



Cousins in Al-Sateh Village, rural Dara'a where UNICEF rehabilitated a local water source © UNICEF/Omar Malas/2021

Reporting Period: 1 - 31 August 2021

# Whole of Syria Humanitarian Situation Report

## August 2021

### Highlights

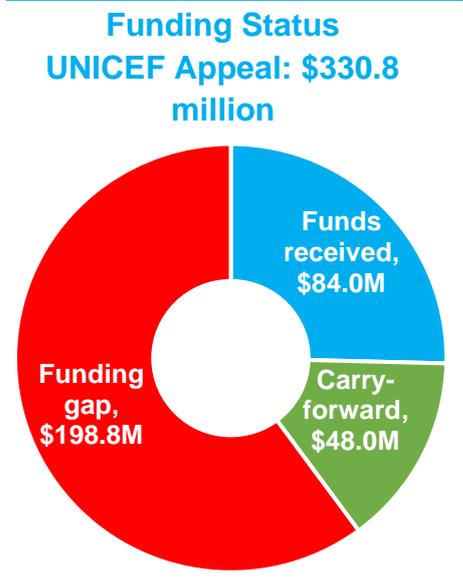
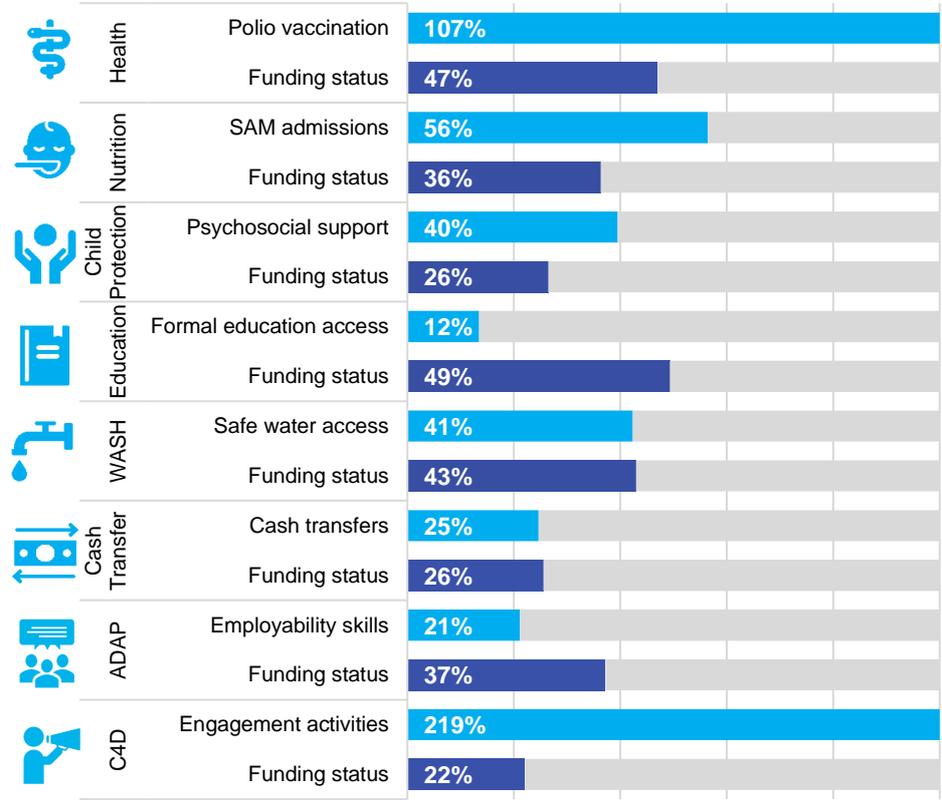
- The conflict between government allied forces and non-state armed groups in Dara'a Al-Balad continued in August. In total, 36,424 people have now been displaced, including 1,268 people hosted in five schools and two mosques. UNICEF continued its health, nutrition, education, child protection and WASH response, and advocacy is on-going for sustainable shelter options to allow the schools to reopen for the new school year.
- COVID-19 infections are surging in Syria, especially in the northwest where cases began increasing in early August, reaching around 1,000 cases per day by the end of the month. UNICEF supported the import of 138,240 doses of AstraZeneca donated by Sweden through the COVAX mechanism and received by the Ministry of Health on 15 August, and launched a mass media and social media campaign with the Ministry of Health to create demand for the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Over 450,000 people have been affected by the disruption of Alouk water station, exacerbated by drought conditions and reduced water flows in the Euphrates River. The UN continues to advocate for regular and unimpeded access to Alouk water station and the electricity network that supports it.
- UNICEF requires \$330.8 million to provide lifesaving assistance to 9.1 million people (including 5.5 million children) across Syria according to the [Humanitarian Action for Children](#). \$132,005,939 is currently available, with a \$198,820,636 (60 per cent) gap.

