



GOAL AREA 2

Every child, including adolescents, learns and acquires skills for the future

Global Annual
Results Report 2022

unicef 
for every child

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Girls sitting in a classroom in Cameroon, on the first day schools reopened in September 2022.

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A girl paints on a canvas placed on a drawing stand during a school class in Cameroon.

Expression of thanks

In 2022, children faced significant challenges impeding the fulfilment of their rights, including their right to education. With the support of resource partners, however, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was able to support millions of children to access education, so that they can learn, grow and develop the skills necessary to thrive in life.

UNICEF's work is funded entirely through individual donations and the voluntary support of government, civil society and private sector partners. Voluntary contributions enable UNICEF to deliver on its mandate to protect the rights of children, to help meet their basic needs and to expand opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF takes this opportunity to thank all its partners for their commitment and trust in UNICEF.

A special acknowledgement is extended to partners who contributed thematic funding to UNICEF. Thematic contributions to education allowed UNICEF the flexibility and agility to deliver technical, operational, and programming support, particularly in emergency settings, where the negative impact on child rights has been multiplied by the pandemic. UNICEF thanks the governments of Norway and Sweden for their continued support for UNICEF's education work.

Contents

Executive summary	3
Global education context in 2022	5
Strategic shifts	7
Resources for education	8
Key achievements	9
The Transforming Education Summit.....	13
Results	15
Result Area 1: Equitable and inclusive access to learning opportunities, including in humanitarian and fragile contexts.....	16
Result Area 2: Improved learning, skills, participation and engagement for all children and adolescents, in development and humanitarian contexts	33
Education in emergencies.....	58
Adolescent and youth development and participation	70
Supporting adolescent and youth empowerment.....	72
Supporting UNICEF and partners to work with adolescents and young people	73
Strengthening systems for adolescent participation	76
Adolescent participation and youth-led change in humanitarian and peacebuilding contexts	77
Strategic partnerships for adolescent and youth development and engagement.....	77
High-level priorities	79
Abbreviations and acronyms	82
Annex 1: Financial Report	83
Annex 2: Data Companion	102



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Executive summary

An adolescent girl participating in a UNICEF-supported education programme in Bamyan, Afghanistan.

The year 2022 marked a transition from a state of global education emergency response towards recovery. While all countries had lifted nationwide school closures by September 2022, disruptions to education persisted. Despite significant efforts made by countries to recover learning losses, learning poverty continued to grow, disproportionately affecting the most marginalized children and youth.¹ In low- and middle-income countries, the share of children living in learning poverty, already at 57 per cent before the pandemic, is estimated to have increased to 70 per cent. The pandemic particularly worsened educational exclusion for marginalized children, including girls who are affected by compounding inequalities, and learners with disabilities, many of whom faced barriers to participation in remote learning, as governments were slow to provide accessible content and support services.

In response to the growing learning crisis, UNICEF spent nearly US\$1.56 billion to support education including US\$880 million for humanitarian action. As a result, noteworthy progress was made in systems-strengthening. Of UNICEF-supported countries, 47 per cent reported having inclusive and gender-equitable system for access to quality learning opportunities. In addition, 62 per cent of reporting countries indicated having evidence-based education sector plans/strategies. Similarly, UNICEF was able to increase or sustain support for improved learning, skills, participation, and engagement – for example, 56 per cent of UNICEF-supported countries reported having effective systems for learning assessment, and 49 per cent reported having effective student and community participation in the education system. As a result, 37.9 million out-of-school children (49 per cent girls) accessed education,² including 251,565 children with disabilities, 3.1 million children on the move and 18.6 million children in humanitarian settings. Learning materials reached 28.3 million children (49 per cent girls), including nearly 3.7 million in humanitarian settings, while 85,099 school management committees or similar bodies received training through UNICEF-supported programmes. In addition, UNICEF programmes engaged 16.1 million adolescents (45 per cent girls) across 89 countries, including nearly 345,000 adolescents in humanitarian settings.

A significant global moment in 2022 was the Transforming Education Summit in September. UNICEF leveraged the lead-up to and the follow-up after the Summit to mobilize high-level political support for education. UNICEF played a leading role in supporting national and regional consultations and advocating together with partners for the commitments made ahead of and at the event to be translated into concrete actions and results for children and youth. Through monitoring mechanisms, UNICEF and partners continued to collect and analyse data on countries' actions against the RAPID Framework for Learning Recovery and Acceleration, an overarching guidance for governments to **Reach** all children; **Assess** learning; **Prioritize** the fundamentals; **Increase** the efficiency of instruction; and **Develop** psychosocial health and well-being.

Building on the achievements made in 2022, UNICEF will continue to leverage its on-the-ground presence and diverse range of partners to ensure every child's right to education is protected, upheld and realized. Ensuring inclusion and gender equity in education will be essential to reach every child everywhere, particularly the most marginalized. UNICEF will also continue to advocate for sustained and increased international support for education, while supporting governments to ensure equitable, effective, and efficient domestic education financing, so that children most in need receive their fair share of national education investments.

¹ Defined by the World Bank as the percentage of 10-year-old children who cannot read and understand a simple story.

² Based on 93 country offices reporting. At the time of reporting, data on Ukraine and refugee response were undergoing verification and were thus largely excluded from the numbers reported in this document.



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Global education context in 2022

A girl in a wheelchair entering her classroom in Cameroon in September 2022.

The year 2022 was marked by a gradual return to normality across the world. By September, all nationwide school closures had been lifted, and in-person learning had resumed in all countries. However, alarming evidence highlighted the grave and lingering impacts of the school closures on children and their learning and well-being, affecting the full spectrum of their rights, including health and nutrition, mental well-being and protection against child labour, gender-based violence and more.

Even though schools across the world had reopened by 2022, new assessments in many countries reveal significant learning losses and lower learning outcomes, even for those reached by remote learning solutions. The learning poverty rate – which is the percentage of children unable to read and write a simple sentence by age 10 – in low- and middle-income countries is estimated to have increased from 57 per cent before the pandemic to 70 per cent. This means that over two thirds of 10-year-olds in low- and middle-income countries are unable to read. The high levels of learning poverty, both before and now, are a manifestation of children's right to education not being fulfilled.

Lost foundational learning will translate into lower levels of skills, which in turn will reduce the productivity and earnings of today's children once they enter the workforce. The economic impact of the school closures, which was estimated at US\$17 trillion in potential lost lifetime earnings for this cohort of learners in 2021, increased to US\$21 trillion with new estimations in 2022.³ The recent learning losses could be compounded over time and lead to even more loss of human capital and negative impacts on economies, making the cost of inaction especially high.

Marginalized children, including girls, children with disabilities, minorities, and children on the move, continued to be disproportionately impacted by the lingering effects of the pandemic, including impacts on their education.

Girls, who faced compounding inequities, exacerbated due to the pandemic, continued to pay the highest toll. The latest data estimate that 244 million children between the ages of 6 and 18 worldwide are out of school, of which

118.5 million are girls.⁴ Despite efforts to close the gender gap in access to education, for example, only two thirds of countries have reached gender parity in primary education enrolment rates, with higher disparities in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.⁵ Similarly, school completion rates for girls at lower secondary level are lower than for boys in low-income countries.⁶ Emerging evidence suggests that fewer girls returned to school when schools reopened, and that girls suffered a larger learning loss than boys: In **Kenya**,⁷ a survey of 4,000 adolescents aged 10–19 years found that 16 per cent of girls and 8 per cent of boys did not return to school at reopening; in rural **Pakistan**,⁸ girls experienced greater learning losses than boys across nearly all competencies and grades; and, in the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**, primary school girls were 1.3 months behind in reading, whereas boys were 0.6 months behind.⁹ *When Schools Shut*, a report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), shows that gendered norms and expectations also affected learners' ability to participate in remote learning and return to school.¹⁰ In addition to the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic on girls' return to school and learning, 2022 was also marked by a major crisis for millions of girls regarding their fundamental right to education. In Afghanistan, the decree banning girls from secondary schools, by the de facto authorities, deprived nearly 1 million adolescent girls. Restrictions on women's work and participation in society also impacted education systems in a country where only 16 per cent of schools are girls-only and there is a lack of female teachers.

Within this context, funding for education continued to pose challenges for UNICEF and partners to support children's access to quality education, and marginalized children pay the highest price. Despite the *Incheon commitment* to allocate at least 15–20 per cent of total public expenditure to education, only 1 in 10 countries and territories meet the 20 per cent benchmark, and only 4 in 10 meet the 15 per cent benchmark. Learners from marginalized communities tend to benefit disproportionately less from public education funding than their peers, despite facing multiple, compounding barriers to learning associated with gender, ethnicity,

³ United Nations Children's Fund, 'The State of Global Learning Poverty: 2022 Update', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/media/122921/file/StateofLearningPoverty2022.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁴ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 'Global Education Monitoring Report', Policy Paper 48, UNESCO, Paris, 2022, <<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382577>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁵ Source: UNICEF Data Portal, <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/gender/gender-disparities-in-education/#:~:text=More%20than%20two%2Dthirds%20of%20likely%20to%20be%20disadvantaged>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁶ In low-income countries, secondary school completion rates for girls also continue to lag, with only 36 per cent of girls completing lower secondary school, compared to 44 per cent of boys. Upper secondary completion rates have similar disparities in lower-income countries: 26 per cent for young men and 21 per cent for young women (source: World Bank, 2022).

⁷ Presidential Policy and Strategy Unit (Kenya) and Population Council, 'Promises to Keep: Impact of COVID-19 on Adolescents in Kenya', Presidential Policy and Strategy Unit (Kenya) and Population Council, Nairobi, 2021, <<https://knowledgecommons.popcouncil.org/departments/sbsr-pgy/1334/>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁸ ASER Pakistan and United Nations Children's Fund, 'Measuring the Impact of COVID-19 on Education in Pakistan', ASER Pakistan and UNICEF, Lahore, 2021, <http://aserpakistan.org/document/aser/2021/ASER_2021_Measuring_the_Impact_of_COVID_19_on_Education_in_Pakistan_FINAL_REPORT.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Where Are We in Education Recovery?', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/media/117626/file/Where_are_we_in_Education_Recovery?.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹⁰ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 'When schools shut: gendered impacts of COVID-19 school closures', UNESCO, Paris, 2021, <<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379270>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

disability, residency and other context-specific challenges.¹¹ In addition, official development assistance (ODA) to the poorest countries has persistently fallen short of global expectations. Over the past decade, the share of education ODA received by the least-developed countries has never exceeded 30 per cent – far from matching the 50 per cent of overall ODA encouraged by the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#). The absolute amount of education ODA to the least-developed countries declined by 10 per cent during

the pandemic, from US\$4.3 billion in 2019 to US\$3.9 billion in 2021.¹² Aid to education has not only been insufficient but also inequitable: in recent years, appeals for education in emergencies often received just 10–30 per cent of the amounts needed. The education in emergencies funding received by the Afghanistan and Ukraine crisis responses in 2022 was larger than that received by all 27 African and Middle Eastern appeals combined.¹³

Strategic shifts

Evidence that emerged throughout 2022 made it clear that the state of emergency for education globally was far from over, leaving governments with a narrow window to remedy the learning losses and bringing education back on track. It was evident that this will require firm political commitment and implementation of evidence-based and rights-based approaches for rapid impact.

Policies to recover learning losses exist across the globe, and successful examples were implemented in 2022 with noteworthy results. In response to the urgent need to recover education, a coalition of UNICEF, UNESCO, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the World Bank continued efforts under the [RAPID Framework for Learning Recovery and Acceleration](#). The Framework encapsulates five key actions to recover learning: **Reach every child and keep them in school**; **Assess learning levels regularly**; **Prioritize teaching the fundamentals**; **Increase the efficiency of instruction**, including through catch-up learning; and **Develop psychosocial health and well-being**.

To provide countries with practical guidance on implementing the RAPID Framework, UNICEF and partners also produced a [Guide for Learning Recovery and Acceleration](#), featuring a menu of policy actions and interventions that can serve as a springboard for long-term transformation, accelerating learning beyond the recovery period. UNICEF and its partners have produced a series of reports on countries' progress against the RAPID Framework using data from the Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures, UNICEF's Pulse Survey and the Global Education Recovery Tracker surveys.

Further, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNICEF's efforts in 2022 reflected a shift to ensure that support to adolescents and young people is not limited to participation in decision-making but constitutes proactive support to young people to lead positive change in their own lives and communities. This profound shift in how UNICEF positions its efforts towards adolescent and youth development and engagement reflects young people not only at the centre of UNICEF's work but as active agents of change towards achieving results for all children.

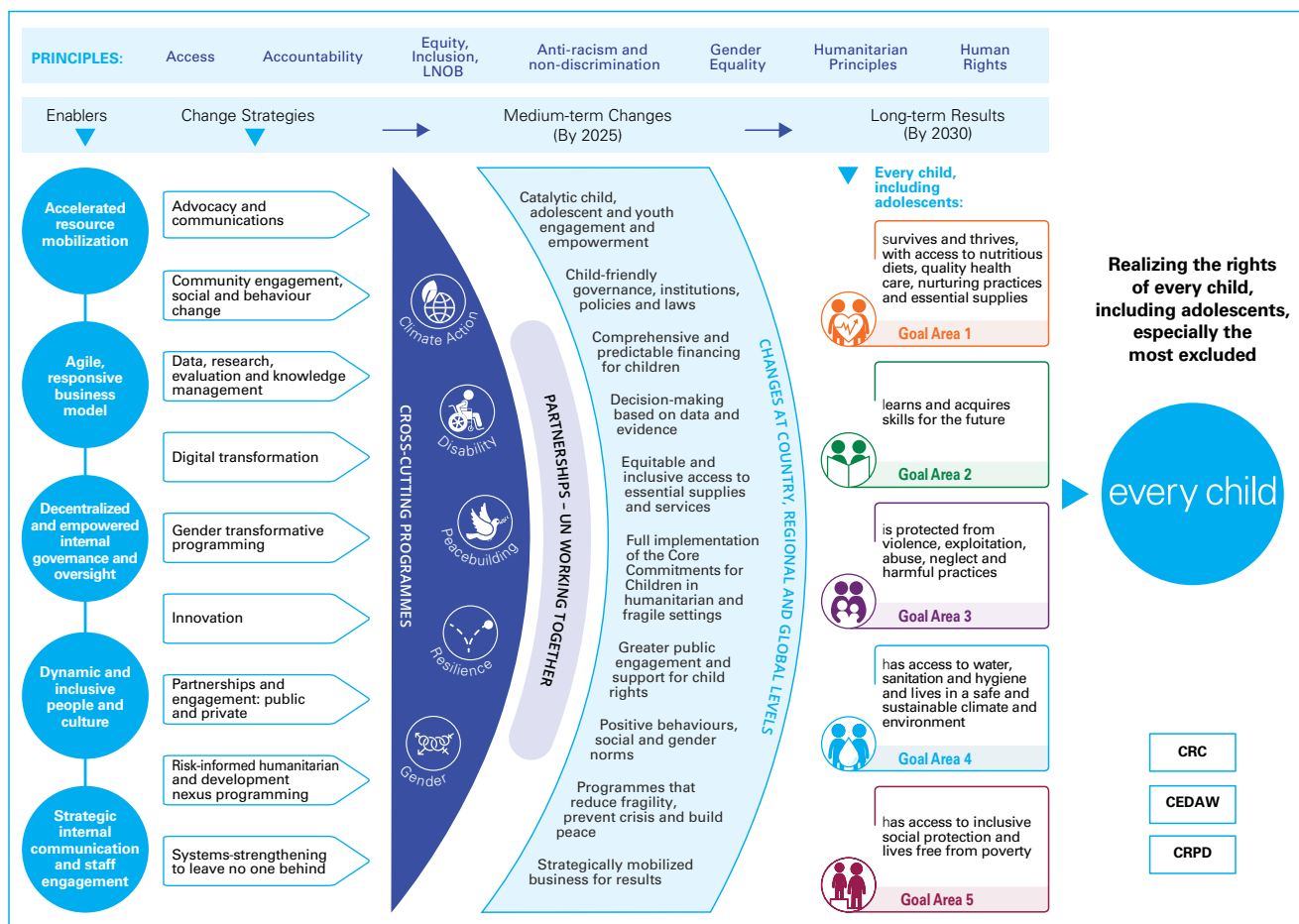
These efforts are part of the broader scope of the [UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025](#), which emphasizes the organization's unreserved commitment to promoting the rights of all children, everywhere, as enshrined in the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), guided by the [Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action](#) and aligned with the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 4 on education. The current Strategic Plan was launched at a time when the human rights of children, including the right to education, were under threat to a degree that had not been seen in more than a generation. Goal Area 2 of the Strategic Plan sets an ambitious goal of ensuring that every child, including adolescents, learns and acquires skills for the future, by increasing access to education and improving the quality of education, and by providing opportunities for children and adolescents to develop life skills, digital skills, transferrable skills and vocational skills to prepare them for the future in a fast-changing world.

¹¹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Transforming Education with Equitable Financing', UNICEF, New York, 2023, <www.unicef.org/reports/transforming-education-equitable-financing>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹² United Nations Children's Fund, 'Where Are We in Education Recovery?', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/media/117626/file/Where_are_we_in_Education_Recovery?.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹³ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Transforming Education with Equitable Financing', UNICEF, New York, 2023, <www.unicef.org/reports/transforming-education-equitable-financing>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Figure 1. Theory of change underpinning the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025



Resources for education

UNICEF’s education programme is supported by over 900 staff members, more than half of them women, and almost all its workforce is deployed to regional, country and field offices, often in fragile, conflict-affected or remote locations where needs are greatest. This strong country presence enables UNICEF to work closely with stakeholders at national level and develop a deeper understanding of the day-to-day challenges faced by education systems. UNICEF’s education staff work in close collaboration with colleagues focused on health, nutrition, child protection, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), social policy and social protection, disability inclusion, gender, adolescent development, and social and behaviour change, in recognition of the fact that schools are excellent entry-points to address the full scope of children’s rights and for a holistic response to children’s needs in development and humanitarian contexts. In addition, UNICEF’s partners at global, regional and county levels bring a wealth of technical expertise and resources that complement UNICEF’s capacity and ability to support the realization of every child’s right to education.

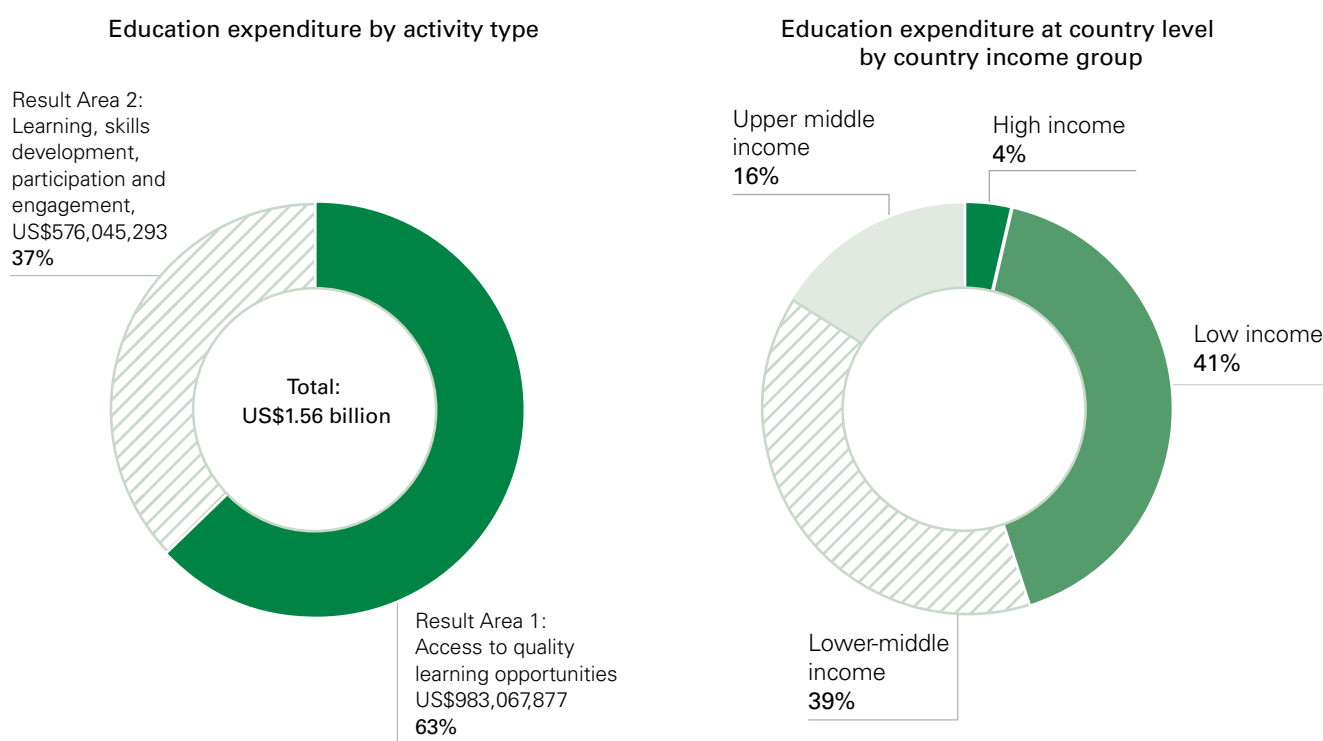
Resources for UNICEF’s programmes, including education, come from the voluntary contributions of governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector and individuals. UNICEF relies on this mixture of robust funding sources to uphold its mission of realizing the rights of every child, especially the most vulnerable. Thematic funds constitute the most flexible, softly earmarked, multi-year funding category of contributions. They contribute to the UNICEF mandate to advocate for the protection of children’s rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. Resource partners can decide to allocate thematic funds to UNICEF programmes at global and country levels. Thematic funding facilitates longer-term planning and sustainability, reduces transaction costs, leaving more resources to achieve results for children, and allows for a faster, more agile response, particularly in countries affected by humanitarian crisis.

In 2022, UNICEF's education income (Other Resources – Regular) reached US\$783 million, showing a 26 per cent increase compared to US\$621 million in 2021.¹⁴ Of this amount, US\$58.7 million was received as thematic funding for education, compared to US\$106.4 million in 2021 (indicating a drastic 45 per cent decrease) and US\$121.8 million in 2020.

UNICEF total education expenditure in 2022 reached \$1.56 billion, including US\$880 million (56 per cent) for humanitarian action. UNICEF's total education expenditure in 2022 shows a 31 per cent increase compared to

US\$1.19 billion in 2021. Eighty per cent of UNICEF's expenses in programme countries were made in low- and lower middle-income countries. Around US\$983 million (63 per cent of UNICEF's total education expenditure) was spent on ensuring equitable and inclusive access to quality learning opportunities, including in humanitarian and fragile contexts (Result Area 1), and US\$576 million (37 per cent) on improving learning outcomes, skills development, participation, and engagement (Result Area 2). This can be explained by gradual return to normalcy and schools reopening.

Figure 2. Expenditure for education in 2022



Key achievements

UNICEF made significant achievements in meeting its 2022 key milestones:

In the area of **service delivery** for access to education (Result Area 1):

- UNICEF reached 37.9 million out-of-school children and adolescents (49 per cent girls) with access to education, including 18.6 million children in humanitarian settings and 3.1 million children on the move. UNICEF surpassed its 2022 milestone by 22 million children.

¹⁴ See Annex 1: Financial Report for more details on UNICEF's education income data.

For improved learning, skills development, participation, and engagement (Result Area 2):

- UNICEF provided learning materials for 28.3 million children, including nearly 3.7 million in humanitarian settings, thus surpassing its 2022 milestone by nearly 13 million children.
- 13.6 million children accessed education through digital platforms, representing 64 per cent of UNICEF's 2022 milestone. This is partly because education systems prioritized school reopening and reallocated resources away from digital platforms to support in-person instruction.
- 85,099 school management committees or similar bodies received training – nearly 15,000 more than UNICEF's 2022 milestone.
- 16.1 million adolescents and young people (45 per cent girls), including nearly 345,000 in humanitarian settings, participated in, or led civic engagement initiatives.

In the area of **systems-strengthening** for access to education (Result Area 1), the following trends were observed against 2021 baselines:

- Percentage of countries with inclusive and gender-responsive system for access to quality learning opportunities grew from 46 to 47 per cent, through UNICEF's support to the national education systems in areas such as laws and policies, inclusive and gender-responsive environments for learning, as well as human resources and support to teachers.¹⁵
- Percentage of countries with resilient education system that can respond to humanitarian crises through UNICEF's support to areas such as risk-informed programming, peacebuilding policies and plans, and mental health and psychosocial support to students and teachers, declined from 30 per cent to 23 per cent.¹⁶
- Percentage of countries with evidence-based education sector plans or strategies grew from 48 per cent to 62 per cent, as a result of UNICEF support in the areas of education sector planning and budgeting, mainstreaming the SDGs in the education sector, and ensuring timely and quality data collection, monitoring and reporting (including through Education Management Information Systems).¹⁷

¹⁵ Number of reporting countries: 137.

¹⁶ Number of reporting countries: 98.

¹⁷ Number of reporting countries: 101.

¹⁸ Number of reporting countries: 75.

¹⁹ Number of reporting countries: 59.

²⁰ Number of reporting countries: 70.

²¹ Number of reporting countries: 101.

²² Number of reporting countries: 81.

²³ Number of reporting countries: 92.

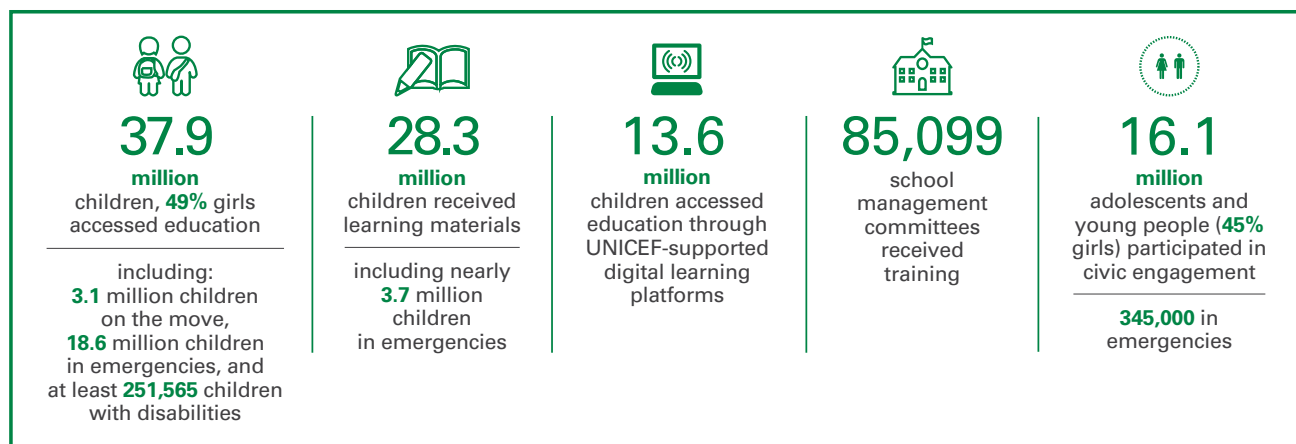
²⁴ Countries include Angola, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Myanmar, Philippines, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Uganda, Venezuela, and Yemen.

For improved learning, skills development, participation and engagement (Result Area 2), the following trends were observed against 2021 baselines:

- Percentage of countries with effective teacher development systems grew from 17 per cent to 21 per cent, as a result of UNICEF support in areas such as teachers' professional development, pedagogy and teachers' mental health.¹⁸
- Percentage of countries with effective systems for learning assessment grew from 39 per cent to 56 per cent, showing an increase of 17 percentage points.¹⁹
- Percentage of countries with effective student and community participation within the education system, such as community involvement in monitoring, and mechanisms for accountability to communities, decreased from 53 per cent to 49 per cent.²⁰
- Percentage of countries with effective system for digital learning solutions, in terms of the quality of digital learning solutions as well as the availability of devices, connectivity, affordability and youth engagement, grew from 9 per cent to 16 per cent.²¹
- Percentage of countries with gender-responsive systems for learning and skills development through gender-responsive teaching and learning systems, and gender-equitable skills development, remained at 41 per cent.²²
- Percentage of countries that have institutionalized holistic skills development to support learning, which includes support in areas such as personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship, social cohesion and/or employability and entrepreneurship, grew from 21 per cent to 23 per cent.²³

In addition, UNICEF support to children in 27 humanitarian and refugee-hosting countries, as part of the [Mission: Recovering Education in Humanitarian Settings Initiative](#),²⁴ reached 701,189 teachers and educational personnel (347,808 female) by the end of 2022. UNICEF programmes engaged 16.1 million adolescents (45 per cent girls) across 89 countries, including nearly 345,000 in humanitarian settings. Furthermore, UNICEF supported several countries with procurement of education supplies, construction of schools or improvements to toilet and hand-washing facilities. In 2022, 52 countries were supported with procurement of 162,830 education kits (valued at US\$134 million).

Figure 3. Highlights of 2022 key results



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.1.1:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with inclusive and gender-equitable system for access to learning

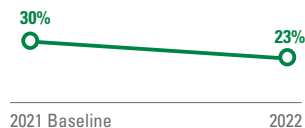
137 reporting countries



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.1.2:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with resilient education system that can respond to humanitarian crises

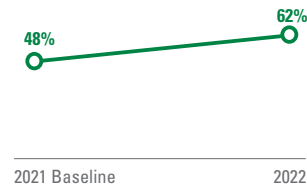
98 reporting countries



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.1.3:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with evidence-based education sector plans/strategies

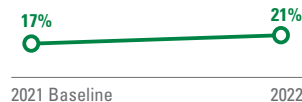
101 reporting countries



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.1:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with effective teacher development system

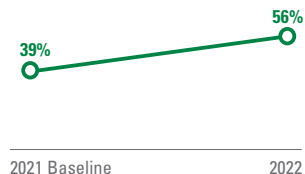
75 reporting countries



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.2:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with effective learning assessment system

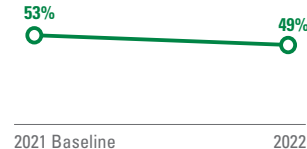
59 reporting countries



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.3:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with effective student and community participation

70 reporting countries



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.4:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with effective system for digital learning solutions

101 reporting countries



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.5:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with gender-responsive systems for learning and skills development

81 reporting countries



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.6:

Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries institutionalizing holistic skills development to support learning

92 reporting countries



In **Greece**, more than 16,000 refugee and nearly 15,000 migrant children accessed formal education programmes, including 1,212 Ukrainian children, and 1,265 refugee and migrant children accessed non-formal education programmes, which is 68 per cent of the estimated number of refugee and migrant children in the country.

In **Costa Rica**, the national version of the Learning Passport, the Aprendo Pura Vida platform, was launched by the Ministry of Public Education and formally adopted as a key part of the national educational recovery and resilience strategy and for teacher training, directly benefiting 1.2 million students and teachers.

In **Brazil**, UNICEF reached over 63,000 girls through schools with menstrual health and hygiene activities as a key entry-point for girls' empowerment, by developing their skills to access information and supplies and support their peers, and through dialogue with authorities on menstrual health.

In **Sierra Leone**, an early-grade teacher training programme helped 600,000 children learn foundational skills in literacy and numeracy through support to in-service and pre-service teachers.

In **Nigeria**, 5 million children continued learning via home-based materials, radio and television programming; 7,500 community learning hubs were set up in 16 states; and 14 states launched the Nigeria Learning Passport, a digital learning platform with 15,000 curriculum-aligned materials and over 120,000 users.

In **Jordan**, UNICEF engaged over 87,000 young people (58 per cent female) in civic and community action in host communities as well as refugee camps, supporting the development of foundational skills, life and employability skills, financial literacy and girls' leadership.

In **Türkiye**, over 63,000 out-of-school adolescents (30,000 girls), including refugees, accessed multiple learning pathways and vocational education to enhance their job-readiness skills.

In **Zimbabwe**, 77,000 children with disabilities (including 35,000 girls) received assistive devices, enabling continued access to education.

In Bihar state, **India**, a total of 44,420 adolescents (97 per cent girls) from marginalized and minority communities were empowered through financial literacy classes in select villages and schools in 26 districts.

In **Afghanistan**, UNICEF supported emergency payments to more than 195,000 public school teachers (34 per cent female) in primary, secondary and technical and vocational education and training, ensured the printing and distribution of 39 million textbooks and provided basic learning materials to all Grade 1 and Grade 5 students, aiming to prevent teacher attrition and keep children learning in school.

In **Tajikistan**, UNICEF deployed high-quality inclusive digital learning content to ensure uninterrupted access to learning for more than 250,000 pre-primary children and over 1.5 million school learners.

In **Viet Nam**, UNICEF introduced augmented and virtual reality education solutions in remote mountainous provinces, which are empowering 28,500 children (of whom 13,750 are ethnic minority girls) to engage in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through gamification and immersive interactive experiences.

In **Sri Lanka**, UNICEF expanded coverage of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in schools and communities, benefiting all 1.9 million secondary students.

In **Myanmar**, UNICEF supported the Bring Back Learning programme with the aim of strengthening community capacity to support children's safety and continuity of learning and supported 247,903 children (126,039 girls) across the country to access learning, including 228 children with disabilities (106 girls).

The Transforming Education Summit

At the end of 2021, in [Our Common Agenda](#), the United Nations Secretary-General called for a Transforming Education Summit during the 77th General Assembly in New York. The aim of the Summit was to draw political attention at the highest level and to solicit concrete commitments and action to recover and transform education. UNICEF worked closely with UNESCO and the office of the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Ms Amina J. Mohammed, in the process leading up to and following the Transforming Education Summit. UNICEF's leading role in supporting national consultations – including through technical assistance and meaningful engagement of young people – and co-leading some of the key thematic Action Tracks of the Summit enabled UNICEF to mobilize a diverse set of partners towards concrete commitments and actions for education recovery and transformation. As the chair of the United Nations Task Team, UNICEF's Executive Director, Ms Catherine Russell, led effective cooperation of the United Nations agencies, programmes and funds to steer and inform related discussions of the Summit's Advisory Committee.

UNICEF joined forces with partners across the public and private sectors as well as young people towards joint high-level advocacy through a series of calls to action, urging world leaders to take urgent action to recover the learning losses caused by the pandemic and transform education for every child.

The lead-up to the Summit, and the Summit itself, created remarkable momentum in mobilizing governments to endorse commitments to action in areas that can accelerate education recovery and transformation, including but not limited to foundation learning, digital learning, gender-transformative education, education in emergencies and meaningful youth engagement. Overall, 133 countries presented Statements of National Commitment that include concrete plans for education recovery and transformation.²⁵ Some of the key outcomes of the Summit are listed below:

- Building on the Secretary-General's [Roadmap for Digital Cooperation](#) and the [Rewired Global Declaration on Connectivity for Education](#), UNICEF and partners launched a [call to action on Assuring and Improving Quality Digital Public Education for All](#) and a new flagship initiative, Gateways to Public Digital Learning ('Gateways'), supporting countries in their commitments to develop digital learning platforms and content. Gateways will also establish

global norms and standards, create and highlight best practices and develop a platform to monitor the quality of public digital learning platforms. As a first step, UNICEF published [Pulse Check on Digital Learning](#), which includes an analysis of the status of public digital learning platforms in 184 countries, as well as recommendations across critical policy and programme areas for digital learning and transformation. As a next step, UNICEF and UNESCO are moving forward with 19 partner organizations targeting the 49 countries that included digital learning in their National Statements of Commitment. Further, 82 UNICEF country offices are working with governments to strengthen national digital learning platforms, such as through the Learning Passport.

- UNICEF and key partners leveraged the momentum by calling on governments to endorse the [Commitment to Action on Foundational Learning](#) to ensure that all children, including the most marginalized, develop foundational learning to realize their full potential and participate in society. The governments of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Egypt and Sierra Leone were among the first countries to champion endorsement of the Commitment to Action. In the follow-up to the Summit, UNICEF and partners are supporting 30 countries in their country-led actions and implementation of foundational learning remediation, improving learning data and monitoring, as well as advocacy and communications.²⁶ Given that early childhood education (ECE) is a prerequisite for children's readiness to learn, UNICEF will continue to support ECE advocacy and programming, including through the Five Million Futures platform, to support governments in scaling up early investments in foundational learning.
- UNICEF joined a coalition of partners to launch a [call to action on Advancing Gender Equality and Girls' and Women's Empowerment in and through Education](#), with clear actions to be taken by governments, donors, United Nations agencies and partners, including civil society. This effort builds on the consultations of the Summit Action Track 1 on inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools, the Freetown Manifesto for Gender-Transformative Leadership in Education,²⁷ related G7 and G20 declarations and communiqués, the Generation Equality Forum, and other normative frameworks and

²⁵ List of countries and their Statements of Commitment can be found at <https://transformingeducationsummit.sdg4education2030.org/NationalCommitment>, accessed 31 May 2023.

²⁶ The 30 countries include: Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe.

