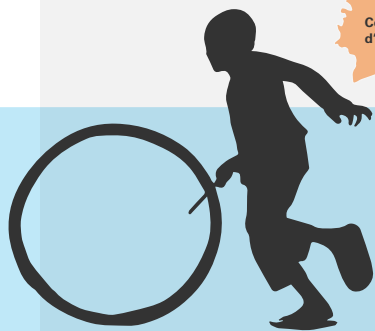
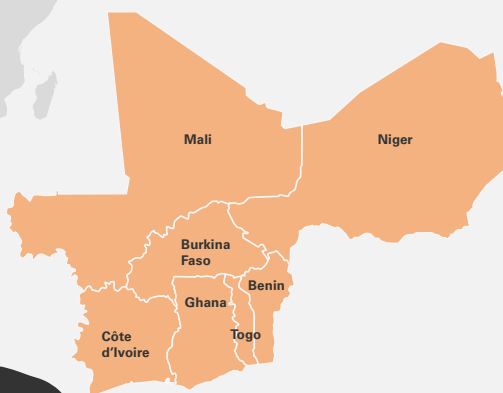


UNICEF | **CHILD ALERT** | March 2023

EXTREME JEOPARDY

Ten million children in the central Sahel need humanitarian assistance amid spiralling conflict and punishing climate.

Children in the central Sahel are increasingly caught up in armed conflict, and the intensification in military clashes is putting their lives and futures in extreme jeopardy. As tactics sink to brutal new lows, children are being directly targeted by non-state armed groups who operate across vast swathes of Mali and Burkina Faso, and increasingly in Niger.



© UNICEF/UN0292064/Houngka Piri

Marcel Mustapha, 16, vividly recalls the gunshots he heard when he fled his village in south-eastern Burkina Faso with his mother, after she “watched the armed men tie up my father and drag him away.”*

Marcel and his mother trekked for two days to Nadiagou but were again chased by armed men. As his mother made her way to northern Benin to try to find her daughter and a younger son who had fled earlier, Marcel stayed near the border, where he worked in the streets, finding customers and carrying luggage for taxi drivers.

Months later, an NGO gave Marcel money for the roughly 100-kilometre ride to Tanguieta, a hub for

Burkinabe refugees in northern Benin. There, wearing his only worldly possessions – a yellow t-shirt and tattered jeans – he was finally reunified with his family by social workers at the government’s Social Promotion Centre, which is supported by UNICEF.

Marcel’s school at home had shut down three years ago due to insecurity, and he is determined to catch up. At the same time, he feels pressure to find work again to feed his family. The social workers have enrolled him in school. Marcel says he feels protected now but doesn’t know yet whether he will ever feel safe enough to return home.

2022 was a particularly violent year for children in the central Sahel, almost certainly the deadliest since armed conflict broke out in northern Mali over a decade ago.



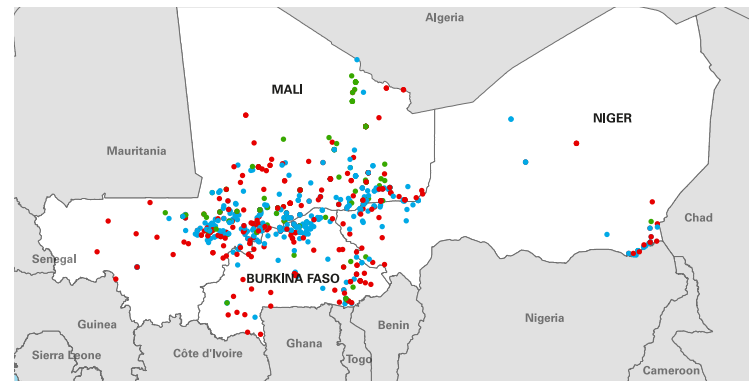
In **Burkina Faso**, three times more children were killed during the first nine months of 2022 than in the same period in 2021 according to UN-verified data. Most of the children died from **gunshot wounds** during attacks on their villages or as a result of improvised explosive devices or explosive remnants of war.

In **Mali**, there were over **480 verified cases of recruitment and use of children by armed groups and forces** during the first half of 2022 alone, a threefold increase compared to the same period in 2021.

