



unicef   
for every child

# UNICEF in Timor-Leste

An investment opportunity for private  
and public donors





Remizia, 8, likes her new school. "I want to become a teacher," she says as if she has just revealed a big secret.

unicef 

**46**  
per cent of the population of  
Timor-Leste are children

## UNICEF in Timor-Leste

UNICEF is committed to establishing children's rights as enduring ethical principles in Timor-Leste. We work tirelessly to translate this commitment into practical actions for the benefit of approximately 550,000 children under 18 years of age, comprising nearly half of the country's population.

We work to bring basic services and opportunities to all children in Timor-Leste in the areas of health, nutrition, education, social inclusion, youth participation and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and to strengthen systems designed to protect children. We nurture and uphold gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness in all our programmes.

Our work is not done in isolation. Since the restoration of independence, the Government of Timor-Leste has been our principal partner to reach every child in the country. We also collaborate with community-based organizations, civil society, development partners, academia and the private sector to enable children and their families to realize their rights, fulfil their potential and continue the development of their country.

## Children in Timor-Leste

Children in Timor-Leste are born into one of the newest countries, with the opportunity to contribute to the nation's rapid development and the fulfilment of its great promise.

Timor-Leste had its independence restored in 2002 and hosts one of Asia's youngest populations: almost half of the population (46 per cent) are children, and nearly three in four people are under 30 years old.

In just over 15 years, Timor-Leste has made steady progress in rebuilding the country's infrastructure and social services needed to help children thrive, to promote their rights, and to support their full development. Now, more children celebrate their fifth birthday and are less affected by childhood illnesses; more children and adolescents are enrolled in school at all levels; and more families have access to clean and safe water.

However, there is still much work to be done in creating an enabling environment for all children, where every child can learn and thrive and the most vulnerable children in the country receive essential social services. Many children and families still lack access to safe water, malnutrition is considered a severe public health problem and many children are affected by entrenched poverty.



## Progress and challenges

### Progress



Significantly more children today **survive their first five years of life**



Almost 90 per cent of children aged 6 to 11 years are **enrolled in primary school**



**Maternal mortality** has been reduced by 80 per cent



More women now receive care from **skilled health attendants** when giving birth

### Challenges



One in two **children under 5 is stunted**



Only one in five **preschool-aged children** attends preschool



Half of the population under 18 years old is **living below the national poverty line**



The **rural water sector** is almost entirely dependent on external support



Three in 10 rural households practice **open defecation**



Impacts of climate change have caused an **increase in visible and subtle natural disasters**, compromising planned targets of all major development sectors



## Throughout all we do, we listen to children, young people and their families to ensure their needs drive our programming and advocacy

### Solutions

In Timor-Leste, UNICEF strikes a balance between thorough research and data gathering and practical, hands-on solutions for children. We work at the policy level to enable systemic changes that can reach every Timorese child in the long run, and at the community level to address the immediate needs of the most disadvantaged in real time. Our programming principles ensure that we deliver results that are at scale, innovative, evidence-based, expert-led and technology-savvy. Throughout all we do, we listen to children, young people and their families to ensure their needs drive our programming and advocacy.

We support children throughout their lives, from birth to adolescence, through our health, nutrition, education, protection, social inclusion and WASH programmes.



#### PROGRAMME AREA 1 CHILD PROTECTION



**US\$6 million**  
Funding gap 2022–2025

UNICEF will support girls and boys to benefit from an effective child protection system and quality services and the adoption of positive behaviours at family and societal levels that prevent and respond to violence while promoting a protective environment.

#### To achieve this, UNICEF will:

- Assist the government to further strengthen the child protection system to reduce violence, abuse and neglect
- Enhance justice for children and adolescents through child-friendly justice and juvenile crime prevention
- Strengthen birth registration
- Support the development of a strong child protection workforce to provide prevention and response services for girls and boys
- Promote positive social and gender norms through positive parenting interventions, communication for behaviour change, teachers' training on non-violence and community engagement around child protection practices

#### Key results



The proportion of children aged 1–17 who experienced any **physical punishment and/or psychological aggression** by caregivers is reduced to 10 per cent from the current 71 per cent



The percentage of men and women who think that **physical punishment is necessary to raise children** is reduced to 10 per cent from the current 47 per cent



# UNICEF

works to help save the lives of mothers,  
newborns and children



## PROGRAMME AREA 2 HEALTH

**US\$16.4 million**  
Funding gap 2022–2025

UNICEF will continue to help save the lives of mothers, newborns and children. We will work to reduce neonatal mortality through equitable and inclusive access to quality health services and support the immunization of children.

