

Muzoon's Story

Muzoon Almellehan is an 18-year-old girl who comes from Syria. Three years ago, Muzoon and her family were forced to flee their country and they found shelter in a refugee camp in Jordan. The war has put almost half of the country's pre-war population of 23 million in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. 4.8 million Syrians have fled their country, and another 6.5 million are displaced within Syria; half of all Syrian refugees are children. Refugee children are extremely vulnerable; malnutrition and diseases brought on by poor sanitation, are threatening the health of children. Occurrences of early marriage and child labor have risen dramatically among Syrian refugee children, and the longer children are out of school, the lower the likelihood they will return and get an education. This, together with the lack of educational opportunities, has left almost 3 million Syrian children out of school.



Muzoon is aware of the importance of education and therefore she embarked on a campaign to ensure that every Syrian refugee girl had access to a good education. She convinced countless parents to send their children to school, rather than marry them off at an early age. Early marriage is a particular problem in refugee camps, where parents see it as the only way to protect their daughters. Muzoon went from tent to tent in the refugee camp and talked to children and their parents. She persuaded many children to go and to stay in school. Her campaign garnered global media coverage and high praise from refugees, international decision makers and journalists. This gave her a platform to meet world leaders, convincing them to do more and spend more to ensure a proper education for Syrian refugee children. Muzoon and her family moved to the United Kingdom in the summer of 2016, where she continues her advocacy for Syrian girls' education.

"If Syrian children are not educated, who will rebuild our country? We need an education because Syria needs us. Syria needs engineers, teachers, doctors, and journalists. Without us, who will bring peace?"

Muzoon was nominated by Malala Yousafzai and the Malala Fund.