



On 10 February 2023, a UNICEF Syria WASH Facilitator in Aleppo, checks the quality of trucked water in the Almyassar neighbourhood of Aleppo City.

Reporting Period: 15-22 February 2023

## Highlights

- On 20 February, a 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck near the city of Antakya, Türkiye (near the Syrian border), adding additional trauma for those who survived the previous earthquakes from 6 February.
- In NW Syria, data reported from partners of suspected cases of cholera were 1,665 in week 7 (12-18 February), a rise of 12 per cent from the previous week. Around 45 per cent of these cases are children under five.
- Across all earthquake affected areas in Syria, UNICEF, as WASH Cluster Lead, has reached more than 425,000 people with essential WASH supplies and services, including through water quality management support to 5 water stations and 89 reception centers in NW Syria serving around 190,000 affected people.
- In NW Syria, UNICEF supported 19,781 children under five with nutrition preventative and curative services (Idleb and Aleppo). As Nutrition Cluster Lead, UNICEF undertook rapid nutrition assessments in 27 shelters in Lattakia as well as 241 shelters in Aleppo. A total of 20,800 children in Aleppo, Hama, Idleb, Lattakia, and Tartous were screened and, if required, provided with adequate treatment.
- With UNICEF technical support and coordination as Education Cluster Lead, a total of 1,551 reportedly damaged schools have been assessed in Aleppo, Hama, Homs Lattakia which contributed to the timely reopening of 1,796 temporarily closed schools. In NW Syria, the Education Cluster has developed two standardized education rapid assessment tools to be used by all partners.
- UNICEF and partners have reached more than 55,000 children with essential Child Protection services and supplies, including psychological first aid and recreational activities.

## Earthquake Response in Syria

### Humanitarian Situation Report No. 2

unicef   
for every child

### Situation in Numbers

 **3,700,000**  
children affected

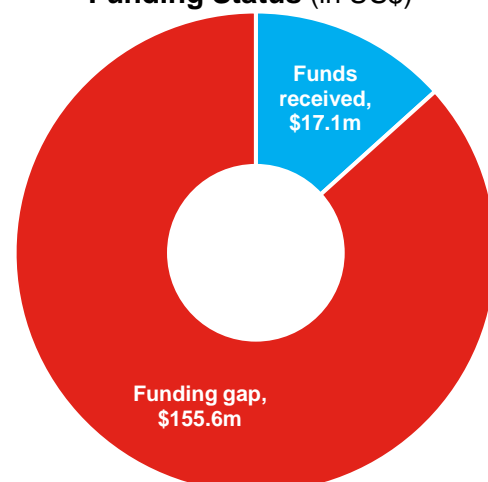
 **8,800,000**  
affected population

 **2,600,000**  
children to be reached

 **5,400,000**  
people to be reached

## UNICEF Appeal US\$ 172.7 million

### Funding Status (in US\$)



## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As of 18 February, in Syria, at least 5,814 people have reportedly been killed and around 11,000 injured as a result of the multiple earthquakes that hit parts of Syria and Türkiye on 6 February. On 20 February, a 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck near the city of Antakya, Türkiye (near the Syrian border), adding additional trauma for those who survived the previous earthquakes from the 6 February.

More than 8.8 million people – including 3.7 million children – have been affected and many are now in urgent need of water, shelter, food, and emergency medical and psychosocial assistance<sup>1</sup>. The assessments in shelters in Idlib, Aleppo and Lattakia confirmed high levels of distress among children and families, children suffering panic attacks and experiencing violence. Due to family separations and lack of shelter, children have become more vulnerable and at greater risk of exploitation and abuse.

Since 14 February, a total of five interagency missions in which UNICEF participated have taken place through the Bab Al-Salam and Bab Al-Hawa border crossings into NW Syria. The missions visited areas heavily impacted by the earthquakes include Salqin, Harim and Jindires.

### WASH:

Preliminary information shows that the already fragile conflict-affected water and sanitation infrastructures were extensively affected, with reports of damage and collapse of water reservoirs, water towers, water stations, network and of sanitation facilities and systems (in Lattakia, Tartous, Idlib, Hama, and Aleppo governorates). Initial assessments in earthquake affected areas in Aleppo, Damascus, Deir-ez-Zor, Hama, Homs, Tartous and parts of southern Idlib indicate a restoration of WASH sector status to pre-earthquake levels are estimated at US\$ 40 to 45 million.