In **Niger**, there were over **200 verified grave violations against children between July and September 2022** in areas bordering **Burkina Faso** and **Mali**, most of them involving the forced recruitment and **use of children into armed groups**.

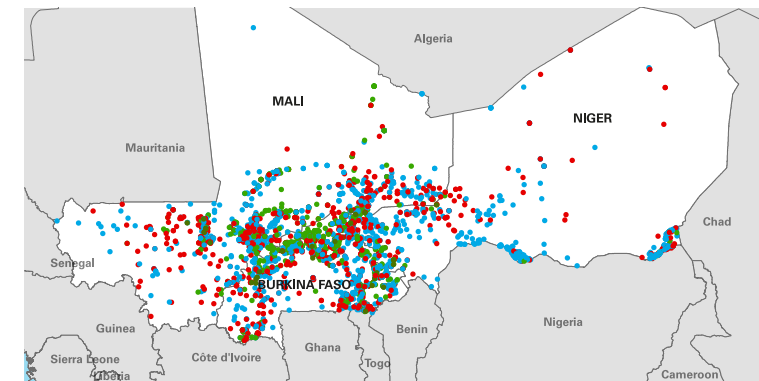


Map 1: **Central Sahel Security**
Incidents in 2018



Event type: ● Battles ● Explosions/Remote violence ● Violence against civilians

Map 2: **Central Sahel Security**
Incidents in 2022



Source: ACLED database

Some children were forced to fight, but many worked in support roles gathering intelligence, or as cooks, guards and porters. Hundreds of children have been abducted across the three countries, many of them girls.

National security operations against the armed groups have also resulted in multiple instances of children being killed, injured and arrested, and many schools and hospitals being damaged or destroyed across the three countries. Dozens of children have been detained during military operations for alleged association with armed groups, and while most were handed over to state child protection structures, several children were held for longer periods, including some because they did not have documentation proving they were children.

In the first half of 2022, the number of verified grave violations against children in the central Sahel was nearly as high as for the whole of 2021 – which in turn was 85 per cent higher than the previous year.

Painstakingly verified by the United Nations, these figures provide only a partial picture of the true magnitude of violence inflicted against children. Among them, sexual violence is one of the least reported, often because survivors are unwilling to come forward – largely because of the stigma they will face, as well as the scarcity of services available to them and the slim chance that perpetrators will be brought to justice.

CHILDHOOD AT THE FRONTLINES OF ARMED CONFLICT

In the early years of the crisis, the armed groups focused their attacks on security infrastructure and personnel and largely spared children and civilians; now their tactics suggest many aim to inflict maximum casualties and suffering on communities.

In Mali, child protection partners described recent incidents in which children were reportedly specifically targeted so that they could never exact retribution on the attackers.

Parties to the conflict exploit ethnic rivalries that turn communities against each other. The pervasive insecurity has given rise to community self-defence groups, including some supported by governments, along with other militia that consider boys as adults capable of bearing arms. The armed groups see these self-defence groups as supported by their communities, so they attack fighters and civilians, including children, without distinction.

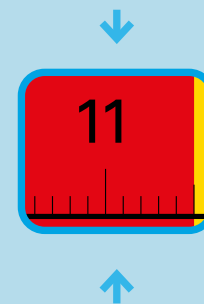
Some children are driven into the fighting because their parents were killed; others, by sheer destitution. A number of those who have managed to flee the armed forces and groups and have completed UNICEF-supported reintegration programmes say they can no longer return home out of fear they will be rejected or even killed by their communities.

Since 2021, non-state armed groups have destroyed food reserves in a region that is among the hungriest and most malnourished on the planet.

Nutrition surveys released in December 2022 project that over **20,000 people in the Liptako-Gourma region**, the border area between the three countries that is a hotbed of insecurity, will have “**catastrophe**”-level food insecurity by the next lean season in June 2023.

The armed conflict has built on wider global issues, including the war in Ukraine and the dramatic socio-economic impact of COVID-19.

