

PRESSEMITTEILUNG

Protection of children in humanitarian crises is chronically underfunded

Oslo, 27 October - Child Protection measures, such as the assistance for child-victims, the reunification of unaccompanied children with their parents, or the reintegration of child soldiers, are chronically underfunded during conflicts and other crises, a new report titled [Still Unprotected: Humanitarian Funding for Child protection](#) shows.

Funding must more than double to assist children who either have been or are at risk of abuse, neglected, exploitation, or violence, the organisations warn.

Children living in humanitarian crises face an increased risk of abuse. While the threats of harm are increasing, the established systems in place to protect them are breaking down. Faced with the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts, vulnerable families suffer multiple hardships. Schools are closed and families have been pushed to the brink of poverty, sometimes having been denied the opportunity to protect and provide for their children.

The report provides an in-depth analysis of 19 Humanitarian Response Plans and Refugee Response Plans from 2019. Only 2% of the overall funding requested through humanitarian appeals was for child protection interventions. Less than half of that amount was received for humanitarian actors to give lifesaving protection assistance to children.

“Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the number of children who need protection has only increased. Children are among the most vulnerable during crises, yet our analysis shows just how chronically underfunded Child Protection is. This is costing children’s lives every day, as children are recruited, abused or fall victim to traffickers because the right mechanisms to protect them are not in place,” said Audrey Bollier, Coordinator for the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

The report shows a pattern of chronic underfunding of child protection and vast disparities in funding from one response to another, ranging from 14% to 97% in 2019. This hampers consistent support for the most vulnerable children fleeing violence, exploitation and trafficking. During 2020 the gap between needs identified and funds allocated has grown at an alarming rate. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, the number of children in need of protection support has doubled, but as of mid-September the Child Protection within the Humanitarian Response Plan was less than 10% funded.

In 2019, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated that 168 million people in 58 countries would need humanitarian assistance in 2020 ^[1]. COVID-19 spread across the world within months of the new year, and in July 2020 the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan aimed to provide humanitarian aid to 250 million people in need in 63 countries.^[2]

“Reaching particularly vulnerable children - who may be victims of violence or abuse, or those who have been separated from their families, or children associated with armed groups - is complex and sensitive. It requires trained staff and time, and our report shows that the funding available is nowhere near enough”, said Alison Sutton, Global Director Child Protection in Save the Children.

[1] Global Humanitarian Needs Overview,, UNOCHA, December 2019 <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2020-enarfrzh>

[2] COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan, UNOCHA (July 2020) <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Global-Humanitarian-Response-Plan-COVID-19.pdf>

The report warns that if the international community fails to respond, children will be left in distress or without psychosocial support, and many children will face severe risks of abuse, violence or even death. The hope of reuniting unaccompanied and separated children with their families will also dwindle rapidly, and more children will be exposed to exploitation, child labour, and child marriages.

Humanitarian agencies are calling on donors and governments to fully fund Child Protection in crises, and to truly invest in building Child Protection capacity, especially among local actors, to ensure that quality support is available for children living in the harshest places on earth.

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Notes to editors:

The report Still Unprotected: Humanitarian Funding for Child Protection been written by Save The Children in collaboration with the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (the Alliance), Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR), and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It is a follow up on the report Unprotected: Crisis in humanitarian funding for child protection published in 2019.

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action is a global, interagency group that sets standards and provide technical support to ensure that efforts to protect children from violence and exploitation are of high quality and effective.

The Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) is specifically focused on enhancing child protection coordination and response in humanitarian contexts (as defined as Humanitarian Coordinator and Early Warning contexts). CP AoR ensures that the efforts of national and international actors to protect children are well coordinated, achieving maximum quality and impact.





Save the Children is a global child rights organization working for and with children so they can survive, learn, and be protected. Save the Children runs programmes that directly reach around 50 million children in around 120 countries every year.

UNHCR is the UN Agency mandated to aid and protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. UNHCR has more than 17,300 staff working in 135 countries.

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Über Save the Children

Im Nachkriegsjahr 1919 gründete die britische Sozialreformerin und Kinderrechtlerin Eglantyne Jebb Save the Children, um Kinder in Deutschland und Österreich vor dem Hungertod zu retten. Heute ist die inzwischen größte unabhängige Kinderrechtsorganisation der Welt in über 110 Ländern im Einsatz. Save the Children ist da für Kinder in Kriegen, Konflikten und Katastrophen – seit 100 Jahren und darüber hinaus. Diese Kinder zu schützen, zu stärken und zu fördern ist das zentrale Anliegen der Organisation. Die Schwerpunkte der Arbeit liegen in den Bereichen Schule und Bildung, Schutz vor Ausbeutung und Gewalt sowie Überleben und Gesundheit. Save the Children setzt sich ein für eine Welt, die die Rechte der Kinder achtet. Eine Welt, in der alle Kinder gesund und sicher leben und frei und selbstbestimmt aufwachsen können.