Highlights

- The scale, severity and complexity of humanitarian needs worsened in 2020 due to the economic downturn, rising cost of commodities, and devaluation of local currency, all compounded by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and ongoing hostilities. This led to devastating consequences for already-vulnerable populations across the country, and particularly for displaced populations and returnees in the northwest and northeast of Syria. The current socio-economic situation is resulting in some of the most challenging humanitarian conditions experienced in the past ten years of crisis.

- In the northwest, ongoing hostilities in populated areas led to higher civilian casualties. Of the 4 million people living in the northwest, 2.8 million need urgent humanitarian assistance. Since December 2019, more than 940,000 people—194,000 of whom are women and 566,000 are children—have been displaced, in addition to the 2.7 million who were already displaced.

- In the northeast, approximately 64,000 people remain in Al-Hol camp, 94 per cent of whom are women and children and 53 per cent of whom are under the age of 12. In addition, about 2,370 people, including children in Al-Roj camp, continue to require urgent humanitarian assistance.

- In the southern region, the overall security situation was fragile and volatile, characterized by insurgency attacks mainly targeting Syrian government figures, installations and its affiliated entities. More than 750 major security incidents resulted in more than 500 fatalities and 730 injuries, and at least 13 children were killed and 19 were injured. The UN remained without access to settlements totalling 12,000 people in Rukban, on the Jordanian border.

- In 2020, UNICEF continued to ensure uninterrupted access to protection, health consultations, immunizations and nutrition services. UNICEF made sure that learning continued and schools resumed functioning with safety measures after reopening, and WASH services were also scaled up. UNICEF procured 26 million PPE items implemented COVID-19 preventive measures, awareness messaging, and risk communication activities. UNICEF also began supporting the readiness plan for the COVID-19 vaccine (COVAX Facility) in Syria.

- The Whole of Syria appeal faced a 25 per cent funding gap. Additional funding, especially flexible in nature, is urgently needed to ensure that children in Syria continue to receive life-saving humanitarian assistance.

UNICEF’s Response and Funding Status

1 Please refer to the narrative for details. Note that ‘Funding status’ refers to the whole sector, while the results only refer to one specific activity.
Funding Overview and Partnerships

In 2020, UNICEF appealed for US$ 294.8 million to continue its response across Syria. UNICEF would like to express its gratitude to the Governments of Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the Syria Humanitarian Fund (SHF), the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and UNICEF national committees for the generous contributions provided.

At the end of the year, UNICEF had an overall funding gap of 25 per cent. Additional funds are urgently needed to support the ongoing response, especially in child health, nutrition, child protection, social protection among others, for over three million people. Without more funding, an estimated two million children and women will not be reached with nutrition interventions, one million will not receive primary health care and about 300,000 will be deprived of psychosocial support and case management.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

A decade of humanitarian crisis and hostilities has had a profound impact on the situation of children in Syria. This year, over 11 million people, including 4.8 million children, continued to require humanitarian assistance, and 6.1 million people remained internally displaced. Their vulnerability has been further aggravated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The scale, severity and complexity of humanitarian needs have become even more extensive due to the economic downturn, rising cost of commodities, and devaluation of local currency, which were all compounded by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and ongoing hostilities. This has led to devastating consequences for already-vulnerable populations across the country, particularly for displaced populations and returnees in northwest and northeast Syria. For most of 2020, Syria’s economy experienced an unprecedented downturn with a sharp decline in the value of the Syrian pound (SYP) by 74 per cent compared to 2019. In November 2020, the SYP depreciated by 11 per cent in the informal exchange rate market and reached SYP 2,638/USD. Families across Syria faced heavily eroded employment opportunities, skyrocketing prices and shortages of basic goods and services, and widespread deterioration of household coping mechanisms. The price of an average food basket in November 2020 was SYP 99,243, an increase of 251 per cent over the past 12 months. For most of the population in the country, the current socio-economic situation represents some of the most challenging humanitarian conditions experienced in the past ten years of crisis.

COVID-19 has brought severe disruption to basic services. Moreover, the government closed all schools as a preventative measure between 14 March and 13 September. Continuing health and nutrition preventative as well as surveillance activities became a major challenge. Simultaneously, the number of mental health consultations tripled from March through May compared to the same period in 2019, posing a great concern. Despite UNICEF and partners’ efforts to keep basic services available, movement restrictions, limited capacity for wide-scale remote services, and the need to maintain physical distancing posed challenges. According to a socio-economic impact assessment, only 4.5 per cent of surveyed households indicated that their children had access to e-learning platforms during the school closures while about 70 per cent used at least one form of distance learning as of April/May 2020. Sadly, due to the above-mentioned reasons, child-labour reportedly increased by about seven per cent, and children with disabilities suffered a dramatic decline in access to rehabilitation programmes, physiotherapy and psychosocial counselling. In September 2020, through the Child Protection Area of Responsibility for northwest Syria – about 82 per cent of interviewed key informants reported that children are engaged in child labour that prevents them from attending school.

