



PRESS RELEASE

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EDUCATION IN SYRIA: REMEDIAL CLASSES FOR 30 THOUSAND CHILDREN, THANKS ALSO TO ENEL'S CONTRIBUTION

UNHCR and Enel announce the results for the first half of the year of the project supported by Enel Cuore Onlus dedicated to the education of Syrian children

Rome, November 11th, 2016 - Access to remedial classes for over **30 thousand children in Syria**. **365 teachers** trained in providing psychological support to children who have experienced trauma. These are some of the most important results achieved in the first half of 2016 by the UNHCR project "**Educate a Child Syria**," of which **Enel is one of the main Italian supporters**. These positive results have been achieved despite difficult operating conditions due to the intensification of fighting between armed groups in Syria. The project's results were announced a few days after the adoption of the New York Declaration by 193 governments at the General Assembly of the United Nations, which affirms the urgent need for greater protection of the rights of refugees and calls upon the international community and host countries to increase educational opportunities for children.

The remedial courses run by UNHCR, with the contribution of Enel, enabled 30 thousand displaced children who had to leave of school to recoup lost months or years of school in the first six months of 2016. It is an essential programme, as it enables students to re-enter state schools and pass any entrance exams, thus decreasing the risk of permanently dropping out.

*"We would like to once again express our gratitude to Enel for its significant commitment to the education of children in Syria", said **Lionello Boscardi**, UNHCR Chief of Section Leadership Giving Private Sector Partnership. "Although the further escalation of hostilities between armed groups in Syria made humanitarian operations very challenging in the first half of 2016, we are pleased to have already completed almost all of the activities involved in the project, thanks in part to the essential contribution of Enel. For the UNHCR, the education of refugee and displaced children remains a top priority. The support of companies like Enel is extremely valuable at a time like the present when the world is witnessing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis".*

*"The first victims of any conflict are children. In addition to the safety of families and the peace of the home in which they live, they are robbed of the opportunity to think about the future," said **Patrizia Grieco**, Enel Chairman. "Not being able to go to school is the first right they have been denied. This is why we are proud to contribute to UNHCR's project "Educate a Child Syria", which in a short time has managed to give access to education to 30 thousand Syrian children and to train 365 teachers in a particularly difficult task, namely assisting and developing the best teaching approaches for those who have suffered trauma and been forced to grow up in inhumane conditions".*

"Educate a Child Syria" has made it possible to establish training courses to help teachers identify the different types of trauma to which children living in a conflict situation may have been exposed and



provide them with the necessary skills to support those children psychologically and protect them through play and school. The work of qualified teachers ensures the children receive a quality education, a key element in countering early school leaving. In the first half of 2016, over 30 thousand Syrian children also benefited from counselling and educational guidance sessions. In the second part of 2016, the project is expanding to two other areas: direct economic support for displaced families with school-age children – beginning in September with the start of the school year – and renovating school buildings.

The results of the first six months of the “**Educate a Child Syria**” project arrive a few days after the publication of the UNHCR report that denounced the fact that 3.7 million refugee children do not have a chance to go to school. Of these, about 1 million 750 thousand do not attend primary school. Only half of school-age refugee children have access to primary education, compared with a global average of more than 90 per cent. In Syria, in particular, in 2009, 94 percent of children had access to primary and lower secondary education, a percentage that in June 2016 had dropped to 60 per cent, leaving about 2.1 million children and adolescents without access to education.

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