

Child Labour Report 2016



»Because we struggle  
to survive«

Child Labour among Refugees of the Syrian Conflict

**Terre des Hommes**  
International Federation

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Help for Children in Need

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# Preface

Dear Reader,

This study provides pertinent first-hand information on the reality facing Syrian children who are working either in their homeland, the neighbouring countries or elsewhere in Europe. Syria's civil war is the worst humanitarian crisis of our time. Hundreds of thousands of people – adults and children alike – have been killed. Two thirds of all Syrians have lost their homes and their livelihoods. Millions of Syrians have been uprooted from their home communities and forced to flee within their country or to neighbouring countries. The consistent spill-over has drawn global attention not just to the humanitarian crisis facing both local communities and national governments but also to the economic and social strain. The bloodshed wreaked by the different parties continues. The suffering deepens. Approximately half of the Syrian refugees and displaced persons are children and young people who suffer from a double-vulnerability: as children and as migrants or refugees.

Terre des Hommes and partners of the Destination Unknown Campaign support children in Syria, the neighbouring countries, along the transit routes and in the host countries. Terre des Hommes and other leaders of the humanitarian community are urging all the parties to immediately end the attacks on civilians, hospitals and schools and to agree on a cease-fire and embark upon a path to peace. Terre des Hommes is appealing to all the states to which the refugee children are turning to find refuge and reminding them of their duties towards all children. The duties of the states are enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child – a Convention which they have already ratified: a child is a child, regardless of his or her legal status. For one thing is certain: Although children escape the war, they are still not out of harm's way. This study reports on a strong increase in the economic exploitation of these children. Children are working in agriculture, on the streets, in factories and in tents and other confined spaces which have now become their new homes.



Ignacio Packer  
Secretary General  
Terre des Hommes



A large number of them – primarily boys – are also being recruited to fight in terrorist organisations.

There are plenty of reasons for protecting these children from labour and exploitation – and plenty of measures to achieve this. However, many states simply accept that the risk of exploitation is on the rise – often even driving it through their own decisions. Children have rights – everywhere – irrespective of whether they are at home or on the run. All states have a duty to ensure the children's survival and to make sure they have access to education and the best-possible health care. Always with the best interests of the child as the uppermost priority, this would be a realistic policy not only as it offers the children good prospects but also as it plays a major contribution to a peaceful coexistence and economic development in the host countries. Although the future of the Syrian Crisis and its impact in the region appear grim, there is hope that the growing and complex needs of the Syrian children can be met.

Terre des Hommes would like to thank all of the children who shared their experiences and expressed their views and hopes with us in interviews and focus group discussions during this study. We thank many members and partner organisations working throughout the journey of these children each and every day: in Syria, along the transit routes and in the host countries. Without their work, it would have been impossible to compile this report.



Albert Recknagel  
Spokesperson of the Executive  
Board terre des hommes Germany



# 1. At a Glance

Terre des Hommes<sup>1</sup> found substantial evidence that Syrian children<sup>2</sup> are facing a high danger of being drawn into child labour and the worst forms of child labour in Syria itself, in neighbouring countries and whilst in transit through Europe. A significant proportion of children fleeing Syria – whether accompanied, unaccompanied or separated<sup>3</sup> – is presumed to be victims of child labour, including the worst forms of child labour:

- **Children are being subjected to horrific experiences every day in Syria:** Grave human rights violations, such as killing, maiming, recruitment by armed groups and attacks on schools and hospitals are being observed. Findings indicate that the conflict and displacement has forced more children into working in increasingly dangerous and exploitative conditions that impact them physically, mentally or socially and limit their right to education. Left without sufficient aid services in areas controlled by government or terrorist groups, as well as in besieged areas, a life in dignity is far beyond reach and many of these children are severely traumatised and in need of immediate help.
- **Syrian refugee children<sup>4</sup> are bearing an immense burden** and often forced to take on the role of breadwinner for their families. Child labour, including its worst forms, has reached an alarming scale in countries adjacent to Syria due to being a coping mechanism after savings have been exhausted, income depleted or aid services reduced. Since the UN had to cut its rations due to a lack of funding during the winter of 2014/2015, more and more children have now taken up work – even the very young.
- In the **neighbouring countries**, such as Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey, **children are found in a variety of work places:** on construction sites, in agriculture, in markets, on the streets and in all kinds of services. Boys and girls are working long hours and often seven days per week. Several characteristics were identified:
  - All interview partners highlighted the fact that child labour and high rates of **youth unemployment** had been a problem in the respective countries before the Syrian crisis and also affected the children of the host communities.
  - The **type of shelter** does not seem to make a difference to the risk of child labour. Child labour can be found in formal camps as well as in those cities and villages where the vast majority of Syrian refugees are currently residing.
  - **Unlike in non-conflict settings**, being together with their families does not seem to prevent refugee children from working.
  - The **85** Syrian refugee children and **11** Iraqi IDP, aged 8 to 18, consulted by Terre des Hommes in ten **Focus Group Discussions** (FGD) reported that they were either currently working in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq or had started to work after arriving in the countries neighbouring Syria (FGD in Serbia and Greece).

1 The term Terre des Hommes covers the ten member organisations of the network Terre des Hommes International Federation in this report. <http://www.terredeshommes.org/>

2 The term «child» is used in this report in line with the definition stated in Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, i.e. «a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier», United Nations (1989): Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989, UN Doc. A/RES/44/25, <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

3 The Committee on the Rights of the Child defined the term unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) as follows: »Unaccompanied children (also called unaccompanied minors) are children...who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so. Separated children are children [...] who have been separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members«. United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (2005): Treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, General Comment No 6, UN Doc. CRC/GC/2005/6, 1 September 2005, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/GC6.pdf>

4 The «refugee child» is used in this report for every child in the sense of the CRC whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other adult who has left their place of habitual residence in order to seek refugee status or other international protection.



Refugee camp in Libanon

- **For the Balkan Route, no evidence was found that child labour had spread** in this transit area **until the beginning of 2016** as most people intended to quickly continue their journey. However, after the closure of the borders along the Balkan Route this year, single cases of child labour have already been reported to Terre des Hommes, especially from Idomeni/Greece where people are stranded and left without any proper aid assistance.
- **Germany** is a destination country for Syrian refugees but one that is not prepared to recognise the risk of child labour among refugee children within the country. Data collection and research on this issue is of high importance as single cases of labour, exploitation and trafficking have already been identified.
- **A huge number of push and pull factors for child labour** has been identified. The core factors are the aftermath of the war, economic reasons (including no access to legal work for parents), a lack of access to education (due to legal problems impeding registration, long distances to the schools etc.), health issues (illnesses of family members, restricted access to the health system), as well as the family situation (e.g. single-headed household) and insufficient humanitarian assistance.
- In view of the multifaceted push and pull factors that touch upon the overall living conditions of refugee children, **prevention and protection mechanisms** have to follow a **multi-dimensional approach** to be effective. This means that rather than setting up specific programmes to combat child labour, interventions to protect children from exploitation should be generally integrated into all the child protection programmes. A holistic approach should include all the aspects of child labour, i.e. health, education, child protection, livelihood, cash assistance and other direct assistance but also include advocacy, awareness-raising and social integration. The Regional Model of Action to fight the Exploitation of Children through Labour in the Near and Middle East, developed by Terre des Hommes (see Box II), follows this path.

## 2. Context and Scope of the Child Labour Report 2016

Since the outbreak of the Syrian crisis in March 2011, about 6.5 million Syrians have been internally displaced by the violence which has also driven more than 4 million Syrians into fleeing their destroyed homesteads and seeking protection and assistance in neighbouring countries, such as Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq.<sup>5</sup> At the end of 2014, UN Agencies had to cut emergency assistance due to having received insufficient donations from the international community. As a consequence, living conditions – especially in the countries around Syria – worsened so many families decided to continue their journey and moved on to take risky boat transfers across the Mediterranean Sea and Western Balkan routes in order to seek protection and asylum in Europe.<sup>6</sup> Until today, the involvement of different players has not stopped the violence and mass flight but instead has actually contributed to escalating the conflict. More recently, the chaotic situation along the Balkan Route – the result of border closures as well as make shift camps, the harsh winter conditions and the changing political situation have created serious conditions for refugees throughout Europe.

At the time of publication of the report at hand, UNOCHA estimated that 13.5 Million Syrian people, including 6 million children, were in need of humanitarian assistance. Of these, 4.8 million people were in hard-to reach areas, including close to 500,000 people in besieged areas in Syria.<sup>7</sup> It is estimated that half of this refugee population are children below 18 years of age. The ongoing regional conflicts have an extreme effect on their lives. In many cases, access to schooling has become impossible and they are faced with health problems, malnutrition and unacceptable hygienic conditions on a daily basis. Moreover, the conflict exposes thousands of children to escalating violence, attacks and exploitation resulting in severe physical harm and trauma. In addition, an increasing number of child marriages are reported in Lebanon and Jordan.<sup>8</sup> Child labour already

existed in Syria and its neighbouring countries prior to the war but the ongoing humanitarian crisis has now pushed it to alarming levels. Reports from Terre des Hommes' national and regional offices indicate that an increasing number of refugee children are involved in all kinds of economic activity. In addition, child labour in its most extreme forms is widespread in Syria. So far, only little research has been done to understand the phenomenon of child labour in Syria and along the migration routes into Europe. However, the majority of existing studies and publications focus on the situation in Syrian neighbouring countries.<sup>9</sup> None of these reports has yet included the topic of child labour amongst refugee children on transit routes through Europe or in the host countries to present an overall picture.

5 UNOCHA (2015): Syria Crisis – Regional Overview, <http://www.unocha.org/syrian-arab-republic/syria-country-profile/about-crisis>

6 UNOCHA (2015): Syrian Arab Republic, October 2015, <http://www.unocha.org/syria>.

7 UNOCHA (2016): Syrian Arab Republic, May 2016, <http://www.unocha.org/syria>.

8 As the scope of this report is limited to child labour, this phenomenon cannot be further investigated. See for example (1) UNICEF (2014): A study on early marriage in Jordan, [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEFJordan\\_EarlyMarriageStudy2014.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEFJordan_EarlyMarriageStudy2014.pdf) (2) Université Saint Joseph (2015):

Mariage précoce: Illusion ou Réalité ? Enquête sur les taux de mariage précoce parmi les Libanais et les réfugiés syriens au Liban, <http://www.isp.usj.edu.lb/pdf/FinalIII%20June%2029%20Images%20Hi%20res.pdf>

9 E.g. (1) UNHCR (2015): The future of Syria – Refugee Children in Crisis, <http://unhcr.org/FutureOfSyria/executive-summary.html#syrian-refugee-children>; (2) UNICEF/ Save the Children (2015): Small hands – Heavy burden: How the Syria Conflict is driving more children into workforce, <http://childrenofsyria.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/CHILD-LABOUR.pdf>, (3) ILO (2015): Impact of Syrian refugees on the Jordanian labour market, [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arab-states/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_242021.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arab-states/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_242021.pdf).



Greece: refugee child selling pastries in the street



Libanon: »I have to care for my children, but being a refugee I don't have the right to work.«

### 3. Objectives and Methodology

The objective of this 2016 Child Labour Report is to shed light on the problem of child labour, including its worst forms, among refugees from the ongoing conflict in Syria and the tremendous spill-over effects in the region. This report presents the overall picture and analyses the push and pull factors for child labour among internally displaced children in Syria and refugee children in the neighbouring countries, as well as in the countries they are heading to. It focusses on protection and prevention mechanisms for children as well as promising practices.

The research process took place in March and April 2016. Due to the dynamics evolving from the refugee crisis and the fast-changing efforts of the international community to cope with the situation, the study can only cover the period from mid-2014 to May 2016 and does not claim full scientific or statistical accuracy.<sup>10</sup> It rather analyses:

- Recent updates from relevant UN Agencies, e.g. UNHCR, UNOCHA, IOM, UNICEF, as well as international Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) reports;
- National Studies, reports and media features from the countries of focus as well as information available via the campaign »Destination Unknown«<sup>11</sup>, an international campaign by Terre des Hommes to protect children on the move;
- Interviews with Terre des Hommes partner organisations and national/regional offices in the Syrian Arabic Republic, the Lebanese Republic, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Republic of Iraq, the Republic of Turkey, the Hellenic Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Germany<sup>12</sup> operating in the respective areas, including key informants dealing with child labour<sup>13</sup>;

- Ten FGD with 96 Syrian refugee children and Iraqi IDP in Greece, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Serbia as well as interviews and case studies with children<sup>14</sup>, and
- A Peer Review Meeting with key experts which took place in Germany on 4 May 2016, including representatives from Terre des Hommes (Lausanne, the Netherlands, Germany) as well as partner organisations from Turkey, Greece and Germany.

The limitations of this report result from the lack of data on the situation of working children in all countries in focus. The information provided by governments and international organisations both before and during the on-going crisis has fundamental gaps and in many cases does not cover the issue of child labour at all. However, the interviews and experiences from Terre des Hommes projects, as well as the FGD, gave valuable insights into the subject of research.

The research hypothesis anticipates that the conflicts in Syria, the whole region as well as the situation along the transit routes into Europe will lead to an increase in child labour – including its worst forms – as a coping mechanism for Syrian refugee families to survive. Analysing this issue from a holistic perspective provides insight into the root causes of child labour, including its worst forms, and helps generate a multi-dimensional understanding of the problem. Promising practices to prevent and protect children from all forms of labour will also be identified.

<sup>10</sup> Child safeguarding measures as the basis for all research activities. All information provided by children themselves was anonymised to avoid harm.

<sup>11</sup> For more information see the campaign's website: <http://destination-unknown.org/>.

<sup>12</sup> Solely with the aim of facilitating the readability of the report at hand, the following short names of the countries will be used hereinafter: Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia and Germany.

<sup>13</sup> The complete set of questions is listed in Annex 2, the list of all interview partners is provided in Annex 3.

<sup>14</sup> A summary of the methodology used for the FGD is provided in Annex 4.

## 4. Legal Provisions to Protect Children from Labour

Terre des Hommes refers to the internationally acknowledged framework set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Conventions 138 and 182 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for a definition of child labour.<sup>15</sup> In its fight against child labour, Terre des Hommes makes a distinction between child work and child labour, and gives top priority to eradicating the latter. Child work refers to the participation of children in any paid or unpaid economic activity, or activities to support families and family caregivers, which are not detrimental to their health and mental and physical development. On the contrary, child labour refers to all kinds of labour which jeopardise a child's physical, mental, educational or social development. Hazardous child labour is prohibited for all children, in line with Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour. Child labour in dangerous jobs, such as in prostitution and bonded labour, should be directly eliminated.

The Syrian Arab Republic, its neighbouring countries as well as all countries along the Balkan Route to Europe have ratified the CRC and the ILO Conventions 138 and 182 to protect children from child labour in all its forms. In addition, Turkey, Macedonia, Serbia, Greece and Germany have ratified the Geneva Convention of 1951 relating to the Status of Refugees<sup>16</sup> which defines who is a refugee, refugee rights and the legal obligations of signatory states towards refugees.

The EU has also made provisions within the Treaty on the EU<sup>17</sup> as well as the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights<sup>18</sup> to ensure that children's rights are respected in accordance with the CRC. The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions and policies relating to children regard-

less of their migratory status, nationality or background.<sup>19</sup> In 2014, the European Parliament called on the member states (Art. 16) to implement Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating the trafficking of human beings which is of particular relevance as »the majority of [the] victims of trafficking are young boys and girls who are child victims of labour and sexual exploitation and other abuses.«<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, Art. 23 calls on member states to implement the European Parliament's resolution on the situation of unaccompanied minors in the EU (2013) as well as to fully implement the Common European Asylum System package in order to protect unaccompanied children.<sup>21</sup>

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on 25 September 2015 by the heads of state of 193 countries, the states agreed on a new transformative agenda. This consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 specific targets to be implemented worldwide by 2030<sup>22</sup>. Targets 8.7 and 16.2 envision ending »child labour in all its forms« by 2025 (8.7) as well as ending »abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and the torture of children« (16.2) by 2030.<sup>23</sup>

15 The following paragraph refers to Terre des Hommes (2016): Terre des Hommes position on Child Labour, <http://www.terredeshommes.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/TDH-position-on-child-labour.pdf>

16 UNHCR (2010): Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, December 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html>.

17 European Union (2010): Consolidated versions of the Treaty on the European Union and Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Article 3, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, [http://europa.eu/eu-law/decision-making/treaties/pdf/consolidated\\_versions\\_of\\_the\\_treaty\\_on\\_european\\_union\\_2012/consolidated\\_versions\\_of\\_the\\_treaty\\_on\\_european\\_union\\_2012\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/eu-law/decision-making/treaties/pdf/consolidated_versions_of_the_treaty_on_european_union_2012/consolidated_versions_of_the_treaty_on_european_union_2012_en.pdf).

18 European Union (2000): Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 18 December 2000, Doc. 2000/C 364/01, Art. 24, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf).

19 Council of the European Union (2010): Council conclusions on unaccompanied minors, 3018th Justice and Home Affairs Council, Luxembourg, 3 June 2010, para c. <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?!=EN&f=ST%2010669%202010%20INIT>

20 European Parliament (2014): 25th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the child, 27 November 2014, Doc. 2014/2919(RSP), <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P8-TA-2014-0070&language=EN&ring=B8-2014-0285>.

21 In its recently adopted new Strategy on the Rights of the Child, the Council of Europe confirms that children on the move »are also at high risk of trafficking and exploitation« (7.22) and declares to strengthen efforts to realise children's rights. Council of Europe (2016): Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016–2021), 3 March 2016, Doc. CM(2015)175, <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=CM%282015%29175&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=final&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383&direct=true>.

22 United Nations (2015): Transforming our world, 25 September 2015, UN Doc. A/RES/70/1, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>.

