

THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2023

RECOVERING FROM SETBACKS AND ADVANCING FORWARD

unicef 
for every child



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The collaboration of numerous individuals and institutions has led to the creation of this report. The team responsible for the report expresses gratitude to all those who generously contributed their time, expertise, and effort.



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Foreword

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly disrupted our path towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The impact has been far-reaching, affecting the health, well-being, and survival of children worldwide. However, amidst adversity, we have witnessed remarkable resilience and determination. It is this resilience that forms the foundation of our recovery efforts.

We recognize that health is a fundamental pillar for children to thrive. The pandemic has reinforced the vital importance of vaccinations, with 2023 marking a pivotal moment for us to catch up on missed routine immunizations. Moreover, we have intensified efforts to improve access to clean water and sanitation, recognizing the link between health and the environment. We remain committed to safeguarding children's growth and development, protecting them from violence and exploitation.

As we understand, there is an urgent need to address the impacts of climate change for the well-being of future generations.

Another critical area we are working tirelessly to restart is our pre-pandemic goals. Gender equality lies at the heart of our endeavors, as we strive to create equal opportunities for all children, regardless of gender. We remain steadfast in protecting girls and women from vulnerabilities, including child marriage and gender-based violence.

Furthermore, we are dedicated to breaking down barriers that children with disabilities face, ensuring they are included in all aspects of society. Humanitarian issues have also demanded our attention, and we continue to tackle child poverty and provide support to children affected by conflicts, displacement, and separation from their families.

Education has always been a cornerstone of our work, and the pandemic's disruption to education has exacerbated existing inequalities, making it imperative for us to ensure that every child has the opportunity to learn. We are committed to ensuring that every child has access to quality education, whether it be through in-person classrooms or innovative remote learning solutions. We are investing in teacher training, bridging the digital divide, and providing psychosocial support to help children thrive academically and emotionally.

As we navigate the path to recovery, collaboration, and partnership remain paramount. It is only through collective action that we can make a lasting difference in the lives of children worldwide. UNICEF is proud to work hand in hand with governments, civil society organizations, and countless individuals who share our vision of a world where every child thrives.

Let us recommit ourselves to the fundamental rights and well-being of every child, as they are the architects of a brighter and more sustainable future.



Catherine Russel,
UNICEF Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

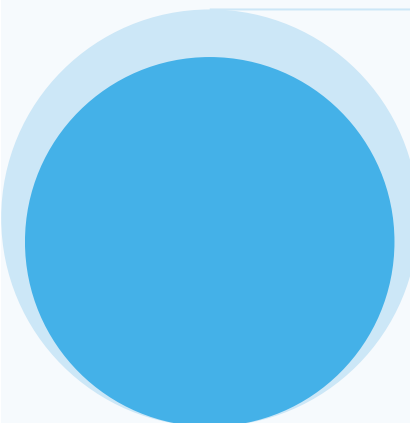
We can do better...



Source: UNICEF, 2020



Here's why:

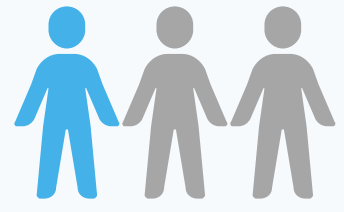


67 million children
did not receive immunization either fully or partially between 2019 and 2021

48 million children
did not receive any immunization at all

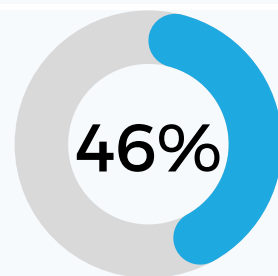
Side effects of the pandemic: global disruptions of childhood vaccinations, resulting in a decline in vaccination rates that have not been observed **since 2008.**

Source: UNICEF, State of the World's Children, 2023



1 in 3 people
do not have access to drinking water globally

Source: World Health Organization (WHO), 2019



46%
of the world's population do not have access to sufficient sanitation services

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2023



1 in 10 girls
below 20 years old have been coerced to participate in sexual activities or engage in other forms of sexual acts against their will

Source: UNICEF, 2022



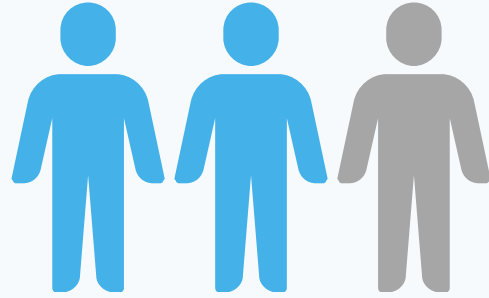
73%
of child victims are boys, especially for recruitment and use, abduction, and instances of killing and maiming

Source: UNICEF, 2022

**1.6
Billion**

children were devastated by school closures due to the pandemic in 2020, resulting in the most significant disruption of education in modern history.

Source: (UNICEF, How many children and young people have Internet access at home? 2020)



2 in 3 children

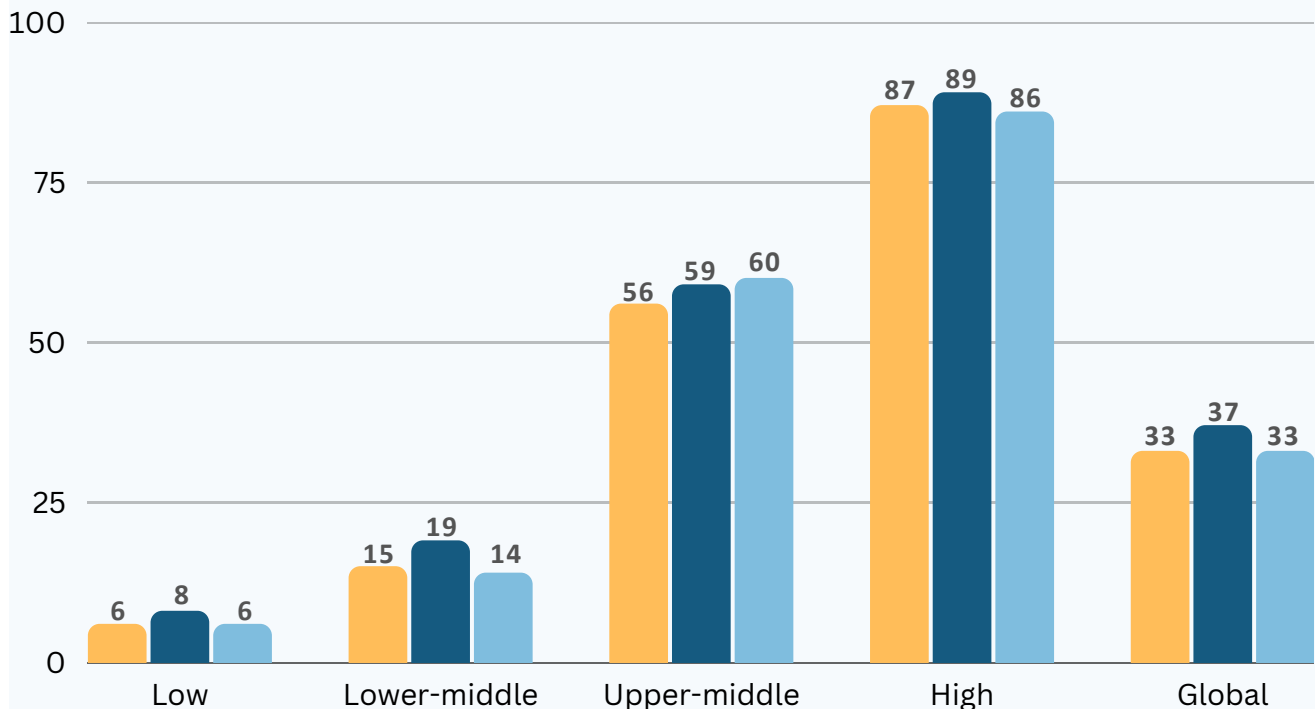
and adolescents (aged 25 years or younger)– or **2.2 billion**–lack Internet connectivity at home.

