SYRIA

CHILD PROTECTION
ASSESSMENT 2013

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The humanitarian situation in Syria has steadily and dramatically deteriorated since the onset of the conflict in March 2011. Fighting across large parts of the country has led to massive and repeated internal displacements and mounting refugee outflows. Over 100,000 people have been killed since the conflict began [1]. An estimated 6.8 million people in Syria, or almost one-third of the entire population, now require humanitarian assistance, including 4.25 million internally displaced people. About 3.1 million, or some 50 per cent of those who require assistance, are children [2]. On the 17th January 2013 the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator declared an L3 humanitarian system-wide emergency for Syria and its neighbouring countries hosting refugees [3].

Restricted humanitarian access inside Syria has resulted in limited information being available to humanitarian-decision makers on the child protection needs and capacities of the affected communities. At the request of the international humanitarian organisations working in the child protection sector, the global-level Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) initiated an assessment, using remote information gathering methodologies, to determine the scale and scope of child protection issues to inform responses, planning, advocacy and resource mobilisation.

An interagency steering committee, comprised of international humanitarian organisations, was formed to oversee the design and implementation of the assessment. On the basis of their understanding of the situation, the steering committee agreed to focus on the following key thematic areas: psychosocial wellbeing, physical violence, children associated with armed forces and armed groups, child marriage, sexual violence, child labour, separation from caregivers and access to basic services and information. Under each of these thematic areas, the steering committee identified key information points that the assessment should cover, or What We Need to Know.

The assessment design was determined in consultation with the measurement and assessment taskforce of the CPWG, and implementation began in February 2013. A number of CPWG member agencies contributed to the realisation of this assessment, including through expertise and staff time for data collection, analysis and interpretation, and providing inputs into this report.

This report, issued by the CPWG, presents the main findings of this interagency child protection assessment for Syria, covering the period February – May 2013. Graphs within the report present the primary information gathered through interviews with resource persons in the affected populations, and this is complemented by qualitative information from further primary information sources (through interviews with humanitarian workers) and a desk review of secondary information on Syria. In addition to this report, the CPWG have made the desk review (one component of this assessment) available as a separate document. The primary data collected through interviews has not been issued separately and remains with the CPWG.

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[1] UN News Centre, UN chief, United States Secretary of State, urge political solution to Syrian crisis, 25 July 2013
[2] OCHA Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview, 26th April 2013
[3] L3 is the highest level emergency according to IASC classifications

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This assessment was initiated at the request of the international humanitarian organizations working in the protection sector. An interagency steering committee, comprised of international humanitarian organisations was formed to oversee the design and implementation of the assessment. A number of global level CPWG member agencies contributed to the realization of this assessment through technical and material support.

SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment covers child protection issues within Syria during the period February – May 2013. Children are defined as all persons under 18 and child protection is defined as "the prevention and response to exploitation, abuse, neglect and violence against children". The assessment aimed to gather information on child protection trends and patterns in Syria to inform planning, programming, advocacy and fundraising, and as such did not gather information on specific violations or identify perpetrators, as there are other mechanisms set up for this purpose.

OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

Given access constraints inside Syria experts recommended using a remote methodology comprising of three components: a desk review of existing Syria literature; resource person interviews with newly arriving refugees; and humanitarian worker interviews. A total of 648 resource person interviews and 20 humanitarian interviews were completed. Resource person interviews (the core dataset) were carried out in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, in camp and host communities based on country situation and feasibility.

This assessment is of qualitative nature and non-probability methods were used in designing the sample and determining the quota sample size. The assessment applied purposive sampling criteria – interviewing refugees who had crossed the border over the preceding month. Resource persons were asked to speak about the situation of children in their area of departure in the two months prior to displacement. The quota sampling methodology required a minimum number of resource person interviews at sub-district, district and governorate levels.

The assessment methodology aimed to limit potential biases by careful design and operational plans, for example, through the sampling strategy, structure of the questionnaire, training of surveyors on interviewing techniques, and use of the desk review and humanitarian worker interviews to triangulate data.

A sufficient number of interviews were conducted to adequately cover the governorates of Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, Damascus, Dar'a, Homs, Idleb, and Rural Damascus. When disaggregated by governorate, only data from these governorates was considered while the overall results presented in this report are drawn from all resource person interviews.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Throughout this summary the term respondents refers to interviews with refugees from Syria. It presents the primary source of findings, with information from humanitarian workers and the desk review used to triangulate and contextualize findings, as well as provide illustrative examples.

Psychosocial wellbeing:

Deterioration in the psychosocial wellbeing of children was reported by 98% of respondents. Main behavior changes include unusual crying/screaming, disruption in sleep patterns, sadness, bedwetting and unwillingness to go to school. Boys are more likely to display aggressive behavior including the desire to join armed forces and armed groups. Girls are reported to show more self-harm and fear. Caregivers tend to limit children's mobility outside of home and are not always able to provide attention to children's needs. Their main sources of stress are the deteriorated security and also access to basic needs (food, electricity, water, and livelihoods), children's safety and access to healthcare.

Physical violence:

The main threats to children's physical safety are civil/political/armed violence, explosive remnants of war, and torture in detention. Half of respondents believed children were specifically targeted in the conflict. Kidnapping and hostage taking of children (as well as of adults) were recurrent themes in all data sources. The detention of children is increasing according to almost 80% of respondents. Respondents believed detention was used for political and military ends, rather than as a means of law enforcement. 60% of respondents believed boys were more often, or at greater risk of being detained. Children's participation in violence was reported by 45% of respondents. The most commonly reported types of violence were looting and/or pillage and children recruiting other children into armed groups or forces.

Children associated with armed forces and groups:

The use of children in armed forces and armed groups is increasing as reported by 71% of respondents. Recruitment was reported to be occurring in a range of locations. 77% of respondents believed recruitment mostly affects teenage boys who are seen as young adults motivated by a sense of obligation with regard to their families and communities.

Sexual violence:

Most respondents (74%) indicated an increase in sexual violence in their area of departure. Sexual violence was reported to occur in a range of locations/situation that implied respondents believe sexual violence is committed by a range of perpetrators. 56% of respondents indicated children would seek help from those around them in the event of sexual violence, but 80% of respondents said they did not know where survivors of sexual violence could get professional support.

Child marriage:

No significant difference was reported in the age boys get married since the conflict. While the overall data for girls is inconclusive, Homs (63%) and Rural Damascus (56%) respondents reported an increase in girls marrying before age 18.

Child Labour:

More than two-thirds of respondents believe that there had been an increase in children working outside of the household since the onset of the crisis, with indications that some of these children are involved in the worst forms of child labour, e.g. children working with armed forces and armed groups. 60% of respondents said the main motivation reported for involvement in child labor was to pay off accumulated debt.

Separated and unaccompanied children:

74% of respondents reported that children are being separated from their usual caregivers and 40% reported that they are aware of unaccompanied children as a result of the conflict. Separation was usually accidental due to death of parents, during movements to safer areas or disappearance during the conflict. Respondents also described deliberate separation, for example, families sending children to work or stay with relatives. Most respondents were aware of families who had sent children out of Syria and cited their motivations as safety, economic hardship and avoidance of being used by armed forces and armed groups.

Access to basic services and information:

Family, friends and neighbors are the most important sources for information. 74% of respondents said they believe there are no basic services designed specifically for children. Where services are available respondents identified health and education services. Access was impeded by a range of factors including disability, age, sex and displacement.

Recommendations:

The following 5 recommendations, which are presented in more detail in the main body of this report, represent an initial response to the assessment findings from humanitarian organisations working in the child protection sector. Further examination of the findings by different actors may generate additional suggested actions in order to improve child protection within Syria.

1. **Advocate through specific strategies for the immediate cessation of violations against children perpetrated by armed forces and groups.** All parties to the conflict must commit to upholding the legal protections for children outlined in national and international law, and take immediate measures to fulfill these commitments. In particular, parties must ensure the immediate cessation of violence against children, including killing and maiming of children; recruitment and use of children; sexual violence against children; and the detention and torture of children. Parties must ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all children who are illegally detained or who are associated with armed forces or groups (including those who have joined voluntarily).

2. **Integrate child protection considerations into all sectors of the response in Syria.** Engage child protection staff into humanitarian programmes to maximise child protection outcomes in other sectors. This includes for example work with education colleagues to ensure routes to school are safe, remove barriers to retaining girls in school to delay marriage, training teachers to provide basic psychosocial support and roll out education packages on physical safety in hostile environments and mine-risk education.

3. **Expand specialist child protection programming inside Syria.** Wherever possible build on and strengthen existing child protection systems, such as addressing causes of stress for children through activities that seek to restore normality (e.g. access to school and community-based psychosocial activities) and training personnel to detect and support children experiencing psychosocial distress.

4. Ensure effective coordination of child protection responses inside Syria. This will help generate, share and use learning in relation to the specific challenges of the context; facilitate the most efficient collective response possible; and allow for common advocacy on urgent child protection issues and for a coherent interface with other sectors of the response. Strong inter-sectoral coordination should also be ensured.

5. Monitor and further investigate child protection issues inside Syria. This includes deepening understandings of critical issues in the assessment by analysing root causes and dynamics; and establishing a simple system to monitor the nature, volume and patterns of child protection issues, drawing on existing sources of data where possible. Use this information, via coordination to inform all aspects of the humanitarian response, including advocacy.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

This report presents information from all sources, graphs relate to resource person interviews only. For each graph the relevant question(s) from the questionnaire are cited and the full questionnaire is appended to this report. Each graph presents information from resource persons who responded to that question. For some questions or themes, a percentage of resource persons declined to answer questions. Overall data presented in this report is drawn from all resource person interviews. When disaggregated by governorate, data is drawn only from those governorates that have been adequately covered (Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, Damascus, Dar'a, Idleb, Homs and Rural Damascus).

Recommendations are presented at the end of report and are by no means exhaustive. They indicate some initial responses to findings from the humanitarian agencies that collaborated on this assessment; readers are welcomed to develop further proposals for improving protection for children in Syria.

OVERVIEW OF THE SYRIAN CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

Prior to the conflict, the Syrian Commission for Family Affairs was the coordinating authority for issues related to child protection. However the Commission's mandate and its relations with other line Ministries had yet to be defined, and it had no presence at sub-national level. This, along with poor resourcing, may have impacted the roll-out of the National Child Protection Plan that sought to establish a family protection unit at the national level and a child helpline, among other activities. Overall, the formal child protection system in Syria before the crisis was fragmented and underdeveloped, and it is now under considerable additional strain.

FINDINGS ON PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING

Deterioration in the psychosocial wellbeing of children was reported by 98% of respondents. Boys and girls appear to be equally affected. Respondents indicated the main behaviour changes in boys and girls as unusual crying/screaming, disruption in sleep patterns, sadness, bed-wetting and unwillingness to go to school. Some differences between boys and girls were observed. Boys are reported as more likely to display more aggressive behaviour, commit violence against younger children and to want to join armed forces and armed groups. Girls are reported to show more anti-social behaviour, greater tendency to hurt them-selves and more fear.

Figure 1: Main behaviour changes in boys and girls (Q4.1.1/2)[4]
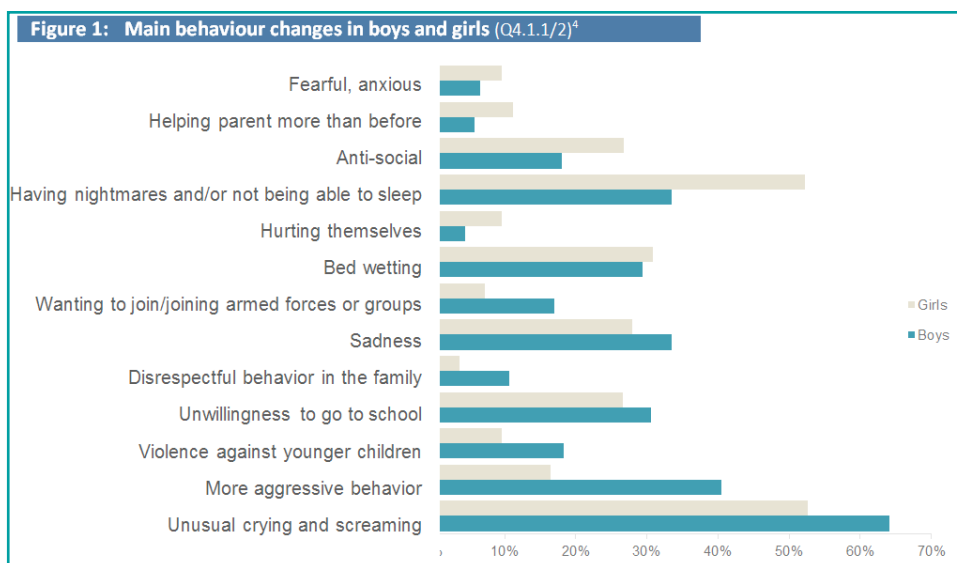
Respondents reported two main categories of changes in the behaviour of caregivers. First, increased tendency to limit children's mobility outside of home, including keeping children from going to school; and second, changes in attitude, demonstrated through changing attention to needs (less/more), time devoted to children (less/more) and changing levels of aggression or affection shown.

Respondents reported the main sources of stress for caregivers as security/conflict, meeting basic needs (food, electricity, water, and livelihoods), children's safety and access to healthcare.

