



# Preparing for the Future of Children and Youth in Syria and the Region through Education: London One Year On

Brussels Conference Education Report  
April 2017



#NOLOST  
GENERATION  
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Supporting the future  
of Syria and the region  
Brussels Conference - 5 April 2017

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the February 2016 London ‘Supporting Syria and the Region’ Conference, the No Lost Generation partners recognized that efforts to support the education of Syrian children and youth were not sufficient, and they set **ambitious goals**: All out-of-school children and youth inside Syria and all Syrian refugee children and youth in the five host countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt), together with affected host community children and youth, were to be provided with education through a total ask of US\$1.4 billion per year.

The *Syria Crisis Education Strategic Paper*, presented in London, outlined key **strategic shifts** to address the scale and challenges of this protracted crisis. These were articulated around the three pillars of education system strengthening, access and quality. The principle behind them is that education interventions occur along an emergency-to-resilience continuum and represent longer term ‘investments for the future’ while addressing the immediate needs related to the crisis. Furthermore, the strategic shifts are in line with the Sustainable Development Goal Four on education (SDG4) towards ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.

One year after London, **progress in education is measurable** – thanks to commendable efforts by governments and partners. Inside Syria, there was a decrease in the number of out-of-school children from 2.12 million (40 per cent) to 1.75 million (32 per cent) between the 2014/15 and the 2015/16 school years. In the five host countries, there was a 15 per cent decrease in the number of out-of-school refugee children, from a total of 630,500 (45 per cent) in December 2015 to a total of 534,500 (34 per cent) in December 2016.

The London education strategic shifts concretely translated into a **more effective education response** architecture inside Syria, and strengthened public education systems in the five host countries with nationally mainstreamed refugee response plans, policy frameworks and data collection instruments. Access strategies validated pathways from non-formal to formal education and enhanced community engagement together with social protection programmes and child protection support mechanisms.

In 2016, the total **funding requirement** for education in Syria and the five host countries was US\$866 million. By the end of the year, an amount of US\$618 million was received from donors for the education sector, representing 71 per cent of the total requirement and an increase of US\$158 million from 2015. More commendable is that 54 per cent of the funds received for 2016 were available to the education sector in the first half of the year, allowing for more effective planning and implementation.

Despite such progress, **substantial challenges** remain. Around 2.3 million Syrian children and youth are still out of school and a large number are at risk of dropping out. Vulnerable families draw upon negative coping mechanisms which impact on girls’ education. Low access rates to post-basic education, including technical, vocational education and training and tertiary education, are a grave concern. Syrian youth aged 15 to 24 years lack perspectives of meaningful livelihoods. The provision of quality education with a focus on attendance, learning outcomes, life skills acquisition and social cohesion, together with safety and security, remains timid and scattered. Multi-sectoral approaches to education need more attention. Funding to education continues to be far from the London US\$1.4 billion ask and needs to be further sustained, predictable and timely.

Gathering in Amman, Jordan, on 23 March 2017, education officials and stakeholders from Syria and the five host countries, as well as regional and global partners, commended the education progress made in the context of the Syria crisis, reviewed critically the remaining tasks, and agreed to send to Brussels a renewed and firm **commitment** to the ambitious goals of London, especially on learning, together with a message of **hope** for a better future for all children and youth in the region.



فتاة

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# CONTENTS

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<b>1. LONDON ONE YEAR ON: WHERE ARE WE IN EDUCATION?</b>	<b>2</b>
• Inside Syria	2
• In the five host countries	4
• Youth at the post-basic level	6
• Palestine refugees	7
• Strategic response	7
• Partnerships and resource mobilization	9
<b>2. OVERVIEW OF COUNTRY RESPONSE</b>	<b>12</b>
• Syria	12
• Turkey	14
• Lebanon	16
• Jordan	18
• Iraq	20
• Egypt	22
<b>3. WAY FORWARD: INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>27</b>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The following partners in Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt contributed to the drafting of this Report: Ministries and national institutions responsible for education; United Nations country office teams from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Programme (WFP); country education donor groups; and Syrian and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

At the regional level, the following education and development partners provided technical inputs. From United Nations agencies: the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and WFP. From NGOs and foundations: the British Council, Education Above All/Educate A Child (EAA/EAC), the Danish Refugee Council, Mercy Corps, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Office of the United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education, Save the Children, and World Vision International. The contribution from the donor community included Canada, the Department for International Development (DfID), the European Commission/European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (EC/ECHO), Finland, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

# 1. LONDON ONE YEAR ON: WHERE ARE WE IN EDUCATION?

After six years of conflict, over half of Syria's population had left their homes: 4.8 million people sought refuge in the region and 6.3 million are internally displaced.<sup>1</sup> Nearly 3 million children in Syria have never known peace, and suffer from psychosocial distress as a result of experiencing the horrors of war.<sup>2</sup> Gathering in London at the 'Supporting Syria and the Region' Conference in February 2016, the No Lost Generation (NLG) partners recognized that efforts to support Syrian children and youth in Syria and the five host countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt were not sufficient, and set high goals to avoid the loss of an entire generation.

Enormous work has since been conducted to meet the needs of Syrian children and youth and ensure that they are offered an opportunity to go to school and learn. One year after London, progress on access to education is measurable, but more needs to be done to maintain the momentum around the ambitious targets set in London. This section outlines the status of education in Syria and the five host countries one year after London, together with key features of the regional response, and provides some highlights on funding trends.

## INSIDE SYRIA

With the crisis entering its seventh year, 5.82 million children and youth from pre- to secondary school-age (in and out of school) are in **need of education** assistance.<sup>3</sup> The formal education system has lost 150,000<sup>4</sup> or over one third of education personnel, including teachers.<sup>5</sup> The total economic loss due to the dropout from basic and secondary education in 2011 is estimated to be US\$11 billion, equivalent to about 18 per cent of the 2010 Syrian Gross Domestic Product.<sup>6</sup>

The conflict has seen one in three schools damaged, destroyed, sheltering displaced families, or being used for military purposes.<sup>7</sup> In 2016, 87 **attacks on education**, including 76 attacks on schools and 11 attacks on teachers and education personnel, resulted in the killing and injuring of more than 250 children in or near schools and of at least 28 education personnel.<sup>8</sup> Children in school face challenges related to overstretched institutions, overcrowded and under-resourced schools, and lack of teaching and learning materials. As a consequence, many children have missed out on years of education, let alone quality education.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, between the 2014/15 and the 2015/16 school years there has been an **increase in enrolment** from 3.24 million (60 per cent) to 3.66 million (68 per cent) without a gender gap.<sup>10</sup> This resulted in a decrease in the number of out-of-school children from 2.12 million (40 per cent) to 1.75 million (32 per cent). Figure 1 summarizes the current progress in relation to the target set in London (*all* out-of-school children reached).

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<sup>1</sup> OCHA. 2017. *Joint Statement by the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria and Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis on the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan*.

<sup>2</sup> Save the Children. 2017. *Invisible wounds: The impact of six years of war on the mental health of Syria's children*.

<sup>3</sup> OCHA. 2017. *Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Needs Overview*.

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF. 2017 (forthcoming). *Quantitative Analysis of Education in Syria, 2010-11 to 2015-16*.

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF. 2016. *Syria Education Sector Analysis. The effects of the crisis on education in Syria, 2010-2015*. The document reports that education personnel and teachers have left the formal education system for reasons related to security, personal safety, remuneration, forced displacement, loss of life, and detention.

<sup>6</sup> UNICEF. 2015. *Economic loss from school dropout due to the Syria crisis: A cost-benefit analysis of the impact of the impact of the Syria crisis on the Education sector*.

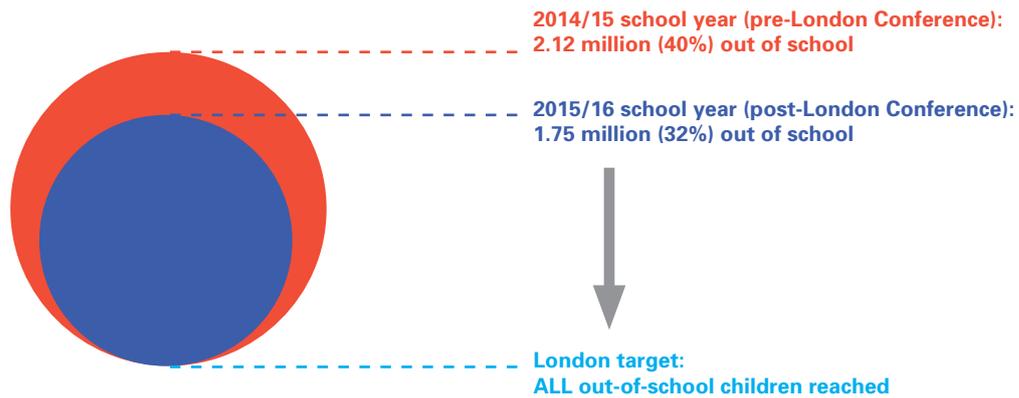
<sup>7</sup> In 2016, the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism for Syria (MRM4Syria) also verified nine incidents of military use of schools, including as barracks and command centres. Two of these schools were subsequently attacked by opposing parties, demonstrating the risks of infringing upon the civilian nature of schools.

<sup>8</sup> The MRM4Syria on grave violations of children's rights in situations of armed conflict. These numbers are not indicative of the overall scale of attacks on education in 2016, but rather of the incidents that were possible to capture and verify.

<sup>9</sup> UNICEF. 2017 (forthcoming). *Quantitative Analysis of Education in Syria, 2010-11 to 2015-16*.

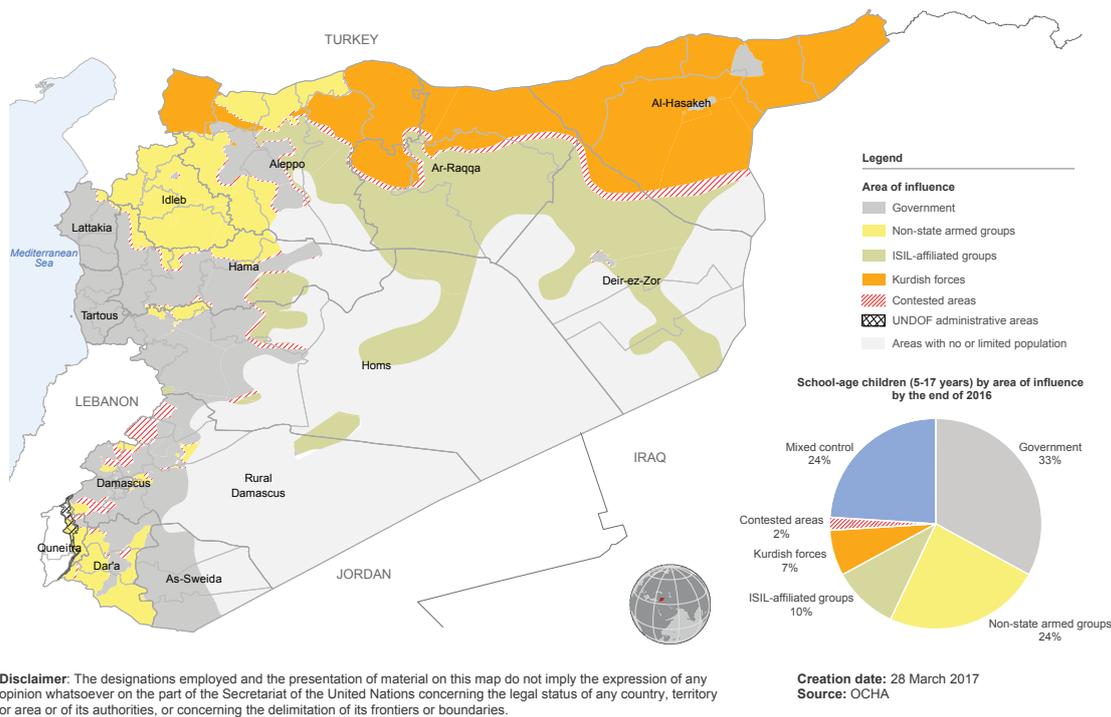
<sup>10</sup> Ibid. While there were 150,000 more boys enrolled than girls, boys' enrolment stands at about two percentage points lower because there are more school-age boys than girls as of the 2015/16 school year.

