

SYRIA REFUGEE

BVOR BACKGROUNDBERS



Photo by Samer Daboul





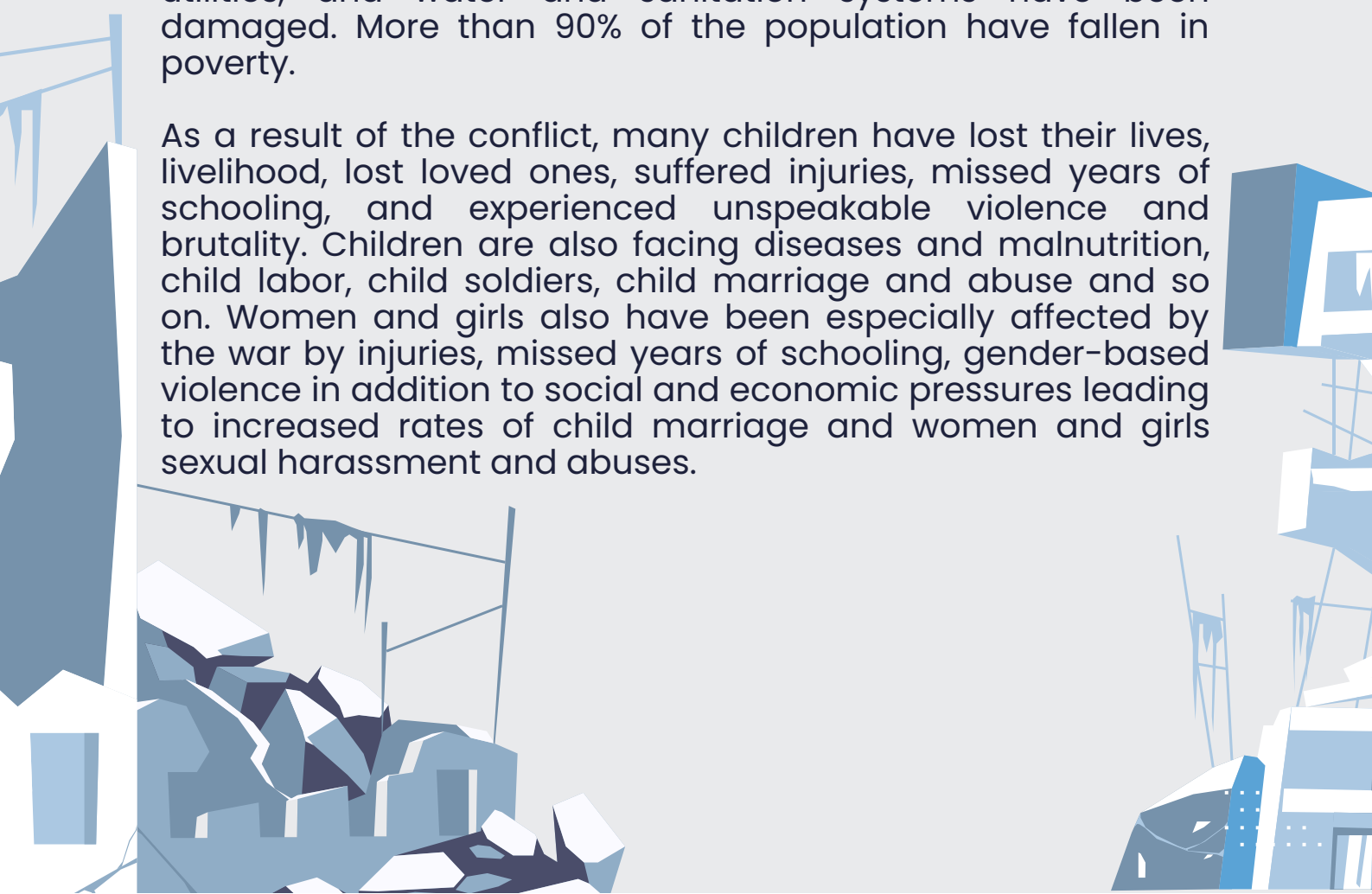
B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

RECENT HISTORY AND REASONS FOR DISPLACEMENT

The Syrian civil war that has been going on now for more than a decade started initially in March 2011 as part of the wider Arab Spring protests. The unrest eventually escalated to an armed conflict after protests called for President Assad's removal. The civil war has been fought by different actors but mainly the Syrian Armed Forces, Syrian Interim Government, nationalists, Sunni Islamist rebel groups, Kurdish-Arab Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and the Al-Qaeda affiliate Guardians of Religion Organization, along with different foreign countries involved in supporting groups on both sides of the conflict. As a result of this ongoing unrest and civil war millions of Syrians have been displaced from their homes, millions died including women and children, and infrastructures have been destroyed.

