Prolonged drought, recurrent floods, cyclones and epidemics impact the already vulnerable population living in Madagascar’s south and southeast regions. Climate change has increased the frequency of disasters, and the coming El Niño weather pattern will intensify their impacts. A projected 2.3 million people will require humanitarian assistance in 2024.\(^3\)

UNICEF will provide a multisectoral, integrated and multilevel response to meet people's needs. The organization will promote a humanitarian–development nexus approach, strengthening its liaison with local authorities and communities through a stronger field presence; and enhance links with resilience programmes and development actors, especially in the south.

UNICEF requires $41.4 million to provide humanitarian support to 1.1 million people (51 per cent women and girls), including 950,000 children and 119,000 people with disabilities.\(^4\)

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**KEY PLANNED TARGETS**

- **114,000** children with severe wasting admitted for treatment
- **370,000** children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- **400,000** women and children accessing gender-based violence mitigation, prevention, response
- **46,500** households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers

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Figures are provisional, based on an updated Flash Appeal, and subject to change upon forthcoming methodological assessments of El Niño's impact.
HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

Approximately 2.3 million people, a third of the population of the south and southeast regions of Madagascar, will need humanitarian assistance in 2024, due to devastating cyclones in 2022 and 2023 and intense drought in the south from 2019 to 2022. Seventeen districts in these regions are classified as crisis level (integrated food security phase classification Phase 3 and above) for the 2024 lean season, starting in January. Potential social unrest due to the electoral process taking place from November to January 2024 could further disturb access to basic social services.

In the drought-prone southern regions, the situation has slightly improved but remains fragile. Access to water is slightly better compared with 2022. However, the number of people classified as being in emergency levels of water scarcity is above the pre-crisis average. Economic and social structures have been impacted by years of crisis, causing internal migration and use of negative coping mechanisms; this has exacerbated social protection needs and increased school dropout. Wasting levels remain high: 9.2 per cent of children under age 5 wasted.

The southeastern regions continue to experience the consequences of two consecutive years of cyclones. Communities dealing with the lasting effects of tropical cyclones in 2022 were then hit by Tropical Cyclone Freddy in the first part of 2023, impacting their recovery. Nutrition needs are increasing: it is estimated that two landlocked districts will be in phase 4 (emergency levels) for acute malnutrition beginning in January 2024. Twenty basic health centres destroyed by the cyclones of 2022 and 2023 still need rehabilitation. Additionally, 40 per cent of WASH infrastructure was destroyed or contaminated by these cyclones, while open defecation persists in some areas of these hard-to-reach districts.

Madagascar continues to experience polio and malaria epidemics, which has increased the burden on already weak health services. More than 1 million malaria cases were reported in these six regions between January and July 2023, 60 per cent of the country’s cases, aggravating wasting levels.

As a result, about 550,000 children will experience wasting in 2024, of whom 114,000 will be severely wasted. And 1.4 million people will require WASH interventions. Rapid protection assessments have shown that the various crises have increased the risks of violence against children and their exploitation in regions already home to high rates of child marriage and child labour. Additionally, 440,000 people require gender-based violence and protection services.

The El Niño weather pattern will intensify droughts and floods in the south and southeast. El Niño may also impact other parts of the country, potentially causing drought in the northwest along with higher risks of cyclones.

STORY FROM THE FIELD

Severe weather events are increasingly disrupting children’s education in Madagascar.

Nearly 100,000 students could not attend school for several weeks after Tropical Cyclone Freddy battered Madagascar after making landfall there on 21 February 2023.

In the secondary school of Antaninarenina, in the city of Tulear, in southwestern Madagascar, students start streaming towards the school as seven o’clock is about to strike. It’s back-to-school day: classes have been suspended for the past three weeks for the 800 students at the school due to the passage of Freddy. Two large tents provided by UNICEF have been set up as temporary classrooms.

Read more about this story here

A student at an Antaninarenina public middle school in the Atsimo-Andrefana region stands inside her school in March 2023. The building was damaged by Tropical Cyclone Freddy.

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HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

In line with the national response of the Government of Madagascar, and complementing its partners’ work, UNICEF will provide an ambitious, child-focused and rights-based humanitarian response. UNICEF supports the focus on anticipatory actions agreed to by the humanitarian community and continues to strengthen early warning systems and engage with communities in the area of social and behaviour change to ensure preparedness.

UNICEF leads the Nutrition and WASH Clusters in Madagascar, as well as the cash working group; UNICEF co-leads the Education Cluster and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility. In these forums, UNICEF focuses on coordination and scaling up interventions using a ‘no-regrets’ approach. UNICEF intends to support the country’s humanitarian strategy by promoting coordinated, multi-risk analyses, and intersectoral, resilience-focused and locally led responses. In accordance with the new country programme document for Madagascar, UNICEF will reinforce its field presence in humanitarian areas and strengthen its accountability to affected populations. Liaising with development actors allows a more efficient humanitarian response. For example, WASH infrastructure and better availability of water has already reduced the costs of WASH interventions.