Source: (UNICEF, How many children and young people have Internet access at home? 2020)

The gap is astounding...

Percentage of children and adolescents with Internet access at home by country income group

■ Age 0-25 ■ Age 15-24 ■ Age 3-17



Internet access at home is available to only **33%** of children and young adults worldwide. However, there is a **substantial disparity between high-income and low-income countries**, with coverage rates of **87% and 6%**, respectively.

Source: UNICEF, How many children and young people have Internet access at home? 2020

In 2020,

the world encountered an unforeseeable crisis that altered the lives of billions of people by storm and disrupted progress in multiple aspects. The COVID-19 pandemic left no country unaffected and no child spared from its aggressive detriment. In 2023, we stand at a point where we must quickly recover from the setbacks and work toward a resilient future for every child.

The multifaceted challenges we collectively faced during the pandemic identified the urgent areas where coordinated action is required to reignite progress. UNICEF is calling upon governments, civil society, and individuals to join UNICEF in rallying behind the rights and well-being of children.

Evidently, data between 2019 and 2023 regarding vaccinations, access to clean water and sanitation services, inequality, humanitarian issues, and education demonstrate how dramatically the pandemic impeded—and even setback—decades of progress.

We must all be committed to ensuring a holistic approach to child development, focusing on the health, wellness, and survival of every child. Restarting delayed pre-pandemic goals emerges as a key area that requires most of our attention.

The challenges are monumental, but so is our resolution to defeat them. Together, let us seize this moment to redouble our efforts, embrace innovation, and foster partnerships that transcend boundaries.

By prioritizing the rights and well-being of every child, we can work toward building a resilient future, where no child is left behind.



Source: UNICEF, 2021

GOAL AREA 1

Health, Wellness, and Survival of Every Child



Our Mission

to deliver vital health and nutrition services in 2020 was gravely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, worsening the long-standing disparity and threatening the improvements that have been made in the past few decades. Ten months into 2022, already one-third of countries globally were confronted with upwards of 10% declines in in-service coverage for routine immunizations, outpatient care for infectious diseases in children, and maternal health services compared to 2019 (Responding to COVID-19: UNICEF Annual Report 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the many shortcomings and inequality of our global health systems. Furthermore, the ramifications of climate change—especially environmental degradation—continue to adversely affect the well-being of children. Nearly half of the world’s children—approximately 1 billion—live in countries that are categorized as ‘extremely high risk’ from the impacts of climate change, such as natural disasters, extreme weather events, rising food insecurity, water scarcity, and disease outbreaks (UNICEF 1, 2022).

Our priorities this year revolve around rectifying and improving the accessibility of health and wellness services to further advance the growth and survival of all children. Long-standing and emergent global challenges demonstrate the need to improve and constantly adapt our strategies. We have identified **three sub-goals** to promote the health, wellness, and survival of every child:

1. **Vaccine Accessibility**
2. **Robust water and sanitation infrastructure**
3. **Protection from violence and exploitation**

Case Study from Cambodia in 2021: The importance of increasing capacity and accessibility for routine immunization

In Stung Treng Province in northern Cambodia, rural health workers dedicated their everything to ensuring that COVID-19 vaccines reached remote communities, while also safeguarding routine immunizations. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, parents were not allowed to bring their children to health centers.

UNICEF supported the National Immunization Programme by providing extra assistance to healthcare outreach teams in Stung Treng and four other northeastern provinces. This support aimed to enhance their capacity in delivering routine vaccinations to children under 2 years old, alongside other essential health services such as safe motherhood care and COVID-19 vaccinations for adults.

In the span of six days, the healthcare outreach teams provided routine immunizations and antenatal care to 837 individuals residing in six villages of Santepheap Commune. Moung Toeur, a mother of a 10-month-old girl who received vaccinations against diphtheria, typhoid, and measles, expressed her gratitude, stating that their village is situated far from the nearest health center. The challenging road conditions made it even more difficult to travel, especially during the rainy season. She testified that without the outreach team visiting their village, her daughter might not have had the opportunity to receive the necessary vaccinations due to the long and taxing journey. She sincerely appreciated the dedicated efforts of the vaccination team in reaching out to villages like hers.



Source: UNICEF, Global Annual Results Report, 2021

Vaccine Accessibility

The development of vaccines has proven to be one of the greatest scientific advancements in global health and prolonging human life. Vaccines have helped us in developing immunity, combating various diseases—such as tetanus, measles, and rubella—and even eradicating smallpox. This great advancement has kept children protected from infectious diseases that could inhibit them from growing and reaching their full potential. Despite the evident benefits of vaccines, there are still countries and regions with low rates of immunization.

There were 67 million children who missed routine vaccination between 2019 and 2021, and 72% (48 million children) didn't receive a single dose of the routine vaccine. These children are often known as "zero-dose" (UNICEF, 2023). Approximately 25 million children are unable to get vaccinated and are at risk of contracting preventable diseases like measles and polio.

Those children are often in some of the most disadvantaged communities that are in urgent need of immunization programs, yet they are the least likely to get vaccinated (UNICEF 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and ongoing global conflicts instigated displacement and unnecessary distress to children around the world, disrupting our effort to get as many children protected from preventable infectious diseases as best we can.

UNICEF's immunization goal is to recover from our delayed objectives due to the pandemic. By promoting, supplying, and delivering vaccines, UNICEF is contributing towards narrowing the global vaccine equity gap, in accordance with SDG #3 (good health and well-being) and #10 (reduced inequalities within and among countries).

Our three focus areas this year for vaccine accessibility:

1

Continue working collaboratively with COVAX to ensure the fair and accessible distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to countries and territories globally, aiming to safeguard the well-being of vulnerable children and communities by ensuring efficient and timely delivery. In 2021, UNICEF obtained and transported a total of 2.751 billion doses of routine and COVID-19 vaccines, with a value of US\$4.121 billion (excluding donations), to 123 countries (UNICEF Global Annual Results Report 2021).

2

Continue our polio and tetanus eradication efforts. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact, The worldwide immunization coverage for the third dose of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP3) declined from 86% in 2019 to 81% in 2021, its lowest point since 2008. Approximately 25 million children in 2021 were either unvaccinated or under-vaccinated, with over 60% residing in just 10 countries. Additionally, there were fewer supplementary immunization activities (SIAs) aimed at eradicating polio, leading to an increase in polio outbreak cases. (UNICEF Global Annual Results Report 2021).

3

UNICEF remains committed to carrying out expedited immunization programs targeting measles, rubella, yellow fever, cholera, and meningitis. These initiatives aim to minimize avoidable illness, disability, and mortality rates. The percentage of children receiving the first dose of the measles vaccine (MCV1) remained unchanged at 81% but further declined after 2019. The administration of the combined measles-rubella vaccine plays a crucial role in preventing measles and safeguarding pregnant women from contracting rubella during the initial three months of pregnancy, preventing long-term disabilities in infants (UNICEF Global Annual Results Report 2021).

