



UNICEF in the State of Palestine

Escalation Humanitarian Situation Report No. 19



Reporting Period: 15 to 28 February 2024

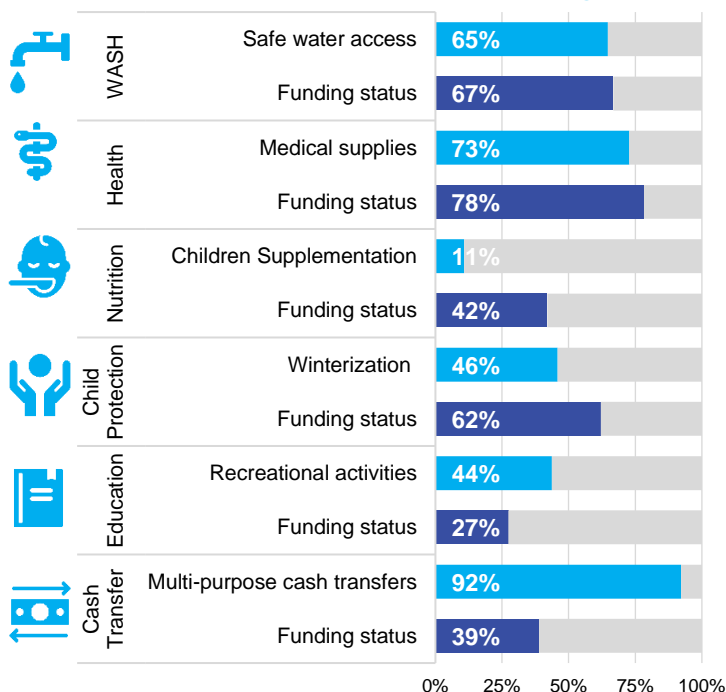
Highlights

- High levels of displacement and overcrowding in collective centers and scattered sites in the Gaza Strip continue with extremely challenging hygiene and sanitation conditions. On average, 340 individuals share one toilet, and 1,290 persons share one shower, as assessed by the WASH Cluster.
- The babies of 5,500 women who are due to give birth in the next month in the Gaza Strip are at risk of dying, as their mothers do not have access to prenatal or postnatal check-ups because of bombings and need to flee for safety. Anxiety is also leading to premature births, as reported by UNFPA.
- Over 90 per cent of children aged 6-23 months and pregnant, breastfeeding women face severe food poverty with access to two or fewer food groups per day.
- Over 1,326,000 people, including 670,000 children, obtained lifesaving clean water for drinking and domestic needs through UNICEF provision of 109,500 litres of fuel to accessible areas south of Wadi Gaza in the past two weeks.
- UNICEF delivered 52 Interagency Emergency Health Kits to serve 520,000 people and ten newborn kits (NBK) benefitting 8,700 newborns.
- UNICEF urgently assisted more than 24,500 pregnant and breastfeeding women with multi-purpose cash to support their critical needs including relocation to a presumably safer location, benefitting a total of 170,000 people.
- UNICEF has moved 32 trucks into the Gaza Strip from Egypt between 16 to 26 February, with healthcare equipment, medicines, tarpaulins for shelters, nutrient supplement paste for 2,000 babies for one month, diapers for 8,000 babies.
- In the West Bank, UNICEF continued to support the emergency response and delivered medical equipment: three transport incubators, 13 foetal monitors, three oxygen regulators, 16 centrifuges, and 15 fibre-optic laryngoscopes.

Situation in Numbers

- 3.1 Million** people in need nationally (OCHA Flash Appeal, Nov 2023)
- 1 Million** Children affected in the Gaza Strip (PCBS, 2023 population projections)
- Estimated 1.7 Million** Internally displaced persons (UNRWA, 7 February 2024)
- 563 schools** sustained damage in the Gaza Strip (Education Cluster, 24 Feb 2024)
- Over 90% of population** face high levels of acute food insecurity in the Gaza Strip (IPC Phase 3 or above, 21 Dec 2023)

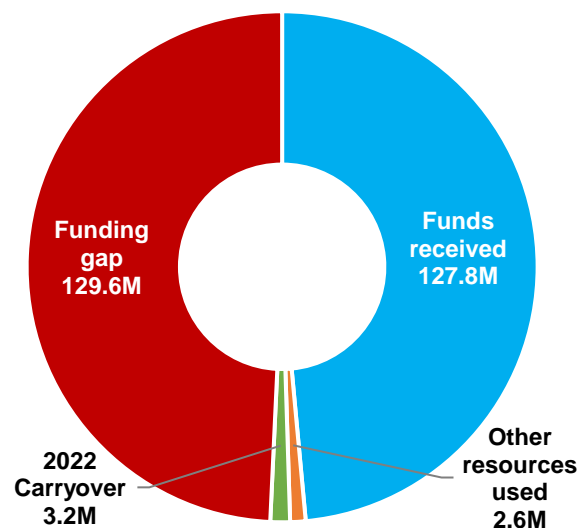
UNICEF's Response and Funding Status



UNICEF Immediate Needs

US\$ 263.3 million

Funding Status (in US\$)



UNICEF funding status is based on the January 2024 revision of the HAC.

