

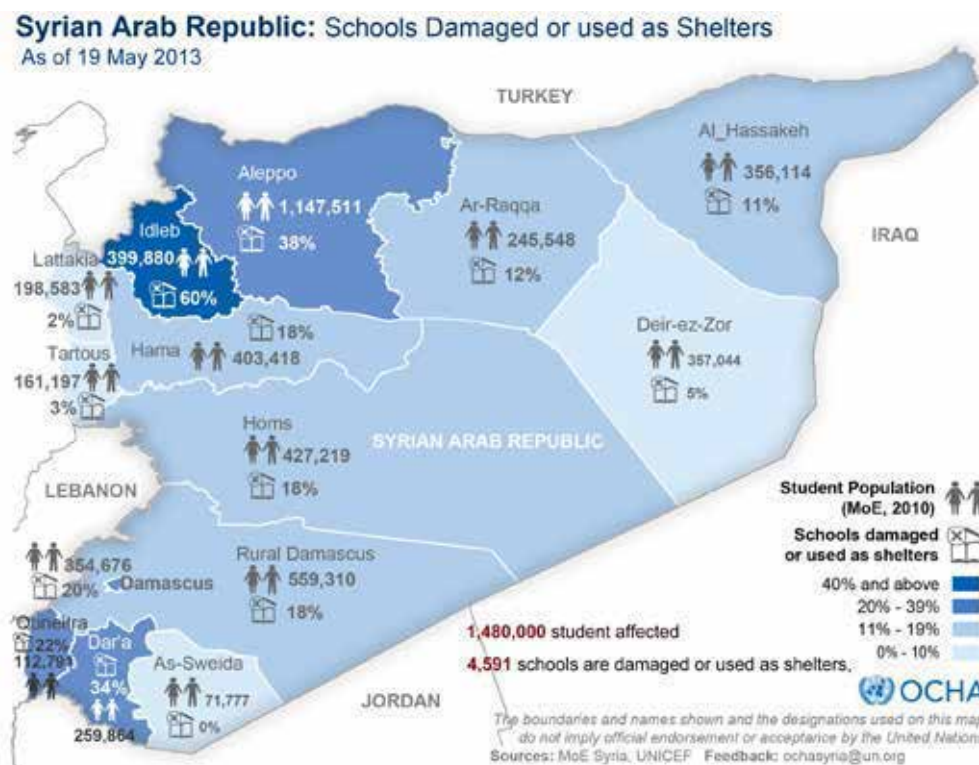
## Overview

**As the crisis in Syria enters its third year, children's access to education continues to deteriorate, threatening hundreds of thousands of Syrian boys and girls who are losing out on their education.**

In areas where conflict has been most severe, schools are damaged while others cannot be used because they are sheltering the internally displaced. Some schools operate in very difficult conditions due to damage to infrastructure, lack of staff, low student attendance, overcrowding and lack of teaching and learning materials.

Children are experiencing stress and trauma. In a number of cases schools have been used by armed forces and groups.

A country that prided itself on near-universal primary school enrolment and gender parity is seeing its education system steadily dismantled.



## The impact of the conflict on education services:

### Key Assessment Findings

- One out of every five schools in Syria is damaged, destroyed or used as collective shelters for internally displaced families.
- Education is most disrupted in areas where conflict has been severe like: Idlib, Aleppo and Dar'a as well as Homs, Hama, Damascus, Rural Damascus and Quneitra.
- Students' attendance rates have dropped significantly - for instance only 6% of children are attending school in Aleppo.
- Main obstacles for attending schools are

insecurity, damaged schools, lack of teachers, lack of education materials and early marriage.

- Some students have lost up to two years of education.
- Over 4,500 schools are damaged or used as shelters, including more than 1,500 in Aleppo alone.
- Schools are overcrowded with some reporting up to 100 children per class.
- Children and adolescents are dropping out of school to try and gain an income for their families.

- Host communities are struggling with inflation and higher costs of fuel which makes transportation to schools difficult for students and teachers.
- School furniture is being used as firewood in the cold winter.
- Many families have lost their official records and papers making it difficult to enrol in official schooling.
- Over 222 educational staff and 97 students have been killed according to MoE Syria.



Children attending an art class in Damascus supported by the Ministry of Culture and UNICEF at a school sheltering internally displaced families.

## UNICEF's response

Since the beginning of the crisis in March 2011, UNICEF in cooperation with partners including 40 NGOs, has worked to ensure that access to education continues for as many Syrian children as possible.

