

THE POWER BEHIND THE PROMISE

CORE RESOURCES for every child, everywhere

Annual Report 2024

From the Executive Director

Children are facing unprecedented challenges. How we respond will define a generation.

In 2024, amid escalating global pressures, we witnessed something powerful: the impact of united action for children. With public sector partners and growing private sector engagement, UNICEF reached children in more than 150 countries, safeguarding essential services, strengthening national systems and delivering results that last.

At the heart of this effort are Core Resources: UNICEF's most flexible and reliable funding. These unrestricted contributions are the foundation of everything we do, allowing us to quickly direct resources where they are most needed to save and improve the lives of children.

This report is a demonstration of what core resources can achieve. It illustrates how the support of governments, businesses, philanthropists, foundations and individuals is enabling UNICEF to advance the rights of children now and over the long-term.

Core Resources have helped strengthen birth registration so children can access essential services, expand social protection so that children have healthy meals and go to school, and sustain health services for women and children caught in conflict zones. These are investments in life-saving systems that require unrestricted, dependable resources.

Yet, 2024 was also a year of economic shock as the needs of children vastly outpaced funding. The world witnessed one of the sharpest and most sudden contractions in international aid in recent history, quickly impacting the most vulnerable children and families.

Critical services were scaled back. Malnutrition treatment, immunization campaigns, education and protection programmes were all affected. Children were left behind – not because we didn't know how to help, but because we lacked the resources to reach them.

Children do not cause these crises. But they are paying the highest price.

In a world shaped by climate shocks, conflict and economic instability, every delayed response bears a human cost. These costs cross borders – weakening health systems, economies and the foundations of progress.

UNICEF's Core Resources are not about short-term fixes – they underpin lasting change. Our message to our valued partners is to continue investing in children through Core Resources so that we can build on the gains we have achieved together.

UNICEF appreciates all of the support we receive. We are deeply thankful to the governments of Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Republic of Korea for their unwavering commitment to core funding.

We are especially grateful to the Netherlands, Spain and the Republic of Korea for increasing their contributions in 2024, and to the Netherlands and Sweden for leading the way with multi-year commitments. We also warmly welcome Ireland's first multi-year contribution in 2024 – a milestone that allows UNICEF to deliver for children everywhere.

To our 32 National Committees for UNICEF, thank you for your extraordinary efforts in mobilizing private sector support. We particularly recognize the National Committees in Japan, Korea and Germany – our three largest contributors to core resources – and commend the Committee in the Netherlands for leading the way in increased contributions in 2024.

Let us not waver in this critical moment. Through sustained support from our donors, we can continue to drive meaningful, positive change for millions of children across the globe using proven solutions. Together we can create a world fit for every child.



Catherine Russell
UNICEF Executive Director



Core Resources: Uniting the private and public sectors for children

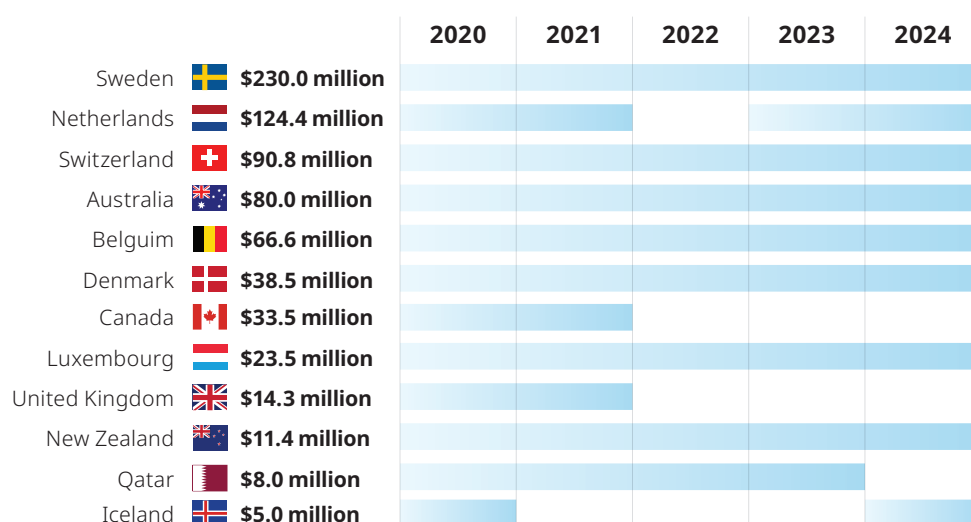
UNICEF thanks each of our donors and partners – governments, corporations, foundations, philanthropists, and millions of individuals around the world – for their core resources contributions in 2024. Every dollar, euro, won, krone, pound and yen you contributed to UNICEF amplified our collective impact for children around the world.

Top 30 Core Resources partners by contributions received, 2024

PARTNER	USD (MILLIONS)	PARTNER	USD (MILLIONS)
Japan Committee for UNICEF	145.0	United Kingdom	20.4
United States	137.0	Belgian Committee for UNICEF	16.1
Korean Committee for UNICEF	84.6	Belgium	16.1
German Committee for UNICEF	69.4	Denmark	15.4
Spanish Committee for UNICEF	65.8	Polish National Committee for UNICEF	14.8
Germany	65.6	United States Fund for UNICEF	14.8
French Committee for UNICEF	57.9	Republic of Korea (the)	14.6
Sweden	56.5	Canadian UNICEF Committee	12.6
Dutch Committee for UNICEF	48.4	Australia	12.3
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	47.1	Finnish Committee for UNICEF	12.1
Norway	45.5	Portuguese Committee for UNICEF	11.8
Italian Committee for UNICEF – Foundation Onlus	38.4	Canada	11.5
Swedish Committee for UNICEF	33.7	Committee for UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein	11.3
United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF	33.1	Japan	11.3
Switzerland	25.0	Norwegian Committee for UNICEF	10.7

Contributors to multi-year* Core Resources revenue** recognized, 2020–2024

UNICEF particularly thanks partners who contributed multi-year revenue – supporting even greater predictability in the planning and implementation of programmes for children.



Note: Numbers may not add up because of rounding.

*Based on the value of the agreement signed at the start of the multi-year contribution.

**Agreements with a lifetime of two years or more defined as multi-year agreements.



The Power Behind the Promise

Why unrestricted funding is the foundation of progress for children

UNICEF's promise to protect the rights of every child, everywhere, is bold in ambition and global in scope. Delivering on that promise requires more than conviction. It depends on the right kind of support: funding that is flexible, sustained and grounded in trust. At UNICEF, this funding is Core Resources.

Official development assistance (ODA) has long been central to this mission. For decades, it has enabled scale, protected lives and helped build stronger, more resilient futures. This responsibility must be shared more broadly, and we are grateful to governments with UNICEF programmes for stepping up with financial contributions to Core Resources and other in-kind support. Today, growing private sector engagement – including from businesses, philanthropists, foundations and individuals – is amplifying that impact, creating a powerful coalition for children across public and private partners.

