Expression of Thanks

UNICEF’s work for children, both boys and girls, is funded entirely through individual donations and the voluntary support of our partners in government, civil society, and the private sector. Voluntary contributions enable UNICEF to deliver on its mandate to protect children’s rights, to help meet their basic needs, and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.

On behalf of children, their families and communities in urgent need, UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all resource partners whose overall contributions supported humanitarian action in 2023 in Syria. The achievements described in this report were the result of these new and continued partnerships, including with the governments of Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the European Union, CERF, GAVI, GPE, Education Cannot Wait and the Syria Humanitarian Fund.

In particular, UNICEF extends special thanks to all resource partners that contributed to global, regional and country humanitarian thematic funds, which provide the most flexible resources in humanitarian responses, including the governments of Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, UNICEF national committees as well as private sector partners. Thanks to thematic funding and its flexibility, UNICEF Syria was able to provide timely and effective technical, operational and programming support as part of its efforts to prepare and deliver lifesaving protection and assistance to children and families.

Cover photo: © UNICEF/UN0792084/Haddad
Caption: On 20 February 2023, four-year-old Naya and other children who fled their homes due to the earthquake use drawing as a way to express their emotions in Stamo village, located in Lattakia governorate, Syria.
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<td>accountability to affected populations</td>
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<td>AOR</td>
<td>Area of Responsibility</td>
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<td>CCC</td>
<td>Core Commitments for Children</td>
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<td>DPT3</td>
<td>diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus (third dose)</td>
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<td>EORE</td>
<td>explosive ordinance risk education</td>
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<td>global acute malnutrition</td>
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<td>Humanitarian Coordination Team</td>
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<td>HNO</td>
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<td>HRP</td>
<td>Humanitarian Response Plan</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>internally displaced person</td>
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<td>IYCF</td>
<td>infant and young feeding</td>
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<td>infant and young feeding in emergencies</td>
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<td>MHPSS</td>
<td>mental health and psychosocial support services</td>
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<td>MoH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>NE Syria</td>
<td>northeast Syria</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>non-government organizations</td>
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<td>NW Syria</td>
<td>northwest Syria</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSEA</td>
<td>prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse</td>
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<td>RCCE</td>
<td>risk communication and community engagement</td>
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<td>SAM</td>
<td>severe acute malnutrition</td>
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<td>SBC</td>
<td>social behaviour change</td>
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<td>SEA</td>
<td>sexual exploitation and abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMART</td>
<td>Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions</td>
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<td>SYP</td>
<td>Syrian Pounds</td>
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<td>ToT</td>
<td>Training of Trainers</td>
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<td>TVET</td>
<td>technical and vocational education and training</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>WASH</td>
<td>water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
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Executive Summary

The multifaceted crisis in Syria creates continuous cycles of vulnerability, disproportionately impacting those most in need, especially children, women and people with disabilities. In 2023, children in Syria experienced the impacts of deadly earthquakes, nearly 13 years of sustained conflict, continued displacements, unprecedented economic crisis, climate-related shocks, and disease outbreaks. As a result, in 2023 15.3 million people required humanitarian assistance, including 7 million children, 7.7 million women and girls, and 2.6 million people and children with disabilities. Of the country’s 6.8 million internally displaced people (IDP), 5.3 million need humanitarian support, accounting for 35 per cent of the humanitarian needs, with over half of the displaced people living in northwest Syria (NW Syria).

When the 7.8 magnitude earthquakes struck southern Türkiye and NW Syria in February 2023, approximately 5,900 people in Syria were killed and more than 12,800 injured. An estimated 8.8 million people were affected, including 3.7 million children, the majority of whom urgently needed food, water, shelter, and emergency medical and psychosocial assistance. Essential infrastructure, already weakened by the conflict, was severely damaged; estimated damages and losses caused by the earthquakes was US$9 billion.

With thanks to contributions from resource partners, including flexible thematic funding, UNICEF was among the first agencies to respond to the humanitarian crisis. Together with partners, UNICEF reached over 15.8 million people in 2023, including 10 million children, 8.6 million women and girls and 262,963 people and children with disabilities. Families in the most severely affected and inaccessible areas were prioritized, with 181,079 people reached in difficult to access areas and 4.3 million in moderately accessible areas. In earthquake affected areas, UNICEF and partners reached 5.8 million people with assistance, including 3.2 million children, 4.8 million women and girls, and 163,000 people with disabilities, including 84,659 women and girls with disabilities.

In 2023, UNICEF and partners, including the Ministry of Health (MoH), supported 6.3 million people with health services and supplies, including 840,751 people in the earthquake affected areas. UNICEF and partners provided 3,255,294 free health care consultations, including 1,214,364 consultations in NW Syria. A total of 4,718,312 people (2,617,593 women and 17,312 people/children with disabilities), were reached with health promotion messages through different platforms, including an estimated 3,208,069 people in NW Syria. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) also supported the MoH’s routine vaccination campaign, during which 2,186,355 children were vaccinated (1,090,219 girls). In addition, 1,082,111 children (540,780 girls) were vaccinated against measles, 768,381 children under the age of five were vaccinated against polio and 190,750 adults were vaccinated against COVID-19.

UNICEF and partners reached 3,145,314 people (2,249,223 women and girls and 11,744 people and children with disabilities) with essential nutrition services. Of these, 902,009 people (671,436 women and girls) were reached in NW Syria, including 449,246 people in the earthquake affected areas. UNICEF and partners screened 2,878,271 children aged 6-59 months (1,442,431 girls) for acute malnutrition, including 1,707,012 children in NW Syria. Among these, 24,329 children across Syria (14,048 girls) were admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM), including 14,621 children (8,859 girls) in NW Syria. Furthermore, UNICEF and partners provided multiple micronutrient supplementation to 1,014,728 children and adolescents (506,457 girls) and 548,328 pregnant and lactating women, including 443,634 children (222,116 girls) and 329,442 women in NW Syria.

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1 The total number of people in need of humanitarian assistance includes 11.2 million people with severe needs, 4 million people with extreme needs and 100,000 people with catastrophic needs. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023.
2 The total number of children in need includes 3.2 million girls and 2.73 million children in difficult-to-access areas. Whole of Syria Humanitarian Situation Report January-June 2023, UNICEF, August 2023.
4 The displaced people account for 65 per cent of the total population in NW Syria.
6 UNICEF successfully reached beneficiaries beyond those in need of humanitarian assistance through specific interventions, such as raising awareness for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) across the country.
Meanwhile, as part of its preventive nutrition initiatives, UNICEF and partners engaged with 1,587,487 caregivers (1,301,702 women) through infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling.

In 2023, UNICEF and partners reached 8,893,764 people (4,653,965 women and girls and 171,255 people with disabilities) with water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services and supplies, including 3,676,320 people (1,909,550 women and girls) in NW Syria. Through the rehabilitation of water infrastructure, UNICEF reinstated access of safe drinking water for 4,418,351 people (2,286,315 women and girls) across Syria who were affected by service deterioration, earthquakes, and cholera outbreaks. Meanwhile, UNICEF and partners reached 2,865,292 people (1,489,065 women and girls) with improved access to sanitation services, including 1,418,290 people (730,089 women and girls) in NW Syria. Furthermore, UNICEF and partners also delivered emergency WASH services to 2,086,466 IDPs (1,100,842 women and girls) and essential supplies to ensure their basic needs were met. Despite the efforts of UNICEF and its partners to help prevent the collapse of the WASH sector, there is a need for the aid strategy to shift from spot interventions to a more comprehensive, strategic, and early recovery initiatives.

Across Syria, 559,352 children (295,391 girls and 20,618 children with disabilities) were reached with mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS), within the framework of the national MHPSS manual. This includes 204,615 children (114,280 girls) in NW Syria. To enhance the response and effectiveness in addressing the severe needs of children following the earthquakes, the UNICEF child protection, education, and WASH programme sections jointly launched the WAQTI initiative (“My time” in Arabic), which constitutes a multisectoral and targeted response to the most affected communities. The initiative successfully established 112 WAQTI centres that provided a range of child protection services, including MHPSS, family tracing and reunification, case management, as well as education, hygiene promotion, and sanitation services, reaching over 200,000 children, adolescents, and parents and caregivers across 56 communities in NW Syria.

Gender-based violence prevention and awareness raising activities reached 257,478 people (171,888 women and girls). This includes 36,308 people (34,272 women and girls) in NW Syria. A total of 28,934 children and women (14,208 women and girls and 6,098 women and children with disabilities), were provided with individual case management and referral to services and support, such as health and education services, legal assistance, MHPSS, and social protection schemes. In NW Syria, individual case management services were provided to 12,467 people (6,325 women and girls) including referral to specialized services. UNICEF and partners also reached 883,089 people (including 472,283 women and girls and 14,949 people and children with disabilities) with explosive ordinance risk education (EORE) messages.

UNICEF supported the provision of equitable access to quality education opportunities for 3,005,953 children and education personnel (1,476,572 women and girls and 19,400 people and children with disabilities), including 584,226 children (290,000 girls) in the earthquake-affected areas. Across Syria, 2,299,853 children (1,105,198 girls, and 2,648 children with disabilities) were supported with education in formal settings, including 80,264 children (35,543 girls) in NW Syria. To reach the most vulnerable children who are out of school or at risk of dropping out, UNICEF provided learning opportunities through non-formal education to 508,304 children (260,581 girls and 12,850 children with disabilities), including 200,130 children (99,781 girls) in NW Syria. UNICEF rehabilitated and undertook minor repairs of 210 schools, including those in earthquake affected areas, and ensured provision of gender-sensitive and disability inclusive WASH facilities in the rehabilitated schools. In areas where school rehabilitation was not sufficient to address the lack of adequate physical space for children, 104 temporary learning spaces were installed.

Working closely with local partners, UNICEF supported 556,877 disadvantaged young people aged 10-24 years old (296,071 young women and adolescent girls and 24,924 young people with disabilities), with skills-building and engagement opportunities across 14 governorates through adolescent friendly spaces and mobile teams. In northeast Syria (NE Syria), UNICEF provided services to young people through seven adolescent friendly spaces, 18 mobile teams and the support of 280 youth volunteers, reaching 71,777 young people, including 4,619 young people living in camps. More than 2,000 young girls participated in sports activities, breaking the social stereotype of girls in sports in NE Syria. In addition, UNICEF and partners’ earthquake response was strengthened by harnessing the support of 6,125 young volunteers, including 3,151 adolescent girls and young...
women, who despite being affected by the earthquakes themselves, were eager to get involved in helping earthquake affected children, peers and families.

UNICEF continued to strengthen the social protection system for the most vulnerable children in the country in 2023. As part of the Cash Transfer for Basic Needs programme for the winter and earthquake response, UNICEF and its partners reached 336,276 people (167,769 women and girls) with humanitarian cash transfers for basic needs, including 12,127 people (7,807 women and girls) in NW Syria. The pre-existence and shock-responsiveness of these programmes meant that UNICEF and partners were able to provide cash assistance within 96 hours of the earthquake. Through the Integrated Social Protection Programme for Children with Disabilities, 10,391 children with severe mental and/or physical disabilities (4,365 girls) were provided with case management services and regular quarterly cash assistance (Syrian Pounds (SYP) equivalent to US$120 per quarter) in Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Homs and Rural Damascus.

Across Syria, UNICEF and partners promoted protective practices and provided information on how to access to services to 20,543,611 people (10,376,371 women and girls). Of the 15.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in 2023, UNICEF reached 97 per cent with social behaviour change (SBC) programmes through community dialogues, edutainment and engagement with influencers. UNICEF and partners also scaled-up of community engagement efforts, engaging 4,661,079 people (including 2,786,073 women and girls) and ensuring equal participation from both women and men.

Throughout 2023, UNICEF continued to integrate and strengthen its accountability to people impacted by the multiple crises in Syria. These efforts involved scaling up complaints and feedback mechanisms to ensure people had accessible ways to provide feedback on UNICEF and its implementing partners’ services, as well as to report complaints, including those related to sexual exploitation and abuse. The mechanism is complemented by a service line, through which UNICEF responded to 5,331 cases in 2023.

Flexible thematic funding enabled UNICEF to respond immediately to sudden life-threatening needs as well as reach people in need in areas that were underfunded. Thematic funding provided paediatric and maternal check-ups and treatment, physiotherapy for children with disabilities, oral polio vaccine and measles, mumps and rubella vaccine, as well as psychological first aid trainings for frontline workers. Thematic funding was also critical to ensuring access to learning for children in the NW Syria and NE Syria, where there are high education needs yet limited funding opportunities. In Aleppo, due to damages caused by the earthquake, thematic funds were used alongside regular funds to support the replacement of a critical portion of pipeline that provides safe water supply to one third of Aleppo city. Thematic funding also provided young people with skills development courses, such as life skills, technical and vocational education and entrepreneurship skills, and social cohesion activities, including youth-led initiatives, sport for development and cultural activities.

UNICEF’s humanitarian action is guided by its Strategic Plan and its Core Commitments for Children (CCC), which outline what UNICEF commits across all sectors – health, nutrition, WASH, child protection, and education – as part of any humanitarian response. The CCCs are aligned to international standards and are guided by humanitarian principles. Working across its mandated areas, UNICEF leads the WASH, Education and Nutrition Sectors and Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AoR), and participates in the Health, Shelter and Non-food Item and Early Recovery and Livelihoods Sectors to provide humanitarian assistance to children and people in need.
Humanitarian Context

In 2023, children in Syria experienced the impacts of deadly earthquakes, nearly 13 years of sustained conflict, continued displacements, unprecedented economic crisis, climate-related shocks, and disease outbreaks. As a result, 15.3 million people require humanitarian assistance, including 7 million children, 7.7 million women and girls, and 2.6 million people and children with disabilities. Of the country’s 6.8 million IDPs, 5.3 million need humanitarian support, accounting for 35 per cent of the humanitarian needs, with over half of the displaced people living in NW Syria.

When the 7.8 magnitude earthquakes struck southern Türkiye and NW Syria in February 2023, approximately 5,900 people in Syria were killed and more than 12,800 injured. An estimated 8.8 million people were affected, including 3.7 million children, the majority of whom urgently needed food, water, shelter, and emergency medical and psychosocial assistance. Essential infrastructure, already weakened by the conflict, was severely damaged; estimated damages and losses caused by the earthquakes was US$9 billion.

In October 2023, northern Syria and the Deir-ez-Zor Governorate experienced the most significant escalation of hostilities since 2019, resulting in the displacement of over 120,000 people in NW Syria. Almost 40 health facilities, 27 schools and 20 water systems were impacted by shelling. In NW Syria, 4.1 million people have multilayered humanitarian needs. Of the 2.9 million internally displaced people, 2 million live in overcrowded camps. Some 3.8 million people need health care and 3.7 million people are food insecure. Protection risks are paramount, and children need support to realize their right to education. In NE Syria, children and women face arbitrary detention, extensive violence and forced relocation.

In NE Syria, approximately 45,000 people live in Al-Hol and Roj camps, nearly 60 per cent of whom are children. Of the total camp populations, nearly half are Iraqi, approximately 35 per cent are Syrian, and the remainder are from roughly 60 other countries. For most of 2023, the Alouk water station in Al-Hasakeh Governorate was out of service or operated intermittently, limiting access to safe drinking water for 610,000 people in Hasakeh city and surrounding areas, including 100,000 people in Al Hol and other IDP camps and settlements. Similarly, 192,00 people in Al Bab, Aleppo Governorate have a very limited access to safe water due to the Ein El Beyda water station not working.