Reported COVID-19 cases in Syria continued to rise despite relatively low numbers overall. Limited testing capacity across the country and other characteristics of the epidemiological situation indicates widespread community transmission. Meanwhile, the prevention of COVID-19 in schools has been a priority for UNICEF and the education sector partners. According to the Ministry of Education (MoE) report issued on 17 December, a total of 2,050 cases have been confirmed among students, teachers and administrators since the school opening in September, showing a sharp increase from the beginning of November (399 cases). This highlights the challenges of preventing transmission in schools, primarily due to overcrowded and often poor or damaged infrastructure which makes adequate physical distancing difficult, but also owing to insufficiently qualified teaching personnel and challenges in changing behaviours.

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1 UNOCHA, Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), 2019
2 WFP: Food basket is a group of basic goods providing 1,930 kcal per day for a family of five for a month. WFP Syria Country Office, Market Price Watch Bulletin, November 2020
3 SEIA
5 Ministry of Education. As of 2 December 2020.
7 Ibid.
Due to restrictions on the movement of supplies, many children were not able to access or receive learning materials at home. The issue was particularly compounded by the lack of access to electricity and internet in many parts of the country, particularly in rural areas of Homs, Hama, Aleppo and across Idlib.

Grave violations of children's rights continued, with Syria showing some of the highest numbers of violations, globally. The Secretary-General’s Report on Children and Armed Conflict has shown that between January and December 2019, the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism verified grave violations affecting 2,292 children, including 1,454 children killed or maimed, and other issues of concern. In the northwest, ongoing hostilities encroach on population areas, leading to higher civilian casualties. Since December 2019, more than 940,000 people, of which 194,000 are women and 566,000 are children, have been displaced in northwest Syria, in addition to the 2.7 million people who were already displaced. Of the four million people living in the northwest, 2.8 million require urgent humanitarian assistance. 2020 was a particularly dangerous year for children in the northwest. January to March 2020 saw the highest number of child casualties in a single quarter since the conflict began. In late 2020, violence again intensified after the March ceasefire, increasing the risk for children and humanitarian workers. In one week alone in November 2020, at least five children were reportedly killed in northwest Syria, including a four-year-old who was on her way to school. In the same week, two aid workers – partners of UNICEF - were killed while heading to a UNICEF-supported child-friendly space.

In northern Aleppo, particularly in Afrin, Jarablus and Al Bab, a number of civilians, including children, were killed and injured as a result of an increase in sporadic fighting between and within armed groups and the indiscriminate use of firepower between the various Non-State Armed Group-controlled Groups.

In northeast Syria, a total of 64,619 people remain in Al-Hol camp, 94 per cent of whom are women and children and 53 per cent are children under the age of 12. In addition, about 2,370 people, including children in Al-Roj camp, continue to require urgent humanitarian assistance. The majority of those living at Al-Hol camp, including children, are comprised of 48 per cent Iraqis, 37 per cent Syrians and 15 per cent third-country nationals (TCNs).

In the southern region, the overall security situation remained fragile and volatile, characterized by insurgency attacks mainly targeting Syrian government figures, installations and its affiliated entities. More than 750 major security incidents resulted in more than 500 fatalities and 730 injuries. At least 13 children were killed and 19 were injured. The UN has remained without access to settlements of 12,000 people in Rukban area on the Jordanian border since September 2019. A total of 38 groups with 19,975 people have left Rukban and transited through five shelters in Homs city since March 2019. People spontaneously returning home urgently require critical assistance and the restoration of basic services in heavily-destroyed communities.

2020 witnessed heightened risk for humanitarian workers posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL), which scaled up the frequency and intensity of attacks against all entities, including the Syrian Arab Army (SAA), Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and their allies. Given the increased security risks, resulting from the ISIL attacks, as well as the ongoing military operations against the ISIL, the work of the UN in Syria was heavily impacted. In fact, Ithreya-at-Tabqah and Sokhna—Deir-ez-Zor roads were suspended. Previously, these roads were used by UN contractors to carry out missions and to provide timely supplies to support UN activities in northeast Syria. The safety of UNICEF staff and operations in these areas became a concern, given that Homs—Deir-ez-Zor road remained the only accessible route for UN missions between the two governorates and the heightened security situation in Deir-ez-Zor.

By the end of 2020, Alouk water station stopped pumping water for the fifteenth time in 2020 as a result of power supply disruptions or damages to the station. This affected almost half a million people in Al-Hassakeh, forcing them to resort to potentially unsafe alternative sources of water.

Similarly, there is an ongoing water supply crisis in Al-Bab subdistrict of northwest Syria. About 150,000 residents of Al-Bab used to receive water from the Al-Bayda water station, which comes from Al-Furat river. As the government of Syria lost control over Al-Bab since 2017, water supply from Al-Bayda water station was disconnected by the government.

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8 UN Secretary-General’s Report on Children and Armed Conflict (Ref: A/74/845 S/2020/525) issued in 9 June 2020. Periodic Monitoring Report for 2020 has not been published at the time of reporting.
9 Recent Developments in Northwest Syria - Situation Report No. 22 - As of 18 November 2020. OCHA.
13 UN Secretary-General’s Report on Syria, S/2020/401 May 2020
14 UN OCHA: Statement of USG for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator during briefing to the UN Security Council on the humanitarian situation in Syria, New York, 16 December 2020
Since then, Al-Bab has been dependent on locally developed low yield borewells and generators that use fossil fuels for pumping to run the water stations.

