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Amani, 10 months, is screened for malnutrition during a UNICEF-supported integrated health and nutrition campaign in IDP gathering sites in eight localities of Gezira state.

unicef for every child

Humanitarian Action for Children

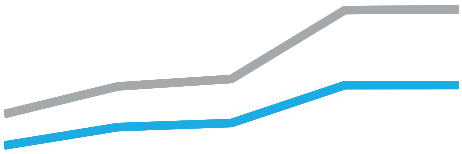
Sudan

HIGHLIGHTS[1]

- The conflict in Sudan is a children's crisis: 13.6 million children urgently need humanitarian assistance. 10.8 million people[2], half of whom are children, have fled their homes.
- Displacement, disease outbreaks, hunger and restricted humanitarian access are creating a lethal combination for a conflict-induced famine and a catastrophic loss of children's lives. This has already led to famine in Zamzam camp in North Darfur, and could potentially cause similar conditions in other areas[3].
- The cost of inaction is unacceptably high: 730,000 children with severe wasting will likely not survive without treatment; 1.7 million children under-one risk missing lifesaving vaccinations; 14.3 million people are at risk of cholera, dengue and malaria; a generation of children will miss out on education; and millions have experienced or are at risk of gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation.
- Despite challenges, UNICEF is staying and delivering through a three-pronged strategy: delivering critical supplies and services in conflict and hard to reach areas, providing urgent assistance to displaced and host communities in states receiving IDPs, and supporting the preservation of systems that deliver basic services across Sudan.
- UNICEF requires $840 million to deliver a package of child protection, education, health, nutrition, WASH and cash plus interventions to save children's lives.

IN NEED

24.8 million people[4,5,6] **13.6 million children**[7]

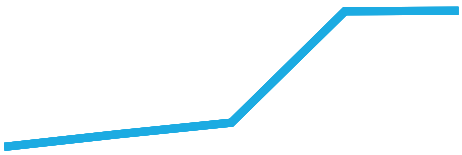


TO BE REACHED

12.9 million people[8] **8.9 million children**[9]

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

US$840 million



KEY PLANNED TARGETS

3 million
children and women accessing primary health care

558,268
children with severe wasting admitted for treatment

2.9 million
children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning

8.9 million
people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

The conflict in Sudan has forced 10.8 million people, half of whom are children, to flee their homes in search of safety and security. Prior to the conflict, the country already had 3.7 million IDPs and around 1 million refugees[10].

Sudan is facing a devastating hunger catastrophe at a scale not seen since the Darfur crisis in the early 2000s, with 755,000 people experiencing catastrophic levels of food insecurity and 25.6 million people in crisis levels of hunger. This means half of Sudan's war-battered population struggles to feed themselves and their families every single day. An estimated 3.7 million children will suffer from acute malnutrition this year, of whom over 730,000 children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) are at an increased risk of not surviving without timely treatment[11]. The situation is especially dire for children and families trapped into areas affected by direct conflict, insecurity, and lack of protection.

The health system in Sudan is on the brink of collapse: over 75 per cent of health facilities are non-functional in conflict-affected states[12] and frontline workers have not been paid in months. UNICEF is particularly worried about the youngest children, including the 1.5 million babies who will be born in the country this year. With many pregnant women trapped in areas of heavy fighting, and others living in overcrowded sites for displaced people or with host communities who are already stretched to their limits, tens of thousands of mothers and children might not access critical health-care services in time.[13]

Nearly one third of the population (including 7.4 million children) lacks access to water, while two third lacks access to sanitation and hygiene services. Many facilities that provide water have been destroyed or damaged, lack of water treatment supplies or are inaccessible for repairs and maintenance due to insecurity. Millions of girls and young women lack even basic hygiene supplies. WASH-related diseases are putting the lives of 3.5 million children at risk.

The right to education of 18 million children in Sudan is at stake. Without urgent action, the learning crisis will become a generational catastrophe. This generation's learning and earning loss is estimated to be $26 billion per year. Millions of Sudanese children not learning is disastrous for their safety and well-being, engendering child protection risks like child labour, child marriage and recruitment by armed groups and forces, which are already on the rise[14]. The country is facing the highest number of grave child rights violations verified in more than a decade across all types of grave violations, including GBV, targeting of schools and hospitals, killing and maiming.

