



UNICEF-trained and supported young volunteers engage in designing and conducting recreational activities, disseminate key awareness raising messages and help provide humanitarian support for children, families, and their peers in a collective shelter in Jableh, rural Lattakia, Syria.

Earthquake Response in Syria

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 8



Reporting Period: 29 March - 11 April 2023

Highlights

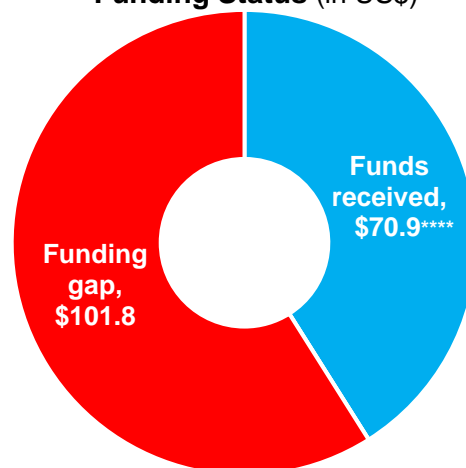
- UNICEF and partner's emergency response is being strengthened through harnessing the invaluable support of 5,370 young volunteers, including 2,705 adolescent girls and young women, who despite themselves being affected by the earthquakes are eager to get involved as strategic partners in helping other earthquake affected children, peers and families.
- UNICEF and partners reached an additional 64,129 people (119,729 people to date) with social behaviour change messages, including lifesaving messages on cholera prevention.
- UNICEF and partners reached an additional 126,422 children, adolescents and caregivers (257,292 people to date) with psychosocial support, mental health and psychological first aid.
- Cash response for affected families in Lattakia has been initiated, bringing the total number of people reached with UNICEF cash assistance in the whole of Syria to 88,721. In Hama, a new survey found that 50 per cent of families used the cash assistance for house repairs and rent.

Situation in Numbers

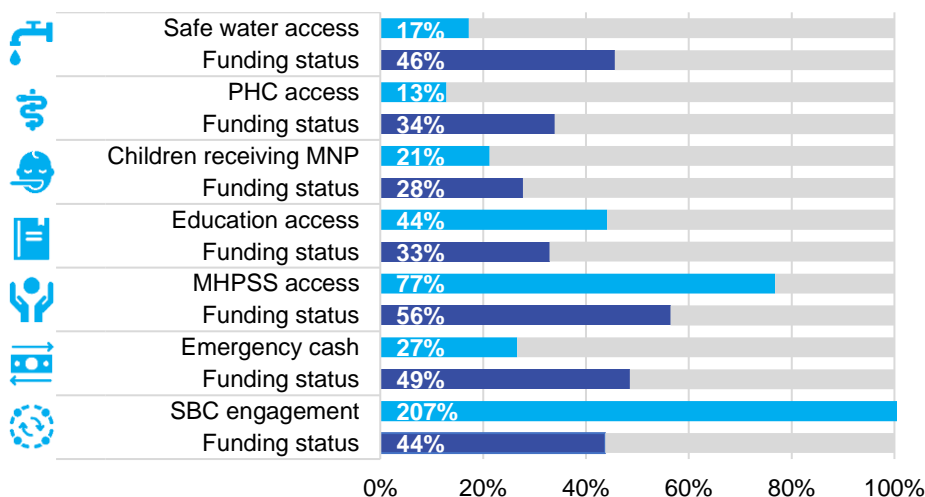


UNICEF Appeal US\$172.7 million

Funding Status (in US\$)



Funding Status***



*UNICEF, Earthquake Response for the Children of the Syrian Arab Republic, Immediate Response Plan, February-May 2023

**OCHA, Syria Earthquake Needs and Response Overview, 15 March 2023

***The funding status reflects funding for the entire sector, while the results towards the selected indicator per sector represents only the results towards that key sector specific indicator.

****In addition to the funds received from partners, UNICEF made available an Emergency Programme Funds (EPF) loan of US\$17.4 million to immediately scale up the earthquake response in Syria. In previous sitreps this was included in the total funding received but has been removed in this sitrep in order to more accurately reflect the level of funding received for this response.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

To meet the life-saving needs of nearly 3 million earthquake-affected children in Syria, UNICEF is appealing for **US\$172.7 million** to implement its [Immediate Response Plan for the Earthquake](#), which is part of the [Inter-Agency Flash Appeal](#) and will inform the revision of the 2023 Syria Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC).¹

The **Immediate Response Plan is 41 per cent funded**, with US\$70.9 million received.² Nutrition, education and health remain significantly underfunded. There is a need for additional flexible and unearmarked contributions to enable UNICEF and its partners to deliver services for children across Syria, regardless of their location.

Of the funds received, US\$45.2 million (64 per cent) are from UNICEF core resources, UNICEF National Committees, UNICEF country offices with structured private sector fundraising activities and UNICEF's global giving online platform.

