

September 2017

Fundraising and the I Welcome Campaign

Intro

Amnesty groups up and down the country have been campaigning hard on the ‘I Welcome’ campaign. However, there’s still work to be done. We are calling on groups to organise fundraising events themed around I Welcome this Autumn.

As border after border shuts, thousands more people are undergoing terrifying, tortuous journeys as they try to find refuge. People like Baraa.

In his hometown in Syria, Baraa would be stopped and humiliated at checkpoints several times each day. Even in his own house he felt in danger. Then one day he was kidnapped and held for five hours. He knew he had to leave, urgently.

Baraa’s journey to safety took years, crossing ten national borders and overcoming obstacle after obstacle, danger after danger. He told us what happened when he set off for Greece from Turkey:

“I was following what was happening in Europe and it sounded like it was getting easier. We contacted one of the agents [smugglers], arranged a bus to a place in the middle of nowhere, just the sea in front of us. We started preparing ourselves with life jackets. There were around 50 people. The kids were in the middle, no driver. Water started leaking into the dinghy. The women were crying and the kids were screaming. The engine started smoking, and I tried to calm the women and kids to say just 10 minutes, we are there ...”

It’s no wonder that many, including Baraa, call these boats ‘floating coffins’.

Without safe and legal routes to escape danger, many people are forced to make impossible decisions – decisions I hope you will never have to make – as they desperately seek a place of safety for themselves and their families.

No one should have to choose which of their loved ones to take, and which to leave behind. No one should be forced to pile into ancient trucks to travel across the Sahara, hoping that they won’t break down and face death by dehydration. To trek over mountains carrying everything they own, hoping that they won’t stumble on a group of gunmen looking for a target. Yet people are forced to do this every day.

Stories like Baraa’s remind how important it is that we keep up pressure on governments to meet their obligations to refugees. It’s important that we continue to organise high-profile, public events on this campaign to keep up the pressure and raise awareness of these issues.

Get Involved

September marks the start of an international period of fundraising on this campaign. The International Secretariat is asking sections all over the world to work with their supporters to organise fundraising events themed around the I Welcome campaign. These events will help raise vital funds for the movement and raise awareness of this important work.

What can you do?

There are loads of ways you can raise money for Amnesty International UK while showing your support for refugee rights.

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Sponsored walk/run: either join an existing race or come up with your own route. Ask friends or family to sponsor you. Tell them about the work they'll be supporting when asking for donations. You could put an 'I Welcome' twist on this idea by covering the distance a refugee might cover on a leg of their journey. Get in touch for advice if you're interested in organising a sponsored walk event like this.

Collections: all you need is permission from your local authority and a team of willing collectors and you can raise hundreds of pounds in a day. Collections are always more successful if you have something a little extra to draw in donors. Try applying for a busker's licence and having some music at yours. If possible, you could set up a stall with info. and actions on the 'I Welcome' campaign.

Quiz nights: these are always popular and are a great way to raise money. You can rent a space or ask your local pub to host you for free. You can hold a raffle to help generate extra funds. Just ask local businesses to donate prizes. We'll write you a letter confirming you're an affiliated Amnesty group which should make this easier.

Meals: partner with a local restaurant and put on a fundraising evening. Charge a set fee with some of the money covering the restaurant's costs and the rest going towards Amnesty International UK. You could have everyone take action on the I Welcome campaign at the end of the meal, or hold a brief talk on refugee rights to link it to the campaign.

Other ideas: there are loads of other ways to fundraise so don't be afraid to try something new. If you have an idea that you'd like to try out but aren't sure where to start, get in touch with the Community Fundraising team. We will be able to make suggestions and maybe even put you in touch with a group that have organised a similar event.

Organising a fundraising Event

For practical fundraising advice and more ideas on how to raise money, you can consult our fundraising guide. You can order this from MDA by calling 01788 545 553.

Working with other organisations

Where proceeds from fundraising events are being split between Amnesty International UK and another organisation, this must be made clear in all promotional materials for the event and in all

communications about the event. The proportions of the split (e.g. 50/50) should also be made clear.

How to donate

Go to: www.amnesty.org.uk/appeal

Alternatively, you can post cheques to:

The Supporter Care Team
Freepost RLUB-JKSB-HLCH
Amnesty International UK
The Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard
London
EC2A 3EA

Please include a note explaining what group you're from and what you did to raise funds.

Get in touch

If you have any questions, please contact Richard Glynn in the Community Fundraising team.

Email: richard.glynn@amnesty.org.uk

Phone: 0207 033 1650
