



COME TOGETHER THIS WORLD REFUGEE DAY

A Guide for Hosting a Community Gathering
to Support the Movement for Refugee Rights

**Refugees
International**

Dear Friend,

World Refugee Day is celebrated globally each year in June, and this year, we are asking our supporters to call in their communities to mark the occasion with us. Thank you for your interest in hosting a gathering of friends during the month of June to help grow the movement for refugee rights!

This guide shares guidance and resources to support you in hosting your event—including a hosting checklist, recipes and reflections from Refugees International’s 2025 Refugee Fellows, and a guide for gathering and discussing the movement for refugee rights.

We can’t wait to hear about your event! Thank you for being a part of our work. It takes all of us coming together to realize our vision for rights and refuge for all.

With gratitude,
The Refugees International Team

About Refugees International

Refugees International advocates for lifesaving assistance, human rights, and protection for displaced people and promotes solutions to displacement crises.

Based in Washington, DC our experts work with partners around the world to investigate the challenges displaced people face, develop policy solutions, mobilize action, and hold the powerful to account.

Refugees International is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN: 52-1224516).

GETTING READY!

Here's Your Hosting Checklist

Let Us Know You're Hosting:

- **Register Your Event:** Let us know that you plan to host a gathering by [filling out this form](#).
- **Create a Fundraising Page:** We invite you to make your gathering a fundraising challenge. [Follow this link](#) to create a fundraising page where your guests can donate to support Refugees International. This is not required, but we welcome whatever your gathering is able to contribute to power our work!

Get Ready for Your Gathering to Build the Movement for Refugee Rights:

- **Pick Your Date:** World Refugee Day is recognized each year on June 20, but we invite you to choose any day during the month of June to host your gathering to build the movement for refugee rights.
- **Invite Your Guests:** Invite a few friends or your whole contact list! Consider including neighbors and friends, classmates or colleagues, and community or faith leaders. For larger gatherings, consider inviting refugee-serving organizations in your area to speak or participate.
- **Build the Movement:** Review our tips for gathering and talking about the movement for refugee rights. Think about what you'd like to share with your guests.
- **Breaking Bread, Bridging Borders:** If you are cooking, explore the recipes from our Refugee Fellows in this toolkit for inspiration.

Follow Up and Keep the Momentum Going:

- **Share Thanks:** Send a note to your guests thanking them for attending and share any additional resources (like this guide!).
- **Let Us Know How It Went:** Complete [this form](#) to tell us about your gathering! If your guests consent, send any photos you took at the gathering that we can share and use to inspire others to build the movement!

BREAKING BREAD, BRIDGING BORDERS

Cooking from the Kitchens of Refugees International's 2025 Refugee Fellows

Sharing a meal opens the door to stories, traditions, and histories that we might not otherwise encounter. When we gather for a meal, we create memories, community, and understanding. In that spirit, we asked our 2025 Refugee Fellows to share a recipe and reflection from their own kitchen. We invite you to feature these beautiful recipes at your gathering, or share the recipes with your guests to create in their own kitchen!

Falafel and Hummus by Jomana Abunahla:

“If there’s a taste that defines home for many of us across Palestine, it’s falafel and hummus. In Gaza, this isn’t just food – it’s a ritual. We start our mornings with it, wrapped in fresh bread with tomatoes, Gazan Shatta (chilli sauce), and pickles. We end our long days gathered around it with family, friends, or neighbors. It’s the food of the street, the home, and the soul of our city. Simple, hearty, and deeply affordable. No matter how poor you are, falafel was always within reach. But today, during the genocide, even the richest families in Gaza can no longer afford what was once the meal of the poor. Chickpeas, oil, gas to fry – all have vanished. The silence of morning streets that once smelled of falafel speaks volumes.”

