GOAL AREA 4

Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

Global Annual Results Report 2020
“Access to clean water, basic sanitation, and good hygiene practices not only keep children thriving, but also gives them a healthier start in life. Sweden’s International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is committed to investing in efficient, fair and sustainable water use and management, access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and improving opportunities for people to manage their personal hygiene. UNICEF, with its global mandate grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child across both development and humanitarian contexts, is a trusted partner for Sida to deliver results in a world where around 3 billion people still lack basic handwashing facilities with soap and water at home; and hundreds of children under the age of 5 still die every day from diseases caused by the lack of safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

Sida provides predictable global thematic funding to directly support results under Goal Area 4 of UNICEF’s Strategic Plan, to realize the right of every child to live in a clean and safe environment. The thematic funding has been highly effective for enabling long-term strategic programming and for UNICEF to be adequately prepared for responding swiftly in emergencies. It has served to empower communities on hygiene practices and eliminating the dangerous practice of open defecation. This has also been of high relevance in the support to schools and health-care facilities to get access to water, sanitation and handwashing facilities; and for delivering safe water and sanitation facilities amid conflict and crisis in a way that will outlast an emergency.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed deep, long-existing inequalities and their devastating impact on children in the poorest countries and communities, and those already disadvantaged by discrimination, social exclusion, fragility and conflict. Through UNICEF’s results, we have seen how immensely valuable flexible funding is for enabling UNICEF to quickly focus on WASH services as a critical part of its pandemic response by supporting large-scale behavior change on handwashing and providing equitable, affordable access to WASH services, especially in health-care facilities and schools in high-risk areas.

Our partnership with UNICEF during 2020 has further strengthened Sida’s confidence in UNICEF as an efficient and effective partner and strong advocate for the implementation of children’s human rights. Sida’s work is grounded in gender equality and overall social inclusion, and UNICEF is a partner that continues to strive to embed gender results for girls, boys and women across all of its programmes. In this regard, we see critical opportunities for UNICEF to continue to scale up on these efforts. As we work together to ensure access to water, sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030, we furthermore welcome UNICEF’s commitment to making all WASH programmes sustainable and adaptive to climate change by the end of 2021, and we welcome the ‘Water Security for All’ initiative.”

Cecilia Scharp, Assistant Director General, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

“Luxembourg is committed to improving access to safe and affordable health care for all. UNICEF and Luxembourg have been joining forces to strengthen existing health systems, to fight the spread of communicable diseases, to encourage maternal and child health, and to support sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Access to clean drinking water and sanitation is crucial to ensuring the healthy development of children and the further growth of strong communities.”

Franz Fayot, Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, Luxembourg

Cover image: © UNICEF/UNI332257/Keïta
Hamsatou Bolly, 13 years old, became a child leader in the Socoura displacement camp, in Mopti, Mali, sensitizing other children on hand washing and COVID-19.

Expression of thanks: © UNICEF/UN0372916/Naftalin
Five-year-old Queen Philip collects water from a solar-powered water system built with UNICEF support in Yambio, South Sudan.
Expression of thanks

Without the generous and continuing support of resource partners, UNICEF efforts to ensure that all children live in a safe and secure environment would not be possible. 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.

In a year of unprecedented challenges brought on by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, UNICEF would like to thank its resource partners for maintaining or increasing their funding commitments and for their flexibility in cases where funds reprogramming was necessary to effectively respond to the crisis.

Many thanks to the Government of Germany for being the largest resource partner over the last three years of the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme and for contributions to Goal Area 4 generally. UNICEF further thanks the governments of Australia, Iceland, the Republic of Korea, Sweden and the United States of America, as well as the European Union, for their generous donations in 2020.

UNICEF would like to express particular thanks to partners that provided thematic funding, which offers greater flexibility, enables UNICEF to continuously improve the quality of interventions, allows for longer-term planning and makes programmes more sustainable. The largest thematic funding partner for 2020 for Goal Area 4 was the Government of Sweden. Other thematic funding partners included the governments of Finland and Luxembourg, and UNICEF National Committees from 20 countries including Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

UNICEF would also like to thank the governments of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for their ongoing financial and technical support through the multi-country Accelerating Sanitation, Hygiene and Water for All (ASWA) programme, and in other areas of cooperation.

We would also like to thank our foundation and private sector partners, including the LIXIL company, which are working with UNICEF in a shared-value partnership on sanitation and hand hygiene. See Annex 1 for additional information on funding partners for Goal Area 4 and Annex 2 for a list of all WASH programming partners.

Finally, UNICEF takes this opportunity to thank all our partners for their commitment and trust in us during a difficult and challenging year.
Seventy-four years after UNICEF was established and thirty-one years since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the organization's mission to promote the full attainment of the rights of all children is as urgent as ever.

The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, is anchored in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and charts a course towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the realization of a future in which every child has a fair chance in life. It sets out measurable results for children, especially the most disadvantaged, including in humanitarian situations, and defines the change strategies and enablers that support their achievement.

Working together with governments, United Nations partners, the private sector, civil society and with the full participation of children, UNICEF remains steadfast in its commitment to realize the rights of all children, everywhere, and to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a world in which no child is left behind.

The following report summarizes how UNICEF and its partners contributed to Goal Area 4 in 2020 and reviews the impact of these accomplishments on children and the communities where they live. This is one of seven reports on the results of efforts during the past year, encompassing gender equality and humanitarian action as well as each of the five Strategic Plan Goal Areas – ‘Every child survives and thrives’, ‘Every child learns’, ‘Every child is protected from violence and exploitation’, ‘Every child lives in a safe and clean environment’ and ‘Every child has an equitable chance in life’. It supplements the 2020 Executive Director Annual Report (EDAR), UNICEF’s official accountability document for the past year.
Contents

Executive Summary ..................................2
  Water, sanitation and hygiene .................................................................3
  Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding ..................5
  Urban programming and local governance ..................................................5
  Climate, energy and the environment .......................................................5

Strategic context ..................................6
  Water, sanitation and hygiene .................................................................7
  Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding ..................9
  Urban programming and local governance ..................................................9
  Climate, energy and the environment .......................................................10

Systems-strengthening ..................11
  Water, sanitation and hygiene .................................................................12
  Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding ..................14
  Urban programming and local governance ..................................................15
  Climate, energy and the environment .......................................................15

Results: Water, sanitation and hygiene ..............................................16
  Hygiene ...........................................................................................................18
  Safe water supply ..........................................................................................24
  Climate-resilient WASH ................................................................................31
  WASH in institutions .....................................................................................38
  Emergency WASH ..........................................................................................43
  Sanitation .........................................................................................................52
  Enabling environment ....................................................................................58
  Cross-cutting: Urban WASH ..........................................................................65
  Cross-cutting: WASH and gender ....................................................................67
  Cross-cutting: WASH and disability ..................................................................69

Results: Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding ..........71
  Child-centred disaster risk reduction and recovery .............................................72
  Strengthening the humanitarian–development–peace nexus ................................74
  Peacebuilding and sustaining peace ..................................................................76

Results: Urban programming and local governance ........................................79
  Urban programming ..........................................................................................80
  Local governance .............................................................................................83

Results: Climate, energy and environment ...............................................88
  Advocacy and evidence generation ...................................................................89
  Engagement and empowerment of children and young people on climate, energy and the environment ..................................................92
  Protecting children from the impacts of climate change and environmental pollution ..................................................................................94
  Reducing emissions and pollution ...................................................................94
  Internal sustainability and the greening of UNICEF ........................................96

High-level priorities ..................................97
  Outputs 1 and 2: Water, sanitation and hygiene ...............................................98
  Output 3: Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding ..........................................................99
  Output 4: Urban programming and local governance .......................................99
  Output 5: Climate, energy and the environment .............................................100

Abbreviations and acronyms ..................101

Annex 1: Financial report ..........................102
  Part I: Overall UNICEF income and expenses ...............................................102
  Part II: WASH financial report .................................................................107
  Part III: Safe and Clean Environment financial report ..................................118

Annex 2: List of UNICEF WASH partners, 2020 ........................................124

Endnotes .........................................................................................................131
Executive summary

A pupil at a new girls’ toilet built for the Sintchan-Farba primary school in Guinea-Bissau, where UNICEF support also included menstrual hygiene health services.

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UNICEF programming within Goal Area 4 of its Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, helps children realize their rights to a safe and clean environment through water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programming, child-sensitive risk-informed planning, peacebuilding, strengthening capacity of local governments in rural and urban areas, and fostering climate action. The importance of this programming area was made crystal clear by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, which highlighted the fact that hand hygiene is impossible without adequate water supplies and other WASH services in communities, health centres and schools, that community resilience and local government services are already overstretched and that climate gains are fragile.

Despite the formidable programming challenges posed by COVID-19, good progress was made towards meeting the Goal Area 4 2020 targets through a combination of emergency response and regular programming (see Figure 1). WASH services were maintained and expanded for millions of children and their families, although some sanitation programming was curtailed owing to reallocation of resources and a focus on hygiene for COVID-19 response, coupled with the pandemic-related challenges of field work. The urban programme for children was expanded, local government services were supported, and child-inclusive climate resilience was promoted across all UNICEF regions. Support was also provided for child-centred disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster recovery efforts; nevertheless, progress was slower than planned owing to limited investment and prioritization of the COVID-19 response in many countries.

FIGURE 1: Goal Area 4 progress against 2020 targets across five output areas

Water, sanitation and hygiene

The entire UNICEF WASH programme was mobilized to respond to the unprecedented emergency posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This mobilization included infection prevention and control (IPC) response and the delivery of hygiene supplies on a large scale, expansion of hand hygiene promotion campaigns and urgent steps to ensure the functionality of existing water and sanitation systems, with a focus on marginalized groups including displaced people and poor urban neighbourhoods. Health-care facilities and schools were a special area of focus, and UNICEF emergency WASH support reached far more of these institutions than ever before. UNICEF developed a comprehensive set of guidance materials for field staff and partners on WASH and COVID-19 covering all aspects of pandemic response programming. In total, UNICEF support reached 106 million people in 120 countries, including in middle-income countries where COVID-19 exposed critical gaps in WASH services for children.

Regular WASH programming continued in 2020, although it was constrained to some extent by COVID-19-related programming, movement restrictions, funding redirection, supply shortages and other factors. UNICEF continued to strengthen sectoral systems in programme countries, support the elimination of open defecation and shift its programming towards greater climate resilience.
UNICEF significantly expanded hand-washing promotion efforts through media and social media campaigns, and support to community-based programmes in 110 countries, more than ever before. UNICEF procured and distributed tens of millions of hygiene kits and other hygiene items in 2020, brokered major donations of soap from global manufacturers and worked with local companies to increase soap manufacturing capacity and strengthen supply chains. At the global level, efforts coalesced around the Hand Hygiene for All initiative, launched in June 2020 with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other partners, highlighting the importance of hand washing with soap to control the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure that efforts lead to lasting infrastructure, and to social and behaviour change. Through the ‘periods don’t stop for pandemics’ campaign, UNICEF helped girls and women to get access to menstrual pads and culturally- and age-specific information.

A total of 170 million people gained access to safe water services through UNICEF direct support in 2020, and an additional 30.2 million people were provided with short-term emergency water services, such as water trucking. Other people were reached through UNICEF advocacy efforts to waive tariffs and subsidize water utilities during the pandemic. UNICEF launched its Water Game Plan in 2020, outlining its contributions to meeting the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) water target with a focus on equity, sustainability and climate resilience.

UNICEF continued to stress climate resilience through all programming in 2020, providing support in 46 countries for the implementation of climate-resilient WASH solutions and initiating an analysis of the extent and impacts of water scarcity on children and their families. A total of 6.3 million people were provided with safe water services classified as climate-resilient in 2020 compared with 4.5 million in 2019, including the construction of 1,488 solar-powered water systems.

A key part of UNICEF response to COVID-19 was support for safe school reopening programmes, through the emergency provision of WASH facilities and supplies in schools or temporary learning spaces, ultimately reaching an unprecedented 15.3 million children in 2020 (2.8 million, by contrast, in 2019). Direct UNICEF support for WASH in health-care facilities also expanded significantly, reaching a total of 5,613 health-care facilities in 66 countries, more than ever before. UNICEF-supported IPC training programmes in health-care settings had an even wider reach. UNICEF and WHO published new data highlighting low WASH coverage levels in health-care facilities and called on governments and support partners to significantly increase investment levels.

UNICEF helped 13.4 million people to gain access to basic sanitation through regular programming and an additional 5.6 million people to sanitation through emergency response. UNICEF and WHO published the landmark State of the World’s Sanitation report, which shows that the SDG target of universal access to safe sanitation is far off track, especially for those living in poor and isolated communities. UNICEF has initiated a strategic shift towards meeting the SDG standard of safely managed sanitation, which ensures that sanitation facilities are safe, incorporate provisions for hand washing, are not shared among households and that excreta disposal is environmentally safe. Using a monitoring indicator launched in 2020, UNICEF estimates that over 6 million of the people reached through direct sanitation support are using sanitation facilities that meet climate resilience standards.

The shift towards a greater focus on urban programming continued in 2020 with the launch of the UNICEF Global Framework for Urban WASH, the release of a new analysis of WASH coverage in urban areas in 2020 with a focus on access disparities and a significant increase in results for children in urban areas through both development programming and humanitarian response.

UNICEF continued its efforts to strengthen humanitarian WASH response through ongoing capacity-building efforts, leadership of the WASH Cluster, advocacy and systems-building. The Blueprint for Joint Action for Refugee Children, which was launched in 2020 with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), advocates the inclusion of refugee support into national WASH policies and budgets and the development of joint action plans in host countries. The second volume of the Water Under Fire report, which was launched with the Global WASH Cluster, promotes predictable, quality humanitarian responses.

UNICEF completed its first comprehensive independent evaluation of WASH programming in protracted crises in 2020, which assessed response and coordination activities in 21 countries across 5 regions.
Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding

UNICEF advanced its commitments and actions on the Humanitarian–Development–Peace (HDP) nexus to reduce vulnerabilities and risk, and prevent crises and conflicts before they materialize, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings. This includes adherence to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) recommendation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the HDP nexus and to new HDP nexus components in the revised UNICEF Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in Humanitarian Action and growing programming aiming to foster social cohesion and build peace.

UNICEF continued to support child-centred DRR and disaster recovery efforts, including for key inter-agency guidance on child-sensitive DRR and resilience-building within United Nations System programming. In the area of peacebuilding and sustaining peace, UNICEF significantly expanded its multisectoral engagement to promote peace, including through COVID-19 responses that were conflict-sensitive and supported social cohesion. UNICEF will continue to proactively support governments with resilient recovery through a systems-strengthening approach that strengthens social cohesion and will help efforts to reach the ‘last mile’, leave no one behind, especially in conflict-affected and fragile contexts, and not resume old vulnerabilities for girls and boys.

Urban programming and local governance

With more than 90 per cent of COVID-19 cases reported in urban areas, UNICEF developed global urban-specific guidance material to strengthen and adapt social services to respond to the health, social and economic crisis. Through regular programming, UNICEF supported urban and rural governments in 55 countries to make their development plans child-responsive. UNICEF also took steps to strengthen and expand its urban programme for children based on the results of a comprehensive evaluation completed in 2020, including by updating the urban strategy and issuing an organization procedure for context-specific urban programming.

As the level of governance closest to people, subnational and local governments play an important role in ensuring the fulfilment of child rights while reducing disparities and inequality. In 2020, UNICEF continued to support local governance systems-strengthening and capacity-building by engaging with multiple stakeholders at national, subnational and local levels. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF developed guidance materials, advised local government partners and provided technical and material support to strengthen local responses and address the multiple challenges faced by local governments in fulfilling their responsibilities to children and their caregivers.

Climate, energy and the environment

This is the first time a global generation of children is growing up in a world made far more uncertain as a result of climate change and environmental degradation. UNICEF structures its contribution to the whole-of-society transformation required around four main areas: (1) making climate, DRR and environmental strategies, as well as government plans, more child-inclusive; (2) increasing the resilience of social services to protect children from the impacts of climate change, including disasters; (3) promoting the reduction of emissions and pollution to levels that are safe for children; and (4) championing children and young people as active agents of change.

In 2020, and despite COVID-19, UNICEF supported governments in 74 countries in climate and environmental programming, and advocacy and communication campaigns were active in 106 countries, the most ever.
Strategic context

Muna Zayed, 10 years old, collects water with a friend in the Al Sha’ab camp for displaced people in Aden, Yemen.

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UNICEF programming within Goal Area 4 of UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, helps children to realize their rights to a safe and clean environment through water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programming; disaster risk reduction, resilience planning and peacebuilding; urban and local governance programming; and fostering climate and environmental action. Programming under Goal Area 4 contributes to environmental, resiliency and gender components of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6) on water and sanitation for all, SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities, SDG 13 on climate action and SDG 5 on gender equality.

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic highlighted the importance for children of each of these areas, as well as the fragility of systems and services upon which they rely. The numbers of households, health centres and schools without access to adequate water services and hygiene supplies were already unacceptably high, and the impacts of the pandemic on national economies and family incomes quickly made the situation worse, especially in the most vulnerable communities and predominantly for children.

The hard gains made in improving the child’s environment are in danger of being lost to the pandemic’s impact. While focus was heightened on water system functionality, hygiene promotion and infection prevention and control (IPC) measures, other critical areas received less attention. Sanitation is the most off-track component of SDG 6 but, in some countries, governments and their development partners were forced to redirect resources elsewhere in 2020. The same was true for action on climate change to some extent, as well as for many other programmes and initiatives designed to secure an improved environment for children.

Accordingly, UNICEF programming within Goal Area 4 combined an unprecedented emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with ongoing efforts to meet the Strategic Plan targets to ensure gains for children were maintained and expanded.

### Water, sanitation and hygiene

UNICEF launched a series of landmark reports and advocacy campaigns in 2020 that together provide a comprehensive situation analysis of the WASH sector during the COVID-19 pandemic, while pointing the way to strategic programmatic shifts required for meeting SDG 6.

The Hand Hygiene for All report and advocacy campaign, launched in July 2020 with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other key partners, highlights the importance of hand washing with soap to control the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure that efforts lead to lasting infrastructure, and to social and behaviour change.5 The campaign draws on the latest figures from the WHO–UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP), showing that 3 billion people around the world lack soap and water at home, nearly half of all schools do not have hand-washing facilities with water and soap, and 43 per cent of health-care settings do not have hand hygiene facilities at points of care where patients are treated. The campaign stresses the importance of strengthening the institutional and policy environment at all levels to ensure that the renewed emphasis on hand washing with soap is sustainable over the long term.

The Hand Hygiene for All campaign capitalizes on and feeds into the surge in public awareness of the importance of hand washing with soap. Hand washing was a headline story in media outlets around the world and trended on social media. UNICEF Facebook posts on the importance of hand washing in a maternity ward in Uganda and on hand-washing promotion in a refugee camp in Mali drew millions of likes, an unprecedented social media engagement level for a WASH programming issue.6, 7

Inadequate WASH services in health-care facilities were further highlighted with the publication of new comprehensive data sets from the JMP, showing low coverage levels across the developing world, especially in the poorest countries (see Figure 2). Subtitled ‘Fundamentals first’, the report stresses how health care cannot be achieved without adequate WASH facilities and services, both during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.8 It calls on governments and partners to significantly increase investments and provides recommendations on financing modalities, monitoring, capacity-building and the need to fully integrate WASH into national health system planning and budgeting processes.

### FIGURE 2: WASH in health-care facilities in least-developed countries, 2020 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Coverage Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic water services</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand hygiene services at points of care</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic sanitation services</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic waste management services</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: JMP (2020).10
UNICEF and WHO also launched a new progress report on WASH in schools in 2020, highlighting the large numbers of schools in the developing world without adequate WASH and slow progress in the four years since the previous report (see Figure 3). The report stresses the implications of this poor progress both in the context of COVID-19 and safe school reopening campaigns, and over the longer term.

FIGURE 3: WASH in schools: Progress 2015–2019, global level

Source: JMP (2020). Note: Figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

The first-ever *State of the World’s Sanitation* report, also launched in 2020, highlights that improving access to sanitation is a sector priority, even during a global pandemic. The report shows that the SDG target of universal access to safe sanitation is far off track, especially for those living in poor and isolated communities. It details the health costs of poor access to sanitation, which is linked to over 850,000 deaths a year, as well as the economic and social costs. It calls for renewed investment in sanitation and outlines five key areas – or ‘accelerators’ – where investment is most needed: good governance, smart public financing, sector-wide capacity-building, more reliable data and programming innovation.

UNICEF also formally released the *Water Game Plan* in 2020, which describes how UNICEF will contribute to the SDG 2030 water targets by helping people to move up the water service ladder, with a focus on equity, sustainability and climate resilience. The game plan provides a broad strategic framework for UNICEF action along with detailed guidance for UNICEF country offices.

The Global WASH Cluster and UNICEF launched the second volume of the *Water Under Fire* report, which highlights how the WASH sector is under increasing pressure to respond to ever more complex and protracted crises but is chronically underfunded in humanitarian appeals. The report describes the challenges in delivering a quality humanitarian response and provides an agenda and road map for strengthening sector capacity.

All these reports and campaigns were released against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and address immediate needs for action, and they also provide a bridge to the post-pandemic world and the need to accelerate progress and adjust strategies to reach SDG 6 targets. To do this, UNICEF will continue its efforts to shift its programming package to ensure that WASH services are climate-resilient, to link humanitarian responses and sustainable development and to move people up the WASH ladder towards safely managed services. These and other changes to WASH programming strategies will be incorporated in the next UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, currently under development.
Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding

Since 2000, some 7,348 disaster events have been recorded worldwide, claiming over 1.23 million lives and affecting over 4 billion people. In this same period, disasters led to approximately US$2.97 trillion in economic losses worldwide. Geophysical events such as earthquakes and tsunamis continue to be especially deadly and have killed more people than any of the other natural hazards in the past 20 years. 2020 was an especially deadly year, with well over 50 million people directly affected by COVID-19, floods, droughts, storms, wildfires and other intersecting disasters.

Today, 670 million children under the age of 14 live in fragile settings15 and 415 million children live in conflict zones.16 Globally, conflicts continue to represent one of the most significant risks to the rights and well-being of children and the achievement of the SDGs in fragile settings, driving 80 per cent of humanitarian needs.17 In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated social divisions, discrimination and grievances that are underlying conflicts and heightened the risk of social unrest and instability.

As a dual-mandated organization working in both humanitarian and development contexts, including fragile and conflict-affected settings, UNICEF work on fostering social cohesion and peace is critical to ensuring the rights of children who often bear the brunt in crisis settings. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need to link humanitarian response with sustainable development to strengthen social cohesion and peace and to foster resilient communities and societies.

Urban programming and local governance

More than 55 per cent of the world’s population live in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 68 per cent by 2050. Projections show that urbanization, combined with the overall growth of the world’s population, could add another 2.5 billion people to urban areas by 2050, two thirds of whom will be living in low- and lower middle-income countries.18 Much of this growth will take place in an unplanned manner characterized by inadequate infrastructure, increased pollution and poor quality housing. Cities are highly vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters and conflict, and overcrowded and unsafe environments make poor urban neighbourhoods especially vulnerable to outbreaks of communicable diseases.

UNICEF completed a comprehensive evaluation of its urban programming for children in 2020, including an assessment of programming in over 70 countries and an in-depth review in 5 countries. The evaluation concludes that addressing the needs of vulnerable children in urban settings, especially in slums and informal settlements, should be at the core of UNICEF programming efforts. It recommends a series of measures to strengthen efforts and modify approaches, all of which are now being addressed through management responses.

The COVID-19 pandemic put stress on subnational and local governance capacity in 2020, with negative impacts on the delivery of multisectoral services for children and their families. Local governments were at the forefront in responding to the crisis, adapting their services to meet emerging needs, but were limited by existing structural
constraints, including in the areas of financial and human resources, and weaknesses in vertical coordination systems with other levels of government. The pandemic further exacerbated inequality and disparities at subnational levels and challenged key principles of good governance – transparency, accountability, efficiency and inclusiveness – with impacts felt the most by marginalized children and their families.

UNICEF continued to work with government partners and other actors to strengthen subnational and local governance systems through fostering national and subnational policy dialogue for enhancing decentralized service delivery for children. UNICEF’s technical assistance at subnational levels supported local authorities and other local stakeholders to produce credible evidence on the situation of children in their localities, develop child-sensitive plans and budgets, deliver child-responsive social services and establish social accountability mechanisms that take into consideration the needs of the most marginalized and excluded families and their children.

**Climate, energy and the environment**

The focus of the international community in 2020 was on COVID-19, stalling momentum on global climate action, with governments postponing commitments for more ambitious climate action. While global emissions and pollution levels reduced in the early part of the year, this was due to economic closures rather than environmentally sustainable actions – 2020 was the hottest year on record, and atmospheric carbon dioxide ($\text{CO}_2$) levels are the highest they have been in at least 3.5 million years.

As economies reopen, the focus must be on a green and inclusive recovery and the prioritization of solutions that provide the triple benefit of being environmentally sustainable, aiding economic recovery and guarding against pandemics of the future. UNICEF COVID-19 stimulus and recovery funds are borrowed from future generations and must be used to safeguard them from the graver long-term threat of climate change. UNICEF contributes to a green and resilient recovery through extensive sector development programming and through global leadership roles in humanitarian response and recovery efforts in the areas of WASH, education and child protection, and through support roles in the areas of health, nutrition and social protection. While the Strategic Plan targets on environmental sustainability are being met, the SDGs are off track, and the scientific evidence states that we have less than a decade to take urgent action to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.
Systems-strengthening

Somaya, 9 years old, washing her hands at a hand-washing station provided with UNICEF support in the Ferdousi camp for displaced people in Balkh province, Afghanistan.

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Much of UNICEF’s work to help ensure that children’s rights to a safe and clean environment are realized involves interventions to strengthen the systems upon which children and their families rely, and through which governments and their partners operate. Most of the activities and results detailed in this report involve systems-strengthening and are described in detail in the body of the report. Key systems-strengthening results are summarized here.

Even in the WASH sector, where UNICEF direct support for service delivery reaches tens of millions of people every year, a substantial component of the UNICEF programme focuses on systems-strengthening, an element UNICEF will expand upon in the next UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. Service delivery is important: it saves lives in emergencies, it helps to address inequities by targeting the poorest and most vulnerable communities, it serves as a test bed for innovation and, by ‘getting our hands dirty in the field’, and it helps UNICEF to build credibility with governments and other partners as a knowledge leader. Nevertheless, progress at the scale necessary to meet the SDGs can only be achieved and sustained over the long term by national governments and their partners working within strong national systems that are fit to task. Thus, an important part of UNICEF programming is contributing to the strengthening of these systems.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

To a certain extent, the pandemic facilitated systems-strengthening work. With some field activities curtailed, focus could, in some cases, shift to upstream work, and UNICEF support led to important results in the areas of policy development, capacity-building, monitoring systems-strengthening and other systemic areas at the global, regional and country levels. This was especially the case in the area of hygiene: the unprecedented focus on the importance of hand washing with soap in 2020 provided an opportunity to advance the policy agenda in this area.

Policy development

UNICEF and WHO launched the ‘Hand Hygiene for All’ call to action in June 2020, with WHO in partnership with other partners, national governments, private sector actors and civil society organizations. The initiative stresses the importance of strengthening the institutional and policy environment at all levels to ensure that the renewed emphasis on hand washing with soap is sustained over the long term.

Three other major policy-related initiatives were launched in 2020, each advocating for, and providing guidance on, the strengthening of sectoral systems:

- The Water Game Plan defines the UNICEF contribution to SDG 6 with a focus on equity, sustainability and climate resilience, outlines programmatic pathways based on country context and provides UNICEF country offices with a set of guidance and resources.
- The first-ever State of the World’s Sanitation report stresses the importance of strengthening national systems in five key areas: governance, public financing, capacity-building, more reliable data and programming innovation.
- The Blueprint for Joint Action for Refugee Children, launched with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), stresses the need to engage in policy dialogue with governments to ensure that the needs of refugees are incorporated into national WASH policies, plans and budgets.

At the national level, UNICEF advocacy and support contributed to major new national policies, strategies and plans in 32 countries in 2020. Examples include new national sanitation strategies and costed plans in Myanmar and Sierra Leone; a major revision of the national water policy in Lebanon; a national WASH refugee response plan in Uganda; the first national solid waste management strategy in Ghana; and a revised national WASH strategy in Indonesia to reach the ambitious SDG standard of safely managed WASH services.

UNICEF leverages its advocacy and support for strengthened systems in the WASH sector through leadership and participation in all key sectoral partnership frameworks and collaboration mechanisms, including UN-Water, vice-chaired by UNICEF; the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) partnership, which UNICEF hosts; the JMP, which is co-managed with WHO; and the Global WASH Cluster, for which UNICEF is the lead organization. UNICEF additionally works closely with key regional partners such as the African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW) and the Pacific Community (SPC).

Capacity-building

From the outset of the pandemic, UNICEF quickly drew on its in-house staff, experience and knowledge resources to develop a comprehensive set of guidance materials for field staff and partners on WASH and COVID-19. This included 14 different guidance packages at the global level covering all aspects of pandemic response programming (see Figure...
In total, UNICEF released over 60 documents of various types related to COVID-19 and WASH from all offices and provided extensive support for COVID-19 response on a day-to-day basis and through webinars and other virtual support tools.

