



Safiathou and her friends walk 6 kilometers every day to attend school in the village of Foulabougou.

unicef 
for every child

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 12

Reporting Period
1 January to 31
December 2023

Mali

HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2023, the humanitarian situation in Mali remained alarming, with 8.8 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, including 4.7 million children.
- MINUSMA, which had been operating in Mali since April 2013, ended its mandate on 31 December 2023. In an unpredictable security context, the government's takeover of Kidal region in November led to a political and military reconfiguration of the northern regions.
- By the end of 2023, 1,608 schools were closed due to insecurity affecting 482,000 children and 9,600 teachers.
- UNICEF and its partners implemented a coordinated response to meet the needs of children requiring critical humanitarian assistance. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene assistance was provided to 254,835 people, 1,977 unaccompanied and separated children could benefit from holistic care, 164,220 children were treated for Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and 7,412,687 children under 5 were administered polio vaccine. Support was provided to 126,106 children, allowing them to access education in conflict-affected areas.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS



4,700,000

Children in need of humanitarian assistance



8,800,000

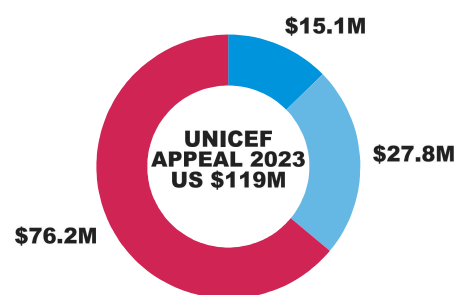
People in need of humanitarian assistance



391,961

Internally Displaced Persons¹

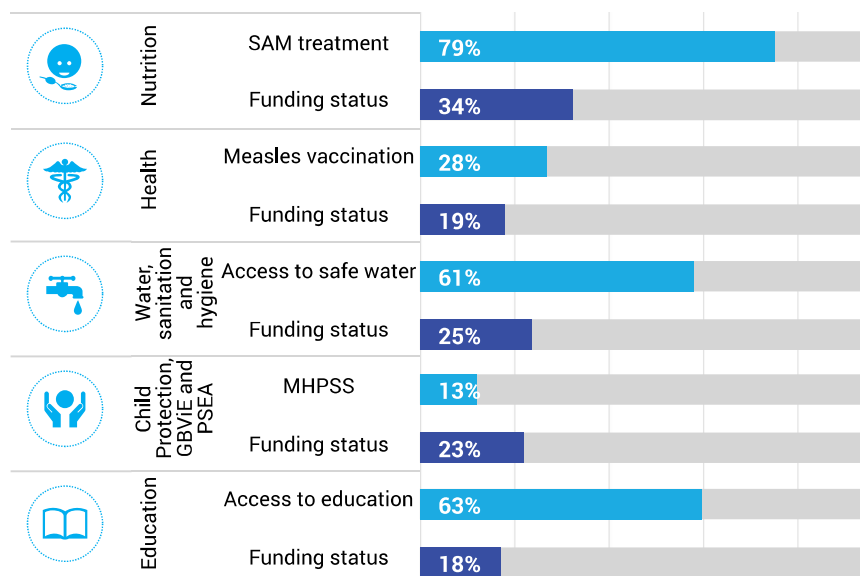
FUNDING STATUS (IN US\$)**



- Humanitarian Resources
- 2022 carry over
- Funding gap

** Funding available includes: funds received in the current year; carry-over from the previous year; and repurposed funds with agreement from donors

UNICEF RESPONSE AND FUNDING STATUS*



* UNICEF response % is only for the indicator, the funding status is for the entire sector.

FUNDING OVERVIEW AND PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, Mali continued to face significant humanitarian needs, prompting a review of the Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) Appeal of US\$119 million.

The overall funding level for the 2023 HAC Appeal was substantially lower (36 per cent funded) compared to 2022 (54 per cent funded), despite similar Appeal targets. This marked a significant decline from previous years, where appeals were typically funded at an average of 52 per cent. Consequently, UNICEF had to significantly scale back its planned humanitarian response. The largest funding gaps were in Education (82 per cent gap), Health (81 per cent gap), and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (75 per cent). Several bilateral donors in Mali reported that they would be facing additional funding cuts in the coming years. Additionally, with the departure of MINUSMA, operating costs substantially increased.

Only 10 per cent of the funding was flexible, unearmarked, multi-year 'thematic' funding, which could have facilitated greater impact for children.

In response to the volatile situation, particularly with the departure of MINUSMA exacerbating existing humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities, a 6-months L2-emergency specifically for Mali was announced by the UNICEF Executive Director on 19 December 2023.

As part of its resource mobilization efforts, UNICEF organized a high-level round table discussion jointly with the World Food Programme and major humanitarian donors in Mali, co-led by UNICEF's Deputy Executive Director for Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations, and WFP's Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer.

