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for every child

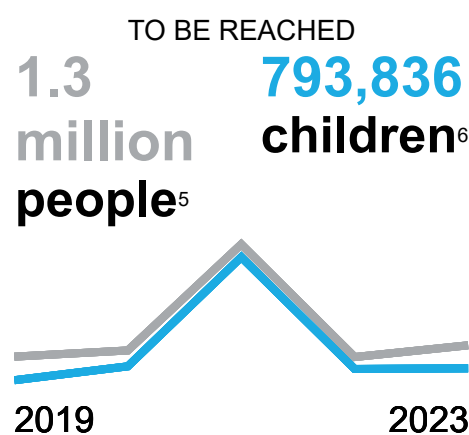
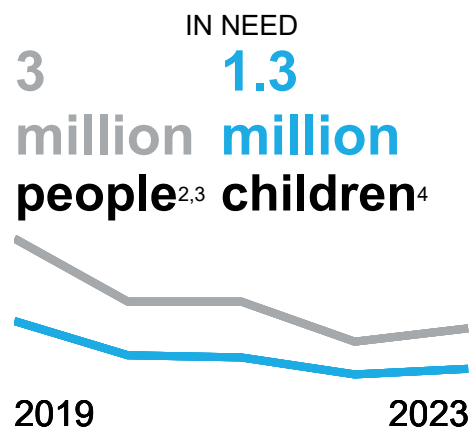
Humanitarian Action for Children

Children play foosball inside a child-friendly space in Shekhan camp for internally displaced people in northern Iraq, in March 2022. Child-friendly spaces help children in Iraq to overcome the impact of conflict by providing them with opportunities to heal the scars of war in a safe and secure environment.

Iraq

HIGHLIGHTS¹

- In Iraq, nearly 3 million people (1.3 million children) affected by the protracted conflict continue to need humanitarian assistance. This includes 1 million people (463,760 children) with acute humanitarian needs and 990,500 children and women at risk of gender-based violence.
- UNICEF's multi-pronged humanitarian strategy within a transition context includes providing continued humanitarian assistance while strengthening government systems and creating durable solutions for children. UNICEF focuses on return areas and on areas of displacement.
- UNICEF is requesting US\$77.6 million in 2023 to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families affected by crisis. This will cover work to strengthen government systems and support children returning from northeast Syria under difficult circumstances, internally displaced children and children in extremely water-stressed areas.



KEY PLANNED TARGETS



100,000

women and children accessing gender-based violence mitigation, prevention, response



7,500

children and adolescents returning from north east Syria accessing rehabilitation and reintegration services



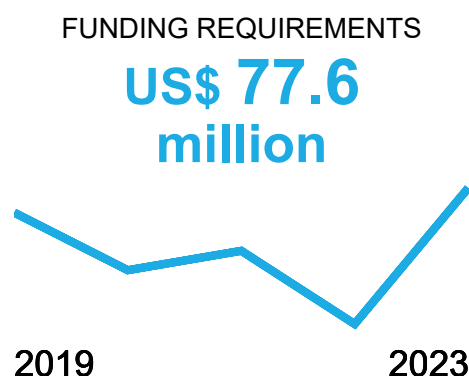
497,786

children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning



865,000

people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water



¹In 2023, there is no inter-agency-led humanitarian planning process (Humanitarian Needs Overview or Humanitarian Response Plan) for Iraq. Appeal figures will be revised as needed based on the changing situation on the ground.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

The current humanitarian situation in Iraq is a legacy of the 2013-2017 conflict, which displaced more than 6 million Iraqis. Although reconstruction and stabilization efforts have been initiated in the conflict-affected areas to promote the sustainable return of people under the durable solutions approach, significant challenges and needs remain. This is particularly true for returnees who live in remote and disputed areas, because there is limited government attention and resources for the provision of basic services.

