

# Three years of full-scale war in Ukraine

UNICEF continues to respond  
to the immediate needs of children  
amid the horror of war  
while paving the way for recovery



## As the war in Ukraine persists, the protection and well-being of an entire generation of children hang in the balance

Since 24 February 2022, when eight years of conflict on the eastern front of Ukraine escalated into full-scale war, millions of children have been affected by the horror, insecurity and impacts of protracted war. Death and destruction have become the new normal for children in Ukraine. More than 2,500 children have been killed or injured, with child casualties up by 57 per cent in 2024 from 2023. Children in the east have now endured nearly 11 years of war.

One in every five children has reported losing a friend or relative, and one in three has reported witnessing death or injury since the war escalated. A third of households report that they have a child or children in distress. Adolescents are especially struggling with mental health issues. But the youngest children - those under three years old - have known nothing but war in their lives. Their most crucial first years have been marred by family stress, threats of violence and disruption to stability.

As full-scale war enters its fourth year, two in every three children in Ukraine are living in poverty and 3.7 million people remain displaced from their homes, up from 3.5 million a year ago as fighting in the east forces families - mostly women and children - to evacuate. Today, 2.9 million children still need humanitarian assistance.

Catastrophic damage to infrastructure is evident across the country.<sup>1</sup> Damage and destruction to 786 health facilities, including the country's largest children hospital, have impacted access to life-saving health care services for thousands of children and families. Continued attacks make it difficult to provide essential medical services and outreach to children, particularly in frontline areas. Relentless attacks on the power grid and water supplies have also left millions of people without reliable access to power or water and with limited heating during winters when temperatures often fall to -20°C. Water and sanitation systems are on the brink of collapse: 1.7 million children lack safe water and 2.5 million are living without adequate waste-water treatment.

More than 1,650 schools have been damaged or destroyed and continued insecurity has forced millions of children out of the classroom over the past three years. In the frontline areas where most schools remain closed, 700,000 children are struggling to learn online. Remote learning is hampered by poor internet connectivity, a lack of technology devices and frequent power outages, and



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*A destroyed school in the village of Ulakly, Donetsk region, Ukraine. "There is no electricity, the wires are cut, the poles are down, the houses are smashed, the school was hit by rockets," says one mother who evacuated with her children in November 2024.*

it can never replace in-person learning or the joy of being with friends and trusted teachers.

Ukraine is one of the most mine-contaminated countries worldwide. Landmines threaten the most fundamental rights of a child and leave a trail of trauma and injury.

What was the biggest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II is now a long-term displacement challenge. By 15 January 2025, more than 6.3 million Ukrainian refugees were registered in Europe, the vast majority of whom are women and children. They are enduring uncertainty, insecure housing and employment, and challenges accessing education and healthcare. Children displaced across borders are particularly vulnerable to family separation, violence, human trafficking and exploitation. Around half of all children from preschool to secondary school are not enrolled in national education systems in the countries that host refugees.

<sup>1</sup> The economic toll of the war has been staggering - total economic losses surpassing \$499 billion. As the nation's budget prioritizes defence, social services are chronically underfunded.

## Devastation in Numbers



An estimated

**3.7 million**

Ukrainians are internally displaced: 24 per cent are children; 57 are women.



**2,523 children**

have been killed or wounded<sup>2</sup>



**2.9 million**

children need humanitarian aid



**32 per cent**

of households report children in emotional distress



**786 health**

facilities are damaged or destroyed



**1,650 educational**

institutions are destroyed



**4.6 million**

children have had their education disrupted



**1.7 million**

children lack safe water



**2.5 million**

children are without adequate wastewater treatment



Up to

**30 per cent**

of Ukraine is contaminated with unexploded ordnance<sup>3</sup>



An estimated

**65 per cent**

of children in Ukraine live in poverty



**6.86 million**

Ukrainian refugees have been recorded globally, the vast majority of them are women and children



*After nearly three years of incessant war, children need a sustained peace. One in which every child can realize their rights. One in which they are safe, nurtured and empowered to recover from the horrors of war and to develop, learn and thrive again."*