Across Syria, 85 per cent of households struggle to make ends meet and seven in ten families are food insecure. By December 2023, the cost of a food basket more than doubled compared to the previous year, representing five times the value of the minimum wage of SYP 185,940. In the parallel market, the SYP continued to lose its value against the US dollar (reaching SYP 14,343 in December 2023) – losing nearly 60 per cent of its value in 2023 and 75 per cent over the past two years. The World Bank projects economic growth to reduce by two percentage points as a result of the earthquakes.

7 The total number of people in need of humanitarian assistance includes 11.2 million people with severe needs, 4 million people with extreme needs and 100,000 people with catastrophic needs. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023.
10 The displaced people account for 65 per cent of the total population in NW Syria.
16 The standard WFP food basket is a group of essential food commodities. In Syria, the food basket is set at a group of dry goods providing 2,060 kcal a day for a family of five during a month. The basket includes 37 kg bread, 19 kg rice, 19 kg lentils, 5 kg of sugar, and 7 litters of vegetable oil.
17 World Food Programme (WFP), Syria Market Price Watch Bulletin, December 2023.
Meanwhile, the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the State of Palestine and the tense situation in the West Bank and Southern Lebanon continue to cast their shadows on the region, heightening the security risks in Syria.

Health
The February earthquake significantly damaged six health centres in Lattakia and Tartous, putting these health centres out of service. In addition, 133 primary health care centres and 18 hospitals in Aleppo, Hama, Lattakia, and Tartous Governorates were partially damaged. The earthquake not only damaged health facilities but also the fragile medical equipment and devices such as C-arms, MRIs, and CT scans, many of which were already operating well beyond their normal lifespan due to a lack of eligible funding for replacement of major equipment. This impacted the timely and effective delivery of life-saving trauma and surgical care.

Access to and functionality of basic health services remain a significant challenge; almost 40 per cent of primary and secondary care health facilities, serving over 4.8 million people in need of life-saving health services, are either partially functioning or not functional. In addition, non-functioning primary health care and specialized facilities increased from 16 per cent and 18 per cent in 2022 to 24 per cent and 31 per cent in 2023 respectively. Furthermore, due to damage, many health facilities are operating in structures not fit for purpose concerning capacity, WASH, and infection prevention and control, as well as accessibility – particularly for persons with disability.

Emerging and re-emerging infectious, vaccine-preventable, and neglected tropical diseases, such as influenza-like illnesses, measles, meningitis, and waterborne diseases including acute watery diarrhoea/cholera, hepatitis A, and leishmaniasis continued to pose a significant threat to affected communities across Syria, accounting for more than 16 per cent of health consultations reported through the surveillance system.

Since the onset of the cholera outbreak in September 2022, a total of 221,836 suspected cases, including a cumulative death count of 1,051 deaths, were reported across all 14 governorates of Syria. The latest cholera related death was reported in July 2023. Camp populations with limited access to clean drinking water remain particularly vulnerable to the disease. The outbreak was associated with the large-scale destruction of water and sanitation infrastructure, the economic crisis, electricity outages, prolonged drought, and the limited knowledge of effective cholera preventive behaviour and practices.

Nutrition
In Syria 5.9 million people urgently need nutritional assistance, including 4.3 million women and girls and 3.8 million children. The impact of earthquakes and the increased erosion of the services interconnected with nutrition needs, specifically water and sanitation, health, and social protection systems, have heightened vulnerabilities.

The nutrition needs of children and women of Syria continue to rise. In 2023, Syria faced a concerning escalation in the prevalence of wasting, stunting, and anaemia affecting children under the age of five. One in 10 women are wasted and there are elevated levels of anaemia for women of reproductive age, particularly among adolescent girls (15-19 years old). The prevalence of stunting has also increased compared to 2019, with a national prevalence of 16.3 per cent of children under five stunted, while many governorates show alarmingly high levels of stunting (above 20 per cent).

Exclusive breastfeeding showed improvement from 28.5 per cent in 2019 to 45.5 per cent in 2023; however, only six per cent of children 6-23 months of age are receiving a minimum acceptable diet, posing a huge risk for chronic and acute malnutrition. Furthermore, only one in four children are consuming a minimum dietary diversity, with critical consumption of vegetables, fruits, eggs, and meat below 50 per cent. Anaemia levels for children, adolescent remain elevated; one in four children and one in two adolescent girls are anaemic.

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The socioeconomic status has further deteriorated, while the February earthquake exacerbated the needs and amplified vulnerabilities. The erosion of services’ capacity continues, with water and sanitation system, health system, and social protection system under immense strain.

According to the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) survey 2023, the prevalence of child acute malnutrition has nearly tripled compared to 2019, with a national prevalence of 4.9 per cent. Many governorates are exceeding child acute malnutrition levels of five per cent, with a few governorates exceeding 10 per cent, especially in earthquake affected governorates.

Based on the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) 2024, the number of children under five who are acutely malnourished increased 40 per cent from 2023, with a total of 508,892 children urgently requiring life-saving treatment for acute malnutrition – out of which, 109,642 children are suffering from severe wasting, presenting a markedly heightened risk of mortality compared to well-nourished children.

**Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**

In 2023, people in Syria continue to endure the severe lack of basic WASH services, with 13.6 million people in dire need of WASH support, reflecting a 2.6 per cent increase from 2022. The protracted conflict, insufficient routine maintenance, a shortage of experienced staff, drought and scarce water resources, the absence of integrated water resources management, inflation, and the impact of the earthquake and escalation of hostilities have collectively contributed to the decline in access to essential WASH services.

The earthquakes had a compounding negative impact on critical infrastructure, resulting in decreased efficiency and an increased risk of water contamination. The earthquake-related damage to WASH infrastructure has been substantial, with 71 water reservoirs collapsing or needing removal and an additional 114 being damaged and requiring rehabilitation. Moreover, 220 water facilities have been either completely or partially destroyed, and 40km of water lines and 103km of sewage lines require rehabilitation. The damage to the sewage system has increased the risk of waterborne disease outbreaks, as sewage from leaking sewer lines may infiltrate broken low-pressure water networks.

**Child Protection**

In a context where 6.3 million children require child protection services, the earthquakes intensified negative coping mechanisms, such as child marriage and child labour. Children have been living under significant stress with limited access to social services and increased exposure and risks of various forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect. The ongoing hostilities, protracted displacement and limited livelihood opportunities affect the physical, mental, and social well-being of children and their caregivers, further undermining parents’ and caregivers’ ability to protect their children. As of December 2023, the United Nations (UN) monitoring and reporting mechanism verified over 1,500 grave violations against children. In NW Syria, persistent hostilities, limited livelihood opportunities, weak governance, and the presence of explosive contamination, continue to pose significant protection risks for children.

**Education**

The past 13 years of crisis continue to adversely impact the education sector. Even before the earthquakes, 2.4 million children were out of school and 1.6 million children were at risk of dropping out of school. The earthquakes further exacerbated the already deteriorated education infrastructure and added to the impact on children’s learning and mental health. The UN led Syria Earthquake Recovery Needs Assessment (SERNA) estimated that an additional one million children across Syria were at risk of being out of school. These out-of-school children face elevated protection risks including, but not limited to, child marriage and engagement in child labour, including in its worst forms.

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The 2024 HNO highlighted that the education sector people in need had increased by four per cent in comparison to the previous year, leading to an overall 7.2 million children and education personnel in need of education emergency services. 24 Children have experienced disruptions in learning, are exposed to high levels of stress and are often exposed to unnecessary risks by learning in unconducive learning environments due to overcrowding, lack of school furniture/school supplies, and lack of operational WASH facilities. The deteriorating economic situation in the country further hinders regular access to learning for both children and teachers alike. Textbooks are the primary learning resources; however, many families are unable to afford them for children.

Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP)
In 2023, nearly one-third of the 15.3 million people requiring humanitarian assistance in Syria were adolescents and youth (aged 10-24 years).

Many adolescents and youth in Syria have been deprived from their right to education and learning as a result of the crisis. The limited investment and availability of flexible and multiple learning pathways for the many adolescents and youth who will not return to school prevents them from learning critical and needed skills for the future. Barriers related to developing skills for work are accompanied with barriers related to connecting them with the labour market and access to opportunities for putting their acquired skills into practice. Barriers related to an enabling system for the transitions to work, including the availability of decent jobs, further affect the critical learning to earning transition for young people. These unaddressed learning needs weaken the resilience of adolescents and communities and hamper early recovery efforts for communities.

In addition, adolescents and youth in Syria face a myriad of interrelated barriers that prevent their meaningful economic, social and civic participation and engagement. Young people face stigma and discrimination regarding their capacities to lead positive change in their communities. Limited opportunities for economic, social and civic engagement, particularly for the most marginalised adolescents and youth contribute to their systematic exclusion and exacerbate feelings of isolation and disenfranchisement. Yet, experiences from other contexts of protracted crisis have shown that supporting young people’s social and civic engagement can have positive social outcomes and be conductive to increased community resilience and social cohesion.

Social Protection and Cash Transfer
Eighty-five per cent of households struggle to make ends meet, 25 which increases the reliance on humanitarian aid and negative coping mechanisms, such as child labour and consumption of suboptimal diets, and further limits their access to basic services.

Families and children across Syria are sliding deeper into poverty and finding it overwhelmingly difficult to make ends meet. Over 13 years of conflict have plunged Syria into deeper poverty, stemming from multiple crises, including: armed conflict, the loss of human capital, the economic and financial downturn, the severe water crisis, continued food insecurity, the consequences of the Ukraine-Russian war, health emergencies such as COVID-19 and cholera, and the devastating February 2023 earthquake.

Furthermore, the situation deteriorated in 2023. UNICEF’s publication on the State Budget Brief 2023 showed that public expenditures continue to fall in real terms. Compared to the pre-conflict level, the 2023 budget is less than one-quarter of its 2011 level and equals about US$5.88 billion or US$256 per capita. The allocations to social protection programmes are largely declining. In parallel, inflation keeps hitting the economy with prices of necessities becoming out of hand. Overall, the humanitarian situation in Syria continues to deteriorate, with an estimate 16.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in 2024.

These multiple crises are disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable people, including families with members with severe disabilities. The multi-sector needs assessment conducted in 2022 showed that households headed by a member with a disability were more likely to report being unable to meet their basic needs compared with other households. In addition to insufficient income, households with

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24 OCHA, Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Needs Overview 2024.
members with disabilities reported spending 50 per cent more on health care and medical expenses compared to other households, with longer-term negative consequences. UNICEF monitoring surveys also identify multiple deprivations and hardships that children with severe disabilities face, including discrimination and a greater risk of abuse, harassment and violence. For example, UNICEF post-distribution monitoring surveys indicate that over 70 per cent of children with disabilities are out of school. As a result of barriers and subsequent inequalities, households with members with disabilities resort to more negative coping mechanisms than other households.

The same applies to other groups of vulnerable people, such as families headed by women and those with chronic diseases. Those families are unable to provide for the basic needs of their children, particularly at specific times during the year when families face higher costs of living (for example, before the start of the school year or before winter). They are often unable to cope with external shocks (such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake). This is particularly true for families who have been displaced several times and have recently returned to urban and peri-urban slums where they continue to live in dire conditions.

**Humanitarian Results**

**Health**
In 2023, UNICEF and partners, including the Ministry of Health (MoH), supported 6.3 million people with health services and supplies, including 840,751 people in the earthquake affected areas. UNICEF and partners provided 3,255,294 free health care consultations. Of these consultations, 1,214,364 were in NW Syria. Due to the earthquake response, the number of children and women reached with health consultations was much higher than originally planned for in 2023, as health interventions were rapidly scaled up through re-deploying mobile health teams to earthquake affected areas. Many IDPs needed medical support and many implementing partners joined the efforts to provide health and nutrition services to affected communities. Additionally, 4,718,312 people (2,617,593 women and 17,312 people/children with disabilities), including an estimated 3,208,069 people in NW Syria, were reached with health promotion messages through different platforms.

UNICEF and WHO supported the MoH with a routine vaccination campaign, during which 2,186,355 children were vaccinated (1,090,219 girls). However, the number of children under one years old reached with the third dose of DPT3 vaccine was less compared to the 2023 targets. This was due to difficulties in reaching some areas after the earthquake and overburdened health workers, which led to delays in reaching some areas. Nonetheless, UNICEF identified zero-dose children in the high-risk districts, reaching 506,405 children (251,535 girls) with the first DPT vaccine, reducing the percentage of zero-dose children to 20 per cent in 2023. Of those, 124,302 children (60,613 girls) were vaccinated in NW Syria. The MoH is planning a large catch-up vaccination campaign in 2024 to vaccinate all defaulter children with DPT3 and any other missing doses of the routine vaccines.

In addition, through measles vaccination campaigns, 1,082,111 children (540,780 girls) were vaccinated, including 639,250 children (319,905 girls) in NW Syria. The number of children under the age of five who were vaccinated against polio was not reached due to the stopping of polio vaccination campaigns – a decision based on WHO recommendations for Syria. UNICEF and WHO also supported the MoH to vaccinate 190,750 adults against COVID-19. In total, UNICEF procured 12,492,000 doses of vaccines (with funding from GAVI and others) to ensure uninterrupted immunization services and enable the MoH to conduct vaccination campaigns and administer vaccines routinely.

UNICEF supported health systems strengthening through the rehabilitation and solarization of 16 primary health care facilities, the procurement and instalment of 18 modern autoclaves for environment friendly health and immunization waste management, and the instalment of 53 pieces of energy efficient cold chain equipment. UNICEF assisted the MoH in the implementation of the inventory gap analysis and the capacity building of seven trainers and 161 Expanded Programme on Immunization health workers.

**Newborn care** training was extended to 1,636 health workers and community volunteers (1,531 women). In addition, some 400 community volunteers were trained on newborn care at home and conducted 24,805 visits to 17,687 pregnant women and 14,474 newborns (7,210 girls) in 13
governorates. The Every Newborn Action Plan was extended from seven to ten hospitals and 9,904 mothers and 9,929 newborns were given quality maternal and neonatal care. In the third quarter, a survey of 2,213 mothers in 10 hospitals showed immediate skin-to-skin contact in 66 per cent of births and breastfeeding initiated in the first hour in 54 per cent of births.

UNICEF and its partners advanced the child-friendly health centres initiative, reaching 10,010 children under five (4,995 girls) with an integrated package of health services for early childhood development (ECD). Of these, 765 children (378 girls) were detected with developmental delay and supported through counselling and referral.

Table 1: Summary of Health Programme Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Response</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
<td>Total Results 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against polio</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,043,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,439,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children under 1 year reached with routine vaccination (DPT3 containing vaccine)</td>
<td></td>
<td>742,880</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Results are achieved through contributions against appeals, as well as resources from UNICEF’s regular programmes where necessary.*

**Nutrition**

In 2023, under UNICEF leadership and with support from partners, the MoH launched the **Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART)** across 14 governorates, and also conducted a SMART for Manager Training (ToT) for 25 participants who led the survey at their respective governorates.26 The preliminary results indicate a threefold increase in the prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) across Syria over the past five years, increasing the GAM rate from 1.7 per cent in 2019 to 4.8 per cent in 2023.27

UNICEF and partners reached 3,145,314 people (2,249,223 women and girls and 11,744 people and children with disabilities) with essential nutrition services. Of these, 902,009 people (671,436 women and girls) were reached in NW Syria, including 449,246 people in earthquake affected areas.