²⁷ The Freetown Manifesto for Gender-Transformative Leadership in Education was developed by 13 African ministries of education with inputs from civil society and multilateral organizations, including UNICEF, UNESCO and GPE.

commitments made by governments and partners to girls' and women's education and gender equality. As a result of UNICEF advocacy, the call to action established a global accountability platform to track countries' progress in advancing gender equality in and through education, which UNICEF and partners will establish in 2023. More than 160 organizations, institutions and private sector partners are brought together in this platform. The Girls' Initiative to Revitalize Learning and Success (GIRLS) programme is being developed to support implementation of the key solutions.

- Given the alarming increase in the number of people affected by armed conflict, forced displacement, including large-scale refugee displacement, health and climate-induced disasters and other crises, UNICEF and partners leveraged the momentum created by the Summit to mobilize the [Education in Crisis Situations: Commitment to action](#). Member States that endorse the commitment will work towards transforming education systems to better prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from crises. The aim is to enable all crisis-affected children and young people, including refugees and stateless populations, to access inclusive, quality learning opportunities continuously, equitably and safely.
- To bring attention to the need for equitable, inclusive education for children with disabilities, civil society launched the [Transforming Education for Disability Inclusion: A call to action for all children](#) during a side event at the Summit. With more than 150 signatories, including UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Bank, Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and the Government of Sierra Leone, the call to action urges governments to commit to three overarching actions to advance this agenda, including increased allocation of resources and establishing criteria and targets for the inclusion of learners with disabilities in education programmes. Since the Summit, UNICEF has continued to advocate for prioritization of inclusive education for children with disabilities with ministries of education through ongoing technical assistance and capacity development as well as the mapping of inclusive education systems in countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa regions. Additionally, a publication is being finalized, highlighting nearly 20 promising practices in inclusive education covering each of UNICEF's 7 regions.

- Children and young people took centre stage throughout the Summit preparation process, as well as at the event itself, to remind world leaders that engagement of children and young people is key to effectively transform education across the world. Their demands are inscribed in the [Youth Declaration on Transforming Education](#), which was handed over to the United Nations Secretary-General on the opening day of the three-day Summit, marked as Youth Mobilization Day. In the follow-up to the Summit, UNICEF, through the Youth-Led Action for Transforming Education initiative, is supporting and training young advocates to strengthen youth movements by leveraging the outcomes of the Summit to raise awareness, conduct advocacy and influence national policies. The programme is ongoing in Sierra Leone, Uzbekistan, Namibia and Thailand, and expected to scale up in 30 countries.
- Translating the commitments into action requires sustained, equitable and effective financing. The [call to action on Financing Education](#) launched at the Summit urges all countries and all partners to take concrete action both nationally and internationally to invest more, to invest more equitably and to invest more efficiently in education. There are excellent examples of countries championing financial investment in education. The President of **Guyana**, for example, announced a decision to increase public education expenditures by 20 per cent. As a follow-up to the Summit, UNICEF has focused on equitable financing as an advocacy priority, starting with the publication of the '[Transforming Education with Equitable Financing](#)' report in January 2023. UNICEF is leveraging this report for further policy advocacy at country level. For example, a regional analysis of equitable financing in Africa is being produced, and an education public expenditure tracking survey has been developed for Nigeria.

As part of the follow-up to the Summit, UNICEF is working to develop scorecards that monitor countries' progress against the commitments they made through the above-mentioned calls-to-action. A three-level monitoring system is being developed to track the situation of the country with regards to the actions against endorsements of calls-to-action; countries' efforts to move forward with plans indicated in the National Statements of Commitment; and UNICEF country office actions to support government efforts.



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Results

A young girl smiling in front of the white board in a classroom in La Guajira, Colombia.



© UNICEF/UN0741905/Zehbrauskas

A student in front of a chalkboard on graduation day at Taffari Community School in in the Taffari camp for internally displaced people (IDPs) in in Kadugli, Sudan.

Result Area 1: Equitable and inclusive access to learning opportunities, including in humanitarian and fragile contexts

In line with the 2030 Agenda SDG 4 – “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” – UNICEF works to ensure that all children can access at least one year of pre-primary and a full 12 years of primary and secondary education. Result Area 1 of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022–2025, confirms the organization’s commitment to ensure equitable and inclusive access to learning opportunities for all children, wherever they are.

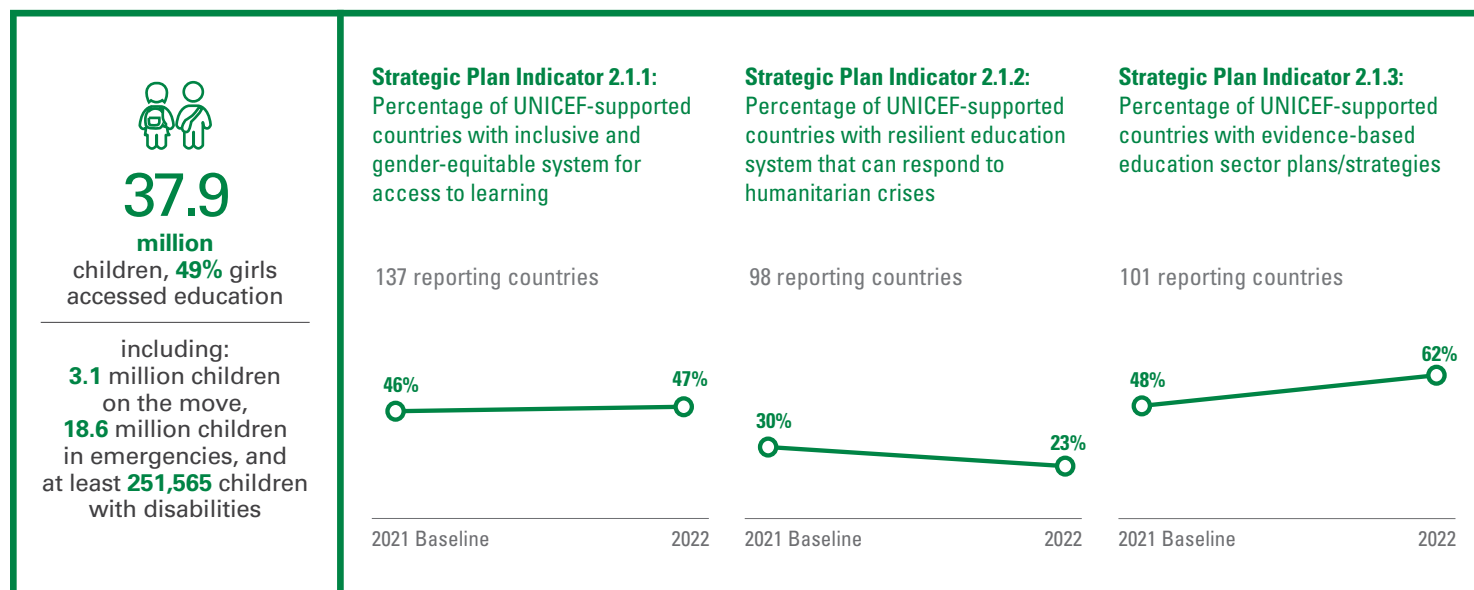
Throughout 2022, UNICEF continued its efforts to ensure that all children in all their diversity can access quality education, by supporting countries to have inclusive and gender-equitable systems for access, including specific

interventions to reach girls, children with disabilities and children on the move. This was done through policy, planning and budgeting, and by addressing barriers resulting in the exclusion of these children. Of UNICEF’s total education expenditure in 2022 (US\$1.56 billion), 63 per cent (US\$983 million) was spent on Result Area 1, compared to US\$802 million in 2021.

Of the total expenditure in Result Area 1, UNICEF spent 61 per cent on systems-strengthening and 39 per cent on service delivery. As a result, 37.9 million out-of-school children (49 per cent girls) accessed education, including 18.6 million children in emergencies, 3.1 million children on the move, and at least 251,565 children with disabilities.²⁸

²⁸ See the ‘Inclusive Education’ chapter for more details on results related to inclusive education for children with disabilities.

Figure 4. Result Area 1: Equitable and inclusive access to education



A young girl colours in a drawing in Chrung Village, Kak Commune, Borkeo District, Ratanakiri, Cambodia.

Strengthening education systems to reach out-of-school children

In 2022, instances of school closures were limited, but data for the first quarter of 2022 showed that school closures continued in 23 countries, representing a critical setback for around 80 million schoolchildren.²⁹ While all nationwide school closures were lifted by September, there is evidence that schools serving rural and poorer communities were less likely to have reopened, due to challenges in securing a safe environment with sufficient teachers.³⁰ The full impact of extended and widespread school closures resulting from COVID-19 is yet to be understood, but there is an expected increase in numbers of out-of-school children that school systems need to respond to.

In response, UNICEF continued its efforts to ensure that children who are not enrolled in any formal or recognized non-formal learning programme can access education at all levels, including, for example, technical and vocational education and training. As a result, UNICEF provided 37.9 million out-of-school children, including 18.6 million in emergencies and 3.1 million children on the move, with access to education, thus surpassing its 2022 milestone by 22 million children.

In addition, UNICEF continued to provide strategic support to countries to produce data and evidence on out-of-school children, and to advocate for policy shifts to increase these children's access to education. For example, percentage of countries with evidence-based education sector plans or strategies grew to 62 per cent (from the 2021 baseline of 48 per cent), as a result of UNICEF support to timely and quality data collection, monitoring and reporting, which are a prerequisite for identifying out-of-school children and integrating them into the national education system.

UNICEF led the revision of the global Out-of-School Children Initiative Operational Manual, to reflect both the expanded scope of SDG 4 and the increasing recognition that quality education can be experienced in both formal and non-formal settings. UNICEF developed guidelines for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to support the countries to reopen and stay open safely for the estimated 35 million children who had no access to schools for almost two years.³¹

In **Sierra Leone**, building on the updated 2021 Out-of-School Children Study, UNICEF worked with relevant ministries to support the development and launch of the National Strategy for Out-of-School Children as an important lever to implement the Government's radical inclusion policy and the 'leave no child behind' agenda. Similarly, in **Bangladesh**, UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Bureau of Non-Formal Education to strengthen its capacity for designing and providing non-formal education to over 770,000 learners (47 per cent girls) through learning centres.

In **Burkina Faso**, the number of out-of-school children who participated in UNICEF-supported education programmes increased from 185,627 (91,208 girls) in 2021 to 271,464 (137,231 girls) in 2022. In **Chad**, 175,282 children (76,477 girls) benefited from school construction and provision of teachers, and 321,621 children (94,531 girls) received learning materials. As part of the emergency response through the Mission: Recovering Education in Humanitarian Settings initiative, in **Iraq**, 400 trained social mobilizers identified 44,373 out-of-school children (45 per cent girls), leading to 10,123 returning to formal education and 3,179 enrolling in non-formal education.

²⁹ List of countries and data can be found at: UNESCO COVID-19 education response regional dashboard, <<https://covid19.uis.unesco.org/global-monitoring-school-closures-covid19/regional-dashboard/>>, accessed 31 May 2023

³⁰ Global Education Monitoring, 'Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender report, deepening the debate on those still left behind', United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, 2022, <<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381329>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

³¹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Reopen, Recover and Resilience in Education: One vision one identity one community', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/eap/reports/reopen-recover-and-resilience-education>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Spotlight on thematic funding: Turning a page in children's access to learning in Myanmar

In Myanmar, nearly 4.5 million children (out of a total of 13 million learners) have limited access to learning or are not accessing education at all.³²

In 2022, through the Bring Back Learning programme, UNICEF continued to provide education opportunities to children in Myanmar. The programme, which was launched in the wake of the military takeover in February 2021 and mainly funded by thematic contributions, supported 247,903 children (including 126,039 girls) across the country to access learning, including 228 children with disabilities (106 of them girls).

The programme also aims to strengthen community capacity to support children's safety and continuity of learning. A total of 2,219 community facilitators have been trained, using the Teacher Resource Package, a Myanmar-developed collection of training modules for educators. Communities were supplied with learning resources: 2,745 children (1,398 girls) received storybooks, 42 community libraries were upgraded to provide safe learning spaces, 210,898 children (107,836 girls) received home-based learning materials, and 3,323 facilitators received teacher guidebooks.



In a Rohingya refugee camp, Bangladesh, 10-year-old Bushara gives instructions to younger students and helps them solve a task during the Kids Takeover.

³² United Nations Children's Fund Myanmar, 'Turning a new page in children's learning', 2023, <www.unicef.org/myanmar/stories/turning-new-page-childrens-learning>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Access to education in early years

Quality pre-primary education is the foundation of a child's journey: Every stage of education that follows relies on its success. Every US\$1 invested in early education generates returns of up to US\$9,³³ and even as high as US\$17 in the case of children living with disadvantages.³⁴ Although the gross enrolment rate for pre-primary education increased to 61 per cent globally in 2020, even before the pandemic over 175 million children did not have access to pre-primary education.³⁵

In 2022, UNICEF continued its work on ensuring access to ECE; 63 per cent of reporting countries indicated having effective ECE systems for access, including effective policies and governance structures.³⁶

At the global level, UNICEF leveraged the political momentum generated through the Transforming Education Summit and the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education in November, where the [Tashkent Declaration](#) was adopted, to advocate for more equitable and efficient investment in ECE. UNICEF urged governments to invest a minimum of 10 per cent of their total annual education budgets on ECE. While countries invest in ECE using domestic resources, the contributions are relatively small, inconsistent and well below the 10 per cent benchmark advocated. As such, commitments made at these global events inspire optimism for increased public expenditure allocated to the pre-primary subsector, which accounted for only 3.3 per cent of education sector budgets in 2021.³⁷

In line with these advocacy efforts, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Education Commission and the LEGO Foundation, developed the report [Add Today Multiply Tomorrow: Building an investment case for early childhood education](#), which was launched globally at the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education in November 2022 in Tashkent. The report highlights the state of ECE financing and the need for investment, while showcasing diverse and contextualized initiatives by governments and partners to promote ECE and achieve milestones through increased investment in ECE.

UNICEF continued generating evidence and research on ECE, such as on global public goods and gender equality in ECE, including a system-wide approach to achieving gender-transformative policy and programming.³⁸ In **Botswana, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Tunisia**, UNICEF

supported the development of public-private partnership frameworks leveraging innovative financing modalities to expand equitable access to early learning. In **Eswatini**, UNICEF developed financing solutions to extend the scope of the Free Primary Education Act to include pre-primary education, ensuring access to at least one year of early learning services for all preschool-age children.

Identifying and scaling up high-quality, low-cost, innovative ECE service delivery models was a priority for UNICEF in expanding access to early learning opportunities for children residing in marginalized and at-risk communities. In **Türkiye**, for example, UNICEF supported the scale-up of an ECE summer programme, benefiting 30,000 children from marginalized communities. In **Kosovo**,³⁹ 17,674 children were reached through UNICEF-supported alternative approaches, including digital and home-based support and learning centres for at-risk children. UNICEF engaged with national and subnational levels of government in **Ecuador, Guatemala and Senegal**, enabling access to community-based ECE services for 84,438 children from hard-to-reach and marginalized communities.

In 2022, the Better Early Learning at Scale (BELDS) approach and the [ECE Accelerator Toolkit](#) enabled UNICEF and its partners to continue to strengthen national ECE systems and address access barriers to early learning services. For example, in **Sao Tome and Principe**, subsector systems-strengthening achieved through the BELDS approach contributed to a 15 per cent increase in the number of children completing one year of pre-primary education.

UNICEF launched the research report [Tackling Gender Equality from the Early Years: Strategies for building a gender-transformative pre-primary education system](#). It explores the ways in which pre-primary education can become more gender-transformative at a system level and presents key strategies to support governments and policymakers to proactively incorporate gender-responsiveness into the design and implementation of their pre-primary education policy and programming.

³³ United Nations Children's Fund, 'COVID-19: A reason to double down on investments in pre-primary education', Innocenti Working Paper 2020-06, UNICEF – Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, 2020.

³⁴ TheirWorld, 'Bright and Early: How financing pre-primary education gives every child a fair start in life', TheirWorld, London, 2017, <<https://theirworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Their-world-Report-Bright-and-Early-June-2017.pdf>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

³⁵ Source: UNICEF Data Portal, <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/pre-primary-education>>, accessed 31 May 2023

³⁶ Number of reporting countries: 137.

³⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Transforming Education with Equitable Financing', UNICEF, New York, 2023, <www.unicef.org/reports/transforming-education-equitable-financing>, accessed 31 May 2023.

³⁸ Resources produced in this area can be found at <www.unicef-irc.org/publications/?viewMode=&sortBy=newest&Title=Gender&topic=&LangID=&AuthorID=&CountryID=&SeriesID=&ThematicAreasID=&Themeld=&ThematicSeriesID=&dateStart=11-2022&dateEnd=11-2022>, accessed 31 May 2023.

³⁹ All references to Kosovo in this report are in the context of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999). Official designation: 'Kosovo' stands for both the long form and the short form.

Spotlight on thematic funding: Ensuring equitable access to early childhood education for marginalized communities in Bangladesh

To ensure equitable access to social services for ethnic minority communities residing in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, three districts within the Chittagong Division in south-east Bangladesh, UNICEF and the Government of Bangladesh jointly formulated the community-based Para Centre approach.

An integral component of the Para Centre programme has been providing at least one year of ECE for children in these areas. UNICEF utilized education thematic funding to facilitate access to quality early learning services for 58,206 children (28,947 girls) aged 3–6 years in 4,800 Para Centres. UNICEF also supported the enrolment of 17,830 children (9,025 girls) previously enrolled in Para Centre ECE programmes into primary school for the start of the 2022/23 school year.

The success of the programme has led the Government of Bangladesh to consider how a similar community-based model could be scaled up nationally to increase access to ECE for other at-risk and marginalized groups.



Parents sitting in a Para Centre management committee meeting at Golachhari Village in Rangamati, Bangladesh.

Gender-responsive access to learning opportunities⁴⁰

UNICEF placed the advancement of gender equality and girls' education at the heart of its work throughout 2022. UNICEF's work around gender-responsive education is underpinned by the organization's [Gender Policy 2021–2030](#) and the accompanying [Gender Action Plan 2022–2025](#) that articulate UNICEF's commitments to promoting gender equality across programmes, workplaces and practices around the world. These overarching frameworks, as well as UNICEF's Global Education Strategy 2019–2030, guide UNICEF's work in ensuring access to quality education for all children, including girls who are facing inequities due to gender and an intersection of factors, often leading to their exclusion.

In 2022, UNICEF achieved noteworthy results in ensuring equitable access to education for girls. Of the total number of children reached with access to education in 2022 (37.9 million), an estimated 49 per cent or 18.6 million were girls. Furthermore, percentage of countries with inclusive and gender-responsive system for access to quality learning grew to 47 per cent (from the 2021 baseline of 46 per cent). These countries reported having context-specific, targeted and evidence-based strategies to address one of the barriers – either sociocultural or financial – to quality education for marginalized girls (or boys where they are at a disadvantage). It also means that these strategies are implemented and regularly monitored.

UNICEF data show that 50 per cent of reporting countries indicated having worked on addressing barriers to access that exclude girls. For example, in **Afghanistan**, despite a new decree by the de facto authorities banning girls from attending secondary education and putting a whole generation of girls at risk, the demand for education remains. In 2022, UNICEF significantly expanded the community-based education programme targeting grades 1–6, doubling the number of children reached to more than 520,000 (55 per cent girls) in 28 provinces, so that girls can continue learning. In **Ghana**, following the full reopening of schools, UNICEF worked with the Government to conduct a nationwide Back-to-School campaign that included advocacy with traditional and religious leaders on the return of pregnant girls and adolescent mothers and the importance of safe schools, right-age enrolment and inclusive education.

Fifty-five per cent of UNICEF-supported countries reported having worked towards ensuring gender-responsive environments for access to education. In **Brazil**, UNICEF reached over 63,000 girls through schools with menstrual health and hygiene activities as a key entry-point for girls' empowerment by developing their skills to access information and supplies and support their peers.

In addition, as part of the Gender at the Centre Initiative,⁴¹ 600 officials from ministries of education in **Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone** committed to championing gender in education policies and plans and removing gender-related barriers to education. These eight countries also received technical support on gender analysis, data collection and evidence-building, guided by institutional gender diagnostics and the [Gender Equality in Education Snapshot Tool](#).

Fifty-eight per cent of reporting countries indicated having activities focused on prevention of, protection from, and response to school-related gender-based violence. For example, in **Ethiopia**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and as part of the Ending Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation programmes, UNICEF developed community conversation toolkits (for development and humanitarian contexts), an engagement manual for boys and men and the national empowerment manual for out-of-school adolescent girls, which emphasize a gender-transformative approach, challenge discriminatory gender norms in families and communities, empower adolescent girls and promote positive masculinities among men and boys.

UNICEF, through the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), also launched a global training course on prevention of school-related gender-based violence, in partnership with UNESCO and the Global Working Group to End School-related Gender-based Violence, following a successful pilot in **Mozambique**.⁴² Further, the [Whole School Approach: Minimum standards and monitoring framework to prevent school-related gender-based violence](#) was implemented in **Sierra Leone**, as an integrated part of the national policy framework.

UNICEF also continued its support to governments in strengthening evidence and data for gender-responsive access to education. For example, in **Nigeria**, UNICEF developed an evidence-based, scalable model on primary enrolment and retention, including community

⁴⁰ UNFPA distinguishes gender-responsive programming from gender-transformative programming in the following terms: Gender-responsive programming refers to specific action to try to reduce gender inequalities within communities, whereas gender-transformative programming is designed around a fundamental aim of addressing root causes of gender inequality within society (source: United Nations Population Fund, 'Gender responsive and/or transformative approaches', Thematic Note, UNFPA, New York, 2021, <www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/thematic_note_1_gender_final.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023). UNICEF's vision and ambition are to have a gender-transformative approach to ensuring access to quality education. As such, UNICEF's programmes are designed to ensure gender-transformative change. When measuring the effectiveness of education systems, the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, Results Framework measures the level of gender-responsiveness.

⁴¹ The Gender at the Centre Initiative, launched in July 2019, was developed by the G7 ministers of education and development with multilateral and civil society organizations working for gender equality in and through education. The initiative supports the eight countries to implement gender-responsive education sector planning and build political and public support for policies and strategies to advance gender equality in education so that every child can access and benefit from a high-quality education.

⁴² The course is available at <www.ungei.org/campaign/preventing-school-related-gender-based-violence-srgbv>, accessed 31 May 2023.

enrolment drives, unconditional cash transfers, improving infrastructure with school grants, foundational learning and peer education. A rigorous evaluation found this approach to be instrumental in bringing 1.5 million girls into school. Social norms on girls' education have shifted, halving the rates of child marriage and childbearing in six north-west states. UNGEI contributed to the data, evidence and advocacy for gender equality in and through education with the G7 baseline report in partnership with the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report,⁴³ a study on social norms and girls' education in eight sub-Saharan African countries,⁴⁴ a working paper mapping existing evidence on the gender gaps in education in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic,⁴⁵ and a learning brief on intergenerational partnerships for transformative change.⁴⁶

In support of global advocacy for gender-transformative access to education, ahead of the Transforming Education Summit, UNICEF led the thematic [Action Track on inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools](#) and spearheaded three major events on gender equality and girls' education. These efforts led to the launch of a [Call to action on Advancing Gender Equality and Girls' and Women's Empowerment in and through Education](#), which called on governments, donors and partners to prioritize gender equality in education planning and budgets, remove gender bias and stereotypes that are pervasive in teaching and learning

materials, and create safe, inclusive education environments to remove barriers to girls' and boys' access to 12 years of education.

In addition, UNICEF and partners established the Global Platform to Drive Leadership and Accountability for Gender Equality and Girls' and Women's Empowerment in and through Education ('the Global Platform') in 2022. At the Transforming Education Summit, over 70 Member States and partners expressed their support for the Global Platform, which will convene ministers and key education stakeholders annually to foster dialogue driven by open data focused on whether countries are on track to meet their gender equality and girls' education commitments. In addition, in the lead-up to the Transforming Education Summit, UNGEI convened the first ever [Global Feminist Coalition for Gender Transformative Education](#), which brought together feminist civil society organizations and young activists from 31 developing countries. These experts championed regional and thematic top priorities and recommendations.⁴⁷ UNGEI also partnered with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education of Sierra Leone and the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) to convene 14 African countries in a political commitment with the [Freetown Manifesto for Gender-Transformative Leadership in Education](#).⁴⁸

⁴³ United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, 'G7 Global Objectives on Girls' Education Baseline Report', UNGEI, 2022, <www.ungei.org/publication/g7-global-objectives-girls-education>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁴⁴ United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, 'Social Norms and Girls' Education: A study of eight sub-Saharan African countries'. Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI) Policy Paper, UNGEI, 2022, <www.ungei.org/publication/social-norms-and-girls-education-GCI-policy-paper>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁴⁵ United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, 'A summary of evidence on gender gaps in education in the context of COVID-19', UNGEI Working Paper, UNGEI, 2022, <www.ungei.org/publication/evidence-gender-gaps-education-covid-19>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁴⁶ United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, 'Intergenerational Partnerships for Transformative Change: A learning brief', UNGEI, 2022, <www.ungei.org/publication/intergenerational-partnerships-transformative-change>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁴⁷ United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, 'The First Convening of the Global Feminist Coalition on Gender-Transformative Education: A report', UNGEI, 2022, <[www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/The First Convening of the Global Feminist Coalition on Gender Transformative Education Report-formatted.pdf](http://www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/The%20First%20Convening%20of%20the%20Global%20Feminist%20Coalition%20on%20Gender%20Transformative%20Education%20Report-formatted.pdf)>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁴⁸ The countries include Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, the Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Voices from the field: “We need to keep schools open and children learning” says Jeannette Vogelaar, Chief of Education, Afghanistan

“UNICEF’s education team in Afghanistan has been working tirelessly to get adolescent girls back into secondary education despite the de facto authorities’ ban. The continued ban on secondary school girls’ education since September 2021 is a blow to the dreams of every girl in the country to be able to have an education and decide on her future. But UNICEF is not giving up and continues to support girls’ education wherever possible.

“Since the August 2021 political transition, UNICEF has focused on opportunities to keep schools open and children learning. UNICEF has significantly expanded community-based education (CBE), reaching 600,000 children (60 per cent girls) in 34 provinces. In addition, UNICEF has continued its support to public primary schools, where 40 per cent of children are girls, through the provision of textbooks and teaching and learning materials, as well as training for female teachers. As long as girls attend primary schools and CBE, UNICEF will be there to support them, keeping a delicate balance between human rights and basic needs.” – Jeannette Vogelaar, Chief of Education, UNICEF Afghanistan



Girls sitting in a community-based education classroom.

Inclusive education

UNICEF strives to advance inclusive education for the most marginalized children around the world. Programmatic focus includes children with disabilities and children from ethno-linguistic minority communities, including Indigenous children, but also extends to other marginalized groups.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the estimated 240 million children with disabilities worldwide were disproportionately excluded from school.⁴⁹ As school closures were lifted across countries, a growing body of evidence indicates that efforts to bring children back to school regularly left children with disabilities behind, exacerbating pre-existing disparities and further denying their right to equitable, quality inclusive education. Not only does the persistent exclusion from education prevent children with disabilities from full enjoyment of all their rights and reaching their full potential, it also has detrimental economic impacts over time. Lack of access to quality learning hinders the ability of persons with disabilities to participate in the workforce, which heightens the likelihood of poverty and can limit national economic growth.⁵⁰ Moreover, inclusive education systems are a more efficient use of limited resources than operating parallel systems of education for children with and without disabilities. Finally, the longer-term returns on investment in the education of persons with disabilities can be up to two to three times higher than that of persons without disabilities.⁵¹

As a result of UNICEF support, in 2022, 47 per cent of reporting countries indicated having systems that are establishing an inclusive education enabling environment,⁵² with most countries prioritizing strengthening the legislative framework and addressing negative attitudes and discrimination.

Out of 37.9 million out-of-school children reached with access to education, 251,565 were children with disabilities. While this is a lower figure than in 2021, this is likely due to the shift from targeted service delivery to inclusive service delivery and systems-strengthening, coupled with a lag in inclusive data collection. Many countries recognize the importance of inclusive data collection using reliable tools such as the UNICEF–Washington Group Child Functioning Module; however, capacity for implementation, particularly at programmatic level through Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), remains inadequate. This will likely result in undercounting of children with disabilities reached through mainstream service delivery. Moreover, the emphasis on systems-strengthening activities such as policy and teacher capacity development renders monitoring of number of children reached difficult. To this end, UNICEF

continues to invest in advocacy for prioritization of and capacity development for inclusive data collection, including by updating existing EMIS guidelines for inclusive data collection (expected to be finalized in late 2023).

Advances in strengthening evidence-based laws, policies and implementation strategies for inclusive education were seen in many countries, including Belarus, Cameroon, Guyana, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Lebanon, the Republic of Moldova, Oman, Senegal, Uganda (pending approval from the Ministry of Education and Sports), Viet Nam and Zimbabwe (pending Cabinet approval).

Supporting access and retention in school for learners with disabilities remained a priority in several countries. For example, in **the Plurinational State of Bolivia**, 17,942 students (including 7,647 girls) with intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities and hearing impairments benefited from improved access and support guidelines. In **Jordan**, UNICEF supported the enrolment and retention of 2,513 children with disabilities (including 1,276 girls) in refugee camps and host communities, including through the provision of assistive devices and transport. In **Senegal**, UNICEF provided direct cash support to over 55,000 school-age children and students from the poorest households in 6 regions, with a special focus on girls and learners with disabilities, to facilitate their enrolment and retention in schools. In **Zimbabwe**, 77,000 children with disabilities (including 35,000 girls) received assistive devices, enabling continued access to education.

Efforts to ensure quality of learning experiences were seen in many countries through interventions such as capacity development and provision of accessible learning materials and inclusive learning programmes. In **Cabo Verde**, UNICEF supported the strengthening of pedagogical skills of the 23 multidisciplinary teams throughout the country that support inclusive education in schools, and 700 primary teachers in 9 of the country's 22 municipalities. In **Cuba**, capacity development in inclusive education was provided to 9,185 education professionals from ECE onwards. In **Lesotho**, 13 teachers' guides were converted into Braille to enable visually impaired teachers to independently read and prepare for their lessons, 200 sign language dictionaries were procured and distributed to 6 primary schools to support the growth of sign language vocabulary for learners with hearing impairments, and assistive technology devices were distributed to support the teaching and learning of children with disabilities. A total of 333 teachers (174 female) were also trained to use assistive devices to ensure that teaching and learning are effective and inclusive for everyone. This made schools a better place for nearly 9,900 children with disabilities (11 per cent of the total). In **Madagascar**, professional development was provided to 5,600 teachers in key areas such as inclusive education.

⁴⁹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Seen, Counted, Included: Using data to shed light on the well-being of children with disabilities', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/children-with-disabilities-report-2021/>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁵⁰ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Combating the Costs of Exclusion for Children with Disabilities and their Families', UNICEF, New York, 2021, <www.unicef.org/reports/combating-costs-exclusion>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² See Annex 2: Data Companion for details about the dimensions for this Indicator.

In **Morocco**, national inclusive education guides were used to train 3,855 preschool educators. The guides are being adapted for primary school. In **North Macedonia**, UNICEF was a key contributor in strengthening the national capacity on inclusive education, covering 1,236 members of the school inclusion teams of all 360 primary schools in the country. In **the Philippines**, UNICEF supported increased access to localized and appropriately designed learning resources for over 200,000 learners, including 21,175 with disabilities and those from Indigenous groups. In **Viet Nam**, disability-inclusive mother tongue-based bilingual education was reactivated to improve the learning outcomes and social inclusion of children from ethnic minority communities.

Accessibility of the physical environment was strengthened in countries such as China, Ecuador, Kenya, Kosovo, Malawi, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe. For example, in **Kenya**, gender- and disability-responsive WASH facilities were constructed in 149 schools, benefiting 56,770 schoolchildren, while in **Kosovo**, private sector partnerships resulted in the construction of 4 ramps and 9 accessible toilets in schools in 6 municipalities.

The availability, analysis and use of disability-inclusive data was advanced in countries such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Namibia. Additionally, with support from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and in partnership with Humanity and Inclusion, UNICEF published a report analysing data collected using the UNICEF–Washington Group Child Functioning Module from nine countries in West and Central Africa.⁵³ The report includes estimates of the prevalence of functional difficulties among children aged 2–17 and disparities in attendance and out-of-school rates, from ECE through to secondary school, as well as in foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) skills. A regional report for the Middle East and North Africa region,⁵⁴ analysing data across 18 indicators, including education, was also published, as were several country factsheets through the MICS-EAGLE initiative.⁵⁵

Support to parents and caregivers of children with disabilities was also prioritized in Bulgaria, Georgia, Lesotho, and Mongolia. Moreover, with the support of GPE, UNICEF published a series of evidence-based resources for parents and caregivers in Europe and Central Asia to support their children's participation in learning opportunities at home and school.⁵⁶

At the global level, ongoing efforts to strengthen capacities of ministries of education in disability-inclusive education sector planning continued through the delivery of a 10-week foundation course, in partnership with IIEP-UNESCO. Since 2020, 5 rounds of the course have been offered, reaching more than 300 participants from ministries of education and UNICEF country offices and nearly 100 observers in 45 countries. In 2022, the course was delivered to 89 participants from 9 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and East Asia and the Pacific. A sixth round of the course is planned in 2023.

UNICEF leveraged the *2nd Global Disability Summit (GDS22)* to mobilize efforts to further the implementation of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*, including inclusive education. As a result, UNICEF made 50 commitments across 15 key themes, including 2 on inclusive education, to strengthen capacity on disability-inclusive education sector analysis and planning and to generate evidence and information on inclusive education policy and programming.⁵ UNICEF, IIEP-UNESCO and GPE also launched the *Education Sector Analysis: Methodological guidelines (Volume 3)* during a side event. The guidelines, developed with support from FCDO, provide methods for carrying out a comprehensive analysis of the education sector in lower-income countries through a disability-inclusive lens.

At the Transforming Education Summit, UNICEF was instrumental in bringing attention to and mobilizing commitments to inclusive education for children with disabilities. In partnership with the International Disability Alliance and others, UNICEF organized a side event, *Transforming Commitments into Real Solutions for Disability-Inclusive Education*, to bring attention to the right to inclusive quality education for children with disabilities. *Transforming Education for Disability Inclusion: A call to action for all children* was launched during the event by civil society, calling for commitments from ministries of education and donors to advance progress in achieving inclusive education for all children with disabilities. The call to action has been endorsed by more than 150 organizations so far, including UNICEF, UNESCO, UNGEI, ECW and the World Bank, as well as the Minister of Education of Sierra Leone. Moreover, UNICEF was instrumental in coordinating the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities throughout the Summit and its side events, including in support of other global initiatives (digital education, girls' education) and as part of the overall engagement of children and young people.

⁵³ United Nations Children's Fund, 'In Pursuit of Education for All in West and Central Africa', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/wca/reports/pursuit-of-education-for-all>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁵⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Children with disabilities in the Middle East and North Africa: A statistical overview of their well-being', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/children-with-disabilities-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa-a-statistical-overview-of-their-well-being/#:~:text=An%20estimated%20million%20children.enjoy%20play%20and%20leisure%20time.>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁵⁵ United Nations Children's Fund, 'MICS – Education Analysis for Global Learning and Equity', May 2023, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/mics-education-analysis-for-global-learning-and-equity/>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁵⁶ Various resources under the Learning is For Everyone (LiFE) research initiative by UNICEF Innocenti. See <www.unicef-irc.org/research/learning-is-for-everyone/>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Accessible Digital Textbooks for All

To improve learning outcomes for all children and address one of the key barriers to inclusive education resulting from inaccessibility of core learning materials, UNICEF has been implementing the Accessible Digital Textbooks (ADT) initiative. An ADT is a digital tool that gives learners access to information in accessible formats that follow Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. To date, ADT has been implemented in nine countries: Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Kenya, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Rwanda, Uganda and Uruguay.

As a result of UNICEF's advocacy and convening role, the initiative has created a global 'movement' towards the use of ADT in support of UDL,⁵⁷ with positive outcomes on learning and inclusion in schools and communities from pilot countries. Key regional and country highlights include:⁵⁸

- In Latin America and the Caribbean, ministries of education in 6 countries and over 2,000 teachers and stakeholders have been trained on ADT, UDL and inclusive education. Four ADT prototypes have been produced, and 2 tested, with over 500 students reached with testing for the prototypes.
 - In Paraguay, the ADT initiative has benefited over 700 students. Preliminary results show that ADT can increase students' motivation and inclusive teaching, leading to improved school results. In 2022, UNICEF published a report based on the ADT pilot in Paraguay, which is part of longer-term multi-country research examining the implementation of ADTs.⁵⁹
- In Eastern and Southern Africa, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda adapted five textbooks into accessible formats, which were loaded onto devices and respective country 'education clouds', and trained teachers on inclusive pedagogies and use of ADT.
 - In Rwanda, ADT is being used in 60 inclusive model schools. UNICEF is supporting the Rwanda Education Board to develop 18 textbooks for Grades 4–6 in accessible digital formats.
 - In Kenya, training of publishers on 'born accessible publishing' will bring the development of teaching and learning materials in Kenya to scale.
 - In Uganda, to foster sustainability, engagement continues with Kyambogo University, Kampala, the only public university with a fully-fledged Faculty of Special Needs and Rehabilitation with a mandate to train Special Needs Teachers. The initiative is currently in 20 inclusive schools where 455 learners with disabilities (206 boys and 249 girls) are enrolled.



