

Libya

Update on the context and situation of children

Libya continues to face a fragile security situation and uncertain political landscape which have heightened the risk of violence in the country despite the success of the peace process in 2020, and the formation of the Government of Libyan National Unity in 2021. The protracted and complex humanitarian crisis in Libya is compounded by high proliferation of weapons, armed groups, political fragmentation, migrant and refugee inflows, and the effects of climate change.

Libya's economic situation improved significantly, with an estimated growth of 14.1 per cent, a stark contrast to the 1.2 per cent contraction in 2022. Looking ahead, the World Bank projects a growth of 4.1 per cent in 2024 and 4.3 per cent in 2025, predominantly due to stabilization of oil production[1]. However, Libya's financing landscape continues to remain volatile due to the country's reliance on hydrocarbons and lack of economic diversity. Moreover, Libya suffers from a low tax buoyancy, whereby 1 per cent of GDP growth results only in 0.07 per cent increase of tax revenue, which further exacerbates the reliance on hydrocarbons, thus shrinking the fiscal space for the government to invest in social services and human development[2]. Over 7 per cent of Libyans live below the international poverty line of US\$ 2.15 per day while 14.2 per cent were found to be living below the national poverty line based on the median medium expenditure basket.[3]

Libya has made some progress on achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 (Good Health and well-being). 2021 data shows a continued downward trajectory in child mortality rates, with the under-five mortality falling to 11 per 1,000 live births, neonatal mortality to 6 per 1,000 live births, and infant mortality to 9 per 1,000 live births[4]. However, the maternal mortality ratio has increased from an estimated 52 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2008 to 72 per 100,000 live births in 2022 - a 38.5 per cent increase[5].

Over the past decade, there has been a deterioration in the accessibility, availability, funding, and quality of primary health care and nutrition services. This decline has adversely affected the delivery of health services to children, adolescents, and pregnant or lactating women. The national measles vaccination coverage stands at 88.9 per cent with a regional variation of 80.9 per cent in the eastern regions.[6]

As per 2023 final draft of the SMART nutrition survey, the overall prevalence of stunting is 8.2 per cent and 4.3 per cent are estimated to be underweight. The annual burden of acute malnutrition based on the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates is estimated at 63,840 caseloads including 20,160 children with severe acute malnutrition and 43,680 children with moderately acute malnutrition across the country.

Libya's complex context has stalled the progress towards SDG 4 in the recent years. Many adolescents and youth continue to be deprived of learning and skill-building opportunities while most children aged 3–5 years do not receive any form of early learning. 11 per cent of households with school-aged children reported having children who were not enrolled in formal school during the 2021/2022 school year. School attendance showed a similar trend, with the lowest rate at 91 per cent for non-displaced male adolescents and 87 per cent for IDP male adolescents[7].

According to the Common Country Analysis (CCA) 2023, progress has also been noted in the number of households having access to improved and safe drinking water source, however, only 45 per cent of IDPs, 57 per cent of returnees, and 47 per cent of non-Libyans have access to improved water sources. Twenty-two per cent of households had access to safely managed sanitation facilities, while 70 per

cent has only access to basic sanitation facilities. Water losses from the national network are estimated at between 30 and 50 per cent.

In the past year, the rights of women and girls in Libya have encountered substantial challenges. Libya's ranking in the global Gender Inequality Index witnessed a decline, falling from 41 out of 162 countries in 2018 to 61 in 2021[8]. The issue of violence against women persists, with a significant underreporting attributed to a range of factors, including cultural, societal, and legal obstacles.

Libya remains a destination and a transit route to Europe for asylum-seekers and migrants. The country currently hosts around 704,369 migrants, comprising 79 per cent adult males, 11 per cent adult females, and 10 per cent children, including 4 per cent unaccompanied minors, representing a diverse range of nationalities[9]. About 4,000 migrants and asylum seekers, 22 per cent of whom are children, were detained across Libyan detention facilities[10]. Additionally, Libya is still grappling with an internal displacement challenge, with an estimated 125,802 (Libya | Displacement Tracking Matrix (iom.int) people displaced within the country.