**FIGURE 4: UNICEF COVID-19 WASH guidance documents, by area, global level, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WASH programming area</th>
<th>No. of guidance documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19 programme strategic design</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of WASH services</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC/WASH in health-care facilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC/WASH in schools</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC/WASH in public spaces and communities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menstrual hygiene and health</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH in emergencies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban WASH</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: COVID-19, coronavirus disease 2019; IPC, infection prevention and control; WASH, water, sanitation and hygiene.

Outside of the pandemic response, UNICEF released various other guidance packages and held training sessions in a variety of areas, including on menstrual hygiene and health (MHH) monitoring, market-based sanitation, the shift to climate-resilient WASH programming, the design of solar-powered water systems, cholera response through Community Outbreak Response Teams, building back better for WASH, and WASH and disability.

UNICEF published 216 documents in 2020, the most documents ever published in a year. These publications include major reports and advocacy documents, evaluations, studies, journal articles and other WASH publications (briefing notes, fact sheets, field notes, case studies, technical papers and guidance). The full list of publications is available [here](#).

**Sector financing**

As a sector leader, UNICEF is well placed to promote increased funding for the WASH sector, and, in 2020, it developed a discussion and guidance paper on leveraging finance in the sector to guide staff and partners.23 UNICEF regional offices are leaders in this area: the Regional Office for South Asia released a new position paper and guidance note in 2020, and the East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office launched a new initiative to encourage small businesses participation in sanitation markets. In the Eastern and Southern Africa region, UNICEF worked with the European Investment Bank to explore blended financing models and other avenues for increasing sector funding in a process detailed in the *Water Diagnostic Study* released in 2020,24 and with KfW Development Bank and UNHCR on the expansion of a self-sustaining business model for water systems serving refugee camps and host communities that was developed in Ethiopia.

More than 20 UNICEF country offices reported substantial new funding for the WASH sector in 2020, notably in India where UNICEF estimates its advocacy and technical support led to US$776 million in new investment for community and institutional WASH, and in Pakistan where national and provincial governments allocated an unprecedented US$125 million for WASH programmes. In many countries, new funds were released as part of COVID-19 response campaigns, such as in Mozambique where US$44 million in new government funding was allocated for WASH in schools.

The affordability of WASH services is enshrined in SDG 6, and UNICEF promotes the inclusion of affordability into national policies and strategic frameworks. In 2020, UNICEF released a set of guidelines25 to help guide programming to ensure that affordability is a component within systems-strengthening efforts at national level. UNICEF also worked on the definition of affordability parameters in sector monitoring systems, held a global webinar on the affordability of WASH services for rural households and developed two guidance notes on affordability during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Strengthening monitoring systems**

UNICEF used its existing networks to track COVID-19 impact and the responses to COVID-19 and developed new systems at global, regional and national levels. UNICEF worked with the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) to monitor COVID-19 impact on the sector and map ongoing responses, and produced a global snapshot of responses by governments, regulators, utilities and other stakeholders in 84 countries, with particular focus on the Middle East and North Africa region and the Latin America Caribbean region.26, 27, 28 UNICEF also launched a new system to track the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on children, including a WASH component that assesses the extent of WASH service disruptions and tracks mitigation measures.29

The JMP prepared regional and global snapshots highlighting pre-COVID-19 baselines for hand hygiene in households, schools and health-care facilities to highlight underlying vulnerabilities and to advocate a greater focus on hand hygiene within COVID-19 responses.30 The JMP launched a flagship publication on WASH in schools that presents the latest global data sets while highlighting the importance of WASH during the COVID-19 pandemic.31
a report on WASH in health-care facilities stressing how health care cannot be achieved without adequate WASH facilities and services.  

UNICEF published two monitoring guides in 2020, one on monitoring MHH and one, through the WASH4Work initiative, on monitoring WASH in the workplace.  

**Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding**

Child-centred disaster risk reduction (DRR) focuses on the specific risks faced by children, as well as involving children in efforts and opportunities to reduce disaster risk and build resilience. UNICEF is relied upon as the lead organization for DRR in nutrition, education, WASH and child protection, and in the area of social protection systems in the health sector. UNICEF is the Co-Chair of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the education sector and actively contributes to a DRR thematic group within the Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

UNICEF continued to implement risk-informed programming as a means to building systems for improved resilience and strengthening preparedness, and linking
humanitarian and development programming with the explicit goal of building peace and strengthening social cohesion.

In fragile and risk-prone areas of Mali, sustained investments were made using humanitarian action as the entry-point to build and strengthen national policies, systems and capacities, including that of local systems and communities, reinforcing resilience and addressing its underlying causes. In Sri Lanka, which has emerged from conflict but is prone to natural disasters, UNICEF programming has operated where humanitarian work and development approaches converge, including social cohesion programming. UNICEF support has thus increasingly moved away from service delivery towards systems-strengthening.

**Urban programming and local governance**

UNICEF is working with United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) on a series of initiatives to advance the rights of children living in urban settings. These initiatives include the integration of child-related indicators into the Global Urban Monitoring Framework, a United Nations system-wide framework for measuring SDGs, and the New Urban Agenda that has been developed through a task team involving partners from United Nations agencies, national and city governments, private sector, civil society and academia. UNICEF is also working with both UN-Habitat and WHO to define a set of principles to govern the design of public urban spaces for children, a concept that lacks clear common understanding and definitions across agencies and governments.

UNICEF supported urban and rural governments in 55 countries to make their development plans child-responsive, while 517 subnational and local governments were supported to develop child-sensitive local budgets. In the area of urban planning for children, work continued on a three-country pilot project in Paraguay, the Philippines and South Africa to develop capacity with a particular focus on sustainable transportation planning, road safety, street design for children and safe school environments.

UNICEF’s work with subnational and local governments to improve outcomes for children focuses strongly on strengthening systems to address poverty and inequality and integrate child priorities into the policy agenda. This systems-strengthening involves working horizontally at the subnational level with governments and other key local stakeholders, such as civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector actors, as well as vertically with other levels of government. UNICEF support helps to make planning processes evidence-based, transparent and accountable; strengthens budgeting practices and financial system management systems; promotes the engagement of youth in local governance processes; and improves coordination of multisectoral service delivery for children.

Work on child-responsive local governance takes place in many countries across all UNICEF regions, even in fragile and humanitarian contexts. In 2020, UNICEF successfully supported local governance programming in Somalia and Yemen, where child-sensitive plans and budgets were developed and launched. Community engagement and child participation in local governance is crucial for building a social cohesion that supports peacebuilding and helps to build resilient communities.

**Climate, energy and the environment**

Climate change and environmental degradation are global phenomena but require local actions and systems to build resilience to the impacts of climate change, including disasters, and to reduce emissions and pollution. UNICEF supported governments in developing child-sensitive climate and environmental actions and plans in 65 countries in 2020. These plans recognize the explicit links between safeguarding child rights and climate action, prioritize the resilience of social services that children depend on and emphasize the education and engagement of young people as a key part of the long-term solution and policy development.

In 74 countries, UNICEF supported child-sensitive climate and environmental programming in areas such as resilient water and sanitation systems, the use of renewable energy in health-care facilities and social protection systems that are responsive to climate and environmental shocks. A bedrock of resilient systems is the education and empowerment of the community; in 2020, UNICEF helped over 750,000 children and young people participate in, or lead, offline and online civic initiatives. UNICEF campaigns to engage young people in advocacy and action were active in 106 countries.
Results: Water, sanitation and hygiene

Aicha, 13 years old, in a camp in the Niger for migrants returning home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. UNICEF and partners constructed toilets in the camp as well as water and hygiene facilities.

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As the COVID-19 pandemic engulfed the world in early 2020, it quickly became clear that WASH would be at the centre of UNICEF response programmes. Health-care facilities needed WASH services to prevent and control infections, schools needed hand washing and sanitation facilities to reopen safely, hand-washing promotion campaigns needed to be rapidly expanded, and people everywhere needed easy and affordable access to soap and other hygiene and IPC supplies.

It was also critical to maintain the functioning of water and sanitation systems, to expand them where possible and to make sure these services were affordable, especially in high-risk areas like poor urban neighbourhoods and migrant camps.

As the world’s largest support organization for WASH, none of these areas are new to UNICEF, and it was able to quickly mobilize its 716 professional staff members and its long-standing sectoral partnerships with governments and other stakeholders to ramp up operations. It also became clear early on that UNICEF would need to broaden its response to some middle-income countries where the pandemic had exposed critical gaps in WASH services, especially in poor and marginalized communities.

UNICEF formulated a strategic programming framework for WASH focusing on three areas: hygiene, IPC and WASH system continuity. Capitalizing on its extensive WASH programming presence in developing countries, UNICEF quickly launched a global response effort in all three of these areas.

Working with governments and other partners, UNICEF helped to ensure that water, sanitation and hand hygiene systems continued to function, that soap and menstrual supplies were available in all settings, that hygiene promotion efforts were expanded and that IPC measures were strengthened in health-care facilities, schools and other high-risk context such as camps for displaced people.

Ultimately, this response reached 106 million people in 120 countries across all UNICEF regions with critical WASH supplies and services, making the 2020 emergency response effort the largest ever for UNICEF (see Figure 5).

Beyond the immediate response effort, UNICEF looked for opportunities to ‘build forward better’ by encouraging solutions that make services more affordable over the long term, improve the efficiency of WASH system management and build capacity of governments, utilities and communities on climate resilience of services.
The UNICEF WASH programme expanded in 2020 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and manage regular operations. The increase in overall expenditure was modest (US$995 million compared to US$992 million in 2019); nevertheless, the proportion of expenditure used for humanitarian response jumped sharply from 49.5 per cent in 2019 to 55.7 per cent in 2020, the second-highest level ever. Staffing levels also increased, from 684 professionals in 2019 to 716 in 2020. Many of these new staff members were posted to countries where UNICEF has not generally supported substantial WASH programming in the past, including in middle-income countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region and the Europe and Central Asia region for COVID-19-related support. Staffing was additionally bolstered through temporary emergency deployments and related support (see ‘Emergency WASH’).

**Hand washing with soap**

UNICEF efforts to promote hand washing as a core response to COVID-19 coalesced around the Hand Hygiene for All initiative, which was launched in June 2020 with WHO in partnership with other international partners, national governments, public and private sectors, and civil society organizations. The call to action highlights the importance of hand hygiene to control the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure that efforts lead to
lasting infrastructure, and to social and behaviour change. The initiative stresses the need for four key elements to ensure hand hygiene at scale:

- Affordable and easy access to supplies
- Innovative, evidence-based behaviour change strategies
- A strong enabling environment
- Political will and leadership

UNICEF also participates in the new Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition, led by Unilever and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with a focus on strengthening national coordination efforts and programming.

The Hand Hygiene for All initiative was the theme of Global Handwashing Day 2020 (15 October), which attracted an unprecedented amount of interest and participation. Over 770 million people in 150 countries participated through virtual or in-person events, a 60 per cent increase over 2019. The day was marked at a high-level United Nations global event co-hosted by Finland and United Kingdom Permanent Missions.

UNICEF worked with its funding partners to quickly modify its programmes to deliver hygiene results. A notable example is the Accelerating Sanitation, Hygiene and Water for All (ASWA) multi-country programmes, supported by the Governments of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

In programme countries around the world, UNICEF, governments and other partners modified and significantly expanded hand-washing promotion campaigns, using all forms of broadcast and social media and a wide range of person-to-person communication techniques, often at the same time. In Malawi, UNICEF reached over 4.3 million people with WASH-related messages through community radio spots, newspaper stories and advertisements, hand-washing demonstrations in communities and markets, mobile van messaging and the wide distribution of information, education and communication materials.

Other examples of delivery platforms for hand hygiene messaging campaigns include:

- A social media challenge campaign of hand-washing videos in Bhutan
- Targeted information, education and communication materials used by community religious leaders in Chad
- A famous social media influencer making dancing videos with children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- A travelling roadshow in Kiribati
- A postcard writing campaign in Papua New Guinea
- A music video for preschool children in the Republic of Moldova
- An art competition for children in poor urban communities in Sri Lanka

Existing UNICEF-sponsored digital media initiatives were tweaked and relaunched as hand-washing promotion platforms such as Pakistan’s ‘Clean and Green’ young people’s social media network and the ‘Internet Saathi’ in the Indian state of Bihar in which girls were supported in reaching out to their communities through mobile social media messaging on hand hygiene.

UNICEF made extensive use of its own social media presence to disseminate hand-washing information in countries around the world, often reaching large audiences. In China, UNICEF reached over 44 million people through its own communication channels and those of partners.

A key component of hand-washing promotion efforts are community-based programmes through which people are engaged directly in their own households and public spaces by outreach workers. This kind of promotion is carried out through stand-alone hand-washing promotion programmes, through open defecation elimination activities and through health, nutrition, education and other sectoral outreach programmes. According to data from UNICEF country offices, 110 programme countries supported community-based hand-washing promotion programmes in 2020, twenty more countries than in 2019. This increase was driven by COVID-19 response programmes in countries across all regions (see Figure 7).

FIGURE 7: Community-based hand-washing promotion programmes, number of countries, by region, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECA</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCA</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF SMOs (2020). Notes: EAP, East Asia and the Pacific; ECA, Europe and Central Asia; ESA, Eastern and Southern Africa; LAC, Latin America and the Caribbean; MENA, Middle East and North Africa; SA, South Asia; WCA, West and Central Africa.
UNICEF procured and distributed tens of millions of hygiene kits and related hygiene items by using its own resources in 2020, including over 7 million items in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, over 22 million in India and over 3 million in Jordan. Hygiene items were also distributed in countries where UNICEF does not normally engage in WASH programming, including several European countries (e.g., Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Croatia and Serbia) and other middle-income countries (e.g., the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Panama and Peru). In all these cases, procurement targeted vulnerable groups such as prisoners, migrants and displaced persons, indigenous communities and street children.

In Ethiopia, UNICEF used the existing government urban safety net programme (u-PSNP) to identify and reach the most vulnerable population in 11 cities with both hygiene services. Ultimately 165,627 vulnerable households were reached with hygiene promotion, soap distribution and communication messages on COVID-19 risk.

UNICEF procured and distributed soap to poor and vulnerable communities at unprecedented levels in 2020, sometimes as part of hygiene kits and sometimes on its own. A big part of this effort was in-kind donations worth over US$7 million from Colgate-Palmolive, Unilever and other companies. In some cases, these soap donations were part of a more comprehensive programme such as in India where the partnership with Hindustan Unilever included a hand-washing campaign in addition to the distribution of soap and hand sanitizer on a large scale.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Guinea and Togo, UNICEF provided technical and material support for artisanal soap manufacturing while in Burundi, an innovative partnership with the national soap-maker cut the cost in half of basic hand soap country-wide (see Case Study 1).

Children washing their hands in a slum in Chembur, Mumbai, India.
Case Study 1: Burundi: Blue soap

The Government of Burundi, UNICEF, the World Bank and SAVONOR, Burundi’s largest soap manufacturer, launched an innovative partnership to cut the price of a basic bar of soap by 50 per cent, a key initiative in a country where just 6 per cent of people have a basic hand-washing facility with soap and water at home. A subsidy from UNICEF and a VAT reduction allowed the company to switch its entire manufacturing line of basic soap to the subsidized soap, which has a distinctive blue colour and has the recommended retail price (150 BIF or US$0.08) engraved on each bar. The first batches of soap were distributed in June 2020, and they sold out in a matter of days. By September, the initiative had produced and sold over 20 million bars throughout Burundi’s 18 provinces.

Making soap affordable was only part of the solution. In partnership with the ministries of health and communication, UNICEF developed messages on coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) prevention measures that were broadcast on every media outlet in the country. UNICEF also developed training modules and trained officials on COVID-19 prevention, with a focus on hand washing and hygiene. These officials then trained community leaders, who then shared the information with thousands of households.

To assess the initiative, UNICEF conducted a national survey on the U-Report platform asking Burundians about price and availability of the soap. The results showed that 92 per cent of respondents had purchased blue soap at or near the recommended retail price.

Part of the government’s overall COVID-19 response plan, financial support for this initiative was provided by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund and the World Bank.

© UNICEF/UNI349559/Nijimbere
A child washing his hands with a bar of blue soap in Bujumbura, Burundi.
UNICEF also worked with the private sector and other partners to increase the availability of hand-washing facilities in communities, with a focus on markets and other areas where people gather and schools and health-care facilities (see ‘WASH in institutions’). This included supporting local innovations in programme countries. Examples include:

- Support for a locally designed and manufactured plastic hand-washing unit in Ecuador
- A foot-operated unit developed in association with a vocational training centre for welders in Guinea-Bissau
- A new UNICEF-designed foot-operated hand-washing station is now widely used and available in local markets in Liberia
- An initiative to help vulnerable households build safe hand-washing facilities with recycled materials in Madagascar
- A major campaign to promote the construction of low-cost ‘tippy-tap’ hand-washing stations in South Africa

Under its shared value partnership agreement, UNICEF and the LIXIL company collaborated on the design of a low-cost, portable hand-washing station for use anywhere in households and communities where there is no running water. The SATO Tap uses refillable empty plastic bottles as water reservoirs, which are widely available in countries around the world, has an integrated soap holder and uses a unique nozzle that releases just enough water to practice safe hygiene.\(^4^1\) The innovative product has attracted widespread media attention and was named one of the best inventions of the year by *Time Magazine*.\(^4^2\) After the initial design and testing phase, the units were piloted in five countries, and the pilots were evaluated. The final product will be rolled out in 2021, starting with an initial donation by LIXIL of some 300,000 units.

## Menstrual health and hygiene

Improving MHH for girls and women in programme countries is a challenge at the best of times; during a global pandemic, the challenge became that much greater, especially with the closure of schools, which are normally at the centre of UNICEF MHH-related programming. UNICEF and its partners addressed this in several ways.

UNICEF sponsored a wide range of media and related events under the theme ‘periods don’t stop for pandemics’, including a week-long campaign involving the participation of several celebrity influencers in India, a series of videos by women athletes in Pakistan and op-ed pieces in other countries. For girls and women quarantining at home, or living in neighbourhoods where supplies had been cut, UNICEF supported online tutorials on how to make your own menstrual pads, including in Ethiopia where the tutorial was hosted by the 2019 CNN Hero of the Year Freweni Mebrahtu of Mariam Seba Sanitary Products Factory.

Menstrual Hygiene Day was an important part of this campaign. Globally, UNICEF issued a joint press release with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) providing key facts, including clarifications on the misconceptions about menstruation and COVID-19, and links to guidance materials and resources.\(^4^3\) The event was also used by UNICEF country offices to provide COVID-19-specific guidance materials and to raise awareness generally, such as in Madagascar where celebrities participated in the #PadChallenge event on TikTok, in Papua New Guinea where stigmas were challenged through the menstruation bracelet campaign (part of a global campaign supported by WASH United),\(^4^4\) and in Ukraine where UNICEF launched a new information campaign fronted by the popular singer Michelle Andrade. The global multi-agency outreach effort across traditional and social media on Menstrual Hygiene Day reached an estimated 411 million people in 2020, more than ever before.\(^4^5\)

With the MHH partners WaterAid, Irise International, Population Services International and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council,\(^4^6\) UNICEF released a special guidance note on mitigating the impact of
the pandemic on MHH. The note provides a set of recommended solutions for COVID-19-specific challenges affecting health-care workers, female patients in health-care facilities, girls and women in communities, and girls and women in institutional settings such as camps and prisons. The note also addresses COVID-19-related disinformation and stigma related to menstruation, such as the fact that the virus is not transmissible through menstrual blood.

To address supply chain interruptions, UNICEF procured and delivered hygiene kits, which include some menstrual hygiene supplies as standard items, and additional products, which include sanitary pads and tampons, menstrual cups, reusable napkins, pain medication and soap, to girls and women in programme countries. Efforts focused on the most vulnerable communities, including returnees in Malawi, indigenous communities in Peru and emergency-affected people in Somalia. In Bangladesh, UNICEF distributed hygiene kits and set up ‘menstrual corners’ at health posts in poor urban neighbourhoods while, in Pakistan, UNICEF partnered with Proctor & Gamble in the distribution of sanitary pads in poor communities. Globally, just under 1.2 million girls and women benefited from emergency MHH services and supplies provided by UNICEF in 2020 (1 million in 2019).

Globally, fewer schools were reached through regular development programming than in previous years owing to school closures and pandemic-related movement restrictions. Nevertheless, almost 10,000 schools were reached with services in 2020, and UNICEF remains on track to exceed the 4-year cumulative Strategic Plan target of 50,000 schools with MHH services (see Figure 8). However, more girls and women were reached through emergency programming in 2020 (1.2 million, compared to 1 million in 2019), mainly outside of schools (see ‘Emergency WASH’).

![School Role Mother, Juliet Apio, holding a discussion with students of Kacheri Secondary School, Kaabong District, Uganda. Through a programme supported by UNICEF, role mothers provide advice on menstrual hygiene health, violence against women and other issues.](image-url)
The Duke University-UNICEF Innovation Accelerator, launched in 2019, supported six selected innovators in Eastern and Southern Africa in 2020 to build and scale up social enterprises that address MHH. They include a company in Burundi that packages comprehensive information on menstrual hygiene management with their washable and reusable sanitary pads; the East Africa branch of an American company that uses artificial intelligence and messaging apps to provide private, trusted and discrete sexual and reproductive health advice to girls in Kenya; and a company in the United Republic of Tanzania that makes affordable biodegradable pads while providing outreach to both girls and boys in schools.

The Duke-UNICEF collaboration is also being used for the sub-Saharan Africa roll-out of the Oky period tracking app, starting in Kenya. First developed by UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office and piloted in Indonesia and Mongolia, the app provides girl-friendly, culturally appropriate menstruation education and individualized period tracking on the android platform and is designed to work even on inexpensive phones.

Innovation was also the theme of the UNICEF-hosted 8th Annual Virtual Conference on Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools in May 2020, which drew 1,124 participants from 81 countries. The sessions highlighted national examples of initiatives to identify and address barriers to safe and dignified MHH for girls in schools. In addition to innovations in products, services and facilities, the conference showcased inclusive ways to end menstrual stigma and empower girls with up-to-date knowledge and skills.

UNICEF launched the first-ever guidance manual for monitoring MHH in 2020, the result of a comprehensive development process with the collaboration of eight institutional partners from the United Nations System and academia. The guidance materials include basic monitoring principles (including ethical considerations) and example questions and indicators that can be used to monitor various elements of MHH through both government systems and household surveys.

### Safe water supply

**FIGURE 9: Safe water supply: Progress against Strategic Plan indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Plan indicators: Safe water supply</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>2018 progress</th>
<th>2019 progress</th>
<th>2020 progress</th>
<th>2020 milestone</th>
<th>4-year target (2021)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.2. Number of additional people with access to safe drinking-water services through UNICEF-supported programmes (cumulative)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>18.6 m</td>
<td>36.9 m</td>
<td>53.9 m</td>
<td>45 m</td>
<td>60 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.a.1. Number of countries implementing water safety plans at the community level</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.a.2. Number of countries implementing independent sustainability checks with a clear feedback mechanism (cumulative)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: See text below for details on progress against these indicators and other safe water supply results. m, million.
Ensuring continuity and affordability of WASH services

By March 2020, it had become clear that the delivery of essential WASH services was being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and, unless urgent steps were taken, people would lose access to water and other services and the pandemic response would be severely constrained. Not unexpectedly, the most severely affected by service interruptions were the most vulnerable populations, notably people living in high-density poor urban neighbourhoods, internally displaced persons and people in refugee camps. Especially concerning was the impact of WASH service interruptions on health-care facilities and other areas critical for the COVID-19 response effort.

Early in the pandemic, some governments helped to ensure that poor families maintained their access to basic WASH services by temporarily waiving fees for household water services and stopping the disconnection of water services owing to non-payment of tariffs, in some cases with the encouragement and support of UNICEF. Over 40 developing countries took this step. Some countries went a step further by reconnecting households that had been disconnected in the past because of non-payment of fees, such as in Colombia where 200,000 households were reconnected to water utilities. In some cases, UNICEF actively encouraged and supported these initiatives, including in Bangladesh where the ministerial order to forbid disconnections during the pandemic was made during the weekly COVID-19 WASH video calls facilitated by UNICEF.

In Malawi, where 40 per cent of communal water points in low-income settings had been disconnected before the pandemic owing to the non-payment of fees to Water Board services, UNICEF helped to develop pro-poor business continuity plans that triggered US$2.5 million of World Bank financing – and an appeal for an additional US$15 million – to help re-establish water services for poor households. UNICEF also supported a new water quality auditing initiative to help ensure the safety of water systems and launched a new water metering subsidy programme that gave 26,000 vulnerable families access to communal water points.

Water utilities and WASH service providers were increasingly affected by the loss of fee revenues and by staff shortages owing to lockdown measures. Governments responded in several ways, including direct support to utilities and through direct cash support to households. In some countries, UNICEF contributed directly to these efforts, such as in Madagascar where UNICEF worked with the national water utility to ensure 160,000 vulnerable families had access to water. The UNICEF and SIWI assessment of COVID-19 response measures (see ‘Enabling environment’) showed that service providers will likely need more support as they grapple with the longer-term effects of the pandemic.

UNICEF leveraged its established programming capacity to support urgent repair and targeted construction of water systems in high-risk areas in many countries. Examples include the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela where the acceleration of water systems projects enabled access to over to 105,000 people by July 2020, the Central
Case Study 2: Central African Republic, Ecuador and Zimbabwe: Emergency support for water supply in vulnerable urban areas

Central African Republic: To ensure the continuity of water distribution in underserved neighbourhoods in the capital Bangui, UNICEF worked with the national water supply agency to manage 16 water supply systems serving 35,500 people and install 1,250 hand-washing facilities in public places. UNICEF also supported a hand-washing promotion campaign for urban health centres and schools, where it delivered infection prevention and control (IPC) and hygiene supplies.

Ecuador: To support vulnerable people (including Venezuelan migrants) living in peri-urban areas with sporadic or insufficient water supplies, UNICEF responded with a water-trucking operation that reached over half a million people. The trucks, which announced their arrival in a community with a special jingle, became the centre of community hygiene promotion activities, including the distribution of soap and IPC supplies. The response also included the installation of hand-washing stations in eight cities, a multimedia hygiene promotion campaign, support for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in health-care facilities and technical and material support to water utilities.

Zimbabwe: The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) lockdown weakened further the already fragile urban water systems in the country by limiting chemical supply for water treatment and other related issues. The comprehensive UNICEF response included the repair of 43 bore-holes serving 21,500 people in high-density areas of Harare (which are also cholera hot spots), the rehabilitation of an additional 60 bore-holes, the supply of chemicals for piped water system treatment to most of the country over a limited period, the targeted promotion of hygiene in vegetable markets and urban health-care facilities, the installation of locally designed foot-operated hand-washing facilities and the piloting of urban water kiosks using tap card systems to dispense water at subsidized rates for vulnerable families.

See ‘Cross-cutting: Urban WASH’ for more information on programming in urban areas.
A critical area of vulnerability was supply chains for treatment chemicals, spare parts and other materials required for uninterrupted operation of water and sanitation systems. In some cases, UNICEF directly procured chemicals and materials or stepped up its existing initiatives, especially in highly vulnerable populations. Examples include the installation of chlorine injection systems for two water systems to ensure safe water supplies for 100,000 people in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the procurement of additional granular chlorine in Mozambique and the purchase of 104 tons of liquid chlorine for the Donbas region of Ukraine. In Tajikistan, UNICEF worked with the World Bank and other partners through the COVID-19 National Coordination Committee to help avert a national supply shortage of water treatment chemicals.

### The UNICEF Water Game Plan and the Basic+2 service standard

UNICEF formally launched its Water Game Plan in 2020, which outlines key principles and approaches for UNICEF’s contribution to SDG 2030 water targets. The Water Game Plan sets out how UNICEF will ensure that the most children possible can grow up in a safe and clean environment, with a focus on equity, sustainability and climate resilience.

The game plan sets the level of ambition of UNICEF’s contribution around the ‘Basic+2’ level, basic water services that are also free from contamination and available whenever needed. By choosing this as the level of reference (instead of the highest SDG ‘Safely Managed’ level, which additionally requires water supplies to be on the premises in every household), UNICEF focuses its resources on safe and accessible supplies for children who are left behind.

The game plan helps to identify the most appropriate programmatic pathways at country level to progressively increase water service levels to at least the Basic+2 standard, ensuring health and socioeconomic benefits for children and their families. The game plan also defines a set of 33 priority countries for support, with a focus on the most off-track countries with the highest funding gaps, and provides country offices with up-to-date, evidence-based guidance and programming resources. In total, five pathways are identified in three different packages: ‘zero with no access’, ‘SDG acceleration’ and ‘SDG in emergencies’. See the [Water Game Plan](#) for illustrations and other details on these pathways and packages.

The game plan also defines a set of 33 priority countries for support, with a focus on the most off-track countries with the highest funding gaps, and provides country offices with up-to-date, evidence-based guidance and programming resources.
### Sustainable water supplies

In 2020, UNICEF direct support helped a total of 170 million people to gain access to safe water services. This includes 8.1 million people at the Basic+2 standard or higher through development programming and 8.9 million people with durable water supplies in emergency situations (see Figure 10). Durable water supplies provide safe water for long periods of time in protracted crisis situations, as opposed to temporary solutions such as water trucking (see ‘Emergency WASH’). This is 7 per cent fewer beneficiaries than in 2019, a reduction mainly due to pandemic-related mobility constraints and reprioritization of activities.

