CordaID AND REFUGEES

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A DUAL MISSION TO PROTECT AND SERVE

BROCHURE CORDAID AND REFUGEES MAY 2019
CORDAID AND REFUGEES

More than 2 billion people live in countries where development is seriously impacted by fragility, conflict and violence. By 2030 the share of global poor living in fragile and conflict-affected situations is projected to reach 50%.

This forces people to seek safer grounds. More than 68 million people are forcibly displaced. Many of them face horrible atrocities on their journey or die in the attempt to enjoy minimal levels of peace, security and prosperity. People are fleeing because of war, persecution or violence, but also because of extreme poverty or natural disasters. Only a small share (4.7%) comes to Europe. By far most refugees - 85% - reside in neighbouring countries, across the border where it is safe.

These often are poor, developing countries themselves, without the resources to adequately support their own people. Cordaid provides support to refugees and host communities, providing shelter, food and clean water. For example in Uganda, where the largest refugee settlements in the world are located. Also in countries like Afghanistan and Syria Cordaid is committed to support people who have had to leave their homes and countries.

“Pope Francis’ example and leadership in standing with those who suffer, especially migrants and refugees, is something that inspires all of us […] More than ever we at Cordaid feel the urgency and the moral obligation to assist refugees and displaced people around the globe. In respect of their dignity.”

Kees Zevenbergen, CEO Cordaid

WHERE WE WORK

Cordaid operates in 20 countries in Africa and Asia, and has a small programme in the Netherlands.

- A countries: Integrated programming approach across thematic sectors
- B countries: Single thematic programming

68.5 Million people are forcibly displaced worldwide

40 Million people are displaced in their own country

25.4 Million people cross borders

3.1 Million of them apply for asylum

Source: UNHCR [2018]
The country is marked by long-term conflict and natural disasters. It has led to the staggering numbers of 3.5 million Afghans being displaced and 6.3 million in need of humanitarian assistance.

Apart from the violence of the Taliban and ISIS and the fighting with the government and allied forces, the country also suffered from a severe drought last year, which affected 4 million people. At the same time, recent floods impact people in the south. Over the last 20 years, many Afghans fled to neighbouring countries Pakistan and Iran, and some came to Europe. But since early 2018, nearly 1.5 million refugees were forcibly returned. This influx of such a large number of returnees has created enormous challenges to the reception capacities. Especially in volatile areas of ongoing conflict, the returnees face the risk of being once again displaced.

Jaap van Hierden, Country Director in Kabul: “Government capacities to absorb the influx are lacking. The conflict between state and non-state actors is ongoing. And international funding does not allow us to even closely meet the demands of all the internally displaced persons.”

Cordaid is providing support wherever it can. Cordaid is leading the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) Joint Response in Afghanistan, focusing its efforts returnees and displaced families in the Nangarhar and Kunduz provinces. The Common Humanitarian Fund allows us to work also in the Uruzgan province. “Families were free to spend our multi-purpose cash assistance on needs they considered most urgent. Most households used it to pay the rent, buy food, cover medical expenses or pay back loans”, van Hierden explains.

However, the biggest challenge is providing long-term support. Many families had been uprooted by violence overnight and left the country in a complete rush. Many returnees were forced to leave Iran and Pakistan without any preparation or luggage, and found themselves displaced and destitute once again. Hence they need not just aid upon arrival, but long-term support to rebuild their lives. Among them, female headed households are Cordaid’s priority. Van Hierden: “This is why we started a project in Nangarhar province benefitting 350 women and their children.”

6.3 Million
Afghans are in need of humanitarian assistance

More than
3.5 million
people are internally displaced

4 Million
people were affected by the severe drought in 2018

Source: OCHA [2018]

“The construction of the shelter changed our lives. When we came here in December 2016, I lived with my five children in a tent. We suffered from poverty, hot and cold weather. Now, my children do not get sick anymore, I do not have to beg for money to pay for the doctor and medicines, and there is a latrine to use. The shelter has helped us to restore dignity and respect. The training is also useful for me and my children.”

Gul Bibi, undocumented internally displaced woman from Kunar, who now lives in Nangarhar.
As the Syrian crisis persists, civilians continue to bear the brunt of a conflict marked by suffering and destruction.

Nearly 12 million Syrians require humanitarian assistance, of which 5 million are in acute need of aid. Over 6 million Syrians have been displaced since the outbreak of the conflict in 2011, with the majority of people forced to flee several times due to shifting front lines and difficulties in accessing cash, food and shelter, clean water and sanitation facilities.