Figure 1: Progress on education inside Syria<sup>11</sup>



Despite this progress, the number of out-of-school children is still high and an additional 1.35 million children in basic education remain at risk of dropping out.<sup>12</sup> The education partners continue to face challenges in terms of accessing children in **besieged and hard-to-reach areas**. Around 33 per cent of school-age children live in areas under the control of the Government of Syria, 26 per cent in contested and mixed control areas, and 41 per cent live in areas under the control of other actors (see Map 1). The heavy bureaucratic procedures and multi-layered approval processes required to access many parts of Syria, including border crossing, negatively impact sustained quality programming, monitoring and reporting and the capacity development of partners.

Map 1: School-age children (5-17 years) by area of influence by the end of 2016<sup>13</sup>



<sup>11</sup> The school-age population (5.36 million for 2014/15 and 5.41 million for 2015/16) is estimated for the beginning of the school year using data from the nation census, OCHA and the United Nations Population Division (UNPD). Schooling figures are estimated using Education Management Information System (EMIS) with the assumption that 25 per cent of the pre-crisis 2011/12 enrolment has been sustained in ISIL-controlled areas.

<sup>12</sup> In the context of the Syria crisis, 'children at risk of dropping out' refers to the group of children who may leave before they finish grade 9 according to the previous education statistics. The 1.35 million children figure has been stable since the 2014/15 school year. See Annex 1.

<sup>13</sup> The data for this map has a limited number of sources, including parties to the conflict. The data has not been independently verified and is subject to error or omission, deliberate or otherwise by the various sources. Due to the fluidity of the conflict, control status is likely to change.

## IN THE FIVE HOST COUNTRIES

In December 2016 there were 1,580,792 registered school-age Syrian refugee children in the five host countries, which represents an increase of 12 per cent from the same month in 2015 (see Table 1). The London target specified that all school-age Syrian refugee children should be reached by education opportunities. While this target was not reached, there was a **15 per cent decrease in the number of out-of-school children**, from 630,417 (45 per cent) in December 2015 to 534,272 (34 per cent) in December 2016 (see Figure 2); formal education enrolment increased by 39 per cent, from 647,098 to 899,211.

Table 1: Syria crisis education snapshot: December 2016 (December 2015 in parenthesis)<sup>14</sup>

Country	Registered Syrian refugees	Registered school-age refugee children (5-17 years)			
		Total	In formal education	In non-formal education <i>only</i> <sup>15</sup>	Out of school # and %
Turkey	2,814,631	872,536	491,896	13,310	367,330 42%
	(2,291,900)	(710,489)	(278,890)	(3,096)	(428,503) (60%)
Lebanon	1,011,366	376,228	194,750	54,746	126,732 34%
	(1,070,189)	(376,707)	(147,285)	(80,119)	(149,303) (40%)
Jordan	655,675	232,868	125,000	67,658	40,210 17%
	(632,228)	(221,134)	(145,458) <sup>16</sup>	(43,610)	(32,066) (15%)
Iraq	233,224	61,804	51,681	10,123	- 0%
	(244,527)	(63,822)	(36,465)	(6,812)	(20,545) (32%)
Egypt	116,013	37,356	35,884	1,472	- 0%
	(123,585)	(39,053)	(39,000)	(53)	- (0%)
<b>Host countries total</b>	<b>4,830,909</b>	<b>1,580,792</b>	<b>899,211</b>	<b>147,309</b>	<b>534,272 34%</b>
	<b>(4,362,429)</b>	<b>(1,411,205)</b>	<b>(647,098)</b>	<b>(133,690)</b>	<b>(630,417) (45%)</b>

This progress is mainly the result of the growth in formal education enrolment in Turkey and Lebanon. **Turkey** hosts the largest number of school-age refugee children, which increased from 710,489 in December 2015 to 872,536 in December 2016. At the beginning of the 2016/17 school year, for the first time since the start of the crisis, and due to the large efforts in expanding enrolment in formal education, the number of children in school is higher than the number of children out of school. In **Lebanon**, policy developments have led to the regularization and formalization of non-formal education (NFE) enrolment and increased pathways to formal education.<sup>17</sup> In **Jordan**, the innovative model of Makani centres providing education, psychosocial support and life skills, greatly increased access to NFE and acted as a key referral pathway into formal education. It is also notable that *all* registered Syrian refugee children in **Iraq** and **Egypt** are reached by either formal education or NFE.

<sup>14</sup> UNICEF calculation based on UNHCR data portal, 3RP monthly updates and UNICEF Syria Crisis Situation Report.

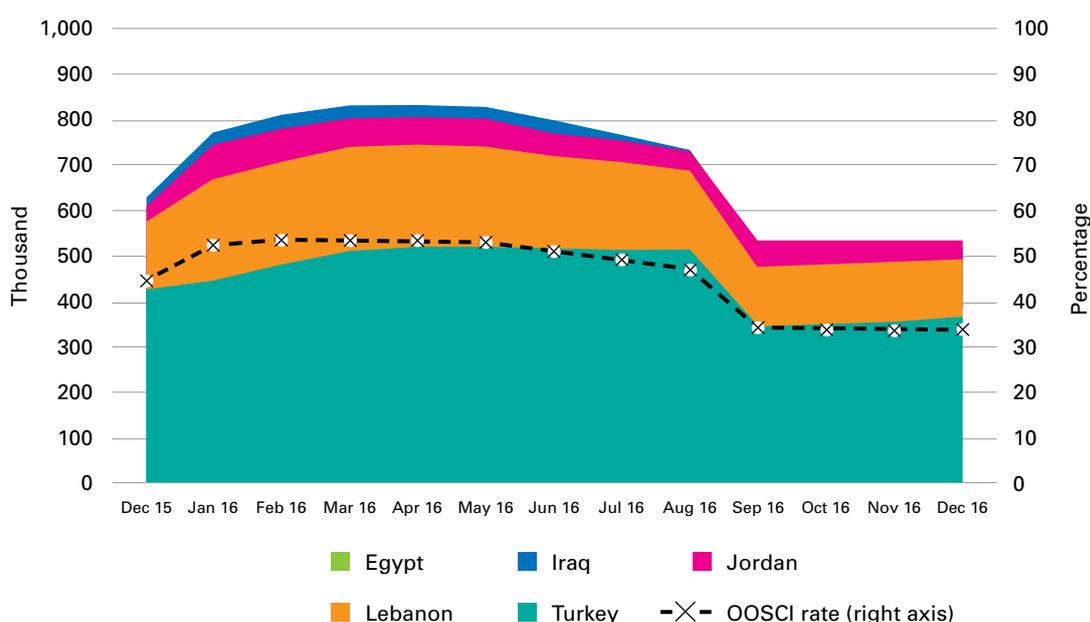
<sup>15</sup> In 2016, while 176,103 children were reported as reached by NFE, this table gives an estimate of the number of children who are *only* in NFE (and not simultaneously in formal education) as of December 2016.

<sup>16</sup> The number of 145,458 may show lack of progress during 2016. It should be noted however that the sources of data for the 2015 and the 2016 figures differ. During 2016, the Government of Jordan has made a strong commitment to improve the quality of school data management system, which in 2016 has resulted in more accurate enrolment data than in the past years. Double counting and other computing errors have been corrected. The more reliable EMIS launched in September 2016 shows that during the first semester of the 2016/17 school year, a total of 125,000 Syrian refugee children are enrolled in Jordanian schools.

<sup>17</sup> The number of children in NFE by the end of 2015 (80,119) included around 30,000 children enrolled in the retention support programme. These children were also part of those in formal education, which means that the number of children in NFE in Lebanon has stayed constant in 2016. It is expected to raise in 2017 as per NFE policy by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE).

**Gender** disaggregated data is not consistently available across the five host countries and it has not been reported regularly in Turkey. In Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt, the enrolment by gender is proportional to the corresponding school-age population. In Jordan, more girls have access to education, accounting for 52 per cent of enrolment in formal education and 55 per cent of enrolment in NFE. However, with dwindling resources and limited economic opportunities, specific attention still needs to be given to the negative coping mechanisms that vulnerable families draw upon. For example, families are increasingly opting to marry their daughters at a young age: child marriage for girls in Syria<sup>18</sup> and among the refugee population<sup>19</sup> is on the rise. It is also reported that child labour has increased for both refugee and host communities, and more than doubled in Jordan (in relation to the pre-crisis figures).<sup>20</sup>

Figure 2: Syrian out-of-school children number (in thousand) and rate (in % of registered school-age refugee children) in the five host countries<sup>21</sup>



The Syria crisis continues to affect **host community children and youth** in the five host countries, especially in the smaller countries where the education resources are drastically stretched by the refugee influx. The relative ratio of Syrian refugee children (5-17 years) to host children is as high as 1:2.3 in Lebanon and 1:8.5 in Jordan.<sup>22</sup> In Iraq, the unavailability of learning spaces continues to be a challenge and the education system is overburdened due to multiple shifts for children in school. Some 355,000 Iraqi internally displaced school-age children were out of school as of the 2015/16 school year, representing almost half of the total number of internally displaced school-age children.<sup>23</sup>

The *Syria Crisis Education Strategic Paper*, presented in London, committed to reach host community children and youth affected by the crisis. While it is hard to provide an accurate number of the affected host community children and youth who benefitted from refugee education programmes, **progress has been reported**. In Iraq, around 7,000 out-of-school Iraqi children have been reached with different education interventions that are also serving Syrian refugees. In Jordan, 13,562 Jordanians are benefitting from NFE

<sup>18</sup> OCHA. 2017 (forthcoming). *Humanitarian Response Plan, Periodic Monitoring Report, January – December 2016*.

<sup>19</sup> UNICEF. 2017 (forthcoming). *Child Protection Response in the Syria Crisis: A Regional Framework*.

<sup>20</sup> University of Jordan. 2016. *National Child Labour Survey 2016 of Jordan*.

<sup>21</sup> UNICEF calculation based on data from UNHCR data portal, 3RP country and regional dashboards and UNICEF Syria Crisis Situation Reports. The rise in the number of out-of-school children between December 2015 and January 2016 is mainly due to the tightened regulation of NFE in Lebanon and Jordan. The drop in the number of out-of-school children in September 2016 is mainly due to the increase in formal education for the new school year in Turkey and Lebanon.

<sup>22</sup> Based on the 2016 UNPD population estimate for the host countries and the December 2016 UNHCR Syria refugee registration data.

<sup>23</sup> Estimates from Ministry of Education (MOE) Iraq Federal, MOE Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), and OCHA for the 2015/16 school year.