During the year, UNICEF and partners screened 2,878,271 children aged 6-59 months (1,442,431 girls) for acute malnutrition, including 1,707,012 children in NW Syria. Among these, 24,329 children across Syria (14,048 girls) were admitted for treatment of SAM, including 14,621 children (8,859 girls) in NW Syria. This accounted for only 55 per cent of the planned target for 2023 due to limited coverage and quality of life-saving nutrition services in hard-to-reach areas. To ensure no child was left behind, UNICEF expanded its blanket supplementary feeding programme, distributing 24,007 cartons of lipid-based nutrient supplement in coordination with World Food Programme (WFP), reaching 80,562 children aged 6-23 months in earthquake-affected governorates and in NE Syria. UNICEF also provided training to 100 nutrition staff on community management of acute malnutrition.

Furthermore, to address significant micronutrient deficiencies among children and women, UNICEF and partners provided multiple micronutrient supplementation to 1,014,728 children and adolescents (506,457 girls) and 548,328 pregnant and lactating women. This included 443,634 children (222,116 girls) and 329,442 women in NW Syria. This accounted for 77 per cent of planned targets for 2023, as the programme faced offshore supply chain issues and external and in-country logistics constraints.

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26 The SMART survey results will be officially launched by the MoH by the end of February 2024.

27 Across all governorates, there has been an almost twofold increase in GAM prevalence, with four governorates (Rural Damascus, Idleb, Ar-Raqqa, and Quneitra) surpassing acceptable stress levels. Lattakia Governorate reported an emergency-level GAM prevalence of 10 per cent.
Meanwhile, as part of its preventive nutrition initiatives, UNICEF and partners engaged with 1,587,487 caregivers (1,301,702 women) through infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling, with 99 per cent achievement against the planned target. In response to the earthquake, UNICEF collaborated with the MoH and Nutrition Cluster/Sector partners to raise awareness among key stakeholders about the risks associated with the unrestricted random distribution of breastmilk substitutes. UNICEF also enhanced the capacity of over 250 frontline workers in IYCF in emergencies (IYCF-E) counselling and assessment of breastmilk substitutes eligibility. Additionally, as a corrective measure, UNICEF distributed 906,000 units of ready-to-use infant formula, benefiting 1,564 children aged 0-5 months in earthquake affected governorates.

In NW Syria, UNICEF and partners provided cash voucher assistance to specific households in 40 at-risk camps. Through the cash voucher assistance programme, 1,700 pregnant and lactating women and their households, as well as mothers and caregivers of children admitted to nutrition stabilization centres, received a US$50 cash grant per month for 12 months, reaching 45,551 people (13,335 women).

Table 2: Summary of Nutrition Programme Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Response28</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
<td>Total Results 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment</td>
<td>56,795</td>
<td>39,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling</td>
<td>1,449,270</td>
<td>568,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children and pregnant and lactating women receiving micronutrients</td>
<td>2,762,363</td>
<td>1,750,913</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results are achieved through contributions against appeals, as well as resources from UNICEF’s regular programmes where necessary.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

In 2023, UNICEF and partners reached 8,893,764 people (4,653,965 women and girls and 171,255 people with disabilities) with WASH services and supplies, including 3,676,320 people (1,909,550 women and girls) in NW Syria through the cross-border response. Despite the efforts of UNICEF and its partners to help prevent the collapse of the WASH sector, there is a need for the aid strategy to shift from spot interventions to more comprehensive, strategic, and early recovery initiatives.

Through the rehabilitation of water infrastructure, UNICEF reinstated access of safe drinking water for 4,418,351 people (2,286,315 women and girls) across Syria who were affected by service deterioration, earthquakes, and cholera outbreaks. This included rehabilitating wells, pumping stations, and water distribution networks. UNICEF also repaired earthquake damaged pipelines in Aleppo and Lattakia cities.

UNICEF prioritized mitigating the earthquake’s impact by implementing multiple reconstruction projects, including replacing 1,400 meters of damaged balanced pipeline, ensuring safe drinking water for about 67 per cent of the 1.6 million residents in Aleppo city. Emergency repairs of severely damaged water networks were conducted in Aleppo and Lattakia cities. UNICEF is actively engaged in reconstructing 10 elevated tanks destroyed by the earthquake, enhancing the engineering designs for increased seismic resistance. UNICEF also repaired earthquake damaged sewer lines in Aleppo and Lattakia cities, ensuring that 227,237 people can safely dispose of their sewage in these areas and also have access to clean water, without the risk of cross contamination.

In NW Syria, 1,518,805 people (790,422 women and girls) gained a more reliable and sustained access to safe water through UNICEF’s and partners’ cross-border resilient measures, such as the restoration of water services, support for operation and maintenance of water stations, and related institutional capacity development.

28 Sector reporting period is one month behind UNICEF’s reporting period. Full results are expected in Q2 2024.
Furthermore, UNICEF procured most of the country’s sodium hypochlorite needs, which is critical for disinfecting water systems. This ensured the availability of safe drinking water to a staggering 17,498,734 people (9,000,000 women and girls) throughout the country. Of those, 2,392,760 people (1,251,703 women and girls) are in NW Syria. The continuous supply of sodium hypochlorite has had a significant impact on the health of people of Syria by preventing further outbreak of cholera and other waterborne diseases.

Energy shortages remained a key factor affecting the efficiency of the water sector. To tackle the challenges related to the declining electricity supply and fuel crisis, UNICEF shifted towards renewable energy solutions, particularly solar power where applicable, including initiating the provision of solar systems to ensure the functionality of 45 water facilities.29

Meanwhile, UNICEF and partners reached 2,865,292 people (1,489,065 women and girls) with improved access to sanitation services, including 1,418,290 people (730,089 women and girls) in NW Syria. This included the rehabilitation of 36 sewage systems in various governorates.

UNICEF and partners also delivered emergency WASH services to 2,086,466 IDPs (1,100,842 women and girls) and essential supplies to ensure their basic needs were met. To curb the spread of diseases, UNICEF provided hygiene supplies such as family hygiene kits, soap aqua tabs, baby diapers and dignity kits to 544,727 IDPs countrywide (164,825 girls, 137,259 boys, 140,392 women and 102,251 men), helping them to cope with dire situation in camps and to prevent any health hazard related to WASH. Additionally, UNICEF reached 497,760 IDPs (148,265 girls, 127,447 boys, 121,318 women and 100,730 men) through life-saving services including water trucking, rehabilitation of WASH facilities, operation and maintenance of WASH facilities, and installation of toilets in collective shelters located in Aleppo, Lattakia (following the earthquake), and Al-Hasakeh. In NW Syria, in response to the cholera outbreak, the increased emphasis on wastewater disposal and treatment benefitted 658,807 people. The WASH interventions in 570 schools reached 172,000 children and in 113 health care facilities benefited at least 109,307 people.

In addition, UNICEF also conducted light rehabilitations and installed WASH facilities in collective shelters and other IDP settings that were affected by the earthquake. To ensure the safety and well-being of the displaced population, UNICEF took proactive measures to mitigate gender-based violence risks while providing WASH facilities. This was achieved by ensuring that all WASH facilities were sex-segregated and by providing adequate road and facility lighting to enhance safety. In response to the cholera outbreak, UNICEF continued the critical hygiene awareness campaign in the affected governorates in partnership with the Syrian Arab Red Cross. The campaign aimed to educate communities, especially children and caregivers, on the importance of handwashing, water management at the household level, and food handling practices to prevent the spread of WASH-related diseases such as cholera.

Table 3: Summary of WASH Programme Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WASH Service</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Response</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
<td>2023 Total Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
<td>7,003,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people reached with handwashing behaviour change programmes</td>
<td>3,700,000</td>
<td>2,415,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people have improved access to sanitation services</td>
<td>4,100,000</td>
<td>2,640,938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results are achieved through contributions against appeals, as well as resources from UNICEF’s regular programmes where necessary.

29 In Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqa, Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Hama, and Homs governorates.
30 Sector reporting period is one month behind UNICEF’s reporting period. Full results are expected in Q2 2024.
**Child Protection**

Across Syria, 559,352 children (295,391 girls and 260,161 children with disabilities) were reached with **mental health and psychosocial support services** (MHPSS), within the framework of the national MHPSS manual. This includes 204,615 children (114,280 girls) in NW Syria. The pre and post assessment of 49,500 children who completed the MHPSS sessions demonstrated that their state of mental health and psychosocial wellbeing has significantly improved. This included being able to express their feelings and emotions, improved skills in communication with peers and parents, being able to identify protection risks and knowing where and how to seek help. In the immediate response to the earthquake, **psychological first aid** was provided by trained frontline workers to children and families to be able to cope with the psychological distress.

During the earthquake response, the **Frontliners Wellbeing Package** was also rolled out to enhance the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of frontline workers and service providers, benefiting over 4,323 staff (2,902 women and 1,421 men). Capacity-building initiatives were launched ensuring frontline workers’ ability to implement high-quality activities for vulnerable children and caregivers. Training initiatives for frontline workers on child protection standards, gender-based violence, explosive ordnance risk education, MHPSS, and parenting have been critical to empowering service providers to deliver high-quality activities for vulnerable populations.

To enhance the response and effectiveness in addressing the severe needs of children following the earthquakes, the UNICEF child protection, education, and WASH programme sections jointly launched the **WAQTI initiative** ("My time" in Arabic), which constitutes a multisectoral and targeted response to the most affected communities. The initiative successfully established 112 WAQTI centres that provided a range of child protection services, including MHPSS, family tracing and reunification, case management, as well as education, hygiene promotion, and sanitation services, reaching over 200,000 children, adolescents, and parents and caregivers across 56 communities in NW Syria.

UNICEF and implementing partners also reached 841,599 people (469,503 women and girls), including 204,788 people (102,989 women and girls) in NW Syria, with key **child protection messages** through awareness raising sessions, recreational activities and other community edutainment events, involving how to cope with the earthquake, and prevention of family separation, exploitation, and violence against children. **Gender-based violence** prevention and awareness raising activities reached 257,478 people (171,888 women and girls). This includes 36,308 people (34,272 women and girls) in NW Syria.

Under the global Children and Armed Conflict Agenda, UNICEF continued its support for the UN Country Task Force Monitoring and Reporting, maintaining a regional system for monitoring incidents of **grave violations against children in armed conflict**. Efforts to engage with armed groups and forces aimed at ending such violations have shown promise, with some actors committing to action plans for improvement.

UNICEF and partners reached 883,089 people (including 472,283 women and girls and 14,949 people and children with disabilities) with **explosive ordinance risk education** (EORE) through the dissemination of critical risk education messages, encompassing face-to-face sessions in schools, health facilities, child-friendly spaces, and via mobile teams and immunization campaigns. This includes EORE delivered to 213,129 people (105,039 women and girls) in NW Syria, with a focus on IDPs and host communities in schools, IDP camps, sites, and communities. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and MoH at the technical level, as well as implementing partners, UNICEF trained 7,640 professionals (4,533 women) working with children and caregivers on child protection minimum standards in humanitarian action.

Furthermore, 1,234 unaccompanied and separated children (600 girls) were supported with child protection services, family tracing and reunification and alternative care. In earthquake affected locations, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour disseminated a hotline number in shelters to report cases of unaccompanied and separated children. A good practice was seen in Aleppo where a "protection necklace" was introduced to prevent separation of children. The necklace had a QR code that included the child’s full name, address, and phone numbers of caregivers and relatives. Some 800 children in schools took part in the pilot. In NE Syria, alternative care and family tracing...
reunification was provided to 45 unaccompanied and separated children (15 girls) in two interim care centres in the Al-Hol camp, of whom 18 (7 girls) were reunified with their relatives.

Efforts to repatriate children with foreign citizenship stranded in camps and detention facilities in NE Syria have been centralized under the child protection programme, leading to successful advocacy and logistical support for repatriation processes.

Case management systems were strengthened, and the government agreed to adopt the Primero Information Management System.\textsuperscript{31} A total of 28,934 children and women (14,208 women and girls and 6,098 women and children with disabilities), who experienced or were at a higher risk of abuse, violence, exploitation, and neglect, were reached with individual case management and referral to services and support, such as health and education services, legal assistance, MHPSS, and social protection schemes. In NW Syria, individual case management services were provided to 12,467 people (6,325 women and girls) including referral to specialized services.

Despite the challenges posed by the earthquake, significant strides in advocacy and technical support were made at the national level, notably through efforts to re-engage the government on the Justice for Children Agenda and in the development of a national case management system. This progress was especially pronounced in the legal and policy frameworks related to children’s justice, underscored by the Ministry of Justice’s endorsement of an implementation plan and the launch of initiatives to develop comprehensive academic, social work programmes at the University of Damascus. These efforts mark significant achievements, highlighting a concerted push towards improving the legal and supportive infrastructure for the protection and welfare of children.

UNICEF and partners developed a harmonized national parenting manual and reached 80,618 parents and caregivers (64,991 women) with parenting programmes, including 8,284 parents and caregivers (4,489 women) in NW Syria, equipping them with essential skills and tools for improved interaction with their children. Parents who attended the programme reported improved communication and increased capacity to manage their children through non-violent means. However, the programme continued to encounter challenges in attracting fathers and male caregivers.

### Table 4: Summary of Child Protection Programme Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Protection</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Response\textsuperscript{32}</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
<td>Total Results 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children accessing mental health and psychosocial support</td>
<td>883,849</td>
<td>722,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of girls, boys and women benefiting from case management for child protection and/or gender-based violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children and caregivers accessing explosive weapons-related risk education and survivor assistance interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results are achieved through contributions against appeals, as well as resources from UNICEF’s regular programmes where necessary.

### Education

In 2023, UNICEF supported the provision of equitable access to quality education opportunities for 3,005,953 children and education personnel (1,476,572 women and girls and 19,400 people and children with disabilities), including 584,226 children (290,000 girls) in the earthquake affected areas. In NW Syria, UNICEF capitalized on its long investment and experience in providing education in emergency response to severely affected populations through the establishment of a rapid response mechanism and prepositioning of education supplies in warehouses in Aleppo and Idleb to be

\textsuperscript{31} Primero is an open-source software platform for humanitarian protection and social welfare workers.

\textsuperscript{32} Sector reporting period is one month behind UNICEF’s reporting period. Full results are expected in Q2 2024.
delivered to vulnerable girls and boys. In NW Syria, a total of 326,391 children and education personnel (160,865 women and girls and 8,945 people and children with disabilities), from both the internally displaced and host communities and in high-severity areas, benefitted from education services.

Across Syria, 2,299,853 children (1,105,198 girls, and 2,648 children with disabilities) were supported with education in formal settings, including 80,264 children (38,543 girls) in NW Syria. UNICEF rehabilitated and undertook minor repairs of 210 schools, including those in earthquake affected areas, and ensured provision of gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive WASH facilities in the rehabilitated schools. This effort improved the learning environment and helped restore the functionality of moderately and slightly damaged schools to serve 300,725 children (156,780 girls and 3,195 children with disabilities), including 1,263 children (650 girls) benefitting from early childhood education. In areas where school rehabilitation was not sufficient to address the lack of adequate physical space for children, 104 temporary learning spaces were installed, supporting 128,179 children (59,977 girls). In addressing the persistent challenge of textbook availability, where sharing among several students is common in certain communities, UNICEF distributed national textbooks to 1,804,623 children (867,828 girls).