Figure 2: Main sources of stress for caregivers (Q4.5)[5]

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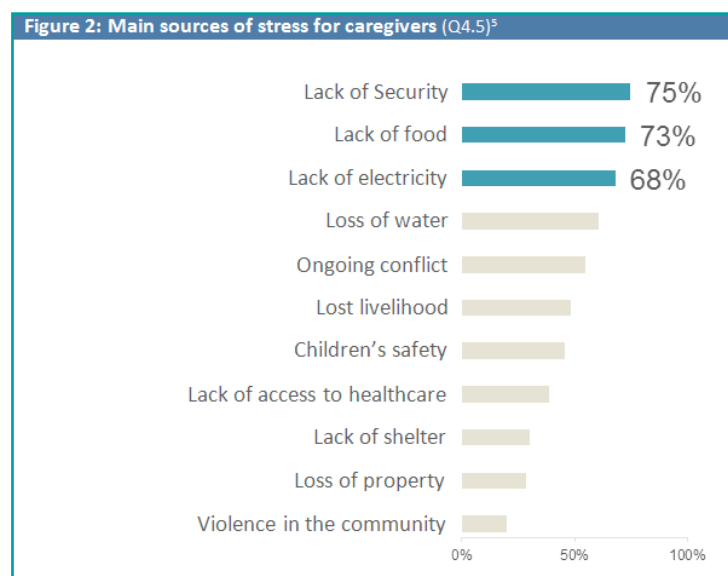
[4] Respondents could select more than one option
[5] Respondents could select more than one option

Figure 3: Sources of psychosocial support for boys and girls (Q4.2)[6]
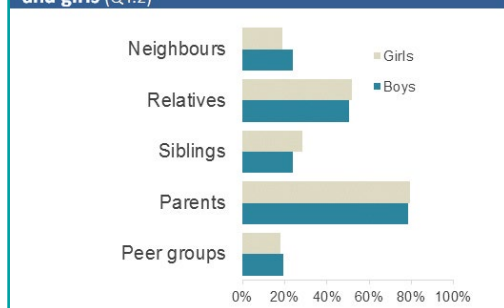
Almost 80% of respondents reported lack of access to education and recreational services for children. This disruption of children's routines may be a major cause of stress. Respondents indicated that children seeking support and information would go to parents (boys 78%, girls 79%), relatives (boys 50%, girls 52%), siblings (boys 24%, girls 28%) and neighbours (boys 24%, girls 19%). Girls were more inclined to seek support within their inner circle and were seen as having less access to services than boys. Beyond this inner circle, local religious leaders were reported as the most likely source of support for boys and girls.

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[6] Respondents could select more than one option

FINDINGS ON PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Respondents were asked to describe the main threats to children's physical safety in their place of departure. Civil/political/armed violence (76%), explosive remnants of war (42%) and torture in detention (39%) were the most commonly cited threats.

Figure 4: Main violent risks to children's physical safety (Q3.1)[7]
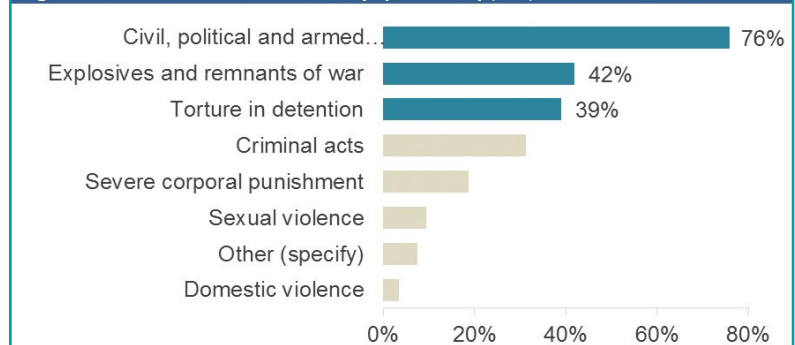
The identification of civil/political/armed violence as the predominant threat to physical safety was consistent across all seven governorates covered by the assessment. Throughout the conflict civilians have borne the brunt of indiscriminate attacks, including the widespread use of explosive weapons in populated areas. Children have been among the reported victims of massacres and executions, and vulnerable to the risk of being killed or maimed by sniper fire [8]. As of the end of April 2013, more than 6,500 children had been killed in the conflict [9]. 42% of respondents saw no difference in the age of children affected, the remaining respondents believed children over 6 years were most affected. Almost two-thirds of respondents indicated boys and girls were equally affected by civil/political/armed violence and almost one-third indicated boys were more affected.

Threats from explosive remnants of war featured more prominently in those governorates most affected by the conflict - Dar'a (63%) and Homs (56%). The risk of death or injury to children from these weapons is high and will persist long after the conflict ends. The appeal of intriguing shapes and colours for children is well documented; hazardous materials hidden under collapsed buildings pose a significant risk to communities as they clear away rubble, and displaced persons returning to their homes may have no way of knowing that their travel routes and/or neighbourhoods are littered with lethal unexploded ordnance. Use of explosive weapons in populated areas can not only present a significant risk of killing and maiming, but also prevent children from accessing healthcare and education, and may prevent the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid [10]. 73% of respondents believed boys and girls are equally affected and 17% believed boys are more affected. No difference was seen in age by two-thirds of respondents. The one-third of respondents believed children over 6 years were most affected.

From the risks they identified, half of all respondents believed children were specifically targeted in the conflict. When asked about the reasons for targeting, most respondents stated that violence against children was used to pressure and threaten others, including parents.

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[7] Respondents could select more than one option
[8] Human Rights Council, 23rd Session *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic*, June 2013
[9] OHCHR, Updated Statistical Analysis of Documentation of Killings in the Syrian Arab Republic, 2013
[10] Save the Children, Explosive Weapons and Grave Violations Against Children: Position Paper, 2013

Respondents were also asked to identify the places where children were most likely to be killed or injured. The results tend to indicate the places where many children spend most of their time: homes (61%) and schools (51%). Both of these locations were also named as the places where recruitment and sexual violence were most likely to take place. However the data does not reveal whether some respondents identified schools as dangerous in reference to those that are no longer being used as schools but for other purposes, such as detention facilities or IDP shelters. Nor does the data reveal how far threats in the home relate to everyday life or specific incidents initiated by, for example, raids or arrests. Disaggregation of data to governorate level gave a more nuanced picture, with checkpoints and detention featuring more prominently in Dar'a (56% and 33% respectively) and Homs (52% and 42% respectively).

Figure 5: Locations where children are most likely to be injured or killed (Q3.4)[11]
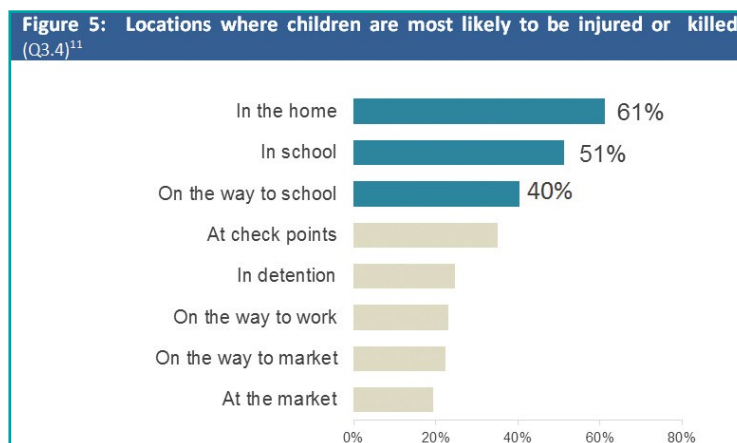
Children's participation in violence was listed by 45% of respondents. The most commonly reported types of violence were looting and/or pillage (63%) and children recruiting other children into armed forces and armed groups (61%). Respondents were not directly asked to propose reasons for children's participation in violence; however, responses to other questions suggest a range of possible explanations: the erosion of public order; lack of constructive, age-appropriate activities and services; psychosocial distress in children (e.g. aggression, anger, hopelessness) and their caregivers (potentially leading to lack of supervision); and, specific to the case of recruitment, a sense of obligation to family and community.

Disappearance, understood in the assessment as including kidnapping and hostage taking, were recurrent themes in the assessment. 32% of respondents indicated it occurred at the moment of conflict and 26% reported it occurring as a continued pattern in their place of departure, furthermore when asked how children are taken out of Syria, a small proportion of respondents also mentioned kidnapping.

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[11] Respondents could select more than one option

Figure 6: Has there been an increase in child detention? (Q3.10.4)

6%

17%

77%

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
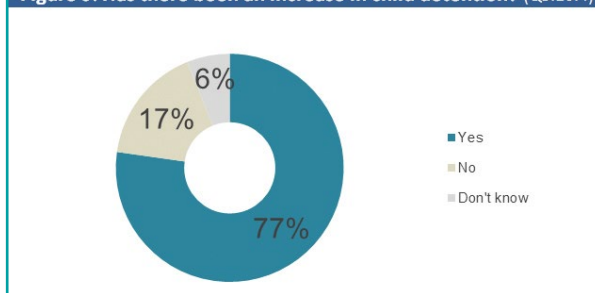
The majority of respondents (almost 80%) felt that there has been an increase in the detention of children.

The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria has reported widespread and arbitrary mass arrests of civilians, including children. Children have been detained for prolonged periods without charge, without being informed of the reason for their arrest and, often, without access to their family [12].

Respondents saw detention facilities as places where sexual violence was likely to occur and as high-risk locations in general for injury and death. The 2013 Annual Report of the Secretary General on children and armed conflict described the increase in detention and torture of children, specifically boys, as an issue of serious concern in Syria, pointing out that detained children had suffered the same methods of torture as adults, and that sexual violence had been used against children to obtain information or confessions [13].

Respondents indicated that they believed detention was used as a political and military measure, e.g. as punishment for supporting the opposition (71%), to pressure families (46%), and along sectarian lines (26%) rather than as a means of law enforcement.

Figure 7: Does detention mostly affect boys or girls? (Q3.10.1)

61% Boys are more affected

4% Girls are more affected

33% Equally the same

2% Do not know
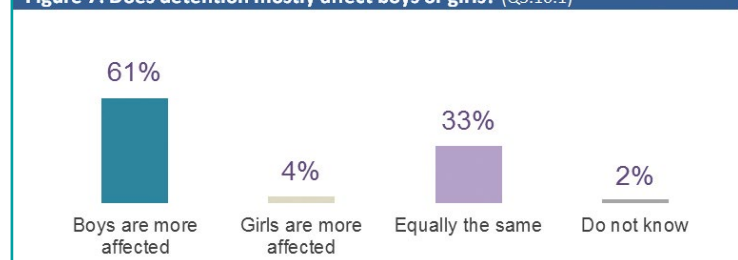
More than 60% of respondents believed boys were more at risk of being detained. One third felt there was no real difference. When asked about torture in detention, 55% respondents believed boys were more at risk and 42% felt there was no difference. Over half of respondents indicated children over 14 were most at risk of torture in detention. 23% believed children aged 6-14 were most at risk and 18% believed there was no difference.

[12] Human Rights Council, 23rd Session *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic*, June 2013
[13] UN General Assembly Security Council, 67th Session, Children and Armed Conflict, Report of the Secretary General, 15 May 2013

FINDINGS ON CHILDREN ASSOCIATED WITH ARMED FORCES AND ARMED GROUPS

Syria has ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. In its declaration upon ratification, it stated that no one under the age of 18 was permitted to enlist in Syria's national armed forces or reserves. Syria also amended its Penal Code in June, toughening sentences for child recruitment and gender-based violence [14]. Prior to the conflict, there was no evidence of children being recruited into the armed forces. Respondents were not asked to distinguish between armed forces or groups, nor to identify specific perpetrators.

Most respondents (71%) believed that the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups was increasing, with a sizable number (40%) stating that they personally knew children who had joined. Recruitment in their area of departure had been noted by 62% of respondents, suggesting that the use of children by armed forces and armed groups in Syria is happening at significant scale in the conflict. Certainly, the Secretary General's most recent report on Children and Armed Conflict confirms that children under 18 years of age have been used by armed groups in both combat and support roles, such as loading bullets, delivering food and evacuating the injured [15].

Figure 8: Increase in children joining or being used by armed forces and armed groups (Q8.2)

- Yes — 71%
- No — 20%
- Do not know — 10%
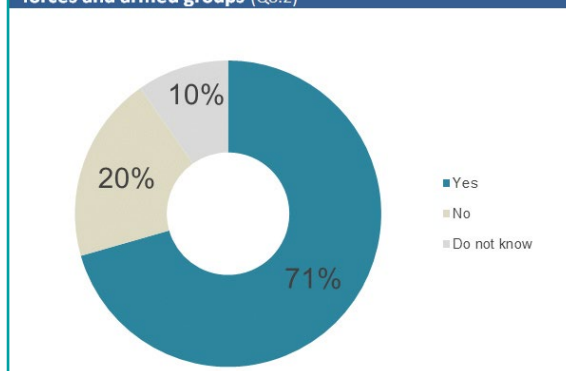
Evidence suggests recruitment is of a "voluntary" nature, with children aged 15 and above perceived by themselves and their communities as young adults with obligations towards their families and communities. Their association with armed forces and armed groups may also be perceived as beneficial, conferring income, status and protection. When asked about the type of work children are engaged in, 20% of respondents said children are being used by armed forces and armed groups. Almost half of all respondents (48%) said that some families had sent children outside of Syria in order to avoid recruitment.

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[14] Law no.11 adopted by the Parliament and signed by President Bashar Al-Assad 30 June 2013
[15] UN General Assembly Security Council, 67th Session, Children and Armed Conflict, Report of the Secretary General, 15 May 2013

There is anecdotal evidence (including from humanitarian interviews) that recruitment frequently happens through family links to armed forces and armed groups – e.g. siblings or parents. This correlates with the high rate of respondents mentioning home (32%) as a location of recruitment, and the fact that families are often the pivot for engagement in Syrian society. This is corroborated by information from the Commission of Inquiry that reported the use of kinship systems, as well as sectarian affiliation and cash payments for recruitment [16].

When asked what type of violence children were participating in, 61% of respondents replied that children were engaging in the recruitment of other children, which may or may not be linked to familial connections or peer associations in other settings. This could also correlate with the high rates of respondents mentioning school as a location of recruitment.

The overall data indicates a relatively even spilt between respondents reporting that recruitment took place along sectarian lines and those reporting that it did not. Highest rates were recorded in Rural Damascus and Al-Hassakeh.

The risk was seen to be significantly higher for boys, with 77% of respondents stating that recruitment affected 'mostly boys' or 'only boys'. 21% of respondents believed boys and girls were equally at risk of recruitment. This was further confirmed by responses to the type of work children are engaged in: 66% said being used by armed forces and armed groups mostly affected boys and 33% of respondents felt it affected both boys and girls. The risk was overwhelmingly seen to be higher for children aged over 14 years (96% of respondents).


Figure 9: Does recruitment mostly affect boys or girls? (Q8.1.2)

Mostly boys	Mostly girls	Only boys	Only girls	No difference	Do not know
40%	1%	37%	1%	21%	0%

[16] Human Rights Council, 21rd Session, Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab, August 2012

FINDINGS ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE

For this assessment, a broad definition of sexual violence was used: "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advance, or acts to traffic a person's sexuality, using coercion, threats of harm or physical force, by any person regardless of relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work. It can take many forms, including rape, sexual slavery and/or trafficking, forced pregnancy, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and/or abuse, and forced abortion" [17]. Questions were formulated to cover sexual violence by members of armed forces and armed groups as well as by civilians, including relatives.

