unicef
for every child

The impact of the war in the Middle East on children in monetarily poor households

Framing the crisis:
a new shock to a fragile global economy

The escalation of conflict in the Middle East is first and foremost a human tragedy, with devastating consequences for civilians and serious implications for regional stability and global peace, as violations of international humanitarian and human rights law continue. While the gravest impacts are borne by children and families in and around areas affected by the conflict, the crisis is also generating economic shocks that extend far beyond the region, with significant consequences for children's rights worldwide.

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz following the escalation of conflict in early 2026 has created a major shock to the global economy. The Strait is one of the world's most important energy and shipping corridors, carrying a significant share of global seaborne oil, liquefied natural gas and fertilizer trade.[1] Disruptions to these flows have already contributed to higher oil prices, rising shipping costs, renewed inflationary pressures and weaker global growth expectations.[2] Crucially, these economic effects risk reversing recent progress on child poverty, and exposing millions of additional children to deprivation, including in countries geographically distant from the conflict.

This crisis differs from earlier shocks in ways that make it especially instructive. It is affecting the global economy while disrupting energy, transport, fertilizer and food systems simultaneously. Climate-related pressures add another layer of risk, particularly for food systems and vulnerable populations.[3] The result is not disruption to a single sector, but a system-wide shock that moves quickly, affecting prices, public budgets, services and household welfare.

The shock has arrived at a difficult moment, after repeated global crises have weakened household resilience and public finances.[4] Many countries are still recovering from the overlapping effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and the economic consequences of the war in Ukraine.[5] Each of these earlier crises hit children hard: families reduced food consumption, delayed health care, withdrew children from school, or relied on harmful coping strategies, including child labour. [6] The current crisis is therefore hitting households whose resilience has already been eroded by several consecutive shocks.

This brief explores the three main economic channels through which the crisis affects children. The analysis provides quantitative estimates on the most visible area of impact: the reduction in purchasing power.

This briefing note contains a summary of estimates detailed in a forthcoming technical note (EPRI 2026)

© UNICEF/UNI956430/.
On 5 March 2026, in Beirut, Lebanon, evacuation warnings triggered large movements of families seeking safety. Thousands, including many children, fled their homes, gathering in the streets or moving to temporary shelters.

**COVER PHOTO:
© UNICEF/UN0881875/
Ayene**

How the shock reaches children: three transmission channels

1. Prices and household purchasing power

The first and most immediate transmission channel relates to rising prices and declining household purchasing power. It also lowers incomes directly: slower growth cuts earnings, so falling incomes and rising prices squeeze households from both sides. Higher energy prices pass quickly through economies via increased costs for transport, electricity generation, food and essential goods. These increases do not affect all households equally. Low-income families spend a larger share of their budgets on food, transport and energy, which means the same price increase absorbs a larger share of their income.[7] For poorer households, inflation is not an abstract macroeconomic indicator, but a direct reduction in daily survival capacity.

As household resources shrink, families lose their ability to pay for the goods and services that support child development. Higher prices make it harder to afford transportation to schools and clinics, medicines, hygiene products, nutritious food and other essentials.[8] Under acute stress, households often resort to coping strategies that carry long-term costs. They may reduce food consumption, postpone health care, withdraw children from school, push children into work, or accept child marriage as a survival strategy.[9] These choices may help a household survive the immediate shock, but they can also permanently damage child health, learning, protection and future earnings.

The burden of adjustment can also be unequal within households. Women and girls often absorb a disproportionate share of economic shocks by reducing their own consumption, taking on more unpaid care work, or being the first to leave school or paid employment when resources become scarce.[10] In Asia and the Pacific, early projections suggested that the combined effects of COVID-19 and associated hardship could put an additional 1.2 million girls at risk of leaving school, many of whom were unlikely to return.[11] This experience illustrates how large, economy-wide shocks – including price shocks – can translate into lasting setbacks for girls, unless protective measures are put in place.

© UNICEF/UNI460459/Upadhayay.
Swastika feeding her daughter a home-cooked meal, with rice, lentils and vegetables.

@UNICEF/Anita Ahamian/UNI878767.
A toddler plays with an educational wall toy at the Chernihiv maternity hospital as part of a program supported by UNICEF Ukraine.

2. Service delivery and access constraints

The second transmission channel relates to the affordability, accessibility and continuity of essential services. Higher fuel and logistics costs increase the operating costs of health, education, nutrition, child protection, and water and sanitation services. These pressures are especially acute where services rely on fuel for transport, electricity generation, cold-chain systems, water treatment or outreach to remote communities.

Disruptions are already visible in education and public service delivery. Energy-saving measures – such as planned power cuts, reduced opening hours and emergency austerity – can compromise critical services for children, including maternity wards, neonatal units, vaccination systems, schools, early childhood centres and water systems.[12] Governments in Pakistan and Bangladesh have announced emergency measures to conserve fuel and electricity, including closing universities, reducing teaching hours and suspending school bus services during an energy crisis linked to higher global oil prices and regional conflict.[13] Transport disruptions and higher freight costs can also delay delivery of medicines, vaccines, therapeutic foods and other essential commodities. For children, these disruptions are not temporary inconveniences, but interruptions in services that can shape their health, learning and development.

The children most affected are those who already face the greatest barriers to accessing services. Children in remote areas, low-income households and households caring for persons with disabilities are more likely to experience the combined effects of higher household costs and reduced availability of services. As prices rise, these households become less able to afford transport, medicine, school materials or care services. At the same time, they become more dependent on public systems that are themselves under strain. The result is a reinforcing cycle in which services become harder to reach precisely when families need more support.

3. Fiscal pressure and reduced policy space

The third transmission channel relates to fiscal pressure and reduced government policy space. Slower growth weakens public revenues at the same time that governments face higher demands to protect households and firms, absorb rising operational costs in public services, and respond to growing social needs.[14] Government revenue as a proportion of GDP has remained below 2019 levels across much of the developing world into the mid-2020s, even as debt service and deficits rise. This creates a difficult policy environment in which governments must respond to larger economic shocks with fewer resources.

The knock-on effects are already stark. Forty-five developing countries now pay more on interest than they spend on health, and 22 spend more on interest than on education.[15] These pressures translate directly into cutbacks to child-focused programmes.[16] When fiscal space narrows, programmes that protect nutrition, learning and health can become adjustment variables, and can be among the first to face cuts.

These three channels reinforce one another. A rise in fuel prices can simultaneously increase household living costs, raise the operating costs of schools and clinics, and reduce governments' ability to sustain long-term investment in human capital, including investment in the services children rely on. Local governments may be especially exposed, as they often carry responsibility for service delivery but have limited capacity to absorb higher costs. The result is a compounding shock that moves through households, services, and public finances at once.[17] This is why a child-poverty response cannot focus on income alone, but must also protect fiscal space and services for children.

