



# Humanitarian Action for Children

unicef 

## Syrian Arab Republic

After more than eight years of conflict, the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic remains one of the most significant humanitarian crises of our time. The scale, severity and complexity of the humanitarian needs remain extensive, particularly for children, due to the continued hostilities in several regions, new and protracted displacements, increasing self-organized returns and the erosion of community resilience. The United Nations estimates that 11 million people require humanitarian assistance, including 4.7 million children, 1.3 million people with disabilities,<sup>1</sup> as well as pregnant and lactating women, who are facing particularly high levels of vulnerability. More than 3.1 million children under 5 years and 1.6 million pregnant and lactating women require nutritional support.<sup>2</sup> Grave violations of children's rights and violations of international humanitarian law continue, with children killed and injured by the persistent use of explosive weapons in civilian areas, the destruction of health and educational facilities and the recruitment of children. Years of conflict have dramatically reduced access to basic social services: 2.1 million children aged 5 to 17 years are out of school and 1.3 million children are at risk of dropping out or not learning.<sup>3</sup> Displaced populations and returnees, particularly in the northeast and northwest, are vulnerable to outbreaks of infectious diseases due to unsanitary living conditions, overstretched health services and low coverage of routine immunization. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) estimate that over 577,000 newborns require routine immunization and some 320,000 children aged 13 to 59 months are not fully vaccinated. In addition, some 15.5 million people require access to safe water, including 6.2 million people experiencing acute needs.<sup>4</sup> While the full scale of explosive contamination is not known, preliminary findings indicate that nearly 2,600 communities are contaminated, with 11.5 million people at risk – an increase of 1.3 million additional people from 2018.<sup>5</sup> The delivery of humanitarian assistance remains extremely difficult due to active conflict, insecurity and restrictions on movement. Between May and August, the escalation of hostilities has left over 630,000 people displaced in the northwest,<sup>6</sup> with widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure (homes, hospitals, schools and water stations). WHO has confirmed 43 incidents impacting health facilities<sup>7</sup> or health personnel in northwest Syrian Arab Republic, and the United Nations has verified 73 incidents<sup>8</sup> affecting educational facilities. Over half of the school-aged population of Idlib (300,000 children) is at risk of being out of school.<sup>9</sup> The humanitarian situation remains fluid in the south, where tensions continue. Between March and September 2019, almost 20,000 people departed Rukban camp towards Homs, while some 12,000 people remain in the camp without regular humanitarian assistance.<sup>10</sup> The northeast remains one of the most complex operating environments in the country due to ongoing hostilities, weather-related hazards and population movements. Al Hol camp currently hosts some 68,000 people<sup>11</sup> (90 per cent children and women) who are fully dependent on humanitarian assistance. An estimated 160,000 people,<sup>12</sup> including 70,000 children, have been displaced since the start of the military operations on 9 October.

### Humanitarian strategy

UNICEF's humanitarian strategy in the Syrian Arab Republic will be implemented using the Whole of Syria Approach through three hubs in Damascus, Gaziantep and Amman. In nutrition, UNICEF will strengthen life-saving and preventive services for vulnerable populations, focusing on safe and appropriate infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices, as well as micronutrient interventions. Increasing access to life-saving and coordinated, equitable health services for the most vulnerable will remain a priority, including through the Expanded Programme on Immunization for children under 5 years and supplementary immunization activities in hard-to-reach and newly accessible areas. Cross-cutting issues such as gender and age will be integrated throughout the response. The water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

strategy will continue to focus on the restoration and maintenance of water and sanitation infrastructure to build resilience, and UNICEF will continue to deliver life-saving interventions such as emergency water; sanitation support for solid waste facilities; supply distribution; and hygiene promotion for the most vulnerable. Equitable access to education will be scaled up, in line with the No Lost Generation initiative, focusing on areas with severe needs, to support alternative learning, self-learning, early learning and quality of education, including through access to learning spaces. UNICEF will increase its focus on adolescents and young people through cross-sectoral services, life-skills programmes, vocational education and entrepreneurship training.

