

Overview

In 2025, children in Mozambique continued to face a deepening and prolonged poly-crisis, as conflict, climate shocks, disease outbreaks, economic pressure and persistent poverty placed growing strain on their lives and futures. Post-election unrest, displacement in the north, multiple cyclones, and tight public finances combined to put extra pressure on families and on the systems that children rely on every day.

This difficult context demanded both speed and flexibility. UNICEF continued to work with the Government, communities and partners to respond to immediate needs created by displacement, cyclones, cholera risk and service disruption, while also helping essential systems continue to function in health, nutrition, education, child protection, water and social protection.

Across the year, the strongest results came where humanitarian

action and longer-term systems strengthening worked together. National vaccination campaigns protected children at scale, community-based services helped reach underserved areas, digital tools improved the ability to identify and support children who were being missed, and integrated programming showed what is possible when sectors work together around the same child.

This report presents what UNICEF and its partners achieved for children in 2025 in support of Government efforts. It focuses on results, explains why they matter, and shows how UNICEF continued to deliver for children while helping lay the foundation for more resilient services in the future.





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Context

Mozambique faced a severe and overlapping set of crises in 2025. Political unrest disrupted mobility, public life and service delivery in parts of the country, while conflict in the north continued to uproot families and limit access to essential services. In Cabo Delgado, insecurity spilled into neighbouring parts of Nampula, contributing to continued displacement and making it harder for children and families to access support.

At the same time, climate shocks intensified vulnerability. The year began with an El Niño-induced drought that left **1.8 million people food insecure**. This was followed by floods and three cyclones, which damaged homes, schools, health facilities and water systems, and increased the risk of disease outbreaks, including cholera, in already vulnerable communities.

Children were already facing deep and persistent deprivation. Around **77 per cent of children, nearly 13 million** in total, were living in monetary poverty. Under-five mortality had fallen over time to **60 deaths per 1,000 live births**, but neonatal mortality remained stagnant at **24 per 1,000**. Around **37 per cent of children under five** were affected by stunting, **35 per cent of school-aged children** were out of school, only **31.3 per cent of children under five** had their births registered, and access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene remained highly unequal.

The wider economic and funding environment also remained difficult. Fiscal pressure constrained public spending, and reductions in external assistance created new risks for child-focused services, especially in sectors that depend heavily on donor support. UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children appeal faced a **54 per cent funding gap**. Even so, UNICEF and its partners helped protect essential services and reach children at scale, showing the value of integrated, shock-responsive and community-based approaches in a highly fragile environment.

Top Results

FOR CHILDREN

19.3 million

children were reached through two nationwide polio vaccination rounds.



2.97 million

girls aged 9 to 18 were reached through the HPV multi-age cohort vaccination campaign.

774,857

new births were registered in the first three quarters of 2025, helping more children gain a legal identity.

204,726

people gained access to improved water services through UNICEF-supported investments.

320 community health workers were trained, as well as **976** trainers, strengthening the primary healthcare system.

2 additional districts were declared open defecation free, bringing the national total to 13 out of 154 districts, or 8 per cent.

345,347

people gained access to at least 'Basic' level sanitation and hygiene services.



13,212

children were reached through the Accelerated School Readiness programme, with all participating children transitioning to Grade 1.

65,756

children were treated for severe acute malnutrition, a 25 % increase compared with 2024.

Integrated programming and service delivery in Sofala contributed to a

35 per cent

reduction in severe stunting among children under five.

262,711

children accessed education through temporary learning spaces, catch-up classes and psychosocial support in areas affected by conflict and climate shocks.

The Child Grant 0-2

programme expanded to **61,725 child beneficiaries** and their respective mothers or caregivers, across 23 districts in Cabo Delgado, Nampula and Niassa, reaching an **estimated 308,625 people** indirectly.

The U-Report and SMS Biz platform grew to

921,928

users, supporting youth engagement and two-way communication at scale.



Every Child

SURVIVES AND THRIVES

19.3
million
children
vaccinated
for polio

In health and nutrition, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to protect children from disease, improve care for mothers and newborns, and reach children at risk of malnutrition. Two nationwide polio vaccination rounds reached **19.3 million children**. Measles and rubella vaccination reached **1.1 million people**, oral cholera vaccination reached nearly **2.4 million people** in outbreak-affected districts, and **25,422 priority individuals** were vaccinated against mpox in high-risk northern districts.

