



**Relief &
Reconciliation
for Syria**

*Help us to win the peace after the revolution
Help us to prevent ethnic cleansing and a spiral of revenge*



Our Concern

WHY PEACEBUILDING?

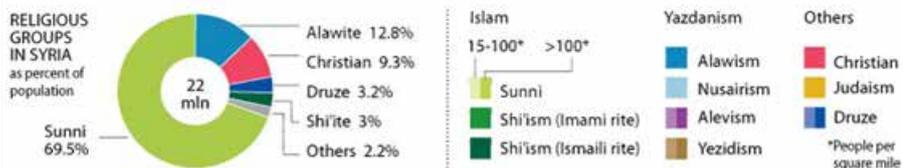
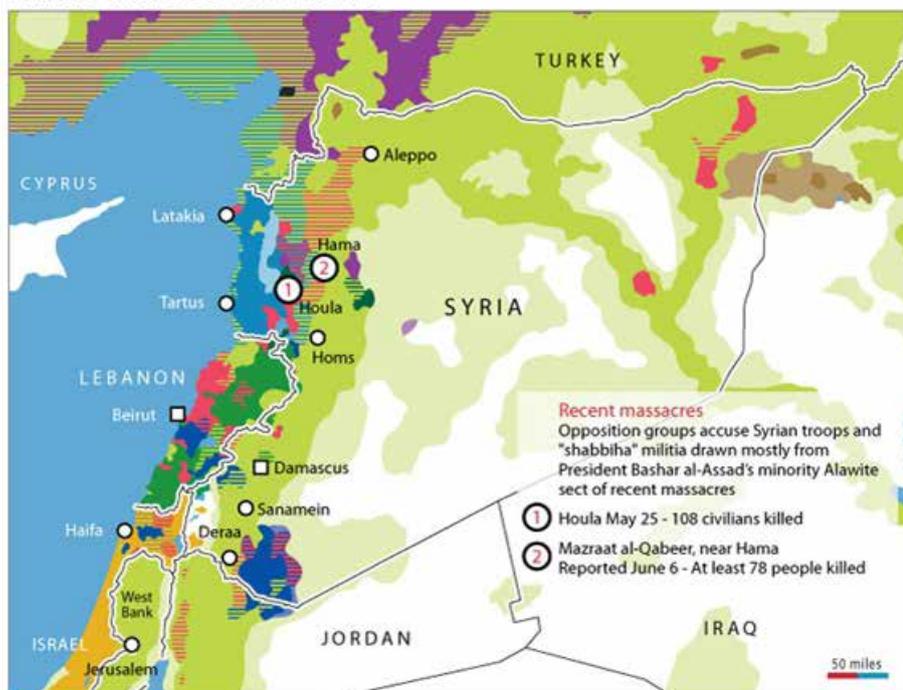
Syria has been one of the most diverse countries of the Middle East: Christians, Muslims and other communities have lived together for centuries. Damascus, the capital, is one of the oldest cities of the world. This long tradition of coexistence is threatened today. Over 60,000 are killed, about 2 million are displaced. A unique world heritage has been bombed to rubble.

The Syrian Revolution, which started as peaceful protest for freedom and democracy, has been pushed into sectarian war. Militias are deliberately employed to stir up sectarian hatred. Massive crimes against humanity are committed on a daily basis. The outcome might be retaliation, ethnic cleansing, and a divided country for years to come.



© Benjamin Hillier (Syria, August 2012)

SYRIA'S RELIGIOUS FACTIONS



Source: M. Izady - Gulf/2000 project, Columbia University

Population data are based from 2008-2009 census or estimates

REUTERS

Even though many Christians, Alawi and other minorities have joined the fight for freedom and democracy, every day of bloodshed drives the country further into sectarian war. The exodus of the Christian community has already begun. Of once about 150,000 Christians living in the Old City of Homs, barely some 60 families are still there. Many of the refugees we met say they will never return. The fate of those staying is all the more uncertain.

We wish the new Syria to be a place where the human dignity and the fundamental rights of every person are respected. We wish Syria to keep its diversity and become a beacon of hope for our times, where people of different faith and conviction are living together in freedom and peace. This dream can only become true if we can put a break on the spiral of violence.



