

SOCIAL JUSTICE: SCARY TIMES FOR CHILDREN pt.1

This year has been scary for children.

Syria is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a child.

7.5 million Syrian children, inside and outside the country, are in need of humanitarian aid, and millions have borne witness to unrelenting violence from the brutal conflict that began more than four years ago. 2.6 million children are no longer in school and 2 million are living as refugees in neighboring countries or on the run in search of safety, **helping to fuel a global migrant crisis**. Syria is now **the world's biggest producer of both internally displaced people and refugees**.

For these children, what's at stake isn't politics. It's their future. Having already lost their homes, schools and communities, their chances of building a future may also soon be lost.

UNICEF has been on the ground since the conflict began, helping to mobilize the largest humanitarian operation in history and working closely with partners to provide education, physical protection, psychological support and clothing to Syrian refugee children in Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt and other countries; immunize children against disease; and provide millions of people with access to safe drinking water.

Children on the run — the extent of the child refugee crisis is staggering.

An estimated 30 million children are on the run today, fleeing brutal violence, extreme poverty or both. This figure includes millions of children caught in conflict in Syria, Iraq, Yemen — more than a dozen countries; children driven from their homes and forced to make difficult and dangerous journeys abroad, children who are out of school and don't know when they might return.

This crisis is a humanitarian emergency of unprecedented scale — one that demands immediate action. Whether these children are migrants, refugees or internally displaced, they are all children first. They need — and deserve — our help.

UNICEF is responding to this crisis across four continents: delivering lifesaving supplies to children and their families fleeing escalating violence in the Middle East and Northern Africa, providing water and tents to create safe spaces for the growing wave of children moving through Europe, and working to improve the lives of children running from violence and abuse in Central America.

Working to make the world better for children

The U.S. Fund for UNICEF supports UNICEF's work, and other efforts in support of the world's children, through fundraising, advocacy and education in the United States.

UNICEF does whatever it takes to save and protect the world's most vulnerable children. Forty years ago, UNICEF figured out that promoting simple, low-cost interventions like hand washing and breastfeeding could save millions of lives. Undaunted by war or geography, UNICEF delivers.

Independent Monitors Recognize the U.S. Fund

The U.S. Fund for UNICEF meets the [Better Business Bureau's](#) Wise Giving Alliance's [Standards for Charity Accountability](#).

The U.S. Fund also [meets Charity Navigator's highest financial standards](#) for charities. Out of every dollar spent, 90.2 cents goes toward helping children. We spend just 7.1 cents on fundraising costs, and 2.7 cents on administration.

UNICEF's "[A Promise Renewed](#)" [2015 progress report](#) affirms that global mortality rates for children under 5 have plummeted by more than half what they were a generation ago. Efforts by UNICEF and its partners to combat [malaria](#), [measles](#), [malnutrition](#) and other leading preventable causes of death in young children have helped save nearly 50 million

lives since 2000, according to the data. Accelerating these efforts could save another 38 million children over the next 15 years.

UNICEF has been working for decades to provide clean and safe water, nutrition, [immunization](#), improved health care and other support to vulnerable children, helping to boost survival rates in the world's poorest countries. Much of that success is due to high-impact, cost-effective solutions: antibiotics to combat pneumonia, oral rehydration tablets to stop diarrhea, insecticide-treated mosquito nets to prevent malaria and support for breastfeeding mothers to give newborns a healthier start in life.

Even those countries in East and Southern Africa with exceptionally high child mortality rates have made significant gains in recent years, by building and investing in primary health care systems and bringing health and nutrition services to more children, with UNICEF's help.

Yet despite all the remarkable progress, the job is far from finished. Some 16,000 children still die every day — 11 children every minute — of causes that can be prevented. More than 80 percent of these deaths occur in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

UNICEF is part of an international coalition of governments, nonprofit groups and other organizations committed to reducing child mortality. Between 2000 and 2015, child deaths were dropping at a rate of 3.9 percent, twice as fast as the rate of decline during the 1990s — and yet not enough to meet the goals that had been set by this leadership group. Soon there will be new goals, new targets, and the challenge going forward will be to pick up the pace in pursuit of the next milestone.

“Millions of children do not have to die,” says UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Yoka Brandt. Reach every child — maintain the political will needed to keep children's lives a priority, ramp up efforts aimed at remote populations — and they won't.