The remaining US\$25.7 million funding received is from public sector partners including the governments of Australia, Japan and Slovakia, the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) Rapid Response, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Accelerated Funding Grant and the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

Other public and private sector partners have pledged additional support, including the Government of the State of Kuwait, the CERF Underfunded Emergencies grant and UNICEF National Committees. UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all private and public sector partners for their critical support to the earthquake response.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

According to local and government sources, approximately 6,000 people have reportedly been killed and more than 12,000 injured across Syria as a result of the multiple earthquakes that hit parts of Syria and Türkiye on 6 February.³ More than 8.8 million people in Syria, including 3.7 million children and pregnant and lactating women, have been affected and many are now in urgent need of water, shelter, food and emergency medical and psychosocial assistance.⁴ Due to pre-existing gender inequalities, women and girls face additional risks which require specific attention in the humanitarian response.

Since the first earthquake on 6 February, 97,400 households have been displaced in Syria.⁵ Movements of affected populations remain highly fluid. The Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster estimates that there are now over 2.6 million people who are internally displaced in northwest (NW) Syria, which includes those who were displaced prior to the earthquakes as well as those who have been newly displaced.⁶

With over 10,600 buildings damaged or destroyed by the earthquakes to varying degrees in NW Syria, shelter and rubble removal remain priorities to support communities in returning to some sense of normalcy.⁷ Concerns remain regarding the vulnerability of populations in informal sites which are susceptible to high levels of damage from floods and heavy rains/winds, putting children at further risk from the elements.

WASH

The earthquakes resulted in severe damage to water infrastructure across many regions in Syria. The water systems were already under significant strain before the earthquakes and most were not subject to routine maintenance, which led to further damages. Elevated reservoirs were the most affected, with many of them either collapsing during or shortly after the earthquakes. In addition, many pumping stations and water/sewage networks suffered extensive damages. Initial assessments revealed that there are 71 reservoirs completely collapsed and 114 were partially damaged. Almost 40km of water lines and 103km of sewage lines are in need of rehabilitation, which is especially dangerous as contaminants, including those from leaking sewer lines, could migrate into water networks.

The delivery of essential water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services was already close to a breaking point after years of crisis and lack of essential maintenance and repairs. The population in earthquake affected areas were strained after years of crisis coupled with a severe economic situation. The deterioration of WASH infrastructure and service delivery will affect WASH services delivery to households and will impact other essential services that rely on water to enable their continuation and safe operation, such as hospitals, medical centres, schools, bakeries and many other facilities.

A multi-sector rapid assessment conducted in collective shelters in Aleppo revealed that almost one in four respondents had challenges accessing functioning toilets and other WASH related facilities. Of those who faced these challenges, 41 per cent reported specific protection challenges, including gender-based violence (GBV). Furthermore, more than a third of respondents indicated that cleaning products were one of their top three priorities and 80 per cent reported

¹ Prior to the earthquake, UNICEF appealed for US\$328.5 million for its 2023 Syria Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC), which includes response activities for Northwest Syria. The severity of humanitarian needs in Syria was further exacerbated by the earthquakes, 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.

² In addition to the funds received from partners, UNICEF made available an Emergency Programme Funds (EPF) loan of US\$17.4 million to immediately scale up the earthquake response in Syria. In previous sitreps this was included in the total funding received but has been removed in this sitrep in order to reflect accurately the level of funding received for this response.

³ OCHA Syrian Arab Republic: Earthquakes, Whole of Syria Situation Updates, 1 March 2023

⁴ OCHA Syria Earthquake Flash Appeal, 14 February

⁵ OCHA Earthquake Needs and Response Overview, Syrian Arab Republic, 15 March 2023

⁶ CCCM Cluster, Earthquake Displacement Update published 20 March 2023

⁷ OCHA Northwest Syria Situation Update 07 April 2023

challenges accessing hygiene supply items (soap, menstrual hygiene supplies etc.). The situation is similar in other earthquake affected areas. All 47 reception centres assessed by the cluster field facilitators in NW Syria showed various gaps in accessing WASH services and supplies.

Health

At least 116 health facilities reported damages (including at least seven hospitals) in Aleppo, Hama, Lattakia and Tartous.⁸ In NW Syria, 67 health facilities have been damaged (six are fully damaged).

Cholera remains a serious concern with 65,218 suspected cases and 23 deaths. While the case fatality rate remains below the acceptable WHO threshold of 1 per cent, the attack rate has continued to slowly increase, rising to 1.41 per cent during this reporting period in NW Syria. Meanwhile, according to the Ministry of Health data, there is a steady increase in the number of reported and suspected cases of measles, with 350 cases confirmed so far this year, compared to 215 confirmed cases throughout the entire year in 2022. The need to prevent children from succumbing to deadly but preventable diseases has become even more pertinent in an environment where many are living in overcrowded camps, with sub-standard WASH systems, elevating the risk for the proliferation of disease.