As of September 2022, 1.2 million people remained internally displaced, while 4.9 million had returned to nearly 2,200 locations in eight governorates. With the abrupt closure of many camps for displaced people starting in October 2020, the in-camp population dropped from 256,861 in August 2020 to 179,325 in September 2022, while the number of displaced people living outside of camps reached 1 million, including 370,000 living in informal sites, often widely dispersed and with little access to services.⁸ Overall, humanitarian assistance for 3 million people, including 1.3 million children, remains critical. Nearly 1 million people (463,760 children) are considered to be in acute humanitarian need.⁷

Additionally, the Government of Iraq started scaling up efforts to return Iraqi citizens from northeast Syria; an estimated 50,000 returnees from Al-Hol camp there are in need of multisectoral assistance and reintegration support. UNICEF and the International Organization for Migration are coordinating efforts to support the Government of Iraq to complete this return and reintegration. This will be a resource-intensive effort and will include providing support for children and young people who are physically and psychologically very vulnerable.

An estimated 680,000 internally displaced and returnee children face obstacles to accessing education. Some 699,000 children are in need of child protection services, while 990,500 individuals are at risk of gender-based violence.⁹ Female-headed households, especially those of displaced people, as well as women and girls living with disabilities and people perceived to be affiliated with extremist groups are at increased risk of gender-based violence.

Iraq also faces significant challenges related to climate change, including water scarcity, which impacts peace and security throughout the region and globally. Iraq will face severe water scarcity in 2023, due to lower groundwater levels and reduced flows in the main rivers. An estimated 15 per cent of children will be affected by this in Iraq's central and southern governorates and will need humanitarian assistance. Overall, nearly 1.7 million people need access to WASH services in conflict-affected areas and in areas facing severe water scarcity and persistent cholera risks.¹⁰

SECTOR NEEDS



1.7 million people in need of primary health services



990,500 children need GBV and child protection services¹¹



680,000 children face obstacles to accessing education¹²



1.7 million people are in need of WASH services¹³

STORY FROM THE FIELD



The Ashti camp is situated in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. It's about 150 miles east of the region's capital, Erbil, and lies close to the border with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The camp has been built to eventually accommodate 1,000 displaced families.

A mobile health team, supported by UNICEF, has arrived at Ashti. The team carries cold vaccine carrier boxes on their shoulders. Inside these boxes are crucial vaccines needed to protect children and keep them healthy, making sure they're not left behind. Teams go door to door, connect with families, provide routine immunizations and carry out routine health check-ups for newborns and young children.

[Read more about this story here](#)

Shahad Mahmood, 10 months, is vaccinated by a UNICEF-supported mobile vaccination team in Ashti camp for internally displaced people, near Arbat, Sulaymaniyah Governorate, Iraq, in April 2022.

UNICEF's multi-pronged humanitarian strategy focuses on delivering immediate services to vulnerable children, providing reintegration support to returnees and peacebuilding and strengthening national systems to meet the longer-term needs of the Iraqi people.

As Iraq transitions from receiving humanitarian assistance to meeting the needs of its population through government services, UNICEF's humanitarian actions align with the triple nexus humanitarian development and peace approach under the United Nations Durable Solution Operational Framework. UNICEF supports the transition from a humanitarian assistance framework to a longer-term development approach, notably by handing over humanitarian coordination to the Government by the end of 2022.

Multisectoral reintegration support is especially needed for families returning from northeast Syria. This will include peacebuilding elements for communities to ensure successful reintegration of sometimes highly stigmatized children.

In 2023, protection will remain central to UNICEF's response in Iraq. UNICEF will adopt a holistic/multisectoral case management approach, integrating gender-based violence response and prevention. Access to relevant mental health and psychosocial support services and legal assistance will continue. UNICEF will also support specialized programming for responding to and preventing gender-based violence and integrating related risk mitigation measures into programmes.

UNICEF will continue to provide WASH services for displaced people where government services have not taken over and strengthen existing water systems in areas facing water scarcity. Using a systems strengthening approach, UNICEF will work closely with government counterparts to provide equitable and sustained access to health and nutrition services, including antenatal and post-natal care, immunization, nutrition screening, counselling and management of malnutrition.

Risk communication and community engagement will be enhanced to promote positive behaviour change. In all programmatic sectors, gender and disability-inclusive programming will ensure that the special needs of women, girls and boys and people with disabilities are addressed.