23 For more information see Global Forum on Migration and Development (2015): Migration and development in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – A child rights perspective, October 2015, [http://destination-unknown.org/wp-content/uploads/BP1\\_Post\\_2015\\_AN\\_web.pdf](http://destination-unknown.org/wp-content/uploads/BP1_Post_2015_AN_web.pdf)



## UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The CRC<sup>1</sup> sets the framework for the protection of children's fundamental human rights and is, thus, the central point of reference when addressing the issue of child labour. In 1989, the CRC was adopted and established a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards primarily specifying state obligations towards children under 18 years of age. Article 32 specifically addresses the protection of children »... from economic exploitation and from performing any work that interferes with his or her education or is harmful to his or her mental, spiritual or social development.« During the course of time, the CRC has been further developed by the adoption of three Optional Protocols.<sup>2</sup> These focus on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the involvement of children in armed conflict, and the communications procedure for child rights violations. All these are, therefore, highly relevant to the context of child labour.<sup>3</sup>

## ILO Conventions 138 and 182

In addition, the framework for determining child labour and defining its worst forms is established in two ILO Conventions: Convention 138 concerning the Minimum Age (1973, No. 1384), and ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999, No. 182<sup>5</sup>). According to ILO Convention 138, the minimum age limit should not be below the age when compulsory schooling is completed – and in any case not below 15 years of age (Art. 3). In addition, employment of persons aged 13 and upwards is allowed where this is not harmful to the health or development of a child and does not prejudice school attendance (Art. 5). ILO Convention 182 defines the »worst forms of child labour«:

- »all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflicts;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children«.

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1 United Nations (1989): Convention on the Rights of the Child, *ibid*.

2 United Nations (2000): Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, 25 May 2000, UN Doc. A/RES/54/263, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPSCCRC.aspx>; United Nations (2000): Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 25 May 2000, UN Doc. A/RES/54/263, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPACCRC.aspx>; United Nations (2011): Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, 19 December 2011, UN Doc. A/RES/66/138, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPICCRC.aspx>

3 The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has drawn specific attention to the situation of UASC in its General Comment No. 6. United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (2005): Treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, *ibid*.

4 ILO (1973): Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 26 June 1973, [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312283:NO](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312283:NO).

5 ILO (1999): Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 17 June 1999, [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312327:NO\(C](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312327:NO(C)

## 5. The Humanitarian Framework of Response to the Syrian Crisis



Together with her daughter she had to flee Syria in 2014

Within Syria, humanitarian partners providing assistance across the operational hubs (Syria, Turkey and Jordan) committed to work together under a »Whole of Syria«<sup>24</sup> approach at the end of 2014. 270 international and national actors have joined hands in this initiative to create a common response plan as well as a supporting coordination structure. This is aimed at reducing overlap in coverage and facilitating response by the direct and effective modalities of aid.

In addition, the UN Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) was launched in December 2014 as a consolidated regional framework to bring together the plans developed under the leadership of the national authorities of Syrian neighbouring countries, i.e. the Republic of Turkey, the Lebanese Republic, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Republic of Iraq and the Arab Republic of Egypt, to ensure protection and humanitarian assistance and to strengthen the resilience of the host communities. The 2016–2017 3RP<sup>25</sup> brings together more than 200 partners – including Terre des Hommes – with a current appeal for funds amounting to 5.78 billion USD in 2016.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, UN agencies and international NGOs launched the No Lost Generation (NLG) Initiative in 2013 to address the needs of Syrian children. It became an integral part of 3RP and established a 3–5 year framework. This initiative puts education and child protection at the centre of the response inside Syria and in its neighbouring countries.<sup>27</sup> Although child labour is mentioned in various reports from the NLG initiative, additional efforts to protect Syrian children are required.

24 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016–2017 in response to the Syria Crisis, Regional Strategic Overview, p. 5, <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/3RP-Regional-Overview-2016-2017.pdf>.

25 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.*

26 (1) UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.*, (2) UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP Annual Report 2015, Introduction, <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/3RP-Progress-Report.pdf>

27 See website of the NLG Initiative: <http://nostgeneration.org/>.



Refugee camp in Turkey

The EU provided the maximum possible amount of 930,997,848 EUR in December 2015 according to its ›Worldwide Decision‹ on financing humanitarian aid operational priorities.<sup>28</sup> With its recently updated contribution to the Syria Regional Crisis, the Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) will now provide an additional amount of 130 million EUR in 2016 on top of its previous allocation of 330 million EUR to address the increasing humanitarian needs of displaced people and refugees in Syria as well as in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.<sup>29</sup> Finally, on 4 February 2016, the UK,

Germany, Kuwait, Norway and the UN co-hosted a conference on the Syria crisis in London. It raised over 11 billion USD for 2016–2020 which will enable the partners to plan ahead.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, it is obvious that this humanitarian framework cannot be implemented as planned if financial support is not increased. As of 18 May 2016, only 25 % of the 3RP and 18 % of the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) were funded.<sup>31</sup>

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28 European Commission (2015): Financing humanitarian aid operational priorities from the 2016 general budget of the European Union, ECHO/WWD/BUD/2016/01000, 15 December 2015, Doc. C(2015) 8936 final, [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2016/HIPs/WWD\\_BUD\\_2016\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2016/HIPs/WWD_BUD_2016_en.pdf)

29 European Commission (2016): Humanitarian Implementation Plan Syria Regional Crisis, ECHO/SYR/BUD/2016/91000, 20 April 2016, Ref. Ares(2016)1865591, <http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/humanitarian-implementation-plan-hip-syria-crisis-echosyrbud201691000-o>.

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30 For more information see website of the London Conference: <https://www.supportingsyria2016.com/>.

31 See UNOCHA: Financial Tracking Service, <https://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=special-syriancrisis>

## 6. The Situation in Syria

### Situation in the sixth year of war

Five years of war have destroyed Syria. The toll on children is immense as they face the violence of war, breakdown of public infrastructure and economic decline. Today, 13 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, among them six million children.<sup>32</sup> More than 2 million Syrian children do not have regular access to aid as they are living in hard to reach areas or under siege.<sup>33</sup> Today, 80% of the people in Syria live in poverty, 67% live in extreme poverty and approximately three million have lost their jobs.<sup>34</sup> Public services have collapsed, public infrastructure has been destroyed. Nearly 70% of the population are without a safe and reliable water supply.<sup>35</sup> Attacks on hospitals and doctors, extremely difficult hygienic conditions in areas under siege and the influx of IDPs has resulted in diseases that had disappeared from the country for decades, such as polio, measles, leishmaniosis and nutrient-draining diarrhoea. Education is also under attack: 2.8 million Syrian children are out of school – close to half of all school-aged children. Prior to the conflict, the primary school enrolment rate was at a level of almost 99%, with the secondary school enrolment rate coming in slightly lower at 89% – with virtually the same number of boys and girls. Today, a quarter of all Syrian schools – more than 6,000 – have either been damaged, are now being used for fighting, as detention centres or torture chambers, or are sheltering displaced families. The governorates of Damascus, Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and Idlib account for nearly half of all children not in school. An unknown number of teachers has been killed and more than 52,000 teachers have left their posts.<sup>36</sup> Even if school attendance is possible, the quality of the education provided

is poor as classes often comprise 50 children or more. Violence and traumatising have also dramatically affected the ability of children to learn. Though little is known about areas under siege, the people forced to remain there are facing even worse conditions, amongst them more than 250,000 children. »The elderly and children, men and women, who were little more than skin and bones: gaunt, severely malnourished, so weak they could barely walk, and utterly desperate for the slightest morsel...I would say they are being held hostage – but it is even worse. Hostages get fed« said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in January 2016. Reports by UN agencies and relief organisations speak about children and young people dying of hunger and malnutrition. Children are eating grass and leaves to survive.<sup>37</sup> Prior to the conflict, Syria was rated a middle income country and ranked 116 in the UN's Human Development Index (HDI). By 2015, the country had been ranked down to 134<sup>38</sup> – and since then the situation has worsened.

### Effects on child labour

With compulsory education in place, no official figures from the Syrian government were available to this study on child labour prior to the war. Now that 13 million people are in need of assistance and 80% of the population inside the country are living in poverty, child labour is on the rise in Syria. Observations on the ground by UN agencies, international and national relief organisations, Terre des Hommes being one of them, confirm that children in Syria are being forced to work simply to survive – as well as being targeted by parties to the conflict to be exploited as child soldiers.

According to Terre des Hommes' Area Manager on Psycho-social Support in Syria, more and more children are being forced into work. Due to the war, exact figures are not available. Families are being forced to develop coping mechanisms which mirrors their high degree of desperation. Common coping mechanisms include the use of savings, the selling of assets, spending money on food only and reducing the number of meals per day, sending children to work for

32 UNOCHA (2016): Syrian Arab Republic – Key figures, [www.unocha.org/syria](http://www.unocha.org/syria)

33 UNICEF (2016): No Place for Children – The Impact of Five Years of War on Syria's Children and their Childhood, 14 March 2016, <https://www.unicef.de/blob/106970/ef5ba0af8e768eacbobaeef-e0ca13d3ae/unicef-bericht-no-place-for-children-2016-03-14-data.pdf>

34 Syrian Centre for Policy Research/ UNDP/ UNRWA (2015): Alienation and Violence – Impact of Syria Crisis Report 2014, March 2015, [http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/alienation\\_and\\_violence\\_impact\\_of\\_the\\_syria\\_crisis\\_in\\_2014\\_eng.pdf](http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/alienation_and_violence_impact_of_the_syria_crisis_in_2014_eng.pdf)

35 UNOCHA (2015): Syrian Arab Republic – Humanitarian Needs Overview, October 2015, p. 4, [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2016\\_hno\\_syrian\\_arab\\_republic.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2016_hno_syrian_arab_republic.pdf)

36 UNICEF (2016): No Place for Children, *ibid.*

37 (1) Save the Children (2016): Childhood under Siege – living and dying in besieged areas of Syria, March 2016, [http://www.savethechildren.de/fileadmin/Berichte\\_Reports/Save\\_the\\_Children\\_Childhood\\_under\\_siege\\_englisch.pdf](http://www.savethechildren.de/fileadmin/Berichte_Reports/Save_the_Children_Childhood_under_siege_englisch.pdf), (2) UNICEF (2016): No Place for Children, *ibid.*

38 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report 2015 – Syria Arabic Republic, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SYR>



Children's amusement in a refugee project of terre des hommes Netherlands

money or food items, as well as marrying off a daughter to give her the chance to flee to a safer area or country with her husband's family and to survive with a wealthier family whilst saving on expenses for food for one family member. Moreover, accepting the recruitment of a child by armed groups, the flight to a more secure area inside the country or the flight to another country are all common strategies families develop in order to survive.

Working children are found in all types of work, paid and unpaid, self-organised and employed. For example, children are working in agriculture, street vending, washing cars, doing metal work, carpentry or begging.<sup>39</sup> They smuggle goods across the border or between fighting zones, collect

oil waste or do household work, including fetching water or collecting food from rubbish tips or the fields.

Syrian and Iraqi children in Greece participated in a FGD conducted by the Terre des Hommes partner organisation ARSIS – Association for the Social Support of Youth – and helped to shed more light on the working conditions they faced in their home countries. According to them, working is not an issue as long as it does not go beyond their physical capacities (such as construction work) or does not demand more than 20 hours of work per day.<sup>40</sup> All the children consulted in Greece used to work on average between 16–20 hours a day in their home countries. In addition, Syrian participants referred to their personal experiences of

39 Terre des hommes Italy (2016): Interview with the Area Manager Psychosocial Support in Syria, 25 April 2016.

40 ARSIS (2016): FGD, Syrian and Iraqi refugee children, aged 14–19, Greece, March 2016.

war in Syria, mentioning funerary work as being suitable for them to do. »*Taking care of killed people is a work we can do; for example, collecting the parts of their body in order to bury them,*«<sup>41</sup> noted one of the participants.

According to UNICEF, the recruitment of children is on the rise with a trend towards recruiting even younger children – as young as seven – including girls. The recruitment of children in armed conflicts to be deployed as child soldiers or to play a supporting role away from the frontlines or for sexual exploitation is considered one of the six grave violations of child rights in armed conflicts.<sup>42</sup> Large numbers of children displaced from Syria have been recruited in Kurdistan and ISIL controlled areas.<sup>43</sup> The UN Secretary-General verified in his 2015 yearly report to the Security Council that »271 boys and 7 girls had been recruited and used by groups affiliated with the Free Syrian Army (FSA) (142), Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG/YPJ) (24), ISIL (69) and al-Nusra Front (ANF) (25). In 77% of these cases, children were armed or used in combat and almost one fifth were under 15 years of age. Boys associated with armed groups were commonly between 14 and 17 years of age, with 17 verified cases of child recruitment under the age of 15. In many cases, children were paid to fight for salaries of up to 400 USD per month.« These salaries paid by ANF, FSA, and in particular ISIL are very high and, thus, create an incentive for children under difficult economic circumstances.<sup>44</sup>

### Prevention and protection mechanisms

The Syrian Arab Republic has ratified all eight ILO core Conventions, the CRC as well as the two Optional Protocols on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (both in 2003). These ratifications are accordingly listed despite being well aware of the fact that the Syrian Arab Republic is violating inherent human rights each and every day in a systematic and brutal manner. In the field of child

labour, Syria adopted the National Work Plan to implement the World's Call on Child Survival related to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and ILO Conventions No. 138 and 182. A new law number 24/2000 was issued, stating that the minimum age for a child's entry into the labour force was 15.<sup>45</sup> An Amendment to the Penal Code was adopted during the crisis (30 June 2013) which added an additional Article No. 488 to the Penal Code criminalising all forms of recruitment and the use of children under the age of 18 by armed forces and armed groups, including taking part in direct combat, carrying and transporting weapons or equipment or ammunition, planting explosives, standing at checkpoints or carrying out surveillance or reconnaissance, acting as a distraction or human shield or assisting and/or serving the perpetrators in any way or form.<sup>46</sup> Although the NLG initiative reported around 1.2 million children could be reached through community-based child protection interventions and psychosocial support across Syria in 2015, the great majority of children is now left without care. The existing child protection programme reach remains limited, especially in rural areas, and there is virtually no child protection programme in place in ISIL-controlled areas. Terre des Hommes is currently implementing three projects in Syria to protect children from being drawn into labour.<sup>47</sup> First, families are being sensitised to the problem of child labour through focus groups. Second, the children themselves are being encouraged to develop plans and ideas for the future and third, the psychosocial support team is helping children and their families to deal with the devastating effects of life in a country at war. All in all, more than 3,700 children and 350 families are being reached. In addition, Terre des Hommes plans to establish vocational training programmes for children above the age of 16.

41 ARSIS (2016): FGD, Greece, *ibid*.

42 United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (2009): *The Six Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict: The Legal Foundation*, October 2009 (updated November 2013), [https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/publications/WorkingPaper-1\\_SixGraveViolationsLegalFoundation.pdf](https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/publications/WorkingPaper-1_SixGraveViolationsLegalFoundation.pdf)

43 United Nations General Assembly/Security Council (2015): *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and armed conflict*, 5 June 2015, UN Doc. A/69/926-S/2015/409, p. 31–34 on Syrian Arab Republic, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/countries/syria/>

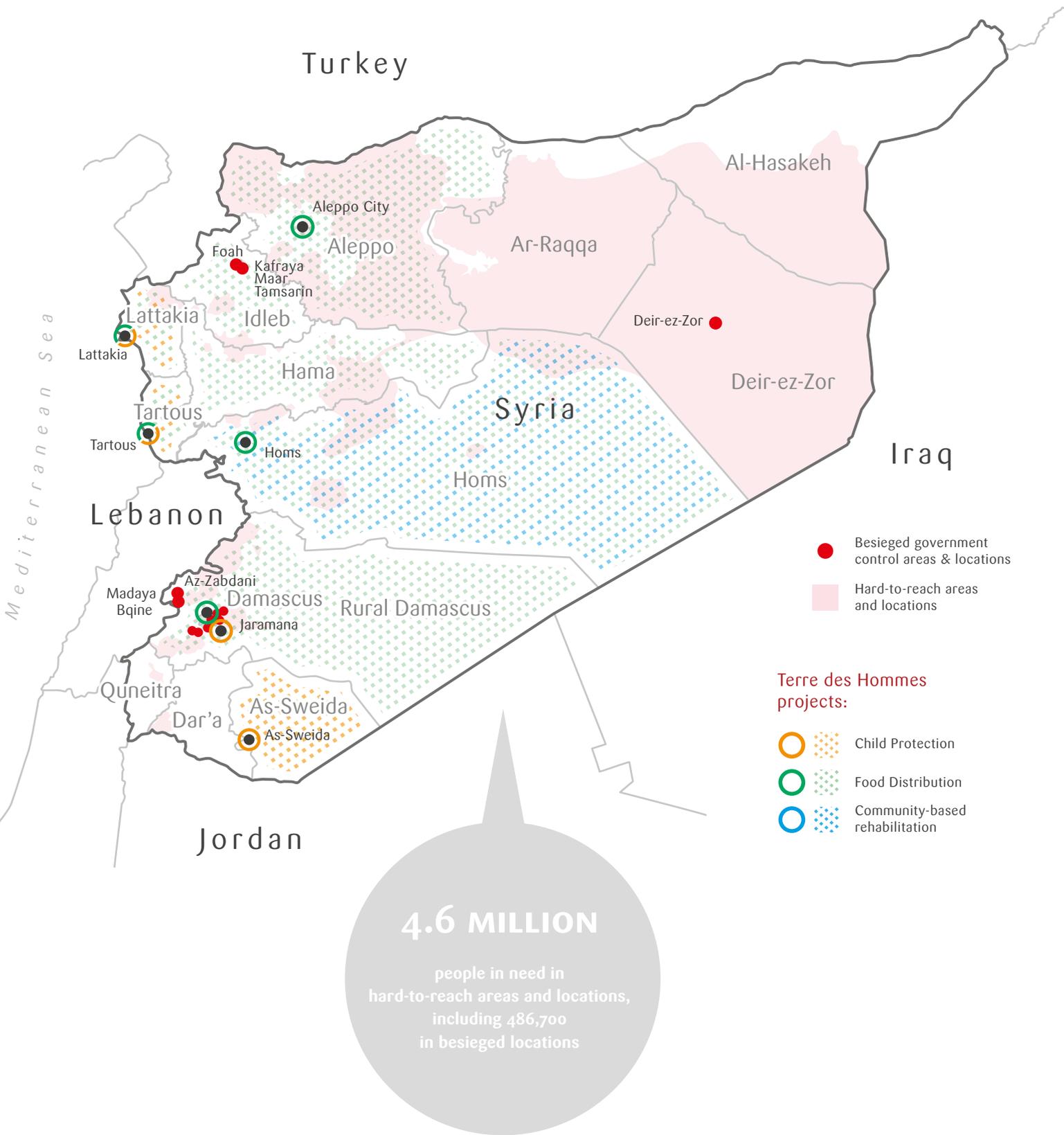
44 United Nations General Assembly/Security Council (2015): *Report of the Secretary-General...*, *ibid*,

45 ILO (2008): *Syrian Arab Republic – Decent Work Country Programme (2008–2010)*, February 2008, p. 8 ff., <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/syria.pdf>

46 Syrian Arab Republic (2013): *Law No. 11 of 2013 amending the Legislative Decree No. 148 of 1949 concerning the Penal Code*, 30 June 2013, accessible via [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p\\_lang=en&p\\_isn=96560&p\\_country=SYR&p\\_count=377&p\\_classification=04&p\\_classcount=14](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=96560&p_country=SYR&p_count=377&p_classification=04&p_classcount=14)

47 Terre des hommes Italy (2016): *Interview with the Area Manager Psychosocial Support*, *ibid*.

Situation in Syria and Terre des Hommes projects



Data on the basis of Terre des Hommes / UNOCHA

## 7. The Situation in Neighbouring Countries

The Syrian conflict remains the largest emergency of our time. Neighbouring countries are hosting more than 60 % of the Syrian people seeking refuge from the war. Jordan has a Syrian refugee population of over 650,000 men, women and children. In Lebanon, it was estimated in February 2016 that more than 1 million registered Syrian refugees are residing in the country. In Turkey there are over 2.7 million officially registered Syrian refugees, and in Iraq almost 250,000.<sup>48</sup> In addition, Syria's neighbouring countries are also hosting a high number of refugees from other countries, primarily from Palestine and Iraq.