### Situation in Numbers

- 6,080,000** children in need of humanitarian assistance
- 13,400,000** people in need
- 6,700,000** internally displaced persons (IDPs)
- 2,565,766** children in difficult to access areas

(source: OCHA, Humanitarian Needs Overview, 2021)

### UNICEF's Response and Funding Status



Note: on the C4D Indicator: Significant over-reach in the response is due to the target focusing only on the Health and Education programmes, while all programmes are undertaking relevant activities.

## Funding Overview and Partnerships

In 2021, UNICEF requires \$330,826,575 to provide lifesaving assistance to 9.1 million people (including 5.5 million children) across Syria according to the [Humanitarian Action for Children \(HAC\)](#). Of the total funding requirements, \$132,005,939 is currently available, with a \$198,820,636 (60 per cent) gap. Funding gaps for Social Protection (74 per cent) and Child Protection (74 per cent) remain particularly acute, with critical needs also seen in other sectors. This is expected to compromise the ability of UNICEF to help the most vulnerable children and families cope with the worsening impacts of the socio-economic crisis and high levels of food insecurity, which expected to be exacerbated by the current drought conditions.

This year, the Governments of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Norway, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States as well as ECHO, the Syria Humanitarian Fund and UNICEF national committees have generously contributed to ongoing UNICEF humanitarian response across Syria. UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all public and private partners for this critical support.

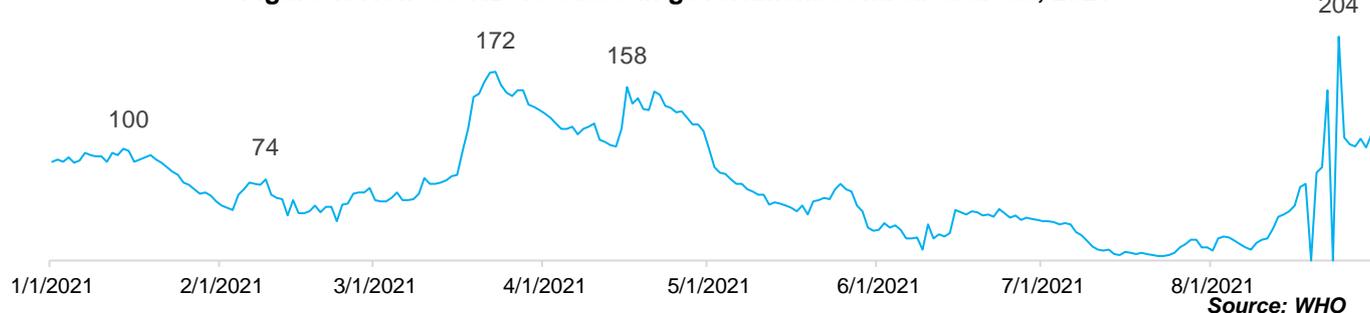
UNICEF continued to lead the Water and Sanitation, Education, Nutrition Sectors/Clusters and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility and the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Group. Further, UNICEF also co-leads, together with World Vision International, the No Lost Generation Initiative, bringing together 39 UN and NGO partners to advocate for the protection, education and development of Syrian children, adolescents and young people, within the umbrella of the Syria HRP and the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP).

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

**Dara'a Al-Balad:** The conflict between government allied forces and non-state armed groups in Dara'a Al-Balad, which had displaced 24,000 people in July,<sup>1</sup> remained fluid throughout August.<sup>2</sup> Heavy shelling in Tafas City and other areas in western Dara'a triggered further displacement into the Al Yarmouk Basin, near the Jordanian border. On 30 August, the Al Shifa and National Hospitals were damaged by mortars, as was one school. On 31 August, a temporary ceasefire was reportedly agreed. By end of August, a total of 36,424 people had been displaced, the majority of those displaced are living with host families while 1,268 people are staying in five schools and two mosques.<sup>3</sup> The UNICEF and Sector response to the situation is detailed in the Summary Analysis of Programme Response section.

**COVID-19:** A fourth wave of COVID-19 infections is growing across Syria, with a surge in new cases seen in northwest Syria (NW Syria). According to WHO, cases in NW Syria began increasing in early August, reaching around 1,000 cases per day by the end of the month. The surge was tied to cross border movements around the Eid holidays and the transmission of the Delta variant.<sup>4</sup> From the start of the pandemic to date, there have been 82,930 COVID-19 cases reported in Syria, including 19,969 in northeast Syria (NE Syria) (780 deaths); 35,430 in NW Syria (751 deaths) and 27,539 in the rest of the country (1,998 deaths). Actual cases likely far exceed the number of confirmed cases due to limited testing in the country. Meanwhile, 403,254 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered, covering 1.1 per cent of the population with at least one dose and 0.9 per cent with two doses.

Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases in government-controlled areas, 2021



**Water crisis in northern and NE Syria:** Water flows in the Euphrates River from Turkey into Syria have decreased from 500m<sup>3</sup> per second in January 2021 to 214m<sup>3</sup> per second in June.<sup>5</sup> While fluctuations have been seen over the past few months, water levels remain significantly below the historic average. This has significantly decreased the amount

<sup>1</sup> OCHA, [Dara'a Flash Update: Hostilities in Dara'a Governorate](#), 2 August 2021.

<sup>2</sup> OCHA, [Dara'a Flash Update 2: Hostilities in Dara'a Governorate](#), 12 August 2021.

<sup>3</sup> OCHA, Dara'a Sitrep, 7 September 2021

<sup>4</sup> WHO, [WHO counters surge in Delta virus with largest COVAX delivery to date into northwest Syria](#), 6 September 2021.

<sup>5</sup> OCHA, [Water Crisis in Northern and Northeast Syria](#), September 2021.

of water available to meet local needs. By end of August 2021, a third of the 200 water stations along the river remain significantly affected, impacting 4.5 million people across the region.<sup>6</sup>

**Alouk water station:** Alouk is the only significant source of drinking water for 460,000 people in Al-Hasakeh Governorate, including Al-Hasakeh and Tal Tamer Cities as well as 100,000 IDPs in Al-Hol and other camps and settlements and 17,000 people in collective centres. After being offline from 23 June to 25 July, a technical team was granted access to Alouk and limited operation resumed (10 out of 30 boreholes). Water provision remained well below required levels and was reportedly not reaching Al-Hasakeh City. Pumping stopped again on 21 August.<sup>7</sup> WASH Sector partners continue to truck 4,426m<sup>3</sup> of water per day to affected areas. An additional \$400,000 per month is urgently required to sustain emergency water trucking operations at current levels.

**The situation in NW Syria:** The escalation of aerial and artillery shelling in NW Syria continued in August. Villages and communities in southern Idleb, northern Hama and western Aleppo have been impacted, along with Idleb City and Ariha, with around 20-25 villages hit each day.<sup>8</sup> Artillery shelling of Al-Bab City on 6 August injured 23 civilians including 11 children and a local responder. On 8 August, four children were reportedly killed, and three children injured, during the shelling of Qastun Village in western Hama. Between 20 and 22 August, shelling in western Aleppo resulted in the death of one child while in Idleb four children were killed. Afrin also continued to experience attacks, including an 18 August rocket attack which killed three civilians and injured several others.

More than 31,000 people were displaced in NW Syria in August, with departures principally occurring from Idleb, Afrin and Ehem. Returns of more than 2,700 IDPs were also recorded, with arrivals registered mainly in Ariha, Mhambal and Jisr-Ash-Shugur in Idleb.<sup>9</sup> Unexploded ordnance (UXOs) and improvised devices (IEDs) particularly affected Afrin and Azaz in August. On 19 and 23 August vehicle borne IEDs in Azaz resulted in several casualties. On 26 August, UXO exploded in an informal camp in Mara'at Masrin killing one child and wounding another.

**Socioeconomic situation:** Food prices remained stable from June to July, with the prices of the national average food basket<sup>10</sup> increasing by one per cent. The relative stability in food prices seen since April are related to stricter controls of market prices and exchange rates<sup>11</sup>. In July, the minimum wage was increased from 47,000 to 71,515 Syrian pounds, while wages for civil servants and members of the military increased by 50 per cent and pensions by 40 per cent.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

### Health

In August 2021, 132,976 **free medical consultations** (54,130 for boys, 54,259 for girls, 2,481 for men and 22,106 for women) were provided by UNICEF implementing partners through fixed centres and mobile teams in 14 governorates. This includes 22,069 consultations in NE Syria (3,992 in Al-Hol Camp) and 16,626 in NW Syria. So far this year, 1,218,578 consultations have been provided, 68 per cent of the annual target. This also included 4,117 consultations provided by UNICEF implementing partners providing emergency health and nutrition services to affected populations in Dara'a Al-Balad through a fixed health centre and mobile medical team.

The reporting period also saw 1,264 **home visits** to 452 pregnant women and 244 newborns (107 girls) in their villages in 12 governorates. To increase the coverage and quality of this intervention, 160 health workers and community volunteers (150 females) were trained on newborn care in August. This included 40 new community volunteers trained in Ar-Raqqa and Idleb as part of a plan to extend the newborn care at home programme. Under this plan, 300 new community volunteers will be trained to cover 20 new communities in 10 governorates including Ar-Raqqa, Idleb and East Ghouta in Rural Damascus.

