

WE MADE A PROMISE: ENSURING LEARNING PATHWAYS AND PROTECTION FOR SYRIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Brussels II Conference, 24-25 April 2018

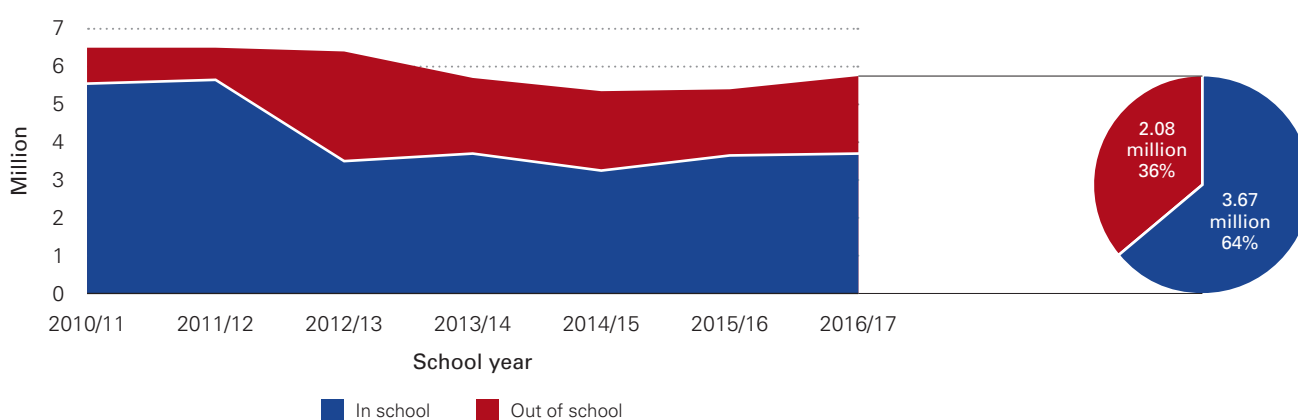
At the London Conference in 2016, the international community made a commitment to reach all school-age Syrian children inside Syria and the five host countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt),¹ as well as affected host-community children, with multiple pathways to learning. To deliver on this promise, US\$1.4 billion are required per year.

This note provides an update of the situation and challenges towards this promise, and puts forward key messages for the second 'Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region' Conference in Brussels.

OVERVIEW

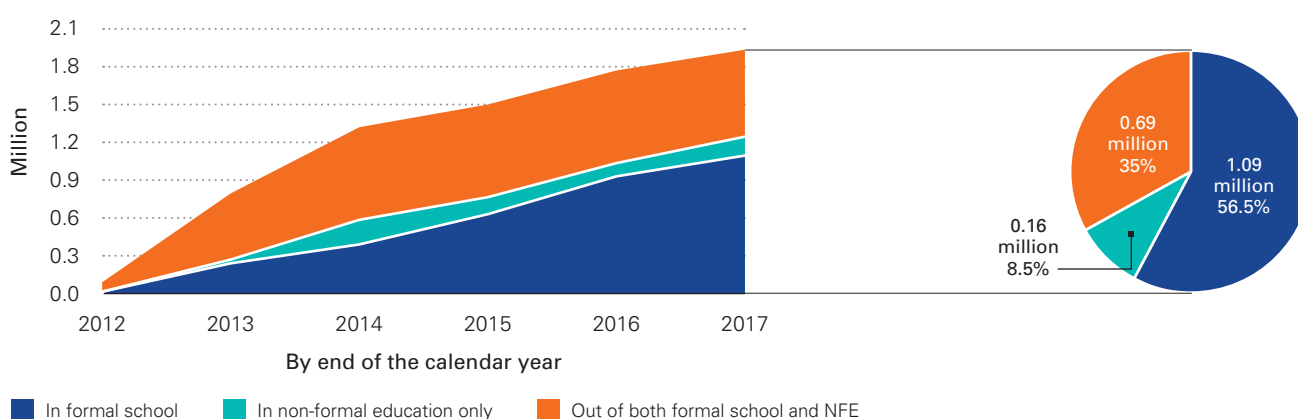
Inside Syria:

- Enrolment remains stable in the 2016/17 school year after a sharp drop during the 2011/12 school year.
- Over 2 million children are still out of school (36%).



