

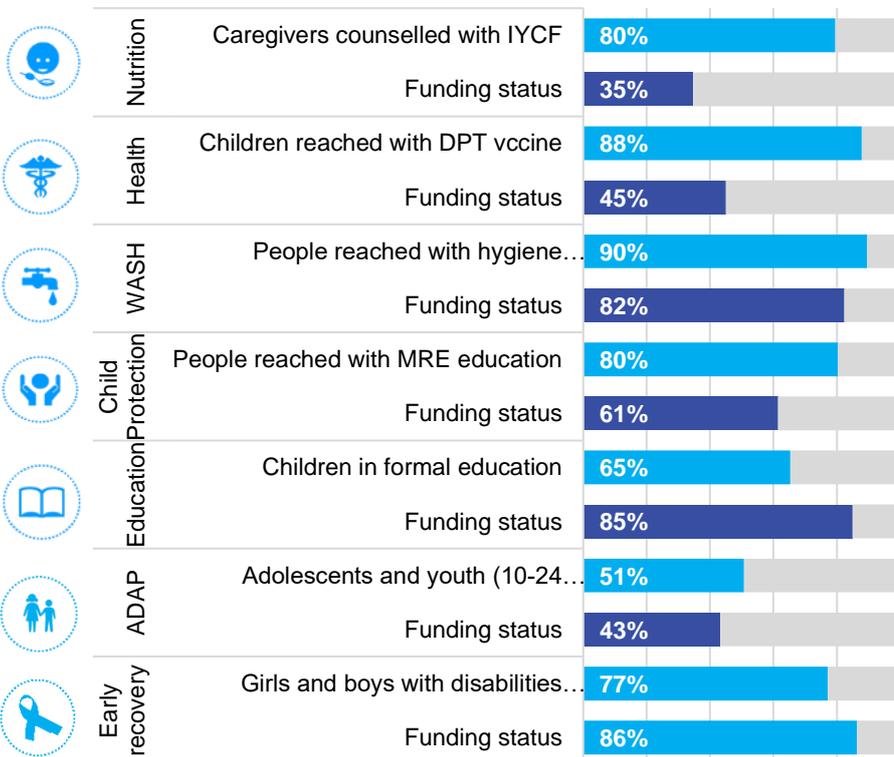


Reporting Period: 1 January—31 December 2019

Highlights

- After nine years of conflict, humanitarian needs in Syria remained extensive. The disruption of basic services and destruction of vital infrastructure continued to impede humanitarian assistance and the safe return of displaced people—particularly in the northwest, where an estimated three-quarters of people in need are women and children.
- In 2019, UNICEF ensured the provision of safe drinking water for over 4.7 million people—including 2 million children—through the rehabilitation of water systems and wells, provision of equipment, installation of water systems, routine maintenance and operations.
- Despite ongoing hostilities and challenges in accessing hard to reach areas, over half a million children under one year were vaccinated with DTP3 and over 3 million children were immunized with polio.
- UNICEF’s Whole of Syria response faced a 27 per cent funding gap by end year. Additional flexible funding is needed in 2020 to ensure vulnerable children and families continue to receive life-saving humanitarian assistance.

UNICEF’s Response and Funding Status



Whole of Syria Humanitarian Situation Report

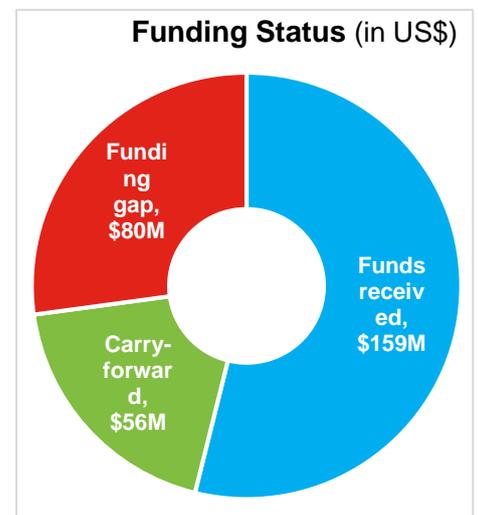


Situation in Numbers



(source: OCHA HNO, March 2019)

