



Aya, 5, clutches her doll to ease her fear as she gazes at a sky filled with warplanes, inside a UNRWA school in the Gaza Strip.

unicef 
for every child

Humanitarian Action for Children

Middle East and North Africa Region

HIGHLIGHTS

- Children in the Middle East and North Africa face life-threatening situations and multiple vulnerabilities caused by a variety of natural and social hazards, protracted and acute armed conflicts, public health emergencies and climate change-related disasters.¹
- UNICEF prioritizes emergency preparedness and response to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of children and communities affected by deteriorating humanitarian situations across the region. In 2024, UNICEF will focus on building capacity internally and among partners to effectively address vulnerabilities and ensure readiness to respond to the humanitarian and protection needs of the hardest to reach and most vulnerable children, including those who are separated, unaccompanied and displaced. Building gender-responsive and inclusive national and local capacities for child rights and protection and providing access to vital services to marginalized populations are a must.
- UNICEF requires \$72.6 million to implement its humanitarian action across the region and cover the needs of approximately 9 million people, including 3.8 million children. This appeal includes the funding requirements of Algeria, Djibouti, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Libya, while also focusing on a coordinated preparedness and response approach to crises with broader regional impacts.

IN NEED^{2,3}



83.9 million people in need of health and nutrition assistance



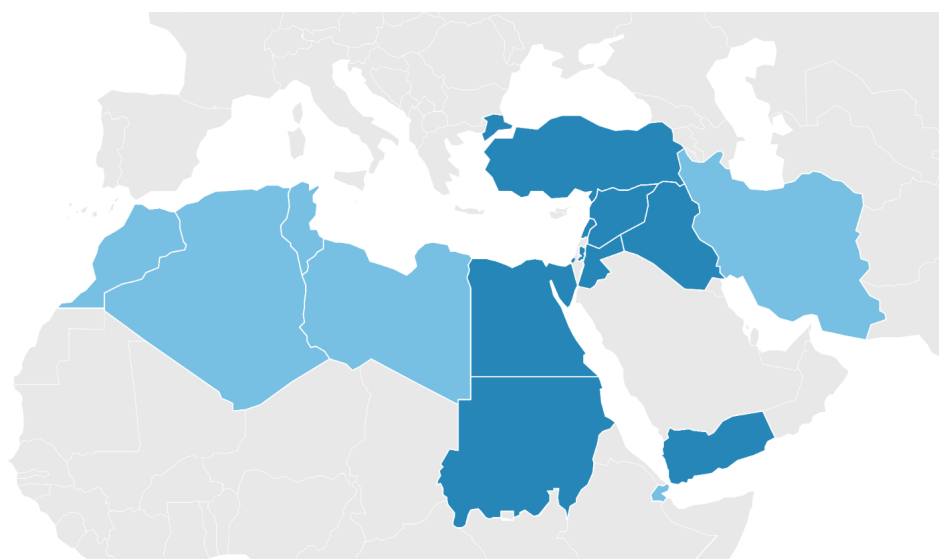
34 million children in need of protection services



36.9 million children in need of education support



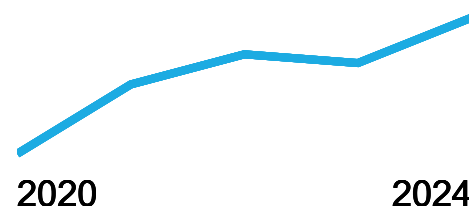
59 million people lack access to safe water



This map does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers. The countries in light blue are embedded in this regional appeal. The countries in dark blue have corresponding standalone appeals or are covered under multi country appeals.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

US\$72.6 million



The Middle East and North Africa region faces unprecedented challenges, including the impact of protracted and changing crises, compounded by the consequences of climate change.⁶ Humanitarian situations and conflicts have diminished national and local capacities and infrastructure. Governance fragility, natural hazards⁷ and other global crises⁸ have left the most vulnerable populations in the region to experience the worst effects of these situations.

A record number of children across the region, including in the State of Palestine, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, are displaced, have lost family members and continue to be exposed to violence, including gender-based violence, and other trauma. Since conflict erupted in the Sudan, 6 million people, half of them children, have fled their homes. The Sudan is now home to the largest child displacement crisis in the world. Egypt has experienced a surge of Sudanese refugees following the outbreak of war in the Sudan. Prolonged conflict, natural disasters, health emergencies and socioeconomic decline have left 7 million Syrian children in dire need.⁹ Despite de-escalation, 11.1 million children remain in need of humanitarian assistance due to protracted conflict in Yemen.¹⁰ The magnitude of hostilities in the State of Palestine has resulted in grave humanitarian consequences, placing children and their families at risk and restricting their access to essential services. Ensuring sustained humanitarian aid in the State of Palestine is imperative, along with strengthening the readiness of UNICEF and its partners to respond in neighbouring countries.