The HAC has been revised for Child Protection and Nutrition. Funding does not include the loans received from within UNICEF. See Annex A for additional explanations.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

The revised Inter-Agency Flash Appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territories was issued on 6 November covering October to December 2023, and was thereafter extended until the end of March 2024. The appeal identifies a financial requirement of approximately US\$ 1.2 billion to meet critical needs for 2.7 million people, 2.2 million population in the Gaza Strip and 500,000 people in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. UNICEF issued an updated Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal for October 2023 until the end of March 2024 aligned with the interagency humanitarian planning processes. The UNICEF funding requirement was adjusted, as laid out in the 2024 HAC appeal, in line with increasing needs to US\$ 263.3 million. This revision reflects strategic shifts towards scaling up and sustaining humanitarian programming in targeted shelters and communities, as well as increased procurement of supplies required regularly and high associated freight costs. To date, the revised HAC has a US\$ 129.6 million (49 per cent) funding gap.

UNICEF would like to sincerely thank partners for their contributions, including the governments of Australia, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom as well as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), EU Humanitarian Aid and the World Bank. UNICEF thanks the UNICEF National Committees of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States. UNICEF would also like to thank the UNICEF private sector fundraising offices of Chile, Croatia, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Gulf Area Office, Japan, Philippines, Indonesia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Thailand and Uzbekistan, which have supported the response to the escalation of hostilities. Last but not least, UNICEF benefited from Global Humanitarian Thematic Funding, which enables UNICEF to respond flexibly to the acute needs of the most vulnerable children and their families in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. UNICEF has also received US\$ 8.75 million from the internal Emergency Programme Fund and exceptionally US\$ 10 million of an internal capital loan both of which will need to be replenished – these loans are not reflected in funds received.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

An analysis on the nutritional vulnerability in the Gaza Strip, conducted between December 2023 and January 2024¹, found that over 90 per cent of children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and breastfeeding women face severe food poverty in the Gaza Strip. The food that is available to them each day is of the lowest nutritional value and from only two or fewer food groups. In addition, 90 per cent of children under five are affected by one or more infectious disease, while 70 per cent have had diarrhoea in the two weeks previous to the assessment. This unprecedented increase has direct implications on the nutritional status of children under five, as well as other vulnerable populations. In addition, 81 per cent of households lack safe and clean water with average household access to safe and clean water at less than one litre per person per day. This is far from the minimum standard of 15 litre per person per day and is of particular concern for babies who are fed with infant formula. The findings show that one in six children (15 per cent) between the age of six to 23 months in the northern part of the Gaza Strip are acutely malnourished. In Rafah, five per cent of the children aged 6-23 are acutely malnourished, this lower rate is mainly due to the humanitarian assistance that can be provided in the south of the Gaza Strip, nevertheless showing a deterioration in the nutritional status. Infant feeding practices – suboptimal before the crisis – have further deteriorated, and an increased number of infants now rely on formula milk for survival. The scarcity of clean drinking water required for safely preparing formula milk will increase young children's risk of infection and subsequently malnutrition. Nutrition partners have described that North Gaza governorate is facing a catastrophic situation. Urgent humanitarian aid is needed to prevent widespread drastic malnutrition and escalating fatalities due to hunger, especially among children and other vulnerable groups.

As of 28 February, at least 29,954 Palestinians were reported killed in the Gaza Strip since the start of hostilities (up to 70 per cent are reported to be women and children). More than 70,325 Palestinians were reported injured, including at least 11,682 children (partially disaggregated data as of 13 February 2024). Medical professionals and the UN staff have reported that more than a thousand children have had one or more of their limbs amputated, and thousands have acquired disabilities due to injuries and trauma, including loss of hearing and speech impairment. Thousands of children continue to be reported missing and are likely to be injured or killed under the rubble of destroyed buildings. Rescue efforts are hampered by ongoing airstrikes, scarcity of fuel for vehicles and equipment, and limited communication capabilities. UNRWA reports that, as of 24 February, 158 UNRWA staff had been killed, while WHO and UNDP report one staff member killed respectively. This amounts to 23 per cent of UN aid workers killed globally since 1997, and by far the most in this short a time period. As of 24 February, there have been 332 incidents impacting 155 UNRWA