UNICEF Appeal 2019 US\$ 294.8 million



Funding Overview and Partnerships

In 2019, UNICEF appealed for US \$294.8 million to ensure the provision of life-saving interventions for women and children in Syria. Thanks to the support from generous donors¹, UNICEF was 73 per cent funded by end year. Nevertheless, insufficient funding led to programmatic gaps: almost 150,000 adolescents missed out on essential life skills training, over 6,000 children did not receive specialized case management services, over 800,000 children were denied critical learning opportunities and more than 2,500 children with disabilities did not receive cash transfers.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

After nine years of conflict, the scale, severity and complexity of humanitarian needs in Syria, especially for children, remained extensive. The disruption of basic services and widespread destruction of vital infrastructure—such as hospitals, schools, water stations, bakeries—continued to impede humanitarian assistance and the safe return of displaced people.

In the northwest, hostilities had devastating consequences for four million residents—particularly in Idlib, where 76 percent are women and children.² From April to August an estimated 400,000 were displaced from Hama, Idlib and Aleppo governorates and more than 1,300 people were reportedly killed.³ Between April and October at least 25 health facilities and 45 schools were damaged by fighting in Hama and Idlib—as a result, 400,000 students were unable to take their final exams. December witnessed a second wave of hostilities in southern Idlib that displaced over 300,000 people toward safer areas in the north—an estimated 80 percent of whom were women and children.⁴ Many families suffered from multiple displacements and were forced to huddle in increasingly crowded settlements with little protection from the elements, exacerbating vulnerabilities. UNICEF, together with other UN agencies and implementing partners, supported the affected population with nutrition, health, WASH, child protection services and winterization items.

In the northeast, one of the most complex operating environments in the country, over 1.65 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance—or 14 per cent of the total population.⁵ Following the launch of Turkey's military operation 'Peace Spring' in October, some 200,000 people, including 80,000 children, fled their homes; over 70,000 people were still displaced as of December.⁶ The hostilities interrupted children's education (with schools used to shelter IDPs) and damaged water facilities like the Allouk pumping station in Al-Hasakeh city, which disrupted the supply of water to 400,000 people for several days.

In the south, civilians living in Rukban camp continue to face harsh living conditions, with food and medical supplies increasingly scarce and limited access to regular humanitarian assistance. Between March and September, 18,380 people—or almost 50 per cent of Rukban's population—relocated to their areas of origin in Homs, where they continue to receive support from UNICEF and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC).⁷ UNICEF advocated for humanitarian assistance to the remaining population of Rukban and, together with SARC and other UN agencies, participated in two interagency convoys that delivered life-saving humanitarian assistance. An inter-agency assessment was conducted to gauge the level of future returns from Rukban and gather information on the immediate/most pressing needs.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Nutrition

In 2019, UNICEF supported over 1.5 million children under five (U5) and pregnant and lactating women with screening for acute malnutrition—of these, more than 8,200 children U5 were identified with severe acute malnutrition and received life-saving treatment. UNICEF also supported more than 1 million children U5 and pregnant and lactating women with micronutrients and Vitamin A, which has been proven to improve learning and prevent visual impairment.⁸ In addition, nearly 574,000 caregivers benefited from Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) counselling and more than 774,500 people received essential nutrition supplies. Insufficient funding, reporting delays and the limited availability of partners, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, constrained the full achievement of targets.

The Nutrition Standardized Monitoring & Assessment of Relief & Transitions (SMART) survey was finalized in 2019, and preliminary results show very low levels of acute malnutrition (1.7 per cent) among children U5. Stunting was

¹ Austria, Belgium, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Canada, Iceland, UK, Germany, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Norway, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea, US, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, ECHO, the Syria Humanitarian Fund and UNICEF National Committees.

² UNOCHA, Northwest Syria Snapshot 20 November 2019.

³ Humanitarian Update Syrian Arab Republic - Issue 07 | 23 December 2019.

⁴ Syrian Arab Republic: Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria Situation Report No. 4, 2 January 2020.

⁵ North-east Syria Humanitarian Snapshot, 20 June 2019.

⁶ Syrian Arab Republic: North East Syria Displacement (11 December 2019).

⁷ UNOCHA, Rukban Departures as of 3 December 2019.