Nutrition

Two months after the earthquakes, the nutrition situation of 3.7 million vulnerable children and pregnant and lactating women, which had already begun deteriorating in 2022, is worsening due to internal displacement, high rates of food insecurity, and lack of basic services. According to the Joint Nutrition Food Security Assessment, malnutrition indicators deteriorated in 2022 compared to 2019, with the Global Acute Malnutrition rate reaching 4.9 per cent (0.9 per cent for severe wasting) compared with 1.7 per cent (0.4 per cent for severe wasting) in the 2019 SMART⁹ survey. Maternal malnutrition is also on a rise, with a prevalence of 10 per cent in 2022 compared with 4.2 per cent in 2019 (SMART 2019). Suboptimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices are also worsening the stunting and micronutrient deficiencies prevalence, as stunting rates were 17.6 per cent in 2022 compared with 12.6 per cent in 2019.¹⁰

According to a recent nutrition assessment conducted in 20 collective shelters in Lattakia Governorate, the moderate and severe wasting rates are 1.4 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively, compared with 0.5 per cent and 0.3 per cent respectively in the previous assessment at the same shelters in February. The nutrition cluster in Syria is anticipating an increased severe acute malnourished caseload of just over 14,000 cases associated with the earthquakes. Furthermore, the admission trends of malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women in February 2023 reflected an almost double admission trend in comparison with the same time-period over the past three years.¹¹ In March, in partnership with the Department of Health, UNICEF conducted a rapid assessment in Lattakia to assess breastfeeding practices among lactating mothers in 25 shelters. A total of 130 children aged 0-6 months and 444 children aged 6-24 months were assessed and only six children aged 0-6 months were found to be dependent on breast milk substitutes.

Education

The earthquakes damaged a total of 2,947 schools, including 2,513 schools in Aleppo, Lattakia, Tartous, Hama, Homs and Idlib as well as 434 schools in NW Syria. Of these, 2,299 lightly damaged schools have reopened, while 104 schools are currently being used as shelters in Aleppo, Lattakia, Tartous, Hama, Homs and Idlib.

Attendance rates in schools that have reopened increased to over 95 per cent on average, but some families are still worried about the safety of their children due to the conditions of schools.¹² In Aleppo, Lattakia, Tartous, Hama, Homs and Idlib, an estimated 141,000 students are still lacking access to schools because the schools are out of service or being used as shelter. This has a particularly a severe impact in rural and remote areas where there are no alternative schools nearby, thus leaving children out of school. The Department of Education in Lattakia has been coordinating with the Emergency Committee to relocate families taking shelter in schools in order to resume education activities. To date, eight schools have been evacuated, reducing the number of schools used as shelter in Lattakia to nine.

Meanwhile, preparations for the national exams have begun; however, there is a concern that many affected children, especially those who have not returned to schools after the earthquakes, might not be ready or able to sit for the exams. In Lattakia, students participating in learning activities in the Sports City shelter were only receiving non-formal education interventions. Therefore, UNICEF provided prefabricated classrooms and coordinated with the Department of Education to offer formal education in these classrooms so that girls and boys can prepare and sit for their final exams, which will give them the opportunity to transition to upper grades and continue their education.

In NW Syria, over one million out of school children need education support¹³ and are at risk of falling out of education longer term, as well as being exposed to increased protection risks due to the compounding impact of the earthquakes on the already fragile education system. Investment in the overstretched and under-resourced school system remains a priority for the future of children in NW Syria, with 452 primary and secondary schools damaged to varying degrees and at least 25,000 teachers affected by the earthquakes and in need of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), appropriate compensation and capacity building.

⁸ WHO Syria Earthquake Situation Report, 15 February

⁹ Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition

¹⁰ Joint Food Security and Nutrition Assessment 2022

¹¹ Syria Nutrition Cluster Bulletin (GZT-Türkiye XB Nutrition Cluster), March 2023 #1

¹² Ministry of Education data

¹³ OCHA Northwest Syria Situation Update 07 April 2023

Child Protection

The need for child protection and GBV services continues to be high in the regions affected by the earthquakes. Two months into the response, children and their caregivers are still living in stressful situations. Physical and mental health research has often found that prolonged exposure to severe trauma, stress, and uncertainty ('toxic stress') especially during childhood and adolescence, can be associated with chronic physical illness including heart disease, a variety of cancers, stroke, and more severe mental health disorders such as schizophrenia and dysthymia later in life. The Child Protection AoR identified 4.6M children affected by the earthquake, who needed child protection services.

Feedback from communities continued to be related to the lack of clarity between permanent and temporary shelters; this uncertainty creates additional stress and anxiety to children and their families. High-level advocacy continues to be a need, especially as many humanitarian actors are hesitant in providing medium to long-term support, including installing adequate, safe and gender-sensitive WASH facilities and lighting pending clarification around the final list of shelters. Moreover, families reported that GBV towards adolescent girls and women is still a concern in collective shelters.

Young People and Adolescents

Young people make up 28.4 per cent of the total population in earthquake affected communities. Prior to the earthquakes, these young people were already suffering from prolonged conflict, the country's economic situation, and the pandemic, with limited opportunities to engage in their communities. As a result, they were often left disillusioned, frustrated and disempowered.

During and following the earthquakes, young people went through the same physical and emotional struggles and suffering as the rest of their community. Nonetheless, young people have refused to sit idly by and are determined to support their peers and families affected by the earthquakes. However, they often lack the enabling environment for empowerment and systematic positive engagement in their communities. Limited financial resources for adolescent programmes in some areas, such as Lattakia, have resulted in the absence of active partnerships.