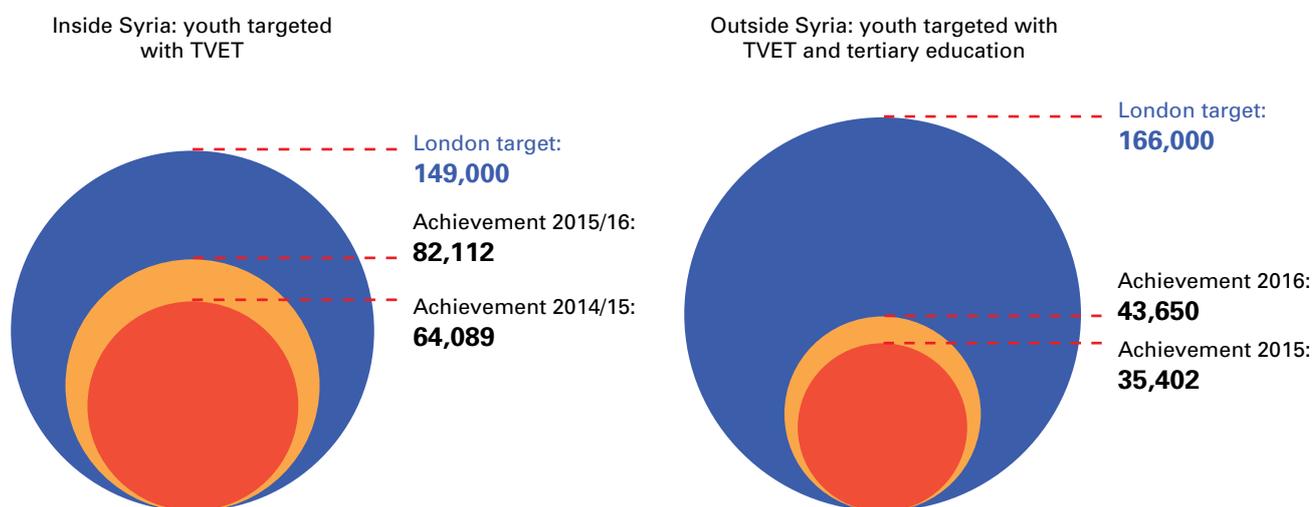
programmes that mainly target Syrian children. In Lebanon, where almost one third of children are Syrian refugees, the Reach All Children with Education (RACE) Plan has supported public school enrolment for Lebanese children from 185,659 in the 2014/15 school year to 194,949 in the 2015/16 school year, and then to 204,347 in the 2016/17 school year.<sup>24</sup>

## YOUTH AT THE POST-BASIC LEVEL

The *Syria Crisis Education Strategic Paper* called for more systematic **targeting of youth (15-24 years) at the post-basic education level**, both inside Syria and in the five host countries. This includes the expansion of access to multiple learning pathways, including secondary education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) – both in formal and non-formal settings – and tertiary education, with a view of enhancing employability. A total of 3.7 million Syrian youth are estimated to be inside Syria (1.1 million aged 15-17 years and 2.6 million aged 18-24 years). In the five host countries there were an estimated over 800,000 registered Syrian refugees aged 15-24 years. One third of this group falls into the upper secondary age (15-17 years), while two thirds are at tertiary education age (18-24 years). Three quarters of the Syrian refugee youth are in Turkey or Lebanon.<sup>25</sup>

**Low access rates to post-basic education** is a concern inside Syria and in the five host countries. The lack of quality data to inform evidence-based programming continues to be a major challenge for more systematic focus on youth. In Turkey, only 13 per cent of Syrian refugee children and youth attending school were enrolled in grades 9-12 at the end of the 2016 academic year.<sup>26</sup> In Lebanon, only 3,075 Syrian refugee youth were enrolled in upper secondary in the 2016/17 school year. While access to higher education provides hope and encourages greater enrolment and retention, its level of support and financing has not kept pace with the growth witnessed at the basic education level. It is at secondary and tertiary levels that enrolment comparison between Syrian refugees and host community peers shows the greatest gap. Inside Syria, TVET enrolment grew, but only 55 per cent of the London target was achieved; in the five host countries, the sector has reached 8,248 additional youth with TVET or tertiary education in 2016, but only 26 per cent of the London target was achieved (see *Figure 3*).

Figure 3: Pre-London and post-London achievements, and the London targets on youth<sup>27</sup>



<sup>24</sup> Information reported by the Iraq education cluster and the Jordan education sector, compiled by UNICEF. The figures for Lebanon are reported by the MEHE.

<sup>25</sup> UNHCR data portal.

<sup>26</sup> Turkey Ministry of National Education (MONE). 2016.

<sup>27</sup> Data was obtained from MOE EMIS for Syria and from 3RP country and regional dashboards for the five host countries.

**Barriers** to post-basic education, including formal secondary, TVET and tertiary education include the lack of residency permits, documentation, recognition of prior learning, different language of instruction, and the high cost of higher education (affecting both Syrian refugee and vulnerable host community youth). For TVET, the recognition of prior learning through testing and certification has emerged as an important need in order to better signal existing competencies to employers, and to comply with national entry regulations to the labour market. In the host countries, the capacity of public training providers for the training of refugee youth is underutilized, while the market relevance of the training provided needs to be improved.

## PALESTINE REFUGEES

The *Syria Crisis Education Strategic Paper* included a call for education support to all Palestine refugee children and youth (5-17 years) from, or in, Syria. Over 110,000 Palestine refugee children and youth in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan continue to be affected by the crisis.<sup>28</sup> **Inside Syria**, the lack of humanitarian access has further limited the capacity of UNRWA to provide education to children and youth in hard-to-reach areas. In the school year 2010/11 and prior to the crisis, there were 67,242 students enrolled in UNRWA basic education schools in Syria. With the crisis, enrolment in 2013/14 went down to its lowest point of 43,309 students, with attendance registered at its lowest in February 2013 reaching 21,962 students. Enrolment then stabilized at 45,541 in the 2015/16 school year.<sup>29</sup> UNRWA extends education services to Palestine refugees from Syria (PRS) who have fled to **Lebanon and Jordan**. During the 2016/17 school year, a total of 5,642 children are enrolled in UNRWA schools in Lebanon and 778 in Jordan.<sup>30</sup>

## STRATEGIC RESPONSE

The *Syria Crisis Education Strategic Paper* outlined key **strategic shifts** that need to occur in education in order to address the enormous challenges of a protracted crisis that has hit hard on the education sector, taking a heavy toll on its personnel, its students and its communities – in Syria and the five host countries. These strategic shifts are articulated around the three pillars of education system strengthening, access and quality, in line with SDG4. The principle behind them is that interventions occur along an emergency-to-resilience continuum and represent longer term ‘investments for the future’ while addressing the immediate needs related to the crisis.

The work around education system strengthening epitomizes the spinal cord that sustains the interventions in the education sector as a whole, leveraging improved results in access and quality, thanks to generous investments by national governments and donors. Inside Syria, system strengthening crystallized around the **Whole of Syria (WoS) coordination architecture** that was established by the United Nations to engender a principled, impartial, coordinated, timely and accountable humanitarian response in both government- and non-government-controlled areas. Despite challenges, the education WoS mechanism provides a model that brings all actors together (including those involved in stabilization programmes) to achieve system-level education improvements at national, governorate and school levels and to prepare for the reconstruction of the country while attending to the immediate needs.

In the five host countries, strategic shifts in system level interventions include the **strengthening of public education systems** in policy development that ensures outreach to the marginalized (NFE accreditation frameworks, NGO collaborative frameworks, engagement of Syrian teachers), in education sector planning that mainstreams the refugee response (RACE in Lebanon, the Jordan Compact), and in a more responsive EMIS that integrates refugee-related data collection (YOBIS in Turkey, OpenEMIS in Jordan). At the regional level, education partners developed a standardized system of data collection that is being mainstreamed

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<sup>28</sup> According to UNRWA January 2016 data, there were 100,350 Palestine refugee children inside Syria, 12,041 PRS in Lebanon and 5,171 in Jordan. UNRWA conducted a comprehensive headcount in Lebanon in July and August 2016, and highlighted that the PRS number declined by 27 per cent. Although not clearly documented, it is believed that this movement is mainly linked to migration to third countries and/or returns to Syria. Therefore, this Report uses a relatively rough estimate of over 110,000.

<sup>29</sup> UNRWA. 2016. *Annual Operational Report 2015*.

<sup>30</sup> UNRWA. 2017. *2017 Syria Emergency Appeal*.

in the HRP and the 3RP planning processes,<sup>31</sup> improving monitoring and tracking for more effective and synchronized programming (plans are on-going to embed these efforts into EMIS).

Strategic shifts in **access to education** included a more systematic approach to maximize the utilization of public schools, including double-shift schools, combined with Back-to-Learning (BTL) campaigns, social protection programmes, and child protection support and referral mechanisms. BTL campaigns improved and were scaled up using innovative ways to reach beneficiaries, including case management at the household level, increased readiness of public school administrators, provision of transportation costs, and language and homework support. As such they represent a key investment in community resilience and engagement in education (including girls' education, as part of the strategies to address girls' early marriage). A regional strategic framework on child labour within the Syrian refugee response was developed to offer guidance on coordination and on the development of programmatic strategies against child labour.

NFE efforts continue to be key for reaching the most vulnerable and marginalized out-of-school children; a key strategic shift has been the improvement of NFE delivery together with the creation of pathways to formal education. In Syria, the **Self-Learning Programme (SLP)** represents an important investment in reaching out-of-school children who are internally displaced and living in areas with limited or no access to schooling due to active conflict or insecurity. The objective of the SLP and its complementary activities (psychosocial support, learning supplies, teacher training, and the rehabilitation of learning spaces) is to deliver a comprehensive self-study course to out-of-school children with pathways to formal education, presently being discussed with the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Damascus. The Self-Learning Material will be revised during 2017 with the aim of adopting a conflict-sensitive approach together with improving pedagogy. Thus, it has the potential of developing into a tool for accompanying the quality of formal learning.

Post-London efforts have seen a more systematic focus on **reaching youth with education opportunities**, though much more remains to be done. Partners are developing an initiative that enables the profiling of youth and the tracking of their participation in education, employment and training. This initiative will provide quantitative and qualitative information necessary for bridging the learning and training gaps for refugees, displaced and vulnerable youth in host countries. At the regional level, programmatic avenues are being explored for more effective and sustainable quality interventions at post basic and tertiary levels, including TVET in formal and non-formal settings. While pilot approaches have demonstrated that structured on-the-job training, designed and implemented with the private sector, can facilitate an easier access to employment, the improvement of TVET further needs to ensure the inclusion of life skills. Furthermore, the devising of strategies for scaling up quality interventions needs to be embedded in national policies and frameworks.<sup>32</sup>

The provision of scholarships remains key to sustain increased **access to higher education**. In 2016, more than 4,000 scholarships<sup>33</sup> were awarded to Syrian youth for bachelor's degrees and TVET diplomas. In addition, efforts focused on providing equipment to public universities in Syria, and developing online platforms, such as Jami3ti, to facilitate the sharing of information on higher education opportunities in host countries. At country and regional level, there was an expansion of scholarship schemes, partnerships and coordination mechanisms. Positively, in Turkey the Government continues to waive tuition fees for students at state universities and to provide full scholarships. In Lebanon, some 1,240 refugee youth were studying in universities across the country in 2016/17, and in Egypt, Syrian refugee youth have been exceptionally exempted from paying foreign student tuition fees. Current engagement between stakeholders and the governments in the five host countries on system and policy issues remains key in addressing the barriers to higher education including costs, documentation, language, recognition of education certificates, and data collection and monitoring.

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<sup>31</sup> The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), led by OCHA, sets out the framework within which the humanitarian community responds to the protection and humanitarian needs inside Syria. The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) is a country driven and regionally coherent planning process, led by UNHCR and UNDP to respond to the Syria crisis.

<sup>32</sup> UNICEF and ILO. 2016. Consultation on Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Middle East and North Africa. Workshop Report. Amman, Jordan 30-31 May.

<sup>33</sup> There is no systematic tracking of scholarships. The number in this Report comes only from two reported programmes and hence the overall number could be higher.

Since 2011, UNRWA has worked to provide **continuity of education to Palestine refugee children and youth** inside Syria as well as to those who have fled to Lebanon and Jordan, by strengthening its overall education in emergencies approach that builds on recent wider reforms to UNRWA's education system. This comprises: developing alternative learning materials; establishing and maintaining safe learning spaces and conducting safety and security trainings for students and staff; providing psychosocial support to children and youth through additional counsellors and teacher training; and strengthening community and student engagement. Additionally, UNRWA has increased and adapted its livelihoods assistance to youth through strengthening and expanding TVET programming, in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

Strategic shifts in the delivery on the quality of education are in the making. Noticeable progress has been achieved in scaling **teacher professional development**. Education partners have supported diverse training schemes, including psychosocial support training, for more than 45,000 teachers and education personnel in Syria and the five host countries. Turkey and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) have focused in particular on Syrian volunteer teachers through the development of teacher training programmes combined with the acquisition of officially recognized qualifications. These interventions have been accompanied by learning support services like remedial education, homework support and extra-curricular activities.

The Syria crisis has demonstrated the need to promote a type of **quality education** that is holistic and addresses simultaneously several goals. Displacement and chronic psychosocial distress impact the capacity of children to learn and require particular approaches to teaching and learning.<sup>34</sup> While acquiring a foreign language represents an opportunity for integration, the promotion of Arabic (mother tongue) as a medium of instruction is needed for the acquisition of foundational skills and for promoting a shared identity. Tensions and violence in and around schools underline the need for education that values diversity and safeguards identity while promoting inclusion and social cohesion.