In response to the impact of the earthquake on children’s well-being, UNICEF supported the review of national manuals on psychosocial support and trained 6,716 teachers (5,028 women) accordingly. In NW Syria, UNICEF, through its implementing partners, provided 37,666 children (20,376 girls) with school-based psychosocial support programmes in both formal and non-formal educational settings. Through the WAQTI project, 30,479 children at risk of drop out were reached with catch-up classes to improve foundational learning skills, 3,047 children with non-formal education were reached through mobile learning/mobile teachers, and 964 teachers with training on psychosocial support and education in emergencies.

To reach the most vulnerable children who are out of school or at risk of dropping out, UNICEF provided learning opportunities through non-formal education to 508,304 children (260,581 girls and 12,850 children with disabilities), including 200,130 children (99,781 girls) in NW Syria. To raise the awareness of caregivers and children on learning opportunities in NW Syria, UNICEF reached 214,773 caregivers and children with back to learning™ interventions. Additionally, 102 schools and learning centres hosting non-formal education programmes were rehabilitated and maintained ensuring gender and disability inclusion, benefitting 22,512 children (11,333 girls). The provision of gender-sensitive washrooms facilitated the retention and enrolment of more girls who could attend regularly even during the monthly menstrual days, reducing absenteeism.

UNICEF also contributed to improving learning outcomes by implementing two internationally recognized learning assessments tools. These tools, tailored to the local context, aim to assist teachers in formal and non-formal education settings in assessing learning, making needed adjustments, and measuring changes in learning of groups of students over time, empowering them to customize their instruction to address the specific and varied needs of children who may have experienced learning gaps.

Through the Learning Passport, which was expanded across 14 governorates in 2023, UNICEF reached 6,501 children (3,528 girls) with digitized self-learning materials in addition to 1,400 interactive assessments to support children’s education in self-learning materials. Following the earthquake, the Learning Cinema, an innovative education approach entailing the provision of interactive digital content through low power consumption technology, was rolled out in accommodation centres, supporting the continuation of learning for 1,577 children (959 girls).

The fragmentation of the education system with different curricula being taught continued to pose challenges in both children’s access to accredited education and collection of reliable enrolment data. In NE Syria, where formal education is very limited, UNICEF supported children’s access to flexible alternative non-formal education pathways through the Self-Learning Programme, which consists of using learning materials that have been mapped and aligned with national curriculum standards, reaching 31,747 children (16,191 girls) through this modality.
Table 5: Summary of Education Programme Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Response33</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
<td>Total Results 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children supported with educational services and supplies in formal settings</td>
<td>2,874,701</td>
<td>1,848,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children in non-formal education benefiting from education services</td>
<td>946,864</td>
<td>792,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers and education personnel trained</td>
<td>74,943</td>
<td>35,870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results are achieved through contributions against appeals, as well as resources from UNICEF’s regular programmes where necessary.

Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP)

In 2023, UNICEF supported 556,877 disadvantaged young people aged 10-24 years (296,071 young women and adolescent girls and 24,924 young people with disabilities), with skills-building and engagement opportunities across 14 governorates through adolescent friendly spaces and mobile teams working closely with its local partners. Of these, 235,436 young people (129,020 young women and adolescent girls and 15,303 young people with disabilities) benefitted from life-skills and citizenship education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), social entrepreneurship, and employability skills. Moreover, 495,786 young people (259,942 young women and adolescent girls and 22,080 young people with disabilities) participated in positive engagement opportunities to promote social cohesion and civic engagement through the implementation of sports for development and cultural activities, youth-clubs, cross-sectoral youth-led initiatives, and awareness-raising campaigns.

UNICEF and partners’ earthquake response was strengthened by harnessing the support of 6,125 young volunteers, including 3,151 adolescent girls and young women, who despite being affected by the earthquakes themselves, were eager to get involved in helping earthquake affected children, peers and families. These young volunteers supported the initial cross-sectoral emergency response including relief and shelter management, distribution of non-food items, as well as disseminating key messages in collective shelters and affected communities. UNICEF and partners provided additional training for the young people and equipped them to engage in and lead social and digital engagement activities, including developing youth-led initiatives, leading recreational activities, disseminating SBC messages, and conducting assessments. Notably, 425 trained young volunteers (190 young women) participated in conducting data collection among their peers and affected communities, like the Syria Needs Assessment Tool to assess the needs of earthquake-affected families. Overall, UNICEF supported 63,861 earthquake affected young people with skills-building and participation opportunities.

In NE Syria, UNICEF provided services to young people through seven adolescent friendly spaces, 18 mobile teams and the support of 280 youth volunteers, reaching 71,777 young people, including 4,619 young people living in camps. More than 2,000 young girls participated in sports activities, breaking the social stereotype of girls in sports in NE Syria.

Through a joint programme in collaboration with other six UN agencies, UNICEF successfully reached 11,982 young people (7,693 young women and adolescent girls) by implementing a comprehensive package of integrated interventions focusing on resilience and recovery for communities, including social cohesion activities, TVET, employability skills, and various engagement opportunities.

UNICEF and partners continued to advance youth engagement activities on climate change. For instance, UNICEF supported two youth-led Local Conferences of Youth,34 which hosted 320 youths and contributed to the global youth statement for the Conference of Parties (COP28) on climate change.

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33 Sector reporting period is one month behind UNICEF’s reporting period. Full results are expected in Q2 2024.
34 In Latakia and Tartous.
UNICEF also provided capacity building opportunities to 3,001 partner staff and potential youth leaders (1,685 women) to ensure quality of the services provided to the young people. Additionally, 7,231 service providers and young volunteers (4,005 women) received information and relevant messages on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).

Table 6: Summary of ADAP Programme Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADAP</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Response</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of adolescents and youth aged 10 to 24 years promoting social cohesion and civic engagement at the community level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of affected adolescents and youth aged 10 to 24 years receiving life-skills and citizenship education and employability skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results are achieved through contributions against appeals, as well as resources from UNICEF’s regular programmes where necessary.

Social Protection and Cash Transfers

As part of the **Cash Transfer for Basic Needs** programme for the winter and earthquake response, UNICEF and its partners reached 336,276 people (167,769 women and girls) with humanitarian cash transfers for basic needs, including 12,127 people (7,807 women and girls) in NW Syria.

Through the **Integrated Social Protection Programme for Children with Disabilities**, 10,391 children with severe mental and/or physical disabilities (4,365 girls) were provided with regular quarterly cash assistance (SYP equivalent to US$120 per quarter) and case management services in Al-Hasakeh, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Homs and Rural Damascus – 61 per cent of the annual target.

Findings from household monitoring surveys confirm high levels of poverty and exclusion. The findings also provided evidence on the importance of an integrated approach. For example, in Deir Azzor, following eight months of enrolment in the programme, most families reported that their financial resources were insufficient to meet the basic needs for their children. The findings showed the critical role played by cash assistance in helping families meet the basic needs of children, mainly covering essentials like food, health, and clothing. Similarly, according to the analysis of the data collected for the post distribution monitoring in July 2023 in Deir ez-Zor, 40 per cent of the cash was used for food, while 46 per cent was spent on health, clothes, and WASH. Additionally, the findings indicated high satisfaction with the programme among the recipients. However, several challenges have impeded the effective delivery of the programme including the limited availability of financial service providers to deliver cash to families; a lack of funding leaving about 7,000 children with disabilities on the waiting list; and the loss of value for money due to the high difference between formal and informal exchange rates.

To respond to the educational needs of children with disabilities enrolled in the programme, seven Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour educational centres for disabilities in three governorates have been identified and assessed for rehabilitation. Through the social policy and education programmes, UNICEF has invested in the rehabilitation of five specialized services centres for children with disabilities in three governorates where the programme is implemented, improving the availability of education services for children with disabilities.

Through the **Basic Needs Support Programme for Winter**, over 64,000 highly vulnerable families were supported with humanitarian cash assistance to help them cope with the economic hardship and meet the essential needs of their children during the harsh winter months. Fifty-seven per cent of these families were reached through the earthquake cash response.

The winter response was redesigned following lessons learned from previous interventions and in close consultations with the partners, so it came with more focus on the most vulnerable families, in particular female-headed families, and an increased amount and frequency of cash assistance (from one to three transfers). The rapid post-distribution monitoring surveys conducted in Rural Damascus
shows that over 90 per cent of the cash was used for energy, food, health and clothes. The use of cash was also extremely quick: on average, it took families 3.3 days to use the cash they received.

In response to the earthquakes, UNICEF adapted and used its two existing humanitarian social protection programmes to deliver emergency cash assistance to earthquake affected families. The pre-existence and shock-responsiveness of these programmes meant that UNICEF and partners were able to provide cash assistance within 96 hours of the earthquake.

Nonetheless, delivering cash in a timely manner remains a critical challenge, with cash payments to families being interrupted for most of the second quarter of the year. This was largely visible during the current winter response 2023/2024, where UNICEF launched the programme in just two governorates targeting 25,000 people living in 5,000 families; 2,382 families (4,948 children; 2,410 girls) were reached before the end of 2023. This is mainly due to the limited progress that was made to diversify the UNICEF network of financial service providers due to operational restrictions. Meanwhile, out of 40,000 families targeted to receive cash assistance following the earthquake, 184,657 people (36,471 families; 93,740 children; 45,500 girls) have received cash assistance. Almost one year since the earthquake, the cash response is still ongoing, and many families have yet to receive the first round of payments.

Table 7: Summary of Social Policy Programme Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Policy</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Response</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
<td>Total Results 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers</td>
<td></td>
<td>472,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of girls and boys with disabilities provided with regular cash transfers</td>
<td></td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results are achieved through contributions against appeals, as well as resources from UNICEF’s regular programmes where necessary.

Cross Sectoral

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) / Social Behaviour Change (SBC)

In 2023, UNICEF and partners reached 20,543,611 people (10,376,371 women and girls) through the promotion of protective practices and information on how to access to services, and through the scale-up of community engagement efforts ensuring equal participation from both women and men, engaged 4,661,079 people (2,786,073 women and girls). Of the 15.3 million people in high need of humanitarian assistance, UNICEF reached 97 per cent with SBC programmes through community dialogues, edutainment and engagement with influencers.

As part of the earthquake response and after the completion of the community assessment, relevant critical protective practices were formulated in simple messages and delivered across different internet platforms in Syria, reaching 862,972 people (446,382 women and girls). Community workers of local non-government organizations (NGOs) were deployed to engage with families in shelters and host communities on the importance of maintaining cleanliness of WASH facilities, saving water and health caring for children, including MHPSS, reaching 853,297 people (539,402 women and girls).

Specifically, communities were reached and engaged in key preventive practices such as handwashing, water handling, food preparation and storage as well as waste management. Altogether, 11,045,373 people were reached (5,613,007 women and girls), and 1,882,433 people were engaged in the cholera response (1,133,467 women and girls). Concretely, in community dialogue sessions people discussed the use of Aquatabs to ensure safe water at household level and the role of oral rehydration solution, including homemade oral rehydration solution, to prevent dehydration. In NW Syria, UNICEF also provided training on key preventive messages for 688 community health workers, 143 social mobilizers as well as 135 camp managers on key preventive messages to protect at-risk populations from disease outbreaks.
Given the ongoing risks associated with cholera outbreaks in 2023, especially in earthquake-affected areas and camps, cholera interventions were implemented according to a national evidence-based strategy drafted by UNICEF and led by MoH. The action plan specifically targeted high-risk rural areas, including those near the Pharate River, where the risk of waterborne diseases is elevated.

The Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Coordination Group, established and co-led by UNICEF comprising multiple UN agencies and international NGOs actively operating on the ground, which serves as a mechanism to synergize and harmonize RCCE efforts while facilitating effective communication with government counterparts, played a pivotal role in the earthquake response. This collaborative platform has not only facilitated the efficient sharing of resources and expertise but has also provided UNICEF and its partners with valuable insights from the field, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the earthquake response efforts in Syria.

**Accountability for Affected Populations (AAP)**

Throughout 2023, UNICEF continued to integrate and strengthen its accountability to people impacted by the multiple crises in Syria. These efforts involved scaling up complaints and feedback mechanisms to ensure people had accessible ways to provide feedback on UNICEF and its implementing partners’ services, as well as to report complaints, including those related to sexual exploitation and abuse.

The mechanism is complemented by a service line, through which UNICEF responded to 5,331 cases in 2023. Among these, 77 per cent were requests for information (e.g., timing of payments), and 17 per cent involved raising new needs (e.g., the need for diapers or education services). Of the total, 206 cases were related to dissatisfaction, complaints, mistreatment, or discrimination, all of which were resolved in coordination with UNICEF programme teams. The majority of calls (79 per cent) were from earthquake-affected governorates. Following the calls, 81 per cent of callers expressed satisfaction with their service line experience.

In an effort to ensure and monitor universal coverage of suggestion boxes in all its service facilities, UNICEF installed 150 suggestion boxes in UNICEF-supported facilities across 10 governorates. Additionally, UNICEF piloted the distribution of leaflets along with WASH and dignity kits to increase awareness of feedback and complaint mechanisms.

UNICEF conducted a monitoring survey in 2023 with a sample of 2,102 respondents in UNICEF-supported facilities across all governorates. The results showed that only 26 per cent of respondents knew how to submit a complaint, provide feedback, or make suggestions about assistance. This points to the need to increase awareness of available safe and confidential complaint mechanisms. Additionally, only six per cent of respondents made a suggestion or complaint regarding received services. Meanwhile, monitory surveys in earthquake-affected governorates gathered data from a further 1,143 respondents. Eighty-seven per cent of these respondents stated that both the supplies and services provided met their current needs. Almost all respondents expressed satisfaction with the behaviour of the aid workers who provided assistance. Furthermore, 32 per cent and 22 per cent of the respondents indicated that they were aware of the service line and suggestion boxes for making a complaint or providing feedback.

In NW Syria, UNICEF supported programming received more than 8,500 feedback and complaint submissions from people in 2023 and approximately 97 per cent of those were resolved by the end of the year. Through the launch of the unique localization-and-feedback project, UNICEF worked with marginalized populations and local NGOs to co-create and lead a sustainable face-to-face community feedback-complaint system that could become part of the inter-agency feedback-complaint mechanism. UNICEF continued to play a leading role in inter-agency accountability to affected populations (AAP) for NW Syria, including integrating multiple types of feedback into the existing PSEA hotline to create a more robust AAP hotline that people can use to submit all types of feedback and complaints.

The 2024-2025 UNICEF AAP Strategy for the cross-border response in NW Syria has been completed, addressing gaps identified in an AAP review and building on strengths. The strategy incorporates standard AAP activities for implementing partners to integrate into programmes starting in 2024, along with associated indicators for UNICEF to measure accountability progress.
Approximately 85 adolescents, youth, women, and children with disabilities participated in face-to-face consultations conducted by UNICEF as part of an inter-agency AAP mission to NW Syria. Fifteen students, who were members of a newly established student council in a UNICEF supported education-child-protection-WASH programme, were consulted remotely and shared insights on the council’s benefits and suggestions for improvement. Student councils will become a standard activity in 2024 in UNICEF supported education programming in NW Syria, enabling children to discuss their priorities and advocate for solutions to staff from the education programme, the implementing partners, and UNICEF. Participants’ comments from all these community consultations informed key AAP initiatives for NW Syria.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)
UNICEF strengthened PSEA programming by ensuring adherence to PSEA standards by UNICEF staff and partners. This included assessing the PSEA capacity of 99 per cent of UNICEF implementing partners. UNICEF continued to invest in awareness raising, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) risk identification and mitigation, code of conduct trainings and the establishment and availability of SEA reporting mechanisms. Independent monitoring conducted by a third party showed that more than 95 per cent of staff implementing activities received a PSEA training, while 18 out of the 19 partners in NW Syria have up-to-date full capacity for PSEA programming. A total of 160 implementing partners staff were trained on SEA prevention, risk mitigation, and SEA reporting mechanisms.