Additionally, the UNICEF Mali Representative traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, in September to brief bilateral partners at the "Palais des Nations" on the humanitarian situation in Mali. The European Union suggested an upcoming follow-up briefing in Geneva, hosted by them, in 2024. The UNICEF Mali Representative also held a press briefing at the "Palais des Nations" and subsequently traveled to Zurich to meet the UNICEF National Committee for Switzerland and Lichtenstein to discuss UNICEF Mali's emergency response and identify resource mobilization opportunities with the country's general public and private sector.

UNICEF demonstrated active engagement with donors at the country level by organizing two Nutrition round tables with the Good Humanitarian Donor Group (GHDG) in June and October, taking the opportunity to analyse concerning indicators on severely malnourished children from Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) Surveys. Internal briefings were run in collaboration with both the Nutrition Cluster and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Due to security concerns, it was not possible to organize a field mission with the GHDG to Menaka. However, UNICEF conducted several field missions with humanitarian partners, including ECHO and a mission related to CERF. Furthermore, UNICEF received visits from humanitarian partners at their headquarters, including the Swedish Cooperation (Sida).

SITUATION OVERVIEW AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Throughout 2023, Mali continued to face political uncertainty including through the postponement of presidential elections, a volatile security situation and increased activity by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs).

On 30 June 2023, responding to the Government's request to end the mission, the UN Security Council decided to conclude the MINUSMA mandate, which had been in operation in Mali since April 2013. Despite significant logistical and security obstacles and a relatively short timeframe, MINUSMA departed from Mali by 31 December 2023. By this time, 11 out of the 13 MINUSMA camps had been transferred to the Malian Government, with only 2 sites (Bamako and Gao) retained for the liquidation process, scheduled to begin in January 2024.

Starting in mid-August 2023, the handover of camps was marked by a series of violent clashes in the Timbuktu, Kidal, and Gao regions, involving the Malian Armed Forces (FAMA) and certain political opposition armed groups affiliated with the "Cadre Strategique Permanent pour la Paix, la Stabilite et le Developpement" (CSP-PSD), signatories of the 2015 Algiers Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. FAMA successfully regained control over northern Timbuktu and Gao, as well as the Kidal region. On 14 November, the Malian army declared the recapture of Kidal, leading to the restoration of the State's authority over the region, which had been under the control of political opposition armed groups for over a decade. The military operations in the Kidal region, commencing in September 2023, led to numerous displacements to neighboring areas and across the Mauritanian and Algerian borders.

Intensified conflict and violence could be observed in the Gao, Menaka, and Timbuktu regions. In mid-August, a blockade was imposed around Timbuktu, leading to a disruption in food and essential goods. As a result, at least 6,121 households (33,100 people) have been displaced across the regions of Timbuktu, Taoudenit, and toward neighboring countries. Humanitarian partners in the Timbuktu region had to restrict or halt their movements outside the city, depriving the most vulnerable populations of crucial humanitarian aid.

Due to the worsening security situation, humanitarian organizations in the northern and central regions of Mali continued to face access challenges, including high risk of criminal attacks and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) incidents during field missions. The departure of MINUSMA created the need for additional logistical support solutions for humanitarian missions in remote areas, including flights, accommodations, area security patrols, and demining. FAMAs' challenges to secure aerodromes, in place of MINUSMA, led to the temporary suspension of humanitarian access to the affected localities of Menaka, Douentza, Goundam, Ansongo and Niafunke, critically aggravating the of humanitarian space.

Rising insecurity has resulted in the ongoing closure of schools, with approximately 1,608 schools closed in 2023, impacting over 516,000 children and over 9,000 teachers. These children are not only vulnerable to child abuse, violence, early marriage, child labour, and increased psychological distress, but are also at risk of not reaching their full potential to contribute to Mali's future development.

Additionally, heightened violence following the departure of MINUSMA has severely affected essential health services, particularly in the northern parts of the country, where nearly one in five health centers have been forced to close. This has led to difficulties in accessing medical care, shortages in staff, medicine, laboratory services, and fuel. As a result, women and children with

serious illnesses in areas affected by increased violence have been unable to access life-saving medical services. In 2023, cases of measles were reported in 32 of the country's 75 health districts, adding to the existing challenges of polio and dengue fever epidemics. The limited access to humanitarian aid in regions affected by these epidemics posed a significant risk of further spread within the country and beyond its borders.

In addition to the protracted insecurity, the increase of violence related to the MINUSMA departure impacted essential health services, particularly in northern parts of the country, where almost one in five health centers was forced to close, and the functioning of other centers was made difficult due to shortages in staff, medicine, laboratory services, and fuel. In that context, women and children with serious illnesses living in areas where violence had worsened (like some localities in Menaka, or Kidal) were not able to access lifesaving medical services. In 2023, cases of measles were reported in 32 of the country's 75 health districts, while the country was faced with other epidemics such as polio and dengue fever.