A partner assessment conducted by REACH<sup>2</sup> in NW Syria has found that at least 25 per cent of the WASH services are damaged.

Widespread reports of an increase in the turbidity of water bears the risk of ineffectual water treatment and subsequent poor health outcomes particularly in areas already reporting an ongoing active Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD)/cholera outbreak. In this context, it is worth reminding that between 25 August 2022 and 21 January 2023, 84,607 suspected cases of cholera have been reported from all 14 governorates, including 24,124 cases in Idlib (25.1 per cent) and 19,438 cases in Aleppo (23 per cent)<sup>3</sup>. In NW Syria, post-earthquake data reported from partners of suspected cases of cholera were 1,665 in week 7 (13-19 February) - a rise of 12 per cent from the previous week when the earthquake took place - with 45 per cent of these cases being children under five (with the attack rate raising from 0.94 per cent at the end of January to 1.05 per cent post-earthquake). This is worrying, especially as the weather gets warmer.

### Health:

Assessments are continuing to determine the extent of the damage on facilities, with at least 91 facilities reportedly damaged (including at least 7 hospitals) in Aleppo, Hama, Lattakia and Tartous<sup>4</sup>. In NW Syria, 52 health facilities were partially destroyed while three were completely destroyed<sup>5</sup>. The destruction is mostly reported in areas closer to the Turkish border, such as in Afrin and Idlib.

An interruption in access to essential health services, as well as overcrowding of existing facilities, might also result in increasing maternal and child deaths, vaccine preventable diseases, as well as deaths from chronic diseases. In addition, the ongoing cholera outbreak, which is expected to worsen over the coming months, is also putting pressure on the already over-burdened public health services, health-care delivery, as well as water, and sanitation systems in the country. It is anticipated to further worsen access to essential health care and nutrition services in 2023.

### Nutrition:

The earthquake has impacted 3.7 million children and Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW) and will exacerbate the nutrition situation of vulnerable children and women that was already alarming. Acute malnutrition level among children and women is steadily rising, whilst stunting, micro-nutrient deficiencies and uptake of Infant and Young Child Feeding and care practices remain concerning<sup>6</sup>.

### Education:

Latest data based on ongoing assessments suggests that up to 1,000 schools are damaged (including over 220 in NW Syria) with the range and severity going from slightly damaged to destroyed<sup>7</sup> and over 177 schools being used as shelter (including 46 in NW Syria<sup>8</sup>). As a result, more than 590,000 children who go to schools that are damaged or used as shelter will not be able to resume their education until these schools are safe and ready. In NW Syria, Education services are unlikely to resume until March. A REACH rapid assessment conducted with communities in NW Syria (data collected between 9-11 February) have reported repair, rehabilitation and debris removal for education facilities as one of the

<sup>1</sup> OCHA Syria Earthquake Flash Appeal (14 February)

<sup>2</sup> REACH\_NWS-NGO-Forum\_Earthquake\_RNA\_Situation-Overview\_15-February-2023.pdf

<sup>3</sup> [WOS Cholera Situation Report \(5 February\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> WHO Syria Earthquake Situation Report (15 February)

<sup>5</sup> Data as shared by WHO partners and Assistance Coordination Unit

<sup>6</sup> OCHA Syria Earthquake Flash Appeal (14 February)

<sup>7</sup> OCHA Flash update #12: [Syrian Arab Republic - Humanitarian Country Team \(HCT\) Coordinated Response Flash Update #12 - Earthquake \(As of 17 February 2023\) - Syrian Arab Republic | ReliefWeb](#). Each school accommodates circa 500 children.

<sup>8</sup> OCHA, Earthquakes: North-west Syria: Flash Update No. 13 (as of 23 February 2023) [Earthquakes: North-west Syria: Flash Update No. 13 \(as of 23 February 2023\) \[EN/AR\] - Syrian Arab Republic | ReliefWeb](#)

most reported areas for support<sup>9</sup>. The continued aftershocks are also one reason why parents may be reluctant to send their children to school.

### **Child Protection:**

Based on the preliminary information received from partners on the ground conducting initial assessments and visiting shelters in affected areas, both children and adults continue to show high levels of trauma, panic attacks and stress. Among children other signs observed include unusual crying, sadness, nightmares, fear from loud noises, inability to enter rooms in their homes where they were when the earthquake happened. While for adults, signs of excessive worrying and fear, nightmares, insomnia, and disorientation have been observed.