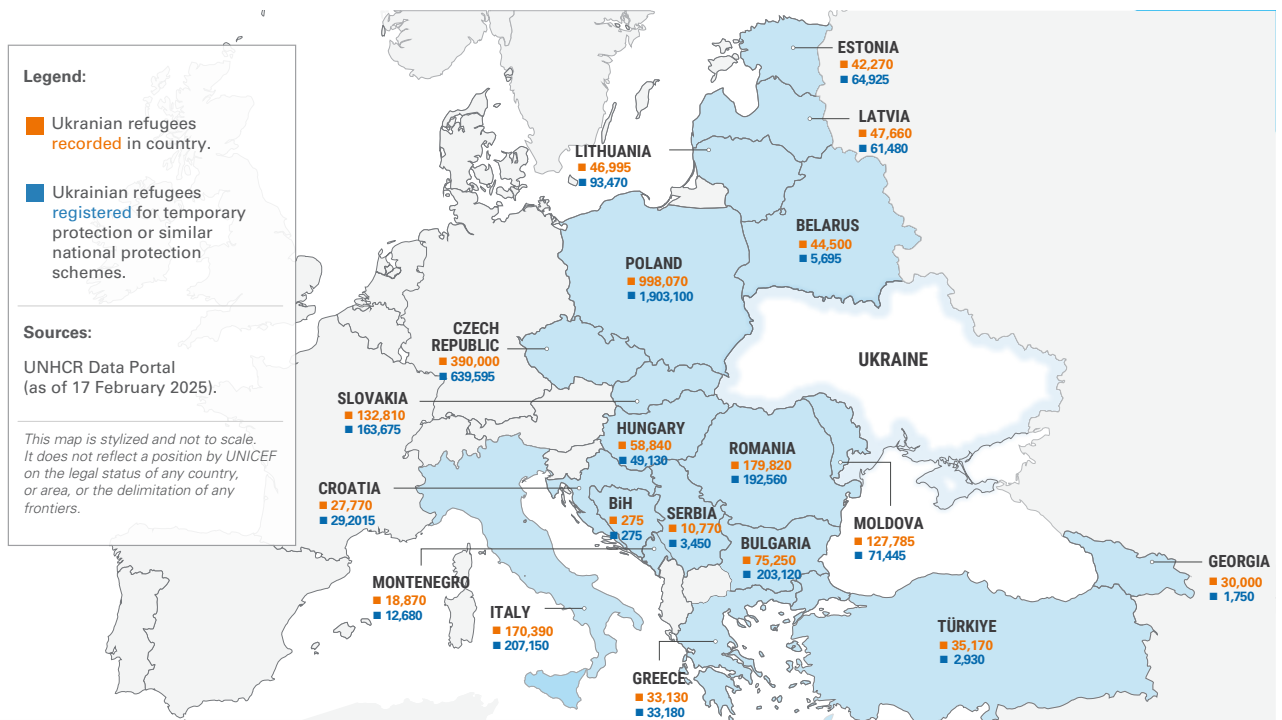
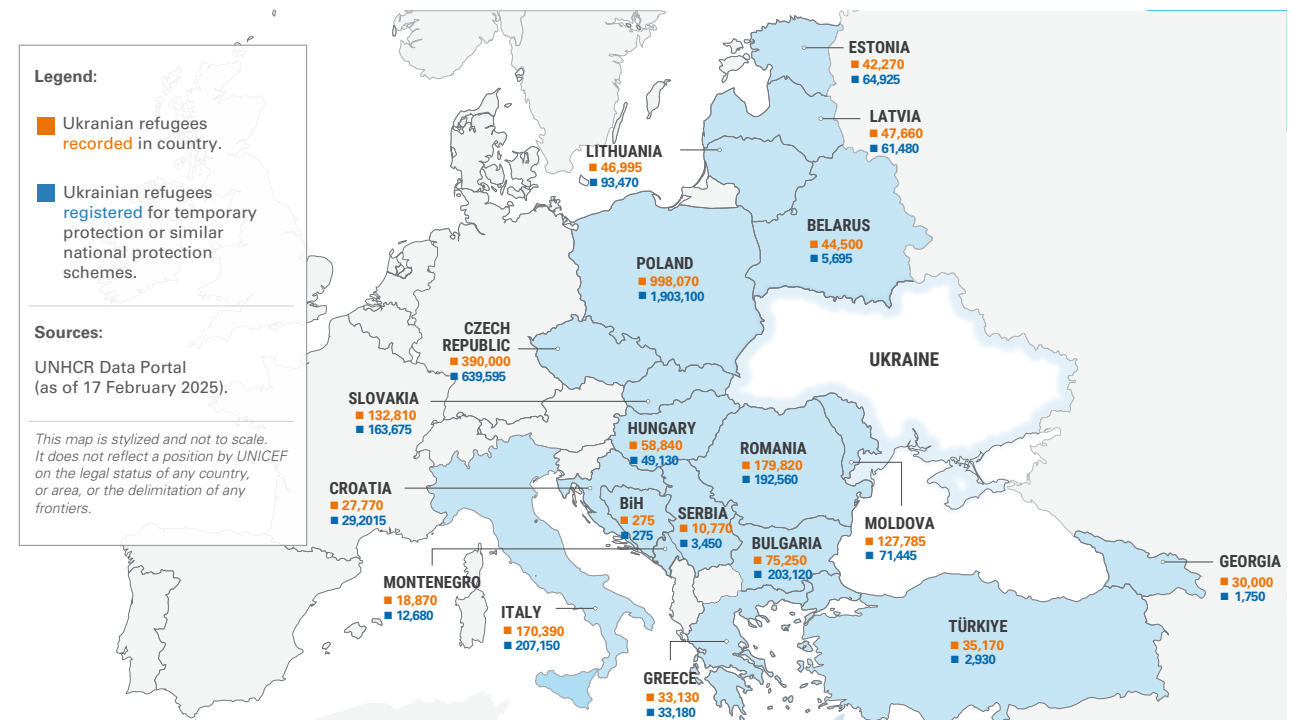
*Munir Mammadzade, Representative, UNICEF Ukraine*

<sup>1</sup> December 2024

<sup>2</sup> Government of Ukraine estimates.



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## » UNICEF IN ACTION

**Children inside Ukraine, and those who have been forced to flee the country, need our continued life-saving support and care. UNICEF works around the clock to meet the urgent needs of children and families and support recovery.**

### An agile response

With the incredible support from our donors, UNICEF has been able to deliver swift yet enduring, vital support to millions of children and their families across Ukraine and in countries hosting refugees. At the onset of full-scale war, UNICEF prepositioned supplies and dispatched rapid response teams in the southeastern regions where the conflict was most intense. In the more accessible central and western areas, we worked with local authorities to deliver essential education and child protection services, clean water and vital supplies.

We have remained agile throughout our response, adapting our work as the situation has evolved. By 2023, UNICEF was working with the Government of Ukraine, international agencies and over 100 local partners to provide ongoing immediate relief while planning and preparing initiatives for early recovery.

In 2024, our frontline emergency support continued as early recovery efforts kicked in and we started to rebuild systems for long-term resilience and sustainability, supporting and strengthening local and national capacities. Our winterization efforts provided cash, clothing, blankets, school grants and heating equipment to help families during Ukraine's brutal winter. UNICEF has also helped to repair and rehabilitate district heating systems to aid recovery.

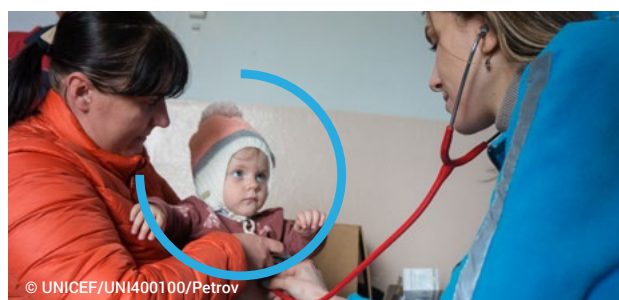
Within 30 kilometres of the frontline, where shelling and missile strikes continue unabated, UNICEF has worked with local authorities and organizations to support children and families with online education, mental health support, mobile health services and essential supplies. In 2024, we were involved in 45 inter-agency convoys with partners, distributing bottled water, hygiene kits and other critical supplies to over 77,000 people enduring conflict, fear and isolation in these regions.

### Looking to the future

As Ukraine embarks on local recovery and focuses on longer-term national development goals, UNICEF is working to ensure that children, youth and adolescents are at the centre of the process, which in turn can improve government effectiveness and efficiency in delivering services for children and young people. UNICEF's leadership in the field of child development is second to none. We bring a holistic approach to each child's life, an approach that is built on three pillars: Better Start to Life; Better Learning and Skills; and Better Care.

With the unflagging commitment of our donors, UNICEF has also supported millions of Ukrainian refugees and the countries that host them. Host governments led the refugee responses from the beginning. UNICEF's immediate emergency responses have evolved into sustainable programmes that support national systems and, increasingly, local municipalities that are hosting refugees. Today, UNICEF complements the national efforts of host governments to address the persistent humanitarian needs of those experiencing long-term displacement while supporting transitions to national systems and community structures.

In everything we do, your support is crucial. It enables UNICEF to continue to deliver high quality humanitarian, recovery and development results to address the immediate challenges while building a safer and more stable future for all.







