

# European Union - UNICEF Partners for Children



Creating a Path to Early Recovery for Education in Syria



Homs - © UNICEF/Syria/2015/Omar Sanadiki



### EU donations in Syria help 2, 5 million children to go back to school

The nearly five- year conflict has had a staggering effect on the education and the future of Syrian children. Two million children are out of school and over 400,000 are at risk of dropping out. Some children have lost up to five years of their education and others have not stepped inside a classroom. The European Union has been at the forefront of the international response to support the Education Sector in Syria. Through the 2015/2016 'Back to Learning' campaign, UNICEF with support from the EU is distributing essential learning materials such as schoolbags, stationary and text books to 2.5 million children across the country.



Rural Damascus - © UNICEF/Syria/2015/Rafik ElOuerchefani



### 650,000 English textbooks for primary school children

Half of the 1.3 million English textbooks being distributed to primary school students in Syria are procured with European Union funding. Shortages of vital school supplies and text books is one reason children, particularly the most vulnerable such as those displaced by conflict, are not integrated or drop out of school. Such efforts are key to helping teachers and parents to keep children in school.



Tartous - © UNICEF/Syria/2015/Omar Sanadiki



### More than 200,000 school bags provided

As part of the 'Back to Learning Campaign 2015/2016' UNICEF is distributing 1 million school bags with stationary supplies out of which 210,000 have been procured with support from European Union funds. For the first time this year, UNICEF has procured all the school bags from local suppliers ensuring timely distribution of the materials and supporting local businesses.



Homs Old City - © UNICEF/Syria/2015/Shushan Mebrahtu



### **28,000 children in hard-to-reach areas benefit from catch-up classes**

In Syria today, over two million school aged children live in hard-to-reach areas and besieged locations. Many of them risked their lives to sit for national exams crossing active lines of conflict and several check points. Their courage demonstrates that children in Syria not only need an education, they desperately want one. UNICEF with the support of the European Union is providing almost 28,000 children in hard to reach areas with remedial education to make up for lost classes. During the current school year, 340,000 children out of the 1 million receiving school supplies live in locations which are difficult to access due to conflict and insecurity.



Tartous Karnak IDP Camp - © UNICEF/Syria/2015/Omar Sanadiki



### Education opportunities for all children

Education in general is free in Syria. However, sending a child to school is no longer affordable for many families. It is estimated that almost 80% of Syrians now live beneath the poverty line. Millions of families have lost their homes and livelihoods and covering basic costs such as school bags, stationary, and school uniforms and clothing is a severe financial burden. As one mom described to UNICEF outside a school in Damascus "When you have one kid, it might be affordable, but if you have two or three, it is really a hard burden these days to provide all of them with school supplies," The European Union is supporting UNICEF in providing a multi-faceted approach to provide education opportunities, including through provision of school supplies, self-learning materials and remedial classes.



Aleppo - © UNICEF/Syria/2015/Tomoya Sonoda



### 163,000 school children in 300 primary schools receive food and education

With the support from the European Union, UNICEF and WFP are working jointly to encourage children to return back to school through an integrated package of food and education supplies. In the first half of 2015, WFP provided on site snacks to 163,000 school children in 300 primary schools in Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Tartous, Homs and Hassakeh, while UNICEF supported the same children with remedial education, text books, stationary and school bags. Such joint efforts are encouraging families to send their children to school and provide boys and girls with an incentive to attend classes. The date-filled biscuits reduce short-term hunger and provide the micronutrients needed to grow and learn. The school supplies offset some of the cost of education so that low-income and displaced students can start the school year with new supplies.



Hassakeh - © UNICEF/Syria/2015/Delil Souliman



### Targeted help and programmes for children who are out-of-school

UNICEF is working with a range of partners across Syria to ensure that education is accessible for every child. This year, UNICEF is launching a dedicated “Self-Learning Programme” which targets out-of-school children who have no access to formal education. In addition an alternative, fast tracked curriculum has been introduced in schools where children who have missed out on education through displacement are struggling to catch up to their peers. The partnership between the European Union and UNICEF will enable expanded learning opportunities for millions of Syrian children. It is absolutely critical that these children are able to continue their education. It is not just their lives that are at stake, but the hope of an entire generation.