

Chad

Update on the context and situation of children

Ranked 190th of 191 countries on the Human Development Index,[1] Chad remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with a high level of gender inequality.[2] With a total population estimated at 17 million, it also has one of the most rapid rates of demographic growth globally (3.1 per cent[3]).

According to the most recent statistics, over two out of five people in Chad live below the poverty line; [4] according to UNICEF Children's Climate Risk Index,[5] it ranks second globally with the highest number of children most at risk from the effects of climate change; and per the Innocenti 2023 Poly crisis index, it is the fifth most vulnerable country to crises.[6] In December 2023, UNICEF Chad supported the Ministry responsible for Planning to conduct the Child-Centered Risk Analysis and Climate Landscape Analysis for Children to gather more evidence on the impact of risks and climate change on children, which will inform the 2024 workplan.

Lake Chad Basin remains highly insecure, and Lac province remains vulnerable to attacks by non-state armed groups, which intensified in the second half of 2023 with physical assaults, murders and kidnappings, including of children. In addition to intercommunity clashes, conflicts in neighboring countries (Central African Republic, Nigeria, Sudan, Libya, Niger) place pressure on the fragile economy and on social cohesion. As of 31 December 2023, United Nations High Commission for Refugees reported 1.4 million displaced persons in Chad, including 215,928 internally displaced, 1,100,927 refugees, among whom 496,834 (87 per cent women and children) and 93,701 returnees arrived from 15 April 2023, fleeing the Sudanese conflict (UNHCR and IOM, December 2023). The 2023 Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal was reviewed during the year to consider a scale up of the response for 900,000 people in eastern Chad until 31 December 2023 to reach a total amount of US\$35 million. The Corporate Emergency Level 2 Scale-up Procedure for Eastern Chad was activated on 21 July 2023. To date, the Country Office has received only 30 per cent of the funding requirements to respond to this unprecedented humanitarian crisis.

Chad has a transitional National Unity Government since October 2022, and is going through a roadmap with two milestones achieved in 2023: the Constitutional Referendum, conducted on December 17 without violence, and the adoption of a new Constitution on December 28. Presidential elections are expected before the end of 2024. The country still depends heavily on the oil industry. Its

GDP grew by 4.0 per cent in 2023, following moderate growth weakened by flooding and insecurity in 2022.[7] Inflation increased from 5.8 per cent in 2022 to 13.2 per cent in 2023, driven by food inflation, reaching 13.9 per cent in December 2023, mainly due to the Sudan conflict, with trade disruptions reducing supply and causing shortages.[8] In a context marked by poverty, social inequalities, and a low rate of access to social protection, this situation is likely to slow progress towards realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and children's rights. A prolonged conflict in Sudan would worsen the humanitarian crisis, weigh on public finances and increase inflationary pressures.

The SMART National Nutrition Survey conducted in November 2022 revealed a prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) at 8.6 per cent, below the World Health Organization's 10 per cent

threshold. The official report from the Harmonized Framework of March 2023[9] showed a deterioration of the nutritional situation, with more than 557,992 people suffering from severe food insecurity, and the September 2023 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [10] report estimated that there are 1.8 million children under five with GAM.

Chad's health system is very fragile and remains vulnerable to epidemics. In 2023, several provinces, including the three hosting the Sudanese refugees, were affected by a measles outbreak. The outbreak of vaccine-derived polio has been ongoing since 2019, with 48 cases reported in 2023. A dengue outbreak was declared by the Government in August 2023 in four provinces (N'Djamena, Ouaddai, Sila, Wadi-Fira). The low vaccination coverage nationwide and the low population access to healthcare and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services are the main underlying causes of these outbreaks.

