

What About the Children?

The Spring 1977 Issue of SIMNOW contains a sobering report entitled *Children of the World*. Although ministries oriented specifically to children are extremely vulnerable in Muslim lands, should not the following statistics from that report have some effect on our evangelism strategies?

There are as many as 100 million street children in the world today. (*United Nations Children's Fund, Crisis*, p. 24)

The words *child* and *children* are mentioned 1,957 times in the Bible (Authorized Version).

One-third of the world's population (1.8 billion people) is under 15 years of age.

Eighty-five percent of those who convert to Christianity do so between 4 and 14 years of age. This global age segment is commonly referred to as the *4/14 window*, a people group in its own right that is most receptive to Christ's message of salvation.

In WAR alone, over the past decade 2m children have been killed; 4-5m have been disabled; 12m have been left homeless, more than 1m have been orphaned or separated from their parents; 10m have been psychologically traumatized. (UNICEF)

Fifteen million children under the age of five die every year worldwide, two-thirds from readily preventable diseases. (UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children*, 1996, p.45)

BIRTHS are projected to level off worldwide by the year 2000, except for sub-Saharan Africa, where the continuing increase in population will result in the annual number of births reaching

35 million by 2025. (UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children*, 1996, p.56)

One million children enter child prostitution every year. Worldwide, an estimated 10 million children are victims of today's sex industry. (UNICEF)

"More than 200 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 in the developing world are working," the UN says. Seventy five percent work six days a week or more, and 50 percent work at least nine hours a day. (*The Associated Press*, Dec. 12, 1966)

Approximately 2 million girls suffer female genital mutilation every year, most in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, and the Sudan. UN Children's Fund, *The progress of Nations*