In 2023, prolonged armed conflict and resulting displacement, along with limited humanitarian access, led to nearly one million children under 5 years old experiencing severe malnutrition/wasting. At least 200,000 of these children were at risk of not surviving, if life-saving aid did not reach them in time. A trend that could worsen in 2024, potentially affecting over 1.2 million children under 5, as indicated by a recent IPC analysis.

Furthermore, over 90 per cent of IDPs were reported to reside in areas where access to water is lower than the national average of 67.3 per cent. Only around 27 per cent of the 2.2 million people targeted for Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services were reached, heightening the risk of epidemics and water-borne diseases among the IDP population.

Mali remained at very high risk according to the Children's Climate Risk Index due to the impact of climate change, which has made crises more frequent and difficult to recover from. The combined effects of conflict and the climate crises have led to a humanitarian crisis that disproportionately affected children in Mali.

In 2023, there were 352 reported cases of measles out of 1,037 suspected cases, compared to 761 in 2022 and 828 in 2021, with the majority of cases occurring in specific regions (Mopti: 56 cases, Timbuktu: 36 cases, Gao: 34 cases, Kidal: 12 cases, Menaka: 13 cases, and Taoudenit: 2 cases). Since September 2023, Mali experienced a dengue fever outbreak that spread from Bamako to various regions.

Children continue to face various risks such as family separation, gender-based violence, and recruitment into armed groups and forces, which can have severe impacts on their mental health and overall development. Between January and September, over 700 grave violations against children were confirmed, affecting 610 children (15 per cent girls), with a majority occurring in the Timbuktu, Gao, and Mopti regions. Additionally, women and children are still vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse.

UNICEF's activation of a Level 2 Corporate Emergency for Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Coastal countries was extended until December 19, 2023. Mali has participated in UNICEF's Call to Action regarding children in the Sahel, as well as a Child Alert.

Health



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UNICEF, in collaboration with its partners and the Government of Mali, organized the launch of National Polio Vaccination days in Bamako, with the theme "A polio-free Mali is possible."

Despite limitations in implementation due to funding shortages and humanitarian access constraints, a total of 322,265 children aged 6 months to 9 years in fragile contexts were vaccinated against measles in 2023. The polio epidemic, caused by the circulating Vaccine-Derived Poliovirus (cVDPV2), remained a significant public health issue, with the country recording 17 cases by December 31st, including 10 in the northern parts of the country and Mopti, and 7 in the southern part. UNICEF and its partners supported a national campaign, resulting in 7,412,687 children under 5 receiving monovalent Oral Polio Vaccine (mOPV) in the first round and 7,260,865 in the second round.

Efforts were focused on capacity building, strengthening cold chains, and ensuring vaccine supply in affected regions, as well as implementing communication and community engagement UNICEF activities.

Since January 2023, 285,637 pregnant women accessed Antenatal Care (ANC). Routine vaccinations included 238,920 children under one year receiving Penta (including 117,071 girls), 427,695 children under five (including 209,571 girls) being treated for malaria, and 65,664 children under five (including 32,175 girls) receiving adequate treatment for diarrhea. Additionally, 287,062 children (including 140,661 girls) were treated for Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI). UNICEF also continued to support birth registration, with 137,192 children (including 67,224 girls) reported at birth out of 159,495 registered live births.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMME RESPONSE

Nutrition



Students in Didiéni drink enriched porridge prepared from local foods prepared by their teachers. It keeps the students healthy and motivates them to come to school every day.

In response to the worsening Nutrition crisis in Mali, UNICEF, working closely with the Government and its partners, extended early detection and treatment services for severely acute malnourished (SAM) children to 1,610 out of 1,640 operational community health centers and all 65 referral health centers nationwide. Over the course of a year, a total of 164,220 children (including 88,571 girls) were admitted and received SAM treatment in nutritional rehabilitation units supported by UNICEF. These interventions were concentrated in 11 regions, namely Gao, Menaka, Kidal, Timbuktu, Taoudenit, Mopti, Segou, Kayes, and the Bamako Health District, covering 79.4 per cent of the annual target set by the Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC). The treatment outcomes for SAM met international SPHERE standards with a cure rate of 95.5 per cent, a death rate of 0.7 per cent, and a defaulter rate of 3.9 per cent. However, challenges persisted, including insufficient treatment coverage in remote communities and heightened logistical expenses for transporting nutrition supplies due to increased security concerns.

During the reporting period, 3 million children underwent screening for acute malnutrition. Additionally, 4.8 million children between the ages of 6 and 59 months were reached with Vitamin A supplementation, while 4.3 million children aged 12 to 59 months received deworming tablets.

Efforts to enhance community health included engaging with over 611,135 caregivers of children aged 0-23 months, including 457,155 pregnant and lactating women in high-acute malnutrition areas. These caregivers received essential education on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices and early stimulation, promoting healthy and nutritious food habits for infants and young children. Furthermore, 135,563 children aged 6-23 months in the Gao, Ménaka, and Mopti regions were provided with multiple Micronutrient Powder Supplementation (MNPs) for household food fortification, ensuring they received vital nutrients for healthy growth and development. These initiatives have significantly benefited the health and well-being of children, women, and communities.