SECTOR NEEDS[15]

15.5 million
people in need of health assistance

4.8 million
children and women with acute malnutrition in need

6.2 million
children in need of protection services

9.5 million
children in need of education support

19.6 million
people in need of urgent WASH support

STORY FROM THE FIELD

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Aida, who is severely malnourished and requires immediate treatment, is being screened for malnutrition in River Nile state by a female healthcare provider. Caregivers offer a lifeline to children.

The future of Sudan's 24 million children is at stake. Every passing day, the needs of girls and boys increase, and the youngest are struggling to survive. Destruction of hospitals, disruption of critical health-care services including immunization and lack of critical medical supplies are putting many children's lives at risk.

Across the country, humanitarian workers remain at the front line, providing relief, hope and much needed care for those who require it, especially children.

Read more about this story here

HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY[16,17,18,19]

UNICEF is staying and delivering for children in Sudan through a three-pronged strategy: in conflict and hard to reach areas (hotspots) – delivering life-saving supplies and services, in states receiving large numbers of IDPs – providing urgent assistance to displaced and host communities, and across the country – supporting the preservation of systems that deliver basic services. UNICEF expects to reach 12.9 million people, including 8.9 million children.[20]

Humanitarian access, insecurity, and bureaucratic impediments are the key constraining factors impacting the scale up of life-saving emergency response, especially in hotspots – Darfur, Gezira, Khartoum and Kordofan states. UNICEF is advocating for access to populations in need and working strategically to access people affected by the violence and upheaval to provide lifesaving assistance.[21] Given the situation in Darfur and the lack of access, a small team has been deployed to Chad to coordinate and lead UNICEF cross-border operations to respond to the needs of IDPs in Darfur.

UNICEF leads the Education[22], Nutrition and WASH clusters and the child protection subcluster and plays a key role in the Health Cluster, the GBV subcluster and the refugee consultation forum. On behalf of the clusters, UNICEF procures and manages the pipeline of core lifesaving supplies for treating severe wasting (ready-to-use therapeutic food), immunization (routine vaccines), maternal and child health (medicines and medical equipment) and emergency WASH supplies.

UNICEF aims to reach over 558,000 children, who are at extreme risk of not surviving, with SAM treatment in 2024. In line with UNICEF's famine prevention strategy, delivery of lifesaving nutrition interventions in the Zamzam camp and the 14 areas at risk of famine will be prioritized, encompassing prevention, early detection, and treatment of wasting. To inform programming, UNICEF will continuously analyze the evolving nutrition situation and programme coverage through SMART surveys, focusing on the cluster's prioritized localities. Additionally, UNICEF will continue to build the capacity of nutrition partners in service delivery and evidence generation.

UNICEF is paying incentives to critical front-line workers who have not been paid for months to prevent a system collapse that would have a devastating impact on children's survival and well-being. Lifesaving interventions will be prioritized, including access to primary healthcare and vaccinations against deadly childhood diseases.[23] UNICEF will focus on children in their first 1,000 days of life by providing cash to pregnant women and new mothers combined with an integrated package of basic services. This gender-responsive mother and child cash transfer 'plus' programme (MCCT+) is a core element of resilience programming. It demonstrably saves lives and empowers women in a sustainable way. UNICEF will target 8.9 million people with access to improved water supply, appropriate sanitation and hygiene and handwashing services to prevent and control disease outbreaks.

UNICEF aims to reach conflict-affected children on the move with integrated learning, skills development and protection assistance.[24] The Makanaa 'our space' approach provides a place where children can learn, play and heal in safe (learning) spaces, while accessing an integrated package of support and referral services. Besides psychosocial support, these encompass family tracing and reunification for unaccompanied and separated children, prevention of and response to child marriage, GBV and mine risk education.

UNICEF continues to support social systems, localization and mutual aid through enhanced community-based and women/community-led interventions to expand reach, sustainability, strengthen engagement and accountability to affected populations. Implementation of programmes is gender- and risk-informed and conflict-sensitive, aligned with 'do no harm' approach.

