



# #NOLOST GENERATION

**No Lost Generation | Read-Out of High Level Panel**  
January 24 2017, Helsinki Syria Crisis Conference

## **The No Lost Generation Initiative**

Since its inception in 2013, the No Lost Generation initiative has been an ambitious commitment to action by humanitarians, donors and policy in support of children and youth affected by the Syria and Iraq crises. The aim of the initiative is to secure the safety and future of a whole generation of children and young people whose wellbeing, education and development stand to be decimated by six years of war. It is a powerful call to invest in the resilience, capacities and potential on which the future of the region depends.

## **No Lost Generation High Level Panel at Helsinki Syria Crisis Conference**

Today a High Level Panel on No Lost Generation at the Syria Crisis Conference, Chaired by Marit Berger Røslund, State Secretary for Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and moderated by UNICEF's Regional Director for MENA, Geert Cappelaere, addressed the question:

*How can we secure the protection, education and participation of the current generation to realise their full potential and enable them to contribute meaningfully in their communities and to Syria's future in the next two to four years?*

## **Key points emerging from the discussion**

**Children and youth face unacceptable levels of violence every day inside Syria.** Parties to the conflict and those with influence over them must end this conflict, and in the meantime ensure the cessation of all violations of children's rights as an urgent priority, in particular attacks on education. All states should immediately sign and implement the Safe Schools Declaration.

**Safety in families and communities and inside schools, as well as access to documentation, legal residency and freedom of movement are priorities** in their own right both inside Syria and in neighbouring countries; and they are also essential to securing education outcomes.

**All children from Syria must have access to quality education, in line with London commitments.** This requires scaled up, multi-sector support for children and families to convert the policy shifts made by refugee hosting countries into access to school for children. Families living in dire poverty require financial support through social protection systems to avoid negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage and child labour, and keep children in school. Ensuring pathways back into school for those who have dropped out, and recognition of school certificates are urgent priorities. Children who have experienced trauma need extra support to learn and heal.

**Young people affected by this crisis are our largest un-tapped resource.** It is essential that they are provided with opportunities to play an active role in their future, families, communities and society. Higher education and pathways to employment are important means to help achieve this. The international community must also make room for youth to engage in its support to the Syria crisis, including in all post-conflict planning. In this vein we should **establish a process whereby Syrian youth help set the agenda and steer the conversations in the forthcoming Brussels conference on Syria.**



*Youth need to be given a chance to think and lead for the future of Syria ... I believe that we can rebuild Syria better than before.* – Humam Alasaad, Field Assistant with Mercy Corps in Greece

*Thousands have lost their families, they lost their chance to continue their education to reach their ambition and many are married in age of childhood. I am here to make their voices heard.* – Magi, a female volunteer in a local NGO inside Syria

*It is hard to imagine a more important item on our agenda than ensuring the safety, education and wellbeing of the children and young people who are the future of Syria and the region. We must keep this topic at the top of the agenda in all relevant forums, including the Brussels pledging conference and other forthcoming events.* - Marit Berger Røslund, State Secretary, Norway

*When children are facing violence or working to support their families, they can't learn. We need to invest in child protection systems to get the education outcomes these children need.* - Lama Yazbeck, CEO, Lebanese NGO Himaya

*With the Syria crisis the whole world is undergoing an exam. Education must be our first priority for the Syrian refugees.* - Ercan Demirci, Deputy Undersecretary, Ministry of National Education, Turkey

*The Syria crisis is forcing us to innovate, and to take risks in order to reach the most vulnerable communities... Without the courage of our staff there would be no education in places like Aleppo and Latakia* - Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner General, UNRWA

*When I hear the testimony of the young people here today, and the stories from those who work with children, I see that there is no lost generation.* Geert Cappelaere, Regional Director MENA, UNICEF

### Children and youth affected by the Syria crisis: statistics

- Nearly half of the 4.8 million Syrian refugees in the region are children.
- In the 2015/2016 school year 1.75 million Syrian children affected by the crisis were out of school and a further 1.35m were at risk of dropping out.
- 44,000 Palestine refugee students from grades 1 to 9 are attending UNRWA schools inside Syria, compared to 67,000 at the onset of the crisis.
- One third of school-age refugee children– 530,000 - have no access to either formal or non-formal education as of November 2016, one year after the London Conference.
- Inside Syria, 1 in 3 schools has been destroyed or is no longer functioning.
- Inside Syria there are 5.8 million children and 2.7 million youth<sup>1</sup> in need of protection.
- Inside Syria, recruitment of children is reported in 90% of sub-districts. Other reported child protection issues include child labour, sexual violence and kidnapping.
- The majority of the over 800,000 youth in the Syrian refugees in the region are not in education.

### No Lost Generation programmes in 2017: goals

#### Pillar I

Ensure that over 1.3m children are enrolled in formal or non-formal education in 3RP countries and reach a further 1.3m children inside Syria with non-formal education; working towards the end goal of getting all children affected by the crisis in school.

#### Pillar II

Reach over 100,000 boys and girls with specialized child protection services and over 1m children with structured, sustained child protection or psychosocial support programmes.

#### Pillar III

Increase the volume and quality of programming for young people, reaching over half a million with positive engagement opportunities by the end of the year.

No Lost Generation partners include ACTED, ActionAid, CARE, DRC, HRW, ILO, Intersos, IOM, IRC, IRD, Malalafund, Mercy Corps, NRC, OCHA, Plan International, Save the Children, TdH, UNHCR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNRWA, UN Women, WFP and World Vision.

---

<sup>1</sup> Youth is defined as people aged 15-24