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for every child

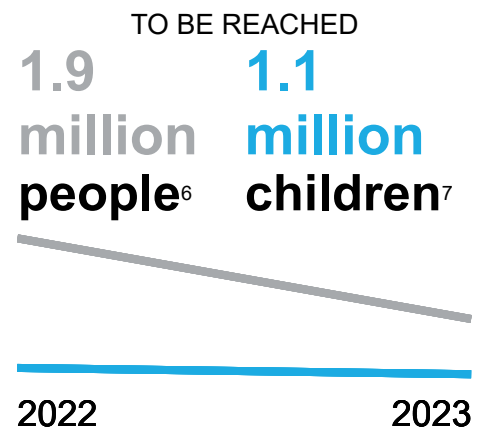
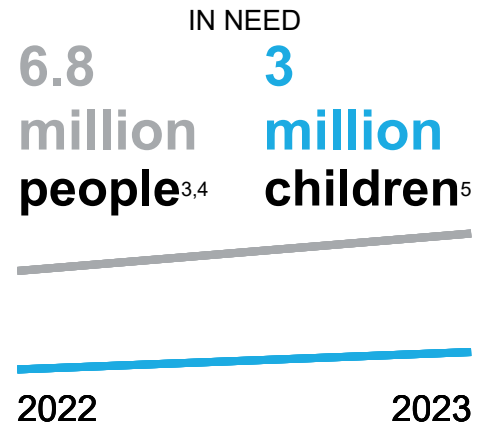
Humanitarian Action for Children

Working with the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs in the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNICEF and Relief International delivered hygiene kits to refugees and host communities.

Afghanistan Refugees

HIGHLIGHTS¹

- More than 7 million Afghans of varying status are residing in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in search of protection and asylum.² With the humanitarian situation inside Afghanistan still dire and fluid, new refugee influxes are expected in 2023. Hosting countries will require additional preparedness and response support to meet the urgent needs of asylum-seekers and host communities.
- UNICEF supports affected populations through direct humanitarian assistance, partnerships with humanitarian actors and support to national systems to prepare for and respond to the growing needs of Afghan and host community children and their families. UNICEF's assistance is multisectoral, child-centred, rights-based and sustainable.
- UNICEF is requesting US\$66.2 million to support national partners in meeting the critical needs of the most vulnerable refugees and their host communities.



KEY PLANNED TARGETS



385,059
children screened for wasting



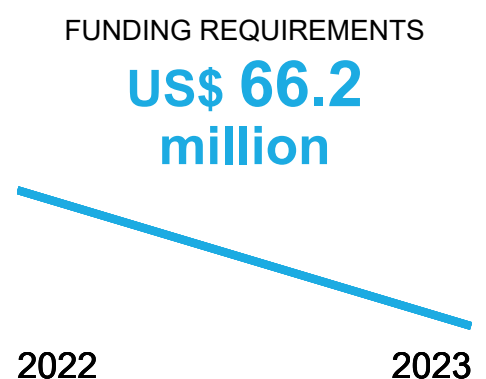
235,882
children/caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support



490,390
children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning



1.5 million
people reached with critical WASH supplies



Figures are provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the Afghanistan Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan and other inter-agency planning documents.

The dire humanitarian and economic situation in Afghanistan, coupled with its volatile political environment, continues to drive Afghan children and families into neighbouring countries in search of protection and asylum. Seven million Afghans of varying status live in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, including 2.1 million registered Afghan refugees.¹¹ The Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan receive the highest number of cross-border movements. Since August 2021, more than 1.3 million Afghans have arrived in the neighbouring countries.¹² The hosting capacity of these countries - which are themselves affected by the economic impact of rising fuel and food prices, natural hazards and limited access to social services - has also been strained by the ongoing impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Approximately 2,000 people cross from Afghanistan into the Islamic Republic of Iran every day, and the country hosts nearly 3.6 million Afghans, including more than 1 million who have arrived since 2021.⁸ Children make up about 40 per cent of the new arrivals and risk violence, stigma and family separation; experience the lack access to basic services; and risk being subject to child labour. Children also comprise a large proportion (49 per cent) of Pakistan's 3.3 million Afghan population,¹⁰ which includes an estimated 1.6 million undocumented Afghans and those of other status. The provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have the highest multidimensional poverty levels - yet they host the vast majority (77 per cent) of the existing Afghan refugee population in Pakistan. The enduring presence of refugees mainly in urban areas has inevitably overstretched Pakistan's available resources, especially the provision of health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and education services.

While countries in Central Asia (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) host a smaller caseload - nearly 26,000 Afghan nationals in total as of mid-2022⁹ - a significant influx could place pressure on countries' basic services and infrastructure, already reeling from the upheaval of the recent pandemic and the war in Ukraine, which continue to impact the political and socioeconomic conditions of these countries. In addition, Afghans arriving in Central Asian countries face difficulties in securing their legal status and livelihoods due to limited protection mechanisms for refugees and asylum-seekers. They also urgently need access to education, health, WASH, child protection and gender-based violence prevention and response services, because systems are not equipped to receive large numbers of refugees.