As part of the PSEA scale-up plan and support to the earthquake-affected population, UNICEF and partners procured and distributed 13,300 dignity kits in Hama, Aleppo, and Lattakia. Also, PSEA awareness was scaled up by integrating PSEA and accountability to affected populations (AAP) flyers into the dignity kit distributions.

Furthermore, 2,029,328 people (1,186,466 women and girls) were provided with safe and accessible channels to report SEA by personnel who assist affected populations, including 1,582,664 people (875,233 women and girls) in NW Syria. Posters with information on PSEA and reporting channels were visibly displayed in only about two-thirds of the community centres, and this is one of the focus areas to reinforce in 2024. Additionally, 640 PSEA information, education and communication materials were printed and distributed to UNICEF field offices and partners. Awareness of SEA reporting mechanisms was mainstreamed in selected partner interventions and child-friendly spaces, increasing outreach to affected populations, especially children, women, and girls.

Table 8: Summary of Cross Sectoral Programme Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross Sectoral</th>
<th>Cluster/Sector Response</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2023 Target</td>
<td>Total Results 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services</td>
<td></td>
<td>10,999,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people participating in engagement actions for social and behavioural change</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,200,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>4,563</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results are achieved through contributions against appeals, as well as resources from UNICEF’s regular programmes where necessary.

Lessons Learned, Emerging Opportunities and Innovations

Lesson learned: Humanitarian cash-based transfers
The winterization response was thoroughly reviewed in a workshop held in June 2023, with intensive participation of key actors, including implementing partners, the Directorate of Social Affairs and Labour and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. A key recommendation following the workshop was to prioritize the targeting of the most vulnerable groups and link the assistance to the number of children in need. In line with this recommendation, efforts were made to regularize the programme with a higher transfer value and over a longer duration (12 months instead of six months).
decision was reinforced following the findings of the post distribution monitoring surveys, which highlighted the vulnerability of the targeted people and the need to receive more frequent disbursements of cash assistance over a longer period of time. Since then, the two social protection programmes have expanded to new locations in the southern governorates.

In 2024, UNICEF plans to arrange a Technical Review Workshop for the Integrated Social Protection Programme for Children with Disabilities with Ministry of Social Affairs and its directorate in the governorates, in addition to the programme’s implementing partners. This Technical Review aims to assess and enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and inclusivity of the Integrated Social Protection Programme cash transfer interventions targeting children with disabilities in Syria. Furthermore, the Workshop aims to receive feedback about (i) achievements to date, (ii) foster cross-governorate learning on the implementation of cash assistance (iii) discuss possible improvements and innovations (transfer values, case management, role of Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour/Directorate of Social Affairs and Labour, referrals to other services etc), (iv) disability criteria, and (v) ways to strengthen advocacy.

**Lesson learned: Supporting different education pathways to expanding learning opportunities**

The protracted crises coupled with economic challenges pose significant barriers to education as many families struggle to meet the financial demands of education, and teachers have low salaries or in some areas no compensation at all. The high cost of transportation to/from school further exacerbates the economic burden on students and teachers, particularly for rural areas. While there is a high number of out of school children, even those with access to education often have to learn in overcrowded classrooms in schools that need rehabilitation and lack teaching and learning materials. Supporting different education pathways (i.e., Curriculum B, self-learning programme and remedial classes) contribute to expanding learning opportunities for children irrespective of their circumstances or where they are and help them in acquiring skills and knowledge that unlock their future potential.

To address learning loss and reintegrate children into schools, alternative and distance learning options, such as digital learning, were implemented and expanded. An innovative solution such as the Learning Cinema was deployed post-earthquakes in accommodation centres as a tool to keep children engaged in learning through use of interactive digital content. In addition, UNICEF introduced the Learning Passport, a platform hosting a diverse range of digital learning materials and assessments, was made accessible to teachers who can utilize these in self-learning programmes. The Learning Passport fosters a more extensive and accessible educational platform, thereby promoting knowledge sharing among teachers.

**Opportunity: Strengthening early recovery**

After 13 years of protracted crisis, the earthquake response presents an opportunity to expand the humanitarian response to longer-term system building efforts. This includes a shift from a primarily emergency response to a continuum of rapid, sustained and equitable response with longer-term solutions that build the resilience of communities and sector systems to endure shocks and crises.

While the delivery of emergency services, including WASH, will need to continue, especially in IDP and other emergency settings in heavily affected areas of NW and NE Syria, there is also an opportunity to transition towards more sustainable solutions, such as establishing connections to existing water networks or simplified water and sewer networks. This was demonstrated following the earthquake, where UNICEF provided support to repair a critical 1km water pipeline that controls the distribution of drinking water to 700,000 people in Aleppo city, half of them children. To keep vulnerable children and families protected from waterborne diseases and conserve clean drinking water, UNICEF and partners will need to go beyond light rehabilitation of essential WASH infrastructure and support more large-scale rehabilitations, such as the work in Aleppo city, in an effort to stop and ultimately reverse the deterioration of WASH services in the country. To sustain these early recovery efforts in WASH, capacity building of local water and sanitation system operators is essential to allow them to undertake the operation and maintenance of critical water and sanitation infrastructure in highly vulnerable communities.

In addition, given the negative impacts that climate change is expected to have on the sustainability of WASH services and behaviours, there is an opportunity to incorporate climate resilience into early
recovery programme. This will involve understanding and managing risks resulting in the protection of water resources, adaptation to increasing water scarcity and deteriorating water quality, and climate-resilient water and sanitation technologies and systems with a focus on renewable energies.

Meanwhile, there is also an opportunity to strengthen early recovery by investing in the education system. The Ministry of Education has endorsed the findings of ‘The Costs and Risks Resulting from Not Investing in Education System in Syria,’ which identified interventions with greatest relevance for early recovery. The report was discussed at a side event during the Brussels Conference and became a key advocacy tool to potentially unlock more funding opportunities.

As part of the earthquake response, UNICEF intensified its advocacy efforts to support school rehabilitation, including rehabilitation for heavily damaged schools particularly in earthquake affected areas. This is a component largely constrained by donor conditions and limited funding. UNICEF took the earthquake as an opportunity to advocate to donors for negotiations and reviews of donor conditions and red lines to maximize the impact of investments.

The restrictions imposed by donor conditionalities, particularly those restricting the transfers of funds to line ministries or directly to education staff, continues to constrain UNICEF’s efforts to systematically scale up teachers’ capacity development and improve children’s learning outcomes. UNICEF continues to advocate for measures such as compensation for teachers’ transportation costs, as incurred for participation in teacher training workshops and other capacity strengthening initiatives.

**Innovation: Complementary feeding bowl initiative**

The quality of children’s diets is crucial before the age of two, more so than at any other time in life. Insufficient nutrients can irreversibly harm a child’s development. At the household level, UNICEF is helping to increase parents and caregiver’s knowledge of the amount and diversity of foods young children need through implementing the ‘complementary feeding bowl’ initiative.

UNICEF developed a complementary feeding bowl to provide caregivers with a simple tool to remember the 10 essential messages of complementary feeding when they are preparing food for their child (with a focus on children 6-23 months of age). This helps ensure children receive a diverse and nutrient-dense diet at the right frequency. The kit is designed to be used by counsellors during IYCF behaviour change sessions for a clearer and more interactive demonstration of nutritional messages.

Caregivers usually take the bowl home as an ongoing reminder to reflect the need for dietary diversity, with culturally relevant nutritional food icons on the inside of the bowl. Inside, measuring lines show age-appropriate portion sizes for meal quantity, while other icons show age-appropriate meal frequency. A slotted spoon accompanies the bowl. While this may seem counterintuitive, it ensures the first semi-solid foods are the right consistency (not watered down) and energy-dense.

In 2023, UNICEF and partners distributed 10,000 bowls in Syria. It is expected that this initiative expands in 2024 to reach more children in new locations.

**Innovation: SBC dashboard**

In a humanitarian setting that could scarcely have been more challenging, the months after the earthquake were a demanding test for the Social and Behaviour Change and Community Engagement Strategy undertaken by UNICEF and its partners. Some important lessons have already been integrated into the response strategy drawn up by the UNICEF office in Damascus with the support of the UNICEF Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa.

This strategy drew on the CCCs and other global emergency standard operating procedures as well as community engagement guidance documents in order to develop a people-centred approach, founded on effective community engagement through community-led action plans and stakeholder coordination in the collective centres. "We helped people transform the negative impact into a positive one, breaking their barrier of fear by emphasizing behaviours that should be followed during such disasters” Health and Nutrition partner, Aleppo.
The earthquake led to a realignment of SBC internal plans, taking into account the capacity development of partners and volunteers who remained in the front line of the response. The earthquake response also prompted the creation of the SBC dashboard that is now being expanded to include SBC other programmes interventions in addition to emergency related activities.

The emergency response underlined the cruciality of emergency preparedness in order to facilitate a timely response. Following the earthquake, SBC materials developed and implemented in previous emergencies enabled a quick response.

A key lesson learned is the importance of strengthening community readiness and ensuring the provision of continuous training for volunteers and relief teams to reinforce their skills in delivering SBC interventions and cope with disaster situations more broadly.

The SBC community engagement dashboard developed following the earthquake allowed UNICEF and partners to track the various SBC community engagement interventions that were carried out in five affected governorates (Aleppo, Idlib, Hama, Tartous and Lattakia). By the end of November 2023, the response had reached 695 communities and involved 15 implementing partners. The interventions reached a total of 855,419 people and recorded engagement with 762,001.

**Cluster/Sector Leadership**

UNICEF’s humanitarian action is guided by its Strategic Plan and its CCCs, which outline what UNICEF commits across all sectors – health, nutrition, WASH, child protection, and education – as part of any humanitarian response. The CCCs are aligned to international standards and are guided by humanitarian principles.

UNICEF Syria was among the first agencies to respond to the humanitarian crisis, working across its mandated areas: child protection, education, health, nutrition, WASH and communication for development to provide humanitarian assistance to children and people in need. In light of UN Security Council Resolutions 2165 and 2191, UNICEF has been conducting cross-border operations and working with NGO partners to deliver life-saving humanitarian assistance and services. Through the Whole of Syria approach, UNICEF strengthened coordination through joint planning for the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), joint mid-year review, as well as joint contingency planning and preparedness.

As per its global mandate UNICEF co-leads WASH, nutrition, education (with Save the Children) clusters, as well as co-leads the Child Protection AoR and RCCE in Syria. Additionally, there are clusters leads in Damascus, Gaziantep and Amman for WASH, education, nutrition and the Child Protection AoR. UNICEF is also a key member of the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria. Planning and implementation of the response is carried out through active leadership of Whole of Syria coordination underpinned by the principle of the cluster approach. Data management and analysis is done across the three hubs (Damascus, Gaziantep and NE Syria Forum) and consolidated via the Whole of Syria; contingency planning is more flexible based on access conditions to maximize coverage.

Furthermore, UNICEF co-leads, together with World Vision International, the No Lost Generation Initiative, bringing together 39 UN and NGO partners to advocate for the protection, education and development of Syrian children, adolescents and young people. UNICEF also works closely with other UN agencies, in particular, WFP, WHO, UNRWA, in the areas of health, nutrition and education and with UNHCR, UNFPA and IOM in the areas of protection and non-food items and with UNDP on the area of early recovery.

In terms of recovery and resilience, the UNICEF Syria Country Programme Document 2022-2024 emphases resilience programming in line with the UN Strategic Framework. The Country Programme complements the HRP, providing specific emphasis and focus on resilience interventions and on cost effective, durable projects.
**Nutrition Sector and Cluster**

Under UNICEF leadership, the 112 cluster/sector partners across the Whole of Syria scaled up the nutrition response, notably during the earthquake response, leading to an expansion of service accessibility, particularly in NW Syria. Overall, the sector reached 2,653,840 people (1,933,270 women and girls and 28,018 people and children with disabilities) with lifesaving preventive and curative nutrition services, including 1,084,360 people in NW Syria. Most of the nutrition response (82.5 per cent) was delivered to areas classified as being under extreme or catastrophic conditions, reaching the most vulnerable people. About nine per cent of those reached (237,667 people) were from the 445 earthquake affected communities, where sector partners also conducted multiple rounds of rapid nutrition assessments in collective shelters hosting people displaced by the earthquakes.

Some key results achieved by the sector include treating 105,346 children (62,290 girls) suffering from moderate wasting, including 50,713 children (29,982 girls) in NW Syria, and 35,266 children with severe wasting, including 20,901 children (12,538 girls) in NW Syria. In addition, 82,104 pregnant and lactating women received treatment for moderate wasting, of whom 51,583 were in NW Syria.

The maternal, infant and young child feeding nutrition services were expanded to prevent malnutrition and prioritized during the earthquake response. Overall, 568,327 women were reached with awareness of optimal IYCF practices. Additionally, 109,994 pregnant and lactating women received cash voucher assistance to improve nutrition outcomes for children and women. In addition, 665,143 pregnant and lactating women (including 10,112 adolescent girls) were reached with micronutrient supplementation, and 1,085,770 children received micronutrient powder (535,854 girls).

Under nutrition sector leadership, three SMART surveys were successfully conducted to inform the formulation of the HNO, and HRP for 2024. The preliminary results of the survey show that the prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) has surged threefold in the past five years, escalating from 1.7 per cent in 2019 to 4.7 per cent in 2023 across Syria. Across all governorates, there has been almost a twofold increase in GAM prevalence, with four governorates (Rural Damascus, Idleb, Ar-Raqqa, and Quneitra) surpassing acceptable stress levels and Lattakia Governorate reporting an emergency-level GAM prevalence of 10 per cent. Children continue to experience sub optimal diets, with one in four children consuming a minimum dietary diversity, with critical consumption of vegetables, fruits, eggs, and meat below 50 per cent. Anaemia levels for children, adolescent remain elevated; one in four children and one in two adolescent girls are anaemic.

Limited quality funds to operate the nutrition sector humanitarian response plan for the last three years is still the major challenge to respond effectively and efficiently to the increased needs on the ground. Furthermore, the cuts of general food assistance come at a time when increased admission of both SAM and moderate acute malnutrition cases in 2023. Fewer children aged between 6-23 months will be reached with the critical preventive blanket supplementary feeding programme due to changes in the general food assistance programme nationwide and its reach.

**WASH Sector and Cluster**

With more than 120 partners, the WASH Cluster/Sector, led by UNICEF, continued supporting service delivery, including in response to the earthquakes, the cholera outbreak and the recent escalation of hostilities in northern Syria, as well as to assist hub coordination teams with strategic and technical support, reaching 12,943,459 people (6,537,612 women and girls and 2,213,682 people and children with disabilities) with WASH services. This includes 4,946,056 people reached in NW Syria across 1,412 IDP camps, 62 collective centres and 477 communities, across 37 subdistricts.

The WASH Cluster/Sector also continued supporting WASH coordination platforms at the national and sub-national levels, including organizing partners’ capacity-building events, facilitating/ contributing to sectoral and intersectoral assessments, developing relevant preparedness and contingency plans and disseminating the WASH-relevant humanitarian and technical standards.

