



Children posing the camera during the celebration of finalizing the second phase of the UNICEF-Desalination Plant expansion in the Gaza Strip.

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 2

Reporting Period
1 January to 30 June
2023

State of Palestine

HIGHLIGHTS

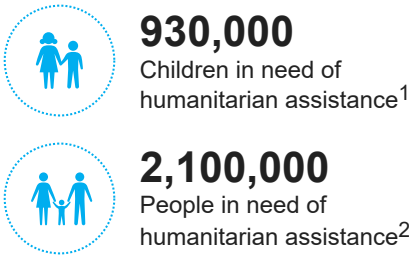
- The increase in violence across the State of Palestine (SoP) has further restricted the already limited access to basic social services and exacerbated socioeconomic challenges during the first half of 2023, impacting children's well-being, survival, and development.
- UNICEF's timely responses to the increasing humanitarian needs in the State of Palestine have contributed to reaching more than 32,000 affected people. These achievements include access to WASH services, strengthened healthcare infrastructure, improved malnutrition management, heightened community awareness, and specialized training interventions, all contributing to enhancing the well-being of vulnerable populations and enabling an effective response to emergencies.
- In 2023, UNICEF requires US\$23.8 million for critical humanitarian services in the State of Palestine (SoP), out of which 38 per cent has been received, leaving a concerning gap of 62 per cent. Without sufficient funding, thousands of people, including children, will not have access to needed basic social services, psychosocial support, and emergency supplies.

UNICEF RESPONSE AND FUNDING STATUS*

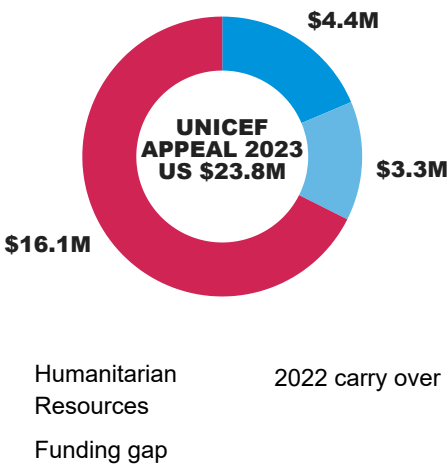
	Health and nutrition	Primary Healthcare	20%
		Funding status	14%
	Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA	MHPSS	47%
		Funding status	40%
	Education	MHPSS in Schools	17%
		Funding status	29%
	Water, sanitation and hygiene	Flood mitigation	94%
		Funding status	13%
	Social protection	Cash Transfer	117%
		Funding status	92%

* UNICEF response % is only for the indicator, the funding status is for the entire sector.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS



FUNDING STATUS (IN US\$)**



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

FUNDING OVERVIEW AND PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, UNICEF is seeking US\$ 23.8 million in humanitarian funding to ensure the provision and continuation of critical life-saving services for women and children in the SoP, including access to adequate water and sanitation services, psychosocial support for those in need, and educational services to address learning loss among children.

As of the end of June 2023, UNICEF has received contributions from several generous partners. The Australian Committee for UNICEF, the European Commission/ECHO, the Global Thematic Humanitarian Fund of UNICEF, and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) have supported UNICEF's efforts in the SoP.

Despite the support received from these partners, the 2023 funding appeal still faces a concerning gap, amounting to 62 per cent of the total required funds. This funding shortfall severely threatens the delivery of essential services, as thousands of people may be deprived of access to vital water and sanitation facilities. At the same time, many children may miss out on the much-needed psychosocial support and education to overcome learning loss.

Furthermore, the scarcity of resources could hinder UNICEF's ability to replenish its life-saving emergency stock. Having an adequate emergency stock is crucial for preparedness and swift responses in the face of unexpected shocks or crises.

SITUATION OVERVIEW AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

As of the end of June 2023, the increase in violence across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, has resulted in 31 Palestinian children (26 boys and 5 girls) and 6 Israeli children killed.³ During the same period, the UN verified that at least 457 Palestinian children (455 boys, 2 girls) were arrested or detained by Israeli Forces (IF) for alleged security offenses in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

In the West Bank, there has been a rise in casualties, including fatalities and injuries, due to increased military operations. The Gaza Strip experienced an escalation of hostilities in May 2023, leading to casualties, damages, and worsening living conditions for children and communities. This has had a negative impact on the mental health and psychosocial well-being of children and caregivers in and around the Gaza Strip, as well as the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, exacerbating pre-existing conditions and affecting healing. Thousands of children display signs of distress, while caregivers struggle to cope with economic pressures and seek support.