An expected new influx of refugees and asylum-seekers from Afghanistan into the neighbouring countries will put additional strain on all the refugee-hosting countries covered in this appeal.



3.2 million people in need of health assistance



1.5 million people in need of nutrition assistance



3.1 million children and caretakers in need of MHPSS services



1.6 million children in need of education support



3.6 million people lack access to safe water

STORY FROM THE FIELD



Due to depleting ground water resources, old infrastructure and sewage seeping into the main water supply lines, access to safe drinking water in the Chairman colony, a congested neighbourhood of Peshawar, Pakistan with a high concentration of registered Afghan refugees, remains a huge challenge.

UNICEF closely coordinated with authorities to launch a project to improve families' access to WASH services, focusing on Afghan refugees and host communities in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan Provinces in Pakistan. In Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, UNICEF supported the provision of a sufficient supply of quality water, cleaned drains and improved solid waste management. The sewer system is now regularly cleaned, preventing water contamination and benefitting 160,000 people, including 13 educational institutions and four health facilities.

[Read more about this story here](#)

Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar workers open a sewer line with the help of a UNICEF-supported sewer rodding machine in Gulberg # 2, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan.

UNICEF will continue working with national governments, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, other United Nations agencies and civil society organizations to ensure the rights of Afghan children and families on the move are protected. Guided by the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, UNICEF will continue to provide life-saving health, nutrition, WASH, child protection (including gender-based violence response) and social protection services to existing Afghan caseloads and host communities, ensuring social cohesion through an inclusive humanitarian response.

To address health and nutrition needs, UNICEF will strengthen primary health care and nutrition services, including preparedness for or provision of routine polio and measles immunization, enhancing partners' capacity to identify, refer and treat children with wasting and severe wasting, provision of nutrition supplies and promotion of infant and young child feeding.

To ensure learning continuity, UNICEF will support improvements to existing education and early childhood development facilities to cater to refugee children, establish temporary learning spaces and support integration of refugee children into national education systems when they arrive.

UNICEF will support rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure in potential or existing refugee hosting sites and pre-position or distribute hygiene supplies to targeted facilities in host communities settings and at border crossing points.

Strengthening child protection and gender-based violence services and mechanisms at the provincial and community levels will also be a priority. This encompasses capacity building of front-line responders on child protection in emergencies, providing mental health and psychosocial support, identifying appropriate care and guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children and addressing cases of gender-based violence. UNICEF will also prioritize humanitarian cash support for families in partnership with other agencies, where required.

Furthermore, UNICEF will continue to reinforce readiness for potential future influxes by pre-positioning critical supplies and strengthening national reception, screening, registration and humanitarian response systems and services to address the needs of vulnerable children and families, including those with disabilities. Existing regional and national partnerships will be leveraged to enhance countries' preparedness in case of a massive flow of refugees from Afghanistan. UNICEF will continue to advocate for humanitarian support for people on the move, as an issue high on national agendas and, where possible, integrated into national priorities. Promoting social inclusion and integration through access to social services and longer-term solutions for refugees and host communities will also be prioritized.

2023 PROGRAMME TARGETS



Health

- **401,424** children vaccinated against measles
- **285,184** children and women accessing primary healthcare in UNICEF-supported facilities



Nutrition

- **24,772** children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment
- **385,059** children 6-59 months screened for wasting
- **116,858** primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling



Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

- **235,882** children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support
- **365,782** women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions
- **1,162,000** people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations¹⁶



Education

- **490,390** children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- **236,970** children receiving individual learning materials



Water, sanitation and hygiene

- **411,993** people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs
- **356,340** people accessing appropriate sanitation services
- **1,525,000** people reached with critical WASH supplies¹⁷



Social protection

- **8,650** households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers



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

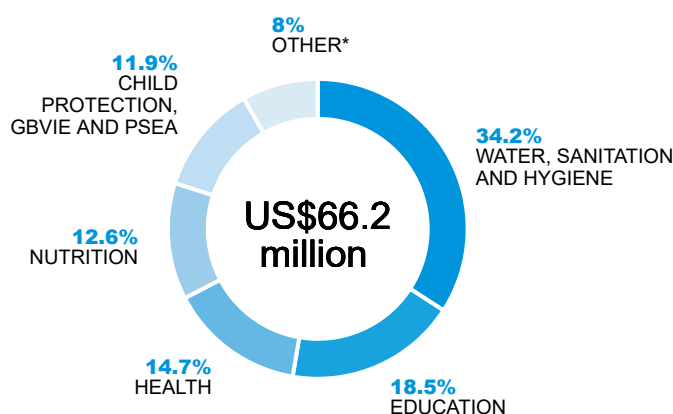
- **45,000** people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2023

UNICEF is requesting US\$66.2 million¹⁸ to meet the needs of current Afghan refugee populations and host communities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and to enhance readiness for any new influx. This ask aligns with the inter-agency Afghanistan Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan.

