

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

# ISIS Recruiting Children



The Kidz on the Block:  
Alex, Brie, Bridgette and Zach

*An Entire Generation bred, trained, and indoctrinated for one purpose: Genocide!*

# The face of the problem...

*“Eleven year old Abu Imara al Omri kneels down to kiss his father’s hand; a final blessing before the boy blows himself up in a truck full of explosives.”*

- Erin McLaughlin

(CNN Erin)



Photo credit to CNN

# Overview

## Problem:

- 1,500 children are forced fight and die for ISIS.
- Children are schooled and indoctrinated with the morals and ideals of a radical Islamic faith.
- Guns, Allah, Bombs, and infidel extermination is all that matters.

Location: Syria and Around the Globe

(Reporter and Post)



# Historical Aspect - The Evolution of ISIS

<http://bnobbe.wixsite.com/isisrecruitschildren/history-of-isis>

## Evolution of a Terrorist

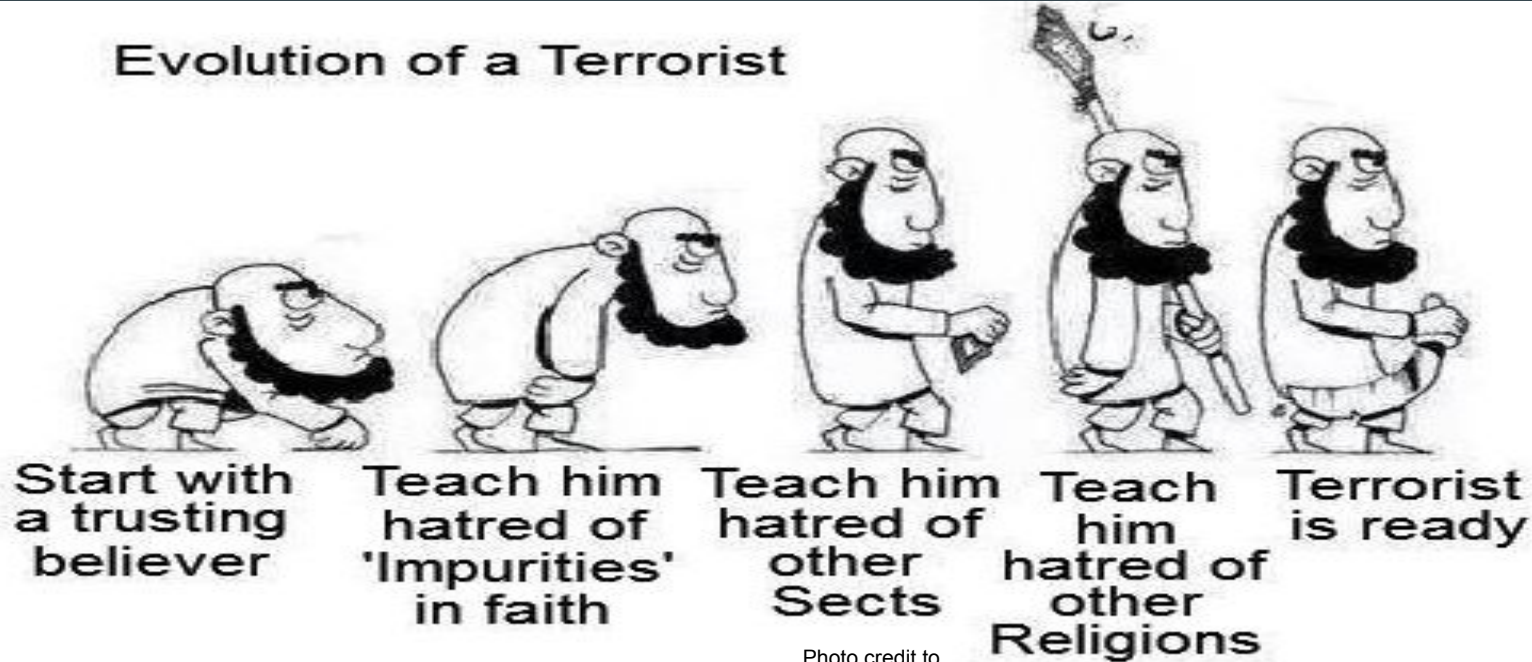
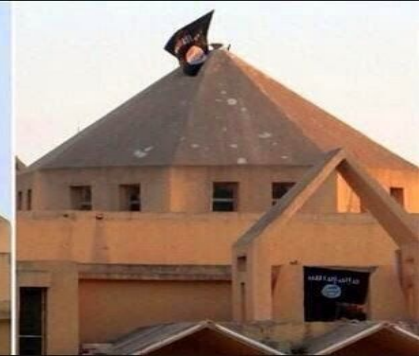


Photo credit to  
newscentralasia.net

(Timeline)

# What ISIS is capable of....



تنفيذ الحكم الشرعي فيمن سب الله عز وجل



# Country Overview - ISIS and Syria



Everything about ISIS is counterproductive to Syria's sustainability, but these four topics in particular are severely impacted.