¹ The comprehensive assessment was carried out by the Nutrition Information Systems in Emergencies (NIS-E) Task Force, which operated under the leadership of Global Nutrition Cluster and is jointly overseen by the WFP and UNICEF. Furthermore, analysis received support from several organizations, including WHO and CDC. A summary as well as the full report are available at: <https://www.nutritioncluster.net/news/nutrition-vulnerability-and-situation-analysis-gaza>.

installations, some of which have sustained direct hits. UNRWA reports as of 24 February, that at least 403 IDPs have been killed in their facilities, with at least a further 1,385 injured due to the hostilities since 7 October.

In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, OCHA reports that since 7 October, at least 403 Palestinians have been killed.² At least 106 Palestinian children were reported killed in conflict-related violence in the same time period, with more than half of incidents in the Jenin, Nablus, and Tulkarem governorates of the northern West Bank, and more than one quarter of incidents in the Ramallah and Jerusalem governorates. Militarized law enforcement operations inside Palestinian communities and refugee camps involving high use of live ammunition, explosive weapons, and aerial strikes, as well as settler violence and movement restrictions, continue to put Palestinian children at higher risk of violence, grave violations, and displacement, and impact their access to services. According to OCHA, since 7 October, at least 2,763 Palestinians including 1,319 children have been displaced, mainly in Area C and East Jerusalem, due to settler violence and access restrictions, home demolitions, and destruction of residences during military law enforcement operations. 2023 was the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since the UN began recording casualties in 2005.

As of end of January, almost 57 per cent of the assessed WASH facilities in the Gaza Strip are reportedly damaged or destroyed.³ Reports of flooding are frequent due to the destruction of the main sewage stations, with over a thousand such incidents reported across the Gaza Strip. The shortage of fuel further increases the sewage crisis, making sewage stations idle, and leading to environmental and public health concerns. As end of January, only the Rafah wastewater treatment plant remained functional, all others were not accessible. Faecal sludge management remains minimum or non-existent due to lack of trucks and treatment chemicals. Reported observations state that open defecation is widespread in camps using “dig and bury” and buckets are being used as substitutes for latrines. In addition, the accumulation of solid waste in general on streets, around hospitals, and IDP shelters are a priority concern, as tens of thousands of tons of uncollected public waste are intensifying public health risks. Israeli sources report that approximately 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed, mostly in the attacks of 7 October, and more than 7,500 people are reported injured. More than 35 children have been reported killed. Around 250 people, including at least 36 children were abducted from Israel into the Gaza Strip, of whom 34 have been released, with very limited information available on the children remaining in captivity.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

Providing adequate critical WASH services to the affected population in the Gaza Strip continued to be hampered by a lack of power supply, restricted access, and fuel shortages. In response to urgent WASH humanitarian needs, through the UN mechanism, UNICEF provided 109,502 litres of fuel during the reporting period, which allowed public and private water wells and desalination plants to produce clean water, benefitting more than 1,326,000 people, including over 670,000 children with lifesaving water for drinking and domestic needs in Deir Al Balah, Khan Younis, Rafah, and Middle areas.⁴

Additionally, UNICEF distributed 1,712 packs of diapers (each pack contains five diapers) and 100 hygiene kits to affected families, benefitting more than 600 people, including women and adolescent girls in Rafah.

In response to the dire sanitation services for the internally displaced people (IDPs) in overcrowded shelters, UNICEF, through the UN mechanism, provided fuel to operate one wastewater treatment plant in Rafah, enabling wastewater treatment and safe disposal of sewage, benefitting over 275,000 people, including 140,250 children in Rafah. Furthermore, 430 basic latrines were constructed, benefitting more than 12,900 people including 6,400 children.

Moreover, to address solid waste and environmental hygiene needs in the overcrowded shelters, UNICEF continued to support cleaning services at 22 shelters in Rafah and Der Al Balah, benefitting over 90,000 people, including 46,000 children. UNICEF further continued its pilot of the “Incentive Based Programme” at Al Quds University, where 700⁵ workers were engaged in solid waste management intervention, benefitting over 30,000 people, including 16,000 children. In partnership with the WASH Cluster, UNICEF is scaling up WASH service delivery in IDP hosting communities through an integrated package of WASH services to support access to water supply, sanitation and hygiene services.

² Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel, Flash Update #127, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-127>

³ Sanitation Briefing Note: State of Palestine WASH emergency response in the Gaza Strip, 8 February 2024

⁴ Some of this fuel is also used for the wastewater treatment plant in Rafah (the only one partially functioning) and sewage pumping stations.