Progress against the latest programme targets is available in the humanitarian situation reports: https://www.unicef.org/appeals/sudan/situation-reports

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

2024 PROGRAMME TARGETS[25,26]

Health (including public health emergencies)[27]

- **2,971,999** children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities
- **1,395,931** children vaccinated against measles, supplemental dose

Nutrition

- **6,030,703** children 6-59 months screened for wasting
- **558,268** children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment[28]
- **1,700,907** primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling

Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

- **3,447,623** children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support
- **149,766** women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions
- **2,866,911** people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations
- **21,966** unaccompanied and separated children provided with alternative care and/or reunified

Education

- **2,866,607** children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning[29]
- **1,177,139** children receiving individual learning materials

Water, sanitation and hygiene

- **8,900,000** people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs
- **300,000** people accessing appropriate sanitation services
- **5,000,000** people reached with handwashing behaviour-change programmes
- **750,000** people reached with critical WASH supplies

Social protection

- **150,000** households benefitting from UNICEF-funded cash plus support.

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

- **5,264,914** people participating in engagement actions for social and behavioural change
- **12,500** people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms[30]

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2024

UNICEF requires $840 million to reach 8.9 million of the most vulnerable children in Sudan – and 12.9 million people altogether – with child protection, education, health, nutrition, WASH and cash plus interventions.[31,32] This appeal includes $50 million for life-saving and life-sustaining social and protection services for refugees living in host communities.

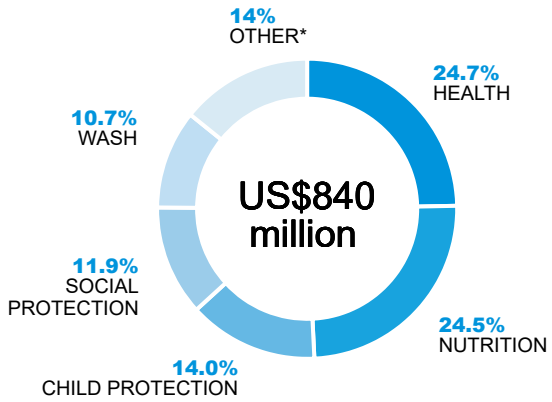
As the conflict continues, the situation of children is deteriorating, increasing the cost, complexity, and most importantly, the need to respond.

Notable factors in the cost of the humanitarian response are payment of incentives for critical front-line workers to prevent system collapse; and operational challenges, including the need for offshore procurement of most supplies (including ready-to-use therapeutic food) due to destruction of local factories and increased logistics and security costs to reach conflict-affected areas.

Considering the growing operating costs in Sudan, UNICEF remains agile, forward-leaning and focused on the most vulnerable ones in need of urgent assistance. UNICEF strives to utilize more direct implementation capabilities and those of its local partners, and enhance synergies between HDP nexus programming, to deliver for children, optimizing cost-efficiencies.

The cost of inaction is unacceptably high: 13.6 million children will not receive the essential services they require to survive and live in dignity; over 730,000 children with severe wasting will be at high risk of dying without treatment; 1.7 million children under-one risk missing life-saving vaccinations to protect them from disease outbreaks; a generation of children will miss out on education; and millions of boys and girls will lack safety and psychosocial well-being, including exposure to child marriage. UNICEF must be a key partner in addressing all these needs.

Now, more than ever, flexible resources are crucial to allow a timely and efficient humanitarian response to preserve life, dignity and hope for the future for Sudan's children and those who care for them.



Appeal sector	Revised 2024 HAC requirement (US$)
Health	207,360,985
Nutrition	206,170,626
Child protection	117,625,351
Education	80,103,091
WASH	89,551,000
Social protection	100,000,000
Cross-sectoral	39,188,947
Total	**840,000,000**

**This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : Education (9.5%), Cross-sectoral (4.7%).*

Appeal sector	Original 2024 HAC requirement (US$)	Revised 2024 HAC requirement (US$)[33]	Funds available (US$)	Funding gap (US$)	Funding gap (%)
Health	207,360,985	207,360,985	54,060,720	153,300,265	73.9%
Nutrition	206,170,626	206,170,626	80,545,439	125,625,187	60.9%
Child protection[34]	117,625,351	117,625,351	15,724,628	101,900,723	86.6%
Education	80,103,091	80,103,091	62,653,858	17,449,233	21.8%
WASH	89,551,000	89,551,000	48,573,656	40,977,344	45.8%
Social protection	100,000,000	100,000,000	332,897[35]	99,667,103	99.7%
Cross-sectoral[36]	39,188,947	39,188,947	23,112,928	16,076,019	41.0%
Total	**840,000,000**	**840,000,000**	**285,004,126**	**554,995,874**	**66.1%**

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ENDNOTES

1. UNICEF activated its Corporate Emergency Level 3 Scale-up Procedure for Sudan for the following period:15 June 2023 to 14 December 2024. UNICEF Emergency Procedures are activated to ensure organization-wide mobilization in support of a timely and effective response to all crises. The emergency procedures provide a tailored package of mandatory actions and simplifications required for all offices responding to Level 3, Level 2 and Level 1 humanitarian situations.