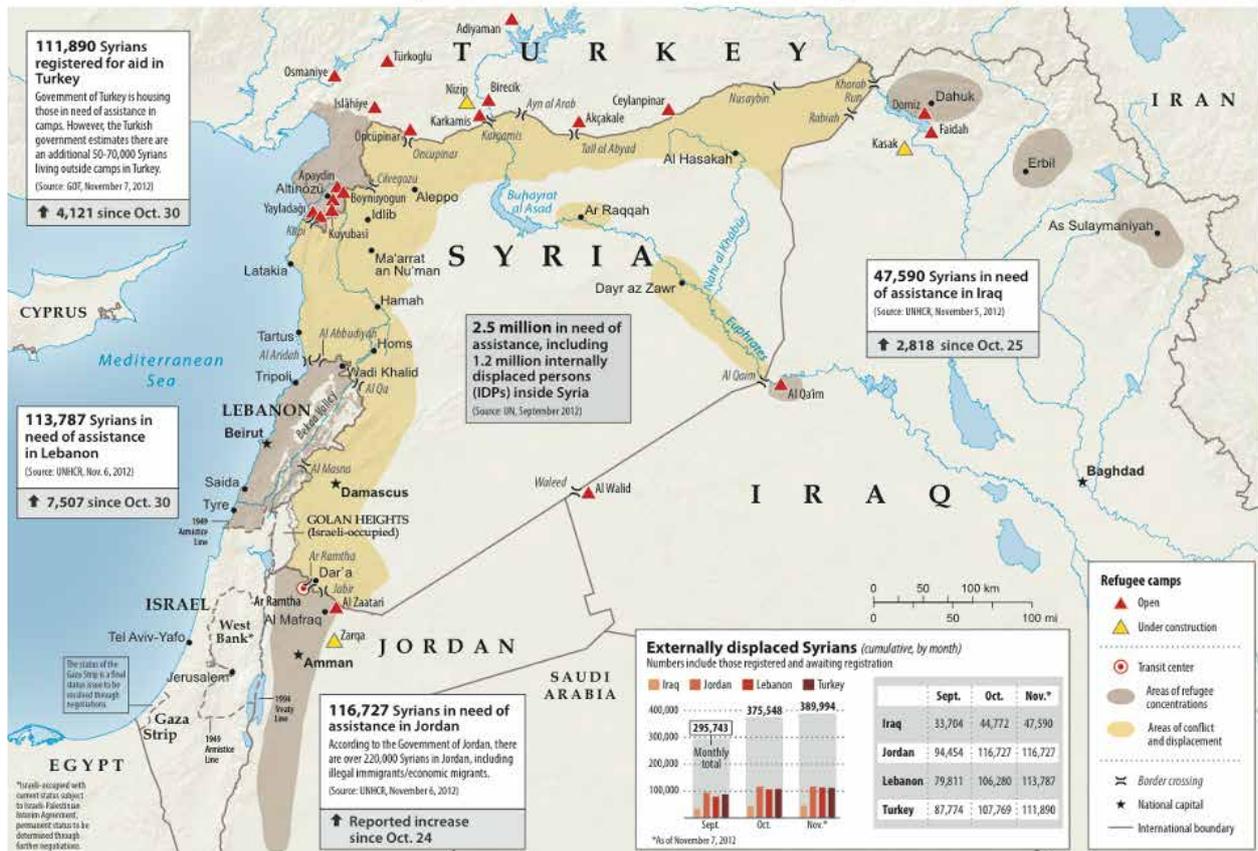
WHY NOW?

Even though the fighting is still continuing, we have to start winning the peace today. We try to make a difference by helping the hundreds of thousands of refugees who have stranded in neighbouring countries and by addressing the sectarian hatred growing amongst them. With your help, we can work to open new horizons, try to heal anger and start building peace.

The humanitarian situation of many refugees is despairing. Winter has arrived and many do not even have shelter or heating. The international crisis response is overwhelmed by the influx over the last weeks. Waiting lists for the mere registration for UN assistance reach until May 2013. Every help is needed to address both their most urgent needs and their grievance.

"The Syrian disaster is measured by both the millions of victims and the few who are willing to help. Without effective relief and reconciliation, we will face the worst."
Father Paolo Dall'Oglio SJ

Syria: Numbers and Locations of Syrians Fleeing Internal Violence



Names and boundary representation are not necessarily authoritative
 UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

Sources: US Department of State, US Agency for International Development, UN OCHA, UNHCR, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

November 7, 2012 - U670 STATE (HIJ)

Our Approach

A GENUINE METHODOLOGY

Based on many years of experience in the field of peacebuilding, humanitarian aid and inter-faith dialogue, we have developed our own methodology. We wish to combine practical help with peacebuilding. We want to bring together different communities and factions to prevent retaliation and sectarian strife. For achieving this objective, we have established three principles:

- (1) We want to work at local level. Our role is not that of a mediator who negotiates a national peace agreement. We will rather go into those places where tensions or open violence has jeopardised the cohabitation of different communities or factions.
- (2) We want to bring together moral authorities of these different communities. We wish to assist them in taking responsibility for reconciliation, bridging the gap between justice and forgiveness. Our main interlocutors will not be political leaders, but we might contribute indirectly to make them lay down their weapons.
- (3) We want to unite these moral authorities around a tangible cause: the future of the Syrian youth. We will invite them to form a local steering committee in their cities for the establishment of a Peace Centre: a house serving as open space for young people of different communities.