### To achieve this, UNICEF will:

- Focus on strengthening neonatal service delivery and promoting positive, health-seeking behaviour and practices
- Support immunization programmes to help children survive and lead healthy lives

### Key results



Over 95 per cent of women receive at least four **antenatal visits** (currently 87 per cent)



Over 70 per cent of live births are attended by **skilled health personnel** (currently 56 per cent)



75 per cent of municipalities administer the second dose of **measles and rubella vaccination** to over 80 per cent of children (currently 15 per cent)



## PROGRAMME AREA 3 LEARNING

**US\$10 million**  
Funding gap 2022–2025

UNICEF will support children and adolescents, irrespective of gender, ability, socio-economic and geographic status, to learn in age-appropriate settings, supported by a positive policy environment and social norms.

### To achieve this, UNICEF will:

- Prioritize early learning and promote school readiness through at least one year of free and universal preschool
- Promote a play-based approach to early learning, strengthen involvement of communities and caregivers, and promote innovative and alternative models that complement traditional centre-based programmes
- Strengthen the capacity of teachers and education policymakers to deliver quality basic and secondary education
- Support increased access to inclusive, equitable, relevant and quality education and innovative learning pathways to enable out-of-school children, children with disabilities, adolescents, young mothers and working children in rural and urban poor areas to continue to learn
- Address the beliefs, practices and social norms that adversely affect access to quality learning and education

### Key results



The net primary **enrolment rate** reaches 98 per cent



60 per cent of **children under 5 years of age** (93,542 children) are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being



# UNICEF

works to empower girls and boys to act as agents of positive change on social, economic and climate issues



## PROGRAMME AREA 4 NUTRITION

**US\$7.2 million**  
Funding gap 2022–2025

Through nutrition, UNICEF will pave the way for a fair chance in life for every Timorese child. Well-nourished children are better placed to lead healthy lives, access equal opportunities and participate fully in their communities and countries.

### To achieve this, UNICEF will:

- Improve the coverage of high-impact nutrition interventions, including improving nutrient intake and care of pregnant mothers, and infant and young child feeding and care practices
- Support the detection and treatment of acute malnutrition, provision of micronutrient supplements, deworming and use of iodized salt
- Promote positive social norms and healthy behaviour practices at the community level, and improve demand for quality nutrition services

### Key results



All **health facilities** (442) provide treatment to manage severe acute malnutrition



75 per cent of children 6–23 months old receive **multiple micronutrient powders** (currently 32 per cent)



## PROGRAMME AREA 5 PARTICIPATION

**US\$2.6 million**  
Funding gap 2022–2025

UNICEF will continue to empower girls and boys to demand their rights and act as agents of positive change on social, economic and climate issues.

### To achieve this, UNICEF will:

- Raise awareness of children's rights among children, adolescents and youth, and build their capacity to organize, speak up and influence others and participate in local and national decision making
- Empower adolescents with life skills, data literacy, multimedia skills and advocacy, gender equality and climate change capacity building, co-designed by adolescents for adolescents
- Raise awareness on the situation and needs of Timorese children and inspire decision makers, influencers and the public to support change that benefits children

### Key results



Three **municipalities** have functioning mechanisms for child participation in local planning, budgeting and monitoring processes (currently none)



2,500 adolescent girls and boys and youth ages 15 to 24 (1,400 girls/women, 1,100 boys/men) participate in or lead **civic engagement initiatives**



100 **high-profile individuals** publicly support and amplify UNICEF advocacy messages and initiatives



# UNICEF

works to reduce poverty and shield girls  
and boys from its lifelong consequences



## PROGRAMME AREA 6 SOCIAL INCLUSION

**US\$1.2 million**  
Funding gap 2022–2025

UNICEF will continue its efforts to reduce child poverty and shield girls and boys from its lifelong consequences.

### To achieve this, UNICEF will:

- Build the capacity of the government to measure and respond to poverty and inequities, ensuring that evidence drives government planning and budgeting for children
- Strengthen and expand social protection systems such as cash transfers that reach those most at risk of discrimination and exclusion
- Build the capacity of local governments to generate local data, plan services accordingly, prepare for emergencies, budget equitably and monitor the impact of interventions on children

### Key results



The share of **public spending** on health and education as a share of gross domestic product is increased to 11 per cent



## PROGRAMME AREA 7 WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

**US\$1.5 million**  
Funding gap 2022–2025

UNICEF will continue its work to provide every Timorese child with a clean and safe environment.

### To achieve this, UNICEF will:

- Make rural community-managed water services sustainable
- Eliminate open defecation and achieve basic-level sanitation through market-based approaches
- Improve positive social norms and hygiene practices and create demand for quality WASH services
- Improve climate resilience and emergency preparedness in the WASH sector
- Integrate WASH services in health-care facilities, compliant with national standards
- Improve WASH-sector data management
- Provide innovative and field-tested solutions for critical challenges in WASH sector

### Key results



70 per cent of the Timorese population has **access to basic sanitation facilities** (currently 57 per cent)



100 per cent of the population has **access to basic water sources** (currently 85 per cent)



50 per cent of the population has the **knowledge of hand washing with soap**







## How the public and private sectors can invest








To reach children in Timor-Leste and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, UNICEF is appealing for US\$44.9 million, alongside advocacy and engagement from the public and private sectors.