Under-reporting of sexual violence in general is a common challenge, making it difficult to assess the extent to which the problem affects children. The Secretary-General's 2013 report on Children and Armed Conflict reports that sexual violence often took place during raids, as well as at checkpoints and in detention facilities. Sexual violence has also been used as a method of torture in official and unofficial detention centres [18].

Due to the cultural and social sensitivity surrounding sexual violence in Syria, both male and female resource persons exercised a high level of discretion when discussing this subject. Nevertheless, when asked about the main violent threats that could lead to injury or death of children, about 10% of respondents listed sexual violence and 74% respondents indicated an increase in sexual violence in their area of departure.

Figure 10: Increase in sexual violence (Q10.2)

74%	12%	10%	4%
Yes	No	Do not know	Sexual violence never happens here
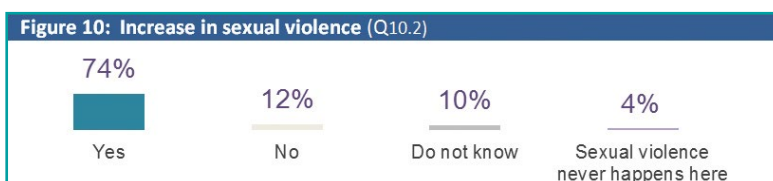
Sexual violence against children is reported to occur in a range of locations/situations. The most frequently mentioned were detention centres (44%), at home (42%), checkpoints (36%), during armed attacks (30%), on the way to school (25%) and at school (20%). While the assessment did not ask for details about circumstances or perpetrators, the diversity of locations/situations listed implies that respondents believe sexual violence is committed by a range of perpetrators – and certainly not limited to armed members of either party to the conflict.

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[17] CPWG, Child Protection Rapid Assessment Toolkit, 2013
[18] Human Rights Council, 22nd Session, *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, February 2013*

36% of the respondents indicated that children would not seek help in the event of sexual violence. Victims of sexual violence are often reluctant to seek help due to feelings of shame, fear, stigma, social exclusion, honour killings or reprisals [20]. Just over half of all respondents (56%) indicated that children would seek help in the event of sexual violence. They felt children were most inclined to seek support from their inner circle of support, specifically parents (mother: 71%, father: 54%) and friends (18%).

Figure 11: Sources of help for child victims of sexual violence (Q10.4.1)[19]
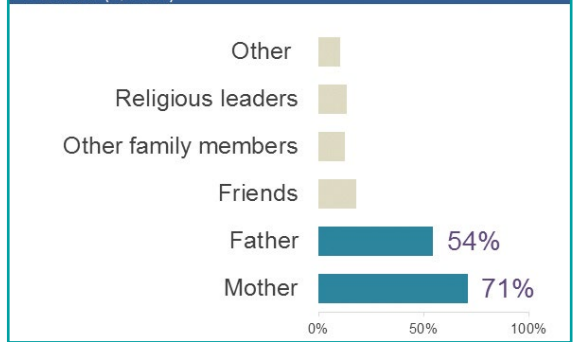
There were significant differences from governorate to governorate on whether children would seek support from religious leaders. The highest rate was recorded in Idleb (29%) compared to no respondents at all in Damascus listing religious leaders as a source of support. This could be owing to the stronger religious presence in northern Syria compared to more liberal centres such as Damascus.

More than 80% of respondents said they did not know where survivors of sexual violence could get professional help, which suggests that seeking help is a significant issue for all survivors. Contributing factors for this may include a lack of services, and a lack of information and awareness of services, where they do exist.

Respondents felt that all age groups were exposed to sexual violence, with children above 14 believed to be most at risk. While boys and girls were both seen to be at risk of sexual violence, 69% of respondents perceived the risk to be higher for girls. However, boys and girls were felt to be at similar risk of sexual violence in detention.

Figure 12: Does sexual violence mostly affect boys or girls? (Q10.3)

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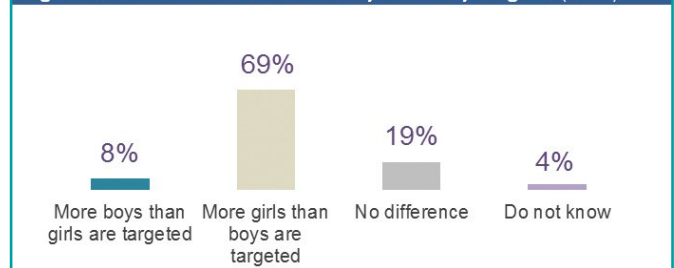
[19] Respondents could select more than one option
[20] *Global Protection Cluster, The Hidden Cost of War: Gender-based Violence, May 2013*

FINDINGS ON CHILD MARRIAGE

Syria's Personal Status Code of 1957 sets the minimum age for marriage at 18 for males and 17 for females. However, the Code authorises judges to lower the age of marriage for boys to 15 years and for girls to 13 if they are considered willing parties to the marriage, "physically mature", and if the father or grandfather consents [21].

Respondents reported that before the crisis boys usually married between the ages of 19 and 25 (85%) and girls usually married between 15 and 18 years (59%). Pre-crisis government data on child marriage [22] suggests the rate was even lower - with just 13% of girls marrying before the age of 18 (and only 3.4% of this group marrying before they reached the age of 15). The same study showed that child marriage rates were higher outside of main cities and declined as educational attainment increased [23].

Most respondents did not feel there had been any significant change in the age boys married since the start of the conflict (66% said there was no change). While the overall data indicated a relatively even division between those who felt girls were marrying earlier and those who saw no change, significant differences were observed between governorates. In Homs (63%) and Rural Damascus (56%), respondents reported an increase in girls marrying before age 18, while in Damascus and Dar'a fewer believed trends had changed (38% and 37%, respectively).

Figure 13: Are girls marrying younger since onset of crisis? (9.1.2)
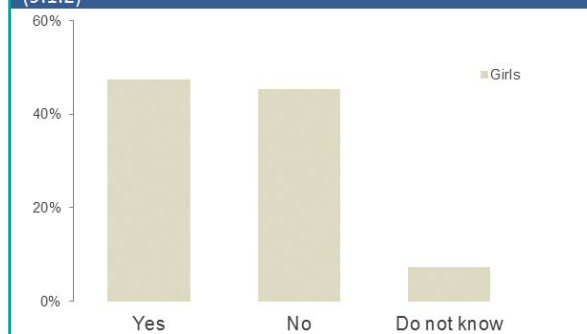
Figure 14: Are Girls marrying younger since onset of crisis? (by governorate) (9.1.2)
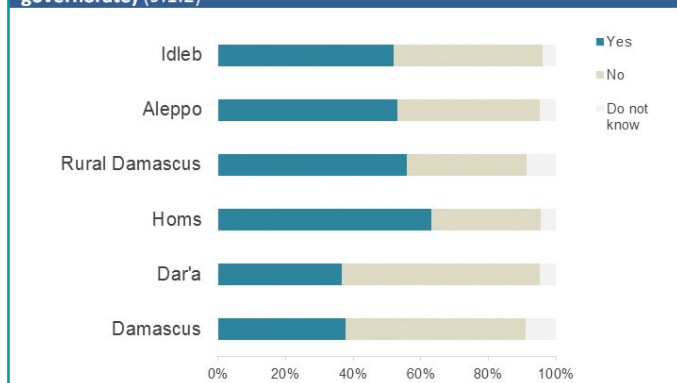
In reply to questions on the coping mechanisms adopted by families, a small proportion of respondents (4%) listed marriage as a possible response to sexual violence against children. When asked about negative changes in caregiver behaviours since the onset of the conflict, 10% of respondents replied that caregivers are encouraging children to marry at a younger age.

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[21] *U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child, 58th Session, Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention, Concluding Observations: Syrian Arab Republic*, 2011

[22] Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is a household survey developed by UNICEF to provide internationally comparable, statistically rigorous data on the situation of children and women.

[23] MICS results in UNICEF & SCFA, *Situation Analysis of Childhood Status in Syria*, 2008

FINDINGS ON CHILD LABOUR

Survey questions on child labour did not give a specific definition for respondents to consider, but were designed to focus on factors characteristic of the "worst forms" of child labour (that is, all forms of slavery, sexual exploitation, use in criminal activities or work that is likely to harm the health, physical development, safety or morals of children) [24]. It also included questions to measure perceptions regarding an increase in the number of children involved in productive activities outside of the home. Work performed by children and child labour (including worst forms of child labour) are not necessarily of the same concern, however, in emergency contexts with the possible loss of livelihoods, breadwinners, access to education, separation from caregivers and displacement, children engaged in productive activities outside of the home may become vulnerable to work characterised as child labour (and especially the worst forms).

The legal minimum age for employment in Syria is 15 years and for children aged 15-18 there are protective conditions relating to the nature, conditions, hours and types of permissible work. Even prior to the conflict, however, there was a significant gap between the legal framework and adherence, due to absence of control and monitoring mechanisms [25].Pre-conflict studies into child labour in Syria show that family businesses, agriculture, manufacturing, trade, hotels, restaurants and construction were the main employers of children. Two thirds of children worked in rural areas, with the highest rates recorded in north-eastern governorates and with greater prevalence in poor households [26].

Figure 15: Are children contributing to family income by working outside the household? (5.1)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

1%
23%
76%
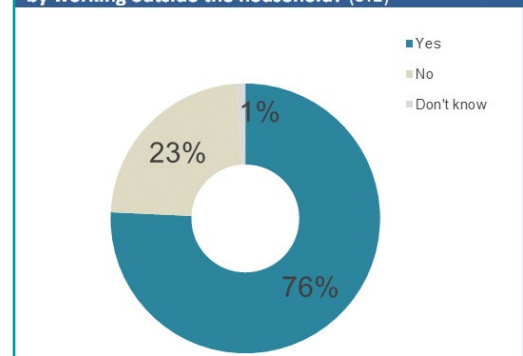
[24] Article 3 of ILO Convention No. 182
[25] UNICEF & SCFA, *Situation Analysis of Childhood Status in Syria*, 2008
[26] UNICEF & SCFA, *Situation Analysis of Childhood Status in Syria*, 2008

More than three quarters of all respondents reported that children worked outside the household. However, respondents' lack of familiarity with international definitions did not allow to draw conclusions on the proportion of these actually involved in child labour per say. 2006 government data [28] estimated that 13% of children aged 5-14 were engaged in child labour [29].

Figure 16: Increase in children working outside the household by governorate (5.2)[27]
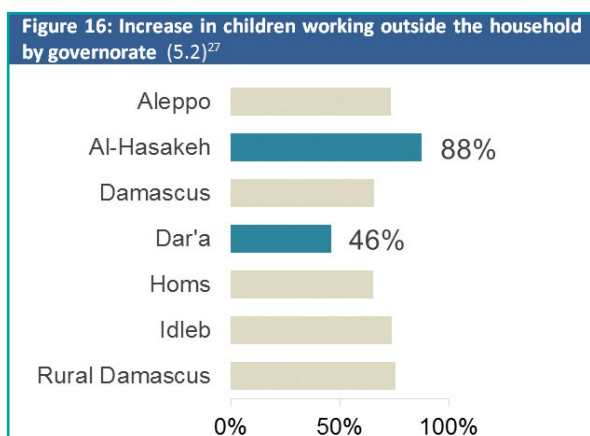
More than two thirds of respondents (69%) believed that there had been an increase in children working outside of the household since the onset of the crisis. Overall boys aged 14 and above were seen as most affected by 69% of respondents; girls by 29%. Disaggregation showed significant differences between governorates with the highest proportion of respondents reporting an increase in Al-Hassakeh (88%) and the lowest in Dar'a (46%). This may reflect the pre-crisis pattern noted above of high rates of child labour in north-eastern governorates.

The main motivation reported for involvement in child labour was to pay off debt (61%). There are a number of indicators that show families are under considerable financial pressure, which may contribute to decisions to send children out to work [30].The depletion of household resources, loss of livelihoods and changing household structures, coupled with high inflation and the collapse of basic services may have forced the hand of many families to borrow money. Children over 14 were seen as most affected by 80% of respondents. 70% of respondents believe boys are most affected; 29% saw no difference between boys and girls.

Respondents reported that children are sent "far from their families" to work within Syria or in neighbouring countries (24% and 35% respectively). This may reflect established patterns of temporary migration for seasonal work, or be part of a broader coping response to keep children safe (i.e., send them away) as well as to help the household meet its basic needs (i.e., by reducing household size, increasing income with children's remittances). This mostly affects boys aged 14 according to 85% of respondents.
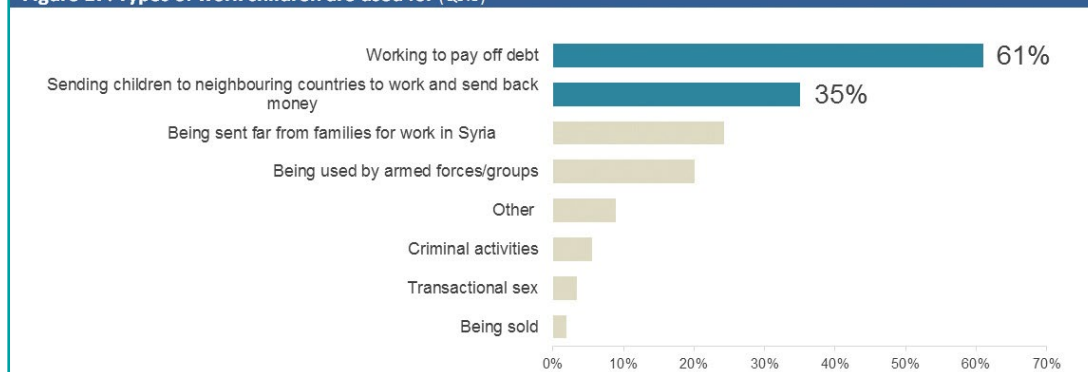
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[27] Respondents could select more than one option

[28] 2006 MICS III Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey is a household survey developed by UNICEF to provide internationally comparable, statistically rigorous data on the situation of children and women.

[29] UNICEF & SCFA, *Situation Analysis of Childhood Status in Syria*, 2008. Defined as 28 hours of domestic work or at least one hour of economic activity for children aged 5-11, or 14 hours for 12-14 year olds

[30] Conclusion drawn from Q4.5: 48% of respondents noted loss of livelihoods, 73% lack of food, 30% lack of shelter etc.