UNICEF also helped deliver the human papillomavirus (HPV) multi-age cohort vaccination campaign, which reached **2.97 million girls aged 9 to 18**. The malaria vaccine rollout expanded into routine immunization in **119 districts across eight provinces**, marking an important shift from pilot introduction to regular service delivery. At the policy level, UNICEF supported the development of the Health Sector Strategic Plan and the National Immunization Strategy 2026 to 2030, which was later approved by Gavi with a **USD 61.5 million** country investment.

2.97
million
girls
vaccinated
for HPV

To reach children who are often missed by the system, UNICEF supported digital transformation in health services. The Electronic Child Registry pilot was completed in **22 districts of Maputo Province**, and digitised microplanning for immunization outreach was expanded to **35 districts in Nampula and Zambezia**. These tools help health workers identify zero-dose and under-immunized children more quickly and target outreach more effectively.

65,756
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for severe
acute
malnutrition

UNICEF also supported better care for newborns and stronger community health services. Three regional learning hubs and a national mentorship network helped improve care for **23,845 hospitalised newborns** across **29 referral hospitals**. At community level, UNICEF supported the training of **976 community health worker trainers** and **320 new community health workers** in four priority provinces, while **668 community health workers** received in-service training on upSCALE. UNICEF's advocacy also helped mobilise more than **USD 11 million** for the Community Health Subsystem from the Global Fund and the World Bank.

On nutrition, UNICEF supported the treatment of **65,756 children** with severe acute malnutrition, a **25 per cent increase** compared with 2024, with a **cure rate of 79 per cent**. The Nutrition Interventions Package reached more than **378,000 children in 14 districts**, and mother-led mid-upper arm circumference screening enabled **1,928**



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caregivers to monitor their children’s nutritional status. An impact evaluation of an EU-UNICEF programme in Sofala showed that integrated nutrition, WASH and social and behaviour change interventions contributed to a **35 per cent reduction** in severe stunting among children under five, providing strong evidence for a convergence approach that UNICEF is now helping scale up in other provinces.

UNICEF also worked to improve early identification of developmental delays and disability. In 2025, **274 health workers** were trained on the Malawi Developmental Assessment Tool and **67 facilities** were equipped, helping bring early detection and referral closer to routine primary care.



Every Child LEARNS

UNICEF supported children to start school ready to learn, stay in school and continue learning during crises. The Accelerated School Readiness programme reached **13,212 children** in 2025, **50 per cent of them girls**, surpassing the annual target and helping all participating children transition to Grade 1. Monitoring data continues to show that children who complete the programme perform better in literacy and numeracy than their peers.

To help more girls stay in school and move on to secondary education, UNICEF expanded school-based mentoring in **83 targeted schools**. In 2025, **1,147 secondary students** mentored **nearly 7,000 younger learners**, supporting primary completion and transition to the next level. UNICEF also distributed **255 bicycles** to vulnerable students in Sofala, reducing one practical barrier to attendance for children living far from school.

Improving education quality remained a core priority. UNICEF trained **506 teachers** in inclusive pedagogies and **476 school managers** in school leadership, both above annual targets. To strengthen local accountability, UNICEF also trained **3,280 school council members** in **205 schools**, helping communities better manage school resources and monitor teacher attendance.

UNICEF also supported efforts to make schools safer. In 2025, school-based violence prevention and referral mechanisms generated **11,636 case reports**, with **3,494 cases** referred for support. The increase in reporting suggests growing trust in the system and greater willingness to break the silence around abuse and violence affecting children in schools.

Under the Education Transformation agenda, UNICEF advanced digital learning to expand access for out-of-school children and youth, strengthen skills development and improve system management. This included developing MAZA, a 21st-century skills platform, and starting the digitalization of the primary education curriculum. Through the UNICEF-ITU GIGA initiative, UNICEF also supported school mapping in Mozambique and began technical support for procuring school connectivity.

UNICEF supported **50 out-of-school adolescent girls** through digital catch-up classes, helping them reintegrate into formal education through the Adolescent and Adult Learning Programme. It also organized a MAZA content creation marathon on climate change awareness and action, leading to two youth-led companies and supporting **11 young people** on a learning-to-earning pathway.

In provinces affected by conflict and climate shocks, UNICEF helped **262,711 children** access education through temporary learning spaces, catch-up classes, and psychosocial support. A major policy gain was the acceptance by government entities of Alternative Learning Programmes as a valid pathway for out-of-school adolescents, helping bridge the gap between emergency learning and longer-term reintegration.

