

Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report No. 4

unicef

for every child

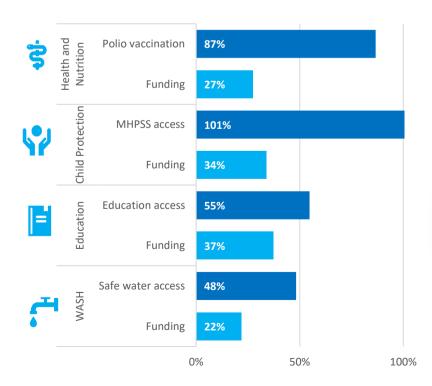
In Hassan Sham camp, Iraq, Kawathar (33) plays with her son Kameran (2). © UNICEF Iraq/2022/Njiokiktjien

Reporting Period: 1 January to 31 December 2022

Highlights

- In 2022, UNICEF required US\$ 52.2 million to meet the critical and acute humanitarian needs of vulnerable children and families in Iraq. US\$ 11.2 million were received against UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children appeal in Iraq, while US\$ 5.5 million were carried over from 2021, with major funding gaps in WASH, Health and Nutrition and Child Protection.
- UNICEF supported the creation of government-led sector coordination working groups at both national and sub-national levels of and handed over clusters/sub-cluster coordination to these groups.
- UNICEF scaled up support to return from northeast Syria, with child protection, health, education and WASH support, both in transit facilities and in communities.

UNICEF's Response and Funding Status



Situation in Numbers

† †

1,100,000

children in need of humanitarian assistance (Humanitarian Needs Overview, HNO 2022)



2,500,000

people in need (HNO 2022)



729,000

Internally displaced people (HNO 2022)

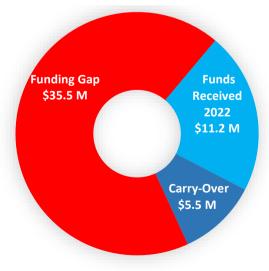


1,700,000

Returnees (HNO 2022)

UNICEF Appeal 2022

US\$ 52.2 million



^{*}Funding available includes: funds received in the current year; carry-over from the previous year; and repurposed funds with agreement from donors.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

In 2022, UNICEF required US\$ 52.2 million to meet the critical and acute humanitarian needs of vulnerable children and families affected by a combination of humanitarian situations, including protracted crises due to conflict, political instability and the COVID-19 pandemic. As protection is central to UNICEF's humanitarian action, the child protection response is the largest component of the country's appeal at 41 per cent, followed by Education and WASH. The funding requirement for 2022 was 21 per cent lower than 2021 due to a decrease in the number of people and children in need.

By the end of 2022, UNICEF had received only US\$ 11.2 million against its Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal in Iraq, while US\$ 5.5 million were carried over from 2021. UNICEF's response to emergency-affected people in Iraq during 2022 was thus 68 per cent underfunded, with a total funding gap of US\$ 35.5 million. The sectors presenting major funding gaps were Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) (78 per cent), Health and Nutrition (73 per cent) and Child Protection (66 per cent).

UNICEF's HAC appeal in Iraq in 2022 was mainly funded by the Czech Republic, Canada, the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), the Republic of Korea and the United States. UNICEF response also benefitted greatly from flexible humanitarian thematic funding. Since the humanitarian situation in Iraq has, for a number of years, been evolving swiftly and unpredictably, the flexible and multi-year nature of thematic funding continues to be critical to allow UNICEF to support underfunded areas of programming and respond in a timely fashion to emergency situations, reaching the most vulnerable populations in conflict and displacement-affected locations.