In **Burkina Faso's Centre Region**, home to many displaced families, the number of children treated for severe acute malnutrition in 2022 **was up 50 per cent from the previous year.**



Entire villages and towns are surrounded by armed groups. Djibo town in Burkina Faso, for example, has been blockaded since February 2022, effectively imprisoning about 350,000 people, including thousands of displaced families. Farmers and herders can no longer tend to their fields and livestock. The population is dependent on deliveries of food and other essential supplies flown in by the government or United Nations Humanitarian Air Services.

In late 2022, a UNICEF - assisted mission to Djibo found that just five of the 51 health centres were still functional in the district, along with eight facilities providing health and nutrition care. Schools were closed, and the only learning available was in UNICEF-supported temporary learning spaces and radio education. The town market had shut down and the few roadside stalls still open sold leaves for food, and wood. Scores of women crowded around the district centre for hours, seeking help.

Djibo is one of the places in Burkina Faso that saw a significant ramping up of attacks on water facilities as a tactic to forcibly displace communities.

Fifty-eight water points were attacked in Burkina Faso in 2022, up from 21 in 2021 and three in 2020. UNICEF - supported water trucks have been burned, and water storage facilities destroyed.

The attacks include sabotaging water networks – cutting power lines and destroying generators or electrical panels at pumping stations that feed urban water supply systems – and damaging manual water pumps and storage facilities. Armed men threaten women on their way to water points by firing warning shots. Water points are poisoned with fuel or animal carcasses.

Initially concentrated in Burkina Faso's Sahel region, the attacks have now spread to the Centre-Nord, Nord and Boucle de Mouhoun regions, with disastrous consequences for children. More than 830,000 people, over half of whom are children, have lost access to safe drinking water because of these attacks – twice the number reached with water via humanitarian assistance over the same period.



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Hayat, 13, fled after an attack on her village in Tillaberi, Niger. "They gathered us in a courtyard – the whole village – put the men on one side and the women on the other. Then they began to kill the men, the boys – big and small – while the wives, mothers and daughters looked on helplessly. They made sure that there were no men left and warned the women to leave. As the women buried their relatives, hoping to leave in the morning, the bandits returned and killed some of them, including my mother. I had just buried my father, brothers and uncles. To escape, I hid with other women and then we left for Mangaizé [site for internally displaced people]."



The armed conflict has driven nearly 2.7 million people off their land into displacement camps or vulnerable host communities across the three countries. In Burkina Faso, 8 per cent of the population has been forcibly displaced. In Mali, the number of children separated from caregivers or left without any adult supervision has soared during mass displacement incidents.

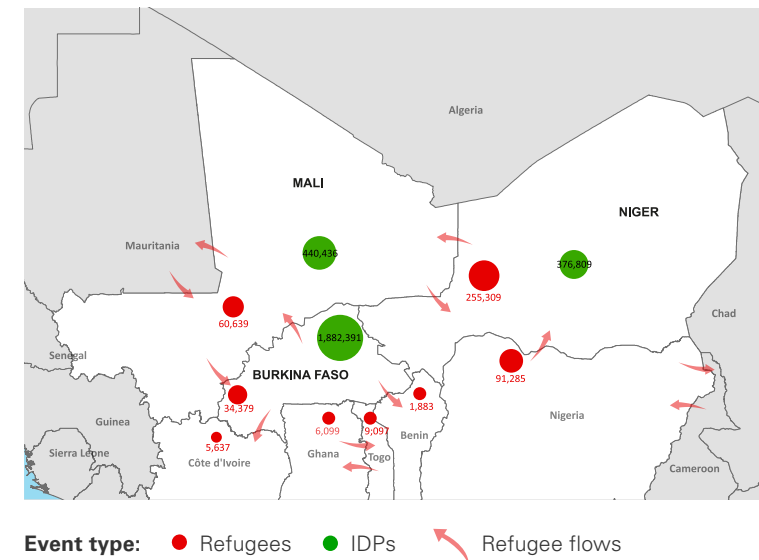
The insecurity and displacement are spilling over central Sahel borders, placing nearly 4 million children at risk in four West African coastal countries – Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Togo.

In 2022, there were at least 172 violent incidents reported including attacks by armed groups in the northern border areas of the four countries. Up to 16 per cent of the population in Benin, which has been hardest hit, are now considered at risk, followed by 13 per cent in Togo and 11 per cent in Côte d’Ivoire. There are fears other neighbouring countries could also face risks.