UNICEF will support the financial access of the most vulnerable households to essential commodities while facilitating their transition to the government's social safety net programme. Capacity building of the Government and civil society partners will be done to identify, prepare for and respond to crises/shocks. Emergency preparedness activities will focus on addressing the impacts of water scarcity and disease outbreaks, including cholera, and enhancing the Government's capacity to respond to other potential emergency events.

UNICEF will work with other United Nations agencies and with civil society partners to ensure that this humanitarian strategy complements the durable solutions components that have been included in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Iraq.

Progress against the latest programme targets is available in the humanitarian situation reports: <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/iraq/situation-reports>

This appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.



Health and nutrition¹⁶

- **296,060** children vaccinated against measles
- **296,050** children vaccinated against polio
- **104,578** children and women accessing primary healthcare in UNICEF-supported facilities
- **563** children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment
- **72,292** primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling



Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

- **52,990** children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support
- **100,000** women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions
- **1,278,000** people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations
- **7,500** children and adolescents returning from north east Syria accessing rehabilitation and reintegration services



Education

- **497,786** children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- **160,000** children receiving individual learning materials



Water, sanitation and hygiene

- **865,000** people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs
- **80,000** people accessing appropriate sanitation services
- **105,000** children using safe and appropriate WASH facilities and hygiene services in learning facilities and safe spaces



Social protection

- **20,000** households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers



Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)

- **700,000** people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services
- **30,000** people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms



Adolescents/youth

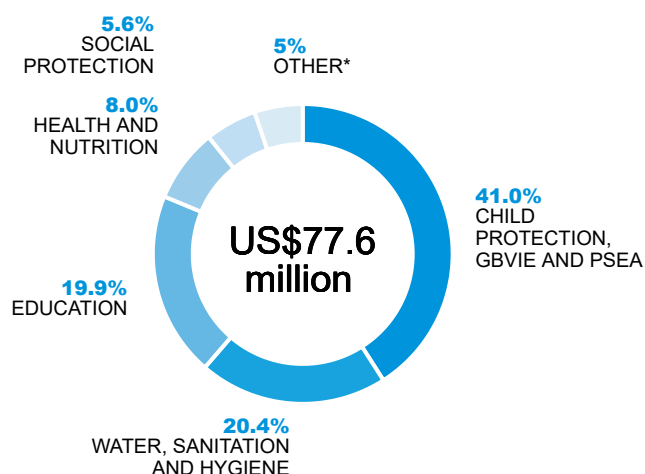
- **73,000** adolescents girls and boys in humanitarian situations who participate in life skills programmes

In 2023, there is no inter-agency planning process or documents for Iraq. Targets include response to displaced populations, returnees and people affected by water scarcity.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2023

In 2023, UNICEF is requesting US\$77.6 million to meet the critical and acute humanitarian needs of vulnerable children and families in Iraq who are affected by protracted conflict and water scarcity. The child protection response is the largest component of the country's appeal at 41 per cent, followed by WASH and education. Funding requirements have increased more than 40 per cent in 2023 compared with 2022 to provide multisectoral assistance and reintegration support for returnees from Al-Hol camp and to respond to the impact of water scarcity on the most vulnerable populations.

UNICEF requests timely, multi-year and flexible funding and resources from partners globally and in Iraq to support integrated humanitarian service delivery in the areas of its comparative advantage. These include, notably, WASH, health, nutrition, child protection, education and social protection. This will enable UNICEF to support its national partners to deliver improved and sustainable services that are durable and resilience-focused and that strengthen linkages with longer-term system-building efforts. Without sufficient and timely funding, UNICEF will be unable to support the delivery of essential services for vulnerable children and families in Iraq - especially WASH and child protection services.



Sector	2023 requirements (US\$)
Health and nutrition	6,170,295
Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA	31,770,534 ¹⁷
Education	15,465,764
Water, sanitation and hygiene	15,805,500
Social protection	4,320,000
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)	615,000
Adolescents/youth	1,954,979
Emergency Preparedness	1,476,000
Total	77,578,072

*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : Adolescents/youth (2.5%), Emergency Preparedness (1.9%), Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP) (<1%).