This support will enable UNICEF to leverage further spending for strategic priority areas to uphold and promote children's rights.

**Option 1: Contribute to thematic funds and other flexible funds** – This type of funding targets a specific goal area of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, such as health, nutrition or education, while enabling the Country Office to direct the investments to activities that are most needed within the thematic areas. This gives UNICEF's experts the flexibility to focus on interventions that will have the most impact in accelerating results for children.

**Option 2: Contribute to specific activities** – If you are interested in contributing to specific activities or would like to support UNICEF with technical expertise or advocacy, UNICEF is ready to partner with you. UNICEF has developed the attached programme overviews that provide more details on the interventions needed and serve as a starting point for a discussion on how to support UNICEF's vital work.

### Funding requirements 2022–2025

PROGRAMMES	US\$
 Child protection	6,000,000
 Health	16,400,000
 Learning	10,000,000
 Nutrition	7,200,000
 Participation	2,600,000
 Social inclusion	1,200,000
 Water, sanitation and hygiene	1,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,900,000</b>

Certainly, financial resources are needed. But collaboration is also essential so that all programmes can be delivered at scale. Beyond financial support, we are looking for partners to:

- Engage in UNICEF campaigns and advocacy work to promote children's rights to public and private decision makers and investors
- Provide access to big data and research to help uncover key trends, identify emerging issues and measure progress for children
- Support, develop or strengthen systems for data collection and data analysis, and pilot and scale up innovative, real-time data platforms
- Invest with UNICEF to finance new cutting-edge solutions in health, education, water and sanitation

In return, for partners who join our work for children, UNICEF can offer a range of opportunities:

- Results reporting to illustrate the impact of your contributions
- Public communication to showcase your support
- Opportunities to meet and engage with UNICEF leaders, staff, Goodwill Ambassadors and supporters
- Access to virtual and in-person events





## Why partner with UNICEF

As a donor, you make deliberate choices to use your resources in a way that can create the best results. At UNICEF, we do the same. With over 75 years' experience, we know what it takes to use limited resources to achieve the greatest impact for children. This impact rests on five key comparative advantages, all made possible by donor support: we have expert staff; we lead and pioneer; we take work to scale; we meet children's needs throughout childhood and adolescence; and we are there for them before, during and after emergencies.

This way of working means we tackle the challenges that matter, in ways that benefit the greatest numbers of children. When you partner with UNICEF, you help us strengthen systems, which pays dividends for whole communities well into the future. And more than that, you support an approach that integrates the needs of children into other essential services in the community. As a result, your contribution goes even farther and supports the overall well-being of the child.

### Key comparative advantages of partnership with UNICEF

- **Employing expert staff:** We are immensely proud of our staff. Working around the world, they have deep expertise and a network of contacts and relationships that is the lifeblood of the impact we deliver for children, day in day out. We cherish the hard-earned trust placed in them by donors, governments, partners and, of course, children and their families.
- **Leading and pioneering:** Your support allows us to lead and innovate for children. Our reliable presence in a country gives our staff the deep insights they need to understand the root causes of problems and find effective solutions. Your trust gives us the flexibility to take risks and innovate, which is how we create new ideas to benefit children, now and in the future.
- **Taking the work to scale:** UNICEF achieves impact for children because we work in over 190 countries. You amplify our impact by pooling your funds with other donors and helping us scale up innovations, proven good practices and programming. This means that UNICEF can promote adoption of global best practices, tailor them to each country's context and the needs of children, and then roll out policies or programmes to reach scale around the world.
- **Meeting needs throughout childhood and adolescence:** UNICEF works to help children fulfil their potential, from early childhood through adolescence. We complement this with key interventions from across all social sectors – from health and nutrition to protection, clean water and sanitation. This means we meet all their needs as they develop through the stages of life.
- **Being there before, during, and after an emergency:** In a crisis, every hour matters. Our teams are first responders because your support enables us to be in a country building effective systems long before a crisis hits. And when emergencies strike, our experts are in place and can use their skills, equipment and relationships to make an impact wherever it matters most. We have close relationships with partners that can deliver real change, fast. Sadly, when a crisis ends, the children's suffering may not. Your support means we can stay long after the emergency and for as long as children need us to ensure their well-being.





We hope you are inspired to join us and take a leading role in advancing the right of every Timorese child. If you have any questions or would like more details, please contact:

**Bilal Durrani**

Country Representative  
UNICEF Timor-Leste  
[bazdurrani@unicef.org](mailto:bazdurrani@unicef.org)

**Rukshan Ratnam**

Communication Specialist  
UNICEF Timor-Leste  
[rratnam@unicef.org](mailto:rratnam@unicef.org)

[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

© United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
September 2022