A recent report published by the ILO centres on »The twin challenges of child labour and youth employment in the Arab States«<sup>49</sup> argues conclusively that the issues of child labour and youth marginalisation are closely linked and points to the need for common policy approaches to address them. Youth employment prospects are typically worse for former child labourers and other early school-leavers as yesterday's child labourers often turn into today's jobless. Although it admits that the situation of children and young people in Syria is beyond its scope, the report describes the devastating impact on the country's children and youth and explains that measures to mitigate this impact are urgently needed.

The following portrayals of the situation in the neighbouring countries that are now accepting refugees focus on the emergence and increase in child labour due to the Syrian crisis – reflecting on the developments over the past two years whilst referring back to the previous conditions in the country.



### 7.1 Jordan

#### Situation in the sixth year of war in Syria

In total, more than 650,000 Syrians had registered with UNHCR in Jordan by May 2016.<sup>50</sup> The Northern region of the country, in particular, was dramatically affected by thousands of refugees crossing the border through the towns of Jabeir and Ramtha to seek protection and shelter directly after the eruption of the crisis in March 2011.<sup>51</sup> The Jordanian government officially recognised the growing refugee crisis in 2012 when an average of 1,000 people a day crossed the border.<sup>52</sup> As a consequence, Za'atari refugee camp was set up in July 2012 and has since taken on unforeseen dimensions.

Today, 20 % of the entire registered refugee population reside in the five official refugee camps<sup>53</sup>, the largest of them (Za'atari camp) is home to over 80,000 people. More than 517,000 refugees are living dispersed in host communities in Jordan's twelve governorates and urban centres.<sup>54</sup> The high number of people entering the country and their impact on the living conditions in Jordan has changed the attitude of Jordanians towards refugees. While they first welcomed the latter as guests, many now have become distant.<sup>55</sup> This has

48 All figures from ILO (2016): The ILO Response to the Syrian Crisis, February 2016 Update, [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/publication/wcms\\_357159.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/publication/wcms_357159.pdf)

49 ILO (2016): The twin challenges of child labour and youth employment in the Arab States, 27 January 2016 [http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS\\_IPEC\\_PUB\\_27702/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_27702/lang-en/index.htm)

50 UNHCR (2016): Syria Regional Refugee Response – Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

51 UNHCR (2015): Country Profile – Jordan 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e486566.html>

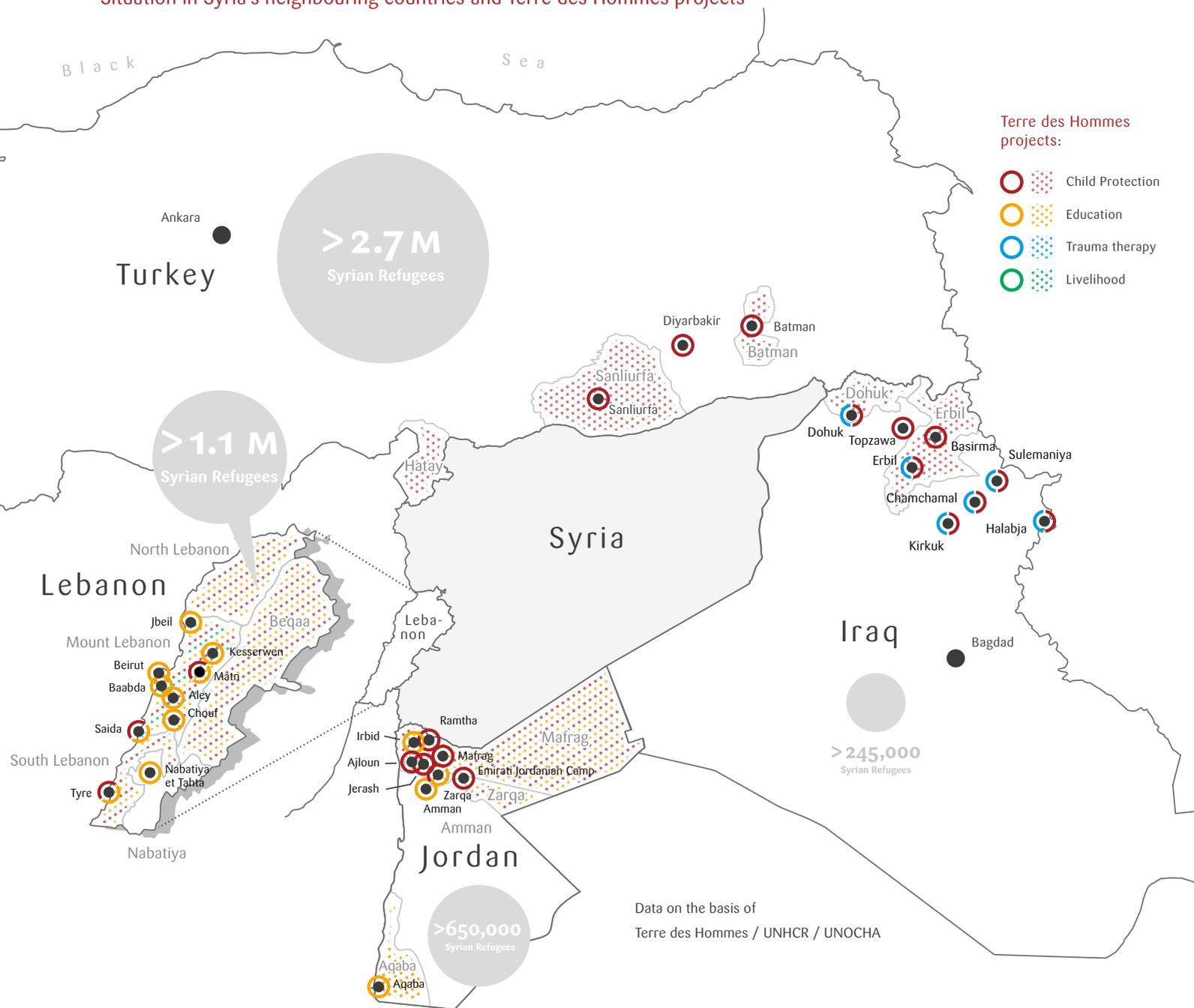
52 UNHCR (2015): Country Profile – Jordan 2015, *ibid.*

53 UNHCR (2016): Syria Regional Refugee Response, *ibid.*

54 UNHCR (2016): Syria Regional Refugee Response, *ibid.*

55 Migration Policy Centre (2015): Syrian Refugees in Jordan: a Reality Check, February 2015, p. 2, <http://cadmus.eui.eu//handle/1814/34904>.

Situation in Syria's neighbouring countries and Terre des Hommes projects



Data on the basis of Terre des Hommes / UNHCR / UNOCHA

to be seen against the background of the internal economic, social and political situation in Jordan at the time of the mass influx of refugees. This is why the Government of Jordan demanded from all the organisations that they included at least 30 % of the Jordanian communities in their projects at the beginning of the crisis.<sup>56</sup>

While the country was ranked 95 out of 188 countries in the HDI 2011, with a good education system showing an enrolment rate at primary school level of 96.8% before the crisis in 2011, youth unemployment has been pervasive.<sup>57</sup> In 2012, the country's youth unemployment rate was almost twice the global average of 12.4 % in 2012 although still lower than the regional average for the Middle East.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, over

56 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Written information provided on 19 May 2016.

57 UNDP (2011): Human Development Report 2011 – Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All, p.159, [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/271/hdr\\_2011\\_en\\_complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/271/hdr_2011_en_complete.pdf)  
 58 ILO (2014): Labour market transitions of young women and men in Jordan, June 2014, [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_245876.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_245876.pdf)

14 % of the Jordanian population are now living below the poverty line<sup>59</sup> and struggling with higher prices for food and rent in their communities. Further political and economic deterioration may follow.<sup>60</sup> However, the effects of the crisis on these figures have not been adequately investigated.

At the same time, the living conditions of the Syrian refugees within Jordan are deteriorating. According to a UNHCR study carried out in 2014, two out of three Syrian refugees are living below the Jordanian absolute poverty line of 68 Jordanian Dinar (JOD) per person per month (~84 EUR<sup>61</sup>).<sup>62</sup> In the border zones and areas with a high refugee density, in particular, rent prices have tripled or even quadrupled as a consequence of the sharp increase in housing needs.<sup>63</sup> In addition, refugees living inside the formal camps lack access to basic services.<sup>64</sup>

### Effects on child labour

In view of the high poverty level, enormous rents, worsening living conditions and the insufficient support provided by state and non-state players, Syrian refugees in Jordan are resorting to a range of coping strategies to survive. Spending savings is one of the first coping mechanisms most of them choose, followed by sharing homes, selling jewellery and household assets.<sup>65</sup> However, when all the savings have been exhausted and all the goods sold, families have no other choice but to opt for more drastic coping strategies.

According to Terre des Hommes' North Field Coordinator in Jordan, an increasing number of children have started to work to support their families and relatives.<sup>66</sup> In 2011/2012 not much child labour was seen amongst refugees because families could, for instance, still rely on their savings. In an

ILO assessment carried out in 2014, only 11 % of employers reported that they had recruited children during the past 3–4 years while 84 % said that they had employed children for the past 1–2 years.<sup>67</sup> This quite probably indicates a significant change in the behaviour of employers – with serious consequences for the children affected. Similarly, since 2014, Terre des Hommes has increasingly observed people resorting to child labour as a source of family income as a consequence of deteriorating living conditions, the decrease in the distribution of World Food Programme (WFP) vouchers, restricted access to medical care and the depletion of income.<sup>68</sup> For example, in a previous project from May to August 2015, the field staff monitored 348 cases of child labour (300 boys and 48 girls). In the current project that started in November 2015, 107 cases have already been identified. These figures might reflect an overall trend, but as no comprehensive data on child labour among Syrian refugee children in Jordan is available, further research is required.

Another identified push factor for child labour is the difficulty adult Syrian refugees have in obtaining a work permit due to the high costs and access restrictions. As a consequence, children start to work to help fulfil the basic needs of their families. Two out of the three FGD conducted with Syrian refugee children in Jordan revealed that one of the main reasons for children working is related to the lower risk of prosecution for illegal work in comparison to that facing adults. Moreover, the children consulted maintained that girls are less likely to be targeted by the police than boys or adults. As argued by the girls themselves, *»females can find more job opportunities compared to males and the police do not focus on chasing girls as they do with boys and adults.«*<sup>69</sup> The restrictive issuing of work permits was intended to protect the national labour market in the past.<sup>70</sup> In April 2016, a new regulation was passed giving employers in the informal sector a three-month grace period to obtain work permits for Syrian refugees and regularise their employment.<sup>71</sup> According to UNHCR, this new regulation might provide *»a much-needed economic boost«*<sup>72</sup> for at least 78,000 Syrians by enabling them to work legally in agricul-

59 The Jordan Times: Third of Jordan's population lives below poverty line at some point of one year, 2 July 2014, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/third-jordan%E2%80%99s-population-lives-below-poverty-line-some-point-one-year-%E2%80%94-study>

60 Migration Policy Centre (2015): Syrian Refugees in Jordan, *ibid.* p. 3.

61 As of 10 May 2016 the exchange rate was 1 JOD = 1.23384 EUR.

62 UNHCR (2014): Living in the Shadows – Jordan Homes Visit Report 2014, p. 7, <http://unhcr.org/jordan2014urbanreport/home-visit-report.pdf>

63 UNHCR (2014): Living in the Shadows, *ibid.* p. 7.

64 E.g. Daily Mail: A migrant city the size of Bath: Refugee camp in the middle of the Jordanian desert opened with 100 families but is now home to 80,000 Syrian refugees, 3 February 2016, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3429835/King-Abdullah-says-Jordan-boiling-point-number-Syrian-refugees.html#ixzz48GyQdFdP>

65 UNHCR (2014): Living in the Shadows, *ibid.* p. 42.

66 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the North Field Coordinator Jordan, 23 February 2016.

67 ILO (2014): Report of the rapid assessment on Child Labour in the Urban Informal Sector in three governorates of Jordan (Amman, Mafraq and Irbid), p. 40, <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=10590>

68 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the North Field Coordinator Jordan, *ibid.*

69 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Syrian refugee children, aged 8–16, Jordan, March 2016.

70 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the North Field Coordinator Jordan, *ibid.*

71 UNHCR (2016): Work permit boost gives hope to Syrian refugees in Jordan, 19 April 2016, <http://www.unhcr.org/57162b0a6.html>

72 UNHCR (2016): Work permit boost gives... *ibid.*



Bochar, 13 years old, works in an orchard in Jordan

ture, construction or service industries in the short term. However, access to the labour market for Syrian refugees is a highly sensitive issue in Jordan as only 36.3% of the local population aged 15 and above actually had employment in 2015.<sup>73</sup> The impact of refugees on the labour market has not been analysed to its full extent, but the coexistence of high levels of unemployment among Jordanian nationals and large shares of foreign workers has raised contentions.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the government is assessing opportunities to open some sectors to Syrian refugees without compromising the livelihood opportunities for Jordanians and other migrants.

Working refugee children living in host communities are found in a variety of sectors, according to Terre des Hommes in Jordan.<sup>75</sup> Cleaning work, selling in shops or in the streets, work in restaurants, collecting trash in the

street, work on construction sites, loading/carrying materials, as well as work as a mechanic or carpenter are all found both inside and outside the camps. Terre des Hommes has identified working children starting at the age of 5 to 6 up to the age of 16, of whom 87% are boys. The average age of the working child is 14. This information confirms the findings of the ILO gathered in a rapid assessment on child labour in the informal urban sector in 2014 in which 66% of the total of 45 child labourer respondents belonged to the group of 16–17 year-olds, 30% to the 12–15 year-old group and only 4% to the group of 5–11 year-olds.<sup>76</sup> Interestingly, Syrian refugee boys living in host communities consulted by Terre des Hommes in Jordan consider that according to their age and capacities they can do both light and heavy work (including working as small-scale vendors, working in a shop, in the textile industry, agriculture, or construction sector) as long as the work is not hazardous, does not compromise their reputation, or contradict their religious values. For instance, although many of the boys consulted work as small-scale vendors, they argued that this is the type of work they should not really be doing »*because people might*

73 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report 2015 – Jordan, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/JOR>

74 ILO (2014): Labour market transitions... *ibid.* p. 9–10.

75 For a specific analysis of the conditions for working children in the Main Amman Market, see Terre des hommes Lausanne/ Great Amman Municipality (2014): Greater Amman Municipality and Terre des hommes Foundation Main Amman Market Child Protection Survey, 26 August 2014.

76 ILO (2014): Report of the rapid assessment on Child Labour in the Urban Informal Sector, *ibid.*



Children collecting scrap metal in a Jordanian refugee camp

*think that working children are beggars when selling at traffic lights.* « Similarly, religious values play an important role when boys define the types of work that they should not do. For example, a group of boys explained that they *»should not do illegal trade such as alcohol, prostitution, stealing because it is against Islam.«*<sup>77</sup>

By contrast, Syrian refugee girls consulted in Jordan consider that they are only capable of doing light work, such as beauty parlour work, weaving, household chores, textile

industry work (from home) or agricultural work (harvesting). According to them, heavy work, such as working in factories or doing heavy agricultural work (planting), would be unsafe and beyond their capabilities. Similar to the boys consulted, religious values play a key role in the type of work they are willing to do, especially in relation to the sectors in which they would have to interact with boys or men. For instance, *»working in markets or doing household work might be unsafe because this is mixed work and there is higher exposure to harassment, injustices and misbehaviour by the employers.«*<sup>78</sup>

77 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Syrian refugee children, aged 8–16, Jordan, March 2016.

78 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD Jordan, ibid.

The working conditions vary according to the nature of the job. As stated by Terre des Hommes, most of the children are working full time.<sup>79</sup> The children working in the streets have very long days (over 7 hours). On average, the children earn between 3–5 JOD per day (~3–6 EUR) in cash. Fifteen of the 28 Syrian refugee children consulted by Terre des Hommes in Jordan reported that they worked more than 7 hours a day, with 13 of them stating that they worked 7 days per week. It is worth mentioning that most of the children consulted are either small-scale vendors or involved in agricultural work. Six of the 15 children who work over 7 hours a day work unpaid, while only three of the 28 consulted indicated that they had received some kind of social security benefits from their employers.<sup>80</sup> The ILO undertook a second rapid assessment on child labour in the agricultural sector in Mafraq and Jordan Valley which produced interesting findings on the working conditions of Syrian refugee children compared to Jordanians.<sup>81</sup> Of the 215 households that were surveyed, including 368 children, 48.8% were found to be Jordanians and 51.2% Syrians. A comparison between the two groups showed that Syrian refugee children work under harsher conditions, have lower school attendance rates and come from poorer families than the Jordanian child workers.<sup>82</sup> For example, only three of the 28 Syrian refugee children consulted by Terre des Hommes in Jordan reported being enrolled in school.<sup>83</sup> According to the girls consulted, *»we should go to school or stay at home because it is the adults' and males' responsibilities to work, not females, especially children girls.«* However, being a part of a large family and, as is often the case, being the eldest child involves various responsibilities with a view to covering the basic needs of the family members. As stated by a group of girls, *»we work to cover home needs, to help pay the rent and to help our relatives. The housing is too expensive and we also need to get food and clothes.«*<sup>84</sup>

## Prevention and protection mechanisms

Jordan has ratified ILO Convention No. 138 and No. 182 as well as the CRC, the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and has, thus, accepted the obligation to protect children on its territory from all kinds of labour. Labour legislation in Jordan prohibits the employment of children below the age of 16 and is directly linked to a system of compulsory education up to the 10th grade. It also includes more specific provisions on the different types of work, working conditions and working hours.<sup>85</sup> However, these regulations are not effectively controlled by Jordan's labour monitoring bodies – neither for Jordanian, nor for Syrian refugee children.