As the country transitioned from a humanitarian to a development context, sustaining key essential services for the most vulnerable women and children remained a challenge due to lack of funding. Transferring responsibility to government agencies and finding sustainable solutions for IDPs was also a challenge, as the government continued to rely on UNICEF technical and financial assistance. UNICEF Iraq will continue to utilize nexus/transition funding to maintain key interventions, while ensuring system strengthening and to build the capacity building of governmental authorities.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The humanitarian situation in Iraq is largely a legacy of the 2014-2017 conflict with ISIS. As the conflict took hold in Iraq and ISIS gained control over territory, particularly in the west and southwest of Iraq, millions of Iraqis were displaced. At the time the HAC appeal for 2022 was drafted, there were 1.2 million internally displaced people (IDPs) in Iraq, while 4.9 million were returnees.¹

The year 2022 was one of transition as handover to government accelerated. UNICEF worked closely with both Federal and KRG ministries to establish coordination mechanisms to take over coordination from clusters. Progress was good if somewhat uneven, with child protection coordination in particular needing support going into 2023. UNICEF has signalled to all relevant ministries that it will remain a partner in 2023, within the context of government leadership.

With the abrupt closure of the camps that started in October 2020, the number of in-camp individuals dropped from 256,861 in August 2020 to 182,000 in October 2021, while out-of-camp IDPs reached over 1 million,² including 370,000 living in self-settled and informal sites, which are often widely dispersed and with little access to services.³ By the end of 2022, nearly 3 million people,⁴ including 1.3 million children⁵ remain in need of humanitarian assistance. This includes 1 million people (463,760 children) who are considered to be in acute humanitarian need, and 990,500 women and children at risk of gender-based violence.⁶

In line with the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview, the overall number of people and children in need has decreased compared to 2021. This is due to the reduced humanitarian impact of COVID-19 as well as to a rebalancing between humanitarian and development needs, taking into account the recent finalization and signing of the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework.

¹ IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix.

² Ibio

³ The number of IDPs in secondary displacement increased, especially in Sinjar and Ba'aj areas of Ninewa, Anbar and the centre of Kirkuk.

⁴ UNICEF HAC Appeal 2023.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

An estimated 680,000 IDP and returnee children continue to face obstacles accessing education, such as absence of civil documentation, lack of access to internet or connectivity devices, more than 1.7 million people need support for WASH services, while 1.7 million people are in need of primary health services.⁷

The COVID-19 pandemic compounded challenges posed by protracted and multiple displacements and continued to adversely impact access to basic services in health, WASH and education. It continues to affect the well-being and resilience of women and children in Iraq, and exposes them to protection concerns. The current situation, added to existing social and gender norms, has exacerbated conditions of communities and young people, disrupting learning, skills development and participation in society, and fracturing social networks. COVID-19 containment measures also contributed to lasting impacts on the livelihoods of families, exposing children to increased risks of child labour and child marriage.

During 2022, the rate of return of Iraqi citizens from Al Hol in Syria to Jeddah 1 camp also picked up. Neary 2,400 people returned, of whom 60 per cent were children. UNICEF scaled up support to WASH, education, health and child protection; UNICEF support also included scaled-up child protection activities in areas of return, especially in Anbar. This support is expected to scale up further in 2023.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Nutrition

UNICEF provided essential nutritional services to ensure proper growth and development and to prevent malnutrition amongst vulnerable children. These included home-based visits for newborns and their mothers, support for mothers and counselling on breastfeeding and appropriate infant and young child feeding (IYCF), and growth monitoring of children aged below five years.

Over 2022, 65,245 children (35,728 girls) under five years of age were assessed by fixed growth monitoring teams inside camp clinics, of whom 7,603 children (3,725 girls) were assessed in the final quarter of the year. A total of 402 children (207 girls) were identified as having severe acute malnutrition and received treatment against a planned target of 243, of whom 49 children (31 girls) were reached between September and December. Another 1,818 (869 girls) with moderate acute malnutrition were identified and treated since January 2022, including 274 (151 girls) in the fourth quarter.

During the fourth quarter, 85,415 primary caregivers of children aged 0–23 months inside camps were counselled on IYCF practices. This brought the total numbers of beneficiaries reached since the beginning of 2022 to 25,697 children (12,591 girls) and 341,660 primary caregivers, against a target of 24,300 children (105.7 per cent achieved) and 369,000 caregivers (92.6 per cent) respectively.

