



Whole of Syria Humanitarian Situation Report

Mid-Year 2020


unicef 
for every child

Reporting Period: January—June 2020

Highlights

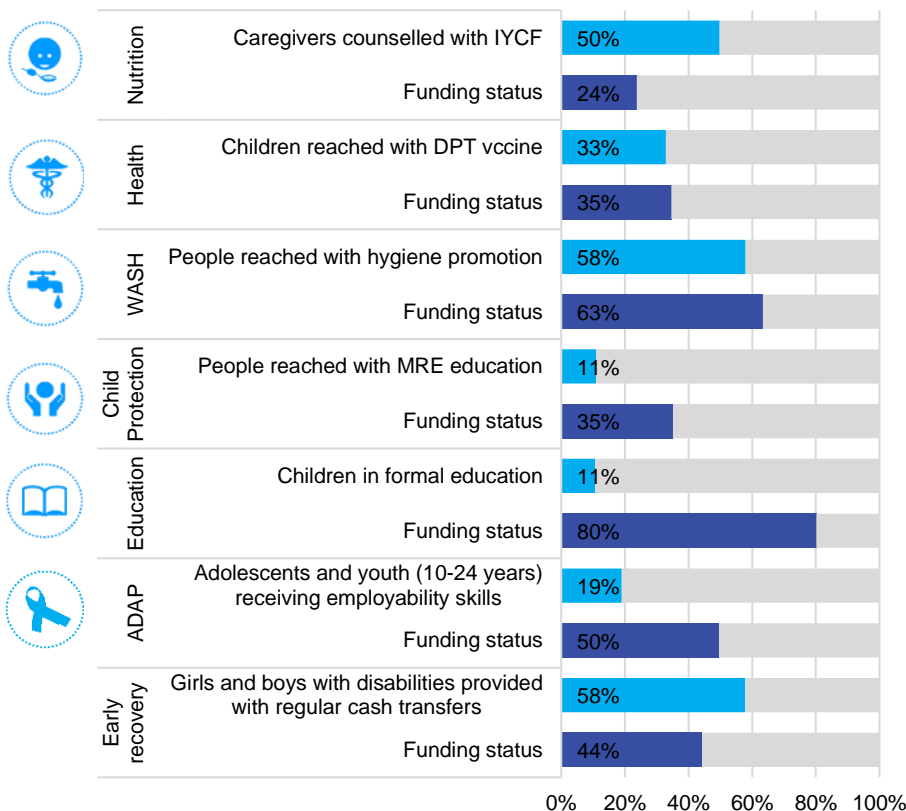
- During the first half of 2020, needs across Syria remained extensive with over 11 million people (4.7 million children) requiring humanitarian assistance, including 6.2 million internally displaced (2.5 million children). The situation has been aggravated by the rapid devaluation of the Syrian Pound and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In Northwest Syria, more than 1.4 million IDPs live precariously in camps and settlements, 80% of whom are women and children. In Northeast Syria 70,630 people, including 28,000 children remain displaced in Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa and Aleppo governorates.
- UNICEF's Whole of Syria response remains only 52% funded. Additional, flexible funding is urgently needed to ensure vulnerable children and families continue to receive life-saving humanitarian assistance.

Situation in Numbers

-  **4,700,000**
children in need of humanitarian assistance
-  **11,000,000**
people in need
-  **6,183,919**
Internally displaced people
-  **490,000**
Children in need in hard-to-reach areas

(source: OCHA, HNO, March 2019)

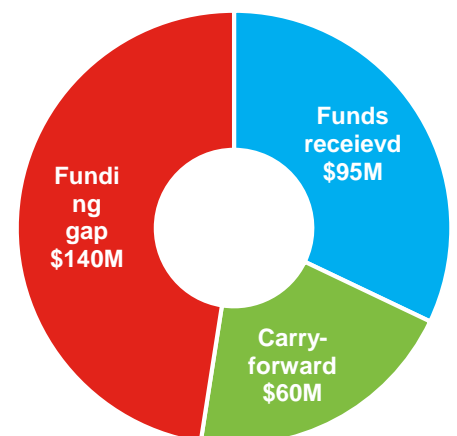
UNICEF's Response and Funding Status ¹



UNICEF Appeal 2020

US\$ 294.8 million

Funding Status (in US\$)