Water and Sanitation Infrastructure

Every child has the right to live and grow in a clean and healthy environment. Providing access to clean water, toilets, handwashing facilities with soap, safe sanitation, and good hygiene services is crucial to ensure children's well-being and needs.

Access to clean and safe drinking water is a fundamental human right. Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of contaminated water. Clean water is crucial for their growth, cognitive development, and overall well-being. Contaminated water can negatively impact their physical and mental health, leading to stunted growth and developmental delays. Access to clean water is closely linked to poverty reduction. Without clean water sources nearby, communities, especially those in rural areas, often have to spend significant time and effort collecting water from distant sources. This affects productivity, particularly for women and girls, who bear the burden of water collection.

Working toilets are essential for maintaining proper sanitation and preventing the contamination of water sources and the environment. Sanitary toilets ensure the safe disposal of human waste, reducing the risk of waterborne diseases and environmental pollution. Access to clean and functioning toilets is a matter of dignity and privacy. Adequate toilet facilities provide individuals with a safe and private space to attend to their personal needs. This is particularly important for women, girls, and people with disabilities, who may face additional challenges and vulnerabilities in the absence of proper sanitation facilities.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the provision of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services has become a crucial element of the global response. Handwashing campaigns have been implemented to ensure fair and affordable access to WASH services, including in healthcare facilities and schools.

Access to handwashing facilities is particularly important for children, as they often have weaker immune systems and are more susceptible to diseases. Teaching and promoting proper handwashing practices from an early age helps protect children's health, reduces absenteeism from schools due to illness, and contributes to their overall development.

The provision of facilities, resources, and practices that promote and support proper hygiene behaviors contribute to good hygiene services. These services include access to clean water, handwashing facilities, toilets, proper waste management, and hygiene education. Handwashing with soap is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Proper hand hygiene, especially before and after certain activities such as using the toilet, preparing food, or caring for the sick, can significantly reduce the transmission of pathogens.

In Tegaldowo village, Central Java province, Indonesia, 3-year-old Fika was happily reading a book near a recently built toilet in her home. Due to tidal floods that drowned their house, Fika's parents had to construct a temporary latrine outside.



However, with the assistance of the government, a new toilet was built in July 2020. The Government of Indonesia has prioritized achieving universal access to sanitation as a means to reduce the prevalence of stunting among children. Access to safe sanitation is essential for promoting health, facilitating child development, and fostering social and economic progress. Furthermore, in response to the challenges posed by the pandemic in 2020, the provision of safe sanitation played a significant role in reducing the transmission of the COVID-19 and many other diseases.

Source: UNICEF Global Annual Results Report 2021

Our two focus areas to advance our water and sanitation goals this year:

1

There are approximately **844 million individuals who do not have access to drinking water**. Taking examples from our past projects, UNICEF is seeking to build and install more water treatment plants, as well as technical training programs about the process of water purification. The training programs are more crucial than ever to ensure that the local authorities are able to **stand on their own**, able to **sustain the project for the long term**, and **provide clean drinking water for their citizens** with minimal/zero interruption (UNICEF, *Building access to clean water in support of Sustainable Development Goal 6, 2023*).

2

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) in schools, healthcare facilities, and homes. Roughly half of the global population—3.6 billion individuals—lacks access to safely managed sanitation facilities within their homes (CDC, *Global WASH Fast Facts, 2022*).

In 2021, approximately 539 million children globally, accounting for 29% of the total, did not have access to a basic sanitation service at their school. Approximately 39% of healthcare facilities in several low- and middle-income countries lack soap for handwashing (CDC, *WASH in Healthcare Facilities, 2022*). The incorporation of WASH in schools homes, and healthcare facilities is in agreement with SDGs 3 (good health and well-being), 6 (clean water and sanitation), and 10 (reduced inequalities) (UNICEF, *WASH in Schools, 2022*).

UNICEF is determined to **further increase the number of WASH facilities in homes, schools, and healthcare facilities** by building the infrastructure for piped water, working toilets, supplying soaps, and proper waste disposal. We are also looking to increase educational programs to promote the importance of handwashing and cleanliness.



UNICEF has developed and implemented a state-of-the-art filtration system at the Al-Qa'qa' water treatment plant. This project, which was finalized in 2021, is expected to benefit more than 450,000 individuals by providing them with access to clean and safe drinking water.

Source: (UNICEF, *Building access to clean water in support of Sustainable Development Goal 6, 2023*).



A primary school equipped with latrines and water points that are easily accessible to the students in Bardé, Central African Republic. From 2018 to 2021, UNICEF constructed latrines and implemented solar-powered water supply systems in a total of 63 schools and 17 health centers.

Source: (UNICEF, *Building access to clean water in support of Sustainable Development Goal 6, 2023*).

Protection from Violence & Exploitation

Aside from being at risk from the effects of climate change and starvation, children in many parts of the world are also living in the midst of violent conflicts. Save the Children's latest report on conflict trends for children revealed that the population of children residing in regions affected by deadly conflicts surged across 13 countries by almost 20% in 2020. This alarming rise brought the total number of children living in such conditions to nearly 208 million, the highest it has been since 2008. The steep surge indicates that despite the global pandemic and the United Nations' appeal for a global ceasefire, armed conflicts persist (Save the Children, 2021).

In 2021, children residing in conflict-laced areas continued to endure severe consequences of the Six Grave Violations against children in times of conflict (Strømme et al. 11). The UN Security Council (UNSC) for Children and Armed Conflict highlighted The Six Grave Violations against children as:

- Killing and maiming of children;
- Recruitment or use of children as soldiers;
- Sexual violence against children;
- Abduction of children;
- Attacks against schools or hospitals;
- Denial of humanitarian access for children.

In 2020, there were 1,268 verified cases of children who experienced sexual violence in armed conflicts worldwide, with girls accounting for 98% of these cases (1,238 girls and 30 boys). This represents the highest number of verified cases in over a decade and reflects a 48% increase since 2016. Sexual violence in armed conflicts encompasses various forms such as rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, forced abortion, sexual mutilation, sexual abuse, and sexual torture. It is important to note that sexual violence serves as a weapon in armed conflicts, aimed at destabilizing, dominating, and devastating communities, whether intended or not (Kamøy, 2021).

Displacement, war, and conflict have severe and detrimental effects on children. Physical harm, emotional and psychological trauma, risk of recruitment and exploitation, and lack of access to basic needs and education. The impact can have long-term consequences. It can hinder physical and cognitive development, limit future opportunities, perpetuate cycles of violence, and hinder the development and stability of communities and societies. It is crucial to protect children from the devastating effects of war and conflict, ensure their safety, provide psychosocial support, and promote their rights to education, health, and a nurturing environment.

Concerning Key Facts:



Over the course of thirty years, the population of children residing in conflict-affected regions and facing the threat of recruitment and use in conflicts has tripled. The number rose from **99 million children in 1990**, accounting for less than 5% of children globally, to **337 million children in 2020**, representing over 14% of children worldwide (Kamøy, 2021).



Instances of grave violations have **predominantly impacted boys**. In 2020, boys constituted 73% of all child victims, with a significant majority of victims of **recruitment and use (85%), abduction (76%), and killing and maiming (70%) being boys**. Girls accounted for a quarter (26%) of all child victims (UNICEF 2022).



Approximately **1 in 10 girls below the age of 20** have experienced **coercion or have been compelled to participate in sexual activities** or perform other sexual acts (UNICEF, 2022).



In 2021, children **significantly** make up the global refugee population (**40%**), even though children constitute **less than one-third** of the overall global population. In 2020, nearly **1 in 3 children** living outside their countries of origin were classified as child refugees (UNICEF 2022).