The continued shortage of health commodities in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank made it very difficult to provide essential healthcare to 1.6 million people (of them, 809,000 are children),⁴ particularly crucial services like maternal, newborn, and child healthcare.

Access to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services faces a range of challenges that hinder the provision of adequate clean and safe water and sanitation facilities for Palestinian children and their families. The Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) has noted a substantial decrease, amounting to 25 per cent, in the water supply to Palestinian communities in the Southern West Bank and Ramallah. The Israeli Forces (IF) operations in Jenin have led to detrimental consequences for water infrastructure.⁵ The deficit in

power supply in the Gaza Strip affects the operation of water wells, exacerbating the challenge of meeting the increased water demand during the summer months.⁶

Education-related incidents in 2023 exceeded 400, marking a substantial increase compared to the 115 incidents documented during the corresponding period in the previous year.⁷ These incidents led to intermittent closures and delays in school operations, consequently resulting in a loss of valuable learning time. Teachers employed in government schools embarked on a strike at the beginning of the second semester, impacting education for over 600,000 students. In addition, 90 schools under the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the West Bank witnessed more than 70 school days closures due to strikes by UNRWA teachers, affecting approximately 45,000 students.

The ongoing humanitarian crisis, along with existing structural needs, is exacerbating socioeconomic challenges for the vulnerable, such as women-headed households, people with disabilities, and those below the poverty line. The escalations in May 2021, August 2022, and May 2023 have strained the existing social protection mechanisms. A tailored shock-responsive approach is necessary to address both immediate and long-term requirements and bridge the gap between the crisis and existing programmes, such as the National Cash Transfer Programme (NCTP).

Access to confidential reporting mechanisms by the affected population is crucial in humanitarian crises like the SoP. Increasing awareness of affected people on the expected behavior of humanitarian workers and using child-friendly methods for reporting PSEA are equally important.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMME RESPONSE⁸

Health and Nutrition

UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), aims to enhance the health service providers' capacity to deliver high-quality health services, respond effectively to emergencies, and sustain essential maternal, neonatal, child health, and nutrition services for vulnerable women and children.

During the second quarter of 2023 in the Gaza Strip, a total of 3,711 neonates (out of 10,000 people to be reached in 2023) received quality healthcare services in MoH Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs). Additionally, 6,235 children under five years (3,190 boys, 3,045 girls) were reached with quality health and nutrition interventions. Maternal and nutrition services were extended to 1,928 women of reproductive age, including pregnant and lactating women (out of 10,000 to be reached this year). Moreover, 4,055 caregivers benefited from awareness sessions on Sexual Reproductive and Maternal Child Health and Nutrition (SRMCHN).

UNICEF's involvement extends to addressing malnutrition among children in the Gaza Strip.

For that, UNICEF partnered with a local NGO to provide malnutrition management services for 350 children (177 boys and 173 girls) in the Gaza Strip, with 70 receiving treatment for severe acute malnutrition.

UNICEF also provided essential medical supplies to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, benefiting 69,500 individuals, including newborns, children, women, and healthcare professionals.

UNICEF facilitated the release of prepositioned supplies from the MoH warehouse aiming at supporting hospitals responding to the

violence in Nablus and Jenin. These provisions are projected to benefit around 5,000 patients across 12 hospitals in the West Bank for up to five months.

Additionally, over 50 engineers were trained in oxygen system maintenance, and 120 health professionals in ventilation, resuscitation, and oxygen therapy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

UNICEF, in collaboration with partners in the Gaza Strip, has successfully reached 977 children (47 per cent of whom are girls) to access structured psychosocial support services via family centers. Furthermore, 2,543 children (48 per cent girls) received essential psychological first aid accompanied by family psychosocial support sessions. More than 508 children (46 per cent girls) were supported through individual case management and referrals to child protection services. These initiatives also extended to caregivers, with 1,533 caregivers (59 per cent women) participating in awareness-raising sessions focused on positive parenting and safeguarding their children, thereby strengthening families to prevent domestic violence.

In partnership with Save the Children (SCI) and in collaboration with Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) and the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), 548 psychosocial kits were provided to families impacted by the May 2023 Escalation in the Gaza Strip.

Moreover, educational sessions on the safe handling of Explosive Remnants of War reached 2,127 children and their caregivers (60 per cent children, 47 per cent girls), ensuring their safety and knowledge on this critical matter.

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, UNICEF, with local partners, have positively impacted the lives of children and caregivers. A total of 5,230 children (44 per cent girls), along with 1,420 caregivers who have been affected by violence and domestic disputes, received structured mental health and psychosocial services. Additionally, 470 mothers and 84 fathers actively engaged in child protection interventions. Moreover, 506 arrested boys aged 12-17 years old in eleven governorates of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, were supported with legal assistance, including tracing, legal counseling, and representation.

