

MIGRATION & DISPLACEMENT

Driving forward research, programming and innovation on child-focused migration and displacement



Save the Children

By mid-2022, over 100 million people were displaced by conflict and violence around the world. During that year alone, 33 million people were displaced by disasters. Over 40% of them are children.

Human mobility is one of the defining characteristics of the 21st century. Children are disproportionately affected by irregular migration and displacement with cascading impacts on their security, nutrition, health, education, and aspirations for the future. The number of children affected by migration and displacement has doubled in the last ten years and is expected to increase even further, driven by conflict and the consequences of the climate crisis felt across the world.

Save the Children operates across **all of the major migration routes** and in the world's most complex displacement situations, providing lifesaving assistance and supporting progress towards long-term solutions.

As the world's largest independent child rights organisation with **established expertise on migration and displacement policy and programming and a footprint across the humanitarian-development nexus**, we are uniquely placed to respond to and influence policy on migration and displacement issues in today's complex crises.

BACKGROUND

Half way through 2022, the number of people forcibly displaced by conflict and persecution surpassed 100 million.¹ In 2022 alone, almost 33 million people were internally displaced by disasters² - a figure set to grow in the coming years.³ Children are dramatically over-represented among the world's displaced: They represent one-third of the global population, but more than 40 per cent of the world's refugees and IDPs.⁴ World over, children in situations of migration and displacement are among the most affected by inequality and discrimination. For example, around half of refugee children are out of school, and two-thirds live in poverty.⁵

Whether they migrate willingly or under duress, displaced children are more susceptible to violence, exploitation, family separation and abuse. For the majority of displaced children, this is not a short-term experience: millions of children have only ever known displacement. For example, in 2021, only 1% of refugees found a durable solution.⁶ Save the Children works in 116 countries to ensure that every child survives, learns and is protected. Our global strategy for 2022-2024 aims to protect the rights of children most affected by discrimination and inequality, now and for the future, through four goals.

For all of these goals, we make special efforts to reach refugee, internally displaced and migrant children. In this regard, there is a clear gap in the international system: there are no migration or displacement-focused organisations that are also experts on child rights. There are also no displacement-focused organisations with a clear dual humanitarian-development mandate. As an organisation with both large-scale humanitarian and development portfolios, and an extensive operational footprint across all regions and the world's major migration routes, Save the Children is in a unique position to work across the nexus, and across geographies and routes, on migration and displacement issues facing children.



Healthy
start in
life



Safe back
to school
& learning



Live free
from
violence



Safety nets
& resilient
families

OUR APPROACH

Our programmes across contexts work to **protect and provide services to these children and their families**. In addition, our 2022-2024 Migration and Displacement Strategy aims to support refugee, migrant and internally displaced children's access to their rights through three main areas of focus:

1. Supporting **access to child-sensitive solutions** through working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus
2. Enforcing **government accountability** to children who are migrating and displaced to ensure protection of their rights
3. Scaling up action in the context of inevitable increase in **population movements as a result of climate change**

In particular, we will:



Leverage our presence along the migration routes to provide comprehensive support to children and families on the move

We work along some of the world's busiest child migration routes, in countries of origin, transit and destination, to provide children with protection and access to basic services. Our route-based programmes (such as the East Africa Migration Routes programme), aim to respond to the needs of children and protect their rights throughout the migration journey, as well as to advocate and strengthen the capacity of authorities to improve protection. In 2019, Save the Children published our [Protecting Children on the Move Programming Guidance](#), building on our field experience from across the world.



Support child-centred durable solutions

Save the Children's [Durable Solutions Toolkit](#) is a comprehensive guidance on advocacy and programming to advance durable solutions for all partners working with displaced or migrating children. We put specific emphasis on children's participation in discussions about durable solutions, and ensuring their agency in decisions that affect them. Together with UNICEF, World Vision and Plan International, we developed a [Child-Centred Durable Solutions Checklist](#) to provide a reference for governments and other actors working in internal displacement situations on how to ensure that the negative impacts of displacement on IDP children are addressed as soon as possible.



Produce ground-breaking research on migration, as well as related impacts of climate change

Our research in migration and displacement contexts mirrors our thought-leadership on topics that concern children affected by migration and displacement, and spotlights practices that work to protect the rights of refugee, internally displaced and migrant children. In recent years, Save the Children has produced, among others, the following migration and displacement research reports: [Walking into the Eye of the Storm \(2021\)](#), to demonstrate the ways in which the climate crisis is already driving widespread and increasingly risky child migration; [Why Children Stay \(2018\)](#) and [Should I Stay or Should I Go? \(2022\)](#), unpacking children's migration decision-making in insecure areas of Sub-Saharan Africa and Northern Central America.