¹ Please refer to the narrative in the report for details. Please note that 'Funding status' refers to the whole sector, while the results are only referring to one specific activity.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

In 2020, UNICEF is appealing for US\$ 294.8 million to continue its response throughout the country. UNICEF would like to express its gratitude to the Governments of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland, the Syria Humanitarian Fund (SHF), United Kingdom, USA, and UNICEF national committees for the generous contributions provided in 2020.

Currently UNICEF has an overall funding gap of 48 per cent; these funds are needed to support the ongoing response covering the lifesaving multi-sectoral needs of over 3 million people, especially in child health, nutrition and child protection. Without additional funds an estimated 2 million children and women will not be reached with nutrition interventions, 1 million with primary health care and 300,000 with psychosocial support and case management.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

In 2020, children continued to bear the brunt of the conflict as Syria remains the largest displacement crisis in the world. Needs across the country remained extensive, with more than 11 million people (4.7 million children)¹ requiring humanitarian assistance, including 6.2 million people internally displaced (2.5 million children).²

Displaced populations and returnees, particularly in Northeast and Northwest Syria, are vulnerable to outbreaks of infectious diseases, including COVID-19, due to unsanitary living conditions, overstretched health services and low coverage of routine immunization. Nine years of conflict have dramatically reduced access to basic social services, with concern that violations against children have been escalating.

The humanitarian situation has been further aggravated by the rapid devaluation of the Syrian Pound (SYP)—since early June 2020, the SYP has lost half of its value within a month and reached historic new lows. In real terms, the SYP weakened by some 360% in a year since June 2019³, contributing to eroding the purchasing power of the people together with high price inflation, rendering them more vulnerable in the face of any new shocks.

In Northwest Syria, over 1 million people were displaced between December 2019 and March 2020⁴ due to an escalation of armed conflict; more than 1.4 million displaced people remain, living precariously in camps and settlements—80 per cent are women and children. Longer-term needs are increasing, particularly in health, nutrition and education services, even as urgent needs for shelter, food, water, sanitation, hygiene and protection persist. More children are likely to be out of school due to the economic crisis, as families struggle to cover education costs and may resort to harmful coping mechanisms such as child labour and child marriage. The nutrition surveillance system indicates that there is an increase in chronic malnutrition among children and acute malnutrition among pregnant and lactating mothers. In May, UNICEF participated in the first joint UN/SARC mission to seven newly accessible areas in western rural Aleppo to identify needs following shifts in control in January. Only 5 per cent of the population that left these areas during the crisis has returned; UNICEF in partnership with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) developed a response plan to meet some of the needs identified for the returnees.

In southern Syria, Rukban camp has not been reached by a humanitarian convoy since September 2019. Informal commercial supply routes from Damascus and Dhumer were closed off in February, further disrupting the delivery of food, fuel and medical supplies into the camp. Access is urgently needed to provide assistance to the vulnerable Rukban population and to support voluntary departures. In the Southwest of Syria tension has been increasing since February 2020, with repeated security incidents that resulted in the limitation of access by humanitarian actors. In light of the increased tensions in the Southwest of Syria, UNOCHA developed scenarios for possible humanitarian impacts, should the situation not ease. UNICEF developed a response plan feeding into the inter-agency response strategy for the south.

At the same time, in the Northeast 70,630 people, including some 28,000 children remain displaced in Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa and Aleppo governorates⁵. The majority of displaced people have found shelter in local communities but also in informal settlements and collective shelters. Also, over 89,000 people are reportedly living in formal camps and 32,000 in recognized informal settlements. The humanitarian situation remains critical as COVID-19 mitigation measures further contributed to a negative economic impact on the most vulnerable population as a driver for unemployment.