According to the latest estimates, the under-five, infant and neonatal mortality rates in Chad are, respectively 107, 66 and 32 per 1,000 live births,[11] which is higher than the Western and Central Africa Region averages. Chad has the second highest maternal mortality rate globally (1,063 deaths per 100,000 live births), after South Sudan.[12] This is attributed to a stagnant socioeconomic situation combined with dynamic population growth and a weak health system, which has insufficient human resources, both in quantity and quality. Additionally, births were registered for under three out of ten under-five children and less than one in two primary school-age children had access to education (i.e. 3 million out-of-school children[13]). These figures highlight the challenges in accelerating progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Regular production of quality data to ensure the monitoring of children's rights is challenging. The last Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted in 2019[14] still serves as a baseline for national policies and programmes. Publication of the results of the 2022 household living conditions survey is still pending. Almost ten years after the last Demographic and Health Survey (DHS 2014–2015), the Government is planning to conduct its fourth DHS in 2024.

[1]<https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/TCD>

[2]<https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/TCD>

[3]<https://www.statista.com/statistics/529365/population-growth-in-chad>

[4]<https://www.inseed.td/index.php/blog-with-right-sidebar/ecosit/110-ecosit-4>

[5]<https://www.unicef.org/documents/CCRI-LDCs>

[6]<https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/1685-prospects-for-children-in-the-polycrisis-a-2023-global-outlook.html>

[7]Chad Overview: Development news, research, data | World Bank

[8]<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/chad/overview>

[9]<https://reliefweb.int/report/chad/wfp-chad-country-brief-march-2023>

[10]<https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1156197/>

[11][https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/countries/country-details/GHO/chad?](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/countries/country-details/GHO/chad?countryProfileId=253f0deb-d37d-4b6b-95b6-f6b8963578c1)

[countryProfileId=253f0deb-d37d-4b6b-95b6-f6b8963578c1](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/countries/country-details/GHO/chad?countryProfileId=253f0deb-d37d-4b6b-95b6-f6b8963578c1) and

<https://data.unicef.org/resources/sowc-2023/>

[12]<https://aho.afro.who.int/search/af?term=Maternal+mortality>

Major contributions and drivers of results

During the last year of the country programme (2017–2023 CPD), UNICEF Chad structured its annual work plan (2023 AWP) around the regionally defined key results for children (KRCs), specifically those to which the Country Office is committed. It built on multisectoral approaches, cross-sectoral synergies, strategic partnerships and innovations to deliver impactful results for children and adolescents, particularly the most vulnerable. As a result, 76 per cent of the KRC targets were achieved.

The year 2023 was marked by both the implementation of the regular programme and the emergency response to the Sudan crisis, for which UNICEF activated its Corporate Emergency Level 2 Scale-up Procedure for Eastern Chad on 21 July 2023.

The government-UNICEF 2023 AWP end of year review was structured around the National Development Plan (NDP) and was an opportunity to demonstrate the contribution of UNICEF-supported interventions to the realization of NDP priorities.

Based on evidence generated by the 2022 Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Chad and 2023 studies, UNICEF Chad updated the United Nations Common Country Analysis, thus contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2024–2026) and the 2024–2028 NDP. The UNICEF country programme (2024–2026 CPD), aligned with the UNSCDF and NDP, was approved by UNICEF’s Executive Board in September 2023.

· Goal Area 1: Every child survives and thrives.

In accordance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2 and 3 related to nutrition and health, respectively, as well as Goal Area 1 of the Strategic Plan and KRC 1 on immunization, to which the Country Office is specifically committed, UNICEF Chad’s support to the Ministry of Health (MoH) allowed the country to attain a 60 per cent coverage with the third dose of the diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccine (DTP3) for the first time.[1] This was also achieved through the contribution of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and Ali Dangote Foundation and technical support from the Office, notably the development and implementation of localised routine immunization plans. Although still far from the target of 90 per cent or more as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), this progress is commendable given that it occurred at the end of the COVID-19 pandemic when most countries in the region witnessed a decline in their performance. This progress can be attributed to the good relationships between UNICEF, health partners and the MoH, and the strong leadership of the Minister of Health. As a result, 2,301,430 children were vaccinated against measles (i.e. 88 per cent of the target), including 1,073,661 in the regular programme and 1,227,769 as part of the eastern Chad response; and 5,784,742 children were vaccinated against polio (i.e. 110 per cent of the target). Plans were submitted and approved by GAVI for the introduction of the rotavirus, anti-pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV) and malaria vaccines.