Measuring the impact

To illustrate the extent to which the crisis is affecting children, we model the first transmission channel – the loss of household purchasing power – under the growth and price shock associated with the disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, on the World Bank's global welfare distributions. We report two complementary views of the same shock. The first uses national poverty lines, which measure poverty against each country's own standard. The second uses the World Bank's international poverty lines, which place every country on a common scale. Both rest on a set of conservative assumptions, detailed in a separate technical note, and should be read as **the minimum plausible impact** of the crisis on children rather than a full accounting of it.

A few of those assumptions are worth highlighting here. First, this approach estimates how changes in forecasted growth and prices in the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) World Economic Outlook (WEO)[18] between October 2025 and April 2026 affect the estimated number of people and children living in monetarily poor households. Because children are overrepresented among people living in poverty, changes in overall poverty are converted into child-poverty estimates using a regional child premium derived from household survey data. The approach captures the direct effect of declining purchasing power only (either from a decrease in income or an increase in inflation), and not the effects through the servicedelivery or fiscal channels. Because the method requires a full set of WEO growth and inflation forecasts for each country, it can only be applied where those forecasts exist, which limits the set of countries covered, most notably excluding countries in the Middle East and in conflict-affected settings, and Brazil, which does not publish an official national poverty line.

The estimates are mainly driven by two factors. First, slower economic growth per person reduces people's living standards (this is the main factor influencing the results, which is why the estimates are sensitive to it). Second, higher inflation further reduces what people can afford to buy.

Second, the model is distribution neutral. Both growth and inflation shocks are applied equally to households at all income levels. The model also captures changes in overall inflation rather than food and energy inflation. As a result, it tends to underestimate the true impact on both the incidence and depth of monetary poverty, as households in the lower deciles of income distribution devote a higher share of their income and consumption to these categories.

© UNICEF/UNI846064/ El Baba. Every day, nine-year-old Hajer walks a long distance to find drinking water for his family, "I can't describe how exhausted I feel carrying the jerrycan all the way home."

© UNICEF/UNI428897/ UNICEF/YPN. Revan, a 6-month-old baby, is cradled in her mother's arms as she undergoes required screenings and vaccinations inside a UNICEF-supported mobile clinic. Such initiatives are made possible through collaborative work with our partners.

Third, the model does not reflect structural features in each country, such as dependence on imported energy, fertilizer and food, large informal economies, or reliance on remittances. The impact on households is likely to be greater in structurally exposed economies, where continued fuel and fertilizer disruptions could also deepen food insecurity.[19, 20]

The estimate is also not intended to represent the full change in forecasts caused by the crisis. A pre-conflict baseline (the October 2025 WEO, adjusted up about 0.2pp for pre-war momentum) is compared with the WEO from April 2026, and only increases in inflation are counted, not decreases. The approach produces a range based on a clear "what if" comparison, rather than suggesting that all changes in the forecasts are directly caused by the situation in the Strait of Hormuz.

These assumptions do not all point one way. Omitting food-and-energy inflation and the service and fiscal channels brings the estimate down. At the same time, the results have been tested under different assumptions. For example, changing how strongly economic shock affects household incomes produces a range of estimates from around 9 to 29 million additional children living in poverty. Similarly, reducing the number of countries included in the analysis (from 167 to 148) changes the result by less than one per cent. Overall, this suggests that the central estimate is cautious in what it omits, while still falling within a range that has been tested for robustness.

Throughout, we report results for five regions. Africa (including North Africa as well as SubSaharan Africa); Europe; North America; Latin America and the Caribbean; and Asia and the Pacific. Asia and the Pacific combines East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East. Within the Middle East, analysis using the international poverty line covers Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Israel, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, while analysis using national poverty lines covers only Iraq, Jordan and Yemen, the three countries that publish a national poverty line.

Coverage is not complete for either international or national poverty lines. The international poverty lines reach 167 economies, about 96 per cent of the world's children; those left out live in areas where no usable welfare distribution exists, chiefly Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan and Somalia. The national poverty lines reach 148 economies directly and, counting China, which maintains a national poverty line at which it reports essentially no poverty, cover about 87 per cent of the world's children. The largest economies not covered are Brazil, Iran and the United States, because they publish no national poverty line. The figures obtained using national poverty lines therefore cover about seven in eight of the world's children, while figures using the international poverty lines cover almost all the world's children. National poverty lines are nevertheless used as the headline measure because they reflect the real standard of living in each country and the threshold that society itself treats as poverty.

How large is the child poverty shock?

Impact measured against national poverty lines

Even with these caveats, the impact on child poverty is considerable. Below we present estimates based on national poverty lines as the headline figure. A national poverty line reflects the real standard of living in the country: the actual cost of meeting basic needs given local prices, diets and social norms, and the threshold the society itself treats as poverty. A single international line applied uniformly cannot capture this, as the same dollar figure means very different things in different economies. Anchoring the estimate to each country's own line therefore keeps it faithful to what poverty means in that country.

Measured against national poverty lines, the moderate adverse scenario pushes **an additional 18.3 million children** into poverty relative to the baseline prior to the escalation of conflict.

Under the severe scenario, the figure **rises to 23.4 million**, an increase of a **further 5.1 million children**. The impact is concentrated in contexts where many households already cluster just above the poverty line, so that modest declines in welfare growth, combined with rising inflation, are enough to move millions of children below the poverty line.[21]

Figure 1 shows the national poverty line results by region under both scenarios, and underscores that although the crisis originates in the Middle East, its measured effects are global. Asia and the Pacific records the largest absolute increase, with 8.1 million additional children in poor households under the adverse scenario and 9.9 million under the severe scenario, reflecting the very large child populations of South Asia and Southeast Asia. Africa follows, with 6.5 million and 8.8 million. Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe each add between 1.5 and 2.7 million across the two scenarios.