**Summary Analysis of Programme Response**

Throughout 2020, amid the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF continued providing life-saving humanitarian assistance to vulnerable children and women and addressing their urgent needs, while ensuring sustainable programming given the protracted crisis. Through its field presence and network of partners, UNICEF remained abreast of the situation of children in Syria and responded to their continuously evolving needs despite the dynamic environment compounded by the pandemic. UNICEF continued its extensive efforts in providing essential humanitarian support in the country to ensure that protection, health consultations, immunizations and nutrition services for children were not interrupted. UNICEF also made sure that learning was supported and that humanitarian cash transfers to mitigate the socio-economic impacts on children were distributed. UNICEF contributed to reopening of schools with safety measures. Water, sanitation and hygiene services were also scaled up, emphasizing COVID-19 preventive measures and awareness messaging, and risk communication. UNICEF rapidly re-programmed the planned winter humanitarian cash transfer support to include the COVID-19 response. Seven governates out of 14 were reached whilst continuing humanitarian social protection cash for CwDs. During the last quarter of the year, UNICEF began supporting the readiness plan for procuring the COVID-19 vaccine (COVAX Facility) in the country.

UNICEF demonstrated the impact and value of its programmatic work through strong engagement and communication with key stakeholders at different levels. In order to address the protection, survival and development of children, innovative and quality communication materials were produced and disseminated, which received positive feedback from donors.

Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) continued to be integrated into all partnership agreements with implementing partners. UNICEF is in the process of finalizing PSEA assessment for partners, as part of the Harmonized Approach to CASH Transfers (HACT) assessment. All implementing partners are assumed high risk until the assessment is finalised and an action plan is implemented to enhance the protection measures against sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) risk. All humanitarian workers are required to sign a code of conduct and commit to the prevention of and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

**Nutrition**

For the nutrition sector, UNICEF continued playing a significant role in preventive interventions for women and children to improve Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) with a focus on complementary feeding and promotion of diet diversity while supporting COVID-19 preventive measures. COVID-19 related messages were included in the IYCF communications since the beginning of the COVID-19 response, which started in March 2020.

Over one million caregivers were reached with messages through community outreach and awareness-raising sessions, local-level media campaigns and social mobilization activities. In 2020, more than 2.6 million women and children were screened for malnutrition, including those in the most vulnerable communities in northeast Syria and IDPs/returnees in rural Damascus, and the northwest and southern parts of Syria. Around 1.5 million of them, which exceeded the planned annual target, were provided with micronutrients. Following the screening, 15,596 children under the age of five (55 per cent girls) were identified as affected by severe acute malnutrition without complications and received life-saving treatment. In the northeast, 227,270 children received outpatient consultations inside camps and in urban and rural communities. 901 children under age five were admitted for severe acute malnutrition treatment, 596 of whom reside in Al-Hol, Areesha, Al-Roj and Mahmoudli camps. In northwest Syria, nutrition surveillance data for the period between January and December 2020 show that maternal malnutrition stands as one of the major nutrition concerns. 12 per cent of mothers were malnourished and acute malnutrition among displaced populations and hard to reach areas reached higher levels than those expected at sub-emergency levels in general.

By the end of 2020, nutrition life-saving interventions reached more than three million beneficiaries in northwest Syria, including 1.54 million boys and girls and 1.47 million pregnant and lactating mothers and caregivers in 231 communities in 39 sub-districts. UNICEF and implementing partners also delivered nutrition services through fixed health facilities and 169 rapid response teams (RRTs) in northwest Syria.

In 2020, UNICEF continued playing an instrumental role as nutrition sector lead at the national and sub-national levels, and ensured timely and effective coordination, including at a local level in six hubs. The sector ensured the provision of a comprehensive package of nutrition services to affected populations to improve their nutritional status. In 2020, the sector trained 307 health staff on community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) programming in the
context of COVID-19. All CMAM reporting health facilities meet the SPHERE\textsuperscript{15} standards of malnutrition in under-five mortality, a set of intervention quality benchmarks for interventions.

**Health**

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, UNICEF was able to continue its work on maternal, newborn and child health, reaching almost 1.8 million children and women with free medical consultations through fixed points and mobile teams in all 14 governorates. Throughout the year, more than 2.4 million caregivers were reached with health promotion messages, including those on immunization. Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, the expansion of vaccination services reached almost half a million children (51 per cent girls) under one year of age with DPT3, including those in the most vulnerable communities in the northwest and northeast and internally displaced persons (IDPs)/returnees in the south, thanks to the support from GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, among others. Moreover, more than 2.6 million children (50 per cent girls) under five years of age were reached with polio vaccine with the integrated provision of Vitamin A through the national immunization days.

In close coordination with the health sector led by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ministry of Health (MoH) and other ministries, UNICEF played a critical role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure proper prevention and control measures, as well as proper protection for front line health workers. UNICEF procured personal protective equipment (PPE) for the health cluster to serve 6,025 health workers for six months. 5,791 health workers in MoH hospitals and university hospitals also received PPE and other materials for infection prevention and control. UNICEF also supported the isolation centres with relevant supplies to ensure infection prevention. In addition, UNICEF supported the establishment of a field hospital in Al-Fayhaa Stadium in Damascus to serve COVID-19 patients in need of oxygen treatment to keep intensive care units accessible for other critical cases.