Figure 17: Types of work children are used for (Q5.3)[31]

Type of work	Percentage
Working to pay off debt	61%
Sending children to neighbouring countries to work and send back money	35%
Being sent far from families for work in Syria	
Being used by armed forces/groups	
Other	
Criminal activities	
Transactional sex	
Being sold	

Transactional sex and the selling of children were only mentioned by a very small proportion of respondents (3% and 2%, respectively). A minority of respondents also reported that persons unknown to the community had offered to take children away from Syria. When asked to describe the circumstances and reasons, trafficking and an exchange of money were among the responses. These issues are sensitive, and by their very nature usually well hidden. The mention of exploitation, even by a small proportion of respondents, could point to degree of vulnerability some families are facing due to the conflict, with a deteriorating economic situation increasing the likelihood of high-risk behaviours as well as possibly increasing opportunities for criminal activities.

[31] Respondents could select more than one option

FINDINGS ON UNACCOMPANIED AND SEPARATED CHILDREN

According to international definitions an unaccompanied child is a child who has been separated from both parents and other relatives and is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so. A separated child is separated from both parents, or from a previous legal or customary primary caregiver but not necessarily from other relatives. Separated children may, therefore, be accompanied by other adult family members [32].

Information gathered through the assessment clearly indicates that children are being separated from their usual caregivers as a result of the conflict, and that there is a growing caseload of both separated and unaccompanied children.

Children without parental care in Syria prior to the crisis tended to be cared for on an informal basis, by grandparents or other members of the extended family, or by persons or families in the wider community, and this has continued during the crisis. This spontaneous fostering may mean that the incidence of separated children has been under-reported.

Many caregivers do not register changes in care arrangements with local authorities, possibly owing to the predominance of informal kinship care arrangements and the fear of sharing information in the current context. Analyses of trends reported in other assessments conducted in surrounding refugee-receiving countries found separation was initiated in Syria for a range of reasons, including safety, access to services, economic reasons, prevention of recruitment into armed forces and armed groups, and to protect girls from sexual assault [33]. In the current assessment, 74% of respondents reported that there were separated children as a result of the conflict, 40% of respondents reported there were unaccompanied children.


Figure 18: Are there children separated from their usual caregivers as a result of the conflict? (1.1)

- Yes 74%
- No 23%
- Don't know 4%
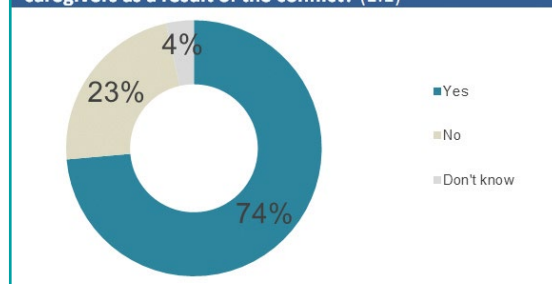
Respondents believed separation was usually accidental (82%) due to death of parents, losing parents during movement to safer areas or disappearance during the conflict. A small proportion of respondents (16%) described separation taking place by choice, for example, families sending children to work or to stay with relatives, friends or in institutional care (as protection against recruitment into armed forces and armed groups, sexual violence or other threats) or sending children to locations where they may be better able to access basic services. However, the rate of deliberate separation is likely to be higher than the data suggests.

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[32] Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, January 2004, as cited in the Child Protection Rapid Assessment Toolkit
[33] UNICEF Lebanon Country Office, June 2013 & Child Protection Rapid Assessment for Domiz Camp and Dohuk, January 2013

Figure 19: Causes of separation (1.1.2) [34]
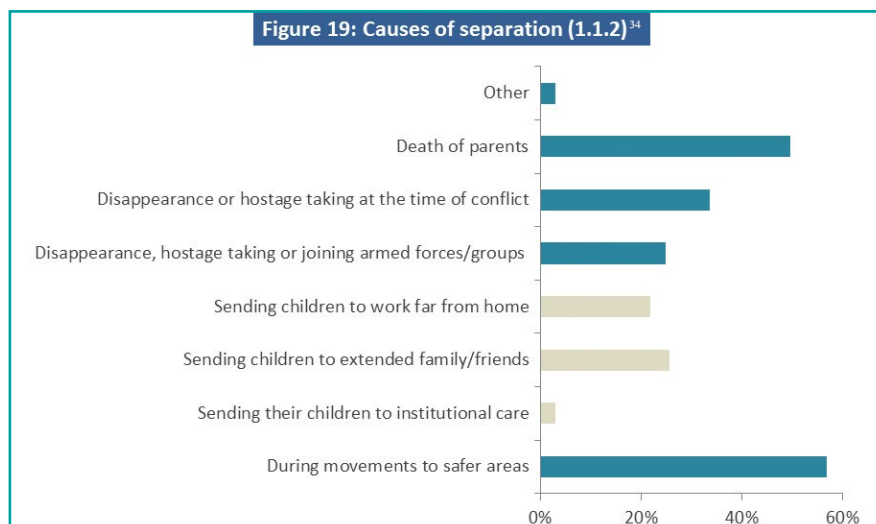
When disaggregated by age, the data showed accidental separation was believed to be more common for children under 14. For children above 14, there were marginally more reports of deliberate separation compared to the overall trend. For this age group there are a number of indicators that suggest deliberate separation may be a result of economic hardship, such as being sent away to work. There might be underreporting of separation of children aged above 14 due to cultural perceptions of the age of adulthood.

Figure 20: Comparison of the nature of separation for children aged 0-14 and 14+ (1.1.2 & 1.2.3)
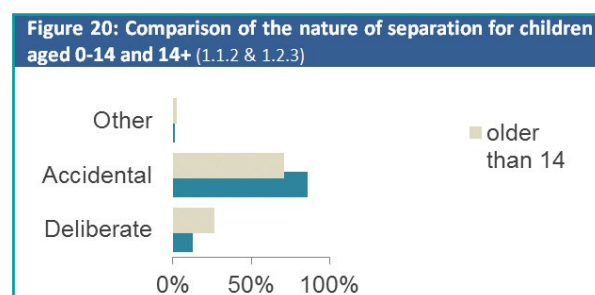
Most respondents (57%) were aware of families who had sent children out of Syria with an unrelated person or without any adult care, and cited their motivations as safety (91%), economic hardship (39%), avoidance of being used by armed forces and armed groups (48%). These causes are also reflected in information gained through case management of newly arrived separated and unaccompanied children in Jordan and Iraq [35].

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[34] Respondents could select more than one option

[35] Conclusion drawn from the Syria assessment desk review: In Jordan, as of April 2013 1,000 separated children and 1,300 unaccompanied children had been identified. An analysis of trends in Jordan found 41% of children separated for reasons of family reunification, 27% for safety and 11% for access to services. In Iraq 59 children are registered as separated. An assessment in Iraq found separation is initiated in Syria as a protection mechanism, to prevent recruitment into armed forces/ armed groups, for economic reasons and to protect girls from sexual assault.

Figure 21: Comparison of the nature of separation by gender (1.1.2 &1.2.2)

Other
Accidental
Deliberate

More boys than girls
More girls than boys

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
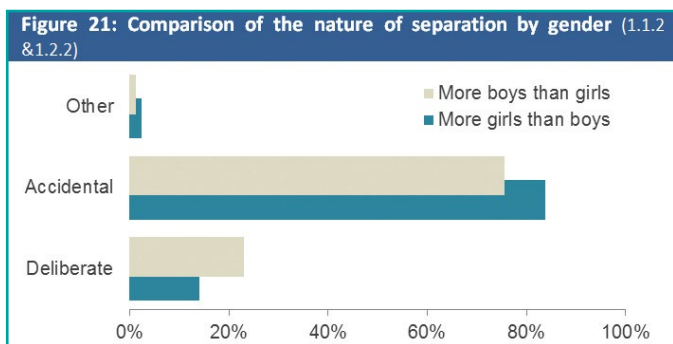
Over half of all respondents said they felt that boys and girls were roughly equally represented among both unaccompanied and separated children. Among the small proportion of respondents who felt there was a gender difference, boys were believed to be more exposed to the risk of being unaccompanied or separated from their usual caregivers in general, with suggesting that girls may be more affected than boys by accidental separation and that boys experience deliberate separation more than girls.

All age groups were reported to be exposed to the risk of being unaccompanied or separated, including infants and young children (under the age of 3). The majority of respondents did not see a difference in ages (33%). Those who did, indicated that children over 5 years were most affected (49%).

Care arrangements

The majority of children separated from their parents live in kinship care arrangements in the community, with communities reporting relatively high capacity to support at community level, corroborating the pre-conflict cultural norm. The deteriorating economic situation may adversely impact this positive community response, as indicated by a small proportion of respondents who stated they would "do nothing" (3%) if they came across an accompanied child. When these respondents were asked why, responses mostly related to an inability to provide for the child. There may already be a significant number of unaccompanied children living without adult care on the street or on their own (respondents reported children living in such conditions).

FINDINGS ON ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

With respect to schools, access to basic education was free and more than 90% of school-aged children were enrolled. Since the conflict began, some children have not attended school in more than 18 months. Schools have been targeted, used as military barracks, prisons or simply closed because of the insecurity. Thousands of children have been out of school for months, or even years [36]. According to government data, over a million children are unable to access basic education, 680 schools are used as shelters for IDPs, and 2,963 schools are either partially damaged or completely destroyed [37].

Prior to the conflict Syria had a well-functioning health system with a robust workforce. Healthcare infrastructure has since collapsed with medical structures targeted and destroyed in fighting, a lack of essential medicines, and a diminished workforce. Its capacity to deliver primary and secondary healthcare has been greatly undermined as a result. It is estimated that 57% of all public hospitals are damaged or are out of service [38].

Almost three quarters of respondents said they believed there were no basic services designed specifically for children. Where services were reported to be available, respondents identified health and education services.

More than half of all respondents felt that some groups of children had less access to services than other children.

Figure 22: Are there children who have less access to services? (Q7.2)

- 52% Yes
- 32% No
- 15% Don't know
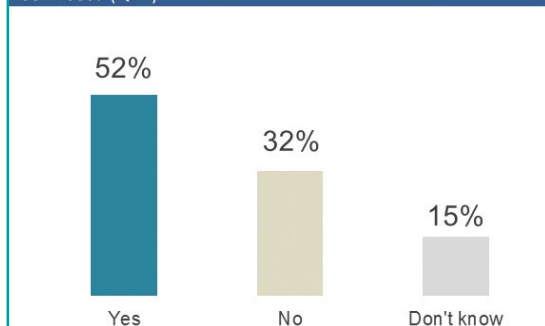
Respondents felt gender was a factor affecting access to basic services, with 63% saying girls had less access and 37% believing it was boys who were at a disadvantage. Gender-specific factors identified as possibly affecting access included the restriction of girls' mobility outside their homes and engagement of boys in work, so that they had less time available to access services.

Respondents indicated children's age also affected their access to services with 80% of respondents stating that children under 15 years had less access than older children.
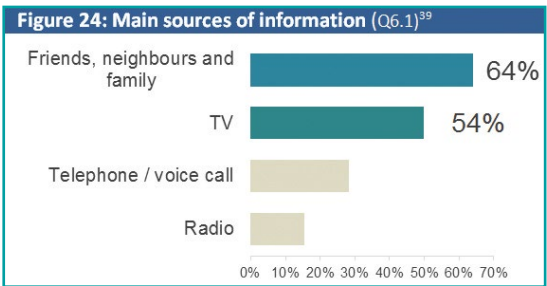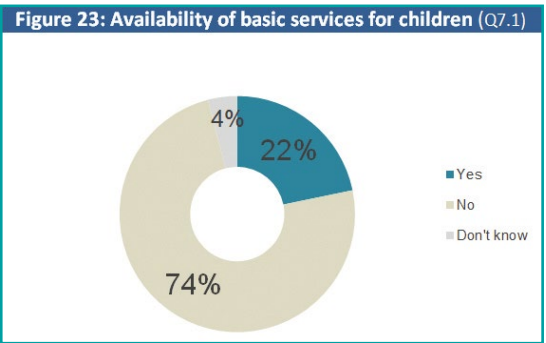
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[36] UN General Assembly Security Council, 67th Session, Children and Armed Conflict, Report of the Secretary General, 15 May 2013
[37] Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan 4, 2013
[38] Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan 4, 2013

Access to services was also negatively affected by disability (either the child's or a carer's), respondents reported. Respondents believed that unaccompanied children and separated children living with elderly caregivers were at a disadvantage. Children from specific religious/cultural groups and displaced children were likewise believed to face a myriad of barriers in accessing services. Barriers may include mobility in the community, mistrust of formal services, discrimination and reduced access to information (e.g. getting information about services to displaced children absorbed into host communities could be a particular challenge).

Respondents reported that family, friends and neighbours were their most important sources for information. People outside of this close sphere, including community and religious leaders, were identified by a significantly lower proportion of respondents, suggesting the importance of both familiarity and closeness to the information source.

Figure 23: Availability of basic services for children (Q7.1)

- 4%
- 22%
- 74%
- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Figure 24: Main sources of information (Q6.1)[39]

Source	Percentage
Friends, neighbours and family	64%
TV	54%
Telephone / voice call	
Radio	

Television and radio were viewed as important sources of information, but SMS, internet and other forms of written communication (newspapers, magazines and posters) were identified by very few respondents as important sources of information.

[39] Respondents could select more than one option

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations indicate some initial responses to findings from humanitarian agencies that collaborated on this assessment; readers may develop further proposals for improving protection for children in Syria and this is welcomed.

The recommendations listed here reflect a system approach to responding to child protection issues in an emergency context. A system approach is premised on the concept of a national child protection system, or a collection of interlinked elements (laws and policies, a trained workforce, a willing and supportive public, data collection and measurement, oversight and accountability mechanisms etc.) which helps to ensure the protection of all children rather than singling out specific groups of children or focusing on some child protection issues whilst ignoring others. In the current context, the application of a system approach means that:

- Existing capacities and structures, including good practices in families and communities, should be supported and extended.
- Humanitarian responses can be framed in terms of strengthening/establishing key elements of a system, as well as in terms of achieving immediate results (for example case management systems can be designed with a view to their longer term application).
- The child protection response can be considered as a whole (rather than a series of discrete initiatives), and can therefore, for example, achieve more systematic linkage with other sectors of the response (such as livelihoods and access to basic services) to secure a range of child protection outcomes.

