Syrian Arab Republic

HIGHLIGHTS

- Children throughout the Syrian Arab Republic face one of the world’s most complex emergencies, including the multiple earthquakes that hit parts of Syria and Türkiye on 6 February 2023, which resulted in more people in urgent need of water, sanitation, shelter, food, and emergency medical and psychosocial assistance. More than 15.3 million people (including 7 million children) require assistance, and 6.8 million people are internally displaced. Almost 70 per cent of the population requires assistance due to a worsening economic crisis, localized hostilities, mass displacement and devastated public infrastructure.

- In 2023, UNICEF will deliver lifesaving services that address recovery needs with its partners and through its field offices, fostering the resilience of children and families. UNICEF will address the needs of girls, boys, adolescents, and families through integrated gender-responsive programming prioritizing high-severity areas, social and behavioural change interventions, and by systematizing preparedness, accountability to affected populations and the prevention of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation.

- UNICEF requires US$468.5 million to meet the needs of children in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2023. The greatest funding requirements are for WASH, health, and education, as these sectors need investment in restoration and rehabilitation as a result of the earthquake, while protection remains a high priority for UNICEF.

KEY PLANNED TARGETS

- 2.4 million children and women accessing primary healthcare
- 1.6 million primary caregivers receiving infant and young child feeding counselling
- 2.6 million children supported with educational services and supplies in formal settings
- 5.3 million people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water

IN NEED

- 15.3 million people
- 7 million children

2019 2023

TO BE REACHED

- 7.8 million people
- 5 million children

2019 2023

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

- US$468.5 million

Figures are provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency planning documents. These are currently under discussion with the Government of Syria.
HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

Children in the Syrian Arab Republic continue to face one of the most complex emergencies in the world. Over two-thirds of the population require assistance because of a worsening economic crisis, continued localized hostilities, mass displacement, devastated public infrastructure, and the effects of the earthquakes. The 15.3 million people in need include 4.5 million women, 7 million children (3.2 million girls), 2.6 million people with disabilities and 5.3 million internally displaced people. Over half of the displaced people are in North-West Syria.

The cholera outbreak declared in September 2022 continues to spread across the country, with 105,959 suspected cases and 104 attributed deaths reported between 25 August 2022 and March 2023. The outbreak is a result of the large-scale destruction of water and sanitation infrastructure, the economic crisis, electricity outages, and prolonged drought. Up to 52 per cent of the population are relying on often unsafe alternative water supply modalities other than piped water to meet or complement their needs; one million fewer people are using water networks than in 2021 due to decreased reliability and efficiency of water systems.

The severity of humanitarian needs in Syria was further exacerbated by the multiple earthquakes that hit parts of Syria and Türkiye on 6 February. Approximately 6,000 people, including children, have reportedly been killed and more than 12,000 injured across Syria as a result of the earthquake.

People in Syria are sliding deeper into poverty and finding it overwhelmingly difficult to make ends meet, whilst 55 per cent are food insecure. The war in Ukraine continues to affect global supply chains and inflationary trends. Approximately 3.75 million children were in dire need of nutritional assistance, which became even more vital following the earthquake and all its implications on the key determinants of maternal and child nutrition (Food, health and WASH sectors).

Over 7,000 schools have been damaged or destroyed and only 57 per cent of health centres are fully functional. There are over 2 million children out of school and 1.6 million at risk of dropping out. Furthermore, over 60 per cent of school-age children with severe mental or physical disabilities have never attended school or any other form of education.

Protection concerns remain paramount. In 2022, 2,438 grave violations were recorded against children, including recruitment, killing, and maiming, attacks on schools and hospitals. The economic crisis is worsening negative coping mechanisms and particularly affecting female-headed households; it is contributing to the normalization of gender-based violence and child labour and marriage, which predominantly affects girls and boys. Eighty-four per cent of communities surveyed reported child marriage (often affecting girls) and 96 per cent reported that children are working (often affecting boys).

Ninety-one per cent of the 4.5 million people living in the northwest are in need of humanitarian assistance, including 2.9 million internally displaced people. Food insecurity affects 3.3 million people in the area, and more than 1 million children are in need of education support. Furthermore, some 2.4 million children are in need of child protection support in northwest Syria following the earthquakes.