Health

In 2022, UNICEF continues to support the Directorates of Health to provide healthcare and nutrition services in governorates housing IDPs, thus ensuring maternal and newborn health, immunization coverage and appropriate growth and development, along with COVID-19 response including vaccination support and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC). During the fourth quarter of 2022, UNICEF trained 60 healthcare workers (30 women) on providing IPC services to IDPs, bringing the total to 475 trained workers (303 women) since the beginning of 2022, against the year's target of 5,000. However, staff providing services in this area had already been trained in 2020 and 2021, with only new staff joining the team trained in 2022.

A total of 164,813 children and women (85,383 women and girls) benefited from quality child health, antenatal, postnatal services and counselling in UNICEF-supported healthcare facilities, bringing the total of beneficiaries since January 2022 to 636,556 individuals (331,201 women and girls) against a planned target of 738,000 (86.3 per cent). The results were lower than the target as children outside camp contexts do not always seek services in public facilities.

To reduce the risk of outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, UNICEF supported vaccination for 75,811 children (37,036 girls) against polio during quarter four, reaching a total of 279,165 children (136,677 girls) since the beginning of 2022, achieving 84.1 per cent of the planned target of 332,000 children, with the shortfall again attributable to the

⁷ UNICEF HAC 2023. Figures are calculated based on data in HNO 2022, adjusted to account for the needs of returnees or of those affected by water scarcity.

dependence on children in host communities to attend primary health care facilities for services including vaccination. Children were also protected against life-threatening infections through the administration of Bacille Calmette–Guérin (BCG), diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP) and measles or measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccines. In addition, doses of vitamin A were administered to 2,404 children (1,177 girls) during vaccination sessions bringing the total number of children reached during 2022 to 9,336 children (4,690 girls).

With UNICEF support, scheduled home visits by community health workers (CHWs) to IDP new mothers and newborns enabled the detection of danger signs and the provision of appropriate referrals to higher levels of care. In 2022, 6,833 newborns (3,399 girls) received these home visits. Of these, 2,059 newborns (1,008 girls) were visited by CHWs in IDP camps in Erbil, Ninawa and Sulaymaniyah during the fourth quarter of the year.

UNICEF collaborated closely with government and NGO partners to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to benefit IDPs inside and outside camps through intensified integrated immunization services. A total of 2,429 people (1,423 women) residing in IDP camps in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Ninawa received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine during the final quarter, bringing the total since January 2022 to 32,261 people (17,212 women) vaccinated.

WASH

In 2022, 216,667 people (110,500 women and girls) in camps, informal settlements and return areas gained access to sufficient quantities of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene in Ninawa, Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk and Anbar, achieving 48.2 per cent of the target of 449,300 beneficiaries despite the low funding received for WASH support. Of these, 112,272 people (57,250 women and girls) were reached in the fourth quarter of the year, through improved water supplies, healthcare WASH, and rehabilitated boreholes equipped with reverse osmosis systems. A total of 50,311 individuals (25,660 women and girls) gained access to safe drinking water provided through the operation and maintenance of water facilities and networks and provision of water purification materials along with Water Quality Monitoring in and out of camps in Ninawa, Dohuk, Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah and Anbar, reducing their exposure to waterborne disease.

Of the abovementioned beneficiaries, 71,535 people (36,480 women and girls) also gained access to appropriately designed and managed latrines through the operation and maintenance of existing sanitation systems, desludging services and solid waste management achieving 34.7 per cent of the target of 206,000 beneficiaries in 2022 due to low funding received. Of these, 51,539 IDPs (26,285 women and girls) were reached during the fourth quarter.

In Ninawa, Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah and Anbar, as reported previously, 126,751 IDP and returnee children and their families (64,600 women and girls) received critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies, including hygiene items, and learned appropriate hygiene practices through social mobilization, and improved public awareness, including on COVID-19 infection prevention and control. This represented 79.2 per cent achievement during 2022 against a planned target of 160,000 individuals.

As part of the humanitarian transition, UNICEF handed over all WASH activities in camps to government and supported the creation of a government coordination structure. The hand-over was nearly completed by the end of the year, only a few camps remained. The Kurdistan Regional Government agreed to take over all camps in the KRI governorates; some support is continuing into early 2023, but this is expected to end in the first quarter.

