



Dalia, 7 years old, and her siblings showing their artwork during a psychosocial activity in their community supported by UNICEF in the Gaza Strip.

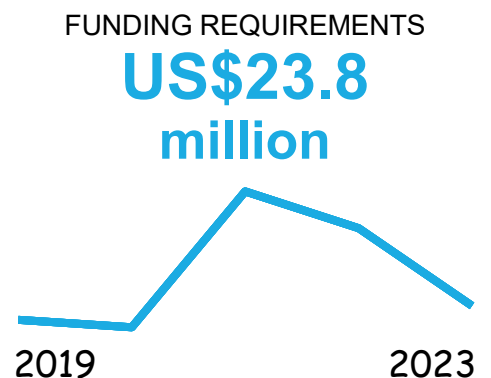
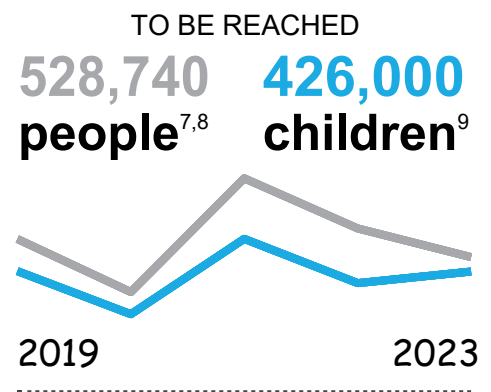
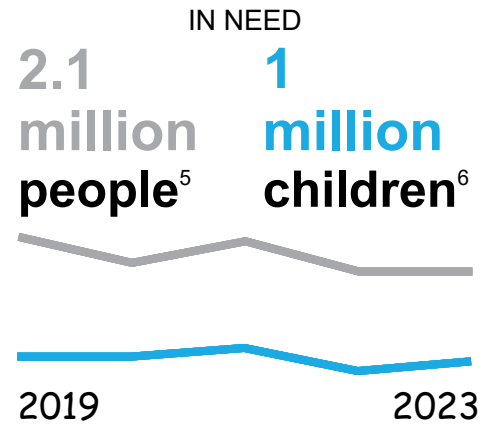
unicef   
for every child

## Humanitarian Action for Children

# State of Palestine

### HIGHLIGHTS<sup>1</sup>

- Around 2.1 million people in the State of Palestine need humanitarian assistance, among them 1 million children.<sup>2</sup>
- The prolonged conflict, renewed escalations, and 15 years of closure in the Gaza Strip have contributed to the dire living conditions and restriction of movements, including children and goods. The situation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is caught in a downward spiral of violence, increasing children's vulnerability.
- The first seven months of 2023 witnessed the death of 41 children (35 Palestinian and 6 Israeli).<sup>3,4</sup>
- UNICEF continues to buttress preparedness throughout its programming, strengthening the humanitarian and development nexus and fulfilling its Core Commitments for Children.
- UNICEF requires US\$23.8 million to respond to the humanitarian situation in the State of Palestine. This funding will allow prioritizing access to gender-responsive child protection and psychosocial support and access to channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse. It will also help procure medical, nutritional, and water supplies, provide quality emergency education, and strengthen shock-responsive social protection.



### KEY PLANNED TARGETS



**145,432**  
children and women  
accessing primary  
healthcare



**27,140**  
children and adolescents  
participating in after-school  
interventions and/or  
summer activities to  
support their well being



**332,000**  
people accessing a  
sufficient quantity and  
quality of water



**50,000**  
people sharing their  
concerns and asking  
questions through  
feedback mechanisms

Figures are aligned to the 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview and the Humanitarian Response Plan.

# HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

The State of Palestine is one of the most complex and challenging environments in which the United Nations operates. A protracted protection crisis persists due to ongoing occupation, with around 2.1 million people requiring humanitarian assistance, including 1 million children.<sup>10,11</sup>

The situation is compounded by the Gaza Strip's closure, recurrent escalation of hostilities, Palestinian internal divisions, fiscal crisis, slow economic recovery, and climate change. These factors have led to a strain on the socio-economic and cultural fabric of Palestinian society, with healthcare systems, the economy, and employment severely affected.