Since 2011, Jordan's Ministry of Labour, in partnership with the ILO and UNICEF, has developed a National Framework to Combat Child Labour in three governorates of Amman, Zarqa and Mafraq and launched a series of pilot schemes.<sup>86</sup> In November 2014, Jordan adopted a Child Law that expanded the definition of »juveniles in need of protection« to include child labourers, such as street vendors and garbage collectors. The Child Law gave the Ministry of Social Development the responsibility for protecting children in these categories and for establishing a new Child Labour Unit to enhance the protection level in the future. The Government, with support from ILO-trained labour inspectors and inter-ministerial social development programmes, launched efforts to enable better access to schooling and/or non-formal education.<sup>87</sup>

These efforts include, for example, the re-introduction of the practice of »double shifts« in overcrowded schools for approximately 215,000 Syrian school children currently based in Jordan. Although the introduction of double shifts helped to get a high percentage of Syrian children back into the schools, it is now overstressing the available resources, affecting the quality of education and derailing the on-going public education reform.<sup>88</sup> Generally, education is free in

79 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the North Field Coordinator, Jordan, *ibid.*

80 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Individual Questionnaire and Consent Form, Syrian refugee children, aged 8–16, Jordan, March 2016.

81 ILO (2014): Rapid Assessment on Child Labour – Agricultural Sector in Jordan / Mafraq & Jordan Valley (Ghor), February 2014, <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=10592>

82 ILO (2014): Rapid Assessment on Child Labour – Agricultural Sector...*ibid.* p. 46–47.

83 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Individual Questionnaire and Consent Form, *ibid.*

84 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD Jordan, *ibid.*

85 UNICEF/Save the Children (2014): Baseline Assessment of Child Labour among Syrian Refugees in Za'atari Refugee Camp – Jordan, November 2014, p. 12 ff., <http://www.alnap.org/resource/20682>.

86 ILO: The ILO Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis February 2016 Update, [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/publication/wcms\\_357159.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/publication/wcms_357159.pdf)

87 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – Jordan, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/jordan>

88 (1) UNICEF (2015): Syria Crisis Education Factsheet – Middle East and North Africa Out of School Initiative, March 2015, <http://childrenofsyria.info/syria-crisis-4-years-on/education/>, (2) UNICEF (2016): Syria Crisis Education Factsheet – Middle



terre des hommes in Jordan: sport supports children in coping with traumatic experiences

Jordan – not only for Jordanian children but also for refugee children. However, access to school is difficult for many reasons. First, children are often withdrawn from school when sent to work.<sup>89</sup> Second, schools are often overcrowded and far away so that transportation costs can be a barrier. Third, a low interest level of the children for education, which has different causes, often prevents them from attending classes. Finally, growing tensions among local and refugee children, mentioned in interviews with the Terre des Hommes' North Field Coordinator, may cause school violence due to the lack of space and overcrowded classes<sup>90</sup>. This might also prevent refugee children from attending. Generally, a high necessity for social inclusion activities to achieve a greater integration of Syrian refugee children at school level and in their local communities and to encourage children not to drop out of school and to feel less discriminated has been identified by Terre des Hommes. Improving access to education can be seen as a decisive step in preventing child labour. Therefore, the NGOs are now trying to scale up non-formal education activities in order to promote and facilitate school enrolment.

In an attempt to improve the protection of children from labour, especially its worst forms, a Child Labour Task Force was recently established in Jordan in cooperation with the ILO. Terre des Hommes actively supports this Task Force. Four priorities have been identified for the next 6 months<sup>91</sup>:

- Develop a common definition and minimum criteria for the ›integration‹ of child labour in other programmes. (Lead: Save the Children International)
- Map out good practices in addressing child labour with a view to narrowing them down to a few replicable models that all players can use. (Lead: ILO)
- Develop key messages on child labour for protection players (Lead: Terre des Hommes)
- Review the implementation of the referral system for child labour cases, identify gaps or bottlenecks and propose alternatives.

In addition, Terre des Hommes has already identified a couple of prevention and protection programmes that have been taken into account when drafting the Regional Model of Action to Fight Exploitation of Children through Labour (see Box II).<sup>92</sup> Cash distribution programmes, for example,

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East and North Africa Out of School Initiative, 2016, [http://www.oosci-mena.org/uploads/1/wysiwyg/Syria\\_Crisis\\_5\\_Year\\_Education\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_English\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.oosci-mena.org/uploads/1/wysiwyg/Syria_Crisis_5_Year_Education_Fact_Sheet_English_FINAL.pdf)

89 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the North Field Coordinator, Jordan, *ibid*.

90 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the North Field Coordinator, Jordan, *ibid*.

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91 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Written information provided on 13 May 2016.

92 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the North Field Coordinator, Jordan, *ibid*.

have proved successful at local level as they minimise the economic pressure on the families. Additionally, field staff has set up a case management system to protect child labourers by supporting their families. A referral system has also been installed to refer children to other NGOs for health issues and matters affecting their livelihoods. Giving children the opportunity to access protection services and attend children's activities, as well as referring possible cases of abuse, is a direct and effective activity. Moreover, it is crucial to enlighten the children on their rights, the risks of hazardous labour, exploitation and protection mechanisms to strengthen their own capacity. Legal information is also now being provided to families to help them address their documentation concerns. In future, the Jordanian delegation would like to develop its activities in the areas of safety, advocacy, awareness, engagement with employers, informal education and remedial classes and also engage in capacity building with local partners to enable them to handle the problem of child labour on their own.

The participatory tools used to consult working refugee children helped to shed light on the type of support children consider crucial to improve their lives. Syrian refugee children consulted in Jordan acknowledged the efforts that key stakeholders, such as the Jordanian Ministry of Labour, UN agencies, NGOs, and religious leaders, have made to improve their lives during their stay in Jordan. However, they also underlined the importance of enforcing legal provisions that aim to protect children from exploitation, abuse, and hazardous work. Parents were also identified as key players when it comes to guaranteeing their protection. Moreover, they argued that more support from UNHCR and NGOs is needed to cover basic needs, especially with regard to accessing decent housing conditions. Finally, they call for higher commitment from vocational training centres as well as health and social centres in order to tackle the lack of employment opportunities for adults and the hurdles to accessing medical treatment and care.<sup>93</sup>

93 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD Jordan, *ibid.*

### Regional Model of Action to Fight Exploitation of Children through Labour

Terre des Hommes has developed a Regional Model of Action to Fight Exploitation of Children through Labour in the Middle East and Northern Africa, i.e. Afghanistan, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine and Syria. This takes into consideration past experiences in this region, including previous achievements, successes, challenges and lessons learnt. This Model suggests that all interventions with respect to the exploitation of children through child labour should be designed based on a three-pronged approach revolving around prevention, protection and (re)integration:

**1) Protection and (Re)Integration:** The core rationale is to ensure that each child is protected, lives in a protective environment, has adequate access to his or her fundamental rights and can further develop his or her capacity to protect him or herself in the future. The main results we expect to see regarding protection and (re)integration are a safer and non-exploitative working environment for the child – one that also promotes learning; better protection of all children who are already victims of or at high risk of being subjected to the worst forms of child labour through case management services (offered with alternatives), improvement in the ability of families at risk to be able to positively respond to their children's needs, and families who are able to support their working children in their choices.

**2) Prevention:** School abandonment has been identified as a risk indicator for child labour. With this in mind, education should be targeted. This is expected to lead to the following results: Increase in regular school attendance levels for working children and/or children at risk of being forced to work – with improved school achievements; increase in the number of children on the move (refugees, IDP, migrants, from rural to urban areas, etc.) who directly benefit from specialised activities (i.e. remedial education); and an enhanced ability of the families at risk to be able to positively respond to their children's needs. In addition, families will also be able to support their working children in their choices (to return to or stay in school).

For each individual component, the Model of Action defines the logic of intervention in more detail, such as the type of activity to be implemented, the methodology to be used, the targeted beneficiaries (children, employers, families etc.) and the players involved in the process.

## 7.2 Lebanon

### Situation in the sixth year of war in Syria

Lebanon has been heavily affected by the Syrian crisis and hosts the highest number of Syrian refugees in relation to its own population. All in all, more than 1 million Syrian refugees have registered with UNHCR as refugees meaning that one in five is a refugee.<sup>94</sup> Often overlooked these days, Lebanon also hosts more than 450,000 Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).<sup>95</sup> More than 53 % of these are living in the country's 12 refugee camps, all of which suffer from precarious living conditions and severe problems, including poverty, overcrowding, unemployment, poor housing conditions and lack of infrastructure.<sup>96</sup>

The effects of this mass influx are increasingly spilling over into the economic, social and political spheres of Lebanon, challenging the economy, leading to income losses and shrinking access to quality public services. This huge challenge is not reflected in the HDI ranking as Lebanon advanced to rank 67 in 2015.<sup>97</sup> However, changes can be seen, e.g. in the education sector. Primary school enrolment reached at 113.5 % in 2015.<sup>98</sup> School rates above 100 % generally indicate the existence of many over-aged or under-aged students due to early or late school entrance and grade repetition.<sup>99</sup> It is unclear whether this data covers refugee children. However, this high percentage seems to indicate that the capacity of the education system has reached its limit. This, however, requires further investigation. The overall unemployment rate has almost doubled since 2011 as a consequence of the fact that the labour

force increased by 50 % during the same period.<sup>100</sup> Youth unemployment is also pervasive, reaching 22.1 % in 2015.<sup>101</sup>

As a result of the huge spill-over effects, Lebanese nationals are divided regarding the Syrian crisis; social tensions between the host communities and Syrian refugees are rising sharply.<sup>102</sup> While coherent data on the poverty level is not available, UNHCR estimated in October 2013 that about 25 % of the Lebanese people are living on less than 4 USD per day<sup>103</sup> – thus, the number of poor Lebanese nationals almost equals the number of Syrian refugees in the country – without considering the 270,000 Palestinian Refugees who have been living in Lebanon under precarious conditions for several decades. In response to the increasing tensions, the government made a shift in its policy towards Syrian refugees and implemented restrictive new regulations in 2015. New border entry regulations were established and a costly residency renewal procedure implemented.<sup>104</sup>

This new development worsens the living conditions of refugees inside the country and directly affects the situation of children. An assessment carried out by UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR in 2015 on the vulnerabilities of the 4,105 Syrian refugee households in Lebanon registered with UNHCR illustrated the difficult living conditions.<sup>105</sup> The great majority of Syrian refugees in Lebanon lives in urban settings; camps are non-existent as various factions in the former Lebanese government refused to set up camps at the beginning of the crisis.<sup>106</sup> Syrian refugees, therefore, live in rented accom-

94 Since 6 May 2015, UNHCR Lebanon has temporarily suspended the new registration of refugees as per the Government of Lebanon's instructions. Accordingly, individuals waiting to be registered are no longer included. UNHCR (2016): Syria Regional Refugee Response – Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, *ibid*.

95 The current number living in the country is apparently lower as many of these refugees remain registered to keep their refugee status although they have already left the country. Written information provided by Terre des hommes Italy, 24 May 2016.

96 UNRWA (2016): Where we work – Lebanon, <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon>

97 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report 2015 – Lebanon, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/LBN>

98 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report 2015, *ibid*.

99 Worldbank (2016): How can gross school enrolment ratios be over 100 percent?, <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/114955-how-can-gross-school-enrollment-ratios-be-over-100>

100 Université Saint Joseph/ Gebara, Dr. Khalil (2015): The Syrian Crisis & its Implications on Lebanon Social, Economic, Political and Security Challenges and Potential Solutions, 9 March 2015, <http://www.sciences-po.usj.edu.lb/pdf/The%20Syrian%20Crisis%20%20its%20Implications%20on%20Lebanon%20-%20Khalil%20Gebara.pdf>

101 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report 2015, *ibid*.

102 UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, p. 3, <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2015VASyR.pdf>

103 UNHCR (2013): Lebanon – Baseline Information – Syria Needs Analysis Project, October 2013, <https://data.unhcr.org/syrian-refugees/download.php?id=3191>

104 Human Rights Watch (2016): I Just Wanted to be Treated like a Person – How Lebanon's Residency Rules Facilitate Abuse of Syrian Refugees, January 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/01/12/i-just-wanted-be-treated-person/how-lebanons-residency-rules-facilitate-abuse>. More information is provided on the website of the General Directorate of General Security <http://www.general-security.gov.lb/residence/اياعرلا-هي-فتم-قال-اسون-ان-يبل-ىل-ان-ي-ي-روس-ال-لو-خ-دم-ي-ظنت-ان-وي-روس-لا.aspx>.

105 UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment..., *ibid*. Data collection was stratified by districts in order to ensure data was representative at this geographical level.

106 Migration Policy Centre (2016): Syrian Refugees – A snapshot of the crisis – in the Middle East and Europe, [http://syrianrefugees.eu/?page\\_id=72](http://syrianrefugees.eu/?page_id=72)



Taha fled from Syria in 2011. He works at a chicken farm in Libanon

modation scattered amongst the host community, such as collective shelters, which are unfinished buildings rented to refugees, and informal tent settlements that can vary between consisting of a few tents and several hundred. Others live in nomadic camps or are hosted by families and locals. The living conditions are harsh. According to the assessment carried out by UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR, around 16 % of households examined were deemed to be in substandard and/or dangerous condition.<sup>107</sup> Shortages in food supply were reported. These stated, for example, that one in three household members had consumed just one or even no cooked meal the previous day. This is something which severely affects children's development. Generally, the food security situation of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon has significantly worsened since 2014. The 3,592 respondents to this assessment reported having an average income of 203 USD per capita with half of them living off less than 167 USD. The average monthly income of those without a paid job was only just below this, at 165 USD. As prices for food are high, 17 % of the households have to spend more than 65 % of their monthly income on food, which does not

leave any space for other essential goods and services.<sup>108</sup> Further, shortages in funding pushed WFP to reduce its in-kind support, further harming refugee families as fewer can now benefit from this support.

### Effects on child labour

Child Labour was already a problem in Lebanon prior to the Syrian crisis. However, it has now reached an unprecedented scale through the extensive effects of the refugee crisis on the country's social, economic and political state – affecting all nationalities.<sup>109</sup> In view of the overall high rate of needy people in the country and the devastating living conditions of Syrian refugees, especially the high food insecurity level, families are being forced to develop coping mechanisms. 100 % of the households assessed by UNICEF,

<sup>107</sup> UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment..., ibid.

<sup>108</sup> UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment..., ibid. p. 37, 41.

<sup>109</sup> Unit for Combat on Child Labour Lebanon (2015): Syrian Refugees Sending Children to Work to Make Ends Meet, 23 January 2015, <http://www.clu.gov.lb/english/news-details.php?id=44#.VzRJFuTwKjE>

WFP and UNHCR reported that they were having to apply food consumption-related coping strategies, i.e. that they were reducing the number of meals per day, buying less preferred or less expensive food or borrowing from friends and neighbours.<sup>110</sup> Due to the recent escalation of the situation, including the reduction of food vouchers due to insufficient support from the international community and the depletion of income amongst the refugees, families are now being forced to opt for even more drastic coping measures. In 2015, for example, 26 % of the households reported that they had had to withdraw their children from school, compared to 8 % in 2014.<sup>111</sup> Child labour was mentioned as a coping mechanism by 12 % (compared to 8 % in 2014).<sup>112</sup> UNICEF pointed out that single parent households are likely to send their children to work to bring in extra money.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, spending savings as well as selling goods and assets were also more common in 2015 than in 2014 and 2013.<sup>114</sup>

According to the Syrian refugee children consulted in South Lebanon by Terre des Hommes, their main reason for working was to support their families, particularly to cover basic needs, such as housing and food. They further stressed that the reduction in aid services provided by the UN agencies – especially by UNHCR – was also pushing refugee children into work.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, the children highlighted how the deplorable health services, coverage and access have become a determining factor in pushing them into work. As they stated, *»we work because there are family members who are sick and need medicine, and UNHCR does not pay medicine price, just when we enter the hospital.«*<sup>116</sup>

Terre des Hommes highlights that all these factors have led to a drastic increase in child labour in Lebanon in the past years. This trend can be observed in the number of children who are victims of the worst forms of child labour: For instance, of the 450 cases of protection opened in 2015 by Terre des Hommes in South Lebanon, more than 30 % were related to this issue.<sup>117</sup> Besides the push factors

already mentioned, field staff also underline the fact that the restricted access of Syrian refugees to the Lebanese labour market which has now been in place since 2014 has also increased child labour. Those officially registered with UNHCR have to pledge not to work at all in notarised form while those that have not registered need the support of a Lebanese national to obtain a residence permit.<sup>118</sup> These regulations make it more difficult for Syrians to enter the labour market, thus increasing the risk of children being sent to work.

In a recently published report, Human Rights Watch identified the new border entry regulations as well as the residency renewal procedures as being additional push factors for child labour.<sup>119</sup> The new procedures not only put enormous economic pressure on the respective families, but also increase the number of refugees losing their residence permits. In the end, this makes refugees more vulnerable to detrimental labour practices on the part of the employers.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, the lack of an official legal status prevents children from accessing education, which in turn exposes them to child labour. While the Ministry of Education officially announced its intention to enrol all Syrian students and pupils regardless of their legal status, Human Rights Watch research identified cases where access was nevertheless denied. Furthermore, safety risks on the way to school, e.g. having to pass checkpoints or go long distances, prevent children from going to school and push them into labour.<sup>121</sup>

Refugee children in Lebanon work in different sectors. In South Lebanon, many children are working in agriculture, such as orange picking and in tobacco fields. Landowners recruit the children living on their premises. Children might also be recruited by other employers or sent to them directly by their parents who see no other option. A high percentage of children can also be found in street-based activities, selling diverse items or begging – either alone or together with their caregivers. One should also not forget to include

110 UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment..., *ibid.* p. 6.

111 UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment..., *ibid.* p. 35.

112 UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment..., *ibid.* p. 35.

113 UNICEF (2014): Under Siege: The devastating impact on children of three years of conflict in Syria, March 2014, p. 5, [http://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_72815.html](http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_72815.html).