### Total people in need

11 million<sup>14</sup>

### Total children (<18) in need

4.7 million<sup>15</sup>

### Total people to be reached

10 million<sup>16</sup>

### Total children to be reached

5.7 million<sup>17</sup>

### 2020<sup>18</sup> programme targets

#### Nutrition

- 9,600 children aged 6 to 59 months affected by SAM admitted for treatment
- 2,400,000 children aged 6 to 59 months and pregnant and lactating women and girls received micronutrients
- 800,000 caregivers, including pregnant and lactating women, reached with IYCF counselling to improve the diets of women and children

#### Health

- 2,900,000 children under 5 years vaccinated against polio
- 2,200,000 children and women of childbearing age receiving health care in UNICEF-supported facilities

#### WASH

- 3,700,000 people safely accessing improved water supply
- 1,300,000 people accessing appropriate sanitation facilities
- 1,500,000 people accessing improved life-saving/emergency WASH facilities and services

#### Child protection

- 350,000 girls and boys engaged in structured and sustained child protection programming, including psychosocial support
- 2,400,000 people accessing mine risk education
- 51,000 women and men engaged in structured and sustained parenting programmes

#### Education

- 2,400,000 children accessing formal education
- 440,000 children accessing non-formal education

#### Non-food items

- 680,000 children protected from extreme weather

#### Early recovery

- 200,000 adolescents and youth (aged 10 to 24 years) promoting social cohesion and civic engagement at the community level
- 11,500 children with disabilities receiving regular cash transfers

UNICEF will work to enhance equitable access to quality child protection services, including for children with disabilities, by improving the quality of community-based child protection services, facilitating community and psychosocial support interventions and improving the quality of specialized services for survivors of violence, exploitation and abuse. UNICEF will continue to engage in social protection schemes that combine regular cash distribution with case management, primarily targeting families of children with disabilities. Gender-based violence risk mitigation will be strengthened across all sectors, and programming on the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse will be scaled up using a survivor-centred approach and quality gender-based violence programming. UNICEF will continue to engage with communities to promote key behaviours related to their well-being and create feedback mechanisms for affected populations.

## Results from 2019

As of 31 August 2019, UNICEF had US\$140 million available against the US\$294.8 million revised appeal (47 per cent funded).<sup>13</sup> UNICEF supported the provision of micronutrients and vitamin A to nearly 558,000 children under 5 years, and over 715,000 children were screened for acute malnutrition. While the nutrition response in Idlib was severely challenged by the escalation of conflict, UNICEF provided life-saving treatment to 4,700 children under 5 years affected by severe acute malnutrition (SAM) throughout the country. With UNICEF support, 1.3 million women and children benefited from free medical consultations through 120 mobile and fixed health centres in all 14 governorates, while 2.5 million caregivers were reached with health promotion messages. UNICEF supported the immunization of over 308,000 children under 1 year with combined diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus vaccination. Some 1.9 million people gained access to safe drinking water, 615,000 people were reached through sanitation interventions and 270,000 people benefited from hygiene promotion. In addition, through UNICEF-supported water chlorination services, an estimated 13.6 million people accessed safe drinking water. UNICEF supported more than 213,000 children with non-formal education and some 309,800 children with formal education. The back-to-learning campaign reached 42,800 children and caregivers. Over 13,000 teachers (65 per cent women) benefited from teacher professional development. With UNICEF support, some 226,000 children (48 per cent girls) improved their coping mechanisms and resilience and over 46,000 caregivers (68 per cent women) received structured psychosocial support services. Over 326,000 people (51 per cent women) received protection awareness-raising sessions, including on prevention of family separation and gender-based violence. In collaboration with government and non-government partners, UNICEF reached 1 million people (46 per cent women/girls) in all 14 governorates with explosive ordnance risk education. Gender-based violence prevention actions included the installation of lights in camps for internally displaced persons and gender-segregated latrines in camps and schools. Over 5,900 children with disabilities (2,309 girls) participated in a system of regular cash transfers linked to a referral and case management system. UNICEF distributed clothing to 390,000 people to support vulnerable families to provide basic clothes for their children. In addition, more than 103,000 young people benefited from UNICEF's skills development programme, functional literacy courses and community-based vocational training, while over 217,000 participated in civic and social cohesion activities.