FALAFEL INGREDIENTS

2 cups dry chickpeas or 4 cans of chickpeas
1 bunch cilantro (roughly 3/4 cup chopped)
1 bunch dill (roughly 1/2 cup chopped)
1 bunch parsley (roughly 1 cup chopped)
7 garlic cloves
5 hot green chilies (to taste)
1 T. each: cumin, coriander, salt, and black pepper
1/2 tsp nutmeg
1 tsp baking soda
2 T. roasted sesame seeds
3-4 cups oil for frying

HUMMUS INGREDIENTS

1 can of chickpeas
1/4 cup tahini
1/4 cup of water
1 large lemon
1 clove garlic
salt to taste
jalapenos (optional)
Parsley for garnish (optional)

FALAFEL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse chickpeas well and add to a bowl.
2. Put chickpeas through a food grinder or pulse in a food processor or blender in batches
3. Roughly chop cilantro, dill, and parsley. Mince garlic and chilies (to taste). Add to a bowl with the ground chickpeas.
4. Add cumin, coriander, salt, pepper, and nutmeg to the bowl.
5. Grind together by hand or pulse in a food processor or blender in batches.
6. Set aside to rest or chill for two hours. ***See Note*
7. Immediately before frying, add baking soda and sesame seeds.
8. Shape into small patties or balls, dipping hands in water if necessary to prevent sticking.
9. Heat oil in a pan over high heat until very hot. Fry the falafel in batches of 4-5 at a time (depending on the size of your pan) for about 6-8 minutes. Turn the falafel occasionally and remove from the oil once browned. Place on a paper towel to rest.
10. Enjoy with hummus or tahini sauce or serve as a sandwich using Arabic style bread like pita and your preferred toppings like sliced onions, tomatoes, or cucumber pickles, and tahini or chili paste (like shatta, zhoug, or harissa).

***Note: If you do not plan to fry all of the mix you can store it in zip lock bags or air-tight containers in the freezer for about 3-6 months. Defrost for a couple of hours before frying.*

HUMMUS INSTRUCTIONS

1. Open the can of chickpeas and rinse well.
2. Add all ingredients into a food processor or blender.
3. Mix well until it forms a smooth paste.
4. Serve with pita bread, falafel, or vegetables



Jomana Abunahla is a fellow at Refugees International and a dedicated women, peace, and security scholar. Through her work with the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH), Jomana has meticulously documented human rights violations against women and girls in Gaza. She has also served as a member of the World Bank Solutions for Youth Employment (S4YE) and Youth Advisory Panel representing Palestine. As an asylum seeker, Jomana has worked to collect testimonies from her Palestinian community in Gaza and beyond and advocate for their needs.

Chicken Dama by Ayoo Irene Hellen

“In my culture, we welcome visitors with chicken stew, often smoked chicken prepared with sesame paste or fried. We serve it with juice and water to accompany the food.

When I was growing up, my mother taught me that when a visitor comes to our home, they must be given food and water, no matter what. That is true hospitality—sharing with everyone, whether we have much or little.”

INGREDIENTS

2 pounds chicken drumsticks
3 large onions
5 large potatoes
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 cinnamon stick
1 tablespoon garlic paste
1 tablespoon ginger paste
2 tablespoons bullion powder (and enough water/
vegetable stock to cover)
1 tablespoon cumin powder
1 tablespoon coriander powder
1/2 teaspoon curry powder
3 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and black pepper to taste
Bread for serving; kisra, injera, chapati,
or other bread. Substitute rice.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large pot, heat your oil and add the chicken. Saute the chicken, stirring frequently until the chicken has browned on all sides.
2. Add black pepper to taste, coriander, and curry powder. Stir chicken to coat evenly.
3. Add the onions until sweat down slightly
4. Add bullion powder and water or vegetable stock.
5. Bring to a boil, cover, and let simmer for 20-30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Peel the potatoes and cut into 1 inch cubes. Rinse cubes in water to remove starch and set aside.
7. Returning to your chicken, add tomato paste, and garlic and ginger paste.
8. Add potatoes to the pot.
9. Allow chicken and potatoes to simmer and reduce for another 20-30 minutes.
10. Add cumin powder at the end. Add a little water. Stir and cover for an additional 5-10 minutes until potatoes are cooked through and soft, but not falling apart.
11. Serve with warm bread or rice.