(CNN Tim)

# Global Overview - How does ISIS impact the Globe?

**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



**10** REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



**15** LIFE  
ON LAND



**16** PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS



# Sports Truly Bring the World Together....



Soccer is the most popular sports in the world. It is cheap, it is fun, and all you need is a ball, or in ISIS' cases, a severed head. ISIS has been known to force children to play the sport with only a severed head to build tolerance of violence and gore. Click the photo for video evidence, viewer discretion is advised ("ISIS Forces").

photo credit to Dailymail.com



# Cultural Aspect

- ISIS and Islamic Religious Beliefs
  - Children joining ISIS is seen as obligation to Islam
- Some Parents Encourage Children to Join ISIS
  - “ISIS encourages mothers to sacrifice their sons for the Caliphate” (Sinkewich).
- Rite of Passage
- Martyr Status



Image Credit: PBS NewsHour

# Economical Aspect

- Syrian Economic Collapse
  - Destruction of Cities and Businesses
  - Syrians Fleeing
  - Lack of trade
  - Government aid services collapse
- ISIS' Money Sources
  - Oil Production and Selling
  - Taxing
  - Ransoms from Kidnappings
  - Looting and Selling
- ISIS' Control over Syria
- Cost Incentive for Joining
  - Men and Children alike

## How does Isis fund itself?

Estimated monthly and yearly Isis revenue streams

Estimated monthly revenue streams



Estimated annual revenue streams



\*Upper estimate for 2014



Sources: US Department of the Treasury, Bloomberg

i100

from  
The INDEPENDENT

statista

Photo Credit: Rise for India

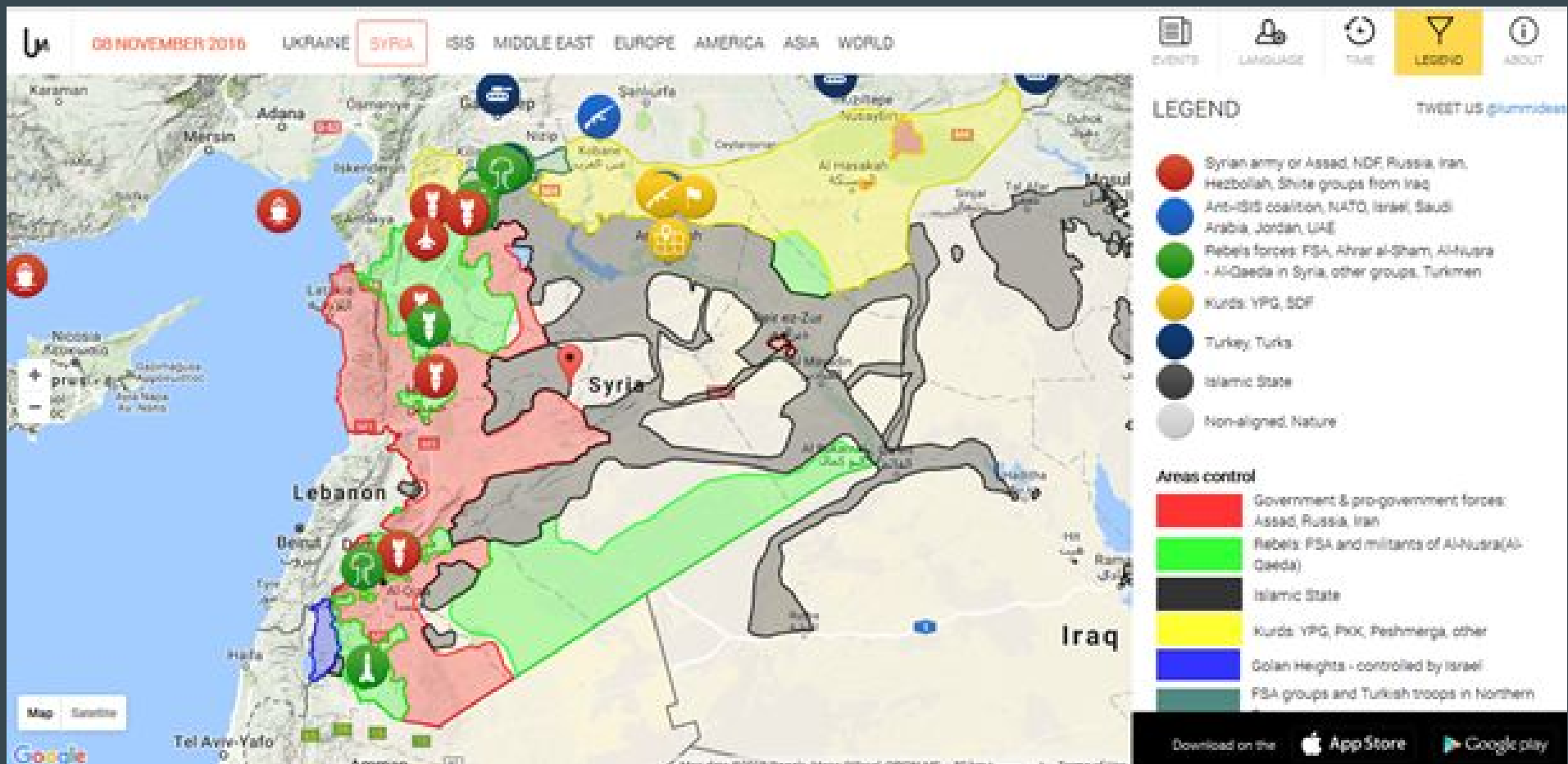
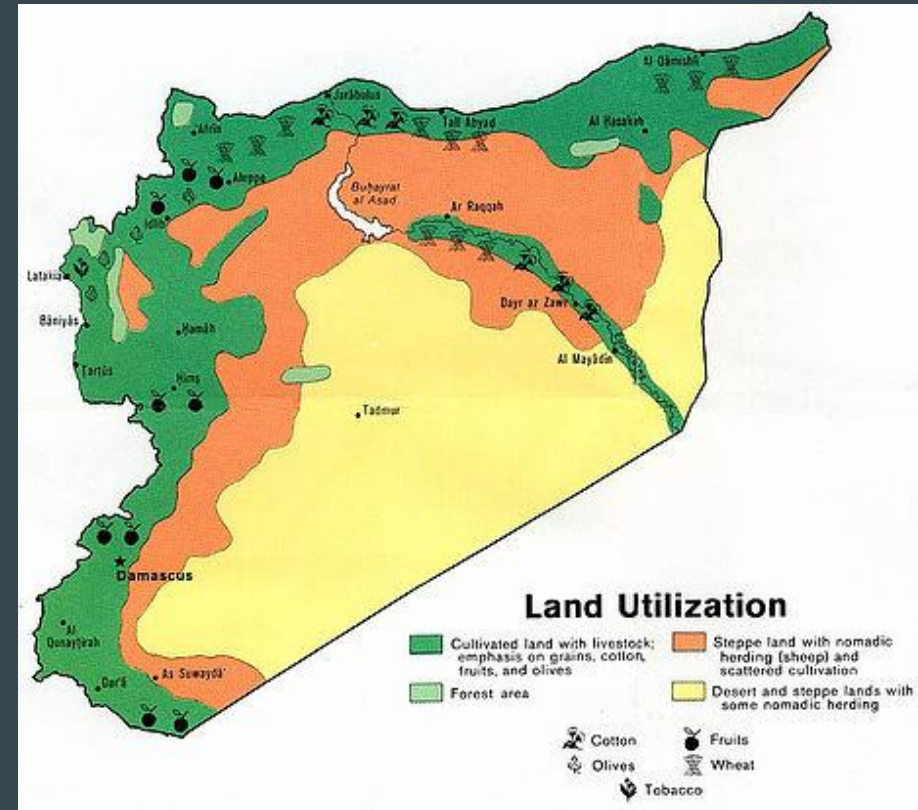


Image Credit: <http://syria.liveuamap.com/>

# Environmental Aspects

- Much of Syria is Desert or Steppe
- War Zone
- Bombing of Cities and Oil Refineries
  - Air and Groundwater Pollution
    - Sulfur Dioxide
    - Nitrogen Dioxide
    - Carbon Monoxide
    - Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons
    - Lead
- Buildup of Waste
  - Lack of Environmental Governance
  - Household
  - Medical
  - Industrial
- Recruitment of Children
  - Clean Water and Provision of Necessities