13,212
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Accelerated
School
Readiness
programme

262,711
children
accessed
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through
temporary
learning
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506
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trained in
inclusive
pedagogies

Every Child IS PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION



774,857
new births
were
registered

In 2025, UNICEF supported progress in both child protection systems and direct services for vulnerable children. The launch of the Plano Nacional de Acção para a Criança, PNAC III, created a new national framework for advancing child rights over the next decade. UNICEF also supported the development of regulations for alternatives to detention for children, helping move the juvenile justice system further toward restorative approaches.

Legal identity remained a major area of progress. In the first three quarters of 2025, **774,857 new births** were registered. UNICEF supported the expansion of health facility-based birth registration to **158 locations** from a baseline of 74 in 2021, helping more children and communities access civil registration services from nearby health facilities.

Furthermore, UNICEF helped strengthen child protection information and referral systems. The electronic National Registry for Alternative Care was expanded across



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four provinces, allowing children in alternative care to be digitally registered and monitored more consistently. The *Linha Fala Criança* child helpline managed **114,073 calls** in 2025 and referred **8,765 cases of violence and abuse** to specialised services, offering a critical route for children and families to seek help confidentially.

Prevention remained a central component of the child protection response. A structured positive parenting course reached **1,521 parents and caregivers** across **12 districts**, helping families develop non-violent approaches to child-rearing. In Cabo Delgado, UNICEF and partners reached **276,337 children and caregivers** with community-based mental health and psychosocial support, and **392 children** associated with armed forces and groups received reintegration support, including case management and other protective services.

114,073
calls managed by
Linha Fala Criança

Every Child

LIVES IN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

204,726
people
received
improved
access
to water
services

UNICEF continued to support stronger, more resilient water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services across development and humanitarian settings. In 2025, the WASH sector underwent major institutional reform following approval of the Water Supply and Sanitation Law in 2024 and the new political cycle after the 2025 elections. UNICEF provided consultative support as new entities were established, including FIPAAS, Águas de Moçambique, and provincial water and sanitation companies, while continuing to advocate for equitable access for vulnerable populations as the reforms move into implementation.

UNICEF also strengthened the enabling environment for the sector. Support to the assessment of the National Water and Sanitation Information System identified important gaps in system functionality and data visualisation, informing upgrades planned for 2026. At the same time, UNICEF supported **60 training sessions** that reached more than **1,700 government and private sector personnel** in areas including procurement, WASH FIT, emergency response, community-led total sanitation, sustainability and borehole construction.

532
communities
were
declared
open
defecation
free

On service delivery, UNICEF supported access to improved water services for **more than 204,726 people** through rural boreholes, solar water systems, small-town schemes, and innovative financing approaches such as revolving funds. Technical sustainability was strengthened through specialised training and quality control for borehole construction, while humanitarian interventions restored or extended services in conflict-affected and disaster-affected areas, including Cabo Delgado.

Sanitation and hygiene efforts also continued at scale. **More than 532 communities** were declared open defecation free in 2025, and **two additional districts** achieved open defecation free status, bringing the national total to **13 districts**. The same integrated programming model that linked WASH, nutrition and behaviour change in Sofala also showed a **35 per cent reduction** in severe stunting among children under five, reinforcing the value of coordinated investments across sectors.

732,000
people
reached with
emergency
water
services

UNICEF advanced climate-resilient WASH services in **37 health facilities** and **37 schools**, helping create safer conditions for children and mothers while contributing to longer-term resilience. Humanitarian WASH needs remained high throughout the year. In response to conflict, cyclones, drought and disease outbreaks, UNICEF reached **more than 723,000 people** with emergency water services and supported sanitation, hygiene and infection prevention in displacement sites, schools, health facilities and cholera treatment centres.







Every Child

HAS AN EQUITABLE CHANCE IN LIFE

At a time of rising fiscal pressure on households and public services, **UNICEF supported social protection and evidence generation to help** children and families cope with shocks.

The Child Grant 0-2 programme expanded in Nampula and Niassa, with **11,000 new beneficiaries** and their respective mothers and caregivers registered in 2025. This brought the total reach of the programme to **61,725 beneficiaries across 23 districts**.