First-grade students learning sign language through an Accessible Digital Textbook in an inclusive classroom at the Escuela Básica Medalla Milagrosa, school located in Limpio, Paraguay.

⁵⁷ Universal Design for Learning is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that helps give all students an equal opportunity to succeed. This approach offers flexibility in the ways that students access and engage with material and highlight their understanding.

⁵⁸ Other country case studies are available on the ADT website. See <www.accessibletextbooksforall.org/>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁵⁹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Accessible Digital Textbooks: Creating digital tools to enable Universal Design for Learning and inclusive education (Paraguay)', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef-irc.org/publications/1467-paraguay-accessible-digital-textbooks-universal-design-for-learning.html>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Voices from the field: A window to the world for children with disabilities in Myanmar⁶⁰

"I first met Von Shant Shan while visiting the Yangon Education Center for the Blind, 30 minutes from Yangon's busy downtown area. She was sitting in the corner of her classroom, intently focused on her drawing," says Saw Wai Moe, a Communication Officer at UNICEF Myanmar. "I introduced myself to Von Shant Shan, and we quickly started a conversation. Von Shant Shan is an energetic and bright eight-year-old who loves school. She enjoys drawing and playing musical instruments and loves to fly kites."

Von Shant Shan and her parents are visually impaired, and only her younger sister is sighted. Her parents, who are massage therapists, are happy their daughter has access to more educational opportunities than they did. In Myanmar, many children with disabilities, like Von Shant Shan, are out of school and lack the support they need to learn.

May Thet Thet Oo, UNICEF Education Officer specializing in early childhood care and development, has also seen the challenges children with disabilities face. "Only a handful of schools, concentrated in major cities, provide education for children with disabilities. And, unfortunately, some parents know little about raising a child with disabilities and struggle with their children's development," she says.

In response, UNICEF Myanmar has been supporting the provision of storybooks tailored for children with disabilities aged 4–8, available in multiple accessible formats, including audio and visual, to support children's learning preferences and needs. UNICEF has produced 27 of the targeted 44 storybooks, shared through social media channels, the Myanmar Information Management Unit website and the Learning Passport, including the offline version. The project will also be scaled up upon finalization of the storybooks, by training teachers working with children with disabilities.

"These books could have a tangible impact on the lives of children with disabilities. They could provide a window to the world for these children," says May Thet Thet Oo.



A girl is seen through the window of a classroom at the Yangon Education Center for the Blind.

⁶⁰ Read more at <www.unicef.org/blog/window-world-children-disabilities-myanmar>, accessed 31 May 2023

Spotlight on thematic funding: Inclusive education for all children in Bhutan

Education thematic funds have contributed significantly to the achievements made in the expansion and improvement of inclusive education services in Bhutan. All 20 districts and 4 *thromdes* (municipalities) have at least one inclusive school, bringing the total number of schools with inclusive programmes up to 37 in 2022 and an enrolment of 926 children with disabilities (381 girls).

In line with UNICEF's holistic support for inclusive education services, UNICEF not only supported the expansion of access to inclusive education services but also equipped teachers and principals with skills and knowledge on inclusive education to provide relevant services and support. The thematic funds have proven critical in enabling UNICEF's support for the Government's capacity to deliver rights-based inclusive education for children with disabilities in the country.



A student and a teacher at the Autsho Central School in Lhuentse District, eastern Bhutan. The school is one of 37 UNICEF-supported inclusive education programmes.

UNICEF's work on mother-tongue and multilingual education to reach children from ethno-linguistic minority communities and those from Indigenous communities focused on provision and expansion of targeted and inclusive programmes. In **Brazil**, for example, targeted support to Indigenous territories reached over 15,000 Indigenous children and adolescents through child-friendly spaces. In **Senegal**, UNICEF supported a regional study on languages used in primary schools and assisted the Ministry of Education to develop an action plan and implement a new pre-primary curriculum through a joint programme with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). In **Viet Nam**, UNICEF interventions supported the government to ensure more inclusive learning opportunities for children from marginalized ethnic communities and LGBTQI+ children. Mother tongue-based bilingual education was reactivated as a strategy to improve learning outcomes and social inclusion of children from ethnic minority communities, with UNICEF directly supporting implementation in eight provinces while working at national level to strengthen education system capacity. These interventions led to legal and policy improvements that will directly affect the learning of 21 million children in **Viet Nam**, of whom 14 per cent (almost 3 million) are from ethnic minority communities. In collaboration with the Viet Nam Institute of Educational Sciences, UNICEF partnered with the [Global Digital Library](#) and [VRapeutic](#) to advocate for equity, digital accessibility and inclusiveness in the education system's digital transformation process. The Global Digital Library project has produced 160 quality digital books and video books in 8 underserved ethnic languages and sign languages.

Ending violence in and around schools

In 2022, as the world started coming out of the pandemic, efforts continued to identify and respond to the consequences of and linkages between school closures and increased protection concerns. UNICEF also continued to work through school systems to create safer learning environments for children and to leverage the role schools play in building skills and promoting norms that protect children from violence.

As a founding partner of the [Safe to Learn](#) initiative, UNICEF continued to play a critical role in supporting countries to implement the [Call to Action to End Violence in Schools](#). By the end of 2022, 16 countries had endorsed the Call to Action.⁶¹ In countries as diverse as Azerbaijan, Belarus, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, the Gambia, Lesotho, Libya, Mauritania, Mexico, Senegal and Sierra Leone, UNICEF has led evidence-informed approaches to strengthen school governance systems, introducing complaints mechanisms, codes of conduct, teacher training, guidance and counselling for teachers, student councils and reproductive health lessons. Evidence shows that these initiatives

contribute to safer school environments, reduce stigma and empower teachers to protect children's rights and identify, prevent and respond to violence.

The Safe Schools Programme in **Somalia** incorporates initiatives to strengthen the protective environment of the school while also challenging social and discriminatory gender norms by working to empower boys to intervene as bystanders to prevent violence against girls and women. The programme has reached 5,538 girls and 5,060 boys in 71 schools in Banadir and Juba land. Results show a marked improvement in boys' attitudes towards girls and women.

UNICEF also continued to advocate with ministries of education across the world for the adoption and implementation of national policies and programmes to protect children in school settings. In connection with the Transforming Education Summit, **Jordan**, which is a signatory to the Safe to Learn call to action, committed to expanding enabling, safe, healthy and accessible learning environments and support systems for all children, with a special emphasis on children vulnerable to exclusion from and within education, such as children with disabilities and refugee children. In November 2022, a new Child Rights Law was approved that addresses gaps in existing legislation and ensures non-discrimination and access to education, as well as other services. UNICEF provided technical support to the process, including through a costing of implementing the law, which helped its passage, and will continue to support the implementation. In addition, in collaboration with the Safe to Learn Coalition, UNICEF launched an advocacy note and supported two cross-country learning opportunities in East Asia and the Pacific. The work involves strengthening the role of the education sector in ending violence in and around schools; promoting mental health and child well-being support; and conducting technical sessions to guide country offices. These events culminated in a regional Safe to Learn round table, which brought together eight countries from the region to learn and share experiences, and the launch of a regional initiative to support countries to advance the agenda at the national level.

In **Indonesia**, the UNICEF-designed ROOTs bullying prevention programme was adopted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology to prevent bullying, intolerance, and sexual violence in school. The programme was rolled out nationwide, including in religious schools, with support from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. As a result, the ROOTs programme is now an integral component of the Ministry's reform agenda, aiming to improve learning outcomes, eradicate child poverty and lead to a more open and tolerant society. In less than two years (2021–2022), more than 200,000 children and adolescents (including 127,840 girls) have been trained as agents of change in formal and Islamic schools. In 2023, the programme will expand to 4,000 secondary schools, and an e-learning module will be rolled out.

⁶¹ Cambodia, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Honduras, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, Moldova, Mozambique, Nepal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, and Uganda.

In the **Congo**, UNICEF supported school clubs in 105 schools to combat violence in schools and enabled the sensitization of 18,961 students (9,924 girls) and 525 teachers (230 women) on school violence to enable students in these target schools to learn in a violence-free school environment. These school clubs have become permanent platforms for fighting school violence, with plans to establish 200 school clubs in the future.

A 2021–2022 mapping of key interventions across West and Central Africa found widespread action in countries towards the integration of violence prevention and response in and around schools in education sector plans, policies and guidance documents. Examples include **Nigeria's** National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools (2021), **Cameroon's** new Education Sector Strategy (2021–2030) and **Guinea-Bissau's** Education Sector Plan 2017–2025. In addition, the mapping showed that national codes of conduct for school staff and policies relating to positive discipline exist in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

With respect to strengthening prevention and response at school level, in **Senegal**, national guidelines and standards are available for education staff to better detect and respond to cases of violence and ensure linkages with child protection services and communities. Additionally, violence monitoring and reporting cells within schools were revamped with revised training, and teachers have been identified (designated by students) as focal points for their school on violence prevention, detection, and referral, in line with a mechanism that has been validated by the Ministry of Education. In **Guinea**, UNICEF successfully advocated for the prevention of violence in school settings to be integrated in the 10-year National Education Sector Plan. As a result, specific interventions to address violence in schools included in the education sector's Annual Budgeted Action Plans have been implemented. In **Ghana**, UNICEF supported the Guidance and Counselling Unit and other key units of the Ghana Education Service to advocate for the need to include a budget for prevention of violence in schools. Capacity-building of UNICEF staff across sectors on public finance for children has enabled UNICEF to undertake more strategic advocacy to the Government of Ghana for increased and targeted budgetary allocations within the education sector for violence prevention in schools.

Social and behavioural change for education

While progress has been made in advancing equal access to education for children, significant social and behavioural barriers still exist that may significantly influence children's access to and experience of education and contribute to learning poverty. To address this, UNICEF has been

enhancing the use of social and behaviour change approaches to overcome social challenges and barriers that cause distortion of education outcomes.

In 2022, 66 UNICEF-supported countries implemented education-specific social and behaviour change strategies. About 20 per cent of UNICEF's total expenditures in social and behaviour change programming (US\$444.4 million) was spent on education. In **Malawi**, for example, under the auspices of the National Girls' Education Strategy 2018–2023, UNICEF supported the education sector to develop guidelines on engaging traditional and religious leaders and parents to support education by addressing social norms and harmful practices affecting primary and secondary education. In **Kenya**, social and behaviour change strategies were used to support the return of 49,257 out-of-school children (22,073 girls) through the provision of teaching and learning materials, improved WASH facilities in schools, and increased child protection and social protection activities.

School health and nutrition

Healthy, well-nourished children and adolescents learn better, and as adults they lead healthier and more productive lives. Investing in the health, nutrition and well-being of learners is key to achieving inclusive and equitable quality education. In a new report, *Ready to Learn and Thrive: School health and nutrition around the world*, UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), GPE and the World Health Organization (WHO) highlight the accelerating impact of school health and nutrition programmes on education outcomes. When school meals are provided at school, for example, the enrolment rate increases by up to 9 percentage points. Malaria prevention programmes at school can reduce absenteeism by 62 per cent. Providing safe drinking-water and promoting hand washing can help reduce absenteeism by 21–61 per cent in low-income countries.⁶² Inequalities, however, impact children's access to such interventions. In high-income countries, for example, school feeding programmes reach on average 78 per cent of children in primary school, while in low-income countries only 20 per cent of primary school-age children are reached with these programmes.⁶³

Recognizing the transformative potential of an integrated approach to school health and nutrition, UNICEF works with governments, education partners and communities to put the health and well-being of learners at the core of the education agenda. For example, in **Argentina**, UNICEF identified that one of the key enablers ensuring knowledge about and access to nutritious food and improving healthy eating behaviours was through the adoption of the front of packaging (FOP) labelling legislation. UNICEF Argentina generated evidence to support FOP labelling, targeting civil society, education partners and parliamentarians through bilateral advocacy and coalitions, and provided technical

⁶² United Nations Children's Fund, 'Ready to Learn and Thrive: School health and nutrition around the world', UNICEF, New York, 2023, <www.unicef.org/documents/nutrition/SHN-report>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁶³ Ibid.

support to strengthen the organizational and coordination capacity of the National Coalition to Prevent Obesity in Children and Adolescents. In 2022, technical teams from 20 municipalities in 5 provinces were trained in guidance on the supply of healthy foods within schools and other institutions and improved access to safe drinking-water. Following its adoption, the law prohibits the sale and distribution of food in schools without warning labels and supports nutrition and health promotion in educational settings.⁶⁴

In **India**, UNICEF, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Human Resource and Development launched the School Health and Wellness Programme in February 2020. Since then, nearly 11 million schoolchildren have benefited from the programme. In every public school, two teachers – preferably one male and one female – are

declared Health and Wellness Ambassadors and trained to promote healthy lifestyles and disease prevention information through weekly activities in the classroom. To prevent anaemia among children, the programme also provides daily meals and weekly iron/folic acid. Other services include the provision of nutrition counselling, tobacco use prevention activities and provision of life skills education. UNICEF has also facilitated training of trainers, reaching 235,311 teachers across 156,880 schools.⁶⁵

As part of the emergency response in **the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**, UNICEF's school feeding programme provided meals for 96,157 children (48,296 girls). The average attendance rate in 319 schools increased from 38.7 per cent at the beginning of the school year in November 2021 to 91.4 per cent at the end of the school year in June 2022.

⁶⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Improving Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition through Policy Advocacy: Argentina case study', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <[www.unicef.org/media/131296/file/Improving_child_and_adolescent_health_and_nutrition_through_policy_advocacy_\(Argentina\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/131296/file/Improving_child_and_adolescent_health_and_nutrition_through_policy_advocacy_(Argentina).pdf)>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁶⁵ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Integrated School Health and Wellness Ensure Better Learning for Students: India case study', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <[www.unicef.org/media/131011/file/Integrated_school_health_and_wellness_ensure_better_learning_for_students_\(India\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/131011/file/Integrated_school_health_and_wellness_ensure_better_learning_for_students_(India).pdf)>, accessed 31 May 2023.



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Layan, 10, and her sister Ritaj 6, in their house in Saqba, rural Damascus, Syria, reading together.

Result Area 2: Improved learning, skills, participation and engagement for all children and adolescents, in development and humanitarian contexts

Despite efforts across the world to reach all children during the school closures and to bring them all back to classrooms by September 2022, new assessments in many countries reveal significant learning losses and lower learning outcomes, even for those reached by remote learning solutions. Lost foundational learning will translate into lower levels of skills, which in turn will reduce the productivity and earnings of today's children once they enter the workforce. The recent learning losses could be compounded over time, and lead to even more loss of human capital and negative impacts on economies, making the cost of inaction especially high.

Of UNICEF's total education expenditure (US\$1.56 billion), 37 per cent (US\$576 million) was spent on Result Area 2. As a result, UNICEF reached 28.3 million children, including 3.7 million in humanitarian settings, with learning materials, thus surpassing its 2022 milestone by nearly 13 million children.

In addition, progress is observed against the 2021 baselines in the following areas:

- Percentage of countries with effective systems for learning assessment grew from 39 per cent to 56 per cent, showing an increase of 17 percentage

points.⁶⁶ This has been achieved through support to national large-scale assessments, examinations and classroom assessments.

- Percentage of countries with effective teacher development systems grew from 17 per cent to 21 per cent, as a result of UNICEF's support in areas such as pedagogy and teachers' professional development and mental health.⁶⁷
- Percentage of countries with effective system for digital learning solutions, in terms of the quality of digital learning solutions as well as the availability of devices, connectivity, affordability and youth engagement, grew from 9 per cent to 16 per cent.⁶⁸

- Percentage of countries that have institutionalized holistic skills development to support learning, which includes support in areas such as personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship, social cohesion and/or employability and entrepreneurship, grew from 21 per cent to 23 per cent.⁶⁹

Furthermore, 41 per cent of reporting countries indicated having gender-responsive systems for learning and skills development through gender-responsive teaching and learning, and gender-equitable skills development.⁷⁰ Further, 49 per cent of reporting countries indicated having effective student and community participation in the education system, such as community involvement in monitoring, and mechanisms for accountability to communities.⁷¹



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8-year-old Milerith, living with a hearing disability, attends an inclusive school in Cerro Otoe, Ngäbe-Buglé Comarca, Panama.

⁶⁶ Number of reporting countries: 59.

⁶⁷ Number of reporting countries: 75.

⁶⁸ Number of reporting countries: 101.

⁶⁹ Number of reporting countries: 92.

⁷⁰ Number of reporting countries: 81.

⁷¹ Number of reporting countries: 70.

Figure 5. Result Area 2: Improved learning, skills, participation and engagement





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In Gaza, the State of Palestine, Suha Qanoua thinks about her 'dream classroom' while attending the Al Shajaiea Basic School for girls.

Learning in early years

Prior to the pandemic, 38 per cent of countries across the world invested under 2 per cent of their education budgets on pre-primary education, and less than 1 per cent of international education aid was spent on pre-primary education, with the amount subject to fluctuations in donor funding.⁷² The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an estimated 10.7 million additional young children falling off-track in their early development because of disrupted ECE services.⁷³ Early learning provides the building blocks for lifelong learning yet is under-prioritized.

Recognizing that the roots of the learning crisis lie in early childhood, at global level, UNICEF leveraged the lead-up to the Transforming Education Summit to mobilize political will for the prioritization of ECE as a pillar of the global response to the learning crisis, and 149 of the 208 countries prioritized a national target for SDG 4.2.2 on participation in ECE as part of their national plans for education recovery and transformation.

Furthermore, UNICEF worked with governments to roll out high-impact solutions supporting learning recovery through contextually appropriate early learning interventions, including programmes for school readiness. In **Mozambique**, for example, UNICEF supported children's school readiness through an expansion of its Accelerated School Readiness Programme, benefiting 10,520 children (5,260 girls). Similarly, early learning Para Centres in

Bangladesh benefited 58,206 young learners (28,947 girls), including 50 children with disabilities, while successfully transitioning 17,830 children (9,025 girls, 6 per cent children with disabilities) into Grade 1 from UNICEF-supported ECE centres. UNICEF also invested in school readiness interventions in **Ethiopia**, focusing on internally displaced children, refugee children and children in host communities, benefiting 132,856 crisis-affected young learners (48 per cent girls). UNICEF supported ECE system reform in **the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** to embed social-emotional learning in the new national ECE curriculum, which will benefit more than 4 million preschool children. In collaboration with the governments of **Belize, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Mexico**, UNICEF is facilitating the integration of social-emotional learning into schools and home-based service delivery platforms supporting ECE. In response to the Ukraine crisis, 117 play and learning hubs were established in Bulgaria, Czechia, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Slovakia, providing 30,638 crisis-affected children with play-based learning opportunities promoting school readiness.

UNICEF harnessed the potential of digital and remote learning platforms to provide quality early learning. In **India**, UNICEF supported the development of an online ECE course in local languages, reaching more than 400,000 female early childhood development workers and benefiting 72 million children enrolled in early childhood development centres (50 per cent girls).

⁷² United Nations Children's Fund, 'A World Ready to Learn: Prioritizing quality early childhood education', UNICEF, New York, 2019, <www.unicef.org/media/57926/file/A-world-ready-to-learn-advocacy-brief-2019.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁷³ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Add Today Multiply Tomorrow: Building an investment case for early childhood education', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/reports/add-today-multiply-tomorrow>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Five Million Futures: Sustainable scaling of early childhood education

In their earliest years, children's brains form more than 1 million new neural connections every second – an astounding pace that is never repeated at any other phase of life. ECE holds incredible, limitless promise to transform the lives of children and communities around the world.

Five Million Futures (5MF) is a partnership initiative launched by UNICEF in 2022 that aims to reach 5 million children and their families with equitable access to quality early learning. It offers an evidence-based solution to improve learning outcomes as children transition to primary school and beyond, while increasing the economic efficiency of education systems. Through the 5MF global framework, governments innovate to accelerate access to at least one year of pre-primary education for all children to increase school readiness in support of foundational learning goals. Programmes also engage parents and caregivers of all genders as active participants in child development through focused support to families, and facilitate smooth transition to primary school.

Through country engagement, the 5MF initiative has successfully mapped critical gaps in costing and financing, workforce development, quality assurance and data systems, while supporting the identification of good practice in achieving the equitable expansion of early learning. 5MF has facilitated demand-driven peer learning around issues such as results-based financing for ECE and gender-transformative approaches to early learning. It will continue to foster knowledge-sharing on topics such as disability-inclusive ECE, measuring school readiness and ensuring quality through standards. The initiative aims to roll out in a cohort of 24 front-runner countries across 7 regions by the end of 2023.

Foundational learning

The high global learning poverty rate is at crisis levels and continues to worsen in the wake of the disruption caused by the pandemic. Children who cannot read and understand a simple text will struggle to learn anything else in school. They are more likely to repeat a grade and more likely to drop out of school. They are less likely to benefit from further training and skills programmes. At a national level, this will lead to worse health outcomes, greater youth unemployment and deeper levels of poverty. Every child deserves the dignity and opportunity that foundational learning brings. High rates of learning poverty are early signals that education systems are failing to ensure that children develop critical foundational skills, and thus are unlikely to reach the SDG 4 target of universal quality education for all by 2030. Weak foundational skills make it much harder for children to acquire the technical and critical thinking skills needed to thrive in increasingly demanding labour markets, and for countries to develop the human capital needed for sustained, inclusive economic growth.

In 2022, the Transforming Education Summit provided a platform for the global community to take stock of the challenges in education and make commitments to improve learning outcomes. UNICEF and a group of partners – UNESCO, the United Kingdom FCDO, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID and the World Bank – leveraged the momentum to launch the Global Coalition on Foundational Learning, a platform to collaboratively support governments to achieve improved learning outcomes. The

Global Coalition and other partners advocated for countries to endorse a global [Commitment to Action on Foundational Learning](#), urging partners, including governments, to reduce the number of children at risk of learning poverty by a half by 2025 and make the necessary investments, including increased budget allocations, to expedite and improve the quality of learning. By the end of 2022, 16 countries as well as civil society organizations such as the People's Action for Learning Network and other funding partners such as GPE had endorsed the Commitment to Action.

Helping children return to school and supporting them to improve foundational skills was one of UNICEF's biggest priorities in 2022. A strong focus was put on catch-up learning, with emphasis on implementing remedial programmes at scale. A critical partnership established in this regard was with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to support scale-up of remedial education in 3 countries – **Ghana, South Africa and Zambia** – with proven, effective government-owned models and technical support to 12 others.

To support governments in scaling up evidence-based approaches to improve FLN, UNICEF, in collaboration with partners, hosted the [FLN Academy 2.0](#) in February 2022, a multi-themed online course building on learning from the first [FLN Academy \(FLN Academy 1.0\)](#). The FLN Academy brought together 641 education practitioners and actors from 12 countries on a learning journey to deepen their understanding and facilitated application of the latest resources and tools from [the FLN Hub](#).

As part of evidence generation and research, UNICEF's Data Must Speak research continued to analyse the behaviours and practices of positive deviant schools and how these can be scaled to improve foundational learning in 14 countries.

Through the [Accelerator Program](#), a partnership with UNICEF, the World Bank and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, five countries – the Niger, Mozambique, Rwanda, Nigeria (Edo State) and Sierra Leone – developed and began implementation of advocacy strategies on foundational learning.

Many countries have set up successful and scalable practices to recover learning losses and support foundational learning and skills development. For example, in the **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education and Sports in the development and implementation of a four-week catch-up remedial education programme focused on FLN for students in Grades 1 and 2, reaching 8,320 children in 6 provinces. Similarly, to tackle the declining performance of learners in early-grade literacy and numeracy, the Ministry of Education in **Zambia**, with support from UNICEF, piloted a remedial programme called Catch-Up; it has reached more than 250,000 students who were behind in their learning and literacy and numeracy skills.⁷⁴

Supporting teachers' development and skills development is crucial in ensuring they are equipped with skills to help recover learning losses. In **Indonesia**, UNICEF launched the Early Grade Literacy programme in 2015 to improve the skills and creativity of teachers and help schools provide a better learning environment adapted to the needs of students, with the goal of improving students' reading and comprehension skills in schools, especially targeting Indigenous children in rural, remote areas. By the end of 2022, over 27,000 students were reached in Papua and West Papua provinces.⁷⁵ In **Sierra Leone**, UNICEF's support to an early-grade teacher training programme, aimed at improving literacy and mathematics skills among children in Grades 1–3, reached 600,000 children.⁷⁶ In **Ghana**, UNICEF's technical support contributed to the Government's approval of the Differentiated Learning approach and helped 36,518 learners (18,432 girls) with improved foundational skills in English and mathematics. Teacher capacity was built to deliver this pedagogy across 235 schools from 47 districts in the 6 new regions.

Secondary skills development and school-to-work transition

Out of 1.2 billion adolescents worldwide, 90 per cent of them live in low-income and middle-income countries. One in 4 of the poorest adolescents has never attended school, and more than 200 million adolescents of secondary school age are out of school.⁷⁷ Adolescents and young people are poised to become the next leaders, inventors, teachers, entrepreneurs and artists and to pursue new occupations just at the cusp of their imaginations. Yet this generation has faced compounding challenges to reaching their potential. Major crises, including the pandemic, wars, protracted conflicts and climate emergencies, and inflexible and limited options for secondary education have restricted skills development opportunities. The experience of adolescents today is complex and varied – and a one-size-fits-all approach to their education is inadequate to support the realization of the rights to which they are entitled, and to meet their needs in a rapidly changing world.

In 2022, UNICEF continued its support to ensure children are equipped with skills needed for learning, life and work. Percentage of countries that have institutionalized holistic skills development to support learning, which includes support in areas such as personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship, social cohesion and/or employability and entrepreneurship, grew to 23 per cent from the 2021 baseline of 21 per cent.⁷⁸ For example, in **Türkiye**, over 63,000 out-of-school adolescents (30,000 girls), including refugees, had access to multiple learning pathways and vocational education to enhance their job-readiness skills. In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, UNICEF and partners provided alternative learning pathways for over 56,000 out-of-school children (40 per cent girls) with skills for resilience and employability.

In the **Syrian Arab Republic**, UNICEF and partners provided 241,532 young people (137,161 female) with skills-building courses, while 360,310 (189,813 female) accessed opportunities to engage in their communities, including 91,044 (38,701 female) through Sports for Development. This was carried out through 129 adolescent-friendly spaces (70 operated in coordination with the Ministry of Culture) and 125 mobile youth teams who work in rural and hard-to-reach areas. Eighty per cent of life-skills graduates reported that the training enhanced their active community engagement.

⁷⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Improving Early Grade Reading and Numeracy Through "Catch-Up," a Remedial Learning Programme: Zambia case study', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/documents/improving-early-grade-reading-and-numeracy-through-catch-remedial-learning-programme>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁷⁵ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Instruction Tailored to Students' Learning Levels Improves Literacy: Indonesia case study', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/documents/instruction-tailored-students-learning-levels-improves-literacy-indonesia>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁷⁶ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Training, Inspiring and Motivating Early Grade Teachers to Strengthen Children's Skills in Literacy and Numeracy: Sierra Leone case study', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/documents/training-inspiring-and-motivating-early-grade-teachers-strengthen-childrens-skills>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁷⁷ Source: <www.unicef.org/mena/adolescent-development-and-participation-adap>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁷⁸ Number of reporting countries: 92.

In **Egypt**, in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and youth networks, UNICEF facilitated career guidance and skills development opportunities for 200,831 young people (112,465 girls). In **India**, support for career guidance expanded across 15 states, with 39.8 million students (half of them girls) registered through online portals to access career information and pathways. In **Brazil**, more than 100,000 adolescents participated in skills development programmes for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship, and employability.

In **Ethiopia**, 89,200 adolescents (75 per cent girls) aged 10–14 were empowered with life-skills education, including 39,096 internally displaced adolescents affected by conflict and drought. In **Jordan**, UNICEF engaged 87,201 young people (58 per cent girls) in civic and community action in host communities and refugee camps, supporting the development of foundational skills, life and employability skills, financial literacy and girls' leadership.

UNICEF also works with young people to support them in engaging in strengthening education systems, including by becoming part of the education workforce. In 2022, 2.2 million young people in 42 countries completed the UPSHIFT social entrepreneur skills curriculum. In **the United Republic of Tanzania**, which has a shortage of nearly 90,000 teachers in pre-primary and primary school education, UNICEF and the Government piloted a volunteer engagement model covering approximately 2,500 teachers in one region. This model will engage young, trained teacher graduates as volunteers in a pipeline that will gradually absorb them into the formal civil service.

In addition to the results achieved across regions and country offices, UNICEF produced key pieces of guidance to inform the secondary education and adolescent skills subsector globally. This included a comprehensive review of skills attainment among children and young people with the Education Commission;⁷⁹ a landscape review of the [Impact of COVID-19 on Alternative Education Programmes](#)

with the Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG); and [Evidence on Learning Outcomes for Adolescents in Fragile Contexts](#) with the Secondary Education Working Group (SEWG). In addition, UNICEF conducted a mapping of learning-to-earning opportunities in Eastern and Southern Africa for young people with disabilities.⁸⁰ The report, which was published in January 2023, provides recommendations to practitioners to make learning-to-earning initiatives inclusive and impactful by designing programmes together with young people with disabilities, adapting learning content and teaching methodology, providing targeted career guidance, and collaborating with employers to transform workplaces into more inclusive working environments.

UNICEF continued engagement in the PROSPECTS partnership, a programme funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, bringing together the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and the World Bank. Spanning eight countries – Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, the Sudan and Uganda – the partnership focuses on supporting migrant and forcibly displaced children and young people to acquire critical learning competencies and skills for employability, by strengthening pathways for the school-to-work transition. As part of these efforts, UNICEF, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), ILO and UNFPA, organized a high-level regional meeting in 2022 on young people's learning, skilling and transition to decent work, in Amman, Jordan, with 300 participants, including youth leaders, among them young refugees, government decision makers and private sector stakeholders, from across the Middle East and North Africa Region to discuss bottlenecks and best practices in the learning-to-earning transition for young people. This resulted in a regional declaration as well as national-level commitments to frame their actions in the next two years that were the basis of countries' engagement at the Transforming Education Summit.

⁷⁹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Recovering Learning: Are children and youth on track in skills development?', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/media/123626/file/UNICEF_Recovering_Learning_Report_EN.pdf.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁸⁰ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Mapping Learning to Earning Opportunities: For youth with disabilities in Eastern and Southern Africa', UNICEF, New York, 2023, <www.unicef.org/esa/reports/mapping-learning-earning-opportunities>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Spotlight on thematic funding: Acting fast to ensure students can sit national exams in Uganda

When the Government of Uganda declared an Ebola epidemic in September 2022, all effort was to ensure that schools remained safe and operational. However, nearly two months into the outbreak, the Government had instituted movement restrictions at the virus epicentre, the districts of Mubende and Kassanda. Students who were Primary 7 candidates were due to sit final examinations. However, the major concern was how the candidates who missed the opportunity to sit examinations in the school year 2021 due to COVID-19 school closures would sit their final examinations.

Through engagement with the Ebola National Task Force and District Task Forces in these districts, and by using education thematic funding, UNICEF facilitated the transportation of 12,468 primary leaving examination candidates and 370 examination officials (supervisors and inspectors) to and from 185 examination centres over a period of three days. In addition, UNICEF advocated for 30 candidates from Rubaga Division in Kampala City who were in home isolation to sit the examinations. This support included a special examination centre for the candidates in home isolation, facilitating transportation of examination officials and provision of meals and transport for candidates during the examinations.



Lilian Nabuufu, an invigilator, briefs Primary 7 pupils of Green Valley Primary School in Masanafu, Kampala, before they started their final English examinations on 9 November 2022.

Gender-responsive education systems for learning and skills development

UNICEF works with governments to ensure education sector plans and policies support gender-transformative teaching and learning, including curricula, learning materials and pedagogies. Furthermore, UNICEF advocates for and supports governments in ensuring sufficient and equitable financing for these efforts. UNICEF also supports countries to ensure gender-equitable skills development, for example through policies for gender parity in student enrolment and learning in traditionally gendered vocational training programmes and subjects such as STEM; gender parity in the teaching workforce, including in vocational training programmes and STEM subjects; and also by ensuring that curricula and materials for skills development (including skills for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship and/or employability) are gender-transformative and explicitly promote gender equality. In addition, UNICEF supports countries to establish incentive mechanisms such

as scholarships, apprenticeships and cash transfers for disadvantaged adolescent girls to access training for formal sector employment.

In **Bangladesh**, with UNICEF's support, a competency-based and gender-transformative National Curriculum Framework was developed and approved that will support the roll-out of a secondary curriculum for 12 million students from 2023 onwards. In **Nepal**, where almost a third of girls are married before they turn 18, UNICEF partnered with the Government and local civil society organizations to roll out a curriculum to equip adolescent girls aged 10–19 with communication and other life and leadership skills, delivered through schools but also reaching out-of-school girls in remote and rural areas and those in religious schools. In **Egypt**, the UNICEF-supported National Girls' Empowerment Initiative, Dawwie, established under the auspices of the First Lady and with support from six governors, engaged more than 270,000 community members face to face and over 3.6 million online. More than 40 per cent of the 58,000 children completing the Dawwie digital literacy package demonstrated enhanced acceptance of gender equality.⁸¹



Two adolescent girls learning about menstrual hygiene in Mauritania.

⁸¹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Dawwie – Unlocking the Power of Girls (photo essay)', 2021, <www.unicef.org/egypt/stories/dawwie-unlocking-power-girls>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Voices from the field: Financial literacy – A tool to empower adolescent girls in Bihar, India

Learning about finances and saving has become exceedingly popular among girls in Bihar through an initiative run by the government and civil society partners, with support from UNICEF, to improve adolescent girls' financial literacy. Gunjan Kumari from Rampur Village, Sheikpura, stated: "I learned about banking, budgeting, loans, insurance, savings and filling forms. Before the training, I had never even heard these terms. I am grateful to Nirmala Didi. She taught all of us a great deal about banking. Last time, when I went to the bank to withdraw the money, I did it myself."

Gunjan has learned to minimize her expenses and ensure some personal saving through this initiative. Financial literacy training has changed her mindset, and she is gradually learning to use her bank account, understand bank terminology and processes and express herself.

The financial literacy programme aimed to empower girls to make informed decisions about finances in day-to-day life, and 44,420 adolescents (97 per cent girls) from marginalized and minority communities were empowered through this activity in select villages and schools in 26 districts. UNICEF and partner organizations developed 12 self-paced online modules, consisting of 12 videos of 5–10 minutes each. The programme helped the participants express themselves, improve their analytical skills and make a financial plan for the best use of their money.



Gunjan Kumari, participant in the financial literacy programme in Bihar, India, smiling for the camera.

Strengthening teachers' development and teaching practices

As schools resumed face-to-face education in the aftermath of the pandemic, wide learning disparities were intensified significantly by the preceding two years of school closures. The ensuing learning losses made the job of teaching more challenging and complex. UNICEF emphasized learning recovery interventions and digital transformation, integral to which was supporting countries to strengthen teacher preparation, professional development, and support systems.

In 2022, percentage of countries with effective teacher development systems grew from 17 per cent to 21 per cent.⁸² This was mainly due to strong support for teachers' professional development, and support to school leadership: 61 per cent of reporting countries worked on teachers' professional development. Furthermore, 43 per cent supported school leadership. Similarly, 49 per cent of reporting countries worked on enhancing teachers' accountability, and 22 per cent of countries indicated having interventions in support of teachers' mental health and psychosocial support.

In **Belarus**, for example, new standards for pedagogical universities and postgraduate institutions were drafted to prepare educators from preschool through higher education to adapt teaching plans to meet each child's unique learning needs. Similarly, the newly launched Teacher Learning Institute in **Belize** provided structured, comprehensive, year-round professional development programmes based on identified needs of teachers and school leaders, complemented by the establishment of mechanisms for teachers to track their own hours of continuous professional development for the licensing process. UNICEF also contributed to the development and expansion of various in-service and pre-service teacher training programmes on ECE, inclusive education, multilingual education and life-skills education in **Cambodia**. To address learning loss, UNICEF invested in the Early Grade Learning programme, supporting 1,582 (917 females) Grade 1 teachers and 891 (582 female) Grade 2 teachers, reaching approximately 110,000 Grade 1 and 2 students (51,150 girls) out of the total of 783,382 nationwide.

Technology-augmented teaching practices were introduced to increase digital literacy among children and young people by providing teachers and professional development leaders with new skills in blended and digital learning and technology integration, reducing the digital gender divide and improving digital literacy in schools. The UNICEF initiative Akademi.al, adopted as the national e-learning platform in **Albania**, continued to provide services for 48,152 teachers on blended learning, reaching 516,178 children (252,927 girls) with language learning.