The most people benefiting from durable water services through emergency programming are in countries in protracted crisis and with large populations of displaced people including the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Somalia and Yemen. In an increasing number of countries, UNICEF provides both these types of services. In the Sudan, just over half a million people gained access to durable water supplies through emergency programmes and an additional 358,000 through development programming at the Basic+2 standard.

Tapping groundwater aquifers using drilled bore-holes is the mainstay of most national water supply programmes, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa where coverage levels are low (just 61 per cent of people have access to basic or safely managed water supplies compared with the global average of 90 per cent). To achieve the SDG water target, it is essential to not only accelerate the pace of drilling, but also ensure that bore-holes are climate-resilient and that they reliably deliver drinking-water that meets quality standards. UNICEF works to strengthen drilling efforts on two interlinked fronts: large-scale direct support to bore-hole drilling campaigns and support for building the capacity, efficiency and reliability of the drilling sector.

A core part of UNICEF support over the last 15 years has been through cooperation with the Rural Water Supply Network on a series of initiatives aimed at professionalizing the drilling industry in programme countries. The work has resulted in the widely used international Drilling Code of Practice and a range of courses and country-specific guidelines; capacity-building in over 60 countries reaching thousands of professionals and hundreds of organizations; improved procurement and contract management practices both within UNICEF and in government departments; and a stronger evidence base on the linkages between bore-hole failure and drilling. However, as a recent review of this work concluded and given the importance of bore-hole drilling for achieving SDG 6, significantly more effort and funds are needed to train and equip the next generation of drillers, supervisors and programme managers.

As outlined in the Water Game Plan, UNICEF is contributing towards the achievement of SDG 6 by pushing for higher service levels, with a minimum standard of Basic+2, which is a basic water service that is safe and available when needed. Part of this strategy is contributing to the professionalization of water service providers by introducing pathways and identifying sustainable service delivery models to take them to scale.

**FIGURE 10: Safe water beneficiaries through UNICEF direct support, Basic+2 and durable water services, 2018–2020**

![Graph showing safe water beneficiaries through UNICEF direct support](source: UNICEF SMOs (2020).)

Many of the beneficiaries that were reached at the Basic+2 level or higher are in populous countries where UNICEF has large, long-running programmes of direct support through development programming, including Ethiopia, Nigeria and Pakistan. Of these beneficiaries, 2.7 million were reached at the safely managed level, the highest SDG standard, the most ever reached through UNICEF direct support (there were 905,000 safely managed beneficiaries in 2019). Many of these beneficiaries are in countries transitioning from emergency response to development programming, including large numbers in Iraq, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. In these and other countries, many of the water systems are being ‘built back better’ to a higher standard than before. It is estimated that 93 per cent of all UNICEF results in water supply, including durable solutions in emergencies and development activities in 2020, were in the 57 fragile states as defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
UNICEF programmes emphasize the importance of water system sustainability through a range of measures ranging from training of community and system-level managers to the promotion and support of national sustainability focused monitoring systems and accountability frameworks. The UNICEF Accountability for Sustainability partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and SIWI addressed the key importance of sustainability in fragile contexts in 2020 with the publication of a new concept note, the fifth in a series on accountability for sustainability, which provides a framework for WASH practitioners and government partners to analyse and improve their interventions in fragile contexts. The approach focuses on reinforcing the government leadership role and improving accountability within the WASH service delivery framework.

UNICEF continued to use third-party sustainability checks to ensure the sustainability of its own programme outputs and to improve national systems, with 30 checks conducted since 2018, exceeding the Strategic Plan milestone of 28 checks. The results of the checks led to changes in UNICEF programmes and, in some cases, influenced national programmes. For example, findings from the sustainability checks were used in Mauritania to modify national monitoring systems to include climate change indicators, in Sierra Leone to inform a new national strategy on water safety planning, and in Togo to emphasize the importance of strengthened microfinancing to improve long-term sustainability.

While project-centred sustainability checks are useful, they can be limited in their long-term impact at the national level. For that reason, UNICEF is developing a new approach to sustainability monitoring that aims at adapting the sustainability check tool from project-based towards a sector-wide sustainability check. During 2020, significant resources were allocated to that new approach, and discussions with key stakeholders and experts took place. However, owing to COVID-19-related mobility restrictions, piloting the new system was put on hold. The new approach addresses broader sector-wide issues and encompasses a range of actors including policymakers, regulatory agencies and service providers. The new approach will incorporate a climate lens to address sector-wide resilience and include focused content on the sustainability of urban WASH infrastructure and services.

UNICEF worked with SIWI and WHO on the development of a new approach to identify national regulation gaps and challenges in water and sanitation services. The WASHReg approach, which will be rolled out in 2021, will include a package of tools that will allow for the tailoring of regulatory reforms in a variety of contexts, including in countries with no regulatory body and in countries where systems are fragmentated. The WASHReg approach provides a systematic and collective exercise to provide practical solutions for strengthening and aligning regulatory roles and responsibilities.
In several countries, UNICEF contributed to improve water system governance mechanisms, such as in Bangladesh where a new performance-based model for governing rural water services was developed, in Burkina Faso where lessons from action research on rural water public–private partnership delivery models were published and in Ethiopia where a new capacity-building programme for water utilities was launched. In Iraq, Rwanda, the Sudan and Uganda, new online tools were launched to improve the management of water utilities by regulatory bodies and to facilitate outage reporting by customers.

**Water safety**

The JMP is rapidly scaling up water quality testing to meet the requirement for confirmed water safety in the SDG standard of safely managed services and the UNICEF standard of Basic+2. In 2019 and in the early months of 2020, twenty-six national surveys were completed.\(^{56}\)

Water quality testing is conducted as a module within national UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and other high-quality household surveys such as Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Trained enumerators test water samples at both the point of collection (such as a communal handpump) and the point of use (a glass of drinking-water in the household) for faecal contamination using rapid field *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) tests, and, in some countries, for other contaminants (such as arsenic).

The growing availability of data on water quality is a major advance in the sector, providing a much clearer picture of drinking-water safety in developing countries, a key resource for policymakers and programme managers. For example, there is now a more complete data set on the extent of water contamination between the points of collection and use, how this varies from country to country and how it is influenced by household poverty (see Figure 11).

Other research is contributing to the global knowledge base on water quality. In partnership with the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (Eawag) and WHO, UNICEF organized a webinar presenting the latest global research on arsenic contamination. Although arsenic contamination is knowingly present in several countries, including Bangladesh, Cambodia and India, the latest research suggests new areas of concern where there are limited data, including parts of Central Asia and the Sahel.\(^{57}\)

![FIGURE 11: Water quality at points of collection and use by household wealth, selected countries, 2014–2019](source: WHO and UNICEF (2020).\(^{58}\))
As water quality data become more widely available through the JMP and other processes, awareness is raised among decision makers and among the general public. In Bangladesh, publicly available results from a UNICEF-supported arsenic screening initiative are triggering community demand for safe water from local government representatives.

UNICEF works with partners to help households improve the quality of their drinking-water in a variety of ways including information dissemination (e.g., cholera control campaigns), capacity-building and the procurement of household water treatment products (see ‘Emergency WASH’). In 2020, UNICEF published a product guide on household level water filters to help UNICEF and its partners at country and regional level make informed decisions on their procurement.59

In 2020, UNICEF worked in 33 countries in support of water safety planning to reduce the risks of bacteriological and chemical contamination of drinking-water supplies. In several other countries, plans were put on hold owing to pandemic-related travel restrictions and will restart in 2021. Since the start of the Strategic Plan period, a total of 51 countries have conducted plans, covering over 60,000 communities. In India, UNICEF supported government efforts to help 40,000 communities complete water action plans, which include water safety elements.

In lieu of field work, some UNICEF country offices focused on policy development and capacity-building, including in Madagascar, Nigeria and Zambia where new water safety-related policies and plans were developed, and in India where a programme of facilities assessment, improvement plan development and capacity-building resulted in the accreditation of 52 water quality monitoring laboratories in 15 states.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, a UNICEF pilot introduced system-level water safety planning for the first time in the country, resulting in an improvement and control plan, and standardized operating procedures for the rural water system in Al-Kisweh. Based on this proof of concept, the programme will be replicated in at least four other towns by government authorities in 2021.

Climate-resilient WASH

This section of the report describes UNICEF activities and results in the area of climate programming in the context of WASH (see “Results: Climate, energy and the environment” for additional UNICEF results related to broader climate programming for children).

Climate resilience

UNICEF has made a commitment to fundamentally shift its WASH programming efforts towards climate resilience to ensure that benefits for children are realized under future climate scenarios and that WASH services, and the communities which depend on them, can cope with uncertainties over future conditions. In 2020, significant progress was made towards the achievement of this shift despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The objective of the UNICEF shift to climate-resilient WASH programming is threefold:

- Ensuring that WASH infrastructure and services are sustainable, safe and resilient to climate related risks, and address the needs of vulnerable groups first
- Ensuring that WASH systems contribute community resilience to adapt to the impacts of climate change, including the sustainable use and protection of water resources
- Working towards a carbon-neutral WASH sector.

FIGURE 12: Climate-resilient WASH: Progress against Strategic Plan indicator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.a.4. Number of countries planning, designing and implementing climate-resilient WASH solutions through UNICEF-supported programmes*</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *New indicator for 2020.
After a consultation process across the organization and with partners, UNICEF codified a methodology for encouraging this shift for country offices in a guidance document, which breaks down the process into a set of nine steps (see Box ‘Making the shift towards climate-resilient WASH programming: Nine steps for UNICEF country programmes’), and a series of global and regional webinars, along with a series of ‘deep dives’ in selected countries (see below in this section).

UNICEF and the Global Water Partnership developed a new online course to strengthen the capacity of the sector to identify and integrate climate risks into WASH services through the use of the Strategic Framework for WASH Climate Resilient Development. The course was attended by 130 participants from government bodies, sectoral partners and UNICEF.

Making the shift towards climate-resilient WASH programming: Nine steps for UNICEF country programmes

1. Conduct a stakeholder analysis reviewing structures and capacities
2. Review existing climate and WASH established national and subnational priorities
3. Assess climate risk to WASH and set the climate rationale for UNICEF interventions
4. Identify a long list of potential options to address prioritized risks
5. Appraise and shortlist options for UNICEF support
6. Screen, assess and manage the potential environmental and social implications of UNICEF climate-resilient WASH initiatives
7. Adjust WASH climate-resilient work plans
8. Identify different financing options and develop fundraising concepts and proposals
9. Design WASH climate-resilient indicators and integrate into monitoring systems

James Epua, Chairman of the Water Users Committee, demonstrates the two main tanks in the new solar water system provided with UNICEF support in Naipa village, northern Kenya.
In 2020, UNICEF initiated a process of deep dives, initially in 19 countries in four regions, to assess shift readiness in the UNICEF programme and the national WASH sector, to identify areas where additional work and new partnerships are required and to determine how UNICEF can contribute. The resulting plans will form the basis of the climate-resilience shift and provide a set of indicators to assess UNICEF progress.

In February 2020, UNICEF was accredited as a delivery partner for readiness funding by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the world’s largest dedicated fund helping developing countries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and enhance their ability to respond to climate change. This allows UNICEF to work with government and sectoral partners on GCF proposals to build readiness capacity in programme countries for climate governance, coordination, strategy development, planning and knowledge management. UNICEF issued guidelines on this process for staff and, in partnership with the Global Water Partnership, detailed technical guidance on accessing GCF funding streams. The GCF readiness activities are linked to the deep dives, which include extensive research on the extent to which WASH is included in the key national climate instruments such as the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). In Cambodia, Iraq, Pakistan and Viet Nam, UNICEF is already supporting government efforts to incorporate WASH into these national climate instruments.

In many countries, UNICEF has already made the shift to support climate-resilient water and sanitation exclusively. Several of UNICEF’s largest programmes – including in Iraq, Kenya and Nigeria – use climate resilience guidelines and technology assessment protocols that guide system construction, including for emergency response. Elsewhere, countries are moving in that direction and are using more resilient WASH system designs such as raised water points and sanitation facilities in flood-prone areas and bore-hole siting techniques that predict falling groundwater levels. UNICEF is also increasingly using solar energy in WASH programming (see ‘Solar water systems’).

UNICEF support on climate-resilient WASH in programme countries is guided by the WASH Strategic Framework for Climate Resilient Development, a collaboration between UNICEF and Global Water Partnership, which defines levels of engagement with government partners and other stakeholders. In 2020, a total of 79 countries were operating at least one level of the framework, and 46 countries were at the implementation stage, a significant increase from 2019 (see Figure 13).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>No. of countries</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 - assessing the climate risks</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 - identifying options for the climate risks identified</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 - implementing the climate options identified</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF SMOs (2020).
In total, an estimated 6.3 million people were provided with climate-resilient water services through UNICEF direct support in 2020, a significant increase from 4.5 million people in 2019. Country offices also reported on climate-resilient sanitation for the first time in 2020, estimating that over 6 million people were provided with a climate-resilient sanitation service, although that figure may be subject to change as monitoring protocols mature in the area of sanitation.

In the East Asia and the Pacific region, UNICEF has finalized the ‘Build Better Climate Resilient WASH’ initiative, which aims to retrofit existing WASH systems to be more climate-sensitive. The initiative, which covers sustainability, emissions reduction and climate resilience at community and national levels will be launched in four countries in 2021.

### Water scarcity

A new analysis by UNICEF shows that 1.42 billion people, including 450 million children, are living in conditions of high or extremely high water vulnerability (see Figure 14). They face a double burden: they live in areas at high risk of water scarcity, and they rely on water services that are unsafe or so far away from their homes that it takes more than 30 minutes a trip to fetch water. The impact of extreme water vulnerability affects all children and their families, and disproportionately affects girls who are often tasked with the physical burden of hauling water, which can have an impact on school enrolment and performance, increase exposure to harassment and violence and reduced leisure time.

In 2020, UNICEF conducted an analysis of the impact of water scarcity on children in the Middle East and North Africa region, the most water-scarce region in the world, and used the findings to initiate an ‘action on water scarcity accelerator’ for the region. Developed jointly by the regional office and country offices, the accelerator stresses a comprehensive response across five programming areas: internal UNICEF planning, strengthening enabling environments, technical support, youth engagement and curriculum development.

UNICEF increasingly addresses issues of water scarcity through its programming procedures. For example, the widely used participatory sector assessment WASH...
Bottleneck Analysis Tool (WASH BAT) (see ‘Enabling environment’) now incorporates climate and water vulnerability criteria in its modules, and community water safety planning exercises — such as those recently completed in Fiji, Kiribati and Vanuatu — stress the linkages between water quality, scarcity and climate resilience.

The Cape Town’s ‘Day Zero’ event, when the city was predicted to run out of water, was a stark illustration of the growing problem of urban water shortages, which are already occurring in cities and towns around the world. The affordability, sustainability and quality of urban WASH services are all likely to be affected on a large scale unless action is taken now to mitigate and adapt to the risks. In response, UNICEF developed a guidance note for staff and partners that highlights the importance of assessing the resilience of urban WASH systems with respect to water scarcity and presents mitigation strategies.

Solar water systems

In 2020, UNICEF supported the construction of 1,448 solar-powered water systems in 41 countries around the world, even though fewer water systems were built in total in 2020 through UNICEF support, owing to the challenges of field work during the pandemic. In some countries, dozens or even hundreds of systems have been constructed, both in development and humanitarian contexts (see Figure 15). Solar systems are particularly important in arid regions like the Sahel, where temperatures are rising and rainfall is becoming less reliable owing to climate change. In some arid regions, climate change is also contributing to falling groundwater levels, making it more difficult to use handpumps to tap aquifers.
As solar systems have become simpler to install, more robust and reliable, they are appropriate in both development and emergency programmes. In Nigeria, where UNICEF has installed more solar-powered pumping systems than in any country, new solar water systems were an important component of the COVID-19 response programme. Costs continue to go down; as illustrated in Malawi (see Case Study 3), solar systems are increasingly the least expensive of all available options when properly designed, installed and maintained.

In some cases, existing systems are being retrofitted with solar-powered pumps either to reduce carbon emissions (when solar pumps replace diesel pumps) or to provide more people with water from a single bore-hole by replacing a low-yielding handpump with a higher-capacity solar pump and building distribution network. These solar-powered small-scale water distribution systems ensure a higher level of water service, reducing the burden and time of water hauling, especially for women and girls. The increased capacity of the systems can also mean, in some cases, that they can provide water for community schools and health-care facilities in addition to households.

All bore-holes used in solar systems, both new and old, are carefully assessed in UNICEF-supported projects to ensure that they have a sustainable water yield for current and future needs, by taking into account climate risks that could threaten water availability in the future.

In 2020, UNICEF launched the regional solar hub for the West and Central Africa region to provide free-of-charge, demand-driven bilingual support for any government body or other organization in the region. The support covers all technical and managerial aspects of solar-powered water systems from planning, designing and procurement to installation, operation and maintenance. In 2020, support was provided remotely only, reaching five different countries. The initiative is part of the UNICEF partnership with the NGO Water Mission and is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

UNICEF and Water Mission also published in 2020 a comprehensive design and installation guide on solar-powered water systems in English, French and Spanish, building on guidance materials developed through the joint online solar course held in 2019.

Case Study 3: Malawi: Climate-resilient solar water systems for institutions and communities

In rural areas of Malawi, UNICEF is using a new programming approach to provide safe and sustainable piped water to schools, health-care facilities and communities. The solar-powered systems are designed to be resilient to the risks associated with climate change, including extreme weather events. The systems provide water for both the institutions and their host communities, which promotes community ownership and participation, helping to ensure sustainability over the long term.
Case Study 3 (continued)

The initial capital cost of the solar-powered systems is higher than the other options available in rural Malawi: individual bore-holes with handpumps or diesel-powered piped systems. Nevertheless, when all costs are calculated over the estimated 25-year planned life of the systems (using sector standard assumptions and population averages in the context of Malawi), the solar systems are substantially less expensive than the alternatives (see Figure 16). When compared with the diesel option, each solar system will eliminate over 45 tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions per year.

To date, 64 solar-powered systems have been constructed by UNICEF in 11 districts, serving an average of 4,000 people in each of the 64 communities and a total of 24 health-care facilities and 40 schools (the systems serve the communities plus either a school, a health-care facility or both). The new water systems have dramatically improved the availability and reliability of water supplies.

We were just staying home and skipping classes during that time of the month. The installation of this solar powered water system has changed all that. There is a steady supply of water both at school and home

– Getrude Madinga, 15 years old, quoted in a local newspaper article, discussing the impact of water availability on menstrual hygiene in Nangondo school, Machinga District.

Several key lessons have been learned through the programme, which are now being used to inform future UNICEF and government efforts. For example, by avoiding the use of expensive batteries (by storing water in larger water tanks instead of using power), the projects were able to reduce both capital and maintenance costs and provide water 24 hours a day. Another lesson was on the importance of designing the distribution network to address the water needs of neighbouring communities and, at the same time, ensuring adequate supply to schools and health-care facilities. Ongoing system performance management will continue, including through remote data collection techniques.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of water system</th>
<th>Total life cycle cost (25 years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solar-powered water system</td>
<td>US$80,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 bore-holes fitted with handpumps</td>
<td>US$109,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel generator-powered water system</td>
<td>US$230,470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF Malawi (2020).69

Students washing their hands at Makankhula primary school in Dedza, Malawi, using a solar-powered water system constructed with the support of UNICEF.
WASH in institutions

UNICEF support for WASH in institutions was ramped up significantly in 2020 in support of the global effort to address COVID-19, particularly in the areas of hygiene promotion, IPC and ensuring the functionality of WASH systems. In programme countries, this effort generally involved an acceleration of what UNICEF was already doing. The promotion and support of hand washing, for example, was already at the core of the UNICEF programme through efforts in health-care facilities and through long-running, group hand-washing promotion programmes in schools. While it was certainly not business as usual, UNICEF was able to quickly build on existing guidance, strategies, methodologies, installed capacity and partnerships to accelerate institutional WASH programming.

There was also an expansion beyond existing programme countries to middle-income countries where urgent support was needed in schools and health-care facilities, particularly in the area of IPC.

WASH in schools

UNICEF direct support through development programming helped 3,826 schools in 62 countries to construct separate, gender-segregated sanitation facilities for girls in 2020. This is fewer than in previous years, due mainly to pandemic-related movement restrictions and the fact that schools were closed for an extended period of time in many
countries. An estimated 3.7 million children were reached through UNICEF direct support for basic WASH facilities in schools in 2020.

Far more schools were reached through indirect support for systems-strengthening, such as in India where over 53,000 schools were reached through government programmes (i.e., the introduction of group hand-washing in schools) that have received substantial support from UNICEF in the areas of policy and strategy development, the formulation of standards, capacity-building and strengthening monitoring systems.

UNICEF humanitarian response provided WASH facilities and supplies in schools or temporary learning spaces for 15.3 million children in 2020, far more than ever before (2.8 million in 2019) (see Figure 18). This increase is due mainly to COVID-19 IPC activities and safe school reopening campaigns. Not only was this response unprecedented in scale, it also reached more countries than in previous years, including middle-income countries such as Malaysia, Paraguay and Serbia. In several European countries, UNICEF distributed hygiene kits and sponsored school hygiene promotion campaigns, which reached every school in Albania and North Macedonia.

In other countries, UNICEF responded on a large scale. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNICEF support to the government safe school reopening campaign ultimately reached 3.6 million children through a package of interventions, including the rehabilitation and construction of water supply and hand-washing infrastructure, the delivery of hygiene materials and hand-washing promotion. Other countries where UNICEF directly supported reopening campaigns with WASH inputs on a large scale include Guinea, Indonesia, the Niger and Sri Lanka.

Although large, the UNICEF response was just part of a global effort by governments and stakeholders around the world. UNICEF helped to stimulate this response through evidence-based advocacy, including through the release with WHO of a global report and regional snapshots on WASH in schools with a focus on COVID-19.71 The reports highlight the precarious situation of WASH in schools before the pandemic, including that 43 per cent of the world’s schools do not have even basic hand-washing facilities with soap and water. These and other advocacy efforts stressed the critical need for improved WASH facilities in schools for their safe reopening.

FIGURE 18: UNICEF WASH emergency response in schools and temporary learning spaces, number of students, by region, 2020*

Source: UNICEF SMQs (2020).70 *Does not include response figures from all countries (some country offices without regular WASH programmes do not report WASH-related figures through internal monitoring systems). EAP, East Asia and the Pacific; ECA, Europe and Central Asia; ESA, Eastern and Southern Africa; LAC, Latin America and the Caribbean; MENA, Middle East and North Africa; SA, South Asia; WCA, West and Central Africa.
Together with sister United Nations agencies and other partners, UNICEF developed general and WASH-specific guidance and technical resources for the safe reopening of schools. These resources included a global framework for school reopening published with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Bank and the World Food Programme (WFP),72 and related guidance focusing on girls including the need for MHH facilities and products.73 Most UNICEF regional offices developed and issued region-specific guidance notes and related materials, and country offices provided a wide range of technical assistance to government counterparts. Other guidance materials produced by UNICEF on COVID-19 response in areas such as supply procurement, hand-washing station fabrication and general IPC measures were also used in school reopening campaigns (see ‘Enabling environment’).

In June 2020, UNICEF, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Water Aid and Save the Children used the annual International Learning Exchange on WASH in schools to share information and experiences on the safe reopening of schools. The event brought together over 700 stakeholders and practitioners from the WASH, education and other sectors in countries around the world. Additionally, several UNICEF regional offices held information and training sessions on safe reopening and IPC in schools.

UNICEF also developed and launched a rapid mobile assessment tool on COVID-19 readiness for schools on the KoBoToolbox platform,74 using a simplified set of indicators from the existing Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool (WASH FIT) for schools monitoring package.

In many countries, UNICEF was the main partner of governments in school reopening campaigns, providing comprehensive support. In the United Republic of Tanzania, UNICEF provided guidance materials and technical support, helped to develop the national WASH protocol for safe reopening, supported the development of an investment case for WASH in schools and, working with the local private sector, designed and fabricated contactless hand-washing stations, which were then distributed to schools and in refugee camps around the country. In other countries, UNICEF procured and distributed buckets with taps as a rapid response measure, such as in Haiti where they were distributed to 1,420 schools.

UNICEF Three Star Approach to WASH in Schools, which promotes incremental steps to improve school WASH with a strong focus on hand washing, was expanded again in 2020, especially in India where it has become national policy and was newly introduced in 196,000 schools. The approach was also expanded to new schools in 30 other countries and is in the process of being introduced in new countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh and the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

National strategies and standards for WASH in schools were approved in several countries, the result of multi-

year support by UNICEF, including in Chad, the Philippines, Zambia and in four Pacific Island countries (the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu). In other countries, heightened awareness on the importance of hand hygiene and water in schools during the COVID-19 pandemic led to the rapid revamping of school standards, including in Ecuador, Eswatini and Guyana.

Despite the focus on COVID-19 response, UNICEF continued to support ongoing efforts to strengthen the enabling environment for initiatives on WASH in schools at the global level. Activities included work on a new guidance material on curriculum development for WASH in schools, the development of a new multi-stakeholder website on WASH in schools and a major update of the distance-learning degree course on WASH in schools with Emory University that will be launched in 2021 (500 participants from over 75 countries graduated from the first version of the course).

WASH in health-care facilities

With its in-country presence around the world and established partnerships in both the health and WASH sectors, UNICEF was well-positioned to provide targeted, multisectoral support to governments to help health workers provide urgent patient care while reducing the risk of COVID-19 infection. The WASH-related response fell into four broad categories:

- Support rapid assessments of required upgrades in IPC and WASH services
- Procure and distribute critical hygiene and IPC supplies, including specialized supplies for quarantine rooms and centres (such as soap, hand-sanitizer, hand-washing stations, cleaning supplies, incinerators and personal protection equipment)
- Repair, construct and expand key WASH facilities, including water supply connections, hand-washing stations and sanitation facilities
- Ensure that IPC protocols in place are being implemented and that health-care staff and outreach workers are trained and have access to updated guidance materials

In many countries, UNICEF programming included extensive support in all four of these areas, often on a large scale. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, physical WASH infrastructure was upgraded in 83 health-care facilities accompanied by the distribution of IPC and hygiene supplies, including personal hygiene kits for patients, and by a training programme for health personnel. In Pakistan, UNICEF supported government coordination and assessment activities at national and provincial levels, upgraded WASH services in over 700 health-care facilities in high-burden districts, procured and distributed a range of supplies including 140,000 bars of soap, worked with WHO and the ministry of health to develop IPC training videos and manuals, and trained 8,626 front-line health workers.
In most of the 120 countries reached through UNICEF’s overall WASH COVID-19 programme, the response included at least some support for IPC in health-care settings (see ‘Emergency WASH’ for information in IPC support in other settings).

UNICEF produced a variety of guidance materials and technical resources for staff and partners related to COVID-19 and IPC in health-care centres, including a global-level programming guidance note, guidance on IPC supply procurement and guidance materials at the region and country levels. UNICEF also established an intersectoral IPC working group comprised of WASH, health and humanitarian response staff and conducted a deep dive into UNICEF’s work on IPC in health-care settings, which addressed both COVID-19 response and longer-term work on IPC.

Ongoing WHO–UNICEF collaboration on WASH in health-care facilities was leveraged to accelerate and improve COVID-19 response, including the multidisciplinary advisory group established in 2019 on IPC, a new joint website, a webinar series and the WASH FIT guidance package. Using the WASH FIT digital toolset, a KoBoToolbox app was developed to rapidly assess and guide WASH service improvements in small and medium health-care centres. The app was used in dozens of countries, including in Indonesia where it was used to assess needs in 48 isolated health-care facilities in Papua province, in Kazakhstan where it was used to assess perinatal centres, and in Nicaragua where, after a UNICEF training programme, it was used by the ministry of health to assess more than 500 health centres.

Globally, direct UNICEF support for WASH in health-care facilities increased significantly in 2020 due to both COVID-19 response programmes and an ongoing increase in focus in this area through the Strategic Plan period. In total, UNICEF helped to improve WASH services in 5,613 health-care facilities in 66 countries, a 68 per cent increase over 2019 and much more than in the previous Strategic Plan, 2014–2017 (see Figure 19). In many countries, the COVID-19 pandemic was an opportunity to engage in WASH in health-care facilities for the first time or to significantly ramp up programmes, including in Egypt, Eswatini, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania. In these and other ‘new’ countries, this support is expected to continue over the longer term.

**FIGURE 19:** Number of health-care facilities, and number of related countries, gaining access to WASH services through UNICEF direct support, 2014–2020

Source: UNICEF SMQs (2020).
In December 2020, WHO and UNICEF launched the ‘Fundamentals first’ global progress report and advocacy document that highlights the extent to which health networks are ill-equipped to prevent and control infections now and to serve the needs of growing populations in the future. With its headline finding that one third of healthcare facilities do not have what is needed to clean hands where care is provided, the report is an urgent call to action for governments and other stakeholders. Such action will also have an impact post-COVID-19 on maternal mortality rates and curbing antimicrobial resistance.

Stressing the need for fundamental changes in policies and programming to ensure that WASH services become a core component of health systems everywhere, the report makes key recommendations on planning, financing, monitoring and capacity-building, and defines a set of eight practical steps at national, subnational and facility levels to improve WASH in health-care facilities (see Figure 20).

FIGURE 20: Fundamentals first: eight practical steps to improve WASH in health-care facilities, 2020

1. CONDUCT SITUATION ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT
2. SET TARGETS AND DEFINE ROADMAP
3. ESTABLISH NATIONAL STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS
4. IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE
5. MONITOR AND REVIEW DATA
6. DEVELOP HEALTH WORKFORCE
7. ENGAGE COMMUNITIES
8. CONDUCT OPERATIONAL RESEARCH AND SHARE LEARNING

Source: WHO and UNICEF (2020).