This support is changing lives. Since 2000, 7.9 million more children have survived to see their fifth birthdays. Vaccination efforts have saved an estimated 154 million lives. Stunting has been reduced by 56 million cases, and over 2 billion people have gained access to clean water. These are not inevitable outcomes. Consistent, flexible investment that spans regions, sectors and generations has been vital part of this success.

But progress is fragile. In too many places, it is already being reversed.

Core Resources are not just a funding source – they are the foundation of UNICEF's operating model. With a presence in 190 countries and territories, and trusted partnerships across government and civil society, UNICEF bridges delivery and policy, crisis response and long-term reform, national systems and local solutions. That model is only possible because of unrestricted funding.

In the Republic of Moldova, a small Core Resources investment catalysed nationwide social protection reform, increasing child benefits and expanding services to nearly 50,000 vulnerable children. In Viet Nam, Core Resources enabled inclusive education at scale, introducing Universal Design for Learning and digital tools for children with disabilities. In Sierra Leone, unrestricted funds supported the country's first legal accreditation for social workers, reaching over 20,000 cases through a digital management system. In West Africa, UNICEF helped Côte d'Ivoire and Cabo Verde achieve near-universal birth registration, unlocking access to essential services.

These are not one-off results – they are systems-level shifts that help children not only survive but thrive.

Core Resources create the foundation. Thematic funding builds on it. Together, they create a transformational portfolio of investment, which is one of UNICEF's most strategic tools for achieving results at scale. Core Resources support our presence and institutional strength. Thematic Funds accelerate impact across nutrition, education, WASH, health and protection – driving innovation, scale and sustainability in national systems.

In a world shaped by climate change, conflict and economic instability, integrated funding is not optional – it is essential. ODA remains vital today as it was a generation ago. And with the private sector stepping up in meaningful ways, we have never had more potential or shared responsibility to act boldly together.

Core Resources are not just about funding. They are how UNICEF keeps its promise – turning intent into impact and ensuring that progress for children continues to move forward, even in the toughest of times.

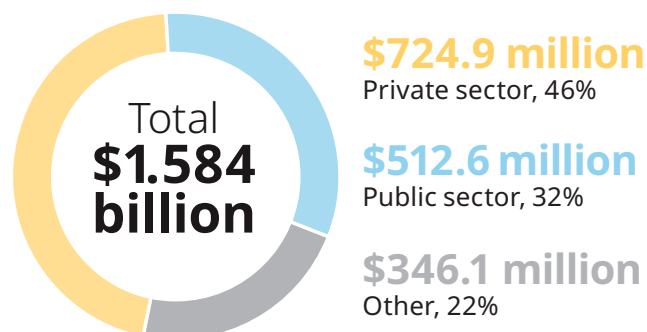


Core Resources: Income and trends

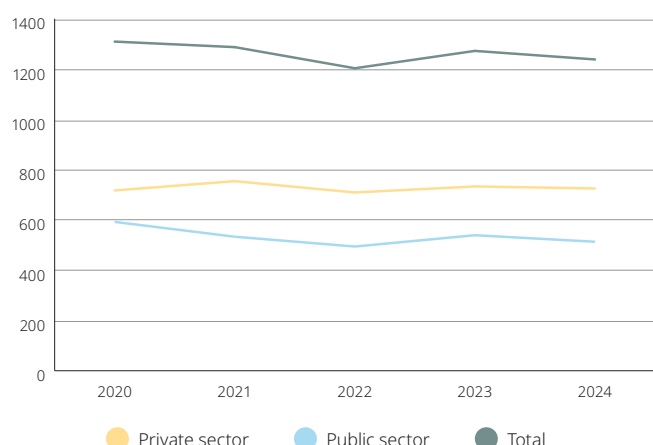
Contributions of Core Resources from donors and partners amounted to a \$1.584 billion income in 2024 – helping us sustain the vital foundation for all of UNICEF's efforts on behalf of children.

In 2024, Core Resources income from voluntary contributions decreased by 3 per cent or \$34 million. \$26 million of the decrease came from the public sector, and \$8 million – from interest, procurement services and other sources – increased by \$47 million.

Core resources income by type of partner, 2024



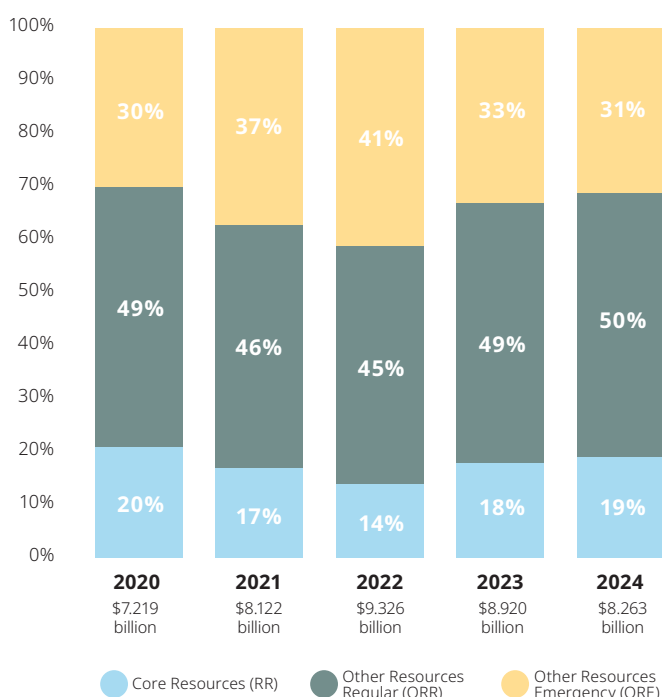
Core Resources income from voluntary contributions by type of resource partner, 2020–2024



For the fourth consecutive year, the share of UNICEF's total income made up of Core Resources was below 20 per cent – indicating a persistent trend in earmarked contributions for sectors, locations, or humanitarian emergencies, and risk of widening inequities for the most disadvantaged and hard-to-reach children.

To ensure progress for every child, UNICEF is making a Call to Action for Member States to fulfil their Funding Compact commitment, and for all donors to increase Core Resources and thematic funding as a proportion of their overall UNICEF portfolio. Investing flexibly promotes resilience in uncertain times, as well as long-term positive change for children.

Income ratio by type of funding, 2020–2024



Highlights of investing in Core Resources

Investing in Core Resources is a clear way to help UNICEF work for every child and the SDGs. These highlights show how our five comparative advantages, all enabled by Core Resources, helped us achieve results for children around the world.

Before, during and after an emergency



Yemen: Core Resources safeguarded continued access and expansion of essential health services, **contributing to a 23 per cent drop in under-five mortality** over the course of the last decade of conflict.