Strengthening pedagogy is a key focus in building back better and restoring lost learning. UNICEF's work in this area includes support to countries to ensure systems are in place that regularly inform instructional practices through evidence (i.e., dissemination of student assessment findings/results), provide clear guidance to teachers and schools, based on students' performance, and inform teaching lesson plans and other teaching practices, while also evaluating teachers' performance. In 2022, UNICEF supported capacity-building of teachers and education staff on a range of issues, including teaching of FLN skills, catch-up and remedial education, the child-centred methodology, differentiated pedagogy, psychosocial support and life-skills integration, learning outcome measurement and more. The Successful School Pathways strategy implemented in **Brazil** provided training and support to nearly 26,000 teachers and managers to develop innovative curricula, create quality early learning content and develop protective learning environments, inclusive education and hybrid education practices. In addition, more than 11,000 ECE managers and teachers were trained on pedagogical practices for quality childhood education services. In **Cabo Verde**, UNICEF supported training of 30 per cent (252) of the pedagogical coordinators and sub-directors on pedagogical supervision in basic education classrooms. In **Chad**, 76 per cent of the schools across the country were supported to conduct in-service teacher orientation to ensure increased access to education for out-of-school children, especially girls.

Teaching in emergencies and humanitarian settings took place within intensifying refugee crises and emergencies in multiple countries. UNICEF continued capacity-building of teachers and other pedagogical staff on various issues, including inclusive education, implementation of accelerated education programmes, EMIS, communication with trauma-affected children, emergency preparedness and response capacities, disaster risk management and planning, and biosecurity measures. In **Greece**, UNICEF supported the inclusion of refugee and migrant children in formal education by providing quality non-formal education and by systematically building the capacity of teachers and partners to apply innovative teaching methodologies to increase refugee/migrant children's learning achievements and transferable skills and providing them with structured psychosocial support and referral to specialized services. In collaboration with the Institute of Educational Policy and academia, UNICEF implemented a 400-hour accredited capacity-building programme, which reached 3,253 teachers, school leaders and other staff engaged in the education of children from refugee and migrant backgrounds and involved more than 100 experts and mentors from different disciplines. In **Cabo Verde**, UNICEF supported the strengthening of pedagogical skills of 23 multidisciplinary teams throughout the country and 700 (out of 3,000) teachers of compulsory primary education (Grades 1–8) to support inclusive education in schools.

⁸² Number of reporting countries: 75.

In 2022, strikes by teachers in some countries such as **Angola and Uganda**, demanding improved salaries and working conditions, put education systems under pressure to improve teaching conditions. In **Algeria**, for example, as lead of the Education Coordination Group, UNICEF spearheaded the advocacy effort to improve teachers' incentives. Professional development programmes using a community of practice approach also focused on fostering the emotional intelligence of teachers to improve their self-awareness. Some of these programmes had a particular focus on improving female teacher well-being, such as in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

As part of UNICEF's global evidence generation and research work, the [Time to Teach](#) research portfolio captured thousands of teachers' voices, to identify factors affecting their attendance. The evidence informed teacher policies in 20 African countries. In 2022, the [final report captured findings from across West and Central Africa](#) and paved the way for initiating the research on teacher deployment across 12 African countries. In addition, UNICEF published an [evidence brief](#) presenting emerging results in [Women in Learning Leadership research](#) that examines how to address the under-representation of women in school leadership.

Voices from the field: Teaching and Learning in Difficult Times, a training course for teachers supporting Ukrainian refugee children in Romania

“In Romania I first faced children who did not want to even communicate with other people around them. They are waiting to be back home. I understood this was caused by trauma, but I had no idea how to deal with it,” says Natalya, a Ukrainian teacher from Kherson who arrived in Romania in May 2022. She started teaching English to Ukrainian children in Bucharest, including doing online lessons.

Only one in 10 refugee children coming from Ukraine to Romania is enrolled in a school or kindergarten in the Romanian education system, most often as ‘auditor’ students. Others benefit either from the courses of the educational hubs established by Ukrainian teachers in Romania or from the didactic and extracurricular activities offered by various educational centres created by non-governmental organizations. All these children have experienced trauma, and the new settings, including language barriers with teachers, add to the stress.

In response, UNICEF, the British Council and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) started a 30-hour intensive course on Teaching and Learning in Difficult Times to train teachers in supporting children’s mental health and well-being through education. The course includes training on creating trauma-sensitive learning environments, managing challenging behaviours that might appear in response to experiencing trauma, and making lessons and classrooms more welcoming for the refugee children. The course trained over 110 teachers in 2022 on applying pedagogical and psychological methods adapted to the emotional disposition of children who have experienced traumatic events.

“During the course, I learned about the physical characteristics of the human brain, their impact on reactions and ways to deal with diverse types of behaviour caused by trauma. The mentors and my colleagues shared their experiences, which is useful for my learners too,” says Nataliya, who took this course in October 2022.

The main objectives of the course are to better support all children in the learning process, as well as facilitate their integration in Romania, from both an educational and a social point of view. As a British Council initiative, the course has been organized in different areas of the world affected by conflicts or in countries hosting refugees.



On 3 May 2022 in Bucharest, Romania, a girl shares her drawing with a classmate at the Mihai Viteazul National College.

Learning assessment

During the pandemic, the function and modality of learning assessments evolved. While national standardized assessments continued to take place in many countries and the ability to collect more comprehensive data from students and teachers increased, the pandemic re-emphasized the need to change learning assessment practices. As schools reopened in 2022, countries rightly continued prioritization of assessment **for** learning (formative assessment) rather than assessment **of** learning (including examinations). With assessment **for** learning, teachers are enabled to identify individual students' learning needs through classroom-based continuous assessments – and to plan lessons based on what students do and do not know.

In 2022, UNICEF continued its work on strengthening learning assessment, with further emphasis under the RAPID Framework for Learning Recovery and Acceleration, which focuses on strengthening national, subnational and classroom-level assessment of students' performance. As a result, percentage of countries with effective systems for learning assessment grew from the 2021 baseline of 39 per cent to 56 per cent, showing an increase of 17 percentage points.⁸³ Data from reporting countries show progress in ensuring functioning examinations, with 71 per cent of countries reporting on supporting examinations, followed by 62 per cent of countries having effective classroom assessment systems, and 54 per cent having effective national assessment systems in place.

At the national education system level, national or subnational learning assessments can help countries make informed decisions on interventions for learning recovery. This strategy is demonstrated in efforts in **India**, where results from the National Achievement Survey for students in Grades 3, 5, 8 and 10 and the Foundational Learning Study for students in Grade 3 will be used to gauge learning losses and inform learning recovery. A similar response is seen in **South Sudan**, where data from a national learning assessment focused on early-grade reading and mathematics will be used to inform learning recovery interventions. Additionally, in **Libya**, UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Education to conduct a national assessment on the effectiveness of the abridged curriculum prepared for the school reopening after COVID-19 closures.

At the classroom level, diagnostic and formative assessments help teachers adapt teaching plans and pedagogical approaches. In **Sri Lanka**, results from a task-based, diagnostic learning achievement test informed curriculum adaptation and a blended approach of classroom-based, teacher-led and home-based, parent-led remedial activities that integrated formative assessments.

Formative assessments, which provide ongoing feedback to teachers and students, are also essential to inform recovery strategies. For instance, in **Mongolia**, teachers used the first two classes of the year for formative assessments to gauge children's learning levels following school closures and to tailor remedial lessons to children's specific needs.

Enhancing teachers' capacity for assessment enables them to continuously assess learning at the classroom level. Support for teachers can include training on new assessment tools and methods, as well as the use of assessment data to adapt instructions to meet students' needs. For instance, to help strengthen teacher capacity for formative assessment in Europe and Central Asia, UNICEF developed a set of modules, the [Formative Assessment for Quality, Inclusive Digital and Distance Learning during and beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), which explores the many purposes, approaches and tools for formative assessment across a variety of education delivery modalities. In **the Plurinational State of Bolivia**, UNICEF developed diagnosis instruments for schools to self-apply to track learning progress. To date, 70 school directors and 997 teachers have been trained, and 20,017 students (9,912 girls) have benefited.

In 2022, UNICEF and USAID set up the Social and Emotional Learning/Soft Skills (SEL/SS) Measurement Taskforce. With approximately 120 members, including international and local practitioners, donors and academic institutions, the task force aims to improve understanding of and coordination around the landscape of SEL/SS measurement work; surface learning on how to measure SEL/SS, including through tool and resource sharing, examining localization/contextualization processes and clarifying best practices for locally led measurement creation and key measurement challenges; and support global (and possibly local) advocacy efforts to promote the measurement of SEL/SS. The task force responds to the collective recognition within the international education development community of the importance of SEL/SS and a growing base of research, policy and guidance pieces on the topic, yet there is limited documentation and sharing among practitioners, academic institutions and donors. The key SEL/SS measurement challenges require a coordinated effort by many stakeholders to advance the measurement agenda towards achieving broad outcomes for children and young people in school, work and engagement with society.

⁸³ Number of reporting countries: 59.

Voices from the field: UNICEF ensures schoolchildren access national exams in South Sudan

More than 2.8 million children are out of school in South Sudan. Many of these children are from the most marginalized, hard-to-reach areas or humanitarian contexts, either because of conflict or ongoing climate shocks such as floods and drought. Children living in crisis-affected and remote areas often miss the chance to sit their national examinations, further depriving them of the opportunity to transition to higher levels of education.

In 2022, UNICEF supported 49,541 candidates (20,398 female), including children in camps for internally displaced persons, to sit their Primary 8 leaving examinations. UNICEF supported the transportation of examination materials and government examiners to different hard-to-reach locations across the country, and of candidates from camps for displaced persons to examination centres. This support enabled these children to sit their examinations and gave them an opportunity to transition to secondary education.

“I am happy to have sat for my national exams. Imagine, if I were home, I would have not known how the world is developing, I would not be able to speak English well, and I would not one day make it to a higher level of being a leader,” says Abiel Elijah Deng, a 16-year-old student from St. Andrew primary school.⁸⁴



A boy sitting an examination in Rock City School in South Sudan.

⁸⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Efforts to Ensure School Children Access National Exams are Keeping Career Dreams Alive', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/southsudan/stories/efforts-ensure-school-children-access-national-exams-are-keeping-career-dreams-alive>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Digital transformation of education systems and digital learning

Digital learning is a key lever for meaningful transformation of education systems – as highlighted in 90 percent of National Statements of Commitment during the Transforming Education Summit. Lower-income countries were most likely to suggest that digital solutions would help solve endemic learning deficits for out-of-school, rural or crisis-affected populations.⁸⁵ However, the pandemic response showed significant gaps in the capacity of most education systems to effectively leverage technology, with almost half a billion children unable to access remote learning.⁸⁶ UNICEF's *Pulse Check on Digital Learning report*, published in 2022, describes a comprehensive way forward to bridge the gap between the promise and the reality of the use of technology in education. The report also pointed at equity and quality challenges, as only one in five digital learning platforms has accessibility features to include learners with disabilities, only one in three has interactive content and two out of three do not work in places with intermittent or low connectivity, where most disadvantaged children live.⁸⁷

In 2022, UNICEF continued to strengthen its global programmes on digital learning. The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, introduced a set of new indicators measuring the extent to which education systems are conducive to accessible digital learning for children, by assessing level of quality, affordability, accessibility, connectivity and youth engagement.⁸⁸

UNICEF data from 101 reporting countries show progress against 2021 baselines on the following systems-strengthening dimensions: the percentage of countries working on making digital learning more affordable increased from 16 per cent to 27 per cent. Percentage of countries with plans for youth engagement in digital learning increased from 16 per cent to 33 per cent.

UNICEF's support to countries on service delivery for digital learning helped reach 13.6 million children (51 per cent girls). This indicates that UNICEF reached 64 per cent of its 2022 milestone which can be explained by the fact that education systems prioritized school reopening and reallocated resources away from digital platforms to support in-person instruction. This is consistent with the finding of UNICEF's *Pulse Check on Digital Learning* report that progress on digital learning made during COVID-19 has stalled and even backtracked in some countries, as

35 per cent of identified national digital learning platforms no longer exist, have not been updated or have links that do not work.

To address this issue and, more broadly, the limitations in access to public digital learning and reduce educational inequalities, UNICEF and UNESCO launched the *Gateways to Public Digital Learning Initiative* ('Gateways') at the Transforming Education Summit in September 2022. This initiative will map, describe, and analyse national public platforms and content; help countries create and strengthen national platforms; identify and share best practices; and establish international norms and standards to guide the development of platforms in ways that advance national and international goals for education.

Gateways builds on the momentum generated by the Transforming Education Summit. The Ministry of Education and Science of **Mongolia**, for example, committed to leverage programmes that developed interactive digital learning and audio content for 1 million children, including children in remote areas and teachers in kindergartens and primary schools. In **Cabo Verde**, the Government committed to prioritize innovative digital learning solutions to increase access and improve learning for vulnerable children at risk of falling behind. In **Malaysia**, UNICEF, the Ministry of Education, Google, Microsoft and Apple launched the Digital Educational Learning Initiative Malaysia (DELIMa) 2.0 platform. DELIMa empowers learners and teachers by integrating multiple applications, services and collaboration tools, establishing learning communities, and providing accessibility features for children with disabilities. So far, 99 per cent of teachers and 85 per cent of students have used DELIMa.

Working with teachers is essential for digital learning to transform education, leveraging pedagogical innovation and blended learning. In **Indonesia**, for example, the national Merdeka Belajar movement equips teachers with skills to teach children at the right level through in-service teacher training, quality learning content and a 'super app' for teachers, which has over 2.3 million users and is among the top five education apps in Indonesia's Google Play Store.

In 2022, 52 per cent of reporting countries indicated having worked on quality content for digital learning.⁸⁹ For example, in **Bangladesh**, to address learning losses and provide remedial education, UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Education to develop content and materials in formats that combined digital, radio, television and print to reach over 1 million learners.

⁸⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 'Analysis of National Statements of Commitments at the Transforming Education Summit', UNESCO, Paris, 2022, <https://transformingeducationsummit.sdg4education2030.org/system/files/2022-12/Analysis_of_TES_National_Statements_of_Commitment_23.10.2022_FINAL.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁸⁶ United Nations Children's Fund, 'COVID-19: Are Children Able to Continue Learning during School Closures? A global analysis of the potential reach of remote learning policies', UNICEF, New York, 2020, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/remote-learning-reachability-factsheet/>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁸⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Pulse Check on Digital Learning', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/reports/pulse-check>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁸⁸ These dimensions correspond to the pillars of Reimagine Education, an initiative launched during the education response in 2020, focusing on implementation of digital learning. See <www.unicef.org/reimagine/education>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁸⁹ Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.4: Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with effective system for digital learning solutions, Dimension 1: Digital Learning Solutions, Datapoint DP0000172. See Annex 2: Data Companion for more details.

UNICEF supports digital learning in emergencies and protracted crisis settings. In **Ukraine**, for example, together with the Ministry of Education and Science and other partners, UNICEF strengthened access to online learning through All-Ukrainian School Online, a national platform for distance and blended learning. UNICEF supported content development, ensuring accessibility features for users with visual, hearing and motor impairments. Teachers were trained to effectively use the content and technical features of the platform in face-to-face, online and blended learning modalities. More than 333,000 Ukrainian students and 135,000 teachers have registered on this platform. Due to the massive closure of kindergartens, UNICEF also developed the first ever online kindergarten (NUMO), accessible to the displaced, caregivers in occupied territories, refugees in hosting countries and all parents in Ukraine. The NUMO online kindergarten has 121 episodes of interactive preschool lessons, covering all key competencies of children's development for over 4.6 million users.

UNICEF also works to ensure that digital learning is inclusive for all learners, especially children with disabilities. In **the Islamic Republic of Iran**, master teachers from 32 provinces were trained to develop accessible digital content to facilitate increased national production of accessible content. In **Tajikistan**, UNICEF deployed high-quality inclusive digital learning materials to ensure uninterrupted access to learning for more than 250,000 pre-primary children and over 1.5 million school learners.

The UNICEF-Akelius Digital Language Learning Course has enabled refugee and migrant children in 13 countries to learn a new foreign language, including in Albania, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cabo Verde, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Mexico, Poland, Sao Tome and Principe, and Serbia. As a result of the UNICEF-Akelius partnership, by 2022, cumulatively 62,029 learners had benefited from the Akelius application in formal and non-formal educational settings across 283 learning centres, including Ukrainian refugee children in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Italy. Also, 4,599 teachers were trained in the application and blended language teaching and learning approaches. E-teacher training modules were developed to support teachers using Akelius in a blended learning environment, and they are currently being used to complement national-led teacher training and professional development events. To guide implementation and to ensure an evidence-based approach, in addition to the two existing evidence-generation research papers on the UNICEF-Akelius digital learning initiative in [Greece](#) and [Lebanon](#), UNICEF produced reports on [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) and [Italy](#).

UNICEF supported digital learning by procuring essential learning devices (such as laptops and tablets), delivering 300,000 devices in **El Salvador** and procuring 35,565 devices for the emergency education programmes in **Ukraine** and neighbouring countries. As the pandemic led to a surge in digital technology use in education, it also revealed staggering gender gaps in access to and use of digital technology worldwide. Women are 7 per cent less likely than men to own a mobile phone, and 15 per cent less likely to use mobile internet in low- and middle-income countries, impeding their access to digital learning and opportunities.⁹⁰ UNICEF works with governments to develop and implement robust gender-responsive programmes, addressing social norms and other barriers that have made it harder for girls to have meaningful engagement and to learn using digital technology. In **South Africa**, approval of the Coding and Robotics Curriculum by uMalusi⁹¹ enabled scale-up to reach 1.2 million young people (60 per cent girls) with online coding and robotics content. UNICEF also trained girls in STEM and drone technology, with job-shadowing for 3,280 young people in STEM-related careers. In **Viet Nam**, UNICEF introduced augmented and virtual reality education solutions in remote mountainous provinces, which are empowering 28,500 children of whom 13,750 are ethnic minority girls to engage in STEM through gamification and immersive interactive experiences.

While many digital learning solutions are optimizing their design to accommodate offline functionality, such as the offline version of the Learning Passport, connectivity remains a key determinant for access to digital learning solutions. To address the connectivity divide, at global level, the Giga initiative, by UNICEF and the International Telecommunication Union, aims to connect schools – and subsequently children and their communities – to the internet. Giga had mapped more than 2.1 million schools in 136 countries by the end of 2022.⁹²

⁹⁰ GSM Association, 'Connected Women: The Mobile Gender Gap Report 2021', GSMA, London, 2021, <www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2021.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁹¹ Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (South Africa).

⁹² United Nations Children's Fund, 'Giga Annual Report 2022', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <<https://s41713.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/230301-GIGA-ANNUAL-REPORT-2022-High-Resolution.pdf>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

The Learning Passport

To close the digital divide and give every child equal access to quality, tailored digital learning, UNICEF developed the Learning Passport, a public-private partnership, as the organization's flagship digital learning programme. It is a highly flexible digital education platform, powered by Microsoft, and is implemented with a supporting programme ecosystem that can be adapted to meet the specific needs of learners and educators. The Learning Passport works across the spectrum of education, from foundational learning to skills development, and across different contexts, including formal and informal education settings. Through the offline programme, UNICEF leverages technical innovations to provide a digital learning experience for any learner, even those without internet connectivity, building digital readiness.

Since 2020, the programme has reached more than 2.8 million learners in 28 countries, with more than 35 countries now in various stages of the deployment process. The Learning Passport is helping to upskill teachers in Poland with a focus on mental health and psychosocial support; supporting girls and disadvantaged young people to access resources and develop skills in Jordan and Lebanon; and integrating with the national education systems to provide digitalized curriculum, teacher support and more in countries such as the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Timor-Leste and Zimbabwe.

In 2022, the Learning Passport was launched in 8 new countries and reached an additional 840,000 learners. Across 20 of the largest country implementations based on the number of learners, 52 per cent of learners enrolled in courses were girls, and almost half a million courses were completed.⁹³ Key 2022 highlights include:

- **Expanded footprint:** The programme was launched in Costa Rica, Gabon, Nigeria, Poland, Serbia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Zambia, supporting learning and development for students, teachers and young people across early childhood development, FLN skills and professional development.
- **Emergency response:** As part of UNICEF's emergency response to the war in Ukraine, the Learning Passport was utilized to provide children, young people and teachers with access to MHPSS and social and emotional learning resources to address trauma and stress and build resilience.
- **Positive learning experience:** Survey results from thousands of learners in Mexico, Nigeria and Zimbabwe indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the programme. In Nigeria, 92 per cent of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that their confidence in the classroom has improved since using the Learning Passport. In Mexico, three out of every four respondents reported that they learned something new from the programme.
- **Equitable access:** UNICEF expanded the Learning Passport offline programme, which delivers digital learning without connectivity and builds digital readiness, to four countries: Egypt, Mexico, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe.
- **Partnership ecosystem:** UNICEF launched new partnerships with industry leaders, including Iberdrola, COPE and Meta, and expanded existing partnerships with companies such as Sony to implement and grow the programme. UNICEF partners provide critical funding to support growth and learner engagement and strengthen global programme delivery, as well as access to best-in-class resources on digital literacy, online safety, disaster resilience and more, and technical expertise, products and services to adapt, iterate and improve key elements of the programme to better support learner needs.
- **Delivering relevant, high-quality resources:** The Learning Passport grew to support over 50 languages, and more than 5,000 new courses were added. And thanks to collaborations with leading providers such as EasyGenerator, IDOL Academy & World, Creative Commons, OpenStax, Twig, COPE, the Age of Learning Foundation, Phet, Storyweaver, Synthesia, Genially and more, the programme delivered relevant, curated, localized resources, meeting the needs of millions of learners.

⁹³ This includes programmes where gender data were collected.

Spotlight on thematic funding: Supporting continuity of learning with the Nigeria Learning Passport

UNICEF, with the Federal Ministry of Education, Microsoft and GPE, launched the Nigeria Learning Passport (NLP) in March 2022 with the support of education thematic funds. The NLP supports individualized learning with free access to high-quality, curriculum-aligned teaching and learning content for pre-primary and primary education (Grades 1–6), junior secondary education (Grades 1–3) and senior secondary education (Grades 1–3). It includes a unique suite of online and mobile functions, including offline functionality in areas with poor connectivity where children cannot otherwise access digital tools and content. Over 15,000 teaching and learning materials aligned with the national curriculum are available on the platform, including skills development curricula and content that has been reviewed against a gender-responsive verification tool. Content is available in four languages of instruction (English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba). Teachers can also complete professional development training courses on the NLP to improve their pedagogical skills.

By the end of 2022, the platform had been launched in 12 states and reached 118,268 users (including 49,895 girls). Thematic funds contributed to the platform's development, including content development and localization. This support also catalysed contributions from Airtel Africa, which donated US\$1.3 million in data to power routers in schools.

Based on a user survey at the end of 2022, 92 per cent use the NLP more than once a week, and 51 per cent use it daily. The survey revealed that 63 per cent use the platform at home, prompting UNICEF to plan and budget for additional teacher training on integrating it into classroom instruction and further engagement with school officials, head teachers and teachers.



A cross-section of teacher training on the use of technology and deployment of the Nigeria Learning Passport in the classroom.

Mental health and psychosocial support

Learners' and teachers' mental health and well-being are key determinants of learning outcomes and integral to quality education. Effective integration of mental health in schools can improve educational outcomes, increase learners' mental health literacy, promote learners' social and emotional learning, help identify at-risk learners and provide support, including through referral pathways to health and social welfare sectors, and reduce the likelihood of mental health concerns developing into more severe mental health problems and risk behaviours.

Recognizing the importance of mental health and psychosocial support to teachers and students in supporting learning outcomes, UNICEF continued its work on school-based mental health support in 2022. Twenty-five per cent of countries reported working on mental health and psychosocial support to ensure resilient education systems,⁹⁴ and 22 per cent of countries reported supporting teachers' mental health. Forty-two per cent of reporting countries, across development and humanitarian contexts, reported work on developing or strengthening policies, strategies and plans to address learners' and teachers' mental health and psychosocial well-being needs in schools and learning environments.

To create enabling learning environments for positive mental health and psychosocial well-being, UNICEF supports governments and partners to develop and implement school-based MHPSS policies informed by children's and adolescents' needs, embedding mental health literacy and social and emotional skills development in curricula. In 2022, 35 per cent of reporting countries worked on incorporating mental health into national education curriculum and training systems. For example, in **China**, UNICEF co-created mental health interventions with adolescents. In **Uzbekistan**, UNICEF supported the Government to integrate physical and mental health literacy into the school curriculum, reaching out to 6 million learners (50 per cent girls), across the country. In **North Macedonia**, UNICEF provided training and support to nearly all active preschool teachers across the country (total of 1,366 teachers, 1,365 of them female) to promote the social and emotional development of preschool children; provided training to 3,000 primary school teachers (2,130 female) on a new module around mental health; and provided technical support and mentoring sessions to 649 school support staff (594 female), representing over 60 per cent of the national workforce. In **Croatia**, two years after the 2020 earthquakes, UNICEF continued to promote the mental health of learners and teachers in 60 per cent of the schools in Sisak Moslavina County. In 2022, 2,228

students built their socio-emotional competencies, while 101 students identified as at risk received weekly additional support to build their resilience and life skills, contributing to their better inclusion and participation in learning.

Half of all mental health conditions emerge before age 14, affecting children's lives and the development of social skills, cognition and educational attainment.⁹⁵ Schools can play a key role in mobilizing communities to prevent stigma around mental health, and coordination to identify and refer children and adolescents to specialized services. These interventions are particularly important for adolescents. In 2022, 21 per cent of 98 reporting countries worked on community engagement to support child and adolescent mental health. In **Sri Lanka**, for example, UNICEF expanded coverage of MHPSS in schools and communities, benefiting all 1.9 million secondary students. In **Uruguay**, which has the second-highest suicide rate among young people aged 15–24 in the region,⁹⁶ UNICEF contributed to placing adolescent mental health at the centre of the public agenda and supported the development of interventions to prevent suicide. In collaboration with the National Youth Institute, UNICEF also implemented a national campaign called *Ni Silencio Ni Tabú*, reaching 14,000 adolescents and training 1,100 first responders across the country.

UNICEF works on building the capacity of teachers and other school staff to promote mental health and well-being, while also supporting teachers' mental health. In 2022, 22 per cent of UNICEF-supported countries reported having supported teachers' mental health. In **Nigeria**, for example, over the past five years UNICEF trained 166,059 teachers (76,019 female) to provide psychosocial support for learners. In **Iraq**, a total of 5,949 teachers (2,515 women) built pedagogical skills and learned to address violence against children and provide psychosocial support. In **Azerbaijan**, UNICEF supported the capacity development of 2,000 schoolteachers on children's social and emotional learning skills and 200 school psychologists on psychological first aid. In **Bangladesh**, in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University, UNICEF supported the Government to develop and disseminate an online course on psychological first aid, and 285,000 secondary education teachers have completed the course with certification.

Advocacy efforts on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) were framed as an integral component of foundational learning, with countries and regions engaging in context-specific initiatives. The Transforming Education Summit provided a global advocacy platform for UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO to join efforts to call on governments and donors to prioritize mental health in the education sector. UNICEF led a global policy dialogue with the launch of a [policy brief](#) that outlines the five essential pillars all

⁹⁴ Number of reporting countries: 98.

⁹⁵ United Nations Children's Fund, 'The State of the World's Children 2021', UNICEF, New York, 2021, <www.unicef.org/reports/state-worlds-children-2021/>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁹⁶ Data from the 2018 National Survey of Adolescents and Youth showed that 136,000 adolescents and young people (aged 12–29) had felt so sad or hopeless for two weeks in a row that they had stopped doing their usual activities. There is a marked gender differential: Girls and women account for 80 per cent of those who feel sad, but only 20 per cent of those who take their own lives. Source: <www.gub.uy/salud-mental-adolescente/bibliografia/>, accessed 31 May 2023.

governments must implement to strengthen education systems to protect and promote the mental health and psychosocial well-being of children and adolescents.

In 2022, UNICEF also contributed to generate evidence and practical guidance on child and adolescent mental health, including the launch of the [Global Multisectoral Operational Framework for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support of Children, Adolescents and Caregivers Across Settings](#), as well as a [Learning Brief](#) that guides MHPSS programming in education. UNICEF also published a [report](#) on the role of remote modalities in implementing MHPSS programmes and services in the education sector.

Comprehensive sexuality education

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is defined as a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality.⁹⁷ The provision and reception of CSE is legally protected under article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 19 of the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has stated that CSE should be part of the mandatory school curriculum and reach out-of-school adolescents; it has urged Member States to adopt comprehensive gender and sexuality-sensitive sexual and reproductive health policies for young people, emphasizing that unequal access to such information, commodities and services amounts to discrimination.⁹⁸

The [International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education](#) explains that 'comprehensive' refers to "the breadth of core elements in the curriculum that equip young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for positive sexuality and good sexual and reproductive health; to develop respectful social and sexual relationships; to consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others, and to understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives."⁹⁹

CSE enables individuals to exercise their sexual and reproductive health rights and empowers adolescents and young people to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. It helps prevent early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. It also enables adolescents and young people to understand their right to bodily autonomy and integrity, to develop respectful relationships and to dismantle gender stereotypes and negative social norms, while contributing to embracing diversity, consent, respect and equality –

all of which contribute to individual development, more equal societies and the fulfilment of human rights.¹⁰⁰ CSE is an indispensable tool for promoting gender equality, because the lack of access to that wealth of information is particularly damaging for girls, as they are the group most at risk of suffering serious or lifelong setbacks, including unplanned pregnancies and injuries during gestation or childbirth.¹⁰¹

UNICEF supports the [Education Plus Initiative](#), a high-level global advocacy initiative for adolescent girls' education and empowerment in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, UNICEF is a member of the [Global Partnership Forum on Comprehensive Sexuality Education](#).

UNICEF works with partners, including ministries of education, to ensure children and adolescents receive age-appropriate CSE. In **Guyana and Jamaica**, UNICEF has long-standing experience supporting the ministries of education to develop and deliver the Health and Family Life Education Programme, which includes CSE among its key themes. UNICEF actions have included supporting teacher training, curriculum review, peer education, community engagement, and monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

In **Peru**, UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to develop a course on comprehensive sexuality education with the aim of strengthening coordination between teachers and health-care professionals for the implementation of CSE in 12 educational institutions in prioritized regions, benefiting 10,000 students. In addition, a toolbox has been created to implement health promotion in 15 educational institutions, benefiting 6,000 students.

The digitalization of education offers another opportunity to meet children and adolescents where they are – online. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the potential reach and flexibility of digital education, if it is done well and used as a tool to include all children, especially the most marginalized. The Learning Passport in Honduras, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, for example, includes a Gender Equality Package that covers a range of themes, including CSE.

While CSE constitutes a vital part of a quality education system, challenges to scaling up CSE are wide-ranging from those related to quality (teachers' capacity, effective pedagogical methods, learning materials, consistent student attendance and participation) to issues around the demand for CSE and community expectations of the role and remit of schools providing CSE. Solving problems

⁹⁷ Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 'A Compendium on Comprehensive Sexuality Education', OHCHR, Geneva, 2023, <www.ohchr.org/en/documents/tools-and-resources/compendium-comprehensive-sexuality-education>, accessed 31 May 2023.

⁹⁸ See Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'General Comment No. 20 (2016)', paras. 61 and 59, United Nations, New York, 2016.

⁹⁹ United Nations Population Fund, 'International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education', UNFPA, New York, 2018, <www.unfpa.org/publications/international-technical-guidance-sexuality-education>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ United Nations Independent Expert on Protection Against Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, 'Comprehensive Sexuality Education', IESOGI, Geneva, 2012, <www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Summary-Comprehensive-Sexuality-Education.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

as complex as these requires partnerships, dedicated investments, and innovative solutions. UNICEF emphasises multi-stakeholder, multisectoral collaboration to support governments to meet their political commitments and operational goals for implementing CSE. Across its work,

UNICEF proposes building a solid evidence base, advancing laws, policies and budgets that enable CSE, strengthening multisectoral gender-responsive and age-appropriate services, and expanding the availability and accessibility of quality CSE.

Voices from the field: The right to CSE for children and adolescents in Viet Nam

One in three Vietnamese young people continue to face barriers in accessing sexual and reproductive health information and services, due to the lack of effective CSE.

In 2021, the Nam Viet Institute of Educational Sciences and UNICEF started to digitalize CSE for Vietnamese children and young people to ensure digital access for students, teachers and caregivers. A website was created with a positive rights-based approach and age-appropriate, appealing content that emphasizes healthy relationships and emotional and physical well-being to promote gender equality and inclusion. Over 1,500 videos from students from all over the country helped raise their voices about inclusion and the need for CSE for children and young people, especially those with disabilities.

Nguyen Sinh Hung is 14 years old and was born and grew up in a traditional family in the suburbs of Ha Noi, Viet Nam. "I advocate for the right to education on sexuality for adolescents and young people. In my belief, it is the lack of knowledge and the openness to discuss and talk about sexuality that prevent us from fully understanding differences in identity and generate tremendous hurdles to realization of the rights of the LGBTI+ community," says Nguyen.

"For the past years, I have been active, along with many young people like me, in advocating for changes, starting with how we are taught in school about sexuality. We advocate for renovation of the educational system's current curricula to include comprehensive sexuality education – in which not only Generation Z is involved in the development but also the parents. What we truly need, as young people, is the understanding and support from our parents right in the home where we live to overcome stigma and discrimination, norms and judgements so that we can be truly happy with who we are and thrive in an environment that respects diversity and promotes inclusion."



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Female ethnic minority students enjoy a game on a smartphone during their mid-day break at Sin Cheng semi-boarding lower secondary school, Lao Cai.

Climate change and education¹⁰²

The world is experiencing a triple planetary crisis: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. In 2022 alone, millions of people were displaced or died because of droughts, heatwaves, floods, cyclones, hurricanes, wildfires and other extreme weather events. UNICEF's 2022 [Heatwave Report](#) shows that 559 million children are exposed to high heatwave frequency; by 2050, every child on earth – over 2 billion children – will face more frequent heatwaves. In 2022, the worst drought on record in the Horn of Africa deepened, bringing communities to the brink of famine. Severe floods affected 19 countries across West Africa and plunged one third of Pakistan underwater. This climate crisis causes disruption in the learning opportunities available to children and adolescents, which sets them further back in terms of developing the foundational and green skills they need to build resilience at community level and develop adaptation responses, including through participation in the green transition.

Greater investments are needed to scale up and sustain these actions. Despite education's transformative potential, investments in the sector are mostly absent from the climate financing mechanisms, with at most 0.03 per cent of all climate finance spent on education.¹⁰³ UNICEF continues providing technical support to governments in low- and middle-income countries that are committed to delivering against the [Paris Agreement](#) and actively seeking financing and grant support for the inclusion of education strategies in their green transition plans and actions.

At the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27), UNICEF urged governments to ensure they took clear steps towards meaningful child and youth engagement in education, leading to empowerment to engage in climate action. UNICEF secured its key priorities on children's education and empowerment within the Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) negotiations. This included mandating guidelines and good practices on children's education and empowerment in climate action, with special consideration given to gender equality and inclusion of persons with disabilities, within the 2024 [Glasgow work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment](#).

In 2022, in 104 countries across all 7 regions, UNICEF supported the participation of young people in climate, energy, environment and disaster risk reduction initiatives, including policy development, advocacy and campaigning through cross-sectoral initiatives. In terms of education-focused responses, UNICEF supported 57 governments across all 7 regions to integrate climate, energy, green skills, environment and disaster risk reduction into learning opportunities.

UNICEF's work on climate change in education is organized around four strategic pillars:¹⁰⁴

- **Greening learning and skills:** Improving the availability of quality curricula, learning materials and digital resources for children and young people to develop the necessary skills for future participation in the green economy
- **Youth-led climate action:** Increasing youth engagement in climate-smart solutions and climate advocacy at local levels
- **Greening capacities of systems:** Supporting ministries of education to strengthen system-level resilience, upskill their teaching workforce and engage in risk-informed sector planning, preventing learning disruptions caused or exacerbated by climate-related events
- **Greener and safer learning facilities:** Strengthening country-level shock-responsiveness to climate-induced emergencies, through greener school infrastructure and disaster risk reduction strategies.

In 2022, 63 country offices delivered results across all four pillars. For Pillar 1 – greening learning and skills – 12 country offices focused efforts on mainstreaming green skills within national education systems, including actions such as upskilling teachers and school directors in Cuba and Egypt; improving the responsiveness of national skills development programmes to the demands of the green transition in Armenia, Lebanon, North Macedonia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam; improving the availability of and access to digital materials focused on climate change in Angola, Armenia and North Macedonia; and mainstreaming gender equity in opportunities for green skills development in Ecuador and Thailand.