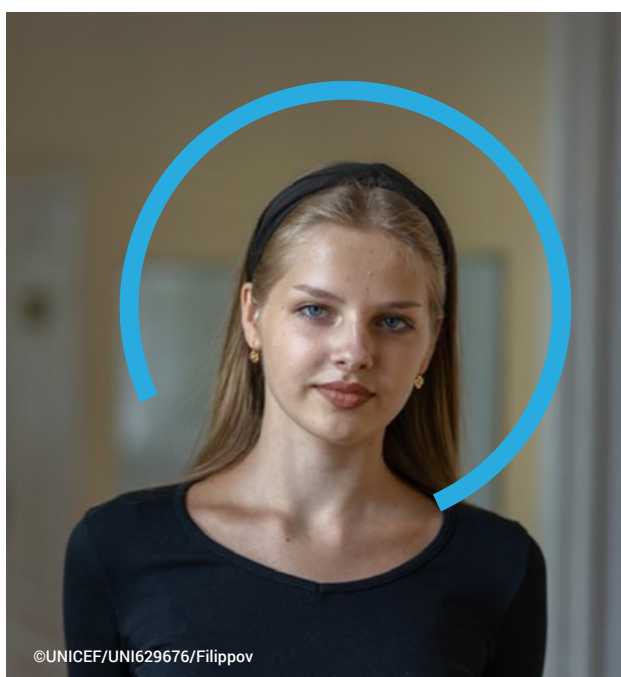
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In April, 2023, Khersonska oblast, a doctor of the UNICEF mobile medical team listens to the lungs of one-year-old Yevheniia.

## UNICEF extends our heartfelt gratitude to our donors

Your flexible and quality funding remain vital to address dire humanitarian needs. Your vital contributions and strategic support pave the way for long-term development.

In Ukraine	In refugee-hosting countries
 <p><b>Over 5 million children and women</b> have accessed primary health services through UNICEF-supported health facilities and mobile teams.</p>	<p><b>Nearly 434,000 children and women</b> in refugee-hosting countries in Europe have accessed primary health services through UNICEF-supported health facilities and mobile teams.</p>
 <p><b>Over 1.45 million children</b> reached with formal and non-formal education, including early learning.</p>	<p><b>1.26 million children</b> reached with formal and non-formal education, including early learning.</p>
 <p>UNICEF's work has enabled <b>nearly 3 million children</b>, adolescents and caregivers to access mental health support.</p>	<p><b>Close to 47,500 households</b> with children have been reached with UNICEF-funded support.</p>
 <p><b>Nearly 5.8 million people</b>, including over 958,000 children, were reached with clean drinking water.</p>	<p><b>Over 100,000 refugees</b> from Ukraine had access to safe drinking water.</p>



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Last year, when her school held a 'self-governance' week in which students took on the roles of teachers, Polina stepped into the shoes of her teacher which helped her decide on her future career. She had studied online in Kupiansk until her mother insisted that she receive a better education, and the family moved to Poltava to escape hostilities. "When the war started, education in my town was suspended," says Polina. "Here, I can study one week online and the next in person. In person, I can ask the teacher about things I don't understand and work through them." Over 35,000 children across Ukraine have participated in classes organized by UNICEF and partners.

## UNICEF: A leader for every child, during every stage of life



***Brutal attacks do not only cause physical and mental harm, but strike at the holistic development of children,”***

**Munir Mammadzade, Representative, UNICEF Ukraine**

UNICEF's leadership covers each stage of a child's life. Today, our early reform agenda is built on three pillars which are integrated in programming in 47 municipalities in Ukraine:



**Better Start to Life** Early childhood development is crucial for the recovery of Ukraine's human capital and a bountiful, peaceful future. We integrate many sectors into our early childhood development approach for children under six years old, including advocating for policies and practices that counteract the horrific effects of war on children and better the lives of generations to come.



**Better Learning and Skills** UNICEF works with children and young people to ensure that they have a voice and a role in Ukraine's national recovery. Our support for better learning and skills equips students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to contribute to this recovery. It is particularly important given that education has been disrupted for millions of students in Ukraine for five years, with the escalation of war following close on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic. Children and young people have a major stake – and deserve a major role – in the solutions to these challenges.



**Better Care** A nurturing family is the best environment for a child's development. UNICEF strives to ensure that every child has a family atmosphere of care, love and understanding. This is the focus of our support for better care in Ukraine which aims to develop integrated social services and benefits and strengthen the social service workforce; develop family-based alternative care; and transform institutional care facilities. Ukraine's reconstruction is an opportunity for comprehensive childcare reform, and UNICEF works to transform institutional care for children into family- and community-based approaches.





Photo courtesy of the family

Svitlana and Andriy, along with 10 of their 12 adopted children, appear in traditional Ukrainian embroidered clothing at their family-style children's home in the Kharkiv region of Ukraine.

## Better Care: A family for every child

### Amidst ongoing war, one family shares their home with 12 children

2015, Svitlana and Andriy adopted two sisters, Nastia and Valeria. "Nastia was 11, but she looked like a six-year-old child. Everyone thought she was a first-grader, no one could believe that she was in the fifth grade. Valeria was 13. She had gone through a lot, including spending nights on the street," Svitlana recalls. Later, the family took in five-year-old Mykhailo and six-year-old Maksym.

As their family grew, Svitlana and Andriy decided to formally create a "family-type children's home" - a home that takes in up to 10 children and receives monthly payments and assistance from the state for each child. Five siblings joined the close-knit family - Veronika, who is now 17, Snizhana, 16, Roman, 14, Yegor, 11 and Sasha, 6. They were soon joined by 16-year-old Alisa and 14-year-old Yulia.

In 2024, Svitlana and Andriy were contacted by social workers about 14-year-old Anton. Since the beginning of the full-scale war, he had lived with his grandmother in an area of hostilities. During shelling, he was wounded by a piece of ammunition that left two scars on his leg. Now, after the death of his grandmother, Anton has found a loving home with Svitlana and Andriy.

Each child has a life story and unique trauma "that has left a mark on their soul," Svitlana says. "For me, the greatest happiness is to see children flourish."

UNICEF works tirelessly to ensure the best care for every child. In Kharkiv, for example, we work with government and social services partners in 12 communities to support a project that helps children who are deprived of parental care find loving families; provides training for professionals who work with children; and offers social, psychological and legal aid for foster families, including advice on how to adapt to new circumstances and ensure better conditions for raising children.



## ACHIEVEMENTS



### Health and nutrition

Since 2022, over 5 million children and women have been able to access health care in Ukraine with UNICEF support, including services from health care mobile teams and home visits to emergency obstetrics, midwifery and newborn care at health centres.

When the war in Ukraine escalated, our health and nutrition response was swift, procuring critical services and supplies for local facilities and supporting mobile health teams to reach children. Our work has evolved from this initial emergency response to include supporting decentralized health delivery models that address immediate relief needs and aid long-term recovery (such as strengthening national health systems); working with partners to procure vaccines; and promoting infant and young child feeding.

UNICEF's delivery of critical vaccines has prevented stock-outs and ensured seamless vaccination services. We have strengthened the national cold-chain infrastructure by procuring and distributing refrigerators, cold boxes, vaccine carriers and refrigerated vehicles.