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ENDNOTES

1. COVID-19 remains a Public Health Emergency of International Concern as declared by the World Health Organization in January 2020. On 1 July 2022, UNICEF deactivated its Level 3 Sustained Phase for the global COVID-19 pandemic response. All activities related to COVID-19 pandemic response, including programme targets and funding requirements, have been shifted into regular development programming and operations. While UNICEF's Level 3 emergency response phase of the COVID-19 pandemic was deactivated, the organization is continuing to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on children, their families and their communities and on the social systems they rely on.
2. The number of people in need is comprised of 2,454,000 million people from the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq, plus a water scarcity caseload 495,000 and 50,000 returnees from Al Hol camp.
3. UNICEF is committed to needs-based targeting, which means covering the unmet needs of children; and will serve as the provider of last resort where it has cluster coordination responsibilities.
4. The number of children in need is calculated based on the same methodology as the number of people in need (see endnote 2).
5. The population to be reached is based on adults (56 per cent) of the highest response target of WASH (865,000); vaccination targets for children under age 5 (296,060); and the highest target for education for school-aged children (497,786). The number of women/girls to be reached corresponds to 50 per cent of the total number of people to be reached. The population with disabilities is estimated at 5.6 per cent of the population to be reached. This estimate is based on the National Disability Survey 2016. UNICEF is not targeting the whole population in need; the Government and other partners will reach the remainder. With increased government services reaching internally displaced people, the total number of people to be reached by UNICEF will decline through 2023. UNICEF is not able to give precise data on the rate of progress of government services, which will depend on many local factors.
6. This total was calculated considering 296,060 children under age 5 vaccinated against measles and 497,786 school-aged children accessing education. The total children to be reached includes 50 per cent girls and 5.6 per cent children with disabilities (based on the National Disability Survey 2016).
7. 50,000 returnees from Al-Hol camp and 82,000 individuals affected by water scarcity in the central and southern governorates of Iraq were added to the number of people in need, based on the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Iraq. These are preliminary estimates, because there is no Humanitarian Needs Overview or Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq for 2023. A new strategic document draft is expected to be released by OCHA in December 2022.
8. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Iraq: 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview, OCHA, March 2022, available at: <<https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/iraq-humanitarian-needs-overview-2022-march-2022>>.
9. The number of children in need of child protection services corresponds to the number of children in need noted in the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Iraq and 70 per cent of returnee children from Al Hol camp.
10. The number of people in need of WASH services corresponds to the number of people needing WASH services noted in the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Iraq, the number of people affected by water scarcity and the number of returnees from Al Hol camp.
11. The number of children in need of child protection services corresponds to the number of children in need noted in the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Iraq and 70 per cent of returnee children from Al Hol camp. The number of people affected by gender-based violence risks corresponds to the figure noted in the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Iraq, to which 100 per cent of the returnees from Al Hol camp and 25 per cent of the people affected by water scarcity were added.
12. OCHA, Iraq: 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview, OCHA, March 2022 and government figures for returnees from northeast Syria.
13. The number of people in need of WASH services corresponds to the number of people needing WASH services noted in the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Iraq, the number of people affected by water scarcity and the number of returnees from Al Hol camp.
14. This appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.
15. UNICEF is committed to empowering local responders in humanitarian crises in a variety of ways. The revised Core Commitments made investing in strengthening the capacities of local actors in the humanitarian response a mandatory benchmark for UNICEF action. A more localized response will improve humanitarian action and is fundamental to achieving better accountability to affected populations.
16. Focus has shifted from internally displaced people to strengthening capacity in areas of return. The goal is to enable health workers to reach people in the areas of return (Ninawa, Salahuddin and Anbar Governorates).
17. The significant budget increase for 2023 compared with 2022 is due to rising needs (related to returns from Al Hol camp and to intensifying water scarcity) and the centrality of protection to the overall response in 2023. UNICEF will adopt a holistic/multisectoral case management approach, integrating gender-based violence response and prevention. UNICEF will continue to support people's access to relevant mental health and psychosocial support services and legal assistance. UNICEF will support specialized programming for responding to and preventing gender-based violence and integrating related risk mitigation measures across programmes.