A CHILDREN’S CRISIS
Assessment results and reports from the field demonstrate that children are among the most affected by the Syria crisis. As the protective environment in Syria continues to degrade, millions of conflict-affected children and women will be left vulnerable to the increased risk of grave rights violations and exposure to disease. There is an urgent need to protect Syria’s social fabric and respond to children’s rights and needs.

Sector Needs, Results, Challenges and Way Forward in Syria (Jan—Apr 2013)

WASH—Needs
The results of UNICEF’s water, sanitation and hygiene assessment highlight the dire situation inside Syria, particularly in collective shelters where women and children are exposed to unsanitary conditions. The decrease in the availability of safe water, to one-third of pre-crisis levels, and the reduction in the treatment of sewer water and solid waste management, pose severe public and environmental health risks, including acute diarrhea and typhoid, as well as acute respiratory infections and skin diseases. Partners report frequent cases of diarrhea and an increasing number of typhoid cases in Deir-ez-Zor, Hama and Homs. Warm weather coupled with the deterioration in access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene in affected areas of Syria, poses serious public and environmental health risks for children and women, in particular increased risk of disease outbreaks, cholera and waterborne diseases, as well as acute respiratory infections.

Results
* 7.4 million people have access to safe drinking water through chlorination, provision of generators, pumps and spare parts and reparation and maintenance of WASH infrastructure in schools, IDP shelters and towns;
* Emergency repair of urban and rural water systems in conflict affected areas including Al Hassakeh, Homs and Rural Damascus and Aleppo;
* 400,000 people benefiting from hygiene supplies.

Challenges and Way Forward
Continued fighting in urban areas has significantly or completely damaged water system infrastructures in areas such as Aleppo and Deir-ez-Zor. Access to these systems for reparations and maintenance remains unpredictable. Additional support is required to prevent outbreaks through the prepositioning of supplies ahead of the summer months. Joint advocacy for access to vulnerable populations remain a priority.

In Syria
3,128,000
# children affected out of 6,800,000
# of people affected of which 4,250,000 are internally displaced

Outside Syria
700,000
# of children affected of 1,400,000
# of pending & registered Refugees

UNICEF Presence
SYRIA— 75 staff
Damascus, Homs, Tartous with presence in Deir-ez-Zor
LEBANON— 41 staff
Beirut, Tyre, Qoobylat
JORDAN— 63 staff
Amman with presence in Za’atari
IRAQ— 82 staff
Baghdad, Erbil, Basraa and Amman Support Centre
TURKEY— 44 staff
Ankara with presence in Gaziantep
**EDUCATION**

**Needs**
With one-fifth of the country’s schools damaged, destroyed or used as shelters, children’s access to education has significantly decreased. Opportunities for schooling are constrained for the more than 1.9 million displaced children. In Aleppo, only 6 per cent of school aged children are enrolled in school. Highlighting the impact of the escalation and ongoing violence on education, the Government of Syria recently reported that an additional 627 schools are currently out of service.

**Results**
- 85,000 children benefiting from remedial classes, psychosocial support and recreational activities through 330 school clubs in Dara’a, Deir-ez-Zor, Rural Damascus, Lattakia, Tartous, Hama, Homs, Quneitra;
- 130,000 children reached through the distribution of essential school supplies.

**CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD**

Schools are often damaged in attacks or occupied by warring parties. In areas where schools are operating, many parents often keep their children home because traveling to and from school is considered too dangerous. Additional efforts must be invested to support remedial and quality education for affected children, and in particular those displaced.

**CHILD PROTECTION**

**Needs**
There are serious child protection concerns for tens of thousands of children in Syria. There are reports of grave child rights violations including killing, maiming, rape, gender-based violence, recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups, exposure to explosive remnants of war, and lack of access to healthcare and education.