¹ UNICEF, 2020 [Humanitarian Appeal for Children](#) (HAC)

² UNOCHA, 2020 [Humanitarian Needs Overview](#) (HNO)

³ UNOCHA, Syria, Situation Report No. 16 - As of 26 June 2020

⁴ UNOCHA, Recent Developments in Northwest Syria - as of 26 June 2020

⁵ Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock Briefing to the Security Council on the humanitarian situation in Syria, New York, 29 April 2020

Despite the challenging environment UNICEF continued to deliver in Syria, adjusting operational modalities to ensure the delivery of critical humanitarian assistance during escalations of violence as well as the COVID-19 pandemic. Distribution methods have been adapted to reduce face-to-face contact, and awareness raising efforts on COVID-19 risks and precautions were scaled up. Virtualization of in-person meetings and activities remains in place, including for coordination and awareness raising, education and case management services.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Nutrition

During the first half of the year, UNICEF supported over 1.2 million pregnant/lactating women and children under the age of five with screening for acute malnutrition (66 per cent of the annual target). Of these, more than 440,000 received micronutrients and some 4,300 children were identified with severe acute malnutrition and received lifesaving treatment. UNICEF also continued to support preventative nutrition interventions, reaching some 390,000 caregivers with awareness on appropriate infant and young child feeding practices (IYCF). COVID-19 -related messages were also included in IYCF messages since the beginning of COVID-19 response.

Health

Since the beginning of 2020, over 960,000 women and children benefitted from free medical consultations through fixed points and mobile teams in all 14 governorates (54 per cent of the annual target). About 28,000 out of these consultations were in Al Hol camp in Hasakeh, and 5,000 in Idleb governorate. However, under the new-born care programme, only 100 health workers were trained on neonatal care in the first half of 2020 due to COVID-19 and subsequent social distancing/lockdown measures. UNICEF also supported 190,000 children with DPT3 through routine immunization and special campaigns (33 per cent of the target), while over 2.6 million children were reached with polio vaccine (91 per cent of the target). However, the limited operating hours of health clinics and reduced capacity due to COVID-19 restrictions resulted in a lower than planned routine immunization reach.

WASH

Since January, UNICEF has reached 3.6 million people in Idleb, Aleppo, Homs, Al-Hasakeh and Tartous governorates with improved and sustained access to safe drinking water through the rehabilitation and installation of water systems, provision equipment, and routine maintenance operations (87 per cent of the annual target). UNICEF also continued the humanitarian emergency response as a top priority for 1.5 million IDPs in 67 locations including, camps, collective shelters and host communities in Al-Hasakeh, Dar'a, Idleb, Homs and Aleppo governorates through the distribution of family hygiene kits, women sanitary napkins, baby diapers, water purification tabs, jerry cans, water tanks, soap bars (92 per cent of the target). UNICEF supported over half a million people in Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Homs, and Al-Hasakeh governorates through installing and cleaning of WASH facilities, desludging septic tanks, and rehabilitating the sewage systems inside camps, in addition to emergency water trucking. Activities were constrained by the impact of COVID-19 and the devaluation of the Syrian currency, however it is expected that the target will be fully achieved by the end of the year.

In addition, UNICEF was able to support almost 180,000 school children (36 per cent of the annual target) through rehabilitating WASH facilities inside schools, emergency water trucking and conducting hygiene promotion campaigns. UNICEF also provided a safe environment for the school children across the country by providing exam and accommodation centres with IPC kits and providing training on safety protocols. Finally, UNICEF's provision of water disinfectants supported 13 million people to access safe water in all 14 governorates, resulting in no major water-borne disease outbreaks. The temporary closure of trans-shipment points between Turkey and Syria in March and inaccessibility to affected lifesaving supplies and services were among the key WASH challenges in the Northwest.