UNICEF also supported the restoration of primary healthcare facilities through the installation of 36 new prefabricated clinics in areas where no functional health centres existed, and in communities severely affected by the conflict and had received a large number of returnees. The prefabricated clinics were installed in six governorates, including Aleppo, Hama, Deir Ezzor, Rural Damascus, Dar’a and Quneitra.

In coordination with the WHO and MoH, UNICEF conducted an effective vaccine management assessment, which led to the development of Vaccine Management Improvement Plan of 2021-2023. This will be implemented with support from GAVI and in coordination with MoH, WHO and other partners. Effective vaccine management has become increasingly important in light of the pandemic and COVAX Facility, the vaccine pillar of a global alliance around COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. Syria has been selected as one of the 92 countries that will benefit from the COVAX Facility and UNICEF made extensive efforts to support the planning, preparedness and procurement for Syria to ensure equitable access to eventual COVID-19 vaccines.

**WASH**

In 2020, UNICEF delivered timely and effective WASH humanitarian assistance, contributing to mitigating the degradation of services that has resulted from the physical destruction and reduced maintenance of water and sanitation infrastructure. This was accomplished by strengthening the environment for WASH, conducting light rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure, supporting operation and maintenance of WASH services and providing lifesaving WASH services in IDP locations and other emergency settings, despite the COVID-19 outbreak. Throughout the reporting year, UNICEF reached over 3.1 million people with access to an improved water supply through the repair of water networks, pumping stations, treatment plants and water tanks. In terms of sanitation, UNICEF reached more than 906,000 people with access to improved sanitation through the repair and rehabilitation of sewerage networks. UNICEF and partners supported more than 947,000 school children in 3,294 schools through water trucking, supplies, hygiene promotion and rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities.

UNICEF continued to support all of the sodium hypochlorite needs of the country by ensuring proper chlorination of water in all governorates. As such, in 2020, 13.6 million people benefitted from access to chlorinated water, which contributed to preventing any major waterborne diseases outbreak.

UNICEF also continued to support the provision of lifesaving WASH services in IDP camps and collective shelters most notably in Al-Hassakeh, Idlib and Aleppo governorates. Notably, UNICEF assisted 3.3 million people through domestic water supply, sanitation infrastructure maintenance, solid waste management, and hygiene supplies provision. Restoration of water supply systems has supported 1.8 million people, 33 per cent of whom were IDPs. A total of 1.45 million people benefitted from drinking water using water disinfectants. Additionally, more than 818,335 people were supported with emergency lifesaving services and a total of 595,810 people were reached with essential non-food items (NFIs). In addition, UNICEF provided immediate support to rapid onset emergencies, such as the ones caused by

\textsuperscript{15} The Sphere Minimum Standards for Healthcare
frequent interruptions of services at the Alouk pumping station, which serves about 460,000 people, including the residents of Al-Hol Camp, in the Al-Hassakeh Governorate.

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, UNICEF strengthened IPC measures in communities, schools and health care facilities. Of note, UNICEF supported the distribution of soap as part of the WFP food distributions. As a result, 3.5 million people in vulnerable communities benefited from the provision of soap alongside key risk-communication messages as part of monthly food distribution, demonstrating value for money with equity.

In line with gender mainstreaming guidelines, measures to prevent gender-based violence and harassment were implemented in camps where rehabilitation of school sanitation facilities took place, which benefitted some 51,158 school children. Lighting and separate latrines for men and women were implemented for a safer access to facilities for women and girls. The child-friendly water and sanitation facilities also addressed the special needs of children with disabilities.

**Child Protection**

In 2020, UNICEF, in coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MoSAL) and Syrian Commission for Family Affairs and Population (SCFAP), started identifying a suitable model of case management in the country, which can serve as a basis to provide integrated social services for children. Subsequently, a conceptual framework was developed for the first time in Syria. The framework is designed as a training package with assessment tools and guidance for an individual response plan. Simultaneously, efforts are underway to strengthen a case management system for children affected by violence, including gender-based violence. This aims to set a standard approach and procedures among all actors in Syria, as well as a monitoring and evaluation framework to track results. To date, 7,110 at-risk children (2,925 girls) benefited from individualized care plans, and they were referred to specialized services in 11 governorates (Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Dar'a, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Homs, Lattakia, Quneitra, rural Damascus and Tartous). In particular, social protection, namely cash assistance support was provided to 5,873 children (2361 girls) with disabilities. Additionally, 135 children were registered and provided with family tracing and reunification services. Family-based care or appropriate alternative care was given to unaccompanied and separated children in Al-Hassakeh.

The humanitarian situation for children in northwest Syria remains severe and protection needs continue to be at their highest levels. 90 per cent of child protection programme interventions took place in high severity locations (i.e. four to six in the severity scale) while less than 10 per cent took place in moderate severity locations (i.e. three). UNICEF Child Protection Programme through eleven implementing partners has been able to reach 378,805 affected people from both IDP and host communities (130,230 girls, 130,347 boys, 67,900 women, and 50,328 men) in 251 communities of 31 sub-district in Aleppo and Idlib Governorates with key child protection services. Insecurity was particularly heightened in the first quarter of the year. It was followed by massive displacement, indiscriminate attacks to critical civilian infrastructure and compounding protection concerns. Hostilities continued to impact communities across the northwest, especially in areas near the M4 and M5 highways in Idlib governorate throughout the year. The programme unfortunately lost two staff members of partners organizations who worked at a child-friendly space in Idlib during hostilities.