The violence spilling over from the central Sahel is unfolding in remote communities with scarce infrastructure and resources, where children already have very limited access to the essential services they depend on for survival and protection. These extremely fragile communities are now also hosting steadily increasing numbers of families fleeing the armed conflict in Burkina Faso.

Well over 20,000 forcibly displaced Burkinabe – more than half of them children – crossed borders in 2022.

Map 3: **Refugees and movements of internally displaced persons**, December 2022



Source: UNHCR data portal

In northern Ghana’s Upper East Region, the flow of families fleeing Burkina Faso continues to converge on the outskirts of Sapelliga village. Conditions are dire, with most families living in severely overcrowded clay, wood or tarp shelters. Zenabu says she and her five children feel safe. “We hear no gunshots.”

While the scale of armed attacks in the coastal countries is still low compared with the central Sahel, the deteriorating context is reminiscent of the situation in Burkina Faso as recently as 2018 – a chilling prospect given that the country is now one of the world’s fastest growing humanitarian emergencies.

AN ACCELERATING ASSAULT ON EDUCATION

Some armed groups that oppose state-administered education burn and loot schools, and threaten, abduct or kill teachers. By 2022, over 8,300 schools had shut down across the central Sahel because they were directly targeted, teachers had fled, or because parents were displaced or too frightened to send their children to school. More than 1 in 5 schools across Burkina Faso have shut down and 30 per cent of schools in Niger's Tillaberi region are no longer functional due to the insecurity.

School Principal Oumar Moro says about one fifth of the roughly 500 students at his UNICEF-supported school in Mopti, central Mali, are displaced. He says he and the teachers often have to offer whatever psychological support they can, to help profoundly distressed children feel safe enough to study.

Moro fears the crisis is deepening. His school was threatened three times on social media last year. "As a parent, when you see that, you won't take your child to school," he says. Despite the threats, he and the teachers continue to do their work, which he describes as a duty and commitment. "When the children see me, they have confidence. But if I don't come to school, the children will say – 'They've been threatened! The principal didn't come, and the teachers didn't come. If I go to school, I will be sacrificing myself.'"

The impact on schools – again evocative of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger – appears to be quickening in the coastal countries. **In both Benin and Togo, nine schools in the countries' northern regions had shut down due to insecurity by late 2022.**

Foune Sanogo, 11, fled her village in Koro [central Mali]. "That night, we were sitting at home when the bandits came. People screamed and hid in their houses and locked the doors. When the attack was over my mother and father said we needed to flee because it was too dangerous. And that's how we came to Sevaré."

"When the bandits came, they said to everyone that if anyone goes to school, they would kill them. So everyone was afraid and no one went to school."

Foune, now displaced, is enrolled in school along with other children who were also forced to flee their homes due to the violence. She loves maths, is top of her class, and plans to become a firefighter.



Schools along the northern border areas of the four countries are also accommodating growing numbers of Burkinabe children. In Côte d'Ivoire, displaced Burkinabe children can attend primary school even without a birth certificate.

In Togo, more than **400 children** displaced from Burkina Faso have been placed in local schools with UNICEF support, alongside **1,800 Togolese children** whose schools were shut down due to insecurity.



Of the 243 officially registered refugee children aged 5 to 18 in Tanguieta, northern Benin, in late 2022, **just 76 were attending primary school while only three, including one girl, were in lower-secondary.** Even though schooling is free, most refugee parents cannot afford books, uniforms or lunch.

For young adolescent refugees fleeing Burkina Faso, the most pressing need is for education or vocational training. Some have not stepped foot in a classroom for years because schools at home have been closed due to insecurity. While a few young refugees are doing some farming, most have absolutely nothing to do. "I am worried because these young boys are extremely exposed and if they don't get help soon, they are at risk of being recruited [by armed groups]," said a social worker in northern Benin who asked not to be named. "Young girls are simply staying home."

AN UNPREDICTABLE CLIMATE IS AGGRAVATING MALNUTRITION

The crisis across the central Sahel is unfolding in one of the most climate-affected and water-scarce regions on the planet. Temperatures are rising 1.5 times faster than the global average.