2. DTM Sudan Mobility Update, 20 August 2024 https://dtm.iom.int/reports/dtm-sudan-mobility-update-06?close=true

3. https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Famine_Review_Committee_Report_Sudan_July2024.pdf

4. The people in need figure is based on Sudan Humanitarian Needs Overview and Response Plan 2024. The people in need figure includes vulnerable residents, internally displaced people, refugees and returnees.

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

6. Of the 24.8 million people in need, around half are children, 26 per cent are women, and 15 per cent are people with disability.

7. The number of children in need is calculated as 55 per cent of people in need, based on the draft Sudan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2024. HAC 2024 was developed prior to HRP 2024, thus using Children in Need in accordance with HRP 2023 data. This will be updated for HAC 2025.

8. The number of people to be reached is calculated based on the highest targeted indicator for each demographic group: 6,030,703 children 6–59 months screened for wasting; 2,866,607 school-age children accessing formal and non-formal education; and 4,000,000 women and men (adult) targeted with WASH interventions. The total number of people to be reached includes 58 per cent women/girls and 15 per cent people with disabilities (10 per cent children with disabilities).

9. The number of children to be reached is calculated based on the highest targeted indicator for each demographic group: 6,030,703 children under-five screened for wasting; and 2,886,607 school-age children accessing formal and non-formal education. The total number of children to be reached includes 54 per cent girls and 10 per cent children with disabilities.

10. Heavy fighting, including air and artillery strikes, continues in the active conflict hotspots of Darfur, Khartoum and Kordofan states. At the same time, ethnic divisions and ethnically targeted attacks have resurfaced in some areas, especially in Darfur. Millions remain trapped in conflict zones, with very limited basic services and commodities including health, nutrition, WASH, education and protection. Sudan has for a long time generously hosted refugees, with the second highest refugee population in Africa (mainly from Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic, and as well as the Central African Republic, Chad and Yemen). Once hosting around 1 million refugees, with the current conflict more than 220,000 refugees and refugee returnees have left Sudan. Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, see <www.unhcr.org/countries/sudan>.

11. UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell warns of a deepening crisis for children following a visit to Sudan https://www.unicef.org/sudan/press-releases/unicef-executive-director-catherine-russell-warns-deepening-crisis-children

12. Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan calls for protection of civilians and aid workers, and end impunity https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/sudan/card/AEWd3TYGo5/

13. Sudan is currently battling a cholera outbreak, with thousands of cases reported. Urgent action – including treatment in cholera treatment corners and vaccination, as well as improved access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene – is needed to curb the outbreak.

14. The conflict in the Sudan is a deepening children's crisis and further exacerbating girls' tenuous claims on their rights including their health, learning and protection. In conflicts and emergencies, women, girls and gender-nonconforming people in all their diversity have specific risks related to exposure to violence, exclusion from services and barriers to engaging in humanitarian action. Girls were already at increased risk of female genital mutilation, child marriage and not returning to school due to gendered expectations of increased domestic labour and mobility and security concerns and trafficking. Boys are targeted for recruitment into armed groups and forces, and families become dependent on them for their livelihoods.

15. All sector needs are based on the Sudan Humanitarian and Response Plan 2024 and include vulnerable residents, internally displaced people, refugees and returnees. Sector needs are inclusive of HNRP Sector PiN and refugee sectoral PiN.

16. Compared with 2023, UNICEF will focus its humanitarian funding foremost on timely identification and treatment of children with severe wasting, while development funding is used for prevention components.

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

18. UNICEF is committed to supporting the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response through its leadership or co-leadership of cluster coordination for the WASH, Nutrition and Education Clusters and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility. All UNICEF-led cluster coordination costs are included in sectoral programme budgets.