In our Peace Centres, experienced teachers, psychologists and social workers will offer individual and social activities, skill training, courses and support. If necessary and if nobody else is taking care, we will also address the most urgent material needs of the youth and their families. All programme lines will be decided in co-decision between us and the local steering committee.



© Virginie Nguyen Hoang (Syria, October 2012)

Religion matters in Syrian politics, both in terms of identity and ethics. Addressing the Sunni-Shi'a need for reconciliation will also be decisive for the future of Christians and other minorities. In this regard, the steering committees of our Peace Centres will be composed by relevant moral authorities, reflecting the various structures of Syria's civil society. Amongst them, religious leaders of different confessions will play a decisive role.

We are going to establish Peace Centres in the most afflicted regions of Syria, as soon as access becomes possible. As long as this is not the case, we are operating in neighbouring countries with a significant influx of refugees from Syria. Have a look on the following pages for more details on the first programme lines we would like you to sponsor.





OUR BACKGROUND

We are a group of young professionals who have all worked in Syria or neighbouring countries. We are as diverse as our origins. Amongst us, you will find Americans, Austrians, Belgians, Croats, Danes, Egyptians, French, Germans, Italians, Lebanese, Poles, Spaniards, Swiss... and of course Syrians. You will find committed Christians and Muslims of different confessions, as well as agnostics or atheists. How different we might be- we are united in our hope for peace.

This is the first fundraising campaign of our new NGO "Relief & Reconciliation for Syria". Hence, we cannot show you achievements of the past. However, our members combine a rich expertise in peacebuilding, humanitarian aid, interfaith dialogue and other relevant fields. Many of us have worked with the UN, the

EU or with internationally recognised NGOs like Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders, Sant'Egidio or the Order of Malta.

As a peacebuilding initiative, we are neutral in political terms, not affiliated to any government or party, but we are not neutral in our values. We are working for a free and inclusive Syria, based on democracy and human rights. Nobody who is violating these values can be our cooperation partner. We want to build upon existing initiatives for interfaith solidarity, such as Adyan in Lebanon, Deir Mar Musa in Syria or the World Council of Religions for Peace.

"Relief & Reconciliation for Syria" is about to be registered as international non-profit organisation in Brussels. As such, we will keep the strict accountancy rules of Belgian law and publish our financial record within an annual report on our website.

Some Team Members



Friedrich Bokern
Political Analyst
Chairman



Aymeline de Cartier
Psychologist
Team Brussels



Constance Proux
Photographer
Team Brussels



Fawzia Harakat
NGO Worker
Team Brussels



Karen Matzke
Media Adviser
Team Berlin



Lise Rasmussen
Theologian
Team Beirut



Zeina Merheb
TV Production Executive
Team Beirut



Giacomo Profili
Political Analyst
Secretary General



Benjamin Hiller
Photographer
Team Berlin



Eva-Maria Zeis
Scholar in Islamic Studies
Team Berlin



François Le Forrestier
NGO Worker
Team Paris



Jasna Zajcek
Journalist
Team Berlin



Rodrigo Martín Galán
Archaeologist
Team Brussels



Shadia Morchid
Psychologist
Team Paris



Paula Iwanowska
Scholar in International Law
Treasurer & Team Stockholm



Boris Laaser
Systemic Consultant
Team Berlin



Evangéline de Bourgoing
Journalist
Team Paris



Hélène Cuenod
NGO Worker
Team Brussels



Katharina Hoffmann
Lawyer
Team Vienna



Rudy Sassine
Political Analyst
Team Beirut



And you?
Write us and join!