⁸ Micro-nutrients supplementation was initially planned to take place jointly with the measles campaign; however, the latter was postponed thus the target of this indicator could not be fully achieved. UNICEF is exploring alternative modalities for 2020.

estimated at 12.6 per cent, with one in five children affected in the province of Deir-ez-Zor. Inadequate IYCF practices persist amid worsening food insecurity (exclusive breastfeeding at 36 per cent and minimum acceptable diet at 26 per cent), which has likely contributed to acute malnutrition.

Health

In the reporting year, UNICEF supported more than 2 million women and children to receive health consultations in all 14 governorates of Syria—including more than 92,086 in Al-Hol camp in northeast Syria—and nearly 3.5 million caregivers were reached with health promotion messages.⁹ Despite the ongoing hostilities and challenges in accessing hard to reach areas, over 507,000 children under one year of age were vaccinated with DPT3¹⁰ while over 3 million children were immunized with polio. In addition, UNICEF trained over 2,000 health workers and facilitated more than 3,100 home visits by community volunteers as part of the new-born programme. In 2019, a clearer picture of the health status of women and children in Syria emerged with the finalization of the Under-Five Mortality Study. The study confirmed that child mortality rates have increased, with neonatal mortality increasing from 8.7 per thousand live births in 2008 to 11.8 in 2019, while U5 mortality rate increased from 17.4 per thousand live births to 23.7 in the same period.

WASH

Over the past year, UNICEF ensured the provision of safe drinking water for over 4.7 million people across the country, including over 2 million children, through the rehabilitation of water systems and wells, provision of equipment, installation of water systems, routine maintenance and operations. More than 1.1 million people, including some 300,000 children, were also reached through the implementation of enhanced sanitation services (such as the installation of solid waste management facilities, provision of equipment, rehabilitation of sewage systems and solid waste collection). In addition, over 260,000 students (50 per cent girls) benefitted from the rehabilitation of WASH facilities in 238 schools, as well as water trucking and hygiene awareness interventions.

UNICEF also distributed non-food items (such as family hygiene kits, soap and aqua tabs) and installed water tanks, benefitting almost 1.4 million people, including almost 600,000 children, in camps, host communities and IDP shelters across the country. In addition, UNICEF supported almost 13.6 million people to access safe water through the provision of water disinfectants and conducted multiple hygiene promotion campaigns reaching more than 470,300 people in IDP centres and host communities. Together, these interventions helped prevent major disease or water-borne illness outbreaks during the year, despite increasingly crowded and difficult living conditions.

Child Protection

In 2019, UNICEF reached almost 393,600 children (50 per cent girls) with psychosocial support services through child-friendly spaces, mobile teams and multi-service platforms, to strengthen children's coping mechanisms and resilience—including in newly accessible areas of Deir-ez-Zor, Al-Hasakeh and Aleppo. In addition, nearly 634,200 people¹¹ received awareness-raising messages on a range of child protection issues in 12 governorates.¹² Case management also continued to play a central role in facilitating individual child protection assessments, monitoring and referral to specialized services—reaching almost 15,700 children (42 per cent girls) in 2019.

In the first nine months of 2019¹³ 90 children were killed and 98 were maimed because of landmines, unexploded ordnances or explosive remnants of war. To address this threat, UNICEF delivered mine risk education (MRE) interventions to promote safe behavior, provide skills and knowledge to children on how best to protect themselves—benefitting 1.9 million people in all 14 governorates, including in Al Hol camp.¹⁴ In coordination with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF also integrated MRE into four immunization campaigns in all governorates, while with the Department of Social Affairs and Labour (DOSAL) UNICEF trained 33 staff on providing MRE to children with disabilities.

UNICEF adopted a holistic approach to gender-based violence (GBV) by integrating multi-disciplinary interventions to support child survivors, address the underlying causes and consequences of GBV, mitigate risk and build safer environments for women and girls in emergencies. GBV prevention continued to be mainstreamed within other programmes, such as ADAP, education and WASH, reaching over 17,600 people. In the last quarter of 2019, GBV activities were also introduced in cross-border operations—a significant expansion of the child protection programme.