Water tables have dropped and wells need to be drilled up to twice as deep as a decade ago. Increasing urbanisation, asphalt and cement surfaces and plastic pollution block water from permeating the soil. The influx of displaced people exerts added pressure, creating tension and protection risks for women and children around water points.

At the same time, rainfall has become more erratic and intense, causing floods that reduce crop yields and contaminate already scarce water supplies – conditions that aggravate diseases such as pneumonia, which can be over 10 times more lethal among severely malnourished children.

In 2022, the worst flooding in years damaged or destroyed 38,000 homes in Niger, which ranks 7th globally on UNICEF's Children's Climate Risk Index, based on children's exposure and vulnerability to climate and environmental shocks. Water in the Niger River reached levels unseen in central Mali since 1967, according to the National Hydrology Department.

The changing climate is robbing families of their livelihoods. A deadly attack forced Fatah Bari, her husband and four children from their village in Mali, but she says even if the security context completely stabilizes, she can no longer

return because the land is parched, there is no longer enough grass for livestock and she cannot afford animal feed. Bari now earns money by selling spices and vegetables at the displacement camp that has become her new home. "I would love to go back, but I cannot in these conditions," she said. "And all we know is herding."

Overcrowding and unsanitary conditions in displacement sites place children at acute risk of the toxic combination of malnutrition and disease. The latest nutritional survey in Mali, published in September 2022, reported global acute malnutrition rates above 23 per cent in Mopti displacement camps – well above the 15 per cent emergency threshold. Kadidiatou Kone, a nurse at a UNICEF-supported health centre in Mopti serving both host communities and displaced families, said she was seeing significantly more cases of suspected measles, which can be lethal for children.

Northern Benin is also undergoing climate change-induced erratic weather patterns that reduce crop yields and scarce water supplies. A doctor at a UNICEF-supported nutrition centre said the number of children requiring life-saving treatment is the highest she has seen in her 14 years at the hospital – more than tripling from 250 in 2020 to over 750 by October 2022.

The children who arrive at the nutrition centre – including some displaced by the insecurity in Burkina Faso – are gravely ill, suffering from severe wasting, which is the most lethal form of malnutrition, plus complications including malaria, respiratory and other diseases.



Nutritional survey in Mali 2022

Emergency threshold

15 per cent

Acute malnutrition

23 per cent in Mopti displacement camps

The desperately sick children are treated with therapeutic milk, other medicine and food supplied by UNICEF, while a team at the hospital teaches mothers how to use locally available products like soybean and the highly nutritious moringa leaf to nourish their children at home.

Malnutrition cases normally peak during the lean season before harvest time, but over the past three years, those peaks have turned into a constant flow of severely wasted children, according to medical staff.



AN ACUTE DEVELOPMENT EMERGENCY COMPOUNDED BY HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Children in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger were dying of hunger and disease at some of the fastest rates in the world long before the crisis. All three countries ranked within or near the bottom 10 countries on the Human Development Index, a composite indicator measuring life expectancy, income and education, since the turn of the century. The acute development emergency persists, only now it is compounded by one of the fastest escalating humanitarian crises in the world.

Today, more than half the children aged between 6 and 23 months in the central Sahel are severely food impoverished, meaning their diets include at most just two food groups, often a cereal such as maize or millet, and a little milk.

At the same time, the assault on learning is unfolding in a region that cannot afford it. National out-of-school rates among children of primary and secondary school age in the central Sahel are shockingly high at 50 per cent, well above the 29 per cent average in sub-Saharan Africa, and more than triple the global average of 16 per cent. In Niger, nearly 3 out of 4 students who do finish primary school are not equipped with even basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Low education outcomes are shackled to the world's highest levels of child marriage and fertility rates. Three in four women aged 20 to 24 were married or in civil partnership before they turned 18 in Niger, and at least one in two in Burkina Faso and Mali. In Niger, women have nearly seven children on average.

The coastal countries affected by the insecurity spilling over from the central Sahel have made steady progress in recent decades to improve children's welfare and strengthen essential services, helping them respond to emerging needs. But the children being hardest hit by the encroaching violence in the northern border areas of Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo are already at the bottom levels of the development ladder in their countries – the least likely to be healthy, well-nourished and in school, and the most likely to be married as children.