Young people have the potential to become positive agents of change within collective shelters and among earthquake affected communities, bringing energy and innovative ideas from a young person's perspective. If left out and without support however, young people are at risk of adopting negative coping mechanisms that can negatively affect their smooth transition from childhood to adulthood, limiting their social and economic potential later in life.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

UNICEF's Immediate Response Plan for the earthquake aims to reach 5.4 million people, including 2.6 million children, in the first three-months of the response (February to May 2023). UNICEF is meeting 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 is leveraging the established system for accountability to affected populations (AAP) and the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and GBV in close collaboration with UNHCR, UNFPA and other partners, especially local NGOs. In line with UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in humanitarian action, priority will be given to restoring essential health and WASH, psychosocial support, family separations, protection case management, provision of cash and non-food items where needed.

UNICEF and partners provide PSEA awareness raising sessions, targeting all communities where UNICEF delivers programmes in either dedicated sessions or as part of other sessions structured by partners where other related topics are also discussed. Since the beginning of the earthquake response, 42,566 children and adults have participated in PSEA awareness sessions (14,917 girls, 15,024 boys, 8,675 women and 3,950 men).

WASH

UNICEF continues providing **life-saving WASH services**, reaching an additional 97,534 people during the reporting period and 582,136 people to date (161,172 girls, 146,317 boys, 141,906 women and 132,741 men) with a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs. An additional 134,945 people were reached with appropriate **sanitation services** during the reporting period, 336,182 to date (95,871 girls, 90,412 boys, 76,604 women and 73,295 men). Hygiene promotion continues to be provided in informal settlements, reception centres, and host communities.

UNICEF delivered WASH supplies to 283,879 internally displaced people (IDP) (83,799 girls, 77,791 boys, 63,884 women and 58,405 men) in collective shelters in Aleppo city, Lattakia, Tartous and NW Syria. These supplies include items such as **family hygiene kits**, soaps, aqua tabs, jerry cans, menstrual hygiene supplies, and baby diapers.

In NW Syria, WASH activities have focused on lifesaving WASH services, such as provision of safe drinking water (through water trucking), sanitation services (such as emergency latrines, solid waste management, and desludging) and distribution of soap, hygiene kits and tarpaulins. UNICEF also supported the desludging of septic tanks at reception centres and IDPs sites that were affected by recent winter storms and flooding.

In recognition of the increased GBV and protection risks, UNICEF is taking concrete actions in WASH interventions including **considerations of age and gender** in design, implementation and monitoring. Whilst reports of insufficient quality and quantity of gender segregated, well-lit and lockable toilet facilities continue in collective shelters, UNICEF has made strong progress in NW Syria through providing user friendly facilities, reducing walking distances to water points and designing facilities that address the specific needs of girls, boys, women and men.

Health

In partnership with the Department of Health, eight **prefabricated health clinics** have been installed in Lattakia, including four at the Sports City and four in Fedyo villages. These clinics will provide the full package of primary health care services (child health, immunization, nutrition, maternal health and general health services, including reproductive health).

Since the beginning of the response, UNICEF and partners have provided 154,229 children and women (66,724 girls, 65,054 boys and 22,451 women) with **access to primary healthcare** through medical consultations in UNICEF supported facilities. In partnership with local NGOs, including women led organizations, UNICEF is also providing maternal and child health services in the affected areas through mobile medical teams that include paediatricians, midwives, and female nurses.

In Idlib and Aleppo, the integrated **polio and measles campaign** was launched on 8 April targeting 819,527 children between the age of 0-59 months for polio vaccination and 758,057 children between the age of 6-59 months for measles vaccination. The second phase of the **oral cholera vaccination campaign** is due to be launched at the end of Ramadan, specifically targeting 1.2 million individuals highly impacted by the earthquakes.

Furthermore, partners are continuing to provide health services, reaching 24,647 individuals with medical consultations and essential health services. **Routine vaccination** is ongoing with the tracking of zero dose children, reaching 6,113 children to date. UNICEF is working with local partners and youth volunteers, including adolescent girls and young women, to engage communities to ensure vaccination coverage of all children.

Nutrition

To date, 134,850 children (67,503 girls and 67,347 boys) aged 6-59 months were **screened for acute malnutrition**, including 80,400 children in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous as well as 54,450 children in NW Syria. Out of the children screened, 178 children (85 female) in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous were identified as having severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and were treated; while 1,699 children in NW Syria were identified as having SAM and were treated. In addition, 22,637 pregnant and lactating women were also screened for acute malnutrition in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous, as well as 42,045 pregnant and lactating women in NW Syria.

In collaboration with WFP, UNICEF and partners reached 79,061 children under-five with **micro-nutrient powder (MNP)** to date, including 59,935 children under-five in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous, and 19,126 children under-five in NW Syria. In addition, 18,100 pregnant and lactating women received micronutrients in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous; and 34,492 pregnant and lactating women received micronutrients in NW Syria. UNICEF also provided **high-energy biscuits** to 2,153 children in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Lattakia, and Tartous as well as 2,408 children in NW Syria.

Meanwhile, UNICEF and partners provided messages on appropriate **infant and young child feeding** practices in emergencies, reaching an additional 15,040 primary caregivers during the reporting period and 108,327 primary caregivers to date (89,680 primary caregivers in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous as well as 18,467 in NW Syria).

In NW Syria, UNICEF continued working closely with its partners to provide **integrated nutrition services** of preventative and curative nutrition services in reception centres through the established 25 mobile clinics and through fixed health facilities. As cluster lead, UNICEF is also providing nutrition supplies to 36 cluster partners, including ready to use therapeutic food and preventative nutrition interventions.