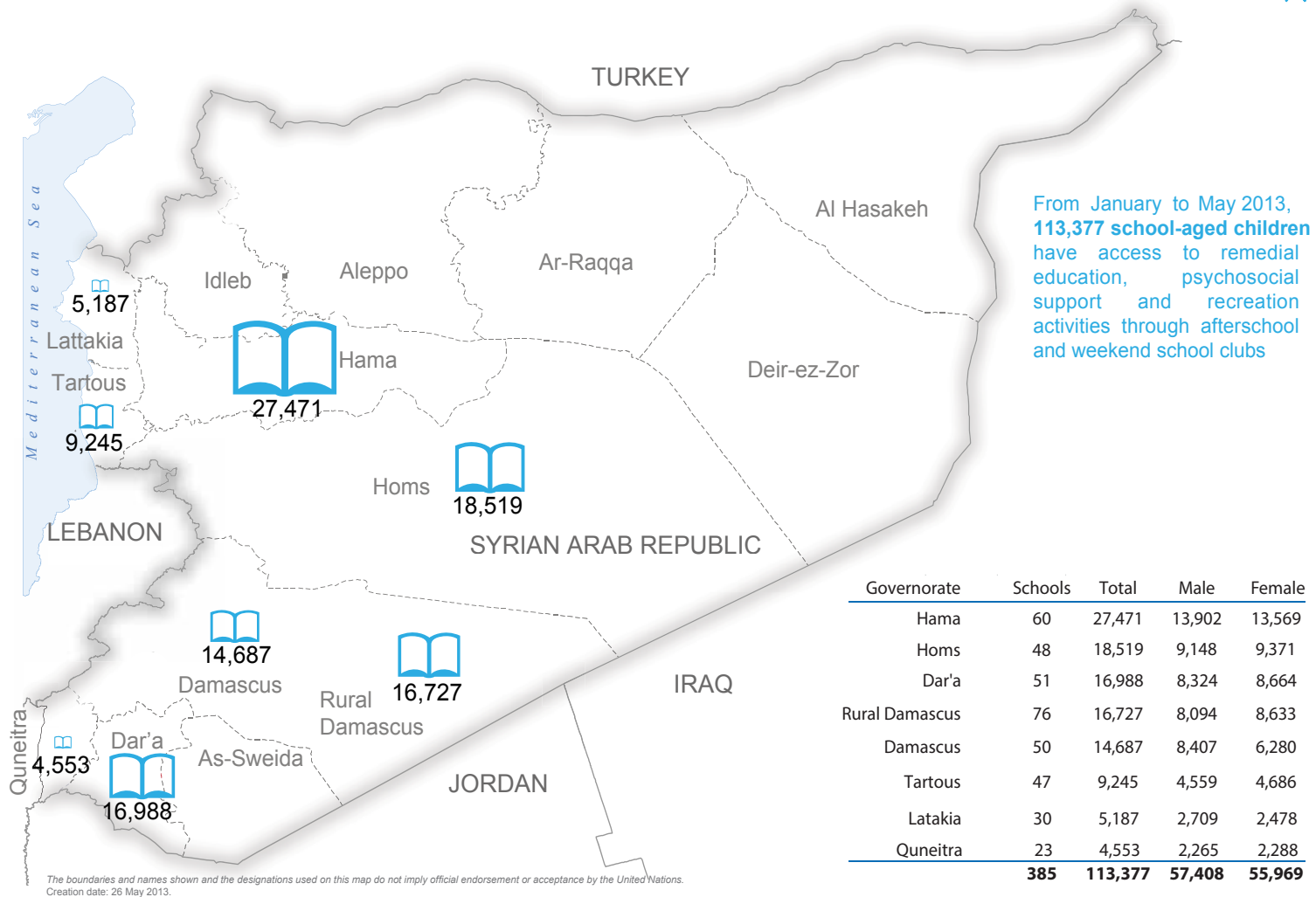
UNICEF believes that school is a place that should provide a safe space for children bringing a sense of normalcy, support and protection against harm.

- Some 113,000 children are benefitting directly from 385 school clubs through active learning, psychosocial support and participation.
- 99,000 children are enrolled in learning programmes.
- Improved physical environment of affected schools.

UNICEF is working with partners to:

- Provide one million children with school materials.
- Increase access to education for 150,000 children with a special focus on internally displaced children and adolescents.
- Reach 300,000 school-aged children to address their psycho-social needs, including through the training of counselors.
- Support Early Childhood Development activities including training for pre-school teachers and volunteers on psychosocial support.
- Schools and kindergartens have a child-friendly physical environment including water and sanitation facilities.
- Provide 500,000 children with awareness on explosive remnants of war (ERW)

## UNICEF school clubs



- Provide pre-fabricated classrooms to increase attendance and support the resumption of educational activities.
- To date, UNICEF has received only 26 per cent of its total funding needs to end December for education activities



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A crowded classroom at a primary school in Homs. The school has just received UNICEF supplies: exercise books, stationery, chalk, and other learning and teaching supplies. Of the 1,200 schools in Homs governorate, about 10 per cent have been damaged or destroyed and many others are used to shelter displaced populations. As a result, some classrooms now accommodate double or triple the usual number of students. Education officials in Homs say that about 50 per cent of students in schools are displaced children.