



Farzana, 12, pumps clean drinking water from a UNICEF-installed, climate-resilient hand pump located just 5 minutes from her home in Umerkot district, Sindh Province.

unicef 
for every child

Humanitarian Action for Children

Pakistan

HIGHLIGHTS

- Children are highly vulnerable to recurrent natural hazards in Pakistan, which ranks fifth globally in climate risks,¹ and to recurrent and simultaneous human-induced crises. Climate change, gender inequalities, food insecurity,² high malnutrition³ and political and economic instability compound the impacts of these disasters.
- Pakistan hosts more than 3 million⁴ Afghans of varying legal status, who require access to basic services, further constraining limited available resources.
- UNICEF remains committed to supporting the Government in preparing for and responding to the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable populations, including strengthening climate resilience at the national and provincial levels.
- UNICEF is appealing for \$140.9 million to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to vulnerable Pakistani and Afghan populations in Pakistan. This includes \$41.6 million for the nutrition emergency, \$59.8 million for potential humanitarian responses,⁵ \$34.5 million for refugee and host community support and \$5 million for disaster risk reduction, preparedness and resilience-building.

KEY PLANNED TARGETS



1.4 million

children and women accessing primary health care



256,504

children with severe wasting admitted for treatment



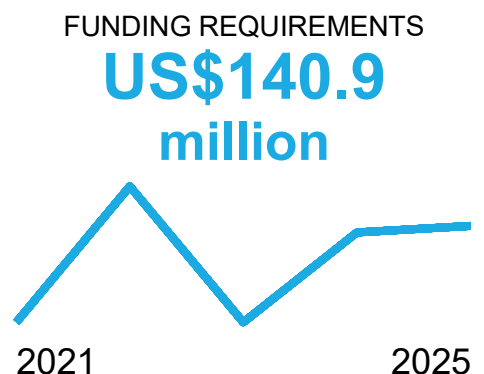
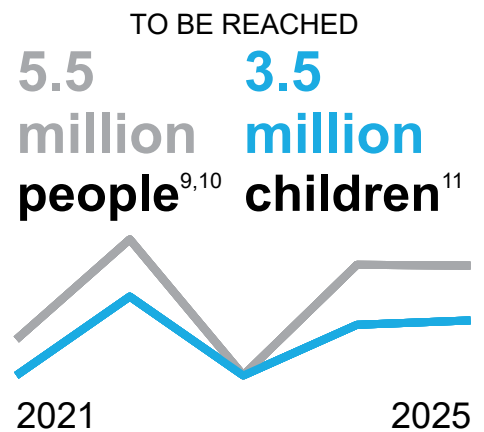
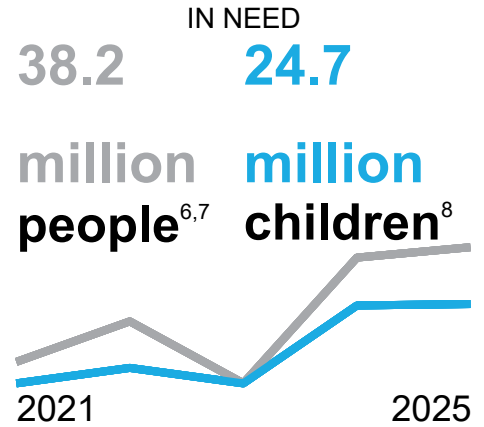
220,000

children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning



760,967

people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water



Figures are provisional and subject to change if there are changes in the Regional Refugee Response Plan 2024–2025: Afghanistan Situation.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

The people of Pakistan face multidimensional deprivations that leave them extremely vulnerable to recurrent and sudden-onset shocks. Climate change contributes to Pakistan being one of the world's most risk-prone countries, which significantly exacerbates vulnerabilities, especially for women and children. Seasonal changes disrupt food security, causing malnutrition and stunted growth, especially in marginalized communities.¹² Floods displace families, destroy homes, schools and health facilities and impede access to safe water and sanitation, increasing disease risks.