Education

UNICEF and partners supported 134,636 children (67,521 girls and 67,115 boys) to access **formal or non-formal education** to date, including early learning, self-learning and remedial classes.

In coordination with the Directorate of Education in Lattakia, a school at the Sports City shelter was established, consisting of six **prefabricated classrooms** (prefabs) which will provide formal education to 120 students. The school was named "Hope" school to ensure the provision of hope for children to return to school and continue their education. Two other prefabs are also functioning in Lattakia, while 40 additional prefabs (17 in Lattakia, 10 in Tartous and 13 in Idlib) are being installed in overcrowded schools and near damaged schools where 54 per cent of students are girls. Another eight prefabs have been installed in a common shelter in Lattakia to provide 300 students with non-formal education.

UNICEF also installed 11 **temporary learning spaces** in four collective shelters in Aleppo and started providing learning and recreational activities to over 440 children. An additional 24 temporary learning spaces are being installed in Hama and Homs, serving an average of 1,560 children (750 girls and 810 boys) through double shifts.

To date, UNICEF established eight **digital learning centres** ("Learning Cinemas") in shelter locations in Aleppo and Lattakia and trained 53 facilitators and teachers on digital learning. Laptops and tablets pre-loaded with digital learning materials and interactive educational games along with projectors and batteries were provided to each centre; 2,040 children are benefitting from the Learning Cinemas.

In NW Syria, UNICEF continued supporting non-formal education activities, including **self-learning and remedial** classes, reaching 65,393 children (32,931 girls and 32,462 boys) in more than 150 schools and learning spaces in 58 communities from 20 sub-districts, of which 31 schools are newly supported. During the reporting period, UNICEF

partners also reached 18,222 children (8,097 girls and 10,125 boys) with **back-to-learning** interventions through numerous means, including awareness raising activities and community mobilization.

Meanwhile, debris removal, minor repairs and **light rehabilitation** is ongoing in 28 schools in Aleppo, Lattakia, Hama and Homs during reporting period. Preparations are ongoing to rehabilitate more than 388 schools and is closely coordinated with the WASH sector to ensure children can return and resume their education in a safe environment with adequate gender and disability sensitive WASH facilities. In Lattakia, seven schools requiring light rehabilitation (two in remote and rural areas) have been completed and 1,100 students can now benefit from formal education. The rehabilitation included schools in Hafeh, where most of the schools had been damaged. In order for more children to resume education, classes have resumed in two shifts in the rehabilitated schools – hosting children from other schools that are still closed due to damage. UNICEF is also coordinating with respective Departments of Education to prioritize schools in remote and rural areas where there is no alternative for children to go to school.

To promote resilience and psychosocial well-being of children in NW Syria, UNICEF partners reached 7,780 children (4,315 girls and 3,465) with **school-based psychosocial support** programmes in non-formal settings. During the same period, life skills and citizenship education programmes in formal and non-formal settings were conducted with UNICEF support, reaching 10,391 children (4,910 girls and 5,481 boys).

In coordination with the Child Protection sector, 12 education officers from 11 implementing partners in Syria are receiving training on **selfcare and psychosocial well-being for frontline workers**. The training aims to improve knowledge of psychosocial wellbeing and help participants design and implement training sessions to enhance the psychosocial well-being and mental health of their peers.

Child Protection

UNICEF and partners continue to provide critical child protection services to ensure that girls and boys in the affected areas receive the support they need. During the reporting period, UNICEF and partners reached an additional 126,422 children, adolescents and caregivers with **psychological first aid, mental health and psychosocial support** (MHPSS), recreational activities and parenting support programmes. This brings the total number of children and caregivers reached with MHPSS services and parenting support to 257,292 people since the beginning of the response. In NW Syria, interventions during the reporting period aimed at building resilience and restoring routine for children, reaching an additional 8,201 individuals (3,012 girls, 2,775 boys, 1,954 women and 460 men).

In Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia, 93 children at high-risk of child protection concerns were referred to specialized services, including referral to health and counselling services, food/non-food providers and cash assistance. UNICEF is closely following up with these cases through **case management** to ensure that they receive the needed support. Since the response began, 2,526 children have benefitted from case management services. In NW Syria, UNICEF and partners have opened 1,512 new protection cases to date (694 girls, 105 women and 713 boys). Child protection and GBV case management plays a central role in facilitating individual assessments, monitoring of cases and referral to specialized services, following a survivor centred approach and the best interests of the child.

During the reporting period there were no newly identified cases of separated or unaccompanied children. UNICEF and partners continued to support the 180 **unaccompanied and separated children** in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia. These children were provided with family tracing and reunification services (three children reunified with their families), psychological counseling support to help them overcome trauma, referral to educational services and regular medical check-ups. In addition, social and behavioural change (SBC) communication focusing on prevention of family separation, violence and negative coping mechanisms reached 9,815 individuals (2,853 girls, 3,390 boys, 2,058 women and 1,514 men) since the beginning of the response.