Violence continues in 2023. As of 5 July 2023, 35 Palestinian children (seven in the Gaza Strip and 28 in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem) and six Israeli children were killed in conflict-related violence. In May 2023, children in and around the Gaza Strip witnessed another intense escalation of hostilities.<sup>12</sup> In July 2023, the Israeli Forces carried out a wide-scale operation in Jenin. Both periods of violence led to casualties and extensive damage, further worsening the already dire situation for children and their families. Violence, military operations, and arrests are expected to continue, as well as demolitions and evictions.<sup>13</sup>

The high rate of unemployment and lack of economic opportunities is impacting many households, increasing their dependency on aid/assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip,<sup>14</sup> and contributing to their high reliance on negative coping mechanisms.<sup>15</sup>

In the Gaza Strip, 40 per cent of households<sup>16</sup> reported at least one member of their household experiencing signs of psychosocial distress or trauma last year.<sup>17</sup> Overall, 1.9 million people<sup>18</sup> are severely affected by protection concerns, of whom 678,000 need child protection services, and 816,000 need mental health and psychosocial support.<sup>19</sup> In the West Bank, protection concerns are directly linked to the safety of children at school or traveling to and from school, non-enrollment of children in school, or children dropping out of school. Dropout rates in the West Bank are estimated at 19 per cent, primarily due to protection risks and school closures.<sup>20</sup> The education situation was further impacted by the extended teachers' strike, affecting more than 600,000 students in the West Bank. Additionally, two schools were demolished this year, and another 58 schools are under threat of demolition. Around 5.7 per cent of school-age children in the Gaza Strip dropped out of school during the 2021-2022 academic year due to school-related expenses,<sup>21</sup> children's need to work, or schools not being inclusive. Also, the recent escalation in the Gaza Strip has led to the damage of 49 education facilities. Thus, 608,500 people<sup>22</sup> will need education support in 2023.<sup>23</sup>

Essential healthcare and nutritional needs are high, driven by the high cost of services, access problems in Area C, H2, and East Jerusalem, and lack of availability of treatment and medicine in the Gaza Strip, affecting 1.6 million people, including 809,000 children.<sup>24</sup>

Most Gaza Strip households have piped water,<sup>25</sup> yet only 3.2 per cent use it for drinking.<sup>26</sup> In the West Bank, households have to revert to other strategies to overcome the lack of sufficient drinking water.<sup>27,28</sup> In total, 1.4 million people<sup>29</sup> are in need of humanitarian support to improve access to safe drinking water.<sup>30</sup>