Figure 1
Additional children in poor households by region, adverse versus severe scenario, national poverty lines

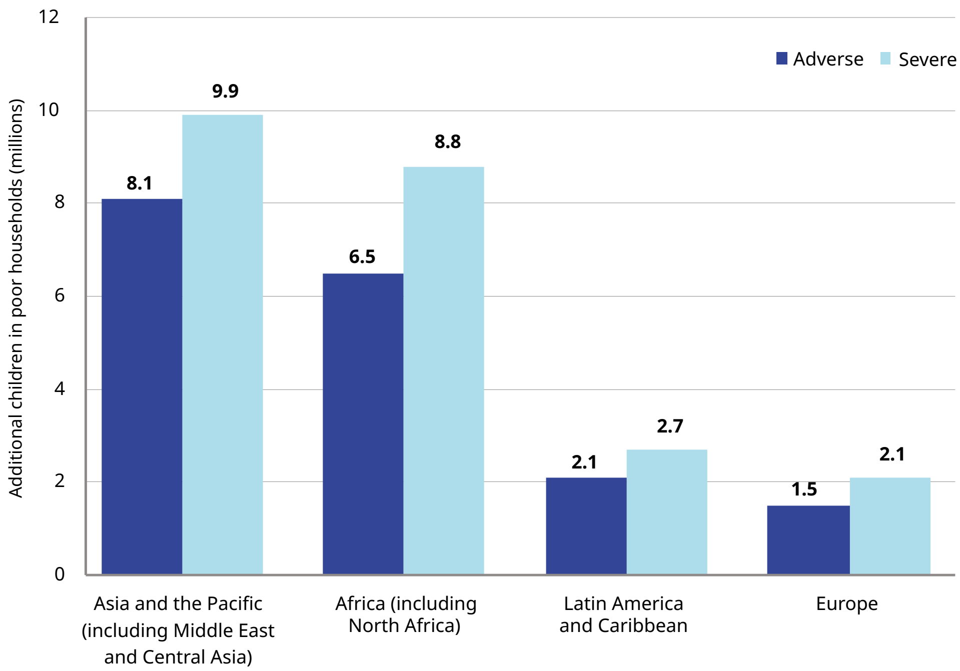


Table 1
Children in monetarily poor households at national poverty lines, by region (millions), and estimated coverage.

Region	Pre-conflict baseline	Additional, adverse	Additional, severe	Children covered
Africa (including North Africa)	272.2	6.5	8.8	98%
Asia and the Pacific (including Middle East and Central Asia)	89.0	8.1	9.9	68%
Latin America and the Caribbean	49.7	2.1	2.7	70%
North America	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%
Europe	19.4	1.5	2.1	100%
World total	**430.3**	**18.3**	**23.4**	**76%**

North America (Canada and the United States) has no harmonized national poverty lines and so contributes no estimates at national lines. Coverage in Asia and the Pacific is limited because China, which accounts for the majority of the region's children, does not have a harmonized national poverty line; nor do Iran, the Gulf states and several other Middle Eastern economies. As a result, the Middle East is only partly covered at national lines and is addressed more fully through the World Bank-consistent estimates below.

Table 1 sets out the regional pattern, together with the share of children in each region covered by a national poverty-line estimate.

Analysis of the situation in Asia and the Pacific calls for particular caution. The national povertyline estimate reaches only about 68 per cent of the region's children. China, where a large share of these children live, has no harmonized national poverty line, so the regional figure describes the rest of the region excluding China.

The estimate also misses much of the Middle East: Iran, at the centre of the shock, has no national poverty line, and neither do the Gulf states, while the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and the State of Palestine have no usable recent data. Only Iraq, Jordan and Yemen can be measured against a national poverty line. The Middle East is taken up more fully through the international poverty-line estimates below.

The national poverty-line results therefore cover roughly three quarters of the world's children.

© UNICEF/China/2012/ Jerry Liu. China's rural poverty alleviation strategy now includes children as a priority target group.

© UNICEF/UNI864582/Ponce
"When I grow up, I want to be a civil engineer like my brother Merlyn. I dream of building a house next to his, so my parents can live with us," says Hansel, 8, Peru.

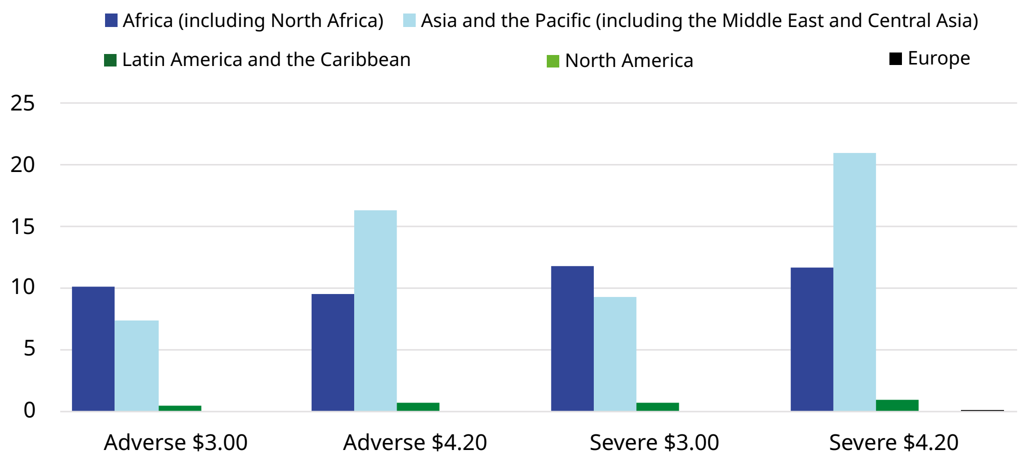
© UNICEF/UNI844206/Pouget
Kabale Molu Godana attends a climate change adaptation session with her three year old son in the Dubuluk camp for internally displaced persons, in the Borna district, Ethiopia.

Impact measured against international poverty lines

National poverty lines are not comparable across countries, as each reflects a different standard of living. To conduct a comparative analysis of the shock, we repeat the exercise using the World Bank's international poverty lines of $3.00 and $4.20 a day in 2021 purchasing power parity. The international line widens coverage to 167 of 218 economies and brings the Middle Eastern economies that have distribution data, including Iran, into the totals for Asia and the Pacific; Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the State of Palestine, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman still fall outside due to lack of usable data.

At the **$3.00 line** the **adverse scenario adds 17.8 million children, rising to 21.6 million under the severe scenario**. At the higher **$4.20 line** – which captures the larger group of children living just above extreme poverty – the additions are **26.5 million and 33.6 million**. Figure 2 shows the regional pattern.

Figure 2 Additional children in poor households at international poverty lines, by region (millions).



Coverage is the share of each region's children living in an economy included in the international poverty-line analysis. The analysis covers 167 economies, including 7 in the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Israel, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates), which together add about 2.1 million children at the $3.00 poverty line and 3.2 million at the $4.20 poverty under the adverse scenario.

© UNICEF/UN0824325/Map. A mother and child sit inside their home. Children are more likely than adults to experience poverty and its consequences, including limited access to adequate housing, nutrition, health care, education and other essential services.

More poverty, deeper poverty

The scale of the shock depends on both the distribution of households around the poverty line and the level at which that line is set. Headcounts rise most sharply where many households sit just above the threshold, as even a modest loss of income or consumption can push them below it. This makes the poverty headcount a useful but incomplete measure. It tells us how many children fall below a given line, but not how far below they are, how many remain just above it and vulnerable, or how conditions change for children who were already poor before the shock.

The poverty gap helps capture this deeper effect. It reflects the average distance between poor households' income or consumption and the poverty line, showing whether poverty is becoming more severe even when the headcount changes little.