ENABLE CHILDREN TO TURN THE PAGE ON CONFLICT AND POVERTY

Over 10 million children across the central Sahel require humanitarian assistance in 2023 – more than double the number in 2020.

The scale of the crisis in the central Sahel and increasingly spilling over into West Africa's coastal countries urgently requires a stronger humanitarian response. But it also

needs long-term flexible investment for sustainable development that contributes to peacebuilding within communities, especially for children. Far more investment in expanding access to essential services and social protection is needed to address the underlying causes of conflict and insecurity. Tackling underlying causes, strengthening social services, and anticipating crises, can help countries build resilient societies with strong social cohesion that allow children to enjoy their rights and realize their potential.



UNICEF urges governments across the central Sahel and affected coastal countries, along with technical and financial partners, to prioritize expanding access to services and protection as pathways to peace and security, specifically by:

1.



Reinforcing the capacities of the local workforces who are the first responders during crises, and who are consistently able to reach children, even in hard-to-reach areas.

2.



Prioritizing support to community-based nutrition, health, child protection and WASH services including through emergency preparedness and training; and strengthening community-based child protection mechanisms to anticipate, help prevent and respond to new and increased risks. In line with humanitarian principles, support must include children from all ethnic groups and target the most vulnerable, including girls and children with disabilities.

3.



Improving the quality and availability of education, training and income-generating opportunities that are crucial to protecting adolescents, and preventing harmful coping and survival mechanisms that include sexual exploitation, hazardous work, child marriage, forced migration and recruitment into armed groups.

4.



Expanding social safety net programmes such as cash transfers to protect families and children from poverty, help them overcome financial constraints to accessing services and goods, and build their resilience. National social protection systems must have the capacity to ensure continuity and expansion of programmes when a shock occurs.

5.



Enabling communities, specifically adolescent and youth clubs and women's organizations, to contribute meaningfully to programme design and implementation.

UNICEF calls on all parties to provide stronger protections for children affected by armed conflict. This includes treating children associated with or suspected as being associated with non-state armed groups, as victims and survivors, and quickly transferring children detained to civilian authorities and child protection actors.

UNICEF calls on all parties to the conflict to engage in dialogue with the United Nations to establish and implement action plans to prevent and end grave violations against children, and to ensure perpetrators are held accountable.



All parties to the conflict have a fundamental moral and legal obligation to protect children and the infrastructure they rely on for survival, protection and education.

UNICEF calls on all military forces and non-state armed groups to respect humanitarian space, and to enable safe and sustainable access for humanitarian assistance to affected populations.

UNICEF calls on stakeholders invested in security, stabilization, humanitarian and development action to ensure that their activities and approaches promote the best interests of the child, respect international humanitarian law and protect marginalized communities. Donors are urged to invest significantly more resources and attention in supporting humanitarian and development action, with a focus on essential social services and social protection. Age- and gender-sensitive services, particularly for sexual violence survivors, along with recovery and reintegration programmes, must be scaled up.



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The overall humanitarian response in the central Sahel remains chronically and critically under-funded. **In 2022, UNICEF received just one third of its US\$391 million Central Sahel appeal.** UNICEF Burkina Faso received just over a quarter of its US\$181 million funding request. **UNICEF Niger received 6 per cent of the funds required for emergency child protection programmes.** In Mali, education and health programmes were less than a quarter funded.