## SECTOR NEEDS<sup>31</sup>



**1.6 million**  
people need health assistance



**780,000**  
children in need of protection services

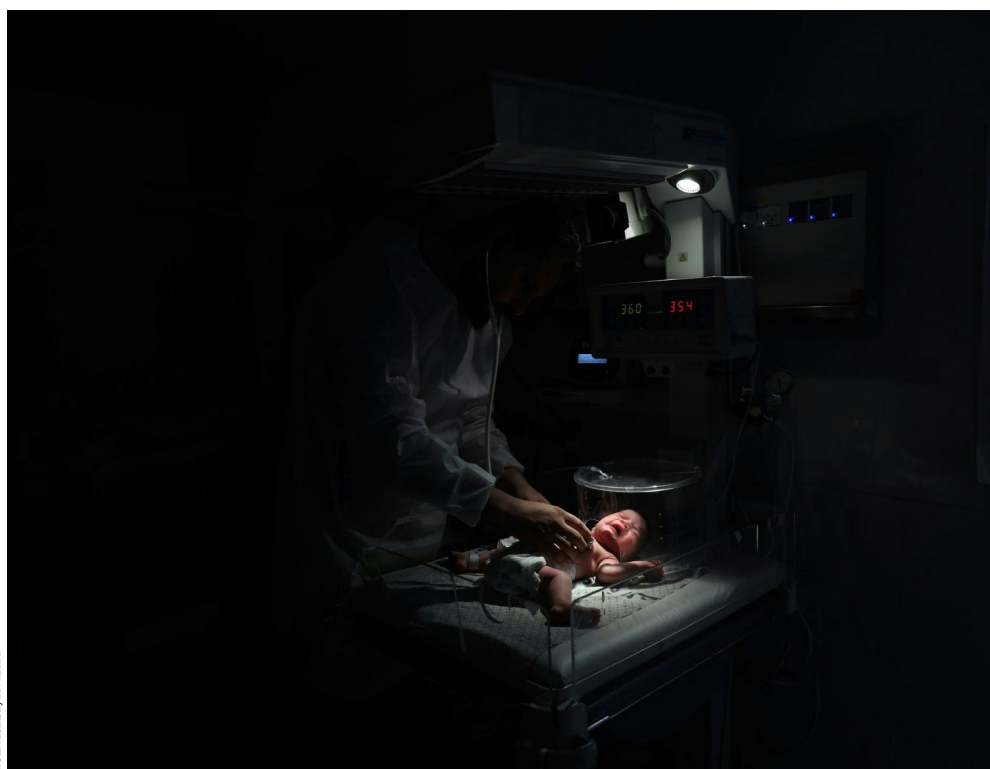


**608,556**  
people in need of education support



**1.4 million**  
people need WASH services

## STORY FROM THE FIELD



Al-Emirati Hospital is one of the few maternity hospitals in Rafah City, south of the Gaza Strip. Around 500 babies are born in this hospital each month. Ten per cent of them require special care and admission to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). The hospital faced many challenges due to the high demand and limited hospital equipment and staff capacity. UNICEF and partners' support increases newborn survival rates in Al Emirati Hospital.

Dr. Mohammed checks the health of a newborn baby in the UNICEF-supported Al-Emirati hospital.

In 2023, UNICEF will continue to address the most acute humanitarian needs in the State of Palestine while working closely with partners to foster synergies between the organization's humanitarian and development work. In collaboration with the authorities, UNICEF will support systems strengthening across all sectors.<sup>34</sup> UNICEF will also generate evidence on the impact of violence and grave violations on children and education-related incidents for high-level advocacy with all parties.

UNICEF will improve access and use of child protection services for the most vulnerable, while the education sector will support access to mental health and psychosocial support interventions and the continuity of quality learning in safe and inclusive learning environments. Due to significant learning losses, UNICEF will provide remedial education and essential learning materials in the Gaza Strip.

UNICEF will provide life-saving health and nutrition interventions, including essential newborn care and support for infant and young child feeding in emergencies. UNICEF will support the provision of quality age- and gender-responsive health, nutrition, and development services and procuring essential medical and nutrition supplies. The WASH programme will address critical humanitarian needs by ensuring equitable, affordable, sustainable, and safely managed access to WASH services. UNICEF will provide water treatment chemicals for safe water, improve WASH services at the community level, schools, and health facilities, flood mitigation and provide hygiene supplies to promote personal hygiene.

UNICEF will continue the roll-out of the shock-responsive child-sensitive social protection programme, aiming at strengthening the national cash transfer programme while reducing households' vulnerabilities by providing cash transfers to meet basic needs and raising awareness of essential practices.

Social and behavioral change will be mainstreamed, addressing key gender and stigma-related barriers through community engagement and empowerment. With the Humanitarian Country Team and other United Nations agencies, UNICEF will roll out initiatives to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and accountability to affected populations, ensuring appropriate reporting mechanisms are in place at all levels.

With a presence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in the Gaza Strip, UNICEF will ensure access to affected populations while promoting local-level partnerships and community (including adolescent and youth) participation.

Preparedness will be embedded throughout the programmes, seeking opportunities to enhance the humanitarian and development nexus, risk-informed programming, and fulfill UNICEF Core Commitments for Children. Risk monitoring and management will be prioritized. Minimum emergency supplies will be pre-positioned, with contingency agreements with key partners, including local non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, for a timely response.

UNICEF will continue to lead the WASH Cluster, the Child Protection Area of Responsibility, and the Nutrition Working Group and co-lead the Education Cluster.



