

UGANDA

ANNUAL REPORT

2023





Uganda Annual Report 2023

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Contents

Foreword	2
Uganda's progress on child-related SDGs	4
Progress for children	10
Health, nutrition and WASH	10
Education	14
Child protection	16
Social policy	18
Humanitarian and emergency response	20
Accelerating SDG progress	25
Funding	26
Programme funding in 2023	26
Donor contributions in 2023	27
Contact us	29

Foreword

Despite these setbacks, Uganda has demonstrated commendable commitment by incorporating over 70 per cent of SDG targets into its national development plans, underscoring its dedication to sustainable progress.

As we stand at the midpoint of our collective endeavour to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, it is imperative to reflect on progress and chart a path forward, especially in Uganda where numerous challenges threaten our progress.

This year's annual report meticulously examines both our achievements and the persistent obstacles to ensuring a better future for Uganda's children. The country has grappled with a series of crises, from the COVID-19 pandemic to Ebola outbreaks, violence and armed conflicts in neighbouring countries, and environmental upheavals, all of which have tested our resilience and imperilled the gains Uganda made over the years. Despite these setbacks, Uganda has demonstrated commendable commitment by incorporating over 70 per cent of SDG targets into its national development plans, underscoring its dedication to sustainable progress.

In 2023, amidst adversity, we witnessed remarkable resilience and significant accomplishments. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Uganda continued its role as a champion for children's rights and well-being, advocating for child-centric policies and frameworks in collaboration with the government. Our joint efforts in advocacy and social policy have led to substantial improvements in access to essential services, laying a solid foundation for a brighter future for Uganda's children.

Notably, UNICEF's initiatives have yielded tangible results, with over 14 million children benefiting from quality maternal, neonatal,

child and adolescent health care; HIV prevention efforts; nutrition support and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. We've empowered over 5 million caregivers with crucial knowledge on feeding infants and young children, provided iron supplementation to 1 million pregnant women and administered deworming treatments to more than 14 million children, addressing nutritional deficiencies effectively. Moreover, nearly 100,300 adolescents have received vital digital life skills education, showcasing UNICEF's significant contribution to advancing the SDGs.

As we embark on 2024, our determination to combat child poverty is unwavering. We are committed to implementing targeted policies and programmes in collaboration with the government and our global partners. Achieving the SDGs necessitates collective and decisive action from all stakeholders.

This is not business as usual; it is a matter of the utmost urgency. We should prioritize financial investments, leverage disaggregated data and centre our efforts on the most vulnerable, particularly women and children. Together, we have the power to effect profound change in the lives of Uganda's children and thereby make a substantial contribution to the global pursuit of sustainable development.

M. Munir A. Safieldin, Ph.D.

UNICEF Representative to Uganda



Uganda's progress on child-related SDGs

2023 marks the halfway point on the road to achieving the SDGs – the world's 'to-do list' to radically change the lives of children, families and the planet by 2030. This is where Uganda stands on this transformative agenda.



Source year	Indicator	Value	Historic SDG progress	Effort needed to reach the 2030 SDG target
SURVIVE AND THRIVE				
2022	Under-five mortality	52	● Very strong	● Very high effort
2022	Stunting prevalence	23	● Very strong	● Very high effort
2022	Maternal mortality	189	● Average	● Average effort
2018	Adolescent birth rate	128	● Strong	● Very high effort
2021	Coverage of essential health services	49	● Strong	● Very high effort

Source year	Indicator	Value	Historic SDG progress	Effort needed to reach the 2030 SDG target
LEARN				
2020	Completion rate in primary education (%)	32	● Weak	No target
2020	Completion rate in lower secondary education (%)	36	● Average	No target
2020	Completion rate in upper secondary education (%)	16	● Average	No target
2013	Proportion of children and young people at the end of primary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in literacy (%)	boys 40.1 girls 44.9 total 42.5	● Average	No target
2023	Proportion of children and young people at the end of primary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in numeracy (%)	boys 61.8 girls 54.7 total 58.3	● Very strong	No target
2017	Pre-primary gross enrolment rate (%)	16	● Weak	● Very high effort
POVERTY				
2022	Children living in households in extreme poverty (%)	44	● Average	● Very high effort
2019	Children living below the national poverty line (%)	20	● Strong	● Low effort