Democratic Republic of the Congo: Core Resources **supported more than 1,700 health-care facilities to stay operational**, securing lifesaving supplies and treatment for **more than 129,000 children** facing severe wasting.



Madagascar and Mozambique: Core Resources provided the seed funding for **UNICEF's Today and Tomorrow Initiative**, an integrated climate and disaster finance solution, **supporting more than 120,000 people** in Madagascar and Mozambique with life-saving services in the aftermath of cyclones.



Rwanda: Core Resources reinforced the government's response to the Marburg disease outbreak, contributing to **more lives being saved and a low fatality rate of 22.7 per cent**.

Leading, convening and pioneering

Horn of Africa: Core Resources scaled up an innovative solution using satellite data to detect groundwater, mapping nearly a million square kilometres of territory in drought-prone countries, **with the potential to benefit 10 million people in need**.



Guatemala: Core Resources positioned UNICEF as a key partner in the transformation of the social protection system, offering the government strategic policy advice and partnerships, which **resulted in a \$1 billion investment in social protection programmes and mitigation of a three-to-four-fold increase in poverty** during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Global: Core Resources fast tracked the **integration of cross-sectoral mental health services and care into national systems in 13 countries**, modelling new solutions, and **reaching more than 8.8 million children**, adolescents, caregivers and service providers.



This map is stylized and not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or area or the delimitation of any frontiers.

Taking the work to scale



India: Core Resources continued to play a vital role in the delivery and scaling up of the government's flagship water and sanitation programmes, **providing safely managed water supplies for 59.3 million people and sanitation services for 17.9 million people** in 2024.



Republic of Moldova: Core Resources **paved the way for \$68 million of government and other investment** in the RESTART social protection reform, **mitigating a 3.4 per cent rise in child poverty** and increasing the value of social benefits for families with children, including Ukrainian refugees, by 42 per cent.



Bangladesh: Core Resources helped UNICEF mobilize and sustain government action to transform children's nutrition outcomes, contributing to **a 40 per cent reduction in stunting** among children under five and **a nearly tenfold increase in domestic investments** in nutrition services over a decade.

Expert staff

Jordan: Core Resources funded the **first-ever One Stop Centre which offers a proven model for replication** across Jordan including Syrian refugee camps, successfully supporting an initial 500 children and women survivors and witnesses of violence, abuse or exploitation with multi-sectoral services.



Sierra Leone: Core Resources strengthened the child protection and case management system, **accrediting social workers for the first time and facilitating protection services for more than 675,000 children in five years**, including those who have faced violence, exploitation, abuse or neglect.



Meeting the holistic needs of children and adolescents



Côte d'Ivoire and Cabo Verde: Core Resources provided instrumental support to the governments to bring universal child registration within reach, **with more than 9 in 10 children registered before their first birthdays**.



Viet Nam: Core Resources supported a more inclusive system for access to learning opportunities for children with disabilities, embedded disability inclusion into national teacher training, and **enabled scaling up the Inclusive Education Resource Centres across 14 provinces** to prepare children with disabilities to enter mainstream classrooms.



Scan the QR code or click on the image to read the **Impact Companion**.



Scan the QR code or click on the image to read **UNICEF's Data Companion and Scorecard** for more information on progress against SDG milestones and targets to which Core Resources contributes.

How we Spend Core Resources to Achieve Results for Children

UNICEF strategically spreads spending of Core Resources across the three pillars of the organization's integrated budget.

UNICEF'S BUDGET

Direct Programmes

Budget



\$952 million Expense*

- **UNICEF country programmes** advancing children's rights and the SDGs for children around the world
- **Global and regional programmes** ensuring data, technical and thought leadership, and advocacy
- **Strategic and innovative activities** solving the greatest challenges facing children
- **Emergency Programme Fund (EPF)** protecting children and saving lives in sudden-onset emergencies

Institutional

Budget



\$227 million Expenditure**

(of which **Development Effectiveness** was \$174 million)

- **Development effectiveness** through technical excellence and results-based management for high-quality programmes
- Advancing **United Nations coordination** on strategic development priorities, including the SDGs
- **Managing human and financial resources** to deliver results for children
- **Capital costs** aligned with programme goals and strategies

Special Purpose

Budget



\$162 million Expense*

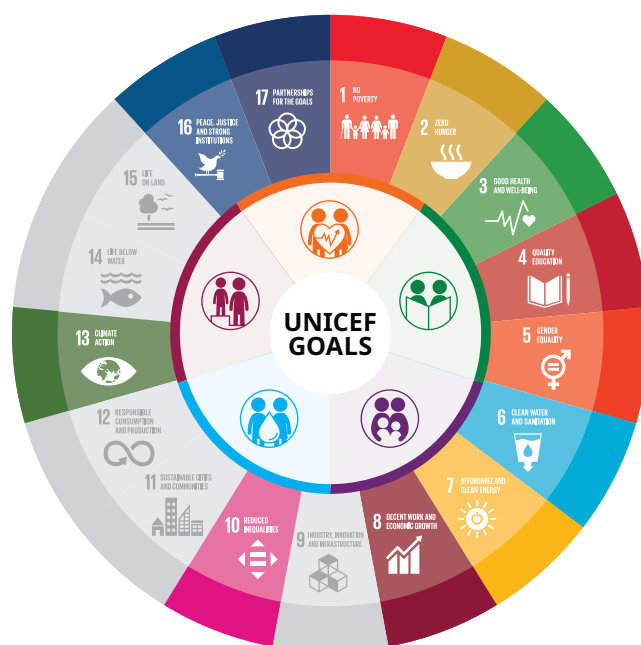
- **Private sector fundraising**, generating new funding for children
- **Partnerships with the private sector**, driving collective impact for children and the SDGs
- **Innovative finance for children**, leveraging new resources for the cause of children

*Expense – actual expenses made in the year.

**Expenditure – includes the expenses made and commitments of funds.

Core Resources accelerate progress across 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals for children.

They support UNICEF's custodian and co-custodian role in 19 child indicators and programmes for every child which can be sustained through strong national systems in the long term.

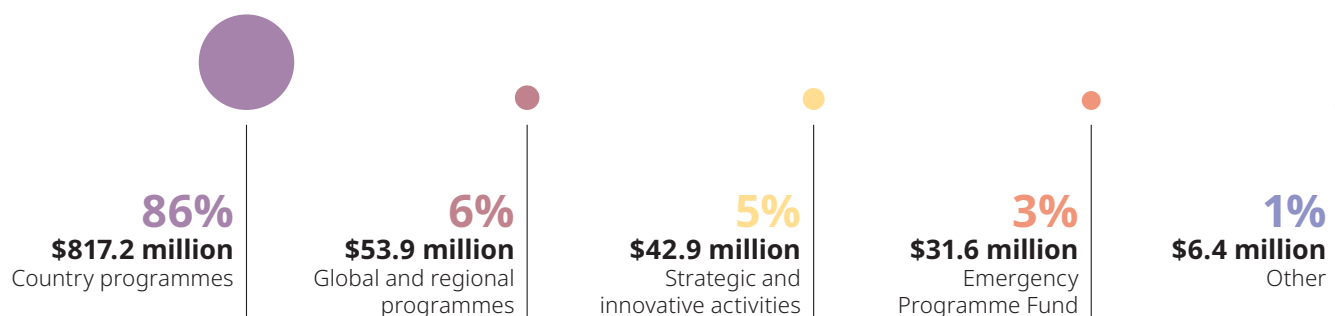


What did Direct Programmes support?