1. Advocate through specific strategies for the immediate cessation of violations against children perpetrated by armed forces and groups.

Use all available entry points to advocate for adherence to international norms by armed actors in the Syrian context, including International Humanitarian Law, Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and the Paris Principles. Priority demands to be made of all parties to the conflict include the following:

- Immediate cessation of all violations - killing and maiming of children (including due to the use of explosive weapons); recruitment and use of children; sexual violence against children; and detention and torture of children.
- Immediate and unconditional release of all children who are illegally detained or who are associated with armed forces or groups (including those who have joined voluntarily).

2. Integrate child protection considerations into all sectors of the response in Syria.

The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action set out standards, key actions, indicators and guidance notes in order to support humanitarians working in a range of sectors to promote child protection through their work. The following recommendations highlight specific actions relevant in the Syria context, and are to be considered in conjunction with the more extensive guidance provided in the standards.

2.1 Foster inter-sectoral approaches to addressing child protection and other concerns, for example using 'one-stop shop' service delivery models whereby various sectors work collaboratively to cater for a number of needs in one place, including through mobile and outreach models.

2.2 Engage specialist child protection staff into humanitarian programmes to assist in the design and implementation of interventions to maximize child protection outcomes from planned and existing responses in other sectors. The following are examples of what such embedded specialists might help humanitarian organizations to achieve:

2.2.1 Improve the appropriateness, availability and accessibility of basic services to different population groups, including in respect to gender, age, developmental stage, disability, sectarian lines, host communities, displaced communities, vulnerable or otherwise marginalised groups.

2.2.2 Identify and use safe ways to reach children with information on available assistance, for example when children and adults come into contact with health services. Ensure that information dissemination targets children's immediate networks of support (family, friends, and neighbours) and reflects information-sharing preferences (television, social media and radio) as opposed to traditional written media.

2.2.3 Mitigate any potential unintended risks that could be caused through their provision of humanitarian aid such as creating large gatherings during distributions, involving children in activities that may draw unwanted attention/make them targets of attacks, or incentivising separation from caregivers by the provision of special benefits or assistance to families.

2.2.4 Mitigate the risk of sexual violence and exploitation in particular, through advice on design of facilities, distributions and organizational processes.

2.2.5 Equip frontline workers, including teachers and community groups in all sectors, with basic protection skills. This could take place via trainings in psychological first aid, the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and dissemination of mine/explosive remnants of war risk education messages. Empower them to respond to incidents or patterns of protection concerns, e.g. through the development of short, simple, action-oriented standard operating procedures.

2.3 Ensure that all relevant sectors of the response incorporate child protection indicators into assessments and existing or planned monitoring systems, including those related to the provision of services to children.

2.4 Establish and/or strengthen formal and informal referral pathways between support structures/services to promote predictable and timely responses to both child protection concerns and to facilitate access to basic services for specific children as required. Promote the development and use of location-specific directories of services by frontline workers to support information dissemination and referrals, ensuring information contained in directories is fed back and forth into Who is doing What Where and When (4Ws) mapping.

2.5 Ensure that humanitarian organisations establish and use codes of conduct for all staff, covering child safeguarding, such as the Keeping Children Safe standards along with organizational systems (collecting, storing and sharing information; reporting mechanisms; disciplinary procedures etc.) and staff training to promote child safeguarding.

2.6 Address household economic vulnerability that may lead to child protection concerns such as worst forms of child labor, child marriage and separation, and target support to households whose structure has changed, for example due to death, disappearance, injury or displacement (including single-parent, elderly, person with disability, households caring for additional children and child-headed households). Package livelihood interventions with free access to health, education and other basic services to reduce household economic vulnerability.

2.7 Initiate and support all efforts to ensure schools and routes to schools are safe for boys and girls.

2.8 Identify and address barriers to retaining girls in school to delay marriage. Barriers may include factors such as gender-based violence, the lack of female teachers and gender-appropriate wash facilities.

2.9 Train and support teachers and school counselors to provide basic psychosocial support to children, to monitor children who may be experiencing special difficulty in school, and to detect and refer those requiring additional psychological support. In schools, support wide-scale roll out of education packages on child protection issues, including physical safety in hostile environments and mine/explosive remnants of war risk education.

3. Expand specialist child protection programming inside Syria.

Standards, key actions, indicators and guidance for all specialist child protection programming are outlined in the *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS)*. The following recommendations highlight specific actions relevant in the Syria context, and are to be considered in conjunction with the more extensive guidance provided in the CPMS. All programming should aim to build on and strengthen national child protection systems, including through the Syrian Commission of Family Affairs as the coordinating authority for child protection. Programming should pay particular attention to single-parent, elderly, person with disability, households caring for additional children and child-headed households.

3.1 Facilitate meaningful engagement of children in programmes with child protection objectives. This is especially important for adolescents and for boys in particular given the high level of participation in violence for this group, and the perception of older boys as young adults. Useful approaches may include life skills education, leadership training, peer mentoring and creating opportunities for community service.

3.2 Develop and disseminate risk reduction messages in collaboration with communities (including children, parents, community leaders, religious leaders and local authorities), including:

- How communities can themselves support the psychosocial wellbeing of children and families;
- How to minimise exposure to physical threats including explosive remnants of war;
- Risks of recruitment, trafficking and kidnapping;
- The dangers of children's participation in violence including association with armed forces and groups;
- Examples of appropriate and inappropriate work for boys and girls of different ages;

- Importance of prevention of family separation and risks related to it;
- Importance of teaching young children their full names and those of their family;
- Promotion of family-based care for children identified as separated or unaccompanied and;
- Importance of finding alternatives for families considering child marriage.

Ensure this awareness raising builds on existing efforts at community level, emphasizes positive examples when not associated with armed forces or groups (such as well viewed alternatives to joining armed forces or groups); and recognises that many children may be perceived by themselves and their communities as young adults with an obligation to support their families and communities. Avoid generating fear through over-sensationalised representations of issues such as sexual violence or trafficking. Extend initiatives to prevent recruitment and use of children and raise awareness on mine/explosive remnants of war outside of Syria to neighboring countries where there is a risk of children returning.

3.3 Address reported causes of stress reported by adult caregivers (including access and availability of basic services) by improving information dissemination, targeting lack of quality, privacy when relevant, parenting skills and self-care through psychological first aid and other relevant programs.

3.4 Wherever possible, address known causes of stress for children, including access to schools, recreational opportunities and absence of normality through community-based context/cultural specific psychosocial activities. Consider modalities that address access challenges and the scale of need (e.g. safe spaces, child and adolescent groups, mobilizing or revitalizing community networks, television and radio programming; and "one-stop shops" where additional services are provided in a single location, such as remedial education to children and parenting skills to adults).

3.5 Train personnel working in centres such as child friendly spaces to detect children particularly affected psychologically, or at risk of for example of the worst forms of child labor or child marriage. Make appropriate referrals for specialized care. Also use and maintain location-specific directories of services in order to facilitate referrals.

3.6 Build upon community capabilities to support unaccompanied and separated children, including existing spontaneous family-based care arrangements (i.e. kinship) and other community-based initiatives. Support for family-based care should be prioritized; institutional care is potentially harmful to children and should only be considered as a last resort and then only for a temporary period while family-based care alternatives can be identified and developed.

3.7 Promote access to birth registration services in all areas of the country, in order to support efforts to ensure children are not recruited or used in armed forces and groups or in other worst forms of child labour, and to maintain this important pre-existing element of the national child protection system. Informal systems can temporarily be used where formal systems are inaccessible or have broken down.

3.8 Promote planning for the demobilisation and release of children associated with armed forces and armed groups that reflects the nature of association in Syria (often voluntary and supported/coerced by families/communities) for example, by finding constructive non-violent ways for children to serve their communities (see 3.1 for examples).

3.9 Advocate to relevant authorities/entities for access and the provision of legal aid, medical care and psychosocial support to respond to children in detention, when/if appropriate. This must be done in combination with advocacy for the immediate and unconditional release of children who are illegally detained.

3.10 Phase in responses to sexual violence sensitively, building on existing structures and resources. Services should be delivered in accordance to survivor-centered principles, such as confidentiality, dignity and safety. Where appropriate, these should be combined with existing and planned health interventions. Service providers should remain mindful of the extent to which boys are also affected by sexual violence and ensure approaches are appropriate and accessible for both boys and girls.

4. Ensure effective coordination of child protection responses inside Syria.

4.1 Ensure effective coordination on responses to critical child protection issues identified in this report, in order to: 1) generate, share and use learning in relation to the specific challenges of the context 2) facilitate the most efficient collective response possible and 3) allow for common advocacy on urgent child protection issues such as those identified in this assessment and for a coherent interface with other sectors of the response.

4.2 Ensure strong linkages between the coordination forum(s) for child protection and other sector coordination forums and actors such as UNOCHA, UNHCR-led Protection and Community Services Working Group, UNICEF-led Child Protection sub-working group (part of the protection working group), UNHCR/IMC/IOM co-led mental health and psychosocial sub-working group, and education working group.

4.3 Promote the use by humanitarian actors of international guidance such as: the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, the IASC Guidelines for Gender-based Violence in Humanitarian Emergencies, the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies, the Interagency Guiding Principles for Unaccompanied and Separated Children, the Alternative Care in Emergency Toolkit, and International Mine Action Standards and Best Practices Guidebooks for Mine/Explosive Remnants of War Risk Education.

4.4 Jointly review and adapt relevant standards from the *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action* for the Syria context through a process engaging all relevant humanitarian actors including child protection specialists working inside Syria. Through a workshop or other discussion forum, agree on adapted standards for the context, and develop and implement a joint implementation plan for application of the standards.

5. Monitor and further investigate child protection issues inside Syria.

5.1 Deepen the understanding of critical child protection issues established by this assessment by liaising with relevant Syrian authorities to facilitate further assessment within Syria, drawing on new and existing humanitarian programmes, as well as available expertise, in order to implement improved and expanded interventions. Child Protection issues to focus on include, but are not limited to:
- Patterns of separation, and the ways children are staying in touch with their families;
- Extent and nature of worst forms of child labor, in particular the nature of debt and alternative options available to children.

5.2 Establish a simple system to monitor child protection issues and concerns on a regular basis, drawing on existing sources of data where possible. Use this information, via coordination, to inform programming and advocacy.

ANNEX 1: ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Given the access constraints inside Syria, experts from the global level Child Protection Working Group recommended using a remote methodology, comprising three components:

1. A <u>desk review</u> **of existing Syria literature covering agreed thematic themes, including a combination of pre and conflict information.**
2. <u>Resource person interviews</u> **with refugees from Syria newly arrived into neighboring countries (respondents).**
3. <u>Humanitarian worker interviews</u> **with Syrians and internationals, working or having worked inside Syria.**

The core data set is made of the data gathered through resource person interviews (respondents), with the desk review and humanitarian worker interviews used for triangulation to facilitate data validation, and to provide qualitative information on context as well as illustrative examples and casual/contributing factors for data collected from resource persons.

ORGANISATION OF THE ASSESSMENT

An interagency steering committee comprised of international humanitarian organisations working inside Syria oversaw the design and implementation of the assessment. Coordination and implementation was managed by UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office and the global level Child Protection Working Group Rapid Response Team. In each of the assessment countries (Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq) the chair of the child protection working group facilitated authorisation, as appropriate and the solicitation of contributing agencies.

SAMPLE DESIGN FOR RESOURCE PERSON INTERVIEWS

The aim of the assessment was to gain sufficient information on child protection trends and patterns in Syria to inform planning, programming and advocacy, and as such did not seek to gather information on specific violations or identify perpetrators, as there are other mechanisms set up for this purpose. In this context, the objective of <u>resource person interviews</u> was to obtain perceptions and observations of the child protection situation from refugees in their area of departure in Syria.

This assessment is of qualitative nature and non-probability methods were used in designing the sample and determining the sample size.

To ensure reasonable geographical coverage a minimum number of resource person interviews was determined taking into consideration Syria's administrative structure: 14 governorates (mohfaza), 61 districts (mantiqua) and 270 sub-districts (nahya). For each nahya, a minimum number of three interviews (or in the case of populations above 100,000 five interviews) was required for the nahya to be considered adequately covered. In order to be able to aggregate upwards from the nahya level, and present information relating to a district a minimum of three nahyas (or at least 50% of nahyas where there were less than five per district) was required to consider a district covered. The same rule was applied to districts in order to consider a governorate covered. Accordingly, a minimum of 473 interviews in refugees receiving countries had to be conducted (648 were effectively conducted) to ensure adequate coverage as per the outlined quota sampling methodology.

Figure 1: Sampling Methodology
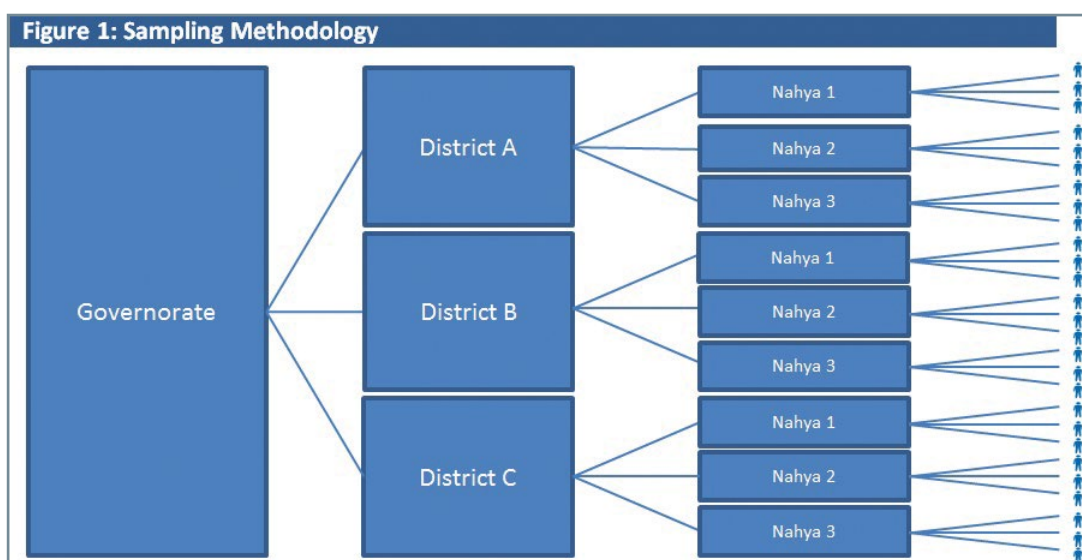
The assessment applied a purposive sampling method – interviewing refugees who had crossed the border over the preceding month. The Unit of Measurement is community with resource persons asked to speak about the situation of children in their area of departure (Nahya) in the two months prior to displacement across international borders. A similar approach was taken with respect to humanitarian worker interviews, whereby the members of the steering committee identified workers that had spent at least 2 weeks at district level in Syria, over the 3 months prior to the interview.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Structured questionnaires for resource person interviews and humanitarian worker interviews were formulated using the global child protection rapid assessment tool. The tools were designed around the agreed thematic areas (psychosocial wellbeing, physical violence, children associated with armed forces and groups, sexual violence, child marriage, child labour, separated and unaccompanied children and access to basic services and information). The humanitarian worker interview questionnaire was designed to elicit information from humanitarians in order to support triangulation of the data collected through interviewing the refugees. The resource person interview questionnaire was translated into Arabic, field tested in Jordan and modified accordingly.