The Universal Progressive Home Visiting model is a joint UNICEF-Ministry of Health initiative. Nurses visit families with young children to provide tailored early childhood care and vaccination guidance, as well as support for breastfeeding and mental health. In 2024, nurses reached nearly 30,000 people across 15 regions. Our advocacy supported the introduction of a 2024 Ministry of Health decree to incorporate home visits into Ukraine's primary health care system.

With our support, 765 generators now ensure uninterrupted functioning of health facilities in the event of a blackout or attack on the electricity grid.

**In countries hosting Ukrainian refugees**, UNICEF's immediate and direct support transitioned over time to focus on the integration of health services for refugees into national health care systems. We have collaborated on training and resource provision, including the employment and integration of Ukrainian paediatricians and health workers into national health systems, the development of digital platforms such as the [Bebbo parenting app](#), and the institutionalization of refugee/local health care models. Since 2022, 434,000 Ukrainian refugee women and children have accessed primary health care services with UNICEF support, including vaccination of over 40,000 children. Counselling on infant and young child feeding has been provided to over 30,000 children and caregivers.



**“Love? Vaccinate!” Cooling-system vans deliver vaccines safely so that children can complete routine vaccinations no matter where they are.**

In December 2024, a fleet of refrigerated vaccine vans stood ready for deployment in Kyiv, Ukraine. Equipped with a specialized cooling unit to maintain the required temperature, and able to store up to 700,000 vaccines each, the vans ensure the safe delivery of vaccines, particularly to areas devastated by war.

UNICEF has also delivered 700 specialized refrigerators to Ukraine that keep vaccines at the required temperatures for up to 2.5 days without electricity - critical as attacks on energy infrastructure continue to cause power outages. In 2024, nearly 1.9 million doses of polio, diphtheria-tetanus for children and adults, measles-mumps-rubella, combined PENTA-Hib and COVID-19 vaccines were delivered to Ukraine with UNICEF support. A 2024 vaccination promotion campaign reached over 7 million people and as a result almost 891,000 people received vaccinations.

Working with partners, UNICEF's support has helped to ensure that 95 per cent of Ukraine's health care facilities are now equipped with cold chain equipment that meets global and European standards.



***Ensuring access to life-saving vaccines for children, and that they complete their routine vaccinations on time, protects a child's health. Strengthening the vaccine cold chain is a critical intervention in our humanitarian response. It helps protect young lives today and in years to come,”***

***Munir Mammadzade, Representative, UNICEF Ukraine.***



## Education

The escalation of war in Ukraine, preceded by the COVID-19 pandemic, has meant five years of severely interrupted education for a generation of children. Attacks on infrastructure have cut off electricity and heating systems, disrupting both in-person and online education. Air raid alarms interrupt classes and force children to move to shelters. And often, children who suffer psychological trauma may not have the emotional bandwidth to learn effectively.

**In Ukraine**, UNICEF supports the Government's efforts to rebuild the education system - repairing and rehabilitating kindergartens and schools; providing online, in-person and catch-up learning opportunities; offering mental health support to school children; and providing early childhood learning in safe community spaces.

We have provided educational opportunities for over 1.45 million children in Ukraine through formal and non-formal programmes since 2022, including early learning initiatives. Nearly 771,000 children have received educational and recreational materials. Some 712,000 children have benefited from mental health support, socio-emotional learning and life-skills education and nearly 100,000 teachers have been trained in these areas.

In 2023, we launched the '2 by 2' model, an early childhood education programme for war-affected children. This programme offers twice-weekly, two-hour classes by trained educators and psychologists in safe community spaces, preparing children for primary school. In 2024, the model provided education to over 15,500 children and trained nearly 10,000 preschool teachers. Children attending 70 per cent of the sessions showed an 83 per cent improvement in their social, emotional and cognitive development.

More than 408,000 people have used the NUMO preschool initiative developed by UNICEF. NUMO is a website, chatbot and educational game app designed for three- to six-year-old children during a crisis. Children play with interactive games that develop their cognitive skills and creative expression, as well as their literacy, numeracy and social-emotional skills. It can be used without internet connection, a plus for displaced families.

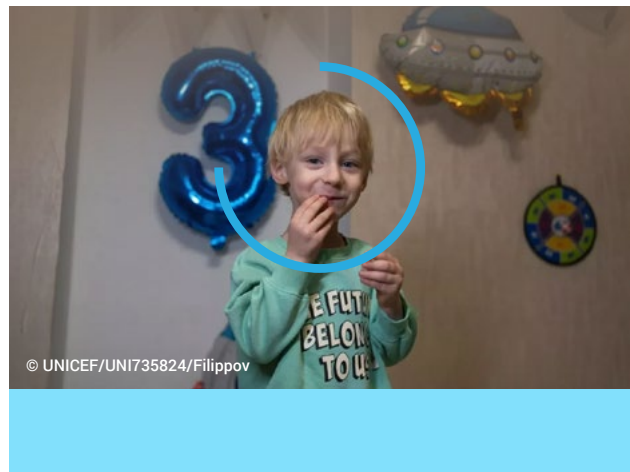
In 2024, over 123,000 children attended 410 learning-support centres run by UNICEF with local partners. Over 1 million students used the All-Ukrainian School Online platform, which gives war-affected children access to blended and distance learning, featuring virtual classrooms, video tutorials, assignments and tests.

Our support for the rehabilitation of shelters in 66 kindergartens and seven schools benefited over 34,600 children in 2024. A total of 438 schools and

kindergartens in several war-affected regions received furniture and equipment for shelters so that 151,200 students could learn in safe environments.

Refugee children and adolescents face many struggles as they try to adapt to a new local school enrolment, including language issues. **In refugee-hosting countries**, 1.26 million children have received UNICEF's educational support (through formal and non-formal channels) since the war escalated, with close to 730,000 children receiving learning materials. Working with governments and local partners, we focus on inclusive learning, language acquisition for refugee schoolchildren, professional development for teachers and skills-building programmes for adolescents and youth.

## UNICEF works for the best start in life



Three-year-old Yehor was born in Mariupol, Ukraine, just weeks before the full-scale war began. He has never known a life without war.

"I feel a deep sadness," says his mother Yevheniia, who fled Mariupol with her newborn on a terrible day three years ago. After they left, the city was destroyed and several thousand civilians killed. "I think the war has robbed the children of a real childhood," she adds.

Evidence shows that the first years of a child's life lay the foundation for everything that follows - how they move, think, communicate and connect with others, shaping their future well-being and potential.

UNICEF is working to ensure that every child gets the best possible start in life. Health professionals in Ukraine visit families at home, offering guidance on immunization, nutrition and early developmental milestones. For children aged three- to six-years old, safe and inclusive early learning spaces help build essential skills, preparing them for school and beyond. And for those with developmental delays or disabilities, speech therapy, counselling and psychosocial support provide the extra care they need to thrive. Because investing in children today means a stronger, more resilient Ukraine tomorrow.



## Child protection

Violence, displacement and instability have created a severe child-protection crisis in Ukraine. Over one third of the country's children have been exposed to the direct impact of war: witness to the horrors of death and destruction, including attacks on their homes, schools and hospitals.

