



## I. Introduction

These key advocacy messages were developed by the partners of the No Lost Generation initiative in January 2016 and should be reiterated and amplified wherever possible in No Lost Generation advocacy platforms and products.

## II. Headlines: for use in all NLG products wherever possible

Very short version:

1. Parties to the conflicts inside Syria and Iraq should **end indiscriminate attacks** on civilian areas, which kill and maim children, and damage or destroy educational facilities.
2. All **children and youth affected by the conflict should be protected** and have equitable access to services in safety and with dignity.
3. **Adolescents and youth** should have access to civic and social engagement and networking opportunities and be able to influence decision-making processes.
4. Youth and refugee families should have **access to decent, legal livelihoods opportunities**.
5. Children and youth should have access to **accredited and certified safe formal and non-formal quality learning opportunities** to develop and realize their full potential in life.

Short version:

The conflicts in Syria and Iraq must come to an end. All those with influence must redouble their efforts to achieve a political solution to these conflicts so that refugees and internally displaced people can voluntarily return in safety and dignity. In the meantime, all violations of children's rights must cease as an urgent priority, in particular all attacks on education, health and water facilities.

Up front, multi-year investment in national education and child protection systems, including building the capacity of education personnel and the social workforce, and promotion of quality standards, is essential to provide a sustainable response for children affected by the Syria and Iraq crises.

The provision of immediate, quality education opportunities and child protection services are urgent priorities for the most vulnerable children and youth affected by the crisis: action now to address child protection concerns and get all children in school will mitigate the impact of gaps in protection and education, and contribute to avoid a Lost Generation.

Adolescents and youth affected by the crisis have a strong desire to contribute positively in their communities. It is essential to open up opportunities for them to engage in social, civic and economic terms, in order to realise their potential and offset the risks, frustration and lack of hope that they otherwise face.

### **III. Specific messages for each of the 5 No Lost Generation advocacy priorities – for use as relevant**

#### **1. Parties to the conflicts inside Syria and Iraq should end indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas as these kill and maim children, and damage or destroy educational facilities.**

- a) All parties to the conflicts respect and protect children's right to life and to an education by adhering to the principles of distinction and proportionality under International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law. Refraining from indiscriminate attacks, including the use of explosive weapons in civilian areas is critical for the realisation of such rights.
- b) Actors with influence over parties to the conflicts inside Syria and Iraq use their leverage to ensure parties respect their obligations to ensure the protection of schools and other educational facilities as civilian objects under International Humanitarian Law.

- c) Member States who provide support to parties to the conflicts should use their influence to call for an immediate stop to attacks on civilian areas that kill and maim children, as well as damage and destroy civilian infrastructure, including educational facilities.
- d) Members of the UN Security Council should strengthen monitoring mechanisms to document International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law violations, including protection concerns and make parties to the conflicts fully aware that any violations are being documented.
- e) Parties to the conflicts should refrain from using educational facilities for military purposes. Member States with influence over parties to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq call for a stop to the military use of and placement of military objects inside or close to educational facilities.

**2. All children and youth affected by the conflict should be protected and have equitable access to services in safety and with dignity.**

- a) Governments should scale up child protection services, addressing gaps in legal and policy frameworks and training to improve the quality of such services in line with children's best interest.
- b) Donors and civil society should continue to support the provision of specialised child protection services and community based child protection and psychosocial interventions to complement national systems. Governments in the region help to facilitate the work of these partners.
- c) Governments and donors should prioritise provision of birth registration, recognising that it serves as a foundation for a child's right to family unity and reunification, as well as the ability to return to Syria, should conditions allow.
- d) Governments should help facilitate children and their families' access to residency and other documentation through flexible, accessible and affordable procedures. When adult family members are not able to access legal documentation and renew their residency this results in restrictions in movement and limitations on livelihoods, which in turn increases the risks of child labour, early marriage and other protection issues for children.
- e) The principle of family unity should be respected to ensure that children and their families are not separated during or after displacement. Governments should facilitate family reunification, including cross-border family reunification.
- f) Children and their families' right to freedom of movement should be respected inside Syria and Iraq, as well as in countries of asylum.

**3. Adolescents and youth should have access to civic and social engagement and networking opportunities and be able to influence decision making processes.**

- a) Governments, donors and civil society should improve opportunities for young people to develop, plan and monitor initiatives that benefit children and youth, as well as their local communities.
- b) Governments, donors and civil society should come together to improve opportunities for young people to lead positive community based activities that provide a sense of purpose and a platform for young people's contributions to be valued and voices to be heard.
- c) Governments should work with local municipal-level governance systems to formalise youth participation and influence in local planning and decision making processes.

**4. Youth and refugee families should have access to decent, legal livelihoods opportunities**

- a) Governments, with support from international donors and the private sector should improve livelihood opportunities for young nationals, internally displaced persons and refugees so they can play a more productive role in society by contributing to local and national economies.
- b) Donors should provide stable and predictable long-term funding and investment to support host governments and private sector in making necessary policy changes and changes to business environment to the benefit of all young people, females and males alike, in their respective countries.
- c) Governments should prioritise providing legal working opportunities for refugees to address child labour and other negative coping mechanisms such as early marriage.
- d) Donors should support livelihoods programmes that address the specific needs of refugees, particularly women-headed households and youth, and provide integrated programmes to address child labour and child marriage that include livelihoods, education and protection elements.
- e) Donors, the international community and national actors should significantly scale up integrated child protection, education and livelihoods programmes to address child labour with a focus on the worst forms of child labour.

**5. Children and youth should have access to accredited and certified safe formal and non-formal quality learning opportunities to develop and realize their full potential in life.**

- a) Governments should provide quality accredited and certified formal education opportunities so that young people can progress to secondary and tertiary education and / or achieve decent livelihoods. This provides sense of purpose and hope for all young Syrian refugees across the sub-region.
- b) Donors who support national educational systems, should call on governments for national formal educational certificates to be consistently recognised across the sub-region through cross border agreements on recognition of student and teacher certification.
- c) Continued technical and financial support by the international community is critical to help governments across the sub-region to develop and adopt accredited and certified non-formal education opportunities, with defined pathways to formal education to ensure a generation of young people grow up with the knowledge and skills to play a constructive role in society.
- d) Governments, with support from the private sector and international donors, should support and provide tailored technical and vocational training opportunities to better prepare adolescents and youth for their working lives so that they can productively contribute to society and the economy.
- e) Donors should continue to provide technical and financial support, to improve the capacity of national education systems to expand the capacity and quality of education systems and develop relevant accreditation and certification frameworks. This is particularly important given the increased strain on education services as a result of conflict, as well as pressure in terms of numbers of children in IDP and refugee hosting communities.
- f) When traditional educational service delivery cannot reach parts of the population, donors, the private sector and governments should support innovative approaches to structured, accredited and certified learning that can engage all children in learning, with a particular focus on those who are in non-formal education or out of school.