Ayoo Irene Hellen is a fellow at Refugees International and a South Sudanese refugee in the Kiryandongo refugee settlement in Uganda. She is a woman and gender activist, mediator, peace builder, and environmental advocate. Her work centers around climate adaptation and mitigation with a focus on promoting solar electricity for cooking – a sustainable solution that can significantly reduce conflicts, prevent school dropouts, and minimize cases of assault in the settlement. Currently, she serves as a Partnership Officer with Last Mile Climate in Uganda, contributing actively to environmental initiatives. She also volunteers as a Community Engagement Lead at the African Youth Action Network and is a board member of CECI Uganda.

Luri Fira by Lucky Karim

“No matter how many miles I am physically away from home, or country – language is my identity and food means home.

Finding someone from my community that speaks my language fluently is the best medicine for my pain, loneliness, or sadness. I survive just on my spicy food – I was born to eat it! We put one box of spice in a dish of meat and still we can eat green chili with food. Our food represents our culture, tradition, and country. It's rare and hard to find my home food where I work or travel, but as soon as I get to eat some, it reminds me of my mom, home, and my birth place. Our love language is serving spicy food to our neighbors, guests, relatives or special people. Cooking beef or chicken with potatoes is the most delicious dish to welcome someone into our homes.”

INGREDIENTS

2 cups rice flour (extra rice flour for rolling)
1.5 cups water
2 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sift the rice flour.
2. In a large pot, bring water to a boil and add salt.
3. Add small amounts of rice flour to the water gradually, stirring to mix with the boiling water. Boil the mixture until the water is absorbed and the flour has formed a rough dough.
4. Place the dough on a plate to knead until the texture is smooth and even.
5. Roll the dough into a long cylinder, then pull off 2 inch sections to form into small balls.
6. Smooth each ball with a rolling pin, dusting your work area with extra rice flour as necessary to prevent sticking. Roll each ball out until it is flat and circular.
7. Cook each luri kira one by one on a frying pan over medium heat to char each side.
8. Serve as a side dish to compliment any meal. Luri kira is traditionally served with Goror Gusso (beef curry). Follow [this video recipe](#) from the Rohingya Cultural Memory Centre to complete your meal.



Lucky Karim is a fellow at Refugees International and a refugee and prominent human rights activist from Burma (Myanmar). She lived for six years in the world's largest refugee camp in Bangladesh and has worked for a number of international organizations to serve her community in Cox's Bazar before she was resettled to the United States in December 2022. Lucky founded Refugee Women for Peace and Justice (RWPJ), the very first Rohingya refugee-led registered organization that works directly with her community in Bangladesh.

Kabuli Pulao by Masooda Qazi

“In Afghan culture, hospitality is sacred: even if we have little, we offer guests the best of what we have: tea, bread, warmth and respect.

I remember my grandmother preparing a meal and clothes for a stranger who had lost his family during the civil war. We have a saying, “A guest is a blessing, not a burden.” A more welcoming world, to me as an Afghan, is one where people are received not with suspicion, but with open arms where borders do not erase the value of a person’s dignity or dreams.”

INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons cumin seeds
1.5 lb lamb
2 cups julienned carrots
1.25 cups raisins
¼ cup sesame or vegetable oil
2 sliced onions
4 roughly chopped garlic cloves
Salt to taste
3 cups rice