As a contribution to achieving the KRC 2 on stunting prevention, UNICEF Chad’s nutrition support led to a significantly improved coverage of the minimum service package to prevent stunting from 3 per cent of the facilities in 2021 to 62 per cent in 2023 as well as the provision of quality Severe Acute

Malnutrition (SAM) services to 371,153 children, with an estimated recovery rate of 95.3 per cent. The ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) pipeline was secured and close monitoring of the RUTF was enforced through implementation of the RUTF management roadmap developed with support from the Western and Central Regional Office (WCARO). As a result of the partnership with Nutrition

International, 4,368,494 children aged 6–59 months (i.e. 97.7 per cent) received two doses of vitamin

A. In addition, in response to the worrying number of children with SAM fleeing from Sudan from April 2023, UNICEF Chad, in partnership with two non-governmental organizations (NGOs), conducted a mass screening of 338,226 children aged 6–59 in the three affected provinces (15,232 children, or 4.5 per cent, had SAM and were referred for appropriate treatment).

Although community health interventions are underfunded in Chad, support provided by UNICEF Chad to the community-based management of childhood illnesses (malaria, diarrhea and pneumonia) contributed to the treatment of 315,954 children. In addition, 644,058 doses of prophylactic treatment of malaria were administered to children through seasonal malaria chemoprophylaxis and treatment, still one of the main causes of mortality in Chad.

UNICEF Chad also contributed to the realization of UNICEF’s Vision of “an AIDS-free generation where all children and their families are protected from HIV infection”, which allowed for: an increase in the proportion of pregnant women tested for HIV and who know their status from 36 per cent in 2016 to 85 per cent in 2023 and; testing of 788 children exposed to HIV within eight weeks of their birth (**representing 34 per cent, against the expected target of 21 per cent**). .

· Goal Area 2: Every child learns.

In line with SDG 4 (Quality Education), Goal Area 2 of the Strategic Plan and the Country Office’s engagement on KRCs 3 and 4 related to access to education and education quality, respectively, UNICEF Chad supported the Ministry of Education in reducing the number of out-of-school children by providing access to quality formal education services to 216,981 students (99,626 girls) by building 160 classrooms, 264 latrine blocks and 80 water points, and paying subsidies for 2,357 teachers (402 women). This effort included the provision of inclusive education services to 250 children (118 girls) with disabilities, and 1,200 children (540 girls) attending renovated Quranic schools that provide both a formal education curriculum and religious content.

To engage parents to enroll their children, in particular girls, and strengthen social cohesion, UNICEF Chad supported the training of community-based organizations in school management, menstrual hygiene management and peaceful cohabitation. In addition, with support from the Education Cannot Wait initiative (ECW), the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Muslim World League, UNICEF Chad enabled access to education to 88,579 students in humanitarian settings. As part of the eastern Chad response, UNICEF Chad set up 100 temporary learning spaces to accommodate 5,000 Sudanese refugee and Chadian returnee students.

UNICEF Chad contributed to improved learning outcomes by focusing on improving teaching practices and class management by training 25,268 teachers on teaching practices, gender, leadership, inclusive education and psychosocial support. UNICEF Chad supported the construction and rehabilitation of 15 teaching training centres for initial and in-service teacher training and ensured

provision of individual learning materials to 2,505,006 students. The Office capitalized on the distance learning programme initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic complemented by learning assessments and remedial or catch-up activities to ensure the continuity of education for children in schools affected by the floods in 2022. Through the partnership developed with the mobile phone company Airtel, pupils were able to access the online education platform free of charge.

· Goal Area 3: Every child is protected from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices.