Education and ADAP

To provide better access to learning environments, UNICEF constructed a prefabricated classroom for IDP children in Halabja, which provided access to primary and secondary education for 610 children (290 girls). Access to education was also promoted through the renovation of schools and the provision of prefabricated classrooms equipped with desks and school supplies. Returnees from Al-Hol camp in Syria were supported with non-formal education interventions, including catch-up classes and remedial classes, life-skills lessons, and self-learning materials. As a result of UNICEF's interventions in the fourth quarter, 175,082 children (87,753 girls) had access to formal and non-formal education in IDP camps, non-camps and returnee areas in Ninawa, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Dohuk, Anbar, and Salah Al-Din governorates, bringing the total number of children accessing formal and non-formal education in 2022 to 245,182 children (120,225 girls) against a target of 447,786, achieving 54.8 per cent of target despite low funding.

In quarter four, 148,562 children (74,111 girls) in IDP camps, IDPs in host communities, and returnee areas in Ninawa, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Dohuk, Anbar, and Salah Al-Din governorates benefited from the distribution of self-learning

materials, stationery, and student kits. This brought the total number of children receiving individual learning materials to 149,382 (74,501 girls) during 2022, representing an achievement of 93.4 per cent against a target of 160,000.

To bring children back into learning through the door-to-door back to school campaign in six governorates, UNICEF trained 400 social mobilizers (40 per cent women) on data collection and communication skills. The campaign resulted in the identification of 45,205 children who were out of school or had dropped out (19,252 girls) and their registration in the Iraq <u>B2L database</u>. Of these, UNICEF re-enrolled 14,357 children (45 per cent girls) into formal and non-formal education in coordination with the directorates of education.

To empower young people and promote their smooth transition from learning to earning, in partnership with the Directorates of Youth and Sports in Dohuk and Erbil, UNICEF provided 14,330 young people aged 10–24 years (achieving 47.8 per cent of the target of 30,000 young people, despite severe under-funding) with life skills, digital and employability and entrepreneurial skills. Targeted and supported youth groups benefited from the UPSHIFT model bootcamp in Erbil and Duhok, and learned about education, environment protection, water conservation, young people health and nutrition and digital engagement including using the U-Report platform. This model contributed to creating positive and meaningful engagement by young people with the issues affect their communities.

Trained young people, using a co-creation approach, designed and implemented engagement initiatives with their peers on various topics, including climate change and environment protection, health and nutrition, and early marriage and back to learning. The project activities included mobilizing and capacitating a core volunteer group of young people comprising 130 volunteers (67 girls) aged 10–24 years belonging to host communities, refugees and IDP communities in camp and non-camp contexts. Youth volunteers implemented peer-to-peer education activities in target communities in Erbil and Duhok, formed networks, and were trained on active citizenship, personal empowerment and applying their new skills to community engagement initiatives on the topics mentioned above.

Child Protection

UNICEF collaborated with government and civil society implementing partners to support the delivery of lifesaving child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) services for IDPs, returnees, and vulnerable host communities, while also supporting efforts to enhance national and sub-national child protection system.

During the year, 60,367 children (30,269 girls) were reached with structured psychosocial support services, exceeding the planned target of 59,540 (101.4 per cent achieved). Additionally, 26,185 children (12,400 girls) were reached with non-structured psychosocial support services. Furthermore, 17,218 children (7,209 girls) received specialized child protection services including legal counselling, case management and referral services, while 5,127 children (2,457 girls) received legal and administrative assistance for birth registration, of whom 4,299 children (2,104 girls) secured civil birth certificates. UNICEF-supported parenting education and awareness programmes reaching a total of 161,634 individuals (87,387 women and girls).

Gender-based violence and child protection concerns, including mental health, risk of exposure to violence, abuse and exploitation and denial of civil registration, remained key concerns and necessitated continued prevention and response interventions. In 2022, UNICEF collaborated with government and civil society implementing partners to reach 81,440 women, girls and boys (62,080 women and girls) with GBV prevention and response services, achieving the year's target of 81,334. Additionally, 91,326 (61,034 girls; 30,292 women) received dignity kits to mitigate GBV risks. UNICEF also conducted formative research on drivers of domestic violence against women and girls in Iraq. The evidence from this study was used to adapt the Communities Care programme to the Iraq context.