Education

Over the course of 2019, UNICEF reached more than 1.5 million children (50 per cent girls) with support to formal education services and carried out door-to-door 'back to learning' campaigns reaching almost 215,000 people, including 7,586 children in Al Hol camp. To help children return to learning, UNICEF supported NGO partners to deliver non-

⁹ Data is received from the Ministry of Health with a two-month delay, thus the actual number of people reached may be higher.

¹⁰ A combined vaccine for Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus.

¹¹ 37 per cent were children and 50 per cent female

¹² Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Dar'a, Hama, Homs, Lattakia, Quneitra, Rural Damascus, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor and Idleb.

¹³ End year data not yet available.

¹⁴ Including 1,188,695 children and 48 per cent female

formal education through the Supportive Learning Programme and Curriculum B¹⁵ for almost 357,600 children (44 per cent girls), including 11,523 children in Al Hol camp. To help children access education services, UNICEF supported school rehabilitation and the establishment of learning centres for nearly 153,800 children (49 per cent girls), while distributing school bags and stationery kits for more than 109,900 children in both formal and non-formal settings. To improve the quality of teaching, UNICEF supported trainings for almost 42,800 teachers, while to help improve life-skills and to provide citizenship education, UNICEF supported skills training for 95,882 children.

Social Policy

UNICEF's Cash Transfer Programme is designed to promote an integrated social protection model with links to public services through referral mechanisms and case management, with a view toward an eventual transition to a nationally-owned social protection scheme. In 2019, UNICEF reached almost 8,900 children with disabilities (39 per cent girls) with cash assistance and case management services in Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Homs, Tartous and Rural Damascus.

The several-fold price increase of essential commodities and continuous depletion of household incomes over the past year have left many Syrians unable to meet their basic needs, particularly in conflict-affected areas and during the cold winter months. To address these needs, UNICEF provided more than 531,500 children in hard-to-reach and newly accessible areas of the country with winter clothing and new-born baby kits. In addition, nearly 65,700 children benefitted from a winter e-voucher programme implemented in six governorates.¹⁶ The programme, which targeted urban areas where local markets were reasonably accessible, was designed to enable families to make their own decisions on the items they needed to get through the harsh winter.

Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP)

In 2019, UNICEF partnered with six line ministries and 15 NGO partners to equip adolescents and youth with the knowledge and skills they need to promote resilience, personal development and social cohesion within their communities. Nearly 347,800 young people (50 per cent girls) were supported through a holistic package of multi-sectoral services in 13 governorates and included young people living in poverty, IDPs, returnees and adolescents with disabilities. Of the total reach, over 152,000 (52 per cent girls) benefited from skills development—including literacy and numeracy, life skills and citizenship education, technical vocational education and entrepreneurship training. In addition, almost 241,000 adolescents and youth (50 per cent girls) participated in social and civic engagement opportunities during the year, including sport for development and social art. Empowered with these skills and knowledge, young people can become more engaged citizens, and think creatively about the problems facing their communities.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

UNICEF continued to advocate for the rights and needs of children through [traditional](#) and [online](#) media channels, producing more than 150 products in 2019, including [photo](#) and [video](#) packages, [interviews](#), press briefings, [news notes](#), [blogs](#), and human-interest [stories](#), highlighting the [plight](#) of children in Syria and the [impact](#) of UNICEF's work on the ground and contributing to [fundraising](#) for UNICEF's programmes and interventions. UNICEF also focused on the continuing [violence](#) and deteriorating humanitarian situation of [displaced](#) families in [Idleb](#), [rural Aleppo](#) and [north-eastern Syria](#), including in [Al-Hol](#) camp as a result of massive displacements from [Hajin](#) and [elsewhere](#), and its [response](#), as well as the worsening [conditions](#) and UN [assistance](#) to [Rukban](#) camp. UNICEF also highlighted regular [programmes](#), focusing on its [winter](#) response through [distributions](#), much-needed [vaccination](#) campaigns, [health](#) and [nutrition](#) services, [education](#) support and [mine risk](#) education for children. Marking 9 years of conflict in Syria, UNICEF took part in the ["11" album](#) project of songs dedicated to children by children. UNICEF also continued its robust collaboration with [national committees](#), producing tailored content for [fundraising](#) campaigns and donor [visibility](#).

