

Syrian children succumb to freezing temperatures while crossing into Lebanon – UNICEF

20 January 2018 – At least 12 Syrians, including two children, lost their lives to the bitter cold in eastern Lebanon as they tried to enter the country, the United Nations Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) reported Saturday, warning that there are fears more could be trapped along the route.

“More children could be among the dead as residents in the area and the Lebanese authorities continue to look for people who are reportedly trapped in the mountains in freezing temperatures and snow,” said Geert Cappelaere, the UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, in a [statement](#).

“Syrian people continue to risk their lives and the lives of their children in a desperate search for safety and shelter,” he added.

The tragic incident occurred near the Masha’ border crossing between Lebanon and Syria.

In the statement, Mr. Cappelaere also said that UNICEF has been distributing blankets, warm clothes, and fuel to heat schools to help families cope with the harsh winter in Syria and other countries in the region.

However, funding constraints are challenging its ability to continue the assistance.

So far, UNICEF has received only half of the funding needed for winter response, and if urgent funding is not received, it will not be able to reach nearly 800,000 children with winter assistance, said the UN agency.

Underscoring that the death of the two Syrian children is a “reminder” that much more needs to be done, Mr. Cappelaere calling for an end to brutal conflicts and increased support for vulnerable children.

“We have no excuse. We cannot continue failing children,” he said.