A key effort in the delivery of meaningful learning in this regard is undertaken at the regional level through the multi-partner **Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) Initiative**. The Initiative provides an integrated, transformative, gender-sensitive and life-long vision of quality learning that focuses on the acquisition of life skills at an early age, while offering programmatic guidance and technical support in the implementation of system approaches to teaching and learning. Beyond enhanced learning, the LSCE Initiative aims at contributing to improved employability and strengthened social cohesion through promoting pedagogical strategies that are conducive to the holistic all-round development of the learners.<sup>35</sup> This further includes technical guidance to integrate and mainstream psychosocial support into the teaching and learning process to ensure a protective and inclusive learning environment for both Syrian refugee and host community children and youth.

Moreover, the issue of **measuring learning outcomes** still needs concerted and strategic efforts. A standardized learning assessment tool (literacy and numeracy skills) will be piloted in Syria with the aim of measuring and improving learning outcomes. Data gathered from learning assessments will be used to improve teacher training programmes, assist children in effective learning and make schools serve as an effective resource for the promotion of children's psychosocial wellbeing. Within the framework of the LSCE Initiative, another standardized tool for measuring the acquisition of core life skills will be developed and piloted within formal and non-formal settings.

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

In 2016, the total funding requirements for education in Syria and the five host countries were calculated at US\$866 million through the country-based planning processes for the HRP and 3RP.<sup>36</sup> In preparation for the London Conference in early 2016 – to match the aspirational goal of *all* children accessing quality education – the education ask was raised to US\$1.4 billion per year. By the end of 2016, an amount of US\$618 million (US\$112 million for Syria and US\$506 million for the host countries) was received. In percentage terms, the

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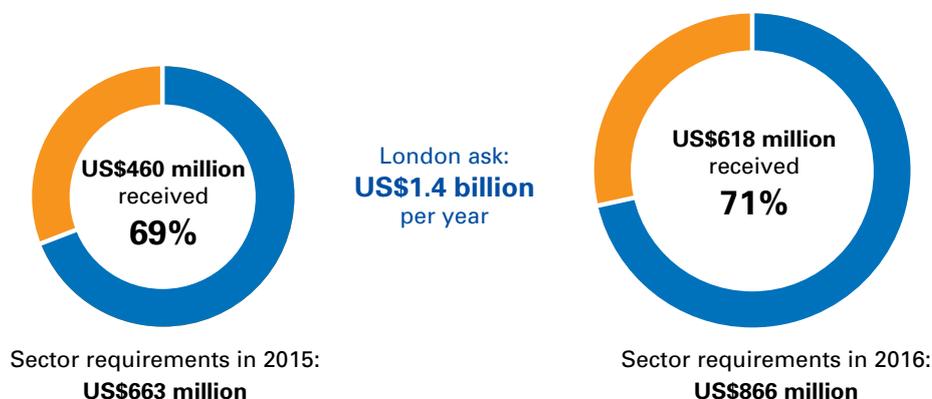
<sup>34</sup> International Rescue Committee. 2017. *Impact of War on Syrian Children's Learning*.

<sup>35</sup> As part of the LSCE Initiative a holistic set of 12 core life skills have been identified that further underpin key areas of learning such as curricular and vocational disciplines, career and entrepreneurship education, comprehensive sexuality education, etc.

<sup>36</sup> Derived from the Syria 2016 HRP and the 3RP mid-year report, June 2016; verified and adjusted by country in March 2017. The country funding figures are rounded to millions and then aggregated to generate the regional figures. See Annex 1 on issues related to tracking funding.

education sector was funded at 71 per cent of the HRP/3RP appeals (see Figure 4). Though still falling short of the London ask, the **received funding in 2016 was higher** than in 2015, both in terms of the amount (from US\$460 million to US\$618 million) and the fulfillment of sector requirements (from 69 per cent to 71 per cent).

Figure 4: Education funding before and after the London Conference



On a positive note, 54 per cent of the received funds for 2016 were **available during the first half of the year**. This represents an improvement when compared with the funding received for the 3RP appeal in 2015, where more than half of the appeal was received in the last two months of the year, severely hampering effective planning and progress. Although the London ask was far from being achieved in 2016, a noticeable impetus was created in terms of frontloading financial resources, and many donors have committed several years of funding to education.

At the London Conference, the **need for multi-year, sustained, predictable and timely funding**, based on country-specific planning cycles, was reiterated as key to preserve gains and to ensure effective and efficient planning, specifically in advance of the school years starting in September. While maintaining the US\$1.4 billion ask, external financing (whether multi-year or predictable) still needs to improve in terms of efficiency, strategic focus, added value and improved coordination. Financial tracking of support to the education response in the context of the Syria crisis should not be limited to the humanitarian channels and needs to include financing going to development budgets.<sup>37</sup> Investments by the national Governments of Syria and the five host countries in the education response also need to be highlighted.

**More concerted outreach** needs to be made to non-traditional donors,<sup>38</sup> the private sector, and innovative financing mechanisms, and untapped resources of multiple organizations and associations need to be leveraged. The pooling of funds is becoming a key feature of the Syria crisis education response and promises to support the London education strategic shifts more systematically.<sup>39</sup>

Multi-stakeholders partnerships constitute important vehicles for mobilizing and sharing knowledge and expertise to support education for all children. The **No Lost Generation (NLG) Initiative** represents a key and broad partnership between diverse stakeholders within the framework of the Syria crisis response that has increasingly mobilized support and leveraged resources from policy makers, communities, academia, civil society actors, UN agencies and donors for three key pillars: education, child protection and adolescent and youth engagement.

<sup>37</sup> Humanitarian channels supporting the Syria crisis education response include the following: (i) Governments: Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA; (ii) inter-governmental organizations: the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the European Commission: the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) and ECHO; and (iii) the private sector (individuals and organizations).

<sup>38</sup> An example is the emerging programme of the Qatar Fund for Development, QUEST (Qatar Upholding Education for Syrians' Trust), which was initiated as par to the State of Qatar's commitment at the London Conference. It aims to leverage funding for coordinated approaches within the HRP and 3RP planning processes.

<sup>39</sup> Two key examples are the EU Trust Fund Madad (launched in 2014 as a regionally driven and managed fund to respond rapidly and flexibly to the shifting needs of refugees) and the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) Fund (established during the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit to support service delivery in acute emergencies and protracted crises, bringing together humanitarian and development approaches).



**PEACE**

## 2. OVERVIEW OF COUNTRY RESPONSE

### SYRIA

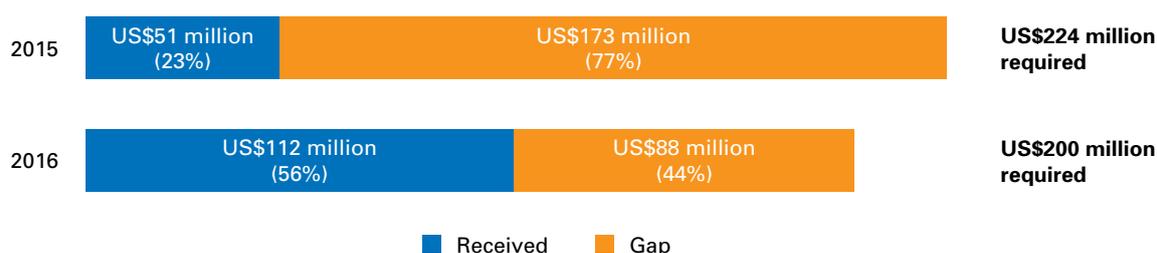
Syria has made progress in reducing the out-of-school rate from 40 per cent in the 2014/15 school year to 32 per cent in 2015/16 school year.

Syria	School-age children (5-17 years)			
	Total	In school	Out of school # and %	
2015/16 school year	5.41M	3.66M	1.75M	32%
2014/15 school year	5.36M	3.24M	2.12M	40%

#### 2016 education response

- System strengthening:** As part of the 2016 WoS strategic response, over 6,000 education actors were trained on data collection, emergency preparedness and response planning, programme cycle management, and the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards (MS). Technical support was provided to the MOE in Damascus to develop a new Curriculum Framework and to strengthen the EMIS and school-level data collection and analysis. Improved coordination between education authorities and humanitarian/stabilization actors at the subnational level continued with the aim of improving the delivery of formal education and NFE.
- Policy development:** The education sector advocated for equitable access to national examinations for all children and assisted almost 12,000 children to cross active lines of conflicts and sit for their final exams in grades 9 and 12. With the technical support of sector partners, the MOE formulated a policy framework for alternative education, together with implementation procedures. The operational standards for the SLP were endorsed by the MOE and implemented at the sector level.
- Access:** Countrywide advocacy, BTL campaigns, community mobilization and the enhanced capacity of partners in targeting out-of-school children through the SLP, Curriculum B and remedial and catch-up programmes contributed to increase access to formal and non-formal learning opportunities, including for 480,000 children in hard-to-reach and besieged areas. The sector supported light school rehabilitation, the establishment of prefabs and temporary learning spaces for a growing population of displaced children. To promote access and retention, vulnerable children were supported with teaching and learning materials (3.6 million), school feeding programmes (400,000), transportation and cash schemes (3,000).
- Quality:** Processes of quality of learning were enhanced through the training of around 15,000 teachers and education practitioners on child-centred protective and interactive methodologies, classroom management, psychosocial support and risk education. Additionally, continuous professional development for teachers was piloted to enhance the capacity of the teaching and learning process, incorporating inclusive education and life skills and citizenship education. Incentives were paid to 15,434 teachers as a way to reinforce motivation, job satisfaction and retention.

#### 2015 and 2016 education funding<sup>40</sup>

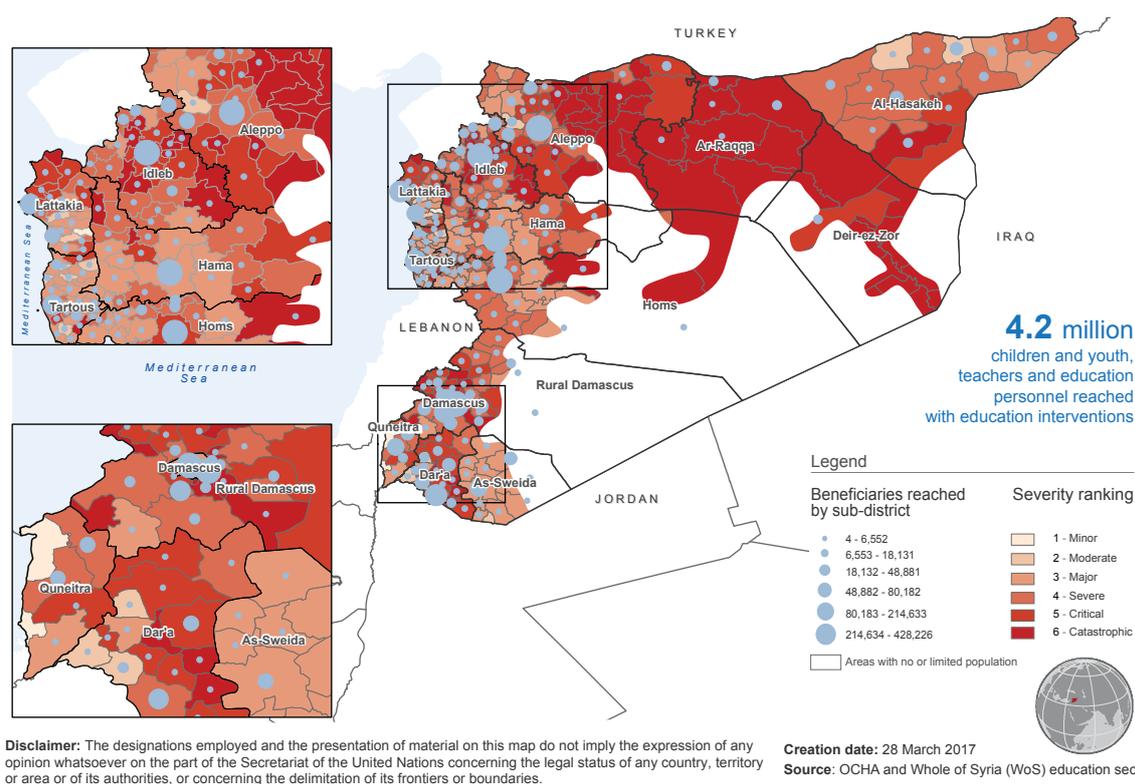


<sup>40</sup> HRP Financial Tracking Service (FTS). See Annex 1.