DATA COLLECTION

In Jordan data collection occurred in Za'atari between 26 March – 9 April 2013 with 13 surveyors. In Lebanon data collection occurred in host communities in Bekaa and North Lebanon between 15 April – 13 May 2013 with 18 surveyors; and in Iraq data collection occurred in Domiz Camp and host communities between 5-16 May 2013 with 10 surveyors.

Before data collection commenced, teams of surveyors were trained for a minimum of 2 days in using the questionnaire and in interviewing techniques, especially in asking open ended questions and probing to avoid influencing interviewee responses.
Several purposive sampling methods were applied based on the country situation and feasibility. Snowball sampling was used in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, and random selection of interviewees from new comers' lists in Lebanon and Iraq.

During the implementation of the assessment, team leaders met daily with surveyors to discuss data collection. Challenges were shared, advice given and approaches agreed upon within the teams. At the end of data collection in each of the three refugee contexts (Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon), a validation exercise occurred, taking into account limitations met during the roll out and any decisions to be taken to support the cleaning of the data.

DATA PROCESSING AND TABULATION

A customized excel based tool was used for the data processing, tabulation and analysis with technical support from Information Management specialists.

DATA TRIANGULATION

Data on agreed thematic areas of child protection compiled through this assessment have been subjected to several layers of triangulation. Firstly, a minimum number of resource person interviews per nahya was required for that geographical area to be considered covered by the assessment and for upwards aggregation to occur. The data gathered through interviews with refugees was then triangulated with information from the desk review and results of interviews with humanitarian workers. Where triangulation on a particular issue was not possible, this is indicated in this report and findings are presented with this caveat.

INTERPRETATION PROCESS

An interpretation workshop was convened for two days (12-13 June 2013) with the steering committee, representatives from child protection organisations and members of the data collection teams. The group reviewed the preliminary analysis, interpreted the data, conducted cross tabulations whenever required and agreed on initial programmatic recommendations. The group took into account data from the resource person interviews, the desk review and the humanitarian worker interviews. Information management specialists were available through the process, supporting participants with additional analysis, including cross-tabulations and geographic analysis.

ASSESSMENT COVERAGE

Total of 648 resource person interviews were conducted during the assessment out of which 234 were in Jordan, 232 in Lebanon and 182 in Iraq. Below presents the distribution of interviews by the governorate of departure.

Map 1: Assessment coverage and number of interviews by Governorate

Governorate	Interviews
Tartous	0
Rural Damascus	95
Quneitra	2
Lattakia	0
Idleb	50
Homs	88
Hama	11
Deir-ez-Zor	21
Dar'a	130
Damascus	46
As-Sweida	1
Ar-Raqqa	7
Aleppo	87
Al-Hasakeh	110
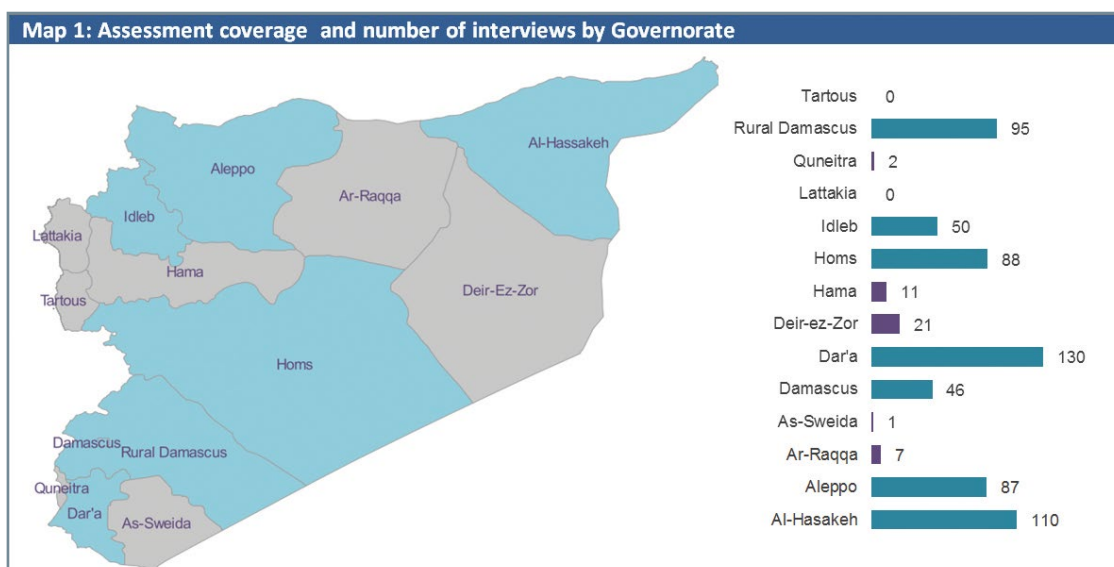
Among the respondents 43% were female and 57% male. 63% of interviews were conducted in refugee camp settings and the remaining 37% in host communities.

In line with methodology described above, a sufficient number of interviews was conducted to adequately cover the governorates of Aleppo, Al Hassekeh, Damascus, Dar'a, Homs, Idleb, and Rural Damascus. Hence when disaggregated by governorate, only data from these governorates is considered while the overall results presented in this report are drawn from all resource person interviews.

Smallest unit of the assessment is nahya as resource persons were asked to share their observations and perceptions of the child protection situation in their nahya of departure (in the two months prior to displacement across international borders).

LIMITATIONS

Limitations in the scope of the assessment:

The aim of this qualitative assessment was to provide information that is sufficiently robust to inform planning, programming and advocacy, subsequently it is not possible to use this data to speak on behalf of the entire affected population in Syria in statistically significant terms.

The assessment covers the period February – May 2013 and serves as a snapshot in an evolving situation. The data points to a correlation between conflict-related activity and heightened child protection concerns, and as such changes in conflict-related activity will generate changes in the pattern of child protection concerns.

Potential biases of resource persons and mitigation measures:

The use of a quota sampling approach and a non-probability sampling method introduces the potential for bias. To mitigate this, a minimum number of interviews per nahya was required to allow for triangulation. This data was further triangulated with information from the desk review and humanitarian interviews.

Some specific potential biases were identified as follows: refugees interviewed could be aligned with certain parties to the conflict, and/or from sectarian and/or religious groups directly affected by the violence. Equally, the fact that all resource persons had fled their homes may have affected their assessment of how dangerous homes are for children in the current conflict. The high proportion of respondents identifying as parents may also have introduced a bias – for example when assessing the role of parents and family in child protection. In some cases, interviews were conducted with an audience (as opposed to individually), and this might have impacted on answers to questions relating to cultural norms, such as gender based violence. Finally, cultural perceptions of childhood could cause bias in resource persons' perceptions of the nature and extent of child protection issues facing adolescent boys and girls (e.g. adolescent boys who live outside of the family may not be perceived as separated).

Prior to data collection all surveyors were trained to try to mitigate bias in a number of ways, such as by:

- Reminding resource persons throughout the interview to speak on behalf of children in their community, not on behalf of their household;
- Reminding resource persons at regular points during the interview that questions refer to all people under the age of 18, including in the phrasing of specific questions;
- Avoiding conducting interviews with audiences as much as possible; and
- Refraining from any discussion with resource persons on the perpetrators of the violations described, and steering the conversation away from such discussions.

Finally, the use of several resource person identification approaches potentially introduced a bias. In an attempt to mitigate this challenge, in camp settings snowballing was only used within individual sectors/districts and not between different sectors/districts, and interviewees were randomly selected from new comers' lists.

Limitations encountered during the data collection phase:

It was not possible to conduct the assessment in Turkey. This was partially addressed by extending the assessment and sampling in Lebanon with populations from governorates neighbouring Turkey.

Not all displacement locations in host countries were covered. In Jordan the government did not allow assessments in host communities at the time of this assessment. In Lebanon, several districts were inaccessible due to security issues. In Iraq, time constraints prevented a comprehensive coverage of host communities.

The assessment methodology required at least one humanitarian worker interview per district covered for triangulation purposes. However, time and resource limitations coupled with the security situation in Syria did not allow this. Humanitarian worker data nevertheless mostly corroborated resource person data. Where there was no match between resource person and humanitarian worker interviews, judgement is reserved on that particular question.

Finally, out of a total of 648 interviews, only 24 interview forms did not indicate a date of departure (3% of the total). Given that surveyors were trained to identify resource persons based on their arrival date, the assumption is that these 24 interviewees meet the criteria for inclusion.

ANNEX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)

The following symbols are used in this tool:

➡ […] This shows parts that are only meant as instructions for the assessor and should not be read out to the interviewee. For example, [don't know] means that the response, "don't know," is not read out to the KI.

This means 'read all answer options.'

In conducting a Resource person Interview, consider the following:

✓ Introduce yourself and your organization to respondents, and explain the purpose of the assessment

✓ Ask if the potential Resource person has arrived from Syria in the last month

✓ Ask the Resource person which Naha/sub district they are from

✓ Inform the RP that the interview questions are about the area (Nahya, Sub District) that they have recently come from in Syria

✓ Do NOT make any promises or raise expectations for assistance

✓ Obtain informed consent orally and if necessary in writing

✓ Write clearly and briefly

✓ Observe and respect cultural principles and norms

✓ Respect interviewees' time. KII should not go beyond one hour

✓ Do No Harm: ensure that your questions and the answers you are receiving are not putting the interviewee in danger of negative repercussions

RESOURCE PERSON INTERVIEW STANDARD TOOL

General Information
Identification

a.1. Assessor(s') code: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _	**a.2.** Organization: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
a.3. Date of assessment (dd/mm/yy): _ _ /_ _ /_ _	RPI number: _ _ _ _ [to be completed by the team leader]

a.4. Country where interview is conducted ☐ Lebanon   ☐ Jordan   ☐ Iraq   ☐ Turkey

a.5. Type of location where interview is conducted: ☑ Camp ☑ host community

a.6. Name of the location where interview is conducted: _

a.7.Sex of Key Informant:

☐ Male   ☐ Female

Informed Consent Form:

My name is _____[say interviewer's name]_____and I am working with the Child Protection Working Group, which is a group of non-governmental organisations working to improve of the lives of children.

We are conducting an assessment on the situation of children affected by the Syrian conflict. We would like to ask you questions about the situation of children, younger than 18, in the area of Syria that you have just come from. While this interview should not be considered as leading to any direct or indirect support to you or your community here in [name country where interview is occurring], the information you provide will help us define child protection priorities and programs inside Syria. The interview should only take one hour at the most Your identity will be kept strictly confidential and your non identified responses will be collated across many interviews .Your participation is voluntary and you can choose not to answer any or all of the questions.

[After asking each of the following questions, look at the RP and get implicit approval that s/he understood]

All the information you give us will remain confidential.
Your participation in this interview is voluntary.
You can stop answering to questions at any time.
Do you have any questions?
[You can decide to obtain written consent or simply obtain verbal consent. Written consent sometimes worries the KI and may make them overly cautious about their answers. This decision should be made based on the context.]

For supervisor's use [only]
Verification done by: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ Date: _ _ /_ _ /_ _ _ Signature:

<u>**Determining the place of departure:**</u>
<u>Please ask the resource person</u>

       b.1. Where was the last place you lived in Syria, for at least two weeks? [**Write the name of the community here . . . . . X. . . . .**]

       b.2. In which Nahya is this located? [**Write the name of the Nahya here . . . .**]

       b.3. [**Then ask:**] when did you leave . . . . .X. . . . . . . ?

- **[If the answer is within the past two months, say:]** throughout this interview, all the questions I will ask you are about . . . . X. . . . ."

- **[As you proceed to ask the questions, keep referring back to . . . . . . X . . . . . . to remind the RP that you are interested in CP issue in that area.]**

All questions will be asked about children under 18 years old, so please consider them in all your replies. In all questions take care not to over or under emphasise the situation but discuss what you know or are aware of in the Nayha that you have just come from.

b.4. Type of engagement RP has with children ☐ 1. Teacher   ☐2.Social Worker   ☐3.Parent/Caregiver
4. Other (specify)_____

Separation from Usual Caregivers

Alone Child: a child who has been separated from both parents and relatives and who is not being cared for by an adult. This means that a child is completely without adult care.

Separated Child: a child who is separated from both parents or from his/her previous legal or customary primary caregiver(s), but not necessarily from other relatives

1.1 In area X in the two months before you left Syria are there children separated from their usual caregivers as a result of the conflict?

1. ☐ Yes   2. ☐ No   3. ☐ [don't know]   →[if **No** or **Don't know**, skip to **1.4**]

1.1.2 Can you tell us the main causes of separation of children that occurred in area X in the past two months before you left Syria?