Table 2 shows the poverty gap where national poverty lines are in use, indicating the level before the shock and the change in percentage points under the adverse and severe scenarios. Under both scenarios, the gap widens, although unevenly across regions. In Africa – where nearly two in five people already live below national poverty lines – the shock may deepen existing poverty more than it increases the number of people counted as poor. Conversely, Asia and the Pacific records the largest rise in the number of poor children yet the least significant deepening in the poverty gap, because many of its newly poor sit close to the poverty line.

Both the headcount and the gap matter for policy. Children already living in poverty when the shock lands are pushed further from minimum living standards. A household just below the line may recover quickly if prices fall, but a household far below the line may experience hunger, withdraw children from school, delay accessing health care, or feel forced to migrate. The depth of poverty therefore matters as much as the number of children counted as poor.

Table 2

Poverty gap at the national poverty line, by region: level before the shock and change under each scenario. Average shortfall of the poor as a percentage of the poverty line, total population; change in percentage points.

Region	Pre-shock level	Change, adverse	Change, severe
Africa (including North Africa)	12.1%	+0.7	+0.9
Asia and the Pacific (including the Middle East and Central Asia)	1.8%	+0.2	+0.2
Latin America and Caribbean	11.9%	+0.7	+0.9
North America	n/a	n/a	n/a
Europe	3.2%	+0.2	+0.3

The headcount also understates how many children are exposed to poverty. In the preconflict baseline about 82 million children live within 10 percentage points above their national poverty line. The crisis therefore draws from a vulnerable pool more than four times the size of the measured increase, which is why a modest downward shift in welfare translates into millions of additional poor children, and why support built on pre-shock poverty status, relying on old registration data, misses many of the newly poor.

One important limitation should be noted. Because the model is distribution-neutral, it moves every household by the same proportion and cannot capture that a food and energy shock falls hardest on the poorest. Given the nature of the crisis, which operates precisely through its impact on food and energy prices, the gap changes shown here are a *conservative* floor on the true deepening of poverty.

Table 3

Children living within 10 percentage points above the national poverty line, by region (pre-conflict baseline, millions).

Region	Children within 10 percentage points above the line
Africa (including North Africa)	39.6
Asia and the Pacific (including the Middle East and Central Asia)	30.3
Latin America and Caribbean	6.7
North America	n/a
Europe	5.3
World total	**81.9**

Baseline (no conflict) counterfactual; the regional child premium is applied as in the poverty headcount tables. North America (Canada and the United States) has no national poverty line. For comparison, the adverse scenario pushes an additional 18.3 million children below the line.

© UNICEF/UN0771027/ Reklajti. Children in an early learning setting. Many children live just above the poverty line and remain highly vulnerable to economic shocks that can quickly push households into poverty.

The response

The most revealing feature of the global response is its imbalance. By 28 May 2026, 109 countries had introduced or planned roughly 288 crisis measures.[22] Subsidies and tax relief accounted for about half of these measures, while social assistance contributed less than a tenth. In aggregate, governments have focused on marketbased interventions, which is often necessary in the acute phase of a shock. However, this reflects that in most countries social assistance systems are not yet prepared to respond adequately and in a timely fashion to these kinds of shocks.

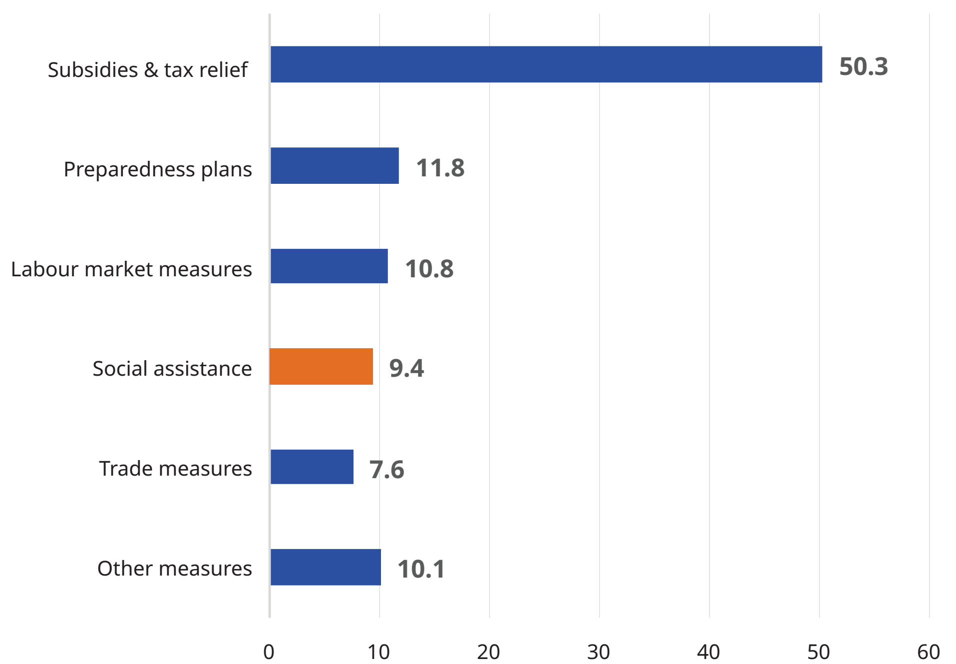
Where social assistance was introduced, it largely took the form of temporary cash transfers, vouchers or targeted support. Examples include Fiji's temporary 50 per cent increase in social welfare payments, Singapore's cost-of-living vouchers and cash payments, Belgium's support to low-income households facing rising heating costs, and the Philippines' cash assistance to transport workers and farmers. These measures show that governments can move quickly when systems exist. They also show the limits of fragmented responses that reach only selected groups and often expire before households fully recover. The challenge is to turn temporary crisis measures into existing systems that are able to respond to the dynamic nature of poverty, and hence provide better support in times of crisis.

At the same time, the crisis has exposed significant fiscal constraints. Analysis by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) highlights widening fiscal deficits, rising subsidy costs, and shrinking policy space. In Indonesia, the fiscal deficit was projected to exceed the legal ceiling if oil prices remained elevated. Malaysia estimated that every $10 increase in oil prices would add roughly RM3.5 billion in subsidy costs.[23] Countries such as Egypt, France, Fiji and Senegal introduced spending freezes or expenditure cuts to offset the burden of the crisis response.[24] These examples illustrate the difficult trade-offs governments face when they must protect households, stabilize prices, and preserve fiscal credibility at the same time. The trade-offs are hardest in countries that enter the crisis with constrained fiscal space and high debt, where financing pressures could intensify if it is prolonged; United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) warns that liquidity pressures in some economies could evolve into broader solvency risks without timely external support.[25]

Figure 3

Crisis-response measures by type – share of measures, by instrument (256 measures across 104 countries).

Source: World Bank price-shock tracker (Gentilini, Ugo, et al., Tracking global social policy responses to high energy prices (Version 7), World Bank, Washington, D.C., 28 May 2026).