## **Summary Analysis of Programme Response**

UNICEF's earthquake Immediate Response Plan aims to reach 5.4 million people, including 2.6 million children, in the first three-month period of the response from February to May 2023. UNICEF addresses the immediate life-saving and urgent humanitarian needs of girls, boys, adolescents, and families through an integrated and gender-responsive approach prioritizing highly affected areas and areas of large displacement. UNICEF will leverage the established system for Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) and the prevention of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation. In line with the Core Commitments for Children in humanitarian action, priority will be given to restoring essential health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), psychosocial support, family separations, protection case management, provision of cash and winter items where possible.

### **WASH**

In NW Syria, UNICEF has reached 302,321 affected people residing in 89 reception centers and 15 communities, in Ariha, Harim, Idlib and Jisr Ashgour in the Idlib governorate as well as Afrin, A'zaz, Jarablus and Jebel Samaan in the Aleppo governorate. The water quality management support provided to five water stations and 89 reception centers, serves 187,506 affected people with safe domestic water supply. Services such as water trucking, solid waste management, and desludging of septic tanks outreached over 125,585 people.

In NW Syria, UNICEF distributed 22,236 hygiene kits, supporting 114,825 affected people. Moreover, 121,437 people were reached from social and behavioural change hygiene promotion sessions.

In Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia, UNICEF provides water trucking to an estimated 125,000 people, including to neighbourhoods where water pumping has been stopped, as a precautionary measure for fear of flooding households or potential cross contamination resulting from damaged/leaking water and sewerage networks.

Given the risk of water borne disease outbreaks, including cholera, UNICEF is monitoring the quality of drinking water jointly with water authorities in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia at the water source, tankers, and end users on daily basis. Free residual chlorine levels ranged from 0.21 to 0.43 mg/l which meets the required standards. This effort will continue across the affected governorates in Syria until regular service could be resumed following the repair of networks. UNICEF also continues to provide sodium hypochlorite to all affected areas covering an estimated 70 to 75 per cent of the population in Syria. Aqua tabs were also distributed, as a precautionary measure where service water is in short supply and additional water supplies are from unknown sources. Aqua tabs reached 4,340 people in affected areas in Lattakia governorate.

UNICEF is currently intensifying hygiene promotion activities in the affected areas in Aleppo and Lattakia reaching almost 5,200 people with essential hygiene items (family hygiene kits, baby diapers and lady sanitary napkins). In addition, key programme interventions for cholera prevention also continued in Aleppo where 6,508 parents, caregivers, and children were reached in the most affected areas of the earthquake.

As WASH sector lead, together with local partners, UNICEF teams have undertaken assessments of key WASH infrastructure so that interventions can start on a priority basis. As part of the earthquake response, UNICEF is currently rehabilitating WASH facilities in two schools used as IDPs shelters in Lattakia while also rehabilitating WASH facilities (including the installation of five prefabricated sanitation units) in the Sport City facility in Lattakia which is being used as a shelter for IDPs. The resurgence of cholera is a signal of a system breakdown for water, sanitation and health hence long-term funding is needed to support infrastructure repairs and improvements is essential to mitigate and prevent waterborne diseases.

### **Health**

In NW Syria, during this reporting period, with the support of key health partners, 8,299 individuals have received medical consultations and life-saving health services (primarily for earthquake related injuries and trauma) in 13 centres across communities in Aleppo and Idlib. To date a total of 18,265 individuals have been reached since the earthquake response began. As part of UNICEF's scale up strategy, 15 UNICEF-supported mobile health teams in Aleppo and Idlib<sup>10</sup> have been providing services in the areas most affected by the earthquake. On 19 February, UNICEF dispatched the first transshipment of essential health kits and medical supplies to cover the needs of 100,000 people in NW Syria. These essential kits will replenish supplies and reinforce the capacity of health centres with IEHK, obstetric surgical kits, resuscitation kits, First Aid Kits and midwifery kits in Idlib and Northern Aleppo.