11,000
new beneficiaries
on Child Grant 0-2
programme

In Magude District, Maputo Province, anticipatory cash transfers reached **4,850 drought-affected households**, or approximately **24,250 people**, before predicted drought conditions peaked. This demonstrated how social protection can function as a proactive response to climate risk, rather than only reacting after families have already fallen deeper into crisis.

4,850
drought-affected
households received
anticipatory cash
transfers

A major operational step forward was the digitalisation of payments. In Nampula and Cabo Delgado, **13,122 mobile money accounts** were opened for beneficiaries, helping improve the efficiency, security and transparency of transfers while also increasing financial inclusion for women, who are the main recipients of the grant. UNICEF also supported case management for the most vulnerable households linked to the programme, helping identify and respond to child protection risks and supporting more children to obtain birth registration.

13,122
mobile money
accounts opened
for beneficiaries

At the policy level, UNICEF supported the Multidimensional Child Poverty Assessment, endorsed by the Government, which provides the country's first official non-monetary poverty estimates for children. UNICEF also continued budget analysis and advocacy on the impact of debt on social sectors, including exploring how innovative financing, such as debt swaps for nutrition, could help protect investment in children during a period of severe fiscal constraint.

Cross-cutting

RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

1.1
million
people
reached by
UNICEF's
emergency
response

Across all sectors, UNICEF's emergency response reached 1.1 million people in 2025. Investments in preparedness, local partnerships and decentralised logistics helped the office continue reaching children even under difficult conditions, including in hard-to-reach parts of the north. Support to the rehabilitation of the National Institute for Disaster Management warehouse in Nampula and the training of district technical councils helped strengthen local preparedness and response capacity.

41,313
model
families
households
were
certified

Social and behaviour change work helped communities adopt healthier practices and seek services. In 2025, **41,313 model family households** were certified for adopting critical health and nutrition behaviours, and communication campaigns reached **4.5 million people** with life-saving messages linked to cholera, mpox, immunization, hygiene and nutrition. Behavioural science pilots in Sofala also demonstrated how low-cost, evidence-based approaches can improve hygiene practices and build trust in services.

921,928
users on
SMS Biz
platform

Youth engagement remained important across the year. **More than 800 adolescents** were engaged as active agents of change, and the U-Report and SMS Biz platform grew to **921,928 users**. A national U-Report poll on Nationally Determined Contributions engaged **30,459 young people**, helping ensure that youth perspectives informed Mozambique's climate discussions ahead of COP30. Youth-led climate advocacy also resulted in a Youth Declaration presented at national and global forums.

Partnerships remained central to these results. In 2025, UNICEF Mozambique mobilised **USD 43.2 million** in Other Resources Regular and **USD 10 million** in Other Resources Emergency. Despite major funding pressures, the office managed more than **USD 81 million in supplies** and achieved a **92 per cent implementation rate** for HACT assurance activities, helping maintain accountability and timely delivery through government and implementing partners.







Looking ahead

The results of 2025 showed that integrated, shock-responsive programming can deliver strong results for children even in a very difficult operating environment. They also showed that the best outcomes often come when emergency response, community engagement, digital innovation, and systems strengthening are combined rather than treated separately.

In 2026, UNICEF will continue working with the Government, communities and partners to protect and expand access to essential services, strengthen child-focused social protection, invest in climate-resilient infrastructure and help direct resources toward the children and communities facing the greatest deprivation. Continued efforts to improve data systems, support digitalised service delivery, especially for learning, skills and community health, strengthen frontline workers and mobilise flexible financing will remain important as Mozambique navigates ongoing fiscal and climate pressures.

With sustained partnership and investment, more children in Mozambique can survive, learn, be protected and thrive. UNICEF remains committed to helping turn this possibility into reality for every child.

UNICEF Mozambique extends its **sincere thanks** to **all donors and partners** whose generous support made this work possible in 2025.

We are grateful to the **European Union** and the **Governments of Canada, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom** and the **United States of America**. We also thank the **UNICEF National Committees of France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Spain** and the **United States** for their valued support.

Our thanks also go to the **Central Emergency Response Fund, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the European Investment Bank, the Gates Foundation, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the Global Fund, the Global Partnership for Education, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, Rotary International, UNOPS, ViiV Healthcare, the World Bank** and the **World Food Programme**.

UNICEF also expresses its deep appreciation to its **partners in the private sector** and to its **implementing partners**, whose support and collaboration on the ground help deliver results **for every child in Mozambique**.