## Health and nutrition

- **145,432** children and women accessing primary healthcare in UNICEF-supported facilities
- **20,000** children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment
- **52,482** primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling
- **359,422** children 6-59 months receiving micronutrient powder
- **25,500** pregnant women and newborns receiving maternal/neonatal life-saving services in UNICEF-supported facilities



## Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

- **30,200** children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support
- **292,568** people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations
- **3,040** children who have received individual case management
- **10,000** children provided with landmine or other explosive weapons prevention and/or survivor assistance interventions
- **7,000** persons (women, girls, men and boys) participating in child protection awareness-raising sessions



## Education

- **30,000** children receiving individual learning materials
- **27,140** children and adolescents participating in after-school interventions and/or summer activities to support their well being
- **5,000** children benefiting from remedial education services and learning support



## Water, sanitation and hygiene<sup>35</sup>

- **332,000** people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs
- **112,000** people accessing appropriate sanitation services
- **57,000** people accessing appropriate WASH facilities and hygiene services in learning and health facilities and safe spaces
- **33,000** people with improved access to flooding mitigation and prevention measures



## Social protection

- **1,000** households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers



## Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)

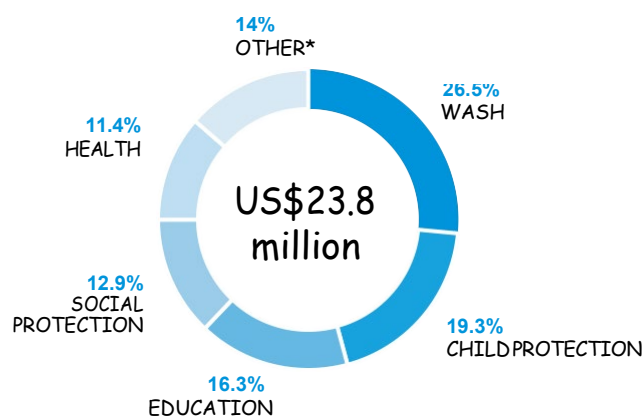
- **50,000** people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms

## FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2023

In 2023, UNICEF requires US\$23.8 million to respond to the most pressing humanitarian needs in the State of Palestine.<sup>36</sup> This funding will allow UNICEF to prioritize access to mental health and psychosocial support and protection services, including the provision of safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse; procure health and nutrition supplies and water treatment chemicals; provide individual learning materials; and continue to engage children and adolescents in catching up on learning needs. UNICEF will also support households with children directly affected by the escalation of hostilities with multipurpose cash transfers. Ahead of the rainy season, flood preparedness will be further strengthened, as well as UNICEF and its partners' preparedness capacity.

The revised Humanitarian Action for Children appeal 2023 has slightly increased due to higher demand for medical supplies and services to UNICEF. Additionally, the overall cost of programming in different sectors has risen due to the impact of the global market and the rise in the cost of offshore procurement and transportation expenses for obtaining those essential supplies.<sup>37</sup>

Failure to secure sufficient funding would result in thousands of children and their families being deprived of accessing essential services and meeting their most urgent basic needs.



Appeal sector	Revised 2023 HAC requirement (US\$)
Health	2,715,000
Nutrition	2,100,000
Child protection	4,600,000
Education	3,880,000
WASH	6,300,000
Social protection	3,065,000
Cross-sectoral	100,000
Coordination	1,040,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,800,000</b>

\*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : Nutrition (8.8%), Coordination (4.4%), Cross-sectoral (<1%).

Appeal sector	Original 2023 HAC requirement (US\$)	Revised 2023 HAC requirement (US\$)	Funds available (US\$)	Funding gap (US\$)	Funding gap (%)
Health	1,450,000	2,715,000	307,710	2,407,290	88.7%
Nutrition	520,000	2,100,000	172,053	1,927,947	91.8%
Child protection	4,057,240	4,600,000	1,854,849	2,745,151	59.7%
Education	3,800,000	3,880,000	1,142,966	2,737,034	70.5%
WASH	6,300,000	6,300,000	787,628	5,512,372	87.5%
Social protection	3,061,080	3,065,000	2,827,912	237,088	7.7%
Cross-sectoral	100,000	100,000	64,522	35,478	35.5%
Coordination	1,040,000	1,040,000	556,183	483,817	46.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,328,320</b>	<b>23,800,000</b>	<b>7,713,823</b>	<b>16,086,177</b>	<b>67.6%</b>