<sup>9</sup> REACH\_NWS-NGO-Forum\_Earthquake\_RNA\_Situation-Overview\_15-February-2023.pdf

<sup>10</sup> Jenderes, Harem, Salqin, Afrin, Atareb, Armanaz, AlDana, Azaz, Darkoush, Jisr AlShaghour, Jarabulus and Marret Masrien in Idlib and Aleppo

A total of 33 UNICEF-supported Mobile Health as well as Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNTs) were redeployed to earthquake affected areas in Aleppo (including Manbij and Ain Al-Arab), Hama, Lattakia, Idleb, and Tartous plus 15 static clinics in Lattakia, Idleb, and Tartous to provide health services and supplies to affected populations, including in shelters, reaching more than 229,700 people (219,500 people during the reporting period).

A total of 203,900 people were reached with health supplies in Aleppo (101,000) and Lattakia (102,900). In addition, large quantities of essential health supplies have been procured to be delivered to the affected areas to cover 250,000. The first instalment of medical supplies, including Interagency Emergency Health kits (IEHK) kits, obstetric surgical kits, resuscitation kit, trauma kit and midwifery kits was airlifted on 14 February from Dubai and Copenhagen and supplies were immediately distributed in Aleppo, Lattakia and Hama. The second instalment was airlifted on 23 February. UNICEF is aiming to work with local partners and youth volunteers and engage communities to ensure coverage of all children with vaccination particularly zero dose children.

With UNICEF support, 25,866 children and women in Aleppo, Lattakia, Idleb<sup>11</sup>, Tartous and Hama were reached with free of charge outpatient consultations and medicines (19,658 during the reporting period). A total of 2,561 children were vaccinated with routine immunization while 364 women were vaccinated with tetanus and diphtheria vaccine in Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Idleb and Lattakia.

In light of the ongoing cholera outbreak, there is an active surveillance system for acute watery diarrhoea in all affected governorates. UNICEF provided an on-the-spot response for the small number of cases of lice and scabies that were reported in the shelters.

## Nutrition

In NW Syria, UNICEF supported 19,781 under five children with nutrition preventative and curative services in the earthquake affected areas<sup>12</sup> in Idleb and Aleppo. A total of 4,528 PLWs and 6,473 children were screened for acute malnutrition, of which 334 children (5 per cent) were admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). UNICEF and partners distributed micro-nutrient tablets to 2,180 PLWs and 2,224 children. UNICEF-supported partners provided 8,195 messages on appropriate infant and young child feeding counselling. UNICEF provided 4,418 high-energy biscuits (HEB) - high in protein and supplemented with a premix of vitamins and minerals - for children under five to prevent malnutrition in emergency contexts. Additional nutrition supplies are expected to arrive within days to support further interventions with micronutrient powders and high-energy biscuits.

UNICEF, as Nutrition Cluster Lead, is monitoring the nutritional status of children under five and pregnant and lactating women in the affected areas very closely. So far, available data from rapid assessments indicates that there is no upward trend in acute malnutrition in the assessed areas.

In Lattakia, a rapid nutrition assessment finalized on 14 February, was conducted in 27 collective shelters in Lattakia where 4,000 children aged 5-59 months were screened. Among those screened, 20 children were found as moderate wasting cases (with 0.5 per cent rate), and 12 were found to be severe wasting cases (and 0.3 per cent rate). In Aleppo, the rapid nutrition assessment is ongoing and have so far has been conducted in 241 out of 280 collective shelters located in Jebel Samaan affected areas, Manbij and Ain Alarab.

With UNICEF support, 20,793 (12,814 during the reporting period) children in Aleppo, Hama, Idleb, Lattakia, and Tartous were screened for acute malnutrition. Out of children screened, 166 moderately malnourished children and 48 severely malnourished children were detected and admitted for treatment. 15,368 (8,507 this week) U5 children received multiple micronutrients powder and 2,150 (504) under five children received high energy biscuits.

A total of 4,214 (2,252 during the reporting period) pregnant and lactating women (PLW) were screened for acute malnutrition of which 270 were admitted for treatment, in addition to 4,156 (2,224 during the reporting period) PLW who received micronutrient tablets. Additional micronutrient supplements have been dispatched to affected areas and will cover 113,000 children 6-59 months plus 1,500 pregnant and lactating women for three months.