Protection of girls and boys against harm, injury and disability continued to be strengthened through **explosive ordnance risk education** (EORE) interventions delivered in displaced communities, health centres, camps and markets. During the reporting period, an additional 3,106 children, parents and caregivers (1,454 girls, 1,409 boys, 133 women and 110 men) received EORE in NW Syria. A total of 978 children and caregivers were reached with key messages on EORE in Aleppo. Since February, UNICEF and partners provided EORE to 16,578 children (8,335 girls and 8,243 boys) and 1,352 parents and caregivers (689 women and 663 men).

During the reporting period, UNICEF also reached an additional 7,628 children, including children with disabilities, in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia with **non-food items** (NFIs) (clothing, blankets and recreational material) to ensure that children have access to play material throughout their stay in collective shelters. Since the beginning of the response, UNICEF and partners reached 27,112 children with NFIs.

Cash Relief Response

UNICEF continues delivering **emergency cash assistance** to the most marginalised earthquake-affected families, reaching 88,721 people to date, including 69,851 highly vulnerable people in Aleppo and Hama as well as 18,870 pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under two years old in NW Syria.

To reach the most marginalized in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia, UNICEF is vertically and horizontally expanding two Humanitarian Cash Transfer (HCT) programmes:

- [Cash for Basic Needs Support Programme](#) (CBNSP): The programme provides unconditional and unrestricted cash assistance to help vulnerable families cover their basic needs during winter. The programme targets highly

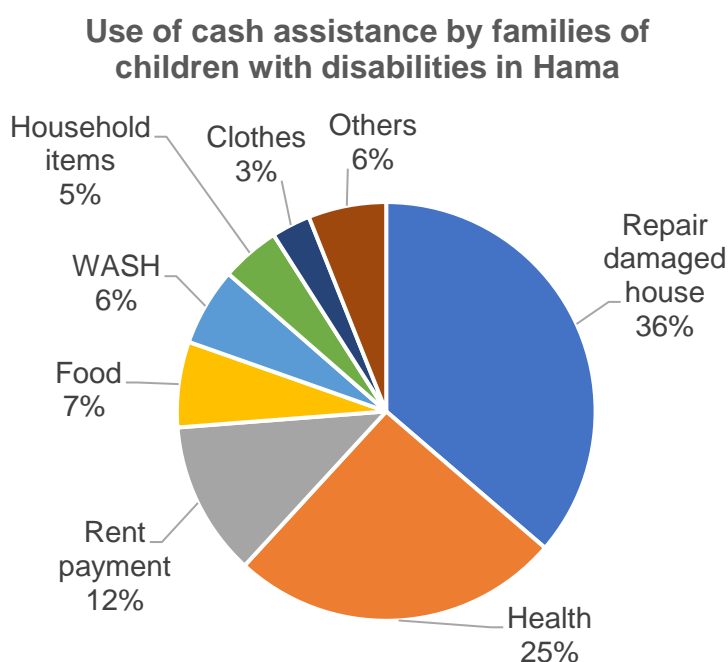
vulnerable families in urban and peri-urban slums, including those (i) headed by females and (ii) with persons with disabilities, chronic illnesses and/or orphans.

- [Integrated Social Protection Programme for Children with Disabilities](#) (ISPP-CWD): The programme provides unconditional and unrestricted cash assistance to families caring for children with severe mental and/or physical disabilities.

As of 12 April, 69,851 highly vulnerable people (13,551 families) in affected areas of Aleppo and Hama have received emergency cash assistance to support them to meet their basic needs and mitigate the economic shock created by the earthquakes. In Lattakia, of the planned target of 6,000 families, the identification, registration, and verification of 1,020 families was completed for immediate payment through financial service providers.

The [findings](#) of the rapid Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) survey, which was conducted among the ISPP-CWD earthquake-affected families who benefitted from UNICEF’s emergency cash assistance in Hama governorate, confirm the importance and relevance of providing unconditional and unrestricted cash assistance. While families have used the cash to respond to new needs resulting from the earthquake, such as house repairs and rent, they have also used the cash to address their specific needs and pre-existing vulnerability, as illustrated by the high share of cash spent for health. Key highlights are:

- Almost half of the cash was used to repair homes and pay rent. The top expenditure was for house repair (36 per cent), followed by health (25 per cent), rent (12 per cent), food (7 per cent), and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) (6 per cent).
- 80 per cent of families used some of the cash top-up for house repairs.
- The use of the cash assistance was very quick; on average, families spent the cash in 4.9 days.
- There was high level of satisfaction with the cash response; 91 per cent of beneficiaries reported that they were “satisfied” with the cash response. In contrast, 5 per cent reported they were satisfied to “some extent” while 4 per cent reported they were not satisfied.



Source: UNICEF rapid PDM survey, Hama Governorate, April 2023

In addition, UNICEF supported 18,870 pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under two years old in NW Syria with a one-off cash grant of US\$150. Alongside these cash transfers, UNICEF and partners are improving knowledge on consumption of adequate and nutritionally balanced diets through social behaviour change activities

Adolescents Development and Participation (ADAP)

UNICEF is working with young people for young people. UNICEF and partner’s emergency response is being strengthened through harnessing the invaluable support of 5,370 young volunteers, including 2,705 adolescent girls and young women, who despite themselves being affected by the earthquakes are eager to get involved as strategic partners in helping other earthquakes affected children, peers and families. These young people are bringing young and innovative perspectives to UNICEF’s response. UNICEF and partners are providing additional training for these young people and equipping them to **engage in and lead social and civic engagement activities**, including developing youth-led initiatives, leading recreational activities, disseminating SBC messages, distributing humanitarian aid and conducting assessments.