The interplay of all these circumstances threatens children's well-being and their future prospects and necessitates greater investment in gender-equitable climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and increased resilience of essential social services.¹³ The catastrophic floods of 2022, which affected 33 million people (half of them children), provided clear evidence of the need for investing in solutions that reduce the impact of disasters, focusing on vulnerability and inequality and investing in climate change adaptation efforts that reduce disruptions to the country and its children's growth and development.¹⁴

Pakistan also grapples with severe food insecurity and persistently high global acute malnutrition rates. Approximately 16 per cent of the population is food insecure¹⁵ and lacks access to essential services, including health care and nutrition, further exacerbating nutritional challenges. Children, in particular, are extremely vulnerable to the effects of malnutrition, which can result in stunted growth, developmental issues and a weakened immune system. Pakistan's global acute malnutrition rate stands at 17.7 per cent,¹⁶ which exceeds the emergency threshold. The severe wasting rate is 6 per cent, and notably higher in children aged 6–59 months. The nutrition of women and girls is of particular concern because high rates of malnutrition put them at risk and also negatively affect birth outcomes. If urgent action is not taken to address this protracted nutrition emergency, the under-five mortality rate could rise.

The presence and prolonged stay of Afghan populations, who have been in Pakistan for more than four decades, adds an additional load to an already overburdened system. Pakistan currently hosts around 3 million Afghans (49 per cent of them children), and provides them with access to essential services. Afghans are mostly concentrated in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, provinces where there are high levels of multidimensional poverty – further depending the inequities Afghans experience. The continued uncertainty around government efforts to repatriate undocumented Afghans, and potentially Afghans of other legal status, have created increased uncertainty among Afghan populations. Afghan women and girls are especially vulnerable under these conditions.

SECTOR NEEDS



5.9 million people in need of health assistance¹⁷



29 million Children and women in need of nutrition services^{18,19}



8.6 million children in need of protection services²⁰



1.7 million children in need of education support²¹



3.6 million People need WASH services²²

STORY FROM THE FIELD



Children walk to a transitional school structure that was built by UNICEF in Goth Khuda Baksh Rind, Balochistan after the devastating floods of 2022 washed away the children's school.

As part of its flood emergency response, UNICEF partnered with the School Education Department, Balochistan Province, to help children resume their education. A transitional school structure was constructed in Goth Khuda Baksh Rind, an area that was severely affected by the floods of August 2022. This structure is a quick-fix construction and is climate-resilient because it is constructed on elevated ground to mitigate the risk of damage during future floods. The building is equipped with functioning toilets and provides access to safe drinking water.

In 2025, UNICEF will continue supporting the Government of Pakistan in delivering integrated life-saving services during humanitarian crises, in line with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. UNICEF will help the Government and the National Disaster Management Authority prepare for emergencies by addressing existing inequities, strengthening the resilience of essential services and ensuring climate-resilient infrastructure. Contingency plans promoting localization, pre-positioning of supplies and standby partnerships will enable rapid humanitarian responses.

UNICEF will work through existing systems to provide essential services to prevent malnutrition and strengthen nutrition information systems. Pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls will receive iron and folic acid and multiple micronutrient supplements to combat nutritional deficiencies, while severely wasted children will be enrolled in treatment programmes. Support groups for parents will be strengthened to enhance infant and young child feeding practices.

UNICEF will support health services, including antenatal care and measles vaccinations, through mobile teams in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. This will transition back to functional health-care facilities, when possible, supported by community health workers who will raise awareness of healthy practices to safeguard against disease outbreaks and malnutrition.

WASH plays a vital role in responding to emergencies, contributing to nutrition, health and well-being of children and their families. WASH initiatives will ensure access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education, complemented by solid waste management. UNICEF will ensure access to WASH infrastructure in schools, child-friendly spaces and health-care facilities.

In emergencies, UNICEF will ensure education and learning continuity by providing temporary learning centres and transitional school structures where schools are completely or partially destroyed; supplying education materials; training teachers; and engaging communities to ensure children's enrolment and retention.