Families are stressed as a result of economic and conflict-related uncertainty, leading to mental strain, violence and even family separation. The emotional toll of three years of war on children has led to high rates of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Seventy-three per cent of children report feeling unsafe and 54 per cent report feeling sad. Children with disabilities, those returning from abroad and those in alternative care are among the most vulnerable.

Since 2022, 3.4 million children, adolescents and caregivers in Ukraine have accessed mental health and psychosocial support with UNICEF's support. Over 100,000 children have been reached with individual case management. Initially, UNICEF-supported mobile teams delivered child protection services at transit centres and humanitarian hubs. Today, we train and build the capacity and outreach of Ukraine's government social service providers, with continued support for supplies, individual case management, measures to address gender-based violence mitigation and referrals to specialized services.

Since 2024, UNICEF's Better Care agenda has supported Ukraine's social services with a foster care model for children separated from their families. With our support, missions to monitor child rights have benefited 1,240 children evacuated from institutions. UNICEF also played a key role in advocating for Decree 1026, endorsed in September 2024, which requires individual assessment for each child returning to alternative care from abroad. Nearly 400 patronage families have helped identify safe and nurturing homes for 790 children.

UNICEF has supported safe spaces, girls' clubs, and prevention and response services that have reached nearly 334,000 children and 300,000 women to reduce the risks of gender-based violence. [Laaha](#), a website with women's health and safety information, has been accessed by 16,000 young women and girls (and has been translated into Russian, Romanian and Turkish, broadening access to the website in Moldova and Türkiye.)

With vast areas of land in Ukraine littered with mines and unexploded ordnances, UNICEF continues to support mine safety education, which is derived from studies and U-Report polls to determined ideal safety interventions. Safety campaigns on explosive ordnance, such as popular cartoons or informative mobile teams, have reached 13.25 million people.



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*In December 2024, a child holds a teddy bear as she welcomes the arrival of Paddington Bear at Kyiv's central railway station. This was the start of Paddington's tour of Ukraine as part of the Better Care agenda - a fitting task for a bear who began his life with a caring foster family after stepping off a train in London. UNICEF is working with partners on the agenda to help families during the war in Ukraine so that children can thrive in safe, supportive family environments.*

**In refugee-hosting countries** in Europe, UNICEF has worked with partners to help children and their families access safe spaces and hubs that are designed for protection and support. Mental health support for refugees addresses gender-based violence; helps identify and support unaccompanied and separated children; and ensures refugees' integration into national child protection systems, including legal aid and case management services.

Over the past three years, over 1.3 million children and caregivers gained access to vital mental health services, while safe spaces and support services reached over 1.2 million refugees. Nearly 1 million people have had access to safe channels such as hotlines to report sexual exploitation and abuse. Blue Dot humanitarian hubs, initially set up to provide critical services to Ukrainian refugees, have evolved into established community centres.



## UNICEF provides mental health lifelines for children and their families

With three years of war and uncertainty, children have endured unprecedented levels of stress and mental health duress in Ukraine. But UNICEF has been there from the start, offering support in every way.

In 2023, for example, 2.5 million people accessed respite and safe space at humanitarian hubs referred to as Spilnos (Ukrainian for “together”). In 2024, nearly 760,000 people, most of them children, received mental health support through mobile teams reaching front lines and rural areas, online platforms, temporary and long-term community centres and child-friendly spaces. UNICEF’s PORUCH project has organized mental health support groups with psychologists for teenagers and parents whose lives have been devastated by the war.

With UNICEF support, a national toll-free hotline was accessed by over 38,000 children and nearly 20,000 adults in 2024. Digital campaigns on mental health awareness have reached 1 million viewers, and across Ukraine 43,000 teachers and nearly 57,000 children have participated in mental health talks.

This year on World Mental Health Day, UNICEF launched Momental, a platform with 365 self-care activities that’s attracted 170,000 visitors to date. Working in partnership, we have helped to train 200 health care professionals and 7,320 professionals via webinars to enhance mental health services.



*“I constantly felt like crying and had no desire to go outside. And once, I lost consciousness,” Nelya, diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, explains. “This is how I found myself at a hospital.” On the advice of specialists, she started working with a psychologist. Now she and her sister, pictured here, have found ways to cope with the constant fear - riding bicycles, playing sports and beading. Through programmes run by UNICEF since the war escalated, more than 3.4 million children and their caregivers have access to life-affirming psychological support.*



## Social protection

UNICEF's humanitarian cash programme, in partnership with governments, provides crucial support for families during war. **In Ukraine** over the last three years, nearly 310,000 households with children have received cash support from UNICEF working with the Ministry of Social Policy and local authorities. In 2024 - as poverty rates continued to rise and 1.9 million people were in need of cash assistance - we rolled out two cash programmes: one for those affected by hostilities and mandatory evacuations, which reached 23,314 households (including 76,000 children); and one providing cash-for-winterization assistance for those on the frontline or with children in alternative care, reaching over 69,700 households.

**In refugee-hosting countries** since 2022, UNICEF has supported almost 47,500 households while offering technical support to government social transfers for over 76,000 households. By 2024, our advocacy and technical assistance were helping to integrate Ukrainian refugees into national social protection systems, supporting policies that grant access to national benefits.

We also collaborate with international agency partners to enhance systemic resilience, such as designing technical support for shock-responsive social protection, and policy planning, budgeting and legislative frameworks.

### "I don't know what this winter will be like."

In October 2024, Daria and her daughters pose in the house where they had recently moved after fleeing the war in the Donetsk region. "It was a difficult decision for us," Daria explained, weeping. "We deferred it for a long time. Back at home, we had all we needed – comfortable conditions for the children, a cosy home. But when the war hit near our house, it was a clear sign that we had to leave. We had no choice. It became very scary to stay; there was constant shelling around, it seemed like it would never stop. I understand that we will never return. Most probably, there will be nowhere to return to, as everything may be destroyed."

To the family's relief, UNICEF has provided Daria's family with winter cash assistance. "We bought coal and a large five-hundred-litre tank. There is no water here, the tank will give us the opportunity to have at least some water supply."



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As part of UNICEF's winterization support programme to help vulnerable families prepare for winter, almost 5,150 families in Ukraine's Donetsk region alone - including more than 7,500 children - received cash payments. In total, we have provided financial support to more than 22,800 households in these regions, reaching more than 32,300 children.





## Water, sanitation and hygiene

In Ukraine, water and sanitation systems are on the brink of collapse. A quarter of wastewater plants and water networks are damaged; and 80 per cent of water utilities lack the backup that prevents water disruption during a blackout.

Attacks on energy infrastructure have destroyed more than half of Ukraine's power generation capacity, with blackouts from four to 18 hours a day expected this winter. With district heating systems also damaged, this is the harshest winter children have experienced since 2022.

