholarships, language (ESL and Indonesian) tutoring, community development, etc.**
- **Advocate for human trafficking and child labor prevention**

WHAT CAN INDONESIA LEARN FROM USA?

- **Change in policy:**
 - Work permit
 - Welfare for refugees
 - Resettlement opportunity
 - Most refugees are skilled workers, they can help build the economy
- **Church outreach: to receive refugees**