Source year	Indicator	Value	Historic SDG progress	Effort needed to reach the 2030 SDG target
PROTECTION				
2016	Proportion of women aged 20–24 who were married or in union before age 18 (%)	34	● Strong	● Very high effort
2016	Proportion of young women aged 18–29 who experienced sexual violence by age 18 (%)	5	● Very strong	● Very high effort
2016	Proportion of children under 5 years whose births have been registered with a civil authority (%)	32	● Weak	● Very high effort
ENVIRONMENT				
2022	Proportion of the population using basic drinking water services (%)	59	● Very strong	● Very high effort
2022	Proportion of the population using basic sanitation services (%)	21	● Weak	● Very high effort
2022	Proportion of the population with a basic handwashing facility with soap and water available on the premises (%)	31	● Very strong	● Very high effort
2022	Proportion of the population practising open defecation (%)	23	● Average	● Very high effort

Source: UNICEF data on the SDGs, accessed 28 February 2024: <https://data.unicef.org/sdgs/country/uga/>; Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2022; National Assessment on Progress in Education – NAPE 2023; Education Sector Strategic Plan 2021–2025; Uganda Bureau of Statistics data.



Uganda stands at a crossroads, poised to harness its potential to overcome key hurdles in its ambitious pursuit of the SDGs.

UGANDA'S PATH TO THE SDGS

KEY CHALLENGES

Governance issues: Weak implementation of policy, legal and regulatory frameworks and limited investment in human capital development pose significant barriers to effective governance. Strengthening institutions and enhancing transparency and accountability are critical to overcoming these challenges and fostering sustainable development.

High poverty rates: In 2023, poverty reduction slowed, with 41.7 per cent of people living in poverty, while both multidimensional and monetary child poverty rates were high at 44 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively. Poverty worsens inequalities and inhibits progress towards the SDGs.

Human capital: Ugandan youth unemployment is at 17 per cent, with a higher rate of 20 per cent for young females. Of youths aged 15–24 years, 41.1 per cent are not in education, employment or training. This necessitates strategies for education, skills and job creation to support sustainable growth and meet the SDGs. Nine out of ten youths hold precarious jobs in the informal economy, fuelling poverty, while facing stiff competition and skill mismatches due to an education crisis where half of primary students can't read or write, and even teachers perform at a 4th-grade level.

Finance for children: Diminished funding for the social sector, with health and education budgets below the recommended levels of 15 per cent and 20 per cent of national budgets, respectively, is impeding advances towards the SDGs.

Climate vulnerabilities: Uganda ranks 15th globally in terms of vulnerability to climate change, with its economy and people's livelihoods already bearing the brunt of adverse weather patterns. In 2023, more than 47,000 people were affected by the El Niño-induced floods while 249,000 children under 5 years of age were at risk of severe acute malnutrition due to food insecurity in the Karamoja sub region.

Disease outbreaks: Uganda's public health system is under constant threat from disease outbreaks, including malaria, Ebola, cholera, measles and Marburg virus.

Lack of investment in early childhood development (ECD): Investing in ECD would be a game changer for Uganda's future prosperity, yet it remains vastly underfunded, missing critical opportunities for human capital development.

High levels of violence: Uganda's high rates of violence against children and women significantly undermine progress towards the SDGs, detracting from women's participation in education and the workforce, and impacting children's well-being and development, which in turn hampers broader social and economic development.

OPPORTUNITIES

Developing human capital, particularly in children, is crucial for a nation's ongoing economic growth, prosperity and the strength of its social capital and networks.