UNICEF and WHO carried out an analysis of the costs of achieving universal basic WASH standards in health-care facilities in 2020. The ‘price tag’ for achieving this is estimated at US$6.5 to 9.6 billion over 10 years, or the equivalent of less than US$1 per capita in capital and operation and maintenance costs annually, which is a relatively modest investment when compared to existing Health and WASH sector budgets.

UNICEF is well-positioned to act on this call to action; over the current Strategic Plan period, it has put significant efforts into strengthening systems in programme countries within each of these eight areas, and the pandemic was an opportunity to expand and accelerate these initiatives.

In many countries, UNICEF contributed to new national guidelines and standards on WASH in health-care facilities to strengthen IPC practices during the pandemic and beyond, such as in China where UNICEF contributed to the new national assessment guidelines on WASH in health-care facilities, and in Uganda where a new set of national guidelines and standards was launched.

UNICEF also launched a new WASH in health-care facilities course with Emory University in 2020. The course provides a comprehensive introduction to WASH in health-care facilities for UNICEF staff and partners from both WASH and health sectors.
Emergency WASH

The UNICEF WASH programme as a whole was mobilized to respond to the unprecedented emergency posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, as detailed in previous sections. This section describes how UNICEF continued to provide life-saving WASH services in protracted crises and other emergencies, while also responding to the pandemic. The UNICEF role in emergency WASH is multifaceted. It responds directly in emergencies in countries around the world, often on a large scale. In 2020, this included COVID-19 infection prevention and control activities in many countries, a relatively new area of programming for UNICEF. UNICEF additionally continued to manage cholera response and support programmes at the country and regional levels. Finally, as WASH sector lead agency and host of the Global WASH Cluster, UNICEF plays a key role in sector coordination and capacity-building efforts.

FIGURE 21: Emergency WASH: Progress against Strategic Plan indicators

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<tr>
<td>4.a.3. Percentage of UNICEF-targeted population in humanitarian situations provided with a sufficient quantity of water of appropriate quality for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>104%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b.4. Percentage of UNICEF-targeted population in humanitarian situations: (a) provided with access to appropriate sanitation in schools, temporary learning spaces and other child-friendly spaces</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b.4. Percentage of UNICEF-targeted population in humanitarian situations: (b) provided with menstrual hygiene management services in schools, temporary learning spaces and other child-friendly spaces</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b.4. Percentage of UNICEF-targeted population in humanitarian situations: (c) provided with access to appropriate WASH facilities for male and female hygiene education in schools, temporary learning spaces and other child-friendly spaces</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>116%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>104%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>82%</td>
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Humanitarian response

UNICEF provided WASH support to children and their families in ongoing protracted crises on a large scale in 2020, notably in Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic and Somalia. Large-scale urgent support also continued for refugees and internally displaced people including in Bangladesh, Iraq and Jordan, for people in several sub-Saharan Africa countries and for migrants on the move in the Americas and Europe. In all cases, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the plight of children in crisis, while complicating response campaigns.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WASH supplies and services were delivered to vulnerable populations in 120 countries, ultimately reaching 106 million people. Even more people were reached through support to build enabling environments for COVID-19 response, such as capacity-building in the area of IPC. The scale and scope of this support varied widely. In some countries, UNICEF pitched in by delivering a few thousand bars of soap to a small number of targeted schools and health centres and in other countries, UNICEF mounted a comprehensive response reaching millions of people. In Zambia, in addition to its ongoing regular WASH programme, UNICEF helped to develop the national COVID-19 response plan, coordinated sector partner responses in support of government, trained over 12,000 front-line workers on IPC protocols and hygiene promotion, supported WASH IPC interventions in 122 health-care facilities, provided critical WASH supplies to 40,654 refugees and ensured safe water for over 6 million people in urban areas through the emergency procurement of chemicals for water treatment.

Globally, 39.1 million people gained or regained access to water supplies and 6.9 million to sanitation services in 2020 through UNICEF emergency programmes (see Figure 22). About the same number of people were provided with emergency water services as in 2019, but this global trend masks the shifts in UNICEF activities at country level. In 45 countries, UNICEF increased emergency water support in response to the pandemic and to other crises in 2020. In other countries, however, emergency support shifted towards reconstruction and development (notably in the Middle East and North Africa region) or focused on indirect support to government partners (such as in South Asia). The drop in emergency sanitation beneficiaries from 2019 to 2020 is due mainly to the need to focus strongly on water and hygiene interventions in response to the COVID-pandemic.

FIGURE 22: UNICEF emergency water and sanitation beneficiaries, 2018–2020
A key part of UNICEF response to COVID-19 was the support of safe school reopening programmes, through the provision of WASH facilities and supplies in schools or temporary learning spaces reaching 15.3 million children in 2020, far more than ever before (2.8 million were reached in 2019) (see Figure 23). Emergency support for menstrual hygiene also increased, including through the distribution of menstrual pads in hygiene kits (see ‘WASH in institutions’ and ‘Hygiene’ for details on this support).

FIGURE 23: UNICEF emergency WASH beneficiaries relating to schools and menstrual hygiene and health, 2018–2020

Two of the largest UNICEF humanitarian response programmes were in Yemen and Bangladesh, both of which experienced complex multifaceted crises in 2020.

In Yemen, safe water services were maintained for 70 million people through the operation and maintenance of public water networks, over 4.9 million people were provided with gender-responsive hygiene kits, and a range of WASH services reached 390,000 people in COVID-19 quarantine and isolation centres. A total of 180,400 people were provided with new sanitation facilities, which is only 20 per cent of the target owing to the COVID-19 restrictions to field work, but support for wastewater and solid waste management systems ensured continuing sanitation access for 2.5 million people.

In Bangladesh, over 8 million people were reached through a comprehensive COVID-19 coordination and response campaign, which included:

- Water point rehabilitation and disinfection
- Piped water chlorination
- An accelerated household toilet construction campaign
- Hand-washing stations in schools, early childhood development (ECD) centres and health-care facilities
- The distribution of soap

At the same time, WASH services were maintained for 242,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, cyclone and flood responses reached 276,000 people, and development programming continued, including in areas affected by the arsenic contamination of groundwater.

Support for refugees, displaced families and people on the move expanded in 2020. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, UNICEF support prioritized access to safe
water for vulnerable communities and health-care facilities through the rehabilitation of 14 rural and urban water supply systems in 6 states, reaching over 2.6 million people. Although many migrants returned to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela due to the pandemic, support continued for the many people remaining in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and in Brazil where the twin crises of COVID-19 and large refugee populations have prompted a multifaceted UNICEF WASH response (see Case Study 4).
COVID-19 infection prevention and control

Early in the pandemic, it became clear that the key for IPC in high-risk setting, such as schools, health-care facilities, camps for internally displaced persons and community gathering points such as markets, was cross-sectoral coordination. In many countries, existing coordination mechanisms were expanded, such as in Pakistan where UNICEF supported government biweekly virtual coordination meetings bringing together over 70 organizations and government representatives from all the provinces with a focus on the WASH component of IPC. Elsewhere, UNICEF promoted cross-sectoral collaboration through capacity enhancement such as in Rwanda and Uganda where WASH advisors were posted in the health system.

It was also clear from the onset of the pandemic that front-line workers from a wide range of sectors would be required to carry out IPC-related activities. In most programme countries, UNICEF sponsored training programmes for workers in health-care facilities and, as schools began to reopen, for education workers (see ‘WASH in institutions’ for UNICEF IPC activities in health-care facilities and schools). Specialized capacity-building support was also provided for workers within the WASH sector. In addition, many countries trained other front-line workers including community and public health outreach workers, as well as workers in detention centres and prisons, in the tourism and transport industries, and in quarantine centres.

In the Middle East and North Africa region, UNICEF launched a large-scale initiative for the training of trainers to build governments and partners’ capacity to better implement IPC in all settings. UNICEF also supported the review and development of national IPC protocols, policies and strategies, and provided a wide range of in-country support.

Centres for internally displaced persons and other high-risk camp settings were an area of special focus for UNICEF support. Hygiene kits, soap, disinfectants, hand-washing facilities and other essential IPC supplies were delivered to

Case Study 4: Brazil: A new WASH emergency response and development programme

The COVID-19 pandemic and the Venezuelan refugee crisis have highlighted gaps in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector in Brazil. This is especially the case in northern parts of the country where household coverage levels can be quite low and where just 20 per cent of public schools have access to piped water supplies and 8 per cent to safely managed sanitation systems.

In response, with the support of United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and other partners, UNICEF has launched a comprehensive WASH programme for the first time in the country. The programme addresses the immediate needs of the most vulnerable children and their families, including refugees, while also laying the foundation for longer-term programming.

UNICEF, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) and the World Bank formulated a widely publicized policy and advocacy brief on WASH and coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), stressing the importance of hand washing and the need to rapidly improve WASH infrastructure and services. UNICEF also launched an immediate response programme including:

- A mapping of government and civil society organization involved in WASH and infection prevention and control (IPC) programming in target regions
- The establishment of partnerships and a coordination mechanism in the states of Amazonas and Pará in the north of the country, including in the cities of Belém and Manaus
- The provision of water services for 24,000 Venezuelan migrants and refugees and the distribution of 21,000 hygiene items
- The promotion of hand washing and the distribution of hygiene and IPC supplies through multisectoral community engagement campaigns, reaching over 2 million people in the north of the country, in vulnerable semi-arid regions and in poor urban neighbourhoods

This programme is expanding in both scale and scope, with a broader community support, the scale-up of WASH services in health-care facilities and the launch of a comprehensive programme on WASH in schools targeting over 1.3 million children.
reception centres for returning refugees in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, to migrant reception camps in Greece, to migration detention facilities in Malaysia, to child protection transit centres in Mali, to Protection of Civilian sites in South Sudan and to hundreds of internally displaced people and refugee camps in countries around the world.

Cholera response programming

There was good news on cholera in 2020. The epidemic in Haiti has likely ended, with no cases reported since February 2019 (although three full years must pass before the country can be formally declared cholera free). The Haiti outbreak was one of the largest in recent history, with over 820,000 cases and nearly ten thousand deaths, many of them children. UNICEF was at the centre of the cholera control programme in the country over the 10 years since the outbreak began in 2010 in both coordination and response roles, as documented in a new report from the Haiti country office.83

In Yemen, which has the largest current outbreak, cholera cases were down substantially (229,887 suspected cases in 2020 against 623,977 in 2019), due to several possible factors including past large-scale investments by UNICEF and partners in prevention and response programmes, and the COVID-19 hand-washing promotion and support campaign in 2020, which likely also had an impact on cholera transmission.

Nevertheless, cholera outbreaks are still all too common, including in Mozambique, Somalia and several countries in the West and Central Africa region in 2020, and the possibility of a resurgence in Yemen is not unlikely. Thus, the threat to children from cholera remains very high, especially when health systems are overburdened owing to COVID-19, and national economies are weak because of the impact of the pandemic. In these and other countries, UNICEF country-level support for prevention and response continues. In designated cholera hot spots, UNICEF and partners reached approximately 16 million people in 2020 through hygiene promotion, water point chlorination, the distribution of household water treatment products and other WASH-related prevention activities.

UNICEF continued its efforts to improve coordination, preparedness and response on cholera emergencies in 2020, including through its membership in the Global Task Force on Cholera Control and its working group on WASH. UNICEF also issued new guidance on the use of dedicated community outbreak response teams to lead community WASH-related activities.86 The guidance is based on extensive experience using this local team-based approach in Haiti, Mozambique, Yemen, Zimbabwe and other countries.

Other capacity-building activities in 2020 included the release of a new operational framework for cholera by the Global WASH Cluster (see ‘Humanitarian WASH coordination and capacity-building’), the development of a new methodology for costed WASH action plans in cholera hot spots and an urban WASH training programme in the Eastern and Southern Africa region focusing on cholera hot spot management. Additionally, UNICEF published a field note on the Cholera Prevention and Preparedness Programme in Nepal86 and a compilation of lessons learned from the programme in Haiti.

Humanitarian WASH coordination and capacity-building

In addition to being one of the largest WASH responders to humanitarian and protracted crises around the world, UNICEF is a leader in coordinating response efforts of sectoral partners and building sector response capacity. This work is carried out through the UNICEF programme directly and through UNICEF leadership of the Global WASH Cluster.

UNICEF support for coordination and capacity-building

UNICEF and UNHCR, the United Nations agency for refugees, launched the ambitious Blueprint for Joint Action for Refugee Children in early 2020, which aims to provide a predictable and inclusive response for refugees and returnees in the areas of education, WASH and child protection in line with the Global Compact on Refugees.85 Later in the year, the two agencies launched an investment case that outlines why the current economic and political context – including the COVID-19 pandemic – is an opportune time to build economically and socially sustainable solutions for refugees and the communities that host them.

UNICEF and UNHCR are already working jointly in the field. One example is in Ethiopia where the two agencies partnered with KfW Development Bank on a system that provides water for some 250,000 people in both camps and host communities near the town of Itang that is run by a professionally managed water utility and improves long-term sustainability using a self-sustaining business model (with some users paying for water services and some users subsidized). The model is now being scaled up to other countries in the region. Other examples include Bangladesh where UNICEF and UNHCR are managing a comprehensive WASH response encompassing Rohingya refugee camps and host communities and Lebanon where they are developing new ways of reaching highly vulnerable ‘out-of-camp’ refugee children.

UNICEF is well-equipped to respond to emergencies in programme countries with WASH field professionals on the ground in 82 countries around the world, most of whom have emergency experience and have completed the UNICEF WASH in Emergencies course. These country teams are back-stopped by emergency WASH advisors in UNICEF regional offices and headquarters. Nevertheless,
Hendri, 3 years old, learns good hand-washing practices at a hand-washing station in Cambalache Community, Bolivar state, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as part of a comprehensive UNICEF emergency WASH programme.
even with these resources, substantial surge capacity is still required every year to further bolster responses. In 2020, UNICEF deployed surge professionals on 63 missions to 32 countries through several mechanisms, including the WASH Cluster Field Support Team (see ‘WASH Cluster support for coordination and capacity-building’), UNICEF’s Emergency Response Team and standby arrangements with pre-qualified partners. Just over 30 per cent of deployments were for humanitarian coordination missions, the rest were for response (see Figure 24). Due to travel restrictions, more than one third of the deployments were virtual. Sixty per cent of deployment days were for COVID-19 response, and other deployments included support in protracted conflicts, refugee crisis support and a special response to restore water supplies after the port explosion in Beirut, Lebanon.

UNICEF, along with the other stakeholders, developed a new Master’s degree course on WASH in emergencies in partnership with the Delft Institute for Water Education (IHE Delft) and the University of Engineering and Technology in Peshawar, Pakistan. The partnership includes an initial degree course offering by IHE Delft along with a programme to professionalize and scale up humanitarian WASH education with academic partners in developing countries.

UNICEF completed its first comprehensive independent evaluation of WASH programming in protracted crises in 2020, which assessed large-scale UNICEF response and coordination activities in protracted crises in 21 countries across five regions (see ‘Enabling environment’ for details).

UNICEF continued to use its Return on Investment tool to help select the lowest-priced, most effective WASH emergency interventions considering both capital and operational costs over the lifespan of the operation, along with the carbon footprint and equity-related criteria. An exercise carried out in 2020 in a refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece, where water is delivered by water trucking, demonstrated that an investment in semi-permanent or permanent WASH infrastructure would break even against trucking costs in under eight months and that if the camp remained operational for three years, the total savings would exceed US$7 million. Additionally, the move away from trucking combined with the use of solar energy would save approximately 350 metric tons of CO₂ emissions, equivalent to 34,000 gallons of diesel fuel.

**FIGURE 24: Humanitarian WASH surge deployment, UNICEF and Global WASH Cluster, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Deployment duration (person-days)</th>
<th>Deployments</th>
<th>Countries</th>
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<tr>
<td>Programme response (UNICEF)</td>
<td>4,454</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster coordination and related (via both UNICEF and the Global WASH Cluster)</td>
<td>1,981</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,435</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
<td>*<em>32</em></td>
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Source: UNICEF Human Resources figures (2020). Note: *Unique countries total.

**WASH Cluster support for coordination and capacity-building**

UNICEF is the lead organization of the Global WASH Cluster, which coordinates humanitarian WASH response, advocates improved and predictable humanitarian WASH funding, contributes to policy and strategy formulation, and builds capacity of humanitarian WASH institutions and practitioners. The cluster is guided by a strategic advisory group, including UNICEF, other United Nations agencies and NGOs, and by the WASH sector’s Road Map 2020–2025.88

A key role of the cluster is providing support for national humanitarian WASH coordination platforms through the Field Support Team, which is partially funded by UNICEF. In 2020, the team was deployed for a total of 960 person-days to five countries and two regional coordination bodies, including virtual deployments. The cluster also provided 1,105 days of remote support to a total of 42 countries.

The WASH Cluster launched and widely publicized the second volume of the *Water Under Fire* report, which focuses on the sector’s capacity to deliver a predictable, quality humanitarian response and provides an agenda and road map for strengthening sector capacity.89 The WASH Cluster also launched in 2020, jointly with the Health Cluster, a new operational framework for cholera, which aims to improve the coordinated and integrated preparedness and response to cholera in countries in humanitarian crisis.
Other WASH Cluster results in 2020 include the 10-country roll-out of the new Quality Assurance and Accountability System, the publication of a study on the use of humanitarian cash transfers and market support in WASH in emergencies, and the piloting of the new WASH Severity Classification toolset with REACH, UNICEF and other partners, which quantifies the severity and scales of humanitarian WASH needs and vulnerabilities.
Sanitation

Sanitation programming activities were somewhat curtailed during the pandemic in programme countries owing to movement restrictions and increase in focus on COVID-19-related emergency interventions in the areas of IPC and hand hygiene promotion. This was especially true for the face-to-face activities required for community-based engagement on the elimination of open defecation. Nevertheless, UNICEF still made good progress in 2020, helping millions of people gain access to basic sanitation services and thousands of communities eliminate open defecation. This is due in part to the momentum built within national programming efforts in recent years and the fact that hygiene and sanitation programmes are very closely linked.

The continuing focus on sanitation is also due to the recognition by policymakers and programme managers that improving access to sanitation is a priority, even during a global pandemic. This was re-emphasized in 2020 with the publication of the first-ever State of the World’s Sanitation report that showed just how far off we are from achieving the SDG target of universal access to safe sanitation, especially for those living in poor and isolated communities who are most at risk of being left behind. The report stresses the need for renewed investment in sanitation and outlines five key areas – or ‘accelerators’ – where investment is most needed: good governance, smart public financing, sector-wide capacity-building, more reliable data and programming innovation.

The report was launched by WHO and UNICEF on World Toilet Day, 19 November 2020, at a high-level virtual event hosted by the United Nations Missions of India, Nigeria and Singapore, which also featured a wide-ranging social media campaign, photo essays and a series of blogs on the accelerators, the costs and benefits of sanitation, and strengthened regulatory frameworks. Concurrent events were held at the regional and country level, including the launch of the #NoPoopChallenge social media campaign by the UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office and a series of virtual events in India, including e-marathons, panel discussions and art-based campaigns on the theme of sustainable and climate-resilient sanitation.

Ending open defecation and increasing access to basic sanitation

UNICEF helped a total of 13.4 million people gain access to sanitation through direct support in 2020, fewer than in 2019 (see Figure 26). UNICEF is consequently off the track from the cumulative Strategic Plan goal of 60 million basic sanitation beneficiaries by the end of 2021, with the momentum that was built between 2018 and 2019 slowed because of the pandemic. The bulk of these beneficiaries are from development programmes, with the remainder from emergency response activities that result in durable sanitation facilities meeting the basic sanitation standard; additional people were reached through life-saving sanitation interventions (see ‘Emergency WASH’).

FIGURE 25: Sanitation: Progress against Strategic Plan indicators

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.4. Number of additional people with access to basic sanitation services through UNICEF-supported programmes (cumulative)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>10.8 m</td>
<td>26.3 m</td>
<td>38.7 m</td>
<td>45 m</td>
<td>60 m cumulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b.2. Percentage of open defecation free communities compared with ‘triggered’ communities</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: m, million.

Sanitation programming activities were somewhat curtailed during the pandemic in programme countries owing to movement restrictions and increase in focus on COVID-19-related emergency interventions in the areas of IPC and hand hygiene promotion. This was especially true for the face-to-face activities required for community-based engagement on the elimination of open defecation. Nevertheless, UNICEF still made good progress in 2020, helping millions of people gain access to basic sanitation services and thousands of communities eliminate open defecation. This is due in part to the momentum built within national programming efforts in recent years and the fact that hygiene and sanitation programmes are very closely linked.

The continuing focus on sanitation is also due to the recognition by policymakers and programme managers that improving access to sanitation is a priority, even during a global pandemic. This was re-emphasized in 2020 with the publication of the first-ever State of the World’s Sanitation report that showed just how far off we are from achieving the SDG target of universal access to safe sanitation, especially for those living in poor and isolated communities who are most at risk of being left behind. The report stresses the need for renewed investment in sanitation and outlines five key areas – or ‘accelerators’ – where investment is most needed: good governance, smart public financing, sector-wide capacity-building, more reliable data and programming innovation.

The report was launched by WHO and UNICEF on World Toilet Day, 19 November 2020, at a high-level virtual event hosted by the United Nations Missions of India, Nigeria and Singapore, which also featured a wide-ranging social media campaign, photo essays and a series of blogs on the accelerators, the costs and benefits of sanitation, and strengthened regulatory frameworks. Concurrent events were held at the regional and country level, including the launch of the #NoPoopChallenge social media campaign by the UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office and a series of virtual events in India, including e-marathons, panel discussions and art-based campaigns on the theme of sustainable and climate-resilient sanitation.

Ending open defecation and increasing access to basic sanitation

UNICEF helped a total of 13.4 million people gain access to sanitation through direct support in 2020, fewer than in 2019 (see Figure 26). UNICEF is consequently off the track from the cumulative Strategic Plan goal of 60 million basic sanitation beneficiaries by the end of 2021, with the momentum that was built between 2018 and 2019 slowed because of the pandemic. The bulk of these beneficiaries are from development programmes, with the remainder from emergency response activities that result in durable sanitation facilities meeting the basic sanitation standard; additional people were reached through life-saving sanitation interventions (see ‘Emergency WASH’).
Almost three quarters of these beneficiaries (73 per cent) were in sub-Saharan Africa, where UNICEF focuses its direct support programming because it has the lowest sanitation coverage rates and the highest economic costs attributed to inadequate sanitation. The majority of people without access to basic sanitation live in rural areas, and the SDG sanitation target will not be met without a rapid acceleration in rural sanitation programming. In late 2019, UNICEF and key partners issued a call to action for increased funding, government leadership, stakeholder alignment, area-wide sanitation programming, inclusive solutions and evidence-based programme design. In 2020, joint work continued on this front with an ongoing landscaping study on rural sanitation programming approaches in challenging contexts, including impoverished communities, fragile contexts and physical challenges such as in areas with high water tables. The study identifies the gaps that need to be addressed and provides recommendations on how to address some of them.

A global total of 19,723 communities became open defecation free (ODF) in 2020 as a result of UNICEF direct programming support, fewer than in 2019 (22,267). Communities’ ODF status is certified independently, usually through a government-run certification programme. Certification confirms that open defecation no longer occurs in a community, that household toilets meet the national standard (usually equivalent to the JMP basic sanitation standard) and, in many countries, that households also have a hand-washing facility near their toilet.
Even larger gains were made through UNICEF indirect support to national sanitation programmes, especially in India and other South Asian countries where extraordinary gains have been made by high-profile national open defecation elimination campaigns over the last few years. Based on government figures and data from UNICEF country offices, an estimated 96.7 million people are living in communities that were certified ODF in the South Asia region in 2020. UNICEF is a long-time partner in the national campaigns, providing a range of support including for monitoring and certification programmes, communication campaigns, policy development and capacity-building on a large scale.

To eliminate open defecation globally, programmes must continue to expand, and they should also be as effective as possible. One measure of effectiveness is the conversion rate: the proportion of communities that achieve certified ODF status after having been ‘triggered’ through community-based programmes. In 2020, UNICEF achieved a global conversion rate of 74 per cent, its highest ever. This is lower than the Strategic Plan milestone figure of 85 per cent; nevertheless, as ODF programmes mature and move into more difficult programming contexts (e.g., peri-urban neighbourhoods, which can lack the social cohesiveness of rural communities), it has become clear that this high target may not have been realistic within the time frame of this Strategic Plan.

There was continuing progress under the UNICEF Game Plan to End Open Defecation, which was launched in 2018 with a focus on the 26 high-burden countries with the greatest numbers and proportion of people practising open defecation. Under the game plan, UNICEF helps to create demand for the elimination of open defecation and strengthen national systems to deliver sustainable and equitable sanitation programmes. The impact of the plan is still to be assessed (the final year of the plan is 2021), but preliminary data show that progress is being made across most plan indicators in the target countries (see Figure 27).

![FIGURE 27: UNICEF Game Plan to End Open Defecation: Progress across selected indicators, number of high-burden countries, 2018–2020](source)

Enabling environment elements and programming approaches from the game plan are also being used in countries outside of the core group of 26. In 2020, the Government of Guinea formally adopted a road map to eliminate open defecation by 2027 with a defined budget, and the Government of Sierra Leone launched a costed action plan for ending open defecation by 2025.
Case Study 5: Bangladesh: Rohingya refugees with disabilities overcoming barriers to sanitation

Children and adults with disabilities living in a refugee camp near Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh, experience great difficulties in accessing basic sanitation services. In a 2019 study, some of the challenges identified were the location of communal latrines, uneven terrain within the refugee camp, long queues and inaccessible latrine designs. Ninety per cent of persons with disabilities reported difficulties squatting comfortably and moving around in the latrines in the camp.

To overcome these barriers, UNICEF and partner CARE conducted a field trial of the new UNICEF disability-accessible emergency toilet add-on, along with more accessible hand-washing facilities (see ‘Cross-cutting: WASH and disability’). Over the 6-month trial period, the usage of the toilet add-on was monitored and was found to have had a dramatic impact on persons with disabilities, who reported being able to access sanitation much more easily.

Prior to the trial, 51 per cent of respondents restricted their use of latrines to once per day owing to the challenges faced. After the introduction of the accessible latrines, 83 per cent of persons with disabilities reported being able to reach the latrine within 5 minutes. Hand washing after using the latrine increased from 63 to 100 per cent.

… before the construction of the accessible latrine, I used to support my mother in-law to access the latrine during the day far away by the swamp within the camp to defecate. It was very challenging for me. Now the accessible latrine has made the problem solved.

– Caregiver of a person with a disability in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh.

Hashim, 14 years old, who has an intellectual disability, is assisted by his mother Monira, as he uses a disability-accessible latrine next to his home in the Cox’s Bazar refugee camp in Bangladesh.
Case Study 5 (continued)

In addition to finding the accessible latrines easier to access and use, being able to use latrines hygienically and with dignity has had an impact on self- and community- perception and acceptance of persons with disabilities.

My husband does not have to assist me to the latrine anymore, and this has improved my self-esteem. Now I am able to use the latrine anytime during the day and night. Even my family members are happy that because of me they also have access to a private and new latrine. They now give me a lot of respect and now I am being consulted for household decisions as well.

– Person with disability in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh.

One of the lessons learned from the field trial was the importance of community engagement and participation. During the field trial, monthly community engagement meetings were held to get feedback from users and engage the broader community. This engagement helped to mitigate any potential stigma or jealousy that could have resulted from the introduction of new latrines to this specific target group (persons with disabilities).

Sustainability

UNICEF conducted 30 independent sustainability checks of its programmes from 2018 to 2020, some of which focused on sanitation and open defecation reduction programming. In several countries, including Guinea, Indonesia and Timor-Leste, the findings were used as inputs in the development or modification of national sanitation strategies and guidance materials. Findings are also used to make course corrections in projects, such as in Liberia where adjustments were made in a UNICEF-supported project to better ensure ODF sustainability and increase the focus on hand washing with soap – the sustainability check tool is currently being updated (see ‘Safe water supply’).

In several countries, UNICEF is helping to strengthen national monitoring systems to better assess ODF sustainability and better respond when communities begin to slip away from their ODF status. In the Sudan, the national WASH Information Management System (WASHIMS) now includes real-time monitoring of ODF status, and similar systems are being developed in other countries.

In India, UNICEF supported government efforts to transition the national sanitation programme – the largest in the world – from the elimination of open defecation to ODF sustainability and safely managed sanitation. Support included the convening of a major sectoral consultation on the transition for government and NGO stakeholders at the beginning of the year, a new national reference manual on ODF sustainability for practitioners, sustainability promotion guidance materials in several states and a large-scale initiative on training trainers.

Ultimately, sanitation sustainability is achieved when people have access to the appropriate tools to maintain and upgrade their sanitation facilities in their local and national markets. Strengthening these markets is a core component of UNICEF and its partners’ efforts to shift focus towards safely managed systems (see ‘Safely managed sanitation’).