UNICEF estimates that nearly 526,000 people, including approximately 200,000 children, required humanitarian assistance in 2023. The situation is particularly dire for children on the move, displaced populations, people living in water scarce areas and populations most exposed to climate hazards.

On 10 September, the unprecedented Storm Daniel struck northeastern Libya, resulting in torrential rains and flash floods that caused devastating consequences. The disaster claimed the lives of over 5,600 people, including more than 1,700 children, and displaced an estimated 44,000 individuals, of whom almost 18,000 were children (Libya DTM). As of early December 2023, 67 per cent of children affected by floods, exhibited negative behavioral changes, and an estimated 48 per cent of children required mental health or psychosocial support. The floods severely affected the health sector, with 84 per cent of hospitals and 88 per cent of Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities partially or non-functional.

[1] World Bank Global Economic Prospects, 2024

[2] Social Expenditure Monitor for Arab States, 2022, UNICEF et. al

[3] 2023 Common Country Analysis for Libya

[4] 2023 Common Country Analysis for Libya

[5] Trends in maternal mortality from 2000 to 2020 (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA , WB)

[6] 2022 SMART Survey

[7] 2023 Common Country Analysis for Libya

[8] UNDP, Human Development Report 2021/2022, September 2022.

[9] IOM Libya Migrant Report Round 48

[10] Libya Detention Centers Profile, September 2023

Major contributions and drivers of results

Health and Nutrition

In 2023, UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH) ensured sustained availability and accessibility of primary health care, nutrition, and newborn services. This cooperation resulted in 38,500 births attended by skilled personnel, 101,959 children under the age of five receiving Integrated Management of Childhood and Newborn Illnesses (IMNCI) services, and 460,000 children under the age of two receiving immunization services. 202 health workers were trained on Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMNCI), Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) and Reproductive Health; in addition to 227 health workers were trained on Basic life support and Basic

Nursing skills. Furthermore, more than 3.4 million individuals were reached with health promotion and awareness-raising messages. These achievements helped to keep the national infant mortality rate at 9.8 and under-five mortality at 13.3 deaths per 1000 live births.

UNICEF supported 77 health facilities with a package of essential and life-saving equipment and supplies to ensure the availability of quality health services to 1.5 million people. Moreover, UNICEF worked with the Medical Waste Management committee within MoH and supported them in launching the Medical Waste Management plan in 50 health facilities supporting an estimated population of 500,000. UNICEF also developed an advocacy position paper aimed at increasing the domestic resourcing for primary health care. This was discussed with the Prime Minister with positive indications regarding the potential expansion of an essential package.

UNICEF worked closely with the Libyan Primary Health Care Institute (PHCI) to strengthen the nutrition programme and to improve access to comprehensive nutrition services in 47 municipalities. This collaboration enhanced the implementation of Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), which provided screening, preventive, and therapeutic nutrition services to 43,944 children and 5,143 pregnant and lactating women. Furthermore, 43,112 pregnant women and caregivers of children under the age of two were reached with information about the best IYCF practices.

Through close partnership with MOH, UNICEF secured US\$ 2.8 million from the Government to help improve immunization services across the country. This collaboration and partnership enabled 460,000 children to access routine immunization services. In addition, UNICEF and WHO collaborative advocacy efforts to ensure the availability of routine child vaccines and to avoid vaccine stockouts, resulted in the decision to provide initial domestic resourcing for a three-year support to procure vaccines from various suppliers.

In partnership with the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), UNICEF supported a long-term cold chain system-strengthening approach which ensured operational efficiency and reliability of equipment in 700 vaccination centers and 94 national, regional, and municipal vaccine stores, covering the entire country. Similarly, the capacity of 20 cold-chain technicians was built on corrective maintenance of all cold-chain equipment. Furthermore, 2,734 vaccinators were trained in Cold Chain and Vaccine Management across the country to ensure the delivery of quality immunization services. UNICEF also strategically supported the NCDC in developing a multi-year immunization strategic plan by conducting an Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) desk review and an Effective Vaccine Management (EVM) assessment.