And what if it’s safe enough to return home, but your house is uninhabitable? This is the case for nearly 5 million Syrians. Cordaid supports shelter programmes that assist in repairing homes in Damascus, Aleppo and Homs. For several years we supported a field kitchen in Aleppo, providing cooked meals on a daily basis for 5000 people.

Cordaid also supports the rehabilitation of schools and health centres. In Jaramana, a big city just outside Damascus, Cordaid supports a community centre which is run by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) that provides psychosocial care, specifically to women. The community centre also targets Syrian children, who missed out on school because of the war, and are helped to catch up on their learning backlog. Many kids are suffering from trauma and receive psychosocial care.

As the situation improved, it was decided to close the kitchens and to shift to recovery activities such as rehabilitation of houses and schools. We also provide vocational training in Dir Hafir, an hour away from Aleppo, where returnees are trained to become electricians, plumbers and painters. These skills will help them also to generate an income for their families.

“Building trust is equally important as building houses and homes. Trust is essential: between authorities and citizens, between religious groups, between young and old, rich and poor people. This trust has been broken. Humanitarian aid needs to take this into account and address it where possible.”

Marten Treffers, shelter expert.

11.7 Million people require humanitarian assistance
5 Million of them are in acute need
6.2 Million Syrians have been displaced since 2011

Source: OCHA (2018)
IRAQ

Iraq has been torn by war and conflict for most of this century. The military operations against ISIS in Iraq ended late 2017. However, the post-conflict situation is far from stable. The fighting still erupts here and there and that makes daily realities quite unpredictable.

Moreover the humanitarian crisis is far from solved. Aid efforts are targeting the nearly 2 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and the more than 300,000 refugees from neighboring countries. A further 2 million IDPs have meanwhile returned home but are still among the most vulnerable in Iraq. The rebuilding of their livelihoods represents a massive challenge. The mismanagement of the country’s oil resources doesn’t help.

People are deprived of basic needs such as access to health care and education, but also lack protection and livelihood opportunities. Recently, the international community is shifting from humanitarian aid structural to development programs. However, it is estimated that 6.7 million people are still in need for humanitarian assistance.

Cordaid has supported health centers through awareness raising, reconstruction, capacity building for staff, psychosocial support and funds for running costs. The health centers also support the process of return. Cordaid provides also basic healthcare services to displaced Christians and Yezidis who suffered enormously under ISIS rule, and who live in barracks or demolished or repaired buildings. Cordaid aims to improve mental health and wellbeing and increase access to protection for vulnerable people. Cordaid provides awareness raising on psychosocial support, SRHR and gender-based violence.

For the people in need of specialized care, we organize referrals and transport to specialists. For remote villagers, we organize a mobile team that provides healthcare services. Last year, Cordaid piloted a recovery approach focused on shelter and livelihoods in three villages in Hamdaniya district located on the Ninewa plain to respond to the needs of the returnees and enable them to regain control of their lives.

6 Million
people have been displaced since the beginning of the crisis in 2014

Almost
2 million
of them remain displaced

Source: OCHA [2018]

“Trauma and deep forms of depression are all too common among the people who visit us. They lost family members, they lost their homes, their jobs. Only now, after the rush of crisis and after having found refuge, do psychological and psychiatric problems come to the surface. We see kids that have become unmanageable. Some of them have epileptic fits because of what they went through. Some women have suicidal thoughts.”

Hala Saba Jameel, Cordaid’s Health program manager in Northern Iraq.
Uganda is the host to the largest refugee population in Africa and the top third in the world, mostly from South Sudan and from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is a crisis that receives too little international attention compared to its magnitude. Despite a highly progressive refugee legislation, allowing refugees to travel and work, Uganda faces unprecedented challenges to cater for all the needs of such a large refugees population putting a strain on the local available resources and services. Sustained support from partners is crucial in ensuring that refugees can become self-reliant.

In 2017, Cordaid provided humanitarian aid to 11,000 refugee and host community households in Uganda. An additional 6000 households were served in 2018.

In Northern Uganda’s refugee settlements of Imvepi and Rhino, Cordaid supports refugees to become independent from food distribution and be self-reliant. We assist them in agriculture and livelihood activities and provide the water, sanitation and hygiene facilities (WASH) needed to improve or uphold basic health levels.