114 UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment..., *ibid.* p. 56.

115 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Syrian refugee children, aged 11–17, Lebanon, March 2016.

116 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Syrian refugee children, aged 11–17, Lebanon, March 2016.

117 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the Programme Coordinator & Interim Country Delegate, Lebanon,

23rd February 2016.

118 Human Rights Watch (2016): I Just Wanted to be Treated like a Person, *ibid.* Prior to 2012, all Syrians were allowed to work in the six months following legal entry into Lebanon; however, they did not have access to welfare benefits as this required an official work permit costing up to 10,000 USD per year.

For additional information see International Rescue Committee (2015): Overview of Right to Work for Refugees Syria Crisis Response: Lebanon & Jordan, <http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/IRC%20Policy%20Brief%20Right%20to%20Work%20for%20Refugees%20.pdf>

119 Human Rights Watch (2016): I Just Wanted to be Treated like a Person, *ibid.*

120 Human Rights Watch (2016): I Just Wanted to be Treated like a Person, *ibid.*

121 Human Rights Watch (2016): I Just Wanted to be Treated like a Person, *ibid.*

the larger networks that are involved in organising child labour activities. In addition, children consulted in the FGD by Terre des Hommes stated that they are working in all types of jobs, such as in car workshops or in restaurants (mostly boys), while girls usually sell clothes, work as hairdressers, in bakeries or in supermarkets.<sup>122</sup> Only limited data on child labour in North Lebanon is available. A rapid assessment conducted by the ILO in 2012 in Tripoli, Akkar and Bekaa governorates based on interviews with 1,007 children aged 5 to 17 and 174 household visits, identified several types of work being done by children, such as working in agriculture, the construction sector, garbage collection, automobile workshops or as porters.<sup>123</sup> The vast majority of the 823 children interviewed in Tripoli were Lebanese (85.3%). By contrast, 73% of the 192 children in Bekaa were Syrian refugees. More than a third of them were under 13 years of age. The children's pay depends on the job, location and their age and ranges from 1 to 50 USD a day.<sup>124</sup> For example, children working in agriculture usually get lower wages than children working on the very busy streets of Beirut. Syrian refugee children consulted by Terre des Hommes in Lebanon indicated that while all of them do paid work, none of them receive social security benefits from their employers. 35 of the 37 children consulted, both boys and girls, are involved in agricultural work, which is one of the main labour activities in South Lebanon. With regard to the working conditions, most of the children consulted face long and exhausting working days that do not allow them to attend school. Only one of the 37 children consulted reported having completed the third year of secondary school, while the majority dropped out either during the first or second year of secondary school.<sup>125</sup>

It is worth noting that the current situation of the children consulted reflects the risks of exploitation that many other refugee children face in their host countries. In Lebanon, for instance, 27 of the 37 children consulted reported 7 days of work a week, while 19 of these 27 reported working over seven hours a day.<sup>126</sup> Unlike the children consulted in Jordan, both the boys and girls consulted in Lebanon underlined that the key factors in defining the type of work they are willing to do are not so much related to their social status or religious values but rather to their capabilities and the

working conditions. Thus, the determining aspect, according to the children consulted, is whether the work corresponds to their physical capacity, whether the working conditions will affect their safety and health and whether the work is harmful or difficult to do.<sup>127</sup>

In addition, one of the six grave child rights violations – the recruitment of child soldiers (from various nationalities) – can be found in the country, especially in the Northern border zone of Lebanon where relentless fighting is going on. Reports published by the UN indicate that children as young as 14 years of age are joining armed groups in Palestinian camps as well as in the Syrian Arab Republic.<sup>128</sup> As a result of these severe violations, the UN Secretary-General urged the Lebanese Government to step in and ratify and implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.<sup>129</sup>

### Prevention and protection mechanisms

Lebanon ratified the CRC in 2002, but has so far failed to sign the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. To date, the government has signed and ratified a series of Arab and international conventions related to child labour laws and child rights.<sup>130</sup> Lebanon, for instance, was one of the first Arab countries to ratify ILO Conventions 138 and 182 that led to amendments in the Labour Code of 1946 concerning the minimum age, working hours and daily rest periods.<sup>131</sup> Although these amendments have helped to improve the legal protection of children, several uncertainties hinder its implementation. According to Article 22 of this Code, for instance, the minimum working age is 14 while »light work« is permitted from 13 years of age upwards.<sup>132</sup> If fully protected, instructed and trained, »other« forms of work are allowed at 16 years of age in line with Art. 3 of Decree

122 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Lebanon, *ibid.*

123 ILO (2012): Rapid Assessment on Child Labour in North Lebanon (Tripoli and Akkar) and Bekaa governorates, 2012, p. 11, <http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=20621>

124 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the Programme Coordinator, *ibid.*

125 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Individual Questionnaire and Consent Form, Syrian refugee children, aged 11–17, Lebanon, March 2016.

126 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Individual Questionnaire... *ibid.*

127 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Lebanon, *ibid.*

128 United Nations General Assembly and Security Council (2015): Children and armed conflict, *ibid.* p. 19, 112–115.

129 United Nations General Assembly and Security Council (2015): Children and armed conflict, *ibid.* p. 20, §115.

130 Outlined in: ILO/UNICEF/Save the Children/Ministry of Labour (2015): Children Living and Working..., *ibid.* p. 102 ff.

131 ILO/UNICEF/Save the Children/Ministry of Labour (2015): Children Living and Working on the Streets in Lebanon: Profile and Magnitude, February 2015, p. 101 [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_344799.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_344799.pdf)

132 Government of Lebanon (1946): Code of Labour, last modified on 14 October 2008, <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/docs/710/Labour%20Code%200f%2023%20September%201946%20as%20amended.Publication%202010.pdf>



Turkey: Break from the field work. Young girl during the harvest.

8987/2012.<sup>133</sup> Applying these regulations in practice is difficult as »light work« is not defined in the Labour Code. Moreover, Art. 7 of the Labour Code excludes domestic workers and employees in the agricultural sector.<sup>134</sup>

In addition, Lebanon displayed a commitment to child protection as far back as 1962 with the ratification of the Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (No. 6), 1919. In 2002, the Government of Lebanon adopted Law 422 on the Protection of Minors in Conflict with the Law or At Risk<sup>135</sup>. This Law establishes the framework for child protection. However, the US Department of Labour under-

lines that it is inconsistent with regard to its treatment of children working as beggars. This is a widespread scenario in Lebanon as many children are working on the streets. According to the Penal Code, child begging is a criminal act, but according to Law 422, child beggars »are entitled to protective measures (3, 12)«<sup>136</sup>. This example of inconsistency in national law shows that further amendments are necessary to ensure that all children in Lebanon receive maximum protection.

To accelerate action against child labour in Lebanon, the government adopted a National Awareness Raising Strategy on the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016 in November 2013 which places special emphasis on combatting street work which is identified as one of the most hazardous forms of child labour under Lebanon's Decree 8987/2012.<sup>137</sup> While

133 Government of Lebanon (2012): The prohibition of employment of minors under the age of 18 in works that may harm their health, safety or morals, Decree No. 8987, 2 October 2012, Art. 3, <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/92729/108175/F-975906685/Decree%208987.pdf> (unofficial English translation).

134 ILO/ UNICEF/Save the Children/Ministry of Labour: Children Living and Working..., *ibid.* p. 101.

135 Government of Lebanon (2002): Law No. 422 on the Protection of Minors in Conflict with the Law or at Risk, enacted 6 June 2002, [http://bba.org.lb/content/uploads/Institute/141211103338689~loi%20422%20delinquent\\_arabe.pdf](http://bba.org.lb/content/uploads/Institute/141211103338689~loi%20422%20delinquent_arabe.pdf)

136 US Department of Labour (2013): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – Lebanon, <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5448a62bo.pdf>

137 Government of Lebanon (2012): Decree No. 8987, *ibid.* Art. 3. In January 2016, the Government of Lebanon together with the ILO launched a revised Guide on Decree 8987: ILO/Unit for the Combat of Child Labour Lebanon/National Steering Committee against Child Labour: Guide of Decree 8987 on Worst

little information is available on the success of this strategy, the US Department of Labour announced a »moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour«<sup>138</sup> in 2014. At the same time, the US Department highlights street work as being especially common among refugee children from Palestine, Iraq, Syria as well as Dom children (ethnic minority<sup>139</sup>). Moreover, hazardous forms of child labour have been identified, including illicit drug trafficking, forced begging, commercial sexual exploitation and working in agriculture.<sup>140</sup> Therefore, the need to scale up prevention and protection measures, especially in the context of exploitation and child labour, is high.

So far, only a few programmes have been designed by the NGOs to specifically address the increasing problem of child labour, particularly in big cities like Beirut. Terre des Hommes started a multidimensional project with a clear focus on child labour in 2016 which will provide psychosocial support activities to children working in agriculture or in street situations. All stakeholders directly linked to the child, i.e. employers, caregivers or municipalities, are targeted by project activities to build a protective environment for the children.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, case management has proven to be very successful with hundreds of children being regrouped in the past.

Looking to education as a major way of preventing child labour, activities should be strengthened to prevent children from dropping out as well as to push for the re-entry of those who have already been withdrawn. So far, the activities have only partially made a difference. The UNICEF survey further showed that just over half (52 %) of the 6–14 year-old refugee boys and girls attended school; for around half of the 6–17 year-old out-of-school children, the main reasons for not attending were the cost of education (i.e. often the cost of transportation) and the children's work (48 % of the 6–14 year-olds and 56 % of the 15–17 year-olds).<sup>142</sup> To deal with the high number of school children, the Ministry

of Education introduced a second shift in the afternoons especially for the Syrian refugee children as school capacity in the mornings was already exhausted. Besides the lack of quantity and quality at formal schools, the social tensions between nationals and refugees described above are also affecting access to education. Syrian refugee children attending classes are often victims of bullying and racism, according to the Terre des Hommes delegation. Furthermore, the differences between the school curricula in Syria and Lebanon are enormous. This impacts drop-out levels as the children have difficulty following. Exacerbating the situation further, many parents cannot afford to pay for the transportation to school.<sup>143</sup> Despite all these efforts, Syrian refugee children enrolled in Lebanese public schools still only account for less than 50 % of the refugee children in school age.

As explained previously, the participatory tools used to consult refugee working children helped to scrutinise the type of support children consider crucial to improve their lives. Syrian refugee children consulted in Lebanon pointed out the importance of further action and commitment from key stakeholders, such as the Lebanese government, UNHCR, NGOs, employers, and families, to ensure that children are protected from exploitation and hazardous labour. They further emphasised the importance of continuous support for refugees to fulfil their basic needs. Moreover, the children called for increased support to guarantee enforcement of their basic rights to education and health. Interestingly, they also identified their friends at work as key stakeholders who can contribute to improving their lives as working children. According to them, their colleagues are very helpful in keeping up their motivation and through the mutual support offered whilst carrying out their working duties.<sup>144</sup>

## 7.3 Iraq

### Situation in the sixth year of war in Syria

Unlike the other neighbouring countries to Syria, Iraq itself is suffering from successive decades of war and ongoing internal conflict. Iraq was ranked 121 out of 188 countries in the 2015 HDI, i.e. in the medium human development category.<sup>145</sup> Youth unemployment is high at 18 % and is greater among young people with a higher level of education.<sup>146</sup> This represents a key challenge for the Iraqi government

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Forms of Child Labour, re-developed January 2016, [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_443273.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_443273.pdf)

138 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – Lebanon, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/lebanon>

139 Over 72 % of the Dom living in Lebanon hold Lebanese citizenship, according to Terre des hommes Lausanne (2010): The Dom People and their Children in Lebanon – A Child Protection Assessment, <https://www.tdh.ch/en/news/dom-people-and-their-children-lebanon>

140 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, *ibid.*

141 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the Programme Coordinator..., *ibid.*

142 UNICEF/ WFP/ UNHCR (2015): Vulnerability Assessment..., *ibid.* p. 4.

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143 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with the Programme Coordinator..., *ibid.*

144 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Lebanon, *ibid.*

145 UNDP (2015): Human Development Reports – Iraq, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/IRQ>.

146 UNDP (2015): Country Information Iraq, <http://www.iq.undp.org/content/iraq/en/home/countryinfo.html>

and society since 59 % of the population is younger than 24 years of age.<sup>147</sup> Official figures for primary school enrolment have been very high over the last years: in 2011, the rate reached 102.5 % and later 107.5 % in 2014.<sup>148</sup> These high numbers result from children who are not of primary school age but nevertheless attend primary education due to reasons of displacement and flight. Therefore, the older children might not have been able to attend school for longer time periods so that their education level does not correspond to their age. Even though primary school enrolment rates are very high, the Iraqi education system is facing massive challenges.

The total number of school-aged refugee children in Iraq as of 2015 was 58,297, most of them residing in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).<sup>149</sup> Additionally this area hosts over 300,000 displaced Iraqi children. The mass flight to Kurdish areas in 2014, resulting from ISIS attacks, placed a major strain on the already over-stretched resources in the schools of the host communities. The situation inside the camps in terms of school enrolment and services provided is somewhat better for refugee children. Inside the camps, 74 % of the children aged 6–14 attend school, whereas attendance outside the camps only reached the 62 % mark.<sup>150</sup> Figures are very low for older children aged 15–17 as only 5 % of this age group attend formal secondary education.<sup>151</sup>

Throughout 2014 and 2015, various parts of Iraq suffered from intensive conflict. This has displaced over three million Iraqis.<sup>152</sup> Thus, the influx of Syrian refugees from 2012 onwards has contributed to an already complicated and instable situation, stretching resources and services even further. As of March 2016, 250,000 Syrians had been registered with UNHCR in Iraq<sup>153</sup> as well as a total of 3.3 million Iraqi IDPs<sup>154</sup>. The three governorates of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq are carrying the heaviest burden and are hosting over 1 million Iraqi IDPs and 98 % of the Syrian refugees in Iraq. Of these registered persons, 65 % consist-

ed of women and children. Only a minority, i.e. 38 %, of the Syrian refugee population live in camps – ten in all, whereas 62 % are accommodated in host communities in urban and rural areas.<sup>155</sup> The approach to Syrian refugees entering Iraq has been welcoming in terms of residency permits, the right to work and freedom of movement.<sup>156</sup> However, due to the high numbers of IDPs, it is very difficult for the Syrian refugee community to be self-reliant, especially in regard to accommodation and employment.<sup>157</sup> Refugees are facing the dilemma that their savings are being increasingly depleted and that income-generating opportunities are scarce. With a view to humanitarian needs, the situation in Iraq represents a huge challenge for both the country and the international community.<sup>158</sup>

### Effects on child labour

The overall conditions in the KRI are extremely critical for all the vulnerable populations concerned. The IDPs, Syrian refugees and host communities are being severely affected by the economic slowdown – and the sheer number of people is placing huge pressure on the basic infrastructure, employment and other services.<sup>159</sup> Thus, as in the other countries in the region, refugee families are now having to resort to coping mechanisms after spending their savings and selling their possessions, such as jewellery. There are no systematic figures currently available on working refugee children in Iraq. More research is needed but interviews that have been conducted on behalf of Terre des hommes Italy underline assumptions of a growing trend: more and more children are now working.

Since 2014, Terre des Hommes has been actively supporting Iraqi IDPs, Syrian refugees and members of the host communities in camps and in out-of-camp settings within the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The organisation's Child Protection Coordinator<sup>160</sup> recalls that before 2014 it was rare to see children working or begging in the streets of Erbil city. After mass flights to the Kurdish governorate from Syria, as well as in the aftermath of ISIL attacks on the city of Mosul and on Yazidis in 2014, there has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of IDP and refugee street-working children. They sell gum or flowers, clean car windows and beg. As in Jordan and Lebanon, internally displaced children consulted in Iraq

147 ILO (2016): The ILO in Iraq, January 2016, [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_444514.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_444514.pdf)

148 (1) UNDP (2011): Human Development Report, *ibid.*, (2) UNDP (2015): Human Development Report – Iraq, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/IRQ>.

149 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 43.

150 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 43.

151 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 43.

152 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 6.

153 UNHCR (2016): Syria Regional Refugee Response – Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, *ibid.*

154 UNHCR (2016): Inter-Agency Operational Update – Syrian Refugees in Iraq, March 2016, [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/system/files/documents/files/ocha\\_iraq\\_humanitarian\\_bulletin\\_april\\_2016.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/system/files/documents/files/ocha_iraq_humanitarian_bulletin_april_2016.pdf)

155 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 7.

156 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 6.

157 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 6.

158 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 6.

159 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.* p. 8.

160 All information in this section was received from Terre des hommes Italy (2016): Interview with Country Delegation, Iraq, 24 February 2016.



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reported that their main reason for working was to support their families. According to them, poverty and having family members who are unable to work are the main determining factors for child labour. Besides this, the children reported that strong family values, peer pressure and prejudiced views on education also prevented them from attending school – pushing them into child labour.<sup>161</sup>

Another reason for child labour was to save money for the onward migration to Europe due to the current desolate living conditions and lack of hope for improvement in the future. In some instances, the overall living conditions are so difficult that they are the cause of the young males' attraction to joining an armed group. They do not do this for ideological reasons, but rather to receive a salary and provide for their families.<sup>162</sup>

With regard to working conditions, most children perform daily work without a contract. As to salaries, children working in hotels or restaurants receive approximately 400 USD per month, while those who are cleaning shoes in the streets or working on construction sites earn 8–10 USD per day. This is very little money compared to the current general salary level in Kurdistan. Children who are working on farms or as shepherds are also paid daily in cash. The working conditions of refugee children are different from those of »common child labourers« in the region, as reported by Terre des hommes Italy's project staff: Refugee and IDP children work longer hours for less pay than a child from the host community. Significantly more refugee and IDP children work on the streets than host community children. Refugee and IDP children work in local restaurants and hotels, whereas host community children do not. Also, children from the host communities are more likely to work with close family members and work fewer hours – and normally attend school.

