

CHILD PROTECTION

FACTSHEET

2015

PROVIDING PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT, SAFE SPACES TO PLAY AND THE RESILIENCE NEEDED TO COPE WITH FUTURE EMERGENCIES

Children have repeatedly found themselves caught in the crossfire in the crises that have engulfed both Syria and Iraq. Boys and girls of all ages having suffered from exploitation, abuse and physical trauma. When not the direct victims of violence, many have witnessed their homes and schools destroyed and members of their families threatened, beaten or killed.

Conflicts rob children of their childhood, and now the effects of the violence and subsequent upheaval are having an enormous impact on thousands of children's physical and mental wellbeing. Parents who have made it to displacement camps talk of their children's marked behavioural changes and trouble sleeping. Many are now in need of psychosocial support so they can develop a sense of routine, build friendships and form meaningful relationships in what are often chaotic circumstances.

Furthermore, grave violations against children such as recruitment, killing and maiming, and sexual violence are even more prominent in the current context. As well as these, harmful traditional practices such as child marriage and child labour place separated, internally displaced and refugee children at an even greater risk of exploitation as they are no longer within their normal protective environment.



A Case Worker talks to a young IDP girl at one of Save the Children's Child Friendly Spaces

Photo Credit: Mark Kaye/Save the Children

CRISIS IN NUMBERS:

- More than **1.2 million internally displaced Iraqi children** and **100,000 Syrian refugee children** currently in Iraq
- More than **750 cases** of grave violations against children in Iraq reported
- Almost **40,000 children** in need of support to deal with psychosocial distress
- Nearly **2100 cases** of unaccompanied or separated children in Iraq reported
- By the end of 2015 Save the Children plans to reach more than **360,000** people in Iraq, including **275,000** children

SAVE THE CHILDREN RESPONSE

Save the Children is supporting children and their families in Iraq who have been affected by both the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts. In addition to working directly with displaced families, we are also supporting communities that are hosting large numbers of those displaced. We are helping ensure children get the support they need by directly implementing programs that ensure children are protected and by helping coordinate and empower local NGOs, the government and communities.

To ensure that we are responding effectively and efficiently we have seconded a co-coordinator to the Iraq Child Protection Sub Cluster/WG also lead UASC WG at national level and active member of PWG steering group member. Good coordination means less gaps and overlaps in humanitarian organisations' work, while also helping to identify ways to work together for better collective results.

CHILD FRIENDLY SPACES

We are setting up safe spaces for children affected by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq in both camp and non-camp settings. Here they can learn, play and receive the psychosocial support they need to get over their experiences through structured activities which are based on their interests and needs. Such activities include traditional song and dance, art, drama, storytelling, theatre, organised sports, and access to Save the Children's educational programmes.

We are now running 24CFS's across Iraq which are attended daily by an average 7200 children.

CHILD RESILIENCE PROGRAMMES

Our Child Resilience Programmes help to provide non-clinical psychosocial support that focuses on strengthening the positive coping skills and resilience of children, their families and communities. Children who have completed the 10 week programme have made significant progress in relation to their self-confidence, while at the same time gaining the skills they need to cope with future challenges. Likewise parents/guardians have become far more aware of their child's psychosocial needs.

To date over 2,000 children have completed a full 10 week cycle of our Child Resilience Programme.

CASE MANAGEMENT

Our Child Protection Case Workers assist individual children and their families suffering from protection concerns. Where the family's needs exceed the support our Case Worker can provide referrals to essential services, such as medical, legal, educational or livelihood support, can be coordinated alongside other agencies or government bodies.

UNACCOMPANIED AND SEPARATED CHILDREN

Save the Children is working alongside several INGOs in Iraq to coordinate the registration of unaccompanied, separated and missing children. We are working tirelessly to protect children without appropriate care, with individual case management, family tracing and reunification and ensuring access to alternative care when needed and are providing significant capacity building support to other CP agencies



Children play the 'telephone game' at one of Save the Children's Child Friendly Spaces

Photo Credit: Mark Kaye/Save the Children

CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES (CPC)

Our CPCs work to empower communities through the promotion of child rights and child protection; made up by those affected by the current crises the CPCs encourage participants to speak out on issues that are affecting children and raise awareness about protection issues.

FUNDING

Child protection is consistently underfunded in emergencies even though it is a vital element of any emergency response. To continue providing for children in Iraq, it is imperative Save the Children receives further funding to implement our activities.

Our Child Protection programme activities are funded by, CIDA, DANIDA, DFATD, DFID, NMFA, SDC, SIDA, UNICEF, UNHCR and our members.