To increase the uptake of health services 17,513 caregivers (1,691 men) were reached with **health promotion** in August. Of these, 8,257 were in NE Syria (3,671 in Al-Hol Camp). Less than 10 per cent of caregivers reached with health promotion messaging were men, as women are more likely to bring their children to the health centre and to be at home when community volunteers visit.

<sup>6</sup> OCHA, [Water Crisis in Northern and Northeast Syria](#), September 2021.

<sup>7</sup> NES NGO Forum, Operational Policy Update, 19-31 August 2021.

<sup>8</sup> OCHA Humanitarian Information Sharing Meeting in Arabic meeting, 12 August.

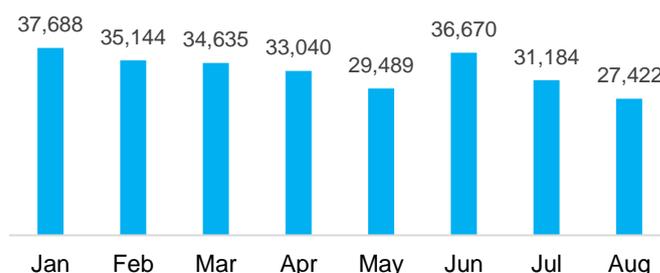
<sup>9</sup> Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Displacement Report, 9 September 2021.

<sup>10</sup> A standard food basket is defined as: a group of dry goods providing 2,060 kcal a day for a family of five for a month (37 kg bread, 19 kg rice, 19 kg lentils, 5 kg sugar and 7L vegetable oil).

<sup>11</sup> WFP, [Market Price Watch Bulletin Issue 80, July 2021](#), posted 6 September.

In NW Syria, UNICEF supports **social mobilizers** to increase the demand for health care and vaccination among caregivers of children under 5. During August, 27,422 caregivers (14,412 female) were reached in person for a total of 265,272 caregivers (135,966 female) this year. The messages focus on the importance of visiting primary health care centres, completing the necessary vaccinations for children under 2 years and COVID-19 prevention. On average, 33,000 caregivers are reached per month including parents and grandparents.

**Figure 2: Caregivers reached with health promotion in NW Syria, 2021**



In terms of **routine immunization**, 41,107 children (20,593 girls) received their third dose of diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus (DPT) vaccine in August, including 11,067 children in NW Syria. Overall, 302,135 children have received their third DPT vaccine in Syria this year, including 76,285 in NW Syria. This is 50 per cent of the annual target of 600,000 (90 per cent of the target for NW Syria and 43 per cent in the rest of the country); the Ministry of Health is planning a national routine immunization campaign in December 2021 to improve coverage rates.

UNICEF supported the import of 138,240 doses of AstraZeneca donated by Sweden through the COVAX mechanism, which were received by the Ministry of Health (MOH) on 15 August. A national campaign has been planned for 5 to 16 September for those above 18 years. To date, 108,802 people have received two shots of AstraZeneca through COVAX in Syria, including 18,742 in NW Syria. The targeted populations to date have included health workers, the elderly and those with pre-existing conditions. In NW Syria, overall, 86,018 individuals (27,226 females) have received at least one dose of **COVID-19 vaccine**. This includes 15,928 health care workers, 30,604 social workers and 35,647 patients with pre-existing conditions, among others. Furthermore, the UNICEF infection prevention and control training manual will be reviewed by the MOH before kicking off capacity building activities for health care providers. Further details on RCCE efforts are included in the Communications for Development section below.

## Nutrition

In August, 981 children with **severe acute malnutrition** (SAM; 566 girls) were admitted for treatment, including 818 in NW Syria, bringing the total admissions in 2021 to 7,615. Areas of increased incidence of malnutrition are being seen in NE Syria. In August, in Areesha Camp in NE Syria, of 185 children screened, 24 per cent were suffering from acute malnutrition, including 19 children with SAM and 25 with moderate acute malnutrition (MAM). UNICEF field monitoring and partner reports indicate multiple underlying reasons for increased levels of acute malnutrition in NE Syria, including the summer weather driving up water needs; the consequences of the drought and decreased water levels in the Euphrates; water quality concerns; and poor hygiene practices. UNICEF and Nutrition Sector partners have prepositioned preventive and curative nutrition supplies in Qamishli as part of the sector preparedness plan, and nutrition services continue to be delivered to children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women.

Almost one-third of children and women of reproductive age in Syria are suffering from anaemia,<sup>12</sup> contributing to acute and chronic malnutrition. So far this year, UNICEF and its partners have provided 589,881 children and mothers with **micronutrient supplements**, including 62,312 (10,089 boys, 10,013 girls and 42,210 women) in August. This includes 14,081 children (6,956 girls) and 27,919 pregnant and lactating women in NW Syria.