Mixed migration through North African countries to Europe is on the rise and likely to continue, worsening the protection risks for those on the move, especially children and female-headed households.^{5,11,4} In addition to this, in September 2023, floods and the impact of climate change in Libya exacerbated the fragile security and political instability there, while Djibouti continues to struggle with the effects of drought. The Islamic Republic of Iran hosts the second largest refugee population in the world, within a challenging context severely affected by economic constraints, including sanctions. And Algeria is dealing with a protracted Sahrawi refugee situation in Tindouf.

In accordance with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, UNICEF's strategy is to meet immediate humanitarian needs while also building the capacity of national and local civil society partners to address existing and emerging vulnerabilities and ensure the protection and promotion of child rights in humanitarian action. UNICEF will enhance its internal capability, at country and regional levels, for readiness and response: identifying regional 'hotspots' and ensuring operational capacity to deploy the right resources at the right time when emergencies strike.

Strong and responsive inter-agency coordination mechanisms are crucial to addressing regional and interregional humanitarian crises. UNICEF will invest in strengthening new and existing partnerships for effective, multisector preparedness and response programming, including a specific focus on access to the most vulnerable and on the protection needs of separated, unaccompanied and displaced children throughout the Middle East and North Africa region.

UNICEF will engage social actors and utilize technology to support durable solutions, promote localization and accountability to crisis-affected populations and invest in social and behaviour change communication, including social research and social listening. UNICEF will promote disability inclusion and gender analysis and response.¹³ And it will address the needs of youth and adolescents and ensure that multisectoral services, education and cash transfers are provided in emergency responses. Improving humanitarian monitoring, evidence gathering and analysis and strengthening nexus and risk-informed programming is key for high-quality, timely and needs-driven emergency responses.

UNICEF is committed to delivering timely humanitarian assistance to people affected and displaced by armed conflict and in the aftermath of flooding in Libya. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNICEF contributes to the Regional Refugee Response Plan, prioritizing the provision of essential services to Afghan refugees and host communities. In Algeria, UNICEF continues responding to Sahrawi refugees' humanitarian needs, in line with the Sahrawi Refugee Response Plan. In Djibouti, UNICEF will support national, decentralized and community efforts to provide assistance to children and populations affected by worsening climate conditions. UNICEF will also focus on strengthening a coordinated preparedness and response approach to crises with broader regional impacts.

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.

STORY FROM THE FIELD



Children at a school in an earthquake-hit village in Khoy County, in northwest Iran, sing hand in hand with volunteers from psychosocial support 'SAHAR' teams of the Iranian Red Crescent.

In an earthquake-stricken village in Khoy County, in the northwestern corner of the Islamic Republic of Iran, an elementary school is a beacon of hope. Despite hardship, children sing joyfully with relief workers. Amid the cheerful atmosphere, Amirali, 9, recalls the night of the disaster.

A psychosocial support team from the Iranian Red Crescent Society, called a SAHAR team, came to the village to implement a series of programmes to restore the morale of both the children and their parents, focusing on mental well-being, which is often overlooked in emergencies. Collaborating with UNICEF, the SAHAR teams establish child-friendly spaces, revitalizing children's spirits.

Even in remote areas, the mobile child-friendly spaces cater to marginalized groups, supported by trained SAHAR volunteers. In times of crisis, these initiatives offer solace and nurture resilience in the hearts of vulnerable children.

[Read more about this story here](#)

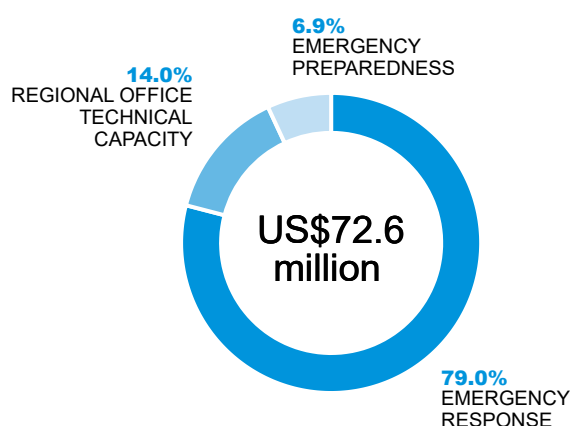
FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2024

In 2024, the UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office requires \$72.6 million to prepare for and respond to the ever-growing humanitarian needs of children, women and young people in the region. These funds will enable UNICEF to strengthen regional inter-agency coordination mechanisms, enhance operational capacities to provide critical resources and ensure a swift, efficient response to crises.

UNICEF will use this funding to promote localization and accountability to affected populations, and for investments in social and behaviour change communication in humanitarian response. Funding will strengthen robust humanitarian monitoring, data analysis systems and risk-informed programming. Enhancing technical capacities for WASH, health, nutrition, protection, education and the use of cash transfers in emergencies will be prioritized. These resources will enable UNICEF to enhance the quality of its response by better targeting specific age groups, genders and people with disabilities. Building gender-responsive and inclusive national and local capacities for child rights protection and providing access to vital services to marginalized populations are a must.