Child Protection

In the first six months of 2020, UNICEF and partners supported some 50,000 children (48 per cent girls) with psychosocial support services; due to the COVID-19 outbreak, only remote sessions took place between March and June. At the same time, over 14,000 caregivers (79 per cent women) were engaged in structured and sustained parenting programmes. Specialized child protection services through case management continued to play a central role in facilitating individual child protection assessments, monitoring of cases and referral to specialized services; in the reporting period about 2,000 children at-risk (48 per cent girls) were reached with specialized services through remote case management. In addition, over 140,000 people received awareness raising messages on child protection issues such as the importance of education, dealing with peers and social cohesion in all 14 governorates. UNICEF continued to prioritize Mine Risk Education (MRE) interventions as a life-saving component to promote safe behaviours and, in

partnership with governmental and non-governmental organizations, provided life-saving messages and face to face MRE sessions to mitigate the risk of explosive devices to over 260,000 people (50 per cent girls).

Education

During the first half of the year, UNICEF reached over 250,000 children (51 per cent girls) with formal educational support across all fourteen governorates—only 14 per cent of the annual target, as schools were closed in March as part of the COVID-19 preventive measures and education activities were also heavily impacted by price volatility and increased cost of supplies and construction materials. 97,000 out-of-school children (48 per cent girls) were reached with non-formal education through Curriculum B (an accelerated learning programme) and self-learning activities (24 per cent of the annual target). To ensure that children continued to access learning and recreational materials during COVID-19, over 46,000 children (50 per cent girls) benefitted from non-formal educational supplies. UNICEF plans to increase support to non-formal education activities in the coming months as formal and non-formal learning centres are scheduled to re-open.

To increase access to early childhood education, UNICEF supported 810 children (48 per cent girls) with newly rehabilitated kindergarten rooms and early-childhood education kits. Since the beginning of the year, to strengthen the quality of learning, 632 teachers were trained in various technical areas such as active learning and child-centred and protective pedagogy (only 1 per cent of the target, due to the suspension of training as a preventive measures for COVID-19). UNICEF is planning to scale up the education response in the second half of the year, as movement restriction measures are lifted and schools will reopen.

Social Policy

In 2020, UNICEF replaced its e-voucher programme with an unconditional cash transfer to support vulnerable families during a time of increased economic hardship and cost of living. The programme is currently implemented in Aleppo, Lattakia and Rural Damascus. During the first half of 2020, UNICEF reached over 50,000 children with cash assistance (51 per cent of the target).

In addition, UNICEF implements a cash transfer programme designed to promote an integrated social protection model with links to public services through referral mechanisms and case management, with a view to preparing the ground for a future transition from an emergency response to a more sustainable social protection scheme. In 2020, UNICEF reached almost 7,000 children with disabilities with cash assistance and case management services (58 per cent of the annual target). Over 330,000 children also received winter clothes, new-born baby kits and blankets in the governorates of Damascus, Rural Damascus, Dar'a, Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Deir ez -Zor, Hama, Homs and Idlib (69 per cent of the annual target).

Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP)

Since the beginning of the year, UNICEF and partners reach over 115,000 adolescents and youth aged 10-24 years (52 per cent girls) with a package of services and opportunities including skills development, vocational training, social and civic engagement. UNICEF focused on including displaced persons, returnees, young people economically disadvantaged and other marginalized groups including those living with disabilities. Overall, 127 youth spaces were supported across the country including cultural spaces and 40 mobile teams were supported to reach out the most vulnerable adolescents in remote locations and camps in the Northeast.

Over 57,000 young people were benefited from online and offline skills development programmes, including life skills and citizenship education, entrepreneurship and vocational training (29 per cent of the annual target). Following participation in the programme, young people were provided with opportunities for engaging with their communities, including COVID-19 response, hygiene promotion, polio vaccine campaign in cooperation with health section, initiating youth platforms for social discussions like debates.

Digital engagement and peer to peer mentoring sessions were supported despite COVID-related restrictions, more than 300 young people were trained by peers on blogging. Youth blogs were published on the Voice of Youth platform⁶ on topics relevant to COVID-19, youth positive roles, wellbeing and prevention from stigmatization.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

During the first months of 2020, UNICEF focused its coverage on the [plight](#) of children and families displaced in [Idlib](#) and the deteriorating [humanitarian](#) situation. With the global spread of COVID-19, a new the focus area developed around UNICEF's response to the pandemic, including provision of [hygiene](#) supplies, [awareness](#)-raising on

⁶ For example one of the youth blog is available at this [link](#).