The number of refugee families that are sending their daughters to work is extremely low because they fear that the girls will be sexually harassed. Additionally, girls are expected not to work like boys in public places. Girls are traditionally involved in domestic work. It is, therefore, very difficult to determine the conditions they are facing and whether they

161 Terre des hommes Italy (2016): FGD, Iraqi children, aged 9–17, Iraq, March 2016.

162 Save the Children (2016): Uncertain Futures. The impact of displacement on Syrian refugee and Iraqi internally displaced youth in Iraq, p. 1, <http://stcc.yeeboodigital.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Uncertain-Futures-low-res.pdf>

are keeping them out of school.<sup>163</sup> According to internally displaced boys consulted in Iraq, gender is a crucial factor when defining child labour. For them, girls can only do what they describe as light work (including household work, water collection or working in a shop), as long as this does not exceed their capacities and does not go against their religious beliefs and cultural values.<sup>164</sup>

According to the interviews held, as well as the results and debates of the FGD, child labour is not necessarily perceived as a problem as long as the children still go to school. Almost half of the internally displaced children consulted in Iraq reported being enrolled in school. As a matter of fact, some of them even reported performing two jobs and working seven days a week for more than seven hours a day, while also attending school.<sup>165</sup> Focus group discussions in Jordan strengthened this view as the children consulted underlined the fact that in their view, *»work as a concept is accepted and doesn't harm the health.«*<sup>166</sup>

Children are reported to work in various sectors: agriculture, industries, such as brick-making, steel factories and plastic recycling, as well as in services in shops, repairs, scavenging and forced begging.<sup>167</sup> Most of the internally displaced children consulted in Iraq reported being involved either in construction work, in household work or as small-scale vendors. Those who perform two jobs reported carpentry as their second job. Concerning working conditions, although most of them reported doing paid work, only a few of them receive social security benefits from their employers.

In addition, the worst forms of child labour are also found in Iraq. The US Department of State reports that some girls in Iraq are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation by their families. In a practice called 'temporary marriage' which predetermines a specific length of time for the marriage, a dowry is granted and paid to the girl's family. Once the time period is up, the marriage is dissolved.<sup>168</sup> In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the commercial sexual exploitation of children was reported to be on the rise due to a large increase

in the number of Syrian refugees.<sup>169</sup> ISIL fighters have subjected girls, primarily from the Yazidi community but also other ethnic and religious groups, to commercial sexual exploitation, forced domestic work or other forms of forced labour in Iraq and Syria.<sup>170</sup> Extreme forms of gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls were recorded in a report by the Human Rights Office of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).<sup>171</sup> Iraq has a serious problem with children being exploited by armed groups. The UN Report of the UN Secretary-General to the Security Council describes inter alia the recruitment and exploitation of children by armed groups: From August 2014 to June 2015, hundreds of boys, including Yazidis and Turkmen, were forcibly taken from their families in Ninawa (mostly in Mosul and Tal Afar) and sent to training centres where boys as young as 8 years of age were taught the Quran and the use of weapons and combat tactics.<sup>172</sup> According to Terre des Hommes' experience, it is estimated that one in three children interviewed in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq have been approached for recruitment in the fighting with armed groups.<sup>173</sup>

### Prevention and protection mechanisms

Iraq has ratified all the key international conventions concerning child labour: ILO Convention No.182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2001 and ILO Convention No.183 on the Minimum Age in 1985. Moreover, Iraq ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1994, as well as the Optional Protocol on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Iraqi legislation stipulates in Article 90.1 of the Labour Law that the minimum working age is 15.<sup>174</sup> However, light work for children aged 13 to 15 is not explicitly prohibited.<sup>175</sup> The compulsory education age is 12 and, thus, lower than the minimum

163 Terre des hommes Italy (2016): Interview with Country Delegation, Iraq, *ibid.*

164 Terre des hommes Italy (2016): FGD, Iraqi children, *ibid.*

165 Terre des hommes Italy (2016): Individual Questionnaire and Consent Form, Iraqi refugee children, aged 9–17, Iraq, March 2016.

166 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD Jordan, *ibid.*

167 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – Iraq, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/iraq>

168 US Department of State (2014): Trafficking in Persons Report, p.210, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/226846.pdf>

169 US Department of State (2014): Trafficking in Persons Report, *ibid.*

170 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, *ibid.*

171 OHCHR/ UNAMI (2014): Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict in Iraq, 11 September – 10 December 2014, [http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/IQ/UNAMI\\_OHCHR\\_Sep\\_Dec\\_2014.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/IQ/UNAMI_OHCHR_Sep_Dec_2014.pdf)

172 United Nations Security Council (2015): Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Iraq, 9 November 2015, UN Doc. S/2015/852, p. 9.; <http://www.refworld.org/docid/565fe2094.html>

173 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2015): Fact Sheet, Report on Child Labour in the Syria Crisis Facts and Figures for Spokespersons, July 2015.

174 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, *ibid.*

175 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, *ibid.*

working age.<sup>176</sup> The gap resulting from this discrepancy in age leaves children between 12 and 15 years of age especially vulnerable to child labour. Legally, they are not allowed to work, but are not obliged to attend school, either.<sup>177</sup> Despite the national legislation governing child labour in Iraq, the implementation of these laws has to be improved.<sup>178</sup> It is estimated that 6.4 % of Iraqi children aged 5–14 are involved in child labour activities.<sup>179</sup>

The Iraqi Council of Representatives (Parliament) did not approve the new Labour Code until 2015 – after a series of intensive discussions. Likewise, the ILO supported the Kurdistan region to develop a new labour code which has now been submitted to the Regional Council of Ministers. This law also limits child labour and provides for improved protection against discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace.<sup>180</sup> The Iraqi government is taking measures to reduce the worst forms of child labour. One example is informal education initiatives and evening schools targeting school dropouts aged 12 to 18.<sup>181</sup> Moreover, the Kurdistan Regional Government has established a Child Rights Hotline which provides advice and receives complaints on child rights issues. A report by the US State Department notes that this hotline was called 4 to 5 times a day in 2014. Most calls referred to human trafficking-related situations.<sup>182</sup> UN organisations, such as UNICEF, run various programs, including psychosocial support services, teacher training and the provision of temporary learning spaces.<sup>183</sup> In December 2015, UNICEF launched a public campaign to stop child labour in the southern zones and central Iraq.<sup>184</sup> This campaign links the NLG approach to broader community-level awareness-raising work. Besides community mobilisers, the campaign includes mass media activities, such as TV and radio spots.<sup>185</sup>

176 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, *ibid.* Article 11.1 of the Iraqi Education Law.

177 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, *ibid.*

178 US Department of Labour (2014): Findings..., *ibid.*

179 UNAMI/ Republic of Iraq (2014): UN Development Assistance Framework for Iraq 2015–2019, April 2014, p. 9, [http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Iraq/Iraq\\_UNDAF\\_2015-2019.pdf](http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Iraq/Iraq_UNDAF_2015-2019.pdf).

180 ILO (2016): The ILO in Iraq, <http://www.ilo.org/beirut/countries/iraq/lang--en/index.htm>.

181 U.S. Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, *ibid.*

182 US Department of State (2013): Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2013humanrightsreport/#wrapper>

183 UNICEF (2016): Appeals Iraq, <http://www.unicef.org/appeals/iraq.html>.

184 UNICEF (2016): Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: [http://www.unicef.org/mena/UNICEF\\_Iraq\\_Humanitarian\\_SitRep\\_-\\_February\\_2016\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/mena/UNICEF_Iraq_Humanitarian_SitRep_-_February_2016(1).pdf)

185 UNICEF (2016): Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report, *ibid.*

## 7.4 Turkey

### Situation in the sixth year of war in Syria

Turkey has experienced strong economic growth over the last decade but has been affected by economic slowdown since 2014.<sup>186</sup> The country ranks 72 out of 188 states and territories in the HDI ranking, with a HDI value of 0.761 in 2014.<sup>187</sup> This puts Turkey in the high development category.<sup>188</sup> Youth unemployment is at 18.7 %, slightly higher than the average 16.7 % for countries in the high development category.<sup>189</sup> The gross enrolment rate for primary education has increased from 99.3 % in 2011 to 100 % in 2014.<sup>190</sup> Since July 2015, the conflict in the southeastern part of Turkey has been aggravated. The most severely affected areas are situated in the south east of the country.<sup>191</sup> The Syrian conflict itself is a threat to Turkey's security situation. Several suicide attacks on Turkish security forces, the general public and tourists have additionally heightened security concerns and have, thus, contributed to tightened border controls at the border to Syria.<sup>192</sup>

According to UNHCR, Turkey currently hosts one of the largest numbers of refugees in the world, including 2.7 million Syrians under temporary protection, as well as over 220,000 asylum-seekers and refugees from other nations, predominantly Iraqis and Afghans.<sup>193</sup> The Turkish government has built 25 camps near the Turkish-Syrian border, where, as of March 2016, 10 % of the refugee population has been settled into camps which have now reached full capacity. The other 90 % are »urban refugees«, scattered in towns and cities throughout the country. Accordingly, children in need of support are living spread out all across Turkey. In reaction to the crisis, the Turkish government has displayed strong national ownership regarding protection and assistance to Syrians.<sup>194</sup> Its initial »open door policy« towards Syrian nationals corresponded to its strong political stance against the regime of Bashar al-Assad. Since the beginning of 2016, however, Turkey has introduced visa restrictions for Syrians

186 Auswärtiges Amt (2016): Länderinformationen Türkei, [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Laenderinfos/Tuerkei/Wirtschaft\\_node.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Laenderinfos/Tuerkei/Wirtschaft_node.html)

187 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report – Turkey, [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/TUR.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/TUR.pdf)

188 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report – Turkey, *ibid.*

189 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report – Turkey, *ibid.*

190 UNDP (2011): Human Development Report, *ibid.*

191 Auswärtiges Amt (2016): Länderinformationen Türkei, *ibid.*

192 Auswärtiges Amt (2016): Länderinformationen Türkei, *ibid.*

193 UNHCR (2016): Syria Regional Refugee Response – Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, *ibid.*

194 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.*

arriving in Turkey by air and sea. In January 2016, Turkey announced its decision to allow Syrian registered refugees to apply for work permits and, thus, to open its labour market. This move represents a major policy shift.<sup>195</sup> However, due to the fact that Turkey is hosting the biggest refugee population in the world, both host communities and the refugees themselves are now struggling to cope with limited resources.<sup>196</sup>

### Effects on child labour

As in other neighbouring countries, child labour is being used as a negative coping mechanism in reaction to the dire economic situation of the refugee community in Turkey. Likewise, child labour is an indication of the exhaustion of other means. More research is needed since no official figures are available. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that child labour among refugee children in Turkey is on the increase.

Child labour was already a major issue in Turkey before the beginning of the Syrian crisis. With the arrival of refugee children who now pick up work in both urban and rural areas, the situation has become even more aggravated. There are already almost 1 million children engaged in economic activities in Turkey<sup>197</sup> and the number continues to grow with the arrival of more and more Syrian children fleeing the war.<sup>198</sup> The UN Human Development Report 2015 states that child labour in Turkey is at a level of 5.9 % amongst children aged 5–14.<sup>199</sup>

According to an assessment of 500 households carried out by Support to Life/Hayata Destek (STL),<sup>200</sup> a Turkish humanitarian aid agency and local partner of Terre des Hommes, the average age of working children amongst those families surveyed in Urfa and Hatay is 14 to 15. Almost 40 % of the children are predominantly working in harsh and dangerous jobs; they are also employed in small shops, bakeries, factories and engaged in domestic labour. Children also work in garbage collection, construction, clothes shops, coffee

shops, restaurants and as carriers. Around 90 % of the children work 6–7 days per week and for more than 8 hours per day on an informal and illegal basis. The major reason for child labour is a lack of family income due to there being no adult breadwinners in many of the households. Most Syrian refugees have exhausted their resources after years of displacement. The conditions for working children are extremely difficult; their wages are very low (no more than 35 Turkish Lira (TRY)<sup>201</sup> or 10 EUR per day).<sup>202</sup> STL conducted 3 FGD in Urfa in which 46 Syrian refugees (20 men and 26 women) aged 25 to 70 participated. Out of these, 28 participants (61 %) were parents to working children. As to the gender-related features of employment conditions for boys and girls, participants said that girls undertake different types of work to boys. They mainly work in cafes, clothes shops, make-up shops or sew. Participants pointed out that Turkish employers are more interested in employing girls because they receive less pay than boys. They also shared their worries that employers might prefer girls as workers because they see girls as possible targets for sexual harassment and abuse.<sup>203</sup>

Recent reports about children working in Turkey's textile industry have made it into the media headlines and sparked consumer awareness.<sup>204</sup> Although there are no figures on the informal Syrian labour force in Turkey, the majority of refugees have to provide for themselves with no financial support from the state. A recent Human Rights Watch report claimed child labour is »rampant«.<sup>205</sup> Families interviewed by Human Rights Watch reported that their children were working in garment factories, dried fruit factories, shoemaking workshops and auto mechanic shops; some picked cherries or worked as agricultural labourers, while others sold tissues, water, or fresh dates on the street. This is illustrated by a Syrian boy that participated in the FGD organised by Terre des Hommes in Serbia. He explains that *»[t]hree years ago we were in a refugee camp in Turkey. My brother, who was then 15 years old worked as a salesman of bags on the market, for a very small amount of money, which we used only for food and nothing more. [...] My brother was helping*

195 UNHCR (2016): UNHCR welcomes Turkish work permits for Syrian refugees, 18 January 2016, <http://www.unhcr.org/569ca19c6.html>

196 UNHCR et al. (2015): 3RP, *ibid.*

197 Turkish Statistical Institute (2016): Youth in Statistics 2014, <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/Start.do;jsessionid=fy36X-2GZTyc3YS5mvpLy3P7xYC2yKhTygXvnH156QbQ6Yc5sfz-tn!-657467095>

198 Support to Life/Hayata Destek (2016): Written information provided on 13 April 2016.

199 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report 2015 – Turkey, *ibid.*

200 For more information see STL's website: <http://www.hayata-destek.org/en/>

201 As of 13 May 2016 the exchange rate was 1 TYR = 0.2982 EUR.

202 Support to Life/Hayata Destek (2016): Written information, *ibid.*

203 Support to Life/Hayata Destek (2016): Written information, *ibid.*

204 Al Jazeera America/Didem Tali: As refugees pour in, child labour booms in Turkey, 4 January 2016, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2016/1/4/as-refugees-pour-in-child-labor-booms-in-turkey.html>

205 Human Rights Watch (2015): When I Picture My Future, I see nothing – Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Turkey, 8 November 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/11/08/when-i-picture-my-future-i-see-nothing/barriers-education-syrian-refugee-children>.



Turkey: on the way to the harvest

*us then, because our father disappeared in Syria and as he was the oldest in the family he had to take care of us.»<sup>206</sup>*

### Prevention and protection mechanisms

Turkey has ratified the key international conventions on child labour, including ILO Conventions 138 and 182, the CRC and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Under Turkish child labour law, the legal minimum working age is 15, respectively, 18 for hazardous work.<sup>207</sup> The Turkish government has established a number of bodies to combat child labour, such as the National Steering Committee on child labour issues. This is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the implementation and monitoring of national programs to prevent and

fight child labour.<sup>208</sup> One approach is to help the parents of working children find employment.<sup>209</sup>

However, the current legal framework omits the protection of children in domestic work, in agricultural enterprises employing fewer than 50 workers and small shops employing up to three persons.<sup>210</sup> Children working without employment contracts, including those that work on the streets, are also out of the reach of legal protection, which leaves non-citizen populations, in particular, vulnerable to exploitation. Since January 2016, adult Syrian refugees have been permitted to work under the »Regulation on Work Permits for Refugees Under Temporary Protection«<sup>211</sup>. Even though formal access to the labour market has been grant-

<sup>206</sup> Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Syrian refugee children, aged 10–15, Serbia, March 2016.

<sup>207</sup> US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – Turkey, Articles 71–73 of the Labour Act; <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/turkey>

<sup>208</sup> US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – Turkey, *ibid*.

<sup>209</sup> US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – Turkey, *ibid*.

<sup>210</sup> US Department of Labour (2014): Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour – Turkey, *ibid*.

<sup>211</sup> Turkish Labour Law (2016): Turkey grants work permits to Syrian refugees, 19 January 2016, <http://turkishLaborlaw.com/news/legal-news/362-turkey-grants-work-permit-for-syrian-refugees>

ed, and under ideal circumstances this measure is a suitable means of limiting child labour, in reality, Syrian refugees are often disadvantaged when it comes to finding employment compared to the Turkish adult population. As refugee adults and children usually receive lower wages than Turkish nationals, child labour, in particular, contributes to dumping prices – aggravating tensions within the host communities. Nevertheless, children need to earn and contribute to the livelihood of their families.<sup>212</sup> Another important measure to keep children out of work is to enable access to education. Over 1,182,000 of the refugees in Turkey are children and an estimated 746,000 are of school age. Approximately 400,000–415,000 of them remain unable to access education which puts them at risk of labour, exploitation, abuse and

212 E.g. CBC News/ Nil Köksal: Syrian refugees spark child labour boom in Istanbul, 21 July 2015, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/syrian-refugees-spark-child-labour-boom-in-istanbul-1.3161611>

neglect.<sup>213</sup> In 2014, the Turkish government made its public school system available to Syrian children and began to accredit a parallel system of private »temporary education centres« that offer a Syrian curriculum. By December 2014, school enrolment levels had reached 20%. In Turkey's 25 government-run refugee camps, most school-aged Syrian children are regularly attending school but these only represent 15% of the refugee school-aged population in Turkey.<sup>214</sup>

213 1) Human Rights Watch (2015): *When I Picture My Future*, *ibid.*, (2) Human Rights Watch (2015): *Turkey: 400,000 Syrian Children Not in School*, 8 November 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/11/08/turkey-400000-syrian-children-not-school>, (3) Support to Life/Hayata Destek (2016): *Written information*, *ibid.*, quoting UNICEF.