In the northeast, political and conflict dynamics drive elevated protection concerns and complicate aid delivery. Among those affected are internally displaced people in Al-Hol camp (53,000 people, 64 per cent children) and Al-Roj camp (2,500 people, 66 per cent children), including children who are third-country nationals and need repatriation to their countries of origin.

SECTOR NEEDS

- 15.3 million people in need of health assistance
- 5.9 million people in need of nutrition assistance
- 6.3 million children in need of child protection services
- 6.9 million children in need of education support
- 13.6 million people require access to WASH services

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

March 2023

STORY FROM THE FIELD

On 10 February 2023, Hiba, a UNICEF-supported mobile health team leader, screens children under five for malnutrition, in the Alsalheen neighbourhood, Aleppo city, north Syria, as part of UNICEF’s emergency response.

“During these past few days, when I go to sleep, I feel that I’m never sure what tomorrow will bring. Uncertainty is everywhere, but we keep going to support the people who need us,” said Hiba, a mobile health team leader. She is one of the unsung heroes involved in the humanitarian response to the devastating earthquakes.

After massive tremors sent people fleeing to the streets, she left her husband and two children at home, and started supporting vulnerable children who had been affected. Her team screened children under five for malnutrition.

Besides her, there are many more teachers, principals, healthcare workers, engineers, and others who stood up to help.

Read more about this story here
UNICEF programme follows a Whole of Syria approach and prioritizes areas that have been identified as high severity. UNICEF leads the Education, Nutrition, and WASH Sectors/Clusters and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility. In January 2023, the Security Council resolution on cross-border access from Türkiye to North-West Syria was extended for six months.

UNICEF is gradually incorporating early recovery programming while maintaining a strong focus on humanitarian assistance, which also includes cholera and earthquake response. Working along this nexus strengthens linkages between the needs-based emergency response and essential service restoration, resilience building, and social cohesion. For example, following the earthquakes UNICEF alongside partners, scaled up lifesaving assistance to affected children and families and made a strategic shift in the response, moving towards supporting people recover, through the rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure and restoration of basic services.

UNICEF and its implementing partners will promote multisectoral collaboration to address the underlying determinants of malnutrition, and facilitate the delivery of life-saving preventive and curative interventions at the facility and community levels in the most affected areas. In parallel, support will be extended to rebuild local health systems and improve the coverage of the expanded programme on immunization. Emergency WASH services will be upgraded from trucking to more cost-effective network rehabilitations, with a focus on high-severity areas, and increasingly on climate resilience.

Through the No Lost Generation initiative, UNICEF will reach children at scale with integrated education, child protection, and adolescent development opportunities. Non-formal education will be delivered with implementing partners, while investments are planned to allow the education system to absorb the current cohort of school-aged children, including inclusive and early childhood education, particularly for adolescent girls. Adolescents will participate in their communities through life skills and social cohesion programming. Eliminating violence against children will be integrated into all programme areas, with a social norms and behaviour change communications lens, ensuring children feel safe in their homes, schools, and communities. Psychosocial support, exploitive ordnance risk education, case management and gender-based violence prevention will aim to reduce children’s exposure to violence, exploitation and abuse. Vulnerable families, including those with children with disabilities, will receive cash transfers, combined with case management to meet their essential needs.

UNICEF will also respond to the cholera outbreak, mainly through the WASH, Health, and RCCE Pillars. UNICEF through the capacity building of local staff, community engagement, and the improvement of WASH and health infrastructures, will create the soil for responsive and resilient health systems able to limit and control epidemics. The response is informed by gender analysis, accounting for the risks, needs and capacities of women, girls, men and boys. UNICEF and all its partners will uphold protection from sexual exploitation and abuse protocols, with safe and confidential reporting mechanisms made available to communities. Mechanisms to engage UNICEF beneficiaries in programming - through information provision, risk communication, and community engagement and feedback mechanisms - will be mainstreamed. This includes promoting positive social norms and practices to reduce communities’ vulnerability and increase their resilience. Programme strategies will be improved through a comprehensive evidence base, including evaluations of programming in the areas of adolescence, WASH and social and behavioural change, integrated programming, and earthquake response.