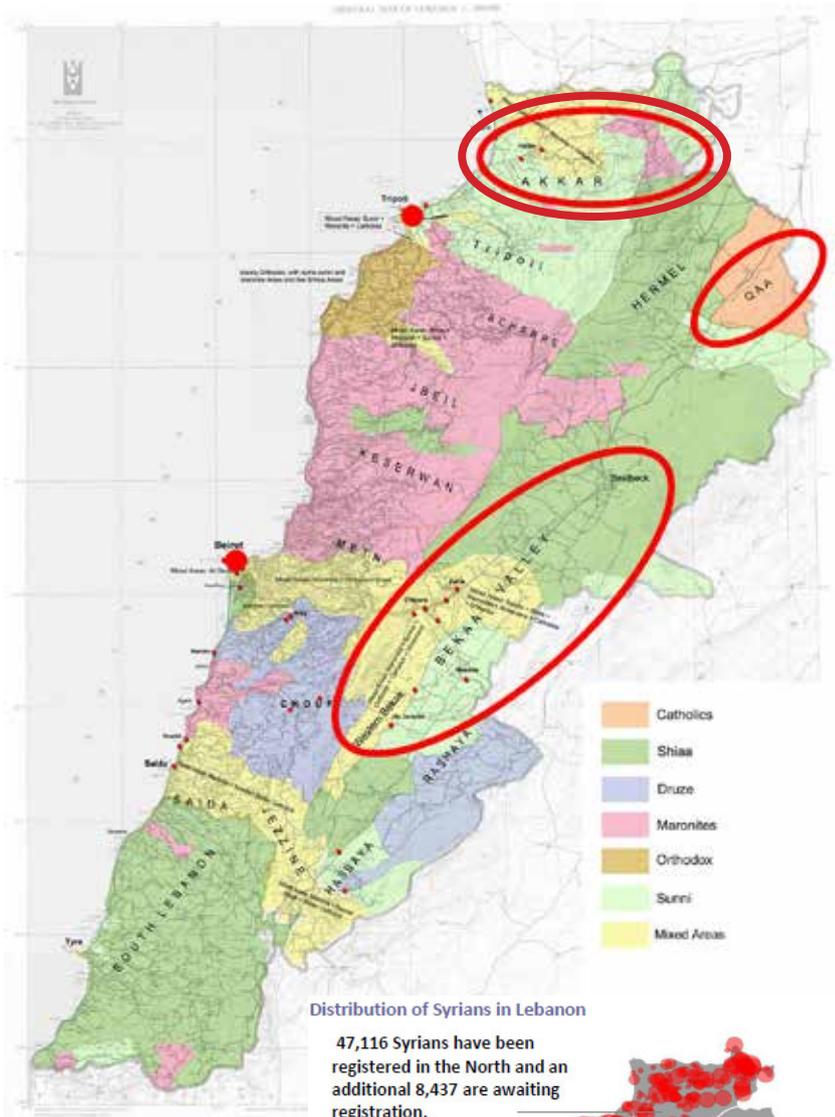
Concrete Steps

THE FIRST PEACE CENTRE

This is our first fundraising campaign to open a first Peace Centre in Lebanon in February 2013: a house for young refugees under the patronage of different communities. We want to operate within Syria as soon as access becomes possible, but a Peace Centre in the Lebanese border regions is more than a solution by default; it is not supposed to be limited in time.

We estimate reaching at least 200 young people plus their families. The main target group of our Centre will be refugees from Syria, but peacebuilding is also needed with and amongst local Lebanese. We are building upon existing initiatives and we are closely coordinating with other organisations on the ground for the humanitarian aspects of our work. As for its steering committee, we will rely on local moral authorities from both Lebanon and Syria.

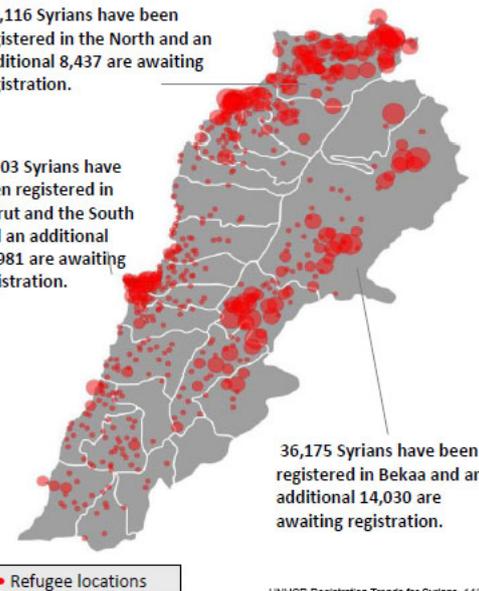
Our advance team is already on the ground to conclude the necessary needs and conflict assessment. We have identified five geographic areas as possible locations for Peace Centres (cf. map): the Akkar in the North, the Qaa and the Beqaa in the East and the cities of Tripoli and Beirut. Most probably, the choice for the first Centre will fall on the Akkar, a region with a high number of refugees and a confessionally mixed population.