In line with SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, and Goal Area 3 of UNICEF's Strategic Plan, UNICEF Chad contributed to advancing the KRC on child protection, in particular, KRC 7 on birth registration, to which the Country Office is committed. In 2023, UNICEF Chad's long-term advocacy efforts resulted in the adoption of the first National Child Protection Policy with a budgeted action plan, the revision of the Child Code, which will be presented to Parliament for adoption in 2024, and the set-up a harmonized mechanism for case management of child victims of violence, abuse and exploitation.

The birth registration rate for under-one children increased from 21 per cent in 2021 to 28 per cent in 2023. This achievement was made possible through the scale up of interoperability between health services and civil registries for birth registration in 92 per cent of the health centres. As per SDG 16.9, UNICEF Chad continued to roll out the one-stop shop approach for birth registration in provincial and district hospitals, achieving a coverage rate of 32 per cent, complemented by the use of the TASDJIL application, which allowed the registration and delivery of birth certificates in under 30 minutes to 265,789 children (122,334 girls).

In response to the Sudan crisis, UNICEF Chad, in collaboration with the Red Cross and NGOs, set up child-friendly spaces to provide 26,285 refugees, including 23,773 children (14,577 girls) and 2,512 adults (1,358 women) with psychological support, and children with care services through the case management mechanism; it also supported the reunification of 95 unaccompanied children.

UNICEF Chad contributed towards achieving KRC 5 on the prevention of sexual violence against children by facilitating access to gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, risk mitigation and response to 42,149 people (19,719 children). In addition, it provided 2,446 GBV survivors with case management aid and referral to medical and legal assistance, and supported them with income-generating activities, thus enabling their reinsertion. UNICEF Chad also contributed to strengthen juvenile justice through capacity building of juvenile judges to promote alternative measures to imprisonment for children, thus allowing 76 out of the 286 children in detention in Chad (i.e. 26.7 per cent) to benefit from a diversion order or a non-custodial measure.

UNICEF Chad's efforts to protect children against marriage in accordance with KRC 6 resulted in an increased number of public declarations to end harmful practices including child marriage, from 58 communities in 2022 to 71 communities in 2023 (i.e. 22 per cent increase). This was achieved by building on the strategic alliances developed with community and religious leaders in areas of high prevalence of child marriage.

· Goal Area 4: Every child lives in safe and sustainable climate and environment.

In line with SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation) and SDG 13 (Climate action), Goal Area 4 of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, UNICEF Chad contributed to advancing the key result on ending open defecation through the scale-up of the Community-Led Total Sanitation approach, which resulted in the certification of 768 villages as open defecation-free, enabling 454,420 people (236,298 women) to live in safe and healthy environments, and 15,300 pupils to have access to safe drinking water and sanitation. In 2023, UNICEF Chad provided access to safe drinking water to 336,913 people, including 100,235 in eastern Chad. In addition, 140,810 people were provided with access to basic sanitation, including 64,310 in eastern Chad. KRC 8 (ending open defecation) was surpassed (120 per cent) as a result of strengthened partnerships with the Government, national and international NGOs and the reprogramming of available funds to enable advocacy efforts to be translated into results.

In collaboration with Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) and the Ministries of Water and the Environment, UNICEF Chad helped improve the integration of climate change issues into the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector by: mobilizing partners to accelerate its preparedness to support the implementation of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) on climate change and the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC); strengthening the capacity of the National Designated Authority (NDA) to accelerate access to the Green Climate Fund for Chad; and developing the first UNICEF Chad proposal under the NAP.

· Goal Area 5:

In line with SDG 1 on poverty eradication and Goal Area 5 of UNICEF's Strategic Plan, UNICEF

Chad supported the Government, in collaboration with World Bank and World Food Programme (WFP), to revise its National Social Protection Strategy (SNPS 2024–2028), specifically to make it shock-responsive and child-sensitive. UNICEF Chad conducted a child-centered risk analysis, including the Climate Landscape Analysis for Children (CLAC) in collaboration with the Ministry in charge of Planning. Evidence generated will inform the implementation of the resilience agenda and the triple Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, which constitute key programmatic shifts for the new country programme (2024–2026 CPD).

