

January to December 2023

# WHOLE OF SYRIA

## Social Behavioural Change (SBC)

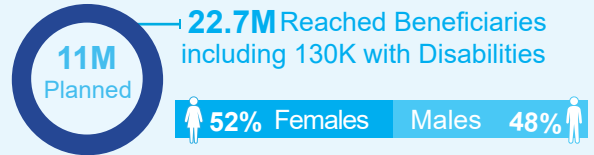
### SITUATION

In Syria, total number of people in need is 15.3 million, 7 million are children, accounting for 46% of people in need. Additionally, Syria has 7.2 million Internally Displaced People. In this context, almost half of the people in need relies on alternative and often unsafe water sources and 28% of households report psychosocial distress among children.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the massive earthquake that struck Syria on February 6, 2023, had a devastating impact on a region already enduring 12 years of conflict and crisis. Out of the 8.8 million people affected by the earthquake and subsequent aftershocks, approximately 3.7 million were children<sup>2</sup>, pregnant women, or nursing mothers. Along with basic necessities such as food, shelter, medical assistance, safe water, and sanitation, children urgently required protection and education services. It quickly became clear that the earthquake added another layer of suffering to the already existing violence and turmoil endured for over a decade.

<sup>1</sup> Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023

<sup>2</sup> Devastating earthquakes hit Syria, February 2023

#### Beneficiaries



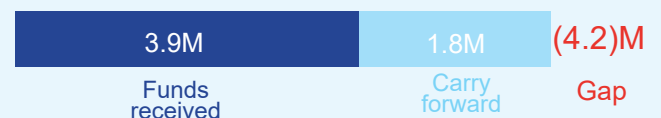
#### SBC reach by severity



#### SBC reach by access quality



#### Funding status (\$) **1.5 M REQUIRED**



# RESPONSE

As one of the international organizations involved in the response effort alongside the government, UNICEF focused on supporting individuals who sought refuge in emergency collective shelters established immediately after the earthquake. Many of these shelters were set up in schools, where entire families crowded into classrooms, playgrounds, and other limited spaces with restricted access to safe water and toilet facilities. The unsanitary conditions posed a risk of diarrhea and other waterborne diseases.<sup>3</sup>

▶ **Earthquake Response:** Within a matter of days, and after the completion of the community assessment and having the relevant data, relevant critical protective practices were formulated in simple messages and delivered across different internet platforms in Syria. At the same time, community workers of local non-governmental organizations were deployed to engage with families in shelters and host communities on importance of keeping toilets, showers, and other wash facilities clean, saving water and health caring for children including psychosocial support. Throughout UNICEF supported activities, caregivers were largely reached and engaged through different approaches and channels, such as community networks, volunteers, influencers and local radios, mass and social media.

▶ **Prevention of water-borne diseases:** Cholera interventions were implemented as per a national evidence-based strategy drafted by UNICEF and Ministry of Health. The new plan focused on high-risk rural areas especially those close to Pharate river where the risk is high for water borne diseases. Specifically, communities were reached and engaged in key preventive practices such as handwashing, water handling, food preparation and storage as well as waste management. Generally, no case of Cholera was confirmed in 2023.

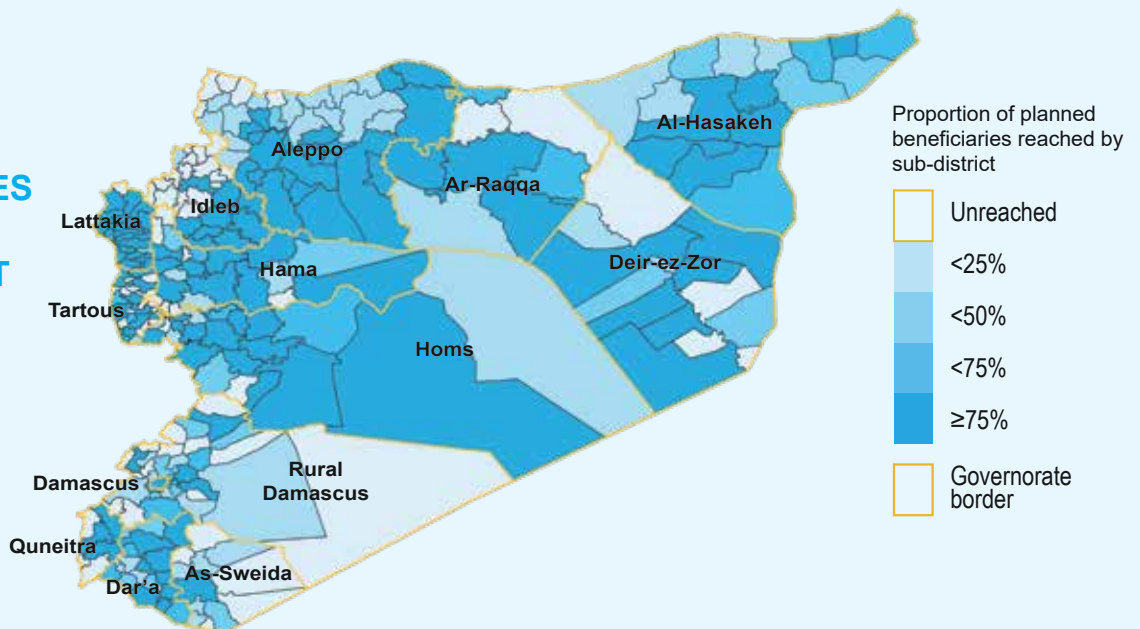
▶ **Coordination:** The Coordination Group on Risk Communication and Community Engagement in Syria, established and co-lead by UNICEF earlier to streamline responses to various public health emergencies, has played a pivotal role in the earthquake response. Comprising multiple UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) actively operating on the ground, the group serves as a mechanism to synergize and harmonize RCCE efforts while facilitating effective communication with government counterparts on the same front. In the context of the earthquake response, UNICEF, was able to disseminate up-to-date crucial key messages and Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials. This collaborative platform has not only facilitated the efficient sharing of resources and expertise but has also provided UNICEF and partners with valuable insights from the field, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the earthquake response efforts in Syria.

3 COPING WITH A DISASTER - How Behaviour Change and Community Engagement Supported Survivors of the



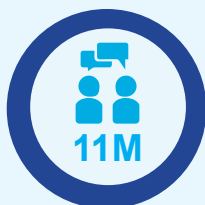
## PROPORTION OF PLANNED BENEFICIARIES REACHED BY SUB-DISTRICT

Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown, and designations used, on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



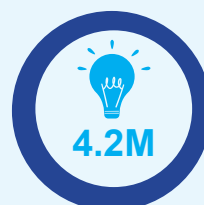
## KEY RESULTS 2023

Planned  
Reach



Number of people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services

20.5M / +100%



Number of people engaged through RCCE actions

4.7M / +100%