Core Resources are first and foremost spent on UNICEF's Direct Programmes for children in countries and regions, and at global level. They enable UNICEF to not only achieve positive impact, but also make sure that no child is left out of it.



Direct Programmes Expense overview by category*



* Percentages may not add up because of rounding.

Country programmes

86%
\$817.2 million

The country programmes are the heart of UNICEF's work for children. Developed with government and other country partners, they are planned and delivered with Core Resources as the foundation for long-term impact, and leverage other funding to deliver on the highest priorities for children and the SDGs.

Core Resources allocated to country programmes give UNICEF's donors and partners the largest global footprint of any investment:

7 regions **149** countries and territories home to **2.1** billion children

How are Core Resources allocated to country programmes?

The yearly allocation of Core Resources to UNICEF offices in low- and middle-income countries is driven by equity and is based on three indicators which are used to determine the severity of children's deprivations, demand for social services, and the capacity of the countries to deliver these services to children:



Under-five mortality rate



Child population



Gross national income per capita

This allocation has two parts:

A fixed minimum amount of **\$850,000** each year

A variable amount resulting from the indicators

Offices continue to receive yearly allocations until the country achieves 'high income' status for two consecutive years. Offices may also receive additional allocations for critical and unfunded priorities of the Strategic Plan 2022–2025, with a particular focus on: adolescent girls, community health and nutrition, education, or climate action.

Global and regional programmes

6%
\$53.9 million







Core Resources contribute to global and regional programmes that enable UNICEF to promote children's rights as a recognized thought leader, and technical and data expert across all areas that affect children's lives.

Using the power of data to drive transformative change for children

If we are to protect the rights enshrined in the Convention the Rights of the Child and meet the SDGs, it is imperative that we know what is happening: How many children are hungry? Who needs to be reached with lifesaving vaccinations? Where are children still subject to forced marriage? Good data are the bedrock of effective response.

Thanks to Core Resources, UNICEF is the world's leading source for data on children, used by over 6 million people annually. For this reason we are also the custodian or co-custodian for 19 child-related SDG indicators.

What is UNICEF's role as the custodian and co-custodian of SDG indicators?

-  Design data collection methods
-  Establish measurement standards
-  Build national-level statistical capacity to generate, analyse and use data
-  Compile and support high-quality national data
-  Maintain global databases and estimates
-  Support countries with geospatial data and analysis

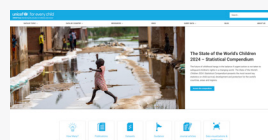
But today, national-level data are only available for about half of the indicators, and there is simply not enough quality information to know whether the goals are being met, or where the greatest focus needs to be placed. This challenge applies across low- to high-income countries.

UNICEF tackles this challenge with the UNICEF Data Team, a team of dedicated data scientists, statisticians, monitoring specialists, and data protection and privacy specialists, funded through core and other resources. The Data Team ensures that we have an increasingly accurate global picture on the child-related SDGs, updating them with the latest data collected directly from children and families, health facilities, schools, and myriad other data points around the world. Key to this role is the work done by UNICEF's global household survey programme, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), a major data source for 40 SDG indicators and the largest source of data on children worldwide. Throughout, we engage children and young people in the process, increasingly building their capacity to contribute to the global conversation on data and data governance.

Those who support Core Resources truly ensure that every child is counted, and that we can identify and better target the children being left behind.



The data collected, validated and analysed by UNICEF's Data Team are accessible as a global public good – supporting better informed decisions on children worldwide.

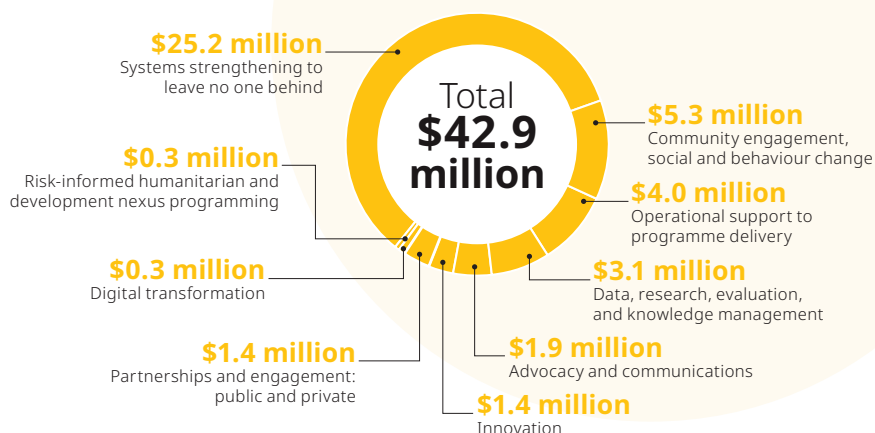


Scan the QR code or click on the image to learn more.

Strategic and innovative activities

5% ●
\$42.9 million

Bold new solutions that can be scaled up to meet demand can be game changers for progress, which is why UNICEF's Executive Board has mandated UNICEF's Executive Director to allocate part of Core Resources to strategic and innovative activities. The Strategic and Innovative Activities Fund supports initiatives that can create even greater opportunities for children across all sectors.



Selection of ongoing multi-year initiatives supported with Core Resources through the Strategic and Innovative Activities Fund for Children



\$1.8 million funds implementation of the **Joint UNICEF and the Africa Centre for Disease Control Action Plan**, supporting stronger primary health-care systems and public health emergency preparedness and response in Africa.

\$5.0 million funds the foundational **Programme to End Childhood Lead Poisoning** – a new and emerging area of programming for children – with the goal to expand programming from the current 4 countries to an additional 20 countries.



\$5.8 million funds the **prevention of HIV among adolescent girls and young women** in 11 African countries: South Africa, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo and Equatorial Guinea.

\$10 million funds the **expansion, professionalization and sustainable financing of 16,000 social service workers** for child protection in 12 countries – including in humanitarian contexts – to prevent and respond to child protection violations.



\$10 million funds **UNICEF and WHO mental health and psychosocial well-being plans** in over 10 countries and a set of foundational investments in UNICEF's technical expertise and capacity to lead mental health and psychosocial support programmes for children.