⁵ Of the 700 volunteers engaged for cash for work on solid waste management in shelters, 600 were engaged in the last week.

The WASH Cluster coordinates the response in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank through sub-national coordination platforms. UNICEF continues to lead and coordinate the WASH cluster, which has 68 partners. In the Gaza Strip, there are 27 active WASH partners who delivered 4,745m³ of water through water trucking from 19 to 25 February.

Health

UNICEF continued to support the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health services in the Gaza Strip, through the provision of medical supplies and consumables. During the reporting period, 52 Interagency Emergency Health Kits (IEHK) medicine kits, 10 newborn kits (NBK) were delivered to the Ministry of Health and partners in the Gaza Strip. Each complete IEHK kit serves around 10,000 people, and each NBK benefits 870 newborns for a period of three months. Furthermore, UNICEF delivered to the Ministry of Health (MoH) under the procurement services several maternal and child medications including vital supplies such as antibiotics, insulin, antihistamines, anticoagulants, medical consumables and acute watery diarrheal kits.

In the West Bank, UNICEF continued to support the emergency response and preparedness efforts. During the reporting period, the delivery of medical supplies and medical consumables continued, including medical equipment such as three transport incubators, 13 foetal monitors and three oxygen regulators, 16 centrifuges, and 15 fibre-optic laryngoscopes. The equipment will be distributed to the MoH maternal and neonatal departments in West Bank. Additionally, UNICEF delivered cold chain items mainly freeze alerts to the Ministry of Health in the West Bank to support the temperature monitoring system of vaccines. While a new shipment of 187,000 doses of BCG vaccines and 500 doses of the Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type B) vaccine were delivered to the central stores, under the procurement services with the Ministry of Health.

UNICEF participates in the Health Cluster including through technical working groups, mainly the sexual reproductive working group, rehabilitation working group.

Nutrition

Considering the rapidly deteriorating nutrition situation in the Gaza Strip, nutrition partners have scaled-up efforts to conduct mid and upper arm circumference (MUAC) screening, to identify cases of children suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) in shelters and health facilities. The implementing agencies are screening for malnutrition among children aged 6 to 59 months, with children found to have acute malnutrition quickly referred for treatment, following a simplified treatment protocol. In total 10,963 children aged 6-59 months underwent MUAC screening.

To prevent further deterioration of the nutrition situation of children, UNICEF and partners continued distributing supplementary nutrition food and blanket supplementary food to those in need. In the Gaza Strip, UNICEF supported the delivery and distribution of curative and preventive nutrition supplies to the Ministry of Health and partners, including 360 boxes of high energy biscuits (HEB), and 420 cartons of lipid nutrient supplements (LNS) that were distributed to children and pregnant and breastfeeding women. In addition, 11,112 cartons of ready to use infant formula (RUIF) were dispatched to partners, for the distribution to 5,556 non-breastfed newborns in shelters and through neonate units and Primary Health Care facilities at the Ministry of Health for two months.

In the West Bank, UNICEF delivered curative nutrition supplies, including 870 cartons of supplementary food (PlumpyNut and PlumpySup), as well as 740 cartons of therapeutic food (BP5 and BP 100 fortified food). These serve 3,220 children under the age of five years who are suffering from acute malnutrition.

For the Nutrition Cluster in the West Bank, discussions and meetings are taking place with the Health and Nutrition departments on prepositioning of nutrition supplies. By collaborating closely with relevant authorities, the aim is to ensure that essential nutrition resources are strategically located in areas where they are most needed, thereby facilitating rapid response when needed.

Child Protection

Amidst the adversities of winter and periods of heavy rain, UNICEF distributed lifesaving winterization items to children in the Gaza Strip (in Rafah, Khan Younis, and Deir Al-Balah), where Palestinians have experienced repeated displacement and worsening vulnerabilities. Since 7 October, UNICEF has worked with twelve implementing partners to distribute over 153,117 clothing items tailored differently for children aged newborn to 17 years old.

Additionally, UNICEF has provided in-person psychosocial support services for 95,041 people including 71,926 children. Of these, 44,303 children (22,649 girls) including 865 children with disabilities, as well as 10,021 caregivers, received in-person structured psychosocial support services. In addition, UNICEF facilitated specialized psychosocial sessions for 350 children who were either injured or with existing disabilities, aiming to assess and address their specific needs within the intervention framework.

UNICEF with partners conducted in-person sessions on explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) for 9,620 individuals in shelters and vulnerable communities, which included 5,235 children and 4,385 caregivers.