These results were achieved due to efficient management of the programme and operations in accordance with the 2023 Annual Management Plan (AMP) priorities. Senior Management promoted an open dialogue with staff and their representatives, particularly during the development of the Country Programme Management Plan (2024–2026 CPMP), which resulted in its approval in October 2023.

In order to boost results for children through the implementation of the new 2024–2026 CPD and drawing from the lessons learned from the implementation of 2017–2023 CPD, the Country Office identified the following seven programmatic shifts: (i) research and development for better understanding of the root causes of children's discrimination and exclusion; (ii) enhanced resource mobilization (domestic, external and private sector) directed more to basic social services and strengthened governance at all levels; (iii) child-focused and community-based innovative and multisectoral programming approaches, adapted to local specificities; (iv) implementation of the Humanitarian-Peace-Development Nexus approach; (v) resilience-building of services to shocks and

crises, including climate change; (vi) the promotion of inclusive and gender-transformative approaches and social accountability; and (vii) strengthening of children's and adolescents' capacity to assert their rights, and of youth capacity in engaging as actors for development and sustainable change.

To implement these programmatic shifts, the Country Office set up new task forces on gender, community approaches, and on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). These task forces are currently developing their strategies and action plans to support the implementation of the 2024–2026 CPD. In 2024, new task forces will have to be put in place, notably on climate change and resilience.

The strengthening of social behaviour change and the addition of the human-centered design approach ensured that the Country Office package of high-impact interventions would reach the neediest populations. In eastern Chad, the feedback and information centers, together with community relays in host communities, allowed 617,181 people (339,323 women and adolescents) to share their feedback and concerns which were transferred to the respective concerned services.

The government submitted its State Report on the Convention of the Rights of the Child in 2023 based on the draft prepared in 2022. In 2023, UNICEF Chad provided inputs to the Universal Periodic Review on the Human Rights Council report submitted by the government end of 2023. This report will be discussed in Geneva early 2024. In addition, UNICEF Chad helped strengthen the child rights monitoring system by supporting the Government in presenting its Rights and Welfare of the Child report at the 2023 African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child meeting in Addis Ababa.

In line with the 2023 Annual Management Plan and in particular to performance areas related to quality assurance, people management and core values and workplace culture, UNICEF Chad's provided resources and support to its four sub-national offices (Bol, Mongo, Abéché and Moundou). Following the activation of the L2 for eastern Chad, the entire Country Office was mobilized, by deploying and rotating the available staff, which also allowed for a better understanding of this unprecedented crisis and enhanced staff cohesion. In addition, with support from the Western and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO), surge staff were recruited, and negotiations undertaken with sister agencies for staff accommodation while waiting for the creation of a new outpost. As a result of this adaptive approach, UNICEF Chad maintained an efficient presence in eastern Chad, setting up an outpost in Farchana with offices and guestrooms to meet the needs for the emergency response in eastern Chad, and for cross-border interventions by UNICEF Sudan.

In 2023, 37 staff were recruited. Staff diversity remains a challenge; gender diversity improved slightly, from 25 per cent female staff in 2022 to 27 per cent female staff in 2023. UNICEF Chad continues to mainly attract applicants from programme countries, which led to a decrease from 19 per cent of staff from industrialized countries in 2022 to 14 per cent from industrialized countries in 2023. With the activation of the L2 for eastern Chad, the Country Office provided support to colleagues of the Sudan Country Office who voluntarily settled in Chad, transited, or were evacuated through Chad. As part of duty of care, Special Emergency Compressed Time-off (SECTO) was approved for locally recruited staff in the Abeche field office and Farchana outpost. The UNICEF staff counsellor visited the Office to support staff morale, notably with regard to the eastern Chad crisis.

In 2023, the Country Office's invested in high-speed satellite technology to ensure uninterrupted cloud-based system operations, including at field level and in the Farchana outpost, which was crucial for delivering programme results. As part of the information and communication technology (ICT) emergency response plan, the deployment of solar-powered systems across all UNICEF Chad offices

not only guaranteed stability for critical ICT, but also reflected the Office's commitment to greening by relying on solar panels.

