

## UNICEF Support to Refugee Children in the Context of the UNHCR-led Regional Response Plan (RRP) to the Syrian Crisis

Presently, nearly **46,500 registered Syrian refugees** (UNHCR, April 2012) are displaced across the sub-region, of whom **an estimated 50 per cent are children**.

UNICEF Country Offices in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, as well as the Regional Office based in Amman, have been mobilized to respond to the humanitarian needs of children as outlined in the UNHCR-led Regional Response Plan.

Syrian refugee children's most pressing needs include:

- **Psychosocial Support.** Reports from interviews with children and parents on the ground indicate that a majority of children are traumatized and experiencing signs of grave distress.
- **Education and Recreation.** Syrian children and their caregivers express a strong desire for a normalized routine and safe learning environment. Unfortunately, a significant percentage of refugee families struggle to meet the invisible costs of schooling, such as textbooks, supplies, transportation and meals.
- **Health Care and Immunization.** Safe access to medical care—and immunization in particular—is critical. Children have missed out on their routine vaccination regimens, posing a serious future risk.
- **Protection for the Most Vulnerable.** UNICEF is concerned about reported cases of child labour and early marriage among refugee children. Comprehensive protection and monitoring mechanisms for the most vulnerable children and families must be implemented immediately.
- **WASH.** Access to basic sanitation facilities and clean water storage in communal settings is critical to halting the spread of communicable diseases.

### UNICEF's response in support to UNHCR's mandate

UNICEF is responding to the critical needs of displaced children, their mothers and caregivers, as well as children of host communities, through its leadership and coordination role in the following sectors:

#### **Child Protection:**

- **Providing** psychosocial support through training of experts, community workers and social workers
- **Strengthening** referral and support mechanisms via a network of social welfare centres.
- **Establishing** and monitoring standards for psychosocial support activities
- **Expanding** the range of Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) to refugee children that provide protection, safe recreation, and remedial and non-formal education

UNICEF and its partners have to date reached **over 2,500 Syrian children** in the sub-region with critical assistance, enabling thorough psychosocial assessment and referral for the most distressed children.

#### **Education:**

- **Partnering** with Ministries of Education of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey to allow **free access to public schools** for Syrian children.
- **Supporting** host governments in covering the costs of tuition, school supplies, teacher salaries, and rental of school facilities when required.
- **Facilitating** the provision of remedial and non-formal education to ensure that Syrian children can make up for missed school days.

UNICEF has to date provided **more than 5,000 Syrian children** in the sub-region with access to formal and informal education.

**Immunization and Care:**

- **Providing** immunization coverage and care, in close collaboration with Ministries of Health, UNHCR and the WHO.
- **Working** with host governments, UN agencies, international NGOs and local associations to monitor the health and nutrition status of Syrian children in the sub-region.

**WASH:**

- **Leading** WASH coordination efforts to ensure facilities for children are up to standards, especially in schools and communal centres
- **Improving** overall sanitation in communal settings by providing latrines and clean water storage, and promoting hygiene awareness.

UNICEF has to date supplied **nearly 10,000 Syrians** and vulnerable families across the sub-region with hygiene kits, in coordination with UNHCR's identified needs.

## Funding Requirements

**With the continued influx of refugees, big gaps remain and funding is urgently needed.** UNICEF has to date received **less than USD \$1.5 million** against its total requirement of USD \$7.4 million within the RRP. For UNICEF—alongside UNHCR and local partners—to continue delivering and expanding services to **all** Syrian children in need, **we must raise an additional USD \$6 million in funding.**