\$10 million funds UNICEF's work with national governments to advance **adolescent girls' education** in 14 countries, to increase the proportion of girls enrolling, attending and completing secondary school with improved learning and life outcomes.



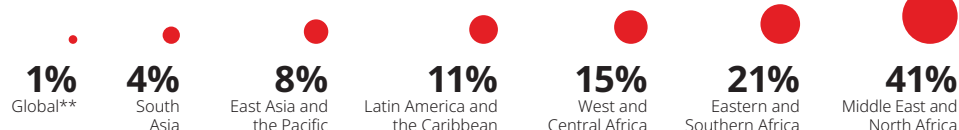
Emergency Programme Fund

3% ●
\$31.6 million

In a sudden-onset emergency, Core Resources have an exceptional importance – they fund UNICEF's immediate response within the first 48 hours. Through a revolving loan called the Emergency Programme Fund (EPF), UNICEF's country offices access financing prior to receiving other donor support.

In 2024, the EPF provided \$97.4 million in Core Resources to 26 UNICEF global, regional, and country offices. Over 40 per cent of these funds went to the Middle East and North Africa region to respond to the escalation of conflict in Lebanon and Syria, as well as to meet urgent needs in the Sudan and Yemen. More than 20 per cent of EPF funds were disbursed to Eastern and Southern Africa to respond to the Sudanese refugee crisis, El Niño-related impacts, and disease outbreaks in Rwanda, Zimbabwe and the Comoros. The EPF also supported vulnerable children and families suffering from the effects of armed conflict in the Sahel, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and Myanmar, and natural disasters in Bangladesh, Viet Nam and Cuba.

EPF 2024 allocations by regions*



EPF supported critical humanitarian needs for children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

For almost 30 years, children in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo have been born into one of the world's most complex and difficult humanitarian situations. Families torn apart by violence. Children losing safety, stability and hope. Decades of recurrent violence, displacement, climate-related disasters and disease outbreaks have led to a significant breakdown in the social systems that keep children safe.

Today 14.9 million children are battling preventable diseases like mpox, cholera and measles. And the children in conflict areas are facing widespread rape, abuse, killing, maiming, abductions and other forms of harm. But despite this overwhelming need, humanitarian agencies – UNICEF included – have faced an increasingly severe funding crisis. As James Elder, UNICEF spokesperson, said after visiting the Democratic Republic of the Congo in April 2025: *"The cost of inaction isn't abstract. It's measured in preventable suffering and lost futures."*

UNICEF exists for every child. And it is in these difficult times that we call on Core Resources and the Emergency Programme Fund (EPF). *"It is a lifeline: there when we need it most, when children's needs are greatest."* said Mariame Sylla, UNICEF Deputy Representative in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in 2024. Without the EPF we would not have been able to:

- Provide safe drinking water and lifesaving supplies to nearly 1,770,000 people in almost 300,000 households affected by or at risk of cholera. These included oral rehydration solution, soap, water treatment products, jerrycans and more. These items save lives today and strengthen resilience to tomorrow's outbreaks
- Help children facing malnutrition. EPF funds paid for nutritional supplies and support to help ensure that more than 1,700 health facilities stayed active, securing essential treatment for more than 129,000 children facing severe wasting
- Provide safety to children. The funds enabled UNICEF to keep providing child protection services with partners, despite increased insecurity. UNICEF assisted over 500 children formerly associated with armed groups (20 per cent of whom were girls), and close to 1,900 children separated from their families were either helped with referrals to other key services or were reunited with their families

With your continued support for Core Resources, UNICEF will carry on helping children in underfunded emergencies and ensure their suffering is not forgotten.

*Percentages may not add up because of rounding.

**This comprises automatic allocations to HQ to support human resource needs upon the activation of Level 2 and Level 3 emergencies.

Other

1% ●
\$6.4 million

Financial adjustments to country programmes in response to currency fluctuations or other economic factors.

How We Spend Core Resources on Priorities for Children Around the World

Core Resources are spent on holistic programmes which affect all areas of children's lives, and link to children's rights. Spending spans all five Goal Areas in UNICEF's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan covering children's health, nutrition, education, protection, and water and sanitation needs, and all seven regions where UNICEF works.

Expense overview by goal area



Survive and thrive
\$327.9 million
34%



Learning and skills
\$170.5 million
18%



Protection from violence and exploitation
\$168.5 million
18%



WASH, climate and the environment
\$173.8 million
18%



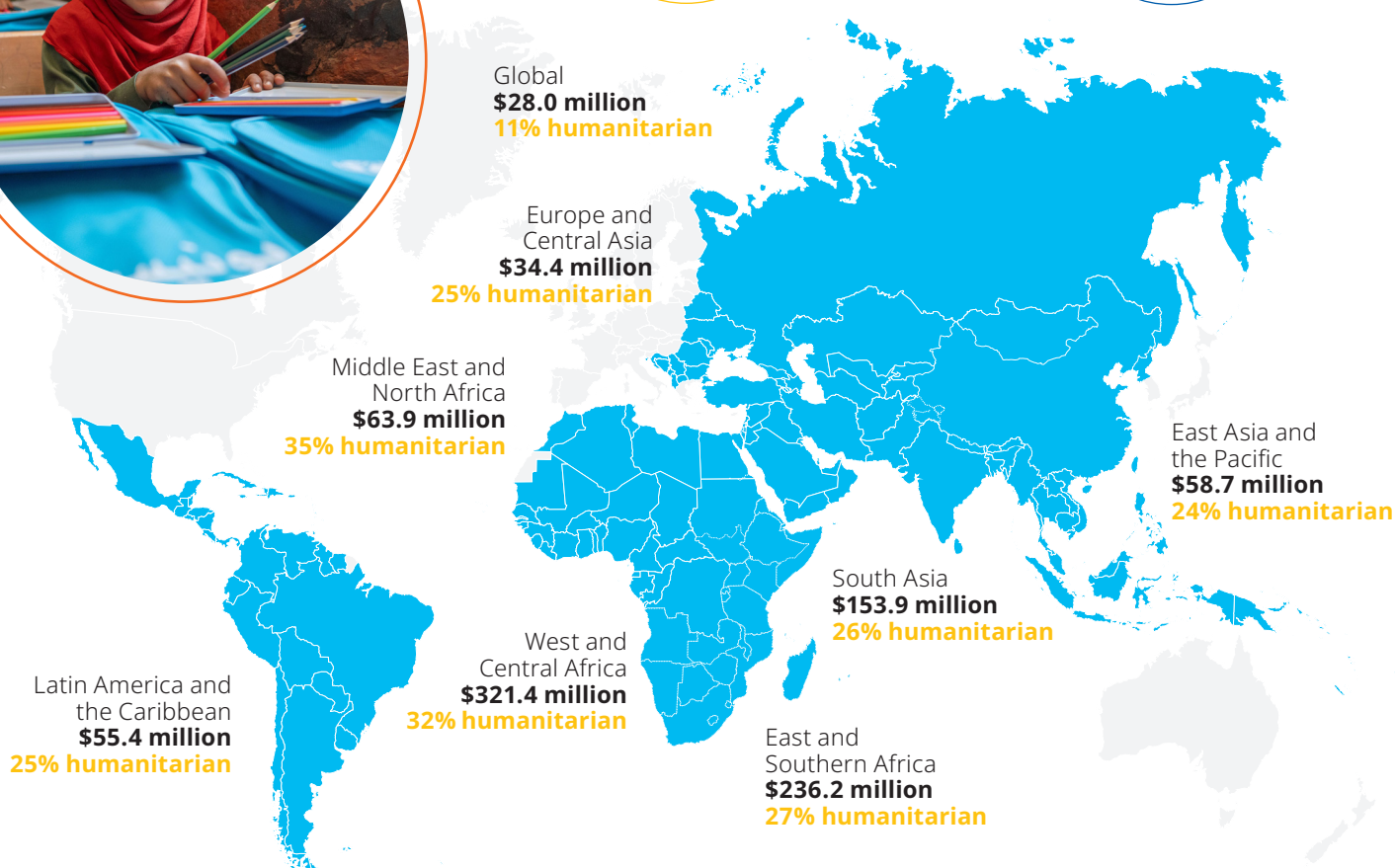
Freedom from poverty
\$111.3 million
12%