Building a response for children

The crisis reaches children via channels that reinforce each other: through higher prices, through reductions in the services they depend on, and through the public budgets that fund those services. The modelled 18.3 to 23.4 million additional children affected by poverty captures that first channel only, leaving much of the damage resulting from strained services and compressed budgets outside of the headline figure. A response built around income support alone would also address only the first channel – higher prices.

A response adequate to the crisis must protect purchasing power, service delivery and fiscal space. It must also recognize that many affected children live in households just above the poverty line, where even a modest shock can quickly erase fragile gains. Children most exposed to the crisis therefore include not only the chronically poor but also the much larger group of nearpoor households that appeared secure in the last survey and are often invisible to systems designed to target persistent poverty. A shock-responsive approach must be able to reach both groups quickly, as a single price shock pushes the poor and near-poor down together. Speed matters because the consequences for children can be irreversible: incomes may recover and economies may stabilize, but a stunted infancy, a missed immunization cohort, a lost year of schooling or a girl withdrawn from education may not. The response must therefore move at the speed of the shock and protect what cannot be recovered first.

The broader lesson extends beyond this crisis. Economic shocks are no longer rare events but an increasingly frequent feature of the global environment, driven by conflict, climate change, financial instability, pandemics and geopolitical fragmentation. The question is not how to respond to a single crisis, but how to ensure that children and families remain protected across repeated periods of volatility. Macroeconomic stability remains essential, but from a childrights perspective, the objective must also be to

© **UNICEF/UNI754717.** Conflict, climate shocks and hunger are driving unprecedented humanitarian needs for children across Eastern and Southern Africa.

create stability at the household level: ensuring continuous access to adequate nutrition, health care, education, care, and income support even when economies experience shocks. Building systems that can absorb volatility without transmitting its full cost to children should therefore be viewed as a core development objective, rather than a crisis-response measure.

Much of this not new. The case for universal child and family benefits, protected spending on health, education, and nutrition, and for keeping children at the centre of budget decisions is longstanding; the shock makes it more urgent. What the shock changes is that it forces these choices onto the macro-fiscal terrain: how price subsidies are handled, whether and how spending floors are indexed to inflation, how the depth of poverty is tracked beyond headcounts, and how budget and delivery systems are arranged before the next shock rather than negotiated after it.

The priorities below are framed by the reality that the estimate only captures headline inflation rather than the higher food inflation the poor actually face, as well as omitting the service and fiscal channels. The estimate also assumes that welfare loss falls evenly across households when in reality, the hardest hit – including households reliant on informal-sector employment or remittances, or headed by women – lose more than the average.

1. Protect children from irreversible impacts first

When the economy contracts, output eventually rebounds, but a child does not. A missed measles campaign, a lost year of school, or malnutrition during the first 1,000 days harms health, learning and well-being now, and leaves lasting scars: lower lifetime earnings, poorer health and reduced productivity in adulthood. This is the cost that cannot be reversed when growth returns, and the one a macroeconomic framework is least equipped to see.

UNICEF calls on national governments to protect the services children rely on through the shock, as among the highest-return uses of scarce fiscal space. When forced to cut budgets national governments must prioritize routine immunization and the cold chain, treatment for severe malnutrition, child and family benefits, safe birth and education and protection so these are the last line to fall rather than the first. Governments must also afford special protections to girls, children with disabilities, children in remote areas, and other marginalized groups, to mitigate existing inequalities magnified by crises. This includes a shift towards cash support that directly reaches families with children, especially those with young children and pregnant women. This means shifting from untargeted price subsidies to category-based support for all children in affected groups, not narrow means testing.

UNICEF also calls on donor governments to provide fast, flexible, low-cost financing to the countries facing the worst fiscal pressure from this crisis – especially those already spending more on debt repayments than on essential services for children. UNICEF also calls on donor governments to maintain and, where needed, increase funding for services and supplies children rely on, including investments to ensure continued access to essential health, nutrition, WASH, education and protection supplies, as rising fuel costs and shipping disruption are making these more expensive at the exact moment more children need them.

@ UNICEF/UN0468134/ Maw. A mother waits in line to get her child vaccinated against measles and rubella (MRV) in Mymensingh.

2. Reach affected categories fast rather than re-targeting based on old data

In many of the most exposed regions, the national poverty line is relatively close to the living standards of a large share of the population. As a result, many households live just above the poverty threshold and remain highly vulnerable to economic shocks.[26] When the whole distribution of poverty shifts down at once, targeting built on pre-shock data misses these newly poor families, and re-registering them takes months the crisis does not allow.

UNICEF calls on national governments to prioritize crisis response measures in the acute phase that reach everyone in an affected category quickly, protecting more children per dollar and enabling support to rapidly reach those who need it, over measures with slow and narrow targeting that relies on outdated data. As in past crises, persons with disabilities, women and girls, and marginalized communities are often inadequately reached, so measures should be designed to identify and remove the barriers they face.

3. Fund the replacement before withdrawing subsidies

Fuel and food subsidies are expensive and can be regressive, so reform is reasonable. But the cash support that replaces them must be built, funded and reaching families before the subsidy is removed. When cuts are made first and compensation provided later children are harmed and reforms collapse. The practical difficulty is that the fiscal room to fund compensation often appears only after removal, creating a transition period in which a government must pay twice. Concessional financing – whether a World Bank development-policy operation or an IMF programme tranche – should be designed to bridge precisely that overlap.

UNICEF calls on national governments to ensure continuity of support for children and families, including by fully funding cash support and ensuring support reaches those who need it, before any fuel or food subsidy is removed. UNICEF also calls on international financial institutions (IFIs) to design their financing to include coverage through periods when a government has to pay for both the old subsidy and the new support replacing it, reducing risk for children and families when they are most exposed.

© UNICEF/Kenya. Schoolchildren in Kenya. Stronger public financial management and budget systems can help governments allocate resources more effectively to education and other services that support children's development and well-being..

4. Make spending floors binding and inflation-indexed

A spending floor – a minimum level of protected public spending needed to maintain essential services for children – written in nominal localcurrency terms, and not actively monitored, does little to protect children. To be effective, a spending floor should rise with inflation, be assessed based on whether services actually reach families rather than on budget allocations alone, and be treated as a binding constraint in programme design rather than a residual objective addressed last. This is particularly important in IMF-supported programmes and other adjustment frameworks, where monitoring should focus on execution and service continuity, not only on planned spending. Where budgets genuinely cannot sustain such floors, the response should be concessional financing or, in countries already in distress, embedding spending floors within the macroeconomic framework of debt restructuring. The alternative – assuming resources exist when they do not – risks undermining essential services for children.