UNICEF and partners continued to provide appropriate infant and young children feeding (IYCF) counselling in the current emergency context and 17,038 (13,193 during the reporting period) caregivers, including pregnant and lactating women, were reached with awareness on appropriate IYCF practices in emergencies. In addition, UNICEF is scaling up awareness creation on the importance of breastfeeding.

## Education

In NW Syria, UNICEF through partners is planning to deploy an engineering consultancy firm (upcoming week) and is working with local education directorates and education partners in NW Syria to conduct a rapid structural assessment for all schools in affected areas, starting in Aleppo. Schools will be assessed and classified according to the level of damage and safety.

In Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia, UNICEF has dispatched education supplies and recreational kits for distribution to schools and shelters, covering the immediate needs of approximately 50,000 children. As of date, 1,580 children in shelters have received materials and engaged in recreational activities. Additional emergency education supplies, such as ECE kits, recreational kits, heaters, cleaning kits, stationery, and classroom tents, are currently being procured offshore. As part of the transshipment of supplies on the 19 February, UNICEF included education materials which have

<sup>11</sup> This refers to southern Idleb sub-districts (Abul Thohur, Khan Shaykun, Sanjar, Tamanaah and Heish) which are reached by the MHNT from Hama

<sup>12</sup> Jenderes, Harem, Salqin, Afrin, Atareb, Armanaz, AlDana, Azaz, Darkoush, Jisr AlShaghour, Jarabulus and Marret Masrien in Idleb and Aleppo

now been prepositioned in anticipation of schools reopening. The first education supplies transshipped were five high performance tents (which will be used as temporary learning centres) which can accommodate 40 children per tent thus accommodating 200 children in total, 50 school-in-a-box kits which will serve 2,000 children and 50 early childhood development (ECD) kits which will reach 2,500 children. Over 10,000 stationery kits have been distributed to schools, ready to reach 10,000 individual learners when schools reopen.

During the reporting period, UNICEF has significantly scaled up the coordination and implementation of rapid assessments of schools in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia. As of date, a total of 1,551 schools have been assessed in these governorates. In order to accelerate the repairs and light rehabilitation of assessed schools. UNICEF has activated contingency procedures with implementing partners and contracted additional engineers in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Lattakia to immediately begin light rehabilitation.

Preparations for school rehabilitation is closely coordinated with WASH sector to ensure the children can return to schools and resume their education in a safe environment with adequate gender and disability sensitive WASH facilities. In cases where longer term, structural rehabilitation is required, UNICEF has established six temporary learning spaces in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia where catch-up lessons and recreational activities are being provided. Additional temporary learning spaces (prefabricated classrooms and tents) are being set up as part of the ongoing response.

## Child Protection

UNICEF partners in NW Syria have provided in a first instance Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) and Mental Health Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) to 7,390 people affected by the earthquake. The first transshipment of 300 recreation kits, which will support 27,000 children with first level psychosocial support items, crossed into NW Syria on 11 February. While other supplies are on the way to NW Syria, these enabling kits aim at child stimulation, learning and re-establishing a sense of normalcy. Additionally, both UNICEF and CP AOR partners received within the two subsequent weeks to the earthquake, 588 recreational family kits, 589 ECD family kits, 584 adolescent family kits and 60 group recreational kits which are serving 23,010 children. UNICEF and CPAOR partners are also receiving First Aid Kits for the CFSSs and mobile teams.

In NW Syria, 14 UNICEF-supported Child Friendly Spaces and Women and Girls Safe Spaces as well as 19 Child Protection and Gender Based Violence (GBV) mobiles teams have resumed operations while scaling up their reach and interventions. UNICEF and partners in NW Syria are also delivering specialized case management for children. To date 147 children have been entered into case management (133 of these were recorded as separated and unaccompanied).

In NW Syria, an immediate Family Tracing and Reunification Mechanism has been established and centralised after the earthquake, linked to case management, initial screenings and protection assessments. The mechanism and registration modality have been shared across clusters addressed to CP and non-CP actors. Additionally, and to be able to support families managing a compounding crisis, UNICEF and partners will be setting up integrated education and child protection spaces near reception centres of families whose homes were damaged by the earthquake. The centres will provide an integrated service package to children and their parents/caregivers in a nurturing, accessible and safe environment. This will allow children and parents/caregivers to receive MHPSS, PFA, access to information and referrals to critical services, Family Tracing and Reunification, Child Protection Case Management, Emergency Case Fund (ECF), youth and adolescence engagement activities as well as Explosive Ordinance Risk Education (EORE).