In 2020, technical assistance was provided to the development of the domestic violence law that aims to curb all violence against women and children at home. UNICEF and SCFAP began preparations for the first national study on all types of violence against children in all settings. Additionally, UNICEF started to develop a parenting programme to promote positive, non-violent discipline and developmentally appropriate and stimulating childcare and rearing practices among parents and caregivers as a strategy to end violence against children. UNICEF child protection programmes have been designed to ensure safe and equal access to the inclusive and non-discriminatory provision of services for girls and boys, the disabled, children-on-the-move, and other vulnerable children. During the reporting year, almost 32,000 caregivers (72 per cent women) benefitted from parenting programs. In 2020, UNICEF also invested in improving the quality of child protection programmes through developing a national mental health and psychosocial programme (MHPSS) curriculum in collaboration with the SCFAP. Throughout the reporting year, 90,229 children (44,122 girls) were engaged with MHPSS programmes, including 7,356 children as part of COVID-19 MHPSS response.

In 2020, UNICEF prioritized Explosive Ordinance Risk Education (EORE) intervention, as a lifesaving component promoting safe behaviour and providing knowledge and awareness to reduce the risk of accidents. Due to COVID-19 related closures, EORE activities adapted new approaches for reaching children and families. These approaches included decreasing the number of beneficiaries in each session, and increasing the number of home visits, using WhatsApp groups and strengthening mobile teams providing EORE messages in order to practice social distancing and other COVID-19 precautionary measures. EORE messages were incorporated within the Syrian educational channel and platform that broadcast lessons for all students during the quarantine. In 2020, for the first-time, risk education awareness sessions were provided at all types of schools, including technical vocational schools for students between 15 and 17 years old. In 2020, 815,437 children (405,753 girls) and 212,756 caregivers (138,944 women) from all 14
governorates received EORE. UNICEF supported in building the capacity of 1,870 governmental and non-governmental partners from all Syrian 14 governorates on how to avoid the risk of explosive ordinance.

UNICEF strengthened its child protection programme with an emphasis on unaccompanied and separated children of third-country nationals stranded in the northeast. UNICEF continued to provide uninterrupted care for unaccompanied or separated children (UASC) in two interim care centres (ICCs) established in February 2019 in Al-Hol Camp, in response to the massive displacements. The ICCs received around 340 unaccompanied minors where 236 were reunified with their families.

In 2020, UNICEF continued to lead the coordination of the child protection Area of Responsibility in Syria, through needs gap analysis, strategic planning for a more cohesive response and greater sector visibility and accountability.

**Education**

Given the enormous education challenges that threaten the future of an entire generation of children, UNICEF continued to play a key role in improving the capacity, functionality and resilience of both formal and non-formal education system to address the access to and quality of education. In 2020, UNICEF reached more than 2.1 million children across all 14 Syrian governorates with various education services and supplies both in formal and non-formal settings. Almost two million children in formal settings and 28,705 children in non-formal settings received educational services and supplies, such as textbooks, self-learning materials, recreational materials, and stationery goods. This helped children to continue to learn despite living in very difficult circumstances. Additionally, to improve the quality of learning in schools, UNICEF provided 1.9 million textbooks.

To help children return to learning, UNICEF supported NGO partners in delivering non-formal education through the Supportive Learning Programme (SLP), and remedial classes, reaching 20,545 children and youth (11,083 females). An additional 3,957 children transited from non-formal to formal education through the Self-Learning Programme. In response to the unprecedented challenges created by school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF, through its NGO partners, scaled up home-based learning, where 43,6545 children were reached. UNICEF also made pivotal shifts during the second half of 2020 to support the COVID-19 response. UNICEF, in coordination with other UN Agencies, including WFP and partners, supported roughly half a million 9th and 12th graders to take the national exams. Additionally, after the lockdown, UNICEF made huge investments in the re-opening of Curriculum B (CB) classes in August 2020 by supporting 121,473 children attend CB classes and providing hygiene materials. After the opening of schools, 738,828 children were provided with soap bars to strengthen hygiene, and 4,901 schools were provided with cleaning kits.

UNICEF Education programme through nine implementing partners was able to provide education services to 447,634 affected children of which 224,803 were girls and 1,274 children with disability from 167 IDP and host communities in 30 sub-district in Aleppo and Idleb Governorates. In Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, Ar-Raqqa and Tartous, 4,743 children (2,308 girls) received Early Childhood Education services. An additional 2,861 children (1,419 girls) were provided with Early Child Development kits or other similar kits such as LEGO. Concerted efforts were also made to reach children with disabilities. 14,150 children with disabilities (CWD) were supported through formal and non-formal activities. Of these, 108 CWD were transited from non-formal to formal education. To reach out-of-school children, UNICEF carried out national door-to-door community mobilization ‘back to learning’ campaigns, which reached 38,621 children and 61,518 parents and caregivers of out-of-school children.

In 2020, the standards for inclusive school infrastructure were completed and culminated in the finalization of the Guidelines for Child-friendly Schools. As a result of this work, there is now a strengthened baseline on child-friendly school rehabilitation across education actors in Syria. UNICEF completed a study titled “Out-of-School Children in Syria: Charting a Path Toward a Solution”.

