

Statement from Upwardly Global President & CEO Nikki Cicerani in the wake of the Paris attacks and calls to halt Syrian refugee resettlement in the U.S.

I know I speak for all of us when I say that we ache for the people of France, Lebanon, Kenya, and the people of Syria whose lives have been devastated by terrorism and violent political repression on an unimaginable scale.

Upwardly Global recognizes the concerns of those who seek to repeal the recent approval to resettle 10,000 Syrian refugees as a precaution against U.S.-based terrorism, or to deny them admission to our cities and states. We hope that our leaders and the public will educate themselves about the refugee resettlement process, the rigorous precautions taken to ensure we prioritize the safety of the American people, and the fact that there have been no recorded terrorist attacks committed by refugees in the United States.

Our organization has worked with thousands of refugees from the Middle East and elsewhere, assisting them in rebuilding livelihoods and lives by helping them secure jobs and economic stability here in the U.S. We know firsthand that when companies and communities accept and include these newcomers, they make incredible contributions to our culture and economy. And the message of success and gratitude is quickly carried deeper into immigrant communities here, and to families and community members back home.

Upwardly Global hopes that we all - policymakers and citizens - can allay our fears of refugees with facts, and cultivate the humanity and moral judgment needed to counter the horrific forces of evil affecting our world. By extending ourselves and the opportunity of our country to the Syrian people, we can lead by example and demonstrate that the U.S. will fight not just for freedom, but for the values of compassion and acceptance that define the American Dream.

Facts about refugee resettlement in the U.S.

- Refugees are screened by a number of different agencies including the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center and the Departments of State, Defense, and Homeland Security. Screenings include interviews and the collection of fingerprints and biographical information. Syrian refugees are subject to additional Department of Homeland Security screening. ([NPR](#) and [Human Rights First 2015 Factsheet](#))
- On average, it takes 18-24 months before a refugee is approved for admission to the U.S. ([NPR](#))
- Research has shown that refugees contribute to local economies. A report in Tennessee found that refugees contributed almost twice as much in tax revenues as they consumed in state funded services in the past two decades. ([Welcoming America](#) and [WBIR](#))
- Of about 1,800 Syrian refugees resettled in the past year, only 2% have been single men of "combat age." None have been arrested on domestic terrorism charges. ([Time](#))
- The U.S. has resettled 784,000 refugees since Sept. 11, 2001 and no terrorist attacks have been committed by refugees in the U.S. ([Migration Policy Institute](#))