A total of 4,614,877 people (2,330,928 women and girls and 789,269 people and children with disabilities) were provided with emergency safe water, and 2,640,938 people (1,333,912 women and girls and 451,672 people and children with disabilities) accessed emergency sanitation services. In addition, 7,303,122 people (3,688,734 women and girls and 1,249,032 people and children with disabilities) benefited from improved access to water services through improved infrastructure.
Meanwhile, 1,239,417 people (626,017 women and girls and 211,974 people and children with disabilities) accessed improved WASH services in schools, healthcare facilities and child-friendly spaces, including 789,000 people in NW Syria.

In response to the earthquakes, the WASH Cluster in NW Syria reached 488,964 people, including 279,922 people with access to safe drinking water (including through emergency water trucking) and 153,147 people with hygiene promotion and awareness raising activities. The cluster also supported the provision of emergency latrines, desludging, and solid waste collection in collective shelters. WASH non-food items were distributed to affected households in collective centres, informal settlements, and host families. Essential emergency repairs and small-scale rehabilitation of water and sanitation infrastructures were also undertaken.

In parallel to the earthquake response, the cluster played a key role in the ongoing cholera outbreak by continuing to co-lead the coordination of the response with the Health Cluster and by focusing on controlling the risk of transmission, reaching 1,270,953 people with a safe water supply in high-risk areas.

**Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AOR)**

Under UNICEF’s leadership, the Child Protection AoR provided strategic guidance and technical support to over 125 child protection agencies operating in 14 governorates and trained them on preparedness, response, and prevention approaches to child protection concerns, reaching 2,652,296 people (1,468,826 women/girls and 405,869 people/children with disabilities) with child protection prevention and response services during 2023. This includes 877,410 people (472,346 women/girls and 181,980 people/children with disabilities) reached as part of the earthquake response.

Overall, 746,174 children and caregivers (384,275 women and girls and 172,970 people and children with disabilities) received MHPSS services including 370,743 children in NW Syria and 1,718,969 people were reached with awareness raising interventions (957,646 women and girls). Parenting programmes were provided to 103,273 people (84,215 women and girls), while 71,153 children (34,826 girls) received multisectoral case management, including 33,048 children in NW Syria.

As part of the earthquake response, the Child Protection AoR conducted a post-earthquake rapid needs assessment across 411 communities in 38 sub-districts, and ensured additional human resources were placed in Aleppo and Lattakia, reaching 492,205 people (265,413 women and girls) with a comprehensive package of child protection services ranging from preventive measures to mitigate family separations, MHPSS, EORE awareness, and prevent further abuse, exploitation and violence against children.

Additional achievements include building the capacity of 8,738 frontline workers and partners (2,621 women) on the provision of psychological first aid, MHPSS and parenting programmes, contributing to improving the delivery of quality services and self-care, especially during the earthquake response. The Child Protection AoR and other partners, trained over 40 senior child protection officers on case management, and 40 additional child protection frontliners on MHPSS.

**Education Sector and Cluster**

Under the co-leadership of UNICEF and Save the Children, as well as the contribution of 205 partners, the cluster/sector provided critical assistance to meet the pressing educational needs of both educators and students, reaching 2,676,794 children (1,204,577 girls and 267,589 children with disabilities) and 35,870 education personnel (16,141 women) with essential educational support, including 512,963 children (230,833 girls) and 29,870 education personnel in NW Syria.

This included 149,071 children (67,081 girls) who benefited from the rehabilitation of classrooms, including 35,35 children (15,907 girls) in NW Syria, ensuring safe and conducive learning environments. In addition, 17,365 students (7,814 girls) received critical catch-up and accelerated learning support from sector partners, including 38,311 students (16,965 girls) in NW Syria. A total of 38,311 children (16,965 girls) received learning materials. Moreover, 13,376 young children aged 3-5 years (6,019 girls and 442 children with disabilities) benefited from early childhood care and development kits and similar resources, establishing a strong educational foundation, including 6,360
young children (2,862 girls) in NW Syria. Also, 298,221 children and adolescents (155,074 girls) benefited from school-based psychosocial support programmes in formal and non-formal settings.

Furthermore, 30,237 teachers and educational personnel (13,696 women) underwent training in various areas, including TVET, parenting programmes, pedagogical skills, positive discipline, remote teaching, education in emergencies, national/inter-agency network for education in emergencies minimum standards, anti-bullying, mine risk education, etc. Meanwhile 12,326 teachers and educational personnel (5,546 women) received essential teaching kits, significantly enhancing the quality of education for children.

UNICEF and sector partners supported 24,017 children (11,518 girls) from hard-to-reach areas to take the national exams (grades 9 and 12). Out of these, 15,478 students travelled daily and 8,628 (4,309 girls) were supported to stay in 62 accommodation centres during the exam period. This represents a 66 per cent increase in children taking the exams and 13 per cent increase in students supported in accommodation centres (compared to last year’s examination).

Table 9: Summary of coordination roles for Whole of Syria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WASH Sector</th>
<th>Syria CO</th>
<th>Gaziantep</th>
<th>Amman</th>
<th>Syria CO</th>
<th>Gaziantep</th>
<th>Amman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead and coordinator</td>
<td>Lead and coordinator</td>
<td>Lead and coordinator</td>
<td>SARC co-lead</td>
<td>Humanitarian Relief Association (IYD Relief) co-lead</td>
<td>ACTED co-lead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Sector</td>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Co-lead with Save the Children</td>
<td>Co-lead with Save the Children</td>
<td>Ministry of Education co-lead</td>
<td>Save the Children International co-lead</td>
<td>Save the Children International co-lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition Sector</td>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Ministry of Health co-lead</td>
<td>Physician Across Continents co-lead</td>
<td>vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection AOR</td>
<td>Lead and coordinator</td>
<td>Lead and coordinator</td>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>World Vision International co-lead</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNICEF supports earthquake affected families in Aleppo by repairing a vital water infrastructure in the city

After the devastating earthquakes struck Aleppo and northern parts of Syria in February 2023, the water infrastructure in Aleppo city, already damaged during nearly 13 years of conflict, was impacted further. The equilibrium pipeline, a 1km critical water pipeline that controls the distribution of drinking water to the city was affected. This pipeline serves some 700,000 people, half of them are children.

To keep vulnerable children and families in Aleppo city protected from waterborne diseases and conserve clean drinking water, UNICEF provided support to repair the most damaged parts of the pipeline. UNICEF procured and shipped ductile pipes, with a diameter of 1,000 millimetres, alongside the needed accessories to the city. In December 2023, UNICEF supported the instalment of the pipes, and the rehabilitation works were finalized within six weeks, enabling two thirds of the city’s population to access safe drinking water.

Following the earthquake, 1km of a critical water pipeline segment that controls water distribution to 699,930 people (165,687 girls, 177,782 boys, 176,246 women and 180,215 men) in the crowded Aleppo city got defected. Following initial assessments and discussions with Aleppo water establishment, UNICEF assumed the responsibility of repairing this pipe. Ductile pipes of 1,000 mm diameter along with accessories and fittings were internationally procured by UNICEF, inspected to ensure adherence to quality at factory and upon arrival and were delivered to Aleppo city. Installation started immediately in busy Aleppo and works continued for 24 hours over 6 weeks. All works were completed 11 months after the earthquake and water is now flowing to the benefiting population.
The circular (or the balancing) pipeline is the most critical component of the water network serving approximately 700,000 people in Aleppo city. Using control valves, this pipe is used to control the flow of water in different directions, a process especially critical during peak hours of water use. During the earthquake, this 1,000m segment of the pipe was defected, started to leak, and thus became especially vulnerable in continuing to deliver water services to Aleppo inhabitants. Initial assessments following the earthquake revealed the criticality of the situation and the need for UNICEF to start acting without any delay.

The total cost of the intervention amounted to US$2,099,374.97, with thematic funds covering 26 per cent of the cost. Procurement of supplies and installation was undertaken through local contractors. The works initially involved the preparation of detailed technical specifications for the internationally purchased ductile pipes of 1,000mm diameter and accessories needed for the repair. Manufacturing and shipping took a long time and initial inspection was undertaken at the factory to ensure compliance with the specifications.

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UNICEF supported workers prepare to backfill the excavated area over UNICEF procured ductile pipes, newly installed in Kadi Askar neighbourhood in Aleppo city, Syria.

The work involved in installation was huge and challenging. Each pipe segment of 6m weighed 2,000kg and required two cranes for lifting, laying, and installing. The installation was done in the centre of the active and populated city of Aleppo, where water needed to be cut, traffic had to be diverted, electricity and telecom cables had to be disconnected and reconnected. Excavations reached a depth of 8m below ground level and asphalt pavements needed to be broken and reinstated. Each week, over a period of six weeks, water would be cut for four days where the work was taking place, day, and night, followed by three days of pumping while another segment of the road was being excavated and prepared. Coordination between the different offices in Aleppo was led by the governor’s office and police department, and included the municipality, telecom, electricity, traffic police, etc. Work is now complete, and water is flowing to the population.

Aleppo is the second largest city in Syria and the water supply service for nearly 700,000 people was jeopardized. Timely assessment and adequate coordination resulted in the identification of a suitable solution. Being the sector lead in the country, UNICEF assumed responsibility and started the
procurement which would not have been possible without the generous contributions from the different humanitarian donors and UNICEF National Committees.

Field presence and coordination with the local and central water authorities, immediately after the earthquake ensured that suggested solutions were complete and technically sound. Continued coordination between the authorities, the manufacturer, and the supplier through UNICEF, ensured that all potential risks associated with quality and specifications of provided supplies are eliminated. This was strengthened by third party inspection at factory level as well as inspection at port level before moving the supplies to designated sites. Competitive bidding by UNICEF and preliminary meetings with potential contractors, ensured that adequate experience and capacity is selected for required works. Delays in shipment following unpredictable climate conditions could not have been avoided.

This activity is unique in scale and complexity and UNICEF had to respond at the time the earthquake hit since it was uniquely positioned to respond to the need with desired financial resources and expertise. Such interventions cannot be usually planned preparedness through good coordination, knowledge of sector specifics and needs in general coupled with good partnerships with sector donors based on confidence in UNICEF’s capacity to respond should be maintained.
Results Achieved from Humanitarian Thematic Funding

Health and Nutrition

Flexible thematic funding enabled UNICEF to respond immediately to the health and nutrition needs of the children and women affected by the earthquake.

UNICEF used these funds to support mobile medical teams and the Syrian Family Planning Association to undertake paediatric and maternal check-ups and treatment for 164,880 vulnerable people (75,598 girls, 72,320 boys, 12,485 women and 4,477 men) in shelters and IDP gathering centres in the affected governorates of Aleppo, Lattakia, Tartous, Hom and Hama.

With UNICEF support, the Syrian Family Planning Association also provided essential nutrition services in those governorates, reaching 168,023 children under five and 65,178 pregnant and lactating women with screening for acute malnutrition. In addition, 1,270 children were admitted for treatment of SAM. During the earthquake response, UNICEF strengthened its IYCF-E programme to counter the random distribution of breastmilk substitutes, reaching 59,774 primary caregivers with skilled breastfeeding counselling. The thematic fund also enabled UNICEF to pay for air freight of the ready to use infant formula for infants 0-5 months in the earthquake affected governorates.

Using thematic funds, UNICEF conducted a SMART For Managers training with the Action Against Hunger Canada SMART team, for UNICEF partners in Syria where 25 trainers were graduated as SMART Survey Managers. This capacity building activity enabled the trainings of another 250 surveyors in 14 governorates across the country under the thematic fund.

Thematic funds were also used to support Al-Rajaa NGO to provide physiotherapy for children with disabilities in Homs and Hama, and they reached 496 children (50 per cent girls). In addition, thematic funding was also used to procure surgical items for the hospitals in Aleppo to respond to the needs of the injured people by the earthquake, the surgical items were sufficient for the treatment of around 1,000 injured people.

To support the national immunization programme, UNICEF used the fund for capacity building of 80 Expanded Programme for Immunization workers on maintenance of solar systems of cold chain equipment. Thematic funding also supported the MoH with the needed printing materials (registries and tally sheets) for the immunization programme and provided the MoH with two laptops for the information system and documentation of immunization programme.

UNICEF also used thematic funds to procure 824,000 doses of oral polio vaccine and 143,000 of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine that was used for the earthquake response to vaccinate children in the shelters and collective centres in addition to support the routine immunization for other children in the affected governorates. To keep children’s vaccines safe and under proper temperature and safe environment, thematic funds were used to do maintenance for the central vaccines stores to ensure proper functioning of the cold chain equipment (28 cold rooms and four refrigerators) and the ventilation devices in the warehouse.

The fund was used to train 20 doctors and nurses at the ‘Every Newborn Action Plan’ sentinel hospitals on the national protocol for newborn care to reduce mortality among newborn. The thematic fund was also used to install eight prefabricated clinics in Lattakia to provide maternal and paediatric check-ups and treatment for the vulnerable children and women affected by the earthquake.

Thematic funding was used to monitor the implementation of the health and nutrition activities including immunizations across the country through third-party monitors, who were able to reach all governorates and provided feedback to different hubs on the implementation of activities and the quality of services.
**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**

Thematic funds were critical in offering a quick and flexible response to a variety of activities in the dynamic and complex WASH sector and were used in complement to other emergency funds. In Aleppo, funds were used to support the replacement of a critical portion of a defected one-meter diameter pipeline that serves one third of Aleppo city following damages resulting from the earthquake.

In the south of the country, specifically in Sweida governorate, which is suffering severe water shortage, funds were used to equip seven water wells to provide water to 75,000 people. Batteries and tires were procured to rehabilitate water trucks to support needy population in Sweida too.

The funding was also used to truck water to locations facing severe shortages in west Gouta and Aleppo. Earthquake defected sewer lines in Lattakia and Aleppo were also repaired, hygiene kits were distributed to displace families in and around Qamishli, and correct hygiene practices were promoted especially in areas prone to cholera.

**Child Protection**

Humanitarian thematic funds allowed UNICEF and partners to provide critical child protection interventions for girls, boys, and adults to reduce the impacts of the earthquake and to improve their overall sense of wellbeing.

As an immediate response to the earthquake, thematic funding allowed UNICEF to promptly conducted psychological first aid trainings, equipping child protection frontline workers with essential skills to deliver psychological first aid sessions for children and families affected by the earthquake. These sessions aimed to reduce stress symptoms and assist in recovery, assisting 46,383 children, parents, and caregivers (22,562 girls, 20,537 boys, 2,227 women and 1,057 men) in navigating the challenges posed by the earthquake and facilitating their recovery from the crisis via MHPSS activities.

The parenting manual that was rolled out in 2023 across all governorates reached 4,743 parents and caregivers (3,416 female and 1,327 male) with parenting skills to better support children in their families and communities. The results have demonstrated tangible improvements in parents' interactions with their children and an increased ability for parents to understand their children's needs.

During the reporting period, a total of 10,756 people (4,938 girls, 3,923 boys, 1,678 women and 217 men) were reached with crucial risk education messages through face-to-face sessions in shelters, child-friendly spaces, and through mobile teams, and community centres. The explosive ordnance risk education activities focused on providing beneficiaries with awareness related to explosive ordnances. During these sessions, UNICEF partners provide children and adults with important information related to how to identify potential unexploded ordnances and where to report them. The impact of such activities includes increased safety and the ability to take informed decisions related to avoiding potential risk for children and adults alike, which eventually can help save lives, prevent injuries, and contribute to the overall wellbeing of communities affected by explosive remnants of war.