Safely managed sanitation

A key UNICEF strategic programming shift for the new UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, is to focus more resources on the SDG ambition of universal access to safely managed sanitation and hygiene services for all by 2030, while continuing to work towards the elimination of open defecation. To meet the safely managed sanitation standard, people must use improved toilets that are not shared with other households, that include hand-washing facilities with soap and water and that are managed to ensure that excreta are safely disposed in situ or transported and treated off-site. This is a major challenge: while 74 per cent of the global population has access to sanitation at the lower standard of basic sanitation, only 45 per cent has access to safely managed sanitation services.98

In 2020, UNICEF initiated discussion on the adjustments needed to its sanitation and hygiene programme to effectively contribute to the SDG target of safely managed sanitation services and commissioned a discussion paper on the programmatic implications for UNICEF.99

One way that UNICEF is helping people to move up the sanitation ladder – from basic to safely managed – is by encouraging sustainable markets for affordable sanitation goods and services by working both with government
partners and directly with private sector actors. UNICEF finalized a guidance package on market-based sanitation in 2020, focused on rural settings. A virtual introductory session on the guidance package was held for 110 participants worldwide, and the package was used at regional and country levels in various ways, such as a 6-week virtual training course for UNICEF staff and partners in Guatemala.

In 2020, UNICEF published a discussion paper on safely managed sanitation services that summarizes the requirements of the SDG sanitation target across the service chain. It highlights specific issues relevant to UNICEF sanitation policy and programming and suggests potential solutions where current practices are not achieving sustainable use of safely managed sanitation services. UNICEF also entered a new partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UN-Habitat and the World Bank in support of urban sanitation initiatives through the Global Framework for Urban WASH (see ‘Cross-cutting: Urban WASH’).
At country level, UNICEF is already supporting government partners in the promotion of safely managed sanitation. In Indonesia, UNICEF conducted a mapping exercise of potential national funding sources to scale up safely managed sanitation programming, developed a social and behaviour change communication campaign to promote standardized septic tanks and regular desludging services at household level, conducted a market assessment of safely managed sanitation products and services, and initiated follow-up discussions with potential private sector partners.

In India, UNICEF is providing extensive support to the government sanitation programme as it shifts its emphasis to helping communities sustain their ODF status while also improving solid and liquid waste management. This support included the roll-out of strategies in UNICEF’s 14 focus states, the development of guidance materials in several areas including greywater management and faecal sludge management, the development and operation of a communication campaign, and the training and engagement of 2,800 field trainers in partnership with the World Bank.

The ‘Make A Splash!’ shared value partnership with the LIXIL sanitary and building products company continued in 2020. Building on respective strengths and a shared ambition of sanitation and hygiene for all, the collaboration combines UNICEF WASH sector leadership with LIXIL’s global expertise in toilet design and innovation. Progress in the original partnership countries included the development of a standardized monitoring system for the partnership and a range of country-results:

- In Ethiopia where an import agreement was signed, a piloting marketing programme was launched, and 165,000 toilet pans were donated to the national urban Safety Net programme.
- In Kenya where a licencing agreement was signed with a local company in 2018, and over 50,000 of LIXIL’s SATO toilet products have now been installed, with a focus on communities that successfully achieved ODF status through UNICEF-supported programmes.
- In the United Republic of Tanzania where toilet sales in six target districts have begun after an extensive marketing campaign, including through trade events with the local private sector and through innovations such as the showcasing of products during football matches.

Also in 2020, the partnership was expanded both geographically – to Bangladesh, India and Madagascar – and, in response to COVID-19, into the area of hand hygiene with the launch of the SATO Tap initiative (see ‘Hygiene’).

### Enabling environment

This section of the report provides an in-depth description of UNICEF efforts to improve the WASH enabling environment at the country, regional and global levels, some of which were summarized in ‘Systems-strengthening’ earlier in this report.

#### Policy and institutional development

The pandemic did not slow UNICEF support for policy development and reform at country level in 2020, with a total of 32 countries finalizing or launching significant new national policies, strategies or plans. In most cases, the new policy instruments are linked to UNICEF global initiatives. For example:

- Ghana launched the country’s first solid waste management strategy
- Indonesia refined its national strategy and monitoring systems to be in line with the SDG standard of safely managed WASH services
- Lebanon finalized a revised water policy incorporating environmental and climate change adaptation components
- Myanmar and Sierra Leone launched new sanitation strategies and costed plans
- Uganda launched a national WASH refugee response plan
- Zambia launched a national action plan for improving drinking-water quality

Several countries strengthened their enabling environment for WASH in institutions, such as the Philippines where UNICEF provided technical support for a policy on WASH in schools for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). A collaboration among UNICEF, WHO and SPC resulted in the endorsement of a Pacific WASH Strategy, a first in this subregion.

In some countries, the pandemic was an impetus for rapid policy reform, such as in Guyana and Tajikistan where WASH was incorporated into national education policy and plans for the first time. In Djibouti, COVID-19 has opened the door for discussions on the inclusion of hygiene promotion into the national sectoral policy framework.
At the global level, UNICEF launched the Water Game Plan in 2020, which sets out the organizational level of ambition for contributing to SDG 2030 water targets, with a focus on equity, sustainability and climate resilience. The Water Game Plan also identifies a set of priority countries and expected regional contributions, defines and prioritizes the most appropriate programmatic pathways based on country contexts, and provides UNICEF country offices with a compilation of guidance and resources.

Other major policy-related initiatives in 2020 include:

- The Hand Hygiene for All call to action, which stresses the need to strengthen the institutional and policy environment at all levels to ensure that the renewed emphasis on hand washing with soap is sustainable over the long term.
- The State of the World’s Sanitation report, which highlights the importance of strengthening national systems in five key areas: governance, public financing, capacity-building, more reliable data and programming innovation.
- The Blueprint for Joint Action for Refugee Children, which encourages policy dialogue with governments to ensure that the needs of refugees are incorporated into national WASH policies, plans and budgets.

UNICEF also works at the regional level to develop policies and strategies. One example is UNICEF’s active engagement with AMCOW on the development of African Sanitation Policy Guidelines, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which will be launched in 2021.

UNICEF is a leader and active participant in all key sectoral partnership frameworks and collaboration mechanisms. This includes the JMP, which is co-managed with WHO; the Global WASH Cluster, which UNICEF leads; the Rural Water Supply Network; the Toilet Board Coalition; the Global Task Force for Cholera Control; the WASH in schools and healthcare facilities global networks; the Global Handwashing Partnership; the WASH4Work Partnership; the Accountability for Sustainability partnership with UNDP and SIWI; and the Sanitation and Hygiene Applied Research for Equity (SHARE) consortium. UNICEF also plays key regional sector roles such as with AMCOW and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

UNICEF is currently vice-chair of UN-Water, which coordinates the activities of the more than 30 United Nations organizations that are involved in WASH programming in some way, and supports its SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework to unify the international community for sustainable WASH for all. UNICEF continued to support the efforts of SWA partnership, through its hosting or its secretariat, and its participation in a wide range of initiatives. UNICEF chairs the Systems and Finance Work Group of SWA, which is formulating a global advocacy strategy to raise financing and is working with countries to resolve major financing bottlenecks.

At the country level, UNICEF’s most important WASH programming partners are government agencies from local to national levels across several sectors. UNICEF also works with many non-governmental partners, on average 20 partners in each country programme in 2020 (see Figure 28). UNICEF often assumes a leadership role in sector coordination and management structures in programme countries: in 2020, a total of 87 country offices reported taking on this role, most (70 country offices) in both development and humanitarian coordination contexts (see Annex 2 for a full list of non-governmental partners at the national level).

FIGURE 28: UNICEF engagement with non-governmental partners at national level, average by country, by type, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National NGOs or CSOs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor partners</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International NGOs</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SMQs (2020). Notes: CSOs, civil society organizations; NGOs, non-governmental organizations.

**Sector financing**

With its long-standing partnerships with governments and other stakeholders in countries around the world, UNICEF is well placed to promote new ways to leverage financing for the WASH sector and to support the development of sector-wide financing strategies in programme countries. The "UNICEF Vision for Leveraging Repayable
Finance in WASH’, published in 2020, codifies the level and range of commitment in this area and provides guidance on key components relevant for planning and implementing financing initiatives as part of UNICEF WASH programming.103

The Regional Office for South Asia released a new position paper that outlines UNICEF’s role in leveraging financing in the region and provides guidance for country offices.104

In the East Asia and the Pacific region, UNICEF launched the WASH Financing Lab initiative to encourage small businesses and entrepreneurs to get involved in the sanitation markets and completed WASH financing briefs in Myanmar and Viet Nam. In the Eastern and Southern Africa region, UNICEF worked with the European Investment Bank to explore blended financing models and explored other avenues for increasing sector funding, a process detailed in the Water Diagnostic Study released in 2020,105 and with KfW Development Bank and UNHCR on the expansion of a self-sustaining business model for water systems serving refugee camps and host communities developed in Ethiopia (see ‘Emergency WASH’).

Country screening, assessment and potential for bankable and blended finance projects in the WASH sector

More than 20 UNICEF country offices reported substantial new funding for the WASH sector in 2020, such as in India where UNICEF estimates its advocacy and technical support led to US$776 million in new investment for community and institutional WASH, and Pakistan where national and provincial governments allocated an unprecedented US$125 million for WASH programmes. In many countries, new funds were released as part of COVID-19 response campaigns, such as Mozambique where US$44 million in new government funding was allocated for WASH in schools.

Building on UNICEF guidance on developing investment cases in the WASH sector developed in 2019,106 UNICEF conducted case studies in several countries in 2020 as a key advocacy tool for encouraging greater domestic, public and commercial finance for WASH in developing countries. These case studies included sector-wide studies in Cambodia, Madagascar, Senegal and Zambia and investment cases in subsectoral areas, including on sanitation in Ghana and on WASH in health-care facilities in Malawi. The Regional Office for South Asia and the East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office hosted the ‘Hand Hygiene for All – Making handwashing everyone’s business!’ four-day virtual conference, which stressed the importance of the development of road maps and investment cases to attract new support in this area.

A major cost–benefit analysis of the world’s largest open defecation elimination campaign, the Clean India Mission (Swachh Bharat), was published in 2020.107 Based on the UNICEF-supported economic study in 2019, the analysis shows that sanitation improvements are highly cost-beneficial, especially when entire communities are free of open defecation with all households using private, improved sanitation facilities.

UNICEF released a new guidance paper on achieving the goal of affordability of WASH services, which is enshrined in SDG 6 and a core component of the UNICEF WASH programming and partnerships strategy. Based on a technical paper that reviewed current sector literature and practices,108 the guidelines affirm the need to include affordability programming within government-led systems-strengthening efforts and set out an affordability framework for use by sector stakeholders within the five SWA ‘building block’ areas of: sector policy and strategy; institutional arrangements; budgeting and financing; planning, monitoring and review; and capacity development.109

The guidelines are part of a series of global UNICEF initiatives on affordability including:

• Incorporating affordability principles and concepts into flagship UNICEF strategy documents (such as the Water Game Plan and the Urban WASH Strategy) and championing affordability within sector partnerships and networks
• Ongoing work on the development of affordability parameters into sector monitoring systems
• A UNICEF and REACH webinar on affordability of WASH services for rural households, which attracted over 400 participants110
• Two guidance notes on affordability during the COVID-19 pandemic, one on ensuring the continuity and affordability of WASH goods and services, and one on financial support measures111

Working with governments and other partners, UNICEF also continued to support measures to improve affordability of WASH services in programme countries. In Bangladesh, UNICEF and WaterAid provided technical and financial support to the revised national ‘Pro-Poor Strategy for Water and Sanitation Sector; in Indonesia, the UNICEF-commissioned market assessment for safely managed sanitation focused on the affordability of products and services; and in Rwanda, UNICEF completed a nationally representative rural water affordability study.

A total of 20 countries conducted Value for Money (VfM) analyses in 2020 to help reduce programming costs of UNICEF and government WASH programmes. VfM studies conducted under the multi-country ASWA programmes, which are funded by the Governments of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, were analysed and compared in 2020, providing new information on unit costs for basic sanitation and water services, and assessments of reasons behind wide variations among countries. The ASWA programme also supports training on VfM principles and processes, such as in the West and Central Africa region where the regional office facilitated a training session for over 50 UNICEF and government staff managers in 12 countries.
Planning, monitoring and evaluation

UNICEF used its existing networks to track COVID-19 impact and responses and developed new systems at global, regional and national levels. Sector coordination mechanisms (within which UNICEF has a leadership role in many countries) were used for real-time monitoring of the impact of the pandemic and for rapid remedial action. In Indonesia, UNICEF commissioned a rapid review of sanitation systems in 18 provinces, which showed the extent to which services were being cut, and it was used as the basis to develop guidance materials.

UNICEF worked with SIWI to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on the sector and map ongoing responses, and produced a global snapshot of responses by governments, regulators, utilities and other stakeholders in 84 countries, with region-specific reports in the Middle East and North Africa region and the Latin America and the Caribbean region. UNICEF launched a new multisectoral system to track the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on children, including a WASH component that assesses the extent of WASH service disruptions and tracks mitigation measures. To track responses, UNICEF used its existing monitoring systems and new COVID-19 monitoring system indicators.

The JMP prepared regional and global snapshots highlighting pre-COVID-19 baselines for hand hygiene in households, schools and health-care facilities. These snapshots were used to highlight underlying vulnerabilities and to advocate a greater focus on hand hygiene within COVID-19 responses, and for the data analysis underpinning the Hand Hygiene for All initiative. The JMP additionally developed the WASH questions for the UNICEF COVID-19 socioeconomic impact survey, contributed to the WHO–UNICEF technical guidance on WASH and waste management for COVID-19, to the United Nations policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on children, and to United Nations statistical analysis on the global impacts of the pandemic.

The JMP also launched two flagship publications on WASH in institutions in 2020, both presenting the latest global data sets while highlighting the importance of WASH during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The progress report on WASH in schools, the most comprehensive to date, presents national, regional and global coverage estimates up to the year 2019, drawing on 814 national data sets from 173 countries. The progress report on WASH in health-care facilities, also the most comprehensive ever published, is subtitled ‘Fundamentals first’ to stress how health care cannot be achieved without adequate WASH facilities and services.

Another flagship report, on sanitation, was also launched in 2020. The *State of the World’s Sanitation* report highlights the fact that progress on sanitation is lagging and stresses the need for renewed investments.120

The JMP also continued to lead sector monitoring efforts and build monitoring capacity at all levels in 2020 with a wide range of activities, including:

- Country consultations and data analysis on WASH in households in preparation for the updated estimated for the period 2000–2020 to be published in mid-2021
- Support on sector monitoring at key global and regional consultations, including the UNICEF regional WASHNet meetings
- Webinars and training for several sectoral stakeholders and academic institutions, and in-depth support missions for seven countries
- Support for the UNICEF household MICS programme to integrate SDG WASH indicators in household surveys
- Ongoing support for the integration of water quality testing into household surveys, including the publication of a lessons learned document121
- Development of harmonised methods and tools for the collection of comparable data on Safe Management of excreta from On-Site Sanitation (SMOSS) to support national and global monitoring of progress towards SDG targets 6.2 and 6.3, with data collection initiated in five countries in 2020.

As discussed in other sections of this report, UNICEF helped to strengthen sector monitoring capacity in country programmes in several ways. This includes day-to-day technical support, sustainability checks and related monitoring initiatives, and the introduction of innovative real-time monitoring systems. UNICEF also published two monitoring guides in 2020, one on monitoring MHH122 and one, through the WASH4Work initiative, on monitoring WASH in the workplace.123

UNICEF completed just three formal evaluations in 2020, far fewer than in previous years due to COVID-19-related travel restrictions: an evaluation of the WASH programme in Nigeria, an evaluation of the WASH programme in small towns in Zimbabwe, and a global evaluation of UNICEF WASH programming in protracted crises.

The *Global Evaluation of UNICEF’s WASH Programming in Protracted Crises, 2014–19*, is the first of its kind for UNICEF.124 It assessed large UNICEF response and coordination activities in protracted crises in 21 countries across five regions, and included extensive data analysis and informant surveys, four in-depth (and in-person) country studies and two thematic case studies, one on responses to public health crises and one on WASH in urban crisis settings. The evaluation was a key opportunity to take stock of what has and has not worked in various contexts, and the management response to the evaluation recommendations is ongoing.

UNICEF also conducted a learning evaluation of COVID-19 response within UNICEF and is currently conducting a set of real-time assessment at the regional and country levels. Also ongoing is an exercise to synthesize United Nations System and development bank evaluations related to SDG 6 to gain a comprehensive picture of progress and shortfalls and inform programming across the United Nations System.

The WASH BAT is a methodology used by UNICEF and government partners to jointly assess sectoral constraints and develop costed plans to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the sector in programme countries. WASH BAT exercises have been conducted in over 50 countries since it was first launched in 2012. In 2020, in-country WASH BAT activities were curtailed due to the pandemic, but UNICEF did complete the first ever comprehensive review of the methodology and its use, which provides a broad analysis of outputs and outcomes, and a set of recommendations for the way forward. This includes additional criteria that enables a deeper understanding of sector bottlenecks and proposes longer-lasting solutions for emergency, fragile, water-scarce and climate-affected countries. The new criteria set was used in the two WASH BAT exercises that were conducted in early 2020 (in Bolivia and the United Republic of Tanzania).

The WASH BAT website (<washbat.org>) was overhauled in 2020,125 with WASH BAT country reports now being made available via an interactive map and the addition of a resource section for facilitators including new training materials.

**Capacity-building and knowledge management**

As the world’s largest support organization for WASH, UNICEF was able to quickly draw on its in-house experience and knowledge resources to develop a comprehensive set of guidance materials for staff and partners on WASH and COVID-19. Ultimately, this included 14 different guidance packages at the global level covering all aspects of pandemic response programming (see Figure 29). In total, UNICEF released over 60 documents related to COVID-19 and WASH of various types from all offices.
UNICEF WASH staff also contributed WASH-related content to broader UNICEF and United Nations guidance materials and strategy instruments on COVID-19 response in the areas of education, health and humanitarian response.

UNICEF regional and country offices adapted global materials to the local context and, in some cases, produced their own guidance materials. Examples include guidance on WASH in workplaces for back-to-work preparedness in the South Asia region, guidance for gender integration in COVID-19 WASH responses in East Asia and the Pacific region, WASH and IPC measures in schools in the Middle East and North Africa region, and a guidance manual on safe school reopening for school administrators and principals in the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

Headquarters and regional offices also provided extensive support for COVID-19 response on a day-to-day basis and through webinars and other virtual support tools, covering all aspects of programming.

Outside of the pandemic response, UNICEF released various other guidance packages and held training sessions in several areas, including, at the global level:

- MHH programme and results monitoring
- Market based sanitation
- WASH FIT implementation
- Shifting to climate-resilient programming and accessing the GCF

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**FIGURE 29: UNICEF WASH and COVID-19 guidance materials, global level, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidance material, global level*</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness and Response WASH Strategic Programming Framework</td>
<td>COVID-19 programme strategic design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance on Roles and Key Actions to Ensure Continuity and Affordability of Essential WASH Goods and Services During and After the Global COVID-19 Pandemic</td>
<td>Continuity of WASH services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Support Measures that Strengthen WASH Continuity and Affordability in the Time of COVID-19</td>
<td>Continuity of WASH services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and Mitigating the Secondary Impacts of the COVID-19 Epidemic on WASH Services Availability and Access</td>
<td>Continuity of WASH services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim technical note on water, sanitation and hygiene for COVID-19 response in slums and informal urban settlements (with UN-Habitat)</td>
<td>Urban WASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH and Infection Prevention and Control in Health-care Facilities: Guidance note</td>
<td>IPC/WASH in health-care facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASHFIT – Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Facilities Improvement Tool (adapted to include COVID-19 response) (with WHO)</td>
<td>IPC/WASH in health-care facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Waste Management for COVID-19 Technical brief</td>
<td>IPC/WASH in health-care facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH and Infection Prevention and Control Measures in Schools</td>
<td>IPC/WASH in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH and Infection Prevention and Control in Households and Public Spaces</td>
<td>IPC/WASH in public spaces and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Hygiene Promotion in the Context of Risk Communication &amp; Community Engagement and Infection Control and Prevention for the COVID-19 outbreak</td>
<td>Hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handwashing Stations and Supplies for the COVID-19 Response</td>
<td>Hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance and Support for WASH Coordination Platforms during COVID Response (Global WASH Cluster)</td>
<td>WASH in emergencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Design and installation guide on solar-powered water systems in 2020
• Cholera response through Community Outbreak Response Teams
• The UNICEF Global Framework for Urban WASH
• Building back better for WASH and disability

Training in these and other areas continued at region and country levels, in most cases through the use of virtual engagement tools. UNICEF conducted a total of 31 webinars in 2020 at the global level, and many more were held at regional and country levels.

In total, UNICEF published 216 documents in 2020, the most documents ever published in a year. These publications include major reports and advocacy documents, evaluations, studies, journal articles and other publications. About one third of these publications were related to COVID-19 response (see Figure 30). Not included in these totals are approximately 60 additional documents including newsletters, blog posts, op-ed pieces and other communications. The full list of publications is available here.

FIGURE 30: UNICEF WASH publications, 2016–2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Study reports</td>
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<td>Peer reviewed journal articles</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>148</td>
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<td>WASH publications (briefing notes, fact sheets, field notes, case studies, technical papers and guidance)</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>94</td>
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<td>Conference papers</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey reports</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books/book chapters</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>728</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Blank entries are due to changes in the publication categorization system for UNICEF WASH publications.
Cross-cutting: Urban WASH

This section of the report describes UNICEF activities and results in the area of urban WASH programming (see ‘Results: Urban programming and local governance’ for additional UNICEF results related to urban programming in general).

UNICEF continued its advocacy on the need to focus more on urban WASH with the release of a new analysis of WASH coverage in urban areas in 2020, with a focus on access disparities at regional, national and household levels. The report highlights specific challenges in urban areas, especially for poorer households, which often have much lower access than national averages and pay more for WASH services, and documents how disparities between rich and poor urban household have increased over the last 10 years. The report also shows how urban households are more vulnerable to cholera, COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, and experience severe deprivations in emergencies.

The UNICEF Global Framework for Urban WASH, launched in early 2020, was disseminated widely and used as the basis for advocacy and engagement with partners. The framework outlines UNICEF approach to urban WASH programming with a focus on reaching marginalized children and their families in three different urban contexts: urban slums, small towns and urban areas in crisis settings.

UNICEF launched its urban WASH capacity development plan and strategy in 2020 to build staff expertise to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate inclusive and accessible urban WASH programmes both in development and humanitarian settings. UNICEF is also drafting a guidance note on strengthening the resilience of urban WASH systems under threat from water scarcity and other repercussions of climate change (see ‘Climate-resilient WASH’).

In recognition of the special vulnerabilities of urban households to COVID-19, UNICEF and UN-Habitat developed a technical guidance note on COVID-19 WASH response in slums and informal urban settlements in May 2020 and launched it globally in cooperation with the Global Water Operators’ Partnership Alliance. UNICEF also contributed to the broader United Nations guidance on COVID-19 programming in urban areas, issued technical guidance on COVID-19 and WASH in slums in the South Asia region and provided day-to-day technical support to government partners in programme countries.

At country level, UNICEF helped to ensure continuity in WASH services for urban residents, especially poor neighbourhoods, employing a variety of strategies. This included advocacy with governments to waive tariffs during the pandemic, direct support to water utilities in support of tariff subsidy initiatives and the expansion of emergency water supply interventions, including trucking where needed (see ‘Safe water supply’ and ‘Emergency WASH’).

UNICEF urban programming varies widely in scope and scale in programme countries. In some countries, UNICEF has no ongoing WASH programme but responds to emergencies, such as in Honduras, Paraguay and Tajikistan in 2020. In other countries, there are comprehensive urban WASH programmes such as in Ethiopia where UNICEF, with funding from the United Kingdom, has supported an integrated WASH programme in urban areas since 2013, and in Iraq where the reconstruction programme is concentrated mainly in cities and towns.

UNICEF support to urban WASH programming is increasing in programme countries. Direct support through UNICEF WASH programmes in development or emergency contexts reached 42 countries with water services (32 countries in 2019) and 36 countries with sanitation services (34 countries in 2019). Taking into account all UNICEF urban WASH interventions – including interventions in communities, schools and temporary learning centres and health-care facilities, and emergency COVID-19 responses even in countries without regular WASH programmes – UNICEF reached a total of 70 countries in 2020 (see Figure 31).
Almost half of all community beneficiaries from UNICEF direct support for water in both development and emergency contexts are in urban areas. The same is true for emergency sanitation interventions, but sanitation development programmes continue to focus more on rural areas (see Figure 32).

FIGURE 31: Countries where UNICEF reached urban beneficiaries, development and emergency contexts, community and institutional WASH, 2020

FIGURE 32: Urban beneficiaries of community WASH through UNICEF direct support, proportion of all beneficiaries, 2020

Source: UNICEF SMQs (2020).131
To further expand and broaden its support to urban WASH, UNICEF entered several strategic partnerships at global, regional and country levels. Examples include:

- The multifaceted partnership with UN-Habitat, which includes activities and advocacy at global, regional and country levels
- The Citywide Inclusive Sanitation partnership, with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UN-Habitat and the World Bank, on harmonizing approaches and capacity-building on urban sanitation and demonstrating scalable models for poor and marginalized populations

Cross-cutting: WASH and gender

UNICEF prioritizes gender-responsive approaches in WASH programmes to contribute to the broader goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women and to improve WASH outcomes. This work is part of the broader UNICEF programme to promote gender equality, as outlined in the Gender Action Plan, 2018–2021.\(^{132}\) UNICEF WASH programming contributes to this agenda by managing MHH activities, one of the Gender Action Plan’s five core priorities; supporting gender-positive policies, strategies and plans; working to disaggregate monitoring systems by gender; and encouraging the impactful participation of women in WASH management bodies and planning processes. UNICEF also works to ensure that WASH services in schools, health centres, communities and households are woman- and girl-friendly and facilitate MHH.

UNICEF WASH programmes benefit a higher number of women than men. In community WASH programming for development and humanitarian response – which are not designed to focus specifically on women, although benefits for women are often greater – an average of 52 per cent of beneficiaries are female (see Figure 33).\(^{133}\) Other programmes are strongly gender-focused and serve mainly women and girls. Emergency support for MHH supplies and services, for example, benefited 1.2 million women and girls in 2020. School WASH programmes serve roughly the same number of girls as boys (50.5 per cent of girls in 2020); nevertheless, programmes are designed with a particular focus on the needs of girls, stressing measures such as gender-segregated toilets and MHH facilities.

FIGURE 33: Gender ratio of WASH beneficiaries, UNICEF direct support, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary type</th>
<th>Proportion of female beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic sanitation (development)</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic+2 water (development)</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation (emergency)</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water (emergency)</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF SMQs (2020).\(^{134}\)

Drawing on its experience and expertise in humanitarian WASH, UNICEF ensured that COVID-19 response programmes incorporated gender-responsive approaches. Examples of this included ensuring that support for MHH was part of the response effort, making special efforts to reach women isolated at home with emergency supplies and messages, and ensuring that maternity wards and antenatal and postnatal care facilities received hygiene and IPC supplies. The UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office issued a guidance note on gender integration in the COVID-19 WASH response.

UNICEF works to ensure that WASH services and facilities are designed to reduce the risk of gender-based violence (GBV). In programmes for WASH in schools, UNICEF only supports the construction of toilets and menstrual hygiene management facilities that are private, lockable and physically separated from facilities used by boys and actively encourages measures to enshrine these norms into national education policies. In communities, UNICEF focuses its sanitation programme on the elimination of open defecation, a practice that is directly linked to violence against women, while its water programming reduces the
distance women and girls walk to fetch water, which puts them at risk in some contexts (see ‘Safe water supply’ and ‘Sanitation’).

In emergency situations, the risk of GBV is especially acute, and UNICEF follows the United Nations Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action. WASH facilities built in camps and transit centres are private and secure, properly located and well-lit, and compliance with these and other measures are monitored and periodically checked through safety audits. New techniques for carrying out WASH GBV safety audits, which were developed through the UNICEF Rohingya refugee response programme in Bangladesh, were used as the basis for a new training video and discussion webinar on COVID-19 response in the South Asia region.

UNICEF uses the visibility and reach of its WASH programming activities to amplify the broader GBV prevention agenda. Hygiene and dignity kits, which were distributed by the millions during the COVID-19 pandemic, generally include a torch and safety whistle in addition to WASH items, and kits and hygiene promotion campaigns in an increasing number of countries include information about GBV mitigation. Integrated WASH and GBV prevention programming is also expanding outside the emergency response, such as in Papua New Guinea where messaging via hygiene promotion is one channel in a major new GBV mitigation effort.

Research and evaluative exercises on WASH and gender continued in 2020, albeit on a reduced scale owing to the pandemic. This included a study in the Indian state of Rajasthan on changes in traditional gender roles with the adoption of rainwater harvesting techniques, a WASH gender analysis in Zimbabwe in areas affected by Cyclone Idai and a GBV study to address conflicts arising at water points, and gender analyses of programme outcomes in Cambodia and Myanmar as part of the ASWA multi-country programme.

At 26 per cent, the proportion of women professionals in the UNICEF staff WASH cadre has slowly risen over the years (which has been as low as 19 per cent) but has not changed much in recent years (25 per cent in 2018 and 2019). Efforts continue to address this underrepresentation with sectoral partners (women are underrepresented across the sector) and within UNICEF and the United Nations System. In 2020, the United Nations Secretariat issued a system-wide administrative instruction on special measures to achieve gender parity at the senior professional (P5) level by the end of 2021 in targeted areas, including WASH.
Cross-cutting: WASH and disability

More than 110 million children are living with disabilities worldwide, and the majority live in developing countries. Children with disabilities have the same rights to water and sanitation as other children, but they may not be able to fully realize these rights due to lack of access to disability-inclusive and accessible facilities and services. Inaccessible sanitation can be particularly problematic for children (and adults) with disabilities, who can be forced to crawl on the floor to use a toilet or engage in open defecation because there is no other option.