UNICEF supported the scale-up of 11 climate solutions in 22 countries, reaching over 1.5 million children. In partnership with UNDP, UNICEF has provided funding and technical support to the opening of the first biohacking lab in **North Macedonia**, which will use advanced biohacking techniques to find new ways to tackle solid waste. The lab will pair young innovators with scientists and train schoolchildren with biology and chemistry experiments as part of UNICEF's efforts to support entrepreneurship and green skills development. In 2023, UNICEF aims to expand the partnership with UNDP to further scale up innovative solutions to tackle waste through entrepreneurship in the Eastern and Southern Africa and Europe and Central Asia regions.

For Pillar 2 – youth-led climate action – 25 country offices have supported youth engagement in climate action and advocacy across development and humanitarian contexts.

¹⁰² UNICEF results in the area of climate education are not measured through the Results Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. Results reported in this chapter have been aggregated based on UNICEF's 2022 Country Office Annual Results Reports.

¹⁰³ Buchner, B. et al., 'Global Landscape of Climate Finance 2019', Climate Policy Initiative, Washington, D.C., 2019, <www.climatepolicyinitiative.org/publication/global-landscape-of-climate-finance-2019/>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹⁰⁴ The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, Results Framework does not include indicators to measure dimensions of work on climate change and education. Results reported in this chapter are pulled from 2022 Country Office Annual Reports and aggregated to report on pillars of work.

Cambodia, India, Jordan, the State of Palestine, Panama and the Republic of Maldives leveraged the capacities of the education system to promote community and student participation in local climate change issues; Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Burundi, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malaysia, the State of Palestine, Timor-Leste and Uganda supported adolescents to participate in or lead offline and online civic engagement initiatives focused on climate change; and through UNICEF's Global Volunteerism Initiative, several youth-led initiatives got off the ground in 2022: air quality monitoring in Mongolia, engagement in disaster risk reduction actions in Kyrgyzstan, a single-use plastic campaign in Kazakhstan, water conservation actions in India and environmental regeneration in Brazil.

For Pillar 3 – greening capacities of systems – 18 country offices worked to strengthen the resilience of the education system through capacity-building and risk-informed planning. In Belize, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, Eswatini, Guatemala, Indonesia, Jamaica, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova and Turkmenistan, country offices have collaborated with national governments and development partners to lead actions such as school safety assessments; inclusion of climate change preparedness and resilience in education sector plans; identification of likely hazards and their effect on the education system through climate and vulnerability mapping; inclusion of risk-informed content and messaging in curriculum and media; and the development of disaster risk reduction and risk mitigation plans for schools.

Finally, for Pillar 4 – greener and safer learning facilities – at least four country offices are increasingly supporting governments to rehabilitate school infrastructure following disasters and build greener schools when expanding subsectors with lower enrolment such as pre-primary and secondary education, considering environmental criteria and making use of clean energy sources for water

facilities and electrification.¹⁰⁵ This area of work requires considerable financial investment, not available in most low-income countries, and hence results in 2022 in terms of greener school infrastructure are limited to targeted countries and pilots.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, 284 classrooms have been built using recycled plastic bricks to enhance environmental protection, coupled with improving access to basic water services using solar pumps in the northern areas most at risk from the impacts of climate change.

In **Viet Nam**, with UNICEF's support for innovative solutions, national and provincial partners installed four-pipe water systems in 14 schools and upgraded their construction with climate-resilient technology such as net-zero toilets, rainwater capture and solar power. The interventions are expected to provide clean water and safely managed sanitation for 20,000 people, including girls and women, by 2023.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, a novel intervention is being tested where early warning equipment was procured and installed in a school in a rural village and will be connected to the national early warning system of the Ministry of Emergency Situations. The potential scale-up includes 600 most-in-need schools in disaster-prone areas that were identified by the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the Ministry of Education in July 2022 to increase resilience to climate change and risk preparedness.

In **Malawi**, UNICEF started construction of a model early childhood development centre using 3D innovative technology, which will improve the quality of early childhood development infrastructure compared to traditional construction and will contribute to mitigating the effects of climate change. Increased efficiency throughout the construction process translates to using fewer materials and prioritizing the use of natural, sustainable and recyclable materials.

¹⁰⁵ There is no indicator for using solar or renewable energy in the education sector; however, based on Country Office Annual Reports, at least four country offices delivered on this area: Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Kyrgyzstan and Viet Nam.

Young people plan, report and advocate for climate action in India¹⁰⁶

UNICEF's Programme of Youth-led Action against Climate Change (YACC) supports young climate change advocates to influence national and subnational climate change-related policies through policy negotiation, advocacy, awareness-raising and strengthening of youth-led movements. The programme, which was launched in 2022, reaches Belarus, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Lebanon, Malawi, Nepal, Paraguay, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. In these countries, UNICEF hires a young coordinator to create a movement with youth organizations and individuals who advocate for climate change, provides capacity-building for developing strategic plans and supports their implementation.

In India's Maharashtra State, UNICEF works in partnership with the youth-led movement Maha Youth for Climate Action, also supported by the Centre for Environment Education for youth advocates. The programme provides three levels of training in climate action planning, reporting and advocacy, followed by self-paced training modules on climate advocacy.

In 2022 alone, successful advocacy led to the integration of climate action and environment lesson plans for first and second grade curricula covering 65,000 primary schools at the state level, with plans to build the capacity of 100 expert trainers and 10,000 schoolteachers through related training.



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A young girl at the UNICEF-supported Temporary Learning Center for children affected by the 2022 floods in Saleh Shah, Sindh Province, Pakistan.

¹⁰⁶ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Lessons from Maharashtra, India on Youth-Led Action towards Climate Advocacy and Policy', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/documents/lessons-youth-led-action-towards-climate-advocacy-and-policy-india>, accessed 31 May 2023.



Eight-year-old Anastasiya in her foster home in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.

Education in emergencies

With the COVID-19 pandemic still ongoing, 2022 was a year racked with compounding emergencies. By mid-2022 it was estimated that 222 million children affected by crises needed educational support.¹⁰⁷ There were seven Level 3 emergencies and 10 Level 2 emergencies in 2022, spread over 40 countries, including Ukraine and its neighbouring countries, the Sahel region and drought-affected countries in the Horn of Africa.¹⁰⁸ **Ukraine's** prolonged conflict intensified into war in February 2022, leaving 7.2 million children in need of aid both inside Ukraine and in 19 refugee-hosting countries across Europe. **Afghanistan** continued to be affected by overlapping crises, leading to an estimated 4 million children (60 per cent girls) out of school, and with an ongoing ban on girls' access to secondary

education and on women attending tertiary education. Horn of Africa countries such as **Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia** are facing debilitating droughts that have placed more than 3.3 million children at risk of dropping out of school.¹⁰⁹ In 8 countries across West and Central Africa, as many as 12,400 schools were closed due to insecurity, violence and attacks against schools, students, and teachers. Within this, in the Central Sahel region alone, as many as 6,879 schools were closed (up from 4,139 schools in 2021). In **Haiti**, it is projected that approximately 1.6 million children will need emergency education support in 2023 because of the recurring lockdowns caused by civil unrest, gang violence, the August 2021 earthquake, the COVID-19 pandemic and cholera.

¹⁰⁷ Education Cannot Wait, 'Global Estimates: Number of crisis-affected children and adolescents in need of education support', ECW, New York, 2022, <www.educationcannotwait.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/ecw_globalestimatesstudy_june2022.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹⁰⁸ The determination of a Level 3 or Level 2 emergency is made based on its scale, urgency and complexity, and the capacity of UNICEF's regional office and country offices affected by the crisis. Level 2 emergency response means UNICEF's country office needs additional support from other parts of the organization (including headquarters, regional office and other country offices) to scale up and respond to the crisis. The regional director will provide leadership, and regional office support is enhanced. Level 3 emergency response is activated when UNICEF's Executive Director declares that organization-wide mobilization is needed to scale up and respond, and appoints a global emergency coordinator.

¹⁰⁹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Regional Call to Action. Horn of Africa Drought Crisis: Climate change is here now', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <[www.unicef.org/esa/media/10491/file/UNICEF-Regional-CTA-HoA-Drought-July-2022\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/esa/media/10491/file/UNICEF-Regional-CTA-HoA-Drought-July-2022(1).pdf)>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Grappling with multiple emergencies in 2022, UNICEF, together with partners, continued to support children and adolescents to access quality education services, even in the most challenging situations. UNICEF's total expenditure for education in humanitarian and crisis settings came to over US\$880 million in 2022, accounting for 56 per cent of all UNICEF expenditures in education (totalling US\$1.56 billion). Of this amount, US\$612 million was spent in delivering results on access to quality learning (Result Area 1), and US\$268 million on improving learning outcomes, skills development and participation of adolescents and young people.

UNICEF's education in emergencies response reached an estimated 18.6 million children (8.5 million girls) in humanitarian contexts.¹¹⁰ Of these 18.6 million children, 5.2 million (28 per cent) were supported with formal education at the pre-primary and primary levels, 8 per cent with formal education at upper secondary and lower secondary, and 5 per cent with non-formal education and technical and vocational education and training. UNICEF supported 3.1 million children on the move, including 1.4 million girls, to access formal and non-formal learning opportunities, with a focus on supporting their inclusion in national education systems. Additionally, UNICEF supplied learning materials for 3.7 million children in humanitarian settings. At the time of reporting, data from **Ukraine** and the refugee response were undergoing verification and thus largely excluded.

In **Yemen**, UNICEF supported 6,128 internally displaced children (2,705 girls) in the Ma'rib Governorate, through a three-month, non-formal catch-up education programme. As a result, 5,848 children passed and have now successfully transitioned to the next grade of formal schools.

In **the United Republic of Tanzania**, UNICEF held back-to-school activities, focusing on 23,088 out-of-school Congolese and Burundian refugee children (12,448 girls) impacted by COVID-19 school closures. UNICEF also supported the updating of school attendance reports and tracked school dropouts.

Sri Lanka faced continued and heightened challenges in ensuring learning continuity due to the political and economic crisis that caused extended school closures and constrained the capacity of the State. UNICEF supported the most marginalized students in the Western, Uva, Central, Eastern and Northern provinces with learning materials, and it assisted the provincial departments of education to strengthen learning continuity and recovery programmes. Overall, 528,000 disadvantaged primary Grade 1 students (one third of all primary-age students) were reached.

In **South Sudan**, recurring floods, droughts and other events induced by climate change, as well as political insecurity, have affected children's ability to attend school. To ensure that children keep learning, UNICEF supported the Ministry of General Education and Instruction with the national radio-based Education on Air II distance learning programme, reaching 493,594 primary school students (252,302 girls), with a focus on foundational learning to mitigate learning loss.

In **Burkina Faso**, armed violence, climate change and multiple public health crises have impacted children's ability to attend school, with a drop in children's attendance from 2021 to 2022. In response to the growing number of out-of-school children, UNICEF provided early learning, primary and secondary education programmes for 271,464 out-of-school children. UNICEF also ensured children's continued access to education through radio programmes for 695,475 children (414,602 girls).

¹¹⁰ Based on reporting by 93 country offices. Data on Ukraine and the crisis refugee response were undergoing verification at the time of reporting and are thus not included.

Mission: Recovering Education in Humanitarian Settings

The COVID-19 pandemic has added significant challenges for children affected by emergencies and has contributed to 78.2 million of the world's 222 million crisis-affected children being out of school.¹¹¹ To alleviate learning losses and learning poverty, UNICEF, with the support of the Government of the United States, is implementing the Mission: Recovering Education in Humanitarian Settings initiative in 27 countries.¹¹² The initiative works to support children and young people living in emergency and conflict-prone settings to return to school and learn in a supportive environment that addresses their health, psychosocial well-being and other needs, as well as sharing best practices and lessons learned to inform education response in emergencies and the global COVID-19 recovery. The programme intervention areas are informed by the 2022 [checklist](#) of key considerations to identify and reach the most vulnerable, to focus on learning and to ensure that the well-being and protection needs of children are met, and by the RAPID Framework to promote effective and equitable learning recovery.

In 2022, this work directly benefited 701,189 children (347,808 girls). Examples of results achieved through Mission: Recovering Education under the RAPID Framework include:

- **Reach every child and keep them in school:** In 2022, through the Mission: Recovering Education in Humanitarian Settings initiative, UNICEF supported back-to-school campaigns for out-of-school children in 14 countries. The United Republic of Tanzania used community-based approaches to successfully bring back 12,320 out-of-school Congolese and Burundian refugee children (5,410 girls) in the Nduta and Nyarugusu camps.
- **Assess learning levels regularly:** In Rwanda, UNICEF supported remedial education for 12,189 pre-primary children (5,959 boys and 6,230 girls) and 13,703 upper primary children (4,727 boys and 8,976 girls), with 28.6 per cent of children (29 per cent girls) scoring above 75 per cent in the evaluation.
- **Prioritize teaching the fundamentals:** Uganda reopened schools after two years of COVID-19 lockdown. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education and Sports to implement an abridged curriculum for 74,571 learners (38,777 girls) affected by conflict and in climate change-impacted areas of the country to enable their recovery from learning loss and develop their foundational skills and relevant competencies.
- **Increase the efficiency of instruction through catch-up learning:** In the Dominican Republic, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education in the public launch of a national policy called 'Building the Learning Base Programme' (CON BASE in Spanish). The programme focuses on improving learning and addressing learning loss in the first three grades of primary school. CON BASE was implemented in 22 educational districts, benefiting 492 schools and reaching 70,592 students and 4,792 teachers. By the end of 2022, training began for technicians in the country's remaining 100 educational districts.
- **Develop psychosocial health and well-being so every child is ready to learn:** In the Congo, UNICEF supported school clubs in 105 schools to combat violence in schools, and enabled the sensitization of 18,961 students (9,924 girls) and 525 teachers (230 women) on school violence, to enable students in these targeted schools to learn in a violence-free school environment.

¹¹¹ Education Cannot Wait, 'Global Estimates: Number of crisis-affected children and adolescents in need of education support', ECW, New York, 2022, <www.educationcannotwait.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/ecw_globalestimatesstudy_june2022.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹¹² Angola, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Myanmar, the Philippines, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukraine, Venezuela, Yemen.

Spotlight on thematic funding: Ensuring learning for children affected by Typhoon Rai in the Philippines

Super Typhoon Rai (local name Odette) hit the Philippines in December 2021 and caused a humanitarian crisis well into 2022 – leaving over 900,000 children in need of humanitarian assistance.

In response to this crisis, compounded by the school closures due to the pandemic, UNICEF contributed to increased access to education, including early learning, for 154,278 schoolchildren through the provision of learner and school kits, temporary learning spaces, WASH behaviour change promotion, supplies, repairs and improvements to facilities, and teacher training on education in emergencies.

To facilitate partnership and accountability, UNICEF strengthened the capacity of local-level education clusters on emergency preparedness, information management, coordination and advocacy. Meanwhile, through the Learning Recovery Programme, School-in-a-Bag was distributed to 6,170 children and 345 teachers. Teachers from recipient schools were trained in pedagogy technology to support emergency and COVID-19 adapted learning approaches. The system on Prevention, Early Identification, Referral and Intervention for Delays, Disorders and Disabilities in Early Childhood (PEIRIDDDEC) was set up, with 3,780 parents and caregivers of young children at risk of developmental delays (92 per cent female parents/caregivers), 529 child development workers (512 females) and 83 local government stakeholders (57 females) oriented and trained on their roles in addressing the needs of children at risk of developmental delays.



Children in a temporary learning space after Typhoon Odette damaged 9 of the 12 classrooms in Magallanes Elementary School, Limasawa Island, the Philippines.

Partnerships for education in emergencies

In 2022, UNICEF continued to host and work in close partnership with ECW, the global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises. At global level, through the representation of UNICEF's Executive Director on ECW's High-Level Steering Group, and participation in other ECW governance and technical groups, UNICEF continued to advocate for ensuring that children can always access learning, including in emergencies. UNICEF worked with ECW on technical inputs that led to the 2022 ECW report on global figures of crisis-affected children and their education situation, known as #222MillionDreams.¹¹³ Over the course of 2022, ECW dispersed a total of US\$180 million to 77 grantees, with US\$106.9 million going to United Nations agencies.¹¹⁴ This funding included US\$53.1 million to support education responses in partnership with UNICEF in 14 Multi-Year Resilience Programmes in countries such as **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Colombia and the Syrian Arab Republic**.

In 2022, UNICEF and Save the Children continued their co-leadership of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Global Education Cluster. Education clusters and working groups were active in 34 contexts (27 IASC-activated countries, including the whole of the Syrian Arab Republic, 3 hubs and 4 Education in Emergencies Working Group countries). UNICEF had dedicated cluster coordinators in 21 of the 34 contexts where it is a cluster lead or co-lead agency. In response to the needs in an increasingly complex and fast-changing humanitarian landscape, the Global Education Cluster bolstered its operational support to education clusters and working groups through a record 1,090 days of remote and in-country deployments to support coordination, information management and thematic priorities such as gender and gender-based violence risk mitigation, child safeguarding and child

participation, cash and voucher assistance and localization. UNICEF and partners also made further progress on strengthening rapid education response by launching a first-of-its-kind toolkit and through advanced work to reinforce the inclusion of child protection in joint education needs assessments.

UNICEF is a founding member and part of the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) steering group. A key focus for INEE in 2022 was on gender equality in INEE initiatives, including monitoring progress in girls' education,¹¹⁵ amplifying the evidence base on gender and education, and strengthening capacity for inclusive and gender-responsive education in emergencies. Additionally, AEWG became a part of INEE in 2022, with UNICEF as one of its supporting partners.¹¹⁶

Up to October 2022, UNICEF chaired the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Resilience and Reduction in the Education Sector (GADRRRES), a multi-stakeholder platform comprising 18 partner organizations, including United Nations agencies, international non-governmental agencies, other leading humanitarian and development organizations and similar regional alliances, advocating for and supporting child rights, resilience and sustainability in the education sector. GADRRRES work centres around the updated Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF) 2022–2023, launched in September 2022, promoting a comprehensive 'all-hazards' approach to risk reduction in the education sector at the national, regional, district and community level. To date, the CSSF has been implemented in more than 60 countries around the world, notably in the Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Eastern Asia and Pacific regions, where it has been a key tool used by UNICEF country teams to strengthen education resilience against climate change and associated impacts on education systems and children's learning. GADRRRES is now chaired by UNESCO, with UNICEF as co-chair for the next two-year period.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Source: UNICEF Transparency Portal, <https://open.unicef.org/index.php/funding-flows?year=total&fund_type=ECW%20Fund>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹¹⁵ Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies, 'Looking Forward to 2022: Centering gender equality in INEE's initiatives', 2022, <<https://inee.org/es/node/11512>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹¹⁶ AEWG is an inter-agency working group made up of several education partners supporting and/or funding accelerated education programmes (AEPs). The overarching aim of AEWG is to support ministries of education, implementing partners and donors in designing, implementing, monitoring and funding AEPs that meet the needs and demands of over-age out-of-school children and young people around the globe. Read more at <<https://inee.org/network-spaces/aewg>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Implementing the Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022–2023

In the South Asia Region, UNICEF is working with six Southeast Asian countries, in collaboration with the Southeast Asian Ministries of Education Organization (SEAMEO) and governments, to embed green and twenty-first-century skills and environmental data under the Global Citizenship module, focusing on Grade 5 children and their teachers, through the Southeast Asian Primary Learning Metric large-scale comparative survey initiative.

In the East Asia and Pacific Region, UNICEF supported risk assessments and research studies exploring the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on children in Malaysia, Thailand, Viet Nam, Indonesia and the Philippines, using our Climate Landscape Analysis for Children and Guidance for Risk-Informed Programming tools. In addition, UNICEF, the Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) and Save the Children have worked together to produce a regional desk review on the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on young children in Asia and the Pacific.¹¹⁷

In September 2022, UNICEF, together with partners, launched the updated CSSF 2022–2030, providing partners with a refined all-hazards approach to strengthening the resilience of the education sector and increasing school safety for children. The updated framework provides global partners and education practitioners with a solid basis for addressing challenges related to climate change, conflict and other risks to children's rights, drawing on key lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and recent humanitarian trends across the world. The global launch marked the first time in its history that the CSSF has been endorsed by major education partners such as GPE.

Education for children on the move

In 2022, there was a marked rise in the number of internally displaced children, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers, and in some cases returnees – those reintegrating into their communities after displacement. By mid-2022, an estimated 103 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced because of conflict, persecution, violence and climate change. Internally displaced persons accounted for 53.2 million, refugees for 32.5 million, and asylum seekers for 4.9 million, and 5.3 million needed international protection.¹¹⁸ This number does not include the estimated 3.86 million Ukrainian refugee children and 4.1 million internally displaced children in the country following the escalation of the war in **Ukraine**.¹¹⁹

Framed around delivering on [UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Contexts](#) and the inclusion of children on the move in national education systems, UNICEF supported 3.1 million children on the move to access safe formal and non-formal learning opportunities in humanitarian settings across the globe in 2022. These efforts were documented in [Education, Children on the Move and Inclusion in Education](#), a synthesis report featuring best practices from all 7 UNICEF regions and

19 country offices. The report's lessons learned on scaling up solutions for inclusion in national education systems have been used to guide the Ukrainian refugee response by UNICEF in countries such as **Poland**, and as a guide within the UNICEF–UNHCR strategic collaboration.

The UNICEF–UNHCR [Global Strategic Collaboration Framework](#) was launched at the end of 2022. It marks another important milestone to deliver on the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) and builds on the strong collaboration developed under the [Blueprint for Joint Action for Refugee Children](#), jointly implemented since 2020 in 10 countries. The new framework provides a global approach to strengthen the collaborative efforts of both organizations in areas such as child protection, education and WASH. This framework is now being used to transform the way both agencies advocate and create programmes on behalf of refugee and host community children and their families.

The partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities (PROSPECTS) began in 2019 under the leadership of the Government of the Netherlands and brings together UNICEF and partners such as IFC, ILO, UNHCR and the World Bank. PROSPECTS supports eight countries in the Middle East and East

¹¹⁷ Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood and United Nations Children's Fund, 'Most Vulnerable to Most Valuable: A scoping study to put young children at the heart of climate actions and environmental protection', ARNEC and UNICEF, Singapore, 2022, <<https://arnec.net/resources/arnec-resources/most-vulnerable-most-valuable-scoping-study-put-young-children-heart-0>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹¹⁸ Source: UNHCR Refugee Data Finder, <www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/#:~:text=While%20a%20full%20picture%20is,103%20million%20at%20mid%2D2022>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹¹⁹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Ukraine and Refugee Response: One Year of Response Consolidated Humanitarian Situation Report', UNICEF, New York, 2023, <[www.unicef.org/media/135141/file/ECAR-Humanitarian-SitRep-\(One-Year-of-Refugee-Response\)24-Feb-2023.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/135141/file/ECAR-Humanitarian-SitRep-(One-Year-of-Refugee-Response)24-Feb-2023.pdf)>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Africa (Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, the Sudan and Uganda) with a focus on supporting migrant and forcibly displaced children and young people as they learn critical competencies and skills for employability and have school-to-professional work pathways strengthened. PROSPECTS actively supports children's and young people's participation in societal forums, so they learn leadership and skills to engage with their communities. For example, as part of the PROSPECTS partnership in **Iraq**, 121,825 young people (55,690 girls) from 10 governorates were enrolled in life-skills education to identify issues, lead community initiatives and advocate for education interventions.

In **Ethiopia**, UNICEF invested in timely resumption of education services for 342,293 emergency-affected children, including 12,398 (57 per cent girls) from refugee and host communities in the Gambella and Benishagul regions and 24,902 children (48 per cent girls) from pastoralist communities, through Alternative Basic Education programmes.

In **Myanmar**, UNICEF established the Bring Back Learning programme with the aim of strengthening community capacity to support children's safety and continuity of learning, and it supported 247,903 children (126,039 girls) across the country to access learning, including 228 children with disabilities (106 girls). In addition, 2,219 community facilitators were trained using the Teacher Resource Package. Communities were supplied with learning resources: 2,745 children (1,398 girls) received storybooks, 42 community libraries were upgraded to provide safe learning spaces, 210,898 children (107,836 girls) received short-term home-based learning materials, and 3,323 facilitators received teacher guidebooks. UNICEF also provided education in emergencies responses, reaching 167,896 children (84,693 girls) across all conflict-affected areas.

In **Greece**, a total of 16,109 refugee and 14,844 migrant children, including 1,212 Ukrainian children, accessed formal education programmes, and 1,265 refugee and migrant children accessed non-formal education programmes, accounting for 68 per cent of the estimated number of refugee and migrant children in the country. In addition, refugee and migrant children were provided with structured psychosocial support and referral to specialized services.

UNICEF's in-country educational programming recognizes the social and linguistic barriers that children on the move face when integrating into their new host community. To overcome these challenges, UNICEF has supported multiple programmes that offer inclusive and flexible learning opportunities for vulnerable children on the move. In **Türkiye**, for example, UNICEF continued its efforts to support the education of 1.8 million refugee children, 1.6 million of whom are Syrian, as well as the approximately 400,000 asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Somalia and, most recently, Ukraine. The Accelerated Learning Programme, which aims to address learning losses and support integration into the formal

education system, helped enrol 6,788 out-of-school refugee children (3,210 girls). The academic support programmes benefited 13,758 children and adolescents (7,429 girls), and Turkish language courses provided by partners improved the linguistic and social abilities of 26,738 children and adolescents (13,689 girls). In February 2022, UNICEF, the Turkish Ministry of National Education, the Turkish Red Crescent and the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants began supporting the Syrian Support Workers Programme, whose 3,420 volunteers have helped more than 80,000 Syrian refugee children access inclusive education and supported their families to access social services.

Education under attack

In 2022, schools, teachers, educational personnel and students continued to be targets of armed violence. Military use of educational facilities, the recruitment of children by armed groups and targeted attacks on women and girls receiving education continued. In 2022, there were over 1,000 verified incidents of attacks on schools and 450 cases of military use of schools across 24 situations of concern.¹²⁰

To date, [116 States](#) around the world have endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, with **Colombia, the Republic of the Congo and Tunisia** becoming the newest signatories. Advances in implementing the Safe Schools Declaration and [Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict](#) were implemented in **Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Somalia and the Sudan**.

UNICEF's support for conflict-affected countries includes developing school safety plans, providing MHPSS and support for continuity of education, rehabilitating schools and distributing supplies for teaching and learning, and working closely across various sectors, including WASH, child protection and health. In **Angola**, more than 56,000 children benefited from the Child-Friendly Schools and Safe Haven initiatives, which provided quality, healthy and safe learning environments, and the provision of foundation literacy and numeracy programmes. In **the Central African Republic**, 2,063 children associated with armed groups (including 731 girls) were identified, and among them 1,415 children (522 girls) were supported to access a sustainable reintegration alternative such as a return to school, an apprenticeship placement or support for income-generating activities.

Non-formal and remedial learning in emergency settings

The COVID-19 pandemic and humanitarian emergencies – including armed attacks on education and climate-related emergencies – showed the need for increased

¹²⁰ The United Nations' Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, (Forthcoming, June 2023).

scalability of non-formal education, remedial learning and accelerated learning programmes. In response, UNICEF scaled up interventions to support non-formal and remedial education, including for children in emergencies. In **Afghanistan**, for example, UNICEF significantly expanded a community-based education programme to 14,981 community-based schools. Community-based education is part of formal education and provides education within the community to address barriers such as distance and safety, particularly for girls. Throughout 2022, UNICEF worked with partners on the ground and doubled the number of children supported with education services to over 520,000 (286,000 girls) in 28 provinces.

In **Pakistan**, which experienced its worst flooding on record in August 2022, UNICEF established 837 temporary learning centres in camps for families displaced by floods in affected villages and next to destroyed or damaged schools. Through this work, 101,222 children (41,543 girls) were supported, with up to 40 per cent being first-time learners not previously enrolled in school.

In **the Sudan**, UNICEF and partners supported over 5 million children (50 per cent girls) to access quality learning, including through targeted mobilization campaigns, teacher training and the provision of a 'back to learning' school grant for over 13,600 schools to prevent dropout. Additionally, UNICEF supported the return to school of children who had recently dropped out or who had never enrolled in schools, supporting 130,400 children (69,100 girls) to return to formal education, in addition to enrolment of 46,853 out-of-school children (52 per cent girls) in accelerated learning and e-learning programmes.

In **Cameroon**, UNICEF's efforts to diversify learning opportunities enabled 49,804 out-of-school children to resume learning. Among them are 31,377 children reached through radio education programmes and 7,818 through an accelerated curriculum programme, as well as through the provision of temporary learning spaces created for children affected by floods. In the east of the country, 10,609 flood-affected children were reached through community engagement for school enrolment and classroom rehabilitation and construction. Additionally, 6,000 children are receiving MHPSS, and 2,000 children have been supported with comprehensive case management and referral services.

Support for teachers in humanitarian situations

Teachers who work within environments of prolonged conflict, emergencies and crises are often overstretched, suffer from trauma themselves, can go without payment and serve a multitude of roles beyond supporting students' learning, to include psychosocial support and protection. In 2022, UNICEF worked to ensure that teachers were

supported to keep teaching and receive the training they needed to assist children affected by emergencies. These resources have provided teachers with the skills they need to better support learning continuity and the mental health and well-being of children and adolescents in humanitarian situations.

In **Afghanistan**, the withdrawal of development aid by the international community following the transition of governmental power in August 2021 resulted in a freezing of direct support to the education budget, which put at risk the payment of public school teachers during the early months as well as the provision of other key inputs such as textbooks, teaching and learning materials and teacher training. To ensure operational schools, UNICEF supported two months of emergency payments to more than 195,000 public school teachers (34 per cent women) in primary, secondary and technical and vocational education and training, ensured the printing and distribution of 39 million textbooks and provided basic learning materials to all Grade 1 and Grade 5 students, with the aim of preventing teacher attrition and helping children learn in school.

In **Yemen**, teachers have not received regular pay since 2016. To ensure that teachers do not leave the profession, UNICEF has provided support for teachers for over six years. In 2022, UNICEF provided paid incentives to 30,736 teachers and 2,163 rural female teachers. Incentives to rural female teachers are designed to increase the enrolment and retention of girl students in these areas. UNICEF has supported the provision of safe schools, psychosocial support, active learning and classroom management training for 13,815 teachers (47 per cent female) in 15 southern and northern governorates.

The development–humanitarian action–peacebuilding triple nexus

Resilient education systems are critical to ensuring the achievement of the SDGs by mitigating costly and potentially irreversible losses to children's learning and investments made in education, due to human-made and environmentally induced disasters.

Every child in the world is exposed to at least one climate or environmental hazard, with about 1 billion children at substantial risk from climate change. It is estimated that 1.7 million children lose their lives each year because of environmentally induced disasters such as flooding, cyclones or drought. Worldwide, the climate crisis is affecting the education of 40 million children every year.¹²¹ At the end of 2022, 27.7 million children in 27 countries were affected by flooding, including in **Chad and the Gambia**, while north-east **Bangladesh** experienced its worst floods in a generation. **Pakistan** was devastated by unprecedented, large-scale flooding that made schools inaccessible for more than 2 million children

¹²¹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Every Country Protected, Every Child Resilient', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/media/120621/file/UNICEF_DRR_in_Action_-_Every_country_protected._Every_child_resilient.pdf>, accessed 31 May 2023.

while damaging or destroying nearly 27,000 schools. In **Cameroon**, 126 schools were affected by floods, leaving 38,000 children without access to education, and recurring flooding in **Nigeria** left an estimated 840,000 children displaced.¹²² Drought in the Horn of Africa and Sahel regions has left 40 million children at high levels of vulnerability to water scarcity.¹²³

In this context of growing risks for children and learning, and pressures undermining the resilience of education systems and communities, UNICEF continued efforts to strengthen education systems through risk-informed programming approaches and capacity development to enhance preparedness, preventative, responsive and mitigation capacities and to strengthen the positive coping capacities of children and communities. The overarching aims are to reduce interruptions to education, reduce risks for children and communities, protect education investments and progressively ensure the inclusion of marginalized children in learning.

As a result of UNICEF's support in 2022, 45 per cent of programme countries reported enhanced capacities to respond to crisis through risk-informed planning and response measures in the education sector. These results were highest in the Eastern and Southern Africa (62 per cent of countries) and the West and Central Africa (59 per cent of countries). Moreover, 32 per cent of programme countries reported improved peacebuilding through education capacities. These results were highest in the East Asia and Pacific, Eastern and Southern Africa and Latin America and Caribbean regions, where 50 per cent of countries reported strong capacities in national education systems to support peacebuilding measures.

UNICEF's efforts helped make schools climate-resilient and ensure safety and disaster preparedness measures and school disaster management strategies are in place. Over the past five years, UNICEF in **Nepal** has drawn upon the CSSF and has supported Government partners at local level in developing contingency and preparedness plans to mitigate the impacts of climate change-induced disruptions to learning, including support to 2,043 schools. In **the Niger**, UNICEF is building capacities to address climate risks and disaster risk reduction at national, regional and community levels by building climate-resilient schools. More than 12,000 students are benefiting from the establishment of an early warning system against climate disasters in schools, technology for remote learning infrastructure to ensure the continuity of education during shocks, electrification with renewable energy solutions for schools, and participation in tree planting and life-skills and citizenship education. In **Viet Nam**, UNICEF, in partnership with the Global Green Growth Institute and the Ministry of Education and Training, is supporting the development of a public-private clean energy financing mechanism

for solar energy in schools by financing, installing and maintaining rooftop solar systems for 40,000 schools across the country.

Conflict-sensitive education and peacebuilding in fragile and conflict-affected settings

UNICEF works to connect humanitarian and development efforts, including through the role of education in support of peacebuilding and social cohesion in fragile and conflict-affected settings. This work is done through risk-informed and conflict-sensitive education programmes. UNICEF supports young people to develop skills to promote effective social and political engagement and social cohesion at community level using schools as entry-points. In this approach, UNICEF works to ensure education is delivered as a peace dividend in post-conflict settings to support stabilization and recovery efforts based on principles of conflict sensitivity and 'Do no Harm'.

In **Mali**, to increase resilience and youth participation, UNICEF supported the training of more than 11,800 young people and adolescents (50 per cent girls) in conflict prevention techniques. The beneficiaries are now carrying out community-based conflict prevention interventions in nine regions of the country.

In **the Plurinational State of Bolivia**, to strengthen the education system and reduce violence in schools, UNICEF supported the official teacher training entity to develop two courses for teachers and school directors on promoting peaceful and harmonious coexistence and on preventing or detecting cases of violence and referring them to the child protection system. More than 25 per cent of all teachers and authorities (22,774 female and 14,765 male) were trained, received study guides and have been accredited with certificates. These courses are now permanent and accessible to all teachers and are expected to reach urban and rural areas in the country in 2023.

In **Ethiopia**, UNICEF's post-conflict recovery strategy for conflict-affected regions was launched with the aim of delivering education as a peace dividend and to support recovery and stabilization efforts. UNICEF also supported the roll-out of a life-skills programme in 304 school gender clubs in the Amhara, Afar and Oromia regions that taught over 89,000 adolescents (75 per cent girls), including 39,096 internally displaced adolescents affected by conflict and drought. The programme focused on how to confront gender-based violence such as female genital mutilation and how to report child marriage.

¹²² United Nations Children's Fund, 'Over 27 million children at risk as devastating floods set records across the world', Press Release, 2022, <www.unicef.org/wca/press-releases/over-27-million-children-risk-devastating-floods-set-records-across-world>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹²³ Burke, K., 'UN: Drought threatens millions of African kids', Deutsche Welle, 23 August 2022, <www.dw.com/en/drought-in-africa-threatens-millions-of-children-un/a-62900846>, accessed 31 May 2023.

In **Benin**, UNICEF supported empowerment and peer education approaches that have enabled young people to handle multiple risks such as those related to conflict. Through these processes, 134,154 adolescents and young people have been trained to promote peace and share prevention and response mechanisms in the face of growing insecurity. This included 73,603 adolescent girls receiving lessons on female empowerment, and 54,601 adolescent boys learning about prevention of gender-based violence.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Youth to launch a Youth Ambassadors for Peace programme. Life-skills training modules for peacebuilding and social cohesion reached 4,022 adolescents and young people (51 per cent girls).

Intersectoral approaches in education in emergencies

A core aspect of UNICEF's support in humanitarian response is its intersectoral work in humanitarian contexts to address the multiple barriers impacting the realization of children's rights. Using schools as an integrated service delivery platform, UNICEF education programming works in close collaboration with health, nutrition, child protection, MHPSS, WASH, Social Policy and Social Protection, disability and gender programmes.

In **Haiti**, UNICEF conducted a comprehensive assessment to evaluate the impact of gang violence in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, which found that 24 per cent of schools were deeply affected. In response, UNICEF supported back-to-school efforts for more than 15,000 children (7,200 girls) and provided sanitation and hygiene facilities for more than 100,000 when schools reopened.

In **the Congo**, UNICEF is supporting school clubs in 105 schools with 660 student members to combat violence in schools. This enabled the sensitization of 18,961 students (9,924 girls and 9,037 boys) and 525 teachers (230 women and 295 men) on school violence, in collaboration with the Forum for African Women Educationalists. Through these school clubs, awareness-raising campaigns will continue during the school year to enable students in these targeted schools to learn in a violence-free environment.