UNICEF has supported many water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) initiatives throughout the war, such as deploying water trucks to displaced families, supplying chemicals for water purification in Ukraine and distributing hygiene kits in refugee-hosting countries. We continue to invest in long-term results with support to water utilities, and to restore damaged water supply and sewage systems.

**In Ukraine**, UNICEF's support over three years has vastly improved access to safe drinking water for nearly 5.8 million people, including over 958,000 children. Critical water and sanitation supplies (bottled water, hygiene kits and water trucking services) have reached over 2.3 million people affected by war.

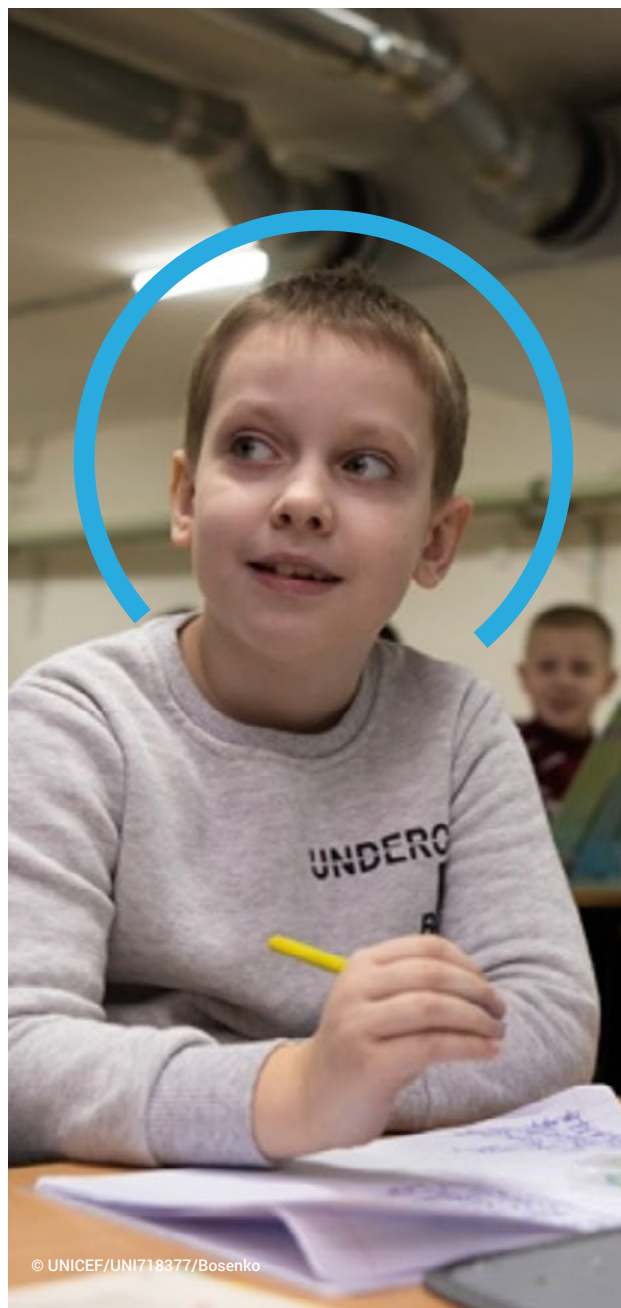
Our direct assistance to 114 water utilities - including emergency repairs, critical equipment and water-treatment chemicals - has significantly improved the availability of safe drinking water. This can be seen in Kryvyi Rih city, where the rehabilitation of water distribution networks increased water uptake by 10 per cent in 2024, securing safe drinking water for over 500,000 people.

UNICEF piloted a cash assistance programme in Kharkiv and Sumy in 2024, enabling 43,460 residents, particularly those in frontline areas or newly displaced, to buy hygiene items from local markets – an effective way to foster dignity and empowerment.

Partnerships have enabled us to install child-friendly WASH facilities in 204 schools, health care centres and community spaces, benefiting over 926,000 people.

To address the damage caused by attacks on district heating systems, UNICEF created a District Heating Cell for fast assessment and resource allocation. In Kharkiv region, we have worked with partners to install modular boilers and 17 cogeneration units to enhance the heating network, supporting 616,000 people, including over 100,000 children. Heating equipment, including boilers and cogeneration units, has been distributed to 14 municipalities. These efforts work to ensure reliable heating for at least 1.5 million people, including over 255,000 children.

**In refugee-hosting countries**, UNICEF has ensured that over 100,000 refugees from Ukraine have had access to safe drinking water since the war escalated. Close to 40,000 have received adequate sanitation and over 100,000 have received critical WASH supplies. And we continue to address residual WASH needs in several countries. In 2024, for example, we distributed 1,913 hygiene kits in Poland; supported WASH services for approximately 10,000 refugees at border crossings and refugee accommodation centres in Moldova; and provided WASH services at the Bucharest refugee hub in Romania for over 5,000 refugees.





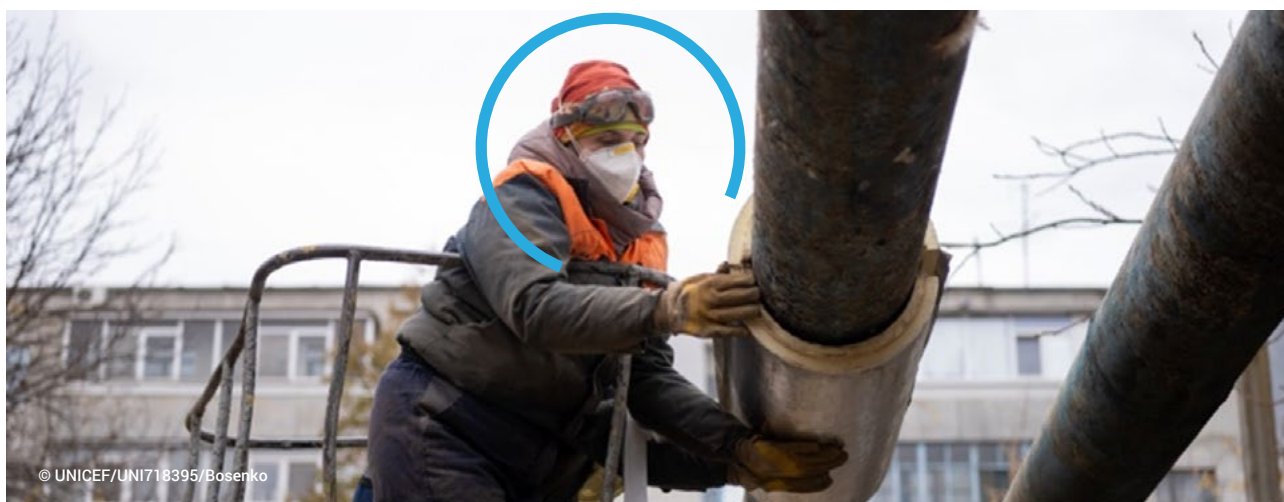
## UNICEF supports reliable heating so children can learn

In November 2024, in Pavlohrad, Ukraine, a worker installed polyurethane foam insulation on heating pipelines, replacing outdated insulation materials to reduce heat loss by 25 per cent, improving energy efficiency across the city. Pavlohrad has become a transit centre for people fleeing fighting. The city's 100,000 local residents host around 20,000 people who are displaced from their homes – nearly 4,000 are children who attend local schools and kindergartens. Missile attacks regularly damage civilian infrastructure.

