



## No Lost Generation Pillar III: Adolescents and Youth

---

No Lost Generation is a multi-agency initiative co-led by UNICEF, Mercy Corps, Save the Children, and World Vision, focused on supporting children and youth affected by the Syria and Iraq conflicts. The initiative comprises programming and advocacy across Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Egypt. No Lost Generation brings together over 100 agencies who are working to prevent a lost generation of children and young people by supporting and investing in three thematic pillars: Education, Child Protection, and Adolescents and Youth. This document relates to the third pillar: Adolescents and Youth.

The Syrian refugee crisis is the largest humanitarian crisis in the world today. Over 12 million people have been displaced by over six years of war in Syria. Current assessments show that 5.1 million people have fled to neighbouring countries, including Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Egypt. The crisis in Iraq has also seen 3.4 million people internally displaced and 11 million now in need of humanitarian assistance.

Currently, the Middle East and North Africa region has one of the highest proportional youth populations in the world. Over half of the region's population is under the age of 25, with roughly one-fifth between the ages of 15 and 24<sup>1</sup>. This youth bulge represents an enormous body of human capital with the potential to drive economic growth. However, the region also has one of the largest regional rates of youth unemployment - at 30 percent in 2015. Inside Syria and Iraq, the situation is particularly dire, with insecurity and the decimation of the economy rendering millions of adolescents and youth unable to access meaningful opportunities for self-development or income generation.

Conflict and displacement disrupts personal development and can engender anger, isolation, powerlessness, fear, hopelessness, insecurity, distress, and desperation. Where young people are unable to access decent livelihoods opportunities they and other family members (including younger siblings) are pushed towards exploitative situations and other risky behaviours including onward migration. However, research shows that interventions which provide adolescents and young people with new opportunities to use and develop their competencies, in parallel with long-lasting mentoring relationships, are an effective counter to the complex factors that can drive youth towards risky behaviours, marginalisation and exploitation.

No Lost Generation facilitates collaborations between private sector companies and humanitarian agencies via its Tech Task Force, led by NetHope. NLG Partners hope to benefit from the support and expertise of the private sector in order to address the challenges faced by adolescents and youth affected by the crises in Syria and Iraq.

---

<sup>1</sup> Adolescents are aged 10-19 inclusive; Youth are aged 15-24 inclusive; the term 'young people' combines both.