→[**tick all that apply**]

1. ☐ losing parents/children during when moving to safer areas
2. ☐ caregivers willingly sending their children to institutional care;
3. ☐ caregivers willingly sending their children to extended family/friends;
4. ☐ caregivers willingly sending their children to work far from home;
5. ☐ at the moment of confict in your area: disappearance, hostage taking, of children/caregivers
6. ☐ continued disappearance of children/caregivers, such as kidnapping; hostage taking, fighting in the conflict
7. ☐ death of parents
8. ☐ [Other (specify) _]

1.2 In area X as a result of the conflict how many children do you think are separated from their usual caregivers in the last two months before you left? → [read out the options if necessary] ☐ 1-10 ☐ 11-50 ☐ 51-100 ☐ >100 (specify _ _) ☐ Other (specify) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ☐ [Don't know] → [if "don't know", skip to 1.2.2]	**1.2.1** How do you know this? 1. ☐ personal observation 2. ☐ a community list 3. ☐ from other community members 4. ☐ Other (specify) _
1.2.2 In area X in the two months before you left Syria do you think that: 👪 ☐ 1. There are more boys than girls who have been separated [**or**] ☐ 2. There are more girls than boys who have been separated[**or**] ☐ 3. No clear difference [**or**] ☐ 4. [do not know]	**1.2.3** In area X in the two months before you left Syria do you think that: 👪 ☐ 1. Separated children are mainly under 5 [**or**] ☐ 2. Separated children are mainly between 5 and 14 [**or**] ☐ 3. Separated children are mainly over 14 [**or**] ☐ 4. No clear difference ☐ 5. [Do not know]

1.3 In area X in the two months before you left Syria do you know if there are any infants or very young children, under 3 years who have been separated from their usual caregivers?

☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [do not know]

1.4 Are you aware of any children in area X who do not live with any adults (alone children)?

☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [don't know]   → [if **No** or **Don't know**, skip to **1.5**]

1.4.1 In area X how many alone children do you think there are? → [read out the options if necessary] ☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 21 – 50 ☐ >51-100 ☐ >100 (specify_____) ☐ Other (specify _ _) ☐ [Don't know] →[if "don't know", skip to 1.4.3]	**1.4.2** How do you know this? ☐ 1. personal observation ☐ 2. a community list ☐ 3. word of mouth, from other community members ☐ 4. Other (specify) _

1.4.3 In area X in the past two months before you left Syria do you know of any new cases of children living alone?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [don't know] → [if **No** or Don't know, skip to **1.5**]

1.4.4 In area X do you think that… → [read out each block separately and allow the RP to respond block by block]

Do not read out ['do not know'.]

☐ 1. there are more alone boys than girls [**or**]
☐ 2. there are more alone girls than boys [**or**]
☐ 3. no clear difference
    4. [do not know]

1.4.5 In area X do you think that… → [read out each block separately and allow the RP to respond block by block]

Do not read out ['do not know'.]

☐ 1. alone children are mainly under 5 [or]
☐ 2. alone children are mainly between 5 and 14 [or]
☐ 3. alone children are mainly 14 and older [or]
☐ 4. no clear difference
☐ 5. [do not know]

1.5 In area X in the two months before you left Syria do you know of any cases of family separation where families send children out of Syria with an unrelated person or without adult care?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [Don't know] → [if **No** or **Don't know**, skip to **1.6**]

1.5.1 What do you think are the main reasons for families choosing to send children out of Syria? [tick all that apply]

☐ 1. for the security of children;
☐ 2. for sectarian reasons
☐ 3. for economic reasons;
☐ 4. for family reunification;
☐ 5. to avoid being used by armed forces and groups;
☐ 6. to access services in [name country of interview]
☐ 7. [Other (specify) _]

1.6 In area X are there persons unknown to the community who have offered to take children away from Syria?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3.[Don't know] → [if **No** or **Don't know**, skip to **1.7**]

1.6.1 Tell us what happened: Who came? What did they want? Were children taken away? If so, how many girls and how many boys were taken away? What is the age group of the removed children?

_ _
_ _
_ _

1.7 In area X are there members of the community who have taken or want to take children away with the promise of assistance, jobs or better living conditions?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No → [if No, skip to 2.1]

1.7.1 Can you describe who this person is and what s/he promises? Has s/he taken some children already?
 so, how many girls and how many boys were taken away? What is the age group of removed children

_ _
_ _
_ _
_ _
_ _

[thank the RP for answering the questions to the previous section and continue by saying: "Now I will ask you some questions about …"]

Care for Separated and Alone Children

2.1. I want you to think about the children who are no longer with their regular caregivers in area X, where do those children live now?

→ **[Write down the response on the left side and code it based on the category codes. The supervisors are responsible to review the codlings]**

I. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _ _ _ _]

II. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _ _ _ _]

III. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _ _ _ _]

IV. _ [other]

V. _ [other]

[Categories and codes]:
1. **FCO**: informal foster care arrangement outside the community
2. **IFC**: informal foster care in the community (non relatives)
3. **KIC**: kinship care (relatives)
4. **FFC**: formal/ governmental foster care in the community;
5. **CHH**: live on their own
6. **CLS**: live on the street
7. **CCF**: child care residential facility

2.1.2 What do you think people in area X would do if they come across an alone child?
→ **[check all that apply]**

☐ 1. Care for the child myself

☐ 2. Only care for the child if they are from the same sect

☐ 3. Keep the child for a short time while they find a long term solution

☐ 4. Find someone in the community to care for the child

☐ 5. Report to the Government

☐ 6. Inform others (specify………………….)

☐ 7. Find someone outside of the community to provide longer term care for the child

☐ 8. Take the child to an NGO that deals with children (specify……………………..)

☐ 9. Take the child to the Government agency that deal with children (specify……………………)

☐ 10. Do nothing (ask why………………………….)

☐ 11. Other (specify……………………………………………….)

Threats to Children's Physical Safety and Security

3.1 In area X that you have come from in Syria in the last two months before you left, what would you say are the main violent risks that have or could lead to death or injury of children?

➔ [Write down the response on the left side and code it based on the category codes. The supervisors are responsible to review the codings]

[Categories and codes]:

1. **ERW**: Landmines or Unexploded Ordinance
2. **CVL**: sectarian civil violence (e.g. religious, minorities etc)
3. **PVL**: political violence (e.g. political parties etc)
4. **SVL**: sexual violence
5. **DMV** : domestic violence

6. **AVL**: armed forces/groups violence
7. **CRA**: criminal acts (e.g. gang activities, looting, etc.)
8. **SCP**: severe physical abuse (punishment)
9. **DTN:** torture in detention

➔ [Write down the response on the left side and code it based on the category codes. The supervisors are responsible to review the codings]	Age of most affected ➔[check all if no difference]	Sex of most affected ➔[check all if no difference]
1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK
2. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK
3. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK
4.. _ [Other]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK
5._ [Other]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK

3.4 In area X thinking of the risks you have just identified do you know where children are more likely to get severely injured or killed?

➔ [tick all that apply]

☐ 1. At the playground ☐ 2. In school ☐ 3. On the way to school
☐ 4. In a camp (outside of the home) ☐ 5. At work ☐ 6. On the way to work
☐ 7. Around military compounds and groups ☐ 8. At the market ☐ 9. On the way to market
☐ 10. In detention ☐ 11. At checkpoints ☐ 12. When crossing the border
☐ 13. In the home ☐ 14. Other (specify) _ ☐ 15. [don't know]

3.5 In area X, do you think there are any risks identified where children are targeted because they are children?

☐ 1.Yes ☐ 2.No ☐ 3.Don't Know   ➔ [if **No** or **Don't know**, skip to **3.6**]

3.5.1 What are the risks above where children are being targeted? What are the reasons for the targeting? Please explain_ _ _ _ _
_ _
_ _
_ _
_ —
_ _

3.6 In area X in the two months before you left approximately how many children have suffered the violence listed above?

→ **[read out the options if necessary]**

☐ 1-5   ☐ 6-10   ☐ 11-20   ☐ 21 – 50

☐ >51-100   ☐ >100 (specify_____)

☐ Other (specify _ _)

☐ [Don't know]   →[if **"don't know"**, skip to **3.7**]

3.6.1 How do you know this?

☐ 1. personal observation

☐ 2. a community list

☐ 3. word of mouth, from other community
  members

☐ 4. Other (specify) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

3.7 In the two months before you left Syria are there any children in area X who have been or are committing acts of violence?

→**[if unclear to the RP, use answer options from the following question as examples]**

☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [Don't know]   → [If **No** or "**don't know**", skip to **3.9**]

3.8 What kind of violence are children participating in?

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _ _ _ _]

2. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _[category code: _ _ _ _ _ _]

3.. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _ _ _ _]

4. _ [Other]

5. _ [Other]

[Categories and codes]:

1. **LTP**: looting and/or pillage
2. **CVL**: sectarian civil violence
3. **SVL**: sexual assault
4. **ASH**: attack on schools and/or community infrastructure
5. **ACV**: attack on civilians
6. **RCC**: recruitment of other children into armed groups/forces

---

3.9 In area X are children being urged into participating in violence?

☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [Don't know]

3.10 In area X, are you aware of children under the age of 18 being held in detention?

☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [Don't know]   → [If **No**, skip to **4.1**]

3.10.1 Does this mostly affect boys or girls?

☐ 1. Boys   ☐ 2. Girls   ☐ 3. Equally the same   ☐ 4. Don't Know

---

3.10.2 In area X in the two months before you left Syria, how many children do you think there are held in detention?

→ **[read out the options if necessary]**

☐ 1-5   ☐ 6-10   ☐ 11-20   ☐ 21 – 50   ☐ >50 (specify _ _)

☐ Other (specify _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _)   ☐ [Don't know]

3.10.3 What are the main reasons for children of area X to be held in detention?

→**[tick all that apply]**

☐ 1. Committing crime   ☐ 2. Have lost their families   ☐ 3. Supporting the opposition

☐ 4. Supporting the Government   ☐ 5. After being sent back from the border   ☐ 6. for sectarian reasons

☐ 7. To pressure families   ☐ 8. [Don't know]   ☐ 9. Other (specify)_____

3.10.4 In area X, do you think there has been an increase in the number of children in detention during the last two months before you left Syria?

☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [Don't know]

Psychosocial Wellbeing

4.1 Have you noticed any changes in children's behaviour since the beginning of the conflict in area x?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [Don't know] →[If **No** or "don't know", skip to **4.2**]

→ [ask about girls and boys separately] →if unclear to the RP, use answer options below as examples

4.1.1 In area X what kind of behaviour changes have you noticed in boys in Syria?

4.1.2 In area X what kind of behaviour changes have you noticed in girls in Syria

1. **UCS**: Unusual crying and screaming
2. **AGG**: More aggressive behaviour;
3. **VYC**: Violence against younger children;
4. **LWH**: Less willing to help caregivers and siblings;
5. **CCR**: Committing crimes;
6. **UWS**: Unwillingness to go to school;
7. **DRB**: Disrespectful behaviour in the family;
8. **SDN**: Sadness (e.g. not talking, not playing, etc.);
9. **SAB**: Substance abuse (specify - - - - - - - -);
10. **JAF**: Wanting to armed forces or groups join/joining

11. **HSB**: Engaging in high risk sexual behavior
12. **BDW**: Bed Wetting
13. **HRT**- Hurting themselves
14. **NTM**: Having nightmares and/or not being able to sleep
15. **ATS**: Anti-social (isolating themselves)
16. **HPP**: Helping parents more than before
17. **STP**: Spending more time on sport and playing
18. **STF**: Spending more time with friends
19. **ASR**: attending school regularly/interested in education
20. **COC**: Caring for others in the community

4.1.1 Boys

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]

2. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]
3. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]
4. _ [Other]

5. _ [Other]

4.1.2 Girls

☐ Same as boys

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]

2. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]

3. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _]
4. _ [Other]

5. _ [Other]

4.2 In area X if boys have problems or are stressed, who in the community is helping them?

→ [if unclear to the RP, use answer options as examples. Check all that apply, but try to guide the RP to prioritize their responses and tell you which ones are the most important]

☐ 1. peer groups (e.g. friends)   ☐ 2. school teachers   ☐ 3. community social workers
☐ 4. religious leaders   ☐ 5. Parents   ☐ 6. government officials
☐ 7. Siblings   ☐ 8. Relatives   ☐ 9. community leaders
☐ 10. Neighbours   ☐ 11. Health worker
☐ 12. [don't know]   ☐ 13. Other (specify) _

4.3 In area X if girls have problems or are stressed, who in the community is helping them?
→ [if unclear to the RP, use answer options as examples. Check all that apply, but try to get to the three most important]

☐ 1. peer groups (e.g. friends)   ☐ 2. school teachers   ☐ 3. community social workers

☐ 4. religious leaders   ☐ 5. parents   ☐ 6. government officials

☐ 7. Siblings   ☐ 8. relatives   ☐ 9. community leaders

☐ 10. traditional midwives   ☐ 11. health worker   ☐ 12. women's groups

☐ 13. neighbours   ☐ 14. [don't know]

☐ 15 other (specify………………)

4.4 In area X have you noticed any changes in primary caregivers' attitude towards their children since the beginning of the conflict in Syria?