In the most affected areas in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia, with the support of implementing partners, and through both static child friendly spaces and mobile response teams, UNICEF reached 38,436 children and caregivers with psychological first aid (PFA), recreational activities, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and parenting sessions.

More than 90 shelters in Aleppo have been reached by UNICEF-supported mobile teams to provide MHPSS, PFA and case management, while collaborating with UNICEF-supported youth volunteer networks to implement recreational activities with and for children in shelters. In Lattakia, UNICEF is providing child protection activities, including PFA and recreational activities, in 29 shelters while supporting the assessment of three additional shelters that opened after the 20 February earthquakes.

UNICEF reached more than 16,000 of children and caregivers in Aleppo and Lattakia with key messages on how to deal with earthquakes and the aftermath. These messages focus on how to deal with fear, anger, death and also provide the children and caregivers with the needed information on how and where to access needed services, and how to prepare for possible new emergencies

UNICEF also supported 157 children in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia who were severely affected by the earthquake, of whom 79 are unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). These children were supported with family tracing interventions and reunification, alternative care arrangements with the extended family through case management, including the referral of 78 children to specialized services.

In Aleppo and Lattakia, in order to mitigate cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, especially in shelters, UNICEF child protection partners have started sessions on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and were able to reach 1,070 children and adults. These numbers are expected to increase rapidly in the coming days to ensure that children and adults are aware of reporting mechanisms.

## Cash Relief Response

UNICEF and partners in NW Syria are anticipating an expansion of the already existing cash programme by combining the current nutrition cash programme with a winterization top-up to reach 133,000 people. The initial assessment carried out by REACH<sup>13</sup> on 15 February 2023 reported that 49 per cent of the population have unrestricted access to markets with only four per cent reporting no access, which makes cash suitable to buy essential commodities. Cash assistance will be provided to families with children who have been affected by the earthquake, including displaced families residing in temporary shelters to meet their basic needs.

Within 96 hours of the earthquake, UNICEF has been providing affected families in Aleppo and Hama with emergency cash assistance to support them meet their most immediate needs. As of 22 February, 32,600 people in 6,511 families in affected areas of Aleppo and Hama have received emergency cash assistance.

Over the next 16 weeks, UNICEF will continue to provide emergency cash assistance with the aim to reach 200,000 vulnerable people (40,000 families) in earthquake-affected areas of Aleppo, Hama, Lattakia and Tartous with two rounds of cash assistance. This unconditional cash assistance will be provided to the most vulnerable families affected by the earthquake, including families caring for children with disabilities, orphans and children with chronic illness and female-headed families. In addition to cash, affected families with highly vulnerable children have started to benefit from case management and referral to social services.

## Adolescents Development and Participation (ADAP)

The engagement of young people helps expand the scope and reach of the humanitarian response while developing wellbeing, belonging and leadership skills of young people themselves. So far, UNICEF and its local partners have mobilized more than 1,000 youth volunteers to support the response actions across sectors in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia. This includes relief and shelters' management, packaging, and distribution of food or NFIs in collective shelters, as well as disseminating key messages. More than 100 youth volunteers were also engaged in conducting rapid Child Protection assessments in 175 shelters in Aleppo during the reporting period.

Life skills sessions in emergency were conducted for 355 youth in Aleppo shelters while young people were mobilized to support Child Protection interventions in 10 shelters which reached more than 700 children through recreational activities and awareness raising sessions on personal hygiene for adolescent girls. In Hama, 2,428 young people in four youth centers and collective shelters received life skills sessions while 1,423 participated in sport for development activities.

## Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

UNICEF is scaling up its presence across the earthquake governorates of Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous. UNICEF is committed to supporting the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response through its leadership or co-leadership of cluster coordination for the WASH, Nutrition and Education Clusters and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility.<sup>14</sup>

Currently, 61 staff with managerial, technical and senior cluster coordination and information management capacity are being surged both into Damascus/ field office locations and into Gaziantep. In addition, around 40 staff are providing support to earthquake affected areas through support missions. As part of this scale-up, UNICEF has also significantly increased capacity for Cluster Coordination at national and sub-national levels across the whole of Syria, including additional international surge capacity for national level Education, Nutrition and Child Protection as well as additional national and international surge capacity for sub-national cluster coordination in UNICEF Field Offices in Aleppo, Lattakia, Homs and dedicated high-level cluster coordination for NW Syria.

