

UNICEF envoy David Beckham sets sights on new goal: ending bullying in Indonesia's schools

To help the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) tackle bullying in Indonesia – where one in three children have been physically attacked in school – David Beckham has visited the country to meet youth who have faced peer violence.

"I spent time with an amazing young girl, Sripun, who was voted by her peers to take part in an anti-bullying programme to help [stop violence in schools](#)," said Mr. Beckham who is a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, after his trip to see how the [7: The David Beckham UNICEF Fund](#) is supporting Indonesian schools.

The 15-year-old told Mr. Beckham how she has become a leader in her school to prevent bullying, and shared her story on the football legend's Instagram.

"She's a change-maker and is now helping to create positive learning environments for other students to feel safe," he said. "This has increased her confidence and she's hopeful that other students won't have to go through the same bullying experience she did."

The '7 Fund' is supporting UNICEF programmes in Indonesia, El Salvador, Nepal and Uganda to help children break down barriers and unlock their incredible potential. It is tackling bullying, violence, child marriage and missed education – making sure children, especially girls, get the opportunity to realize their true potential.

Peer violence and bullying are among the top challenges facing young people in Indonesia, where more than one-in-five children aged 13-15 have been bullied – some 18 million in all.

Moreover, another one-in-three have been physically attacked in school. This violence increases the risk of poor mental health among children and leads to early school drop-out.



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UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador David Beckham plays soccer with students and teachers at the SMPN 17 school in Semarang, Indonesia.

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The '7 Fund' is supporting programmes that empower youth to speak out when they experience or witness violence.

Mr. Beckham saw first-hand how schools in Indonesia are taking a student-focused approach by involving not only those who have been bullied, but children who have previously bullied others.

Under this approach, a peer nominated group is trained on issues of bullying and taught how to create positive environments. At the same time, teachers learn how to use positive discipline so classrooms remain violence-free.

Mr. Beckham learned that 7,000 children have already benefited from bullying prevention programmes in Indonesia, with early pilot programmes indicating nearly a 30 per cent reduction in bullying.

"I feel very proud to see how my 7 Fund is helping UNICEF tackle bullying and

violence in schools in Indonesia, and is ultimately keeping children, especially girls, safe in their schools so they can continue their education and hope for a better future,” concluded the Goodwill Ambassador.

[UN receives nearly \\$1 billion from Saudi Arabia and UAE for humanitarian response to Yemen crisis](#)

Ahead of the upcoming international fundraising conference for Yemen, the United Nations has received nearly \$1 billion contributions from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), urging other donors to follow suit and help tackle the world’s worst humanitarian crisis there.

UN [Secretary-General António Guterres](#) expressed his deep gratitude for the \$930 million provided on Tuesday evening by the two donor countries to the Yemen Humanitarian Fund.

“I would like to take this occasion to appeal to all the other donors who will be meeting in Geneva next week... to [follow the same generosity](#)” shown by the two countries, the UN chief told reporters at the world body’s New York Headquarters, after meeting with Prince Mohamad Bin Salman Al Saud, Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince.

“[These funds](#) cover almost one-third of the \$2.96 billion required to implement the 2018 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan, which will enable the United Nations and its partners to help alleviate the suffering of millions of vulnerable people across Yemen,” read a statement issued by Mr. Guterres’ office, following the signing of the memorandum on the voluntary contributions.

More than 22 million people in Yemen require humanitarian aid or protection assistance, including 2 million who are internally displaced due to the ongoing conflict between the Government and rebel forces.

On 3 April, donors will meet in the [humanitarian pledging conference](#) in Geneva, Switzerland.

In his meeting with the Crown Prince, who is also First Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister, Mr. Guterres said “to give to those in need is a central pillar of Islam,” noting that two-thirds of the refugees are Muslims and are received by Muslim countries.

The Secretary-General and the Crown Prince discussed the obligations of all parties to the conflict under international humanitarian law to protect

civilians and civilian infrastructure, and the critical need for humanitarian access across the country and for all of Yemen's ports to remain open to both humanitarian and commercial movement.

They also discussed the need for the parties to the conflict to work towards a negotiated political settlement through inclusive intra-Yemeni dialogue.

Mr. Guterres expressed the UN's readiness to work together with Saudi Arabia for these objectives.

The UN, through its [envoy](#), has been engaged in helping Yemenis to find a peaceful solution. UN agencies and partners are also on the ground to deliver life-saving aid.

[UN allocates \\$9 million to help thousands of people displaced in north-east Nigeria](#)

Some 60,000 people displaced by ongoing hostilities in Nigeria's crisis-torn Borno state will receive life-saving aid thanks to an allocation from the United Nations-managed country-based humanitarian assistance fund.

"The crisis continues to [displace thousands](#) of vulnerable women, children and men every week. Many have gone through unspeakable hardship and the UN and its partners remain committed to help alleviate their suffering," said Edward Kallon, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria.

Set up through the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund (NHF), the assistance includes \$2 million in support to the UN Humanitarian Air Service for frontline responders in the country's north-east.

