Goal Area 3 aims to ensure that every girl and boy is protected from violence and exploitation in keeping with the CRC, and supports the achievement of multiple SDGs, in particular Goals 5, 8 and 16.

Yet, despite these and other advances, without further acceleration, and hampered by armed conflicts and disasters, none of the SDGs related to Goal Area 3 are on track to be achieved by 2030. With the end of 2019 came the unprecedented global crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The devastating socio-economic impacts of the pandemic will have severe and lasting consequences for children and women, including their care, protection and well-being. The United Nations Secretary-General’s 2019 call for a Decade of Action to dramatically scale up transformative action towards achievement of the SDGs is now more relevant than ever.

Data trends and tracking progress: Agenda 2030

Goal Area 3 aims to ensure that every girl and boy is protected from violence and exploitation in keeping with the CRC, and supports the achievement of multiple SDGs, in particular Goals 5, 8 and 16.

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**SDG 5**
- An estimated 650 million girls and women today were married before their 18th birthday (5.3)
- At least 200 million girls and women have been subjected to FGM (5.3)
- Worldwide, 1 in 4 children under age 5 live with a mother who is a victim of intimate partner violence (5.2)

**SDG 8**
- Almost 73 million children are performing hazardous work (8.7)
- Child labour in countries affected by armed conflict is 77% higher than global averages (8.7)
- Around 7,750 children are recruited and used in conflict (8.7)
- 170 countries have ratified Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict (8.7)

**SDG 16**
- 3 in 4 children aged 2–4 experience violent discipline by their caregivers on a regular basis (16.2)
- 15 million adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 have experienced forced sex in their lifetime (16.2)
- 237 million children under 5 do not have a birth certificate (16.9)

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Explosive Ordnance Risk Education key in 5-year Oslo Action Plan (164 countries)

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**SDG Status**

- SDG 5.3: off track
- SDG 8.7: off track
- SDG 16.2 (16.2.1 & 16.2.3) & 16.9: off track
Child protection in humanitarian action

Child protection in humanitarian action achieved breakthrough results in 2019 on many critical fronts. UNICEF provided protective services to millions of children affected by armed conflict, natural disasters and public health emergencies in 74 humanitarian situations.

Mental health and psychosocial support

UNICEF deepened its commitment to delivering MHPSS in 2019 by providing community-based MHPSS to more than 3.7 million children and adolescents (+3% compared to 2018) across 60 countries (59 countries in 2018) and almost 517,000 caregivers in 41 countries. To rally behind a unifying and game-changing vision for Global Mental Health, the Mid Term Review has identified mental health as a priority area for accelerated implementation of UNICEF Strategic Plan, covering 2018-2022. The organization is accelerating prioritization of community-led services, focusing on bolstering family and social networks, as well as MHPSS systems, including building the capacity of front-line workers.

Meeting 2019 milestones against Goal Area 3 strategic plan outputs (result areas)

UNICEF worked in over 150 countries in 2019 in its efforts to protect children against violence and exploitation at an expense of nearly US$708 million. Two years into the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, Goal Area 3 had progress rates of over 90 per cent for two of the three result areas. Progress was slowest in the result area on access to justice, specifically on legal aid and birth registration.
OUTPUT 3.2: Strengthening prevention and protection services to address harmful practices

2019 saw the conclusion of independent joint evaluations of the UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage and the UNFPA–UNICEF Joint Programme on the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation. Findings from these evaluations reinforced their standing as proven examples of how joined-up United Nations action can provide essential political, policy and programmatic leverage to identify and implement collective solutions to achieve the SDGs.

Child marriage

In 2019, UNICEF and partners supported 58 countries across all regions to implement rights-based interventions aimed at ending child marriage. While child marriage occurs among both boys and girls, the prevalence is about six times higher among girls. Partnering with boys and men in gender equality is crucial to ending child marriage.

Around 5.7 million adolescent girls received prevention and care interventions from UNICEF-supported programming on child marriage across 45 countries (+16%).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

UNICEF supported 21 countries to eliminate FGM, including strengthening interventions such as building girls’ and women’s agency to claim their rights, advancing gender equality by engaging men and boys, improving community surveillance and response mechanisms following public declarations of FGM abandonment.

Around 8.5 million individuals participated in education, communication discussions; and social mobilization platforms to promote the elimination of FGM, supported by UNICEF (+22%).

OUTPUT 3.3: Improving access to justice for children

Strengthening justice systems for children contributes towards ending violence against children and harmful practices, protecting children in contact with the law, protecting the rights of children without parental care and ensuring legal identity for all, including birth registration – across development, peacebuilding and humanitarian contexts.

The year 2019 was a watershed moment for care reform globally. The landmark United Nations General Assembly Resolution on children without parental care and ensuring legal identity for all, including birth registration – across development, peacebuilding and humanitarian contexts.