A total of 14 unaccompanied children are in the care of a UNICEF partner in the Rafah Governorate, receiving counselling, basic services, along with family tracing support. A further two unaccompanied infant twins identified in a hospital will be temporarily placed at a safe care home operated by a UNICEF partner, upon hospital discharge. A total of 252 separated children in informal kinship care arrangements are regularly monitored by a UN agency.

Activities to prevent and respond to family separation have been designed and will be included in the “Recreational Programme” run by the Education Section. The implementation of the pilot programme for 100 families providing informal kinship care to unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) could not start due to increasing insecurity in the Rafah Governorate.

In the West Bank including East Jerusalem, the provision of primary (child rights awareness), secondary (positive parenting, psychosocial support), and tertiary protection (mental health legal counselling/aid/representation) services reached a total of 1,927 people including 1,443 children and 484 caregivers affected by political and intra-family violence, in 17 Governorates. Sessions on positive parenting continued to be carried out in key location of the West Bank (in Fawar Camp, Aroub, Biet Skaria, Masafer Yatta, Jayyous), reaching 210 children through 17 sessions, and 66 mothers through 7 sessions. A total of 25 government and Civil Society Origination (CSO) child protection staff continued attending the accredited child protection diploma at Bethlehem University. UNICEF continued to provide technical and financial support to child protection councillors who were able to reach 12 children in Ramallah and Nablus.

During the reporting period the CPAoR has continued the efforts to mainstream the identification and referral mechanism for UASC among all humanitarian sectors and coordinated the response amongst partners for children being released from detention in Gaza, including the provision of basic material assistance, cash and specialised mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). Since 7 October, CPAoR partners have reached 267,511 boys and girls and 27,307 women and men in Gaza Strip through awareness raising interventions on key child protection partners concerns (including on explosive remnants of war), MHPSS for children and caregivers, USAC identification and registration and distribution of clothing kits.

Education

UNICEF with partners continued to support the well-being of children in the Gaza Strip through the provision of recreational activities as partners reported reaching 4,347 children (of whom 2,386 girls; 1,961 boys; and 11 children with disabilities). Partners are preparing to integrate informal learning into activities, but security risks and space limitations for safe learning spaces poses a challenge due to the high demand for space for IDP accommodation. To that end, UNICEF is leading the Education Cluster task force on continuity of education in Gaza which collaborates with partners to model functional safe learning spaces to bring children back to a safe learning community based on different implementation phases for any learning interventions.

To support the well-being of adolescent girls, UNICEF has partnered with a consortium of local women-led organizations to support the creation of safer spaces for adolescent girls where they will be reached with information and services that are specific to the needs of adolescents’ girls. In February, UNICEF has distributed 2,390 Adolescent Girls’ Personal Care packages (of which 899 kits for 9-13 years old girls, and 1,491 kits for 14-18 years old girls).⁶ These packages are linked to information sharing and recreational activities, including MHPSS adapted to adolescent girls. These care packages not only provide recreational activities to adolescent girls, but also provide items that cannot currently be found on the local market which will help adolescent girls take personal care. The package provides three packs of sanitary pads, underwear, skin wipes, multipurpose cloth, feminine wash, a whistle, a headscarf, the “Laaha⁷ MHPSS and GBV Booklet” and the “Adolescent Girls Care Kit Booklet”.

In the West Bank, UNICEF continued to support the national education system on the adoption of the Learning Passport platform for children living in hot spot areas who are not able to reach their schools due to security issues, including the adaptation of content for children with disabilities. Moreover, UNICEF continues to finalize potential partnerships to introduce recreational activities and mitigation to the compounded learning loss in the identified areas. UNICEF is also working with the Ministry of Education on a national humanitarian response plan for the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Since October 2023, in the Gaza strip, 13 Education Cluster partners have reached more than 164,000 students and teachers – of which 52,000 beneficiaries were reached through UNICEF and partners – with psychosocial support,

⁶ In reference to SitRep no.18 only 2,390 Adolescent Girls Personal Care packages were received by the adolescent girls.

⁷ Laaha provides information to women and girls on sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence as well as where and how to access services when needed. It is the first-ever platform designed by and for women and girls in humanitarian and development settings to address gender-based violence.

emergency learning, recreational supplies and activities, and awareness sessions in the Deir al Balah, Khan Younis, and Rafah governorates. Most of the cluster response is delivered by local partners.⁸

Social Protection

During the week of 19 February, UNICEF assisted 24,692 pregnant and breastfeeding women (benefitting approximately 170,000 people) with multi-purpose cash to support their critical needs including those related to the relocation to a presumably safer location.