GOAL AREA 2

Quality Education for Every Child



Education

continues to be flawed for low and middle-income countries. Young girls, disabled children, and those in humanitarian areas are often left behind, and only exacerbated by the pandemic. It is very much possible to have a reality where all children receive equal access to education, acquire better learning outcomes and receive the skills necessary for proper development.

A big way to achieve these goals is through gender-transformative education and curriculum. This will teach girls and give them an education and build up a culture of respect and endearment for girls. This type of education will teach boys how to properly treat girls, and reduce cases of gender-based violence, child labor, teenage pregnancy, and many more issues that plague the Earth.

Education also pertains to WASH, or washing and sanitation hygiene. This is crucial to development as giving and receiving the WASH products and services is necessary, but teaching young boys and girls how to properly use them and the importance of the WASH services will go a long way. The children will also be able to educate their parents and community members about the importance of WASH. Furthermore, they will teach future generations about WASH and create a healthy environment in the process.

It is also important to adequately give the school children the proper skills needed to develop. Skills like STEM, entrepreneurship, business, and digital skills that are invaluable to a developing nation.

Case Study: Partnering with the Ghana Library Authority

UNICEF proudly partnered with the Ghana Library Authority (GLA) to introduce the Mobile Library Early Grade Community Reading program to help reach out to kids who were unable to go to school due to the pandemic-caused closures in 2021.

With an emphasis on those in hard-to-reach communities and those out of school, the GLA library van visited these communities and engaged parents, children, and locals through reading clinics, group reading sessions, video story time sessions, and personality readings. Furthermore, the translation of videos and audiobooks on external drives helped facilitate learning.

In total, 8,523 children (4,291 of which were girls) in grades kindergarten through to 3rd grade received books and services through this initiative in low-performing communities in 8 selected regions in Ghana.



Children are provided with books through the Mobile Library Early Grade Community Reading program to support their reading activities at home.

Source: (UNICEF, *Goal Area 2-Every child learns*, 2022)

Equitable Access to Education

UNICEF put 67% of its absolute spending, amounting to \$800 million, on equitable access to education. This huge investment had lots of areas to cover. There are many marginalized groups that need to catch up in education. Women and girls are by far the biggest. The pandemic obviously worsened or hampered development. The pandemic, like any emergency, resulted in an increase in gender-based violence, child marriage, early pregnancy, and disrupted support systems

These boundaries are the main contributors to why girls receive less education than boys. There are no proper foundations set in place to break down the boundaries. The (WASH) stations are not equal or supportive of girls. They often are combined and lack privacy, and the resources needed for girls to take care of themselves, like menstrual products, are not available.

Along with physical barriers, there are cultural barriers. Patriarchal societies put more emphasis on men, and women are often left behind. Promoting gender-responsive education is crucial for changing societal norms and expectations based on gender. Promoting this type of curriculum will result in less child marriage, less gender-based violence, less disrupted support systems, and more.

Case Study: Education reforms for more inclusive and equitable education in North Macedonia

North Macedonia was a recipient of educational reforms, namely with a brand new law that supported inclusive education. This enabled special schools with resource centers, now able to provide capacity development for staff. 500 teaching assistants, 474 of whom were female, received training on inclusive education practice and were deployed to public schools across the country.

Through our support, and partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), there are new curricula for Grades 1 through 4, in addition to training for over 3 thousand teachers and over 120 thousand new textbooks.

In 2018 there was a Review of the Evaluation and Assessment of Education in North Macedonia by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

UNICEF supported the Ministry to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of public spending in education through the development of a new, per-student funding formula for primary education.

Source: (UNICEF, Goal Area 2-Every child learns, 2022)

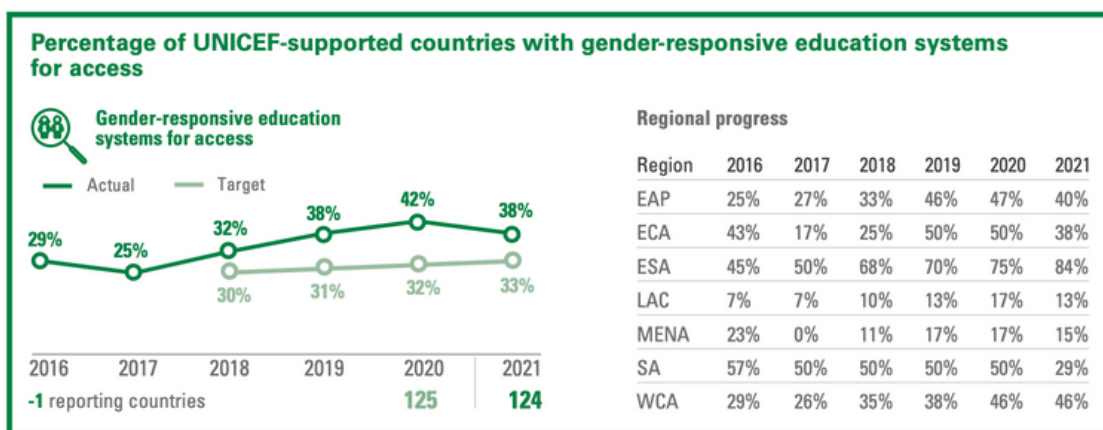


Figure 2: Systems-strengthening indicators for gender-responsive education.

Source: (UNICEF, Goal Area 2-Every child learns, 2022)

Improving Learning Outcomes

The pandemic created alarming results of learning outcomes. Even in high-income and developed countries, like the US, results created worry. Only 30% of 3rd graders in Texas had a grade level of mathematics in 2021, compared to 48% in 2019 (UNICEF, *Goal Area 2-Every child learns*, 2022).

An 8-week shutdown in the Netherlands created a learning loss equivalent to 20% of a school year. Spending on learning outcomes increased by \$37 million from 2020 as a result. This increase in investments helped reach 42.1 million children in some capacity and supported 85,586 school management committees or similar bodies with training. The effectiveness of education systems for learning outcomes is measured through 4 core dimensions, which are early learning, teacher development, learning assessment, and community participation (UNICEF, *Goal Area 2-Every child learns*, 2022).

The biggest issue facing early education centers was access to remote learning, as it was given less attention and resources compared to higher education. UNICEF's goal was to have 10% of funding go to early education, but a lack of commitment from the country's government meant for only 4.2% of spending goes to ECE.

There have been incredible successes with effective teacher development. 2017 saw only 23% of UNICEF countries with effective teaching development programs, but 2021 saw 45% of countries with the programs in place, going hand in hand with gender-responsive teaching curriculums ((UNICEF, *Goal Area 2-Every child learns*, 2022).

The pandemic created a unique opportunity for a reset in how the curriculum was taught. Pre-pandemic schools focus on the assessment of learning and post-pandemic schools are focusing more on the assessment of learning. This means teachers are more adept to deal with individual student's needs and cater to them. They also recognize which areas are in need of some extra help and others that do not need to be covered as much.

Community participation allows for pupils to have multiple teachers, 1 inside the classroom and community members outside of the class. the Data Must Speak program is a great example of this as data is provided to parents and elders to help guide and educate their youth (UNICEF, *Goal Area 2-Every child learns*, 2022).