1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [Don't know]   → [If **No** or "**don't know**", skip to **4.5**]

4.4.1 In area X what kind of changes (positive or negative) have you noticed in primary caregivers' attitude towards their children?
→[if unclear to the RP, use answer options as examples. Check all that apply, but try to get to the 3 most important]

1. Pay less attention to children's needs   ☐ 2. Pay more attention to children's needs;
☐ 3. Spend less time with their children   ☐ 4. Spend more time with their children;
☐ 5. More aggressive towards their children   ☐ 6. Show more love and affection to their children;
☐ 7. Send children away from home (if so, specify _)
☐ 8. Force children to stay inside the house;   ☐ 9. Keep children from going to school
☐ 10. Ensure children's education despite difficulties;   ☐ 11. Force/encourage children to marry at young age
☐ 12. Ensure that children have access to recreational activities
☐ 13. [Don't know]   ☐ 14. other (specify) _

4.5 In area X what are the main sources of stress for caregivers in the community?
☐ 1. ongoing conflict   ☐ 2. Sectarian nature of the conflict
☐ 3. lack of food   ☐ 4. Lack of electricity
☐ 5. Lack of water   ☐ 6. Lack of access to health services
☐ 7. Lack of access to psychosocial services   ☐ 8. lack of access to sanitation facilitites
☐ 9. Lack of security   ☐ 10. lack of shelter
☐ 11. loss of property   ☐ 12. lost livelihood
☐ 13. children's safety   ☐ 14. violence within community
☐ 15. not being able to return home
☐ 16. being separated from their community
☐ 17. Inability to carry out cultural or religious rituals (e.g. proper burial rituals)
☐ 18. [Don't know]   ☐ 19. other (specify) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

4.6. In area X are there people who are capable of organizing recreational and/or educational activities for children?
☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [Don't know]   → [If **No** or "**don't know**", skip to **5.1**]

4.6.1 What kind of skills do these people have?

→[check all that apply]

☐ 1. Teaching   ☐ 2. Organizing collective activities for children   ☐ 3. Supporting distressed children

☐ 4. Keeping children safe   ☐ 5. Working/supporting with children living with physical disabilities

☐ 6. Teaching children with learning difficulties   ☐ 7. [Don't know]

☐ 8. Other (specify) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

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thank the RP for answering the questions to the previous section and continue by saying: "Now I will ask you some questions about …"]

Worst Forms of Child Labour

5.1 In area X that you have come from in Syria, are children under the age of 18 needing to contribute to family income by working outside the household in very difficult, dangerous or long hours of work?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [Don't Know]   → [If **No** or "**don't know**", skip to **5.3**]

5.2 In area X in the two months before you left Syria, has there been an increase in children under 18 year olds engaging in very difficult, dangerous or long hours of work?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [Don't Know]

5.3 In area X in the two months before you came from Syria are children under 18 involved in the below types of work?

→[Write down the response on the left side and code it based on the category codes. The supervisors are responsible to review the codlings]

[Categories and codes]:

1. **TRF:** Being sent far from families for work in Syria
2. **SLD**: being sold
3. **DBT**: working to pay off debt
4. **CRA**: criminal activities

5. **TNS**: transactional sex
6. **AVL**: being used by armed forces/groups
7. **NGH**: sending children to neighbouring countries to work and send back money
8. **Other** (specify…………………………………………)

[Write down the response on the left side and code it based on the category codes. The supervisors are responsible to review the codings]	Age of most affected [check all if no difference]	Sex of most affected [check both if no difference]
1. _____ [category code: ____]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK
2. _____ [category code: ____]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK
3. _____ [category code: ____]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK
4. _____ [Other]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK
5. _____ [Other]	☐<5 ☐6-14 ☐>14 ☐DNK	☐Boys ☐Girls ☐DNK

5.4 In area X how many children under 18 who are working in these types of jobs? ☐ 1-30 ☐ 30-60 ☐ 60-100 ☐ >100 ☐ [Don't Know]	**5.4.1** How do you know this? ☐ 1. personal observation ☐ 2. from other community members ☐ 3. Other (specify) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Access to Information

6.1 In the last two months before you left Syria, what were the most important sources that your community used in area X to get information?

→**Tick the three most important from the list**

☐ 1. Radio (name?) _ _ _ _ _ _ _   ☐ 2. TV (name?) _ _ _ _ _ _   ☐ 3. Newspapers/magazines (name?) _ _ _ _ _ _ _

☐ 4. Telephone voice call   ☐ 5. SMS   ☐ 6. Internet

☐ 7. Noticeboards and posters   ☐ 8. Community leader   ☐ 9. Friends, neighbours and family

☐ 10. Religious leader   ☐ 11. Government official   ☐ 12. Military official

☐ 13. Aid workers   ☐ 14. [don't know]   ☐ 15. Other (specify) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Access to Services

7.1 Are there any services designed specifically for children that were functioning in area X during the last 2 months before you l Syria?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [Don't Know]   → [If **No** or "**don't know"**, skip to **7.2**]

7.1.1. What kind of services for children are there in area X?

☐ 1. Recreational   ☐ 2. educational   ☐ 3. health   ☐ 4. nutrition   ☐ 5. sanitation   ☐ 6. children's club

☐ 7. youth club   ☐ 8. other [specify _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _]

1.2.4

7.2 Are there children who have less access to services?

☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. [Don't know]   → [If **No** or "**don't know"**, skip to **8.1**]

7.2.1 Have you noticed any group of children in area X who are excluded from services or activities?

1. Gender: ☐ 1.1 Boys get less access   ☐ 1.2 Girls get less access

2. Age: ☐ 2.1 children under 15 have less access   ☐ 2. 2 children 15 and above have less access

3. Sectarian: ☐ 3.1 children from specific groups get less access (specify which groups…………………………..)

4. Disability: ☐ 4.1 children living with disabilities have less access   ☐ 4.2 children living with diasbled caregivers have less access

5. Caregivers   ☐ 5.1 children living with elderly caregivers have less access   ☐ 5.2 children living alone (CHH) have less access

                   ☐ 5. 3 children living on the street have less access

6. Displacement   ☐ 6.1 children who recently arrived in the area have less access   ☐ 6.2 children who have come from other area have less access

Children and Armed Forces and Groups

8.1 In area X did you see children working with or being used by armed forces and armed groups since the conflict started?

E.g. children with guns, operating checkpoints, cooking or cleaning for military, etc. ☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No → **[if No, go to 9.1]**

8.1.1 How many children from area x do you think were used by armed forces and other armed groups? ☐ 1-10 ☐ 11-50 ☐ 51-100 ☐ Other (specify) _ _ _ _ _ ☐ don't know ☐ cannot say	**8.1.2** Are these children, →[read out the options] ☐ 1. mostly boys? ☐ 2. mostly girls ? ☐ 3. only boys? ☐ 4. only girls ? ☐ 5. no difference? ☐ 6. [don't know]

8.1.3 In area X are children being recruited into armed forces or armed groups according the sect of the family?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [don't know]

[**request more information if possible and appropriate** _]

8.2 In area X has the number of children joining/being recruited or used by armed forces and armed groups increased in the two months before you left Syria?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [don't know] → [If **No** or "**don't know**", skip to **8.3**]

8.2.1 How do you know this?

→ **[Read out the options as examples. Tick all that apply]**

☐ 1. there are more recruitment events;

☐ 2. many children have disappeared and are suspected to have joined;

☐ 3. you see more children working with or being used by armed forces & armed groups;

☐ 4. you personally know children who are recruited after the emergency;

☐ 5. [don't know] ☐ 6. Other (specify) _

8.3 Where do you think most recruitments happen?

→**[Write down the responses on the left side and code it based on the category codes. The supervisors are responsible to review the codlings at the end of each day]**

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _ _ _ _ _]

2.. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _ _ _ _ _]

3. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ [category code: _ _ _ _ _ _ _]

4. _ [Other]

5. _ [Other]

☐ [don't know]

[Categories and codes]:
1. **CCF**: child care residential facility
2. **CMP**: in camps or collective shelters
3. **SCH**: schools
4. **ORD**: on the road (e.g. to school)
5. **SPT**: service points (e.g. health center or food distribution)
6. **HME**: home

Child Marriage

9.1 In area X what is the usual age before the conflict of getting married?

For boys ☐ 9-11 ☐ 12-14 ☐ 15-18 ☐ 19-25

For girls ☐ 9-11 ☐ 12-14 ☐ 15-18 ☐ 19-25

9.1.1 In area X, do you think boys get married at an earlier age since the conflict began?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. Don't Know

9.1.2 In area X, do you think girls get married at an ealier age since the conflict began?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [Don't Know]

9.2 [If yes to 9.1.1 or 9.1.2] In area X how many children do you think there are who are marrying before the age of 18 in the two months before you left Syria?

9.2.1 Boys ☐ 1-30 ☐ 30-60 ☐ 60-100 ☐ >100 ☐ [Don't Know]

9.2.2 Girls ☐ 1-30 ☐ 30-60 ☐ 60-100 ☐ >100 ☐ [Don't Know]

9.2.3 How do you know this?
☐ 1. personal observation
☐ 2. a community list
☐ 3. from other community members
☐ 4. Other (specify)

[thank the RP for answering the questions to the previous section and continue by saying: "Now I will ask you some questions about …"]
Sexual Violence [use a culturally appropriate term for SV]

10.1 What do you think community members in area X would do if they came across a child survivor of sexual violence?
☐ 1. Sexual violence never happens here → [if this is chosen, skip to question 11]
☐ 2. take child to caregivers ☐ 3. take child to other family members ☐ 4. take child to religious leader
☐ 5. take child to health centre ☐ 6. take child to mobile clinic
☐ 7. take child to community social worker ☐ 8. take child to teacher ☐ 9. take child to clan leader
☐ 10. report to police/community justice system ☐ 11. confront the perpetrator *(the person harming the child)*
☐ 12. take child to women's association ☐ 13. take child to a traditional midwife;
☐ 14. do nothing; ☐ 15. [Don't know]
☐ 16. [other (specify)] _

| **10.2** In area X over the two months before you left Syria, do you think the number of sexual violence cases has increased?
☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know
☐ 4. Sexual violence never happens here

→ [if the latter is chosen, skip to the end part of the interview] | **10.2.1** In area X in what situation does sexual violence occur to children?
→ [Only read out the options if the RP needs examples. Tick all that apply]
☐ 1. while at home ☐ 2. while at school
☐ 3. while playing around the camp ☐ 4. on the way to school
☐ 5. when at workplace ☐ 6. while working in the fields
☐ 7. while playing around the village ☐ 8. during population movement
☐ 9. at checkpoints ☐ 10. during armed group attacks
☐ 11. in common areas, such as around latrines/showers, etc ☐ 12. Detention centres
☐ 13. Collective shelters/IDP location or camps ☐ 14. [other (specify)] _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
☐ 15. [don't know]; |

10.3 Who is most affected by sexual violence? ☗

10.3.1
☐ 1. more boys are being targeted for sexual violence than girls [or]
☐ 2. more girls are being targeted for sexual violence than boys [or]
☐ 3. no difference
☐ 4. [do not know]

10.3.2
☐ 1. mostly younger children (under 14) are targeted for sexual violence [or]
☐ 2. mostly older children (over 14) are targeted for sexual violence [or]
☐ 3. no difference
☐ 4. [do not know]

10.4 In area X if a child or an adolescent suffers from sexual violence, would s/he normally seek help → **[if not clear say: "is it culturally acceptable to seek help"]?** ☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [Don't know] → [if **No** or **Don't know**, skip to **10.5**]	**10.4.1** Who do they normally turn to for help? ☐ 1. mother; ☐ 2. father; ☐ 3. friends; ☐ 4. grandparents; ☐ 5. other family members; ☐ 6. religious leader; ☐ 7. health worker; ☐ 8. teacher; ☐ 9. social worker; ☐ 10. community leader ☐ 11. traditional midwives ☐ 12. [other (specify)] _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ☐ 13. [Don't know]
10.5 In area X do you know of a place where people can get help if they have suffered sexual violence? ☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. Don't know →[if NO or don't know, skip to next section] **[collect more info if appropriate: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _]**	**10.5.1** Can children also seek help in that place? ☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ 3. [Don't know] [Comments: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _]

Other

[thank the RP for answering the questions to the previous section and continue by saying: "now I have two more questions before we finish

11. Do you think there are any sectarian issues in area X that could affect the wellbeing of children?
☐ 1. Yes   ☐ 2. No   ☐ 3. Don't know   →[if "no" or "don't know" go to the end of the interview]

11.1 How do you think such sectarian issues affect children?_ _
_ _
_ _
_ _

Thank the RP for their time in answering the questions, it is much appreciated and will help us to understand the issues for children in Syria and help us define priorities and responses inside Syria".

TERMINOLOGY

Gender: Refers to the social differences between men and women that are learned, and though deeply rooted in every culture, are changeable over time, and have wide variations both within and between cultures.

Gender-based Violence: is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. The nature and extent of specific types of GBV vary across cultures, countries, and regions

Perpetrator: Person, group, or institution that directly inflicts or otherwise supports violence or other abuse inflicted on another against her/his will

Survivor/victim: Person who has experienced gender-based violence. The terms "victim" and "survivor" can be used interchangeably. "Victim" is a term often used in the legal and medical sectors. "Survivor" is the term generally preferred in the psychological and social support sectors because it implies resiliency

Rape/Attempted Rape: is an act of non-consensual sexual intercourse. This can include the invasion of any part of the body with a sexual organ and/or the invasion of the genital or anal opening with any object or body part. Rape and attempted rape involve the use of force, threat of force, and/or coercion. Any penetration is considered rape. Efforts to rape someone which do not result in penetration are considered attempted rape. Rape of women and of men is often used as a weapon of war, as a form of attack on the enemy, typifying the conquest and degradation of rape, sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation

Sexual violence: is "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic a person's sexuality, using coercion, threats of harm or physical force, by any person regardless of relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work." Sexual violence takes many forms, including rape, sexual slavery and/or trafficking, forced pregnancy, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and/or abuse, and forced abortion

Sexual abuse: is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. (See also "sexual exploitation.")

Sexual exploitation: is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. (See also "sexual abuse.")

Physical Assault: an act of physical violence that is not sexual in nature. Examples include: hitting, slapping, choking, cutting, shoving, burning, shooting or use of any weapons, acid attacks or any other act that results in pain, discomfort or injury. Domestic Physical Violence: any physical violence perpetrated by a member of the immediate family (parents, spouses, siblings, grandparents, aunts/uncles etc.)

Forced Marriage: the marriage of an individual against her or his will

Child Marriage: any marriage under the age of 18, whether legal under the country in which the marriage occurred or not

Domestic Violence: includes violence (physically and psychologically) perpetrated by an intimate partner and by other family members

CHILD PROTECTION DEFINITIONS

Children are people under 18 years of age

Child Protection: is the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation of and violence against children in emergencies

Alone Child: a child who has been separated from both parents and relatives and who is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so. This means that a child may be completely without adult care.

Separated Child: a child who is separated from both parents or from his/her previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives

Children Associated with Armed Groups or Forces: refers to any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed forces (government military or other security forces such as Shabiha) or armed (opposition) groups in any capacity, including but not limited to children (boys and girls) used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes. Includes children who provide information to armed groups or forces, who distribute pamphlets on the behalf of these groups/forces, or who transport material or work as mechanics. Does not include children who show support for either the opposition or Government forces without any instruction from or agreement from members of armed groups (e.g. through participation in demonstrations, throwing stones or writing slogans on walls)

Child Labour: is work undertaken by children under the legal minimum working age. Hazardous work is work that is hazardous for the health, safety or moral development of children working in conditions that are hazardous for their wellbeing and development

Trafficking (also GBV): it involves an act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring or receiving a person through a use of force, coercion or other means, for the purpose of exploiting them. E.g. a child has been trafficked if he or she has been moved within a country, or across borders, whether by force or not, with the purpose of exploiting the child

Psychosocial support refers to processes and actions that promote the holistic wellbeing of people in their social world. It includes support provided by family, friends and the wider community. E.g. for children it can be that they have access to Child Friendly Spaces where they participate in structured activities in a safe and child friendly environment