## A child's new norm...

"It will have lifelong impact when you become indoctrinated - that becomes your norm. In your day to day life, your first response is violence because that's what you've become accustomed to knowing" (Paton)



Photo Credit: IB Times UK



# Political Aspects



- Islamic State group (ISIS) is taking over countries in the Middle East.
- How they exert authority and control:
  - Sophisticated social media network
  - Training camps
  - Strong administrative structures
- ISIS media featuring young boys and recruited children



# Political Aspects



Photo Credit: [worldpress.org](http://worldpress.org)

- How ISIS benefits from these children:
  - Brainwashed into supporting the group for their whole lives
  - Cheaper to have children rather than adults
  - Adults can be used for other tasks
- More than 500 children are being prepared by ISIS
  - Parents are being paid monthly per child
  - Parents are promised religious education

# Political Aspects: Main Health Concerns



Photo Credit: dailymail.co.uk

- In 2013 there were more than 2 million registered refugees
  - Many of these were children that were fighting or left behind by families
- Increase in health issues
  - Inability to access health care has increased the number of people dying from chronic diseases
  - Devastation of the health infrastructure
- United Nations declared Syria a Level 3 emergency

# Design Aspects: Propaganda

- ISIS Propaganda
  - Consists of videos, photos and music
  - Sent over the internet to maximize viewers
- Purposed of Ads
  - First used to create international awareness
  - Now used more regionally to deter rebellions by filming public execution of alleged spies or conspirators

Photo Credit: [worldpress.org](#)



Photo Credit: [dailymail.co.uk](#)



# Design Aspects: Propaganda

- Photo Essays:
  - 5-15 photos
  - Some focus on promoting the Islamic State (showing abundant food, markets etc.)
  - Others show the consequences of disobeying laws (executions, beheadings etc)



Photo Credit: redflagnews.com



# School Experience

- In school we learned subjects such as reading, writing, math, science, social studies, art and music.
- My favorite time of the day was art class and recess.
- No religious education
- In the US, this is the common experience. However not for children recruited by ISIS...
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkC6CxKzJHY>



My first day of Kindergarten!

# Health Interventions

"in the first 7 months of 2015, ISIS recruited 1100 children as fighters for their forces" (Monitor and Ajiri). Another study, by Georgia State University, "found that at least 1,500 children currently are enlisted to fight for ISIS" (Bloom, Horgan, Winter).



# How is ISIS so Successful in Recruiting Children?

## By taking over schools

In ISIS held areas, school curriculum's have been replaced with religious extremism. "Attendance by children is mandatory starting at the age of three."(Boghani).

## Mass Propaganda Campaigns

For many young people throughout the world, social media and the internet have become a center point of their lives. ISIS has become adept at creating high quality propaganda and using it to target children and even adults who may already be at risk of radicalization.



Video credit: frontline



video credit: Alhayat Media Center

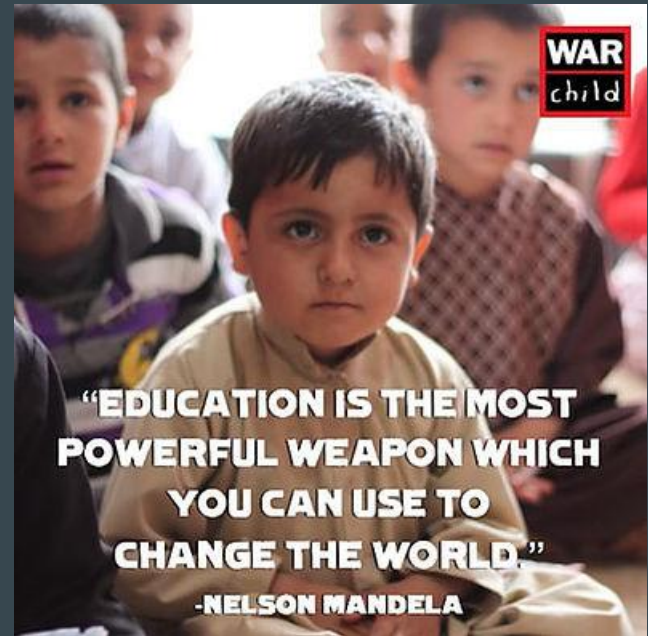
# How is Child Recruitment Being Stopped?

