

Abe Schoen

UNICEF: Topic #1 - Children in Afghanistan

YUNMUN XXXIV

The children of Afghanistan are facing a child rights crisis. For decades rampant conflict had limited the aid that UNICEF could provide to the children of Afghanistan. Since the 2021 departure of the NATO Allies coalition and the subsequent Taliban seizure of power, UNICEF has had greater physical access to many parts of the country, yet threats and restrictions have severely curtailed UNICEF's ability to administer humanitarian assistance and provide equality of opportunity. The humanitarian crisis facing two thirds of Afghanistan includes millions of children.

Almost 16 million children wake up each morning in Afghanistan to drastic conditions. In 2023 alone around 2.3 children will potentially face malnutrition<sup>1</sup>. Adults and children alike are deprived of the proper food and water needed to sustain themselves nutritionally. Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) concerns are all heightened, 50% of the population is without access to safe water<sup>2</sup>.

These problems are further compounded by environmental issues and natural disasters. Afghanistan is the fifth most at-risk country due to climate change, contributing to floods and droughts alike<sup>3</sup>. After a series of devastating earthquakes over a thousand people are dead and hundreds of thousands have been displaced, further jeopardizing the already insecure lives of many of the children in Afghanistan<sup>4</sup>. Beyond natural environmental factors, children face further threats in the conditions of rampant child labor as well as living surrounded by mines and other explosives, the vestiges of past wars<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/delivering-support-afghanistans-children>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/afghanistan>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/afghanistan>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/press-releases/unicef-earthquake-relief-supplies-treat-afghan-children-and-their-families-arrive>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/afghanistan-childrens-crisis-unicef-afghanistan-representative-fran-equizas-remarks>

Since the governmental turnover in 2021 there have been additional crises for women, particularly in education. Females have been banned from receiving a secondary education, limiting their knowledge and capabilities for the future. They have also been restricted in what jobs they can work<sup>6</sup>.

Some questions to consider:

- Why should your country care about children in Afghanistan?
- What actions should UNICEF take in Afghanistan? How can your country help UNICEF maximize its expanded reach?
- What is your country's policy on providing foreign aid? What aid can your country provide?
- What is your country's policy with regard to female education?

Please do not feel limited to just these guiding questions. Allow your research to help you build your country's independent stance. Make sure the views you present are aligned with those of your country. YU and YUNMUN have a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism. I ask that you please make sure to provide all citations. All papers will be submitted through Turnitin. Please email me at [aaschoen@mail.yu.edu](mailto:aaschoen@mail.yu.edu) with any questions.

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YUNMUN XXXIV

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/afghanistan>