Youthful population: Uganda's youthful demographic presents a unique opportunity to harness the potential of its young workforce. By investing in education and skills training, the country can unlock a demographic dividend that propels economic growth and development.

Climate action: Uganda's commitment to ambitious climate actions, as outlined in its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, offers a pathway to mitigate the impacts of climate change, especially to children's health and well-being, while promoting sustainable development.

Agricultural and food systems potential: With its fertile lands and favourable climate, Uganda has immense potential to boost its agricultural sector. Enhancing agricultural productivity and transforming food systems can drive economic growth, reduce poverty and provide food and nutrition security for families and children.

Policy reforms: Uganda's adoption of programme-based budgeting and the Public Finance Management Reform Strategy demonstrates its commitment to better resource use and coordination, laying the groundwork for accelerated progress toward the SDGs.

Social protection: The government's focus on social protection, including the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment programme, underscores its dedication to leaving no one behind.

Daniel's joy at having access to water all the time



On the sun-baked plains of Longaroe Subcounty, Kotido District, in north-eastern Uganda, the patter of raindrops has often been a rare blessing. In this harsh climate, where droughts linger for months, 17-year-old Daniel once walked over 10 kilometres daily, herding cattle for water. This changed dramatically with a sustainable splash – the intervention of UNICEF through the installation of a multipurpose-use water system (MUWS).

This transformative project has ushered in an era of hope and climate resilience for about 4,400 people. With this system of pumps, pipelines, reservoirs and irrigation, water scarcity turned into availability, providing safe water for health centres, schools, other community structures and livestock.

Daniel, whose life previously revolved around the arduous task of leading livestock to remote water sources, recounts the impact succinctly, "In the past, due to the water source being far away, the animals were not feeding sufficiently." His face brightens as he talks about the new water system. "I was so happy. It's made a difference in our lives."

The ripple effects of the MUWS are impressive. Not only do animals now flourish near the homesteads, but milk production has also surged – a fundamental shift from scarcity to sustenance. "We all have enough milk in the household now," Daniel says.

The community, once taut with the stress of survival, now cultivates gardens plush with crops, even in dry spells. John Paul Kedi, Kotido District Water Officer, elucidates the broader canvas, "The convenience in feeding the animals and growing food for home consumption cannot be overstated; the lives of the community, especially their nutrition, have been improved."

Yet the horizon isn't free of clouds. Tick infestations and raiding by desperate neighbouring communities paint a complex picture. However, Daniel remains a steadfast beacon of optimism: "We're hopeful that through dialogue and peaceful resolution, conflict can be overcome."

John-Bosco Sempala, the UNICEF WASH Specialist in the Karamoja sub region, weighs in, "We identified the dire need for the MUWS in improving the lives of the community in Nacuuma." Indeed, the project is more than a source of hydration; it's a lifeline that's rekindled dreams and fortified the community against the aridity of both the land and despair.

Progress for children

HEALTH, NUTRITION AND WASH

In 2023, the Government of Uganda, with UNICEF's support, stepped up efforts to improve children's and women's access to services, including health, HIV, nutrition and climate-resilient WASH services. Investments in primary health care and the strengthening of health systems expanded, with women, children, disabled individuals and local communities included in climate and disaster framework development and implementation.

UNICEF Uganda's national-level support encompassed enhancing child health and HIV policies, launching a strategy to digitize health information at community level, advocating for public financing for children and bolstering COVID-19 immunization and Ebola responses. A national action plan to accelerate the paediatric and adolescent HIV response was developed and disseminated at national and subnational levels, in keeping with Uganda's commitment to the Global Alliance to end Paediatric AIDS by 2030.

UNICEF worked to enhance maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, including operationalizing special care units for newborns. The Global Vaccine Alliance's IRMMA (identify-reach-monitor-measure-advocate) framework was introduced to reach zero-dose and under-immunized children. In addition, adolescent health challenges were tackled, with special focus on reducing

high rates of teenage pregnancy and new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women. This was done through targeted social behaviour communication campaigns and responsive service packages for adolescent girls and young women.