In **Afghanistan**, a total of 116,331 households in 7 priority provinces were reached with multisectoral and sectoral cash assistance delivered through national and international partners. About 21 per cent of recipient households reported using some of the funds for education expenses for their children.

Mental health and psychosocial support through education in emergency settings

Integrating mental health and psychosocial support within humanitarian education responses is imperative to protect children and adolescents from the harmful effects of crisis and adversity. Schools and learning environments can support learners in building the coping and interpersonal skills they need to recover from exposure to traumatic events. Early MHPSS intervention in schools can reduce the risk of children developing mental health problems.

In 2022, UNICEF continued supporting children's mental health and psychosocial well-being through education in emergencies responses. In **Madagascar**, as part of the emergency response to the drought, over 11,000 children benefited from MHPSS services in schools. In **Ukraine**, 298,593 children received access to psychosocial support and life-skills education.

In **Ethiopia**, around 78,000 children (49 per cent girls) were reached through the My Home/Bete approach in Afar, Amhara, Benishagul Gumuz, Oromia and Somali regions. The approach focused on the provision of accelerated learning opportunities, life-skills education and MHPSS. In addition, 89,200 adolescents (75 per cent girls) aged 10–14 were empowered with life-skills education, including 39,096 internally displaced adolescents affected by conflict and drought.

Children and adolescents affected by war, extreme violence and displacement often see their education disrupted and face multiple and prolonged stressors. In **Nigeria**, UNICEF supported 1.3 million conflict-affected children (659,000 girls) to access formal and non-formal education, and over 34,000 teachers were trained in psychosocial support, reaching 2.7 million conflict-affected children.

Spotlight on thematic funding: Supporting the most marginalized children to enrol in schools in the Islamic Republic of Iran

In 2022, UNICEF Iran supported the national school entrance health screening programme, organized by the Ministry of Education. The screening is a mandatory step for school enrolment and aims to assess the school readiness, hearing, vision and overall health of children to identify any support they might need.

UNICEF, with the support of thematic funding, covered the cost of the screening for refugees, nomadic children and children living in the most disadvantaged provinces, and provided the necessary equipment to ensure the screening centres could function properly. UNICEF equipped 545 centres to conduct the screening more efficiently. Overall, UNICEF supported 97,454 children (45,354 Afghan children, 17,997 nomadic children and 34,104 children from low socioeconomic backgrounds in four disadvantaged provinces of Sistan and Baluchistan, Kerman, Lorestan and Hormozgan). The programme visits revealed that Afghan refugees aged 8–9 years also participated in the programme, which shows that easier access to the screening programme motivated families of out-of-school children to participate. UNICEF's intervention and its significant impact on participation in the screening programme resulted in increased public finance for the screening programme for 2023.



Zeinab (right) and her twin sister Zinat (left) are among the Afghan refugee children who took the health screening tests as part of their enrolment at a school in Kerman, Islamic Republic of Iran.

UNICEF's education response for Ukraine and neighbouring countries

In February 2022, the conflict in Ukraine escalated into war, resulting in catastrophic humanitarian and children's rights violations, massive internal displacement and an exodus of refugees into Europe not seen since the Second World War. By the end of 2022, there were 7.2 million children in need of humanitarian assistance inside Ukraine and in the 19 UNICEF country programme and response offices throughout Europe. Through coordinated, multi-country and regional educational responses, a total of 2,040,453 Ukrainian, refugee and host community children were provided with access to formal and non-formal education.

In **Ukraine**, UNICEF supported 1,451,665 children with access to formal and non-formal education, including early learning, and 99,000 teachers were trained on mental health and psychosocial support, social and emotional learning and life-skills education, benefiting 298,593 children. UNICEF also distributed early childhood development kits, recreation kits, School-in-a-Box kits and individual learning kits to 770,958 children. Additionally, despite ongoing attacks that damaged mobile networks and internet connectivity across the country, UNICEF and partners supported Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Sciences to strengthen access to online learning through All-Ukrainian School Online, a national platform for distance and online learning. By the end of 2022, over 333,000 Ukrainian students and 135,000 teachers had registered on the platform.

In 19 refugee response countries across Europe, a total of 588,788 refugee and host community children (51 per cent girls) were provided with access to formal and non-formal education, including early learning. UNICEF offices in **Poland**, the **Republic of Moldova**, **Romania**, and **Slovakia** implemented immediate emergency responses and urgent support to provide learning continuity and integration into their national education systems for Ukrainian refugee children.

In **Poland**, UNICEF supported access to formal education, including early childhood development, and non-formal education through play and learning and digital hubs, Polish language classes and Ukrainian-based curricula in schools for 462,347 children (50 per cent girls) in 2,220 education institutions across 12 municipalities.

In **Slovakia**, UNICEF provided 40,433 refugee and host community children with access to formal and non-formal learning opportunities and provided 23,181 children with learning materials. This included supporting the integration of 10,232 Ukrainian refugee children into Slovakia's national education system.

In the **Republic of Moldova**, UNICEF and partners reached 36,433 refugees and host community children with access to formal and non-formal learning opportunities and supported the enrolment of 1,832 children in the country's formal education system. Additionally, 43,666 refugee and host community children received child-centred learning and recreational materials from UNICEF and the LEGO Foundation.

In **Romania**, UNICEF supported access to formal and non-formal education opportunities, including early learning, to over 5,495 Ukrainian children and provided quality individual learning materials to 15,772 Ukrainian and host community children. UNICEF, IOM and the British Council extended training opportunities to 116 Ukrainian, Bulgarian and Romanian teachers to support refugees' integration into the national education system.



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Adolescent and youth development and participation

A high school student showing her sign calling for attention to climate change policy and environmental protection outside the United Nations building in New York.

Investing in adolescents and young people is a proven way to address intergenerational cycles of poverty and ill health, yielding a triple dividend of benefits including improving the well-being of young people today, enhancing their prospects as tomorrow's caregivers and workforce and improving outcomes of future generations.

While adolescence and young adulthood present a 'second window of opportunity',¹²⁴ this is also a period when adolescents and young people face inequities more tangibly, based on gender, household income level, migration status, minority status, ethnicity and disability. Rapid advances in technology and social media, unemployment, mass migration and forced displacement, the impacts of and stresses brought about by climate change, global epidemics and more are reshaping today's society and forcing unprecedented changes in lives, education and work – particularly for marginalized adolescents and young people. Adolescent girls too often face a disproportionate burden of unpaid work and expectations to marry,¹²⁵ risks of early pregnancy¹²⁶ and gender-based violence.¹²⁷ Norms around masculinity that encourage risk-taking are linked to higher rates of death due to road injuries and homicides among older adolescent boys.¹²⁸ For all adolescents, self-harm is among the top five causes of death in most regions.¹²⁹

Some 63 million adolescents of lower secondary school age are out of school.¹³⁰ Adolescents in rural areas are nearly twice as likely to be out of school as those in urban areas, and those from the poorest households are more than three times as likely as the richest to be out of school.¹³¹

Compounding these inequities is the growing digital divide: Globally, two thirds of children and young people under age 25 do not have an internet connection in their homes, restricting opportunities for learning and skills development.¹³² However, data on youth living in households with internet access conceal stark gender disparities relating to device access, internet usage and digital skills within the home. Even once access barriers are crossed, this does not always translate to actual usage by

individuals, and digital competency is also highly gendered. When it comes to digital devices, adolescent girls and young women face distinct barriers to owning and using them and being enabled to develop skills on an equitable footing with adolescent boys and young men. Evidence shows that 9 out of 10 adolescent girls and young women are offline in low-income countries. Even within the same households, adolescent girls and young women have less access to, and fewer skills to make use of, the internet and digital technologies than male household members of the same age, suggesting the pervasiveness of gender biases that restrict girls' and women's digital inclusion and skills development.¹³³

To navigate the social, economic, environmental and political challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow, adolescents must have the right and be able to think critically, live peaceful and healthy lives, access economic opportunities, use digital tools and technologies safely and seek, receive and impart information and ideas in ways that translate into positive individual and societal development. They must have the right and be able to actively examine, question, influence and lead change – to achieve a better tomorrow for all.

Around the world, young people are demonstrating their power and potential by standing up against mental health stigma and discrimination, leading relief efforts during conflicts and disasters, stepping in to provide education services when systems fail, advocating for climate action and speaking out against injustice.

UNICEF's support to adolescent and youth engagement is increasingly focused on building the capacities of adolescents and young people as **active agents of change**, to achieve results for all children. And while adolescents and young people are deeply interested in and capable of making a better world for future generations, doing so is good for their development.

UNICEF's work on safe and meaningful adolescent and youth engagement is organized around three strategic pillars:

¹²⁴ Neuroscience evidence indicates that the second decade of life is a period of substantial neurological development, second only to early childhood, during which significant and rapid neural and physiological changes occur and when billions of neural networks that affect emotional skills and physical and mental abilities are reorganized.

¹²⁵ Globally, adolescent girls spend more time than boys helping around the house.

¹²⁶ The global average birth rate is 41 births per 1,000 girls aged 15–19 (2020). This level varies substantially across countries and regions; in West and Central Africa, the average is 110 births per 1,000 girls aged 15–19.

¹²⁷ In nearly half of the 67 countries with available data, more than 1 in 5 ever-married adolescent girls had experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a husband or partner within the past year. These include countries spanning regions from Asia to sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, indicating that adolescent girls everywhere are exposed to this form of violence.

¹²⁸ An estimated 2,600 adolescents died each day in 2020, mostly from preventable or treatable causes.

¹²⁹ Source: UNICEF Data Portal.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² United Nations Children's Fund and International Telecommunication Union, 'How Many Children and Young People have Internet Access at Home?', UNICEF, New York, 2020, <www.unicef.org/reports/how-many-children-and-young-people-have-internet-access-home-2020>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹³³ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Bridging the Gender Digital Divide', UNICEF, New York, 2023, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/ictgenderdivide/>>, accessed 31 May 2023.

- **Supporting adolescent and youth empowerment:** Directly empowering adolescents and young people as rights-holders, change-makers and leaders
- **Supporting UNICEF and partners to work with adolescents and young people:** Supporting UNICEF country offices and partners to work with adolescents and young people
- **Strengthening systems for adolescent and youth participation and change-making:** Strengthening systems for adolescent engagement.

In 2022, UNICEF achieved results at or near the milestones for all three pillars. For the first pillar, 16.1 million adolescents and young people (45 per cent girls) were engaged across 89 countries, with nearly 345,000 specifically engaged in humanitarian settings; 30 per cent of the adolescents and young people reached were engaged in education programmes. As a result of efforts under the second pillar, two thirds of UNICEF-supported countries reported having consulted adolescents and young people in programming processes. Under the third pillar, UNICEF strengthened systems for adolescent participation in 46 countries, including support for the development of 65 adolescent-friendly policies.

Supporting adolescent and youth empowerment

UNICEF works to empower adolescents and young people by working with them as partners to co-create, find solutions and lead positive action using three strategies: advocacy to influence practices and policies; participation in school, local and national governance; and the provision of information and services. In **China**, for example, UNICEF's [#KnowYourFood](#) campaign supports the empowerment of children, adolescents and young people to make informed, healthy choices about their diet through improved nutrition literacy. Throughout 2022, adolescents and young people were engaged in the campaign's design and delivery, with activities reaching nearly 13 million children and adolescents. From pop-up convenience stores offering customers information on the ingredients and potential health impacts of snacks and drinks; to week-long healthy eating challenges; to targeted information for schoolchildren – adolescents and young people have been at the forefront of the campaign's success.

In many countries, youth programmes shifted towards large-scale results. In **India**, for instance, UNICEF's Yuwaah repositioned itself as a convening platform for different partners, serving as a facilitator and enabler. Through partners, Yuwaah reached over 46 million young people, including over 20 million with career guidance, employment support, civic engagement and twenty-first-century skills.

In 2022, UNICEF country offices continued to invest in and deepen peer-to-peer adolescent and youth engagement efforts in the delivery and support of services and knowledge. In **Indonesia**, over 150,000 children and adolescents (66 per cent girls) were trained to prevent and respond to violence against children in schools, including bullying and other forms of peer violence. In **South Africa**, UNICEF and partners continued to expand the adolescent girl peer mentor counselling model to promote Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) prevention

and response services such as testing and regimen adherence. As a result, over 31,600 pregnant and lactating girls have enrolled in health-care facilities, and stipends for mother mentors have been allocated within the government budget.

In Indigenous communities in Cochabamba, the **Plurinational State of Bolivia**, UNICEF supported adolescents to form networks of community health reporters, who led peer-to-peer and community discussions about HIV and teenage pregnancy prevention. Over 1,800 adolescents were mobilized (1,050 girls), reaching 10,000 community members through social networks and local radio.

With the 2022 launch of the [Adolescent Girls Programme Strategy](#), UNICEF initiated an acceleration of efforts with and for adolescent girls, grounded in transformative approaches that address discriminatory norms and systems impeding the realization of girls' potential.¹³⁴

Through the UNICEF Skills4Girls initiative (implemented since 2020 in partnership with private sector partners), 2.4 million girls across 22 countries were provided with girl-focused learning opportunities, including linkages to peer support, mentors and job placements.¹³⁵ In **Kyrgyzstan**, for example, UNICEF is working to create an enabling environment of parents, teachers and policymakers to promote STEM education and careers for girls. Actions include integrating STEM components into national education plans, organizing large-scale awareness events that highlight careers and women-in-technology role models, mentoring and job-shadowing, and mobilization of peer trainers in schools to reach 30,000 girls and nearly 19,000 boys. In **Jordan**, UNICEF has partnered with government and the private sector to bridge the gap between skills development and job opportunities for girls

¹³⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Annual Report on the Implementation of the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2018–2021', UNICEF, New York, 2022, <www.unicef.org/executiveboard/documents/unicef-GAP-annual-report-AS-2022>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

by supporting national platforms that link young people to jobs through internships and job placements. The Nahno platform, launched in 2018, is helping connect young people to relevant opportunities and to learn and practise skills related to new employability, technical and personal empowerment and citizenship. Nahno has connected 126,791 registered young people (64 per cent females) to 388,291 volunteering opportunities.

In **Brazil**, UNICEF supported nearly 31,000 adolescents through 1,500 Adolescent Citizenry Centres, where adolescents can engage with local authorities to promote child-centred policies, and presented a plan of action on girls' empowerment and sexual and reproductive rights in dialogue with the local government officials.

Supporting UNICEF and partners to work with adolescents and young people

UNICEF continues to build mechanisms for adolescent and youth participation in its strategic processes, and in those of partners, to improve programming and better reflect the perspectives of young people.

To inform the development of the [UNICEF Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy \(DIPAS\) 2022–2030](#), UNICEF conducted consultations with adolescents and young people with disabilities from low- and middle-income countries. The focus was on identifying the obstacles they face to achieve their goals, and how UNICEF can ensure their meaningful participation and leadership on equal grounds with other children and adolescents.

In **Greece**, UNICEF joined forces with the Democracy and Culture Foundation to co-organize the first Teens' Athens Democracy Forum, held as part of the larger Athens Democracy Forum, a prestigious annual event that brings together global leaders.

UNICEF supported the participation of 20 adolescents from 14 Latin American and Caribbean countries in the Education, Early Childhood Development, and Adolescent Development and Participation Regional Meeting to voice their experiences and advise UNICEF on inclusion, education and mental health. Twelve of the participants from eight countries who are part of the Regional Youth for Mental Health Network have completed training using the [I Support My Friends](#) resource to become facilitators of psychological first aid workshops and stronger champions for mental health and well-being in their own communities.

In the Middle East and North Africa, a Youth Advisory Group was set up in the lead-up to the High-Level Meeting on Learning, Skilling and Transition to Decent Work, held in March 2022. Through the Youth Advisory Group, young people continue to follow up on the meeting's key recommendations and commitments at both regional and national levels, while some are working directly with government partners to translate the commitments made into action.

U-Report poll: Elevating the voices of young people

In 2022, U-Report reached an additional 6 million U-Reporters (bringing the cumulative total to 27.5 million young people in 92 countries). Mental health chatbots launched within the framework of the [On My Mind](#) campaign reached nearly half a million young people, helping them strengthen self-esteem and interpersonal and problem-solving skills. In emergency settings, the deployment of U-Report reached affected populations and provided information necessary to facilitate access to emergency services, including over 130,000 in Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, and Uganda under the PROSPECTS partnership (with over 860,000 U-Reporters registered among PROSPECTS countries). UNICEF also supported the ['Dear Leaders' video that featured 8 U-Report ambassadors](#), presenting key demands to the African Union and the European Union leaders on behalf of 450,000 young people across Europe and Africa.

Voices of youth: “Young people will not stop until everyone in every village, island and city has access to quality education,” says Karimot Odebode

“Our only source of hope is to transform education. Education is our future, and the future is now. Young people will not stop until everyone in every village, island and city has access to quality education, which is a fundamental human right,” says Karimot Odebode, a young poet and lawyer from Ibadan, Nigeria, and founder of the Black Girl’s Dream Initiative.

Karimot was a co-presenter of the [Youth Declaration](#) at the Transforming Education Summit. “I stood before world leaders at the 77th United Nations General Assembly to remind them of the importance of transforming education, financing education and working alongside young people to create a future where every child has access to quality education,” she says.

Before the Summit, Karimot led the sub-Saharan Africa regional youth consultation online and in local communities in Oyo State, Nigeria, where she mobilized and spoke with young people about their vision for transforming education. These consultations fed into the Youth Declaration.



On 19 September 2022, Karimot Odebode (left) and Ulises Brengi (right) speak at the Transforming Education Summit at the United Nations in New York.

Empowering adolescents and young people affected by the Ukraine crisis

Scouting is a global youth movement that builds skills for life, shaping young people's futures as active citizens. The Scout Movement is the biggest youth organization in the world, active in 173 countries and mobilizing over 57 million young people to take part in activities and events worldwide. In 2022, UNICEF and the World Organization of the Scout Movement launched a regional cooperation agreement mobilizing young people to provide care and support to children and families fleeing the war in Ukraine, involving the neighbouring countries of Poland, Hungary, Romania, the Republic of Moldova and Slovakia, as well as Czechia, Latvia and Lithuania (where refugees are continuing their journey).

These initiatives include organizing activities for children and adolescents at reception points and shelters and providing summer camps (Poland); distributing essential supplies to arriving refugee families at train stations and implementing social cohesion programmes that raise awareness on migration and refugee needs through storytelling (Hungary); and helping refugees access local services through dedicated web pages (Lithuania). Direct support has also been provided in Ukraine, where Scout groups are reaching internally displaced persons seeking safety in the country. In addition, UNICEF in Ukraine has partnered with the Ukrainian Volunteer Services and the Ministry of Youth and Sports to engage over 180,000 young volunteers in similar efforts to support internally displaced families.

Together with UNICEF, the Scout Movement supported more than 900,000 Ukrainian individuals in 2022, 408,000 of whom were children and young people, in various locations across 9 countries. Communication actions and social media interactions have reached nearly 3 million people.

UNICEF's partnership with the Scout Movement to support the Ukraine humanitarian response has demonstrated how valuable and powerful young people's engagement in humanitarian action can be when provided with appropriate resources and support.



Young refugee children and adolescents from Ukraine in a team-building activity as part of a UNICEF-supported day camp organized by the Polish Scouts in Gdansk, Poland.

Strengthening systems for adolescent participation

Throughout 2022, UNICEF worked with partners to support sustained improvements in the provision, utilization, quality and efficiency of adolescent participation mechanisms. In **Albania**, for example, the first National Youth Strategy 2022–2029 was developed by the Ministry of State for Youth and Children, with support from UNICEF. Consultation processes involved over 1,000 young people, who came together to define key challenges, identify key actions, and suggest monitoring mechanisms. A national consultation event, bringing together 200 young people and adolescents from 14 regions, was held to review the draft strategy (with the same youth representatives) and see how their suggestions materialized in the document.

In **Iraq**, UNICEF continued to support the implementation of the multisectoral National Youth Vision 2030 developed in 2021, with the strong inclusion of representatives of young people under the lead of a high-level Inter-Ministerial Committee. UNICEF supported the capacities of governmental partners to work with young people, training 112 staff from the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Culture and Youth in life-skills and

citizenship education, gender inclusion and the systematic engagement of young people. UNICEF further supported the establishment of the Young People's Advisory Group to provide feedback to the United Nations and UNICEF on programming. In **Angola**, UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, engaged young people in the design and running of a campaign to increase knowledge about how national and local budgets are formulated.

In 2022, volunteering continued to serve as a valuable tool for youth engagement. In **Iraq**, UNICEF supported United Nations Volunteers, with 122,000 young people (46 per cent girls) leading community initiatives on climate change, social cohesion and gender equality. In **Serbia**, UNICEF provided the government with support to establish online systems for volunteer management. Serbia's volunteering platform is an open hub where every young person can find a volunteering opportunity and organizations can find volunteers.¹³⁶ The platform engaged 400 new volunteers in 2022, bringing the current total to 1,600 young people and 20 organizations on the platform.

Youth-led climate action through volunteerism

In 2022, close to 167,000 young volunteers engaged in addressing issues related to climate and the environment in their communities. Noteworthy examples include:

- In **Mongolia**, 3,100 volunteers continued to campaign for clean air through the Youth for Clean Air Network (YouCAN) programme. Volunteers posted air pollution measurements and raised awareness on the harmful levels of pollution on social media and through face-to-face training in schools and kindergartens – teaching students about the negative impacts of air pollution and methods they can use to protect themselves.
- UNICEF launched a three-year programme in **Brazil** to work with 161,900 young volunteers specifically on local climate change issues, with a focus on the Amazon and semi-arid regions. The programme includes online and offline components, including 370 Climate Action Clubs and online advocacy.
- In **Kazakhstan**, 230 offline and 176 online volunteers worked with 30 schools to prepare them for emergencies and climate-related events through the 'Be Safe' campaign.
- In **Kyrgyzstan**, UNICEF is working with 300 young volunteers on a disaster risk reduction campaign. The volunteers fill a crucial gap, teaching children how to respond to a disaster and helping organize school emergency drills in a country with increasing numbers of intense earthquakes, floods and landslides. The young volunteers have reached 566 schools and 14 kindergartens, as well as 158,000 children and 9,720 teachers and school administrators, with concrete actions. Volunteers also monitor the implementation of the proposed emergency preparedness requirements.¹³⁷
- In **South Africa**, 500 young people continued to work on monitoring and advocating for stream health.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ See <www.volonterinamrezi.rs>.

¹³⁷ Read more at <www.unicef.org/innovation/unicefvolunteerskyrgyzstan>, accessed 31 May 2023.

¹³⁸ 'Enviro-Champs' is short for Environment Champions. Read more about the programme at: <<https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/stories/youth-frontlines-protecting-south-africas-environment>>.

Adolescent participation and youth-led change in humanitarian and peacebuilding contexts

In 2022, UNICEF amplified young people's voices and actions in humanitarian contexts – from disaster response in **Indonesia** to conflict responses in **Afghanistan and Ukraine**. Of 16.1 million adolescents engaged in UNICEF programmes globally, 340,000 were in humanitarian settings. UNICEF's efforts to support adolescents in 2022 were guided by its flagship tools and resources, such as the [Core Commitments for Children \(CCCs\)](#), the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\) Guidelines on Working with and for Young People in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises](#), the [Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation](#) and the [Youth Advocacy Guide](#). These frameworks and resources are global standards that can be leveraged to support local partners and youth-led organizations as they engage young people and respond to their needs in humanitarian and peacebuilding initiatives.

In 2022, there was further demand for contextualization and roll-out of the IASC youth guidelines, which provide a framework for working with and for young people throughout the humanitarian programme cycle and across sectors. From global advocacy to training and learning series in multiple languages, UNICEF, together with the [Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action](#), led several efforts for partners and young humanitarians responding to the crises in Ukraine and Afghanistan and others. The IASC youth guidelines and training materials were translated by UNICEF and UNFPA into Arabic, Pashto and Dari languages.

In 2022, UNICEF and partners reached nearly 300,000 adolescents in 11 countries with the [Adolescent Kit](#).¹³⁹ UNICEF partnered with Aflatoun to digitize parts of the Adolescent Kit to make them available through the Learning Passport and other digital platforms.

In 2022, UNICEF signed an agreement with the Women's Refugee Commission and the [Global Refugee Youth Network](#) (GRYN), a youth refugee-led organization, to support local action with refugees and forcibly displaced adolescents and young people. Founded and run by young refugees, GRYN aims to develop the capacity of young refugees (aged 15–30) to support each other, lead initiatives that respond to their communities' needs and advocate for change. Under the PROSPECTS partnership, UNICEF will work with GRYN to support capacity-building of young people in collaboration with UNHCR and ILO, facilitate networking and enable young people to connect and learn from each other, provide technical and financial assistance to support young people to design and lead local initiatives, and support young people to raise issues that are important to them.

UNICEF has also partnered with the [Major Group for Children and Youth](#) for the Youth on the Move Fellowship Programme, which supported 15 talented young people on the move and young refugees from 10 countries, who face obstacles in accessing traditional internships and learning-to-earning opportunities, to gain practical skills and work experience with UNICEF teams. These innovative partnerships have shown UNICEF's continuous commitment to and with adolescents and young people as equal partners in humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts.

Strategic partnerships for adolescent and youth development and engagement

In 2022, UNICEF leveraged key global events to amplify the voices of young people and ensure they are at the forefront of discussions and meaningfully engaged in decision-making. In the lead-up to the Transforming Education Summit, UNICEF worked with partners, including young people, to ensure young people's voices took centre stage at the Summit and beyond. At the Summit, during

the Youth-led Mobilization Day on 16 September 2022, a [Youth Declaration](#) was delivered by young representatives to the United Nations Secretary-General to drive political commitment on the need to transform education and build young people's ownership over this process. Similarly, the Global Disability Summit 2022, led by young people with disabilities and with 1,200 attendees, included 24 hours of

¹³⁹ The Adolescent Kit, both the original and the adapted version, is now available in Arabic, Spanish and French. Some materials have also been translated into local languages, such as Thai, Tajik, Bahasa, Urdu, Myanmar (Burmese) and Ukrainian. UNICEF Algeria has developed some of the Adolescent Kit materials in Arabic Braille, which are being used by visually impaired adolescents.

discussions with young people with disabilities in the form of a [Global Disability Youth Summit](#). It concluded with the development of a Youth Charter for Change.

UNICEF is a key supporter of the [Youth 2030 Agenda](#), an umbrella framework for the United Nations to strengthen its capacity to engage young people and benefit from their insights. In 2022, UNICEF continued to support the development of the Youth 2030 implementation package, including resources for young people, United Nations country teams and governments. The use of the Youth 2030 scorecard, a planning and accountability tool, by all United Nations country teams in 2022 allowed UNICEF to assess its progress using 20 key performance indicators.

Furthermore, UNICEF continued its partnership with the PROSPECTS initiative, a multi-stakeholder partnership with UNICEF, UNHCR, ILO, IFC and the World Bank, funded by the Government of the Netherlands, to develop mechanisms to support and meaningfully engage forcibly

displaced young people and host communities. This partnership opened opportunities for learning-to-earning and systematic participation of forcibly displaced young people in Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, the Sudan and Uganda. PROSPECTS established a youth workstream, created space for young people through forums such as [Youth at Heart](#), conducted training and adapted materials and standards for young people, many living in forcibly displaced contexts. It was the first time that multiple partners came together to support school-to-work transitions for young refugees and host communities, with a dedicated budget and programmes in place for young people's meaningful participation.

UNICEF also continued its partnership with the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, scaling up the implementation of the [Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation](#). By the end of 2022, the Adolescent Kit had reached more than 900,000 adolescents in over 30 countries and trained 55,000 partners, facilitators, teachers and young volunteers.



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Anwar, 25, from Jerash, is a Youth Climate Leader with the UNICEF-supported Sawn ('to protect/preserve' in Arabic) programme.



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High-level priorities

A girl reading to her classmates in a temporary learning center in Afghanistan.

Despite progress made in helping children catch up with learning, the grave and lingering impacts on children and their well-being are evident. At exactly the halfway point to 2030, but 'off-track' in achieving the SDGs, the world is faced with a grim outlook in terms of realization of children's rights, constituting a polycrisis.¹⁴⁰

Responding to the learning crisis, UNICEF's strategic focus in education will continue to be on supporting all children and adolescents throughout the 3 most crucial transitions of their learning journey: early childhood education preparing them for school; foundational learning to ensure that they can read, write and do basic mathematics; and skills development so that every young person has the full range of foundational, transferable, digital, job-specific, and entrepreneurial skills, engaged and ready for life and work.

To build a solid foundation for learning in early years, UNICEF will seek to scale its Five Million Futures initiative to embed ECE as an integral component of national foundational learning strategies, while supporting quality and holistic early learning interventions that foster school readiness and positively contribute to ending generational cycles of learning poverty. Through the Foundational Learning Coalition, UNICEF will continue working with partners and governments to scale up learning recovery and remediation programmes. To ensure support for adolescents as they transition from learning to earning, UNICEF will continue to provide skills development, including but not limited to digital skills and employability skills, and to prepare children and young people for the future of work and life.

The three transitions are further supported through a focus on the four cross-cutting thematic areas: education in emergencies; digital learning; gender, equity and inclusion; education and climate change.

- **Education in emergencies:** By prioritizing education as a fundamental element of emergency response, UNICEF aims to ensure uninterrupted learning, safeguard the rights of learners, and provide essential multisectoral services such as mental health and psychosocial support, WASH, nutrition, and health, to children affected by crises within educational settings. UNICEF is committed to intensify education in emergencies efforts in 2023 as humanitarian needs are worsening and become more acute. The devastating earthquakes across **Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic** in February 2023 have exacerbated the situation for over 811,000 refugee children in Türkiye and over 2 million out-of-school children across the Syrian Arab Republic after more than a decade of civil war. Furthermore, in April 2023, escalating violence in **the Sudan** increased the number of children out of school and in need of assistance from 7 million to over 8.5 million, due to widespread school closures. UNICEF will continue to advance its core commitments to children in

humanitarian crises and leverage its long-standing comparative advantages to enable and improve education access and learning outcomes for all crisis-affected children and adolescents. Among the most marginalized are children affected by emergencies and humanitarian crises. Support to children in humanitarian settings will remain at the heart of UNICEF's work in education. Schools and learning spaces provide not only education but also life-saving support, including health and well-being services and protection from risks. UNICEF will continue to advocate for and prioritize children's right to learning in a safe space, also through the Safe to Learn initiative and the implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration.

- **Digital learning:** Recognizing the transformative potential of technology in education, UNICEF advocates for, and supports, countries in leveraging digital learning to strengthen education systems' resilience, enhance learning outcomes, expand access to quality education, and foster digital literacy skills. Going forward, UNICEF will continue to improve efficiency and effectiveness and grow the impact of its work by leveraging the power and potential of technology through system-wide digital transformation. The Gateways initiative will be a great catalyst for change on the ground to improve digital learning policies and implementation, making them more accessible and gender-responsive, and prioritizing children in marginalized groups, including those living in emergencies and rural, remote areas and the teachers who support them.
- **Gender Equity and Inclusion:** UNICEF works to ensure learning for *all*, by addressing barriers and challenges posed by gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity, socio-economic status, disability, ethnicity, language, race, geography, or other form of discrimination. UNICEF will continue to advocate for inclusive, equitable, gender-transformative education across all modalities, including digital learning.
- **Education and Climate Change:** The education sector has transformative potential for climate change adaptation and resilience. UNICEF is doubling down on efforts to strengthen local capacities for climate-resilient education systems; community-based resilience and adaptation by engaging teachers, children, and young people in climate action; and advocacy at local and global levels for better investments, capacity and innovation towards climate-smart education systems and effective climate action.

Furthermore, UNICEF will continue to build on the outcomes of the Transforming Education Summit, including advocacy through calls to action on pressing issues in education, such as foundational learning, digital learning, education in emergencies, girls' education, and women's

¹⁴⁰ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Prospects for Children in the Polycrisis: A 2023 global outlook', UNICEF, New York, 2023, <www.unicef.org/globalinsight/reports/prospects-children-2023-global-outlook>, accessed 31 May 2023.

empowerment and inclusive education, among others. UNICEF's work on the ground complements global efforts, ensuring that commitments and plans made ahead of, and during, the Transforming Education Summit are translated into concrete actions and results for children. The National Statements of Commitment have provided a springboard for urgent and sustained action at country level.

UNICEF will continue to scale up multisectoral, cost-effective and high-impact interventions, using schools as an entry-point, to maximize results for children. It will enhance the application of social and behaviour change approaches to enhance results in and beyond education and tap into a thus far under-used potential for enabling the education sector to overcome social challenges and barriers. Mental health and psychosocial support for learners and teachers will remain a key priority in supporting children's learning and well-being. Integrated programming will be key to reaching the most marginalized children, including girls, children with disabilities, children on the move and those living in minority communities.

Insufficient and inequitable domestic financing for education, compounded by reductions in international aid for education overall, demand more advocacy and more support to governments for increased and equitable financing. Countries need to allocate larger amounts not only to national education budgets but also for the most marginalized children to benefit from a fair share of these investments. Building on its advocacy on increased and equitable financing for education, UNICEF will continue to urge governments to increase domestic investments in education and ensure equitable financing.

UNICEF's own resources for education were also stretched in 2022, due to growing emergencies. Contributions to global education thematic funding, which enables UNICEF to respond to children's needs with agility and flexibility, decreased by over 50 per cent. Traditional donors to the education global thematic funding pool redefined their ODA

priorities and redirected funding to competing crises, most notably the war in Ukraine and refugee responses. With less flexible funding available, UNICEF faces significant challenges in its ability to be agile in crisis situations and to provide sustained technical support for systems-strengthening. Within this challenging context, UNICEF will continue to engage its long-standing partnerships and develop new ones to continue to deliver on its mandate. Collaborating with a diverse set of partners, UNICEF will continue to reach millions of children with inclusive and gender-responsive policies and programmes, ranging from ECE to skills development (including learning to earning) and digital learning across development and humanitarian settings. Engagement with a wide range of private sector partners, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the LEGO Foundation, the Hempel Foundation, Microsoft, and Google, as well as high net worth individuals, will help catalyse further influence and financing. Influencing high-level political platforms such as the G7 and the G20 will provide opportunities for firm commitments towards more resilient, equitable, inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable futures through education.

UNICEF will also accelerate efforts to empower young people to make positive change for their lives and their communities. These efforts will focus on two areas: (1) building partnerships with local and regional networks, governments, and other community bodies to build their capacity to sustain and scale up support for young change-makers; and (2) reaching the most marginalized young people to support their change-making efforts with innovative and peer-driven approaches, informed by young people themselves.

Looking forward, UNICEF will continue to uphold its commitments within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Core Commitments for Children and its Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, to realize every child's undeniable right to education – *For every child, education.*

Abbreviations and acronyms

AEWG	Accelerated Education Working Group	GRYN	Global Refugee Youth Network
ARNEC	Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood	IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	IIEP-UNESCO	UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning
AUC	African Union Commission	ILO	International Labour Organization
AVR	augmented and virtual reality	INEE	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
BELDS	Better Early Learning at Scale	IOM	International Organization for Migration
CBE	community-based education	LGBTQI+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex
CSI	Core Standard Indicator	MHPSS	mental health and psychosocial support
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	ODA	official development assistance
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
CSSF	Comprehensive School Safety Framework	SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministries of Education Organization
DELIMa	Digital Educational Learning Initiative Malaysia	SEL/SS	social and emotional learning/soft skills
ECD	early childhood development	SEWG	Secondary Education Working Group
ECE	early childhood education	STEM	science, technology, engineering and mathematics
ECW	Education Cannot Wait	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems	United Nations	United Nations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the Government of the United Kingdom	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
FLN	foundational literacy and numeracy	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
G7	the Group of Seven	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
GADRRRES	Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector	WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
GPE	Global Partnership for Education	WFP	World Food Programme

Annex 1: Financial Report

Resources to UNICEF's programmes come from the voluntary contributions of governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector and individuals. UNICEF relies on this mixture of robust funding sources to uphold our mission of realizing the rights of every child, especially the most marginalized. Resources to UNICEF take the form of direct or indirect funding, people (volunteers, consultants and seconded personnel), partnerships, equipment and other in-kind donations.

Categories of funding to UNICEF include:¹⁴¹

Core Resources or Regular Resources (RR) are unrestricted and unearmarked funding provided to UNICEF to deliver results across its Strategic Plan. As the most flexible form of funding, Regular Resources allow UNICEF to respond quickly and effectively whenever and wherever the children and young people we serve are most in need or most at risk. Regular Resources also fund the backbone of UNICEF's country presence and programming as well as critical global technical expertise, emergency response structure and core management functions.

Other Resources (OR) are earmarked contributions by donors for programmes; these are supplementary to the contributions in unearmarked RR and are made for a specific purpose such as an emergency response or a specific programme in a country/region.