In applying the UNICEF's policy on zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse, the Country Office developed its 2023 PSEA action plan, which was monitored each quarter. The recruitment of a dedicated P4 PSEA specialist allowed the Country Office to enhance internal and external capacities with a PSEA training course for a pool of nine UNICEF staff, who then trained over 150 UNICEF staff and 100 partners. In addition, as part of the response to the eastern Chad crisis, the Country Office set up PSEA reporting mechanisms, conducted awareness-raising sessions, and developed PSEA materials in French and Arabic, which were distributed in refugee and returnee camps and among host communities.

Similarly, a P4 dedicated gender specialist ensured the mainstreaming of gender-transformative approaches into programming. In 2023, gender was particularly mainstreamed into immunization, nutrition, education and child protection activities, which involved the capacity building of UNICEF staff, including in zonal offices and the training of 36 senior staff of six line ministries.

At the end of December 2023, overall funding for the Country Office totalled US\$131 million (US\$1 million institutional budget (IB), US\$26.3 million regular resources (RR), US\$67.5 million other resources regular (ORR) and US\$36.2 million other resources emergency (ORE), plus US\$67.2 million already re-phased (OR and ORE) for 2024 and beyond. The 2023 funding was higher than in 2022 (US\$96 million), i.e. a 35 per cent increase. As of 31 December 2023, the budget utilization rate was 100 per cent for RR, ORR and ORE, and there were no outstanding direct cash transfers (DCTs) to partner for more than nine months. [1]<https://www.gavi.org/fr/programmes-et-impact/espace-pays/afrique/tchad> (in French).

UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

In 2023, despite the declining funding environment due to the effects of the global recession and the Ukraine crisis, UNICEF Chad maintained its engagement with in-country partners and locally based donors such as the European Union, Germany, United States Agency for International

Development/Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA), Swiss Cooperation and the World Bank while strengthening interaction with Canada and Japan representations based in Cameroon, and global partnerships such as Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund), Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF),

Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW). As a result, the Country Office mobilized US\$69 million out of a planned US\$18.9 million of other resources regular (ORR) and US\$36.7 million out of a planned US\$114.3 million of ORE.

In 2023, UNICEF Chad developed 28 cooperation partnership agreements with national and international non-governmental organization (NGOs), worth US\$12,629,099. UNICEF Chad nurtured partnerships with civil society organizations such as the Lawyers' Association, Pediatric Association, Gynecologists and Obstetrician Association, and local universities (N'Djamena, Moundou and Abéché) to create an environment conducive to promoting sustainable achievements in advancing child rights, the norms and standards for the health sector, the gender-transformative agenda, evidence generation,

and social and behavioural change. This also includes the partnership established with Chadian National Network of People Living with HIV (RNTAP+) to strengthen the provision of people-focused services by engaging people living with HIV in HIV interventions. In December 2023, UNICEF Chad launched a call for expressions of interest targeting local NGOs interested in contributing to implementation of the new 2024–2026 CPD, which will identify new and more local NGOs as part of the localization agenda.

UNICEF Chad reinforced the engagement of youth with a focus on adolescent girls (notably through the scale up of *Super Banat*, model girls), and the engagement of community and religious leaders to promote the demand for and use of services and the realization of children’s rights. Building on the available network of more than 1 million U-Reporters, UNICEF Chad partnered with youth to promote community engagement, gender equality and sustainable social and behavioural change.

In 2023, UNICEF Chad rolled out interventions related to its Strategic Plan Goal Area 1, mainly funded from international financial institutions. This included an unprecedented US\$44.1 million from the Islamic Development Bank to strengthen the provision of quality primary healthcare, notably in underserved provinces. Partnerships developed with GAVI, BMGF, World Bank and USAID were critical to ensure access to quality immunization services countrywide. Over US\$8 million secured from the Global Fund contributed to HIV screening of pregnant women to protect their lives and prevent HIV transmission from mother to child. The main financial partners of UNICEF Chad for the procurement of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) are the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), the UK Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office, (FCDO) USAID/BHA and CERF. However, the Country Office diversified these traditional financial partners by partnering with the World Bank, thus securing RUTF from January 2022 to June 2024.