UNICEF will use the available social protection system to administer humanitarian cash transfers to cover up to 50 per cent of the population in need, as identified by the cash working group. Access to free primary health care for 228,000 people will be improved by strengthening community and primary health care, including through outreach and a mobile strategy to facilitate access.

Madagascar is one of the first countries to implement the new World Health Organization recommendations for prevention and treatment of wasting. This means a better continuum of care for 385,000 malnourished children. UNICEF also intends to expand its coverage to meet the nutritional needs of women and adolescent girls, with 31,500 women receiving multiple micronutrients supplementation, and to strengthen the links with social protection.

With more than 182,000 children deprived of school in 2023 due to cyclones, the priority for education will be to prepare schools in the drought- and cyclone-affected areas to build back better, and facilitate children’s retention in school, by providing materials, temporary classrooms and psychosocial support services.

Child protection efforts will centre on strengthening protection monitoring systems, with a focus on gender-based violence identification and case management and on support to other sectors to integrate psychosocial supports and positive parenting.

UNICEF remains committed to zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse. The organization will strengthen its internal capacity in this regard in 2024, and also contribute to inter-agency efforts on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse through refresher trainings and through collaborations among sectors to better integrate protection from sexual exploitation and abuse into UNICEF programmes.

2024 PROGRAMME TARGETS

Health (including public health emergencies)
- 193,000 children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities
- 35,000 pregnant women receiving 4 antenatal care with prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis and malaria prevention.

Nutrition
- 114,000 children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment
- 336,589 primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling

Child protection, GBViE and PSEA
- 164,000 children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support
- 400,000 women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions
- 400,000 people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations

Education
- 370,000 children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- 300,000 children receiving individual learning materials

Water, sanitation and hygiene
- 122,700 people accessing appropriate sanitation services
- 303,500 people reached with critical WASH supplies

Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)
- 46,500 households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers (including for social protection and other sectors)
- 4,800,000 affected people (children, caregivers, community members) reached with timely and life-saving information on how and where to access available services
UNICEF is requesting $41.4 million to address the needs of 1.1 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in Madagascar, including 950,000 children. Full funding of this appeal is critical to enable UNICEF to provide life-saving goods and services to children and vulnerable populations in the context of persistent drought and frequent cyclones and floods.

Addressing the persistent nutrition crisis is the top priority, requiring 38 per cent of the total funding requirement to provide life-saving treatment for 385,000 malnourished children. Another priority area will be to cover at least 50 per cent of humanitarian cash transfer needs in support of vulnerable communities during the lean seasons and after natural disasters such as cyclones, especially in the southeast. Funding will also enable UNICEF to provide essential primary health care to 228,000 people, bring children back to school in the drought- and cyclone-affected areas and promote child protection and gender-based violence identification and case management. UNICEF continues to invest in protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and in gender-based violence prevention and response, allocating at least $500,000 through child protection ($300,000) and other sectors, to reach 400,000 people. Twenty-seven per cent of all funds requested will be dedicated to gender-related priorities.

UNICEF has developed an accountability to affected populations strategy with a humanitarian–development nexus lens, and is part of the common feedback mechanism with other humanitarian partners in Madagascar. Finally, $370,000 will be devoted to ensuring community participation.

Without timely and sufficient funding, UNICEF will be unable to provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable populations, leaving many without access to essential services and protection.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2024 requirements (US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health (including public health emergencies)</td>
<td>6,380,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>15,760,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA</td>
<td>3,020,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2,480,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
<td>3,730,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)</td>
<td>10,040,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41,410,000</td>
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The aim for 2024 is to have a UNICEF programme integrating protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and accountability to affected populations at all stages of its implementation. The programme will continue to provide support to affected populations, including children and adolescents, in order to ensure that they are protected from all forms of violence and abuse. The programme will also work closely with other humanitarian agencies and partners to ensure a comprehensive and integrated response.

The programme will continue to focus on providing essential services to affected populations, including education, health, and nutrition. It will also continue to support the process of reintegration of children who have been displaced or are at risk of displacement.

The programme will also continue to advocate for the rights of children and adolescents, and to ensure that their needs are met. It will work closely with other humanitarian agencies and partners to ensure a comprehensive and integrated response to the needs of affected populations.

The programme will continue to monitor the situation and respond to the needs of affected populations, including children and adolescents, in order to ensure that they are protected from all forms of violence and abuse. The programme will also continue to work closely with other humanitarian agencies and partners to ensure a comprehensive and integrated response to the needs of affected populations.

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