The Ministry of Health committed US\$1 million towards child nutrition, helping to improve treatment for children with severe wasting and bolstering nutrition coordination in districts. Initiatives such as establishing a national nutrition data repository with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, promoting maternal nutrition, encouraging dietary diversification and vitamin A supplementation campaigns, along with extensive infant and young child feeding counselling for caregivers, deworming, iron supplementation and giving caregivers the tools to measure the growth of children are helping to reduce stunting and wasting and improve nutrition among children.

With UNICEF's support, the Ministry of Water and Environment developed a five-year costed action plan for climate-resilient WASH and reviewed the Nationally Determined Contributions, with water and sanitation added as areas to adapt to climate change. This will pave the way for a National Adaptation Plan for WASH that will be developed in 2024. In tandem, advancements in climate-resilient water supply systems, water management innovations, and market-based sanitation initiatives improved

The Ministry of Health committed US\$1 million towards child nutrition, helping to improve treatment for children with severe wasting and bolstering nutrition coordination in districts.

access to water and sanitation for children and families in schools, communities and health centres. With access to improved sanitation remaining a huge challenge and almost a quarter of the population still practising open defecation, UNICEF, along with government, recognizes that a concerted effort is required and is supporting the Ministry of Health to develop a dedicated sanitation and hygiene policy for the country.

YOUTH ADVOCACY AT THE FOREFRONT OF CLIMATE POLICY

In the months leading up to the African Climate Summit and COP28, the critical role of youth engagement in climate action took centre stage in Uganda. Recognizing the urgency of the climate crisis and its disproportionate impact on children's rights, young advocates met with government representatives on 29 August 2023 to submit a statement and call to action to their leaders to take immediate and firm action on the climate crisis. Young people urged their leaders to collaborate on innovative solutions to the climate crisis, emphasizing that it is a child rights crisis and calling for their active inclusion and consultation through a widely publicized Call to Action. Youth Go Green, a key actor in youth environmental engagement, partnered with UNICEF Uganda to facilitate a dedicated children and youth session during COP28. Their aim was distinct: to forge a solid, unignorable link between youth and government decision makers in tackling climate change.





Health, nutrition and WASH: Results in numbers



257,239

pregnant mothers from remote locations provided with community transport vouchers to deliver their babies safely in health facilities.

14 million

children benefiting from maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health, HIV, nutrition and WASH services directly supported by UNICEF Uganda.

5 million

caregivers reached with capacity-building and behaviour-changing efforts, helping them improve children's health.

1.8 million

people benefiting from emergency health interventions.

89%

DTP 3 (diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, third dose) coverage achieved as a result of UNICEF support to the Ministry of Health and other partners to strengthen immunization services.

72

high-volume health facilities where peer-led antenatal and postnatal care services were established for pregnant adolescent girls and young women and family support groups.

5 million+

children received Vitamin A supplementation, nutrition campaigns educated over 5 million caregivers on infant and young child feeding, iron supplementation reached 1 million pregnant women, and more than 14 million children dewormed.

6 million

children reached through public health campaign via 300 radio stations and 100 community radios in Uganda, covering Ebola, Marburg, polio and handwashing awareness, as well as social issues like teenage pregnancy and child marriage, while encouraging positive behavioural changes and uptake for services like immunization.

74,295

children with severe acute malnutrition treated to prevent deaths. Children with severe acute malnutrition are up to 11 times more likely to die compared to well-nourished children.

123,293

people, including approximately 65,300 children, reached with market-based sanitation initiatives, providing basic sanitation services.

5 million

children diagnosed with malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea treated through the Integrated Community Case Management programme in 68 districts.

From US\$21.7 to US\$23

The increase in per capita health sector spending, resulting from UNICEF Uganda's public financing for children policy analysis and advocacy.