The infrastructure and overall the social, economic, political, legal and environmental framework in the state have collapsed due to the unrest. Healthcare centres, schools, utilities, and water and sanitation systems have been damaged. More than 90% of the population have fallen in poverty.

As a result of the conflict, many children have lost their lives, livelihood, lost loved ones, suffered injuries, missed years of schooling, and experienced unspeakable violence and brutality. Children are also facing diseases and malnutrition, child labor, child soldiers, child marriage and abuse and so on. Women and girls also have been especially affected by the war by injuries, missed years of schooling, gender-based violence in addition to social and economic pressures leading to increased rates of child marriage and women and girls sexual harassment and abuses.

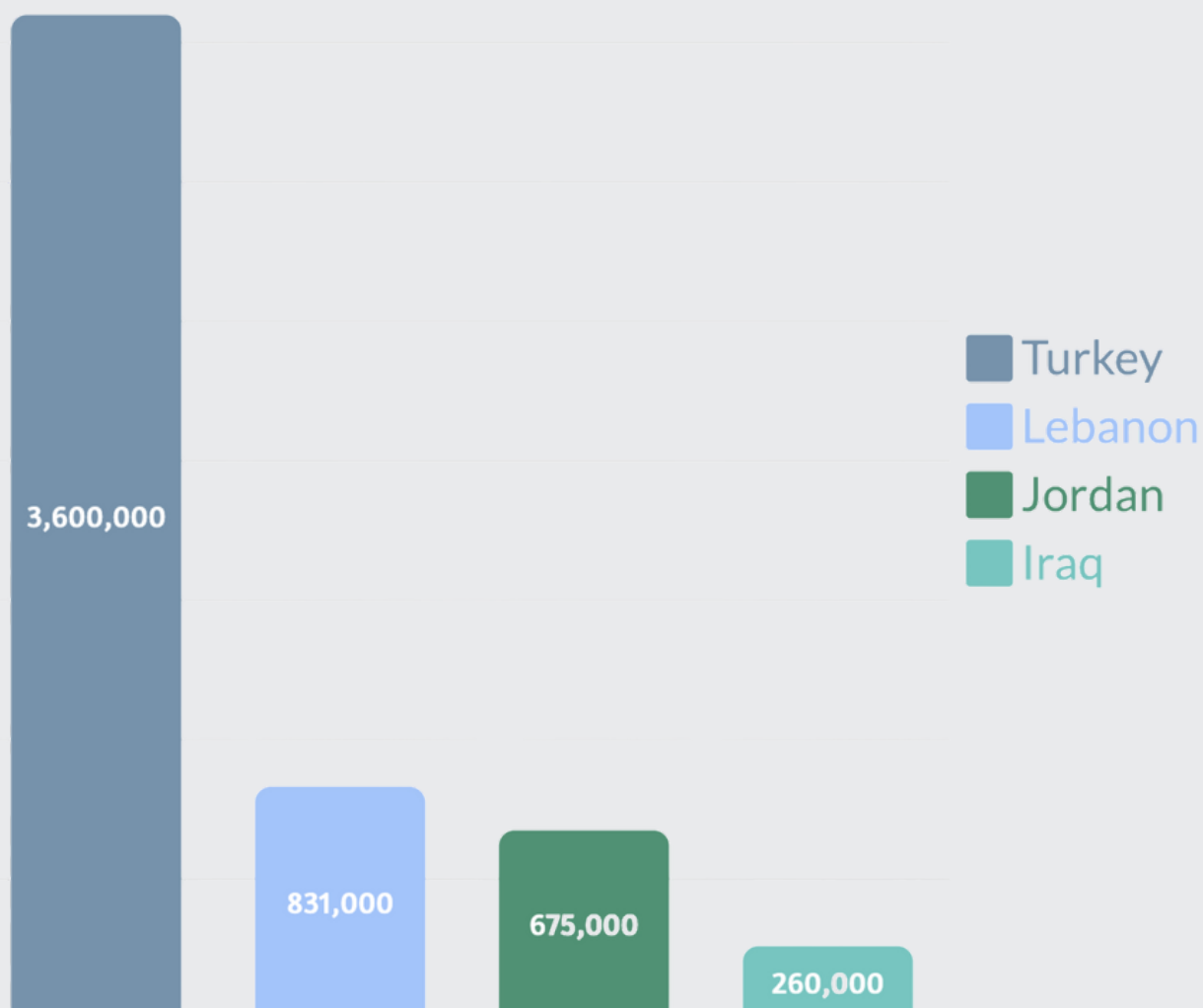




B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

WHERE DO PEOPLE GO?

More than **3.6 million** Syrian refugees are in Turkey. About **831,000** Syrian refugees which make up more than 14% of Lebanon's population. Nearly **675,000** Syrian refugees are in Jordan and just over **260,000** Syrian refugees are in Iraq.





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WHY CAN'T THEY STAY THERE?

Turkey

- Temporary camps were initially constructed to accommodate the immediate response. Those shelters are not intended for long-term use, yet thousands are still living in poor camp conditions. Those who try to find housing in nearby cities are struggling to afford increasing rents.
- Lack of clarity and communication on refugees' status is the other challenge Syrian refugees face making it difficult to open bank accounts, and access education, or medical services. Without refugee status, Syrians also cannot obtain work permits, leading to an illegal job market where workers are vulnerable to exploitation and child labour. The rise of illegal workers has led to a reduction in wages to legal workers, putting Syrians at risk of harassment from the local community.
- Syrian women and girls refugees have been victims of sexual and gender-based violence in Turkey. Gender-based discrimination leads to depriving women of access to work. This leads to their isolation, making them particularly vulnerable.

Lebanon

- Syrian refugees face economic and social hardship due to a lack of status and documentation in Lebanon. The influx of Syrians has resulted in economic, political, social, and religious tensions. Many Syrians live in informal tent settlements with few legal opportunities to earn money, pay for residency fees, utilities, or food.



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Jordan