UNICEF will strengthen child protection and gender-based violence response systems at the provincial and community levels, supporting the social service workforce to extend prevention and response services. UNICEF will support providing key information, along with mental health and psychosocial support and integrated activities, for children at risk and survivors of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, including for unaccompanied and separated children. Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse underlines all UNICEF programming with partners.

UNICEF will implement integrated social and behaviour change interventions through community engagement to improve knowledge of and access to essential services and on adopting life-saving practices to reduce vulnerability. UNICEF will develop and roll out an integrated framework for accountability to affected populations, considering in particular girls, women and disabled persons. UNICEF will engage community-based structures to mainstream protection, mitigate gender-based violence and establish complaint and feedback mechanisms.

2025 PROGRAMME TARGETS



Health (including public health emergencies)

- **1,422,220** children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities^{26,27}
- **113,777** live births that were delivered in health facilities in UNICEF-supported areas
- **284,444** pregnant women receiving antenatal care



Nutrition²⁸

- **256,504** children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment²⁹
- **1,136,984** primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling
- **529,380** children 6-59 months receiving micronutrient powder
- **2,084,470** Adolescents reached with Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) supplements



Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA

- **143,536** children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support
- **1,349,460** women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions
- **5,465,338** people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations³⁰
- **2,871** children who have received individual case management



Education

- **220,000** children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- **5,500** teachers and facilitators trained in basic pedagogy and/or mental health and psychosocial support



Water, sanitation and hygiene

- **760,967** people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs
- **312,387** people accessing appropriate sanitation services
- **38,731** children using safe and appropriate WASH facilities and hygiene services in learning facilities and safe spaces



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

- **4,480,390** people reached with timely and life-saving information on how and where to access available services
- **1,344,117** people engaged in reflective dialogue through community platforms
- **26,882** people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2025

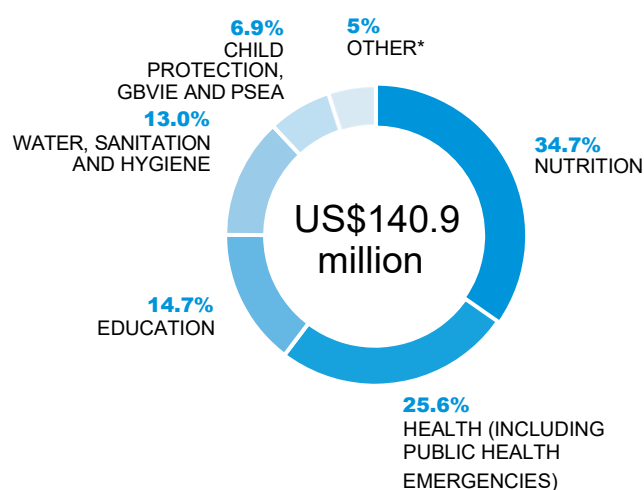
UNICEF requests \$140.9 million for 2025 to meet the critical humanitarian needs of 5.5 million people in need, including 3.5 million children. The appeal includes \$41.6 million for the nutrition emergency, \$34.5 million for refugee and host community support, \$59.8 million for potential humanitarian response and \$5 million for disaster risk reduction, preparedness and resilience-building.

This funding will underpin essential nutrition services for 4 million women and children, help 760,967 people gain access to safe water and sanitation and enable 220,000 children to access formal or non-formal learning opportunities.

The appeal has a strong focus on the protracted nutrition emergency. Without adequate funding, children suffering from emergency levels of malnutrition, particularly severe wasting, cannot be guaranteed the treatment and supplies necessary for saving their lives. Inadequate resources could lead to a surge in under-five mortality rates and exacerbate such severe consequences of chronic malnutrition as stunted growth and developmental delays. For adolescent girls, malnutrition may delay puberty, hinder development and lead to reproductive health issues. Malnourished mothers also face higher risks of poor health and pregnancy complications.

If the appeal is fully supported, UNICEF will be able to reach 14 per cent³¹ of the children in Pakistan in critical need of humanitarian support and access to essential services.