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse your rice until the water runs clear. Let the rice soak.
2. Heat the sesame oil in a pot or pressure cooker, then add onions and garlic. Saute for 30 seconds before adding cumin.
3. Next, add the lamb, a tablespoon of salt, and 3 cups of water to the pot. In a pressure cooker, cook for 25 minutes on high pressure. On stovetop, cover and allow to simmer for about an hour, until the meat is fork tender. Prepare the other elements of the dish while you wait for the meat. When done, remove your meat from the broth. Set the broth aside to be used later.
4. While your meat is cooking, prepare your carrots. Heat vegetable oil in a pan before adding your shredded carrots. Cook until soft – this will not take very long. Set aside on a sheet of tin foil.
5. Next, prepare your raisins. Soak in hot water for about 5 minutes. Then, drain and add to the same pan that you cooked the carrots in. Cook for about 30 seconds. Then, add the raisins to the foil with your carrots and wrap the foil into a packet to keep warm. Set aside.
6. Boil a large pot of salted water. Add your rinsed and soaked rice to the boiling water. This is a step you have to watch. Allow the rice to cook for 4-5 minutes. At this stage, you do not want to fully cook the rice or you will have mushy pulao. If you can break the rice in your finger you are done. Then, remove from heat and drain your rice.
7. Now it is time to assemble your dish. Add half of your rice to the bottom of a large pot before adding your lamb. Last, add the other half of the rice. Pour a few scoops of the lamb broth over the dish.
8. Poke some holes in the rice with the handle of a spoon to allow steam to release. Place your tin-foil wrapped packet of raisins and carrots on top of your rice. Then, cover the pot with a lid.
9. Cook on the stovetop on medium-low heat for about 25 minutes. Remove from heat, mix the lamb into the rice. Top your lamb and rice with the raisin and carrot mixture to serve.



Masooda Qazi is a fellow at Refugees International and a paralegal at the San Diego County Public Defender’s Office. When Kabul fell in August 2021, she was working for the U.S. Embassy. A 2012 graduate of Kabul University, Masooda began her legal career at the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, where she promoted gender parity in government hiring. Before joining the Embassy, Masooda served on the EU Police Mission supporting capacity-building and rule of law projects, then served as a legal advisor on EU-funded projects to establish and oversee the Anti-Corruption Justice Center. Masooda, her husband Hamid (also a lawyer), and their two sons endured a challenging journey out of Kabul in August 2021. After being evacuated to the Netherlands, the family was detained in a refugee camp for nine months before being resettled in San Diego.

Beef Sancocho by William Adrián Clavijo Vitto

“I wanted to share with you a very special recipe from Venezuela: Sancocho de Res, specifically the traditional version from the state of Táchira, in the Andes region where I come from.

Sancocho is a hearty, nourishing soup made with beef, root vegetables, and plantains. It’s more than just a meal — it’s a dish that brings people together. Families and friends gather around a pot of sancocho, especially on weekends, to share stories, laughter, and warmth.”

INGREDIENTS

3.3 lbs of beef short ribs or shank (bone-in, well cleaned)
2 ears of corn, cut into thick rounds
3 medium potatoes, peeled and chopped
2 cassava (yuca) roots, peeled and chopped (substitute with potatoes, jicama, or sweet potatoes if necessary)
2 green plantains, sliced
1 small yam or parsnip/white carrot (substitute with potatoes or sweet potatoes if necessary)
1 carrot, sliced
1 stalk of green onion (scallion)
1 bunch of cilantro or culantro
1 red bell pepper, sliced
1 large onion, chopped
4 garlic cloves, crushed
Salt and pepper to taste

Optional: a touch of cumin or sweet chili pepper (ají dulce), if available

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large pot, place the beef with plenty of water (about 4 liters or 1 gallon), salt, onion, garlic, green onion, and bell pepper. Cook for about 1.5 hours or until the meat is very tender.
2. Add the corn rounds and green plantains. Let cook for 15 minutes.
3. Then add the cassava, yam, and potatoes. Adjust salt and add the carrots. Cook until all the vegetables are tender.
4. Finally, stir in the chopped cilantro (it’s best added at the end to preserve its fresh flavor).
5. Serve hot — ideally with arepas or a bit of homemade spicy sauce on the side.



William Adrián Clavijo Vitto is a fellow at Refugees International. He is the president and founder of the Venezuela Global Association, the first association founded and led by Venezuelans in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, aimed at promoting the social and economic integration of Venezuelan migrants and refugees and those of other nationalities in Brazil. Clavijo served as the Country Coordinator for the Coalition for Venezuela in Brazil from 2021 until his election as a Board Member for the 2023-2025 term.

THE DAY IS HERE!

Let's Gather and Talk About the Movement for Refugee Rights

Take some time during your gathering to share ideas, information, and reflections about what it means to build community and support the movement for refugee rights.

