



Humanitarian Action for Children

unicef 

Afghanistan

The crisis in Afghanistan has been ongoing for over 18 years, and humanitarian needs driven by armed conflict, natural disasters and poverty are on the rise. In 2020, over 9.4 million people¹ (56 per cent children) will require humanitarian and protection assistance. Half of the population of Afghanistan – nearly 17 million people² – live in conflict-affected areas and 103 districts³ are assessed as hardest to reach. The people of Afghanistan are routinely exposed to human rights violations, including deliberate attacks on schools and health facilities, sexual and gender-based violence and forced recruitment. Between January and September 2019, over 280,000 people (58 per cent children) were newly displaced by conflict and 336,000 people⁴ had returned to Afghanistan. One third of school-aged children (3.7 million children, including 2.2 million girls)⁵ are out of school, and 2 million of these children live in conflict-affected areas.⁶ An estimated 2 million children under 5 years and 485,000 pregnant and lactating women are affected by acute malnutrition, and nearly 600,000 children are at risk of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in 2020.⁷ Direct and indirect violence against humanitarian personnel and assets/facilities continues to challenge humanitarian access, with 319 such incidents⁸ recorded between January and September 2019.

Humanitarian strategy

UNICEF operations in Afghanistan will be led by its five field offices and six outposts to enable countrywide coverage and quality programming. As lead of the nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) clusters and the child protection area of responsibility and co-lead of the education cluster, UNICEF will enable strategic planning, coordinated response, capacity building of partners and advocacy at the national and state levels. Life-saving humanitarian assistance will be provided through the delivery of a timely, effective and integrated package of nutrition, health, WASH, child protection and education services. Sub-district health centres and mobile teams will provide hard-to-reach crisis-affected people with vital health and nutrition services. Education interventions will be expanded to include a multi-sectoral component incorporating WASH and child protection, including psychosocial support and referrals, which will increase programme costs. To improve humanitarian action and development programme linkages, UNICEF will invest in preparedness measures and risk-informed programming to strengthen local and community capacities by applying durable solutions to the most pressing needs of affected populations. Emergency cash programming will be implemented using common cash systems through inter-agency mechanisms such as the Cash Working Group. UNICEF will also promote cross-cutting work in communication for development, accountability to affected populations, early childhood development and gender to promote community resilience.

Results from 2019

As of 31 August 2019, UNICEF had US\$20.5 million available against the US\$50 million appeal (41 per cent funded).⁹ UNICEF and partners reached some 500,000 affected people (60 per cent children) with humanitarian assistance during the year. Given the lack of flexible funding, UNICEF prioritized urgent life-saving interventions, limiting the ability of sectors and clusters to fully achieve their 2019 targets. Responses largely covered people affected by floods, drought and conflict in camps, host communities and places of origin. UNICEF reached affected populations with gender-sensitive integrated services in education facilities, basic health centres, child-friendly spaces and communities. UNICEF's humanitarian interventions focused on the provision of supplies and services that included the distribution of ready-to-use therapeutic foods, hygiene kits, teaching and learning materials, school tents, vaccines, essential medicines, winter kits, etc. UNICEF provided technical support and capacity building for partners at the national and sub-national levels to improve emergency preparedness and response. As part of efforts to strengthen the linkages between humanitarian action and development programming, sectoral plans were developed based on multi-hazard vulnerability and risk analysis. With funding gaps exceeding 90 per cent for health, child protection and education, UNICEF reprogrammed regular resources to ensure the delivery of essential services.

Total people in need

9.4 million¹⁰

Total children (<18) in need

5.3 million¹¹

Total people to be reached

768,800¹²

Total children to be reached

510,000¹³

2020 programme targets

Nutrition

- 300,000 children under 5 years with SAM admitted for treatment
- 78,000 children aged 6 to 59 months in emergency-affected communities receiving vitamin A supplementation

Health

- 150,000 children immunized against measles and benefiting from integrated community case management services
- 150,000 women of childbearing age benefiting from quality essential health services and health education
- 30,000 newborns received essential newborn services

WASH

- 250,000 people in humanitarian situations accessing safe drinking water
- 100,000 people in humanitarian situations accessing basic sanitation services

Child protection

- 210,000 children accessing psychosocial support through child-friendly spaces
- 15,000 children protected and supported through case management and family reunification
- 240,000 people affected by conflict and natural disasters who received winter clothes and other non-food items

Education

- 210,000 children and adolescents provided with access to quality education
- 210,000 children received education-in-emergencies supplies and recreational materials