Mobilize our global network to stand up for refugee, internally displaced and migrant children

Save the Children's advocacy aims at ensuring refugee, migrant and displaced children are at the centre of relevant humanitarian, development and climate change-related frameworks, processes, responses and practices at the global, regional and national level. We work closely with IOM, UNHCR and UNICEF globally and across all regions. We co-chair the [Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts](#) and are part of the [GRF Education Alliance](#). We are playing a leading role in coordinating the child rights sector on [child focused pledging](#) in view of the next Global Refugee Forum and lead the [Coalition for the Defence of the Rights of Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons](#).

Innovation with and for migrating and displaced children

Some examples of our innovation work in migration and displacement contexts include:

- **Learning Tree on the Move:** Launched in Guatemala in late 2022 by MDI, Learning Tree on the Move provides an innovative approach to providing education in emergencies to mobile populations. It addresses the education challenges of children on the move through a flexible, cost-efficient, and scalable mobile application, contextualized curriculum and educational content, and an innovative delivery model along the displacement or migration route.
- **Predictive Displacement Analysis:** A project pioneered by MDI uses cutting-edge data analytics to predict the scale, duration, geography, and demographics of mass displacements. In phases 1 and 2, the project has made significant progress towards harnessing the power of data-driven innovation, pivoting to develop machine learning models that predict displacement characteristics in more localized geographies and contexts, developing agent-based models (ABM) that predict displacement characteristics, designing an innovative and potentially ground-breaking methodology, and successfully piloting this in Northern Nigeria.



KEY SUCCESSSES



Save the Children's Global and Regional Migration and Displacement Hubs



BANGLADESH

The Good Cause Campaign in Bangladesh was created to empower families and children at risk to withstand unsafe migration and create access for children on the move to adequate services to ensure their rights to protection and education. The project resulted in extensive capacity building and sensitization of 19,694 children and 14,126 parents through 32 socialization centres, group formation, trainings and awareness sessions. In addition to this, Children's access to education in Dhaka increased from 52% in the baseline period to 95.6% in the final year of the project. During the reporting period, 1,188 children and their families (52.2% of total migrants) registered in the migration registration systems of 12 local government institutions.

SYRIA/LEBANON

In 2022, Save the Children launched a project in Syria and Lebanon to create pathways to material, physical and psychosocial safety for displacement-affected and returnee children. Save the Children and its local partners established an adolescent girls and womens centre in Raqqa to improve access and promote meaningful participation of women and girls in project activities. As a result, 366 adolescent girls and young women have been provided with employability skills to enable them to pursue available livelihoods options or start their own businesses. In addition, we have provided tailored age and gender appropriate protection services to boys and girls as well as gender-based violence prevention and risk mitigation through addressing gender inequality in the community.

EL SALVADOR

Save the Children's response to the forced displacement of girls, boys, adolescents and their families in El Salvador has yielded great results. Our work has improved the response of the Specialized Care Directorate of the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women to survivors of gender-based violence, serving adolescent girls and 268 women. Additionally, it has strengthened comprehensive child and family social services programmes within the Forced Displacement Unit of the Attorney General's Office for the care of 475 cases of people in conditions of forced displacement and other forms of violence. With the support of the Salvadoran Institute for the Integral Development of Children and Adolescents, 1,343 cases of psychological first aid and crisis care were addressed.

PARTNERSHIPS

Save the Children works closely with governments, migrants or displaced populations, affected populations, and other partners to address today's complex migration challenges. It recognizes that no single organization can expect to reap migration's benefits or address its challenges by managing it alone. At the national, regional, and global levels, we collaborate with relevant UN agencies (IOM, UNICEF, among others) and other international organizations, including PLAN International, World Vision, and academia.

KEY TOOLS & RESOURCES

- [Tipping Points to Turning Points \(2022\)](#)
- [Wherever We Go, Someone Does Us Harm \(2022\)](#)
- [Anywhere But Syria \(2021\)](#), [Achieving Durable Solutions for Returnee Children \(2019\)](#)
- [Displaced Children and Emerging Technologies \(2019\)](#), [Digital Safeguarding for Migrating and Displaced Children \(2020\)](#)

For more information, contact the Migration & Displacement Initiative team at MDI@savethechildren.org

THANK YOU