## ENDNOTES

1. On 1 July 2022, UNICEF deactivated its Level 3 Sustained Phase for the global COVID-19 pandemic response. All activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic response, including programme targets and funding requirements, have been shifted into regular development programming and operations. While UNICEF's Level 3 emergency response phase of the COVID-19 pandemic was deactivated, the organization is continuing to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on children, their families, and their communities, and on the social systems they rely on.
2. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - oPt: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023
3. A total of 28 Palestinian children were killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, compared to 16 at this time last year and 36 in the whole of 2022, which is considered the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank since the United Nations started systematically counting fatalities in 2005.
4. UNICEF monitoring data
5. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - oPt: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023.
6. Ibid.
7. The total number of people to be reached is calculated based on the following programme targets: 1) the number of children aged 6-59 months receiving multiple micronutrient powders (359,500, which is 100 per cent of the target); 2) the number of people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking and domestic needs (83,000, which is 25 per cent of the set target – to avoid overlap with other indicators); 3) the number of pregnant and lactating women receiving micronutrients (59,100, which is 100 per cent of the target); and 4) the number of children and adolescents participating in after-school interventions and/or summer activities to support their well-being (27,140, which is 100 per cent of the target). Gender disaggregation is 50.9 per cent male and 49.1 per cent female, and 5.8 per cent people living with disability and difficulties, as per the 2017 Palestinian Census. UNICEF is committed to needs-based targeting, which means covering the unmet needs of children, and will serve as the provider of last resort where it has cluster coordination responsibilities.
8. In the revised Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) 2023 appeal, UNICEF has slightly reduced the total number of people and children to be assisted. This decrease is primarily due to a lowered target for the "number of children and adolescents participating in after-school interventions and/or summer activities to support their well-being." The decrease was in consultation with the Education Cluster and based on the gap and lessons learned from the previous year.
9. The total number of children to be reached is calculated based on the following programme targets: 1) the number of children aged 6-59 months receiving multiple micronutrient powders (359,500, which is 100 per cent of the target); 2) the number of people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking and domestic needs (41,500 children, which represents 50 per cent of the 83,000 population cohort considered in the people to be reached calculation); and 3) the number of children and adolescents participating in after-school interventions and/or summer activities to support their well-being (25,000 children). Gender disaggregation is 50.9 per cent male and 49.1 per cent female, and 5.8 per cent children living with disability and difficulties, as per the 2017 Palestinian Census.
10. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - oPt: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023.
11. The multi-sectoral needs assessment conducted in 2022 indicated overall deepening vulnerabilities and a 12 per cent increase in the number of vulnerable children compared with 2021, a trend likely to continue in 2023.
12. This escalation has once again affected children and communities in and around the Gaza Strip, already deeply scared by at least three major escalations between May 2021 and May 2023.
13. Particularly in Area C.
14. In the Gaza Strip, 80.7 per cent of the assessed households rely on less preferred/less expensive food, 52.2 per cent reduce expenses on health to meet the food needs of the household, and 44.1 per cent reported difficulties meeting the education needs of their children (tuition fees, books, etc.).
15. OCHA, Key Sectoral Findings Factsheet Booklet - 2022 Multisectoral Needs Assessment, available at [https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key-Sectoral-Findings\\_Factsheet-Booklet\\_MSNA-2022\\_Gaza.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key-Sectoral-Findings_Factsheet-Booklet_MSNA-2022_Gaza.pdf) and [https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key\\_Sectoral\\_Findings\\_Factsheet\\_Booklet\\_MSNA\\_WB.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key_Sectoral_Findings_Factsheet_Booklet_MSNA_WB.pdf).
16. Among the 40 per cent of households, 32 per cent of the population are children.