[precautionary](#) measures against the virus, the promotion of safe physical [distancing](#) and [psychosocial](#) and [education](#) support for children forced to stay home due to restrictions.

UNICEF also marked relevant international days including marking [9 years](#) of conflict in Syria, International [Women's Day](#), World [Water Day](#) and the international day of [mine](#) awareness. Finally, UNICEF also covered its regular programmes and interventions, including [winter response](#) to vulnerable [children](#), [immunization campaigns](#), the provision of [health](#) and [nutrition](#) services, water-[trucking](#), [education](#) support including [self-learning](#), as well as [cash assistance](#) for children with disability.

Next SitRep: 20 August 2020

UNICEF Syria Crisis: <https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/syrian-crisis>

UNICEF Syria Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal: <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/>

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Summary of Programme Results

Sector	Overall needs	Cluster/Sector Response			UNICEF and IPs		
		2020 target	Total results	Change since last report ▲▼	2020 target	Total results	Change since last report ▲▼
Nutrition							
# of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) received micro-nutrients	4,700,000	2,566,942	367,167 ¹	n/a	2,400,000	441,758 ⁴	111,897
# of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) screened for acute malnutrition		2,867,674	1,231,130 ²	n/a	1,800,000	1,243,904	526,760
# of children reached with the treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)		17,447	3,294 ³	n/a	9,600	4,321	3,037
# of caregivers including pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) counselled or reached with awareness on appropriate infant and young child feeding (IYCF)		915,063	437,104	n/a	800,000	398,705	96,936
Health							
# of children under five years vaccinated through polio campaigns	13,200,000				2,900,000	2,632,608 ¹	0
# of children under one year reached with routine vaccination (DTP3 containing vaccine)					577,000	189,051 ²	24,293
# of Primary Health Care outpatient consultations supported (children & CBA women)					2,200,000	965,289	155,498
# of health workers and community volunteers trained on ne- born care packages					640	100 ³	0
# of caregivers reached with health promotion, including immunization messages					3,500,000	1,550,987	277,285
WASH							
Estimated # of people with access to improved water supply	15,700,000	8,000,000	667,950	3,081,657 ¹	3,700,000	3,611,302	1,775,210
Estimated # of people have improved access to sanitation services		5,500,000	648,112	1,161,540	1,300,000	539,970	299,999
# of school children benefited from improved WASH facilities and services		n/a	n/a	n/a	390,000	179,479	61,612
# of people supported with access to essential WASH NFIs including in HTR areas		2,000,000	751,161	1,558,216	1,600,000	856,895	309,196

# of people reached with hygiene promotion interventions		3,000,000	846,215	1,545,363	525,000	304,361	141,802
# of people benefitting from access to improved lifesaving/emergency WASH facilities and services		3,000,000	2,722,993	3,205,066	1,500,000	1,515,084 ²	442,524
Child Protection¹							
# of girls and boys engaged in structured and sustained child protection programming, including psychosocial support	5,600,000	880,000	203,529	0	350,000	49,486 ²	- 7,132 ⁷
# of women and men engaged in structured and sustained parenting programmes		93,000	20,103	0	51,000	14,048 ³	4,118
# of girls, boys, women and men reached with explosive hazards risk education		4,592,604	346,295	0	2,400,000	260,807 ⁴	- 235, 202 ⁸
# of women, men, girls and boys reached by behaviour change communication interventions for child protection issues		1,650,000	240,977	0	630,000	140,651 ⁵	2,175
# of girls and boys received specialized child protection services including through case management		50,000	12,538	0	22,000	2,179 ⁶	- 1,134 ⁹
Education							
# of children provided with education services in formal settings	5,700,000	3,300,000	1,020,877 ¹	0	2,400,000	251,751 ²	48,538
# of children in non-formal education benefiting from education services		1,256,530	74,252	0	440,000	97,769 ³	31,275
# of teachers and education personnel trained		76,524	1,200	1,200	42,600	632 ⁴	119
# of children and youth (5-24 years) participating in life skills and citizenship education programmes in formal and non-formal settings		300,000	7,861	0	280,000	18,526 ⁵	0
# of caregivers and children reached with C4D back to learning (BTL) interventions		n/a	n/a	n/a	225,000	9,627 ⁶	0
SOCIAL POLICY							
# of girls and boys with - disabilities provided with regular cash transfers					11,500	6,492	1,926
# of girls and boys protected from extreme weather through NFIs					570,000	337,571	197
# of girls and boys protected from extreme weather through vouchers or cash transfers					110,000	50,760	12,505
ADAP							