From the onset of the 7 October escalation, UNICEF has provided cash assistance to 546,588 people (81,605 families, including 285,617 children, 16,195 people with disabilities, and 12,882 female-headed households). Of whom 536,186 people (76,598 families) were assisted with multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA). This represents 56 per cent of all MPCA provided in the Gaza Strip. In recognition of continuous need, UNICEF started to provide the second round of MPCA from January and already reached 122,316 people (15,574 households). The plan includes to cover all recipients with three rounds of payments.

Responding to the growing food insecurity, UNICEF has been providing nutrition top up cash payments since December, reaching cumulatively 28,840 pregnant and breastfeeding women, and disability top up cash payments to 5,079 families with children with disabilities. These top ups are estimated to benefit a total of 238,282 people.

Cash delivery has been accompanied by recurring monitoring through RapidPro⁹ with over 8,000 post-distribution monitoring survey responses to date, shedding light on the continued usefulness of unrestricted cash transfers even in a context of partially compromised market functionality, and the existence of informal markets. According to the latest data collection round (14-21 February), a large majority of respondents – 73 per cent responded “partially” or “yes” to the question: “Do you find the goods you need on the market?”. This is in line with precedent data collection rounds, as there has not been a significant increase in negative responses. The biggest expense category remains food, while the share of people purchasing most of the goods in formal shops has fallen further from 34 per cent at the end of December to 17 per cent in the last data collection, with informal vendors the biggest source of commodities.

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) / Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

UNICEF continues efforts to ensure that communities have direct, safe and confidential channels for any complaint or feedback they may have regarding UNICEF and partners’ interventions in the Gaza Strip, West Bank and East Jerusalem. Since 7 October, 15,455 pieces of feedback and complaints have been received through feedback channels (the Interagency Hotline, the PSEA network hotline and the UNICEF e-mail). During this reporting period of two weeks, 7,205 pieces of feedback and complaints were received. Communication and feedback included requests for cash assistance, information inquiries regarding the cash assistance, as well as issues related to cash redemption; these cases also included requests for specific products. This feedback is analysed and used by the UNICEF Humanitarian Cash Transfer team to identify and resolve redemption issues, as well as to inform the direction of cash programming.

Leading the humanitarian clusters on Child Protection, Health, Nutrition and WASH, while being an active member in additional humanitarian clusters, UNICEF succeeded to mainstream PSEA across many clusters. UNICEF delivered IASC-based¹⁰ presentation and materials on PSEA and on the PSEA Network (SANAD) to reach out to different organizations, especially in clusters where UNICEF is the lead agency. This role is actively utilized to strengthen efforts and PSEA content at the interagency level, for programming and coordination, while inviting more actors to join the SANAD network.

A UNICEF partner providing PSS services in the Gaza Strip continues to deliver safeguarding sessions that reached 102,167 IDPs with safeguarding awareness services and a copy of the Sanad brochure.

Through the PSEA Network, UNICEF further continues to strengthen interagency feedback channels, and advocates for the use of the hotline (164 and 121), which receives complaints and provides MHPSS and referrals. Since 7 October, the hotline documented 1,099 calls and delivered MHPSS sessions in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, benefitting 64 boys, 16 girls, 609 men and 410 women. The majority of calls are about the situation in the Gaza Strip. Most calls from the North of the Gaza Strip state that people are dying of starvation, and that children are crying from hunger.

Support from Egypt Coordination Cell

Cumulatively 521 trucks containing UNICEF supplies have crossed into the Gaza Strip from Egypt since 21 October, which is when the first trucks could enter after the escalation of hostilities on 7 October 2023. Security deteriorated

⁸ source: Education Cluster 5W PowerBi dashboard - Gaza Response

⁹ RapidPro collects data via short message service (SMS) and other communication channels (e.g. voice; social media channels, such as Facebook Messenger, Telegram, WhatsApp) to enable real-time data collection and mass-communication with target end-users, including beneficiaries and frontline workers.

¹⁰ The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) was established in June 1992 in response to General Assembly Resolution 46/182 to serve as the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination relating to humanitarian assistance in response to complex and major emergencies under the leadership of the Emergency Relief Coordinator.

during the reporting period, UN supply convoys were targeted resulting in repeated border closures and a marked reduction in the quantity and volume of supplies delivered to Gaza. Between February 16-26, only 32 trucks with critical emergency supplies have crossed including:

- Medicines and medical equipment (IEH Kits) to meet the initial primary healthcare needs of a population of 20,000 people for three months.
- Newborn Kits for facilities covering a population of 180,000 for 3 months.
- Lipid Nutrition Supplements (LNS-MQ) to cover 2,000 babies for one month.
- Baby diapers for 8,285 babies.
- Assorted medicines, tarpaulins for temporary WASH facilities.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

UNICEF is an active member of the UN Country Team and the Humanitarian Country Team and closely coordinates with other organizations and local partners, including women-led organisations. UNICEF also leads the coordination of the WASH and Nutrition Clusters and co-leads the Education Cluster with Save the Children. Within the Protection Cluster, UNICEF leads the Child Protection Area of Responsibility as well as the Technical Working Group on UASC. UNICEF is part of the Inter-Cluster Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Technical Working Group. UNICEF also supports the Inter-Agency Network for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and participates in the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Working Group coordinated by OCHA. UNICEF also actively participates in the Regional and National Gender and Humanitarian Working Group, coordinated by the UN Women and OCHA, and contributes to gender equality programming as well as preparedness and response.