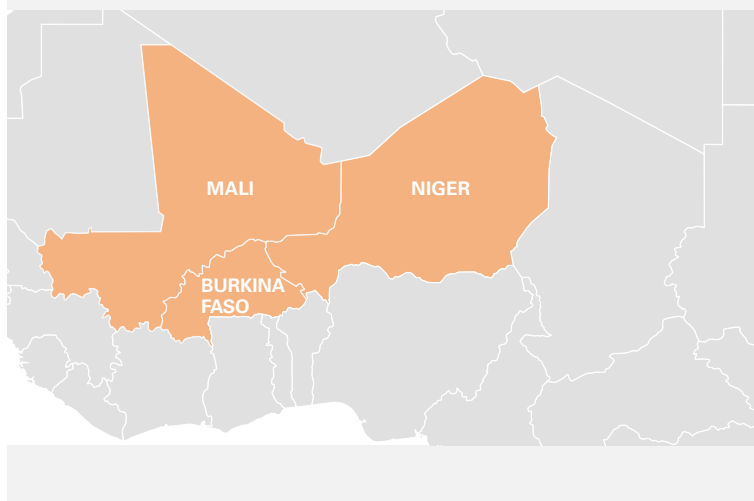


If the central Sahel is to extricate itself from chronic crises, and the coastal countries are to prevent a looming emergency, they must enable this generation of children to turn the page on violence and poverty, with full support from the international community. To that end, the region will need far more flexible resources now and in the long term to build resilience and social cohesion above and beyond life-saving emergency responses.

UNICEF calls on the international community to provide sufficient, long-term and flexible funding, and to prioritize climate-adaptive anticipatory action and preparedness, to support a robust response in an increasingly volatile and fragile context.

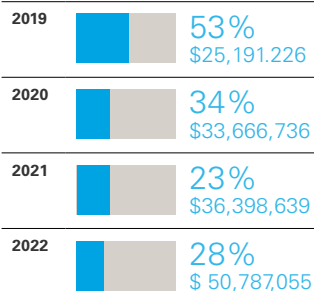
Some of the most vulnerable children on the planet are contending with the most brutal effects of conflict and climate. They need urgent support to counter and mitigate the impact of impending shocks, and they need far better options and opportunities to build a future they can look forward to. Their lives and the course of their nations hang in the balance.

Table 1: **Central Sahel Humanitarian FUNDING 2019–2022**

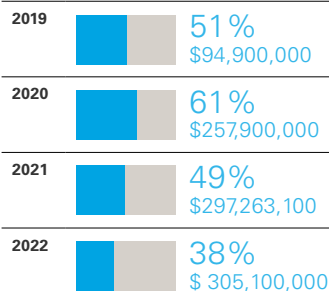


Burkina Faso

Humanitarian Action for Children

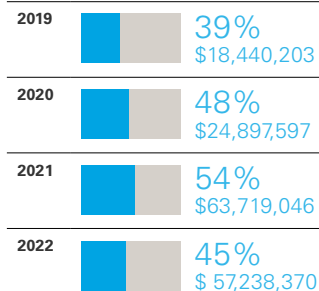


Humanitarian Response Plan

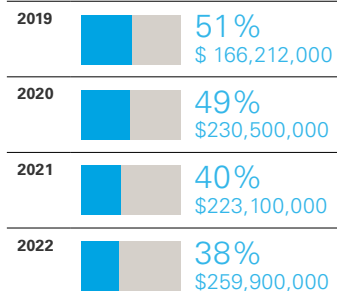


Mali

Humanitarian Action for Children

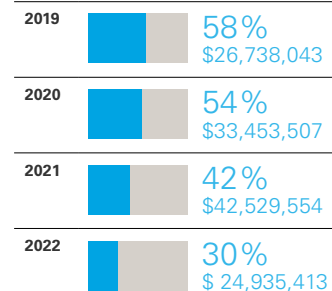


Humanitarian Response Plan

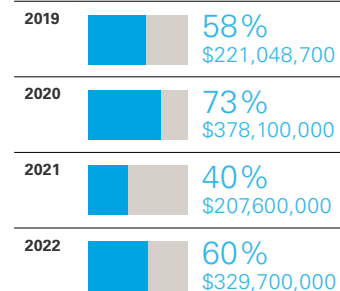


Niger

Humanitarian Action for Children



Humanitarian Response Plan



Funding Gap (Funding requirement minus funding received)



WHAT UNICEF IS DOING

UNICEF has a large operational footprint in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, with roughly 580 staff members working across the 3 national offices and 12 sub-offices, including in some of the most volatile areas.

UNICEF Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo country offices are expanding their presence and investing in emergency preparedness and all four offices are scaling up programming in affected areas, in cooperation with local authorities, communities and NGO partners.