UNICEF calls on national governments to protect minimum spending on health, nutrition and education even when budgets are under pressure, ensuring services can continue to reach children and families who need them. UNICEF also calls on IFIs to ensure that, where needed, loan conditions or macro frameworks for debt restructuring encourage or enable borrowing countries to ensure minimum spending on essential services for children. Similarly, national governments should assess what new loans will mean for children's health and education services before signing loan agreements, not after services have already been cut.

5. Arrange financing and delivery before the next shock

Resilient public financial management (PFM) systems protect children not only by mobilizing resources after a shock, but also by arranging the financing, authorizations, data and delivery channels in advance, to allow governments to act while families still have choices. Pre-agreed triggers, standby financing instruments (including contingent credit, scalable budget support, reserve funds and risk transfer), and payment systems built and tested in calmer times allow top-ups or expanded benefits support to reach families in days, rather than months during which lasting harm to children sets in and banking and delivery channels narrow. Pre-arranged financing is not a substitute for strong public systems; rather, it is a test for them. It carries real fiscal and operational costs, including commitment fees, premiums, tied up borrowing space and the risk that a trigger releases funds too early, too late or not all. The way to manage this risk is to embed pre-arranged instruments within a childresponsive PFM architecture. Triggers should be linked to child-related indicators already collected by social protection, education, health, nutrition, early warning and local delivery systems. Release rules should be reflected in budget, treasury and procurement procedures before the shock. Payment providers, grievance mechanisms and fiduciary controls should be stress-tested in normal times.

UNICEF calls on national governments to set up the child-focused preparedness systems – pre-arranged financing with payment systems, early warning data, agreed triggers – that enable support to reach children and families within days of a shock, not months. The cost of preparing in advance is far lower than the harm caused by waiting. UNICEF also calls on donor governments to commit funding in advance as a contribution to pre-agreed trigger-based financing mechanisms, so that when warning signs appear, pre-arranged funding is available. UNICEF also calls on IFIs to include child-focused indicators, such as rising child malnutrition levels or falling vaccination rates, in pre-agreed financing options, including anticipatory action measures and trigger-based financing mechanisms.

© UNICEF/UN020184/Anmar
A child in Türkiye. Economic hardship can increase the risk of child labour as families struggle to cope with rising costs and falling incomes.

6. Beyond domestic reprioritization: treat social spending floors, debt relief and medium-term financing as a single package to protect children

None of this assumes an open-ended budget. In many low- and middle-income countries, the budget is already constrained by weak revenue, rising debt service and competing claims on public spending. Most of what is required is a matter of composition and sequencing: protecting children from irreversible impacts first, sequencing subsidy reform so that compensation precedes withdrawal, and reaching the nearpoor quickly. Where the budget genuinely cannot stretch, there is a case for concessional financing, and in distressed economies for debt-service suspension or debt restructuring, to expand fiscal space rather than to assume that the constraint will disappear. Where debt service already exceeds spending on health, education or social protection, no government can protect children through domestic reprioritization alone. In this scenario, spending floors, debt relief and credible medium-term financing become part of the same package, not separate conversations.

In contexts where crisis-affected countries are holding significant levels of debt, decreasing their ability to invest in continuity of essential services for children, UNICEF calls on lending countries to pause debt repayments automatically for the countries hit hardest, without months of negotiation while children go without services. Where debt is restructured, funds saved should be reinvested in essential services for children, ensuring their continued access to health, nutrition, WASH, education and protection. UNICEF also calls on IFIs to use the process of loan assessment, negotiation and approval to assess the impact on children and their access to services, ensuring loan conditions do no harm.

7. Invest in youth livelihoods and economic inclusion as part of shock preparedness.

Expanding access to skills development, entrepreneurship support, digital employment opportunities, and pathways to decent work can strengthen household resilience and reduce the risk that future economic shocks push vulnerable families into poverty. As youth often contribute significantly to household incomes in low- and middle-income countries, investment in youth livelihoods can serve both as an economic recovery measure and as a child poverty prevention strategy.

UNICEF calls on national governments to expand job training, entrepreneurship support and digital work opportunities for young people. UNICEF also calls on donor governments and private sector donors to refrain from further cuts to children's education and skills development, amidst unprecedented cuts to aid budgets.[27]

UNICEF's role

© **UNICEF/UNI782355/Ushindi.** Cash assistance from UNICEF to vulnerable families in eastern DR Congo is provided via mobile phone. Espérance Shukuru checks a message while holding 6-month-old daughter Jordanna in Goma, North Kivu province.

UNICEF is positioned to supply something that other actors cannot offer. UNICEF country offices already collect vital data on indicators for child rights and wellbeing. Admissions for severe acute malnutrition, drop-off in routine vaccination, and girls leaving school are among the most sensitive early signals of household distress. Tracked close to real time, they can serve three purposes at once. They can act as the triggers that release pre-arranged financing; they can verify whether a spending floor is translating into services for families rather than only appearing in a budget; and they can provide early information on the two transmission channels, services and fiscal pressure, that the headline poverty estimate does not capture. Defining and maintaining this indicator set is a concrete contribution UNICEF can offer governments and financing partners now.

Much of what protects children from irreversible outcomes is operational work that UNICEF already delivers at scale, and that becomes more rather than less important as the shock spreads. Procurement and distribution of ready-to-use therapeutic food keeps treatment for severe acute malnutrition available when food prices rise and clinics come under strain. Vaccine procurement and cold-chain support hold immunization systems together at precisely the moment fuel and electricity disruptions threaten them. Humanitarian cash transfers reach families in fragile and sanctioned settings when national systems cannot, often within the narrow window before coping strategies become irreversible. These are the front-line defences against the very outcomes from which children cannot recover.

The same shock that deepens need also threatens these programmes directly, and that threat does not show up in poverty statistics. Higher fuel and freight costs raise the price of procuring and distributing therapeutic food and vaccines. Disruptions to the maritime corridors connected to Hormuz delay delivery of the commodities themselves. Tightening fiscal space and competing humanitarian demands squeeze the funding that sustains programmes. The banking bottlenecks that accompany sanctions can choke the cash transfers meant for the families furthest from national systems. A supply line can fray, a cold chain can lapse, or a cash pipeline can stall well before any of it registers in a count built on household purchasing power, so a delivery system can be quietly eroding even as the headline numbers still look stable. This is a further reason the indicator set above matters: it is designed to catch exactly this kind of erosion as it happens, rather than after the damage has been counted.

The case to governments and funders is therefore twofold. These programmes should be sustained and – where the shock deepens need – expanded; and their role should be made visible within the wider crisis response, so that they attract the increased support the moment demands. A childcentred response to the Strait of Hormuz crisis is not only a set of macro-fiscal choices made in finance ministries. It is also the continuation, at greater scale and with greater visibility, of the direct protection that keeps a malnourished child in treatment, an immunization cohort intact, and a family solvent through the months when help would otherwise arrive too late.