## Challenges and opportunities

2016 witnessed a rapid shifting of areas of influence, which made it complex to provide education support to children, particularly in besieged and ISIL-controlled areas (see Map 2). Lack of safety and security continues to constitute the greatest barrier to education, with schools under attack and occupied by parties to the conflict. These attacks, coupled with poverty, unemployment and the lack of accreditation and certification in some parts of the country, discourage families from sending their children to school. Lack of permission from authorities and limited access have impacted on the ability of the sector to assess needs, identify out-of-school children and scale up the education response. Underfunding and short-term funding continue to impede access to and quality of education, disrupt continuity of interventions and undermine the investments made.

Map 2: Number of beneficiaries reached by sub-district and by severity scale against the 2016 Syria HRP



## Preparing children and youth for the future through education

There is a need for a more strategic and harmonized sector engagement in addressing political and bureaucratic bottlenecks, poor communication and low learning outcomes. The implementation of a new Curriculum Framework will be critical to enhance quality and relevance of education, as well as diversify learning pathways through a policy framework for NFE. A capacity-building strategy is being prepared to ensure that all education actors<sup>41</sup> are equipped for implementing coherent and relevant education activities. As insecurity and poverty continues to push children out of education, the education sector will continue to invest in the expansion of NFE programmes (including vocational training) and in social protection schemes (including vouchers assistance programmes and school feeding). Systematic investments will be made in teachers' professional development. Education partners will also work towards ensuring a unified and cooperative approach to resolve issues related to teachers' stipends/incentives and pilot standardized learning assessment tools, with the aim of improving learning and measuring learning outcomes. More attention will be given to youth and employment needs.

<sup>41</sup> The term 'education actors' refers to all relevant education stakeholders, including United Nations agencies, INGOs, NGOs and education authorities.

## TURKEY

Turkey has made progress in reducing the out-of-school children rate from 60 per cent in December 2015 to 42 per cent in December 2016.

Turkey	Registered school-age refugee children (5-17 years)				
	Total	In formal education	In non-formal education only	Out of school # and %	
December 2016	872,536	491,896	13,310	367,330	42%
December 2015	710,489	278,890	3,096	428,503	60%

### 2016 education response

- **System strengthening:** To scale up the provision of quality education opportunities for Syrian refugee children and youth, the Ministry of National Education (MONE) strengthened the status and capacity of the Education in Emergencies and Migration Unit within the Directorate for Lifelong Learning. MONE-administered education information management systems (E-Okul and YOBIS) are being used for evidence-based programming for Syrian and other vulnerable children. School attendance data from both systems will be used to implement the conditional cash transfer for education (CCTE),<sup>42</sup> to commence in April 2017.

- **Policy development:** A key policy shift by MONE was to promote the enrolment of Syrian children in Turkish public schools (TPS) and prepare children in Temporary Education Centres (TECs) to enter TPS by increasing the number of Turkish language classes provided. This resulted in a significant rise in the number of Syrian children enrolled in TPS (see Figure 5). The rate of monthly incentives for 13,200 Syrian volunteer teachers was increased to match the net minimum wage in Turkey. Needs-based remedial education and catch-up programmes are being developed by MONE. An examination/assessment system is planned for the appointment of Syrian teachers and for defining students' academic levels and skills in Turkish language.

- **Access:** In 2017, for the first time since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, there are more refugee children in school than out of school. Over 30 new schools in host communities were constructed while hundreds of tented classrooms were replaced with container classrooms in camps. MONE supported enrolment in all forms of education provision, including 'Open High Schools' and TVET. The number of Syrian students in university rose to 14,750, with 4,254 scholarships being awarded by different entities. Over 1,400 Syrian youth participated in higher education preparation programmes, enabling them to meet university entrance language requirements.

- **Quality:** MONE recruited 3,600 Turkish language teachers to enable Syrian students to improve their Turkish language proficiency and new, age-appropriate language teaching modules are under development. More than 20,000 Syrian (certified) and Turkish teachers were trained on pedagogy and inclusive approaches. The existing national psychosocial support programme is under revision, targeting all vulnerable children.

### 2015 and 2016 education funding<sup>43</sup>



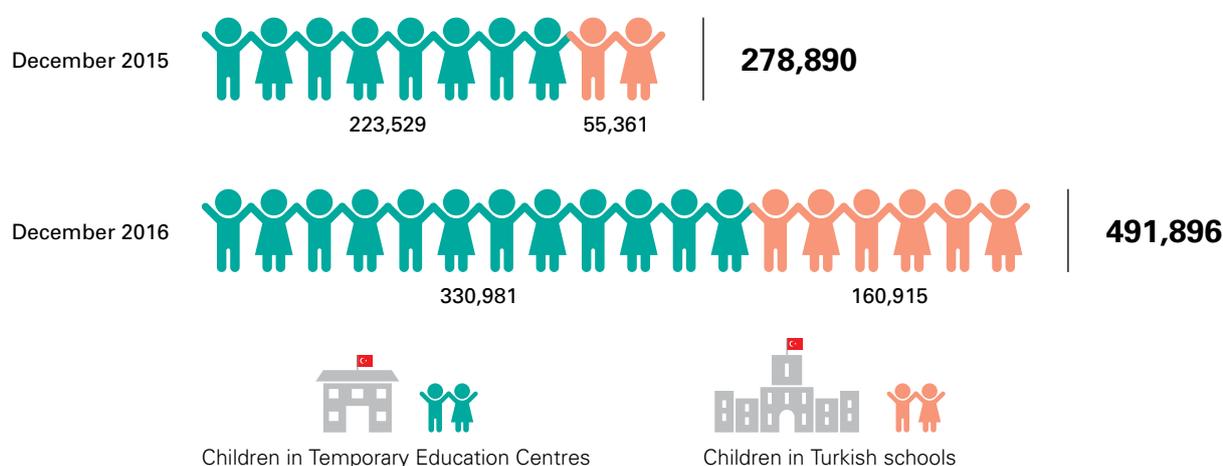
<sup>42</sup> CCTE is a programme that supports the school attendance of vulnerable refugee children. It is an extension of the national CCTE Programme and will serve as a "top-up" to education for Syrian families who benefit from the recently launched Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) Programme (a basic needs cash transfer programme implemented by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy and other partners).

<sup>43</sup> 3RP FTS. See Annex 1.

## Challenges and opportunities

Despite intense efforts in scaling up the provision of education, the enrolment of students in middle and secondary education remains low. The main challenges are insufficient Turkish language proficiency, low socio-economic conditions of Syrian families and the unavailability of appropriate catch-up programmes for adolescents who have been out of school for more than one year. Other challenges include insufficient school buildings (26,000 additional classrooms are needed) in high-density refugee-hosting areas; limited preschool education opportunities for Syrian and Turkish children; transportation costs; bullying; and limited options to access informal and certified NFE opportunities for out-of-school children. Demand for higher education exceeds the limited number of scholarships. There are strategic opportunities to employ Syrian volunteer teachers to support MONE's policy of transitioning Syrian children from TECs into TPS. Civil society efforts, in close coordination with government institutions, can promote access to learning through the provision of informal education opportunities for Syrians out of school. Cooperation with I/NGOs and communities is essential to disseminate information on education opportunities and to promote social cohesion activities in school.

Figure 5: School enrolment of Syrian children in Turkey<sup>44</sup>



## Preparing children and youth for the future through education

A clear long-term strategy for the provision of a continuum of relevant educational opportunities to refugee children, youth and adults is required and needs political commitment, a clear framework regulating multiple learning pathways, and implementation support from all relevant stakeholders. Building the resilience of the existing national education system to scale up access to all forms of education can be achieved through expanding opportunities for Syrian children to learn the Turkish language while simultaneously maintaining their mother tongue. Scaling-up access to preschool education, where children can learn Turkish and Arabic languages, can further support this aim while contributing to social cohesion. To ensure access to a continuum of educational opportunities, the provision of higher education is a key element. The investment in the professional development of teachers should continue for both Syrians and Turks, combined with the certification of Syrian teachers and teacher incentive support for Syrian volunteer teachers.

<sup>44</sup> Turkey MONE. 2016.

## LEBANON

Lebanon has made progress in reducing the out-of-school children rate from 40 per cent in December 2015 to 34 per cent in December 2016.

Lebanon	Registered school-age refugee children (5-17 years)				
	Total	In formal education	In non-formal education <i>only</i>	Out of school # and %	
December 2016	376,228	194,750	54,746	126,732	34%
December 2015	376,707	147,285	80,119	149,303	40%

### 2016 education response

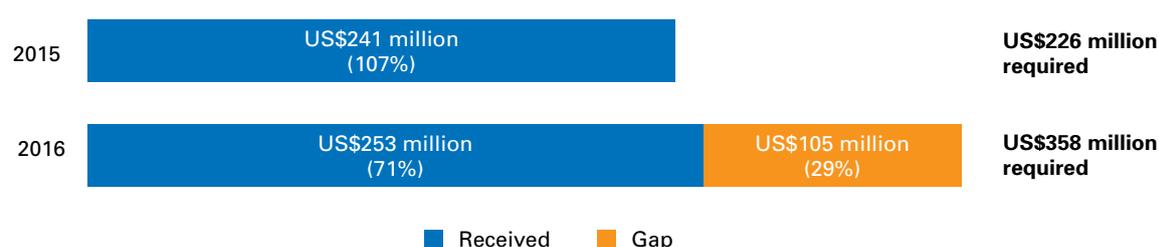
- **System strengthening:** MEHE and its institutions, in partnership with key education stakeholders, finalized a medium-term response strategy to the Syria crisis – the RACE II Plan (2017-2021). As a five-year costed plan, it provides a clear vision of the priorities to improve the capacity of the MEHE, its personnel and its schools to better administer a quality public education system. The implementation of the RACE Plan is supported by a fully operational governance structure, including a steering committee, several thematic and technical sub-committees and a programme management unit (PMU).

- **Policy development:** MEHE has regulated the content and administration of some NFE programmes in Lebanon, to reach children and youth who are currently not eligible for formal education. Grounded in a national NFE Framework, MEHE has endorsed standardized content and implementation modalities of the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) and Early Childhood Education Programmes. MEHE’s strategic shift towards inclusive education will begin with the inclusion of children with cognitive and physical disabilities in (pilot) public schools, culminating in a national inclusive education policy. MEHE is also finalizing a child protection policy for schools and child protection referral mechanisms to address bullying and violence reported in schools and communities.

- **Access:** MEHE has scaled up access to formal education in each successive school year since the onset of the Syria crisis (see Figure 6). MEHE’s proactive engagement and significant donor support have allowed the full subsidization of public school fees and associated costs, the waiving of documentation requirements for refugees including those children sitting national exams, and the opening of over 310 second-shift schools. As a result, for the 2016/17 school year, 194,750 refugee children were enrolled in Lebanese public schools (49 per cent girls). In addition, MEHE reported 50,000 non-Lebanese children enrolled in private or subsidized schools. I/NGOs have made important contributions to increase access to quality education, including in the BTL campaign, community outreach and the implementation of some NFE programmes.

- **Quality:** Under-performing children and those with language difficulties were assisted with retention support programmes. Refugee parents were trained to improve the involvement in their children’s education; Parent Community Groups liaised with the school administration with regards to refugee children’s health or social issues. Despite the challenges they face, non-Lebanese children (enrolled in second shifts) have a reported daily attendance rate of 86 per cent. Additionally, almost 60 per cent of refugee children sitting for grade 9 national exams successfully passed in 2016.