To enhance availability of timely data to inform programming, UNICEF provided technical support to the MoH to operationalize District Health Information System (DHIS2), with an extensive capacity building of 53 health information management teams. UNICEF also built capacities of information management staff and provided ICT equipment to 700 out of 1500 health facilities nationwide. This facilitated the rollout and utilization of DHIS2.

UNICEF responded to several humanitarian health-related situations during the year, however ensuring life-saving actions were accompanied by constant interventions on system strengthening. During Storm Daniel flood response, UNICEF supported the implementation of a comprehensive package of interventions (medical kits and equipment, physical restoration of primary health care units, training, health awareness campaigns), benefiting 250,000 people. UNICEF also supported the ministry of health to provide health, nutrition and psychosocial services in flood affected areas of Benghazi through mobilizing 6 mobile teams.

In addition, responded to measles outbreak through vaccination campaign in the southern region, reaching 32,741 children with vaccine and successfully interrupting the virus transmission chain. Furthermore, UNICEF supported the provision of integrated health (immunization) and nutrition services to 583 children in detention centers.

Child Protection

In 2023, UNICEF contributed financial, technical capacity development, advocacy, and evidence generation support to improve the Government of Libya's financial and institutional capacity to plan, coordinate and manage child protection systems and to strengthen communities' knowledge and skills to prevent violence against children.

As part of the strategy to support the strengthening of inter-ministerial capacity to protect children in contact with the law, UNICEF built the capacity of 21 frontline workers in addition to 12 supervisors from Ministry of Interior (MOI), Ministry of Justice (MOJ), Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) and Higher Committee for Children (HCC). They received training on alternatives to detention, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), competencies skills, and provided practical tools including checklists and assessment forms for frontliners to use. The frontline workers trained will support cascade trainings to further disseminate this learning across key ministries covering all regions of Libya. Additionally, capacity of 46 investigators and social workers (11 men, 35 women) from Family and Child Protection Units (FCPU) was built on child friendly interviewing techniques for children in contact with the law- one of the key criteria to ensure the Justice for Children (J4C) system is in line with international standards.

UNICEF supported positive parenting programmes in seven of its Baity centers and five mobile child protection teams in schools reaching 1,867 parents/caregivers with positive parenting education. In addition, 150,000 individuals living in areas affected by explosive ordnance were reached with key Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) through radio as well as information education and communication (IEC) materials.

Additionally, UNICEF continued supporting the delivery of quality child protection services. As a result, 4,932 children benefitted from referral services, 308 children (received individual case management; and 74,029 individuals (72,000 children) received MHPSS. 154 Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) were supported through UNICEF best interest assessments and referral to services. In addition, UNICEF provided technical support in the Best Interest Determination panels, jointly with IOM and UNHCR, to determine durable solutions for children on the move, in addition to supporting UNHCR identified Persons of Concern (PoCs) with services at Baity centers.

In response to the unprecedented floods from Storm Daniel in north-east region of Libya, UNICEF child protection programme reached 8,609 affected children with mental health and psychosocial services (MHPSS). UNICEF established 16 mobile teams and afterwards static services to deliver MHPSS services with priority to displaced, unaccompanied and children directly impacted by the floods.

Through UNICEF's technical and financial support, a total of 120 children on the move in detention centers were reached with MHPSS services. UNICEF advocated with authorities for alternatives to detention and has initiated work on best interest determination and family/community-based interim care before durable solutions are identified.

Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

In 2023, UNICEF strengthened the capacity of Government and civil society in climate resilient programming. One notable contribution is the establishment of a coherent sector coordination forum led by Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) and co-led by UNICEF and AfDB as part of the Climate Outcome of the UN Cooperation Framework. The forum has provided space to discuss important issues faced by the sector especially the impact of climate on water resources and the need to reform the water and sanitation sector through a paradigm shift moving from a supply driven approach to a demand management strategy.

UNICEF's sustained advocacy work on water scarcity and climate resulted in a commitment from

Government to develop a new forward-looking water strategy that aims to address water scarcity through innovation and structural reforms. The development of the water strategy is led by the Ministry of Planning (MoP), Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), UNDP, UNICEF and AfDB.