In 2023, the GPE and ECW remained the main financial partners of UNICEF Chad to advance the UNICEF Strategic Plan Goal Area 2 related to education. The partnerships with GPE and ECW are a result of the Country Office’s long relationship with the Ministry of Education, whose role is determinant in the final decision for budget allocations.

The Country Office participated in the 2023 May Stocktaking Workshop on the UNICEF – World

Food Programme (WFP) Enhanced Partnership in Chad, Mali and Niger, and conducted a joint UNICEF-WFP field mission with UNICEF’s Western and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) and WFP’s Regional Office to reflect on lessons learned from the collaboration and build a common vision on resilience. These lessons learned were capitalized on for the development of the UNICEFWFP-GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) regional Building Resilience in the Sahel project. UNICEF Chad also reinforced relationships with WFP during joint missions that also included WFP and UNICEF Regional Offices, which led to Chad’s inclusion in the Sahel shockresponsive social protection programme financed by Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) of the German Government, now covering five countries (Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso). Towards the end of 2023, these projects were approved for funding by the German Cooperation, thus allowing UNICEF Chad to implement integrated multisectoral approaches focusing on resilience and climate change over the next five years.

In responding to the Sudan crisis, partnerships were strengthened with headquarters and WCARO, through support to the L2 eastern Chad response, notably by setting up a regional supply hub in N’Djamena. This created an opportunity to strengthen interagency collaboration mainly with United

Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations High

Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organization for Migration (IOM), WFP and the World Health Organization (WHO) to pool resources for effective crisis response. This was facilitated by the leading role of UNICEF for the Education, Nutrition and WASH clusters and of the child protection area of responsibility. In October 2023, the UNICEF Chad Representative participated in a joint Government/UN mission in Geneva to raise the international community's interest in supporting Chad's response.

In accordance with the Delivering as One principle, UNICEF Chad implemented the Muskoka interagency project (funded by the French government), with WHO, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and UN Women to address maternal, neonatal and child mortality. The joint WFP-UNICEF

Breaking Barriers to Girls' Education ended in June 2023 and the two agencies engaged in the development of a new joint programme to scale up the first phase. Approval is still pending.

UNICEF Chad also developed partnerships with mobile phone companies to support the achievement of at-scale results for children and adolescents. The partnership with Airtel allowed the programme to provide internet connectivity in schools and promote exclusive breastfeeding for children under six months through SMS messages **conveyed by Airtel to its network of 2,080,000 subscribers**. Teachers' subsidies were paid by UNICEF Chad through **partnerships with Airtel and Moov**.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

In 2023, the Country Office built on the Country Programme Document (2017–2023 CPD) lessons learned and innovations to deliver impactful results towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Goal Areas of the Strategic Plan and the regionally defined key results for children (KRCs).

The development of the roadmap for Accelerating the Reduction of Maternal, Newborn, and Child

Mortality increased attention for maternal and newborn health, whose indicators are stagnating in Chad. This roadmap is an innovative tool that was developed in 2023 to assess the quality of maternal and newborn care which could be scaled up in health facilities in the coming years. UNICEF Chad also contributed to accelerating health care services for HIV-infected children by reducing the waiting time from an average of three months to an average of one day for results from screened babies born from HIV-positive mothers. This performance was achieved by implementing GeneXpert at points of care, which allows treatment decisions to be made on the same day of the infant screening.

To help increase access to quality education, UNICEF Chad supported the development of a new preschool curriculum, which was tested in 18 preschools in 2023. This pilot represents a niche for UNICEF to invest in early childhood development, a sector that has not yet received much attention from donors in Chad and could be an entry point for other programme components such as health and nutrition, social cohesion, parental education and child protection.