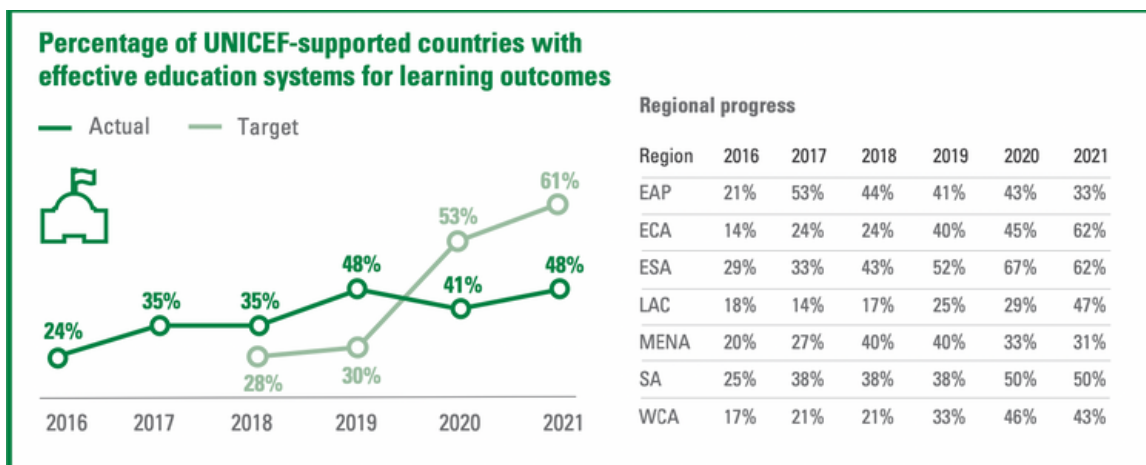


Figure 3: Systems-strengthening indicators for learning outcomes. Source: (UNICEF, *Goal Area 2-Every child learns*, 2022)

Skills Development

Having the proper skills is necessary for a child's community or country to grow and develop. They need to have the skills needed to face the ever-changing world, the labor market, migration, climate change, and all the curveballs thrown their way.

Prior to Covid, 61.5 million adolescents (10-19 years old) were out of lower secondary school. Around 825 million school-age children in low and middle-income countries were not on track to acquire minimum secondary-level skills by 2030. The pandemic forced 24% of students at the lower secondary education level out of school with a lack of remote education resources (UNICEF, Goal Area 2-Every child learns, 2022).

Key Priorities include:

- **Enhancing quality of skills programming:** integrating the full range of skills in curricula, pedagogy, and assessment in formal education and certified multiple pathways. This includes a focus on transferable, entrepreneurial, and digital skills, as well as related areas such as climate education, green skills, STEM, and global citizenship.
- **Expanding access to skills programming:** support the implementation of non-formal/community-based opportunities to develop and apply the full range of skills. This includes enhancing skills developed through volunteerism, adolescent participation, internships, and apprenticeships.

Figure 4: UNICEF's Skill Typology



- **33 million children and youth** received development in these skills
- **49%** were girls
- **51%** in humanitarian settings

Source: (UNICEF, Goal Area 2-Every child learns, 2022)

CHANGE STRATEGY I

Framework for Action



Strategy and Action Framework

There are 3 current pillars for our strategy:

1. Increase initiation and coverage
2. Diversify methods and innovation
3. Improve learning and programmatic synergy.

All of these pillars are built around progressing towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

A look in at the Pillars

Increasing initiation and coverage can be completed by launching the Impact Catalyst Fund, technical assistance on the use of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) 'impact' criterion, and summative evaluations. There is also a focus on integrating a requirement for impact evaluation for major donor proposals and promoting impact evaluation planning for any new and strategic interventions within CPD progress.

The second pillar plans on using the Method's Innovation Lab test and promoting new methods, tools, and data applications along with the Evaluation Helpdesk to provide support in impact evaluation designs, data scoping, and application of digital tools.

The final pillar puts emphasis on developing the capacity of UNICEF staff and partners through ongoing learning and programming initiatives. There is also focus on producing methodological briefs and guidelines and facilitating institutional and global learning through dissemination of impact evidence, exchanges on 'best practices' and innovation. Finally there is intent on promoting technical skills to upgrade evaluation function.



Source: UNICEF Evaluation of Impact: Strategy and Action Framework 2022-2025 (2023)

Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Framework is a set of 17 global goals established by the United Nations to address various social, economic, and environmental challenges. The framework for action involves defining specific targets and indicators to guide countries and organizations in implementing sustainable development initiatives.

UNICEF is committed to upholding the goals of the SDGs through our work in protecting children's rights and well-being.

The SDGs acknowledge the interconnected nature of addressing poverty and other forms of deprivation. The SDGs also understand that efforts to alleviate poverty should be accompanied by strategies that enhance healthcare and education, decrease inequality, promote economic development, combat climate change, and safeguard the preservation of our oceans and forests (United Nations).

There are six SDGs guiding UNICEF's mission and action framework:

1. **Goal 1 - No Poverty:** UNICEF's framework addresses poverty by implementing programs and initiatives that aim to improve the well-being of children and their families, focusing on access to essential services, social protection, and economic empowerment.
2. **Goal 2 - Zero Hunger:** UNICEF works towards reducing child malnutrition and promoting food security through nutrition interventions, access to clean water and sanitation, and supporting sustainable agricultural practices.
3. **Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-being:** UNICEF's framework prioritizes child survival and well-being by ensuring access to quality healthcare, immunizations, and nutrition, as well as addressing issues such as maternal and child mortality, infectious diseases, and mental health.
4. **Goal 4 - Quality Education:** UNICEF's framework emphasizes the provision of inclusive and equitable education for all children, addressing barriers to education, promoting early childhood development, improving learning outcomes, and reducing disparities in education access and quality.
5. **Goal 5 - Gender Equality:** UNICEF's framework promotes gender equality by addressing gender disparities in education, child marriage, and harmful practices while promoting girls' empowerment and equal opportunities for all children.
6. **Goal 10 - Reduced Inequalities:** UNICEF's framework aims to reduce inequalities by focusing on the most marginalized and vulnerable children, addressing disparities in access to healthcare, education, protection, and social services.

Source: United Nations (UN), *Sustainable Development Goals*

CHANGE STRATEGY II

Partnerships and Funding



Partnerships and Funding

UNICEF depends largely on voluntary contributions to fulfill our mission of reaching every child worldwide, especially the most vulnerable. Voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental organizations, private organizations, and individuals help us secure valuable funding and other resources alike to sustain our mission. As stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF remains absolutely committed to promoting children’s rights and fulfilling their needs globally.

In light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, we all witnessed the fragility, disparity, and inefficacy of our global health systems. The core of our mission this year—aligned with several of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—is to first and foremost narrow the disparity between developed and developing countries when it comes to the overall well-being of every child.

This report communicates our goals for funding distributions, usage, and arrangements to our contributors, ensuring transparency and accountability. It acts as a strategic plan to maximize the impact of every contribution to support children in need around the world. In 2021, UNICEF received a total contribution of US\$8.1 billion, and the public sector—government, inter-governmental, inter-organization partners, and Global Programme Partnerships—accounted for approximately 73% (US\$ 5.9 billion) of the total funding we received (Figure 1). The remaining contributions (US\$2.2 billion) received were from the private sector, such as the National Committees, individual donors, NGOs, foundations, and more (“Funding to UNICEF”).