For World Breastfeeding Week in August, UNICEF intensified **breastfeeding counselling and awareness raising**. During the month, 77,913 caregivers (404 males), including 7,916 in NE Syria, were reached with door-to-door visits, skilled breastfeeding counselling and community outreach activities. The campaign also incorporated media messages, radio broadcasts promoting breastfeeding and advocacy meetings with key influencers, including gynaecologists and paediatricians. In NW Syria, 30,133 caregivers and pregnant and lactating women were counselled or reached with awareness messaging on infant and young child feeding (IYCF) in August. So far this year, 178,010 caregivers and pregnant and lactating women (62 per cent of annual target) have been reached in NW Syria. The

**Figure 3: Caregivers counselled or reached with awareness on IYCF in NW Syria**



<sup>12</sup> UNICEF, SMART Survey 2019.

decrease seen in February (see Figure 3) was tied to an increased trend of COVID-19, during which time teams focused more on one-to-one counselling sessions instead of having large group sessions.

### **Nutrition Sector**

From January to July 2021, the Nutrition Sector reached 1,493,112 beneficiaries (340,285 boys, 353,164 girls, 752,799 women and 46,864 men) with lifesaving nutrition interventions. This includes 3,349 boys and 4,658 girls with MAM and 1,146 boys and 1,492 girls with SAM identified and admitted for treatment. In addition, 3,653 pregnant and lactating women were identified with MAM and treated. To prevent micronutrient deficiencies and malnutrition, the Sector has reached 66,475 girls, 66,323 boys and 149,519 pregnant and lactating women with micronutrients while 749,738 pregnant and lactating women have received IYCF messages and counselling.

Nutrition Sector partners UNICEF along with Al-Birr, the Syrian Family Planning Association and the Directorate of Health are supporting the response in Dara'a Al-Balad. UNICEF provided implementing partners with 400 cartons of high energy biscuits, 7,600 sachets of micronutrient powder, 300 micronutrient tablets for pregnant women and 200 cartons of therapeutic spread. Al-Birr is distributing meals and food baskets from the host community to IDPs in the collective shelters as part of the nutrition response. Partners screened 1,686 children under 5 in Dara'a for malnutrition, identifying 58 children with MAM and 7 with SAM, and admitting these children for treatment. A further 550 pregnant and lactating women were screened, with 49 MAM cases detected and admitted for treatment. Nutrition supplies were provided to 1,886 women and children, while 419 pregnant and lactating women received individual IYCF counselling. The nutrition response was constrained by the lack of designated and private spaces in the collective shelters.

The Nutrition Sector organized an orientation session for 15 staff (10 females) on integrating gender-based violence (GBV) mitigation measures into nutrition programming, conducted by a UNFPA GBV consultant. A Nutrition Sector Plan of Action to mitigate against GBV was prepared and adopted by sector partners. The plan includes ensuring all Nutrition Sector partners complete the Arabic e-learning course on GBV risk mitigation in nutrition and developing GBV risk mitigation messages to be incorporated into nutrition-related community outreach.

### **Child Protection**

With support from partners, UNICEF provides **explosive ordnance risk education (EORE)** to raise awareness on the risk of explosive devices. In August, 36,181 children (13,935 girls) and 9,256 caregivers were reached, including 8,063 children and 2,174 caregivers in NW Syria, bringing the total from the beginning of the year to 556,588 children (269,078 girls) and 109,548 caregivers (64,480 women). COVID-19 prevention measures, which impose limitations on group activities, have contributed to the slow progress to date, as have funding gaps. Only 26 per cent of the funding required for Child Protection programming in 2021 has been received.

In **Al-Hol Camp**, UNICEF continued its support to 67 unaccompanied and separated children living in the interim care centre. All of the children were provided with psychosocial support while 47 participated in life-skills activities, 44 received health services and 48 registered for the new school year. Five children were reunified with their relatives in Al-Hol Camp with close monitoring from the case managers. In addition, one woman and her five children were repatriated to South Africa from Damascus, and UNICEF has remained in contact with the family to follow the reintegration process. To support the re-integration of Syrian returnees leaving Al-Hol, focus group discussions were conducted with 80 families. Preliminary findings showed that these families have limited access to services due to high levels of discrimination and social stigma. One third of women and adolescent girls is estimated to be at high risk of GBV, including forced or undocumented marriage, while half of children are engaged in child labor and are working long hours and are poorly paid. Children who leave Al-Hol Camp often do not go to school to avoid stigma and discrimination and for financial reasons. These findings will feed into the existing multi-sectoral plan to respond to the needs for the Syrian children leaving Al-Hol Camp.