### 2015 and 2016 education funding<sup>45</sup>

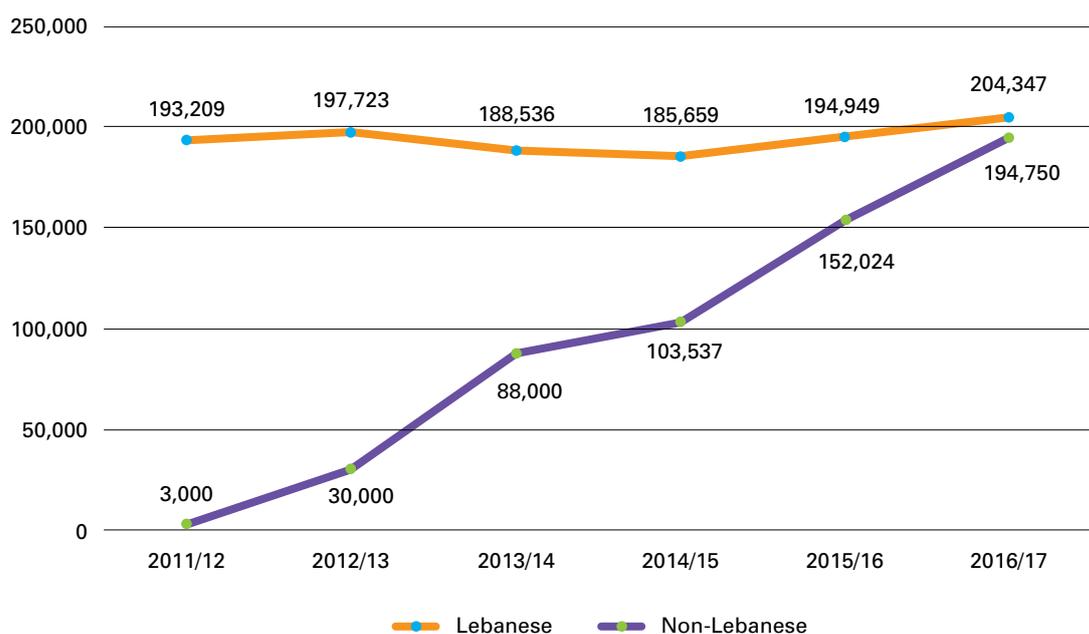


<sup>45</sup> 3RP FTS. See Annex 1.

## Challenges and opportunities

Despite important successes, key challenges remain – poverty and safety concerns in remote areas are often cited by parents as deterrents to their children’s enrolment in school. To improve participation and retention in education, key structural barriers need to be addressed: limited capacity of education personnel to cope with multi-age/-level students, who are traumatized by the crisis; violence and bullying in and around school, and at home; and differences in language of instruction. On the other hand, several opportunities to improve access and quality of education are on the agenda of MEHE and its partners, including scaling up of NFE to reach the remaining out-of-school children and youth and a shift towards a more inclusive education.

Figure 6: Number of students in public schools (2011/12 to 2016/17 school years)<sup>46</sup>



## Preparing children and youth for the future through education

Building on the current efforts, MEHE and its partners will mainly focus their interventions on improving learning outcomes for all children through a new national interactive curriculum – both for learners and teachers. School retention, learning and students’ participation can be markedly improved through the provision of safe, healthy and inclusive learning environments. Simultaneously, MEHE-endorsed NFE components need to be sustained (basic literacy and numeracy programmes for children and youth, primary and secondary accelerated programmes, vocational training) to ensure that all children and youth have access to certified and quality non formal learning that effectively supports transition either into formal education or into the job market. Investments in strengthened data collection and analysis will be crucial to inform effective policy and budgeting decisions whereas predictable, multi-year and flexible funding, channeled to RACE II Plan, is key to ensuring a sustainable system-led response.

<sup>46</sup> The non-Lebanese enrolment of 152,024 refers to the highest enrolment achieved by the end of the 2015/16 school year (June 2016), which is larger than the enrolment of 147,285 recorded in December 2015 (and displayed in Table 1 in parenthesis).

## JORDAN

In Jordan, the number of Syrian school-age refugee children and the out-of-school rate remained similar between December 2015 and December 2016.

Jordan	Registered school-age refugee children (5-17 years)				
	Total	In formal education	In non-formal education only	Out of school # and %	
December 2016	232,868	125,000	67,658	40,210	17%
December 2015	221,134	145,458 <sup>47</sup>	43,610	32,066	15%

### 2016 education response

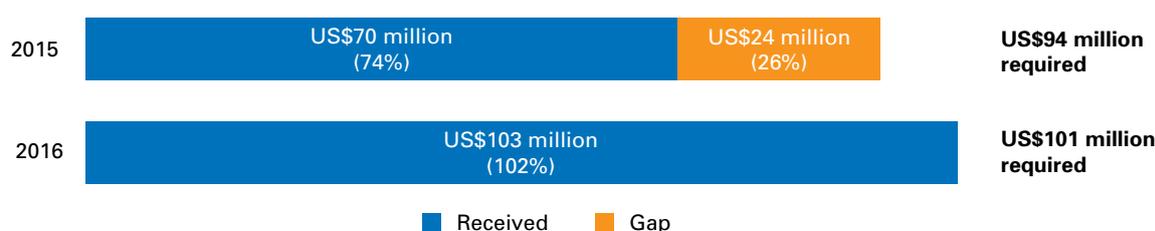
- **System strengthening:** The MOE has made investments to strengthen EMIS to serve as a centralized source of information for planning and monitoring results, particularly on access to formal education (see footnote 47). Through OpenEMIS, which includes an individual student record tracking system for refugees, the MOE was able to improve the overall accuracy and reliability of national education statistics. Improved coordination between the MOE, UN agencies and NGOs resulted in the improved transitioning of students from non-formal/informal education to formal schools.

- **Policy development:** The MOE revised its school enrolment policy to allow all children access education regardless of their nationality, including refugee children without documentation, and extended the enrolment period to March 2017. The MOE established a new certified NFE programme, called Catch-Up, catering to the needs of children aged 9 to 12 who have been out of school for over three years and are not eligible to enrol in the formal system.

- **Access:** A total of 125,000 Syrian children have enrolled in the formal education system in the 2016/17 school year (see Map 3). A total of 44 schools in 16 complexes in Jordan's refugee camps are providing educational services to nearly 32,000 Syrian children. In host communities, the MOE established a total of 198 double-shift schools. Concerning NFE, 47 catch-up centres were established in double-shift schools, enrolling 1,000 children. Another 1,620 children were enrolled in MOE-certified NFE programmes (dropout and basic literacy) and 66,038 children received learning support services in Makani centres. A total of 6,102 children attended pre-primary education. Syrian refugee youth had access to 220 scholarships and through sustained advocacy more opportunities for bachelor and master levels were made available. Over 800 youth were provided with opportunities to access technical or professional diplomas and bachelor degree programmes. Two nation-wide Learning-for-All campaigns were conducted to boost enrolment, identify out-of-school children and provide referral and registration support.

- **Quality:** Efforts to improve the quality of education included the training of over 4,000 teachers. School principals and deputies benefitted from quality leadership trainings. Other efforts to improve the quality of education included enhancing the learning environment through the operational maintenance and rehabilitation of infrastructure and facilities within schools.

### 2015 and 2016 education funding<sup>48</sup>



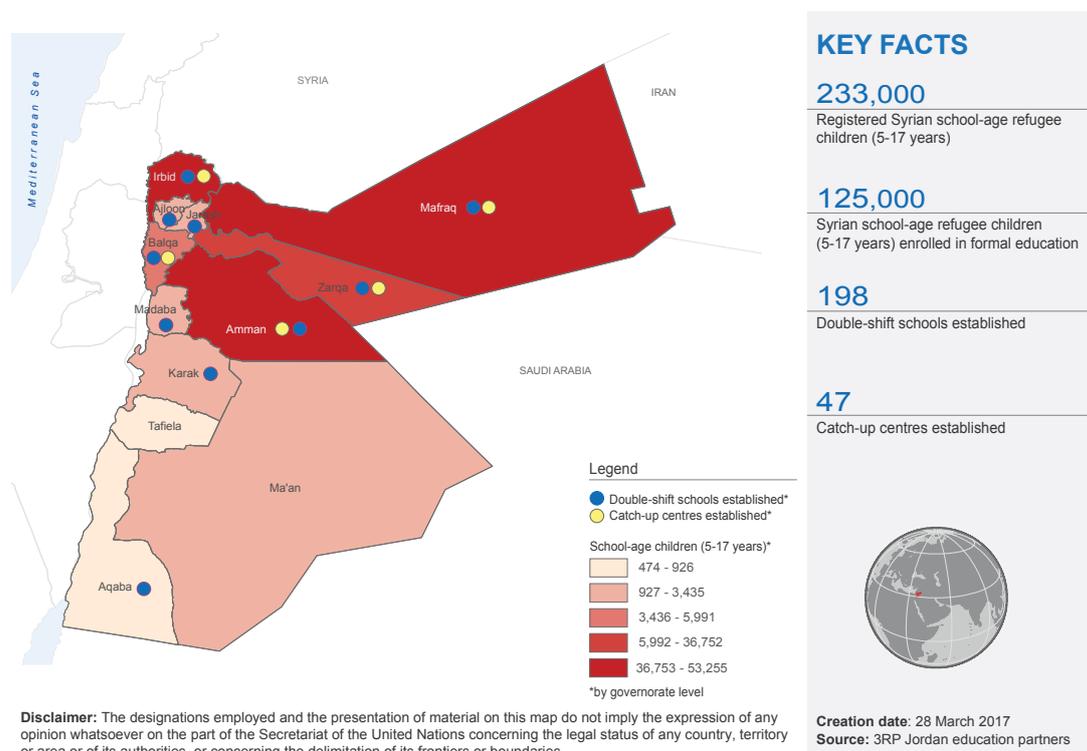
<sup>47</sup> The number of 145,458 may show lack of progress during 2016. It should be noted however that the sources of data from 2015 and 2016 figure differ. During 2016, the Government of Jordan has made a strong commitment to improve the quality of school data management system, which in 2016 has resulted in more accurate enrolment data than in the past years. Double counting and other computing errors have been corrected. The more reliable EMIS launched in September 2016 shows that during the first semester of the 2016/17 school year, a total of 125,000 Syrian refugee children are enrolled in Jordanian schools.

<sup>48</sup> 3RP FTS. See Annex 1.

## Challenges and opportunities

Challenges continue to exist both on the supply-side (teacher training, unsafe and poorly maintained school environments, and limited access for non-eligible students aged 13+ years) and on the demand-side (transportation, economic barriers, child labour, early marriage, and perceptions of education). Within tertiary education, Syrians face difficulties related to placement procedures, high school fees and lack of TVET opportunities. Although the Jordan Compact allowed for the issuance of work permits for refugees, some sectors remain closed to them. Further efforts, including the introduction of more flexible access to a wider range of economic opportunities is desirable. English language and other preparatory support, such as computer literacy critical to access tertiary education, also need further support. For long-term sustainable enhancement of education quality, the Government of Jordan should be supported to develop a clear cross-governmental action plan for implementing the recommendations of its national Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy.

Map 3: Education response in public schools: catch-up classes and double-shift schools



## Preparing children and youth for the future through education

Current efforts to expand education within the formal system, certified and uncertified non-formal programmes, including at pre-primary level, and higher education will continue into 2017. Jordan aims to reduce the number of double-shift schools by transferring students to single-shift schools as new, safe and inclusive learning environments become available. Advocacy will continue to allow Syrian volunteers to assist in schools. Education sector partners will invest in quality education through teacher professional development, strengthening the national curriculum, improving learning assessment in school and Makani, and through enhanced decentralization and accountability. Leveraging community engagement to support education and linking this with cross-cutting protection issues is necessary. With technical and financial support, Jordan will also focus on the longer-term reforms, as envisioned in the national HRD Strategy. This entails reaching the most vulnerable, including children with disabilities and those engaged in child labour, so that quality learning opportunities are available to all children and youth in Jordan. A more coordinated response with the child protection and the livelihood sectors will mitigate the economic and protection-related barriers, especially for older children (15-17 years). Jordan will continue investing in quality post-basic education; alternative pathways will be designed through TVET and tertiary education, including certified online learning.