UNICEF successfully advocated for and supported the establishment of government-led high-level sectoral coordination mechanisms for child protection at national and sub-national levels. CPIMS+ and GBVIMS+ were rolled out, with 500 child protection case workers from 32 child protection agencies trained to use CPIMS+, and 158 GBV case workers from 21 civil society organizations trained to GBViMS. These will enable cases to be registered, tracked and connected to services.

UNICEF and its implementing partners enabled 81,440 people (62,080 women and girls) to have safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse, achieving the year's target.

Communications for Development (C4D), Community Engagement & Accountability

In 2022, UNICEF continued to promote the uptake of COVID-19 vaccine and disseminate key life-saving messages to vulnerable groups through a combination of awareness-raising, community outreach and mobilization interventions. UNICEF also took further steps to enhance two-way communication with affected communities to strengthen acceptance, ownership, and accountability to affected populations to support COVID-19 vaccination interventions, back to learning and immunization, and to promote positive behaviours.

As a result, 367,158 IDPs and returnees (186,005 girls and women, 181,153 boys and men) were reached in IDP settlements and areas of return in Erbil, Duhok, Ninewa; Kirkuk, Anbar and Salahuddin, mainly through mass media campaigns, mobilization/outreach activities to promote COVID-19 and dissemination of educational materials on key life-saving messages. This exceeded the year's target of 250,000. Of these, 96,231 people (47,832 girls and women, 48,399 boys and men) were reached through direct interventions while an estimated 270,927 IDPs and returnees (138,173 girls and women, 132,754 boys and men) were reached through mass media campaigns that targeted the community as a whole. Of the year's total, 283,927 people (144,673 girls and women, 139,254 boys and men) were reached during the last quarter.

Another 33,779 people (12,422 girls and women, 21,357 boys and men) were engaged in dialogue and two-way communication around these key topics through an established platform to enhance accountability to affected populations, achieving 67.6 per cent of the year's target. The target was not reached mainly because of a lack of a single systematic accountability/feedback mechanism at the start of the year. During the year, UNICEF invested in the creation of a unified mechanism and trained partners on accountability principles and tools, which is expected to increase feedback engagement next year. The majority of these, numbering 29,076 people (11,361 girls and women, 17,715 boys and men) were engaged during the year's final quarter, when the back to learning campaign (which has a strong dialogic component) was implemented and the unified feedback mechanism was fully deployed. These individuals shared their concerns, asked questions about issues that affected their lives, conveyed feedback on the services and expressed appreciation for the quality of information to counter misinformation and make them feel comfortable about using the provided services.

However, lack of certainty and stability remained key challenges for beneficiaries and affected the efficacy of social and behaviour change interventions. Furthermore, provision of public services in camps and return areas was not optimal, impacting on community engagement. Furthermore, security risks in some conflict-affected and areas of return affected programme implementation.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

In 2022, UNICEF co-led the WASH Cluster with Mercy Corps, the Education Cluster with Save the Children International, and the Child Protection Sub-Cluster (CPSC) with Save the Children International. UNICEF was also an active member of the Health Cluster and of the GBV Sub-Cluster.

During the year, UNICEF and the clusters it led/co-led were actively engaged in supporting the establishment of government-led sector coordination working groups at national and sub-national levels to replace the cluster system in 2023. Over the course of the year, UNICEF transitioned coordination and response activities to the government. While progress was good overall, it was uneven between sectors.

All WASH and solid waste management services were handed over to the local government in Erbil and Dohuk and sector leadership started being transferred from UNICEF to the government. Meetings were held with the head of the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre and the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism on the plan to form a WASH Working Group comprising concerned ministries in KRI. The WASH Working Group was formally established in 2022 to coordinate services following the deactivation of the cluster system.

As part of its accountability to affected populations, UNICEF remained available for feedback through the UNOPS IDP Call Centre in Iraq. Affected populations were consulted regularly to ensure the response remained adaptable, addressed emerging priorities and ensured ownership of the interventions. Regular meetings were held with community members to review the information collected and to provide feedback.