Human Interest Stories, External Media and Advocacy

Advocacy - What is UNICEF calling for?

To respond to the situation for children in Israel and the State of Palestine, UNICEF is calling for:

- An immediate and long-lasting humanitarian ceasefire.
- Safe and unrestricted humanitarian access to and within the Gaza Strip to reach affected populations wherever they are, including in the north. All access crossings must be opened including to sufficient fuel, materials needed to run and rehabilitate essential infrastructure, and commercial supplies. Safe movement for humanitarian workers and supplies across the Gaza Strip must be guaranteed and reliable telecommunications networks made available to coordinate response efforts.
- The immediate, safe, and unconditional release of all abducted children, and an end to any grave violations against all children, including killing and maiming children.
- Respect and protection for civilian infrastructure such as shelters and schools, and health, electric, water, sanitation, and telecommunications facilities, to prevent loss of civilian and children's lives, outbreaks of diseases, and to provide care to the sick and wounded. All parties to the conflict must respect international humanitarian law.
- Urgent medical cases in the Gaza Strip to be able to safely access critical health services or be allowed to leave, and for injured or sick children evacuated to be accompanied by family members.

UNICEF continues to press world leaders on every occasion for an end to the violence and humanitarian access to the whole of the Gaza Strip.

Statements:

- 27.02.2024: [Statement by Principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee - Civilians in Gaza in extreme peril while the world](#)
- 19.02.2024: [Children's lives threatened by rising malnutrition in the Gaza Strip](#)

Human interest stories:

- [Hope Amidst Ruins, Echoing the Voices of Gaza Strip's Children | UNICEF State of Palestine](#)
- [Adolescents' Hopes Amidst Chaos in the Gaza Strip | UNICEF State of Palestine](#)

Social Media:

- [Postcards on the testimony of Razan, a 11-year-old girl who lost her mother, father, brother and two sisters in a bombardment in Gaza.](#)
- [There is a high risk that malnutrition will continue to rise across the Gaza Strip due to the alarming lack of food, water and health and nutrition services.](#)
- [The delivery of aid is a matter of life or death for children in Gaza.](#)
- [Hadeel misses her friends, she's losing her hope and now her life's at risk. There is nowhere safe for children in Rafah to go.](#)
- [Rafah, one of the most densely populated places on earth, Now shelters half of Gaza's population, many of whom have been displaced multiple times by war.](#)

- [Many in Gaza survive on just one meal a day, others find none. Children face acute malnutrition, safe water is scarce at under 1L per person.](#)
- [Thanks to the AEXCID and Spanish Natcom for their support on the delivery of essential medical supplies in the West Bank.](#)
- [Children in Gaza have been exposed to deeply distressing events, witnessing horrors that no child should.](#)

Next SitRep: 8 March 2024

UNICEF State of Palestine Humanitarian Action for Children 2024 Appeal: www.unicef.org/appeals/state-of-palestine

Latest Situation Reports are available on: www.unicef.org/sop/research-and-reports

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Annex A - Summary of Programme Results (Gaza Strip and West Bank)¹¹