5,000+

children benefiting from access to safe water through the installation of 10 remote-sensing data loggers in boreholes supplying water to schools and communities in Karamoja.



EDUCATION

In 2023, UNICEF's advocacy led to increased education funding and marked allocations for disability inclusion. Significant contributions were secured for improvements in the quality of education, including European Union and Netherlands-funded programmes to support girls' education and skills training for refugee adolescents and young people, as well as Ireland-supported inclusive education initiatives. As chair of the Education Development Partners' group, UNICEF supported the establishment of the Compact for Education Transformation, resulting in substantive investments in Uganda's education sector.

UNICEF was also central in supporting advocacy and inclusive programming in ECD. With support from Education Cannot Wait, UNICEF was able to develop a cost-benefit analysis on early childhood education and childcare and revise the UNICEF ECD kit to ensure inclusion of children with disabilities and developmental delays. In addition, UNICEF is developing and rolling out the Caring for the Caregiver package, supporting the psychosocial well-being of teenage mothers.

UNICEF helped strengthen national ECD coordination and the capacities of local governments in 29 UNICEF priority districts to provide integrated health, nutrition, WASH and early learning interventions for young children.

A skills training programme enhancing social innovation and entrepreneurial skills received formal recognition, expanding vocational and informal education for out-of-school youth. Adolescent life skills training was integrated in co-curricular learning in schools. Learning recovery was supported by the implementation of the five key policy actions in the RAPID (Learning Recovery to Acceleration) framework, while children with disabilities were integrated into education through the LEGO Braille Bricks initiative and the provision of assistive digital textbooks.



Education: Results in numbers

52,235

children received pre-primary education and ECD services, including in refugee settlements.

245,777

learners benefiting from the global and regional RAPID strategy recovery of learning efforts.

241,888

public school teachers supported and mentored through the RAPID framework.

4,000

children with disabilities included in education through the LEGO Braille Bricks initiative and assistive digital textbooks.

100,293

adolescents, including 14,389 out-of-school children, improved their 21st century skills and digital skills.

US\$48.7 to US\$50.5

The increase in per capita education sector spending in Uganda.



134

districts in which the Caring for the Caregiver initiative was rolled out.



CHILD PROTECTION

In 2023, UNICEF Uganda played a critical role in advocating and spreading awareness of the National Child Policy throughout the country, with significant reach across its districts.

Leadership from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and UNICEF Uganda worked collaboratively with various stakeholders to enhance the national Child Well-Being Management Information System, and made headway on several initiatives, including the development of an alternative care framework, improvements to the training of parasocial workers and strengthening justice for children.

UNICEF also completed a parenting manual that was instrumental in equipping caregivers with the necessary parenting skills to combat violence against children. Additionally, through the Parish Development Model, substantial community engagement initiatives were launched, which focused on changing societal norms related to gender-based inequalities and violence against children, while improving the use of abuse reporting channels.

Birth registration initiatives saw a significant portion of both under-five and under-one births being officially recorded, bolstering advocacy for more accessible registration at health facilities. Lastly, a mental health and psychosocial support artificial intelligence-aided chatbot was integrated into an established child helpline to augment counselling services for youth.



Child protection: Results in numbers

123,789

community members reached with social and behaviour change interventions.

105,089

children and community members used reporting channels for violence against children and gender-based violence.

43% under-five births (330,843 out of 770,797) registered.

60% under-one births (97,468 out of 162,446) registered.

50,000+

caregivers empowered with a national parenting manual.

80% (116 districts)

National Child Policy coverage in 2023.



50,000+

caregivers empowered with a national parenting manual.





SOCIAL POLICY

UNICEF played a key role in advocating for increased government investments in health, education and social protection in 2023, leading to increases in public expenditure in these critical areas.

Partnering with various ministries, UNICEF contributed to enhancing financial transparency and accessibility, including producing a citizen-friendly budget with Braille and audio-visual formats.