UNICEF continues to raise the profile of children and youth in the local and global climate conversation allowing young climate advocates to share their views on climate in local and international forums with the aim to influence upcoming climate policies in Libya. Youth and Children participation in COP28 proceedings, where they interacted with peers and the official Libyan delegation, illustrates the contribution of UNICEF to the empowerment of youth and children in climate action, as per objective 2 of the Sustainable Climate Action Plan (SCAP) and the LCO Advocacy Strategy. In addition, UNICEF produced a Climate Landscape Analysis for Children (CLAC) report shedding light on the impact of climate on children including recommendations on programmatic shifts to better protect children as per objective 1 of the SCAP. The CLAC was shared with key Government and donor partners and its recommendations discussed in a dialogue between youth and authorities.

In 2024, UNICEF will continue supporting WASH and Climate capacity strengthening in Libya building on what was achieved during the previous year and expanding the program in line with guiding objectives of the SCAP.

In 2023, UNICEF dedicated specific focus to the southern regions. UNICEF distributed 7,666 hygiene kits, reaching 38,330 people in the southern region of Libya. Additionally, UNICEF facilitated capacity-building training for 60 water technicians across the country on water quality monitoring contributing to improved service delivery. The installation of essential water infrastructure in the Agar area of the south and the timely response to the needs of 5,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnee families in Sabha, Algordah, and Brak reinforced UNICEF's commitment to providing inclusive services.

In response to Storm Daniel flood, UNICEF swiftly distributed 8,960 family hygiene kits, benefiting 53,750 people. In addition, UNICEF delivered over 400,000 water purification tablets and 2.5 tons of chlorine for water treatment which has played a crucial role in preventing waterborne diseases in the flood affected areas in the east of Libya benefiting 14,000 people for one month. UNICEF also repaired 11 boreholes reaching 50,000 people; repaired WASH in schools and PHCs serving 15,000 people.

The WASH Thematic Working Group (TWG), led by UNICEF, improved transparency and refined reporting system across 15 WASH partners. Similarly, WASH TWG launched a comprehensive activity dashboard which provided evidence thus, enhancing targeted intervention to help address regional challenges like borehole contamination and water-trucking efficiency in Derna and Albaida. Additionally, the TWG established focused sub-groups for specific tasks such as water trucking and hygiene kit distribution, significantly improving emergency response in water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

UNICEF continued its life saving response for people on the move held in detention centers. In coordination with the Libya Red Crescent Society (LRCS), UNICEF delivered 394,318 liters of water to around 1200 migrant/asylum seekers detained or stranded at Libya-Tunisia borders. In addition, 3660 migrants were reached with hygiene kits.

Education

UNICEF advocated for sector policy and strategy development across mainly four core pillars of work, namely access to quality education for all children, digitalization, evidence generation and inclusive education with focus on children with disabilities and children on the move.

In the reporting year, UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) rolled out

Education Management and Information System (EMIS). The EMIS will provide the needed data ranging from enrollment, transition, and completion of schooling of all children in the formal education sector to help inform effective programming. This information system will also help in identification of children at risk of dropping out of the school system and children with disabilities hence enabling timely and targeted intervention.

To enhance access to relevant practical and activity-based learning to children, UNICEF initiated a large-scale in-service teacher training programme focusing on refresher pedagogy courses. This is led by the Ministry of Education and will run for two years from 2024 benefiting 50,000 children. In addition, UNICEF provided technical support to MOE for the inclusion of life skills into the national curriculum. Embedding life skills in the curriculum will provide children with the skills and knowledge that they need to be 21st century citizens and enable them to tackle global challenges such as climate change and social cohesion. In 2023 alone UNICEF has supported the capacity building of 219 teachers and education personnel across Libya on inclusive education.

In 2023, through UNICEF's concerted effort to improve access to specialized resources in schools for children with disabilities, 50 Montessori rooms were installed in integrated schools to provide access to learning for children with disabilities and 40 master trainers and 179 teachers were trained on inclusive education.

As a result of continuous advocacy, the MoE finally adopted, UNICEF's Learning Passport as the digital learning platform for Libyan students. This tool is crucial as complementary learning for children in school, as well as shock-responsive learning tool for children displaced or whose school is destroyed/damaged.

