Yemen remains the worst humanitarian crisis globally. Protracted armed conflict, widespread economic collapse and a breakdown in national systems and services has left 80 per cent of the total population, including 12.4 million children, in need of humanitarian assistance.¹ The protracted situation risks bringing Yemen to the brink of famine; at least 325,000 children are severely malnourished and 2 million are moderately malnourished.² The COVID-19 pandemic has further strained the fragile health system and exacerbated the underlying protection and gender-related vulnerabilities of children, adolescents and women.

UNICEF’s humanitarian strategy has a dual focus on direct life-saving assistance and system strengthening, in line with efforts to strengthen the linkages between humanitarian action and development programming. The COVID-19 response involves protecting children and their families from exposure to the virus, minimizing mortality and supporting the continuity of essential services.

Amidst an already constrained funding landscape, UNICEF requires US$576.9 million to respond to the humanitarian situation in Yemen in 2021. Over 70 per cent of funding requirements are for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health and nutrition.

### Key Planned Targets

- **289,402** children admitted for treatment for severe acute malnutrition
- **5.5 million** children vaccinated against polio
- **6.1 million** women and children accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation/prevention/response
- **8 million** people participating in engagement actions

### IN Need

- **24.3 million** people
- **12.4 million** children

### To Be Reached

- **11.3 million** people
- **8 million** children

### Funding Requirements

- **US$ 576.9 million**
More than five years since the conflict began, Yemen remains the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, with 24.3 million people – 80 per cent of the total population – in need of humanitarian assistance. The conflict has left 3.6 million people, including 2 million children, internally displaced, and 422,000 people are now migrants and asylum seekers.

Humanitarian access in Yemen remains constrained due to the escalation of the armed conflict and increasing bureaucratic impediments that are hampering the work of UNICEF and partners across the country. In 2020, fighting erupted along new front-lines, bringing the number of active front-lines to 43. Hostilities are most intense in Marib governorate. Children are the primary victims of the war: nearly 3,200 have been killed, over 5,700 have been injured and nearly 3,500 have been recruited into armed forces and groups.

The war’s impact on children has been staggering. More than 325,000 children under 5 years are suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), and more than 20.5 million people urgently need WASH services. Nutrition needs are continuing to rise in the south, and lack of funding for WASH is undermining the WASH response. These conditions are heightening the risk of cholera, malnutrition and other WASH-related diseases, including COVID-19. In the first six months of 2020, nearly 110,000 suspected cases of acute watery diarrhoea/cholera and 27 associated deaths were recorded. Immunization coverage has stagnated at the national level, with 37 per cent of children under 1 year missing routine vaccinations. As a result, the country is seeing regular outbreaks of measles, diphtheria and other preventable diseases. In 2020, Yemen confirmed 16 cases of vaccine-derived poliovirus.

By 31 August 2020, Yemen had confirmed nearly 2,000 cases of COVID-19, including over 1,100 recoveries and nearly 570 deaths. The outbreak has put added pressure on the already fragile health system – more than half of health facilities are not functioning – and global shortages and breaks in the supply chain could lead to further loss of household income, rising food prices and inflation. At least 2 million children in Yemen were out of school before the COVID-19 outbreak; and following COVID-19 school closures, an additional 5.8 million children have had their educations disrupted. School closures and the worsening economic situation due to COVID-19 restrictions have increased the vulnerability of children and women to exploitation, violence and abuse, including child labour, domestic and gender-based violence and child marriage.

### SECTOR NEEDS

**Nutrition**
- 325,000 children under 5 years have SAM

**Health**
- 17.9 million people need health assistance

**Water, sanitation and hygiene**
- 20.5 million people lack access to safe water

**Education**
- 5.5 million children need education support

### STORY FROM THE FIELD

Ten-year-old Muna Zayed is one of 2 million internally displaced children in Yemen, the world’s largest humanitarian emergency. The situation in Yemen is dire, and the need to reduce the additional strain of COVID-19 is urgent. UNICEF has been scaling up preparedness and response programmes across Yemen, including providing clean water to communities in need, and distributing basic hygiene kits – containing soap, towels, buckets and jerry cans – to empower and enable internally displaced families across the country to protect themselves.

Read more about this story here

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UNICEF’s humanitarian strategy in Yemen is aligned with the Humanitarian Needs Overview, Humanitarian Response Plan and cluster priorities. UNICEF leads the nutrition and WASH clusters and co-leads the education cluster and the child protection sub-cluster, providing dedicated full-time support to coordination and information management.

Building on gains made in previous years, UNICEF will continue to pursue a balanced approach between providing immediate life-saving interventions and investing in systems strengthening. This balancing of humanitarian and development programming will require a nuanced approach in different parts of the country at different paces, and dedicated donor support.

Access constraints and bureaucratic impediments continue to intensify. The fighting continues in 45 active front-lines that are home to nearly 1.2 million children. Notwithstanding these challenges, UNICEF will continue to provide life-saving programmes for children in some of the hardest-to-reach districts with its robust field presence and network of five field offices.

With public services collapsing, UNICEF will continue to provide life-saving health and nutrition interventions through community-based activities for affected populations, including internally displaced persons, while sustaining and strengthening access to a set of high-impact preventive and curative services at the community and facility levels. UNICEF’s COVID-19 strategy involves protecting children and their families from exposure to the virus, minimizing mortality and supporting the continuity of services.

UNICEF WASH interventions will include the provision of durable, cost-effective solutions that strengthen the resilience of local institutions and communities. UNICEF will provide immediate life-saving assistance; sustain existing WASH services to mitigate exposure to disease in high-risk communities and avert further deterioration of humanitarian needs; and support public institutions to reduce risks of COVID-19 and support health actors to reduce secondary contamination in health facilities.