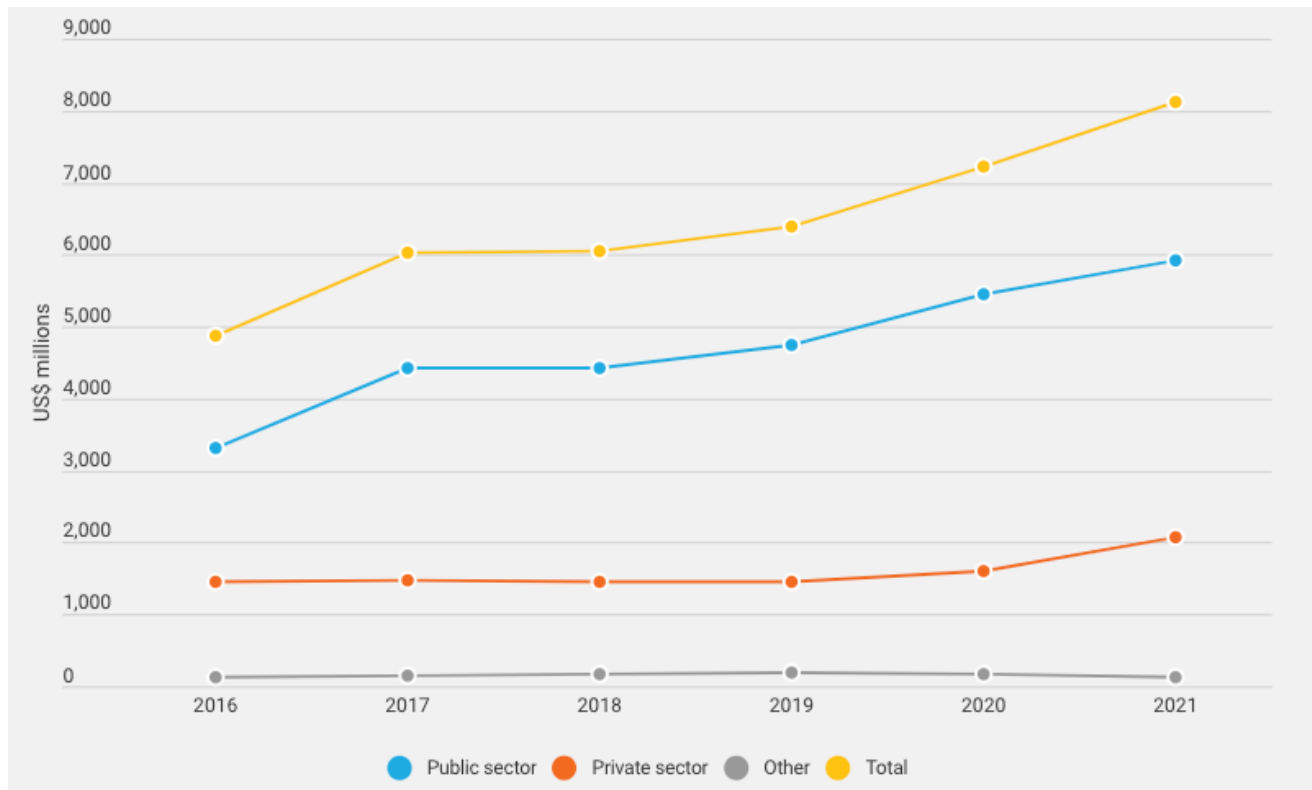
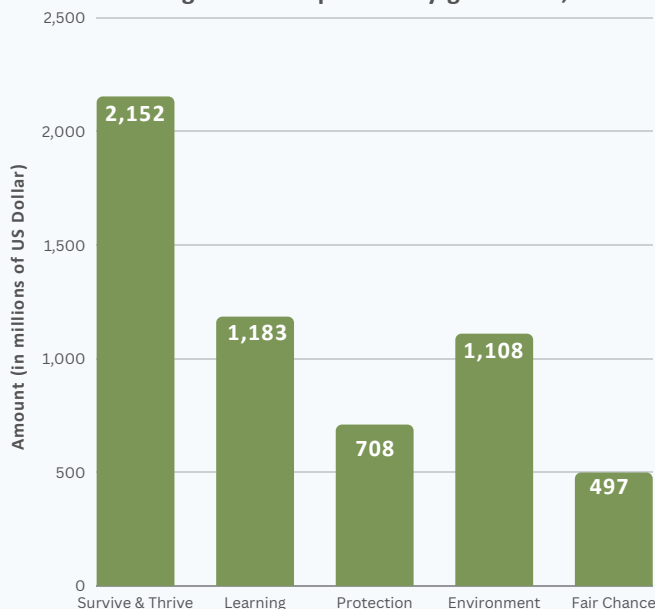


Figure 1: UNICEF income by type of resource partner, 2016-2021. Source: *Funding to UNICEF*.

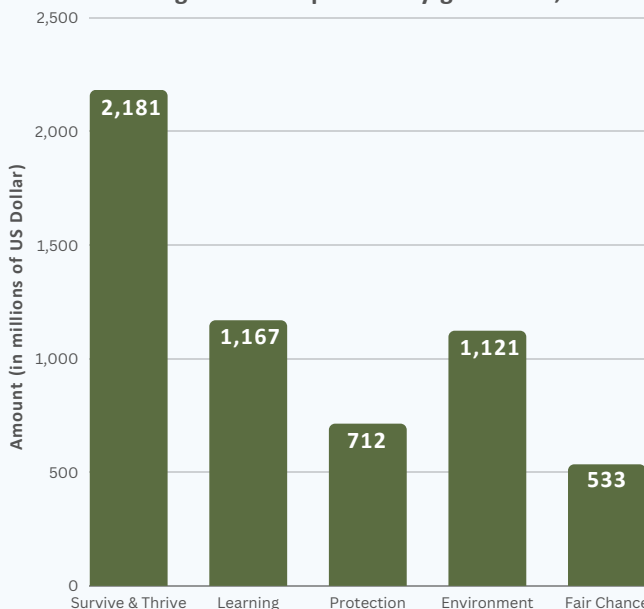
2019-2022 Expenditure

Direct Programme Expenses by goal area, 2019



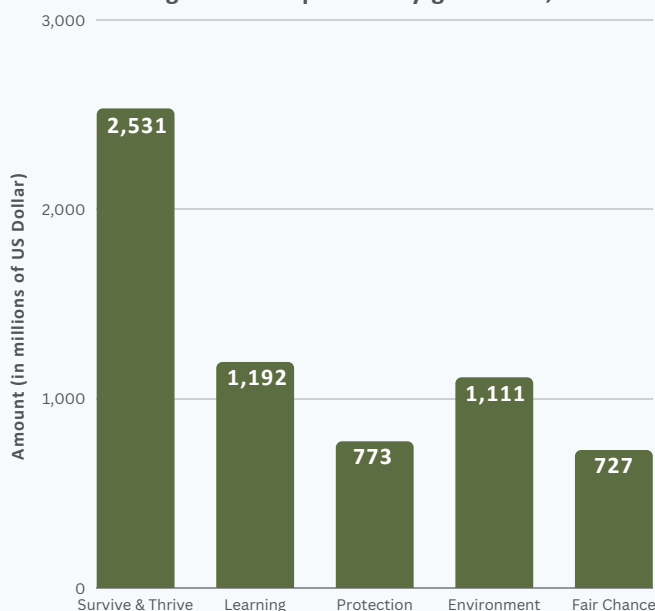
Source: UNICEF, Annual 2019 Report: For Every Child, Reimagine, 2020