Additionally, to support education providers to deliver inclusive, gender-responsive and quality education, UNICEF mainstreamed accessibility and gender inclusivity through infrastructural improvements to the learning environment. WASH facilities in 12 schools were rehabilitated, and accessibility features constructed. In the Wadi Atba municipality, 2 prefab classrooms were provided to expand the learning space available for children. Outside of formal education, UNICEF established 5 youth centres in the South to foster skills programmes, community participation and social cohesion among adolescents and youth (the centres are currently under rehabilitation). In addition, with private sector support, UNICEF rehabilitated five football fields across Libya to promote youth engagement in sports. Overall UNICEF rehabilitated 12 schools across Libya benefiting 10,150 children.

In parallel to the infrastructural support, UNICEF continued to provide essential learning materials to children reaching 22,500 children early childhood education kits.

The education humanitarian response in 2023 primarily centered around the response to floods in the East in September. In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, UNICEF distributed 200 school-in-a-box kits and 100 Early Childhood Education (ECE) kits to Derna, Soussa, Shahat and Al Bayda, reaching a total of 13,000 children. Following a rapid mapping and assessment of infrastructural damage across all flood affected areas, UNICEF supported schools to reopen through the cleaning of 11 schools in Shahat and Al Bayda, and provision of classroom furniture for those 11 and an additional 3 in Al Qoba. 10 temporary learning spaces that cater to 300 children were established in Derna, to alleviate overcrowding in classrooms absorbing high levels of IDP children. UNICEF also trained a cohort of 54 Master Trainers to provide MHPSS and frontline workers' wellbeing training to 250 teachers in flood affected areas.

Social Policy

In 2023, UNICEF played a pivotal role in advancing social protection in Libya, contributing significantly to the development of the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS). Through

UNICEF's support, the NSPS now encompasses crucial social care interventions and aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and international child rights frameworks. The collaborative efforts between UNICEF and key stakeholders for social protection have not only shaped the strategy but have also catalyzed improved coordination mechanisms.

In line with the NSPS initiative, UNICEF in partnership with WFP built the capacity of 21 government officers on social assistance and social care planning thus enhancing their capabilities to contribute effectively to the NSPS. This training has empowered the technical team, fostering a robust environment for inclusive and child-responsive budgeting. Further, UNICEF in partnership with UN Women facilitated an inclusive budgeting policy dialogue among Ministries including Ministries of Planning, Local Government and Social Affairs to advocate for child sensitive, inclusive, and better financing in social sectors. Notably, these efforts resulted in the collaborative signing of a joint workplan with the Government, which led Government to formulate a task team for production of budget briefs and incorporation of public finance for children into national priorities.

In 2023, UNICEF remained a leading Government partner for technical assistance on social protection. UNICEF supported the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) in developing the framework of the National Social Protection Strategy based the Social Protection Road Map which was developed in 2022.

In addressing the need for shock-responsive social protection, UNICEF pioneered the development of a rapid assessment tool for Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA). This tool, endorsed by the Cash and Market Working Group (CMWG), is instrumental in targeting households affected by floods, particularly IPDs.

Evidence Generation

In 2023, UNICEF provided technical and financial support to strengthen the capacity and systems of Bureau of Statistics and Census (BSC) to collect and analyse data, measure results, generate and use evidence to improve development, resilience building and humanitarian programming. A total of 9 staff from BSC were trained on survey design, data processing and analysis. UNICEF is currently collaborating with the BSC to implement Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), a nationally representative household survey that will enable the country to have current statistics on the situation of children and women as well as to monitor the progress of 40 out of the 80-household survey-based SDG indicators.

To further strengthen the availability of evidence to help inform interventions targeting and to measure performance, UNICEF completed SMART survey which provides the needed nutrition statistics, Climate Landscape Analysis for Children and Joint Education Need Assessment. In addition, the office completed 2 evaluations against an annual target of one and ensured evaluation budget expenditure of 0.89 per cent against a global target of 1 per cent.

UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

UNICEF continued to leverage partnerships with MoE, MoLG, MoH, MoWR, GWWA, GDC, MmRP, Ministry of Environment, 4 INGOs and 5 NGOs, to coordinate and foster collaboration with the Government, the UN, civil society and private sector. Of particular relevance the partnerships with the Ministry of Planning (MOP) and the National Statistical Bureau (NSB) to undertake the first MICS for Libya with the financial support from the European Union (EU); the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) to support its reform agenda related to social protection and public finance for children; UNICEF collaborated with WHO to support the MoH's to support PHCs and the

continuity of quality health services and resource mobilization for the sector.

The office increased and cemented its working relationship with the Government in all programmatic areas and cross-sectoral components. This culminated in the signing of two-year rolling work plans with 6 line ministries outlining the strategic interventions UNICEF will be implementing in collaboration with the government for the remaining two years of the CPD.

UNICEF continues to be an active member of the UN Sustainable Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). UNICEF chairs the Result Group 3 on Human and Social Capital Development and has led the relevant work plans for education, health, protection/social work and social protection. UNICEF also co-chaired with UNDP and AFDB the WASH WG and initiated significant work on a long-term water strategy. Furthermore, UNICEF co-chaired with UNFPA the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Task Force and developed a full preventive and responsive plan of action. UNICEF also co-chaired the UN M&E technical working group with IOM and the UN Programme Management Team with the Resident Coordinator's Office. This ensured that the children's agenda remained at the center in various engagements.

UNICEF Libya continued its close cooperation with other UN agencies to push forward the one UN agenda. This included active membership of the Operations Management Team (OMT) and its working groups (Admin, Finance, HR, ICT and procurement) and contributing to the implementation of the UN Business Operating Strategy (BOS) agenda.

UNICEF strengthened the child protection system through upstream engagement and partnerships with key line ministries including MOSA, SSF and MOI in accordance with signed workplans. Partnerships focused on the seven domains of system strengthening, including legal and policy framework, governance and coordination structures, human resourcing, and financing.

In addition, UNICEF co-chaired the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) with INTERSOS which ensured a coordinated response amongst child protection partners during the storm Daniel flood response. UNICEF also co-chaired with UNDP and AFDB the WASH WG and initiated significant work on a long-term water strategy. UNICEF continued to partner with international and national NGOs to deliver quality child protection services, including IRC, TDH-I, INTERSOS, Asarya and Futuremakers.

The previous UNHCR-UNICEF Blueprint for Joint Action for Refugee Children formally ended in 2022, however coordination established during the first phase continues, namely through child protection, education, social and behavioral change and social policy activities in Baity centers.

Through close cooperation between UNICEF, IOM and UNHCR on the migration file, an advocacy note on alternative detention was developed and donors were jointly engaged with the Resident Coordinator to advance inclusive policies for people and children on the move.

Additionally, UNICEF worked closely with Primary Health Care Institute (PHCI) to finalize the PHC Essential Service Package as well as coordinating key partners such as WFP and FAO to prioritize finalization of the Food Security and Nutrition Strategy. UNICEF led the Nutrition flood-focused thematic working group for the flood emergency and actively participated in the Food Security and Nutrition Strategy task force meetings, where led to the development of a draft roadmap for the strategy's development.

UNICEF relied on its strong relationship with MoWR and affiliated agencies such as the Manmade River Project (MmRP), General Water and Wastewater Company (GWWC) and General Desalination Company (GDC) to continue advocacy and technical support for prioritization of children in water service delivery, raise the profile of climate in water policies with a focus on water scarcity, strengthen coordination mechanisms, increase investments in climate resilient water and availability of reliable sustainability data for better programming and investments. Engagement with the African

Development Bank (AfDB) enabled UNICEF to increase the potency of its influencing work with government through concerted advocacy efforts on sector issues like water scarcity. The establishment of the Water Sector Working Group (WSWG) led by MoWR and co-led by UNICEF and AfDB as the main sector coordination forum in Libya provided a suitable window for engaging in forward looking system strengthening work.

During the flood response in eastern Libya, while the clusters were discontinued at the onset of 2023, the Humanitarian Coordinator established WGs and UNICEF led WASH, Nutrition, Education and CP sub-WG, closely coordinating a rapid needs assessment with the World Bank and the European Union, as well as prioritizing actions with UNDP through the early recovery WG and on health with WHO.