## Addressing Educational Needs

There is no blueprint for delivering education to students within a caliphate. What can be done, however, is to offer support to the teachers and elders who see it as their duty to oppose ISIS curriculum and continue teaching children in secret.

How do we do this?

Children must be able to access education and information unaltered by ISIS extremism.



For an in-depth report on how civil disobedience is helping to preserve education in ISIS held areas, click the link below

<https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/articles/2016/07/25/civilians-teach-children-in-isis-held-deir-ezzor>

# Education: What can be done?

We must look to areas with similar challenges and determine what methods were successful. Several International groups are doing so and working to address this issue, as well.



War Child is an international group that works to bring the framework of education to children who live in conflict areas. Their focus is to empower children and give them the tools necessary to gain an education and lead successful lives.

They offer:

- psychological support
- education
- child protection



**GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP  
for EDUCATION**

The Global Partnership for Education is a multinational platform aimed at bring together all the necessary components to improve education and equality throughout the world. Their strategy is to support governments and streamline funding to maximize education efforts.

GPE has developed focus areas that education should apply their resources too. In doing so, they streamline the response to educational crisis.



# Combating ISIS Propaganda

As with young people in Western societies, those living in the Middle East are increasingly turning to the internet and social media platforms for answers to questions and social interaction (Pandith). ISIS knows this and has exploited it well. From twitter and YouTube videos, as well as, google, they have been able to create huge publicity. In turn, they have become the source for answers for many young people who may already be at risk of radicalization

According to Farah Pandith, there must be a movement to counter ISIS information that reaches the same scale and quality as the information that ISIS is producing. Right now, ISIS is the loudest voice when it comes to answers. We must become the loudest voice. (Pandith)



**Photo Credit: U.S. Department of State**

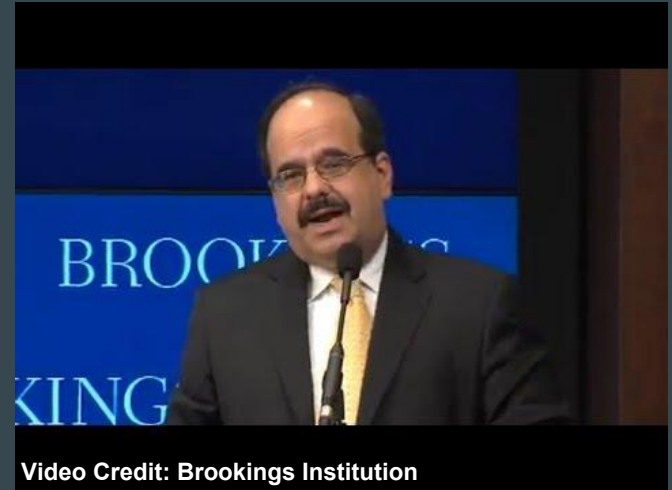
Farah Pandith, is a senior fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and former Special Representative to Muslim Communities for the US State Department.

Go to our website to listen to an interview with Pandith on how to combat ISIS propaganda.

# Anti-Propaganda Programs must improve

The Brookings institute echoes the same message as Farah Pandith."Governments need to be doing more to counter ISIS propaganda. This means to increase funding in this area and developing clear political goals to better counteract ISIS rhetoric. They offer four recommendation as to how to do this and create effective counter-propaganda policy.

1. view the problem of the Islamic State as a political problem with a media dimension, not the other way
2. up the volume of our counter-propaganda efforts
3. employ credible voices of people who have firsthand knowledge of ISIS violence
4. multifaceted content similar to the multifaceted content that the Islamic State produces"(Fernandez).



Video Credit: Brookings Institution

# What is Being Done?

The U.S. State Department recently formed the [Global Engagement Center](#). It's goal is to, "more effectively coordinate, integrate and synchronize messaging to foreign audiences that undermines the disinformation espoused by violent extremist groups, including ISIL and al-Qaeda, and that offers positive alternatives."



Photo Credit: Don Healy / Regina Leader-Post

# What is being Done?

Cyber activism is also playing a role. Hacking group, Anonymous declared all out cyber-war on ISIS. Social media platforms have removed ISIS accounts.



Video Credit: AJ+

# Steps Towards Success

While all the programs mentioned have had initial success, only time will tell how successful these programs are in the long. The conflict with ISIS has only just begun and it is sure to last for years to come.



AP Photo/Hussein Malla



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