UNICEF Chad continued to roll out the one-stop shop approach for birth registration (i.e.

interoperability between health services and civil registries) complemented by the use of the TASDJIL application to register and deliver a birth certificate in under 30 minutes. Through the adaptive management of this innovative platform, birth certificates were also delivered in emergency settings, notably in eastern Chad, where 2,903 refugees, returnees and children from host communities (1,517 girls) were registered and received birth certificates.

In 2023, the Country Office identified increased visibility for climate change as a new approach to draw donor attention to the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector. By building national capacities, notably of Ministries of Water, Environment and Planning, and then conducting the ChildCentered Risk Analysis and the Climate Landscape Analysis for Children (CLAC), the Country Office placed climate change on the national agenda. Through CLAC, the Country Office will also be able to generate evidence and mainstream climate change interventions by submitting proposals under innovative financing mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund.

Implementation of the Building Resilience in the Sahel project funded by German Cooperation (BMZ) whose funds were received at the end of 2023 for a five-year period is an opportunity for UNICEF Chad to implement the programmatic shift related to resilience, building on previous successful community-based interventions and multisectoral approaches such as the mother-to-mother support groups (GASPA), community health interventions, and Community-Led Total Sanitation. Linking the

BMZ resilience project with the Sahel shock-responsive social protection programme financed by Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) will provide opportunities to develop and document a comprehensive model of resilient communities.

In Chad, there are still enormous gaps in school and health infrastructure, and UNICEF Chad is devoting a significant level of resources for construction. However, the construction business environment and the capacities for monitoring construction work in Chad are very weak. This impacted results and resulted in the need to introduce no-cost extension requests to donors to complete construction. A lesson learned in 2023 was the need to better calibrate the Country Office structure and staffing regarding the volume of construction required for projects. The Country Office is thus planning to develop a new construction strategy as part of the new cooperation programme (2024–2026 CPD) to address this bottleneck, with improved planning and the hiring of qualified engineers at sub-national offices.

The L2 response to eastern Chad allowed the Country Office to draw the following lessons: **(i)** immediate field presence through staff rotation is critical to quickly respond to large-scale emergencies by providing technical support to subnational offices for needs assessment, response coordination as well as technical support and supervision of implementing partners; **(ii)** pre-positioning of non-food items (NFI) at subnational offices allows for a quick response to the immediate needs of affected populations; **(iii)** the emergency programme no-regret funding allocation allowed for the delivery of lifesaving interventions, notably in WASH and nutrition; **(iv)** the simplification of procedures, notably the possibility to reprogramme expiring funding and sign a one-page start-up letter with the partners, enabled the Country Office to quickly open a temporary nutrition 30-bed in-patient service in Adre (eastern Chad) and conduct mass screening in the three affected provinces; **(v)** teaming between international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) strengthened the capacity of local NGOs at the decentralized level, and dedicated information and training sessions, including in Arabic, allowed local private companies to participate in bidding processes at the decentralized level, in line

with the localization of humanitarian response; (vi) the opening of the Farchana outpost was critical in providing UNICEF staff better working conditions and ensuring a continuous presence in the field. The Farchana outpost also benefits the UNICEF Sudan-led cross-border programme. Since prospects for resolving the conflict in Sudan seem distant, this outpost will allow UNICEF Chad to continue delivering interventions over the long term, and help ease tensions between refugees, returnees and host communities.

Lessons learned from the implementation of the 2017–2023 country programme also guided the revision of the programme theory of change, with an emphasis on delinking the nutrition component from the Child Survival and Development component and integrating HIV and health in the same programme component to better coordinate health interventions. Other adjustments are being made to the Country Office structure to respond to the evolving country context and strategic programmatic shifts. An internal workshop is planned for early 2024 to define the operationalization of the strategic programmatic shifts of the new CPD/CPMP 2024-2026 in line with national priorities, taking into account the country context and promising themes such as resilience and climate change.