UNICEF's collaboration with national statistical offices strengthened the measurement of child poverty, resulting in influential poverty reports and supporting data-driven government interventions. UNICEF's assistance was key in embedding child poverty metrics into major social protection programmes and in guiding budgetary decisions impacting child welfare across regions.

Additionally, UNICEF supported the completion of Uganda's Demographic and Health Survey, providing crucial support after a significant partner withdrew. Furthering its commitment to social protection strategies, UNICEF facilitated studies, provided resources for a national registry, rolled out the model child-focused social protection programmes (Girls Empowering Girls and EmpowerU Cash+) and built governmental capacities in social protection and public finance for children to increase investments in these critical areas.



Social policy: Results in numbers

Health:

7.7%

(6.3% in 2021/22)

Education:

8.7%

(8% in 2021/22)

Social protection:

0.57%

(0.61% in 2021/22)

9,335 children benefited from UNICEF-supported child social protection programmes.

23 government officials, including members of Parliament, trained in social protection and public finance.



Public spending increased as a result of UNICEF's advocacy in 2023.



HUMANITARIAN AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

UNICEF was a critical partner in the Ebola recovery efforts in 2023 and responded to outbreaks like Marburg virus and cholera in addition to extending humanitarian support to refugees and people affected by floods and food scarcity.

Working closely with the Office of the Prime Minister, UNICEF contributed to the improvement of children's well-being through unconditional cash transfers in Lamwo District, addressing educational access, malnutrition and food insecurity and fostering sustainable income-generating activities for families.

UNICEF supported district and subcounty disaster management committees to develop contingency plans and simulations to bolster the emergency preparedness of 10 districts and integrate Accountability to Affected Populations feedback mechanisms into their programmes to refine their strategies based on ground-level input.

In efforts to sustain the momentum of the COVAX initiative, UNICEF's investment in cold storage facilities bolstered Uganda's vaccine preservation infrastructure, mitigating the possibility of service disruptions. UNICEF also fostered partnerships that led to the establishment of oxygen plants in four regional referral hospitals and enhanced infection prevention and control (IPC) in eight hospitals, significantly enriching the availability and quality of emergency health services for millions of children.



Humanitarian and emergency response: Results in numbers

702,479

disaster-impacted people received critical WASH supplies.

933,000

refugee women and children accessed quality health services.

64,900

crisis-affected people gained access to improved WASH services.

3.27 million

at-risk children benefiting from the Ebola response with strengthened regional referral hospitals and improved IPC infrastructure.

5 ultra-low temperature freezers provided by UNICEF to enhance Uganda's cold chain capacity.

21,995 children with severe acute malnutrition in drought-and-food-insecurity-affected Karamoja treated.

6,337 refugees and host community members benefiting from unconditional cash transfers in Lamwo District.

650,067

influencers mobilized through a UNICEF, Lutheran World Federation and World Vision partnership to disseminate risk communication and engage communities.



10 districts supported to strengthen their disaster preparedness and response capacity.



ADVOCACY AMPLIFIED

UNICEF Uganda's advocacy, communication, partnership and community engagement initiatives reached over 3.7 million people via radio, about 984,000 through TV and over 400,000 through the UNICEF Uganda website and social media platforms. This was supplemented with numerous materials produced to raise awareness on children's rights. The advocacy efforts led to legislative advances such as the passing of the employment amendment bill supporting workplace provisions for childcare, and engaged over 3,000 students

and 200 teachers in education and skilling programmes in partnership with private sector partners like MTN and Airtel. Additionally, multimedia campaigns across 400 radio stations communicated health emergency prevention measures and disseminated messages about how and why ending teenage pregnancy and child marriage are important to an audience exceeding 6 million, while feedback mechanisms enabled over 1 million people to express concerns and enquire about service access.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN EDUCATION

In Adjumani District, 400 kilometres away from the hustle of Kampala, the eager minds at St. Mary's Assumpta Girls Secondary School longed to access the world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). These students and their dedicated teachers faced a daunting obstacle: a lack of internet meant their reach for knowledge was often just out of grasp.

