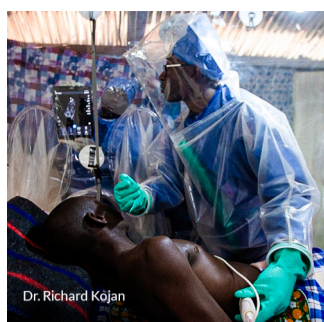


World Refugee Day is June 20, and as we pay tribute to the courage and dignity of people forced to flee, we also recognize the heroism of the humanitarians who risk their lives when crisis erupts. In eastern Congo, a major Ebola outbreak is underway in a region already fractured by conflict, displacement, and aid cuts, making this deadly virus' spread even harder to contain.

Aurora humanitarians [Julienne Lusenge](#) and [Dr. Richard Kojan](#) are among those protecting lives on the front lines. Scroll down to our reading corner for recent news stories about their efforts.



Their work confirms what Aurora knows to be true: **local humanitarians have the experience, expertise, trust within their communities, and closeness to crisis to act immediately.** But they cannot do it without resources.



Direct funding that reaches humanitarians quickly is one of the most effective ways to stand with people on the front lines. Aurora provides flexible, trust-based funding to a vetted group of local humanitarians operating in Eastern Congo and other crisis zones around the world. Your gift helps move resources quickly to those already serving their communities, turning urgent needs into lasting care.

**DONATE**

Those who have lived through crisis often know best what others in crisis need.

This World Refugee Day, we invite you to see the **more than 117 million people forced to flee** not only through what they have lost, but through what they carry: hard-won knowledge, deep community trust, and an understanding of what care must look like when everything familiar is gone.

[Shadi Martini](#) knows that from the inside. Before the war in Syria, he was a businessman running his family's hospital in Aleppo. When wounded civilians began coming through the doors, he chose to help. That choice eventually set Shadi on a path from personal displacement to life-saving humanitarian work across the Middle East and beyond.



For World Refugee Day, we asked Shadi what that taught him. Here is what he shared with us:

*"No one chooses to become a refugee. It means being separated from everyone you love and dropped into an unfamiliar world. Having lived through this, I know the profound isolation of those early days. What I needed most was a hand to guide me through the dark. The volunteers who welcomed us were that light. Now, my mission is to be that same anchor for others.*

*Humans are hardwired to care for one another and to extend a hand to the stranger. When ordinary people are thrust into situations that require impossible choices, they must look to their moral compass. I chose to alleviate suffering, even when it meant risking my life. The beautiful thing is that I wasn't alone; I have witnessed so many others make that same choice. Beneath the political divisions, we all share the same basic humanity."*

Voices like Shadi's help change the narrative about who refugees are and inspire everyone to recognize their own humanitarian potential. Read his full story [here](#).



### Aurora at UNGA Week

This September, we will bring together humanitarians, partners, and friends at UNGA Week in New York to put the focus where it belongs: on the people closest to crisis, the results they achieve, and the support they need to keep helping.

### Discover stories of courage and humanity

Meet Aurora Humanitarians whose lived experience and leadership are changing how communities respond to crisis.



**LEARN MORE**



### Nominate a humanitarian for the Aurora Prize

Help us find the humanitarians whose courage should be recognized and supported through the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity.

**NOMINATE NOW**

With Gratitude,  
The Aurora Team

### Aurora Book Club

Our reading corner for voices that deepen our sense of what it means to be human and humanitarian.



Aurora Prize Laureate [Julienne Lusenge](#) [speaks to AP News](#) about how [misinformation](#) and [lack of protective equipment](#) are making a deadly crisis harder to contain as Ebola resurfaces in the DRC.

[In the Financial Times](#), she warns that empty pharmacy shelves and shortages of medicine are undermining the response (*FT subscription required*).



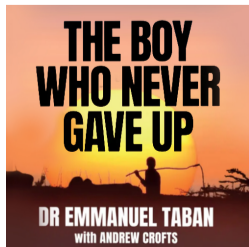
In [The Guardian](#), Aurora humanitarian [Dr. Richard Kojan](#) also brings a frontline perspective, noting that late detection and limited resources are narrowing the window to contain the outbreak and save lives.



Feeling overwhelmed by the weight of the world?

[Marguerite Barankitse](#) offers a reminder of what love can still make possible. When despair and inhumanity seemed to have the final word, this Aurora Prize Laureate chose action, saving children and rebuilding communities.

Read her powerful story on [EWTN](#).



For another reminder of what courage can carry, read [The Boy Who Never Gave Up](#), which follows Aurora humanitarian [Dr. Emmanuel Taban's](#) journey from refugee teenager fleeing war in Sudan to pioneering pulmonologist in South Africa.

Did a quote or idea stick with you?  
Tell us about it!



[info@aurorahumanitarian.org](mailto:info@aurorahumanitarian.org)

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