Next SitRep: 20 February 2020

UNICEF Syria Crisis: <https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/syrian-crisis>

UNICEF Syria Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal: <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/>

Who to contact for further information: **Fran Equiza**
Representative
UNICEF Syria Country Office
Tel: +963 (0) 938887755
Email: fequiza@unicef.org

Lieke Van de Wiel
Deputy Representative a.i.
UNICEF Syria Country Office
Tel: +963 (0)11 6191300
Email: lvandewiel@unicef.org

Melinda Young
Senior Emergency Specialist
UNICEF MENA Regional Office
Tel: +962 7 9513 5290
Email: meyoung@unicef.org

¹⁵ Curriculum B is an accelerated learning programme that provides a first or second chance to adolescents and youth who never attended school or dropped out. The curriculum focuses on literacy, numeracy, life-skills and other skills training intended to improve their employability and livelihood.

¹⁶ Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh, Homs, Hama, Lattakia.

Summary of Programme Results

Sector	Overall needs	Cluster/Sector Response			UNICEF and IPs		
		2019 target	Total results*	Change since last report ▲▼	2019 target	Total results*	Change since last report ▲▼
Nutrition							
# of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) received micro-nutrients	4,700,000	2,566,942	670,631	0 ¹	2,400,000	1,252,580 ²	284,949
# of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) screened for acute malnutrition		2,867,674	2,462,877	0	1,800,000	1,812,017 ³	420,920
# of children reached with the treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)		17,447	13,404	0	9,600	11,498	3,657
# of caregivers including pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) counselled or reached with awareness on appropriate infant and young child feeding (IYCF)		915,063	599,208	0	800,000	636,467 ⁴	176,570
Estimated # of people reached with nutrition supplies, including in HTR areas		4,371,332			1,045,000	975,610 ⁵	286,099
Health							
# of children under five years vaccinated through polio campaigns	13,200,000				2,900,000	3,305,648 ¹	7,568
# of children under one year reached with routine vaccination (DTP3 containing vaccine)					577,000	507,141 ²	77,619
# of Primary Health Care outpatient consultations supported (children & CBA women)					2,200,000	2,003,500 ³	183,905
# of health workers and community volunteers trained on new born care packages					640	2,034 ⁴	4
# of caregivers reached with health promotion, including immunization messages					3,500,000	3,445,012	507,229
WASH							
Estimated # of people with access to improved water supply	15,700,000	8,000,000	4,106,940	549,297	3,700,000	4,715,365	289,680
Estimated # of people have improved access to sanitation services		5,500,000	1,083,990	45,786	1,300,000	1,124,008 ¹	261,066
# of school children benefited from improved WASH facilities and services					390,000	260,697 ²	50,431
# of people supported with access to essential WASH NFIs including in HTR areas		2,000,000	3,008,745 ³	279,218	1,600,000	1,738,488 ³	229,805
# of people reached with hygiene promotion interventions		3,000,000	1,029,083	126,737	525,000	470,323 ⁴	61,606

# of people benefitting from access to improved lifesaving/emergency WASH facilities and services		3,000,000	3,371,962	222,557	1,500,000	1,346,507 ⁵	199,517
Child Protection							
# of girls and boys engaged in structured and sustained child protection programming, including psychosocial support	5,600,000	880,000	708,625	71,998	350,000	393,570 ¹	23,225
# of women and men engaged in structured and sustained parenting programmes		93,000	109,908	6,628	51,000	73,027 ¹	5,322
# of girls, boys, women and men reached with explosive hazards risk education		4,592,604	2,429,031	287,842	2,400,000	1,911,339 ²	133,682
# of women, men, girls and boys reached by behaviour change communication interventions for child protection issues		1,650,000	912,686	75,185	630,000	634,188	147,940
# of girls and boys received specialized child protection services including through case management		50,000	42,957	4,936	22,000	15,678 ³	891
Education							
# of children provided with education services in formal settings	5,700,000	3,300,000	3,879,634	302,640	2,400,000	1,534,973 ¹	73,387
# of children in non-formal education benefiting from education services		1,256,530	983,709	97,277	440,000	357,586 ¹	41,286
# of teachers and education personnel trained		76,524	189,295	112,809	42,600	42,792	158
# of children and youth (5-24 years) participating in life skills and citizenship education programmes in formal and non-formal settings		300,000	196,886	15,197	280,000	95,882 ¹	46,951
# of caregivers and children reached with C4D back to learning (BTL) interventions					225,000	214,961	4,583
SOCIAL POLICY							
# of girls and boys with disabilities provided with regular cash transfers					11,500	8,865 ¹	1,404
# of girls and boys protected from extreme weather through NFIs					570,000	531,556	108,809
# of girls and boys protected from extreme weather through vouchers or cash transfers					110,000	65,665 ²	0
ADAP							
# of adolescents and youth (10-24 years) promoting social cohesion and civic engagement					200,000	240,927 ¹	3,842
# of affected adolescents and youth (10-24 years) receiving employability skills including life skills, TVET and entrepreneurship					300,000	152,017 ²	15,152
Footnotes							

