

# IKEA Foundation



## **IKEA Foundation gives grants worth €9.4 million to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and Save the Children to help children and families caught up in Syria conflict**

**15 March 2016**

As the conflict in Syria enters its fifth year, the IKEA Foundation has donated €9.4 million to help children and their families, both within Syria and in neighbouring countries. The money is supporting the lifesaving work of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and Save the Children.

The conflict has created one of the worst humanitarian crises of recent times. More than 11 million people—half the country's pre-war population—have been killed or forced to flee their homes. Many essential services such as schools and healthcare have completely disintegrated.

The IKEA Foundation's €5.7 million grant to MSF is funding emergency medical aid to some of these children and families in Syria, and to Syrian refugees and vulnerable people in Lebanon and Iraq. It will pay for essential healthcare, mental health services—particularly for children—and training medical workers, in a region that is home to 1.17 million people.

Avril Benoit, Director of Communication and Fundraising from MSF, says: "The funding from the IKEA Foundation is helping MSF provide lifesaving medical care to some of the most vulnerable children and families in Syria and the surrounding areas. In a country where the healthcare system has collapsed, it will enable us to offer essential services such as maternity clinics, paediatric healthcare and treatment for victims of sexual and gender-based violence."

The Foundation has also given €3.7 million to Save the Children to support its work in strengthening and training 17 local partner organisations in Syria. This funding will give them the knowledge and skills they need to increase protection of 41,000 vulnerable children and provide basic services such as healthcare and education.

Seven-year-old Fatima (not her real name), from northern Syria, dreams of becoming a teacher. But with fighting a constant part of daily life, children's lives, health and futures are in danger. Once, nearly all children in Syria went to school but the country now has the second worst enrolment rate in the world.

In the area where Fatima lives, Save the Children and its partners are supporting schools, repairing classrooms and setting up temporary learning spaces. They are also providing learning equipment, and training and supporting teachers, so children like Fatima can continue learning.

Sonia Khush, Save the Children's Senior Humanitarian Advisor for Syria, says: "We are very excited about this partnership with the IKEA Foundation that will allow us to reach vulnerable children by supporting local organisations who can access hard-to-reach areas in Syria. This is the first time Save the Children is able to work from all our bases, inside Syria and in neighbouring countries, to deliver a coordinated approach in strengthening the capacity of our partners across Syria."

Jonathan Spampinato, head of strategic planning for the IKEA Foundation, says: "A generation of children in Syria are losing their childhoods, as the conflict disrupts every part of their daily lives. These children are at risk of illness, malnutrition and abuse, while millions have been forced to quit school. The work of organisations like MSF and Save the Children is essential in protecting and supporting Syria's children, offering them - and the nation - hope for a better future when the conflict ends."

Last month, the IKEA Foundation, UN Refugee Agency and What Design Can Do challenged designers and creative thinkers to find new ways to support urban refugees. The five best entries will receive up to €10,000 each, along with expert advice and guidance to develop their concepts into feasible plans. Both new ideas and existing concepts that need development are eligible. Everyone is welcome to join the challenge, including IKEA co-workers. Read more about [the process](#) or [enter now](#). The deadline is 1 May 2016.

### **ABOUT IKEA FOUNDATION**

The IKEA Foundation (Stichting IKEA Foundation) is the philanthropic arm of INGKA Foundation, the owner of the IKEA Group of companies. We aim to improve opportunities for children and youth in some of the world's poorest communities by funding holistic, long-term programmes that can create substantial, lasting change. The IKEA Foundation works with strong strategic partners applying innovative approaches to achieve large-scale results in four fundamental areas of a child's life: a place to call home; a healthy start in life; a quality education; and a sustainable family income, while helping these communities fight and cope with climate change.

Learn more at [www.ikeafoundation.org](http://www.ikeafoundation.org) and [www.facebook.com/IKEAfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/IKEAfoundation)