2019 Strategic plan midterm review: Findings and accelerators for action

Doubling down on selected interventions and taking to scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>Harmful Practices</td>
<td>Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale up violence prevention interventions and institutionalize response services</td>
<td>Increase ambition of UNICEF targets to meet SDGs</td>
<td>Step up efforts to meet existing UNICEF targets</td>
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<th>ACCELERATORS</th>
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<td>• Parenting programmes</td>
<td>• Widening universe of countries</td>
<td>• Rule of Law partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>• End violence in schools</td>
<td>• Expand child online protection agenda</td>
<td>• Links to social service workforce</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Expand child online protection agenda</td>
<td>• Social norms change, care management</td>
<td>• Capacity building</td>
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<th>Birth Registration</th>
<th>Humanitarian Action</th>
<th>Mental Health and Psychosocial Support</th>
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<tr>
<td>Target scale up to strengthen CRVS systems, including birth registration services</td>
<td>Improve reach, impact, and sustainability in increasingly complex environments</td>
<td>Advance acceleration initiative for scalable multi-sectoral MHPS programming</td>
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**Mohamed Kone and Eric Nissa, both 18, are working as mechanics, in San Pedro, in the Southwest of Côte d’Ivoire. They became friends in a centre supported by UNICEF, which aims to reintegrate vulnerable teenagers and young adults into community life and provide vocational training.**

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OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW, 2019

In 2019, Goal Area 3 expenses were US$708 million, an increase of 8 per cent from 2018 levels (US$658.2 million).

Expense by output area, 2019: US$708 million

- **Output 3.2 Harmful Practices**: US$30.3 million or 4%
- **Output 3.1 Violence Against Children**: US$593.4 million or 84%
- **Output 3.3 Justice for Children**: US$84.1 million or 12%

Goal Area 3 expenses represent **13 per cent** of total UNICEF expenditure for 2019 (US$5,620 million).

The **top 10 countries** accounted for 38 per cent of total Goal Area 3 spending for 2019 (US$269.3 million); these are (listed in order): Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, Bangladesh, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Nigeria.

**84 per cent** of 2019 Goal Area 3 global expenses were spent on Output Area 3.1 strengthening prevention and response services for violence against children (US$593.4 million). This includes expenditure to support programming in humanitarian contexts which accounted for US$264 million. Additional humanitarian action expenses were drawn from other resources – regular (US$72 million) and from regular resources (US$39 million).

**LOOKING FORWARD - RESPOND, RECOVER, REIMAGINE:**

**COVID-19: A child rights issue converging humanitarian and development approaches**

- **Greater awareness of violence at the home and online**
- **Heightened visibility of children at risk of violence, such as refugees and displaced children**
- **Adoption of a whole of society approach to address key issues**
- **Integration across sectors (Social Protection, Education, Health)**
- **Recognition of Social Service workers as essential workers**

**Approach**

- **Maintain a systems approach**
- **Capitalise on partnerships for faster action**
- **Boost support for frontline responders**
- **Heighten digital engagement with communities and investment in digital public goods**
- **Work flexibly and differently**
- **Extend humanitarian approaches in development settings to address COVID-19 effects**

**Enablers**

- Partnerships / Advocacy / Capacity / Knowledge Generation and Management

**DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

UNICEF expresses its deep appreciation to all resource partners who contribute to its work on child protection, enabling UNICEF to support countries in all regions to deliver strategic and direct child protection interventions to marginalized children, their families and communities. This includes, but is not limited to, the governments of Canada, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, and Sweden, United Kingdom and United States of America, and the European Commission. UNICEF would like to extend particular thanks to its partners who provided thematic funding, notably the governments of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Spain and the Flanders International Cooperation Agency and all National Committees for UNICEF, particularly the National Committee for Korea, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom and Switzerland. Thematic funds are critical in allowing for greater flexibility, long-term planning and innovative programming. Thematic contributions reflect the trust resource partners have in UNICEF and its capacity and ability to deliver high-quality support. These funds have contributed significantly to the results achieved in 2019.

**Financial Overview: 2019 Income**

- **GA 3 ‘other resources – regular’ contributions**
  - 2014: US$175 million (87%)
  - 2015: US$168 million (89%)
  - 2016: US$124 million (85%)
  - 2017: US$170 million (84%)
  - 2018: US$164 million (83%)
  - 2019: US$175 million (80%)

**In 2019, partners contributed US$175 million ‘other resources–regular’ (ORR) for Child Protection, a 7% increase from the previous year.**

**The number of partners contributing thematic funding to Goal Area 3 increased from 22 in 2018 to 31 in 2019.**

US$12.53 million of global thematic funding for Goal Area 3 was allocated, including US$9.77 million to 49 UNICEF country offices, US$1.5 million to seven regional offices, and US$1.25 million to UNICEF headquarters, representing 78, 12 and 10 per cent of the total allocations for 2019, respectively.

154 UNICEF country offices globally implementing Goal Area 3 programming.

804 professional staff managed Goal Area 3 programming, up 2% from 2018 levels. There has been no proportionate increase in the percentage of staff located at headquarters in 2019, with the level remaining consistent with the previous year.

**The COVID-19 crisis is a child rights crisis. We need an immediate, medium- and long-term response that not only addresses the challenges created by the pandemic and its secondary impacts on children, but also outlines a clear vision for building back a better world when the crisis finally recedes.**

– UNICEF Executive Director, Henrietta H. Fore

**SOURCES**

For primary sources and further results see 2019 UNICEF Goal Area 3 Annual Results Report: www.unicef.org/reports/global-annual-results-2019

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