

## Crisis in Syria:

### Save the Children and Partners Working Nonstop to Aid Children; New Support Needed as Families Flee Fighting

August 2016

**“Bombing a maternity hospital, which is helping women living under the shadow of war to give birth safely, is a shameful act, whether it was done intentionally or because due care was not taken to avoid civilian areas.”**

*Sonia Khush, Save the Children’s Syria Director, following the bombing of a hospital that we support in northwest Syria.*

#### The Emergency

The humanitarian community’s latest estimates are that half of Syria’s entire population has fled their homes as the five-year-old conflict rages on. Close to 5 million Syrian children and adults are refugees, and an estimated 6.5 million others are displaced inside the country and face extraordinary deprivation.

The United Nation’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that 8.7 million Syrians are unable to meet their basic food needs, and that 70 percent of the population has no access to safe drinking water. It’s thought that tens of thousands of children have lost their lives. More than 7.5 million children will grow up in Syria having known only conflict.

While there was some drop in fighting in recent months following a UN Security Council resolution, the situation has again deteriorated and many areas inside Syria have only limited access to aid and are experiencing shortages of food, water and medical care. There has also been an escalation in fighting in the northwest region, with airstrikes and fighting in and around the cities of Aleppo and



Bayan\*, 13, stands at the entrance to her family’s tent in a camp for displaced families in northern Syria. She has attended a camp school supported by Save the Children.

*Photo: Ahmad Baroudi for Save the Children*

*\* name changed to protect privacy*

Idlib. One of those airstrikes in Idlib on July 29 struck a maternity hospital supported by Save the Children and run by our partner, Syria Relief. Two men waiting for their wives to give birth were killed and several babies and women were injured.

#### Our Response

Since the beginning of our humanitarian response to the crisis in Syria, Save the Children and its partners have worked tirelessly to reach over 1 million internally displaced children and adults in the country’s south, central, northeast and northwest regions.

Our teams are also working in refugee camps and host communities in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey to provide tens of thousands of refugee children and their families, as well as children from host communities, with access to critical resources and services.

### **The Impact of Your Support**

***We continue our call for support for the breadth of our aid to desperate Syrian children and families inside Syria and in neighboring countries. Your contribution, pooled with other resources, will help us sustain lifesaving work and critical services addressing health, nutrition and education needs and help to protect very vulnerable children. This funding may also be used to help us expand our urgent work in northwest Syria near the cities of Aleppo and Idlib. Over 20,000 people have reportedly fled Idlib for the countryside, escaping violence with only what they can carry.***

### **Southern and Central Syria**

Our partners have reached nearly 300,000 children and adults in southern and central Syria. Improving water, sanitation and hygiene systems and practices is central to our effort; we also have an emergency education program for children ages 6-18.

### **Northwest Syria**

Through partners, Save the Children has been providing extremely vulnerable children and families in and near Idlib and Aleppo with health care, nutrition services, education and food security and livelihoods activities. We have also run small-scale water, sanitation and hygiene and child protection programs in both cities.

Since early July, northwest Syria – particularly Idlib and Aleppo – have seen a significant surge in violence. To respond to the increase of displaced people, we are seeking funding for mobile health teams and other health responses; to provide newly displaced families with cash grants to help them meet their immediate needs; for up to 30

temporary learning spaces for children; and for psychosocial support for girls and boys traumatized by their experiences.



Syrians in the city of Idlib gather at the entrance to a maternity hospital, where a bomb fell on July 29. We support the hospital, which serves more than 1,300 women and performs over 300 deliveries each month.

*Save the Children Photo*

### **Northeast Syria**

In northeast Syria, we support conflict-affected children through psychosocial support programs. In June, over 2,300 girls and boys attended activities in our child-friendly spaces. We also engage children in programs to boost their resilience and strengthen their capacity to cope with their experiences. Our temporary learning spaces – which provide an alternative form of education for children forced out of school – have been operating continuously, serving hundreds of children in the month of June alone. Thirteen schools are being selected for rehabilitation.

### **Our Reach to Syrian Refugees**

Here are updates of our humanitarian programs in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya and Turkey:

## Egypt

At the end of May, the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported over 117,700 Syrian refugees were registered in Egypt. The influx has led to an overcrowding in public schools; many refugees also face discrimination while accessing healthcare and attempting to find work.

Save the Children's programs focus on child protection, education and health. Our protection programs raise awareness of the risks of early marriage and assist unaccompanied refugee children who are alone and vulnerable. Additionally, we engage hundreds of adults in positive parenting sessions to improve parent-child interactions and combat violence.