In alignment with its leadership role in the CP AoR and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Technical Working Group, and by following the priorities outlined in the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), UNICEF effectively coordinated the efforts of various organizations part of the CP AoR. Over the course of January to June 2023, in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, these collaborative efforts reached 24,515 children (including 13,203 girls and 11,312 boys) and 31,789 adults (23,705 women and 8,084 men) benefited from CP and MHPSS services. This included 455 children with special needs.

The MHPSS Inter-Cluster Technical Working Group was established in 2023 for both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to bolster the provision of quality Mental Health and Psychosocial Support services. Two MHPSS Specialists were deployed for three months to provide expertise and guidance, enhancing coordination, technical support, capacity building, and information management.

Moreover, a concerted effort was made to establish a unified understanding of MHPSS programme standards and activities. This involved a tiered approach based on the IASC MHPSS Intervention Pyramid, which highlighted staff qualifications and competencies required at each level. This clarity ensured that interventions were tailored to specific needs.

Education

A total of 4,605 children (2,648 girls and 1,957 boys) benefited from a holistic approach to a protective learning environment to enhance their safe access to learning.

In the Gaza Strip, hygiene kits containing cleaning and disinfection materials were provided to ensure the safety of the school environment. Moreover, student hygiene packages (62 per school) were distributed, benefiting a total of 114,210 students (with 54 per cent being girls) and the school staff.

To improve learning outcomes for the most marginalized students and prevent dropout rates, UNICEF provided remedial education, reaching 9,241 children (48 per cent girls). Furthermore, 189 assistant teachers, all university graduates, were enlisted to conduct remedial education classes focused on Arabic language and Mathematics for students in grades 3 to 6. In addition, 8,108 core teachers received training (with 51 per cent being women) to address learning gaps. This training equipped teachers with the necessary skills to identify gaps in Arabic Language, Mathematics, and Science and effectively address them in their teaching.

To enhance the efficiency of emergency responses, UNICEF has established five youth emergency groups in the West Bank, each comprising 20 young boys and girls. These youth have been trained to respond effectively to both natural and human-made disasters. This initiative involves close coordination with local entities and the Ministry of Local Government. UNICEF has also taken measures to bolster preparedness by procuring and prepositioning essential stationery kits suitable for 34,000 children. These kits are readily accessible in the warehouse for immediate distribution when required.

As one of the active actors in the Education in Emergencies sector and the co-lead of the Education cluster, UNICEF, in May 2023, conducted a national workshop to update contingency plans. This workshop was attended by 43 participants (including 18 females) and brought together representatives from the Ministry of Education across 18 districts.

Additionally, UNICEF has strengthened the incidents reporting mechanism, which covers both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This mechanism provides partners with real-time data, trend analysis, and triggers for effective responses.

The Education cluster strategy was also updated, accompanied by capacity-building endeavors for cluster partners. Training sessions on Disability Inclusive Programming and Core Coordination were conducted, benefiting a total of 154 partner staff (with 104 being female). These initiatives collectively underscore UNICEF's commitment to promoting education and safeguarding the well-being of children in diverse emergency contexts.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

In the Gaza Strip, at the onset of the year, UNICEF supported winterization preparedness and response efforts, protecting approximately 31,059 individuals (comprising 7,951 girls, 8,303 boys, 7,357 women, and 7,448 men) from the risks posed by flooding across vulnerable areas. UNICEF effectively mitigated these risks by providing protective clothing and maintenance tools to the Coastal Municipality Water Utility. Additionally, dewatering pumps were maintained, stormwater gullies were cleaned and installed, manholes were cleaned, and excavation and backfilling works were carried out around pumping stations in various locations. Critical electromechanical repairs were also performed on five different sewage pumping stations. These repairs played an important role in enabling the pumping stations to effectively manage increased stormwater volumes, thereby averting failures during heavy rainfall.

To further ensure the well-being of the population, UNICEF supplied essential water treatment chemicals, sustaining water facility operations until the end of March 2023. This support benefited approximately 750,000 people, encompassing 192,000 girls, 200,492 boys, 177,658 women, and 179,850 men.

In response to the escalation in May 2023, fifty thousand liters of fuel were prepositioned in strategic locations to sustain the operation of 120 critical water and sanitation facilities, serving approximately 750,000 people.