In 2024, over two thirds of Core Resources in regions were spent on development and less than a third on humanitarian programme. Most Core Resources were spent in sub-Saharan Africa and the least developed countries, where children's deprivations and needs are the greatest.



28%
 spent on
 humanitarian
 action

59%
 spent in
 Sub-Saharan
 Africa



This map is stylized and not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or area or the delimitation of any frontiers.

A Decade of Progress: How India's WASH transformation is saving lives



Vani (5) practises good handwashing technique. Yuvoday volunteers also conduct sessions for better hygiene with children in Mohlai village, Durg, Chattisgarh.

In India, a decade-long effort to bring safe sanitation and hygiene to every home has done more than improve toilets – it has helped to save children's lives.

Between 2014 and 2022, India saw a 37 per cent reduction in child mortality. While progress on child health is never the result of a single intervention, improved access to clean water and sanitation played a pivotal role by dramatically reducing incidence of diarrhoeal disease, malnutrition and infection – some of the leading causes of death in young children. Few programmes have had such a far-reaching and systemic impact as India's water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) revolution. At the heart of that transformation has been an ambitious government-led movement, backed by UNICEF and enabled by sustained investments of unrestricted funding.

In 2014, the Government of India launched the Swachh Bharat (Clean India) Mission, one of the largest sanitation programmes in the world. Its goal was bold: provide universal access to sanitation and eliminate open defecation by constructing over 110 million toilets for 550 million people across the country. This ambitious target was achieved by 2019.

SDG target 6

In the last 10 years, 550 million people have been reached with at least basic sanitation, and 580 million people with improved drinking water in their homes.



By 2024, Swachh Bharat had reached nearly every corner of the country. But more importantly, it had catalysed a shift in mindset – from building toilets to strengthening systems for sustainable sanitation services, including solid and liquid waste management and climate-responsive initiatives. From the start, UNICEF has been a trusted partner in the mission's design, delivery and scaling up, helping ensure that infrastructure was matched with systems-strengthening, community engagement and behaviour change. UNICEF supported this shift by embedding technical advisors in every state, and building the capacity of local governments to improve and monitor services over time. As Ms Vini Mahajan, Secretary of the Ministry of Water Resources, said: *"UNICEF has been a very valuable partner to us. I have personally seen how much engagement has been shown by your team in water and sanitation."*

Building on the gains of the sanitation movement, India launched the Jal Jeevan (Water is Life) Mission to achieve universal access to safe and adequate drinking water – a natural and essential next step in improving child health, development and protection. UNICEF's support expanded accordingly, providing technical expertise, developing equity-focused tools for state and district governments, and helping improve service delivery for the most marginalized children and communities. Over the last five years, more than 115 million rural households have gained piped water connections in their homes for the first time.

For UNICEF, as the government's partner of choice on WASH, this has been a unique opportunity to expand and accelerate services for women and children. Unrestricted Core Resources have been critical to this success. While other resources can be fragmented or time-bound, Core Resources allowed UNICEF to be a consistent, strategic partner, year after year – playing a central role in planning, monitoring and scaling up the programme. That consistency helped ensure not only national reach, but also the strategic and equitable delivery of water and sanitation services to maximize impact for children and communities.

One of UNICEF's most transformative contributions has been improving the way India collects, manages and uses WASH data. Despite massive public investment, fragmented definitions, reporting formats and data systems had made it difficult to measure progress consistently and spotlight inequalities. UNICEF worked closely with government to strengthen these systems, enabling more accurate, timely and actionable data to guide decisions and track progress at every level.



"Since the inception of the United Nations, its main objective has been to improve people's lives. The Swachh Bharat Mission has not only made the lives of crores [tens of millions] of people better, but has also protected their dignity and has also played an important role in achieving the goals of the United Nations."

"UNICEF has estimated that every family living in the village who are constructing toilets in their homes is saving at least 50,000 rupees (\$650). Another UNICEF study has revealed that the quality of ground water has improved in the last five years, and I believe that Swachh Bharat Mission is also a major contributor to the same."

"When a developing country is able to successfully implement the world's biggest sanitation campaign... all its achievements and outcomes are an inspirational message for the entire world."

"Swachh Bharat mission is this century's biggest and most successful people's movement with people's participation and people's leadership."

— **Narendra Modi**,
Prime Minister of India

The Government of India has backed its commitment with a game-changing investment of over \$120 billion in water and sanitation over the past 10 years. The results speak for themselves: achieving 110 million toilets constructed, more than 550 million people using improved sanitation, more than 580 million rural people using improved drinking water, and lasting reductions in waterborne diseases – a major contributor to child mortality and morbidity.

This impact was made possible by unrestricted funding, which gave UNICEF the ability to work flexibly across sectors, test and adapt approaches in real time, and remain engaged for the long haul. Over 10 years, that flexibility has enabled UNICEF to help take the programme from proof of concept to national scale, and from rolling out infrastructure to transformation of systems.

UNICEF's efforts have also sparked lasting behavioural change, particularly in schools, and children are empowered to carry healthy habits back to their families. *"Swachh Bharat has created that dialogue,"*

noted UNICEF India Representative Cynthia McCaffrey, *"children now have the knowledge, talk about it and grow with it."* The programme has also laid the foundation for climate-smart, sustainable solutions. *"UNICEF is working through its water and sanitation programmes to add climate change and environmental sustainability – and in this, the youth becomes very important, helping us to live sustainably,"* McCaffrey added.