Distribution of Syrians in Lebanon

47,116 Syrians have been registered in the North and an additional 8,437 are awaiting registration.

5,503 Syrians have been registered in Beirut and the South and an additional 10,981 are awaiting registration.



UNHCR Registration Trends for Syrians, 14/11/2012

Our total needs for 2013

Item	Specification	in EUR
Programmes	Programme lines: peacebuilding, humanitarian, psycho-social, educational, artistic, etc. (cf. estimated break-down on the following page.)	230,000
Infrastructure	Rent & equipment for our Peace Centres	40,000
Communication	Creation of a new website & feedback to donors	3,000
Personnel	Core staff: 3 volunteers x €500/month + insurance	20,000
Administration	Administrative fees, payment fees & travel costs	7,000
		300,000



PROGRAMME LINES

The influx of refugees from Syria into Lebanon is increasing every day. More than 120,000 have officially registered so far. The real number is said to be much higher. Winter has arrived and many refugees still lack shelter, blankets and heating.

A certain percentage of your donations will be used for humanitarian emergency programmes on the ground, according to the most urgent needs. However, the main programme lines after the opening of our Peace Centre will be dedicated to young refugees from Syria. We might include facilities to accommodate emergency cases. The exact scope of these programmes will be determined in consensus with our local steering committee on the basis of a thorough needs assessment.

Our first enquiries on the ground have shown that the age group from 10 to 18 years seems to be the most vulnerable. The Lebanese government has done great efforts to integrate most refugee children in local schools. The youngest seem to be doing fine, with exception of the need for material and psychological assistance. Elder kids, however, can hardly cope with the high educational standards of Lebanese classes, especially in the field of foreign languages.

Besides the necessary post-trauma work with all age groups, we will address this issue and offer extra-curricular tutorials, possibly extended to the field of vocational training. We also foresee sport and art groups as well as a careful approach towards the delicate issue of interreligious harmony. In all our work, we will pay special attention to the protection of young women in order to foster respectful gender relations.



© Virginie Nguyen Hoang (Syria, October 2012)

Please have a look at the following table for a first estimation of the most important needs. These figures are only preliminary. They all refer to the ideal situation whereas our Peace Centre will be fully operational as from February 2013. Hence, all positions are calculated for 11 months.

Estimated break-down for programmes

Item	Specification	in EUR
Emergency aid	Food and non-food items, medicine, shelter and/or emergency repairs, etc.	64,000
Permanence	1 field manager (house director) x €1000/month + 2 outreach assistants x €500/month	22,000
Psycho-social	1 chief psychologist x €1000/month + 2 psychological assistants x €500/month	22,000
Peacebuilding	2 conflict-resolution assistants (experts in mediation and interreligious dialogue) x €500/month	11,000
Educational	8 teacher assistants for extra-curricular courses (languages, sciences, skills, etc.) x €500/month	44,000
Artistic	4 art assistants (experts in photography, music, theatre, creative writing, etc.) x €500/month	22,000
Materials	School books, sport & art equipment	20,000
Insurances	Accident + health insurance for volunteers	25,000
		230,000

Thank You!

We need your support to let our work bear fruits. We are a new and independent initiative that has not received any money from governments, parties or other organisations. We will disclose all amounts received on our website. However, you can choose to stay anonymous.

This is our first fundraising campaign for the establishment of our first Peace Centre. We need to cover at least 10 % of the estimated total needs for 2013 to take the responsibility of opening the Centre in the coming months. That means: €30,000.

How to donate? You can donate for free from any part of the world if you have a credit card or a bank account. The cheapest way for us is to make a direct transfer to our Belgian bank account, indicated below. But you can also visit our website and pay directly per credit card or Paypal.

Even if you cannot give much, you can help us to spread the word. You could promote our initiative within the circle of your families, colleagues and friends. Follow us on Facebook or Twitter and send the link of our website and/or to all your contacts!

Follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/relief4syria

Make a donation on our website: www.reliefandreconciliation.org

As long as our official registration is still in process, all funds will go through the bank account our Secretary General opened exclusively for our campaign. He made a declaration that all assets of this account have to be used for the project "Relief & Reconciliation for Syria" as described in this brochure. The balance sheet will be disclosed on our website.

Our bank account in Belgium:

Bank: BNP Paribas Fortis
Name: Giacomo Profili
IBAN: BE91 0016 8453 8776
BIC/Swift Code: GEBABEBBXXX