17. OCHA, Key Sectoral Findings Factsheet Booklet - 2022 Multisectoral Needs Assessment, available at [https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key-Sectoral-Findings\\_Factsheet-Booklet\\_MSNA-2022\\_Gaza.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key-Sectoral-Findings_Factsheet-Booklet_MSNA-2022_Gaza.pdf) and [https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key\\_Sectoral\\_Findings\\_Factsheet\\_Booklet\\_MSNA\\_WB.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key_Sectoral_Findings_Factsheet_Booklet_MSNA_WB.pdf).
18. Of the people needing protection services, 970,000 are male and 953,000 are female. Forty-seven per cent of those in need are in the Gaza Strip and 53 per cent are in the West Bank.
19. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - oPt: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023.
20. OCHA, Key Sectoral Findings Factsheet Booklet - 2022 Multisectoral Needs Assessment, available at [https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key-Sectoral-Findings\\_Factsheet-Booklet\\_MSNA-2022\\_Gaza.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key-Sectoral-Findings_Factsheet-Booklet_MSNA-2022_Gaza.pdf) and [https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key\\_Sectoral\\_Findings\\_Factsheet\\_Booklet\\_MSNA\\_WB.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/Key_Sectoral_Findings_Factsheet_Booklet_MSNA_WB.pdf).
21. The Oslo Accords divided the Palestinian West Bank into three administrative zones: Area A (18 per cent), where the Palestinian Authority (PA) administers civil and security matters; Area B (22 per cent), where the PA administers only civil matters; and Area C (60 per cent) where Israel maintains full control. [1] Area C includes all Israeli settlements [2] While Area C is a continuous territory, Areas A and B are fragmented into 166 separate enclaves.
22. This figure includes 96 per cent are children.
23. Of the people needing humanitarian education support, 309,401 are males, and 299,155 are females.
24. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - oPt: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023.
25. As per the 2022 MSNA findings, piped water is the main water source for 94.7 per cent of Gaza Strip households.
26. Part of the Gaza Strip population resides in low-lying areas at risk of flooding events during winter due to heavy rains, as well as overflow of storm-water facilities and sewage pumping stations.
27. In the West Bank, 96.3 per cent of the households have to revert to other strategies, such as reducing water consumption, increasing spending on water and modifying hygiene practices to overcome the lack of sufficient drinking water, per the 2022 MSNA findings.
28. Operation and maintenance of WASH facilities, including wastewater treatment stations, also remain a challenge.
29. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - oPt: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023.
30. Of those who need support to sustain access to WASH services, 47 per cent live in the Gaza Strip and 53 per cent in the West Bank. Forty-nine per cent of them are females. Children represent 45 per cent of those in need.
31. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - oPt: 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2023.
32. UNICEF is committed to supporting the leadership and coordination of humanitarian response through its leadership or co-leadership of cluster coordination for the WASH, Nutrition and Education Clusters and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility. All cluster coordinators costs are included into sectoral programme budgets.
33. UNICEF is committed to empowering local responders in humanitarian crises in a variety of ways. The revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action made investing in strengthening the capacities of local actors in the humanitarian response a mandatory benchmark for UNICEF action. A more localized response will improve humanitarian action and is fundamental to achieving better accountability to affected populations.
34. UNICEF closely coordinates all its work with the authorities at the national and local level, other United Nations agencies, and non-governmental organizations.
35. The UNICEF WASH target for 2023 is adopted in close consultation with the WASH Cluster and due consideration to the capacity of partners in the West Bank and the ongoing WASH projects in the Gaza Strip (e.g., desalination plant) and the situation before the May 2021 escalation (see Humanitarian Action for Children 2020 as a reference).
36. UNICEF sincerely appreciates all public and private donors for their generous contributions thus far. However, the 2023 humanitarian appeal still faces a substantial funding gap of 68 per cent.
37. There has been a notable increase in the demand for medical supplies by the Ministry of Health in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in the Gaza Strip, due to the deterioration of the situation, leading to a corresponding increase in demand for medical supplies and services to UNICEF. Additionally, the overall cost of programming in different sectors has risen due to the impact of the global market. Another major factor driving the increase in the required budget is the rise in offshore procurement and transportation expenses for obtaining essential supplies.