**Results**
- Increased capacity to establish child protection monitoring to identify the main child protection concerns and inform response and prevention strategies;
- 80,000 children benefitting from psychosocial support, and plans to provide increased access in all governorates.

**CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD**

Mobilizing joint advocacy for all parties to the conflict to abide by international human rights and humanitarian law, and to take action to prevent grave violations against civilians, particularly children, remain challenges. In addition, the limited number of partners addressing child protection makes it difficult to scale up activities countrywide.
HEALTH and NUTRITION

Needs
Due to declining access to routine immunizations, an increasing number of children are at risk for vaccine preventable diseases such as measles and polio. Children also face constrained access to nutritional services. Based on 2012 data, an estimated 480,000 children may be at risk of malnutrition; however this number is expected to be much higher. Compounding factors include growing food insecurity and difficulties accessing treatment.

Results
- 900,000 children reached to date in a national campaign targeting 2.5 million children with measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), polio and Vitamin-A. Supplies to support the vaccination campaign have reached every governorate.
- 45,000 children received medical check-ups through the scale up of mobile health clinics to 47 in 12 governorates;
- 39,000 children under five benefitted from support provided to the Syrian Ministry of Health and its partners in the treatment and prevention of acute malnutrition through the provision of therapeutic and supplementary products across the country.

Challenges and Way Forward
Children face difficulties accessing healthcare due to the destruction of health system infrastructures and targeting of health centers. Parents of injured children in some areas don’t dare utilize public health facilities for fear of reprisals. In addition, there is a lack of medicine, lack of medical supplies, and a diminishing health workforce, including for specialized services such as trauma surgery, gender-based violence, and disabilities.

SUB-REGION: Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey (Jan—Apr 2013)

Result Highlights
In the sub-region more than 350,000 people have been reached since the start of the year.
- 250,000 people with access to drinking and domestic water including more than 110,000 in Jordan;
- 79,900 children immunized against measles in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq;
- 143,000 children enrolled in learning programmes, including in Turkey;
- 157,000 with access to psychosocial support.

Challenges and Way Forward
Resources in host countries, such as water, education and health services, are quickly becoming overstretched, leading to concerns of increased tension between host and refugee communities. Given the large-scale displacements taking place in Syria and the interruption in water supply and wastewater systems, as well as the high number of movements across borders, disease transmission to neighbouring countries is a major risk. Appropriate and timely preventive interventions and case management is crucial.
SPECIAL FOCUS ON CROSS-LINE

With partners including UN sister agencies, international and local NGOs and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), UNICEF works across in all governorates in Syria, including cross-line areas, to reach the most vulnerable populations, particularly children and women. Approximately 35 per cent of beneficiaries are reached as a result of cross-line interventions.

UNICEF participates in regular missions including joint missions with partners to hot spot areas. In April, cross-line missions to Homs and Aleppo highlighted a deteriorating humanitarian situation. In Homs, the shortage of water and waste management is increasing health risks. In Aleppo, water and sanitation concerns increase the likelihood of disease and place children at risk of malnutrition. Health, nutrition and WASH are priorities, as well as education and psychosocial support.

UNICEF Cross-line missions (01 January – 01 May 2013)

**Aleppo 430 Km**
- UNICEF/WFP on 16 Apr
- Joint UN mission on 13 Apr
- Joint UN mission on 30 Mar
- Joint UN mission on 12 Mar
- Joint UN mission/North Idlib on 24 Feb

**Homs, Talbisheh**
- 12 Km from Homs city
- UNICEF Mission on 29 Jan
- Joint UN mission on 25 Apr
- Joint UN mission on 01 Apr

**Homs, Al-Qareyteen**
- 90 Km to Homs
- UNICEF/WFP mission 01 May

**Homs, Ter Meala**
- 7.5 Km from Homs city
- Joint UN mission on 24 Apr

**Source:** UNICEF, May 2013

UNICEF Syria Crisis: [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/syriancrisis_68134.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/syriancrisis_68134.html)
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