UNICEF is implementing a large-scale project here to restore heating and water infrastructure. The work includes repairing equipment damaged by

shelling, replacing worn-out assets and introducing modern technologies. We have also supported the installation of water purification systems, and provided green energy equipment to increase the production of thermal and electrical energy.

Our support ensures heating during winter in a city where there are more than 11,000 school children and more than 2,500 preschool children. Fourth-grade students attend lessons in a basement-turned-classroom at a local school. The underground shelter, equipped with heating and lighting, allows the children to continue in-person learning despite missile attacks that damaged the school, shattering its windows.



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*In Liubar, parents were distressed as the water was undrinkable with deteriorating pipes, frequent system failures and sediment buildup. UNICEF provided 1,500 metres of plastic piping and there are no more leaks, no more burst pipes.*

### Working with our partners, UNICEF delivers essential supplies to the families who need help

Since 2022, UNICEF has been a lifeline for children in Ukraine. Simply put, supplies have sustained life: medical kits, surgical equipment, midwifery kits, first aid kits, hygiene essentials, winter blankets and clothes, generators, solar lamps, school-in-a-box kits, education, play and recreational materials and water purification chemicals are only some examples of items that have brought solace to many.

In 2024 alone, children and their families in Ukraine received \$79 million worth of vital supplies. We released \$46.7 million worth of supplies from our warehouses, and \$55.2 million of supplies flowed directly to implementing partners from local vendors. Our current stockpiles hold \$7.9 million in supplies, and a robust pipeline worth \$8.8 million ensures ongoing support.

## Adolescent development and participation

**In Ukraine**, over one-quarter of young people are dealing with mental health issues. Many adolescents want to develop the skills that will help them deal with stress and build resilience. Among our many approaches to adolescent development and participation, UNICEF works to foster young people's civic engagement and employability.

Ukrainian adolescents and youth are actively involved in their communities – a reported 51 per cent are involved in volunteering and 31 per cent involved in civic initiatives. We are collaborating with the Government to build on this, preparing young people for vital roles in the nation's recovery and future growth.

In 2024, nearly 251,000 youth accessed skills-development initiatives with UNICEF support. New municipal youth centres in frontline regions have enabled over 40,700 youth to participate in skills development, and to access mental health support and peer learning. Local authorities and young leaders were trained to manage the centres.

Around 95,000 young people have been trained and engaged in humanitarian volunteering efforts, such as distributing winter supplies in Zaporizhzhia. The [UPSHIFT programme](#) has empowered 375 youth teams to address issues such as mental health and environmental protection, reaching over 86,000 people in need. In addition, U-Report has helped almost 39,000 students to engage in learning. Almost 28,500 adolescents have received mental health support online.

**In countries hosting refugees**, UNICEF continues to emphasize youth engagement, education and psychosocial support – opening doors to education, job training and employment with programmes such as PATHWAYS.

### Ukrainian youth in Slovakia find their pathways

For Ukrainian refugee children in Slovakia, in-person education can be out of reach and school drop-out rates are high. Fifteen-year-old Masha, who fled her home in Kharkiv and arrived in Slovakia just five months ago, is currently attending her Ukrainian school online and not yet part of the Slovak education system.

This will change at the start of the new school year, when schooling for Ukraine's refugees in Slovakia will become compulsory and Ukrainian children aged five to 16 years old will be mandated to enroll in the national school system.



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*For Masha, a 15-year-old who just arrived in Slovakia from Kharkiv, art therapy is more than creative expression – it's a refuge from daily challenges and a way to connect with peers. Art therapy is one of many activities offered by a civil society organization as part of the PATHWAYS Initiative.*

Masha is being supported through UNICEF's PATHWAYS Initiative, a regional programme implemented both in Ukraine and in refugee-hosting countries.

In collaboration with an array of partners, UNICEF launched PATHWAYS in Slovakia in 2024 to ensure that Ukrainian refugee adolescents and youth stay on an educational path, build skills and are ready to transition to decent work. The initiative integrates education, protection and mental health support from "learning to earning" through support for individual case management, career guidance and access to learning and job opportunities. "When I first came here, I didn't know the language," explains Masha. "But now I am learning Slovak, and I dream of studying at a university one day."

The initiative operates through one-stop shops where Ukrainian youth can access language courses, mental health support, career counseling and different community events. For many young Ukrainians, especially those separated from parents or caregivers, the sessions offer more than creative expression – they provide a refuge from daily challenges and loneliness.

## The way forward

As 2025 dawns, the war in Ukraine remains unpredictable. Millions of children are entering their fourth year of danger and uncertainty. UNICEF continues to provide essential humanitarian support while focusing on the country's recovery agenda. We continue to work with the Government of Ukraine and a range of partners to strengthen Ukraine's systems – vital to safeguard and enrich children's futures.

Our work to educate children, for example, includes a range of quality online educational tools, mobile education professionals and mental health support in schools. Our water, sanitation and hygiene programme is working around the clock to repair crucial infrastructure, provide alternative power sources and deliver water treatment and hygiene supplies. Multipurpose cash assistance is supporting

the survival and dignity of the most vulnerable families and those who have lost everything, helping to shield them from the daily consequences of the war.

The Better Care agenda guides our work with partners to find alternative safe and supportive care for children who have lost their families. And we continue to tackle the threats of gender-based violence, supporting response services and mental health support. We support mental health services, as well as access to basic services for all children, no matter who or where they are.

In countries supporting Ukrainian refugees – including Belarus, Bulgaria, Czechia, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia – our support will continue to empower refugees and enhance national responses for the long-term.

**Today your funding is more crucial than ever before.  
We need your continued support.**

Continued support for Ukrainian children and their families, both within Ukraine and in neighbouring countries in Europe, is crucial for their well-being. In 2025, UNICEF is seeking \$495.6 million to fund our efforts – \$400 million allocated for operations in Ukraine and \$95.6 million dedicated to assisting Ukraine's refugee children and families.

**We continue to emphasize the need for sustained peace in Ukraine – a peace that enables children to recover from war, regain their health and education, and reach their full potential.**

Funding needs for Ukraine and for the refugee response in 2025 <sup>2</sup>	
Sectors	2025 total requirement (US\$)
Health and nutrition	43,727,232
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA	121,945,773
Education	123,325,019
Water, sanitation and hygiene	136,943,176
Social protection	62,597,000
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)	7,071,496
<b>Total</b>	<b>495,609,698</b>

<sup>2</sup> Funding figures from [2025 Ukraine HAC](#)



## ANNEX I Key results for children and their families

Over the past three years, the generous, flexible and prompt support from our private sector partners has enabled us to extend support to millions of children and their families in Ukraine as well as in host communities across 19 European countries.