# of adolescents and youth (10-24 years) promoting social cohesion and civic engagement					200,000	57,031 ¹	1,424
# of affected adolescents and youth (10-24 years) receiving employability skills including life skills, TVET and entrepreneurship					300,000	44,764 ²	6,439

Footnotes

*The revised Whole of Syria [2020 UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children](#) appeal is published with updated indicators and targets. All UNICEF results are as of 30 June 2020.

Nutrition 1,2,3: The sector reach is lower than UNICEF reach as sector data are as of end May, while UNICEF data as of end June

Nutrition 4: This activity was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 containment measures, as distribution was scheduled together with the immunization campaigns that were postponed between March and June 2020. This activity will be scaled up during the second half of the year.

Health 1: The target for Polio is almost reached as the campaign is scheduled in the first quarter of the year.

Health 2: The reach for this activity is low as routine immunization was heavily affected by the COVID-19 containment measures, as the health facilities were working at reduced operating hours and less people could access the services, also due to the movement restrictions faced by the population. It is expected that in the second half of the year this will be scaled up to achieve the full target.

Health 3: The reach under the new-born programme was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 movement restrictions and postponement of the scheduled trainings. It is expected that the target will be reached as more trainings are scheduled for the second half of the year.

WASH 1: WASH sector figures are as of end May 2020, while UNICEF reach is as of 30 June.

WASH 2: The target for this activity has been already reached, due to the need to cover the WASH emergency needs of the newly displaced people in 2020.

Child Protection 1: Sector results are as of end May, while UNICEF reach is of end June.

Child Protection 2,3,4,5, 6: The reach for these child protection activities was negatively affected by the COVID-19 containment measures as no face-to-face sessions could take place and only virtual activities through phone or internet took place. As after June movement restrictions related to COVID-19 have been lifted, UNICEF will be increasing the reach in the second half of the year.

Child Protection 7,8,9: After data cleaning the values for these indicators was revised and reduced compared to May Sitrep.

Education 1: This figure includes the school meals provided by sector partner WFP, already distributed for the entire year

Education 2,3,4,5,6: The reach for these Education indicators has been heavily affected by the COVID-19 mitigation measures, as since March all schools and education centers were closed, training activities suspended. Only distance learning activities could take place, but the reach of such activities in Syria has been very low. With the re-opening of schools in September UNICEF is planning to reach the targets.

ADAP 1,2: The reach for ADAP activities was negatively impacted by COVID-19 mitigation measures, as all youth and adolescents' trainings, empowerment and skills development activities were halted, and only virtual engagements were possible. The activities will be scaled up in the second half of the year to ensure that targets are fully reached.

Annex B

Funding Status

Sector	Requirements	Funds available		Funding gap	
		Received Current Year	Carry-Over	\$	%
Nutrition	32,954,663	5,740,034	2,091,601	25,123,028	76 %
Health	41,877,045	9,590,994	4,918,158	27,367,893	65 %
WASH	77,492,160	33,095,614	15,985,680	28,410,866	37 %
Child Protection	36,133,672	6,914,309	5,767,765	23,451,598	65 %
Education	64,492,956	28,841,559	22,871,500	12,779,897	20 %
ADAP	6,232,248	1,334,150	1,753,651	3,144,447	50 %
Early recovery	35,617,293	9,041,783	6,719,374	19,856,136	63 %
Being allocated	-		-		-
Total	294,800,037	94,558,442	60,107,729	140,133,865	48 %