In Iraq, enrolment in both formal education and NFE increased. While there were 20,545 school-age Syrian refugee children out of school in December 2015, by December 2016 all of them were reached by education opportunities.<sup>49</sup>

Iraq	Registered school-age refugee children (5-17 years)				
	Total	In formal education	In non-formal education <i>only</i>	Out of school # and %	
December 2016	61,804	51,681	10,123	-	0%
December 2015	63,822	36,465	6,812	20,545	32%

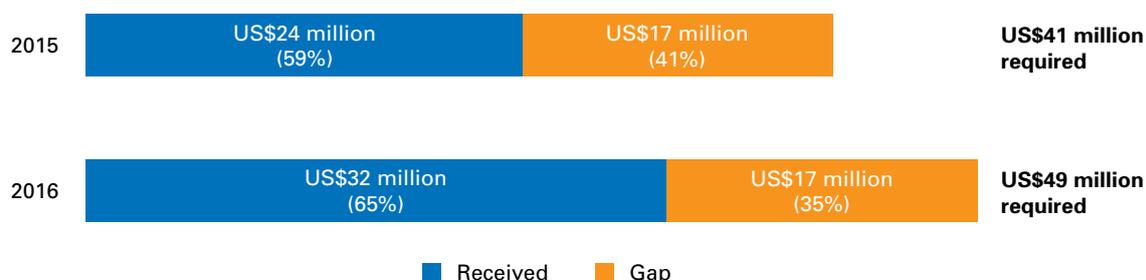
### 2016 education response

- **System strengthening:** The education response was substantially improved by systematically integrating the education provision for both Syrian refugee children (in KR-I) and Iraqi internally displaced children (countrywide). Efforts have been made to empower schools through a school-based management approach in both host-community and refugee camps with the aim to improve school governance, quality education, children learning outcomes and foster partnerships amongst schools, parents, communities, children and directorates of education.

- **Policy development:** The contextualized INEE MS for Iraq have been endorsed by the federal MOE and are informing the education response. Efforts continue to finalize and operationalize the NFE framework for the KR-I.

- **Access:** Education interventions included the establishment of additional learning spaces in host community schools and the use of mobile school units targeting out-of-school children in host communities with NFE programmes. BTL campaigns were conducted to mobilize children to register and stay in school. An e-learning initiative was modelled to provide education opportunities, through technology, to Syrian refugee children in selected governorates. Social protection mechanisms in place for vulnerable children included the provision of school transportation and cash grants to refugee families. Education cluster partners have provided support to around 650,000 internally displaced children (*see Map 4*). Among them, 377,112 children were reached through the implementation of Education in Emergencies (EiE) programmes, including the establishment of temporary learning spaces and the renovation and repairing of damaged schools, and around 528,979 children received education supplies and teaching and learning materials.

- **Quality:** The MOE KR-I has been supported to train unqualified refugee and internally displaced teachers on improved pedagogy, classroom management, subject matter and psychosocial support. Education partners have also provided incentives to volunteer teachers, especially in light of the financial crisis currently faced by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The MOE KR-I printed and distributed 254,000 textbooks to refugee children.



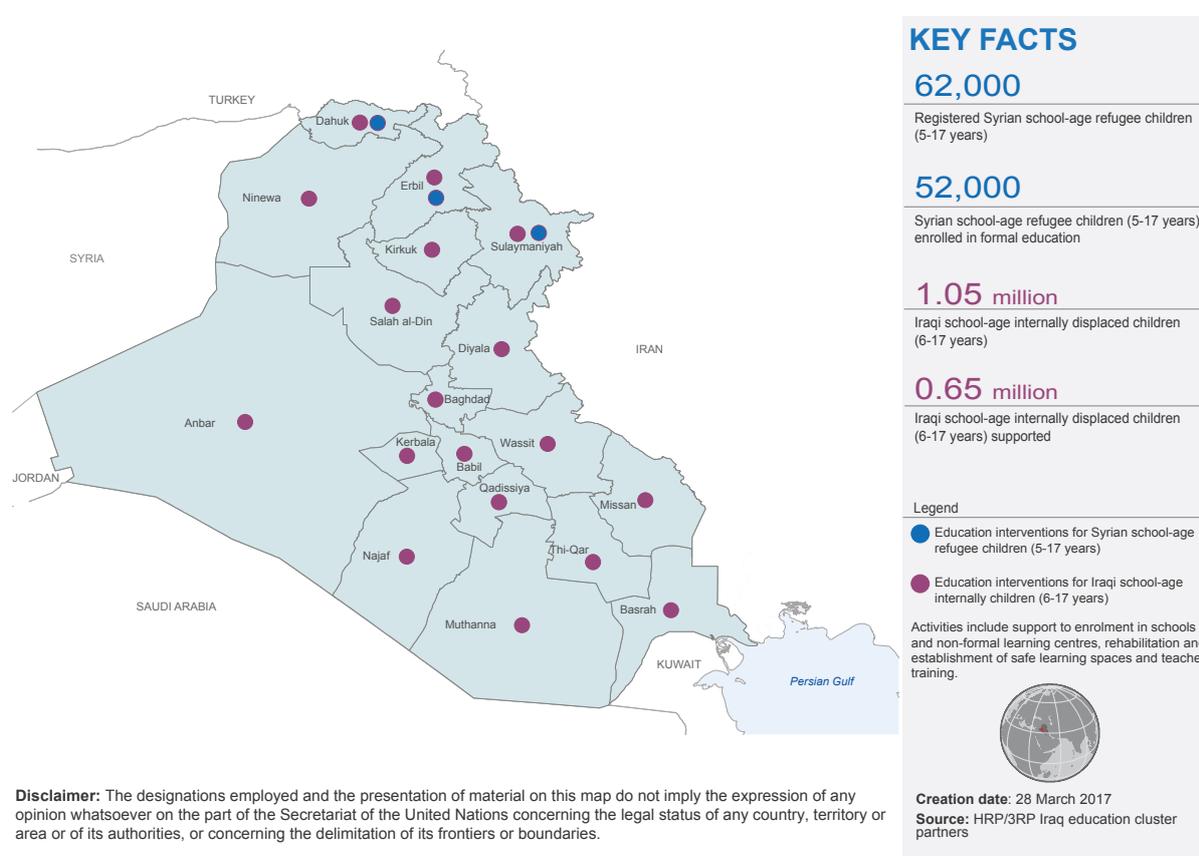
<sup>49</sup> School enrolment also covers unregistered refugees. Partners are working on improving the reporting to identify and avoid double counting.

<sup>50</sup> 3RP FTS. See Annex 1.

## Challenges and opportunities

Although education partners have been providing tents and prefabricated structures, limited space for education services remains the biggest challenge, especially in host communities. Education facilities are overstretched, conducting triple and quadruple shifts with fewer hours of instruction for children in all shifts. Due to the current financial crisis in the KR-I, coupled with challenges in coordination at different levels, the MOE has not been able to pay refugee teacher incentives or provide textbooks to Syrian refugee children. Youth have limited TVET and employment opportunities. The lack of official documentation and strict regulations are hampering children's placement at the right education level once they register in school. A shortage of learning materials, including textbooks, continues to affect the quality of learning in the camps.

Map 4: Refugee and internally displaced children supported with education interventions



## Preparing children and youth for the future through education

Refugee communities in the KR-I are concerned about the validity of Kurdish school certificates outside the KR-I. High-level advocacy is needed to establish clear transition pathways from one curriculum to another. Key opportunities to invest in include the use of technology to reach out-of-school children with interactive self-learning modules and mobile schooling units to reach remote areas on a regular basis, where refugee children cannot access education. The use of cash transfers to support out-of-school children and those who are at risk of dropping out remains a key strategy to enable families to cover education costs, including transportation to and from schools. Integrated child protection and education services need to be enhanced to ensure the safety and protection of children in learning spaces. Teachers are being trained on child protection, referral pathways and how to deliver life-saving messages, while child protection caseworkers are being trained to support outreach to vulnerable and out-of-school children.

## EGYPT

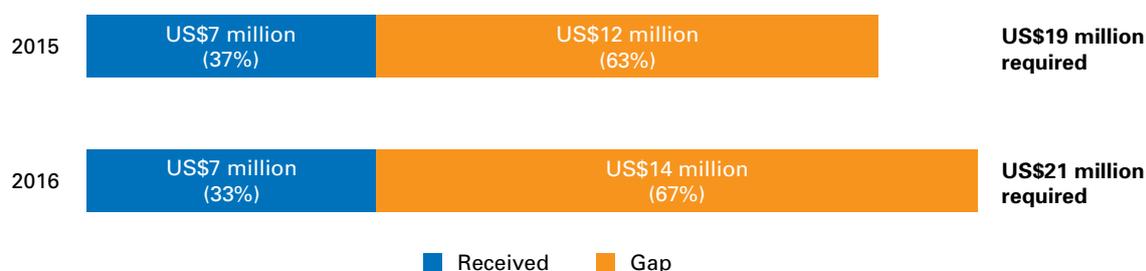
In Egypt, all Syrian school-age refugee children were reached by either formal education or NFE opportunities.<sup>51</sup>

Egypt	Registered school-age refugee children (5-17 years)				
	Total	In formal education	In non-formal education <i>only</i>	Out of school # and %	
December 2016	37,356	35,884	1,472	-	0%
December 2015	39,053	39,000	53	-	0%

### 2016 education response

- **System strengthening:** Education partners continued to streamline professional development and capacity building opportunities for MOE schools and personnel in the six impacted governorates with high numbers of Syrian refugees.
- **Policy development:** The partnership with the MOE was strengthened to design both short and medium term education response strategies. Education sector partners, in close coordination with the MOE, continued to work towards removing barriers faced by Syrian refugee children. In May 2016, the Government of Egypt reaffirmed its commitment through the renewal of the Ministerial Decree regarding education for Syrians to continue unrestricted access of Syrian refugee children to public education services.
- **Access:** Education partners established 50 early childhood education classes, equipped 30 schools with computer labs and implemented rehabilitation activities to enhance the learning environment in 210 public schools, widening access to education for both Syrian refugees and host community children (*see Map 5*). During the 2016/17 school year, education partners facilitated the enrolment of approximately 4,000 children in early childhood education opportunities and 7,200 children in all grades of basic and secondary education in public schools and informal community centres across the country. Additionally, and in light of the constrained economic situation in the country, education grants have been distributed to 19,731 boys and girls. These grants cover school fees, books and uniforms and pay for safe transportation to and from schools.
- **Quality:** Over 2,100 teachers and education staff were trained in active learning and positive discipline in order to improve the quality of education and raise awareness on protection issues in public schools. Support to the MOE also included the printing of approximately 1.8 million textbooks for Egyptian and Syrian students in the first three grades of primary education to improve literacy and numeracy skills.