UNICEF released its new disability-accessible emergency toilet add-on for people with disabilities in 2020 after a three-year collaborative design process involving users, product developers and UNICEF staff, and pilots in Angola and Bangladesh. The final product has two variations, both of which are designed to be easily attached to standard latrines making them accessible for children and adults with disabilities. The new products will greatly facilitate sanitation for people with disabilities in camps and other humanitarian settings. UNICEF expects to ship some 2,500 units a year, reaching thousands of children with disabilities worldwide.

UNICEF ensures that disability and inclusion are taken into account in WASH policies, strategies, plans and other enabling environment processes and products. The 2020 Water Game Plan, for example, includes a section on disability, as does the UNICEF Global Framework for Urban WASH and other instruments. Flagship reports are increasingly focused on issues of inclusion. The 2020 JMP progress report on WASH in schools includes a chapter on disability that presents data on the lack of access to inclusive WASH facilities and discusses strategies to improve the availability of data to strengthen advocacy and support for inclusive WASH in schools (see Figure 34).

FIGURE 34: Proportion of schools with inclusive toilets, selected countries, 2013–2018

Source: JMP (2020).
COVID-19 response included disability-inclusive components in many countries. Examples include the construction of disability-accessible WASH blocks in transit and reception areas in the Za’atari camp in Jordan, the construction of accessible school toilets in Tunisia, and a collaboration with the national association for people with disabilities in Timor-Leste on both infrastructure design and outreach programme planning. In many countries, hand-washing stations installed with UNICEF support included provisions to make them accessible to people with disabilities. In some cases, this included adjustments to existing products and, in other cases, completely new designs were developed. The development of the new SATO Tap hand-washing station incorporated disability-friendly design criteria and included people with disabilities in the pilots (see ‘Hygiene’).

UNICEF support has led to new designs and standards for inclusive and accessible WASH in school facilities in several countries, including Guinea-Bissau, the Indian state of Gujarat and the Syrian Arab Republic. In Uzbekistan, a UNICEF-supported assessment of WASH facilities in schools and health-care facilities led to changes in government construction projects to include provisions for the requirements of adults and children with disabilities. UNICEF country programmes are increasingly focusing on ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities to clean water, appropriate sanitation and hygiene services. In Bangladesh, through regular and humanitarian programming, 67,470 persons with disabilities gained access to water in 2020, some 15,560 persons to appropriate sanitation and 6,875 girls and women with disabilities to menstrual hygiene management services.

In December 2020, UNICEF co-sponsored a global webinar on WASH and disability with the World Bank, the Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation (Sida), WaterAid and several advocacy and umbrella organizations for people with disabilities, including the International Disability Alliance, the Special Olympics and HelpAge International. The event, One Billion Reasons to Build Back Better: Towards Inclusive and Accessible WASH, explored ways to improve collaboration among WASH and disability actors to improve inclusivity and reduce barriers in WASH programmes and services. A similar event was held in Nepal with local actors, focusing on national school reopening strategies.

Work continued to improve monitoring systems to better track the extent to which UNICEF is reaching children with disabilities through its WASH programming, which can be difficult owing to differing national standards on inclusivity, data availability and other factors. The new guidance package on monitoring MHH, for example, stresses the importance of including disability-related considerations in monitoring systems and studies, and provides information on good practices in this area.

The issue has been analysed in-depth in the development of phase 2 of the ASWA multi-country programme, which are funded by the Governments of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, and a new system for monitoring inclusion across all countries has now been instituted. The system uses a 23-point checklist to monitor both gender- and disability-related programming criteria across four categories: situation analysis, programming design, implementation and monitoring.

Lessons from the ASWA initiative will help with ongoing efforts to include disability within all UNICEF global monitoring systems. These efforts are yielding results: country offices reported that 829,956 people with disabilities benefited from direct UNICEF support for safe water services in 2020, more than double the number reported in 2019 (395,223 people). This increase is due to more countries modifying their monitoring systems to more accurately capture the number of people with disabilities benefiting from programmes: 35 countries were able to monitor and report on disability in the area of safe water supply in 2020 compared to just 20 countries in 2019.
Results: Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding

Sirajul Islam, Ruksana Begum and their four-year-old son Rabiul in front of a raised homestead where they retreated when floodwaters submerged their house in July 2020 in Amtola Char, Kurigram, Bangladesh.

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Child-centred disaster risk reduction and recovery

Despite the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on normal programming, momentum continued on several fronts to advance child-centred DRR and disaster recovery efforts both internally within UNICEF and together with partners. UNICEF efforts in this area are cross-sectoral and mainstreamed through all sectoral programming. UNICEF is the lead organization for DRR through the United Nations cluster approach in WASH, education, nutrition and child protection, and has a leading support role in the areas of social protection and health.

In 2020, UNICEF and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) launched new guidance on engaging children in DRR and resilience programming: *Words into Action guidelines: Engaging children and youth in disaster risk reduction and resilience building.* The guidance materials also include additional resources on child and youth rights, inclusion and engagement, and a reference guide on how COVID-19 response relates to the new guidance material.

UNICEF also works to ensure that child-sensitive programming is incorporated into United Nations guidance material on DRR, including contributions to the following publications in 2020:

- **Guidance Note on Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework** and the associated training package
- The **United Nations Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies**
- An adaptation of the existing multi-agency post-disaster needs assessment methodologies for the **COVID-19 Recovery Needs Assessments tool**
- **Scaling up Disaster Risk Reduction in Humanitarian Action** (recommendations and checklist).

UNICEF supports the development of child-sensitive national and local risk management plans that address risks related to disasters, climate change, conflict, public health emergencies and other crises. A total of 56 countries now have these plans, which is an increase since the start of the Strategic Plan but is short of its annual target of 60 countries. Efforts in 2020 continued, and good progress was made, despite pandemic-related disruptions in programming activities.

An area of focus is the promotion and support of local risk management planning and building capacity for DRR and recovery at local levels, the need for which has been underlined by the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, UNICEF continued and expanded its efforts in this area, including in India (see Case Study 7) and in other countries.

In Belize, the ‘Protocol for the Integrated Protection of Children and Adolescents in Emergencies and Disaster Situations’ was launched nationally in 2020, an important step that will pave the way for the development of child-sensitive risk management plans at subnational levels.

In Benin, the subnational level has been an important entry-point for child-sensitive DRR. With support from UNICEF and partners, 45 out of 77 municipalities have developed contingency plans, and all 12 regions have formulated civil security organization plans. In 2020, UNICEF supported the updating of the contingency plan sensitive to the needs of children, based on risk analysis in five municipalities.

In Indonesia, UNICEF supported the inclusion of child-sensitive parameters in the national climate risk database and, in 2020, supported child-centred district and village-level contingency plans in the Merapi volcano region.

In Madagascar, a country routinely affected by droughts, floods and other hazards, both national and subnational level plans are critical for reducing risks to children. With ongoing support from UNICEF, the country now has child-sensitive disaster management plans at the subnational level nationwide.

UNICEF, UNDP and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) supported the update and finalization of Myanmar’s first climate-integrated disaster management plan at the subnational level in the Shan State, including planning and budgetary requirements at district and township levels. UNICEF provided technical support and evidence using the Child-Centred Risk Assessment tool.

School-based DRR remains a strong entry-point for child-centred DRR, since it addresses the vulnerabilities of children but also engages them as active participants in solutions and facilitators of community-wide awareness and change, such as in Kyrgyzstan where school-based interventions are at the centre of UNICEF DRR support (see Case Study 6).
Case Study 6: Kyrgyzstan: Scaling up child-centred disaster risk assessment, analysis, reduction and management

Kyrgyzstan has made great strides in disaster risk reduction (DRR) through local and school-based planning and capacity-building. These efforts accelerated during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) response programming, partly through the use of evidence and lessons from child-centred risk assessment and trainings supported by UNICEF.

In 2020, UNICEF and Kyrgyzstan’s Ministry of Emergency Situations and Ministry of Education and Science developed the Road Map on DRR in Educational Institutions of the Kyrgyzstan for 2021–2025. The road map was informed by ongoing UNICEF support, which has to date helped 64,000 children in 119 schools to learn safe behaviour and skills through school-based DRR emergency drills. The road map is now being used to scale up child-centred DRR to 80 per cent of the schools in the country, institutionalizing DRR in schools and helping to keep boys and girls safe at school, home and in their communities.

The road map is supported by two guidebooks, one for teachers and school administrators and one for municipal authorities, along with a set of video lessons developed, tested and approved in 2020 to enhance preparedness in emergency situations.

A girl learns first aid as part of DRR school training in Bishkek School Gymnasium #5, Kyrgyzstan.
Strengthening the humanitarian-development-peace nexus

In 2020, UNICEF advanced its commitments and actions on the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus to reduce vulnerabilities and risk and to prevent crises and conflicts before they materialize. This is in line with actions set out in the UNICEF Procedure on Linking Humanitarian and Development Programming, which seek to ensure consistent and systematic HDP programme linkages.

A significant step in further institutionalizing the HDP nexus was achieved through the 2020 revision of the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children (CCCs), which now include key commitments and considerations on linking humanitarian and development programming, conflict sensitivity and contributions to peacebuilding and social cohesion. The CCCs also include special considerations for operations in the context of the United Nations Integrated Mission presence in full adherence to the humanitarian principles.

In 2020, UNICEF became an adherent to the OECD DAC recommendation on the HDP nexus to support better results, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The DAC recommendation was developed in response to the call for strengthened policy and operational coherence by HDP actors, reflecting commitments across key global frameworks including Agenda 2030, the United Nations Sustaining Peace resolutions and Agenda for Humanity.

To inform future efforts to strengthen engagement, collaboration and partnership across the HDP nexus, in 2020, UNICEF launched a formative evaluation on the HDP nexus across its programmes and a review of HDP nexus efforts in the top 10 emergency contexts. UNICEF also completed a formative evaluation on its support to young people in peacebuilding in conflict-affected and fragile settings, and a global review of its conflict sensitivity, social cohesion and peacebuilding programmes. Findings and recommendations will be forthcoming in 2021.

UNICEF continued to implement risk-informed programming as a means of building resilience and strengthening preparedness by identifying risks to children through child-sensitive and multi-hazard risk analyses. To this end, in 2020, a stand-alone Gender Equality module was added to UNICEF guidance on risk-informed programming to support country offices, United Nations partners, governments and civil society in undertaking child-sensitive and multi-hazard risk analyses.

In 2020, some 41 per cent of UNICEF country offices report meeting organizational benchmarks on implementing risk-informed programming in country programmes. A total of 48 UNICEF country offices reported using up-to-date conflict analyses to inform their work, with 30 per cent (38 country offices) of all UNICEF country offices meeting the organizational benchmark for ‘peaceful and inclusive societies’ by using conflict analyses to inform programmes with explicit goals to build peace and strengthen social cohesion.

These efforts included the completion of a conflict analysis in Burkina Faso, a comprehensive multisectoral conflict analysis in Ethiopia and the development of an innovative risk-informed response mechanism capturing live early warning and conflict context data in Somalia. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UNICEF conducted an analysis of the root causes of social conflicts and supported capacity-building activities on conflict resolution and the promotion of spaces for dialogue and conflict resolution in priority municipalities.

In fragile and risk-prone areas of Mali, sustained investments were made using humanitarian action as the entry-point to build and strengthen national policies, systems and capacities including that of local systems and communities, reinforcing resilience and addressing its underlying causes. For example, in the town of Mopti, the emergency education needs of out-of-school children were improved and served as a framework for the continuity of official educational programmes.

In South Sudan, the formation of the Revitalized Transnational Government of National Unity in February 2020 further enabled the shift from humanitarian action into development and systems-building efforts. The WASH programme increased its focus on urban water supply and management to strengthen resilience of urban and peri-urban populations, while systematically integrating conflict-sensitive programme approaches. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNICEF, WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) joined forces in a four-year programme to improve socioeconomic resilience and contribute to social cohesion of vulnerable populations in two eastern provinces, reaching 23,500 households in 2020.

Responding to COVID-19 and strengthening longer term resilience

The COVID-19 pandemic defined much of 2020, with the vulnerability of children increasing overall, and out-sized impacts felt by the most at-risk children and families. Children have been especially hard hit by the pandemic’s secondary socioeconomic impacts, which have highlighted the need to link humanitarian response with sustainable development to strengthen national systems and foster resilient communities and societies.
COVID-19 also created significant challenges to social cohesion, exacerbating stigma, mistrust and deepening social divides. In the initial phases of the crisis, UNICEF integrated conflict sensitivity and social cohesion approaches its Global Programme Framework for COVID-19 and used its Global COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard and Reporting to track shifts in group-based social tensions and incidents of violence. These revealed heightened group-based discrimination, stigma and violence in at least 10 conflict-affected and fragile settings, particularly against migrants and people on the move.

In the State of Palestine, in response to the challenges of COVID-19 such as insufficient capacity and infrastructure for distance learning in the education system, UNICEF partnered with UNESCO to strengthen the distance learning system in innovative ways. These efforts focused on marginalized children without internet access, including through procurement of devices and tablets loaded with offline interactive self-learning materials.

In Nepal, the pandemic created the opportunity to expand distance learning to previously unreached children and contributed to greater cross-sectoral coordination among government bodies. It also showed the value of ongoing system building efforts: children and adolescents who were part of capacity-building initiatives of the regular programme played a crucial role in disseminating key messages on COVID-19 prevention.

In a middle-income country such as Sri Lanka, which has emerged from conflict but is prone to natural disasters, UNICEF programming has operated where humanitarian work and development approaches converge. UNICEF support has thus increasingly moved away from service delivery towards systems-strengthening. COVID-19 also allowed UNICEF to advance other humanitarian and development priorities such as extensive advocacy efforts with the government to strengthen its social protection floor, including provision of a child grant, and building long-term capacity in child protection systems.
Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

In 2020, seventy country offices – up from 59 in 2019 – reported implementing cross-sectoral programmes with deliberate goals of using child-centred social services to bridge community and intergenerational divides, reduce social tensions and address the root causes of conflicts (see Figure 35). These efforts leveraged UNICEF sectoral engagement in education and skills, WASH, ECD, child protection services and its support to adolescent, youth and community inclusion and participation. UNICEF also significantly expanded its collaboration with the Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund in 2020, implementing 51 joint projects in 32 countries with United Nations entities.

**FIGURE 35: UNICEF country offices implementing peacebuilding-related programmes, 2018–2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of country offices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF SMQs (2020).

Adolescents and youth as agents of peace

In 42 countries, UNICEF worked to support the transformative role of adolescents and youth in building peace and social cohesion and bridging divides in their communities and societies. Support included the development of peacebuilding and conflict resolution competencies and skills, and the promotion of youth-led initiatives to participate in local and national dialogue, decision-making and peacebuilding processes.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNICEF, in close collaboration with the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, UNDP, UNESCO and the Office of the Presidency, has supported youth participation in local governance for social cohesion and peace. Now in its second phase, the Dialogue for the Future project has brought together over 26,000 people across ethnic divides through 24 projects and local dialogue platforms in 28 municipalities across the country. A concurrent ‘Choose your words’ campaign, which reached 3 million people, used concerts, music and art to raise awareness on hate speech.

In Madagascar, UNICEF supported 19 young reporters’ clubs with technology and training to develop their own peacebuilding radio programmes to spark dialogues on

Social cohesion and peace through education

In 2020, UNICEF worked through the education system in 44 countries to contribute to local and national social cohesion and peacebuilding efforts. This included expanding access to education in marginalized communities in conflict-affected settings; promoting peace capacities of children, adolescents, teachers and schools; and supporting inclusive and multilingual curricula. Examples from three countries illustrate the range of these initiatives:

- **In El Salvador**, UNICEF supported the national teacher training institute to develop and implement the innovative ‘Soy Musica’ methodology, which trains teachers in using art and music to promote peaceful coexistence in communities facing high levels of violence. To date, 26,625 children have participated in sport, arts and cultural activities that promote child rights, and UNICEF is currently adapting the approach into a national TV programme.

- **In Jordan**, the UNICEF Nashatati programme promotes tolerance within and among communities and enhances collaborative problem-solving skills of children and adolescents. To continue these efforts despite school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF developed digital content that was shared with 3,000 teachers and 900 schools through WhatsApp and Facebook platforms, which enabled some 180,000 students in Grades 7–10 to continue acquiring key life skills and learning about the value of inclusive citizenship and social cohesion.

- **In Myanmar**, UNICEF Learning Together initiative strengthened social cohesion in Rakhine state, by encouraging children to contribute to an inclusive environment through school-based activities aimed at bridging divides among communities in conflict-affected locations. In 2020, the initiative reached 40,000 children in 163 schools.
issues affecting them, their peers and communities. The initiative has engaged 169 girls and 116 boys, deliberately aiming to increase the participation of girls and discussion on issues of gender equality. The clubs have so far produced 12 thematic programmes, which have been broadcast on local radio stations.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNICEF engaged adolescents and their communities in initiatives aimed at bringing together different ethnic and religious groups, along with internally displaced persons, refugees and host communities. In total, 300,383 adolescents – over half of them girls – participated in cultural, sports and youth-led initiatives aimed at promoting inter-ethnic collaboration, skills development and their role as agents of change in their communities.

Local governance, WASH and protection for social cohesion and peace

UNICEF country offices continued to leverage the organization's decentralized field presence and its expertise in child-centred social services to consolidate and build peace and strengthen social cohesion, in particular through engagement with local governments and support to WASH and child protection services. This engagement also included support for child release and reintegration in conflict settings, security sector engagement on child rights and juvenile justice reform.

In Colombia, UNICEF contributed to the implementation of the peace agreement through support for local development plans in 170 municipalities most affected by violence and conflict. Over 32,000 related initiatives were implemented with UNICEF support in 2020, promoting community reconciliation and engagement with local government to improve accountability and inclusive access to quality social services, such as education, health and nutrition.

In Jamaica, UNICEF supported initiatives aimed at reducing violence at community level due to criminal and gang activity. Working closely with two local organizations, UNICEF helped equip at-risk children and adolescents with the life skills they need to cope and thrive in high-violence communities, including skills on building non-violent and gender-equitable relationships, reaching over 500 children and youth.

In Tripoli, Lebanon, UNICEF has pioneered the role of water for peace in divided communities. The initiative involved raising awareness on shared water issues by engaging children in plays and supporting inter-communal WASH committees. Agreements reached within the communities enabled the government to prioritize new investments in WASH infrastructure. Reduced community tensions around water also led to the removal of security checkpoints, thereby improving children's access to schools. The approach is now being expanded to other parts of the country.

Conflict sensitivity and social cohesion in UNICEF COVID-19 response

COVID-19 challenged social cohesion, heightening group-based discrimination and exacerbating existing conflict grievances. UNICEF COVID-19 response aimed to address the health and socioeconomic dimensions of these challenges by supporting the continuity of basic services, including supporting learning throughout the crisis, and by reducing mistrust through its risk communication and community engagement initiatives.

In India, UNICEF supported the national campaign to combat discrimination and stigma related to COVID-19 affecting health workers, migrants and people living urban slums. In areas where the return of migrants due to the pandemic had led to high tensions, UNICEF supported over 500 youth volunteers as part of local peace committees to raise awareness on COVID-19 and mediate disputes between host communities and returning migrant families, reaching 6,700 migrant households and 5,200 children.

In Mali, UNICEF engaged over a hundred child journalists, artists, U-Reporters, and parliamentarians, to implement dialogues and carry out advocacy campaigns reaching 184,721 people in marginalized and at-risk communities to reduce mistrust in the response.
Case Study 7: India: Nationwide commitment to child-sensitive disaster risk management plans

In 2020, India achieved a milestone for child rights with 100 per cent of its disaster risk management plans in states and districts now inclusive of child-sensitive, risk-informed strategies, policies and programming. UNICEF support included training and advocacy, which contributed to increase government financial commitments, including over US$58 million in new funding for disaster risk mitigation and a school safety and security programme in Bihar state.

The mainstreaming of child-centred disaster risk reduction (DRR) accelerated the national efforts in addressing children’s needs during multiple disasters in 2020, including the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and severe flooding events, and in prioritizing the targeting of inputs, from local to national levels. For example:

- UNICEF helped local and regional governments to act quickly and effectively when the national Disaster Management Act was activated in early 2020, enabling governments to adapt child-centred DRR interventions to the Disaster Management Act’s rules and procedures, leading to ‘quick wins’ for children.
- UNICEF Child Risk and Impact Analysis and the Guidance for Risk-Informed Programming packages helped to keep India’s most vulnerable populations safe during the COVID-19 response by identifying where to deliver resources and protective equipment.

Building resilience takes many years, and UNICEF has supported many sequenced steps towards child-sensitive DRR in India, including extensive capacity-building. This continued in 2020 with the training of over 12,000 government staff through the new UNICEF-supported child-centred DRR unit of the National Institute of Disaster Management.

At a UNICEF meeting with adolescents in Gujarat, India, Raveena (14 years old) shows her drawing on the importance of staying home for safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Results: Urban programming and local governance

U-Reporters raising awareness about COVID-19 and mask use in the community of Cocody, a suburb of Abidjan, in Côte d’Ivoire.

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Urban programming

More than 55 per cent of the world population of 7.7 billion live in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 68 per cent by 2050. Of the 4.4 billion people currently living in urban areas, more than 1 billion live in slums and informal settlements, including 350 million children.\(^{150}\)

In 2020, UNICEF supported interventions in cities and towns in over 90 countries, with a strong focus on the most vulnerable children and their families. These interventions are carried out through integrated urban programmes, sectoral programmes and through activities under the Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) framework.

It is a global imperative to focus more on children in urban settings, including slums and informal settlements, to achieve the SDGs by 2030 and fulfil every child’s rights. UNICEF is thus scaling up its urban programming to address the unique structural barriers to child well-being in urban settings, with a special focus on the most marginalized and vulnerable children. This involves leveraging the resources of UNICEF in various ways, including through expanded partnerships with UN-Habitat and other relevant United Nations agencies. It also involves significant adjustments in programming strategies and approaches, which UNICEF is now initiating based on the recommendations of the first UNICEF comprehensive evaluation of its global urban programme that was completed in 2020 (see ‘Evaluation of UNICEF work for children in urban settings’).

The importance of working in urban areas was emphatically underlined in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic, which, like all infectious diseases, spreads rapidly in informal settlements and slums where overcrowding makes it difficult to follow recommended measures of social distancing and self-isolation (and where key services, such as water supply, are lacking). All UNICEF sectoral response programmes included activities in urban areas in COVID-19. In WASH, for example, UNICEF supported the construction or upgrading of water supply systems in 42 countries in 2020, ten more than in 2019.

At country level, UNICEF supported urban and rural governments in 55 countries to make their development plans child-responsive, while 517 subnational and local governments were supported to develop child-sensitive local budgets.

The urban team in UNICEF Headquarters contributed to three major COVID-19 guidance packages: the UNICEF guidance to country offices on COVID-19 response in urban areas; the IASC guidance on public health measures for COVID-19 in low capacity and humanitarian settings; and the United Nations Secretary-General’s policy brief on COVID-19 and cities.

Evaluation of UNICEF work for children in urban settings

UNICEF completed a major evaluation of its urban programming for children in 2020, the first of its kind for the organization.\(^{151}\) The evaluation included a review of global data and trends, the mapping of programming and progress in 72 UNICEF country offices, and a detailed review of urban programming in 5 countries: Belize, Brazil, the Philippines, Spain and the Syrian Arab Republic. Its findings and recommendations are focused on strengthening the organization’s urban strategies and programming to help fulfill the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The evaluation concluded that UNICEF work in urban settings is largely relevant to the goals and strategies articulated in the current UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, and the 2017 Urban Strategy Note. It noted that currently UNICEF employs three main approaches to urban programming – an integrated approach, a sectoral approach and work through CFCI – and that country offices require more harmonized guidance on programming for children in urban settings. The evaluation also noted that urban governance is more complex and bigger in scope than local governance systems and that UNICEF should engage with all tiers of government.

The evaluation also addresses the need for a greater focus on DRR, climate change adaptation and environmental degradation, and calls for additional urban programming capacity within UNICEF, especially in regions with the fastest rates of urbanization and the most pressing urban inequities and crises. The evaluation concludes that addressing the needs of vulnerable children in urban settings, especially in slums and informal settlements, should be at the core of UNICEF programming in countries with widespread urban informality. UNICEF has now completed its management response to the evaluation recommendations and presented it to the Executive Board in February 2021, outlining processes and time frames for adjusting strategies, programming and resource allocations.

Urban diagnostics and planning

UNICEF encourages and supports improved data on intra-urban disparities in programme countries to strengthen advocacy and resource target focus on those most in need. Significant progress has been made in this area; country office reports show that the number of countries with data on intra-urban disparities, including girls and boys in informal settings, climbed to 71 compared to 58 in 2019. This greatly exceed the 2020 Strategic Plan milestone of 32 countries for this indicator.
UNICEF contributed to several initiatives focusing on improving data for evidence-based advocacy and improved planning in 2020, including a chapter on children living in slums in the upcoming UN-Habitat global report on slums. UNICEF and UN-Habitat also joined forces on an initiative to estimate the number of children living in slums in the 40 countries with the highest poor urban populations, which would be a significant step forward towards an impactful programming in slums. UNICEF and UN-Habitat also completed and launched an analysis of multiple deprivations in secondary cities in sub-Saharan Africa in 2020.152

UNICEF has initiated the development of new guidance on conducting city situation analyses for country offices in response to the evaluation finding that broader guidance on urban programming is needed at country level. The guidance will be an important initial step in increasing attention to urban issues within country programmes and in identifying priorities in programming areas.

Country offices also report on the existence of national child-responsive urban planning instruments through the UNICEF reporting system and, in some cases, provide support to government partners in this area (indicator 4.d.2). The data show that in 2020, some 46 countries had child-responsive urban development plans, 30 countries had child-responsive urban planning standards, and 395 towns and cities in 40 countries engaged in child-responsive planning and budgeting.

Work continued on a three-country pilot project on child-responsive urban planning in Paraguay, the Philippines and South Africa, which is developing capacity in child-responsive urban planning, with a particular focus on sustainable transportation planning, road safety, street design for children and safe school environments. The project targets student urban planners, transportation planners and professionals in urban and transportation planning, and includes research and data-strengthening activities in each country. Nevertheless, progress varied in 2020 owing to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

In Paraguay, road improvements were made near three schools and other areas to help guarantee safety and accessibility measures for children and adults. Parallel road safety campaigns were carried to shift the practices of road users, the effectiveness of which will be assessed through a post-intervention road behaviour study. In the Philippines, in 2020, the project used a model school approach to showcase road safety improvements and child-friendly spaces for school children. The work was assessed and used as the basis for interventions in other schools, targeted as being high-risk from a road safety perspective. Four additional schools have been covered to date and have become among the first schools in the country to achieve a 5-star rating from the International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP).

Partnerships and outreach

UNICEF is a member of the expert group that develops the United Nations System-wide Urban Monitoring Framework and is working with UN-Habitat and other agencies on incorporating child-related indicators into the Global Urban Monitoring Framework.

UNICEF has strengthened and expanded its partnership with UN-Habitat by collaborating on several initiatives. This includes deepening data availability on children in slums described above, as well as joint programming in four countries. UNICEF is collaborating with both UN-Habitat and WHO on the development of a set of guidance and principles for public spaces for children.

As a result of a commitment made by UNICEF, Save the Children, World Vision and another 20 organizations at the Tenth Session of the World Urban Forum in February 2020, a new network of organizations working for children in urban settings was formed. The ‘Global Alliance – Cities for Children’ group meets on a monthly basis, and its main objectives are knowledge sharing, research and joint advocacy on issues concerning children living in urban settings. UNICEF is part of the steering committee and the communication and advocacy task team.
Case Study 8: Syrian Arab Republic: Humanitarian needs overview

In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNICEF and international humanitarian partners have developed a monitoring system that works around an absence of administrative and survey data and limited access to affected populations. The humanitarian needs overview (HNO) is coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), and it constitutes sector-specific analyses using a severity scale to identify those most in need. This is complemented by the multisector needs assessment (MSNA), which is a multi-hub and multi-partner assessment coordinated by UNOCHA to identify humanitarian needs. The scale of this exercise is necessarily large: the latest MSNA was conducted by 39 partners in 6,322 communities in the Syrian Arab Republic. The data were collected from households and a variety of focal points, including local authorities, male and female community leaders, health staff, teachers and traders, and other humanitarian agencies. Special efforts were made to interview people at additional risk, such as persons with disabilities, women, older people and housebound individuals.

The HNO reports data at the subdistrict level, and further disaggregation provides a picture of city-level needs in the Syrian Arab Republic. For instance, the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector was able to use the data set to identify the most affected cities, including Daraa, Quneitra, Idlib and Deir-ez-Zor, where residents have very little access to piped water and water trucking was the only source for 35 to 45 per cent of residents.

The HNO is not formally recognized by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic; nevertheless, based on these findings, UNICEF coordinates and plans interventions in partnership with local governments, and interventions are implemented with the approval of the national government.
Local governance

Despite the significant challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, local governance programming in UNICEF continued to yield important results. In 2020, thirty-four country offices reported having supported local planning and budgeting processes at subnational level, including fostering community and child participation to inform local decision-making.