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

20. UNICEF programming is disability-inclusive as well as gender responsive and ensures the accessibility of new or temporary structures, modification of existing structures, provision of reasonable accommodations, training of staff and partners on disability inclusion and engaging disability-inclusion advice. UNICEF's gender responsive programming is also draws on Accountability to Affected Populations and localization strategies through strong partnerships with women-led and girl-centered organizations.

21. UNICEF and its humanitarian partners struggle daily to access areas with active conflict. This affects capacity on the ground, transport of supplies and access to people in need, as well as people's access to basic services. In addition, significant bureaucratic impediments and restrictions by different entities affect the presence and mobility of UNICEF and partners, especially in conflict hotspot areas. UNICEF is working through partners, including non-traditional partners such as community groups such as youth- and women-led groups. At the inter-agency level, advocacy and negotiations for access are also taking place.

22. UNICEF co-leads the Education Cluster with Save the Children.

23. In addition, UNICEF is responding to waterborne and vector-borne disease outbreaks and putting in place epidemic control interventions.

24. UNICEF is utilizing the EiE-GenKit (United Nations Girls Education Initiative, Education Cannot Wait and Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies, 2021) to ensure that girls and boys equally enjoy the protection and learning outcomes that its learning and skills development programme aims to provide. This includes providing gender-responsive instruction and learning processes for implementing partners, a gender audit of the e-learning curriculum, setting-up adolescent girls' clubs and gender-responsive support for teachers and other education personnel.

25. Beyond the UNICEF targets for these interventions, other humanitarian partners are expected to reach the remaining children/families in need.

26. Some targets have been updated to ensure compliance with UNICEF's global indicator methodology notes, which involves using a uniform calculation method and consistent reporting for UNICEF results across both sections and clusters. Additionally, the revision aims to align the HAC targets with UNICEF Crisis Response Plan for 2024 and Famine Prevention Plan (FPP).

27. Of the 1,395,931 targeted children, 70 per cent are children under-five.

28. The target is approximately 84 per cent of the severe wasting caseload in the age group 6–59 months (640,000 children based on the draft Sudan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2024). It was reduced from 90 per cent coverage in 2023 due to continued insecurity and subsequent humanitarian access constraints in 17 localities in the Sudan.

29. A total of 9.5 million school-age children are in need of education support, of whom the cluster is targeting 4.2 million. UNICEF and Save the Children – as cluster lead agencies and providers of last resort – agreed to each target 40 per cent (1,681,627 school-age children), and the remaining 20 per cent will be covered by other Education Cluster partners.

30. The AAP indicator was first introduced in June 2023 and was calculated as per different consideration and included other indicators that were considered under different sections. The AAP indicator is now different across programmatic areas. The compliance of target setting with UNICEF's global indicator methodology notes that the usually this target is 1-2% of the highest target, but to avoid underachieving, given that it is a new component, UNICEF Sudan is revising it down.

31. Per UNICEF's institutional commitment, funding requirements include such disability-inclusive programming as the accessibility of new or temporary structures, modification of existing structures, provision of reasonable accommodations, training of staff and partners on disability inclusion and engaging disability-inclusion advice.

32. UNICEF HAC revision does not reflect an increase in funding requirements. While needs are increasing, UNICEF will harness its knowledge, systems and good practices established to continue to deliver efficiently and effectively against set targets.

33. UNICEF HAC revision reflects an update in some targets and not an increase in funding requirements because these targets have been updated to align with the UNICEF Crisis Response Plan for 2024 and Famine Prevention Plan (FPP). UNICEF is committed to remain agile, forward-leaning, and focused on the most vulnerable. UNICEF will aim to further drive cost-efficiencies until the end of 2024 by utilizing more direct implementation capabilities and those of our expanded network of local partners, as well as by optimizing synergies between HDP nexus programming currently funded. UNICEF remains committed to delivering value for money but considering the volatile programming and operations environment in Sudan will re-assess its funding requirements for 2025 against needs and cost-of-doing-business when developing the 2025 HAC.

34. This includes $8,600,733 (7.3 per cent) for providing accessible ways to report sexual exploitation and abuse and $23,670,400 (20 per cent) for prevention and response to gender-based violence.

35. Social Protection receives resilience/development-focused funding to sustain systems and resilience for delivery of basic services to communities across Sudan. Since these are not humanitarian funding contributions, they are not reflected here.

36. This includes $1,250,250 (3.2 per cent) for accountability to affected populations; the remaining amount is for social and behavioural change communication, including community engagement activities.