**Social Policy**

In Syria, social protection interventions are crucial to enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable families to cope with the devastating impact of the conflict and the ongoing economic crisis. Social protection is also critical to strengthen the continuum of humanitarian and early recovery interventions. In 2020, UNICEF reached over 388,801 highly vulnerable children (52 per cent girls) through its humanitarian social protection response, which consisted of cash transfer for CWD, cash transfer for impoverished families in urban and peri-urban areas, and winter clothes distribution for children in IDP camps/settlements and remote rural areas.

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16 Curriculum B- is a learning modality, where lessons are taught through existing printed materials (textbooks, exercise books, supplementary resources) combined with instructions and monitoring shared through WhatsApp messaging. It is being implemented efficiently, especially during this year, given restrictions posed by the pandemic. It is a formal programme which allows out-of-school children to combine two academic years in one to catch up to their peers.
The cash transfer programme was quickly adapted to respond to the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. The coverage of the programme increased, reaching 10,711 children (40 per cent girls) living with severe disabilities in comparison to 8,900 in 2019, which was a 20 per cent increase. In addition, the programme expanded to a new governorate, namely Hama, which brought the total number of governates reached by the programme to seven, out of 14 governorates. The quality of the case management component has also improved with additional case managers. The average number of case manager per child decreased from 70 to 30, which led to more personal and dedicated support. Through the case manager, many children gained access to a disability card, which allows their integration into the national social protection system. As demonstrated through the post-distribution survey, 65 per cent of children gained access to specialized health care largely thanks to the programme.

In line with the Grand Bargain objective to shift from conditional e-vouchers to unconditional cash, a major progress was made in altering the programme modality in poor urban areas where vulnerable families and children were forced to cope with the economic hardship and increased cost of living. The shift to the cash modality meant that beneficiaries gained the ability to decide for themselves the type of support they needed the most. In total, 51,471 children were reached with e-voucher or one-time cash transfer for basic needs.

In parallel, in remote communities where there were no competitive markets, as well as in IDP camps and resettlement areas, the programme reached 132,978 children (52 per cent girls), which is 73 per cent of the target, with winter, summer, and newborn kits to protect children from harsh weather conditions. There was a significant improvement in the timeliness of the distribution of winter clothes. 87 per cent of children received clothes during the critical winter month in comparison to 29 per cent in 2019.

Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP)
Young Syrians have a critical role to play in promoting tolerance and social cohesion and driving social and economic development and the COVID-19 response. They require access to learning, employment opportunities, spaces for social participation. They also need mechanisms to ensure their well-being and respect of their rights and to maximize their potential to enable themselves to become positive agents in their community for their peers and themselves. Adolescents and youth are more connected through technology, media and the internet than any other generation. They can play a critical role in disseminating accurate information on COVID-19 and support information sharing on risk reduction, national preparedness, and response efforts.

In 2020, a total of 227,995 girls and boys (52 per cent girls) of ages 10 to 24 benefited from a holistic package of multi-sectoral services and opportunities in 12 governorates. Many of them were IDPs, returnees, young people living in poverty and other marginalized groups including those with disabilities. Additionally, 170,141 young people (51 per cent girls) were equipped with critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity skills. These are core competencies viewed essential to a smooth transition to adulthood and into the labour market. Seed funding program fostered social and economic inclusion of the most vulnerable youth. 6,847 youth (4,003 girls) beneficial from entrepreneurship training opportunities and 112 youth of ages 15 to 24 received seed funding of up to $2,000 to implement social and business entrepreneurship projects. Adolescents and youth empowered with these skills learned how to become engaged citizens, who can analyse and think creatively and propose solutions to their local social challenges. Moreover, 85,639 young people (54 per cent girls) participated in social engagement activities, including youth-led initiatives, sport for development and cultural and social arts.

In 2020, UNICEF supported eleven Integrated Learning Centres (ILCs), in coordination with the Ministry of Culture, to provide youth and children (8 to 24 years old) with multiple pathways to learn and equip themselves with required skills for learning and transitioning from education to work. Capacity development trainings for centres’ cadre and mobile teams were conducted to sensitize them on ILCs’ approach and to develop the action plans. During the reporting period, more than 300 participants received the training.

For the first time in 2020, with the joint support of UNDP and UNICEF, CreaDeaf, a Syrian team comprised of two young women and three young men, participated in Generation Unlimited Youth Challenge, a global contest with 15 million participants. CreaDeaf won the Equity and Empowerment category for their idea to promote equitable access to education, employment and to improve engagement of youth living with disabilities in the society.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

In 2020, UNICEF continued its winter response to help vulnerable children across the country, including those displaced by violence and living in basic conditions in tented camps, shelters and informal settlements in Idlib, northern rural Aleppo and northeast Syria, and those who returned to war-ravaged areas despite in violence.
With the global spread of COVID-19, UNICEF strengthened its response through awareness campaigns, provision of hygiene kits and e-vouchers for essential hygiene supplies, as well as innovative learning methods during lockdown periods and youth-led initiatives. Under the COVID-19 restrictions, UNICEF also highlighted the continuity of its services, including lifesaving health and nutrition support, such as immunization campaigns.


The Country Office also received high-level visits by the Executive and Regional Director and maintained visibility of the key donors.