UNICEF will ensure affected persons are reached through messaging on prevention and access to services, and existing complaints and feedback mechanisms (including sexual exploitation and abuse) will be scaled up with special attention to gender elements across all programmes and interventions.

As part of the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), UNICEF is increasing the operating hours of its service line to accommodate the increased number of calls during the weekend. In addition, an agreement has been reached among sister UN Agencies on how to refer and manage cases to address the diverse needs of the affected population, in the areas, including but not limited to, shelter, non-food items (NFIs), health, gender-based violence, legal documentation, and reunification with families. At the same time, the agencies have agreed to share their respective services in the affected areas so the callers can be immediately referred to and provide with necessary support.

Aside from the community engagement and social and behaviour change support mainstreamed across all programmes, UNICEF will lead the coordination across UN and non-UN organizations for a relevant response in this area. In addition, UNICEF will lead strategic activities catered to building resilience of children and their families affected by the earthquake and strengthening partners' emergency preparedness following the humanitarian programme cycle.

<sup>13</sup> REACH Rapid Needs Assessment, 15 February 2023

<sup>14</sup> All cluster coordinators costs are included into sectoral programme budgets

## Funding Overview and Partnerships

Prior to the earthquake, the US\$328.5 million 2023 Syria Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC)<sup>15</sup>, which includes response activities for NW Syria, was already underfunded. The severity of humanitarian needs in Syria was further exacerbated by the earthquake, especially since people across the country were already suffering from a deteriorating socio-economic condition, a recent cholera outbreak, shortages of electricity, water and fuel and 12 years of protracted crisis.

To respond to the life-saving needs of earthquake-affected children, UNICEF Syria developed an [Immediate Response Plan \(US\\$172.7 million\)](#) which is part of the [Inter-Agency Flash Appeal](#) and will inform the upcoming revision of the 2023 Syria HAC.

Section	Requirements (USD)	Funds allocated	Funding gap	
		USD	USD	%
WASH	\$47,800,008	\$6,234,460	\$41,565,548	87%
Health	\$29,265,371	\$2,880,376	\$26,384,995	90%
Nutrition	\$18,361,542	\$663,771	\$17,697,771	96%
Education	\$31,300,000	\$4,545,560	\$26,754,440	85%
Child Protection GBViE	\$19,950,000	\$2,501,985	\$17,448,015	87%
Cash transfers and social protection	\$23,623,079	\$300,000	\$23,323,079	99%
Cross-sectoral (PSEA, AAP, Evaluation, RO technical support)	\$2,400,000	\$0	\$2,400,000	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$172,700,000</b>	<b>\$17,126,151</b>	<b>\$155,573,849</b>	<b>91%</b>

Within 48 hours of the disaster, UNICEF immediately provided US\$6 million from its Regular Resources as part of the Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) to rapidly scale up the response. An additional US\$6 million from the EPF were also made available, bringing the total to \$12 million. To date, contributions from the Government of Australia and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) were allocated along with UNICEF's core resources.

A partnership of GBP 3 million with the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office was finalized on 21 February. Additional contributions from UNICEF National Committees are expected shortly. Other public sector partners indicated pledges of additional support (including from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, Japan, and Slovakia).

UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all public and private partners for the critical support to the earthquake response.

*Flexible and unearmarked contributions are requested to enable UNICEF to rapidly respond based on emerging needs.*

## External Media

Interviews with regional and international media outlets continued. Messaging continued to highlight the dire situation of the children (particularly after the second devastating earthquake on Monday 20 February), their immense needs and current challenges, and UNICEF's response on the ground. Production and dissemination of a wide array of social media [assets](#), videos and photos continued to mobilize private and international support to respond to the children's immense needs.

<sup>15</sup> The 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for Syria is undergoing finalization prior to the earthquake. The HAC requirement is based on 2022 and will be revised once the HRP project sheets for 2023 are finalized. Pre-earthquake, it is expected that UNICEF will require at least US\$360 million in 2023 to respond to the increased needs across Syria once the HAC is revised. The total number of people in need for 2023 has increased to 15.3 million people (including 7 million children) compared to 14.6 million people in need (including 6.5 million children) in 2022.