UNICEF also facilitated the release of prepositioned spare parts for water and sanitation networks, enabling the repair and rehabilitation of affected WASH systems across different regions in the Gaza Strip. These actions secured water access for around 80,000 people, including 20,480 girls, 21,386 boys, 18,950 women, and 19,184 men.

In the West Bank, UNICEF has provided 17 Schools and is planning to distribute hygiene awareness messages once the school year begins.

In close collaboration with the Palestinian Water Authority, the WASH in Schools Working Group was established, aiming at providing technical and coordination support during the assessment, design, and implementation of WASH interventions in schools. A workshop on WASH Operation and Maintenance was facilitated in the Gaza Strip, fostering a unified approach to ensure the continued functionality of WASH responses.

Social Protection

In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development, UNICEF has continued implementing an innovative approach to addressing the needs of vulnerable households with children affected by escalations in the Gaza Strip. This initiative involves providing child-sensitive cash-plus grants designed to offer multifaceted support. The aim is to offer multipurpose cash assistance and establish links between vulnerable families and a range of essential social services while promoting crucial practices for their well-being.

Through this effort, 1,168 households were reached, including a total of 4,528 children (2,222 girls and 2,306 boys), with 165 children having disabilities. Alongside the provision of cash transfers, UNICEF has also extended its support to households with specific protection needs. These households have been connected to child protection services and psychosocial support through the Family Centers facilitated by UNICEF.

Recognizing the importance of a holistic social protection system, UNICEF is actively collaborating with the Ministry of Social Development to enhance its initiatives. In this regard, consultations with key stakeholders have been initiated to develop an all-encompassing Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) action plan. This plan aims to incorporate various forms of assistance, including cash-based interventions and in-kind support. As part of this endeavor, UNICEF is concurrently finalizing a study that evaluates the effectiveness of different responses, particularly social protection measures, undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic. Insights from this analysis, together with the readiness assessment report for SRSP, will contribute to the development of national protocols that facilitate more effective and comprehensive humanitarian responses during times of crisis.

UNICEF's engagement extends further, as it provides crucial support to the Ministry of Social Development in shaping the Social Development Sector Strategy for the period 2024-2029. This involves a series of consultation workshops conducted across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These workshops, four in total, have been conducted to collect evidence and insights. Subsequently, the

process of synthesizing this evidence and preparing a situation analysis report is currently underway. This report will undergo validation by the Ministry of Social Development, thus contributing to the development of a robust strategy that addresses the needs of the most vulnerable segments of the population.

HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP, COORDINATION AND STRATEGY

UNICEF operates as an integral part of the United Nations (UN) and collaborates closely with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), ensuring seamless coordination with other organizations and local stakeholders. In this collaborative framework, UNICEF assumes leadership in critical humanitarian coordination clusters. Specifically, it leads the WASH Cluster, a collective effort aimed at addressing water, sanitation, and hygiene challenges. Additionally, in conjunction with Save the Children, UNICEF co-leads the Education cluster, focusing on educational initiatives.

Within the Protection Cluster, UNICEF takes the lead in the Child Protection Area of Responsibility, advocating for and safeguarding the rights of children. Moreover, UNICEF spearheads the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Technical Working Group, acknowledging the importance of mental well-being for affected populations, including children.

In a strategic partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF shares co-leadership of the Nutrition Working Group within the Health Cluster. This collaborative effort is particularly significant in the Gaza Strip and at the national level, addressing nutritional needs during crisis.

UNICEF remains dedicated to enhancing cooperation between humanitarian aid and developmental assistance in the State of Palestine. This commitment extends to emphasizing the importance of emergency preparedness, ensuring effective response to unforeseen challenges.

In close cooperation with implementing partners, UNICEF has institutionalized their Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) systems to improve access of communities and children to appropriate feedback platforms, integrating their views in decision-making and programme design processes. This included the operationalization of accountability frameworks through community engagement, transparent information sharing, and feedback components to ensure appropriate and effective responses.

Through a large-scale community engagement campaign, UNICEF reached more than 384,800 people. This campaign has been evidence-oriented, participatory and building on the findings of the completed AAP Context Analysis Results (July 2021). The primary objective of the campaign was to disseminate information and raise awareness about the new feedback channels and reporting protocols available to affected individuals. Through targeted messaging, the campaign encouraged a culture of accountability within the Palestinian communities, emphasizing their role in reporting issues and providing feedback. By actively engaging and involving community members, the campaign seeks to establish trust in the reporting mechanisms and build confidence in the processes involved, ensuring the safety of those reporting fraud or SEA.