UNICEF will continue to improve access to and enrolment in safe learning environments through the rehabilitation of damaged schools and the establishment of temporary safe learning spaces and safe COVID-19 school protocols. Incentives for school-based staff will also continue in 2021. UNICEF will integrate gender-responsive initiatives to ensure protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and strengthen interventions to prevent, respond to and mitigate the risk of gender-based violence through UNICEF-supported programmes.

UNICEF will build the resilience of affected children through life-skills education and psychosocial support in community spaces, schools and hospitals; mitigate the risk of injuries from exposure to landmines and explosive remnants of war through targeted campaigns; and provide services to children with acute protection needs, including children released from armed forces and groups. The Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting will engage with parties to the conflict to establish concrete measures to prevent and halt grave child rights violations.

Vulnerable children and families will receive integrated social protection services, including humanitarian cash transfers, in line with the Grand Bargain commitments.

Progress against the 2020 programme targets is available in the humanitarian situation reports:
https://www.unicef.org/appeals/yemen/situation-reports

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**HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY**

**2021 PROGRAMME TARGETS**

**Nutrition**
- 289,402 children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment
- 1,800,000 children aged 6 to 59 months receiving vitamin A supplementation every six months

**Health**
- 5,535,816 children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against polio
- 2,500,000 children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities
- 972,142 children aged 0 to 12 months vaccinated against measles
- 25,000 health care facility staff and community health workers provided with personal protective equipment

**Water, sanitation and hygiene**
- 6,800,000 people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene
- 5,910,000 people reached with critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies (including hygiene items) and services
- 3,400,000 people in humanitarian situations accessing safe means of excreta disposal
- 5,910,000 people in humanitarian situations reached with messages on appropriate hygiene practices

**Child protection, GBVie and PSEA**
- 900,000 children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support
- 6,100,000 women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions
- 500,000 people with access to safe channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse
- 2,160,000 children accessing explosive weapons-related risk education and survivor assistance interventions

**Education**
- 850,000 children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- 850,000 children receiving individual learning materials
- 1,000 schools implementing safe school protocols (infection prevention and control)
- 160,000 teachers receiving teacher incentives each month

**Social protection and cash transfers**
- 30,000 households reached with humanitarian cash transfers across sectors
- 150,000 people benefiting from emergency and longer-term social and economic assistance

**C4D, community engagement and AAP**
- 8,000,000 people participating in engagement actions for social and behavioural change

**Rapid Response Mechanism**
- 500,000 vulnerable displaced people who received Rapid Response Mechanism kits

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

Programme targets are provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency planning documents.
UNICEF is appealing for US$576.9 million to meet the humanitarian needs of children and families and fulfill children’s rights in Yemen. UNICEF’s humanitarian programmes are planned for nationwide reach, targeting populations in the areas with the most acute needs. The appeal reflects UNICEF’s requirements for the ongoing humanitarian response and the COVID-19 response. Without timely funding, UNICEF and its partners will be unable to effectively address the needs of the most vulnerable children and families. This funding will allow UNICEF to meet pressing needs in health, WASH, nutrition and education (including teacher incentives) and work through the Rapid Response Mechanism. This support will be vital to meeting the needs of affected people, who are experiencing the devastating impacts of the continued conflict coupled and the crippling health and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2021 requirements (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>119,875,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>158,351,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
<td>120,571,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA</td>
<td>48,223,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>92,712,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social protection and cash transfers</td>
<td>11,300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4D, community engagement and AAP</td>
<td>12,320,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Response Mechanism</td>
<td>6,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster coordination</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>576,854,041</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions: C4D, community engagement and AAP (2.1%), Social protection and cash transfers (2.0%), Cluster coordination (1.2%), Rapid Response Mechanism (1.1%).

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2. A 2020 analysis by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification indicated that in the southern governorates, SAM has increased by over 15 per cent in 2020, putting the lives of nearly 100,000 children at immediate risk. A similar increase is anticipated in the northern governorates in 2021.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. This was calculated using the highest coverage programme targets of 5.5 million children under 5 years to be reached with polio vaccination and 2.5 million children aged 5 to 17 and 3,332,000 adults to be reached with safe water. An estimated 57 per cent are women/girls. Disability disaggregation is not available. UNICEF is committed to needs-based targeting, which means covering the unmet needs of children; and will serve as the provider of last resort where it has cluster coordination responsibilities.

6. This was calculated using the highest coverage programme targets of 5.5 million children under 5 years to be reached with polio vaccination and 2.5 million children aged 5 to 17 years to be reached with safe water. An estimated 50 per cent are girls.


11. Ibid.


19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. The Grand Bargain is a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organizations, who have committed to getting more means into the hands of people in need and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.

23. Due to space constraints, the following acronyms appear in the appeal: GBVIE (gender-based violence in emergencies); PSEA (prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse); C4D (communication for development); and AAP (accountability to affected populations).

24. Cash plus also includes referrals to services, communication for development and life skills and economic empowerment (adolescent employability) activities.

25. Communication for development, including accountability to affected populations, is integrated into sectoral responses and interventions.

26. UNICEF will cover nearly 60 per cent of the expected needs in 2020 (820,000). Other key partners, particularly the Norwegian Refugee Council, will cover the remaining needs.

27. Figures are provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency needs and planning documents.

28. WASH funding needs decreased in 2021 due in part to activities related to safe water provision and longer-term interventions covered and complemented by regular programming. New WASH activities outlined in the appeal will reach more people with low-cost activities – for example community awareness, which will reach people with messages on hygiene activities.

29. This includes US$45,917,500 for child protection interventions; US$2,156,000 for gender-based violence interventions; and US$150,000 for prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse interventions.