## Iraq

As of June, there were over 247,300 Syrian refugees registered in Iraq.

We run child-friendly spaces and youth-friendly spaces in camps and urban settings. The programs focus on building resilience and offering psychosocial support to participants. Children, adolescents, and parents/caregivers attend regular sessions that raise awareness of children's rights, and the harmful effects of violence and child marriage.

We also implement refugee education programs in Erbil and Dohuk – early childhood care and development, non-formal education and “catch-up” classes. We have constructed learning spaces to strengthen the local education system.

## Jordan

The number of registered Syrian refugees is over 657,400, according to UNHCR.

We have maintained a large response in camps and host communities, with an emphasis on protecting children and providing them with psychosocial support; meeting their nutritional needs; and offering access to quality education services.

Our child protection work includes raising awareness of children's rights, managing cases of very vulnerable children who require interventions for their safety and well-being, and training social workers who work with children living on the street.



Malik\*, 12, looks out from his tent in Iraq. His family has lived in the tent since fleeing shelling in Syria over two years ago. Malik and other children in the camp have access to recreational activities through our supporters.

*Photo: Tom Pilston for Save the Children  
\* name changed to protect privacy*

We support 32 informal education centers in camps and host communities that provide hundreds of children and adolescents with informal education, psychosocial support and life skills. We hold awareness sessions with adolescents and parents on child rights and the harm caused by violent discipline and early marriage.

Our nutrition teams screen children for malnutrition and help run a large infant and young child feeding program that works with over 350 community based organizations, schools and health centers. We monitor the nutritional status of newly-arriving refugee children and refer

malnourished children for care. Our new children's nutrition bus reaches children and mothers in hard-to-access places.

Save the Children in Jordan is also the leading agency in UNICEF's initiative to expand the reach of informal education. We have designed our own curriculum in math, Arabic, English, science and life skills, and have taught it to Jordanian and Syrian children who do not attend school. Our approach has been so well received that it is being shared with other education providers.



Our early childhood programs in Lebanon help young Syrian refugees like Suzan\* prepare for formal school.

*Photo: Ahmed Bayram for Save the Children  
\* name changed to protect privacy*

## Lebanon

Lebanon, a country with a population of a little over 4 million, hosts the highest number of Syrian refugees relative to its population in the region, with almost 1.1 million registered Syrians.

Our priorities are protect children from harm and exploitation; address refugee families' food needs and ensure that they have shelter, clean water and basic necessities; and provide education activities.

Our education programs include early childhood care and development, mobile libraries and reading corners at schools, accelerated learning programs, supporting youth taking technical and vocational training, and organizing parent groups.

We recently completed installing a water chlorination system that improves the quality of drinking water for 25,000 refugees and those in the host community. Our trained hygiene volunteers recently conducted 89 sessions for children and their caregivers.

## Turkey

Official figures show that over 2.7 million Syrians have registered in Turkey since 2011. Government refugee camps house just 10 percent of the Syrian refugee population. The remainder live in villages, towns and cities.

We support eight temporary education centers for Syrian children. We have distributed student kits to 2,381 children, trained over 100 teachers and provide transportation assistance so 1,700 children can go to school.

We are awaiting approval from the government in Hatay Province to construct three schools to serve over 2,100 Syrian children. We also seek to identify particularly vulnerable children in schools and to address the causes of their learning difficulties.

## Libya

Libya has become the point of departure for many refugees and migrants from the Middle East and Africa hoping to safely reach Italy and Europe.

Basic health services are being provided in 10 schools, supporting children and families with basic health services, health education and hygiene kits.

## Why Save the Children?

*Save the Children is the world's leading child-focused humanitarian organization. We have nearly 100 years' experience responding to children and their families*

*during and after crises. We are exceptional among aid agencies because we provide comprehensive emergency preparedness, relief and recovery programs that are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of children and their families. We have well-trained national staff ready to respond at a moment's notice.*

*Our international experts in health, nutrition, food security, shelter, water and sanitation, education and child protection can join our local staff if needed. We also have pre-positioned relief supplies and medicines that can be distributed quickly.*

*Because we work directly with children and families in the heart of the crisis, we know immediately when conditions change and can adapt our programs to meet children's most urgent needs. Save the Children also stays as long as it takes to help children, families and communities recover from their losses, rebuild their lives and become more resilient to future shocks.*

*Nobody knows when the next crisis will strike. That's why 10 percent of your generous gift goes to helping our emergency teams prepare for and provide critical assistance when and where children need us the most.*