*The Whole of Syria [2019 UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children](#) appeal was revised with updated 2019 indicators and targets. Sector reach for WASH is as of end Nov; Education and Child Protection is as of end Oct; Nutrition is as of end Sept. All UNICEF results are as of end Dec.

Nutrition 2: The micro-nutrients supplementation was initially planned to take place jointly with the measles campaign; as the campaign could not take place, the target of this indicator could not be fully achieved. UNICEF is looking into alternative ways of supplementation for 2020

Nutrition 3: Screening of acute malnutrition was impacted by limited funding

Nutrition 4: For this activity, low funding and low number of available skilled workers affected the reach.

Nutrition 5: Limited funding constrained the delivery of life-saving nutrition supplies to hard-to-reach areas.

Health 1: Over-achievement is due to a dedicated funding pipeline as well as a scale up of response due to additional displacements.

Health 2: Under-achievement is due to lack of access to several densely populated areas of Aleppo.

Health 3: Target was under-achieved due to difficulties in access in some areas of Idleb.

Health 4: Overachievement in the training indicator is due to the expansion of the new-born programme after the late approval of the MoH. This was a newly introduced activity and the target was set in a conservative manner.

WASH 1: Target was over-achieved (140 per cent) due to a cost-effective approach which targets highly density population areas by fulfilling the minimum needs to keep water systems running.

WASH 2: This target was not fully achieved due to limited funding

WASH 3: The reach is higher than the target both for the sector and for UNICEF due to the additional recent displacements in the northwest

WASH 4: This represents 66 per cent of the target, as the interventions targeted schools in newly accessible areas, where the number of returnees' children was lower than expected.

WASH 5: This target was not achieved due to limited funding.

Child Protection 1: These two activities were over-achieved to cover the new displacements and people in newly accessible areas and were prioritized over the other activities.

Child protection 2: The low reach on MRE indicator is due to limited funding available.

Child Protection 3: The low reach is due to funding constraints.

Education 1: The low reach of these education indicators is due to limited funding affecting the programme.

Social Policy 1: This result was affected by late funding and funding conditionalities

Social Policy 2: Due to technical difficulties, the use of vouchers was discontinued, and the target could not be achieved. UNICEF is planning to replace vouchers with cash in 2020.

ADAP 1: The over-achievement was possible thanks to dedicated funding, good partnerships on the ground, increased demand for social and civic engagement activities, especially in the newly accessed areas (Rural Damascus, Aleppo and Hasakeh), better understanding by partners on the importance of adolescent engagement, scale up of activities with the Ministry of Culture and increased community buy-in and participation.

ADAP 2: This activity was constrained by lack of funding.

Annex B

Funding Status*

Sector	Requirements	Funds available		Funding gap	
		Received Current Year	Carry-Over	\$	%
Nutrition	32,954,663	13,439,232	2,525,260	16,990,172	52%
Health	41,877,045	10,888,776	5,680,481	25,307,788	60%
WASH	77,492,160	54,786,022	15,162,990	7,543,148	10%
Child Protection	36,133,672	14,665,780	7,443,669	14,024,223	39%
Education	64,492,956	44,887,231	18,611,883	993,843	2%
Non-food items	26,660,955	8,897,905	3,475,018	14,288,032	54%
Early Recovery and Livelihood	15,188,586	4,682,122	3,074,003	7,432,461	47%
Being allocated	-	6,535,310	-	-	-
Total	294,800,037	158,782,377	55,973,303	80,044,357	27%

* As defined in Humanitarian Appeal of 31/05/2019 for a period of 12 months