Remember that the people you are gathering may be at different stages of their journey working for refugee rights. And that's ok! Some guests may need a 101 on who refugees are and what's at stake, while others need some inspiration and solidarity to keep up the fight. We need all of us – together – to realize our vision for rights and refuge for all.

First, thank your guests for coming, and share your intention for the gathering.

Explain why it was important to you to bring your community together to mark World Refugee Day this year. You might also consider reading a poem or showing a video highlighting a powerful refugee story. Here are some great options our team draws on in these moments for inspiration:

- [“Home”](#) by Warsan Shire
- [“Birth Water”](#) by Bigoa Chuol
- [“Di Baladna \(Our Land\)”](#) by Emtithal Mahmoud
- [“A Thank-You Letter From the Bomb That Visited My Home 11 Years Ago”](#) by Ahmed M. Badr
- [“Gate A-4”](#) by Naomi Shihab Nye
- [This is the Refugee Storytellers Collective](#)
- [Lucky Karim: Advocate, Refugee Returns to Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh](#)

Share some tunes from around the world! The Refugees International team made a playlist featuring some of our favorites. [Listen on Youtube](#).

Next, consider inviting your guests to offer some reflections on why they were interested in joining your gathering.

They may have personal or family history of displacement – or maybe they are just curious and want to learn something new! Invite your guests to go around the room and share: **“What brought you here today? Why were you interested in coming together to honor World Refugee Day?”**

Sometimes conversations about refugees, migration, and displaced people can become complicated or fraught. There is a lot of misinformation out there that can lead to misunderstandings or mistrust. Here are some tips for making sure that your conversation builds empathy, understanding, and respectful dialogue:

- **Lead with Shared Values.** While not everyone can relate to what it means to be displaced, everyone knows what it means to safety for your family, opportunities to contribute and thrive, and how important it is to have a sense of belonging. Make sure that your conversation stays grounded in universal values and shared humanity.

- **Use Facts Thoughtfully.** The old adage is that a picture is worth a thousand words. Share facts and information accurately, but don't overwhelm your guests with statistics. Personal stories or examples of refugee resilience or contributions can often help create emotional connection and understanding.
- **Stay Calm and Curious.** If someone expresses skepticism or concern, ask open-ended questions rather than becoming confrontational. By fostering curiosity, you can create a conducive environment that allows people to reconsider their position – and learn something new.

Discussion Ideas to Consider:

- What does a vision of rights and refuge for all mean to you?
- Why do you think some people or governments are hesitant to welcome refugees, and what might help change their minds?
- What do you think might be the hardest part about suddenly needing to leave your home and rebuild your life in a new country?
- If you have people with lived experience of displacement at your gathering: What do you wish more people understood about your experience?

Stay Engaged!

The scale of the global displacement crisis can feel overwhelming. But at Refugees International, we believe that a better world is possible, and we know what we all have a role to play. Make sure you leave your guests with a sense of what THEY can do to be part of the movement for refugee rights.

Stay in Touch with Refugees International

- **Sign up for our updates** on the most pressing displacement and humanitarian issues in our monthly newsletter, the RI Bulletin.
- Follow us on social media [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Bluesky](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#).
- Watch out for our **upcoming events**.

Take Action for Refugee Rights Follow our [take action page](#) for the latest ways you can get involved. Get started with the below actions:

- **Tell Your Member of Congress: Save USAID, Save Lives**
- **Tell Your Member of Congress: The UAE Must End Their Support for Genocide in Sudan**

Financially Support the Movement for Refugee Rights:

Since Refugees International does not accept funding from any government or the United Nations, we are reliant on support from individuals like you. With this independence, we can speak freely and impartially. When you give one-time or monthly, send funds from your donor advised fund or IRA, donate stock or by wire, or include us in your planned giving - it all makes a difference. Learn more [here](#) to determine which methods work best for you.

Share Feedback and Photos!

We want to know how it went! Take photos of your event and share with us! Contact Rachel Roberts at rroberts@refugeesinternational.org or fill out [this form](#).

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