Endnotes

1. United Nations Trade and Development, *Strait of Hormuz disruptions: Implications for global trade and development* (UNCTAD/OSG/TT/INF/2026/1),UNCTAD, Geneva, 2026 https://unctad.org/publication/strait-hor-muz-disruptions-implications-glob-al-trade-and-devel-opment.

2. International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook, April 2026: Global economy in the shadow of war*, IMF, Washington, D.C., 2026, https://www.imf.org/en/publications/weo/issues/2026/04/14/world-economic-outlook-april-2026; World Bank, *Commodity Markets Outlook, April 2026*, World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2026, https://documents.worldbank.org/ en/publication/documents-reports/documentde-tail/099842304282633100.

3. International Food Policy Research Institute, 2022 *Global food policy report: Climate change and food systems*, IFPRI, Washington, D.C., 2022, https://www.ifpri.org/glob-al-food-policy-report-2024/; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Social Report 2023: Leaving no one behind in an ageing world*, UNDESA, New York, 2023, https://social.desa.un.org/publications/2023-leaving-no-one-behind-in-an-ageing-world.

4. United Nations Children's Fund Innocenti, *Prospects for children in the polycrisis: A 2023 global outlook*, UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight, Florence, 2023, https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/reports/prospects-children-polycrisis-2023-global-outlook; International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook, October 2023: Navigating global divergences, IMF*, Washington, D.C., 2023, https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2023/10/10/world-economic-outlook-october-2023.

5. International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook, October 2022: Countering the cost-of-living crisis, IMF, Washington, D.C., 2022, https://www.imf.org/en/ Publications/WEO/Issues/2022/10/11/world-econom-ic-outlook-october-2022; *Strait of Hormuz disruptions: Implications for global trade and development.*

6. Mendoza, Ronald U., 'Aggregate shocks, poor households and children: Transmission channels and policy responses', *Global Social Policy*, vol. 9, 2009, supplement, pp.55–78, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/ pdf/10.1177/1468018109106885; Harper, C., N. Jones, A. McKay, and J. Espey, *Children in times of economic crisis: Past lessons, future policies*, Overseas Development Institute, London, 2012, https://www.odi. org/publications/2865-children-times-econom-ic-cri-sis-past-lessons-future-policies; United Nations Edu-cational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Children's Fund, World Bank, the World Food Programme and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Framework for reopening schools*, UNESCO, Paris, 2022, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ ark:/48223/pf0000373348; *Prospects for children in the polycrisis: A 2023 global outlook.*

7. United Nations Children's Fund Innocenti, *Prospects for children in 2022: A global outlook*, UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight, Florence, 2022, https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/reports/ prospects-children-2022-global-outlook; Salmeron-Gomez, Daylan, et al., *Global trends in child monetary poverty according to international poverty lines*, World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2023, https://documents1. worldbank.org/curated/en/099835007242399476/pdf/ IDU0965118d-1098b8048870ac0e0cb5aeb049f98.pdf.

8. United Nations Children's Fund Regional Office for South Asia, *Financing a fair future: Why human development must be at the heart of global recovery*, UNICEF ROSA, 2025, Kathmandu, https://www.unicef.org/rosa/reports/financing-fair-future.

9. Prospects for children in 2022: A global outlook; United Nations Children's Fund, The State of the World's Children 2025: Ending child poverty – Our shared imperative, UNICEF, New York, 2025, https://www.unicef.org/re-ports/state-worlds-children-2025.

10. Howell, Brianna and Constanza Tabbush, 'Gender and the cost-of-living crisis: How did the global policy response stack up?', UN Women Data Hub, 11 Apri 2025, https://data.unwomen.org/features/gender-and-cost-living-crisis-how-did-global-policy-response-stack; UN Women, *Global Gendered Impacts of the Ukraine Crisis on Energy Access and Food Security and Nutrition*, UN Women, New York, 2022, https://www.unwomen.org/sites/ default/files/2022-09/Policy-paper-Global-gendered-im-pacts-of-the-Ukraine-crisis-en.pdf.

11. United Nations Children's, *Issue Brief: COVID-19 and Girls' Education in East Asia and Pacific,* UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, Bangkok, October 2020, https://reliefweb.int/report/mongolia/issue-brief-covid-19-and-girls-education-east-asia-and-pacific-october-2020.

12. *The State of the World's Children 2025: Ending child poverty – Our shared imperative;* World Health Organization, *World health statistics 2022: Monitoring health for the SDGs,* World Health Organization, Geneva, WHO, 2022, https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240051157.

13. 'Pakistan, Bangladesh shut schools over energy crisis', *The Whistler Newspaper*, 9 March 2026, https://thewhistler.ng/pakistan-bangladesh-shut-schools-over-energy-crisis/; 'Bangladesh shuts universities, limits fuel

Endnotes

sale as Iran war causes shortage', *Al Jazeera*, 9 March 2026, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/3/9/ bangladesh-shuts-universities-limits-fuel-sale-as-iran-war-causes-shortage; International Energy Agency, '2026 Energy Crisis Policy Response Tracker', IEA, 12 June 2026, https://www.iea.org/data-and-statistics/ data-tools/2026-energy-crisis-policy-response-track-er?tab=Energy+conservation; Gentilini, Ugo, et al., *Tracking global social policy responses to high energy prices (Version 7)*, World Bank, Washington, D.C., 28 May 2026, https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/ en/099106503252633049/pdf/IDU-d15e64da-0670-4821-bebe-1caa0026210b.pdf.

14. United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF global social protection programme framework, UNICEF, New York, 2022, https://www.unicef.org/reports/unicef-global-social-protection-programme-framework; The State of the World's Children 2025: Ending child poverty – Our shared imperative.

15. *The State of the World's Children 2025: Ending child poverty – Our shared imperative*, p.3*;* United Nations Trade and Development, *A World of Debt: It is Time for Reform,* UNCTAD, Geneva, 2025, p.20, https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/osgttinf2025d4_en.pdf.

16. 'Pakistan, Bangladesh shut schools over energy crisis'; 'Bangladesh shuts universities, limits fuel sale as Iran war causes shortage'; '2026 Energy Crisis Policy Response Tracker', ; Gentilini, Ugo, et al., Tracking global social policy responses to high energy prices (Version 7).

17. Strait of Hormuz disruptions: Implications for global trade and development; The State of the World's Children 2025: Ending child poverty – Our shared imperative.

18. Refer to technical note.

19. *Strait of Hormuz disruptions: Implications for global trade and development*; Gentelini et al., *Tracking global social policy responses to high energy prices (Version 7);* World Food Programme, *Food Security Under Pressure: How the Middle East Crisis Is Impacting Vulnerable Countries,* WFP, Rome, 2026, https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000174007/download/; Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, 'Food and Agriculture Organization assessments on fertilizer and food supply disruptions linked to the Strait of Hormuz crisis', FAO, Rome, 2026, https://www.fao.org.

