

## **CPDE Statement on the Refugee Crisis in Syria**

28 September 2015

As a community of civil society organizations advocating for development effectiveness, the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) stands in solidarity with the people of Syria. At the core of CPDE's work is the respect and protection of human rights for all, rooted in social justice, decent work, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and an enabling environment for CSOs as independent development actors in their own right. The refugee crisis in Syria poses a growing challenge to the international community especially as the United Nations Member States, with the adoption of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, pledged to promote peaceful societies and a promise to leave no one behind.

CPDE expresses deep concern over the plight of refugees. Insurmountable challenges in acquiring asylum and securing the basic needs for survival are just some of the harsh realities they continue to face. The welfare of women and children refugees from Syria who now compose 70% of the registered total is also a source of deep concern as evidence have shown that conflict and post-conflict situations result in unique and disproportionate impacts on women.<sup>[1]</sup> Their equal access to protection and assistance call the need for more international support and attention.<sup>[2]</sup>

We therefore urge all development actors to uphold, defend, and expand the fundamental rights and freedoms of all peoples regardless of their situation, race, class, gender, religion or migratory status most especially those in conflict and in fragile societies. We believe that refugees in all parts of the world should be treated with respect, dignity and in strict accordance to commitments such as but not limited to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international humanitarian law, the 1951 Refugee Convention, and Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

We denounce the atrocities being committed in Syria and stress that no one and no country and their people should ever suffer under such circumstances.

We urge the international community to bridge the competing parties into meaningful dialogue and find solutions for lasting peace. Putting a stop to the persisting conflict, the unnecessary bloodshed, and the barriers to development must be at the core of our efforts.

We strongly call on all countries who are host to Syrian Refugees to abide by all standards in international law that relate to refugees. Governments from around the world, most especially in the European Union, should also respond with the same generosity of spirit that civil society across Europe has displayed. Furthermore we endorse the UNHCR's Key Guidelines for dealing with Europe's refugee crisis. These six fundamental principles should be upheld by the European Union without reservation.<sup>[3]</sup>

We urge the international community to remain accountable in fulfilling its global and humanitarian obligations including the responsibility to provide adequate funding, ODA/development cooperation and the assurance of humane and just conditions for all affected populations.

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[1] Women in situations of armed conflict. <http://www.forcedmigration.org/research-resources/expert-guides/psychosocial-issues/women-in-situations-of-armed-conflict#sthash.9abHGYU6.dpuf>

[2] Women in Syria have been arbitrarily arrested and detained, physically abused, harassed, and tortured during Syria's conflict by government forces, pro-government militias, and armed groups opposed to the government, as Human Rights Watch highlighted. Further details to be found at: Syria: War's Toll on Women (July 2014): <http://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/syria-wars-toll-women>

[3] UNHCR chief issues key guidelines for dealing with Europe's refugee crisis <http://www.unhcr.org/55e9793b6.html>

Read the Statement in French (<http://www.csopartnership.org/declaration-du-cpde-sur-la-crise-des-refugies-en-syrie/>) and Spanish (<http://www.csopartnership.org/declaracion-de-la-aoed-sobre-la-crisis-de-los-refugiados-en-siria/>)



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