But hope wasn't lost.

Thanks to UNICEF's partnership with Airtel on reimagining education that introduced connectivity, the digital gap started to close. Internet access opened doors to learning and growth, sparking a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics)-powered transformation at the school.

As the year unfolded, St. Mary's community moved forward. They joined hands with 30 schools across the country for practical lessons in pure and applied mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, geography, economics, information communication technology, history, entrepreneurship and English.

Teachers honed their craft with new problem-solving skills for STEM teaching and learning, while students voiced their thoughts on global platforms during the International Day Against Violence and Bullying at school, nurturing a culture of well-being. They also advocated for the planet in a climate action initiative and embraced new skills for a greener tomorrow.

In addition, students were registered on the national education management information system, ensuring that every student is counted, supported and on track to unlocking their full potential.

Saving lives and dreams amid a cholera outbreak



In the serene environment of Bukana Island, which overlooks Lake Victoria, the peaceful routine at Buduma Primary School in Namayingo District in eastern Uganda was disrupted by a sudden cholera outbreak that posed a serious threat to its 600 students.

Nabwiire Seridina, a motivated 13-year-old pupil in her final year of primary school, saw her ambition of becoming a nurse slide away. “The cholera outbreak almost made me give up because there were plans to close our school ... that would have affected my studies,” she explained.

The cholera outbreak in Buduma Primary School began with a stomach ache reported by one child – an innocent complaint, or so it seemed. But within hours, it revealed the chilling presence of a severe cholera threat.

The head teacher, Okochi Charles, remembered the shock that came with the initial diagnosis. “It was just a simple stomach ache. After a few hours, the symptoms that the child showed became more severe.”

Faced with this grave crisis, the school was thrust into a race against time, having to maintain a high level of cleanliness and prevent the deadly disease from spreading further among the children. The community was required to report hourly to Bugana Health Centre III about any complaints of diarrhoea, vomiting, abdominal pains, fever and headaches from the children. The situation was dire.

As Edwin Byakatonda, a second grader and aspiring teacher, admitted, “We were really scared of the situation.” Despite the fears, hope was on the horizon.

The cholera outbreak had been traced back to poor hygiene, stemming from limited sanitation facilities and resources both within the community and at the school. UNICEF, with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) funding, acted swiftly, supplying essential hygiene resources, including mobile toilets and handwashing facilities within 48 hours and sensitizing students and teachers on outbreak management. UNICEF also supported the district to set up a cholera treatment unit (CTU) and to develop a comprehensive response plan.

Dr Mathias Mangeni, Assistant District Health Officer, highlighted that “UNICEF’s support, including information, education and communication materials, a CTU, infection prevention and control supplies and WASH facilities played a critical role.”

No lives were lost in Namayingo District to cholera, a triumph of the partnership of government, UNICEF and non-governmental organizations that ensured children were able to continue learning safely.





Accelerating SDG progress

To achieve the 2030 SDG targets, Uganda will need to set ambitious and realistic targets rapidly and accelerate progress to historic levels. There is evidence that investing in child rights drives and sustains results for all societies, people and the planet, as interventions in children's early years go the furthest toward eradicating hunger, poverty, inequality and poor health.

UNICEF and its partners are committed to putting child rights at the heart of their agendas and taking historic steps to accelerate progress by:

- **Building political commitment at the national level.** UNICEF will continue to work with the government to significantly increase and safeguard social spending in areas such as health and HIV, education, social services and social protection.
- **Prioritizing knowledge and evidence for children.** UNICEF will promote strong partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders to facilitate high-quality and regular data collection, sharing and use, to determine the concrete actions needed to reach the SDG targets.
- **Strengthening commitment towards building a liveable planet for every child.** UNICEF will support the government

to build resilient systems and develop and implement climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

- **Focusing on adolescent girls.** UNICEF will work with partners to create more opportunities for adolescent girls, who are disproportionately marginalized, including through laws and targeted educational and social protection investments in their rights and well-being.
- **Focusing on frontline workers.** Community health, nutrition and social workers, the majority of whom are women, represent the first line of care, including in humanitarian contexts. Their role is critical in reaching the SDG targets on immunization, child wasting, child marriage and many others, and they need support in their jobs.