During the reporting period, 74 young volunteers (35 female and 39 male) from the volunteering platform “Youth Power in Emergencies” in Tartous and Lattakia (62 from Tartous, and 12 from Lattakia) supported a **cross-sectoral needs assessment** using the Syria Needs Assessment Tool (SYNAT), with support from UNICEF, OCHA, UNHCR and other UN agencies. The assessment took place in 48 communities in Tartous Governorate and 17 neighbourhoods in Lattakia city.

Through a **youth-led initiative** in “Omar Yehya al faraji” collective shelter in Hama, 49 youth volunteers (19 female) were trained on detergent production. The volunteers produced soap, shampoo, and laundry powder which were then added to 135 dignity kits (including menstrual hygiene management products) and distributed to families residing both inside and outside the shelter, along with key messages about hygiene promotion. The volunteers conducted the

humanitarian needs assessment (including hygiene needs), planned and organized the distribution, and participated in the distribution.

Meanwhile, on 6 April, earthquake affected 90 youth volunteers in Aleppo and Lattakia, who were and are still living in shelters and supporting on a voluntary basis, marked the **International Sports for Development Day**, by engaging with their 370 of their peers, including peers with disabilities, through organizing and leading various types of sport activities with the support of UNICEF and partners.

In addition, in (Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia), 1,106 young people (943 girls and 163 boys) benefited from **skill building activities**, including interactive sessions on the topic of self-awareness, stress management, teamwork and living together. The activities helped adolescents understand their own strengths and weaknesses and provided an opportunity for them to discuss their interests, hobbies, and hopes as they work through and beyond the difficult challenges they faced during and following the earthquake. The activity “Writing a Story Together”, where each adolescent wrote one sentence of a story, provided a fun, safe and creative space for adolescents to sit together, discuss, and share ideas with each other.

Social and Behavioural Change (SBC) / Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

UNICEF and partners reached an additional 64,129 people with SBC/RCCE messaging during the reporting period, reaching 119,729 people to date.

In Aleppo, Lattakia, Hama and Idlib, UNICEF and partners, including volunteers, reached 90,742 people (57,013 females and 33,729 males) during the reporting period with **community engagement sessions** in collective shelters and host communities. The focus of these sessions included hygiene promotion, cholera preventive practices, as well as proper IYCF practices. Messages on cholera prevention were also disseminated through more than 10,000 **print materials** that were distributed during the reporting period, reaching more than 13,000 individuals. Furthermore, group sessions underscored the benefits of routine immunization and emphasized the significance of COVID-19 vaccination.

In addition, 49,860 children (28,614 girls and 21,246 boys) in Aleppo, Lattakia, Hama and Idlib took part in **edutainment activities** that provided them with the necessary skills to protect themselves against water-borne illnesses and cope with hazards related to earthquakes. Volunteers also carried out **household visits**, reaching 11,303 individuals (6,771 females and 4,532 males) and facilitated the dissemination of essential self-protection messages and practices. Meanwhile, over 300 **advocacy meetings** were held with influencers and community leaders to better reach and engage with different members of the community.

Meanwhile, in NW Syria, UNICEF **leads the RCCE working group** for both the cholera and earthquake response, providing technical guidance and support to 33 organizations who are a part of the working group and implementing RCCE activities across NW Syria. During the reporting period, 9,928 students were reached in 31 subdistricts with life-saving messages and information on prevention of cholera and earthquake response. UNICEF and partners also engaged 102 teachers, 29 religious leaders and 63 community members on prevention of cholera; while 47 camp managers, 42 health workers, and 55 other influencers participated in UNICEF supported engagement actions for social and behavioural change. Since the earthquakes, a total of 49,629 people were reached with awareness messages on communicable diseases following earthquakes, psychosocial well-being and ways to keep safe after the earthquakes.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

As part of UN Humanitarian Country Team, UNICEF is scaling up its presence across the earthquake-affected governorates of Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous. Furthermore, UNICEF has been supporting OCHA for the Governorate-level Syria Needs Assessment Tool (SYNAT) by mobilising UNICEF community volunteers as enumerators to capture needs of the affected population outside shelters. Also, UNICEF is **expanding service delivery in the areas where there are critical gaps** while **shifting towards early recovery focusing more on resilience and system building in essential services**, in close coordination with local partners by strengthening their capacities. Furthermore, UNICEF is committed to supporting the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response through its **leadership or co-leadership of cluster/sector coordination for the WASH, nutrition and education clusters/sectors and the child protection area of responsibility**.¹⁴

To respond to the urgent needs of children, UNICEF mobilized a total of 84 staff with managerial, technical and senior cluster/sector coordination and information management capacity are being surged both into Damascus/ field office locations and into Gaziantep. This includes 31 surge staff from outside Syria and 53 internal surge staff from within Syria. As part of this scale-up, UNICEF has also significantly increased capacity for cluster/sector coordination at national and sub-national levels across the whole of Syria, including additional international surge capacity for national and sub-national level WASH, education, nutrition and child protection cluster/sector 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. **PSEA key messages**, including messages specifically tailored for children, have been disseminated through the UNICEF and UNHCR led interagency PSEA network in the earthquake-affected areas.