In keeping with Grand Bargain commitments, UNICEF seeks multi-year and flexible funding for the multifaceted humanitarian needs faced by children and families in Pakistan. Without adequate and timely funding, UNICEF and its partners will be unable to address children's critical needs for health services, nutrition support, prevention of school drop-out and protection from violence, exploitation and abuse.



Sector	2025 requirements (US\$)
Health (including public health emergencies)	36,121,657
Nutrition	48,897,136
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA	9,780,174 ³²
Education	20,759,922
Water, sanitation and hygiene	18,303,822
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)	2,041,160 ³³
Preparedness and disaster reduction	5,000,000
Total	140,903,871

*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : Preparedness and disaster reduction (3.5%), Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP) (1.4%).

ENDNOTES

1. Eckstein, David et al., Global Climate Risk Index 2021: Who suffers most from extreme weather events? Weather-related loss events in 2019 and 2000–2019, Germanwatch, Bonn, 2021, available at <www.germanwatch.org/en/19777>.
2. Nearly 10.5 million people (29 percent of the population analysed) experienced high levels of acute food insecurity, Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 or above, between April and October 2023. Among the 43 analysed districts, approximately 2.1 million people (6 per cent of the analysed population) were in IPC Phase 4 (emergency), and around 8.4 million people (23 percent of the analysed population) were in IPC Phase 3 (crisis). Source: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Pakistan: IPC Acute Food Insecurity Snapshot [Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa & Sindh] (April 2023 – January 2024), 5 June 2023, available at <<https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/pakistan-ipc-acute-food-insecurity-snapshot-balochistan-khyber-pakhtunkhwa-sindh-april-2023-january-2024>>.
3. The global acute malnutrition rate in Pakistan is 17.7 per cent, above the emergency threshold, and the severe wasting rate is 6 per cent. Source: Pakistan Nutrition Sector Working Group, Pakistan Nutrition Humanitarian Overview 2022, available at <www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2022-07/ns_pak_hno_2022_v4.pdf>.
4. These include 1.9 million Afghan refugees and 1.1 million Afghans with other status. Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Regional Refugee Response Plan 2024-25: Afghanistan situation, UNHCR, March 2024.
5. Pakistan is at high risk for such hazards as floods, earthquakes, extreme winters/heatwaves and health emergencies (particularly cholera, malaria, etc.). This figure is also in line with inter-agency estimates for monsoon floods in its contingency plan 2024, available at <www.unocha.org/publications/report/pakistan/pakistan-inter-agency-monsoon-contingency-plan-2024>.
6. The total number of people in need includes 29 million people under the protracted nutrition emergency, 3.6 million Afghans and host community members, and 5.5 million males and others not covered under the refugee response and nutrition emergency. A total of 3 per cent of all people in need are estimated to have a disability, and 49 per cent of the people in need are women.
7. The 29 million figure for people in need of nutrition assistance is calculated using Census 2023 demographic figures and nutrition data from 2023 SMART surveys.
8. The total number of children in need includes 20.48 million children under the protracted nutrition emergency, 1.68 million Afghan and host community children, 2.57 million males and others not covered under the refugee response and nutrition emergency. A total of 3 per cent of all children in need are estimated to have a disability. Also an overall 49 per cent of all children in need are girls.
9. 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.
10. This target is calculated based on the highest programmatic targets of 4 million receiving nutrition services, 908,000 Afghans and host community members and 550,000 male individuals receiving primary health care not covered under the refugee response and nutrition emergency. A total of 3 per cent of all people in need are estimated to have a disability, and 49 per cent of the people in need are women.
11. This target is calculated based on the highest programmatic targets of 2.87 million children receiving nutrition services; and 423,128 Afghan and host community children and 256,300 boys not covered under the refugee response and nutrition emergency receiving primary health care. Three per cent are estimated to have a disability, and 49 per cent of the children in need are girls.
12. Pakistan has consistently ranked among the top 10 most vulnerable countries on the Global Climate Risk Index. Source: Global Climate Risk Index 2021.
13. Ngcamu, Bethuel Sibongiseni, "Climate change effects on vulnerable populations in the Global South: A systematic review", Natural Hazards, vol. 118, pages 977-991, July 2023.