Sector / Indicator	UNICEF			CLUSTER		
	Total Target ¹²	Cumulative Result	% Progress	Total Target	Cumulative Result	% Progress
WASH						
# of people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs ¹³	2,050,000	1,326,000	65%	2,426,544	2,100,000	87%
# of people benefitting from improved access to sanitation and hygiene services	1,350,000	495,187	37%	2,426,544	759,827	31%
# of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items)	1,050,000	439,288	42%			
Health						
# of people supported through UNICEF delivered medical supplies ¹⁴	780,000	567,785	73%			
# of high risks pregnant women who benefited from medical assistance in Gaza	50,000	5,030	10%			
Nutrition¹⁵						
# of pregnant women receiving preventative iron folate or multiple micronutrients supplementation	182,272	21,000	12%	197,858	21,000	11%
# of children 6-59 months receiving preventative lipid-based supplements, micronutrients supplementation, and high energy biscuits	341,524	36,866	11%	371,859	62,623	17%
# of Infants 0-6 months receiving RUIF ¹⁶	16,415	5,856	36%	23,551	5,856	24%
# of children 0-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment	6,813	115	2%	6,813	115	%
Child Protection¹⁷						
# of children and caregivers affected by conflict related violence received emergency and child protection service including PSS support	596,453 Children 255,623 caregivers	82,260 31,637	14% 12%	710,000	90,858 ¹⁸	13%
# of children receiving explosive weapons-related risk education	504,925	5,235	1%			
# of children reached with winterization items (including blankets)	330,000	151,209	46%			
Education						
# of affected school aged children provided with recreational activities to support their well being ¹⁹	155,000	67,790	44%	529,084	136,559	26%
# of school aged children provided with essential education in emergency learning materials	325,500	160	0% ²⁰	438,286	53,334	12%
Social Protection						
# of households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers ²¹	88,500	81,605	92%			

¹¹ The Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal for October to December 2023 was carried over in the 2024 HAC revised on 5 January and in February to cover October 2023 to March 2024 inclusive. Accordingly, also the results against the indicators were carried over into 2024.

¹² UNICEF targets have been updated aligned to the revised HAC.

¹³ As interventions support the same population over time, UNICEF reports the maximum number of people reached each week to avoid double counting, based on the water production and trucking.

¹⁴ This result is calculated based upon the distribution of Inter-Agency Emergency Health Kits (IEHK) to health facilities and partner reports.

¹⁵ The result for the treatment of wasting will be updated as partners' report the treatment of children, but due to communications challenges these reports are not yet received.

¹⁶ UNICEF is committed to supporting mothers to exclusively breastfeed their infants up to 6 months of age and to continue breastfeeding to age 2 and beyond with appropriate complementary foods. In exceptional circumstances, UNICEF provides breastmilk substitutes, as some infants are not breastfed or only partially breastfed during emergencies. These infants are highly vulnerable and require urgent and targeted support given their increased risk of morbidity and mortality.

¹⁷ CP indicators and targets are linked to quality reach, and it is difficult to implement some activities (e.g. MHPSS level 2 and 3 interventions) during active hostilities. CPAoR partners reached a cumulative of 220,132 children with MHPSS as of 15 January 2024. Results are being updated.

¹⁸ # of children reached with MHPSS by Cluster has been revised downward due to double counting in previously reported numbers.

¹⁹ The cumulative result indicates 33,557 girls, 29,886 boys and 1,252 children with disabilities.

²⁰ As most of UNRWA and public schools are now being used as emergency shelters, no learning activities have taken place since 7 October. Also, UNICEF does not count children who benefitted through recreational kits as a result under emergency learning materials indicator. The kits are utilized for recreational activities and thus the service delivery is reported under the recreational activity indicator.

²¹ Reach with humanitarian cash transfers is reported based upon households which have received messages to redeem their cash. The response exceeds the target as the programme revised the initial strategy and has only delivered one round of transfers as compared to three rounds in the plan, with some households receiving second transfers in recent weeks. Furthermore, UNICEF has partially funded the response through loans which are not reflected in the Funding Status table. The actual reach of households has been adjusted from the last report.

Annex B - Funding Status²²

Sector	Revised Requirements (USD)	Funds available			Funding gap	
		Humanitarian resources received	Other resources used for the escalation	Resources available from 2022 (Carry-over)	US\$	%
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	62,225,779	42,673,104	93,972	629,647	18,829,056	30%
Health	35,195,054	20,621,091	2,200,000	234,764	12,139,199	34%
Nutrition	27,765,177	11,654,238	0	0	16,110,939	58%
Child Protection	24,857,916	15,203,957	0	462,963	9,190,996	37%
Education	29,645,946	5,905,829	52,000	1,142,966	22,545,151	76%
Social Protection and Cash Transfer	74,376,225	26,129,621	0	727,084	47,519,520	64%
Cross-Sectoral (PSEA, AAP, Disability)	4,746,532	2,384,151	0	50,146	2,312,235	49%
Cluster Coordination	4,495,988	3,198,862	220,000	29,000	1,048,126	23%
Total	263,308,617	127,770,854	2,565,972	3,276,570	129,695,221	49%

All amounts include weighted cross-sectoral costs and cost recovery.

*Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) and Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) are integrated under each programme.

²² The funding requirement has been revised with a 56 per cent increase from the January 2024 revision of US\$ 168.3 million, bringing the total funding requirements to US\$ 263.3 million. The funding gap by section (\$ and %) reflects only the sections which are not fully funded, while the overall gap reflects the total funding received against the total funds requirement.