

**Statement of ChildFund Alliance: Annual Session of the UNICEF Executive Board  
June 2, 2021  
Agenda item 5: Annual report on UNICEF humanitarian action**

Ms. President, Executive Director Fore, and Distinguished Members of the Board, I appreciate the opportunity to address you today and to thank UNICEF for its ongoing leadership in humanitarian action.

As Secretary General of [ChildFund Alliance](#), I speak on behalf of 12 child-focused development organizations. The Alliance is committed to providing expertise in humanitarian crises, as aligned with the objectives of humanitarian action, which are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity.

Our Italy-based member WeWorld has been at the forefront of humanitarian efforts in Syria, where war over the past decade has ravaged the region. It has destroyed businesses, hospitals and schools; left hundreds of thousands dead, injured or missing; and triggered the largest refugee and displacement crisis of our time.

This spring, on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conflict, WeWorld released [Stuck in Time](#), in which it reports more than 500,000 people have died since the conflict began; an estimated 6.2 million people are internally displaced; and 6.7 million have fled. Of those who fled, 1.5 million are in Lebanon. WeWorld is intervening with projects to address basic and acute needs in both Syria and Lebanon. They are targeting education, protection, water, sanitation and hygiene efforts—providing shelter kits and latrines and reaching more than 81,000 people in the past three years with water management and education-related activities.

In 2020, with the support of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and the Italian Development Cooperation Agency (AICS), WeWorld ensured access to school in Syria for almost 7,000 children ages 6 to 19; trained more than 1,000 teachers; and distributed school supplies to nearly 3,000 children. They also trained more than 24,000 children on the risks posed by mines and unexploded devices.

WeWorld's humanitarian programs are urgently needed. During the period between July 2018 and June 2020, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFRM) verified 4,724 grave violations affecting at least 4,474 children in Syria. These include the recruitment and use of children in combat roles, the deaths of 1,557 children, and the maiming of 1,160 children. The CTFRM also verified 371 attacks on schools, medical facilities, and protected persons, and unprecedented attacks on water facilities affecting more than 700,000 people.

We strongly condemn the scale, severity, and recurrence of grave humanitarian violations in Syria, especially against children. We support all calls for immediate and concrete steps to prevent child casualties, end the recruitment of children, end all violations and forms of violence against children, and to hold perpetrators accountable. We also call on the release of all barriers impeding the provision of a more integrated response to ensure that humanitarian assistance provides not only minimum redress, but also durable solutions to the unbearable suffering and erosion of human dignity for the entire population, particularly children.

I thank UNICEF, our partners, and our member WeWorld for working tirelessly to help those in need in Syria.