As needs grow and access becomes increasingly constrained by insecurity, UNICEF's priorities include:



Ensuring the continuity of services

by investing in capacity-building of local actors who are most knowledgeable about needs, and best placed to consistently reach children. These include teachers and health, protection and social workers, for example, who can rapidly identify unaccompanied, separated or otherwise vulnerable children; facilitate immediate and appropriate support; and consistently follow-up on their care.

Specific areas of training include how to identify, treat and above all prevent malnutrition; deliver essential health care; and how to prevent violence and provide care for survivors. Contracts with local enterprises facilitate access to water, sanitation and hygiene services in inaccessible zones, while temporary learning spaces and radio-based programming reach children who cannot go to school.

In 2022, working with local partners, UNICEF Mali reached over 385,000 children with measles vaccination – nearly double the planned target for the entire year, while in Niger, UNICEF and partners provided life-saving treatment to over 400,000 severely malnourished children. In Burkina Faso, UNICEF education and life-skills support reached over 740,000 out-of-school children through formal and informal programmes including radio education, and over 80 local partners were trained on humanitarian principles and multisectoral assessments following shocks such as armed attacks.



Strengthening protection for children affected by the armed conflict.

This includes engaging with all parties to conflict and developing measurable action plans to end and prevent grave violations against children, along with specific protocols, like the ones signed by Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, on the treatment and handover of children allegedly associated with armed groups to civilian authorities.

Together with partners, UNICEF provides children released from armed groups, or who have suffered other violations of their rights, with intensive, months-long care, and support for reintegration back to their families and communities. Separated and unaccompanied children are reunited with their families or provided with suitable alternative care.

With local partners, UNICEF Mali reached over 440 children released from armed forces or groups with protection or reintegration support in 2022. Over 2,000 unaccompanied and separated children were reunited with their families or provided with suitable alternative care – more than the 1,200 projected for the entire year.

Systematic advocacy, coupled with training for justice and military personnel, has enabled a real shift in the perception of children caught up in conflict as victims and survivors, as opposed to adult combatants. A growing proportion of children captured in military operations are now being systematically handed over to civilian protection actors.



As needs grow and access becomes increasingly constrained by insecurity, UNICEF's priorities include:



Delivering climate- and conflict-adapted services

including solar-powered water and vaccine storage systems that provide uninterrupted service despite frequent electricity cuts. The new water systems have ample storage and multiple taps, and minimize tensions and protection risks by increasing the amount of water available and reducing time needed to draw it. The new fridges cut time wasted trying to preserve vaccines during power outages. Both enable significant cost savings.

In Mali, working with local contractors, UNICEF has constructed 164 solar-powered water systems since 2021 serving over 370,000 people. The majority of the water systems were constructed in conflict-affected and extremely water-scarce northern and central regions. On Côte d'Ivoire's border with Burkina Faso, UNICEF has repaired hand pumps, installed new boreholes and constructed a solar pump, serving the community, school, health facility and border health control post in Laléraba.



Engaging young people

and equipping them with skills to improve welfare, increase employability and build peace within their communities. This means actively enabling young people to be part of the solution in programme design and delivery as agents of change – from finding ways around access constraints, to making sure that families register their children at birth and monitor their nutrition and immunization status.

In Benin, over 4,700 adolescents living in the northern border areas were trained as peer educators who provide reliable information on child marriage and early pregnancy, sexual harassment and abuse, along with resources on where to seek help. Over 450 extremely vulnerable young people identified as at risk of recruitment were provided with seed funding, apprenticeships and equipment to help them start their own businesses and cooperatives.

In Côte d'Ivoire, in alignment with the Programme social du Gouvernement, UNICEF is working to strengthen resilience in the northeast, including through promoting 'youth ambassadors for peace' and intergenerational dialogues. A hundred young people have in turn reached over 4,000 other adolescents and youth.



Delivering life-saving supplies

in hard-to-reach areas by any means necessary – by air, local transport services, boats, even tricycles. In 2022, UNICEF Burkina Faso's 'Rapid Response and Community Resilience' mechanism with local partners reached nearly 200,000 people in areas with major access constraints. UNICEF Niger reached over 60,000 people displaced by insecurity or flooding, with emergency supplies. UNICEF is also working proactively to encourage local production of nutritious food through market shaping to reduce dependence on external supply chains.

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