Other Resources (regular) are funds for specific, non-emergency programme purposes and strategic priorities. OR may be contributed via several funding modalities: UN inter-organizational arrangements and thematic funding; Global Programme Partnerships, which help to address transnational issues and improve aid effectiveness; International Financial Institutions, such as the World Bank.

Other Resources (emergency) are earmarked funds for specific humanitarian action and post-crisis recovery activities.

Thematic Funds are unearmarked contributions received to specific UNICEF programmes. These funds facilitate longer-term planning and sustainability, and reduce transaction costs, leaving more resources to achieve results for children. In countries affected by humanitarian crisis, it also allows for a faster, more agile and cost-effective UNICEF response.

¹⁴¹ More information about UNICEF funding categories is available at <www.unicef.org/partnerships/funding>, accessed 31 May 2023.

Goal Area 2 income in 2022

In 2022, UNICEF received US\$783 million in **Other Resources – Regular** contributions for Goal Area 2 – a 26 per cent increase compared to US\$621 million in 2021 (Figure A1-1).¹⁴² Public sector partners contributed the largest share of **Other Resources – Regular** to Goal Area 2, at 86 per cent (Figure A1-2).

Figure A1-1. Goal Area 2 *Other Resources – Regular* contributions received, 2014–2022

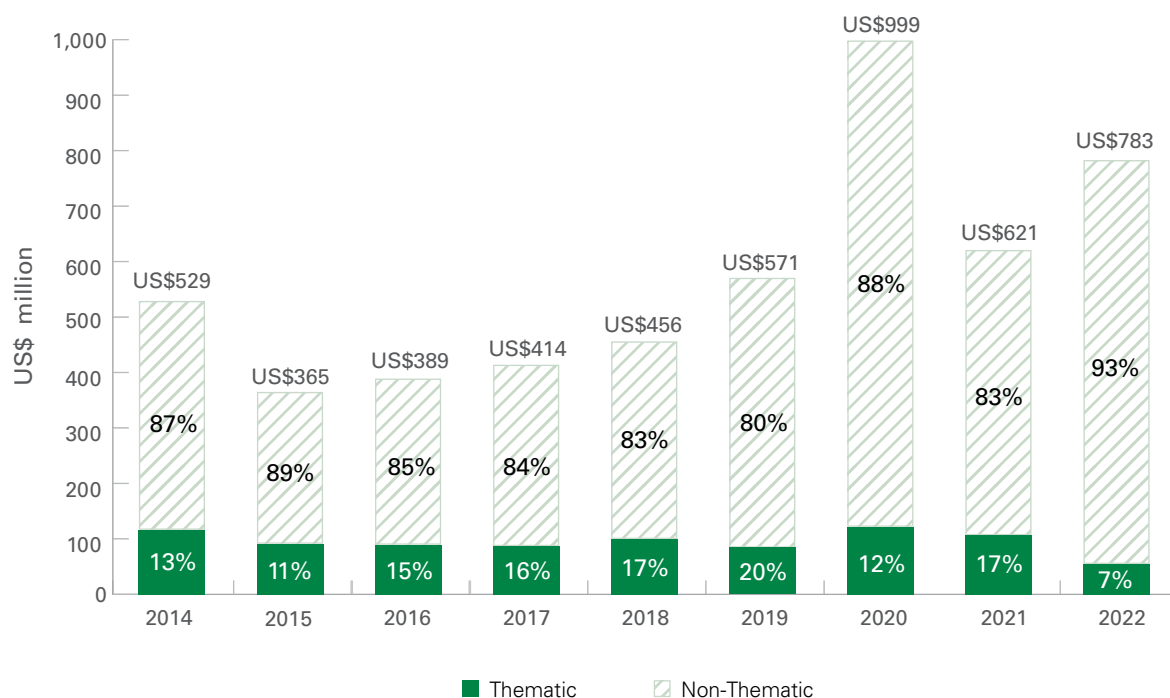
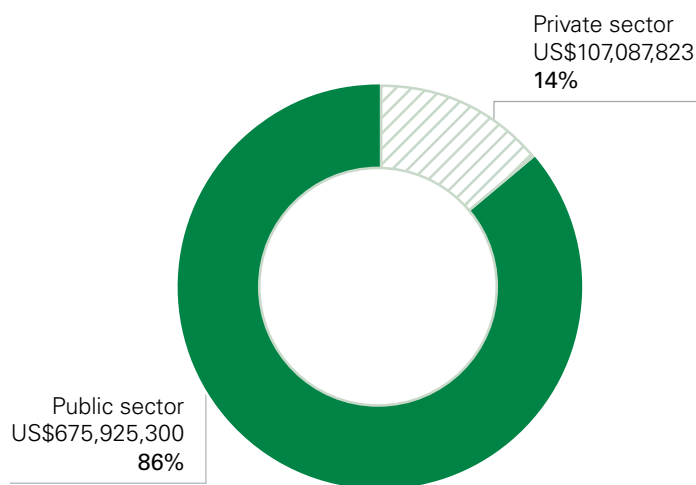


Figure A1-2. Total Goal Area 2 *Other Resources – Regular* funds received by type of resource partner, 2022



¹⁴² In 2022, UNICEF implemented a system to record funds dedicated to humanitarian response from non-emergency partners' budgets. This resulted in US\$96.4 million in grants reported in Goal Area 2 also reported in Global Annual Results Reports 2022 - Humanitarian action.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) was the largest contributor to **Other Resources – Regular**, with US\$177 million, followed by the European Commission with US\$129.3 million, the Government of Germany with US\$84.6 million, the Education Cannot Wait with US\$62 million, and the Government of Norway, with US\$46.5 million.

Table A1-1. Top 20 resource partners to Goal Area 2 *Other Resources – Regular* by total contributions, 2022¹⁴³

Rank	Resource partners	Total (US\$)
1	Global Partnership for Education	177,015,550
2	European Commission	129,303,064
3	Germany	84,666,508
4	Education Cannot Wait Fund	62,022,275
5	Norway	46,539,463
6	United States of America	45,502,518
7	United States Fund for UNICEF	19,199,864
8	Canada	12,908,434
9	UNICEF Qatar	12,006,543
10	Finland	10,580,449
11	Japan Committee for UNICEF	10,147,645
12	Japan	10,094,684
13	Denmark	9,913,382
14	German Committee for UNICEF	9,505,001
15	United Kingdom	8,682,369
16	Sweden	8,131,633
17	Danish Committee for UNICEF	7,619,735
18	Switzerland	7,370,152
19	UNICEF South Sudan ¹⁴⁴	7,140,780
20	Australia	6,411,455
Grand Total		684,761,504

¹⁴³ This list includes only Primary Donors.

¹⁴⁴ Contributions marked as received from South Sudan include US\$7.1 million received from the African Development Bank.

Education in Afghanistan remained a top financial priority for many partners in 2022, receiving contributions from the European Commission, with its critical support to teachers (US\$56 million) and USAID (US\$40 million) to keep schools open. The Government of Norway's sizeable thematic funding contribution (US\$28 million) given at the most flexible level provided much needed support to other critical areas of education programmes globally. Education in Afghanistan was also the focus of the Global Partnership for Education's Education Sector Implementation Grants (ESPIGs) as well as Accelerated Funding, followed by contributions to Pakistan, Rwanda, Chad, Sierra Leone and Syria, and more Accelerated Funding for the Democratic Republic of Congo and Myanmar. The US\$10.7 million GPE-funded programme for the Emergency Education Drought Response in Somalia highlights partners' growing focus and UNICEF's presence and expertise in working on climate change in education.

Table A1-2. Top 20 contributions by grant to Goal Area 2, 2022

Rank	Total (US\$)	Grant description	Resource partners
1	56,379,956	Thematic Funding for Education in Afghanistan: Providing Incentives, Protecting Teachers	European Commission
2	40,000,000	Afghanistan: Keep Schools Open	USAID
3	27,959,440	Global education thematic funding	Norway
4	21,793,781	Support to Transition and Resilience Education in Lebanon	Germany
5	20,650,165	ESPIG in Pakistan (Punjab)	Global Partnership for Education
6	15,970,590	ESPIG for Rwanda	Global Partnership for Education
7	15,358,309	Support To Türkiye: Syrian Support Workers Programme for Facilitating Access to Education	Germany
8	15,350,777	ESPIG for Chad	Global Partnership for Education
9	12,000,000	Education Cannot Wait funds for UNICEF Afghanistan	Education Cannot Wait Fund
10	11,708,400	Support to education in Lebanon	European Commission/EC
11	10,700,000	Somalia Emergency Education Drought Response Programme	Global Partnership for Education
12	10,700,000	ESPIG in Afghanistan	Global Partnership for Education
13	10,555,427	Support No Lost Generation (NLG) Initiative for children (Phase VI)	Germany
14	10,537,704	Support to education in Ethiopia	European Commission
15	10,494,441	ESPIG in Sierra Leone	Global Partnership for Education
16	10,298,988	Support to education in Greece	European Commission
17	9,998,572	GPE Accelerated Funding for the Democratic Republic of Congo	Global Partnership for Education
18	9,682,004	ESPIG for the Syrian Arab Republic	Global Partnership for Education
19	9,555,000	GPE Accelerated Funding for Afghanistan	Global Partnership for Education
20	9,301,632	GPE Accelerated Funding for Myanmar	Global Partnership for Education

Education thematic income in 2022

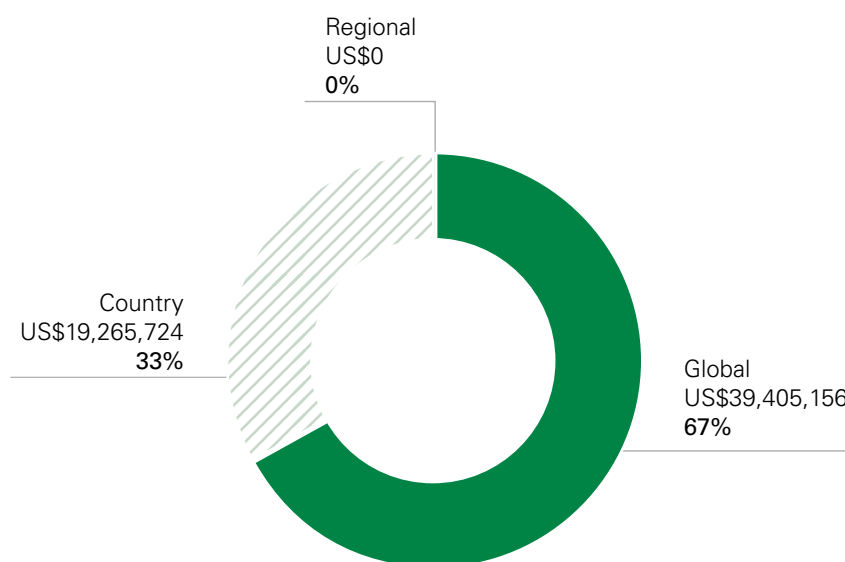
In 2022, UNICEF received US\$58.7 million in thematic funding to education, compared to US\$106.4 million in 2021 (indicating a drastic 45 per cent decrease), and US\$121.8 million in 2020. Of the total thematic funding received in 2022, 78.3 per cent was contributed by public sector partners, including the governments of Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and Luxembourg. Sizeable contributions were received by partners through the National Committees for UNICEF in the United States, France, Finland, and Germany. Private sector partners contributed 21.7 per cent of UNICEF's education thematic funding.

Table A1-3. Thematic contributions to education by resource partner, 2022

Resource Partner Type	Resource partner	Total (US\$)	Percentage of total
Public sector 78.3%	Norway	28,460,442	48.51%
	Denmark	7,656,968	13.05%
	Sweden	6,443,663	10.98%
	Finland	2,726,337	4.65%
	Luxembourg	645,161	1.10%
Private sector 21.7%	United States Fund for UNICEF	2,196,039	3.74%
	French Committee for UNICEF	2,052,101	3.50%
	Finnish Committee for UNICEF	1,867,534	3.18%
	German Committee for UNICEF	1,321,516	2.25%
	Spanish Committee for UNICEF	956,186	1.63%
	Italian Committee for UNICEF	950,610	1.62%
	Norwegian Committee for UNICEF	782,961	1.33%
	Dutch Committee for UNICEF	484,812	0.83%
	Swedish Committee for UNICEF	386,076	0.66%
	Portuguese Committee for UNICEF	351,812	0.60%
	Czech Committee for UNICEF	159,870	0.27%
	United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF	111,734	0.19%
	Andorran National Committee for UNICEF	77,559	0.13%
	Danish Committee for UNICEF	66,938	0.11%
	Turkish National Committee for UNICEF	30,628	0.05%
	Australian Committee for UNICEF	30,222	0.05%
	Canadian UNICEF Committee	24,248	0.04%
	Korean Committee for UNICEF	15,352	0.03%
	Iceland National Committee for UNICEF	3,893	0.01%
	Hong Kong Committee for UNICEF	3,446	0.01%
UNICEF country offices	864,770	1.47%	
Grand Total		58,670,880	100%

UNICEF receives thematic funding at global, regional and country level. Of all thematic education contributions that UNICEF received in 2022, 67 per cent were global level contributions, more than half of that (48 per cent overall) was contributed solely by the Government of Norway. Global thematic contributions are the most flexible sources of funding to UNICEF after Regular Resources and can be allocated across regions to individual country programmes, according to priority needs. The remaining 33 per cent were loosely earmarked as country-level contributions, underscoring the growing preference of partners to give at the country level. There were no regional level thematic contributions received in 2022.

Figure A1-3. Education thematic funding contributions by level, 2022



Global education thematic allocations in 2022

UNICEF allocates global thematic funding to its headquarters, regional and country offices according to the regional and/or country context, needs, progress against critical education indicators, among other equity-focused factors such as the number of children and adolescents, the proportion of children living in learning poverty, among other indicators. These allocations are consistent with the Results Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

In 2022, UNICEF allocated US\$47.9 million of the global education thematic funding received at the global level to UNICEF headquarters, regional and country offices. Of this total amount, 78 per cent (US\$37.4 million) was allocated to country offices selected for global thematic funding allocation, in consultation with Regional Offices and on a needs-based formula; 12 per cent (US\$5.7 million) was allocated to regional offices and 10 per cent (US\$4.8 million) was allocated to headquarters.

From the amount dedicated to country offices (nearly US\$37.4 million), US\$29.5 million (79 per cent) was allocated to low- and lower-middle-income countries.¹⁴⁵

Table A1-4. Global thematic funding allocation to UNICEF country offices

Country	Total (US\$)
Afghanistan	901,656
Albania	117,043
Algeria	331,331
Angola	489,894

¹⁴⁵ List of low- and lower-middle-income countries are as classified in the World Bank's Country Classification by Income (2022/2023), retrieved from <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups> on 23 June 2023.

Table A1-4. (continued)

Country	Total (US\$)
Armenia	124,042
Azerbaijan	123,505
Bangladesh	837,477
Barbados	176,470
Belarus	113,401
Belize	126,311
Benin	607,880
Bhutan	423,139
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	193,484
Bosnia and Herzegovina	117,769
Botswana	158,442
Bulgaria	100,728
Burkina Faso	207,880
Burundi	416,686
Cambodia	431,078
Cameroon	207,880
Cape Verde	345,516
Central African Republic	239,062
Chad	207,880
Colombia	218,985
Comoros	338,154
Costa Rica	124,575
Cote D'Ivoire	207,880
Croatia	82,765
Cuba	174,841
Democratic Republic of the Congo	226,900
Djibouti	353,459
Dominican Republic	203,692
Ecuador	173,876
Egypt	508,061
El Salvador	276,879
Equatorial Guinea	457,880
Eritrea	555,001
Eswatini	186,388
Ethiopia	444,301
Fiji	443,182
Gabon	345,516
Gambia (Republic of The)	489,062
Georgia	150,445
Ghana	489,062
Greece	75,783
Guatemala	284,701

Table A1-4. (continued)

Country	Total (US\$)
Guinea	457,880
Guinea-Bissau	457,880
Guyana	210,935
Haiti	347,438
Honduras	276,265
India	891,127
Indonesia	417,671
Iran	280,525
Iraq	280,525
Jamaica	133,290
Jordan	152,418
Kazakhstan	110,079
Kenya	306,247
Kosovo	146,991
Kyrgyzstan	161,989
Lao People's Democratic Republic	393,463
Lebanon	152,418
Lesotho	167,971
Liberia	395,516
Libya	174,545
Macedonia	106,100
Madagascar	415,560
Malawi	318,697
Maldives	187,627
Mali	207,880
Mauritania	607,880
Moldova	122,939
Mongolia	318,234
Montenegro	106,093
Morocco	225,351
Mozambique	456,993
Myanmar	381,359
Namibia	136,874
Nepal	542,868
Nicaragua	164,633
Niger	207,880
Nigeria	311,820
Oman	152,418
Pakistan	1,079,358
Palestine (The State of)	481,566
Panama	79,431
Papua New Guinea	418,974

Table A1-4. (continued)

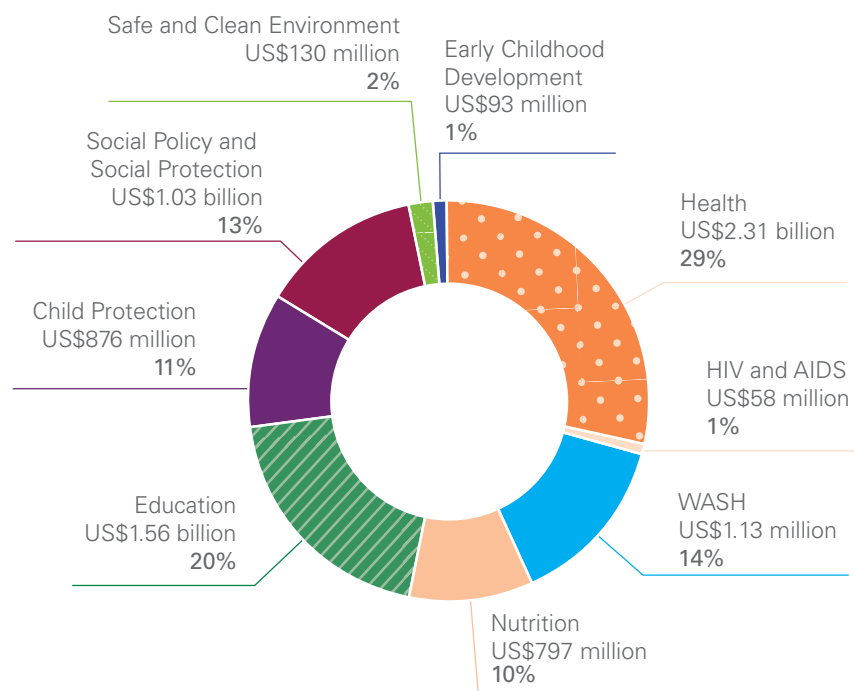
Country	Total (US\$)
Paraguay	274,494
Peru	73,223
Philippines	393,463
Republic of Congo	445,516
Romania	88,297
Rwanda	334,058
Sao Tome and Principe	345,516
Saudi Arabia	207,592
Senegal	609,896
Serbia	95,551
Sierra Leone	576,698
Somalia	444,761
South Africa	402,518
South Sudan	449,707
Sri Lanka	478,856
Sudan	609,673
Syrian Arab Republic	508,061
Tajikistan	137,235
Tanzania (United Republic of)	374,317
Timor-Leste	381,359
Togo	607,880
Tunisia	331,331
Türkiye	100,980
Turkmenistan	112,483
Uganda	388,979
Ukraine	61,800
Uzbekistan	146,928
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	184,859
Vietnam	343,744
Yemen	331,331
Zambia	379,729
Zimbabwe	380,919
Grand Total	37,357,399

The allocation and expense of all thematic funding contributions can be monitored on the UNICEF transparency portal (open.unicef.org) and the results achieved with the funds, assessed against Executive Board approved targets and indicators at country, regional and global levels, are consolidated and reported across the suite of Global Annual Results Reports. Specific reporting for country and regional thematic funding contributions is provided separately to partners.

Goal Area 2 expenses in 2022

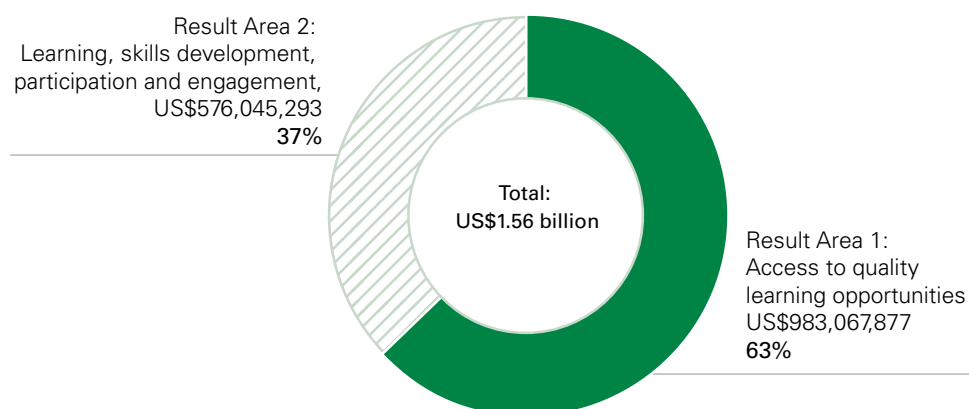
In 2022, UNICEF's total expenses globally amounted to US\$7.98 billion. Of this amount, US\$1.56 billion (20 per cent) was spent on Education interventions, the second highest expense after Health programmes, which accounted for 29 per cent of total organizational expenses. UNICEF's total education expenses in 2022 show a 31 per cent increase compared to US\$1.19 billion in 2021.

Figure A1-4. Total expenses by strategic outcome area, 2022



Of UNICEF's total education expenses (US\$1.56 billion) in 2022, 63 per cent was spent on delivering on UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 Result Area 1, *Ensuring equitable and inclusive access to learning opportunities, including in humanitarian and fragile contexts*, and 37 per cent on Result Area 2, *Improved learning, skills, participation and engagement*.

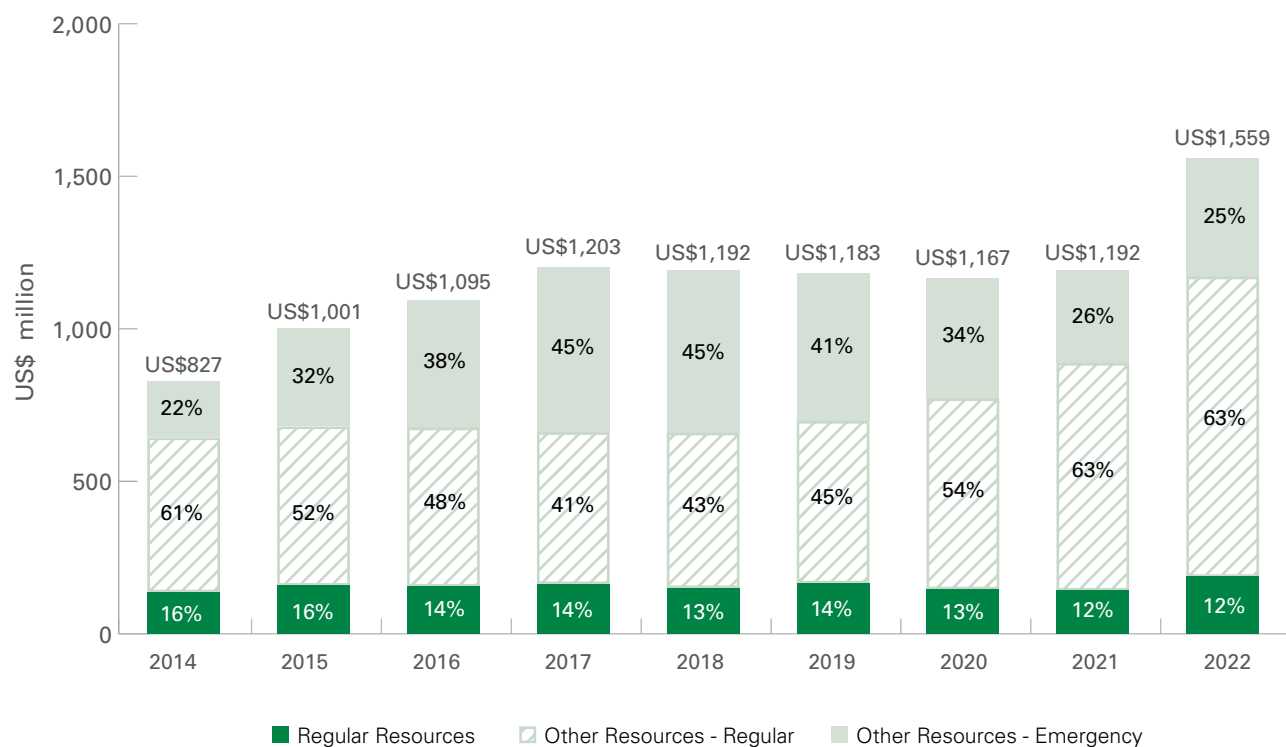
Figure A1-5. Education expenses, by result area, 2022



In 2022, there was a 32 per cent increase in expenses from **Regular Resources** (from US\$142 million in 2021 to US\$187 million in 2022). Expenses from **Other Resources - Regular** were also increased by 32 per cent (from US\$746 million in 2021 to US\$984 million in 2022).

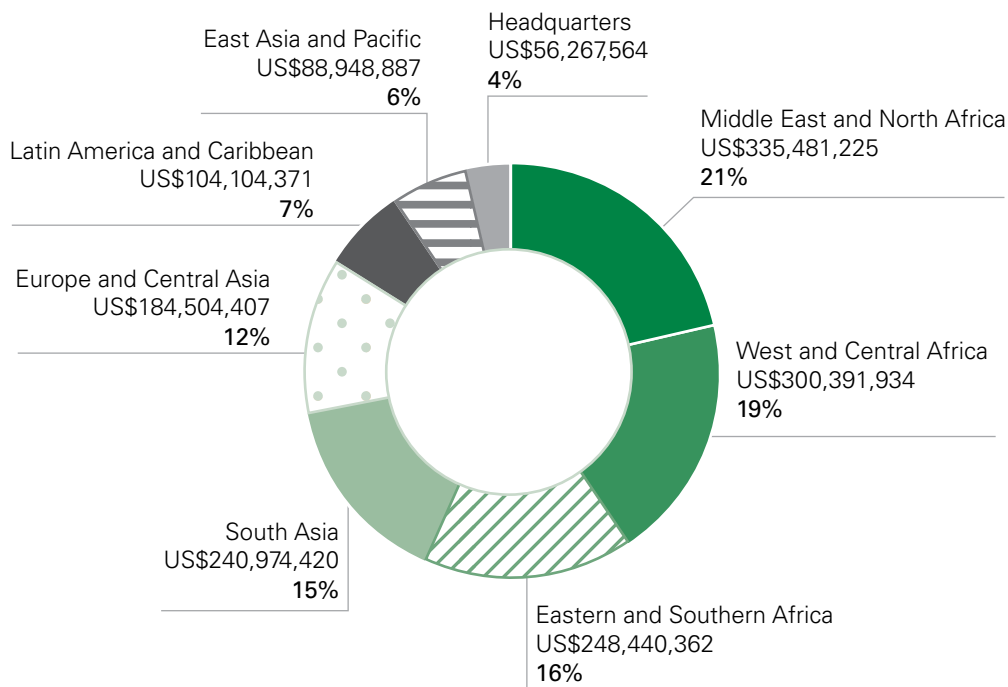
Similarly, expenses from **Other Resources – Emergency** increased by 28 per cent (from US\$304 million in 2021 to US\$388 million in 2022). For two consecutive years in 2021 and 2022, the proportion of expenses from **Other Resources - Emergency** has been about a quarter of total, down from 34 per cent in 2020, a year marked by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure A1-6. Education expenses trend by fund type, 2014–2022



In 2022, the largest expenses for education across all fund types were in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region at 21 per cent of the total expenses, followed by West and Central Africa, and Eastern and Southern Africa regions, at 19 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively. These three regions together accounted for 56 per cent of all UNICEF expenses for education. East Asia and the Pacific, and the Latin America and the Caribbean regions had the lowest share of education expense, at 6 and 7 per cent respectively.

Figure A1-7. Overall education expenses by region, 2022



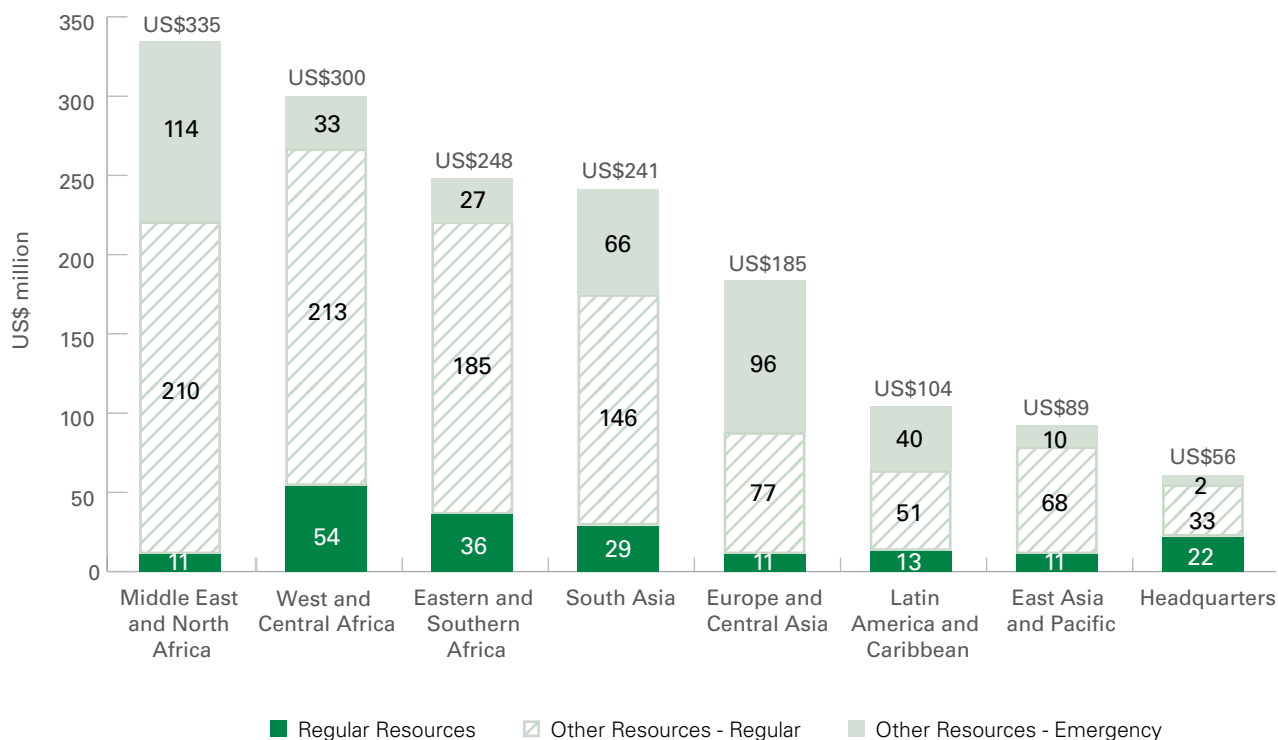
West and Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa had the highest reliance on **Regular Resources**, 18 per cent and 14 per cent respectively, whereas only 3 per cent of MENA expenses are from **Regular Resources**.

All regions highly relied on **Other Resources – Regular**. In the case of Eastern Asia and the Pacific, 77 per cent of expenses were from **Other Resources – regular**, followed by Eastern and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa who relied on **Other Resources – Regular** at 75 and 71 per cent of their expenses in 2022.

Eastern and Central Europe, Latin America and Caribbean and Middle East and North Africa had the highest reliance on **Other Resources - Emergency**, at 52 per cent, 39 per cent and 34 per cent of their total expenses respectively.

The graph below sheds light on the expense per region by fund type.

Figure A1-8. Education expenses per region, by fund type, 2022



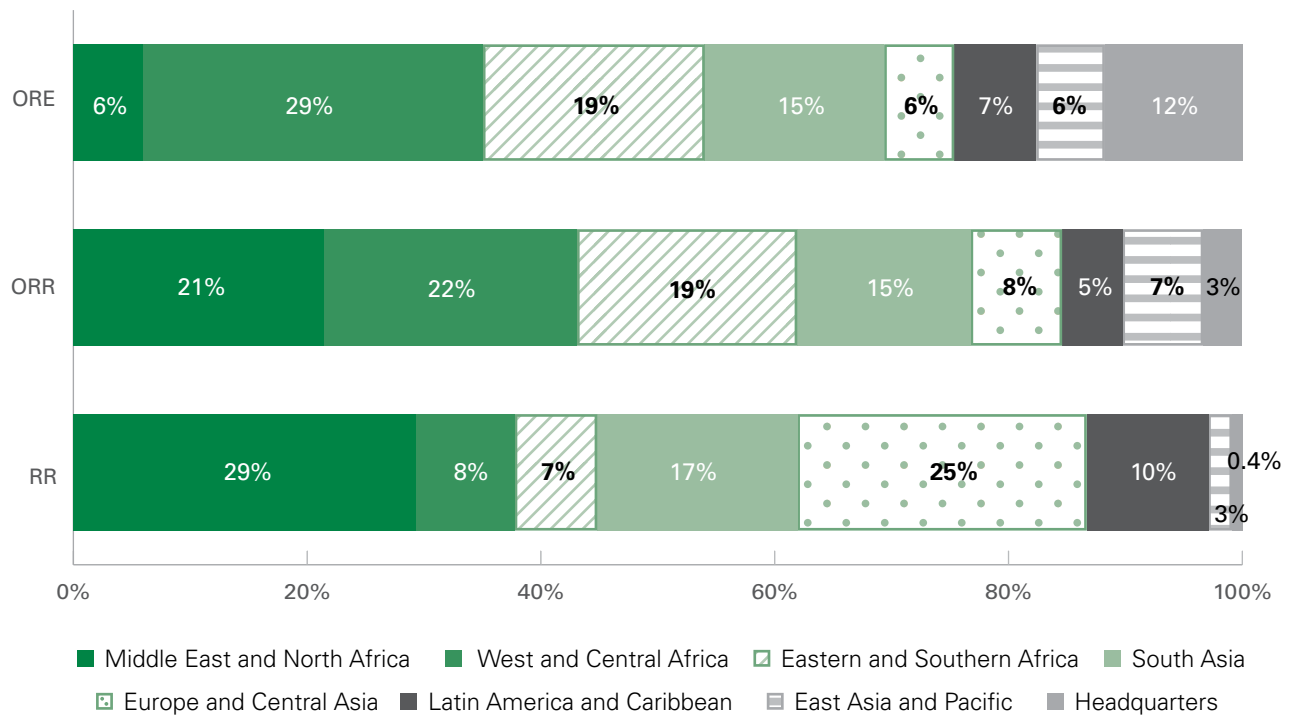
Of **Regular Resources**, the West and Central Africa region had the highest share of expenses at 29 percent, followed by the Eastern and Southern Africa region at 19 per cent and South Asia at 15 per cent.

Of **Other Resources – Regular**, West and Central Africa, Middle East and North Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa regions spent 22, 21 and 19 per cent respectively. These three regions together spent over 62 per cent of **Other Resources – Regular** fund type.

Of **Other Resources – Emergency**, over 54 per cent was spent in the Middle East and North Africa Europe and Central Asia regions, at 29 and 25 per cent respectively, followed by the South Asia region at 17 per cent.