This is more than a national success story – it is a global milestone. With sustained support from the Government of India, partners and donors to UNICEF's Core Resources, India has achieved progress at a scale that is shifting the global dial on water and sanitation. Every Core Resources donor should feel immense pride: your investment has helped transform millions of lives and brought the world closer to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6. The results are measurable, replicable and, with continued partnership, within reach for every child, everywhere.



AWW helps kids with handwashing and accompanies them to clean toilets in the AWC centre. Suka Village, Naramada, Gujarat.

SDG target 6

In 2024, 17.9 million people accessed safely managed sanitation, and 59.3 million people accessed safely managed water in their homes.



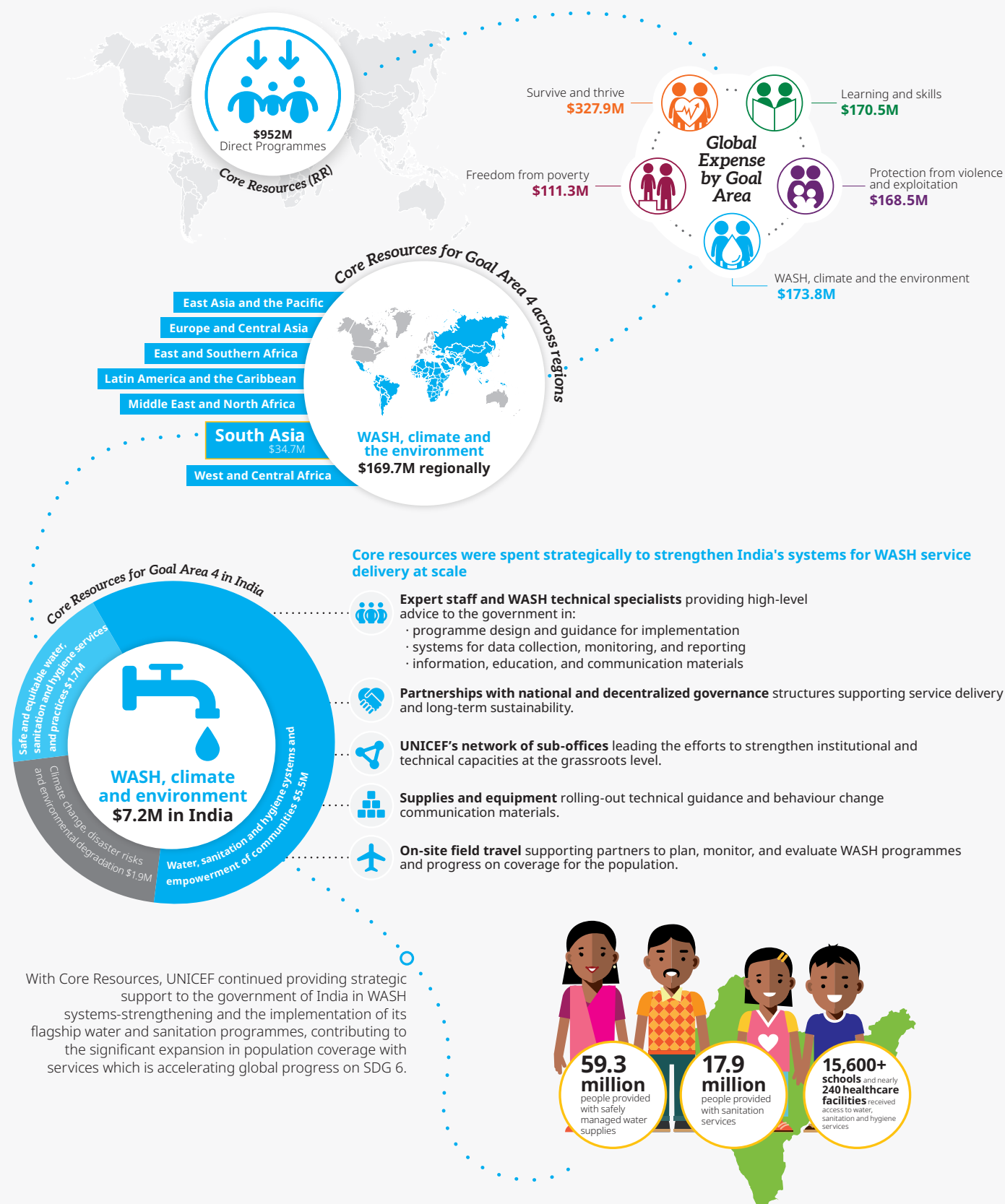
Grade 11 student taking sanitary pad from pad bank to give to other students



How We Spend Core Resources in Countries: The journey from allocation to results in India

The Core Resources journey begins with UNICEF's Strategic Plan Goal Areas. These are the basis on which we budget and allocate for our Direct Programmes at the global, regional, and country level.

This illustration shows how UNICEF strategically used Core Resources under the WASH, Climate and Environment Goal Area to advance access to safe water and sanitation for children in India.



A Public Sector Perspective on Giving to Core Resources

From football clubs and hotel guests to next-gen philanthropists, global investors, music legends, and government partners, including programme countries stepping up to share responsibility, a growing movement is choosing unrestricted funding as the smartest, most strategic way to drive results for children.

“Spain remains a dedicated and long-standing partner of UNICEF, recognizing its crucial role in advocating for the respect, protection, and fulfillment of children’s rights. This commitment is more critical than ever, as UNICEF plays a key role in bridging development and humanitarian assistance to protect children in times of need. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 is a priority for Spain, and UNICEF is our ally in this endeavour, particularly in safeguarding the lives, education, health and well-being of children. Spain is proudly committed to supporting UNICEF with core resources, enabling the agency to effectively deliver on its mandate. We are confident that other partners will take similar actions”



Eva Granados,
Secretary of State for
International Cooperation

“The Republic of Korea values UNICEF’s mission to protect and empower every child. As a country that rose through the power of education, we believe every child deserves a chance to learn, grow, and reach their full potential. In 2024 alone, our contribution to UNICEF exceeded \$140 million, our largest-ever annual contribution to date. We more than tripled our Core Resources, reflecting our belief in UNICEF to respond swiftly to crises, invest in sustainable solutions, and reach the most marginalized children. We will continue to stand with UNICEF to make a meaningful difference for children – wherever they are.”



Cho Tae-yul,
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Republic of Korea

“At Qatar Fund for Development, we believe that investing in children is fundamental to building a just, resilient and sustainable future. Our enduring partnership with UNICEF reflects our shared commitment to reaching the most vulnerable with timely, equitable, and effective responses, especially in times of crisis. Supporting this vital mission embodies our core values and belief in collective action. As QFFD continues to diversify its development finance instruments and scale up innovative financing solutions, we are proud to work with high-impact partners like UNICEF to safeguard children’s rights across education, health, economic development and food security, driving meaningful change for children and communities worldwide.”