Additional links:

- The boy with the golden foot, Aleppo
- CreaDeaf: Marking the International Day for Persons with Disability
- Article: Do It Yourself; Syrian youth produce handmade detergents in Quneitra
- Article: Suhaib’s new life. Marking World Youth Skills Day
- Article: Syrian Youth produce face masks in response to COVID 19 for children and families

Additional Success Stories and innovative interventions:

**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:**
Through UNICEF-supported inclusive education project, schools are increasingly becoming more capable of receiving children with disabilities (CwD). Structural modifications of the buildings are made and staff are trained to follow up on CwD, provide consultation for teachers and parents, help CwD integrate and interact with their peers and teachers, support their wellbeing, and monitor the educational environment. In addition, assistive devices like wheelchairs, hearing devices, and eyeglasses are also provided.

**VOCATIONAL TRAINING:**
“Due to the crisis, I couldn’t find a proper job. I live with my family in a rented house with difficult living conditions, but when I saw the announcement of vocational training courses, I was excited to learn and have better opportunity to find a job,” says Ghaieth. Vocational Training courses provide an opportunity for adolescents and young adults to learn and help them and their families secure a decent life.

**DISTANCE LEARNING:**
With the suspension of schools and learning spaces as a precaution for COVID-19 to protect children, UNICEF, through its implementing partners, sought to find a way forward. Education activities continued through distance learning using the internet. WhatsApp was used by teachers, students, and their parents for lessons, follow-up and individual support.
# Summary of Programme Results

## Annex A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Overall needs</th>
<th>2020 target</th>
<th>Total i results</th>
<th>Change since last report ▲▼</th>
<th>2020 target ii</th>
<th>Total results</th>
<th>Change since last report ▲▼</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td># of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) received micro-nutrients</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,563,000</td>
<td>1,682,794</td>
<td>688,449</td>
<td>2,400,000</td>
<td>1,593,417</td>
<td>170,357</td>
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<tr>
<td># of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) screened for acute malnutrition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,867,674</td>
<td>4,342,803</td>
<td>1,457,252</td>
<td>1,800,000</td>
<td>2,623,401</td>
<td>202,656</td>
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<tr>
<td># of children reached with the treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)</td>
<td>4,700,000</td>
<td>17,447</td>
<td>15,481</td>
<td>2,091</td>
<td>9,600</td>
<td>15,596</td>
<td>1,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of caregivers including pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) counselled or reached with awareness on appropriate infant and young child feeding (IYCF)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>915,063</td>
<td>2,484,591</td>
<td>1,485,587</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>1,004,913</td>
<td>93,505</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td># of children under five years vaccinated through polio campaigns</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td># of children under one year reached with routine vaccination (DTP3 containing vaccine)</td>
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<tr>
<td># of Primary Health Care outpatient consultations supported (children &amp; CBA women)</td>
<td>13,200,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td># of health workers and community volunteers trained on new-born care packages</td>
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<tr>
<td># of caregivers reached with health promotion, including immunization messages</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WASH</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated # of people with access to improved water supply</td>
<td>15,700,000</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
<td>2,764,145</td>
<td>254,303</td>
<td>3,700,000</td>
<td>3,166,182</td>
<td>379,321</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated # of people have improved access to sanitation services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,500,000</td>
<td>1,726,985</td>
<td>336,374</td>
<td>1,300,000</td>
<td>906,528</td>
<td>38,188</td>
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<tr>
<td># of school children benefited from improved WASH facilities and services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>390,000</td>
<td>947,434</td>
<td>5,584</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of people supported with access to essential WASH NFIs including in HTR areas</td>
<td># of people reached with hygiene promotion interventions</td>
<td># of people benefitting from access to improved lifesaving/emergency WASH facilities and services</td>
<td>Child Protection ¹</td>
<td>Education ¹</td>
<td>Social Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>880,000</td>
<td>3,300,000</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,179,701</td>
<td>3,230,521</td>
<td>4,839,164</td>
<td>505,388</td>
<td>4,013,284</td>
<td>213,585</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>519,418²</td>
<td>169,287</td>
<td>617,639</td>
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<td>1,587,832</td>
<td>213,585</td>
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<td>1,600,000</td>
<td>525,000</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>2,400,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,473,388</td>
<td>452,806</td>
<td>1,849,572</td>
<td>166,292²</td>
<td>2,205,947²</td>
<td>100,454⁵</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>144,207</td>
<td>22,388</td>
<td>15,574</td>
<td>18,374</td>
<td>70,346</td>
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<td>519,418</td>
<td>144,207</td>
<td>144,207</td>
<td>11,500</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

¹: Data represents numbers and does not include percentages.

²: Includes psychosocial support.

³: Includes parenting programmes.

⁴: Includes explosive hazards risk education.

⁵: Includes C4D back to learning (BTL) interventions.
**ADAP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count 1</th>
<th>Count 2</th>
<th>Count 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of girls and boys protected from extreme weather through NFIs</td>
<td>570,000</td>
<td>388,801&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of girls and boys protected from extreme weather through vouchers or cash transfers</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>51,471&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count 1</th>
<th>Count 2</th>
<th>Count 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of adolescents and youth (10-24 years) promoting social cohesion and civic engagement</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>170,141</td>
<td>8,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of affected adolescents and youth (10-24 years) receiving employability skills including life skills, TVET and entrepreneurship</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>85,639&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7,162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 November 2020.