### 2015 and 2016 education funding<sup>52</sup>



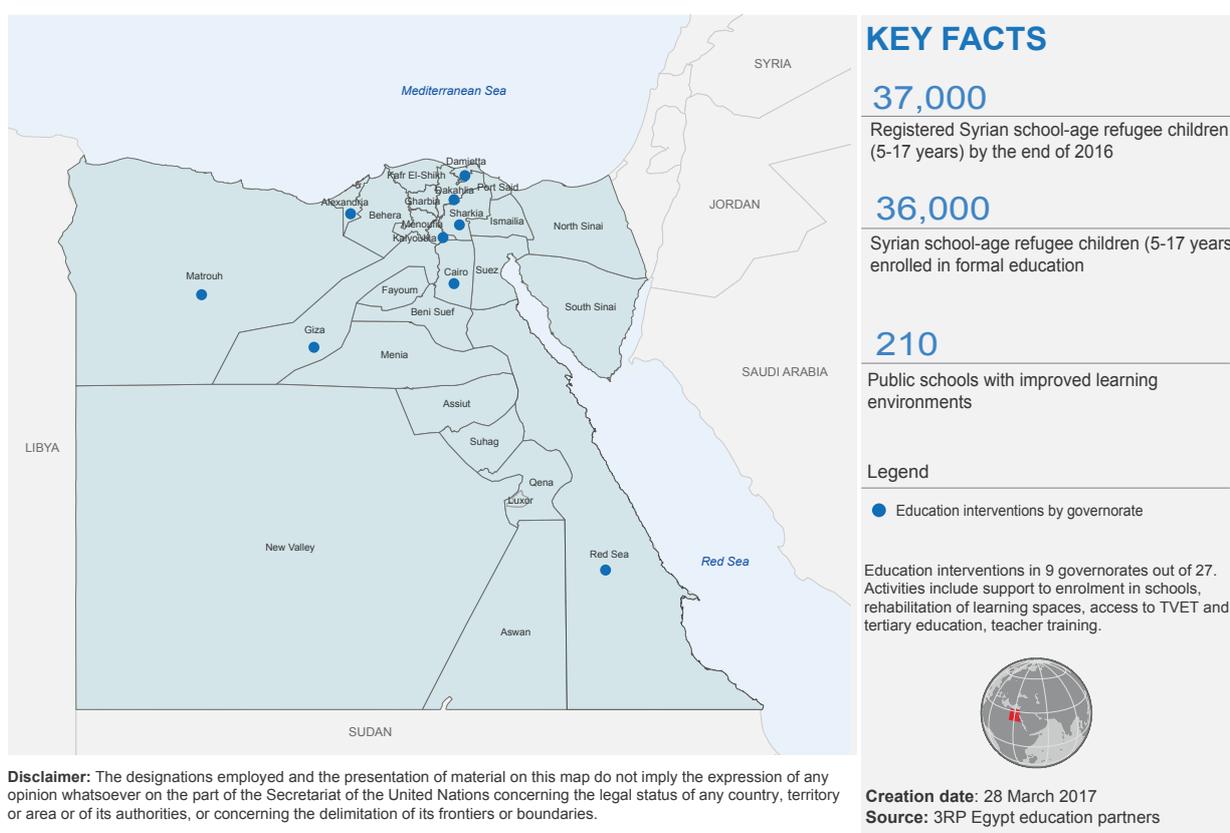
<sup>51</sup> School enrolment also covers unregistered refugees.

<sup>52</sup> 3RP FTS. See Annex 1.

## Challenges and opportunities

Due to the current economic conditions of the country, many refugee families are struggling to meet their basic needs. Despite enormous efforts to facilitate the enrolment of Syrian children in public schools, attendance and retention remain persisting challenges. Improvements need to be made in relation to the quality of education, ensuring sufficient availability of teaching materials, supporting for teacher qualifications, and establishing different learning pathways for all learners. Protection concerns remain a challenge, particularly with regards to violence in school, child labour, and for unaccompanied and separated children. Despite these challenges, there is strong political commitment from the Government of Egypt to strengthen its support to Syrian refugees. Social cohesion has been encouraged by the inclusion of Syrian children in public schools. The MOE is looking to further extend educational services by reaching the most vulnerable, including children with disabilities, and expanding access to all levels of education (from pre-primary to higher education).

Map 5: Education interventions in Egypt, by governorate (December 2016)



## Preparing children and youth for the future through education

Moving forward from a sustainable and rights-based perspective, it is important to promote a multi-pronged strategy that builds and expands children's access to multiple forms of education and learning. Alternative education opportunities should be flexible and appropriate to the ages and needs of the out-of-school children and youth, but should also be developed with the view to equip learners with core skills that promote their cognitive and social development. It is critical for education partners to expand partnerships beyond the education sector (child protection, particularly in relation to gender-based violence, livelihoods, etc.) in order to ensure that holistic approaches are being developed to address the needs of, and include all, children and youth.



**“My wish for Syria’s future is that it goes back to the way it was. No more war. I hope that we can go out and know that we will come back safely, not go out and never return home, to live like we used to.”**

says Saja, 13, who lost her leg in a bomb attack in the Bab Al-Nairab neighbourhood in eastern Aleppo more than two years ago. She lost four of her best friends in the same attack, and her brother in another. But she hasn’t lost hope, and her dreams of one day taking part in the Special Olympics. She was only 7 when the conflict began.

### 3. WAY FORWARD: INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE

Gathering in Amman, Jordan, on 23 March 2017, education officials and stakeholders from Syria and the five host countries, as well as regional and global partners, commended the progress made in 2016 and critically reviewed the remaining tasks. While underlining the scale of the challenges, they emphasized the value of **the London and Brussels Conferences** in keeping the momentum around long-term commitments and accountabilities in education in full alignment with the vision of SDG4. They also agreed to maintain the high stakes of London – all children and youth in education for US\$1.4 billion per year – to keep the pressure on accelerating and scaling up, but also to flag equity issues and the need for specific strategies to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized children and youth.

The **strategic shifts** in education around the three pillars of system strengthening, access and quality paved the way for meaningful investments for the future – in education and beyond. These efforts need to be improved and sustained, while sequencing into short- and medium-term strategies would be shaped by country contexts.

**Strengthening public education systems** in the Syria crisis education response entails enhanced national education governance and accountability, planning and costing, teacher professional development, and data collection. Stronger investment in communities and civil society organizations is essential to sustain schooling, support learning and protect children. Multi-sectoral approaches and partnerships, including child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene, food and nutrition, and social protection, are instrumental to maintain gains in education, and they need to be systematized.

While expanding **access** to formal education remains a priority, NFE is essential to reach the ‘hard-to-reach’; on the other hand, all NFE provision needs to be accredited and entail pathways to formal learning. In addition, the education response needs to be embedded within a lifelong learning approach that starts from early learning and continues through tertiary education levels. The timid and scattered efforts at reaching the youth population with education must be reinforced to provide and expand post-basic education opportunities, while addressing school-to-work transition. Major efforts also need to be invested in building the skills needed for the reconstruction of Syria.

Last but not least, stronger strides need to be made in **quality learning**. The necessary acquisition and measurement of foundational and technical skills should be accompanied with life skills and citizenship education to ensure cognitive learning, psychosocial wellbeing, constructive identity building and social cohesion. The focus on establishing protective, safe, gender-sensitive and inclusive learning environments needs to be strengthened. Investments in new and mobile technologies are necessary for reaching children and youth on the move; they need to be better structured and focused on content that is relevant and conflict sensitive.

**Sustained, predictable and timely funding** based on country-specific planning cycles remains key to preserve gains, and to ensure effective and efficient planning. While maintaining the US\$1.4 billion ask, more concerted outreach needs to be made to non-traditional donors, the private sector, and innovative financing mechanisms. Investments by national governments in Syria and in the five host countries in the education response need to be highlighted. A funding ‘observatory’ will be established to track all education funding.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships constitute important vehicles for mobilizing and sharing knowledge and expertise to support education for all children. Participants at the meeting in Amman on 23 March appreciated the coming together of education stakeholders and agreed on the value of joint quarterly progress updates to maintain an improved response. Most importantly, they underlined the need to **sustain a sense of hope** for all children and youth, in Syria, in the five host countries, and in the region, and to prepare them for a better future.

## VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

### SYRIA

“ I wish we could go back to our house, and I hope the birds would go back too and sing again. School is our second home. We will learn and mature and we will build our country. ”

**Rawan, a 16-year-old Syrian girl who dreams of becoming a doctor**

“ We don't know what the future holds for us, but our passion for education is high even in these difficult times. I see education as the only way out. ”

**Shrouq, 25-year-old Palestine refugee, displaced for the second time**

### LEBANON

“ This is my first class photo. I never had one taken in Syria. We were to do it but then the war broke out. ”

**Yamen, 10-year-old Syrian boy, now in school**

“ My life has been difficult and a little sad. But I don't let it bring me down. When I grow up, I want to become an astronaut. ”

**Rama, 15-year-old Palestine refugee from Syria, in Ein El Hilweh camp**

### EGYPT

“ I reached high levels of despair as I kept getting rejected from higher education institutes, but the scholarship has helped me develop a very strong character which I did not expect. ”

**Ahmad, a 20-year-old Syrian, studying on a scholarship, and the first generation of his family to enter university**

### TURKEY

“ I am happy here. I feel safe. I can go to school here. I don't worry that something bad will happen. ”

**Mohammad, 12-year-old refugee from Aleppo, now in school in Ankara**

### JORDAN

“ The most important thing for me is to study. I want to work and travel around the world, then I want to go back home and rebuild Syria. Education is important for me to realize my dreams. ”

**Nisreen, 11-year-old Syrian girl, studying in a Makani centre**

### IRAQ

“ We fled because there was no security, no food, and no jobs. We were struggling to provide. ”

**Siham, mother of 16-year-old Saja, explaining why they had considered marrying her off. Now Saja attends a school in Akre, and her father walks her to school every day.**

## ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

This Report is based on reliable primary and secondary **data sources** (EMIS, ILO, Ministries of Education, OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNRWA) as well as information from discussions and consultations with relevant stakeholders at country and regional levels. It is important to acknowledge data limitations and gaps; these are highlighted in the text and footnotes of the Report and mainly relate to the challenges of data collection in contexts of crises.

While Syrian **children and youth** inside and outside Syria constitute the focus of this Report, host community children and youth and Palestine refugee children and youth affected by the crisis are also considered. Concerning age groups, the category 'children and youth' is used to underline basic education (age group 6-14) and post-basic education (age group 15-24). Data for profiling children and youth by gender and camp/internally displaced person status exists, but is not regularly reported. Statistics on child vulnerabilities (disability, child labour, child marriage, etc.) remain limited.

**Early childhood education (ECE)** refers to one year of pre-primary education for children aged 5 years, with the exception of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan where ECE includes children aged 3-5 years. **Basic education** refers to primary and lower-secondary education, targeting children aged 6-14 years for most countries. **Post-basic education** refers to education for youth aged 15-24 years and can be further divided into general upper secondary education and TVET (15-17 years), and tertiary/higher education, including university education and TVET (18-24 years). It should be noted however that quality data on youth (15-24 years) is a challenge.

**Formal education** refers to education that is institutionalized through public organizations and recognized private bodies, and that – in its totality – constitutes the formal education system of a country as per the standard definition in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). It refers to education that is provided and approved by a State, with learning outcomes certified by national education authorities. **Non-formal education (NFE)** refers to any organized and sustained education activity that is provided outside formal education. Depending on the context, it may cover either alternative educational pathways that support transition to formal education (catch-up, self-learning and accelerated learning programmes) or remedial education programmes (language support, literacy and numeracy, e-learning) without transition to formal education. In Jordan and Turkey, this second type of NFE is referred to as informal education (IFE).

The term **out-of-school children (OOSC)** refers to children of basic education age (6-14 years) who are not attending formal education. Youth of post-basic education age are considered 'not in school' because they are not in a compulsory education age and are legally allowed to work. In the context of the Syria crisis however, the age group 5-17 is exceptionally adopted to identify OOSC in order to address the programming priorities of the education response.

For **children inside Syria**, the school-age population (5-17 years) is estimated for the beginning of the school year using OCHA population data, and the school enrolment number is extracted from the EMIS. For ISIL-controlled areas, it is assumed that 25 per cent of the pre-crisis 2011/12 enrolment has been sustained. Due to the limitations of data collection, it is difficult to estimate regular school attendance. The number of children at risk of dropping out is estimated by applying the repetition rate plus the dropout rate to the number of enrolment in basic education. For **Syrian refugees in the five host countries**, the school-age population (5-17 years) is calculated from the UNHCR data portal. Enrolment in formal/non-formal education is collected from UNHCR and UNICEF. Due to the limitations of data collection, it is difficult to estimate regular attendance in schools and NFE centres. There could be also an over- or under-estimation of enrolment due to reporting inaccuracies (double counting, inclusion of host community children, time lags, etc.).

**Financial tracking** in the context of the Syria crisis remains challenging. In this Report, the requested and received funding amounts for the education sector are obtained from the HRP/3RP Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and refer to HRP/3RP funding only (i.e. humanitarian funding). The tracking does not cover funding going to the development budgets of Syria and the five host countries (for the crisis response or other). Because, in general, education budgets cover activities for expanding access together with quality improvement and system strengthening, the increase in funding cannot be proportional to the growth in enrolment.



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