	Sector 2019 targets	Sector total results	UNICEF 2019 targets	UNICEF total results
<b>NUTRITION</b>				
Children and pregnant and lactating women who received micronutrients	2,566,942	778,837	2,400,000	705,335 <sup>i</sup>
Children and pregnant and lactating women screened for acute malnutrition	2,867,674	2,263,116	1,800,000	943,613 <sup>ii</sup>
Children reached with SAM treatment	17,447	9,144	9,600	4,723 <sup>iii</sup>
Caregivers, including pregnant and lactating women, counselled or reached with awareness on appropriate IYCF	915,063	504,918	800,000	236,312 <sup>iv</sup>
People reached with nutrition supplies, including in hard-to-reach areas	4,371,322	N/A	1,045,000	457,821 <sup>v</sup>
<b>HEALTH</b>				
Children under 5 years vaccinated through polio campaigns			2,900,000	3,288,503 <sup>vi</sup>
Children under 1 year reached with routine vaccination (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis 3-containing vaccine)			577,000	308,157 <sup>vii</sup>
Primary health care outpatient consultations supported (children and women of childbearing age)			2,200,000	1,297,677 <sup>viii</sup>
Health workers and community volunteers trained on newborn care packages			640	1,460 <sup>ix</sup>
Caregivers reached with health promotion, including immunization messages			3,500,000	2,529,635
<b>WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE<sup>x</sup></b>				
People with access to improved water supply	8,000,000	2,270,241	3,700,000	1,911,880
People with improved access to sanitation services	5,500,000	N/A	1,300,000	615,010
Schoolchildren who benefited from improved WASH facilities and services	N/A	N/A	390,000	89,327 <sup>xi</sup>
People supported with access to essential WASH non-food items, including in hard-to-reach areas	2,000,000	2,213,149	1,600,000	996,545
People reached with hygiene promotion interventions	3,000,000	758,829	525,000	296,913
People who benefited from access to improved life-saving/emergency WASH facilities and services	3,000,000	2,675,299	1,500,000	720,981
<b>CHILD PROTECTION</b>				
Girls and boys engaged in structured and sustained child protection programming, including psychosocial support	880,000	551,638	350,000	226,290
Women and men engaged in structured and sustained parenting programmes	93,000	77,367	51,000	46,231
Girls, boys, women and men reached with explosive hazards risk education	4,592,604	1,870,918	2,400,000	1,093,673 <sup>xii</sup>
Women, men, girls and boys reached with behaviour change communication interventions for child protection issues	1,650,000	687,459	630,000	326,219 <sup>xiii</sup>
Girls and boys who received specialized child protection services,	50,000	33,725	22,000	10,871

including through case management				
<b>EDUCATION<sup>xiv</sup></b>				
Children provided with education services in formal settings	3,300,000	2,029,042	2,400,000	309,755
Children in non-formal education benefiting from education services	1,256,530	841,791	440,000	213,311
Teachers and education personnel trained	76,524	68,372	42,600	13,001 <sup>xv</sup>
Children and youth (aged 5 to 24 years) participating in life-skills and citizenship education programmes in formal and non-formal settings	300,000	172,507	280,000	33,819
Caregivers and children reached with communication for development back-to-learning interventions	N/A	N/A	225,000	42,825
<b>ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION</b>				
Adolescents and youth (aged 10 to 24 years) promoting social cohesion and civic engagement at the community level			200,000	217,167 <sup>xvi</sup>
Affected adolescents and youth (aged 10 to 24 years) receiving employability skills, including life skills, technical and vocational education and training and entrepreneurship skills			300,000	103,431 <sup>xvii</sup>
<b>CASH-BASED TRANSFERS</b>				
Girls and boys with disabilities provided with regular cash transfers			11,500	5,931
<b>NON-FOOD ITEMS</b>				
Girls and boys protected from extreme weather through the provision of non-food items			680,000	390,103
Girls and boys protected from extreme weather through the provision of e-vouchers or cash transfers			110,000	65,665

\* Results are as of 31 August 2019 unless otherwise noted.

<sup>i</sup> Micronutrient supplementation was initially planned to take place jointly with the measles campaign. However, the measles campaign was cancelled by the Government. The target for this indicator is under revision (during the next Joint Operational Planning meeting for the Whole of Syria).

<sup>ii</sup> The low reach is due to the operational constraints faced by partners in obtaining the necessary permissions. In addition, partner data were received with a two-month delay.

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> This represents partial reporting, as the Ministry of Health has not yet adopted the IYCF operational strategy. Results are coming through non-governmental organization partners. Funding constraints have also impacted results.

<sup>v</sup> The low reach is due to the operational constraints faced by partners in obtaining the necessary permissions. In addition, partner data were received with a two-month delay.

