

Factsheet

KS4 – Education and Conflict



Education is a universal human right, but for many children this is being denied because of violence. As a result, generations of young people are denied their rights to achieve their full potential and are trapped in situations of poverty, discrimination and conflict.

The United Nations General Assembly that takes place in September 2015 must prioritise education for ALL children including those living with conflict. Schools and universities must be kept off limits during armed conflict and governments must ensure that the right to education is protected from the threat of violence. More funding is needed as child protection and education are strongly underfunded on the global level. Over the last decade, education was the least funded humanitarian sector. This is largely due to life-saving emergency relief often taking priority over education and other needs during a crisis.

Facts

- Of the 58 million children missing out on primary school, over half live in countries affected by conflict.
- One billion children live in conflict-affected areas, of which 300 million are under the age of five.
- Between 2009 and 2014, schools and universities in 30 countries were deliberately attacked or taken over by armed groups for military purposes.

What are some of the challenges for children living with conflict?

Children are among the most vulnerable victims of conflict. Conflict affects children in many ways: wars, natural disasters, and attacks on individuals and schools. Schools are often attacked because they may be symbols of government. They may be seen to be imposing a foreign culture or language or because they teach girls – something that is opposed by some cultures.

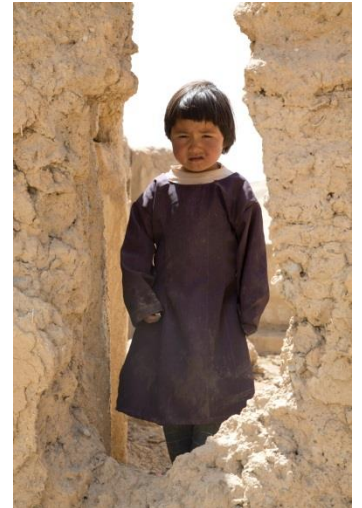


Wars

Many children are among the civilian casualties of war. Boys and girls may be recruited by armed groups, separated from their families and forcibly displaced, and they can get injured and even killed.

Children, like six-year-old Sakaina from Bamyan in Afghanistan are at risk of becoming orphaned or separated from their families. Parents' livelihoods are destroyed and basic services disrupted, increasing the number of children suffering from malnutrition, and dying from preventable or curable diseases increases.

Photo: ActionAid



Natural disasters

When a natural disaster hits a country, education is affected either because people have to flee their homes and live in camps without schools, or because schools are damaged.

For example, following the 2014 Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, over a million children were denied an education when their schools were destroyed.



Photo: David San Millan del Rio/ActionAid



Attacks

Every year hundreds of students and teachers are threatened, attacked or killed. The shooting of Malala Yousoufzai in 2012 shocked the world. She was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman in response to her campaign against the destruction of girl schools in Pakistan. Since then, Malala has continued to campaign for girls' education.



Malala is an inspiring speaker. Here she is speaking at the United Nations saying “Education is our right – don’t take it from us”.

Photo: ActionAid



Kidnappings

In the most extreme cases, militant groups have waged a war against what they call “western” education, and have killed and kidnapped students.

In Nigeria over 200 girls were abducted from their school in the town of Chibok in April 2014, and almost 50 boys were killed when a bomb exploded at their school in November 2014.

Following the kidnapping of more than 200 girls by Boko Haram, an Islamic extremist group whose name means ‘Western education is forbidden’, Send My Friend to School stands in solidarity with distraught communities.



We also support the bravery of incredible leaders like Precious Luka seen in this photo. Fifteen-year-old Precious from Manchok in central Nigeria set up a Girls Club to encourage girls to be confident and to use their voice to help others.

Photo: Jon Hughes/ActionAid

What can you do to make school a safer place for ALL children?

58 million children are missing out on school – 2015 could change their future. Remind world leaders that they promised ALL children an education by 2015. Speak up for the right to education for every child.

www.sendmyfriend.org

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