UNICEF addresses the immediate life-saving and urgent humanitarian needs of girls, boys, adolescents, and families through an integrated and gender-responsive approach prioritizing highly affected areas and areas of large displacement, and also systemizes accountability to affected populations and the prevention of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation.

**2023 PROGRAMME TARGETS**

**Health**
- 1,043,200 children vaccinated against polio
- 2,439,799 children and women accessing primary healthcare in UNICEF-supported facilities
- 742,880 children under 1 year receiving three doses of DTP-containing vaccine

**Nutrition**
- 4,468 children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment
- 1,970,300 children 6-59 months screened for wasting
- 1,604,900 primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling
- 256,000 children 6-59 months receiving Vitamin A supplementation
- 2,030,900 children and pregnant and lactating women receiving micronutrients

**Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA**
- 131,494 women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions
- 7,934,782 people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations
- 5,800 children who have received individual case management
- 1,451,579 children provided with landmine or other explosive weapons prevention and/or survivor assistance interventions
- 488,782 children accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support

**Education**
- 2,614,570 children supported with educational services and supplies in formal settings
- 536,466 children in non-formal education benefiting from education services
- 37,058 teachers and education personnel trained

**Water, sanitation and hygiene**
- 5,276,000 people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs
- 2,290,000 people accessing appropriate sanitation services
- 330,000 people reached with hand-washing behaviour-change programmes
- 2,361,000 people are accessing WASH non-food items

**Social protection and cash transfers**
- 472,293 individuals reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers
- 17,000 children with disabilities reached with regular cash transfers and case management services

**Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)**
- 10,999,998 people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services
- 4,200,001 people who participate in engagement actions
- 5,000 people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms

**Adolescents/youth**
- 225,017 affected adolescents and youth aged 10 to 24 years receiving life-skills and citizenship education and employability skills
- 342,883 adolescents and youth aged 10 to 24 years promoting social cohesion and civic engagement at the community level
FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2023

UNICEF requires US$468.5 million in 2023 to meet the urgent humanitarian and early recovery needs of the most vulnerable children and families in the Syrian Arab Republic and fulfil children’s rights.56 57 This funding will cover interventions delivered from within the country as well as cross-border assistance delivered as part of the Whole of Syria approach. Funding will be prioritized for programming in areas with the highest severity of need in health, nutrition, WASH, education, child protection, social protection and cash transfers, and adolescent programming.

Without sufficient and timely funding, the protection needs of vulnerable populations will go unmet, and the long-term effects of this will increase including mental health issues, domestic violence, substance abuse, and increasing use of harmful coping mechanisms including early and forced marriage and sexual exploitation, exposure to recruitment, and other forms of abuse and child labour, including unpaid labour for adolescent girls. Furthermore, a lack of funds has 75,000 severely malnourished children aged below five years risk of death, more than 300,000 moderately malnourished children to fall into severe acute malnutrition category and 900,000 pregnant and lactating women to practice suboptimal infant and young child feeding practices. Any further funding cuts will bring dire consequences to 5.8 million boys and girls including education personnel with severe, extreme and catastrophic education needs. If the funding gaps continues to widen, all the gains made in the last 18 months will be reversed.58

### Appeal sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appeal sector</th>
<th>Revised 2023 HAC requirement (US$)</th>
<th>Funds available (US$)61,62</th>
<th>Funding gap (US$)</th>
<th>Funding gap (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>100,343,826</td>
<td>42,357,501</td>
<td>57,986,325</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>43,939,584</td>
<td>25,889,985</td>
<td>18,049,599</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child protection</td>
<td>40,507,632</td>
<td>21,360,323</td>
<td>19,147,309</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>89,840,465</td>
<td>35,386,977</td>
<td>54,453,488</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>115,637,760</td>
<td>63,731,526</td>
<td>51,906,234</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social protection and cash transfers</td>
<td>64,259,430</td>
<td>17,222,693</td>
<td>47,036,737</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-sectoral</td>
<td>1,520,640</td>
<td>2,493,290</td>
<td>-972,650</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents/Youth</td>
<td>12,409,826</td>
<td>11,255,996</td>
<td>1,153,830</td>
<td>9.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>468,459,163</strong></td>
<td><strong>209,596,125</strong></td>
<td><strong>258,863,038</strong></td>
<td><strong>55.3%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : Child protection (8.6%), Adolescents/Youth (2.6%), Cross-sectoral (<1%).