Your ongoing assistance is helping Ukrainian children and families rebuild their lives and look towards a more hopeful future. We extend our heartfelt thanks on behalf of all those you have supported over their most difficult time.

### Our funding, our results 2022 - 2024

Ukraine 2024							
Programme	Funds required (US\$)	Funds received in 2024 (US\$)	Carry-over funding (US\$)	Funds spent (US\$)	Target	Key result	% of targets reached
Health & Nutrition	72,783,360	15,652,036	25,754,839	15,571,340	920,000	1,138,9011 children and women accessing <b>primary health care</b> in UNICEF-supported facilities and through mobile teams.	124%
Child Protection	101,313,504	48,559,964	40,295,997	58,298,915	888,312	757,807 children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based <b>mental health and psychosocial support</b> .	85%
Education	94,570,464	28,208,236	43,873,604	43,119,945	625,000	481,484 children accessing <b>formal or non-formal education, including early learning</b> .	111%
WASH	159,142,870	68,003,633	45,323,974	80,503,968	5,660,000	5,785,754 people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of <b>water for drinking and domestic needs</b> .	102%
Social Protection	68,066,438	45,885,255	41,429,313	57,218,689	39,985	69,695 households reached with UNICEF-funded <b>humanitarian cash transfers</b> .	174%

Ukraine 2023							
Programme	Funds required (US\$)	Funds received in 2023 (US\$)	Carry-over funding (US\$)	Funds spent (US\$)	Target	Key result	% of targets reached
Health & Nutrition	104,000,000	23,906,619	29,134,589	40,250,000	5,000,000	5,033,280 children and women accessing <b>primary health care</b> in UNICEF-supported facilities and through mobile teams.	101%
Child Protection	111,010,000	66,217,289	20,092,284	30,880,000	2,600,000	2,561,399 children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based <b>mental health and psychosocial support</b> .	98.5%
Education	100,000,000	51,413,683	33,931,587	64,130,000	1,200,000	1,328,602 children accessing <b>formal or non-formal education, including early learning</b> .	111%
WASH	145,000,000	82,938,194	34,152,841	50,430,000	5,700,000	5,421,369 people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of <b>water for drinking and domestic needs</b> .	95%
Social Protection	369,230,400	82,666,939	51,247,615	51,360,000	200,000	59,858 households reached with UNICEF-funded <b>humanitarian cash transfers</b> .	30%
Ukraine 2022							
Programme	Funds required (US\$)	Funds received in 2022 (US\$)	Carry-over funding from 2021 (US\$)	Funds spent (US\$)	Target	Key result	% of targets reached
Health & Nutrition	100,400,000	94,070,006	520,831	50,300,000	4,500,000	4,926,077 children and women accessing <b>primary health care</b> in UNICEF-supported facilities and through mobile teams.	109%
Child Protection	65,300,000	85,135,049	483,122	28,370,000	2,000,000	2,978,598 children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based <b>mental health and psychosocial support</b> .	149%
Education	60,000,000	68,708,323	219,080	30,660,000	1,400,000	1,451,665 children accessing <b>formal or non-formal education, including early learning</b> .	104%
WASH	106,500,000	138,440,639	491,565	47,450,000	4,500,000	4,649,974 people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of <b>water for drinking and domestic needs</b> .	103%
Social Protection	655,149,430	471,838,932	1,057	312,430,000	265,000	309,100 households reached with UNICEF-funded <b>humanitarian cash transfers</b> .	117%

Refugee-hosting countries 2024							
Programme	Funds required (US\$)	Funds received in 2024 (US\$)	Carry-over funding (US\$)	Funds spent (US\$)	Target	Key result	% of targets reached
Child protection	50,633,423	32,360,312	24,680,552	43,378,489	534,848	360,806 children and caregivers accessing <b>mental health and psychosocial support</b> .	101.2%
Education	44,376,137	22,228,115	13,874,293	30,656,593	444,130	485,228 children accessing <b>formal or non-formal education, including early learning</b> , through UNICEF-supported systems strengthening and programmes.	109.3%
Health & Nutrition	7,004,361	4,455,344	3,002,934	5,579,821	50,590	43,764 children and women receiving <b>primary health care services</b> through UNICEF-supported mechanisms (number of unique beneficiaries).	86.5%
Social Protection	44,376,137	3,512,476	11,002,371	9,025,963	31,800	17,173 households reached with <b>cash transfers</b> through an existing government system with UNICEF technical assistance.	54%
WASH	2,537,574	1,396,500	1,014,602	1,978,812	20,000	14,919 people accessing a sufficient quantity of <b>safe water</b> for drinking and domestic needs.	74.6%



Refugee-hosting countries 2023							
Programme	Funds required (US\$)	Funds received in 2023 (US\$)	Carry-over funding (US\$)	Funds spent (US\$)	Target	Key result	% of targets reached
Child protection	51,278,689	44,209,901	38,508,539	60,730,000	1,171,460	1,316,114 children and caregivers accessing <b>mental health and psychosocial support</b> .	112%
Education	74,890,431	31,826,823	28,993,752	72,350,000	673,580	1,259,838 children accessing <b>formal or non-formal education, including early learning</b> , through UNICEF-supported systems strengthening and programmes.	187%
Health	16,191,889	10,282,425	9,277,800	17,770,000	274,390	346,968 children and women receiving <b>primary health care</b> services through UNICEF-supported mechanisms (number of unique beneficiaries).	126.5%
Social Protection	74,609,389	20,139,897	15,458,986	45,300,000	158,750	76,131 households reached with <b>cash transfers</b> through an existing government system with UNICEF technical assistance.	48%
WASH	5,539,917	1,233,052	641,683	1,310,000	40,000	24,928 people accessing a sufficient quantity of <b>safe water</b> for drinking and domestic needs.	62%

Refugee-hosting countries 2022							
Programme	Funds required (US\$)	Funds received in 2022 (US\$)	Carry-over funding (US\$)	Funds spent (US\$)	Target	Key result	% of targets reached
Child protection	108,642,871	138,683,028	0	69,990,000	1,210,190	846,033 children and caregivers accessing <b>mental health and psychosocial support</b> .	70%
Education	135,260,555	141,999,187	0	89,440,000	626,050	588,778 children accessing <b>formal or non-formal education, including early learning</b> , through UNICEF-supported systems strengthening and programmes.	94%
Health & Nutrition	29,041,949	26,533,122	0	13,560,000	429,800	433,701 children and women receiving <b>primary health care</b> services through UNICEF-supported mechanisms (number of unique beneficiaries).	101%
Social Protection	75,695,843	61,391,716	0	21,410,000	64,150	47,494 households reached with <b>cash transfers</b> through an existing government system with UNICEF technical assistance.	74%
WASH	18,337,783	6,805,483	0	200,000	216,000	100,350 people accessing a sufficient quantity of <b>safe water</b> for drinking and domestic needs.	46%