As a result of UNICEF interventions for strengthening local development planning and budgeting processes, 515 subnational and local governments in 31 countries across all UNICEF regions developed child-sensitive plans and budgets that take into account the needs of children and adolescents (see Figure 36). This is a 25 per cent increase over 2019, indicating that local governance programming is expanding in countries where UNICEF is engaged in this area.

FIGURE 36: Countries with child-responsive local plans and budgets, by region, 2020

A variety of instruments were used to make these local development plans child-responsive. Community consultations and support for the integration of national policies and standards related to children into local development plans were the two most commonly used (see Figure 37).

Source: UNICEF SMOs (2020). Notes: EAP, East Asia and the Pacific; ECA, Europe and Central Asia; ESA, Eastern and Southern Africa; LAC, Latin America and the Caribbean; MENA, Middle East and North Africa; SA, South Asia; WCA, West and Central Africa.
UNICEF is also engaging with local governments in 59 countries through the CFCI (34 country offices and 25 National Committees). In many countries, the increased capacity of subnational and local governments, along with more adaptive plans and budgets, have helped to ensure the continuity of essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Ukraine, for example, UNICEF support to local governments in the planning, costing and budgeting of integrated social services, including technical assistance for public finance management, helped participating governments to address fiscal challenges related to COVID-19 response. This enabled budget adaptation at local level to address new and emerging needs, such as purchase of personal protective equipment for front-line social workers to ensure uninterrupted provision of social services for vulnerable families with children.

At the global level, UNICEF supported these efforts through internal technical guidance on local governance and COVID-19 for response planning and delivery of regional offices, country offices and national committees with local governments. Technical assistance was also readjusted to enable provision of targeted support by refocusing local plans and budget allocations to be better able to adapt social service delivery to the new requirements. As with all UNICEF programming, this meant that some work was rescheduled owing to the pandemic, including the planned development of a new UNICEF framework integrating local governance, urban and CFCI approaches at subnational and local levels.

Local data and evidence

Credible administrative data on the status of children and on service delivery performance are key for subnational and local governments to understand the specific needs of children and their caregivers, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized. UNICEF supports efforts to build capacity and promote innovation for the generation and dissemination of these data in programme countries.

In Bhutan, UNICEF partnered with the National Statistical Bureau and the Department of Local Governance to develop a new database system for improving data collection, coherence and consistency at the local level. The system supports local level planning, monitoring and decision-making. UNICEF also supported an assessment of child-friendly local governance in three districts to improve understanding of the needs and challenges faced by local governments in fulfilling commitments. The assessment highlights the constraints in governance, planning, budgeting and service provision at local level.
In Spain, where the UNICEF National Committee is working with local governments through CFCI, a survey was commissioned to gather data on services available for children at the municipal level and assess delivery gaps for the most vulnerable children and their families. A total of 166 local governments responded to the survey, providing information on activities in the areas of nutrition, education, emergency housing and cash transfers. The evidence from this exercise, along with a series of training webinars for 1,300 technical staff, enabled UNICEF to advocate an improved equity-based targeting, helping to ensure that the most vulnerable children and families are not excluded from support services.

**Local planning and budgeting**

UNICEF supports subnational and local governments to strengthen planning processes, improve budgeting systems and practices, and influence resource allocation for more equitable, efficient and effective service delivery. This work includes the development of a variety of instruments and processes and involves a wide range of stakeholders: from technical experts in large cities to council members in rural districts.

In the Philippines, work revolved around the development of costed nutrition action plans and their integration into municipal spending structures. Support included participatory technical content reviewing of the action plans, developing budgets, engaging with governors and mayors, and – ultimately – integrating nutrition interventions into the cross-sectoral municipal investment plans. The process led to the institutionalization of local funding for maternal nutrition, infant and young child nutrition, micronutrient supplementation as well as the management of acute malnutrition through existing municipal mechanisms, including food security, social welfare and WASH programmes.

In Senegal, UNICEF supported the development of budgets in 52 Child Friendly Municipalities that include activities on birth registration (monitoring and updating of newborn registers in villages and quarters), education (construction of classrooms), youth empowerment and employability, civic engagement, resource mobilization and climate change. The programme included a parallel empowerment campaign promoting youth leadership, personal development, good governance, entrepreneurship and human rights, and capacity-building of girls’ clubs in the areas of digitalization and social innovation. UNICEF also supported civic engagement activities, including youth-led COVID-19 initiatives, such as the distribution of masks and the promotion of hand washing with soap.

Ladj Kamara, a mentor from the Child Friendly Municipality of Kothiary in Senegal, speaking at an ‘Upshift Bootcamp’ event on social innovation skills development.
Local participation and accountability

Strengthening the voice and agency of children, adolescents and their caregivers is an important part of building accountable and equitable subnational and local governance systems. Participation of children in decision-making helps to ensure that their views and specific needs are incorporated into local policies, plans and budgets. Being the level closest to people, local governments are best placed to provide space for community and child voices to influence local agendas and provide informed oversight of local service delivery. Examples of UNICEF support for effective community and child participation in 2020 include:

- In Cambodia, where UNICEF promoted youth participation in planning and budgeting process to help ensure the accountability of local councils through support for the participation of youth in annual community planning and budgeting activities, and sponsoring youth-led initiatives to make their voices heard on matters directly affecting their community. The programme included collaboration with government ministries on the development of a citizen budget engagement methodology, which was piloted in 63 communes.

- In the Niger, where support was provided to 21 municipalities to involve youth organizations in local government decision-making processes, including assessment of annual investment plans, participation municipal council sessions, review of past investments with municipal monitoring commissions, and in related initiatives to promote citizen participation and oversight of budget processes and municipal resource mobilization.

- In Sri Lanka, where the Municipal Council of Batticaloa conducted a budget consultation with children for the first time. Children actively participated in the process and provided suggestions for building recreational spaces for children, greening of the city, improving road safety and expanding library and reading spaces. As a result, a specific expenditure category was created by the council, and funds were allocated for child-friendly infrastructure development.

Local service delivery arrangements

Subnational and local governments play an important role in the provision and coordination of basic social services and in ensuring they reach target populations. However, they often struggle to effectively design, coordinate and manage provision of integrated social services. Strengthening local government capacity in the delivery of services is thus an important strategy to improve outcomes for children generally and to ensure services reach poor and vulnerable populations.

An example of UNICEF support for local capacity-building is the Brazil Municipal Seal of Approval initiative, which has engaged over 1,900 municipalities in the Semi-arid and Amazon regions of the country over the last four years. More than 5 million children and adolescents have benefited from the initiative through increased quality learning opportunities, improved access to birth registration, accelerated child immunization programmes, better maternal and newborn care services, and political and social engagement opportunities for adolescents.

In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UNICEF provided technical assistance to two municipalities to update their ECD plans and guarantee inclusion of ECD in the new municipal planning cycle for 2021–2025. The new municipal plans guide actions of local authorities and define specific mechanisms for the implementation of ECD programmes, including adjustments related to the COVID-19 response. Over 110,000 children aged 0–5 years have now benefited from these services.
Case Study 9: Mexico: Strategic advocacy to expand social protection for children during the COVID-19 pandemic in Mexico City

A long-standing partnership on local governance support in Mexico City as a focal municipality enabled UNICEF to strategically advocate approaches that deliver results for children and that can be showcased at the federal level and to other local governments country-wide.

Leveraging this partnership, UNICEF advocated a temporary increase in transfer values with the Government of Mexico City for existing beneficiaries in the city’s cash transfer programme ‘Mi Beca para Empezar’ in response to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the quarantine provisions. This cash transfer programme is one of the local government’s flagship initiatives, benefiting more than 1.2 million children living in the city. The rationale behind UNICEF suggestion was that the higher transfer level would help to address the needs of vulnerable children during the pandemic, particularly when many households (especially those with members who are women and/or informal workers) were suffering from reduced incomes and other economic and social impacts. As a result of the advocacy, and a concurrent high-level technical assistance programme, Mexico City became one of the first city governments in the country to announce financial support for its citizens in the context of COVID-19, prioritizing children and their families. The temporary expansion was implemented rapidly and successfully, fully financed by the Government of Mexico City. Recipients received their regular monthly stipend of US$15/month plus an US$22 top-up for a total of US$37, and children with disabilities received an extra US$5.
Results: Climate, energy and environment

A woman crossing a severely polluted road in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Children are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of air pollution.

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Despite the challenges of delivering programmes during a global pandemic, UNICEF climate and environmental programming expanded again in 2020. This section of the report describes UNICEF activities and responses in this area (see ‘Climate-resilient WASH’ for WASH-specific programming).

Climate resilience and environmental action are increasingly mainstreamed into UNICEF sectoral programming, with over 6 million people reached with climate-resilient WASH services in 2020, health-related interventions in 57 countries, expanding education and youth engagement activities across all regions and mainstreaming climate and the environment into UNICEF policy and strategy, including the upcoming Strategic Plan and the recently updated nutrition strategy.

A total of 74 countries implemented child-inclusive programmes that foster climate resilience, environmental sustainability and low carbon development in 2020, the most ever (see Figure 38).

FIGURE 38: Child-inclusive climate and environmental programmes through UNICEF support, number of countries, 2018–2020

Source: UNICEF SMQs (2020).

Selected 2020 results are described below, broadly categorized into five areas: advocacy and evidence generation, engagement and empowerment of children and young people, the protection of children from the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, reducing emissions and pollution, and improving the sustainability of UNICEF operations.

**Advocacy and evidence generation**

Although not widely recognized, climate change is a child rights crisis because children bear the brunt of its impacts. UNICEF continues to make this a central theme of its global advocacy. One example is the briefing document on climate and COVID-19, *Reimagining our Future: Building back better from COVID-19*, which presents a set of solutions to reduce the impact of COVID-19 that can at the same time create a foundation for a greener, more sustainable
future for children. Key messages include how the crisis has emphasized the importance of sustainable and equitable services across all UNICEF programme areas, reinforced the value of multilateralism and of public–private collaboration, and underlined the need for local action, preparedness and resilience (see Figure 39 for additional examples).

Building back better for children was the theme of UNICEF advocacy on World Children’s Day in 2020, which amplified the voices of children and young people on reimagining a greener and more sustainable future. In India, the Vice President called on leaders to listen to and engage with children, and the child parliamentarians presented a charter of demands on climate action to the adult parliamentarians. In Bangladesh, UNICEF facilitated online discussions on climate issues involving over 1 million young people along with sessions between elected representatives and children from their constituencies. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a documentary showcased the activities of participants in the Child Reporters initiative related to climate change, including the launch of a popular song on a radio station to inform children and their families about rights and duties.

FIGURE 39: Selected UNICEF advocacy publications on climate change and the environment, 2020

Global publications
- The Toxic Truth: Children’s exposure to lead pollution undermines a generation of future potential
- Reimagining our Future: Building back better from COVID-19. Solutions to reduce the impact of COVID-19 can at the same time create a foundation for a greener, more sustainable future for children
- The COVID-19, Climate Change and Environmental Degradation Crisis
- Healthy Environments for Healthy Children: Global Programme Framework
- A Future for the World’s Children (Lancet report, with WHO)

Regional and country publications
- Latin America and the Caribbean: Toolkit for Young Climate Activists
- East Asia and the Pacific:
  - Children’s Rights to a Healthy Environment in East Asia and the Pacific, Discussion paper
  - Children’s Environment and Health in East Asia and the Pacific: Situation analysis and call For action
  - Guardians of the Planet: Asia Pacific children and youth voices on climate crisis and disaster risk
- Eastern and Southern Africa: The Climate Crisis: Climate change impacts, trends and vulnerabilities: Children in sub-Saharan Africa
- South Asia: Rising to the Challenge: Youth perspectives on climate change and education in South Asia
- Bangladesh: Rising to the Challenge: Youth perspectives on climate change and education in Bangladesh
- India: Rising to the Challenge: Youth perspectives on climate change and education in India
- Ecuador: The Air We Breathe: The effects of air pollution and climate change on the health of children in Ecuador (Spanish)

UNICEF encouraged the engagement of young people in NDC processes through a range of mechanisms, including through support of the NDC Partnership global Youth Task Force and the development of the 2020 NDC Youth Engagement Plan. UNICEF also developed a global toolkit on engaging children and young people in NDC processes and regional toolkits in the East Asia and the Pacific region and the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

At country level, UNICEF directly supported child and youth-inclusive NDCs in Barbados, Cambodia, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Zimbabwe and several other countries. Viet Nam’s 2020 NDC submission, supported by UNICEF and other partners, includes a dedicated section on children’s vulnerabilities to climate change across various sectors, while featuring issues of equity by recognizing children with disabilities, children from poor families, migrant children, girls and those in the Mekong Delta.
In Ecuador, Jamaica, Lebanon and the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UNICEF conducted Climate Landscape Assessments for Children, with assessments being initiated in an additional four countries.

UNICEF regional offices carried out a range of initiatives to advocate the inclusion of children’s rights in climate and environmental action and the empowerment of children activists. Examples include:

- A discussion paper on children’s right to a healthy environment and the status of children’s education, engagement and participation in environmental issues in the East Asia and the Pacific region

- A study on youth perspectives on climate change and education in South Asia, which compiled and analysed the opinions of almost 25,000 voices of young people from all 8 countries in the region

- A report on climate change risks, trends and impacts on children in sub-Saharan Africa, which modelled a range of climate scenarios to assess the range of possible future impacts on health services, education services and water security and the implications for children

A total of 65 countries now have child-sensitive national sectoral or cross-sectoral climate change adaptation and mitigation plans developed through UNICEF support, more than double the number in 2019 and significantly exceeding the 2020 target of 20 countries. In all cases, these policy instruments recognize that children are at risk from the negative impacts of climate change, unsustainable energy use and environmental degradation, and address their needs and rights.

Women collecting water from a UNICEF-supported well in the village of Dafo in southern Djibouti. Severe multi-year droughts linked to climate change in Djibouti and neighbouring countries have caused many water points to dry up.
Engagement and empowerment of children and young people on climate, energy and the environment

Action on climate and the environment is driven by the energy of young people, and UNICEF programmes promote their engagement and empower them through education. In 2020, the World’s Largest Lesson, a UNICEF-supported initiative, promoted the use of the SDGs in learning and included a toolkit for young people to engage in climate policy development. The toolkit is now serving as a model for initiatives by other stakeholders.

In response to widespread requests from children and young people to learn more about climate change and climate action, UNICEF launched a U-Report climate chat bot that provides climate facts – from causes, to impacts, to solutions – and contains a unique ‘Act’ feature that coaches users on how to create their own advocacy. Over 12,000 young people have been engaging with this chat bot since 2020. UNICEF also developed a toolkit for young climate activists in the Latin America and the Caribbean region that provides young people with the skills and information needed to engage in climate action. The toolkit has been downloaded over 5,000 times.

In 2020, UNICEF supported 106 countries to engage children and young people on advocacy, communication and campaigning around climate change and the environment. UNICEF also became a strategic partner of the Youth Sustainable Energy Hub in 2020, which is building support for the participation of young people in sustainable energy initiatives globally. The number of adolescents who were supported by UNICEF to participate in or lead offline and online civic initiatives in climate and environmental action reached a total of 761,232 young people. Through this support, youth were engaged in a wide range of activities, including environmental activism using U-Report, participation in NDC processes and involvement in air quality monitoring and advocacy, recycling initiatives and environmental education programmes.

Examples include the Philippines where UNICEF and government partners developed a comprehensive communication strategy to engage young people and influence practices; India where over 24,000 young people engaged on climate issues via U-Report; and the Eastern Caribbean subregion where UNICEF launched the Health Environments for Healthy Children campaign to link the climate and youth health agendas through regional consultations and advocacy.

Case Study 10: Armenia, Kazakhstan and Zimbabwe: Supporting young people as agents of change for action on climate change and the environment

In Armenia, UNICEF, the Austrian Development Agency and government partners are developing a comprehensive environmental education programme in the country linking in-school learning with youth-led action in communities through a three-year project. On World Youth Day, the project sponsored a discussion between a group of 50 girls and boys, including children with disabilities, and education policymakers on the children’s priorities for a new curriculum in the areas of climate, environment and disaster risk reduction (DRR). On World Environment Day, the project convened an online event during which adolescents and experts discussed how climate change affects the biodiversity in Armenia and the necessity of climate action to build resilient communities. This event led to the launch of a digital campaign on eco-efficiency to provide young people with strategies on reducing the environmental and climate footprint in communities and homes, which ultimately reached over 110,000 people through digital channels.
In Kazakhstan, UNICEF partnered with the National Volunteers Network and national ministries responsible for education, natural resources and foreign affairs to engage with children on the issue of plastic pollution. The #PlasticFreeKazakhstan initiative trains youth volunteers to act as teachers and mentors for younger children with the goal of educating children on plastic pollution and broader climate and environment issues, while encouraging life-long eco-friendly behaviours at home and in their communities. Children aged 7–10 years are engaged in 30-minute sessions by the volunteers through interactive games and educational activities tailored to the local context. Due to the pandemic, these sessions were mainly provided remotely. After a 10-school pilot in one region, the programme has expanded to more than 100 schools country-wide. By the end of 2020, over 100 trained volunteers had engaged with 9,094 children, and there are now plans to expand the initiative further in Kazakhstan and into neighbouring countries.

In Zimbabwe, the Green Innovations Hub (GiHUB) initiative, supported by UNICEF, Sida and other partners, is helping young people to get involved in environmental issues and take action on climate change through three channels: a green innovations facility, green schools and green internships. GiHUB offers boot camps, mentorships and seed funding to selected young entrepreneurs and connects them to industry leaders. In one example, a new youth-led company converts used tires into patio and garden furniture. GiHUB grants to schools have provided essential equipment, including solar panels, and financed environmental skills development for students, teachers and the surrounding community. Under the internships channel, 20 young people completed internships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private companies in a variety of roles. In one example, a programme intern helped to develop a successful green waste management system for the host company. A policy brief based on this experience is being used for engagement with government partners on expanding components of the GiHUB experience nationally.

In Aksuat in eastern Kazakhstan, 16-year-old volunteer Kalamkas Zharkymbayeva discusses eco-friendly practices during a family meal.
Protecting children from the impacts of climate change and environmental pollution

UNICEF helps to strengthen resilience to climate impacts and environmental degradation throughout its programming for children at country level, including cross-sectoral work, sector initiatives within the WASH, health, nutrition, education programmes and through humanitarian response. Climate resilience is now a core focus for WASH interventions, and environment- and climate change-related DRR have been a long-standing area of focus for work in the UNICEF education sector. Addressing the impact of climate change and pollution on children’s health and nutrition and leveraging UNICEF experience in shock-responsive social protection systems to better serve children are becoming increasingly important to the organization’s work.

UNICEF programmes emphasize the importance of climate-resilient social services to ensure the continued delivery of services for children and their families. In 2020, over 30 UNICEF offices reported the use of renewable energy solutions for health, education and other facilities providing services for children. Strengthening national cold chain networks using solar-powered refrigeration is a key area, especially in the era of COVID-19 and the continuing infrastructure demands of routine immunization programmes for children. Solar refrigerators were installed in Haiti (in 288 health centres), Madagascar (270 centres), South Sudan (160 centres) and other countries. In Togo, four health-care facilities were equipped with both solar pumps and solar refrigerators, and an additional 70 health-care facilities with refrigerators.

Solar power for school initiatives continued in several countries, including in the Gambia, Malawi, Myanmar and Uganda. In Kenya, UNICEF supported the COVID-19 school resilience and remote learning plan of the ministry of education through the distribution of textbooks and solar-powered radios that reached over 85,000 children in disadvantaged areas. In Viet Nam, a new partnership was established with the Global Green Growth Institute for innovative clean energy financing for schools to develop solar power at the national level, with co-benefits for child health.

UNICEF continued to shift its WASH programme towards full climate resilience, delivering climate-resilient services to over 6 million people in 2020 (see ‘Results: Water, sanitation and hygiene’).

The UNICEF CCCs now have guidelines for reducing the environmental footprint of programming interventions and implementing climate resilience as part of humanitarian response. This has contributed to an expansion of the application of environmental and social safeguards in humanitarian programming contexts. In 2020, safeguards were incorporated into 26 approved projects and programmes, including in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

In 2020, UNICEF joined the Climate and Clean Air Coalition – a partnership of governments, intergovernmental organizations, businesses, scientific institutions and civil society organizations – which is committed to improving air quality and protecting the climate through actions to reduce short-lived climate pollutants. UNICEF continued its involvement in other partnership frameworks including the SDG 7 Technical Advisory Group, the United Nations High-level Dialogue on Energy 2021, the United Nations Environment Management Group and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board on Biodiversity.

Reducing emissions and pollution

Approximately 93 per cent of children under 15 years of age – a total of 1.8 billion young people – breathe air that is so polluted it risks their health and development. Children are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of air pollution, both household and ambient, which include chronic respiratory infections, lung disease, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, cognitive problems, birth defects and other negative health effects, and can have an impact on adolescent mental health and well-being.

In 2020, UNICEF air pollution response programmes were being implemented in nine countries: China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Mongolia, Myanmar, Serbia and Viet Nam. These programmes are multifaceted, involving data collection, advocacy, youth engagement and other components. In Myanmar, the ‘Clean Air and Green Economy Transition for Myanmar’s Children and Youth’ project:
Dolys, 11 years old, and his family were left homeless by floods in northern Madagascar in January 2020.
• Generated data and evidence on the sources of air pollution and its effects on children and pregnant women
• Supported the engagement of children and youth networks as clean air advocates
• Encouraged public–private partnerships and young entrepreneurs to explore responses
• Engaged in advocacy and the encouragement of behavioural change with government partners at all levels

UNICEF recently launched the Global Programme Framework on Healthy Environments for Healthy Children initiative, which provides evidence about the impacts of environmental hazards on children and calls for new partnerships across the public and private sectors to address this challenge and protect children’s current and future well-being.

In 2020, UNICEF supported health-related interventions on climate change and environmental pollution in 57 countries. Programmes targeted air pollution, lead pollution and other environmental pollutants (including pesticides, arsenic and e-waste) through policy engagement, advocacy, capacity-building, research and other interventions. In 16 countries, UNICEF supported safe and environmentally sound waste disposal solutions in health-care facilities and, in 8 countries, worked with partners on strengthening the climate resilience of health networks.

UNICEF global report *The Toxic Truth*, launched in 2020, showed that 1 in 3 children – up to 800 million globally – has dangerously high blood lead levels. Lead contamination is particularly destructive to babies and children under the age of 5 as it damages their brain before they have had the opportunity to fully develop, causing them lifelong neurological, cognitive and physical impairment. The report was covered by over 800 online and print media outlets, potentially reaching 2 billion people.

In cooperation with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the East Asia and the Pacific region, UNICEF launched a clean air webinar series that covered air quality monitoring systems and technologies, including use of low-cost sensors, and facilitated the sharing of experiences and lessons learned across countries.

### Internal sustainability and the greening of UNICEF

UNICEF has aligned its 2030 carbon reduction target with the United Nations 45 per cent reduction target (from 2016 levels) and will once again be recognized as carbon neutral after offsetting unavoidable emissions. In the upcoming Strategic Plan, UNICEF will, for the first time, include carbon reduction targets as a core performance outcome indicator.

In 2020, UNICEF conducted 23 internal eco-efficiency projects, including solar energy projects in 11 offices and 10 social and behaviour change campaigns, and implemented energy-efficiency standards for new construction. In Guinea-Bissau, a new solar system reduced fossil fuel energy consumption by 17 per cent, with savings exceeding US$25,000. In Guyana, UNICEF relocated to common United Nations premises, where it will be drawing over 90 per cent of its electricity from a solar system. In another example, the UNICEF office of the United Republic of Tanzania in Dar es Salaam completed a solar energy installation project, reduced water consumption by more than 10 per cent, eliminated the use of plastic material and reduced paper use by over 30 per cent.
High-level priorities

A student washes his hands at a facility provided by UNICEF in support of a school reopening campaign in the south of Ethiopia.

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As this report goes to press, UNICEF is continuing to manage programmes that have been altered, to a certain extent, for the response to COVID-19 while also working to meet the Strategic Plan targets within Goal Area 4. At the same time, UNICEF is in the final stages of developing its strategies and results framework for the new UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. This development includes an extensive consultation process, targeted situation analyses and the elaboration of a theory of change to achieve results for children under the new Strategic Plan.

This chapter of the report outlines priorities and plans for the remainder of the Strategic Plan period and into the next across the five results areas.

## Outputs 1 and 2: Water, sanitation and hygiene

The midterm review of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, completed in 2020, noted that UNICEF must adapt its WASH strategies to a programming context increasingly affected by the impacts of climate change and by protracted crises, while also adjusting to the more rigorous, safely managed standards of the targets within SDG 6. The review outlined the need for three broad shifts in global strategic direction of UNICEF WASH programming: to ensure that WASH services are climate-resilient, to link humanitarian responses and sustainable development and to move people up the WASH ladder towards safely managed services, particularly in the areas of sanitation and hygiene where progress is lagging. The review also noted that these shifts should be incorporated both within UNICEF direct support for increasing access to WASH services and through support for strengthening sectoral systems.

In preparation for the new UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, two situation analyses were conducted: one focusing on supporting the SDG target of universal and equitable access to WASH services through the pathway of support for service delivery, and one on the pathway of systems-strengthening in the WASH sector, both without which SDG 6 will not be achieved. WASH programming under the new Strategic Plan will have two results areas based on these pathways.

The first results area will help children and adolescents to gain access to safe, sustainable and climate-resilient water, sanitation and hygiene services through direct support, with a focus on the most disadvantaged and those living in humanitarian and fragile contexts. Through this programming, UNICEF will work to address the full ambition of the SDGs for safe sanitation and hygiene. Medium-term results will be achieved in three activity streams:

- Improving WASH services in communities
- Scaling up WASH services in schools and health-care facilities
- Reaching all children in fragile and humanitarian contexts

UNICEF will also continue to improve sector progress monitoring, reflecting its mandate as co-custodian with WHO for tracking progress towards SDGs 6.1 and 6.2 (safe and affordable drinking-water, and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all).

The second results area will support efforts to:

- Strengthen national WASH systems
- Empower communities to achieve gender equal, inclusive, affordable and sustainable WASH services
- Enable increased sector financing and strengthened capacity at national and local levels through evidence-based advocacy
- Promote innovative approaches and the development of strategic partnerships

This renewed emphasis on systems-building acknowledges the central role of national and local government authorities in ensuring that sectoral SDG targets are met, that results are equitable and that WASH systems are climate-resilient and address water scarcity. UNICEF engagement with government partners will also include advocacy and support for national monitoring systems that identify inequalities in WASH services and systems that prioritize action to address gaps. The second results area will also support efforts to ensure sustainability and resilience criteria are built into routine monitoring systems. UNICEF will continue to play a critical role in strengthening coordination mechanisms for predictable, effective and high-quality service delivery, linked to the UNICEF CCCs for humanitarian action.
Output 3: Disaster risk reduction, resilience strengthening and peacebuilding

In 2021, and into the new Strategic Plan period, UNICEF will continue to expand its focus on the HDP nexus, linking humanitarian and development programming, conflict sensitivity and contributions to peacebuilding and social cohesion. This includes the implementation of related commitments in the new UNICEF CCCs.

In the area of child-centred DRR and recovery, UNICEF will proactively support governments with resilient recovery through a systems-strengthening approach that will help efforts to reach the ‘last mile’, leaving no one behind. Efforts in 2021 will focus on learning the lessons from the COVID-19 crisis to ensure that when the next crisis comes national risk processes and capabilities are more robust and that girls and boys are less vulnerable to its impacts.

Given the challenges posed by conflict and fragility to the achievement of the SDGs and the realization of children’s rights, UNICEF will also strengthen its efforts on preventing conflict and reduce fragility by more deliberately harnessing the significant peacebuilding impact of child-centred social services, particularly in the sectors of education, WASH and social and child protection. Growing partnerships and collaboration with other actors in these areas is a priority for UNICEF.

Output 4: Urban programming and local governance

UNICEF local governance and urban programming will be stepped up in 2021 and beyond, guided by the recommendations of the evaluation completed in 2020, the first ever comprehensive assessment of UNICEF urban programming. The urban strategy note will be updated, and an organizational procedure issued for guiding sectors and country offices in addressing the unique structural barriers of child well-being in urban settings. An integrated programme framework for UNICEF engagement at subnational and local levels will be developed, bringing together the urban programming, local governance and CFCI. This integrated approach will be applied in different territorial and country contexts and will enable more strategic and convergent programming at the subnational level with local governments and other local stakeholders.

The urban programme will be tailored to country contexts, with low- and middle-income countries focusing on strengthening the capacity of cities for the analysis of intra-urban data, child-responsive urban planning and strategic interventions to address the unique structural barriers to child well-being. UNICEF, in partnership with relevant organizations and networks, will work to address specific issues related to children living in slums and informality. An action plan for advocacy and programming will be developed and country offices supported for implementation. In higher income countries, the priority will be put on child rights advocacy and child participation alongside improving urban and local governance programming. Local governance programming guidance in country programmes will be strengthened through the provision of additional technical support and the modelling of approaches to local planning and budgeting, social accountability and coordination of services. Particular focus will be placed on improving capacities of local governance systems in both urban and rural settings to engage in participatory decision-making by enhancing the voice and agency of communities and children at local level.
Strong poverty reduction lenses will support the systems-strengthening efforts at subnational level for the delivery of child-centred equitable social programmes.