14. A post-disaster needs assessment showed the magnitude of losses incurred by the floods. This led to the development of the flood response plan, which highlights the population affected and the humanitarian assistance they require. Source: Joint Launch of 2022 Pakistan Floods Response Plan by Government of Pakistan and the United Nations, press release, 30 August 2022, available at <<https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/joint-launch-2022-pakistan-floods-response-plan-government-pakistan-and-united-nations>>.
15. IPC analysed 43 rural districts in the most vulnerable provinces of Balochistan (18 districts), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (9) and Sindh (16), see <www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1156396/?iso3=PAK>.
16. 2018 Pakistan National Nutrition Survey (NNS 2018).
17. Health sector needs are calculated based on 10 million people in need for the overall natural hazards scenario planning in alignment with the Inter-agency Monsoon Contingency Plan 2024: Pakistan (OCHA, June 2024). This health sector need includes 1.2 million children with diarrhoea and pneumonia, 370,000 children requiring immunization, 790,000 pregnant and lactating women accessing health care and 3.5 million people requiring primary health care services.
18. Nutrition sector needs are from nutrition sector assessments, which include severe and moderate wasting for children under age 5; pregnant and lactating women; and adolescent girls.
19. Because the National Nutrition Survey 2018 is now dated, we have used the average of the SMART survey conducted in 2023 in the high-risk districts. This gives us a more realistic figure than the NNS 2018. These SMART surveys were conducted by UNICEF with technical support of Action contre la Faim Canada.
20. The 'in need' numbers for child protection, gender-based violence in emergencies and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse are derived from assessments done by the Child Protection Area of Responsibility. Out of 8.6 million people, Child Protection has taken 60% as children and 26% as adults of the population affected.
21. Pakistan 2022: Post-disaster needs assessment notes (p. 52) that schools education (pre-primary to higher secondary) suffered the most, with a 97 per cent share of all damaged education institutions affecting an estimated 2.4 million students. Among the schools, the damage to primary schools was highest, comprising 80 per cent of all damaged institutions, affecting 1.1 million students.
22. WASH sector needs are comprised of the people in need of hygiene promotion: 20 per cent of flood-affected people (1.33 million people) and 49 per cent of Afghan refugees (2.22 million people), based on the Regional Refugee Response Plan 2024-25: Afghanistan situation.
23. This appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.
24. UNICEF is committed to empowering local responders in humanitarian crises in a variety of ways. The revised Core Commitments 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.
25. UNICEF is working with UNHCR and other United Nations agencies at the inter-agency level under the Regional Refugee Response Plan 2024-25: Afghanistan situation. The Regional Refugee Response Plan has 51 partners, including United Nations entities and international non-governmental organizations.
26. Health targets are comprised of 1,422,220 people accessing primary health care services, including 422,220 Afghans; 113,777 live births in UNICEF supported health facilities, including 33,777 Afghans; and 284,444 pregnant women receiving antenatal care, including 42,222 Afghans.
27. This indicator also includes men accessing primary health care.

28. Nutritional needs will be met with UNICEF funds covering both humanitarian and development responses.
29. Nutrition targets are comprised of 256,504 children aged 6–59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment, including 38,476 Afghans; 1,136,984 primary caregivers of children aged 0–23 months receiving infant and young child feeding and nurturing care counselling, including 170,548 Afghans; 2,084,470 adolescents reached with multiple micronutrient powders/iron folic acid supplements, including 312,671 Afghans; and 529,380 children aged 6–59 months reached with multiple micronutrient supplements, including 79,407 Afghans.
30. The target for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse covers all people UNICEF intends to reach.
31. Accounting for the significant government capacity in humanitarian response, UNICEF will target 14 per cent of the overall people in need, complementary to the government led response.
32. Child protection: \$3,444,863; gender-based violence protection and response: \$625,000; and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: \$2,437,500. This totals \$8,307,997 plus local support and recovery costs.
33. The cross-sectoral line item includes \$2,041,160 for accountability to affected populations.