Water is one of the most important things on the minds of the South Sudanese refugees in the settlements in Uganda. Petra van Haren, country director in Kampala: “Water is the priority. Without water, people can’t stay alive. Without water, people can’t grow food. That’s why our first response was to build sustainable water facilities in the settlements.” Thanks to the generous donations to the Giro 555-appeal ‘Help victims of famine’ Cordaid has been able to build water supply systems in Imvepi and Rhino refugee settlements and will also provide water to Kyangwali refugee settlement hosting refugees from the DRC. Psycho-social support is a crucial need for the refugee population as well, as too many of them have witnessed and experienced first-hand both war and unimaginable atrocities. Cordaid works through expert partners to target the most mentally vulnerable within the refugee community.

1.2 Million refugees from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan
Source: OCHA [2019]

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In Northern Uganda, Cordaid’s water supply provides 22 liters per person per day to 4600 beneficiaries (Feb 2018)
The Netherlands has welcomed refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea and several other countries and conflict areas. The large influx in 2015/2016 created challenges in organising emergency shelter and reception facilities. These were later followed by challenges of participation and integration into the Dutch society and economy.

In particular, refugees face disadvantages on the labour market due to language barriers and because their skills and diplomas are not recognised. Also, they have a weak starting position due to a small network and knowledge about suitable companies, presenting CVs and how best to apply for a position. With these challenges in mind, Cordaid is bringing refugees together into social cooperatives, across the country, that develop business opportunities with a social impact: helping refugees to earn a living. They are supported with business advise and financial assistance.

One of these refugee cooperatives is Jude Catering (Jude means ‘generosity’ in Arabic), which sells Syrian dishes to organisations and individuals. The dishes are delivered and served with a personal story of one of the members of Jude. So eating the dishes is not the only experience, customers also learn about why refugees have left Syria and how they live in the Netherlands. Moreover, the cooperative has an important social function: “I have learnt more Dutch since working for Jude Catering. And have made more friends”, says one of the Syrian members.

“I have repeatedly expressed my particular concern for the lamentable situation of many migrants and refugees fleeing from war, persecution, natural disasters and poverty. [...] I wish to reaffirm that our shared response may be articulated by four verbs: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate”

Pope Francis

MIND

Cordaid is one of the 12 Caritas members participating in the MIND (Migration, Interconnectedness, Development.) project co-financed by the European Commission and Porticus. The MIND project is about raising public and political awareness of the relation between sustainable development and migration and the European Union’s role in development cooperation. The project revolves around three pillars:

- drivers of forced migration, and how to tackle these
- welcoming societies, and how to encourage migrant integration
- migrants as development actors, both at home and abroad

The project includes a EU-wide study “Common Home” with policy recommendations for The Netherlands, that was launched in May 2019. The MIND advocacy actions are linked to the Caritas global migration campaign “Share the Journey”.

Cordaid is a founding member of Caritas Internationalis, a global confederation of over 160 Catholic humanitarian and development organizations, working from grassroots to international policy arenas. With its global 2-year campaign ‘Share the Journey’, Caritas and Cordaid are responding to pope Francis’ call to create a culture of encounter with migrants and refugees.

The MIND advocacy focuses on Dutch policies at home and abroad, including recent policies in response to the Venezuelan crisis and the related refugee reception on the Dutch Caribbean islands (Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire, located off the coast of Venezuela) that are part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
Cordaid supports the psychosocial health care of refugees in Uganda’s Kiryandongo refugee settlement.

Some of our partners:

**Unicef**

**UNHCR**

**OCHA**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands**

**Dutch Relief Alliance**

**Caritas Internationalis**

**About Cordaid**

The Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid (Cordaid) is based in the Netherlands and has offices in 11 developing countries. For over a century it has been fighting poverty and exclusion in the world’s most fragile and (post-)conflict areas. We envisage a world where a dignified life is possible for all. Where each person can flourish and live in peace. Where the poor and marginalised, including refugees and internally displaced people, can influence decisions that affect their lives. Cordaid delivers innovative solutions to complex problems by emphasizing sustainability and performance in projects that deliver results in security and justice, health, resilience and economic opportunity.

Cordaid is deeply rooted in Dutch society with more than 260,000 private donors. Cordaid is a founding member of Caritas Internationalis and CIDSE.

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In June 2018, a campaign action by 22 NGOs promoted just and humane asylum and migration policies in Europe, with a full page advert in the biggest Dutch newspaper. This is the English version of that poster.