Who to contact for further information:

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68. Distributing suggestion boxes; regular surveys and feedback through third-party monitors; training of partners; and regular focus group discussions and consultations with communities to understand and respond to their needs.


58. 2,149 schools have been damaged according to the Syria Earthquake Recovery Needs Assessment (SERNHA) as a result of the earthquakes.

57. The population targeted is higher than the total number of people/children to be reached because the target includes mass media outreach. The target has decreased to be able to focus on areas / population of most need in governorates with severe damages.

56. This indicator includes the repair/rehabilitation of sewage systems.

55. This includes the electrification through solar systems.

54. The target includes both counselling and awareness-raising sessions. The target is a percentage of people in need in high-severity areas and differs from year to year.

53. The target includes the additional need in North West Syria due to the increase of the internally displaced people due to the impacts of the earthquake.

52. UNICEF is committed to supporting the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response through its leadership or co-leadership of cluster coordination for the WASH, Nutrition and EducationClusters and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility. All cluster coordinators costs are included into sectoral programme budgets.

51. The appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.

50. The population targeted is higher than the total number of people/children to be reached because the target includes mass media outreach. The target has decreased to be able to focus on areas / population of most need in governorates with severe damages.

49. UNICEF is committed to empowering local responders in humanitarian crises in a variety of ways. The revised Core Commitments made investing in strengthening the capacities of local actors in the humanitarian response a mandatory benchmark for UNICEF action. A more localized response will improve humanitarian action and is fundamental to achieving better accountability to affected populations.

48. This appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.

47. The funding requirement for social protection has increased significantly due to (i) the inclusion of the emergency cash response to the earthquake (US$ 30.7 million requirements to reach 200,000 earthquake affected people) and (ii) the expansion of targeted Social Protection Programmes for Children with Disabilities (CSD) in line with the targets in the Programme Expansion Plan for the period 2023-2025: 17,000 CSDs in 2023, 25,000 CSDs in 2024, and 50,000 CSDs in 2025.

46. UNICEF Whole of Syria-AWD/Cholera response note January to December 2023. The planned activities aim to ensure life-saving interventions in the most affected areas, while increasing prevention and preparedness in other at-risk areas.


44. UNICEF is committed to needs-based targeting, which means covering the unmet needs of children; and will serve as the provider of last resort where it has cluster coordination responsibilities.

43. UNICEF Whole of Syria-AWD/Cholera response note January to December 2023.

42. Following on from cholera the WASH situation further worsened after the earthquake, as additional damage in water supply and sanitation infrastructure was witnessed in Aleppo and Idlib governorates.

41. The displaced people count as 6 per cent of the total population in North-West Syria.


39. This appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.

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31. Under the early recovery and livelihoods sector.

30. The appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.

29. The funding requirement for early response has increased significantly due to the additional needs identified following the earthquake, which has included a need to distribute clean water, food, and supplies to those affected.

28. The funding requirement for health has increased significantly due to the additional needs identified following the earthquake, which has included a need to distribute clean water, food, and supplies to those affected.

27. The funding requirement for WASH has increased significantly due to the additional needs identified following the earthquake, which has included a need to distribute clean water, food, and supplies to those affected.

26. The funding requirement for nutrition has increased significantly due to the additional needs identified following the earthquake, which has included a need to distribute clean water, food, and supplies to those affected.

25. The funding requirement for education has increased significantly due to the additional needs identified following the earthquake, which has included a need to distribute clean water, food, and supplies to those affected.

24. Data is as of 10 June 2023.

23. The funding requirement for housing has increased significantly due to the additional needs identified following the earthquake, which has included a need to distribute clean water, food, and supplies to those affected.

22. The funding requirement for food has increased significantly due to the additional needs identified following the earthquake, which has included a need to distribute clean water, food, and supplies to those affected.

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