In August, 12,390 children (6,471 girls) were reached with structured and sustained **child protection and psychosocial support services** to help them cope with stress and regain a sense of balance and normality. This included 3,606 children (1,814 girls) in NW Syria. So far this year, 164,072 children and caregivers have received psychosocial support. A new psychosocial manual developed with UNICEF and Syrian Commission for Family Affairs and Population support is expected to be issued by mid-September to standardize and ensure the quality of services. The training of trainers on the new manual will start upon the adoption of the manual by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MOSAL).

**GBV awareness-raising** was provided in August through campaigns or door-to-door to 16,706 children (8,558 girls) and 5,596 caregivers (4,400 women). This includes 2,215 beneficiaries in NW Syria. In newly accessible areas of northern rural Hama, solar street lighting was installed on the main streets to improve women and girls' safe movement

and prevent verbal harassment. This was an initiative of a UNICEF-supported group made up of 30 young people (8 females).

**Parenting programmes** engaged 5,827 parents and primary caregivers (4,418 females) in August to enhance their skills and knowledge to care for and protect their children, bringing the total number of parents and caregivers reached since the beginning of the year to 27,556. As part of the parenting campaign, UNICEF and MOSAL shared 50 social media posts promoting positive parenting tips reaching more than 27.5 million views in Syria.

UNICEF and partners supported the **emergency child protection response in Dara'a**, working both in temporary shelters and with IDPs hosted in the local community. The response included: case management (58 children), psychosocial support (535 children) and EORE (3,461 children), in addition to awareness raising on child protection and GBV and recreational activities, among others. In Dara'a City an information desk was installed at the distribution point to inform IDPs on available child protection services and how to access them. Due to the security situation, partners could not access the shelters in Dara'a after 25 August, though case managers followed-up on the cases needing specialized services over the phone.



**Parenting messages in Syria Today, 10 August**

In Aleppo, in partnership with ILO and local partners Al Ihsan and Anis Saada, UNICEF continued case management of **children engaged in child labour** as part of the Supporting Children's Rights through Education and the Arts and the Media (SCREAM) project. Two new activities were launched in August: support to enrol in non-formal education (NFE) and awareness raising sessions on workplace safety for children and their caregivers and employers. As a result, 78 children engaged in labour were enrolled in NFE, with a further 47 children expected to be enrolled in September. The partnership is also operating in Tartous, where 50 child workers were provided with vocational training opportunities, linking them with private institutions that offer training as well as job opportunities. Regular monitoring visits indicate positive feedback from these 50 children and their caregivers, particularly on the availability and quality of case management. Feedback also indicated improvement in children's behaviour, including in their day-to-day interaction with their parents.

### **Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AOR)**

In July, 69,504 people were reached by Child Protection AOR partners with psychosocial support and parenting programmes, with 2,230 individuals reached with specialized child protection services. AOR members worked in 224 communities (in 116 sub-districts) through July. The Child Protection AOR also advocated for the protection of children in Dara'a as also highlighted in the [statement on protection of civilians in Dara'a](#). The statement noted "Major concerns have been raised over the impact of the violence and displacement on the most vulnerable, including women, adolescent girls and boys, children and people with disabilities, many of whom live in overcrowded shelters, leading to exposure to increased protection risks." It called for urgent and unimpeded humanitarian access and free movement of humanitarian workers and supplies.

In NW Syria, consultations with child protection teams in the field about violence against children in IDP settings showed the need for increased attention on informal settlements where access is reduced. Work is on-going focused on capacity building, service mapping and awareness amongst communities as well as reporting and referrals on violence against children. Training is also being provided on referrals for non-child protection actors. The Child Protection AOR coordination team with the support of collaborators in the field has continued to monitor key child protection concerns in NW Syria. Outcomes of this monitoring can be viewed [here](#).

### **Education**

In August, UNICEF supported 17,128 children (8,221 girls) **with educational services and supplies in formal settings**, including 3,362 in NW Syria, for a total of 235,799 children this year. In Homs, Hama, Lattakia, Tartous and Deir-ez-Zor, UNICEF supported remedial classes for 7,169 Curriculum B students (3,489 girls). Curriculum B is a formal accelerated learning programme, providing an opportunity for children aged 8 to 15 who have never been in school or dropped out two or more years ago to access formal education and transition to formal school. The support for Curriculum B students included school bags, stationery and recreational kits, as well as cleaning materials to ensure COVID-19 protocols are observed.

UNICEF partners work to identify and support **particularly vulnerable children** to access their right to education. Examples of this in August include a school in Homs which was able to successfully enroll 70 displaced students (26 girls) who arrived from Rukban Camp, where they had been out of school for many years, into Curriculum B. Remedial classes are also supporting children who are blind or visually impaired ; this support contributed to 31 children who are blind and visually impaired (13 girls) passing the July national exams out of the 36 (15 girls) who sat them.