Child protection targeted awareness activities were implemented with NGOs and reached 8,379 (3,469 girls, 3,410 boys, 1,246 women and 254 men) children and caregivers, including those affected by the earthquake. Special SBC messages were developed as part of earthquake response, the messages were developed for children, caregivers, and frontline workers. A total of 14,408 children and adults (56,778 girls, 109 boys, 2,488 women and 33 men) were reached specifically with messages on prevention of gender-based violence.

UNICEF implementing partners continued to provide case management services during the earthquake response to severe cases of children facing protection risks. Around 2,534 children (1,221 girls and 1,313 boys) were referred to case managers who assessed the vulnerabilities of those children and drafted individual plans to them to refer them to specialized services as needed. Children were mainly referred to health services and cash assistance, as these were the main highlighted services that most children affected with the earthquake needed.
To enhance the skills of service providers, UNICEF concentrated on developing community-level capacities to enhance the skills of service providers. Several capacity building efforts were initiated to ensure that frontline workers and service providers had the needed tools and support to implement quality activities for vulnerable children and their caregivers. UNICEF trained 518 frontline workers (326 women and 192 men) who were providing immediate response to the earthquake from implementing partners and sector partners in affected governorates on case management, explosive ordnance risk education, MHPSS, psychological first aid and parenting to ensure a smooth and structured response to children, parents and caregivers needs.

During the earthquake response, the Frontliners Wellbeing Package was launched with the aim of enhancing the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of frontline workers and service providers workers affected by the earthquake. This programme acknowledges the unique difficulties faced by frontline workers in disaster-stricken areas and aims to equip trainers with the necessary skills and knowledge to support their well-being and resilience.

**Education-in-Emergencies**

Flexible thematic funding was critical to ensuring access to learning for children in the NW Syria and NE Syria, where there are high education needs yet limited funding opportunities. Many families in these areas were unable to afford basic stationeries and textbooks and schools are not equipped with basic supplies that impact the learning process. Therefore, flexible funds were directed to procure and distribute various education supplies, including 33,000 memory games, stationery and art kits for grade 1 learners, 7,600 teacher stationery kits, 600 classroom whiteboards, 1,000 wall fans, and 590 school heaters to enhance the learning environment.

The multifaceted crisis in Syria creates continuous cycles of vulnerability, disproportionately impacting those most in need, especially individuals with disabilities. Flexible funds were allocated for the rehabilitation of three learning centres for children with disabilities.\(^{35}\) The rehabilitation effort preserved the functionality of the centres, ensured safety and improved learning environments for approximately 105 children with disabilities beneficiaries including those with hearing loss, and intellectual disability and Cerebral Palsy. The rehabilitation works involved repairing damages, repainting walls, replacing worn-out components, ensuring the functionality of the utilities, maintaining WASH facilities, and installing ramps, handrails and other disability inclusive facilities.

Following the earthquakes, the availability of needs assessment to inform the response were a priority, therefore, funds were promptly allocated to the structural assessments of schools in Aleppo and Tartous Governorates. The assessments provided data necessary for UNICEF and partners to understand the extent of school damage, urgent needs of affected populations, develop rehabilitation plans, and prioritize resources for the most vulnerable children in need.

Following the assessments, thematic funds supported light rehabilitation and classroom maintenance works in 15 schools affected by earthquakes in Homs (3) and Hama (12). This enabled 6,081 children (2,871 girls) - 470 children (137 girls) in Homs and 5,611 children (2,734 girls) in Hama – to continue learning in safe, inclusive and child-friendly environments. These children were also provided with stationaries to address the shortage in learning supplies post-earthquakes. Additionally, 264 children (137 girls) were supported to participate in remedial classes in the collective shelters in Hama to catch up on learning and mitigate the learning loss during school closure because of the earthquakes.

In NW Syria, the education programme package prioritized the support of both formal and non-formal education, ranging from providing protected learning spaces, learning materials, to mobile learning and teaching with 11,318 children (4,925 girls and 6,393 boys) reached through mobile teacher services targeting out-of-school children and children at risk of drop out. Education services in formal settings reached 80,264 children (38,543 girls and 41,721 boys). On the other hand, 190,257 children (95,483 girls and 94,774 boys) reached through non-formal education aiming to reduce the numbers of out-of-school children and dropout.

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\(^{35}\) Institute of Special Education for Hearing Disability, Institute of Special Education for Cerebral Palsy for Young People, Institute of Intellectual Disability Education.
To raise the awareness of caregivers and children of learning opportunities, UNICEF reached 83,531 caregivers and children with back to learning interventions. Additionally, 13,305 children and young people (5–24 years) (5,691 girls, 6,281 boys) benefited from a life-skills and citizenship education programme in formal and non-formal settings. Capacity development of teachers and education personnel provided to 3,727 (1,708 females, 2,019 males). Children have been exposed to a dramatic deterioration in living conditions, frequent exposure to violence and repeated displacement, which has had a profound impact on their psychological well-being and development. UNICEF, through its implementing partners, provided 37,666 children (17,290 boys, 20,376 girls) with school-based psychosocial support programmes in both formal and non-formal educational settings. An integrated response WAQTI project to respond to the devastating effect of the earthquake through provision of an innovative interventions along with CP & WASH where the three sectors provided essential services for displaced children in 56 communities where 105 centres established to serve earthquake displaced population.

Acknowledging the impact on children's wellbeing, UNICEF conducted Conduct community-based dialogues including awareness-raising sessions (individual, group), consultation sessions, help desk (centre-based and mobile) reaching 83,531 children and adults.

An integrated programme WAQTI was implemented where education, CP & WASH services were provided to 105 WAQTI centres in 56 communities in 10 subdistricts. The aim was to deliver these services in and around reception centres, camps, and camp-like settlements in non-government-controlled parts of NW Syria that have been affected by the February 6 earthquakes. The interventions made use of material resources provided by UNICEF (including tents, ECD Kits, recreational kits and Adolescence Kits.

Education services delivery included formal classes and foundational skills for children, training for teachers in modern instructional methods, psychosocial support for those impacted by conflict. ECD kits were given to learning spaces, and student councils were established to enhance dialogue with school authorities. A comprehensive core child protection services, included Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, Case Management, and Family Tracing and Reunification. Additionally WASH Hygiene promotion and sanitation were incorporated into WAQTI programme.

**Adolescent Development and Participating (ADAP)**

Through thematic funding, UNICEF, in partnership with local NGOs, enabled access to a comprehensive package of youth development services. These included skills development courses, such as life skills, technical and vocational education and entrepreneurship skills, and social cohesion activities, including youth-led initiatives, sport for development and cultural activities. In addition UNICEF and partners supported cross-sectoral young people’s volunteerism, especially as part of the earthquake response. In a context of rare opportunities for young people to participate and engage in their communities, and even though they themselves were affected by the earthquakes whether physically or emotionally as the rest of their communities, yet, those young people were determined and eager to have a positive role in supporting their peers and families. Young people have the potential to become positive agents of change in their communities even in humanitarian settings and emergencies response. The empowerment and engagement of young people as strategic partners helps expand the scope and reach of the humanitarian response while developing the wellbeing, belonging, self-esteem, and leadership skills of young people themselves. Moreover, their engagement showcases their positive roles and sense of responsibility towards their communities, which addresses the stereotypes and negative perspective of the community about young people.

Through youth-friendly spaces and mobile teams in earthquake affected areas in Lattakia and Tartous, UNICEF provided access to packages of skill-building services and opportunities for 2,800 young people (1,792 females and 1,008 males). This included interactive sessions on self-awareness, stress management, teamwork and living together. UNICEF and partners also strengthened social, civic and digital engagement for 1,700 young people (1,105 females and 595 males), including developing youth-led initiatives, leading recreational activities, disseminating SBC messages, distributing humanitarian aid and conducting assessments.

In addition, UNICEF and partner’s emergency response was strengthened through harnessing the invaluable support of young volunteers. Young volunteers engaged with UNICEF supported youth-led
initiatives to distribute youth-designed hygiene kits to 70 families and implement youth-designed recreational activities (as psychological first aid) for 140 children and adolescents in two shelters in rural Lattakia in late February. During April and May 2023, young volunteers also led recreational activities for more than 76 earthquake-affected children and adolescents (37 girls and 39 boys), such as psychosocial support and echo awareness-raising activities in the Sports City collective shelter in Lattakia.

UNICEF-supported young volunteers’ engagement was also instrumental in conducting cross-sectoral needs assessments led by UNICEF and other UN agencies like OCHA and UNHCR in response to the earthquake. A total of 74 young volunteers (35 young females) from the Volunteering Digital Platform “Youth Power in Emergencies” from Tartous and Lattakia participated in conducting the Syria Needs Assessment Tool multi-sectoral needs assessment in 48 communities in Tartous Governorate & 17 neighbourhoods in Lattakia city in coordination with the OCHA, UNHCR, and UNICEF partners, after they received a full-day training by OCHA and Sectors’ leads on this assessment tool. Likewise, the ADAP programme supported the mobilization of six young researchers from the Young Participatory Research team in coordination with Tartous Directorate of Culture with the UNICEF Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation section in conducting the Multisectoral Initial Rapid Assessment surveys in three affected locations in Rural Lattakia & Tartous.

Meanwhile, as part of the youth digital engagement, six youth digital platforms disseminated SBC messages about the mitigation measures in case of earthquakes that reached over than 30,000 followers in the early days after the earthquake. Similarly, in coordination with the Nutrition Sector and UNICEF Health and Nutrition programme, five youth digital platforms disseminated the messages of the Nutrition Sector’s campaign “enabling environment - let's make breastfeeding and work, work!” during the World Breastfeeding Week that reached out to 11,000 followers by the end of the week.

The ADAP programme in Syria supported several activities for Youth Engagement in Climate Action in coordination with the UNICEF Regional Office. UNICEF and its local partners in coordination with the YOUNGO, the official youth constituency for the UNFCCC, and the UNICEF regional office supported two youth-led Local Conferences of Youth in Lattakia and Tartous Governorates in September and October 2023 that hosted 320 youths and fed into the Global Youth Statement for the Conference of Parties (COP28). Upon which, a young woman from the Young Climate Champions group in Syria, who organized the Lattakia Local Conferences of Youth, participated in the Middle East and North Africa Climate Week held in October in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supported by the YOUNGO and the COP28 Presidency team.

Social Policy and Cash Transfer
Through the thematic contribution, UNICEF reached the beneficiaries in the three humanitarian cash plus interventions overall the country.

Thematic funding contributed to delivering cash assistance, case management and referral services to children with disabilities in NE Syria. The findings from post distribution monitoring, which was also conducted through thematic funding, showed that the programme is indeed reaching the most vulnerable people whose income/expenditures gap is 44 per cent, on average. This vulnerability is reaffirmed when looking at the way the cash was spent. Three-quarters of the cash received was spent on three basic necessities: food (32 per cent), health (28 per cent), and clothes (15 per cent). This affirms the extent of needs of this families. The findings also revealed that the ‘Plus’ component of the programme is becoming visible, with all families mentioning that they had the contact information of their case managers and reported their satisfaction with the frequency they are contacted by their case managers.

Overall, the beneficiaries expressed a high level of satisfaction. This applies to the process of payment (100 per cent), the amount of cash received (99 per cent) and the proximity of financial service provider (89 per cent). Ninety-three percent of the families highly evaluated the importance of the eight payments of the cash assistance to support the needs of their children with disabilities.

In addition, the thematic fund contributed to helping vulnerable families cope with the harsh winter, through providing families with three payments every other month during the late autumn and winter.
To ensure efficiency in targeting, the programme focused on the most vulnerable families, including four specific groups of families with children:

1) Female-headed families.
2) Families with a child and/or adult with disabilities.
3) Families with a child and/or adult with a chronic illness.
4) Families with orphan children.

Thanks to its flexibility, thematic funding reached the most affected people in a very short time in the three governorates of Aleppo, Lattakia and Hama. This flexibility added to the strong shock-responsive nature of the two above-mentioned programmes and helped UNICEF and partners provide cash assistance within 96 hours of the earthquake.

In addition, the thematic fund was used to generate evidence on the effects and efficiency of UNICEF’s interventions through the post distribution surveys. These surveys provide a wealth of information about the socio-economic situation of those who received cash, the use of the cash received, as well as critical information to strengthen the quality of interventions.
Flexible thematic funding in Syria is instrumental in addressing gaps in formal education

The past 13 years of humanitarian crisis continued to adversely impact the education sector. Prior to the earthquakes in 2023, over 2 million children were out of school and 1.6 million at risk of dropping out. The earthquakes have exacerbated an already dire education infrastructure and have added to the impact on children’s learning and mental health. School age children have experienced disruptions in learning, are exposed to high levels of stress and due to limited investments in formal schools, are often learning in unconducive learning environments. The deteriorating economic situation in the country further hinders access to learning for both children and teachers alike.

In 2023, UNICEF continued its efforts to advance education quality and achieve strategic results articulated in the UNICEF Annual Workplan and aligned with the Humanitarian Response Plan. Flexible thematic funding in Syria is instrumental in addressing gaps in formal education. The funds were strategically directed to support the implementation of Curriculum B – an accelerated learning programme under formal education where there continues to be limited funding opportunities due to donor conditionalities. UNICEF was able to continue the expansion of Curriculum B across Syria including in the earthquakes affected areas to support children catch up on learning.

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Rayan, 14, attends a 'Curriculum B' class at Arabistan School, a UNICEF-rehabilitated education facility in Aleppo city, Syria, on 14 December 2022. Rayan was out of school due to the conflict, and has resumed her schooling, since the start of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Curriculum B is based on Curriculum A1 and has four learning sets - Arabic, Math, Science and English. Each set has four levels, each covering two grades. The content is aligned with Curriculum A1 textbook guidance and structure and thus conveys foundational cognitive skills and life skills. It allows children to catch up on learning by studying two years of Curriculum A1 content condensed in one year.

In 2023, over 53,000 over-aged children (25,577 girls) who missed more than two years of schooling were reintegrated to formal education through Curriculum B. In addition, Curriculum B textbook sets were distributed to 30,023 children (13,533 girls) across Syria. These children were equipped with materials to catch up with education content missed during the crisis and eventually transition back to public Curriculum A programmes. As part of the earthquake response, UNICEF also supported 364 out-of-school children affected by earthquakes in participating in Curriculum B programme to prepare for the new school year.

The thematic funds enabled the procurement of 48 desktop computer sets for schools implementing Curriculum B in Deir-ez-Zor (31), Ar-Raqqa (8) and Hasakeh (9) Governorates, benefiting 29,142 children (15,359 girls). These Governorates in NE Syria have high education needs and limited funding opportunities. Schools in these areas do not have adequate IT equipment to support school records keeping, especially for learners enrolled in Curriculum B programme. To improve data collection and monitoring at school level to better analyze the effectiveness of the Curriculum B programme and inform evidence-based decisions, these desktops were distributed to support teachers in maintaining student registration records, and teacher and learners’ attendance etc. These efforts contribute to evidence generation for the Curriculum B programme as well as improvement in school information management.