In 2023, workshops were conducted in crisis zones to address challenges related to data collection complexity and low data completeness rates, resulting in an improved 66 per cent completeness rate in 2023 compared to 46 per cent in 2022. Despite being implemented in some regions and districts, data quality issues persisted as a major challenge for implementing partners.

A national SMART 2023 Nutrition survey conducted in July revealed a Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) prevalence of 11.1 per cent and

Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) of 2.1 per cent, exceeding the World Health Organization (WHO) alert threshold.

In response to these concerning findings and to ensure continuity of immediate and sustainable services, UNICEF partnered with local Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) in remote and inaccessible areas to strengthen essential social services, particularly in Health, Nutrition, and Livelihood sectors, aiming to enhance living conditions for affected populations. This collaborative strategy was outlined in the regional response plan, developed and approved by Nutrition stakeholders, including Government, key partners and members of the Nutrition Cluster (national, regional, local levels).

The Nutrition Cluster reports that in 2023, partners provided life-saving support to 1.3 million individuals, achieving 62 per cent of their annual target. For 2024, the Nutrition Cluster in Mali aims to assist 2.5 million vulnerable people, including 201,250 SAM cases, requiring an estimated funding amount of US\$ 74.6 million.

Child Protection, Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE), and PSEA



Students from Massakorobougou and their teacher playing in the schoolyard.

Throughout 2023, UNICEF and its partners provided psychosocial support to 98,812 conflict-affected children, with 48,531 being girls, reaching 25 per cent of the annual target. Additionally, within the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AOR) 159,599 children (including 80,247 girls) participated in psychosocial and recreational activities in safe spaces, achieving 15 per cent of the annual target. The underachievement for this indicator, is due in part to a lack of funding, difficulties accessing intervention areas, and a targeting strategy focused on children in need rather than operational capacity.

Between January and September 2023, approximately 700 cases of grave violations were verified, with the most affected regions being Timbuktu, Gao, Menaka, and Kidal. The active presence of armed groups, combined with a lack of socio-economic opportunities, increased the risk of children joining armed forces or groups as a negative coping strategy. Children were also at risk of abduction and association with armed groups, either as combatants or for other exploitative purposes, including sexual exploitation, violating their rights (including the most fundamental right "the right to life") and security and exposing them to serious psychological trauma.

The termination of MINUSMA interventions in Mali significantly impacted the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) for 6 grave violations, which operated under the co-leadership of MINUSMA and UNICEF. To meet its expanded responsibilities, linked to the departure of MINUSMA, and related to coordinating the

mechanism and supporting victims, UNICEF scaled up its response, recruiting additional MRM staff at national and local levels. Linked to the possible departure of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UNICEF restarted Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) activities.

UNICEF provided care and services for 531 children released from armed forces and armed groups, with 87 being girls, in the regions of Kidal, Timbuktu, Gao, Segou, Taoudenit and Mopti, representing 77 per cent reached against the set target. Additionally, 2,054 unaccompanied and separated children, including 725 girls, received holistic family-based care or care through suitable alternatives, exceeding the annual target by 128 per cent.

While there were relatively timid achievements in providing assistance to Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG), higher success in providing targeted assistance to Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) was reported. Both CAAFAG and UASC received comprehensive interim first response, including medical care, psychosocial support, food, and shelter. Significant challenges in addressing sensitive issues, related to child recruitment and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) remained.

Family reunifications, achieved in close collaboration with Government bodies and community leaders, have been successful despite ongoing displacement and limited access to certain areas. Community leaders and local protection committees were instrumental in helping reunite children with their families, as they demonstrated a deep understanding of the community and can reach areas that are difficult to access. Providing economic support, such as vocational training for adolescents in conflict-affected areas is a vital aspect of Child Protection in Emergencies interventions. This support offers alternative opportunities for young people to build resilience and contributes to their overall well-being.

In April 2023, Child Protection AoR members validated harmonized guidelines for Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS), setting minimum standards, ensuring consistency, and maintaining quality in the establishment and operation of CFS in Mali, particularly within the framework of community-based psychosocial support for children impacted by conflict. Additionally, AoR members released five newsletters containing insightful articles, as well as regional dashboards related to the Child Protection response.

During the reporting period, UNICEF and partners maintained their field responses reaching about 22,105 people (13,056 girls) with safe channel to report Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). UNICEF has also strengthened its internal safeguarding system with a special focus on sexual misconduct, by launching the PSEA code of conduct. This code of conduct has been signed by the whole UNICEF staff. The capacities of 63 implementing partners have been strengthened to integrate minimal PSEA engagements and how to ensure that mechanisms for reporting SEA are safe and context specific. Moreover, 63 UNICEF implementing partners were reassessed for PSEA capacity. UNICEF conducted research to assess the functionality of the Community complaints mechanisms in Mopti, Sikasso and Bamako to identify the challenges and reestablishing them as required based on the key findings.