In **NFE** settings, 57,452 children (28,527 girls) received educational support including 52,770 in NW Syria. UNICEF has supported 552,053 children with NFE; of these children, 246 children (142 girls) have transitioned to formal education. NFE targets children who are internally displaced and/or out of school with no access to formal education opportunities. Parents, NGOs and community members play a role in running learning spaces using self-learning materials. While Curriculum B provides a certificate, NFE does not. In addition, 7,515 children and youth (3,698 females) participated in **life skills and citizenship education** programmes in formal and non-formal settings in August, including 6,668 in NW Syria. Since January 2021, 676,030 children (347,093 girls) have been supported in both formal education and NFE settings by UNICEF, including 5,752 children with disabilities.

To enhance the quality of education and build the resilience of teachers and education pathways, UNICEF **trained 2,076 teachers and education personnel** (1,530 women) in August. Of these, 726 were newly recruited teachers (621 women) in Deir-ez-Zor who will start work in the new school year. In NW Syria, UNICEF through its implementing partners provided 1,232 teachers (740 females) with incentives to improve their retention. Forty-six teachers and education personnel (18 females) were trained on child-centered teaching and learning while 11 were trained on psychosocial support and referral mechanisms. School-based psychosocial support in formal and non-formal settings reached 15,159 children (7,324 girls) in August.

UNICEF also participated in the **emergency education response in Dara'a**. Since the 10 UNICEF-supported learning centres in Dara'a Al-Balad were closed due to the security situation, 502 internally displaced children (248 girls) were transported from shelters to two learning points. Shelling in Dara'a City in the last three days of the month forced those learning points to close. A UNICEF-supported school in Dara'a Al-Balad was also damaged by the recent clashes; UNICEF had started school rehabilitation in the area before the recent crisis. In anticipation of possible delays in re-opening schools UNICEF and the Directorate of Education are making contingency plans to send self-learning materials as part of a convoy planned to Dara'a Al-Balad.

A **cash assistance** project began in NW Syria to help families with children to send them to study. This one-time cash transfer supported 1,527 internally displaced children (762 girls) including 70 children with disabilities (30 girls) in camps in Maaret Tamsrin Sub-District. The project has focused on six schools and considers the needs of children with disabilities, out of school children and children at risk of dropping out. Cash assistance provides families flexibility and the freedom and dignity of choice while being more efficient and cost effective than in-kind programming. The aim is to enhance parents' income to allow them to send children to school. Other basic needs were also covered, including incentives for 55 teachers and supplies to help meet safe school protocols considering COVID-19.

### **Education Sector Response**

The second, supplementary round of **national examinations** for Grade 9 and 12 students was conducted in August. According to the Ministry of Education, 77,867 students sat the exams, with a success rate of 85 per cent. Out of the 66,557 students who passed the exam, 12,091 were those who failed in the first round. The total success rate for the July and August rounds is 73 per cent. For the second round of the Grade 12 examinations (1-15 August 2021), 937 students registered from crossline and cross-border areas, of whom around 50 per cent were received in 10 accommodation centres (Aleppo: 314, Ar-Raqqa: 37, Hama: 33 and Deir-ez-Zor: 17).<sup>13</sup> Intersectoral coordination<sup>14</sup> continued for students staying in accommodation centres for the supplementary exams, ensuring the provision of mobile health clinics; sterilization of accommodation centres, fabric masks and personal hygiene kits; drinking water and latrine maintenance; transportation; daily hot meals and ready-to-eat food baskets; psychosocial support, case management and legal services; and awareness sessions on the danger of UXO.

The Child Protection AOR ensured the availability of suggestion boxes for students staying in accommodation centres. The students reported 238 issues through the boxes during the August exams. It is estimated that at least 58 children used the suggestion box; 90 per cent of which were complaints about the quality of service while 10 per cent were about protection concerns including the behaviour of staff, such as guards standing in front of bathrooms and requests for fees

<sup>13</sup> As this round was supplementary round of the 1st round of the Grade 12 examinations, each student could participate in the examinations for only up to 3 subjects; thus the actual number of participated students are expected to be significantly higher than these numbers.

<sup>14</sup> Including support from: Directorate of Education, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, ICRC, Al-Birr Association, Mar Afram, NRC, SARC, SIF, Social Care and SSSD.

for charging phones. There were also notes about the lack of privacy and concerns about safety overnight in the centres and sexual harassment. Actions were taken immediately by accommodation centre, NGO and Ministry of Education staff to respond to these concerns. The Child Protection AOR Team also summarized the findings and shared a written response to the students.