In the five host countries:

- Progress in accessing education is steady with 1.25 million (or two out of three) school-age Syrian children attending either formal or regulated non-formal education (NFE). Most of them, seven out of eight, are in formal schools.
- Although the percentage of out-of-school children has been reduced from 41% in 2016 to 35% in 2017, almost 700,000 children remain out of school.²



The Syria crisis education response has had a positive impact on host communities:

- Public school enrolment for Lebanese children has increased by nearly 13% since the 2014/15 school year.
- Close to 40,000 Jordanian children are benefitting from learning support services put in place for Syrian children.
- Internally displaced Iraqi children now attend non-formal education programmes with their Syrian peers.
- In Egypt, 1.8 million Egyptian and Syrian children have received school supplies.

¹ The category of 'school-age' children refers to children from 5 to 17 years.

² See full report: NLG. 2018. *We Made a Promise: Ensuring Learning Pathways and Protection for Syrian Children and Youth*, footnote 14 and Annex 2 for explanation on calculations and adjustments..

Financing for the Syria crisis response:

- **Host countries continue to provide significant resources**, both human and financial, to support the education of refugee children and youth.
- **Financing for education has declined** under the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and the Regional Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) for the Syria crisis, both in terms of the amount (from US\$618 million to US\$566 million), and the fulfilment of sector requirements (from 71% to 52%).
- With **less than 60% of funds for 2017 received during the first half of the year**, there is significant room for improvement in the timely disbursement of financial resources.



KEY CHALLENGES

On access to education:

- While enrolment is stable, as long as **the conflict intensifies**, the scale and severity of the effects on children and youth leaves the international community in an uphill battle against increasing challenges to maintaining access to education.
- Education participation is limited by protection concerns and the need to provide for families.
- School-age children at the age range of 15-17 years represent 40% of the out-of-school children inside Syria.

On quality of education:

- Challenges of teaching students of different ages, learning levels, backgrounds, language of instruction proficiency (in some of the host countries), in addition to overcrowded schools and a lack of sufficient teachers and resources, continue to **compromise the quality of education**.
- Both children and teachers demonstrate **psychosocial distress** inflicted by the conflict, including depression, anxiety and panic attacks.
- Youth experience a **mismatch of skills taught in formal education** with those sought after by the labour market.

On system strengthening:

- **Today's youth in particular miss out on quality learning**, attesting to the inadequate education response throughout the crisis.
- **Lack of recognition and accreditation of learning in non-formal settings** challenges transitions to the formal system or the world of work.
- While **data generation and monitoring systems** have improved in Syria and the five host countries, both in terms of accuracy and disaggregation, there remain education and financial data gaps to deepen analysis that is necessary to design adequate responses.
- **Public systems in host countries are under pressure** by increased enrolment and in need of more resources, classrooms and learning materials.

On financing:

- Although financial information on annual allocations and disbursements to the Syria crisis education response in Syria and the five host countries may be underreported, **total financing** for the response is declining and lacks **flexibility and multi-year provision**.

ASKS FOR 2018:

- **End the conflict, attacks on education and the military use of school buildings** to secure the protection of all children and youth, and improve education access and quality.
- **Expand multiple pathways to learning, focusing on youth, and secure recognized and certified learning opportunities.**
- **Improve multi-sectoral responses** that link education, protection and livelihood interventions.
- **Ensure flexible medium-term and adequately financed plans, and strengthen coordination and accountability among all stakeholders.**
- Prioritize learning and the acquisition of skills, with adequate **tools for monitoring learning outcomes** to inform evidence-based decision making.