UNICEF will continue to work with the government to significantly increase and safeguard social spending in areas such as health and HIV, education, social services and social protection.



Funding

In 2023, UNICEF Uganda had access to a total of US\$56.1 million allocated across various funding streams to support its country programme. This comprised US\$15,648,000 in core resources alongside US\$40.5 million of development and humanitarian funding. These funds encompassed newly mobilized contributions in 2023 and resources carried over from previous years.

UNICEF expresses sincere appreciation to all donors and partners for their invaluable contributions, which played a crucial role in enabling the achievements for girls and boys in Uganda.

PROGRAMME FUNDING IN 2023

Name of programme	Regular resources	Other resources – regular	Other regular – emergency	Total allocated
Child survival and development	2,334,294	7,494,853	3,300,444	13,129,591
Basic education and adolescent development	416,502	14,829,014		15,245,516
Child protection	436,943	1,710,824	707,693	2,855,460
Social policy	403,360	353,478		756,838
Programme effectiveness	12,056,902	10,845,075	1,281,963	24,183,940
TOTAL	15,648,000	35,233,244	5,290,100	56,171,344

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Donor	Amount (US\$)
European Commission	17,641,963
UNICEF regular resources	15,648,000
Sweden	4,547,108
Gavi The Vaccine Alliance	4,422,919
Iceland	2,777,778
Ireland	2,319,036
United Nations joint programmes	1,756,225
United Kingdom	1,179,523
Japan	1,111,111
Global Humanitarian Thematic Fund	954,000
United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	934,579
United States Fund for UNICEF	639,219

Donor	Amount (US\$)
Republic of Korea	492,593
Canadian Committee for UNICEF	341,927
Italian Committee for UNICEF	261,982
Austria	250,000
United States Centers for Disease Control	248,027
UNICEF United Kingdom	198,760
Italy	149,640
French Committee for UNICEF	147,284
Spanish Committee for UNICEF	85,096
Luxembourg Committee for UNICEF	35,729
United States Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance	28,845
TOTAL	56,171,344



HOW SWEDEN'S FLEXIBLE FUNDING FUELS

UNICEF'S EFFORTS IN UGANDA

The provision of flexible funds by Sweden supports UNICEF's ability to tackle critical issues that impact children and women in Uganda.

Such funding supports the flexibility and agility of the UNICEF Country Programme to provide critical support to children in Uganda when and where it is needed, including addressing critical funding gaps. It allows a timely and flexible approach to crises, facilitating immediate action in the face of emergencies – be they disease outbreaks such as Ebola, cholera or measles, or climatic crises like the drought and consequent nutrition crisis in the Karamoja sub region – by circumventing the typical restrictions of earmarked funding.

The flexibility of these funds is equally vital in addressing long-term developmental challenges, empowering UNICEF to support impactful policy implementation and generating critical evidence to support transformative systemic changes.

In 2023, Sweden's support allowed the provision of critical assistance to more than 18 million people in Uganda. Improved child health, nutrition, education and child protection services reached close to half a million children, including supporting the return to school of more than 1,000 vulnerable girls. Child considerations were mainstreamed in the Uganda national climate change water adaptation plans showcased at COP28.

Sweden's substantial flexible grant of nearly US\$19 million exemplifies a commitment to supporting UNICEF's work over a four-year period (2022–2026), significantly helping us to deliver comprehensive support for children and women and to strengthen social service systems.

Contact us

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