¹⁴ All cluster coordinators costs are included into sectoral programme budgets

As part of UNICEF's **accountability to affected populations (AAP)**, UNICEF has increased the operating hours of its service line to accommodate the increased number of calls during weekends. An agreement has been reached with 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, health, gender-based violence, legal documentation, and reunification with families. At the same time, 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. Since the earthquakes, the UNICEF service line has responded to more than 700 cases from the affected governorates of Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia.

In addition to the community engagement and social and behaviour change support mainstreamed across all programmes, UNICEF is leading the coordination across UN and non-UN organizations for a relevant response in this area. At the national level, partners are convening under the RCCE platform to coordinate earthquake-related activities. An intervention tracker has been established with active mapping tools using GIS to reflect RCCE activities at subnational levels and differentiated approach used to address various needs. Furthermore, UNICEF is leading strategic activities catered to building resilience of children and their families affected by the earthquakes and strengthening partners' emergency preparedness as well as early recovery and resilience building following the humanitarian programme cycle.

External Media

More social media and web content was disseminated across the platforms to showcase UNICEF's work on the ground [across the affected areas](#) and showcase [unsung heroes who are part of the response](#), providing critical aid, even while they are impacted by the earthquakes themselves. New content sought to bolster efforts to mobilise resources to respond to the need of vulnerable children particularly in the earthquake affected areas across the country. Content also recognised [key donors for their contributions](#) to the response.

Next SitRep: 28 April 2023

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Summary of Programme Results

Sector Indicator	UNICEF and Implementing Partners Response		
	Target	Total Results	Change* ▲ ▼
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			
Number of people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs	3,375,000	582,136 ¹⁵	▲ 97,534
Number of people accessing appropriate sanitation services	2,650,000	336,182 ¹⁶	▲ 134,945
Health			
Number of children and women accessing primary healthcare in UNICEF supported facilities	1,200,000	154,229 ¹⁷	▲ 12,642
Nutrition			
Number of children aged 6-59 months screened for wasting	433,000	134,850	▲ 12,416
Number of boys and girls (6-59 months) who received MNPs	371,250	79,061	▲ 9,866
Number of primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving IYCF counselling	339,000	108,327	▲ 15,040
Education			
Number of children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning	305,000	134,636	▲ 32,661
Child Protection, GBVIE & PSEA			
Number of children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community based MHPSS	335,000	257,292	▲ 126,422
Number of children provided with landmine or other explosive weapons prevention and/or survivor assistance interventions	545,000	16,578 ¹⁸	▲ 3,067
Number of people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations	3,750,000	42,566 ¹⁹	▲ 11,783
Social Protection & Cash Transfers			
Number of people reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers	333,000	88,721	▲ 19,692
Adolescents & Youth			
Number of adolescents and young people who participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives through UNICEF-supported programmes	10,000	5,370	▲ 3,629
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)			
Number of people participating in engagement actions for social and behavioural change	105,410	217,767	▲ 158,410
Number of people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services	1,850,000	119,729 ²⁰	▲ 64,129

*Change since last report

¹⁵ Rehabilitation work is ongoing. Beneficiary figures will increase significantly once this work is complete.

¹⁶ Rehabilitation work is ongoing. Beneficiary figures will increase significantly once this work is complete.

¹⁷ Data is still being processed and results are expected to increase in the next sitrep

¹⁸ This important activity remains critically underfunded, resulting in a low result compared to need that has been targeted

¹⁹ Current reporting includes those newly and directly reached to share information on safe, accessible reporting channels, but does not include indirect outreach or calculation of the population who already have access. This will be updated in the next report.

²⁰ SBC achievement of the target for engagement is on track with almost 60 per cent achieved. However, for the reach indicator, the underachievement at 22 per cent has been due to only focusing on interpersonal communication inside the shelter – once social and mass media interventions start the reach estimates will double.

Annex B

Funding Status*

Section	Requirements (USD)	Funds received (USD)	Funding gap	
			USD	%
WASH	\$47,800,008	\$21,787,827	\$26,012,181	54%
Health	\$29,265,371	\$9,927,739	\$19,337,632	66%
Nutrition	\$18,361,542	\$5,089,581	\$13,271,961	72%
Education	\$31,300,000	\$10,303,929	\$20,996,071	67%
Child Protection, GBViE & PSEA	\$19,950,000	\$11,257,229	\$8,692,771	44%
Cash transfers and social protection	\$23,623,079	\$11,466,542	\$12,156,537	51%
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE, AAP, Evaluation, RO technical support)	\$2,400,000	\$1,049,496	\$1,350,504	56%
Total	\$172,700,000	\$70,882,343**	\$101,817,657	59%

*As defined in UNICEF Immediate Response Plan for Syria (Earthquake), 16 February 2023, for a period of three months.

**In addition to the funds received from partners, UNICEF made available an Emergency Programme Funds (EPF) loan of US\$17.4 million to immediately scale up the earthquake response in Syria. In previous sitreps this was included in the total funding received but has been removed in this sitrep in order to more accurately reflect the level of funding received for this response.