	Sector 2019 targets	Sector total results	UNICEF 2019 targets	UNICEF total results
NUTRITION				
Children under 5 years with SAM admitted for treatment	273,000 ⁱ	143,459	377,000	191,622
Children aged 6 to 59 months who received vitamin A supplementation			78,000	2,962 ⁱⁱ
HEALTH				
Children aged 9 months to 10 years who received measles vaccination			75,000	12,237 ⁱⁱⁱ
Affected pregnant/lactating women and children who benefited from essential health services and health education			196,000	142,182
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE				
People accessing safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene	1,100,000	639,579	300,000	185,149
People accessing sanitation facilities	450,000	208,819	100,000	45,016
CHILD PROTECTION^{iv}				
Children accessing psychosocial support through child-friendly spaces	82,451	30,602	80,000	30,602
Children protected and supported through case management and family reunification	8,245	2,203	7,500	2,203
Affected children and their families who received warm winter clothes and other non-food item support	220,000	67,635	200,000	67,635
EDUCATION				
Children and adolescents accessing quality education	349,373	184,749	160,000	33,436

* Results are as of 31 August 2019, except for health results, which are as of 30 June because health data are verified on a quarterly basis.

ⁱ The cluster target is lower than the UNICEF target because the cluster target only covers 22 provinces and the UNICEF target covers 34 provinces.

ⁱⁱ The national immunization campaign includes vitamin A supplementation. The figure covers children aged 6 to 59 months provided with vitamin A in sites for internally displaced persons.

ⁱⁱⁱ As per reports of the National Disease Surveillance and Response, between January and June 2018, there were 175 measles outbreaks recorded (2,415 cases); whereas 19 outbreaks (175 cases) were detected during the same period in 2019. Due to the reduction in the number of outbreaks, only 12,237 children have been vaccinated thus far in 2019, including during the peak time between March and May.

^{iv} Child protection sub-cluster achievements include UNICEF results only. The results of other child protection cluster members will be added after verification.

Funding requirements

In line with Afghanistan's inter-agency Humanitarian Response Plan 2018–2021, UNICEF is requesting US\$72 million to meet the humanitarian needs of women and children in 2020. These resources will allow UNICEF to provide life-saving and urgent education, nutrition, health and child protection services in the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach areas. Without additional funding, UNICEF will be unable to support the countrywide response to the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan and provide critical services to internally displaced persons and populations affected by conflict and natural disasters.

Sector	2020 requirements (US\$)	2021 requirements (US\$)
Nutrition	22,500,000	22,500,000
Health	8,150,000	8,150,000
Water, sanitation and hygiene	8,000,000	7,150,000
Child protection	6,500,000	7,000,000
Education ¹⁴	23,700,000	22,035,000
Cluster/sector coordination	1,200,000	1,200,000
Cash transfers and accountability to affected populations	2,000,000	2,000,000
Total	72,050,000	70,035,000

¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Afghanistan: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview', OCHA, October 2019.

² Humanitarian Country Team in Afghanistan, Quarter-2 Key Messages, June 2019.

³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Afghanistan Humanitarian Access Group, July 2019.

⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Afghanistan Population on the Move', September 2019.

⁵ Education in Emergencies Dashboard – Afghanistan, September 2019.

⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Afghanistan: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview', OCHA, 2019.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Afghanistan: 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan Mid-Year Review', OCHA, 2019.

⁹ Available funds include US\$13.5 million received against the 2019 appeal and US\$7 million carried forward from the previous year.

¹⁰ 'Afghanistan: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview'.

¹¹ This was calculated using the proportion of children within the total population used in the Humanitarian Needs Overview/Humanitarian Response Plan (56 per cent).

¹² This includes children under 5 years targeted for SAM treatment (300,000); 95 per cent of the adult population targeted with access to safe drinking water (108,775); pregnant and lactating women benefiting from quality health services and health education (150,000); and children targeted for access to education (210,000). As per the draft 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview datasheets, the ratio of males and females is approximately 50:50.

¹³ This includes children under 5 years targeted for SAM treatment (300,000) and children targeted for access to education (210,000). As per the draft 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview datasheets, the ratio of boys and girls is approximately 50:50.

¹⁴ The education requirement has increased compared with 2019 due to the expansion of the education package for the set up of community-based classes (comprising supply distribution, teacher recruitment and training and community leader capacity building) to include a multi-sectoral component through the inclusion of WASH and child protection psychosocial support and referrals.

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