



January, 2016

Save the Children Responds to the Child Refugee Crisis

The Emergency

Children and families are on the move in unprecedented numbers, creating the highest level of displacement since World War II. The world is witnessing a rapid escalation in the number of people forced to flee from conflict, wars and persecution in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq – moving toward countries of transit, such as Greece, Italy, Serbia, Lebanon and Egypt – seeking safety and relief of suffering in countries like Germany and other open-border European nations.

Approximately half of the 19.5 million registered refugees globally are children and youth. From Syria alone children make up 53% of the refugees. These numbers are growing dramatically as a result of escalating crises in places where violence, persecution and conflict are uprooting entire populations.

Children and families are fleeing out of fear for their lives and embarking on perilous journeys. Many hope for the chance of a better life and the opportunity for asylum. But while they are on the move, they are extremely vulnerable.

Save the Children seeks your generous support for our Child Refugee Crisis Appeal, which will help us reach desperate children across Europe and in other locations where refugees are on the move.



Critical Needs Among Children and Families

With thousands of refugees arriving in countries that are a gateway to the core of Europe, the local capacity of government authorities is being pushed to the breaking point in some locations, including Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and Lebanon. Basic services are stretched to inadequacy as great numbers succeed in fleeing their homes, only to find little in the way of comfort or support – sleeping in the open or in public spaces, suffering from exhaustion and malnutrition, all the while left highly vulnerable to exploitation and harm.

Children are vulnerable to abuse and trafficking, families have no adequate shelter in informal camps and food is scarce in many places. The health needs are constant, since access to primary health care is severely limited, and conditions make children especially vulnerable to diarrheal diseases.

Save the Children's Response

Save the Children has been responding to crises around the world for almost 100 years. We quickly moved to meet the growing needs of children and families on the move, allocating funding from our Children's Emergency Fund to respond to the crisis in several locations. Here are examples of countries where our relief efforts are underway:

Save the Children Responds to the Child Refugee Crisis continued...

Greece

We have an established presence on the island of Lesbos, at the Northern Greek Border, on Chios and Samos with activities expanding. We are moving forward with child protection initiatives to build the capacity of government authorities and civil society organizations to help vulnerable children – especially those who are unaccompanied – and to coordinate a protective environment for children in informal camps. We are also distributing emergency shelters, hygiene kits and baby kits.



Photo Credit: Hedinn Halldorsson/Save the Children

Italy

Save the Children works at the southern borders of Italy, addressing the needs of children - particularly unaccompanied children - who arrive from across the Mediterranean Sea. We have set up child-friendly spaces that give children a safe place to play and socialize, release stress and talk about their experience with trained emergency staff. Support services are provided to child refugees at railway stations in Rome and Milan, and Save the Children has been offering care and guidance for girls and boys at government processing sites. We are intensifying our activities there.

As of December, 2015, Save the Children has reached more than 3.6 million people in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and Syria -- approximately 2.2 million children.

Serbia

As increasing numbers of refugees are traversing the Balkans toward the core of Europe, Save the Children is set to help children and families who are spending time in public spaces and abandoned buildings in Belgrade. In Serbia we provide daily hot meals, and run a 24/7 Safe Space with 13 beds, a resting zone and hygiene facilities.

Lebanon

In Lebanon, Save the Children has been providing an integrated response and since the start of the crisis has provided over 357,400 beneficiaries with shelter, education, child protection, food security and livelihoods and health services. By the end of 2015 we anticipated Save the Children would have helped more than 400,000 children and adults in Lebanon alone.

Egypt

Egypt has seen an influx of 500 – 700,000 refugee arrivals, 50% of whom are children. Save the Children has conducted child protection risk assessments for Libyan children living in Alexandria, and together with our partners, since 2013 have reached 41,000 people, of whom 25,000 are children.