Education



Students playing in the schoolyard. The Ntentou school benefits from UNICEF support (didactic materials, toys, training of monitors), which has contributed to a better learning environment.

In 2023, UNICEF was able to reach 227,150 children in 15 out of 20 regions. Interventions included installing temporary classrooms, conducting catch-up classes, distributing school kits, organizing recreational activities, and providing training on psychosocial support, peace building, and child-centered pedagogy.

These results included 126,106 out of targeted 200,000 children (63 per cent of the annual target) accessing formal or non-formal education and 227,150 children (21 per cent of the annual target) receiving individual learning materials. The unmet targets were primarily due to a funding gap of US\$22.8 million (representing a gap of 88.7 per cent of total funds needed), impacting UNICEF's capacity to deliver results for children. Important funds received to allow still important Education response achievements included among other funds received via Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and Global and Humanitarian Thematic Fundings.

By the end of December, 1,608 schools were reported closed/non-functional due to insecurity, affecting over 482,000 school-aged children and 9,600 teachers (compared to 1,582 closed/non-functional schools in 2022). This number continued to fluctuate throughout the year, with significant differences between regions. UNICEF and its partners continued efforts to provide access and ensure continuity of education through alternative education provisions and reopening of schools. UNICEF actively contributed to the reopening of 174 schools, benefiting 39,152 children (19,500 girls), and supported 637 volunteer teachers, community dialogue and the development of community action plans. UNICEF also supported additional alternative education offers such as Community-Learning Centers (CLCs), contributing to continued access to learning.

In the context of forced displacements, UNICEF addressed the needs of displaced school-aged children in all regions by enhancing the capabilities of host schools and offering alternative education. Additionally, UNICEF supported Rapid Response Mechanisms (RRM) in Education and Child Protection in Ségou and San regions, assisting 2,438 internally displaced children, including 1,302 girls.

UNICEF supported the development of distance education by broadcasting two validated radio programmes through 78 community radios, reaching an estimated 550,000 primary school-aged children (out of which 51 per cent girls). UNICEF also trained 35 Central Education Services personnel from National Directorates and from Pedagogical Animation Centres in script creation and developed 120 scripts for the 9th year of basic education, which are expected to be

validated by the Ministry of Education (MEN) to support children enrolled to sit for the Diploma of Fundamental Education (DEF). In the field of digital education, the MEN Steering Committee approved 379 free educational resources for inclusion in the Learning Passport, set to be launched in Mali in 2024.

Additionally, UNICEF supported the revision of the training module and tools for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), and developed a peer support approach, which was validated by the Ministry of Education and foreseen to be used by all Education Cluster members and stakeholders working in the field. A total of 82 trainers (27 women) received training at national, regional, and local levels, and subsequently trained 257 educational staff (including pre-school teachers/educators, school and pre-school headmasters), with 171 of them being women.

UNICEF, as co-lead agency for the Education Cluster, continued supporting interventions related to functioning of schools in areas affected by crises. This involved strengthening the capacity of Government staff to gather, process, and share data, in order to provide real-time information on affected schools, students, and teachers for planning purposes. The development of two important documents, a guidance note for rapid response in education and the Education Cluster strategy, was a part of this effort. With the assistance of the Global Education Cluster, the Cluster was able to offer support to crisis-affected regions, including through organizing training sessions and supporting the creation of regional contingency plans. While Sikasso completed its plan by the end of the year, other regions were in the process of developing their own specific plans. The Cluster initiated an evaluation of its performance by key stakeholders, with 78 per cent participation and overall satisfactory rating (out of 19 evaluation criteria, 9 were rated “good”, 10 “satisfactory”).

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)



Safiatou fetches water from the standpipe at the Foulaboula school, a school supported by UNICEF.

Throughout 2023, UNICEF and its partners continued to deliver essential WASH services to 127,757 people affected by conflict in the central and northern regions of Mali, including the immediate distribution of emergency kits. Additionally, water points were established or rehabilitated in various locations, such as Bamako, Kayes, Sikasso, Ségou, Mopti, Gao, Menaka, Kidal, Taoudenit, and Timbuktu, providing 127,079 individuals (including 68,305 children) with access to clean water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene. Furthermore, 17,018 girls and women in regions including Kayes, Ségou, Mopti, Sikasso, Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal, Taoudenit, Menaka, Bandiagara, and Bamako were reached with the provision of menstrual hygiene kits during the year.

Given the operational, logistical, and financial challenges faced by humanitarian actors in 2023, satisfactory results were achieved. However, they still fall short of the annual targets set. In 2023, the target for providing access to water and distributing kits was 415,500 people, with UNICEF reaching 254,836 people (61 per cent of the target). The target for kit distribution was 228,000 people, versus 127,757 people were reached (56 per cent of the target). Additionally, the target for sanitation was 50,000 people, out of which 18,653 people were reached (37 per cent of the target).