Expanded partnerships with UN-Habitat, Cities Alliance, the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), UNDP and other relevant United Nations agencies will improve visibility and knowledge sharing on urban and local governance programming to ensure complementarity and clear parameters for working together in cities and rural areas, maximize the results of UNICEF supported interventions across all regions and achieve sustainable and long-term results for children.

Output 5: Climate, energy and the environment

Children bear the brunt of impacts from climate change, environmental degradation and disasters. 2020 was the warmest year on record, the number of climate-related disasters has increased by 30 per cent since the 1990s, and the majority of the world’s children already breathe air that is polluted.

UNICEF will continue to expand responses to climate change and environmental degradation, including in DRR. Programmes will continue to leverage the UNICEF collaborative advantage in advocacy, building the resilience of social sectors (including WASH, health and education) while engaging young people and holistic responses across climate change adaptation, DRR, and emergency response. The focus of work will continue to be on cross-sectoral policy and implementation support for a child-sensitive, green and sustainable recovery from COVID-19 and on scaling up sector-based interventions such as climate-resilient WASH and climate-adaptive shock-responsive social protection. UNICEF will also implement internal organizational requirements for environmental sustainability, as well as continue to reduce emissions (and offset those that are unavoidable) while increasing sustainability across operations and supply chains.
### Abbreviations and acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMCOW</td>
<td>African Ministers’ Council on Water</td>
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<td>ASWA</td>
<td>Accelerating Sanitation, Hygiene and Water for All</td>
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<td>CCCs</td>
<td>Core Commitments to Children</td>
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<td>CFCl</td>
<td>Child Friendly Cities Initiative</td>
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<td>CO₂</td>
<td>carbon dioxide</td>
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<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>coronavirus disease 2019</td>
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<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<td>DHS</td>
<td>Demographic and Health Survey</td>
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<td>DRR</td>
<td>disaster risk reduction</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>early childhood development</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>gender-based violence</td>
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<td>GCF</td>
<td>Green Climate Fund</td>
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<td>GIHUB</td>
<td>Green Innovations Hub</td>
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<td>HDP</td>
<td>Humanitarian–Development–Peace</td>
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<td>HNO</td>
<td>humanitarian needs overview</td>
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<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPC</td>
<td>infection prevention and control</td>
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<tr>
<td>JMP</td>
<td>WHO–UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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<td>MHH</td>
<td>menstrual hygiene and health</td>
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<tr>
<td>MICS</td>
<td>Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey</td>
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<td>MSNA</td>
<td>multisector needs assessment</td>
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<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Adaptation Plan</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>Nationally Determined Contribution</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODF</td>
<td>open defecation free</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sida</td>
<td>Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation</td>
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<td>SIWI</td>
<td>Stockholm International Water Institute</td>
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<td>SMQ</td>
<td>strategic monitoring question</td>
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<td>SPC</td>
<td>Pacific Community</td>
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<td>SWA</td>
<td>Sanitation and Water for All</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN-Habitat</td>
<td>United Nations Human Settlements Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNOCHA</td>
<td>United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>VfM</td>
<td>value for money</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH BAT</td>
<td>WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH FIT</td>
<td>Water and Sanitation for Health-care Facility Improvement Tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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Annex 1: Financial report*

*All funding data as of 6 April 2021, pending audit and certification.

This financial report details income and expenses for Goal Area 4 in 2020. It is presented in three parts:

- An overall summary report for UNICEF income and expenses
- A report on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) income and expenses
- A report on income and expenses for disaster risk reduction (DRR), urban and local governance, and climate, energy and the environment output areas (referred to in this financial annex as Safe and Clean Environment income and expenses).

Part I: Overall UNICEF income and expenses

UNICEF income in 2020

In 2020, UNICEF total income increased by 13 per cent compared with 2019, reaching an all-time high of US$7,219 million. This was largely due to an increase in income to earmarked funds to specific programmes (other resources), which grew by 14 per cent, up from US$5,029 million in 2019 to US$5,748 million in 2020. Although income to un-earmarked funds (regular resources) also increased, to US$1,470 million in 2020 compared with US$1,371 million in 2019, it decreased as a proportion of UNICEF total income to 20 per cent, down from 21 per cent in 2019 (see Figure A1-1).

FIGURE A1-1: Income by funding type, 2014–2020*

Note: *Figures are based on ‘income’, which here represents contributions received from public sector and revenue from private sector.
‘Other resources’ contributions increased by 13 per cent compared with 2019, and contributions to UNICEF’s thematic funding pools increased by 27 per cent, from US$346 million in 2019 to US$438 million in 2020. Thematic funding also increased as a percentage of all ‘other resources’, from 7 per cent in 2019 to 8 per cent in 2020. This is 6 per cent below the milestone target set out in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, with thematic funding representing 43 per cent of all ‘other resources’ in 2020.

The increasing overall amount of thematic funding, as well as increasing ratio of thematic funding as a percentage, is a result of both an increase in non-humanitarian thematic funding and an increase in humanitarian thematic funding driven by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. This trend is encouraging and in line with the Funding Compact commitments. In the Funding Compact between governments and the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, United Nations Member States have committed to double the share of non-core contributions that are provided through single agency thematic, such as UNICEF’s thematic funding pools. In alignment with this commitment, UNICEF aims to double thematic funding as a share of all ‘other resources’ to 15 per cent by 2021. To reach this goal, UNICEF encourages partners to channel more contributions through these softly earmarked funds.

FIGURE A1-2: Other resources contributions, share of thematic funding, 2014–2020*

‘Income’ is defined as contributions received from Governments, inter-organizational arrangements and intergovernmental organizations, and revenue from the private sector.

Regular resources (RR): Un-earmarked funds that are foundational to deliver results across the Strategic Plan.

Other resources (OR): Earmarked funds for programmes; supplementary to RR and intended for a specific purpose, such as an emergency response or a specific programme in a country/region.

Other resources – regular (ORR): Funds for specific, non-emergency programme purposes and strategic priorities.

Other resources – emergency (ORE): Earmarked funds for specific humanitarian action and post-crisis recovery activities.

Thematic funding remains a critical source of income for UNICEF programme delivery. Through thematic funding contributions at global, regional and/or country levels, partners support UNICEF-delivered results at the highest programme level in each of those contexts for the greatest impact. They act as an ideal complement to regular resources, as they can be allocated on a needs basis. The flexibility of thematic funding allows UNICEF to respond more effectively. It facilitates longer-term planning, sustainability and savings in transaction costs, leaving more resources for UNICEF programmes.

For partners, contributions to UNICEF’s 10 thematic funding pools are in keeping with the principles of good multilateral resource partnerships. Thematic contributions have the greatest potential of ‘other resources’ to produce high-level results directly aligned to the Strategic Plan, as endorsed by the UNICEF Executive Board, and supported by the aims of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. They yield a higher return on investment than more tightly earmarked contributions, as lower management and reporting costs result in a larger percentage of funds going towards programming. They also simplify renewal and allocation procedures and reduce the administrative monitoring burden for partners.

Overall contributions to the thematic funding pools increased from US$346 million in 2019 to US$438 million in 2020. The largest public sector contributors to the thematic funding pools in 2020 were the Governments of Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands, while the largest private sector contributions were facilitated by the German Committee for UNICEF, the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, and the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF. (more information on thematic funding and how it works is available at <www.unicef.org/publicpartnerships/66662_66851.html>).

FIGURE A1-3: Thematic contributions by thematic pool, 2020: US$438 million
The allocation and expenditure of all thematic funding contributions can be monitored on the UNICEF transparency portal (<https://open.unicef.org>), and the results achieved with the funds, assessed against Executive Board-approved targets and indicators at country, regional and global levels, are consolidated and reported across the suite of Global Annual Results Reports.

Transparency:
Follow the flow of funds from contribution to programming by visiting <https://open.unicef.org>.

UNICEF expenses in 2020
Of note, expenses are higher than the income received because expenses are comprised of total allotments from regular resources and ‘other resources’ (including balances carried over from previous years), whereas income reflects only earmarked contributions to Goal Area 4 in 2020.

‘Expenses’ are recorded according to IPSAS standards and are accrual based. These are used for official financial reporting. ‘Expenditures’ are recorded on a modified cash basis. They are used for budget reporting since they are aligned with cash disbursements and goods receipts (the way budgets are consumed).
In 2020, total expenses for UNICEF programmes amounted to US$5.72 billion. Total expenses for Goal Area 4 in 2020 were US$1.1 billion. Most of these funds (89 per cent) were used for WASH programming, with the remainder allocated to the disaster risk reduction (DRR), urban programming and environmental sustainability results areas (collectively referred to in this financial annex as ‘Safe and Clean Environment’).
In 2020, partners contributed US$260 million ‘other resources – regular’ for WASH, a 40 per cent increase over the previous year. Public sector partners contributed the largest share of ‘other resources – regular’ to WASH, at 92 per cent. The top five resource partners to UNICEF WASH in 2020 were the Government of Germany, the European Commission and the Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Sweden and the Netherlands (see Figure A1-7). The largest contributions were received from the Government of Germany for a regional WASH programme for refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities in East Africa, for strengthening community resilience in South Sudan urban settings and for WASH phase III in Lebanon (see Figure A1-8 and the body of the report for results on these programmes).
FIGURE A1-6: Total WASH funds received by type of resource partner, 2020: US$260 million

Private sector
US$20,270,005
8%

Public sector
US$240,154,813
92%

FIGURE A1-7: Top 20 resource partners to WASH by total contributions, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Resource partners</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Germany*</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>European Commission*</td>
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<td>Sweden*</td>
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<td>United States</td>
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<td>Republic of Korea*</td>
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<td>U.S. Fund for UNICEF</td>
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<td>UNDP-managed United Nations Partnerships and Joint Programmes*</td>
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<td>World Bank</td>
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<td>Iceland</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Australia</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>German Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>3,039,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Japan Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Finland</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Canada</td>
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<tr>
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<td>United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF</td>
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### FIGURE A1-7 (continued)

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<th>Rank</th>
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<td>18</td>
<td>1,794,303</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,518,309</td>
<td>Solomon Islands (pass-through funding from the European Union)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,407,775</td>
<td>UNOPS</td>
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### FIGURE A1-8: Top 20 contributions to WASH, 2020

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<th>Grant description</th>
<th>Resource partner</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>28,673,835</td>
<td>Regional WASH Programme for Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities in East Africa</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>18,839,828</td>
<td>Strengthening Community Resilience in South Sudan Urban Settings*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>17,743,710</td>
<td>WASH Phase III, Lebanon</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17,432,139</td>
<td>Enhancing Access to WASH Services in Luapula Province, Zambia</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>17,362,373</td>
<td>Sanitation, Hygiene and Water in Nigeria (SHAWN Phase II), Nigeria</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13,045,282</td>
<td>WASH, Lebanon</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>12,527,561</td>
<td>Global Thematic WASH Strategic Plan 2018–2021</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>11,829,140</td>
<td>Equitable Basic WASH Services for all: Breaking the Vicious Cycle of Service Degradation Phase V, Syrian Arab Republic</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>11,684,589</td>
<td>Supporting the Transformation of Rural WASH Service Delivery in Mozambique</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11,439,676</td>
<td>Improving the Well-being of Conflict-affected Children and Families in Sudan’s Blue Nile and South Kordofan States*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>10,892,724</td>
<td>Building Rohingya Refugee and Host Community Resilience in Cox’s Bazar, Phase 2*</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>9,702,970</td>
<td>Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene, Afghanistan</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>8,427,000</td>
<td>Accelerating Sanitation and Water Supply for All II (ASWA II) – Towards Universal Access to WASH</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>7,962,309</td>
<td>Strengthening of Service Provision for Children in Iraq*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>7,765,830</td>
<td>COVID-19 Emergency Response Project, Lebanon*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>7,566,204</td>
<td>Accelerating Sanitation and Water Supply for All II (ASWA II)</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>6,421,468</td>
<td>Recovery, Stability and Socio-economic Development in Libya*</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>5,940,000</td>
<td>Sustainable WASH for Resilience Programme, South Sudan</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>5,913,978</td>
<td>WASH, Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>5,889,282</td>
<td>Building Post-conflict Resilience for Children in Iraq*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNICEF thematic funds maintain a four-year funding period that covers the entire Strategic Plan period (2018–2021). In the first three years of the Strategic Plan, thematic funding contributions for WASH reached US$122 million, with US$24 million received in 2020, of which more than 70 per cent came from government partners. The Government of Sweden was the largest thematic resources partner in 2020, providing 58 per cent of all thematic WASH contributions received (see Figure A1-11).

FIGURE A1-9: WASH thematic funding contributions at country, regional and global levels, 2018–2020

Of all thematic WASH contributions that UNICEF received in 2018 to 2020, some 68 per cent were global-level contributions. These are the most flexible sources of funding to UNICEF after regular resources and can be allocated across regions to individual country programmes, according to priority needs (see Figure A1-10).
Under the current UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, the Government of Sweden has contributed 83% of all global WASH thematic funding.

UNICEF is seeking to broaden and diversify its funding base, including thematic contributions, and encourages all partners to give as flexibly as possible. In 2020, twenty-seven partners contributed thematic funding to WASH compared with 30 partners contributing in 2019. Sizeable thematic contributions were received from the Governments of Sweden and Luxembourg for global WASH thematic funding and from the Government of Finland towards WASH activities in Afghanistan.

### FIGURE A1-10: Spotlight on global WASH thematic funding contributions, 2018–2020

- **Sweden**: $68.9m
- **Norway**: $7.3m
- **Luxembourg**: $2.3m
- **Other resource partners**: $4.9m

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource partner type</th>
<th>Resource partner</th>
<th>Total (US$)</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governments 70.20%</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>14,253,864</td>
<td>58.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2,117,647</td>
<td>8.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>764,192</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sector 29.80%</td>
<td>German Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>2,304,800</td>
<td>9.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>849,320</td>
<td>3.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>718,962</td>
<td>2.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.S. Fund for UNICEF</td>
<td>685,359</td>
<td>2.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belgian Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>589,820</td>
<td>2.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>569,881</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2020, a total of US$9.4 million in WASH thematic funding was allocated to regions and countries, and an additional US$1.0 million was allocated to headquarters. Funds were allocated with a focus on the following three main priority areas:

- Accelerate the Strategic Plan priority and off-track areas across all regions and country programmes, including (1) ending open defecation; (2) WASH in health-care facilities; (3) WASH in schools; and (4) addressing WASH inequalities in rural and urban areas.

- Implement the three key mid-term review strategic shifts on (1) climate-resilient WASH; (2) expanding sanitation programming for meeting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) ambitions; and (3) linking development and humanitarian programming in fragile and protracted crisis.

- Provide catalytic funding and WASH technical support to (1) critically needed innovations and initiatives such as innovative financing, systems-strengthening, urban WASH and business for results; and (2) underfunded country offices.

The allocation also allowed country offices to utilize portions of these funds for WASH COVID-19 response at their discretion.

A total of 48 countries and 2 subregions (Pacific and Eastern Caribbean) received thematic funding across all UNICEF programme regions (see Figure A1-12). Of the total allocation, countries received 78 per cent of the allocations, regional offices 12 per cent and headquarters 10 per cent.
### FIGURE A1-12: Allocation of global WASH thematic funding to country offices, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Region, total allocation (US$)</th>
<th>Regional office allocation (US$)</th>
<th>Country offices/subregions</th>
<th>Country offices allocations (US$)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Countries total:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>205,453</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>205,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>1,473,628</td>
<td>199,817</td>
<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic</td>
<td>308,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pacific subregion</td>
<td>154,090</td>
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<td>Philippines</td>
<td>102,727</td>
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<td>Timor-Leste</td>
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<td>Viet Nam</td>
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<td>Countries total:</td>
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<td>Kazakhstan</td>
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<td>Countries total:</td>
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<td>Madagascar</td>
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<td>Malawi</td>
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<td>Namibia</td>
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<td>LAC</td>
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<td>199,817</td>
<td>Bolivia (Plurinational State of)</td>
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<td>Colombia</td>
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<td>Eastern Caribbean subregion</td>
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<td>Ecuador</td>
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<td>Honduras</td>
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### FIGURE A1-12 (continued)

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<th>Total Population</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCA</td>
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<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<td>254,762</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Totals</td>
<td>9,366,426</td>
<td>1,248,857</td>
<td>8,117,569</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: EAP, East Asia and the Pacific; ECA, Europe and Central Asia; ESA, Eastern and Southern Africa; LAC, Latin America and the Caribbean; MENA, Middle East and North Africa; SA, South Asia; WCA, West and Central Africa.
Expenses for WASH 2020

Of note, expenses are higher than the income received because expenses comprise total allotments from regular resources and ‘other resources’ (including balances carried over from previous years), whereas income reflects only earmarked contributions from 2020 to WASH.

In 2020, expenses for UNICEF WASH programming totalled US$995 million, a slight increase over the 2019 total of US$992 million (see Figure A1-13). Spending on humanitarian response, including COVID-19 response, rose sharply, however, with 55.7 per cent of total WASH expenditure used for emergency programming, the second-highest percentage ever.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Emergency (Other resources, emergency)</th>
<th>Development (Other resources, regular + Regular resources)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>377</td>
<td>506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>542</td>
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<td>2017</td>
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<td>2018</td>
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<td>2019</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over half of emergency spending was in the Middle East and North Africa region, as UNICEF continued to provide humanitarian response to ongoing protracted crises on a large scale in 2020 (see Figure A1-14). Over half of development spending on WASH (57 per cent) was in the Eastern and Southern Africa region and the West and Central Africa region in 2020, as UNICEF continues to focus much of its direct programming efforts in the regions with the lowest coverage rates for WASH services.
For the third year in a row, Yemen had the largest WASH programme, with expenses of US$127 million. Rounding off the top five countries by expenses in 2020 are Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bangladesh and South Sudan. In all these cases, the majority of expenses were for large-scale humanitarian response programmes.
The largest expenses by cost category are transfers and grants to counterparts, which accounted for 42 per cent of all expenses in 2020 (see Figure A1-16). Counterparts include government partners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), other United Nations agencies and other categories, as discussed in the report and listed in Annex 2.
Part III: Safe and Clean Environment
financial report

Income for Safe and Clean Environment in 2020

The Safe and Clean Environment section of this financial annex refers to income and expenses for the DRR, urban and local governance, and climate, energy and the environment output areas. In 2020, partners contributed US$4.2 million to ‘other resources – regular’ for Safe and Clean Environment, a 90 per cent increase over the previous year. Private sector partners contributed the largest share of ‘other resources – regular’ to Safe and Clean Environment, at 72 per cent. The top five resource partners to UNICEF Safe and Clean Environment in 2020 were the Government of Germany, the European Commission, the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, the World Bank and the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF (see Figure A1-19). The largest contributions were received from the Government of Germany for building resilience in the Sahel region and in Somalia, and from the European Commission for resilience in Bangladesh (see Figure A1-20 and the body of the report for results on these programmes).

FIGURE A1-17: Safe and Clean Environment ‘other resources – regular’ contributions, 2018–2020

The largest contributions were received from the Government of Germany for building resilience in the Sahel region and in Somalia, and from the European Commission for resilience in Bangladesh (see Figure A1-20 and the body of the report for results on these programmes).

FIGURE A1-18: Total Safe and Clean Environment funds received by type of resource partner, 2020: US$4.2 million

The largest contributions were received from the Government of Germany for building resilience in the Sahel region and in Somalia, and from the European Commission for resilience in Bangladesh (see Figure A1-20 and the body of the report for results on these programmes).
### FIGURE A1-19: Top 20 resource partners to Safe and Clean Environment by total contributions, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Resource partners</th>
<th>Total (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Germany*</td>
<td>55,222,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>European Commission*</td>
<td>3,940,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>U.S. Fund for UNICEF</td>
<td>1,517,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>1,117,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>689,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>582,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>French Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>447,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Spanish Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>435,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Italian Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>250,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Korean Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>181,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Dutch Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>180,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>178,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swiss Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>178,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>UNICEF Brazil</td>
<td>151,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>German Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>145,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>143,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>UNICEF South Africa</td>
<td>143,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>UNICEF Argentina</td>
<td>143,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Japan Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>27,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Portuguese Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>25,214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### FIGURE A1-20: Top 20 contributions to Safe and Clean Environment, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Total (US$)</th>
<th>Grant description</th>
<th>Resource partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>40,931,359</td>
<td>Building Resilience in Sahel (Mali, Mauritania, Niger)*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11,394,863</td>
<td>Joint Action for Building Resilience in Somalia*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,940,229</td>
<td>Resilience, Bangladesh*</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,602,411</td>
<td>Enhancing Girls’ and Boys’ Resilience and Empowerment through Integrated Basic Services and Community Mobilization, Sudan*</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,470,000</td>
<td>From Plastic Waste to Building Blocks, Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>U.S. Fund for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,117,095</td>
<td>Accelerated Funding for Response to the Power Generation in the Health Centres of the Kindia and Kankan Regions, Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FIGURE A1-20 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Total (US$)</th>
<th>Grant description</th>
<th>Resource partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>585,109</td>
<td>Improving Access to Eco-Cookstoves and Establishing Green Zones</td>
<td>United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>347,335</td>
<td>Thematic Safe and Clean Environment Support, Sudan</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>331,126</td>
<td>Clean Air and Green Economy Transition for Myanmar’s Children and Youth</td>
<td>French Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>293,972</td>
<td>Regional Support on Environmental and Social Safeguards, ESARO</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>250,114</td>
<td>From Plastic Waste to Classrooms Climate, Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Italian Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>237,217</td>
<td>Global Thematic Safe and Clean Environment Funding</td>
<td>Spanish Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>202,265</td>
<td>Thematic Safe and Clean Environment Support, Plurinational State of Bolivia</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>181,315</td>
<td>Thematic Safe and Clean Environment Support, Mongolia</td>
<td>Korean Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>178,139</td>
<td>From Plastic Waste to Classrooms Climate, Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Swiss Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>167,411</td>
<td>Clear Air for Healthy Children, Mongolia</td>
<td>Dutch Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>151,973</td>
<td>From Plastic Waste to Classrooms Climate, Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>UNICEF Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>145,515</td>
<td>From Plastic Waste to Classrooms Climate, Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>German Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>116,734</td>
<td>From Plastic Waste to Classrooms Climate, Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>French Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>112,691</td>
<td>Climate-resilient Water Supply System for Schools and Communities, Malawi</td>
<td>Spanish Committee for UNICEF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the first three years of the Strategic Plan, thematic funding contributions for Safe and Clean Environment reached US$2.2 million, with US$1.0 million received in 2020, of which almost 54 per cent came from the Government of Sweden (see Figure A1-21).

In 2020, the first ever global-level thematic contribution for Safe and Clean Environment was received from the Spanish Committee for UNICEF. Global-level contributions are the most flexible sources of funding to UNICEF after regular resources and can be allocated across regions to individual country programmes, according to priority needs.
FIGURE A1-21: Thematic contributions by resource partners to Safe and Clean Environment, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource partner type</th>
<th>Resource partner</th>
<th>Total (US$)</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governments</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>549,601</td>
<td>53.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Spanish Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>237,217</td>
<td>23.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>181,315</td>
<td>17.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>4.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,018,133</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Grant numbers are provided for IATI compliance: SC1899070003, SC1899070005, SC1899070006, SC1899070008, SC1899070007.

Expenses for Safe and Clean Environment 2020

Of note, expenses are higher than the income received because expenses comprise total allotments from regular resources and ‘other resources’ (including balances carried over from previous years), whereas income reflects only earmarked contributions from 2020 to Safe and Clean Environment.

Expenses for Safe and Clean Environment programming were US$126.8 million, the highest since the start of the Strategic Plan period in 2018 (see Figure A1-22). Just over half of the expenses were for emergency programming (other resources – emergency, ORE). The DRR result area accounted for 53 per cent of all Safe and Clean Environment expenses in 2020 (see Figure A1-23).

In 2020, the greatest proportion of expenses for Safe and Clean Environment was in the West and Central Africa region, followed by the Eastern and Southern Africa region (see Figure A1-24). In both these regions, emergency expenses accounted for over half of all expenses.

FIGURE A1-23: Expenses for Safe and Clean Environment, by result area, 2020

FIGURE A1-24: Expenses for Safe and Clean Environment, by region and fund type, 2020
Expenses were over US$10 million in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh and Nigeria for Safe and Clean Environment programming in 2020. The other largest expenses at the country, regional or headquarter office levels are shown in Figure A1-25.

FIGURE A1-25: Expenses for Safe and Clean Environment, by top 20 countries/offices and fund type, 2020

FIGURE A1-26: Expenses for Safe and Clean Environment, by cost category and fund type, 2020 (US$ millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost category</th>
<th>Other resources – emergency</th>
<th>Other resources – regular</th>
<th>Regular resources</th>
<th>Grand total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contractual services</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment, vehicles and furniture</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General operating and other direct costs</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incremental indirect cost</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff and other personnel costs</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies and commodities</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers and grants to counterparts</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>126.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 2: List of UNICEF WASH partners, 2020

At country level, UNICEF worked with a total of 1,824 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donor partners, academic institutions, civil society organizations, foundations and other non-governmental partners in 2020. This total does not include government partners (UNICEF works extensively with government bodies in all programme countries). UNICEF works with additional partners at the regional and global levels.

The list of partners below includes all non-governmental partners with which UNICEF works in two or more countries, and thus it does not include national NGOs or government agencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bristol University</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia University</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion Institute</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delft Institute for Water Education (IHE Delft)</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke University</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eawag (Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology)</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emory University</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>icddr,b (formerly the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh)</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Water Management Institute (IWMI)</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johns Hopkins University</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford University</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REACH Consortium</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation and Hygiene Applied Research for Equity (SHARE) consortium</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Open University</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tufts University</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities in programme countries (various)</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Buffalo</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Academic institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of North Carolina</td>
<td>Academic institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Technology Sydney</td>
<td>Academic institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC), Loughborough University</td>
<td>Academic institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor pooled fund (mixed donors)</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Commission</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Commission/ECHO (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations)</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Kuwait</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
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<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
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<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
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<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Agency for International Development (USAID)</td>
<td>Donor partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
<td>International finance institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
<td>International finance institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
<td>International finance institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>International finance institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action contre la Faim (Action against Hunger)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arche Nova</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associação Voluntários para o Serviço Internacional (AVSI)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bremen Overseas Research &amp; Development Association (BORDA)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care International</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caritas</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Relief Services</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBM International</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Fund International</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Relief Fund</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli (CISP)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Family Services International (CFSI)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consortium of Dutch NGOs</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordaid</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish Refugee Council</td>
<td>NGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deep Springs International</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deutsche Welthungerhilfe</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch Coalition on Disability and Development</td>
<td>NGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Meets West Foundation</td>
<td>NGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineers Without Borders</td>
<td>NGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Ready</td>
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<td>Finn Church Aid</td>
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<td>Food for the Hungry Association</td>
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<td>Fundación Avina</td>
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<td>GOAL</td>
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<td>Category</td>
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<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gruppo di Volontariato Civile (GVC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Habitat for Humanity</td>
<td>NGO</td>
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Endnotes


2. The total of 17 million water beneficiaries includes 8.1 million through regular development programming and 8.9 million through emergency interventions that result in durable, or long-term, water supply systems. The 30.2 million emergency figure refers to short-term services such as water trucking. See ‘Safe water supply’ and ‘Emergency WASH’ sections for details and charts on how water beneficiaries are classified.


4. The total of 13.4 million basic sanitation beneficiaries includes 12.1 million through regular development programming and 1.2 million through emergency interventions that meet the standard for basic sanitation services. The 5.6 million emergency figure refers to short-term emergency services that do not meet the standard for safe sanitation. See the Sanitation section and the Emergency WASH sections for details and charts on how water beneficiaries are classified. Note that figures may not add up due to rounding.


9. Data availability: water, 52 countries; hand hygiene, 71 countries; sanitation, 27 countries; waste management, 58 countries.


12. Ibid.


17. *States of Fragility 2020*.


19. *Hand Hygiene for All: A call to action for all of society to achieve universal access to hand hygiene*.


31. ‘Progress on Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools’.


35. Staffing figures as of 31 December 2020. Posted in a total of 82 countries (94 countries including headquarter and regional office locations).


37. Ibid.
38. **Hand Hygiene for All.**


40. United Nations Children's Fund, Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs), indicators from the UNICEF internal annual monitoring system of country-level programming results.


50. **Guidance for Monitoring Menstrual Health and Hygiene.**

51. ‘Overview of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) COVID-19 Responses from Governments, Regulators, Utilities and other Stakeholders in 84 Countries’.

52. United Nations Children's Fund, Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs).


64. United Nations Children’s Fund, Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs).


66. Ibid.


70. United Nations Children’s Fund, Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs).

71. ‘Progress on Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools’.


73. United Nations Children’s Fund, Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs).

74. KoboToolbox is a collection of real-time data monitoring software applications used to enable and accelerate the collection, sharing, management, analysis and reporting of data, <www.kobotoolbox.org>, accessed 23 April 2021.


79. Ibid.


82. Ibid.


Water Under Fire, Volume 2.


*State of the World’s Sanitation.*

*State of the World’s Sanitation.*


138. ‘Progress on Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools’. 


154. Ibid. 


Global Annual Results Report 2020 | UNICEF 137


166. United Nations Children's Fund, *Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs).*


171. Short-lived climate pollutants remain in the atmosphere for a much shorter period of time than carbon dioxide (CO₂), yet their potential to warm the atmosphere can be many times greater. Certain short-lived climate pollutants are also dangerous air pollutants that have harmful effects for people, ecosystems and agricultural productivity.