20. Upcoming work will deepen the analysis, looking for example at the structural features of individual economies that exacerbate or dampen the impact.

21. See also: Thurlow, James and Eleanor Jones, 'Country-level analysis: Iran War increasing global poverty and food insecurity', *IFPRI Blog: Issue Post Foresight and Policy Modeling,* 16 June 2026, https://www.ifpri.org/ blog/country-level-analysis-iran-war-increasing-glob-al-poverty-and-food-insecurity/.

22. Gentilini, Ugo, et al., *Tracking global social policy responses to high energy prices (Version 7);* Gentelini, Ugo, 'Links May 29 – A fresh stocktaking of global responses to high energy prices…', *ugogentilini.net,* 29 May 2026, https://www.ugogentilini.net/links-may-29-a-fresh-stocktacking-of-global-responses-to-high-energy-prices/.

23. United Nations Development Programme, *Preliminary Assessment. Escalation in the Middle East: Human Development Impacts across Asia and the Pacific,* UNDP, New York, April 2026, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/ zskgke326/files/2026-04/undp-rbap-middle-east-military-escalation-hdi-impacts-across-asia-pacific.pdf.pdf.

24. Gentilini, Ugo, et al., Tracking global social policy responses to high energy prices (Version 7).

25. United Nations Trade and Development, *Trade and Development Foresights 2026: Global economy faces a geopolitical challenge*, UNCTAD, Geneva, 2026, https:// unctad.org/publication/trade-and-development-foresights-2026-global-economy-faces-geopolitical-challenge; *The State of the World's Children 2025: Ending child poverty – Our shared imperative*.

26. The underlying distribution of households across welfare levels is reported in the companion methodological note.

27. For instance, a projected drop of $3.2 billion in international aid to education, including an estimated $856 million (34 per cent drop) to primary education, resulting in a potential $164 billion lost in lifetime earnings for children affected.

Appendix:

Country coverage and regional composition

This appendix documents which economies are included in the estimate, how they are grouped into regions, and what share of each region's children the estimate is able to cover at each poverty line. Regions follow the grouping used for the headline figure, in which North Africa (Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) is reported within Africa, and the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, the Pacific and Central Asia are reported together as Asia and the Pacific.

Coverage is measured against the total under-18 population of each region, including economies that have no usable welfare data. Economies with no recent distribution – such as Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Cambodia, Oman and Kuwait – therefore remain in the denominator as uncovered. The national poverty line column covers only economies with a published national poverty line. The international column applies to both the US$3.00 and $4.20 poverty lines, which share the same model set of 167 economies.

Coverage of the estimates

218 economies worldwide

International poverty lines

167 economies

Children covered (worldwide) **96%**

National poverty lines

148 economies

Children covered (worldwide) **76%**

Table A1 Share of regional child population covered, by poverty line

Region	Children (millions)	National poverty line	International poverty line ($3.00 and $4.20)
Africa (including North Africa)	680	98%	98%
Asia and the Pacific (including the Middle East and Central Asia)	1,304	68%	95%
Latin America and Caribbean	182	70%	98%
North America	81	0%	100%
Europe	167	100%	100%
World	**2,415**	**76%**	**96%**

China sensitivity. China is modelled using the international poverty lines but carries no national poverty line in the harmonized set, so it is excluded from the national povertyline column. Because China accounts for about 286 million children, it is the single reason Asia and the Pacific coverage at the national line is 68 per cent. If China is treated as covered at the national line, on the basis that its official line implies a poverty rate close to zero, Asia and the Pacific coverage at the national line rises to about 90 per cent and the world figure rises from 76 to 88 per cent.

Lebanon is excluded from the model and so counts as uncovered Asia and the Pacific children. The South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) is reported within Europe; these are low-poverty economies, and the choice has a negligible effect on the totals. Four micro-territories with about 10,000 children in total are unmapped and excluded.

Countries included in each regional grouping

The lists below show every economy in the model set of 167. Economies marked "no national poverty line" enter the estimate only at the international poverty lines.

Africa (including North Africa)

51 economies modelled, 51 with a national poverty line. Sub-Saharan Africa plus Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

Algeria; Angola; Benin; Botswana; Burkina Faso; Burundi; Cabo Verde; Cameroon; Central African Republic; Chad; Comoros; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the Republic of the Congo; Côte d'Ivoire; Djibouti; Egypt; Equatorial Guinea; Eswatini; Ethiopia; Gabon; Gambia; Ghana; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Kenya; Lesotho; Liberia; Madagascar; Malawi; Mali; Mauritania; Mauritius; Morocco; Mozambique; Namibia; Niger; Nigeria; Rwanda; Senegal; Seychelles; Sierra Leone; South Africa; South Sudan; Sudan; São Tomé and Príncipe; Togo; Tunisia; Uganda; United Republic of Tanzania; Zambia; Zimbabwe.

Asia and the Pacific

43 economies modelled, 32 with a national poverty line. East Asia and Pacific, South Asia, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the five Central Asian republics.

Australia (no national poverty line); Bangladesh; Bhutan; China (no national poverty line); Fiji; India; Indonesia; Iran (no national poverty line); Iraq; Israel (no national poverty line); Japan (no national poverty line); Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kiribati; Korea, Rep. (no national poverty line); Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Federated States of Micronesia; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru (no national poverty line); Nepal; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Qatar (no national poverty line); Samoa; Solomon Islands; Taiwan, China (no national poverty line); Tajikistan; Thailand; TimorLeste; Tonga; Turkmenistan (no national poverty line); Tuvalu; United Arab Emirates (no national poverty line); Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; Viet Nam; Yemen.

Latin America and the Caribbean

27 economies modelled, 21 with a national poverty line.

Argentina; Barbados (no national poverty line); Belize (no national poverty line); Plurinational State of Bolivia; Brazil (no national poverty line); Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador; Grenada; Guatemala; Guyana (no national poverty line); Haiti; Honduras; Jamaica; Mexico; Nicaragua; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; St. Lucia; Suriname (no national poverty line); Trinidad and Tobago (no national poverty line); Uruguay; Venezuela.

North America

2 economies modelled, 0 with a national poverty line.

Canada (no national poverty line); United States (no national poverty line).

Europe

44 economies modelled, 44 with a national poverty line. Europe and Central Asia excluding the five Central Asian republics; retains Russia, Türkiye and the South Caucasus.

Albania; Armenia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czechia; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malta; Moldova; Montenegro; Netherlands; North Macedonia; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Türkiye; Ukraine; United Kingdom.

Source and method

Child population denominators are UNICEF under-18 estimates for the current year. Welfare coverage is drawn from the model set used for the headline estimate.

Published by UNICEF
Global Programme Division
3 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA

pubdoc@unicef.org
www.unicef.org

unicef
for every child