The primary reason for programmatic response gaps was a significant shortfall in funding, with a 75 percent gap against the US\$15 million sought for WASH programme in emergency interventions for 2023. This chronic underfunding has compromised the capacity of to implement crucial life-saving interventions and establish long-term, sustainable solutions connected to the WASH programme. Consequently, necessary support to essential facilities was negatively affected, and it was not possible to provide needed minimal WASH kits to schools and health centres.

Faced with this situation, and in order to continue delivering while increasing the impact of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) interventions on the ground, UNICEF, in support of the Government, was able to build on the lessons learned in recent years to establish a coordination mechanism including key stakeholders at the local level. The integration of governance, coordination, and capacity strengthening efforts across sectors such as WASH, Nutrition, Health, Child Protection and Education has helped to harmonise approaches and risk mitigation measures, particularly linked to the selection of intervention areas.

Awareness-raising, stakeholder involvement, and capacity-development of construction companies and implementing partners of WASH projects, facilitated ownership and behavioural change in the use and maintenance of WASH infrastructure. Practical hands-on training for members of Water-point Management Committees conducted in collaboration with WASH construction companies proved to be more effective than traditional classroom-based training sessions. Moreover, the effective collaboration between the Regional Technical Services (including DRH, DRCPN, DRS, and the Regional Public Procurement Office) and the local Governors improved the coordination in hiring of local firms and the implementation of WASH activities at regional levels.

The recent crises in Mali have highlighted the importance of developing risk-informed systems that can anticipate and effectively respond to various shocks and stressors, including personal shocks than can occur during a child's life as well as related to the impact of climate change, population displacement, and conflict. WASH interventions at community level, as well as addressing priority needs, helped to build resilience and social cohesion. Half of the 2023 trained members of the WASH Management Committees were women. Their participation was essential to ensure that decisions taken represent the community as a whole and meet expectations of women, the main users of these water points. Measures such as reducing distances and improving water collection methods provided comfort and enhanced safety for women and children responsible for these duties.

As lead agency for the WASH Cluster, UNICEF was able to mobilize 76 WASH Cluster members for a coordinated response, reaching 965,696 people, including 548,757 children, which is 43 per cent of the annual target, despite only mobilizing 40 per cent of the funds. The assistance provided focused on water access (66 per cent, including 23 per cent for emergency water supplies) and hygiene promotion (33 per cent). Additionally, the WASH Cluster supported the development and validation of an emergency WASH guide, which integrates norms and standards tailored to the context of Mali and good emergency response practices, validated by stakeholders

and published in September 2023. UNICEF in its capacity as WASH Cluster lead-agency also funded a training workshop in February for all Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) actors, which included 35 staff from 14 organizations. This aimed to strengthen their capacity and integrate new tools and skills to improve the quality and content into WASH emergency responses in Mali. The WASH Cluster also spearheaded various innovations, such as quality assurance and accountability initiatives, as well as ongoing WASH insecurity analysis.

In line with previous years, and to gain a better understanding of humanitarian needs in Mali, UNICEF co-financed the Multisectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA 2023). This survey revealed that nationally, 32 per cent of households lack access to improved latrines, a decrease from 42 per cent in 2022; 7 per cent still practice open defecation. This issue is particularly prevalent in Timbuktu (23 per cent), Gao (20 per cent), Kidal and Ménaka (11 per cent), and Mopti (9 per cent). Among IDPS, 26 per cent practice open defecation. Additionally, 11 per cent of households used unimproved water sources in 2023, especially in Timbuktu (20 per cent) and Ségou (15 per cent). Furthermore, in the regions of Kidal (23 per cent), Gao (22 per cent), Timbuktu (18 per cent), and Ménaka (14 per cent), households spent more than 30 minutes collecting water, compared to a national average of 6 per cent (compared to 1.4 per cent in 2022). Regarding hygiene, 35 per cent of households were reported to lack hand washing facilities, and 52 per cent did not have soap or detergent for handwashing.

Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)



Vaccination Campaign against COVID-19, Yirimadio District.

In 2023, UNICEF and its partners supported the Government of Mali to strengthen Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) for increased COVID-19 and polio vaccination promotion and compliance. This effort engaged over 990,461 individuals, including 382,211 involved in immunization promotion activities. Additionally, 93,269 community feedbacks and concerns regarding immunization were addressed. Simultaneously, an estimated 9.5 million people, including 5.7 million women, received information and messages disseminated with the support of UNICEF and its partners.

Overall, the communication for Social Behavior Change (SBC for action) approach integrated various social mobilization and community engagement activities, such as advocacy and animation sessions, awareness raising, community dialogues, home visits, and thematic preaching, alongside the provision of immunization services. These activities were coordinated by members of the Crisis and Disaster Management Committees at the local level.

HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP, COORDINATION AND STRATEGY

The Ministry of Health and Social Development and the Ministry in charge of Humanitarian Affairs led the coordination of humanitarian action, in concertation with the Humanitarian Coordinator and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). UNICEF led the WASH and Nutrition Clusters, the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AoR), and co-led the Education Cluster. UNICEF actively participated in the Humanitarian Planning Cycle (HPC) process and was part of the Inter-Cluster Working Group (ICWG) led by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), both at national and sub-national levels. Additionally, throughout the year, UNICEF was involved in the Interagency Task Force related to the prevention of SEA (PSEA) and the Interagency Gender in Emergencies Working Group.

As the Cluster Lead Agency, UNICEF facilitated the participation of the WASH Cluster in a training on the new version of the Joint Inter-sectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF 2.0) in Istanbul, Turkey, aiming to strengthen the capacity of national experts in cross-sectoral needs analysis and identification.

UNICEF Mali implemented preparedness activities to enhance readiness for the potential impact related to the departure of MINUSMA, including strengthening partnerships with local actors and NGOs to improve humanitarian access and community acceptance, and developing new contingency plans for Country Office, including its Offices at field levels.

HUMAN INTEREST STORIES AND EXTERNAL MEDIA



World Children's Day is UNICEF's annual day of action for children, by children, marking the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

In 2023, UNICEF Mali continued to increase its reach and share of voice to strategically position itself as the leading voice for children in support of advocacy and fundraising efforts, particularly in the humanitarian sector. Through advocacy efforts for Education and Nutrition, UNICEF successfully prioritized these sectors for children in conflict-affected areas, aligned to national priorities by the Government.

Throughout the year, UNICEF produced numerous high-quality multimedia materials, including videos, photos, Human Interest

Stories (HIS), and press releases, showcasing children in humanitarian contexts, such as those affected by displacement and conflict.

Global visibility, awareness and advocacy related to humanitarian needs, including for children in Mali increased in 2023. This among other through i) a joint visit to Mali by the UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, Humanitarian Action and Supply Operations and the WFP Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, ii) Palais des Nations Briefing by the UNICEF Representative in Geneva, iii) 2023 Global HAC launch broadcasted from Mali, iv) Participation in a joint UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR visit meeting key bilateral partners and decision-makers outside of the country. These efforts aimed to raise global awareness on the situation in Mali, as well as the Sahel and Coastal countries (within the L2-Emergency activation) and included also fundraising efforts.

UNICEF also engaged in extensive media outreach, including the publication, and sharing of press releases with national and international media, as well as organizing national and international press conferences and regular engagements with national media. These efforts resulted in over 1,000 media mentions related to UNICEF's supported priority advocacy themes and humanitarian issues, such as Education, Nutrition, and Climate Change.

Additionally, UNICEF reached over 270,000 accounts through social media campaigns focused on raising awareness about school closures, nutritional crises, children without vaccinations (zero-doses), psychosocial support, and the impact of climate change on children affected by humanitarian crises, conflicts, and displacement.

- Almost 9 million people in Mali need humanitarian assistance - and half of them are children.
<https://twitter.com/UNICEF/status/1697576241040093501?s=20>
- Child parliamentarians from Kidal, at the advocacy training
<https://twitter.com/unicefmali/status/1689971083678486528>
- Education under attack
<https://www.facebook.com/unicef/videos/1110241183315981/>

HAC APPEALS AND SITREPS

- Mali Appeals
<https://www.unicef.org/appeals/mali>
- Mali Situation Reports
<https://www.unicef.org/appeals/mali/situation-reports>
- All Humanitarian Action for Children Appeals
<https://www.unicef.org/appeals>
- All Situation Reports
<https://www.unicef.org/appeals/situation-reports>

NEXT SITREP: 29 FEBRUARY 2024

ANNEX A - PROGRAMME RESULTS

Consolidated Programme Results

Sector			UNICEF and IPs response			Cluster/Sector response		
Indicator	Disaggregation	Total needs	2023 targets	Total results	Progress*	2023 targets	Total results	Progress*
Nutrition								
Children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment	Total	-	206,700	164,220	▲ 79%	206,749	164,220	▲ 79%
	Girls	-	206,700	88,571	▲ 43%	206,749	88,571	▲ 43%
	Boys	-	206,700	75,649	▲ 37%	206,749	75,649	▲ 37%
Primary caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling	Total	-	496,600	611,135	▲ 123%	496,600	611,135	▲ 123%
	Women	-	496,600	457,155	▲ 92%	496,000	457,155	▲ 92%
	Men	-	496,600	153,980	▲ 31%	496,600	153,980	▲ 31%
Health								
Children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against measles	Total	-	1.1 million	322,265	▲ 28%	-	-	-
Children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against polio	Total	-	1.4 million	7.3 million	▲ 509%	-	-	-
Water, sanitation and hygiene								
People accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking and domestic needs	Total	2.1 million	415,000	254,835	▲ 61%	1.1 million	646,299	▲ 60%
	Girls	2.1 million	415,500	70,910	▲ 17%	1.1 million	187,421	▲ 17%
	Boys	2.1 million	415,500	73,900	▲ 18%	1.1 million	179,839	▲ 17%
	Women	2.1 million	415,500	56,061	▲ 13%	1.1 million	142,178	▲ 13%
	Men	2.1 million	415,500	53,964	▲ 13%	1.1 million	136,861	▲ 13%
People use safe and appropriate sanitation facilities	Total	1.3 million	40,000	18,653	▲ 47%	100,000	97,590	▲ 98%
	Women	1.3 million	40,000	9,294	▲ 23%	100,000	47,821	▲ 48%
	Men	1.3 million	40,000	9,359	▲ 23%	100,000	49,769	▲ 50%
People reached with critical WASH supplies	Total	4.1 million	228,000	127,757	▲ 56%	1.1 million	238,259	▲ 23%
	Women	4.1 million	228,000	63,655	▲ 28%	1.1 million	121,507	▲ 12%
	Men	4.1 million	228,000	64,102	▲ 28%	1.1 million	116,752	▲ 11%
Child Protection, GBVIE and PSEA								