The humanitarian coordination mechanism operational in 2022 was deactivated in January 2023. Government-led sector coordination mechanism will require continued support to function adequately and ensure that the best interests

of women and children affected by displacement remain at the heart of support. UNICEF is also developing a resource mobilization plan to fund Durable Solutions, thus promoting the nexus approach to build resilience.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

Social Media Highlights

Visit to camps: Facebook,

Vaccination: Facebook 1, Facebook 2

Responding to WASH needs: Facebook, Twitter

Sustainable solutions: Facebook, Twitter

Winterization: Facebook 1, Facebook 2, Twitter 1, Twitter 2

Next SitRep: April 2023

Whom to contact for further information

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Annex A

Summary of Programme Results

			UNICEF and IPs Response		Cluster/Sector Response		
Sector	Overall needs	2022 target	Total results*	Change since last report	2022 target	Total results*	Change since last report ▲ ▼
Health							
# of children 0-59 months vaccinated against polio	332,000	322,100	279,165	75,811	322,100	279,165	75,811
# of children and women accessing primary healthcare in UNICEF supported facilities	738,000	738,000	636,556	164,813	738,000	636,556	164,813
# of health care facility staff and community health workers trained in infection prevention and control	5,000	5,000	475	60	5,000	475	60
Nutrition							
# primary caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling	369,000	369,000	341,660	85,415	369,000	341,660	85,415
# of children aged 6 to 59 months receiving multiple micronutrient powders	24,300	24,300	19,000	0	24,300	19,000	0
# children aged 0 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment	243	243	402	49	243	402	49
Child Protection, GBVIE & PSEA							
# of children and parents/caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support	663,576	59,540	60,367 ⁸	11,734	74,227	88,637 ⁹	15.859
# of women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/ or response intervention	953,483	81,334	81,440 ¹⁰	4,836			
# of people who have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers	663,576	81,334	81,440 ¹⁰	4,836			
Education							
# of children accessing formal or non-formal education	872,889	447,786	245,182 ¹¹	175,082	354,433	404,173 ¹²	
# of children receiving individual learning materials	872,889	160,000	149,382 13	148,562	354,430	190,635 ¹⁴	
# of children/adolescents accessing skills development programmes	77,155	30,000	14,300	3,100			
WASH							
# people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking and domestic needs	1,229,485	449,300	216,667	21,000	859,265	862,555	515,916
# people use safe and appropriate sanitation facilities	495,180	206,000	71,535	21,224	473,604	124,750	66,090
# people reached with critical WASH supplies	578,233	160,000	160,000	33,249	291,743	415,340	190,271
C4D, community engagement and AAP							

^{8 30,269} girls, 30,098 boys.
9 43,991 girls, 44,646 boys.
10 34,650 women; 27,430 girls; 9,559 men and 9,801 boys. Total 62,080 women and girls.
11 120,225 girls.
12 195,014 girls.
13 74,501 girls.
14 69,699 girls.

			UNICEF and IPs Response		Cluster/Sector Response		
Sector	Overall needs	2022 target	Total results*	Change since last report	2022 target	Total results*	Change since last report ▲ ▼
# of people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services	4,000,000	350,000	367,158 ¹⁵	283,927			
# of people with access to established accountability mechanisms		50,000	33,779 ¹⁶	29,076			

Annex B

Funding Status*

Appeal Sector	Requirements	Funds Av	ailable	Funding Gap		
		Funds Received (Current Year)	Carry-Over	Funding Gap	Funding Gap %	
Health and Nutrition	5,939,200	130,066	1,492,627	4,316,507	73%	
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	10,825,942	1,646,750	715,642	8,463,550	78%	
Education	13,308,624	4,285,132	664,089	8,359,402	63%	
Child Protection, GBV, PSEA	21,239,733	4,993,425	2,201,983	14,044,326	66%	
C4D, Community Engagement and AAP	874,800	165,119	435,496	274,185	31%	
Total	52,188,299	11,220,492	5,509,837	35,457,970	68%	

 $^{^{\}rm 15}$ 186,005 girls and women, 181,153 boys and men. $^{\rm 16}$ 12,422 girls and women, 21,357 boys and men.