This appeal includes the funding requirements for emergency response in Algeria, Djibouti, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Libya, while also focusing on a coordinated preparedness and response approach to those crises with broader regional impacts.

Lack of adequate and timely financial support will have far-reaching impacts, especially for the most vulnerable households with children in the region. Without support, millions of children, their families and communities risk missing out on educational opportunities, falling behind on health and nutrition indicators and resorting to harmful practices. The generous response of donors can provide a spectrum of services and ensure children, adolescents and women can realize their right to live with dignity. Join us in making sure that all children – and the vulnerable communities supporting them – receive the services they need and deserve to survive and thrive.



Sector	2024 requirements (US\$)
Emergency response	57,360,020 ¹⁴
Emergency Preparedness	5,024,000 ¹⁵
Regional Office Technical Capacity	10,181,633 ¹⁶
Total	72,565,653

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ENDNOTES

1. The total number of people in need increased from 71.8 million in 2022 to 90.6 million in 2023. This figure reflects the needs in the entire region. The figure for people in need is calculated based on the sum of sector needs in the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plans and the 2023 Syrian Refugees Humanitarian Action for Children appeal, as well as the needs in Algeria, Djibouti, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Libya.
2. The figures for people in need are calculated based on the sum of sector needs in the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plans and the 2023 Syrian Refugees Humanitarian Action for Children appeal. These figures reflect the needs in the entire region. This appeal for 2024 covers the needs in Algeria, Djibouti, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Libya. Furthermore, as hostilities and humanitarian consequences in the State of Palestine unfold, requiring a coordinated preparedness and response approach for broader regional impacts, the people in need and funding amounts required will be continually revised.
3. The in-need figures reflect the number of people with pressing needs in the major sectors that UNICEF supports in countries covered by this regional appeal.
4. Among many other incidents, humanitarian actors reported death and injury of migrants stranded in a desert area on the Libyan–Tunisian border in July and August 2023.
5. As of 15 October 2023, the number of sea arrivals had reached 202,135. This is already 26.8 percent higher than the total number of arrivals in 2022 (159,410). The number of dead and missing in the sea has also risen: as of 15 October 2023, 2,539 were dead or missing compared with 2,439 in 2022. Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Operational data portal, Mediterranean situation, available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean> and accessed on 18 October 2023.
6. The primary effects of climate change manifest through more frequent and extreme weather conditions, while the secondary consequences include deteriorating livelihoods, food insecurity, rising levels of waterborne diseases and widespread displacement, significantly impacting communities and children in the region.
7. The countries in the Middle East and North Africa region are among the most exposed states to the impacts of climate change and are susceptible to natural hazards, notably earthquakes, extended droughts and more intense sandstorms and floods. Source: Wehrey, Frederic, et al., Climate change and vulnerability in the Middle East, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 6 July 2023, available at <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/07/06/climate-change-and-vulnerability-in-middle-east-pub-90089#:~:text=The%20countries%20of%20the%20Middle,floods%2C%20and%20rising%20sea%20levels.>>.
8. The war in Ukraine and the increase in food prices have exposed children and mothers in the Middle East and North Africa more than ever to increased risk of malnutrition and its consequences.
9. Syrian refugees still face a grave humanitarian crisis. About 5.6 million registered refugees, including more than 2.6 million children, live in camps, informal settlements and host communities in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Türkiye.
10. In addition to health care and food insecurity challenges, this situation has significantly increased the risks of disease, malnutrition and various forms of exploitation, including violence, child labour and child marriage.
11. The status of migrants and asylum-seekers, including children, remains a serious protection concern. Due to the lack of legal status, migrants and asylum-seekers have limited access to social assistance and humanitarian assistance.
12. UNICEF is an active member of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group to promote analysis and response.
13. UNICEF recognizes the gendered impact of the humanitarian situation for girls, adolescent girls and young women specifically, and includes critical tailored supply and programming as a part of its response. UNICEF response is informed by gender analysis, accounting for the differentiated risks, needs and capacities of women and girls, and men and boys. As a part of the Core Commitments of Children in Humanitarian Action, UNICEF has adopted holistic, multisectoral gender-responsive approaches to mitigating gendered barriers in relation to access to services, resources and information and adjusting service delivery based on inputs from community feedback.
14. This amount includes the funding requirements of the Regional Office to enhance humanitarian coordination and preparedness for ongoing humanitarian crises across the region, as well as emergency response in Algeria, Djibouti, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Libya. As hostilities and humanitarian consequences in the State of Palestine unfold, requiring a coordinated preparedness and response approach for broader, regional impacts, the people in need and funding amounts required will be continually revised.
15. This amount includes the funding requirements of the Regional Office to enhance emergency preparedness and contingency planning across the region.
16. Funding will be used mostly for Regional Office staff supporting emergency functions, missions and other related costs to support countries in the region.