

Syria's Children: A Lost Generation? UNICEF 14 March 2013 Two years into the conflict in Syria, children are paying the heaviest price. The affected population estimates made in late 2012 speak for themselves: of the 4 million affected people inside Syria, almost 2 million are children, and of the 2 million displaced, 800,000 are children. The current numbers are most likely much higher. Half a million child refugees are now in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt. Thousands more are streaming across Syria's borders every week. Meanwhile, host communities that were already vulnerable before the crisis are overwhelmed. In short, the crisis is reaching a point of no return, with long-term consequences for Syria and the region as a whole, including the risk of a 'lost generation' of Syrian children.

In Syria, children have been exposed to grave human rights violations including killing and maiming, sexual violence, torture, arbitrary detention, recruitment and use by armed forces and groups, and exposure to explosive remnants of war. Basic infrastructure and public services are being systematically destroyed. Families are struggling to survive in increasingly desperate conditions. One in every five schools in Syria is destroyed, damaged or converted into shelters for displaced families – disrupting schooling for hundreds of thousands of children. (...)

Despite these challenges, UNICEF continues to play a key role in line with its mandate and comparative advantage in protecting children's rights and meeting their humanitarian needs. (...)

Today, UNICEF works with a wide network of 40 partners and plans to expand this network to reach more and more children in need inside Syria, including in Dera'a, Tartous, Homs, and Al-Hassakeh, in addition to Damascus.

Over the coming months, UNICEF and partners will continue to focus on delivering life-saving interventions such as water purifying supplies for 10 million people and immunization for up to 3 million children against polio and measles through dozens of mobile clinics that will reach children all over Syria, including in areas controlled by the opposition. At the same time, we will work on ensuring access to education and providing psychosocial support to the most vulnerable children.

To assist as many children as possible, UNICEF appealed for more than US\$195 million to meet the humanitarian needs of children and women affected by the crisis in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt until the end of June. (...)

Additional resources are also urgently required to maintain children's education and protect them from violence, exploitation and other forms of abuse.

See the full report

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