© UNICEF/UN0855946/Shahan
Abdulrahman, 12, does his homework at home. Abdulrahman attends a UNICEF-supported ‘Curriculum B’ programme, at his school in Douma, Rural Damascus, Syria.
Meanwhile, Curriculum B materials were upgraded to fully align with the national curriculum standards. The content review ensured it is gender-sensitive, inclusive, psychosocially relevant, and free of contentious content. The enhanced Curriculum B aims to better prepare out-of-school children with adequate knowledge and skills to participate in the national exams and transition into accredited education. The evaluation of the materials is supported by contributions from other funding sources. Qualitative training was provided to the Ministry of Education Assessment and Measurement Directorate staff to evaluate the materials. The outcomes of the evaluation will be used to inform any further enhancement needed.

The protracted crises coupled with economic challenges pose significant barriers to education as many families struggle to meet the financial demands of education, and teachers have low salaries or in some areas no compensation at all. The high cost of transportation to/from school further exacerbates the economic burden on students and teachers, particularly for rural areas. While there is a high number of out of school children, even those with access to education often have to learn in overcrowded classrooms in schools that need rehabilitation and lack teaching and learning materials. Supporting different education pathways (i.e., Curriculum B and remedial classes) contribute to expanding learning opportunities for children irrespective of their circumstances or where they are and help them in acquiring skills and knowledge that unlock their future potential.

Flexible thematic funding in Syria will continue to support addressing education gaps in formal education. The funds will be strategically directed to support the implementation of programme where there continue to be limited funding opportunities due to donor conditionalities. This includes, but is not limited to, scaling up Curriculum B, rolling out formal teacher professional development and promoting addressing violence against children in school.
Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

UNICEF has four complementary and triangulated programme monitoring modalities. First, UNICEF implementing partners conduct their own monitoring and submit progress reports. Independent Third-Party Monitors then impartially verify implementation using agreed checklists. UNICEF staff and third-party technical facilitators, based in the Country Office in Damascus, six Field Offices as well as one hub in Gaziantep across the country, conduct programme monitoring visits to assess progress and quality of these results, and identify constraints and adaptations required. Third-party technical facilitators extend this monitoring to hard-to-reach areas. Feedback mechanisms are the final pillar of monitoring, including a service line, suggestion boxes, beneficiary surveys, focus group discussions and post-distribution monitoring surveys.

The monitoring coverage is adaptive. For example, in 2023, questionnaires integrated enquiries around beneficiaries’ satisfaction of the services and supplies provided in the earthquake response, as well as the impact of economic and fuel crises on access to basic services. At the beginning of 2023, the provision of cross borderer services in NW Syria from Gaziantep, Türkiye was under the UN Security Council resolution 2672 (2023), as of July 2023, were there was no extension of the resolution, the operation continued with a Government of Syria consent letter, UNICEF continued providing humanitarian relief in NW Syria from Türkiye (Gaziantep) through implementing partners.

Prior to the February earthquake, monitoring for NW Syria cross border operations was constrained as UNICEF staff were not authorized to travel into NW Syria due to the security and political situation. Therefore, the only method for monitoring was through a third-party monitoring company. After the earthquake, permission was granted by the Government of Syria to allow UN staff to cross the boarders for the first time since the operation started. Eventually there were 44 monitoring visits conducted by staff in addition to 101 monitoring visits conducted by the third-party monitoring company. This helped ensure that the programmes were delivered in line with agreed deliverables as well as quality control, accountability to affected populations, prevention of aid diversion and compliance with humanitarian principles.

The staff and the company have been equipped with a robust package of technical expertise on the use of the Field Monitoring Module which was rolled out in 2023. The company has active field networks and capacity to adjust or expand the geographical coverage should the need arise and depending on the security situation. The produced programme monitoring visits reports served as an additional source of information that supports and complemented cluster data collection mechanisms, partners’ monthly reports to the clusters, and UNICEF programme sections. A mix of qualitative and quantitative methods are used, and information is collected through onsite verification, desk reviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, implementation and post implementation surveys and on-site warehouse monitoring.

The planning, implementation and reporting of monitoring activities are digitalized and accessible by both UNICEF’s relevant staff and the third-party monitoring company. Corrective actions, action points and required adjustments, shared are online, and used to inform the programme implementation, and the findings are also used at the time of implementing partnership development.

UNICEF leads the WASH, Education and Nutrition Sectors/Clusters and Child Protection Area of Responsibility, and participates in the Health, Shelter and Non-food Item and Early Recovery and Livelihoods Sectors. The sectors, through the Whole of the Syria coordination structure, carry out assessments which contributed to the 2023 HNO and HRP.

To consolidate and analyse data, UNICEF developed a Whole of Syria information management platform. Information is collected through 4Ws and is cleaned, consolidated and uploaded onto the platform. There, it is verified and calculations are made for unique beneficiaries reached and key gaps, including against severity scales. UNICEF uses the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers, a risk-based management framework for cash transfers to implementing partners. This ensures partners are assessed for financial management capacity to determine the overall risk rating and assurance activities. Accordingly, UNICEF conducts assurance activities and ensures that recommended actions are taken to strengthen partner’s capacity and lead to management actions.
To evaluate and learn from UNICEF’s earthquake response, an after-action review was conducted in close coordination with the UNICEF regional office. The after-action review showed that UNICEF’s efforts were appropriate, timely and effective in addressing multifaceted needs. The review also generated valuable lessons that contributed to strengthening UNICEF’s preparedness practices/tools and identifying priority areas of work to be further analysed in the upcoming HQ-led L3 evaluation of earthquake response.

Following cash distributions, regular and rapid post-distribution monitoring surveys were conducted to help ensure that UNICEF was responding in the most appropriate ways to meet the needs of vulnerable people, including those affected by the earthquake. Post-distribution monitoring surveys assessed cash use and satisfaction, with results confirming the relevance of cash assistance and high level of satisfaction among participants.

In addition, an evaluation of the UNICEF SBC programme was conducted covering the period of 2018-2022. The evaluation informed enhancements in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the SBC programme and laid the groundwork for the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation-SBC teams’ joint reflection on outcome indicators to measure changes in knowledge, behaviours, and practices.

The office continues to collect up-to-date data through child wellbeing monitoring, capitalizing on programme monitoring to gauge the rapidly changing situation on the ground. Given the continued decline in the coverage of routine immunization, UNICEF is preparing for a knowledge, attitude, and behaviour study to understand the hesitancy reasons for accessing routine immunisation for children under five. Meanwhile, to fill the considerable data gap on the situation of children and women, UNICEF continues to advocate for a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey to better understand up-to-date data on children for our programming in Syria.

### Financial Analysis

In 2023, UNICEF required US$468.5 million to provide lifesaving assistance to 7.8 million people, including 5 million children, both boys and girls, across Syria. UNICEF prioritized focus on areas of the country with the highest severity of needs and provided multi-sectoral humanitarian and early recovery services, through a Whole of Syria approach in line with the Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) and the strategic objectives of the Syria HRP.

With thanks to the generous contributions of resource partners, US$302.7 million was made available, including US$241.2 million in humanitarian funding, US$26.7 million in other funding and US$34.8 million carried forward from 2022, leaving a funding gap of US$165.7 million (35 per cent). Of the total humanitarian funding received in 2023, 16 per cent was thematic. Given the acute needs of the population and the complex operating environment in Syria, this thematic funding was critical to deliver services to children, regardless of their location in Syria.

UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to partners who have provided support towards its humanitarian response in Syria this year, including the governments of Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the European Union, CERF, GAVI, GPE, Education Cannot Wait and the Syria Humanitarian Fund.

In particular, UNICEF extends special thanks to all resource partners that contributed to global, regional and country humanitarian thematic funds, which provide the most flexible resources in humanitarian responses, including the governments of Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, UNICEF national committees as well as private sector partners. Thanks to thematic funding and its flexibility, UNICEF Syria was able to provide timely and effective technical, operational and programming support as part of its efforts to prepare and deliver lifesaving protection and assistance to children and families.

---


Table 10: 2023 funding status against the appeal by sector (US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Humanitarian Funds (ORE) Received in 2023</th>
<th>Other Funds (ORR) Received in 2023</th>
<th>Carry-Forward from 2022</th>
<th>% Funding Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>100,343,826</td>
<td>34,822,039</td>
<td>5,575,436</td>
<td>8,768,235</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>43,939,584</td>
<td>28,631,507</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,250,576</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, Sanitation &amp; Hygiene</td>
<td>115,637,760</td>
<td>77,979,252</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7,369,746</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
<td>40,507,632</td>
<td>23,571,449</td>
<td>2,794,389</td>
<td>2,193,949</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>89,840,465</td>
<td>30,928,960</td>
<td>16,069,464</td>
<td>8,668,498</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents and youth</td>
<td>12,409,826</td>
<td>1,209,973</td>
<td>1,565,060</td>
<td>629,303</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Protection &amp; cash transfers</td>
<td>64,259,430</td>
<td>28,304,731</td>
<td>406,145</td>
<td>2,163,750</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross-sectorial</td>
<td>1,520,640</td>
<td>3,671,199</td>
<td>1,764,873</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster coordination</td>
<td>1,520,640</td>
<td>12,134,859</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>468,459,163</td>
<td>241,253,969</td>
<td>26,672,286</td>
<td>34,808,930</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11. Funding received and available by 31 December 2023 by donor and funding type (US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor Name/Type of funding</th>
<th>Grant reference</th>
<th>Overall Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Humanitarian funds received in 2023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Thematic Humanitarian Funds</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global - Thematic Humanitarian Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Non-Thematic Humanitarian Funds</td>
<td></td>
<td>186,587,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andorran National Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>SM230529</td>
<td>11,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia Ausaid</td>
<td>SM230067</td>
<td>3,028,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>SM230095</td>
<td>2,143,374</td>
</tr>
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<td>Australian Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>SM230209</td>
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<td>SM230483</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<td>SM230645</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgian Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>SM230177</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgian Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>SM230330</td>
<td>577,429</td>
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<td>SM230331</td>
<td>98,940</td>
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<td>SM230586</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulgarian</td>
<td>SM230705</td>
<td>54,825</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance USAID BHA</td>
<td>SM210661</td>
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<td>7,499,999</td>
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<td>SM220436</td>
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<td>823,785</td>
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<td>SM230733</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Organization</td>
<td>Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>German Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<td>German Federal Foreign Office</td>
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<td>Government Of Austria</td>
<td>SM230064</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Committee for UNICEF CHINA</td>
<td>SM230180</td>
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<td>Italian Committee for UNICEF Foundation</td>
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<td>698,084</td>
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<td>Luxembourg Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<td>New Zealand Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<td>SM230401</td>
<td>216,000</td>
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<td>27,668</td>
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<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>SM230173</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
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<td>Sida</td>
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<td>Sida - Sweden</td>
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<td>SM230104</td>
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<td>Syria CERF RR: Vulnerable People And Children Affected By The Earthquake</td>
<td>SM230083</td>
<td>1,392,410</td>
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<td>The United Kingdom</td>
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<td>The United Kingdom Of Great Britain And Northern Ireland</td>
<td>SM230094</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkish National Comm for UNICEF Bilkent Universitesi</td>
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<td>UNICEF Ireland</td>
<td>SM230080</td>
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<td>UNICEF-Egypt</td>
<td>SM230086</td>
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<td>UNICEF-Singapore</td>
<td>SM230085</td>
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<td>UNICEF-United Arab Emirates</td>
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<td>Organization/Committee</td>
<td>Code</td>
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<td>UNICEF-United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>SM230694</td>
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<td>SM230074</td>
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<td>United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>SM230612</td>
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<td>WFP - Italy</td>
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<td>WHO GSC, Global Procurement Services</td>
<td>SM230102</td>
<td>177,780</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland c/o Swiss Agency for Development</td>
<td>SM230309</td>
<td>186,624</td>
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</table>

**c) Pooled Funding**

24,427,121

**d) Other types of humanitarian funds**

2,061,486
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country/Multi Partner Trust Fund</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>123,490</td>
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<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>KM230030</td>
<td>23,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITED STATES FUND FOR UNICEF</td>
<td>KM230024</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITED STATES FUND FOR UNICEF</td>
<td>KM230066</td>
<td>194,235</td>
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<td>UNITED STATES FUND FOR UNICEF</td>
<td>KM230067</td>
<td>185,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNITED STATES FUND FOR UNICEF</td>
<td>KM230073</td>
<td>119,461</td>
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<td>Danish Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>KC230006</td>
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**e) Other resources – development funding towards HAC (SH grant)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>SH220020</td>
<td>810,000</td>
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**f) Other resources – development funding towards HAC (SC grant)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consolidated Funds from NatComs</td>
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<td>Danish Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>SC230334</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Cannot Wait Fund</td>
<td>SC210294</td>
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<td>European Commission/EC</td>
<td>SC200439</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>SC230725</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAVI THE VACCINE ALLIANCE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global - Child Protection THEMATIC FUND</td>
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<td>Global - Education THEMATIC FUND</td>
<td>SC229904</td>
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<td>Global - Education THEMATIC FUND</td>
<td>SC229934</td>
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<td>SC210297</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>SC220651</td>
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<tr>
<td>NORWAY</td>
<td>SC230471</td>
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<td>2022-2025 CPD Flexible Thematic Pool - Country</td>
<td>SC229930</td>
<td>24,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWEDISH COMMITTEE FOR UNICEF</td>
<td>SC220018</td>
<td>17,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITED NATIONS MULTI PARTNER TRUST</td>
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<td>367,349</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Nations Multi Partner Trust Fund</td>
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**Total humanitarian funds received in 2023**

<p>| | |</p>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>267,926,256</td>
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</tbody>
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**II. Carry-over of humanitarian funds available in 2023**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>g) Carry over Thematic Humanitarian Funds</td>
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<td>4,019,640.93</td>
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<td>Global Humanitarian Thematic Funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Humanitarian Thematic Funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country Humanitarian Thematic Funds</td>
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<td>3,705,473</td>
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<tr>
<td>h) Carry-over of non-Thematic Humanitarian Funds</td>
<td></td>
<td>30,789,289.15</td>
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Future Work Plan

UNICEF is dedicated to supporting the most vulnerable children and families in Syria and will continue to work to alleviate their suffering and promote their well-being. UNICEF remains steadfast in delivering on its mandate, prioritizing populations and areas with high severity needs. Our commitment extends to providing life-saving interventions while integrating early recovery and long-term perspectives into all aspects of our humanitarian action. This includes scaling up localization and preparedness efforts to bolster the resilience of communities and local and national systems in facing crises. UNICEF will implement multisectoral, risk-informed, conflict- and gender-sensitive, and disability-inclusive strategies to enhance programme quality and equity across all interventions.

Building on lessons learned from the Level 3 earthquake response experience in 2023, UNICEF will in particular focus on 1) strategic planning, including strengthening early recovery to scale, given the extension of the current UN Strategic Framework as well as Country Programme Document by another year; 2) evidence generation, including improved data collection and analysis; and 3) continued system building efforts, including further capacity building of frontline workers as well as enhancement of information management systems in various social sectors.

Furthermore, UNICEF will advance programme integration among sectors with key priority areas, such as social protection and violence against children, in collaboration with our partners. Our community engagement and resilience building remain essential to accelerate early recovery efforts as one of the key UN Country Team wide priorities in coming years in Syria, together with common advocacy and partnerships building efforts in coordination with other UN agencies as well as NGO partners.

Annexes

a. Two-pagers – non-thematic funding contributions
b. Donor Statement (As of 31 December 2023)

For all UNICEF stories from Syria, please refer to the link below:
https://www.UNICEF.org/syria/

Donor Feedback Form

UNICEF Donor Feedback Form