HUMAN INTEREST STORIES AND EXTERNAL MEDIA

"I love sketching, and I began drawing every day with the paper and colors I got. I drew myself as a lawyer, and when I grow up, I want to be a great lawyer", says Dalia in second grade while showing her

drawing which she learned during the house-to-house visits campaign.

- How the most vulnerable children in the Gaza Strip use art and drawing to express themselves?
<https://www.unicef.org/sop/stories/how-most-vulnerable-children-gaza-strip-use-art-and-drawing-express-themselves>

HAC APPEALS AND SITREPS

- State of Palestine Appeals
<https://www.unicef.org/appeals/state-of-palestine>
- State of Palestine Situation Reports
<https://www.unicef.org/appeals/state-of-palestine/situation-reports>
- All Humanitarian Action for Children Appeals
<https://www.unicef.org/appeals>
- All Situation Reports
<https://www.unicef.org/appeals/situation-reports>

NEXT SITREP: 15 OCTOBER 2023

ANNEX A - PROGRAMME RESULTS

Consolidated Programme Results

Sector			UNICEF and IPs response		
Indicator	Disaggregation	Total needs	2023 targets	Total results	Progress*
Health and nutrition					
Children and women accessing primary healthcare in UNICEF-supported facilities	Total	-	145,432	29,084	20%
Children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment	Total	-	20,000	151	1%
Primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling	Total	-	52,482	7,044	13%
Children 6-59 months receiving micronutrient powder	Total	-	359,422	12,365	3%
Pregnant women and newborns receiving maternal/neonatal life-saving services in UNICEF-supported facilities	Total	-	25,500	32,174	126%
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA					
Children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support	Total	-	30,200	14,062	47%
People with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations	Total	-	292,568	384,800	132%
Children who have received individual case management	Total	-	3,040	1,083	36%
Children provided with landmine or other explosive weapons prevention and/or survivor assistance interventions	Total	-	10,000	3,882	39%
Persons (women, girls, men and boys) participating in child protection awareness-raising sessions	Total	-	7,000	3,153	45%
Education					
Children receiving individual learning materials	Total	332,305	30,000	9,430	31%
Children and adolescents participating in after-school interventions and/or summer activities to support their well being	Total	90,111	27,140	4,605	17%
Children benefiting from remedial education services and learning support	Total	67,341	5,000	9,241	185%
Water, sanitation and hygiene ⁹					
People accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs	Total	1.2 million	332,000	-	0%
People accessing appropriate sanitation services	Total	1.2 million	112,000	-	0%
People accessing appropriate WASH facilities and hygiene services in learning and health facilities and safe spaces	Total	56,574	57,000	-	0%
People with improved access to flooding mitigation and prevention measures	Total	1.2 million	33,000	31,059	94%
Social protection					

Households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers	Total	-	1,000	1,168	117%
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)					
People sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms	Total	-	50,000	6,358	13%

**Progress in the reporting period 1 January to 30 June 2023*

ANNEX B — FUNDING STATUS

Consolidated funding by sector

		Funding available		Funding gap	
Sector	Requirements	Humanitarian resources received in 2023	Resources available from 2022 (carry over)	Funding gap (US\$)	Funding gap (%)
Health	2,715,000	180,000	200,000	2,335,000	86%
Nutrition	2,100,000	65,000	34,764	2,000,236	95%
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA	4,600,000	1,391,886	462,963	2,745,151	60%
Education	3,880,000	-	1,142,966	2,737,034	71%
Water, sanitation and hygiene	6,300,000	157,981	629,647	5,512,372	87%
Social protection	3,065,000	2,100,828	727,084	237,088	8%
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)	100,000	14,376	50,146	35,478	35%
Coordination	1,040,000	527,183	29,000	483,817	47%
Total	23,800,000	4,437,254	3,276,570	16,086,176	68%

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ENDNOTES

1. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 'State of Palestine: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023.
2. Ibis
3. Including a 10-year-old boy who succumbed to wounds sustained during the August 2022 escalation in the Gaza Strip.
4. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - oPt: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023.
5. oPt: The Humanitarian Impact of the Israeli Forces Operation in Jenin, 3-4 July.
6. Palestinian Water Authority (PWA).
7. Education-related Incidents in oPt_1st half 2023 report – Education Cluster.
8. People to be reached for specific indicators have been revised as part of the revised 2023 HAC issued in July 2023.
9. The UNICEF WASH target for 2023 is adopted in close consultation with the WASH Cluster and due consideration to the capacity of partners in the West Bank and the ongoing WASH projects in the Gaza Strip (e.g., desalination plant) and the situation before the May 2021 escalation (see Humanitarian Action for Children 2020 as a reference).