Children and parents/caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support	Girls	-	384,783	48,531	▲ 13%	1.1 million	80,247	▲ 8%
	Boys	-	384,783	50,281	▲ 13%	1.1 million	79,352	▲ 7%
People who have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers	Girls	-	572,500	13,026	▲ 2%	-	-	-
	Boys	-	572,500	11,075	▲ 2%	-	-	-
	Women	-	572,500	9,079	▲ 2%	-	-	-
	Men	-	572,500	8,272	▲ 1%	-	-	-
Children who have exited armed forces and groups provided with protection or reintegration support	Girls	-	700	87	▲ 12%	1,000	108	▲ 11%
	Boys	-	700	444	▲ 63%	1,000	488	▲ 49%
Unaccompanied and separated children accessing family-based care or a suitable alternative	Girls	-	1,600	725	▲ 45%	2,000	1,141	▲ 57%
	Boys	-	1,600	1,329	▲ 83%	2,000	1,797	▲ 90%
Women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions	Total	-	166,100	48,597	▲ 29%	-	-	-
	Girls	-	166,100	18,415	▲ 11%	-	-	-
	Boys	-	166,100	20,786	▲ 13%	-	-	-
	Women	-	166,100	9,396	▲ 6%	-	-	-
People with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations	Total	-	572,500	41,452	▲ 7%	-	-	-
Children who have exited an armed force and groups provided with protection or reintegration support	Total	-	700	531	▲ 76%	1,000	596	▲ 60%
Children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support	Total	-	384,783	98,812	▲ 26%	1.1 million	159,599	▲ 15%
Unaccompanied and separated children provided with alternative care and/or reunified	Total	-	1,600	1,977	▲ 124%	2,000	2,938	▲ 147%
Education								
Children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning	Total	-	200,000	126,106	▲ 63%	274,772	145,847	▲ 53%
	Girls	-	200,000	59,913	▲ 30%	274,772	71,847	▲ 26%
	Boys	-	200,000	66,993	▲ 33%	274,772	74,018	▲ 27%

Children receiving individual learning materials	Total	-	1.1 million	227,150	▲ 21%	2.8 million	674,957	▲ 25%
	Girls	-	1.1 million	113,916	▲ 10%	2.8 million	330,728	▲ 12%
	Boys	-	1.1 million	113,234	▲ 10%	2.8 million	344,829	▲ 13%
Cross-sectoral (HCT, C4D, RCCE and AAP)								
People engaged in risk communication and community engagement actions	Total	-	800,000	990,461	▲ 124%	-	-	-
People sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms	Total	-	250,000	93,269	▲ 37%	-	-	-

*Progress in the reporting period 1 January to 31 December 2023

ANNEX B — FUNDING STATUS

Consolidated funding by sector

Sector	Requirements	Funding available		Funding gap	
		Humanitarian resources received in 2023	Resources available from 2022 (carry over)	Funding gap (US\$)	Funding gap (%)
Health	11,997,720	1,737,679	575,137	9,684,904	81%
Nutrition	31,259,097	4,307,966	6,174,365	20,776,766	66%
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA	23,532,094	2,645,825	2,671,302	18,214,967	77%
Education	25,706,846	2,448,493	2,180,155	21,078,198	82%
Water, sanitation and hygiene	15,090,228	2,025,989	1,772,490	11,291,749	75%
Social protection	6,233,882	-	13,186,748	-	0%
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)	2,948,400	654,926	290,000	2,003,474	68%
Emergency preparedness	2,270,000	1,276,701	935,320	57,979	3%
Total	119,038,267	15,097,579	27,785,517	76,155,171	64%

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ENDNOTES

1. <https://dtm.iom.int/fr/reports/mali-rapport-sur-les-mouvements-de-populations-septembre-2023?close=true>