Direct Programme Expenses by goal area, 2020



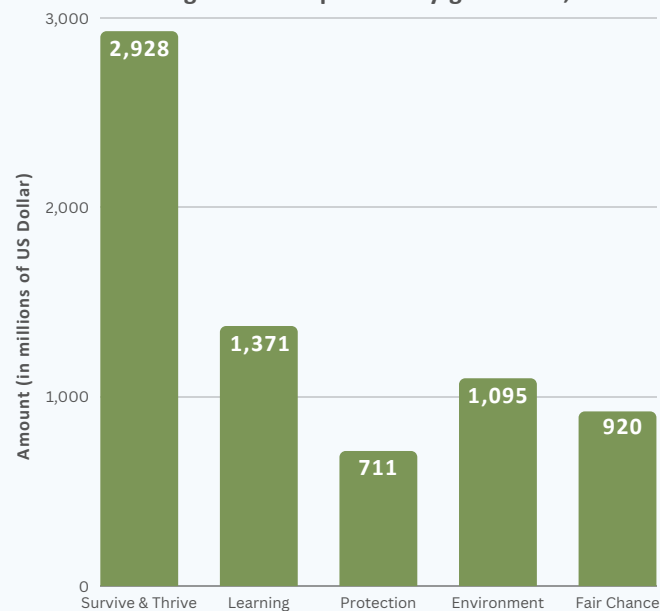
Source: UNICEF, 2020 Annual Report: Responding to COVID-19, 2020

Direct Programme Expenses by goal area, 2021



Source: UNICEF, Annual Report for 2021 of the Executive Director, 2022

Direct Programme Expenses by goal area, 2022



Source: UNICEF, Report on the implementation of the Integrated Results and Resources Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025, 2023

Survive and Thrive

- quality healthcare
- sufficient nutrition
- immunization
- adolescent health
- early childhood development



Learning

- education programs
- learning materials
- skill development programs
- digital connectivity (in response to COVID-19 pandemic)



Protection

- To address:
- violence and exploitation against children
 - care and services to children formerly in armed groups



Environment

- clean water
- sanitation and hygiene
- climate resilience
- environmental sustainability



Fair Chance

- child poverty
- public financing for children
- social protection
- gender equality
- children and adolescents with disabilities



REGIONS



**Where your
contributions
help transform
lives...**



East Asia and Pacific

The East Asia & Pacific (EAP) region is characterized by its rich diversity and vibrant nature, bordered by Mongolia to the north and Tonga to the South. With a roughly 30 million annual birth rate, UNICEF is working tirelessly and actively to defend and advocate for children's rights in the region (UNICEF).

EAP is the region most susceptible to natural disasters, affecting an average of 122 million people annually. This vulnerability is further worsened by the adverse effects of climate change, as well as human-caused hazards like conflicts and civil unrest. In most dire cases of climate change, the region's annual economic losses are estimated to reach 4.2% of its gross domestic product (UNICEF).

Quick Regional Situation Report

1.7 million children negatively impacted by severe wasting.

7.4 million children did not receive their first dose of measles vaccine.

89 million people lack essential basic hygiene services within their households.

115 million children and adolescents do not have access to education.

Source: UNICEF, East Asia and Pacific Region, 2022

Your Contribution, Our Work

- Facilitated primary healthcare access for **4,161,790 children and women** and successfully administered measles vaccinations to **27,041,501 children** in 2022.
- Prioritized mental health and psychosocial support, assisting a total of **958,035 children and caregivers** in accessing these vital services.
- Focused on mitigating and responding to gender-based violence, supporting **98,338 women, girls, and boys** in risk reduction, prevention, and intervention efforts.
- Enabled **8,737,376 children** to access formal or non-formal education, expanding their educational opportunities.
- Provided safe and appropriate WASH facilities and hygiene services to **1,230,497 children** in learning facilities and safe spaces.

Source: UNICEF, East Asia and Pacific Region, 2022



Source: UNICEF, East Asia and Pacific Region Appeal, 2023

Central Asia and Europe

UNICEF collaborates with and supports underprivileged children and adolescents in 22 countries and territories located in Europe and Central Asia through our country programs. Additionally, we have specific initiatives aimed at addressing the needs of refugee and migrant women and children in the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Slovakia (UNICEF).

In countries where a significant number of marginalized children face exclusion, UNICEF focuses on addressing various challenges. These challenges include high rates of institutionalization, limited access to education, residing in unsafe and vulnerable communities, and exclusion of adolescents.

The children affected by these circumstances encompass those with disabilities, children of migrant workers, refugee, and migrant children, children from ethnic minorities, rural children, children from impoverished urban areas, children in conflict with the law, and often, girls. UNICEF works towards creating inclusive environments and opportunities for these children, aiming to overcome the barriers they face (UNICEF).



Source: UNICEF, Europe and Central Asia Region Appeal, 2022

Quick Regional Situation Report

15.8 million confirmed COVID-19 cases and **75,351 deaths**.

24.1 million children out of school.

19.8 million children living in households experiencing poverty.

3.7 million people at high risk of earthquakes.

Source: UNICEF, Europe and Central Asia Region Appeal, 2022

Your Contribution, Our Work

- **Strengthened** systems, services, and supplies related to nutrition, health, infection prevention and control (IPC), water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), education, social protection, and risk communication, and **ensured the protection** of at-risk children, adolescents, and women.
- **Prioritized** emergency preparedness and **enhanced** the capacity to respond to emergencies promptly. We also focused on **implementing risk-informed programs**, including social protection mechanisms to bolster resilience and provided support in responding to sudden-onset emergencies.

Source: UNICEF, Europe and Central Asia Region Appeal, 2022

South Asia



Source: UNICEF, South Asia Region Appeal, 2023

UNICEF operates in eight countries—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka—with the aim of safeguarding children's lives, protecting their rights, and supporting their overall development.

The population of children in South Asia is estimated to be 616 million. Climate change-induced natural disasters, economic and nutrition crises, public health emergencies, and intricate political and refugee situations sparked an urgent need for humanitarian assistance in South Asia for at least 100 million individuals, with over 50 million of them being children (UNICEF).

Ensuring the well-being of children and families requires comprehensive responses that address multiple sectors such as health, nutrition, education, water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH), child protection, and social protection, including the provision of humanitarian cash transfers. These integrated approaches continue to be our top priority in alleviating the suffering experienced by these vulnerable groups (UNICEF).

Quick Regional Situation Report

1.8 million

children need ongoing support to ensure continuous access to education.

815,000

children are in need of essential water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services.

1.6 million

children under the age of five are experiencing malnutrition

1.7 million

children urgently require access to primary healthcare services.