UNICEF continued to partner with international and national NGOs to deliver quality child protection, education and social cohesion services, in particular implementing its integrated child friendly spaces, “Baity”. A successful interaction on technical standards, oversight and scale up/outreach approaches between International and National NGOs has meant a positive expansion of the programme to most vulnerable children.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

UNICEF’s partnership with local NGOs was critical in supporting the emergency response to the floods. Engaging the Scouts, Future Makers, Asarya and Libyan Red Crescent Society enabled boys and girls to be reached with urgent multi-sectoral activities. This also helped overcome access issues which continue to be faced by many international NGOs, enabling UNICEF to rapidly reach vulnerable children in affected areas.

Building effective and reciprocating relations with International Development Banks (AfDB and ISDB) had a multiplier effect on UNICEF’s ability to influence and advocate for change with government. The joint co-leading agreement with AfDB for the Water Sector Working Group illustrates the benefits of these types of partnerships in shifting the dial in climate and water programming. In 2024, UNICEF will explore potential partnerships with other non-traditional WASH sector actors especially private entities to pursue the aim to fulfill Libyan children's right to water, sanitation, hygiene, and a better environment.

Relations with sector Ministries and affiliated agencies is at times a management challenge in a context where government entities are fragmented and integration among them is limited. Transparent information flows on priorities through multiple channels, leveraging donors’ support and ensuring a constant interministerial dialogue has been helpful in navigating these complex issues and maximize impact for programming.

The environmental disaster in Derna and other affected cities in the East of Libya was a call for action to invest more time and energy in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programming and preparedness planning including the generation of climate data for better forecasting and establishment of Early warning Systems (EWSs). It also called for a review of existing DRR and preparedness policies and plans with Government and should be a priority of One UN work through Pillar 4 of the current UNSDCF.

Emergencies in 2023 have shown the ever-increasing need for close alignment of communications, advocacy and fundraising efforts in collaboration with programme sections and UNICEF Natcoms. They have also been a strong reminder of the opportunity emergencies offer to build trust and enhance relationships with government, partners and amongst the UNICEF team. Investing in in-house digital communication and photography capacity is critical for a strengthened performance during crises. In terms of innovations, UNICEF supported the development and implementation of “Tahseen”, an Electronic Vaccine Tracking system which facilitates registration, tracking of defaults, and addressing of supply-related issues. This system has been rolled out in 627 vaccination centers, covering 86 per cent of all vaccination sites. In addition, UNICEF facilitated the adoption and implementation of WHO Cold Chain Equipment Inventory and Gap Analysis Tool, which helps keep track of the storage capacity of cold chain equipment and monitors the performance of immunization service delivery.

To effectively address misinformation which could hamper programme implementation, UNICEF used Talkwalker software to monitor public sentiments, concerns, and opinions. This innovative approach helped identify and address misinformation, thus enhancing the credibility of communication efforts. As part of the climate change action plan, UNICEF supported the solarization of 30 health facilities, installed 60 solar vaccine refrigerators, and supported the implementation of an eco-friendly medical waste management plan.

In collaboration with the Libyan Ministry of Education, UNICEF Libya introduced the Learning Passport (LP) initiative - an emergency education response to children in flood affected areas. The LP initiative aims to establish a stable and flexible learning environment for children impacted by natural disasters by leveraging existing educational content and digital platforms. The Learning Passport, developed jointly by UNICEF and Microsoft, provides access to education during emergencies through cloud-based services and educational software. The initiative has been fully adopted and officially launched by the Minister for Education.

Access to public budget and expenditure data, previously inaccessible in Libya, has been a critical requirement. The partnership with NESDB has been instrumental in enabling the creation of a multi-agency Budget Briefs task force which will facilitate access to public finance data. The necessity for a unified platform for Humanitarian Cash Transfers (HCT) was highlighted during the floods caused by Storm Daniel. In response, UNICEF facilitated a joint UN intervention to overcome capacity challenges and accelerate aid delivery, reflecting the need for cohesive strategies and platforms for emergency responses and the importance of data access and sharing for informed decision-making.