- Around 80 percent of Jordan's Syrian refugees fall below the poverty line, and 60 percent of families are in extreme poverty. These numbers have increased due to the pandemic. Many Syrians are heavily indebted with 55% of debt for basic needs.
- According to UNHCR, only 2% of refugee households can meet their essential food needs without any negative coping strategies, which include cutting down on meals, pulling children out of school, early marriage, and sending family members to beg. The health of Syrian refugees, including physical injuries and psychological trauma, is exacerbated by poor working, housing, and sanitary conditions.
- Schooling and education has also been challenging to the Syrian refugees in Jordan. In 2020 there were 145,000 Syrian refugees in Jordanian schools, most in double-shift schools. In 2017, over 40% of enrolled children were out of school. A recent report by Human Rights Watch highlights an increasingly lower enrolment rate. The causes are poverty, lack of appropriate transportation, poor educational quality, low value of continuing education given Syrians' limited employment opportunities, administrative enrolment barriers, and lack of accommodations for disabled children.

Iraq

- Syrian refugees based in the camps, remain food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity. Families' dependence on irregular and unpredictable cash jobs in the informal economy is a key aggravator of food insecurity. They are forced to reduce their overall food consumption and have taken on debt. Nearly a third of households rely on humanitarian cash assistance.
- Access to primary health care has decreased, especially reproductive health care for women and girls. The risk of children not receiving a proper education is particularly high. Distance learning has been challenging for refugee children.
- The lack of status and documentation is a challenge as they are not able to work, open bank accounts, or enrol in education.





B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Blended Visa-Office Referred (BVOR) program helps to resettle refugees to Canada identified by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) as those who are the most vulnerable and most in need of resettlement.

The BVOR program is a partnership program between sponsor groups in Canada, Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), and the newcomers. IRCC provides up to six months of income support to the newcomers, while the private sponsors provide the start-up costs, remaining six months financial support, along with social and emotional support for the newcomers' first year in Canada.

For more information about the BVOR program, and to view profiles of refugees that urgently need to be matched with a sponsoring group, please visit our website or contact us via email.

Refugee Sponsorship Training Program

 BVOR@RSTP.CA

 416.290.1700
1.877.290.1701

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