The funding will allow UNICEF to support host governments and partners to sustain life-saving activities in health, nutrition, child protection, gender-based violence, WASH and humanitarian cash support to Afghan refugees and host communities. It will also enable UNICEF to enhance preparedness measures for additional or new refugee flows by ensuring adequate capacity to respond to emerging needs, given the continued fragile context in Afghanistan. Life-saving interventions including screening and treatment of severe wasting, vaccination and access to primary health services and provision of safe drinking water and hygiene items will be prioritized. Facilitation of safe return to schools, psychosocial support to children and families and protection from gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse will also remain key. Investment will continue to enhance capacities of systems to provide equitable services to Afghan refugees and host communities.

A lack of timely, flexible funding will impact UNICEF's capacity to respond effectively to the current situation and maintain life-saving services for vulnerable Afghan refugees and host communities in the five countries covered in this appeal. Lack of full funding will also impede preparations for the potential future influx of people.



Sectors	2023 total requirement (US\$)
Health	9,719,491
Nutrition	8,336,833
Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA	7,858,000
Education	12,266,122
Water, sanitation and hygiene	22,625,380
Social protection	1,982,378
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)	1,450,000
Emergency Preparedness	2,000,000
Total	66,238,204

*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions: Emergency Preparedness (3.0%), Social protection (3.0%), Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP) (2.2%).

Sectors	Islamic Republic of Iran	Pakistan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan	2023 total requirement (US\$)
Health ¹⁹	1,674,140	7,748,851	154,500	50,000	92,000	9,719,491
Nutrition	303,170	7,844,663	120,000	-	69,000	8,336,833
Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA	1,315,000	4,443,000	500,000	100,000	1,500,000	7,858,000
Education	3,838,000	6,285,000	1,713,122	130,000	300,000	12,266,122
Water, sanitation and hygiene	3,369,480	12,759,900	4,680,000	220,000	1,596,000	22,625,380
Social protection	-	-	882,378	100,000	1,000,000	1,982,378
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)	-	1,000,000	-	20,000	430,000	1,450,000
Emergency Preparedness ²⁰	-	2,000,000	-	-	-	2,000,000
Total	10,499,790	42,081,414	8,050,000	620,000	4,987,000	66,238,204

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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. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Operational Data Portal, Afghanistan Situation, available at <<https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/afghanistan>>.
3. Estimate based on the following: the 2022 Afghanistan Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) (Iran: 2,203,500); and the draft 2023 RRP planning figures (Pakistan: 4,540,000, Tajikistan: 20,000, Turkmenistan: 2,700 and Uzbekistan: 23,000). The number of people in need includes host community members in addition to the Afghan populations in need.
4. 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.
5. The estimate of children in need is calculated at 44.6 per cent of the total number of people in need (2022 RRP).
6. The number of people to be reached is based on the sectoral targets, with the adult population drawn from the WASH target and the child population drawn from health or nutrition plus education targets in each country, avoiding duplication. The number of people to be reached includes 51 per cent women/girls and 15 per cent people with disabilities. UNICEF's target has decreased compared with 2022 because the number of partners has increased.
7. The number of children to be reached is based on sectoral targets on health or nutrition plus education for each countries. This includes 51 per cent girls and 15 per cent children with disabilities.
8. UNHCR, draft country refugee response plan, January-December 2023, UNHCR, 2022.
9. UNHCR, Operational Data Portal.
10. UNHCR, Operational Data Portal. This includes 1.29 million Afghan refugee card holders, 840,000 passport with valid visa, 775,000 undocumented Afghans, and more than 250,000 new arrivals (headcounted).
11. UNHCR, Operational Data Portal. Registered refugees: Pakistan: 1.29 million; Iran: 780,000; Central Asia: 6,903.
12. UNHCR, Operational Data Portal.
13. Cumulative from all five countries based on provisional figures for the draft 2023 RRP.
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. Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse is a cross-cutting intervention and will therefore be integrated into all sectors, including WASH, health, nutrition and child protection. All the sectors have prioritized strengthening community-based complaints mechanisms, which will provide a channel for safe and accessible reporting of sexual exploitation and abuse. As a result, there is a significant increase in the 2023 target number for this compared with 2022.
17. Iran: 50,000; Pakistan: 1,430,000; Tajikistan: 20,000; Turkmenistan: 2,000; and Uzbekistan: 23,000.
18. The funding ask has decreased compared with 2022 mainly due to the change in UNICEF's approach. While in 2022 UNICEF invested more in infrastructure (for example, WASH facilities in reception centres), in 2023 the focus is more on building capacities, advocacy and leveraging resources from other partners. These are relatively less costly. The funding ask has also been adjusted to be in line with the number of people and children to be reached in 2023.
19. The funding ask for health has increased compared with 2022, to scale up interventions on primary health-care services, including child vaccinations.
20. Except for Pakistan, the funds required for preparedness have been incorporated within the sectoral asks for country offices.