"This UN fund give us the flexibility to prioritize those who are most in need of aid and act swiftly for the good of the people of north-east Nigeria."

The [region's humanitarian crisis](#), sparked mainly by Boko Haram's years-long insurgency, remains one of the most severe globally.

In the worst-affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, at least 7.7 million people are in need this year— with about 80 per cent, or 6.1 million, targeted for humanitarian assistance.

The \$9 million allocation will help fund 15 projects supporting humanitarian rapid response in areas affected by large-scale conflict-related displacements, particularly in the northern parts of Borno, along the

Maiduguri-Monguno axis.

In just three months, the close to 30,000 people who have fled violence in hard-to-reach areas are in dire need of food, water, shelter, clothes and medical services. Additionally, the funds will help scale up the response near the border with Cameroon in eastern Borno – Gwoza, Bama, Dikwa, Kala/Balge, Monguno, Askira/Uba – and northern Adamawa – Madagali – where approximately another 30,000 have arrived following military operations.

Finally, the funds will also help maintain UN Humanitarian Air Service operations, crucial to reach and deliver aid in remote areas of the north-east, especially where roads are unusable.

Under the leadership of Edward Kallon, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, the NHF is managed by the [UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs](#) (OCHA) to provide flexible and timely funds for basic life-saving support. To date, it has raised \$48 million in contributions and pledges.

[Security Council renews UN mission in DR Congo](#)

The Security Council on Tuesday extended for one year the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), making it a priority for the operation to protect civilians and provide support for implementation of a 31 December 2016 agreement on holding elections.

Adopting a unanimous resolution, the 15-member body authorized the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ([MONUSCO](#)) to maintain the troop ceiling of 16,215 military personnel, 660 military observers and staff officers, 391 police personnel, and 1,050 personnel of formed police units, until 31 March 2019.

Also in the 63-paragraph text, the Council reiterated its appeal to all Congolese actors to work for the preservation of the still fragile gains in the path of peace and stability in the African country, and urges the Government to hold accountable those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law or violations and abuses of human rights, in particular those that may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Secretary-General is requested to prioritize and align budgetary resources based on critical tasks set out in the mandate.

The troop levels were retained, including more than 16,000 military personnel and 400 police, but the Council requested the Secretary-General to undertake

contingency planning within 90 days, looking at all options, including through inter-mission cooperation.

'When weapons speak, civilians pay the price,' says UN aid chief as Syria war grinds on

More than 1,700 people reportedly killed in military operations and airstrikes on Eastern Ghouta since late February, the top United Nations relief official said on Tuesday, describing the past few months of relentless bloodshed as "some of the worst yet" for civilians inside war-torn Syria.

Mark Lowcock said attacks on critical civilian infrastructure like medical facilities continue to be reported with at least 28 reported attacks on health facilities since mid-February and more than 70 verified incidents since the beginning of this year.

"Tens of thousands of people have also been displaced from across the war-ravaged country and many are living in overcrowded, ill-equipped shelters. There is also a severe shortage of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, as well as rising protection concerns," he said.

Mr. Lowcock, who is the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, told the 15-member Council that UN agencies and their partners are working as hard as conditions permit to provide support to people in need.

Challenges range from physical security for aid workers, continued fighting, denial of access, and lack of resources.

We are essentially just given crumbs – an occasional convoy here and there, often, coincidentally, shortly before our monthly briefings to you – *UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock*

"We are essentially just given crumbs – an occasional convoy here and there, often, coincidentally, shortly before our monthly briefings to you [the Security Council members]," said the senior relief official.

As such, he said: "5.6 million Syrians in acute need cannot live on crumbs."

Mr. Lowcock called on all Council Members as well as the members of the International Syria Support Group Humanitarian Task Force – the UN-backed task force created two years ago to boost aid delivery to besieged towns and war-weary civilians – to exert their individual and collective influence over

the parties.

He also reiterated the UN Secretary-General's call on all parties to fully respect international humanitarian and human rights law, to ensure immediate humanitarian access and guarantee the protection of civilians, including in relation to displacements and evacuations.



UN Photo/Loey Felipe

Mark Lowcock (on screen), Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, briefs the Security Council meeting on the situation in Syria.

Concluding his briefing, the UN relief chief recalled Security Council [resolution 2401](#) adopted last month – in which the Council demanded an immediate cease in hostilities and conditions that to enable humanitarian aid deliveries and medical evacuations of those in need – and called on the UN body to make the resolution a reality for the people of Syria.

“Whatever the difficulty, the United Nations and its partners, remain determined to follow through, for the sake of the Syrian people,” said Mr. Lowcock.

The seemingly unending conflict in Syria has surpassed World War II in terms of duration.

Since the [conflict](#) broke out in March 2011, more than 13 million Syrians remain dependent on humanitarian assistance, including 6.1 million internally displaced and over 5.5 million driven into refuge outside its borders. Furthermore, a third of houses and residences across the country and about half of all health facilities are estimated to have been destroyed.

More than 2.75 million children are out of school and about two-thirds of all Syrian children have lost a loved one, had their house damaged or suffered conflict-related injuries.