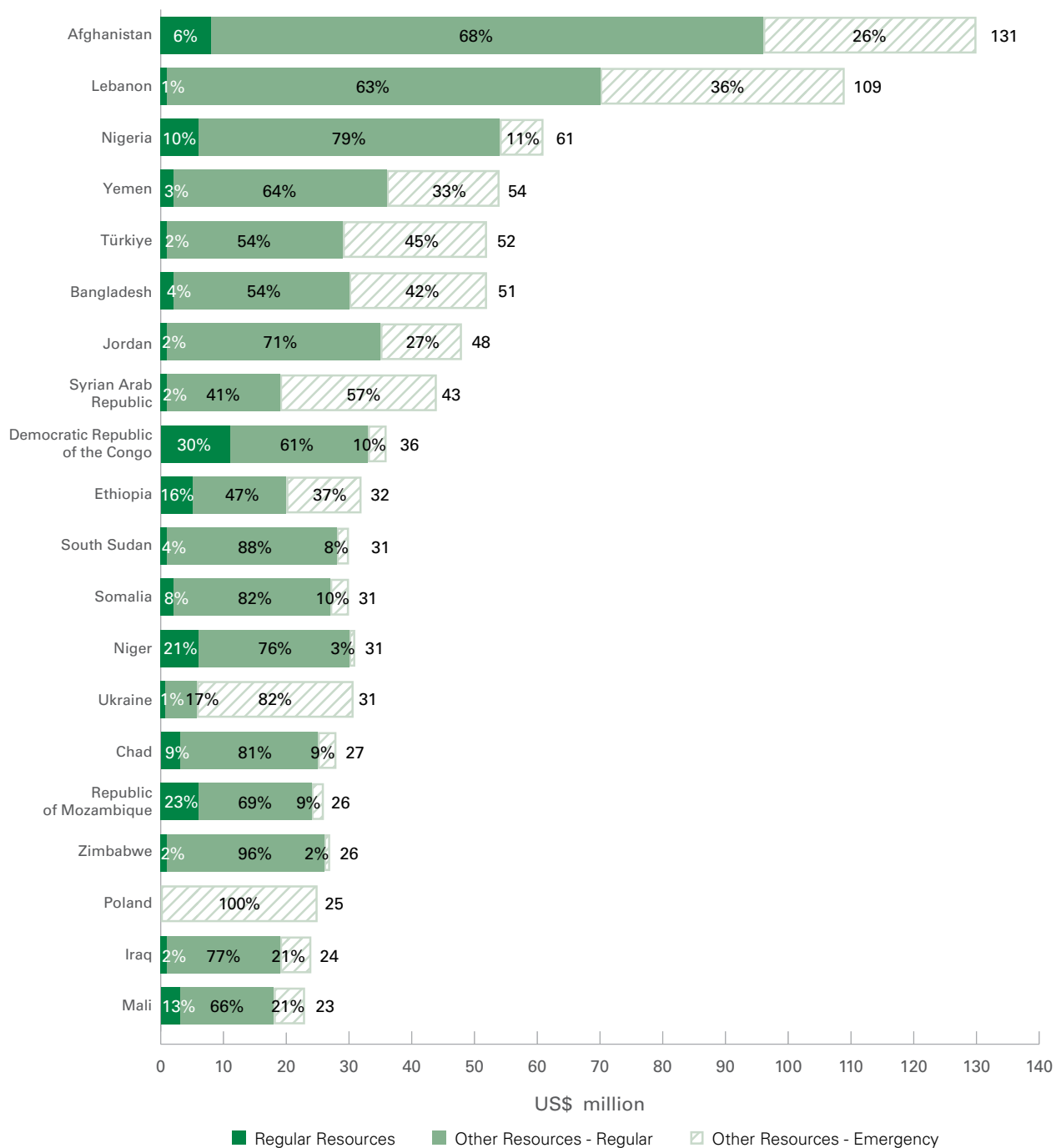
The graph below shows expenses per fund type in each region.

Figure A1-9. Education expenses per fund type, by region



Countries affected by emergencies and humanitarian crises generally had the largest education expenses in 2022. The education crisis in Afghanistan placed the country on top in terms of overall education expenses. The Syrian crisis continues to have an impact on Syria itself and many of refugee-hosting countries, including Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and therefore the reason for high education expenses in these countries. Other countries with high levels of expenses included Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Yemen, that are countries affected by conflict, natural disasters, or epidemics.

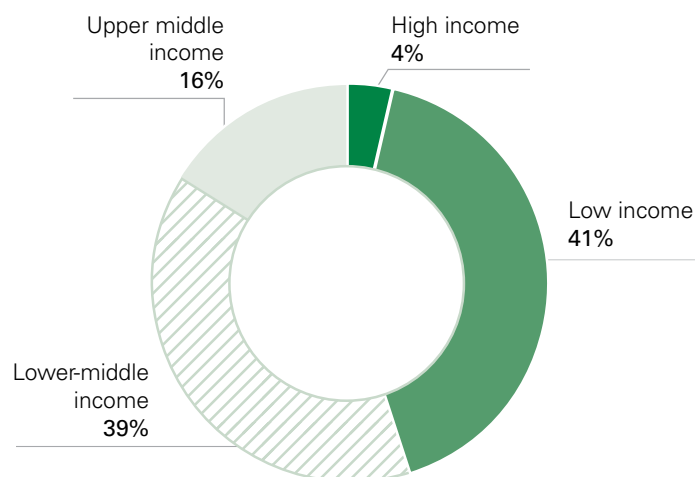
Figure A1-10. Education expenses by top 20 countries, by funding type, 2022



UNICEF's overall expenses in 2022 supported programming in 129 countries and territories, of which 27 were classified as low-income, 50 as lower-middle income, 42 as upper-middle income and 10 as high-income countries¹⁴⁶. Eighty per cent of UNICEF's expenses in programme countries were made in low- and lower middle-income countries and only four per cent in high-income countries. High-income countries, such as Poland, Romania and Greece used the funding to tackle refugee crises.

The average expense per low-income country was US\$22.5 million, compared to US\$11.4 million per lower-middle income country. Upper-middle income and high-income countries had an average expense of US\$5.5 and US\$5.6 million respectively.

Figure A1-11. Education expenses by country income group, 2022



Of UNICEF's overall expenses in 2022, the largest portion was spent on transfers and grants to counterparts. This reflects the modus operandi of UNICEF in most countries where governments and civil society organizations are supported to deliver results for children. Staff and personnel costs were kept at 15 per cent (compared to 17 per cent in 2021) and contractual services at 13 per cent (compared to 11 per cent in 2021). Travel costs in 2022 amounted to nearly US\$23.5 representing only 1.5 per cent of total costs.

Table A1-5. Education expenses by cost category and fund type, 2022

Cost category	Other Resources - Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular Resources	Grand Total
Equipment, vehicles, and furniture	89,609	24,550	4,135	118,293
Travel	5,159,178	11,859,224	6,478,512	23,496,914
General operating and other direct costs	14,592,053	37,439,100	19,136,033	71,167,186
Incremental indirect cost	31,010,463	63,124,154	0	94,134,617
Contractual services	35,845,524	149,431,156	23,648,407	208,925,087
Supplies and commodities	65,524,502	102,576,493	12,330,384	180,431,379
Staff and other personnel costs	45,407,103	117,410,850	66,822,576	229,640,529
Transfers and grants to counterparts	183,166,694	488,083,482	39,000,746	710,250,921
Other	7,407,149	13,774,045	19,767,049	40,948,244
Grand total	388,202,273	983,723,054	187,187,842	1,559,113,170

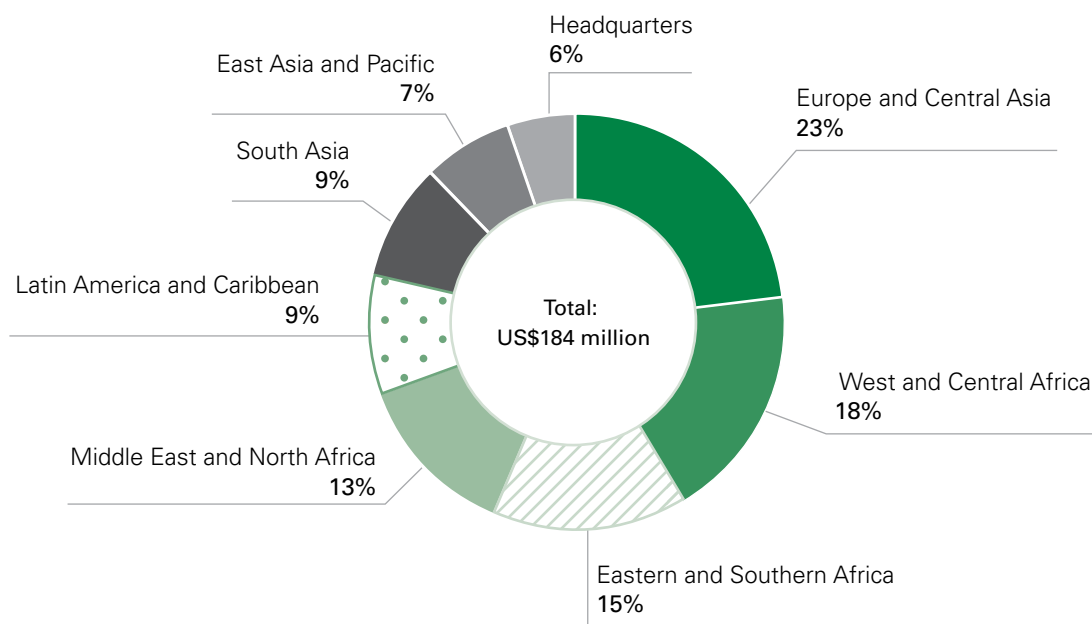
¹⁴⁶ Low-income economies are defined as those with a GNI per capita, calculated using the [World Bank Atlas method](#), of \$1,085 or less in 2021; lower middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between \$1,086 and \$4,255; upper middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between \$4,256 and \$13,205; high-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of \$13,205 or more. The list is available here <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>. Since Venezuela is unclassified by World Bank, for the purpose of this report, it is classified as "Lower middle income" as per recommendation of [Discussion Paper by Inter-American Development Bank](#).

Education thematic expense in 2022

In 2022, the amount of education spending from thematic funds was nearly US\$184 million (showing an increase from US\$121 million in 2021), of which 36 per cent was emergency thematic expenses (compared to 25 per cent in 2021). Globally, thematic funds accounted for 12 per cent of all the education expenses in 2022, compared to 10 per cent in 2021.

Eastern and Central Asia was the region with the highest spending of thematic funds, largely due to the emergency response in Ukraine and the refugee hosting countries, followed by West and Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa regions. These three regions cumulated 57 per cent of the total education thematic expense. Eastern Asia and the Pacific, South Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, together accounted for only 25 per cent of education thematic expenses. UNICEF headquarters spent 6 per cent of overall thematic fundings for education.

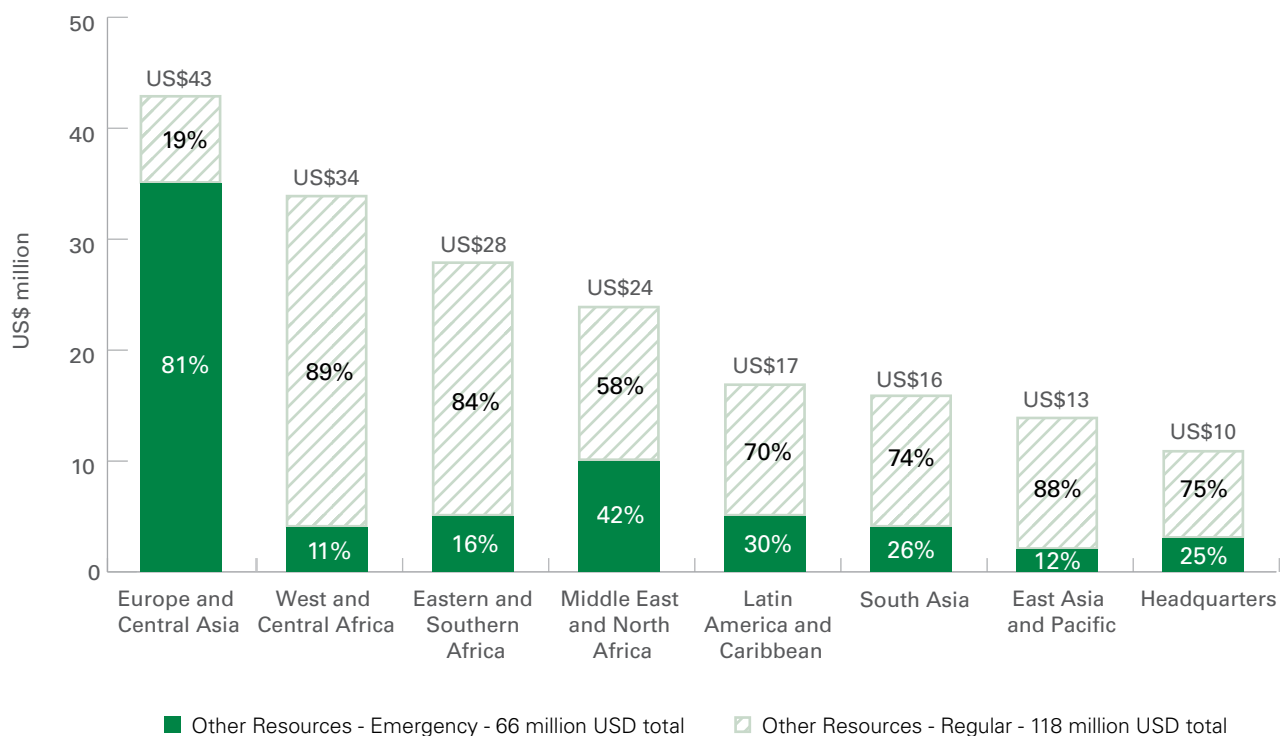
Figure A1-12. Education thematic expenses for education by region, 2022¹⁴⁷



¹⁴⁷ Includes the total education thematic funding at global, regional and country level.

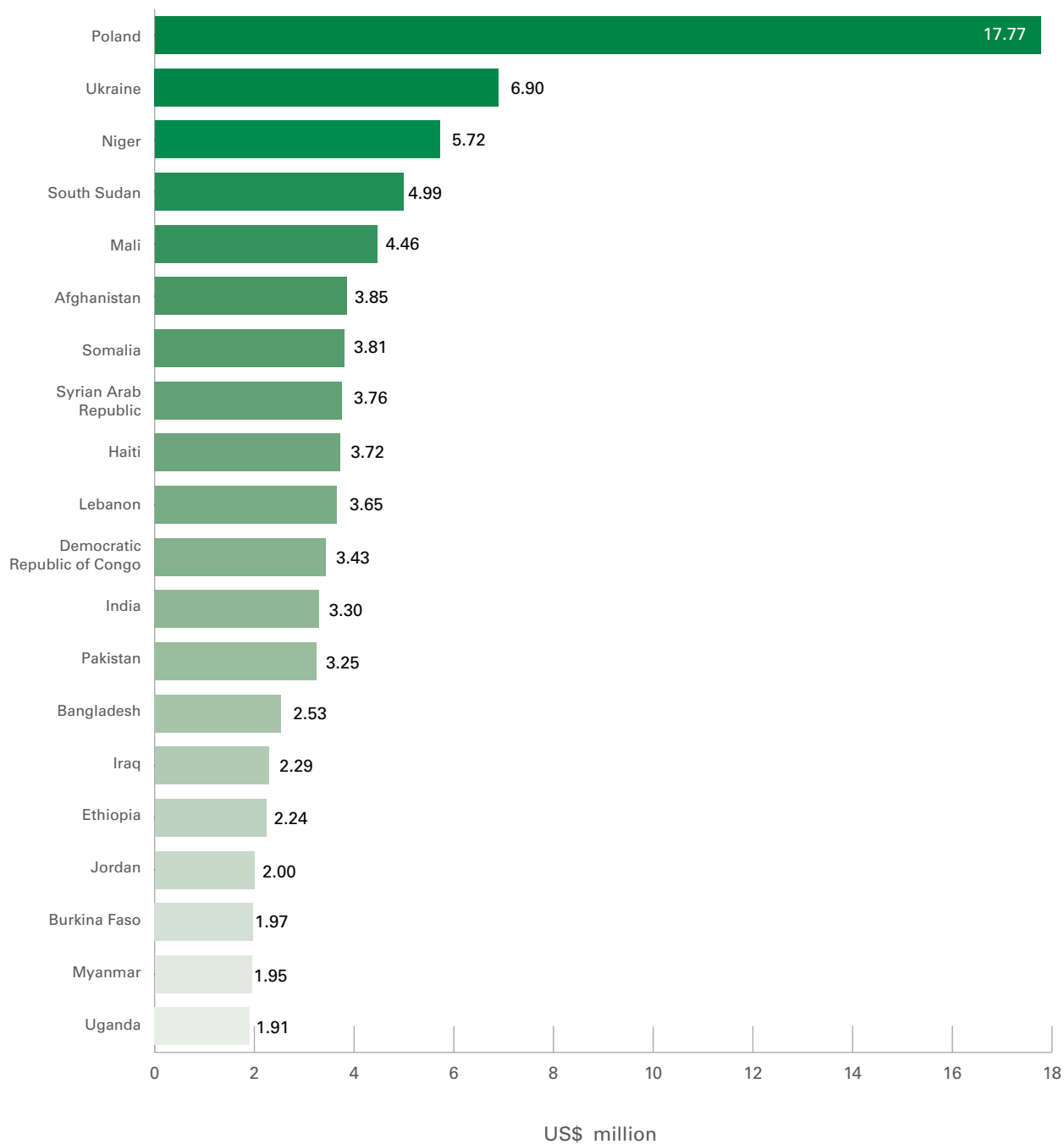
The breakdown of the education thematic expenses by fund type shows that **Other Resources - Regular** spending was at US\$118 million, and **Other Resources - Emergency** at US\$66 million. Europe and Central Asia region had the heaviest reliance on Emergency resources (81 per cent of its \$US43 million total), followed by the Middle East and North Africa region where 42 per cent of Education thematic expense was from Emergency resources.

A1-13. Education thematic expenses per region, by fund type, 2022



As can be seen in the graph below, Poland and Ukraine spent the largest shares of overall education thematic funds. Together they received close to \$US24.7 million, followed by Niger, South Sudan, Mali.

Figure A1-14. Education thematic expenses by top 20 countries, 2022



Annex 2: Data Companion

While preparing its Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, UNICEF Education teams reviewed the entire [Integrated Results and Resources Framework](#), through an extensive consultation process with other sectors and stakeholders, to better integrate new indicators (such as digital learning, which did not exist during the previous strategic plan cycle) or fine-tune others (such as risk-informed programming or inclusive education for children with disabilities), to rationalize data collection. This resulted in a modified set of monitoring questions addressed to UNICEF country offices for the yearly reporting, and consequently a set of modified indicators.

Core Standard Indicators (CSIs) are a required set of global standard indicators derived from UNICEF’s new Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, Results Framework. In addition to country-level indicators, CSIs generate the data required to calculate the values for Strategic Plan indicators that rely on country-level data. UNICEF country offices plan, monitor and report on all CSIs for the Results Areas where they are programming. Each CSI has one or more data points capturing data used to compute the CSI value and strategic plan indicator value.

2021 baselines for the current Strategic Plan may vary from the 2021 results as reported in the 2021 Annual Results Report, for two main reasons: First, UNICEF needed to establish baselines for the new indicators introduced in its new Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, which were not reported against during the previous cycle. Second, UNICEF country office reporting rules changed, as per discussions with partners. For instance, while during the previous Strategic Plan, countries working on inclusive education for children with disabilities were reporting only on the dimensions they were working on, they are now required to report on all five dimensions relevant to it, to (1) be consistent with the underlying theory of change; and (2) make it possible to establish trends, considering that the countries are required to report throughout the overall cycle.

This Annex provides definitions of output indicators from the Integrated Results and Resources Framework. The analytical narrative in the report is informed by comparing 2022 actual results against the 2021 baseline to assess UNICEF’s progress against its 2022 milestones.

Table A2-1. Output indicator data for Goal Area 2

Indicator	2021 baseline	2022 results	2022 milestone	2025 target
Result Area 1: Equitable and inclusive access to learning opportunities, including in humanitarian and fragile contexts				
2.1.1. Percentage of countries with an inclusive and gender-equitable system for access to learning opportunities	46%	47%	49%	65%
2.1.2. Percentage of countries with a resilient education system that can respond to humanitarian crises	30%	23%	33%	49%
2.1.3. Percentage of countries implementing evidence-based education sector plans/ strategies addressing inequities and mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals indicators	48%	62%	50%	63%
2.1.4 Number of out-of-school children and adolescents who accessed education through UNICEF-supported programmes	48.6 million	86.5 million (cumulative including 37.9 million)	64.5 million	114.1 million

Table A2-1. (continued)

Indicator	2021 baseline	2022 results	2022 milestone	2025 target
Result Area 2: Improved learning, skills, participation and engagement for all children and adolescents, in development and humanitarian contexts				
2.2.1. Percentage of countries with effective teacher development system	17%	21%	31%	75%
2.2.2. Percentage of countries with effective learning assessment system	39%	56%	42%	67%
2.2.3. Percentage of countries with effective student and community participation within the education system	53%	49%	55%	76%
2.2.4. Percentage of countries with effective system for digital learning solutions	9%	16%	11%	26%
2.2.5. Percentage of countries with gender-responsive systems for learning and skills development	41%	41%	50%	78%
2.2.6. Percentage of countries institutionalizing holistic skills development to support learning, personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship, social cohesion and/or employability and entrepreneurship	21%	23%	22%	42%
2.2.7. Number of children provided with individual learning materials through UNICEF-supported programmes	42.1 million	70.4 million (cumulative including 28.3 million)	57.0 million	91.4 million
2.2.8. Number of children who accessed education through digital platforms through UNICEF-supported programmes	63.1 million	76.8 million (cumulative including 13.6 million)	84.4 million	148.6 million
2.2.9. Number of school management committees whose capacity was developed through UNICEF-supported programmes	85,586	170,685 (cumulative including 85,099)	156,000	402,000

Result Area 1: Equitable and inclusive access to learning opportunities, including in humanitarian and fragile contexts

Systems-strengthening indicators

2.1.1 Inclusive and gender-equitable system for access to learning opportunities is implemented (index)

This indicator measures the extent to which UNICEF support around inclusive and equitable access to learning opportunities has succeeded in strengthening the education system to a minimum level conducive to gender equality and the inclusion of children from disadvantaged backgrounds or with special needs.

This indicator consists of 15 sub-dimensions grouped into 4 dimensions as follows:

Dimension 1: Inclusive education for children with disabilities

- Law/policy
- Accessible physical environment (including transportation)
- Materials and communication
- Human resources
- Attitudes

Dimension 2: Gender-responsive education system for access

- Addressing demand barriers
- Gender-responsive environment
- School-related gender-based violence

Dimension 3: Early childhood education

- Policy, leadership and budget
- Governance
- Teaching and learning environment

Dimension 4: Children on the move

- Refugee children inclusive law, policy and budget
- Documented migrant children inclusive law, policy and budget
- Undocumented migrant children inclusive law, policy and budget

- Inclusive data, firewalls, practices, resources for refugees and migrant children.

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (least inclusive and gender equitable) and 4 (most inclusive and gender equitable) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 46 per cent and by achieving 47 per cent in 2022, UNICEF has fallen short of its 2022 milestone of 49 per cent. Examining the 4 dimensions, decline in progress is observed in Dimension 1: Inclusive education for children with disabilities from 54 per cent 2021 baseline to 47 per cent in 2022, and Dimension 3: Early childhood education from 64 per cent 2021 baseline to 63 per cent in 2022 (*see Figure A2-1*).

2.1.2 A resilient education system that can respond to humanitarian crises is implemented (index)

This indicator measures the extent to which the education system is resilient and can respond to humanitarian crisis.

This indicator consists of nine sub-dimensions grouped into three dimensions as follows:

Dimension 1: Risk-informed programming

- Risk assessment
- Risk reduction strategy
- Human financial resources

Dimension 2: Peacebuilding

- Conflict sensitivity in the education sector
- Laws and policies
- National curricula

Dimension 3: Mental health and psychosocial support for children, adolescents and teachers

- Policies and plans
- Curricula
- Community engagement.

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (least resilient) and 4 (most resilient) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 30 per cent, and 2022 milestone at 33 per cent. The actual 2022 result was 23 per cent. Therefore, UNICEF fell short of its 2022 milestone by 10 percentage points. Examining the 3 dimensions, decline in progress is observed on Dimension 1: Risk-informed programming from 51 per cent 2021 baseline to 45 per cent in 2022 (see *Figure A2-1*).

2.1.3 Evidence-based education sector plans/strategies addressing inequities and mainstreaming SDG indicators are implemented (index)

This indicator measures the extent to which evidence-based education sector plans/strategies addressing inequities and mainstreaming SDG indicators are implemented. The indicator reflects the extent of implementation of evidence-based education sector plans or strategies addressing learning poverty and inequities and mainstreaming the SDGs among those supported by UNICEF on the topic.

This indicator involves seven sub-dimensions grouped into three dimensions as follows:

Dimension 1: Evidence-based education sector plans (ESP) / education strategy

- Evidence-based ESP/strategy (based on an updated education sector analysis or situation analysis)
- Address inequities in access, participation and retention
- Address inequities in resource allocation

Dimension 2: Mainstreaming of SDGs indicators in the ESP/education strategy

- Mainstreaming of SDGs indicators in the ESP

Dimension 3: Data/Education Management Information System

- Quality and timeliness
- Disaggregation
- Attendance and dropout.

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (weak) and 4 (championing) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline and 2022 milestone were 48 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively. By reaching 62 per cent in 2022, UNICEF surpassed its 2022 milestone by 12 percentage points. Noteworthy progress has been made in Dimension 1 and Dimension 2 (see *Figure A2-1*).

Service delivery indicators

2.1.4. Number of out-of-school children and adolescents who accessed education through UNICEF-supported programmes

The purpose of this indicator is to track UNICEF's direct contribution to reduce the global number of out-of-school children by providing them with access to learning opportunities. This indicator reflects the number of children whose enrolment in formal or non-formal early learning/pre-primary, primary or general lower or upper secondary education can be attributed to UNICEF support.

An out-of-school child is a child who is not enrolled in any formal or recognized non-formal learning programme during the reporting year before UNICEF intervention.

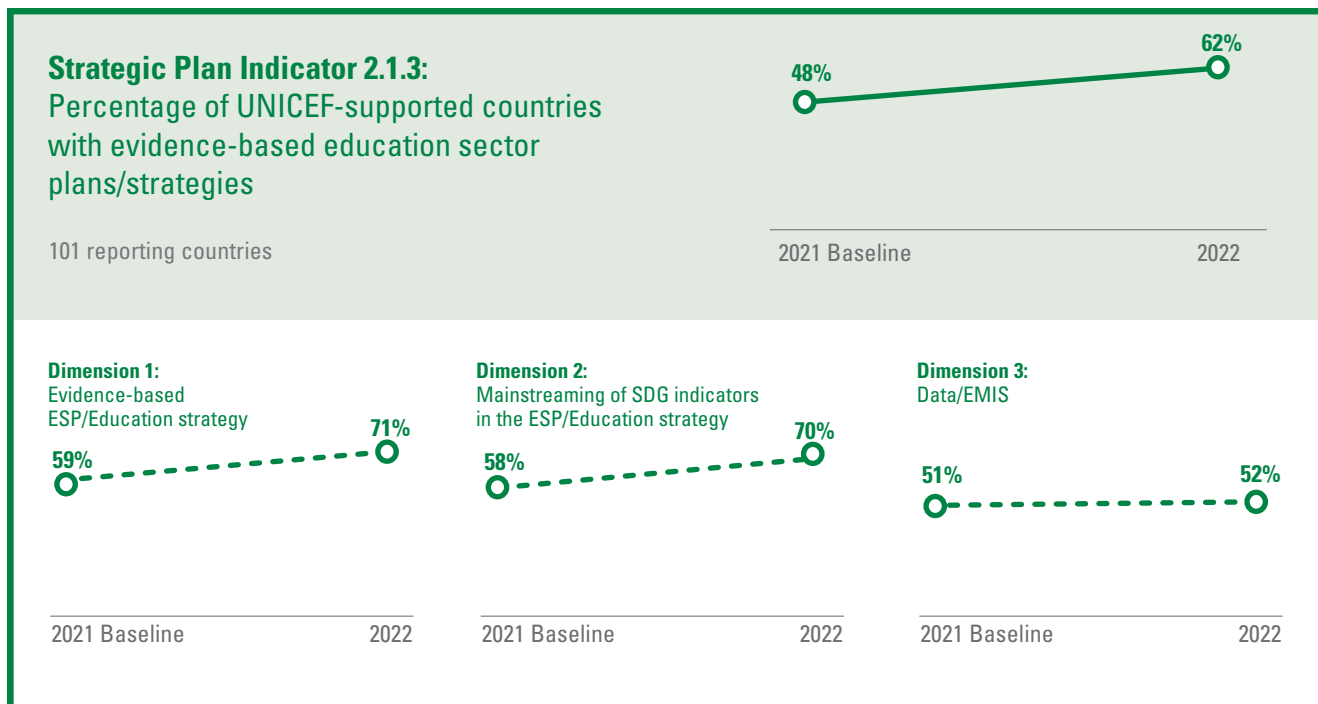
Children supported in development contexts and in humanitarian crises are included. Children who were enrolled in technical and vocational education and training are included. Children on the move are also included. This group encompasses boys and girls affected by migration and displacement, namely:

- Children who are migrating within their own country or across borders
- Children migrating on their own or with their caregivers
- Children forcibly displaced within their own country and across borders
- Children moving in a documented or undocumented manner, including those whose movement involves smuggling or trafficking networks.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 48.6 million children, and the actual number of children reached in 2022 was 37.9 million. The cumulative result by the end of 2022 (sum of 2021 baseline and 2022 results) is 86.5 million. UNICEF has surpassed the 2022 milestone of 64.5 million by 22 million (see *Table A2-1*).

Figure A2-1. System strengthening indicators for Result Area 1: Equitable and inclusive access to learning opportunities, including in humanitarian and fragile contexts





Result Area 2: Improved learning, skills, participation and engagement for all children and adolescents, in development and humanitarian contexts

Systems-strengthening indicators

2.2.1 Level of effectiveness of teacher development system (index)

This indicator measures the level of effectiveness of the teacher development system, and consists of seven sub-dimensions grouped into two dimensions as follows:

Dimension 1: Teachers' development

- Teacher professional development
- School leadership
- Incentives
- Teacher mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)
- Teachers' peacebuilding and social cohesion

Dimension 2: Teaching

- Teacher pedagogy
- Accountability

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (weak) and 4 (championing) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 17 per cent, with an aim to achieve 31 per cent as its 2022 milestone. However, the actual result in 2022 is 21 per cent. This indicates that despite progress, the 2022 milestone for this indicator has not been met. Examining the 2 dimensions, progress is observed in both (see *Figure A2-2*).

2.2.2 Level of effectiveness of learning assessment system (index)

This indicator measures the level of effectiveness of the learning assessment system, and consists of three sub-dimensions as follows:

- Classroom assessments
- Examinations
- National large-scale assessments (including school readiness)

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (weak) and 4 (championing) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 39 percent, and its 2022 milestone was 42 per cent. By the end of 2022, the result reached was 56 per cent, indicating that the reporting countries surpassed the 2022 milestone by 12 percentage points.

2.2.3 Level of effectiveness of student and community participation within the education system (index)

This indicator measures the level of effectiveness of student and community participation in the education system, and consists of three sub-dimensions as follows:

- Participation
- Accountability to communities
- Community involvement in monitoring

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (weak) and 4 (championing) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 53 per cent, and its 2022 milestone was 55 per cent. By the end of 2022, the result reached was 49 per cent, indicating that the reporting countries fell short of the 2022 milestone by 6 percentage points.

2.2.4 Level of effectiveness of the education system for digital learning solutions (index)

This indicator measures the extent to which UNICEF support around digital learning has succeeded in strengthening the education system to a minimum level conducive to accessible digital learning for children.

This indicator consists of 14 sub-dimensions grouped into 5 dimensions as follows:

Dimension 1: Digital learning solution

- Teachers' training and professional development
- Administrators and school leaders
- Content and platform availability

Dimension 2: Devices

- Devices' functional requirements and information technology (IT) specifications
- Financing
- Procurement mechanism for devices
- Technical support and maintenance

Dimension 3: Affordability

- Policy and regulatory framework
- Financing

Dimension 4: Connectivity

- School mapping
- Connectivity financing
- School connectivity
- Real-time connectivity impact measurement

Dimension 5: Youth engagement

- Country plan for youth engagement.

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (weak) and 4 (championing) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 milestone for this indicator was 9 per cent, and 2022 milestone was 11 per cent. By the end of 2022, the result reached was 16 per cent, indicating that the reporting countries surpassed the 2022 milestone by 5 percentage points.

2.2.5 Extent to which the systems for learning and skills development are gender-responsive (index)

This indicator measures the extent to which UNICEF-supported systems for learning and skills development are gender-responsive.

This indicator is grouped into two dimensions, each measured via a Data Point as follows:

Dimension 1: Gender-responsive teaching and learning systems

- Gender-responsive teaching and learning systems

Dimension 2: Gender-equitable skills development

- Gender-equitable skills development.

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (weak) and 4 (championing) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline was 41 per cent, and 2022 milestone was 50 per cent. By the end of 2022, the result reached was 41 per cent, indicating that the reporting countries fell short of the 2022 milestone by 9 percentage points.

2.2.6 Level of institutionalization of holistic skills development to support learning, personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship, social cohesion and/or employability and entrepreneurship (index)

This indicator measures the extent to which UNICEF support around the institutionalization of skills development has succeeded in institutionalizing holistic skills development to support learning, personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship and/or employability and entrepreneurship.

This indicator involves three sub-dimensions grouped into two dimensions as follows:

Dimension 1: Mainstreaming skills development within the national education/ training

- Transferable skills development
- Digital skills and literacy

Dimension 2: Responsiveness of skills programmes to the demands of the labour market

- Responsiveness of skills programmes to the demands of the labour market.

The value of the indicator is measured by a number between 1 (weak) and 4 (championing) for each dimension. The reported indicator value represents the percent of countries with an overall average score equal to or greater than the threshold of 2.5.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 21 per cent with an aim to achieve 2022 per cent as the 2022 milestone. By the end of 2022, the result reached was 23 per cent, indicating that the reporting countries surpassed the 2022 milestone by one percentage point.

Service delivery indicators

2.2.7 Number of children provided with individual learning materials through UNICEF-supported programmes (number)

This indicator reflects the number of children whose provision with individual education/early learning materials can be attributed to UNICEF support. It reflects the number of individual children, in the specified year, provided with education materials intended to be used by one child, such as textbooks, drawing books, back-to-school kits, notebooks, student desks and benches (to be counted per child seat), school bags, etc.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 42.1 million children, and the actual number of children reached in 2022 was 28.3 million. The cumulative result achieved by the end of 2022 is 70.4 million. Therefore, UNICEF has surpassed the 2022 milestone of 57 million by nearly 13 million.

2.2.8 Number of children who accessed education through digital platforms through UNICEF-supported programmes (number)

This indicator reflects the number of children whose access to digital learning is due to UNICEF intervention. In cases where UNICEF is not the sole contributor, its share should be estimated in proportion to its financial contribution.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 63.1 million, and the actual number reached in 2022 was 13.6 million. This brings the cumulative results by the end of 2022 to 76.7 million, which falls short of the 2022 milestone of 84.4 million.

2.2.9 Number of school management committees whose capacity was developed through UNICEF-supported programmes (number)

The purpose of this indicator is to track UNICEF's direct contribution to the capacity-building of school management committees or similar bodies. This indicator reflects the number of school management committees whose capacity was developed through UNICEF-supported programmes.

The term 'school management committee' is to be understood in a broad sense. It refers to all community structures involved in the management of schools. It includes school management committees, parent-teacher associations, parents' associations and mothers' associations.

UNICEF's 2021 baseline for this indicator was 85,586, and the actual number reached in 2022 was 85,099. The cumulative result by the end of 2022 (170,685) indicates that UNICEF has surpassed the 2022 milestone of 156,000 by nearly 15,000 (see Figure A2-2).

2.2.10 Number of adolescents and young people who participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives through UNICEF-supported programmes (number)

This indicator tracks the number of adolescents and young people who participated in civic engagement initiatives, online or offline, through UNICEF programmes. This can include the adolescents and young people directly engaged by UNICEF and those mobilized by them.

For this indicator, the 2021 baseline was 19.6 million, with an aim to reach 2022 milestone of 20.1 million. In 2022, results show that UNICEF has reached 16.1 million, indicating that UNICEF has fallen short of its 2022 milestone by 4 million.

Figure A2-2: Systems-strengthening indicators and dimensions for Result Area 2: Improved learning, skills, participation and engagement for all children and adolescents, in development and humanitarian contexts.



Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.3:
Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with effective student and community participation

70 reporting countries



2021 Baseline

2022

Dimension 1:
Participation



No baseline

2022

Dimension 2:
Accountability to communities



No baseline

2022

Dimension 3:
Community involvement in monitoring



No baseline

2022

Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.4:
Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with effective system for digital learning solutions

101 reporting countries



2021 Baseline

2022

Dimension 1:
Digital learning solution



2021 Baseline

2022

Dimension 2:
Devices



2021 Baseline

2022

Dimension 3:
Affordability



2021 Baseline

2022

Dimension 4:
Connectivity



2021 Baseline

2022

Dimension 5:
Youth engagement



2021 Baseline

2022

Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.5:
Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with gender-responsive systems for learning and skills development

81 reporting countries



2021 Baseline

2022

Dimension 1:
Gender-responsive teaching and learning systems



2021 Baseline

2022

Dimension 2:
Gender equitable skills development

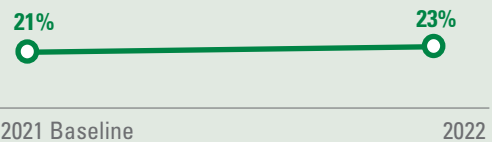


2021 Baseline

2022

Strategic Plan Indicator 2.2.6:
Percentage of UNICEF-supported countries
institutionalizing holistic skills development
to support learning

92 reporting countries



Dimension 1:
Mainstreaming skills development
within the national education/training



Dimension 2:
Responsiveness of skills programmes
to the demands of the labour market





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