**Overall Comment 1**: The sector reach is lower than UNICEF reach, as sector data are as of end October, while UNICEF data as of end November

**Overall Comment 2**: Since 2020 HRP has not been published, 2019 HRP Targets are used for the purpose of the Situation Report

**Nutrition 1**: Justification of overachievement: the reason of increase in reaching beneficiaries is due to the fact that the rapid response teams have accessed more areas and reached more beneficiaries than planned

**Nutrition 2**: Justification of overachievement: the reason of increase in reaching beneficiaries is due to the fact that the rapid response teams have accessed more areas and reached more beneficiaries than planned

**Nutrition 3**: Justification of overachievement: the reason of increase in reaching beneficiaries is due to the fact that the rapid response teams have accessed more areas and reached more beneficiaries than planned

**Nutrition 4**: Justification of overachievement: the reason of increase in reaching beneficiaries is due to the fact that the rapid response teams have accessed more areas and reached more beneficiaries than planned.

**Nutrition 5**: Justification of overachievement: the reason of increase in reaching beneficiaries is due to the fact that the rapid response teams have accessed more areas and reached more beneficiaries than planned.

**Health 1**: Although it looks like an overachievement, the target figure (640) which is used in this case, refers to the data from approved HRP from 2019. The target for 2020 is 2050 (not 640), thus there is no overachievement in this case.

**Health 2**: Justification for underachievement: C4D activities were affected by the lockdown and transportation problems due to COVID-19; most of the reach was done in the second half of the year after the ease of the lockdown measures

**WASH 1**: WASH sector figures are as of end November 2020, while UNICEF reach is as of end December 2020

**WASH 2**: Underachievement is due to the fact that no proper funds were received, as well as the fact that WASH priorities focused on COVID-19 response.

**WASH 3**: Underachievement is due to the fact that no proper funds were received, as well as the fact that WASH priorities focused on COVID-19 response.

**WASH 4**: The devaluation of the Syrian currency and the substantial difference between the official exchange rate (used by UNICEF) and the market rate (used by contractors) has rendered interventions more costly, especially those that involve imports of supplies from abroad. As such the cost effectiveness of interventions has been substantially reduced and UNICEF is reaching less beneficiaries with the same amount of funding.

**WASH 5**: The reach exceeds the target because we reached a higher number of schools as part of the COVID response.

**WASH 6**: Justification for overachievement: WASH Responses focused on COVID-19 interventions materials distributions

**WASH 7**: Justification for overachievement: WASH Responses focused on COVID-19 interventions materials distributions

**Child Protection 1**: Sector results are as of end October 2020, while UNICEF reach is as of end December 2020.

**Child Protection 2, 3, 4, 5**: 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. In addition, CP programme was operating on less than 50% capacity.

**Education 1**: For education sector: The results reflect November Update and some adjustments will take place in December cycle.

**Education 2**: Education section increased the number of textbooks in order not to risk losing time-limited flexible funds, which could not be used earlier as anticipated; for other planned activities due to COVID-19 lockdown in Q2.

**Education 3**: The original A4P considered training 44/00 teachers by providing 5-day refresher training sessions; as this was practice in previous years, in 2020, MoE changed its approach requesting support for training 15000 temporary school teachers through 6-week trainings to enable them to join the MoE teaching work force. Hence, less teachers were trained, but with better quality.

**Education 4**: Through unofficial reports that more than 80,000 children received LSCE training, and this was the official revised target when MoE re-started operations after the COVID-19 lockdown in Q2. However, as the section didn’t receive MoE reports on time (prior to 31 Dec 2020), it couldn’t report on the real number of students reached in 2020.

**Education 5**: The reach 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 reached more beneficiaries.

**Social Policy 1**: The indicator progress shows negative trend as SP section did a quality check on the data and rectified the numbers to reflect the unique beneficiaries reached through full 2020.

**Social Policy 2/3**: Underachievement is due to the lack of funds received in a timely manner.

**ADAP 1**: 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. Even after the lockdown the centres worked with 30 per cent capacity and young people have participated on online sessions (10-13 young people in each session max) the internet speed and connectivity in Syria are very poor specially for NES and rural locations. Long delays/ rejection of the agreement with local NGOs has a critical effected the program. Some approvals took more than four months to be obtained. Lack of flexible fund for line ministries to run such activities.
## Funding Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Funds available</th>
<th>Funding gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Received Current Year</td>
<td>Carry-Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>$32,954,663</td>
<td>$12,482,081</td>
<td>$2,091,601</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>$41,877,045</td>
<td>$14,098,768</td>
<td>$4,918,158</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>$77,492,160</td>
<td>$51,781,455</td>
<td>$15,985,680</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
<td>$36,133,672</td>
<td>$15,045,264</td>
<td>$5,767,765</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education/ADAP</td>
<td>$64,492,956</td>
<td>$44,896,277</td>
<td>$22,871,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth/adolescents ERL</td>
<td>$6,232,248</td>
<td>$1,393,480</td>
<td>$1,753,651</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early recovery</td>
<td>$35,617,293</td>
<td>$16,807,203</td>
<td>$6,719,374</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being allocated</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$5,015,973</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>294,800,037</strong></td>
<td><strong>161,520,501</strong></td>
<td><strong>60,107,729</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNICEF Syria Crisis: [https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/syrian-crisis](https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/syrian-crisis)


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