Source: UNICEF in South Asia, 2023

Your Contribution, Our Work

- UNICEF will persist in its support to governments operating in crisis-affected areas, aiming to guarantee that children, adolescents, caregivers, and particularly girls, **receive vital services** such as health care, nutrition, education, protection, and WASH provisions to safeguard their well-being.
- UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) provided assistance through **41 surge support and technical missions** to countries facing emergencies, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.
- UNICEF ROSA supported local government efforts in delivering life-saving services to **at least 1 million children** affected by emergencies in Bhutan, the Maldives and Sri Lanka

Source: UNICEF, South Asia Region: Humanitarian Action for Children, 2023

Middle East and North Africa

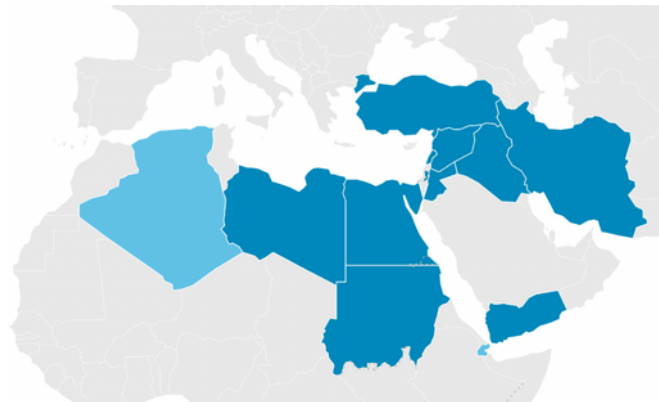
- The Middle East and North Africa remain to be a hotbed for conflict and social unrest, but climate change is beginning to rear its ugly head as well.
- The Muslim-majority areas continue to have a disproportionately high number of refugees due to conflicts, unrest, economic deterioration, and a volatile political landscape.
- These challenges result in 50 million children, 6.4 million of whom are refugees and another 6.4 million internally displaced, in need of humanitarian assistance (UNICEF).
- The biggest risk is access to WASH. The notoriously dry and hot climate make WASH, and overall health and nutrition vital to everyone, especially with the heightened volatility of climate change.
- The most unfortunate reality is that the insecure and unpredictable future and socioeconomic climate, that leaves children at risk of negative outcomes such as child labor and assorted forms of violence. Even worse is that children who are displaced or in a humanitarian situation are more susceptible, creating a vicious downward spiral.

Your Contribution, Our Work



6 years ago, Fatima had a shell hit her home in Ar-Rappa resulting in her brother being permanently injured and herself traumatized. UNICEF has a "Curriculum-B program" that Fatima was enrolled in. After some initial doubts and struggles, UNICEF volunteers came into her home and after some psychosocial support sessions, returned to school and is now better than ever. Fatima is one of 3,700 children with disabilities that are engaging with UNICEF-supported multi-service centers in Aleppo.

Source: UNICEF, Middle East and North Africa Region Appeal 2022



Source: UNICEF, Middle East and North Africa Region Appeal 2022

Latin America and Caribbean

- Due to Latin America and the Caribbean's vulnerability to environmental disasters, emergency preparedness is crucial to development in this region
- 3.8 million people, 1.5 million of whom were children, were affected by these disasters in 17 countries and territories in the region between January to September 2022 alone (UNICEF).
- Not only will the proactiveness for disasters, in which 88% of all hazards in the region were climate-related between 2020 and July 2022 (UNICEF), help alleviate the damage brought on the disasters themselves, but help protect the population from indirect consequences such as gender-based violence, political and economic instability, turmoil and internal displacement. Brain drain is a very real threat because of these disasters, as the deterioration of infrastructure and structural foundations make it harder for those able to succeed and leave for better opportunities.
- All of these crises continue to be UNICEF's main targets to fix, along with disease outbreaks and food insecurity
- Latin America is second, behind Sub-Saharan Africa in regions that are the most prone to the negative impacts facing the war in Ukraine with rising food prices and energy prices with tightening finances as a result. These everyday impacts can easily cripple the livelihood of the 96 million people affected in the region (UNICEF).



Source: UNICEF, Latin America and Caribbean Region Appeal, 2022

Your Contribution, Our Work



After a destructive eruption of a volcano in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the population was naturally devastated by physical and economic difficulties. The ash made it difficult to breathe and all business activity was halted as a result. UNICEF helped the Government by offering a lifeline by temporarily expanding the national social protection system to reach affected households. Bank cards and the cash-plus approach were used to help design and deliver upcoming recovery programs.

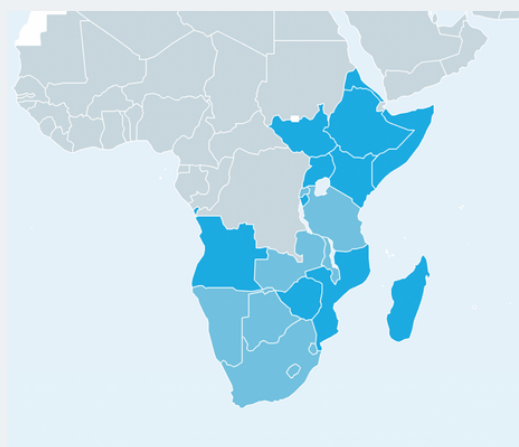
Source: UNICEF, Latin America and Caribbean Region Appeal, 2022

Eastern and Southern Africa

- The vast expanse of Eastern and Southern Africa unsurprisingly brings about much disaster and areas of improvement. The Horn of Africa—namely Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia—is suffering extreme drought, and on the other side of the coin Madagascar and South Africa are experiencing extreme flooding.
- 38 million people and 23 million children are in need of support with gender-based violence, exploitation, and abuse becoming an even more acute problem in the region (UNICEF).
- There are over 860,000 refugees sprawled across displacement and refugee camps (UNICEF).
- Large-scale outbreaks, such as cholera, Ebola, measles, polio, and yellow fever, continue to have a stranglehold on the population in this part of Africa.
- UNICEF is committed to working with women, youth leaders, and community-based organizations to strengthen capacities for emergency preparedness and response.
- 2022 marked the launch of the Regional Collaboration for Children (C4C) and brought about corporate expertise at every organizational level to identify and prioritize seven main change strategies, including foundational literacy and numeracy, and employability and education financing for young people.

Your Contribution, Our Work

- KwaZulu is a South African province that was affected by the flooding in April 2022. The floods destroyed infrastructure, homes, schools, and health facilities. Approximately 500 people were killed and over 40,000 were displaced.
- WASH, nutrition, health, education, and child protection services were all essential to support those affected.
- UNICEF supported the provincial government along with the national government to address some of the humanitarian needs.



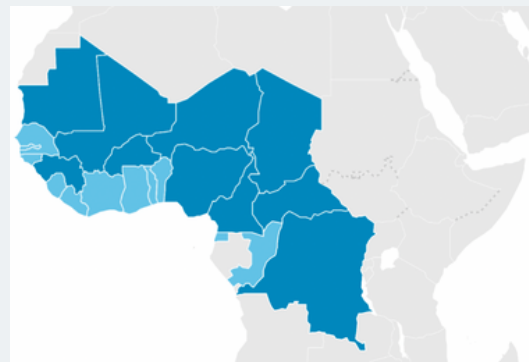
Source: UNICEF, Eastern and Southern Africa Region Appeal (2022)

West and Central Africa

- West and Central Africa is arguably the region with the most dire of needs. While only making up 12% of the population of the world's children, 1/3rd of those who die by age 5 are from West and Central Africa, 1/3rd of all unvaccinated children, 1/3rd of all out-of-school children and 1/5th of all student children (UNICEF).
- 31.9 million people are in urgent need of WASH systems and 12,400 schools had to permanently close due to insecurity (UNICEF).
- All of these worrying statistics are only permeated through the violence and exploitation experienced in the region, the conflicts stagnate development, and climate shocks are worsening
- UNICEF is partnering with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, multi-country partnerships with governments, local, regional, national, and international organizations to fight this uphill, but achievable battle.
- UNICEF is also helping to develop conflict-and gender sensitive emergency responses and risk-informed, resilience-building programs.

Your Contribution, Our Work

- Odette Ouedraogo had to flee from Burkina Faso to the Ivory Coast in February 2022 due to frequent attacks that killed her beloved friends and neighbors.
- However this may not be enough as conflicts have crossed the border into the Northern Ivory Coast as non-state armed groups move south.
- UNICEF is responding to this crisis by building community resilience and strengthening access to social services to those affected.



Source: UNICEF, Western and Central Africa Region Appeal, 2022

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