214 Human Rights Watch (2015): *When I Picture My Future*, *ibid.* p. 5f.



Turkey: children harvesting cotton

## 8. The situation on the Western Balkan Route and in Europe

In March 2015, countries along the Western Balkan Route registered a steady increase in the number of refugees arriving, including refugees from Syria heading to Europe, in particular, to Germany.<sup>215</sup> It soon became clear that the great majority of these were choosing the Western Balkan Route as the main gateway into Europe, transiting through Turkey into Greece and then onwards to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, into Hungary or Croatia and then on towards Western Europe. Ongoing political and humanitarian developments constantly caused shifts in the migration flows in the region throughout the course of 2015.<sup>216</sup> Finally, the Balkan Route was shut down, starting with the Macedonian border to Greece. On 8 March 2016, the route was officially closed, creating enormous backlogs, especially at the Greek-Macedonian border in Idomeni.

Shortly after this, on 18 March 2016, the EU forged a deal with Turkey to address the overwhelming flow of refugees crossing the Aegean Sea from Turkey to the Greek islands to seek protection. The deal provides for people to be sent back from Greece to Turkey should they have been declared inadmissible as a result of the asylum application process. In exchange, the EU agreed to resettle one Syrian refugee from Turkey to the EU for every Syrian returned to Turkey from Greece. Serious concerns were raised following this deal with a view to the arbitrary detention of refugees and migrants as well as the general »overlooking of human rights obligations.«<sup>217</sup>

In addition, a huge debate on refugee children who have disappeared on their way to Europe evolved after the EU's police intelligence unit confirmed in January 2016 that 10,000 minor refugees had gone missing over the past two years after registering with state authorities.<sup>218</sup> Sexual

exploitation and forced labour were mentioned as potential root causes. Terre des Hommes identified two reasons.<sup>219</sup> One is based on discrepancies in the data of the various EU member states. For example, some children register in one country but then continue – potentially alone – on their journey to other countries without being accordingly »deleted« from the system. As there is no clear tracking system, it is impossible to say with any degree of certainty what actually happens to these children whilst they are travelling and where they end up. Secondly, Terre des Hommes fears that single cases have fallen into the hands of traffickers or smugglers and been exposed to the worst forms of child labour and (sexual) exploitation. This is impossible to verify at the moment as the German Government, for instance, does not collect information on tracing unaccompanied minor refugees.<sup>220</sup>

Since the Balkan Route was the main path into Europe, the report at hand focuses on the situation in these transit countries. Although political change on the refugee situation is still ongoing, information can only be provided for events up until May 2016.

### 8.1 Situation in the Transit Countries

#### Situation after the closure of the Balkan Route

According to UNHCR, 851,319 refugees transited – mainly from Turkey – through Greece in 2015 in order to reach Europe.<sup>221</sup> Approximately 30 % of the population on the move were children (both unaccompanied or separated and travelling with families) who require particular attention.

215 ACAPS/MapAction (2016): The Balkan Migrant Crisis – An Introduction, January 2016, <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/download.php?id=510>

216 See for example (1) IOM (2016): Flow Monitoring Services, <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>, (2) IOM (2016): Mixed Migration Flows in the Mediterranean and Beyond – 2015 Overview, <http://doe.iom.int/docs/Flows%20Compilation%202015%20Overview.pdf>

217 Destination Unknown (2016): EU – Turkey agreement: a real risk of overlooking human rights law obligations says UN, 25 March 2016, <http://destination-unknown.org/eu-turkey-agreement-a-real-risk-of-overlooking-human-rights-law-obligations-says-un/>

218 BBC News: Migrant crisis: More than 10,000 children »missing«, 31 January 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-eu->

[rope-35453589](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35453589)

219 Both options addressed in: Deutschlandradio Kultur: »6.000 vermisste Flüchtlingskinder«, Interview, 11 April 2016, [http://ondemand-mp3.dradio.de/file/dradio/2016/04/11/drk\\_20160411\\_1229\\_4b0e45e7.mp3](http://ondemand-mp3.dradio.de/file/dradio/2016/04/11/drk_20160411_1229_4b0e45e7.mp3)

220 The German Parliament recently announced that the number of UASCs registered and missing as of 21 March 2016 amounted to 635 children and 7,371 young people; Deutscher Bundestag (2016): Response to the Request of the Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, No. (18/8087), 13 April 2016; <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/18/080/1808087.pdf>

221 UNHCR (2016): Regional Refugee and migrant response plan for Europe, p. 8.



Child labour near a refugee camp

Until October 2015, most refugees headed on to Europe via Macedonia, Serbia and Hungary after passing through Greece. Since the closure of the Hungarian border in October 2015, the flow has been through Croatia, Slovenia and Austria. All countries along the Balkan Route are not only struggling with the high influx of refugees but also with the socio-political impact. Greece was hit hard by the deep economic recession which started in 2010 and which has severely affected the living conditions of the Greek population. According to EU information, the overall risk of poverty and/or the social exclusion rate reached 36 % in 2014.

Unemployment has also increased dramatically. In 2015, 58.3% of the young people found themselves with virtually no prospects of improving their condition in future.<sup>222</sup> Similarly, Macedonia is suffering from high unemployment rates which in the past have often led to social tensions within

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222 (1) UNDP (2011): Human Development Report, *ibid.* p. 127., (2) UNDP (2015): Human Development Report – Greece, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/GRC>

the country as one third of the Macedonian population is classified as being poor.<sup>223</sup> Youth unemployment is extremely high, leaving every second boy or girl aged between 15–24 unemployed in 2015.<sup>224</sup> Moreover, a 50 % spike in poverty and mass unemployment have shaken the social and economic balance within Serbia during the course of the past year<sup>225</sup>. During the same period (2015), more than 550,700 refugees transiting to Europe also registered with UNHCR in Serbia.<sup>226</sup> The closure of the Macedonian border to Greece on 8 March 2016 turned Greece into a destination country. More than 50,000 refugees were stranded in Greece, with up to 10,000 stranded in the informal camps in Idomeni close to the Macedonian border. Here they were living under devastating conditions, lacking critical access to services and the conditions required for a dignified life.<sup>227</sup> More than 1,000 people are stranded on the other side of the border in Macedonia and living in temporary shelters, sleeping on benches or on the floor, suffering from extremely primitive sanitary facilities and limited freedom of movement. Among them are more than 500 children of whom a third is under 5 years of age.<sup>228</sup> Children in this border zone are at a high risk of being exploited.<sup>229</sup>

## Effects on child labour in transit countries

Before the closure of the Balkan Route, the situation was characterised by high fluidity and mobility. The majority of the refugees tended to quickly pass through the Balkan region to reach their destinations in Europe. The average stay of the refugees in each country was only a few hours or days until they continued their journey. This differs greatly from the situation in Syria and its neighbouring countries where refugees tend to stay more permanently. Due to the very short time refugees used to spend in Greece, Macedonia and Serbia, and the fact that most of Terre des Hommes' activities were only set up along the official corridor, no evidence has been found to prove that refugee children are working whilst they are staying in these countries.<sup>230</sup> The Terre des Hommes partner organisation ARSIS in Greece has reported single cases of child labour among the refugees.<sup>231</sup> Children, especially in the border zone around Idomeni, are observed selling bread or cigarettes on the streets. There are also reports of an increase in child labour inside the camps. This information is backed up by local media which point out that the »black market in child labour« is apparently »flourishing«<sup>232</sup>. In addition, Terre des Hommes consulted Syrian refugee children in Serbia. They all referred to work they did on the way to Serbia, e.g. in Turkey. However, none of them had worked in Serbia.<sup>233</sup> This information tends to indicate that child labour amongst Syrian refugees has not developed on a large scale. However, this might change following the closure of the border as a longer duration of stay might contribute to increasing the vulnerability of the children and the number of smugglers who may facilitate child labour, exploitation and trafficking in a region which has already been greatly affected by such criminal activities for years. This, therefore, requires further investigation. Several risk factors can already be identified.

223 (1) State Statistical Office (2015): Macedonia in figures, p. 62, <http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/MakBrojki2015a.pdf>; (2) Reuters (2012): Poverty, frustration keep Macedonia tensions alive, 30 March 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-macedonia-tensions-idUSBRE82T09620120330>.

224 UNDP (2015): Human Development Report 2015 – Macedonia, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/MKD>.

225 Worldbank (2016): Overview – Serbia, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/serbia/overview>.

226 UNHCR (2016): Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response Mediterranean; <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>

227 E.g. (1) Huffington Post: Idomeni: The Final Stop Of The Mediterranean Refugee Route, 12 May 2016, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/idomeni-final-stop-of-refugee-route\\_us\\_5734f69ee4b077d4d6f29488](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/idomeni-final-stop-of-refugee-route_us_5734f69ee4b077d4d6f29488), (2) The Guardian: The refugee children of Idomeni: alone, far from home but clinging to hope, 8 May 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/07/refugee-children-idomeni-syria-greece>. On 24 May 2016, the Greek authorities started to dismantle the camp in Idomeni, e.g. The Guardian: Idomeni: Greek riot police move in to clear refugee camp, 24 May 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/24/idomeni-greek-riot-police-move-in-before-dawn-to-clear-out-refugee-camp>.

228 Destination Unknown (2016): Macedonia – Situation of the forgotten refugees worsening, 26 April 2016, <http://destination-unknown.org/macedonia-situation-of-the-forgotten-refugees-worsening/>

229 E.g. (1) Huffington Post: Idomeni, *ibid.*, (2) The Guardian: The refugee children of Idomeni, *ibid.*

230 (1) Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with several Project Coordinators in charge of the project coordination in Macedonia and Serbia at the Regional Office in Hungary on 5, 16 and 26 February 2016, (2) Information provided by ARSIS at the Peer Review for the report at hand on 4 May 2016.

231 Information provided by ARSIS, *ibid.*

232 Both quotes from: Pemptousia: Child labour in Greece today, 20 September 2014, <http://pemptousia.com/2014/09/child-labour-in-greece-today/>

233 Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): FGD, Syrian refugee children, aged 10–15, Serbia, March 2016.

## Risk factors for child labour

Greece, Macedonia and Serbia have all ratified the international conventions relevant to the issue of child labour, i.e. ILO Conventions 138 and 182, as well as the CRC and the Optional Protocols on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Despite these international human rights obligations, adequate protection mechanisms in countries along the Balkan Route are lacking. This might expose a rising number of children to child labour. Therefore, Terre des Hommes has identified several risk factors that need to be addressed:<sup>234</sup>

- Exhaustion of other coping mechanisms;
- Insufficient humanitarian assistance in comparison to the needs;
- High uncertainty on what is going to happen following the border closure, pushing children to take extra risks to reach out to what they deem a safe destination;
- Separation of children from their families in the chaotic situation at the border zones and in the informal shelters;
- No safe shelter or adequate protection mechanisms for children who are either living on the streets and/or on their own or who are on the move;
- Non-functioning and overburdened asylum systems as well as the border closure;
- Increased prices for travelling as the borders are closed, leading to the development of smuggling routes exposing vulnerable people to the risk of exploitation;
- Less protection through families or groups due to the erosion of values as a reaction to the desperate situation and experiences of conflict and displacement.

<sup>234</sup> (1) Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): Interview with several Project Coordinators at the Regional Office in Hungary, *ibid.*  
 (2) Terre des hommes Lausanne (2016): written information provided on 26 April 2016.

## 8.2 Situation in Germany

Germany is the top-destination country for refugees travelling along the Balkan Route; around 800,000 people entered the Federal Republic in 2015 – approximately 30% of whom were children.<sup>235</sup> The vast majority comes from Syria, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq, but also from various African countries, such as Somalia, South-Sudan and Sudan. As of 29 January 2016, the Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees (B-UMF) had counted more than 60,000 unaccompanied minor refugees in Germany.<sup>236</sup> In addition, 7,721 formerly unaccompanied refugee children were being provided with assistance from the Youth Welfare Service (Jugendamt). In contrast to many other countries facing a high influx of Syrian refugees, Germany's overall situation is highly developed, with an HDI ranking of 6 out of 188<sup>237</sup> and a solid and steady economic growth rate in 2015.<sup>238</sup> Quality education is provided at all levels, with a primary school enrolment rate of 100.5% in the past year.<sup>239</sup> Moreover, youth unemployment was at 6.9% in March 2016 – the lowest level amongst all the EU member states.<sup>240</sup> Nevertheless, the gap between the rich and the poor is widening and poverty was at the highest level since the reunification in 1990.<sup>241</sup>

<sup>235</sup> Official data provided by the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees lists 1.1 million persons in 2015. This figure includes all people that entered Germany and registered to seek asylum. However, this figure includes a high number of double and false registrations and many refugees continued their journey to other EU states, particularly in Scandinavia, without being subsequently deleted from the German system. Thus, the »net« number of potential applicants for refugee status in Germany is estimated at 800,000 according to Pro Asyl (2016): *Fakten, Zahlen und Argumente*, <https://www.proasyl.de/thema/fakten-zahlen-argumente/>.

<sup>236</sup> Bundesfachverband Unbegleitete Minderjährige Flüchtlinge (B-UMF) (2016): *Zahlen zu unbegleiteten minderjährigen Flüchtlingen: Bestand, Verteilung, Quotenerfüllung und Elternnachzug*, 29 January 2016, [http://www.b-umf.de/images/150129\\_PM\\_AktuelleZahlenUMF.pdf](http://www.b-umf.de/images/150129_PM_AktuelleZahlenUMF.pdf).

<sup>237</sup> UNDP (2015): *Human Development Report 2015 – Germany*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/DEU>

<sup>238</sup> Destatis/Statistisches Bundesamt (2016): *German economy continues to grow in 2015*, 14 January 2016, [https://www.destatis.de/EN/PressServices/Press/pr/2016/01/PE16\\_014\\_811.html](https://www.destatis.de/EN/PressServices/Press/pr/2016/01/PE16_014_811.html).

<sup>239</sup> UNDP (2015): *Human Development Report 2015*, *ibid.*

<sup>240</sup> Statista (2016): *Europäische Union: Jugendarbeitslosenquoten in den Mitgliedsstaaten*, März 2016, <http://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/74795/umfrage/jugendarbeitslosigkeit-in-europa/>.

<sup>241</sup> Deutsche Welle (2015): *Poverty in Germany at its highest since reunification*, 19 February 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/poverty-in-germany-at-its-highest-since-reunification/a-18268757>.

## Risk factors for child labour

All the international conventions tackling the issue of child labour have been ratified by Germany. These include ILO Conventions 138 and 182, as well as the CRC and its three Optional Protocols on (1) the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, (2) the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, as well as (3) a Communications Procedure. In July 2010, Germany withdrew its reservations, stating that the CRC did not apply to asylum-seeking children.<sup>242</sup> Despite these human rights obligations and ongoing humanitarian assistance<sup>243</sup>, the current level of protection from child labour is not sufficient. Based on ongoing project activities for refugee children in Germany, Terre des Hommes has identified three key risk factors that might lead to child labour among refugee children:

The access to education for school-aged refugees, which is one of the key mechanisms in preventing children from being forced into labour, is dealt with differently by the individual federal states.<sup>244</sup> Not all the federal states provide compulsory education for refugee children as soon as they arrive. An expansion and standardisation of the current federal regulations is highly recommended. This implies that compulsory education should be available to all refugee children throughout Germany.<sup>245</sup> UASC sometimes travel in groups with adults who are relatives necessarily caregivers. These children are not always identified as such during the registration process.<sup>246</sup> Unaccompanied refugee children in

Germany are taken into custody by the Youth Welfare Service (§42 Social Code VIII) and provided with a legal guardian. This applies, if children are travelling with adults who are not their relatives. However, there are also cases of children staying at reception centres with adults who are not their caregivers which are not brought to the attention of the Youth Welfare Service. In such cases, the actual relationship status might not be verified. This places refugee children at high risk of being victims of exploitation and trafficking for economic purposes. Terre des Hommes project partners working with unaccompanied minors have reported cases of youngsters who were targeted by contact persons from smuggler networks: These turned up at the youth welfare institutions to threaten the boys and force them to pay back the money they were lent to pay for their flight. Terre des Hommes fears that these refugee children then started to look for income through illegal activities, such as prostitution or drug-selling. Germany lags behind when it comes to the implementation of the EU Directive on »Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings«<sup>247</sup>. For example, exploitation through forced begging is not included as being an offense in the context of trafficking. Moreover, there is insufficient data to shed light on the problem of trafficking which is taking place with the sole aim of forcing the children into labour.<sup>248</sup> At least, the draft law proposed by the Ministry of Justice should be adopted.<sup>249</sup>

242 Cremer, Hendrik (2011): Die UN-Kinderrechtskonvention – Geltung und Anwendbarkeit in Deutschland nach der Rücknahme der Vorbehalte, Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte, June 2011, [http://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/uploads/tx\\_commerce/die\\_un\\_kinderrechtskonvention.pdf](http://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/uploads/tx_commerce/die_un_kinderrechtskonvention.pdf)

243 Die ZEIT: Flüchtlinge kosten Deutschland 50 Milliarden Euro, 1 February 2016, <http://www.zeit.de/wirtschaft/2016-02/fluechtlinge-haushalt-kosten-studie-iw>

244 Robert Bosch Stiftung (2015): Themendossier – Zugang zu Bildungseinrichtungen für Flüchtlinge: Kindertagesstätten, Schulen und Hochschulen, p. 23 ff. [http://www.bosch-stiftung.de/content/language1/downloads/Kommissionsbericht\\_Fluechtlingspolitik\\_Bildung.pdf](http://www.bosch-stiftung.de/content/language1/downloads/Kommissionsbericht_Fluechtlingspolitik_Bildung.pdf)

245 Robert Bosch Stiftung (2015): Themendossier, *ibid.* p. 17 ff. For more information see: Mercator-Institut für Sprachförderung/ Zentrum für LehrerInnenbildung (2015): Neu zugewanderte Kinder und Jugendliche im deutschen Schulsystem – Bestandsaufnahme und Empfehlungen, p. 31–44, [http://www.mercator-institut-sprachfoerderung.de/fileadmin/Redaktion/PDF/Publikationen/MI\\_ZfL\\_Studie\\_Zugewanderte\\_im\\_deutschen\\_Schulsystem\\_final\\_screen.pdf](http://www.mercator-institut-sprachfoerderung.de/fileadmin/Redaktion/PDF/Publikationen/MI_ZfL_Studie_Zugewanderte_im_deutschen_Schulsystem_final_screen.pdf)

246 B-UMF/ UNICEF (2016): Factfinding zur Situation von Kindern und Jugendlichen in Erstaufnahmeeinrichtungen und Notunterkünften, February 2016, p. 10, <https://www.unicef.de/blob/106516/d0912061605d9a839102bc34cfae0ba2/unicef-bumf-factfinding-fluechtlingskinder-2016-data.pdf>

247 European Union (2011): Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, EU Directive 2011/36/EU, 5 April 2011, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=URISERV:j10058&from=DE>

248 Federal Government's reply to Parliament of 13 April 2016, German parliamentary paper No. 18/8087, 13 April 2016, p. 7, <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/18/080/1808087.pdf>

249 Bundesministerium für Justiz und Verbraucherschutz (2015): Besserer Schutz vor Menschenhandel, 28 January 2015, [http://www.bmjv.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2015/01282015\\_Besserer\\_Schutz\\_Menschenhandel.html](http://www.bmjv.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2015/01282015_Besserer_Schutz_Menschenhandel.html)

## 9. Conclusion

The research hypothesised that conflicts in Syria and the region have led to an increase in child labour, including its worst forms, as a negative coping mechanism for Syrian refugee and IDP families to survive in neighbouring countries, as well as along the Balkan Route into Europe, and to cover economic expenses resulting from their displacement. This assumption has been partially validated, as summarised below.