<sup>vi</sup> This target has already been achieved because the polio campaign took place during the first month of the year. Overachievement can also be explained by the fact that this activity has a dedicated funding line additional populations were covered due to the evolution of the crisis.

<sup>vii</sup> These data are received from the Ministry of Health with a two-month delay.

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>ix</sup> Overachievement is due to the expansion of the newborn programme after late approval by the Ministry of Health. This was a newly introduced activity and the target was set conservatively.

<sup>x</sup> Limited funding has impacted the achievement of WASH results.

<sup>xi</sup> The planned number of schools to be reached with WASH services is on track, however, the number of children reached is lower than expected: a revision of the methodological calculation for these data is ongoing.

<sup>xii</sup> The low reach is due to turnover in the Ministry of Education, which delayed education programming. The gap is expected to be closed in the second half of the year.

<sup>xiii</sup> The low reach is due to the operational constraints faced by non-governmental organization partners in obtaining the necessary permissions, as well as limited funding.

<sup>xiv</sup> Most of the results are expected to be achieved in September/October with the new academic year.

<sup>xv</sup> Teacher and education personnel training is scheduled for the summer season during the school break. There is also limited funding for this activity.

<sup>xvi</sup> Strong results are due to successful implementation and good funding.

<sup>xvii</sup> This activity is scheduled to reach more beneficiaries in the second half of the year. This activity is also considerably underfunded.

### Funding requirements

UNICEF is requesting US\$294.8 million to meet the needs of children and families and fulfil children's rights in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2020. This funding requirement covers programming delivered from within the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as cross-border assistance delivered as part of the Whole of Syria approach. UNICEF programmes are planned for nationwide reach, targeting populations in the areas with the most acute needs, and the population groups most in need of life-saving humanitarian assistance.<sup>19</sup>

Sector	2020 requirements (US\$) <sup>20</sup>
Nutrition	32,954,663
Health	41,877,045
Water, sanitation and hygiene	77,492,160
Child protection	36,133,672
Education	64,492,956
Non-food items	26,660,955
Early recovery and livelihoods <sup>21</sup>	15,188,586
<b>Total</b>	<b>294,800,037</b>

<sup>1</sup> Figures are provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency needs and planning documents. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Syrian Arab Republic: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview' (draft), OCHA, October 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Security Council, 'Security Council: Syria (24 Oct 2019)', 24 October 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Syrian Arab Republic: Recent developments in northwestern Syria - situation report no. 11', OCHA, 6 September 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Whole of Syria Education, 'Whole of Syria (WoS): Attacks on education in Syria (Jan 2019–June 2019)', 17 September 2019.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'Whole of Syria Humanitarian Results', UNICEF, August 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Syrian Arab Republic: Rukban humanitarian update', OCHA, 25 September 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Humanitarian Update: Syrian Arab Republic - issue #5', OCHA, 29 August 2019.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'North East Syria Response: Situation report # 7', UNICEF, 17 October 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Available funds include US\$84 million received against the 2019 appeal and US\$56 million carried forward from the previous year.

<sup>14</sup> This figure is provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency needs and planning documents. 'Syrian Arab Republic: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview' (draft).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> This figure was set considering different interventions in different geographical areas and in different humanitarian situations (host communities, internally displaced persons, returnees), and different community types (urban, rural and camps), to avoid double counting beneficiaries. The total figure includes 5 million women/girls and 1 million people with disabilities.

<sup>17</sup> The target for children to be reached, which includes 2.9 million children targeted for polio vaccination and 2.8 million children targeted for formal and non-formal education, is higher than the total number of children in need because it is calculated based on polio immunization targeting all children under 5 years in the country, not only children in need, which is calculated as 43 per cent of the total people in need. The total figure includes 2.87 million girls and 500,000 children with disabilities.

<sup>18</sup> Programme targets are provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency planning documents.

<sup>19</sup> The six population groups that are generally most in need of life-saving humanitarian assistance in the Syrian Arab Republic include: people living in United Nations-declared besieged areas; internally displaced persons in last resort camps, informal settlements, transit centres and collective centres; newly displaced persons; spontaneous/self-organized returnees; overburdened communities; and people in areas of high conflict intensity.

<sup>20</sup> Figures are provisional estimates. Financial requirements are subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency appeals/planning documents.

<sup>21</sup> This includes US\$8,956,338 for cash-based programming.

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