

Regional reflections on 2015 education achievements, while looking ahead at the education priorities for 2016

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

In December, the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Jordan confirmed that 145,458 Syrian students had access to formal education in schools in camp and host community settings for the 2015/2016 academic year. For the first time, this data was compiled and analysed through the Education Management Information System (EMIS), which 3RP partners supported through the provision of laptops in the camp schools.

In Turkey, significant progress has been made in both increasing access to educational services and enhancing educational quality during 2015. The number of Syrian children enrolled in recognised education programmes at the start of the 2015/2016 school year had risen by 30 per cent compared to the same period in 2014. Additional educational places were created through the construction, renovation and refurbishment of schools, which formed a major focus of the Education Sector's response in 2015.

In Iraq, over 36,000 refugee children were enrolled in formal primary education by the end of the year, and over 6,000 were accessing non-formal education opportunities. A range of assistance was provided to schools and school children throughout the year, including the rehabilitation of facilities, provision of educational and learning materials, stationary, Quality Learning Environment assessment tools, kerosene lamps for the winter period, training sessions, cash for uniforms, and transportation assistance.

In Egypt, some 39,000 children are enrolled in formal primary education, and around 6,000 in non-formal education. The 'First Arab Regional Meeting on Education 2030' was held on 15-16 December in Egypt. Over 90 participants representing high level officials from 17 Arab member states, UN co-convenors, civil society organizations and private foundations attended the meeting. Concerns expressed included the negative impact of the Syrian crisis on the national education development gains achieved in past years in the region.

NEEDS ANALYSIS:

While education ministries in refugee hosting countries have generally welcomed Syrian children into their education systems, there is a profound strain on resources, leading to significant needs in terms of access and quality. Some 691,000 Syrian refugee children (50 per cent) are out of school as of September 2015.

There are a range of factors contributing to low enrolment and attendance rates, including policy and bureaucratic regulations, with many children required to take placement tests and provide documentation for school registration, which many families no longer have or are unable to obtain.

There are issues in the quality of education, including: new and different curricula; language of teaching; lack of appropriate infrastructure; teacher capacity; overcrowding; lack of certified education programmes; students with trauma and distress; and limited programmes to address lost years of schooling. Targeted education interventions are needed to address the risks of negative coping behaviours.



Sector Response Summary:



1,268,194 Refugees & Local Community Members targeted for assistance by end-2015
903, 473 assisted in 2015



Syrian Refugees in the Region:



4,270,000 Syrian Refugees expected by end-2015
4,591,939 currently registered or awaiting registration



Education Sector Funding Status:



USD 440 million required in 2015 (Agencies)
USD 409 million received in 2015



NEW REPORT SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON REFUGEE EDUCATION CHALLENGES

A regional report titled 'Education of Syrian refugee children' by Rand Corporation released this month stresses the need to develop both short term and long-term approaches to providing education for children refugees.

The report reviews Syrian refugee education for children in the three neighbouring countries with the largest populations of refugees — Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan — and analyses four areas: access, management, society, and quality.

The report finds that access to education is the biggest obstacle: barriers to access include school space shortages, language and curriculum, transportation, parental documentation, child labour and early marriage, school fees, and safety.

Given that the Syrian civil war is ongoing, it will be many years until the Syrians can return home. Yet the refugee education response has mainly been addressed as a short-term effort, according to the report, and there has been little longer term planning to manage refugee education into the future.

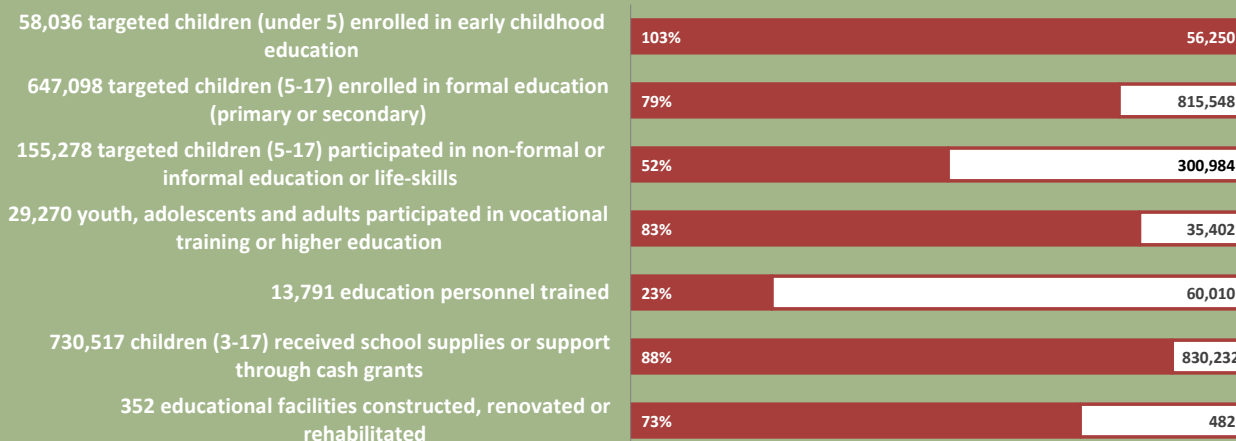
The report finds that several societal challenges are related to education, including how Syrian refugee children are separated from or integrated with host country children in schools, certification of education to provide pathways to the labour market or further education, the need to improve livelihoods to reduce child labour or early marriage and enable education, and how schools and teachers manage the psychosocial needs of children. While these policy issues are politically charged, not addressing them poses risks to delicate societal balances over time.

Finally, the influx of many new children has led to problems with the quality of education, for both refugees and host country children. Quality concerns include crowded classrooms and placing children of different educational levels together. The additional students have meant that investments in quality improvements for host country education systems have been put on hold.

The report is available at http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR859.html

REGIONAL RESPONSE INDICATORS: JANUARY - DECEMBER 2015

■ Progress ■ Planned Response, by end-2015



These dashboards reflect the achievements of the more than 200 partners, including governments, UN Agencies, and NGOs, involved in the 3RP response in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Progress and targets may change in line with data revisions. All data on this Dashboard is current as at 31 December 2015. Funding status is indicative pending finalization of accounts and allocations.