### Grave violations against children in Syria

Children in Syria face multiple horrors on a daily basis. They witness atrocities and violence among their communities and families and are directly affected by the ongoing fighting, killing and maiming in government-controlled as well as besieged areas. The report at hand identified several forms of child labour, including the worst forms, which are emerging as mechanisms to cope with the devastating living conditions of the families in Syria. Recruitment of children by armed groups is pervasive and to the uttermost extent detrimental to their development. As data is lacking, the overall number of children affected by being forced into labour cannot be provided. The key push factor is the aftermath of the war in Syria. Children and their families are being deprived of everything that is needed to survive and are, thus, forced to resort to the most drastic coping mechanisms. Adequate protection mechanisms are lacking due to the attacks on the basic infrastructure, such as hospitals, and the humanitarian services provided are limited.

### Alarming scale of child labour in countries neighbouring Syria

With the immense influx of Syrian refugees in countries neighbouring Syria (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey), the socio-economic and political situation has deteriorated considerably – affecting both the refugees and host communities alike – resulting in growing social tensions and overstretched capacities and infrastructure. The humanitarian assistance provided is insufficient to cover the needs of all the refugees. This leaves the Syrian population in unbearable living conditions. In response, coping mechanisms have emerged. Syrian refugee children are bearing an immense burden as they often have to assume the role of the breadwinner for their war-affected families. Child labour, including its worst forms, has drastically increased as a result of the crisis, according to the findings of this report. All types of work can be found, e.g. in the agricultural sector, construc-

tion sector or work as small-scale vendors. In addition, refugee children are being recruited by armed groups. As a quick reference, 45 of the 76 children consulted by Terre des Hommes in Syria's neighbouring countries reported that they are working more than 7 hours a day – with 28 of these working 7 days per week.

A large number of push and pull factors were identified, reflecting that child labour amongst refugee children is a multidimensional problem. As the table below shows, the factors identified touch upon all spheres of life, i.e. the overall aftermath of the war, a deteriorating economic situation, lack of access to education, the bad health condition of a family member, the overall family situation, as well as a lack of humanitarian assistance. The country-specific results that are based on FGD with children are marked with an asterisk (\*).<sup>250</sup>

In addition, other interesting findings were brought to light. It seems that the type of shelter does not make a difference to the risk of child labour as it can be found both in formal camps as well as in informal shelters – although the majority of Syrian refugees in the neighbouring countries actually resides directly amongst the host communities. Moreover, being together with their families does not seem to prevent the children from being engaged in child labour. In Syrian neighbouring countries, girls are more involved in domestic work and are rarely seen working in public. This makes it difficult to determine the conditions facing them and to secure access to schooling. These findings clearly indicate that tackling child labour in Syrian neighbouring countries demands a holistic approach. Efforts to fight child labour, including its worst forms, should be integrated into child protection programmes and cover all aspects of child labour, e.g. education, livelihood, cash assistance and case management.

### Risk Factors for child labour along the Balkan Route and in Europe

In 2015, no substantial evidence was found for the existence of child labour among Syrian refugee children along the Balkan Route. Following the most recent political developments, thousands of Syrian refugees are now stuck in front

<sup>250</sup> The push and pull factors are not sorted by frequency of mention.

## Overall push and pull factors for child labour

## Country-specific push and pull factors for child labour besides the overall factors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Aftermath of the war</b></li> <li>• <b>Economic reasons</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– High poverty level               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) of refugees themselves,</li> <li>b) of the host communities</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Exhaustion of savings</li> <li>– Depletion of income</li> <li>– Exhaustion of other coping mechanisms</li> <li>– Families need support</li> <li>– High rental prices</li> <li>– High (youth) unemployment in the host countries and Syria</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Lack of access to education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– High transportation costs</li> <li>– Social tensions with host communities (not in Iraq)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Health situation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Illness of a family member</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Family situation, e.g.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Parent died in the war</li> <li>– Younger siblings</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Lack of humanitarian assistance provided by UNHCR/NGOs/governments</b></li> <li>• <b>Future hopes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Return to school</li> <li>– Return home to Syria*</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Jordan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of financial means for medical treatment/insufficient health insurance*</li> <li>• No access to work permits for parents</li> <li>• Guarantee education for younger siblings*</li> <li>• Role of being the eldest child of the family*</li> <li>• Single-parent households are more likely to send their children to work</li> <li>• Neglectful parents*</li> <li>• Legal problems/lack of documentation impede access to education</li> </ul>
	<b>Lebanon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New border entry regulations and establishment of a costly residency renewal procedure</li> <li>• Single-parent households are more likely to send their children to work</li> <li>• Clothing*</li> <li>• Food insecurity*</li> <li>• Family members suffering from diseases*</li> <li>• Send money to relatives in Syria*</li> <li>• Forced recruitment</li> </ul>
	<b>Iraq</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age or disability*</li> <li>• Family values, such as prejudiced views about education (work is better than attending school/peer pressure)*</li> <li>• Save money for onward migration to Europe</li> <li>• Joining armed groups becomes more attractive to young people due to harsh living conditions</li> <li>• Forced recruitment</li> </ul>
	<b>Turkey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High demand for a cheap labour force in the industrial sector (e.g. textiles)</li> </ul>

of closed borders – especially in Greece and Macedonia. Single cases of child labour have already been reported to Terre des Hommes by partner organisations in Greece. Thus, a closer look at the situation is required, as is the establishment of coherent protection mechanisms by both state and non-state players. In addition, destination countries, such as Germany, should intensify their efforts to collect data and gain knowledge on the risk of child labour, including its worst forms, and the trafficking of children amongst refugee children within their country. So far, activities that could shed light on this issue are lacking.

## 10. Recommendations

### 10.1 Appeal to end the Suffering in Syria

Together with more than 120 humanitarian organisations and UN agencies, Terre des Hommes issued a joint appeal<sup>251</sup> urging the world to **call for an end to the Syria crisis** and to demand strict observation of international humanitarian law. Until there is a diplomatic solution to and cessation of the fighting, such action should include:

- Unimpeded and sustained **access for humanitarian organisations** to bring immediate relief to all those in need inside Syria.
- **Humanitarian pauses and unconditional, monitored ceasefires** to allow food and other urgent assistance to be delivered to civilians.
- **A cessation of attacks on civilian infrastructure.**
- **Freedom of movement** for all civilians and the immediate lifting of all sieges.

### 10.2 General Recommendations

- A **holistic and multidimensional cross-border approach** should be adopted in the fight against child labour among refugee children.
- **The right to education** for all refugee children should be realised as a key to overcoming child labour and include informal education and vocational training.
- The children's **right to be heard** should be realised in the solution-finding process.
- All measures must take into account the **symptoms of distress, trauma and post-traumatic stress disorders** and offer access to basic services. Rehabilitation and re-integration services should be made available to children recruited by armed groups.
- As child labour is a coping mechanism which emerges out of desperation, **working children should not be criminalised.**
- **The provision of data on child labour among refugee children** is crucial for developing targeted action.

<sup>251</sup> For more information see Terre des Hommes (2016): Syria – An Appeal to end the war, 21 January 2016, <http://www.terredeshommes.org/syria-an-appeal-to-end-the-war/>

- States should provide **additional funding** to fill the gap – as of 18 May 2016, only 25 % of the 3RP and 18 % of the HRP had been secured.<sup>252</sup>

### 10.3 Recommendations to the European Union

Terre des Hommes is gravely concerned that the **EU-Turkey-Refugee Deal** presents a real risk of overlooking human rights law obligations. Thus:

- The EU should **set up prevention and protection mechanisms** targeting refugee children with a special focus on victims of labour.
- The EU should **monitor** how member states implement child protection mechanisms, as well as identify and share promising practices to prevent child labour.
- **Cooperation** between EU members should be improved to protect refugee children from labour, e.g. by setting up a coherent registration system and labour inspections.
- The EU should be supporting access to employment and education, as well as **increasing the qualification and employment of young people.**

### 10.4 Recommendations to National Governments

Terre des Hommes calls upon all states to comply with and build interventions on the **Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child** on »The Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration«. <sup>253</sup> The following additional recommendations are made despite being aware of the fact that the governments concerned need to be addressed directly with regard to specific aspects:

- All states have the duty **to implement and enforce the international human rights conventions**, in particular ILO Conventions 138 and 182 and the CRC.

<sup>252</sup> See UNOCHA (2016): Financial Tracking Service: <https://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=special-syriancrisis>.

<sup>253</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2012): Day of General Discussion on the Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration, 28 September 2012, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CRC/Discussions/2012/DG-D2012ReportAndRecommendations.pdf>



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- Efforts should be intensified to realise and enforce the **right of every child to be protected from economic exploitation**, from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, and from other forms of exploitation prejudicial to their welfare.<sup>254</sup>
- States should ensure that **national child protection systems** follow a **holistic approach** and target refugee children at risk of being forced into labour.
- States have the responsibility to **protect unaccompanied or separated children**. A formal »best interests« determination is required, as outlined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.<sup>255</sup>

## 10.5 Recommendations to Non-Governmental Organisations

- All organisations providing services to refugee children should **establish effective safeguards** against abuse, labour and exploitation in a child protection policy.
- All organisations focusing on refugee children should **coordinate all protection and prevention programmes**, e.g. via the NLG Initiative.

<sup>254</sup> UN CRC Articles 32, 34 and 36.

<sup>255</sup> See UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2005): General Comment No. 6, *ibid.* and UNHCR (2008): Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child, <http://www.unhcr.org/4566b16b2.pdf>

- Organisations should ensure that their actions do not increase the **risk of family separations**, placing children at high risk of being forced into labour.
- All organisations involved should increase their efforts to **create public awareness and understanding** for the root causes of labour among refugee children.

## 10.6 Recommendations to Businesses and Trade Unions

- All business players – including retailers, brand-name companies, importers – should fulfil their **corporate responsibility to respect human rights**<sup>256</sup> in their global supply chains. This means avoiding infringing on the rights of others – especially children – and addressing any adverse impacts that may develop.
- **Employers' organisations** should sensitise their members **not to employ children**, following ILO conventions 138 and 182 – be they national or refugee children.
- **Trade unions** should **sensitise their members** to report child labour cases.
- **Employers** should intensify their efforts to **address youth unemployment** and offer vocational training for young people, be they nationals or refugees.

<sup>256</sup> United Nations (2008): Protect, Respect and Remedy: a Framework for Business and Human Rights, 7 April 2008, UN Doc. A/HRC/8/5, <http://www.reports-and-materials.org/sites/default/files/reports-and-materials/Ruggie-report-7-Apr-2008.pdf>

# Annex

## Annex 1: Literature Review

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## Annex 2: Interview Guideline

### Questions:

- 1) What can you say about the number of refugee children working in Syria and the neighbouring countries and along the refugee routes into Europe?
  - Which children work? (age, sex, accompanied/unaccompanied children, fled with family/any other adult?)
  - What kind of work do they do?
  - Who recruits these children? Or do they work on a self-employed/self-organised basis?
  - How are they paid?
  - What are the working conditions like? (Contract? Working hours per day? Home-based work? Support of parents/family?)
  - Which coping mechanisms emerge? (Child marriage/prostitution...)?
- 2) What are the drivers of child labour under refugee conditions? What pushes or pulls children into or out of work?
- 3) Are the working conditions of refugee children different from those of »common child labourers« in the region? In what sense? Have any »new child labour phenomena« appeared due to the circumstances of their flight or their refugee status? If yes, which ones and why?
- 4) Which gender-related features do the employment conditions of boys resp. girls entail?
- 5) Which protection programmes or prevention measures are implemented by national and international organisations? What about their efficiency? »Good Practices«? Which regulations are provided by the existing legislation and what do state agencies/the relevant authorities do?
- 6) What results and recommendations can be derived from the situation of working boys and girls? For your organisation? For other players?
- 7) (Partner) organisations' own aspects resp. recommendations?

## Annex 3: List of Interview Partners and Focus Group Discussions

Child Protection Programme Manager, Support to Life/Hayata Destek, Turkey, written statement, 13 April 2016

STEGI PLUS (+) Project Coordinator, PRAKSIS, Greece, written statement, 23 March 2016

Head of International Relations, Youth Group one third, Sweden, interviewed 25 February 2016

Bundesfachverband unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge e.V., Berlin, Germany, interviewed 29 February 2016

Country Representative Iraq, National Child Protection Officer Iraq, Child Protection Coordinator Iraq, all Terre des hommes Italy, interviewed 24 February 2016

Programme Coordinator & Interim Country Delegate, Lebanon Delegation, Terre des hommes Lausanne, interviewed 23 February 2016

North Field Coordinator Jordan, Jordan Delegation, Terre des hommes Lausanne, interviewed 23 February 2016

Program Director Open Gate/La Strada Macedonia, interviewed 17 February 2016

Coordinator for emergency response to the refugees with the partners in Macedonia and Serbia, La Strada Open Gate & Terre des hommes Lausanne, and Coordinator for migrant projects, Terre des hommes Lausanne, interviewed 16 February 2016

Desk Officer MENA, Terre des hommes Lausanne/Italy, interviewed 15 February 2016

Coordinator for emergency response to the refugees with the partners in Macedonia and Serbia, Terre des hommes Lausanne, interviewed 5 February 2016, follow-up via email.

Area manager Psychosocial Support, Terre des hommes Italy in Syria, interviewed 25 April 2016, follow-up via E-Mail.

FGD with 11 male Iraqi IDPs aged 9–17, Harsham IDP Camp, Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), Terre des hommes Italy, 8 March 2016.

FGD with 10 Syrian boys aged 8–14, Irbid city, Soum Alshnaq village, Jordan, Terre des hommes Lausanne, 8 March 2016.

FGD with 7 Syrian girls aged 17, Mafraq city, Jordan, Terre des hommes Lausanne, 9 March 2016.

FGD with 11 Syrian boys aged 12–16, Moghaier Assarhan village, Jordan, Terre des hommes Lausanne, 10 March 2016.

FGD with 8 Syrian boys and 2 Syrian girls aged 10–15, Adaševci, Šid, refugee camp, Serbia, Terre des hommes Lausanne, 16 March 2016.

FGD with 8 Syrian boys aged 14–17, Deir Kanoun, Tyre, Lebanon, Terre des hommes Lausanne, 16 March 2016.

FGD with 9 Syrian girls aged 13–15, Deir Kanoun, Tyre, Lebanon, Terre des hommes Lausanne, 16 March 2016.

FGD with 16 Syrian girls aged 15–17, Sarafand, Saida, Lebanon, Terre des hommes Lausanne, 18 March 2016.

FGD with 11 Syrian boys aged 11–17, Sarafand, Saida, Lebanon, Terre des hommes Lausanne, 18 March 2016.

FGD with 12 Syrian boys and 1 Syrian girl aged 14–19, Oraiokastros, Thessaloniki, Greece, ARSIS, 28 March 2016.

## Annex 4: Participatory Consultations with Refugee and IDP Working Children

As part of this research, ten Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted with 96 refugee-working children in Greece, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Serbia. The objectives of the consultations were to better understand the benefits, challenges, risks, and complexities of children's work as experienced by refugee working boys and girls in different countries and contexts and to share children's views, experiences and recommendations.

In this report, the term 'FGD participants' refers to all participants who were consulted during a focus group discussion between March and April 2016. This part of the research was primarily qualitative. A multi-method approach was applied, which included focus group discussions (FGD) using participatory evaluation tools with different groups of refugee working children. Key quantitative findings were also collected through the use of an Individual Questionnaire completed by each participant.

Three evaluation tools were used for to facilitate the FGD amongst a group of 7–16 participants involved in different types of work. Visual participatory tools used during the FGD offered increased opportunities for participants of different ages, especially younger participants, to interact and share their views, experiences and feelings<sup>257</sup>.

Overview of participatory tools<sup>258</sup>:

### Why? Why? Why?

- To explore the different reasons and motivations as to why refugee children work (positive or negative), as well as and the underlying causes.

### Mapping work we can and should do and work we cannot or should not do

- To enable children to discuss and identify what work they think is or is not appropriate for refugee boys and/or girls at different ages and capacities, and the reasons why.

### Flowers of Support

- To enable children to identify what different groups of people should do to improve the situation of refugee working children.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

3RP	(UN) Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
ANF	Al-Nusra Front
B-UMF	Bundesfachverband unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge (Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
FGD	Focus Group Discussion(s)
FSA	Free Syrian Army
GBV	gender based violence
HDI	Human Development Index
HIP	Humanitarian Implementation Plan
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDP	Internally displaced people
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIL/ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant / Syria
JOD	Jordanian Dinar
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NLG	No Lost Generation (Initiative)
PKK	Kurdish Workers Party
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STL	Support to Life
TRY	Turkish Lira
UASC	Unaccompanied and/or Separated children
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	UN Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme
YPG/YPJ	Kurdish People's Protection Units



Destination Unknown is an **international campaign to protect children on the move** led by Terre des Hommes International Federation (TDHIF) and its member organisations. It is supported by partners who join forces to develop protection mechanisms for children on the move, raise awareness about the campaign messages and advocate for policy change. [www.destination-unknown.org](http://www.destination-unknown.org)

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