Fahad Hamad Al-Sulaiti,
Director General of Qatar
Fund for Development

“As long-standing partners to UNICEF, the Nordic countries are united in our commitment to advancing the rights and well-being of every child. We recognize that flexible Core Resources are the backbone of UNICEF’s ability to deliver lasting results for children – where they are needed most, and when they are needed most. Our support to UNICEF’s Core Resources reflects our shared values and global priorities that include strengthening child protection systems, promoting gender equality, supporting children in humanitarian crises, and safeguarding the rights of all children, everywhere. Just as importantly, it reinforces the normative agenda that underpins UNICEF’s work – grounded in international human rights standards, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. By investing in core resources, we help ensure that UNICEF remains a principled, effective, and agile organization, able to uphold its mandate in both development and humanitarian contexts. We are proud to partner with UNICEF in delivering on the promise of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and building a more just, inclusive, and resilient world for all children.”



**Ministries for Foreign
Affairs of Denmark,
Finland, Iceland, Norway
and Sweden**



Scan the QR
code or click on
the image to
read the **Partner
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A Private Sector Perspective on Giving to Core Resources

From inspiration to impact: philanthropists backing scale and self-reliance

Members of UNICEF's International Council are redefining what strategic philanthropy looks like – and proving that Core Resources is an investment in readiness, resilience and results.

Core Resources is what turns 'For Every Child' from a tagline into a reality. It's what lets UNICEF move faster, reach further and stay longer. When these funds run dry, youth centres close. Programmes shut down. That's not a future we're willing to accept.



UNICEF International Council

The next generation is choosing flexibility – and leading the way

From Austria to Italy to the United States, UNICEF NextGen members are embedding flexibility into everyday philanthropy.

“NextGen is about ownership. It's about connection. It's about finding your place in a movement bigger than yourself – and making sure your contribution goes where it's needed most. Across our chapters, flexible funding isn't just encouraged. It's expected. Because we're not just funding projects. We're funding futures.”



Lauren Taylor and Giuseppe Stigliano,
NextGen members in United States and Italy

Where royalties meet results: music's enduring gift to children

UNICEF's innovative approach to fundraising through music IP donations is turning artistic legacy into global impact.

Every time a donated song is streamed, purchased or played, it generates Core Resources for UNICEF. That means clean water after disasters. Vaccines in remote communities. Safe spaces to learn and grow. Music moves people – and now, it moves resources to where children need them most.



Scan the QR code or click on the image to listen to the concert for Bangladesh now, and help mobilize Core Resources for children!

From the pitch to the planet: football for every child

“We know that flexibility is key to success – for athletes as well as organizations – and we trust UNICEF to deliver. Our support goes where the need is greatest, helping UNICEF respond fast, scale what works and reach children no one else can. Together, we're delivering impact that goes beyond one-time interventions – and making sure no child faces poverty, conflict or crisis alone.”



Brighton & Hove

Check Out for Children: three decades of unrestricted impact

“‘Serve Our World’ has been one of our core values since my grandparents founded Marriott nearly 100 years ago. Through the Check Out for Children program, our hotel teams and guests have helped support UNICEF's life-saving work for 30 years. Flexible funding, raised through donations at participating hotels, allows UNICEF to use their world-leading expertise to respond to the most urgent needs of children and families in over 190 countries and territories.”



David Marriott,
Chairman of the Board,
Marriott International

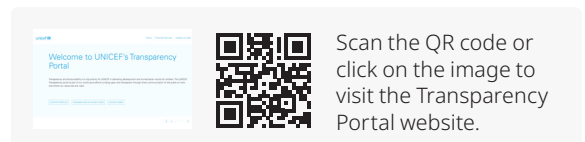
How we Champion Transparency with Core Resources

UNICEF values the trust that our donors and partners have placed in us. Equally, we provide unparalleled transparency and accountability to our partners, and the wider public. We are proud to share:

- We are in the top 10 out of 50 organizations reviewed by the International Aid Transparency Initiative for our transparency in 2024 and have a perfect score for budgets and finance
- As part of the International Aid Transparency Initiative, we have achieved an industry-leading 99 per cent data publishing rate
- We provide real-time and public financial and results insights on UNICEF's programmes for children worldwide on the Transparency Portal



100 per cent of Core Resources is spent to advance UNICEF's mission for children worldwide. Our spending is firmly grounded in the principles of transparency and accountability, maximizing what goes to programmes for children.



How much of Core Resources was spent on programmes* for children in 2024?

84% which includes high-quality and results-based programmes at all levels, but also the technical excellence, data and advocacy that power programme implementation. The remaining 16 per cent is spent on a set of strategic programme enablers such as United Nations coordination to achieve the SDGs, the management of resources for results, and the generation of new funding – including innovative financing for children.

Core Resources reporting helps companies meet ESG goals while demonstrating real, long-term impact

This funding forms the foundation for UNICEF to strengthen systems – from health to education to water – that children and communities depend on. When those systems are resilient, societies are better able to withstand shocks like conflict, climate change and pandemics.

UNICEF is deeply committed to the SDGs, and contributes to 12 of the 17 goals. An investment in Core Resources reflects a commitment to shared global priorities and systemic progress for children. Results are reported annually, demonstrating the short-, medium- and long-term change UNICEF delivers every day for children around the world.

Our Core Resources Report and companion publications offer clear, credible and consistent insights that support ESG reporting, even when contributions are not linked to a specific initiative.

Every dollar contributes to stronger systems, greater equity and lasting change. This is value worth showcasing.



*This figure shows combined expenditure of Direct Programmes and Development Effectiveness to demonstrate the total Core Resources spent on programmes for children in 2024.

About UNICEF

We are the world's largest children's organization, an agency of the United Nations, and 100 per cent voluntarily funded. Mandated at the highest levels, we ensure that children and adolescents are protected, healthy, and educated. We have a presence in over 190 countries and territories, working during times of peace and stability and when emergency strikes. We partner with national governments and local communities, other United Nations agencies and NGO partners, and the public and private sectors to achieve our mission to create a better future for children and adolescents.

Importantly, UNICEF provides support to children from before birth all the way through to adolescence. Thus, please note that within this report the terms "children" and "childhood" encompass the full spectrum of a child's life, up to age 18.

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Cover

I am a child, not a bride. In the drought-stricken Afar region of north-eastern Ethiopia, water scarcity and loss of livelihoods are threatening the future of girls who are increasingly forced into child marriage. UNICEF is conducting awareness-raising activities on the ground to ensure that young girls like Aissa remain in school as long as possible!

Credits

Writers and producers: Programme Coordination Team, as part of the Global Flexible Funding Team (Public and Private Sector).

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Resources

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