The Education Sector drafted a response plan for both Dara'a City and **Dara'a al-Balad** in early August. Due to security and access challenges, few partners have been able to respond. The response in August included: 1) NFE activities in two learning points (reported under the UNICEF Education section above) and the provision of school bags to 502 displaced children (248 girls); and 2) the delivery of 200 sets of stationery and 16 whiteboards by Syrian Society for Social Development. Five functioning schools are currently being used as collective shelters with a sixth school designated as a backup shelter. These schools have 2,000 students enrolled for the new school year on 5 September.<sup>15</sup> Advocacy to evacuate the six schools was conducted at both the national and the governorate levels in collaboration with OCHA and the Shelter Sector.

In NW Syria, UNICEF continues to provide technical support to the Education Cluster and facilitate the coordination of more than 100 cluster members. As of the end of June 2021, the Education Cluster has reached approximately 689,000 people through support by 53 organizations. Cluster members provided catch up classes and remedial lessons during the summer and the preparation for opening schools for new academic year is ongoing. In August, the Education Cluster was provided the opportunity to highlight the educational needs in NW Syria and key messages at the Humanitarian Liaison Group meeting, where the importance of including education activities in a humanitarian response was reiterated. The cluster is also working with an OCHA's advocacy specialist to develop communication material to share with wider stakeholders including donors

## WASH

In August, UNICEF supported **new access to safe water** for more than 236,998 people (73,329 boys, 70,095 girls, 75,418 men and 78,156 women), increasing the total reach to 1,692,667 people out of a target of 4,140,000 for the year. The repair of pumps and provision of fuel and spare parts in seven locations in Idleb Governorate benefited 65,998 people while the rehabilitation of a water system in Tal Ehmeir in Al-Hasakeh benefited 20,000 people. Additionally, 151,000 people newly benefited from the restoration of water stations and distribution networks in NW Syria in August.

The lack of local production or importation of sodium hypochlorite in Syria poses considerable risks for the availability of safe water in the country. In August, **two chlorine production factories** supported by UNICEF began operation in Rural Damascus and Deir-ez-Zor Governorates, producing more than three tons of chlorine daily. The chlorine produced by the Rural Damascus factory is being used to chlorinate Fijeh spring water in Rural Damascus Governorate, the main water source for more than 1.8 million people in Damascus and parts of Rural Damascus. In Deir-ez-Zor, UNICEF installed four devices which can produce 300 litres of active chlorine per day to sterilize around 1,200m<sup>3</sup> of water for 60,000 people. The devices in Deir-ez-Zor were equipped with solar energy systems to ensure their continuous operation considering the shortage of electricity in the area. The factories are expected to increase the reliability of the availability of the needed chlorine.

UNICEF provided **emergency lifesaving WASH services** for 702,242 people (183,324 boys, 194,891 girls, 152,291 men and 171,736 women) in Al-Hasakeh, Idleb, Aleppo and Rural Damascus, including water trucking for the residents in IDP camps and collective shelters in NE Syria and rural Aleppo as well as returnees in Rural Damascus, benefiting 199,488 people (47,072 boys, 45,086 girls, 50,419 men and 56,911 women). In Dara'a, 59,501 IDPs received hygiene kits during August 2021 as did 5,965 IDPs in NW Syria. The Dara'a water authority is providing 14,000m<sup>3</sup> of safe water twice a week to Dara'a Al-Balad from the Kherbet Kazaleh water pumping station, which was rehabilitated earlier by UNICEF. In NW Syria, UNICEF has provided 1,371,995 people in need with WASH supplies and services, including 217,158 newly reached people in August.

UNICEF rehabilitated the existing reverse osmosis (RO) water station in **Al-Hol Camp** through the provision and installation of new filters and repair of the generator. The RO station provides 100 of the 1,200 to 1,500m<sup>3</sup> required per day in the camp, with trucking meeting the remainder of the water needs. UNICEF supported 59,001 (19,255 boys, 19,883 girls, 3,803 men and 16,395 women) out of the 64,627 IDPs residents in Al-Hol Camp with water trucking and hygiene kits (29,000 hygiene kits provided to 11,800 families, with other partners reaching the remaining population). UNICEF also maintained the sanitation facilities and latrines in the camp.

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<sup>15</sup> OCHA, [Syria: Dara'a Governorate Situation Report](#), 7 September 2021

In terms of **WASH in schools**, UNICEF completed the rehabilitation of WASH facilities in four schools in Homs improving access for 2,619 students (1,055 girls) to gender-responsive and child-friendly WASH facilities that also address the special needs of children with disabilities. So far this year, 136,141 (65,387 girls) out of 390,000 targeted students have been supported by WASH interventions in schools. During August 2021, UNICEF also provided schools in Tartous with cleaning materials to improve COVID 19 infection prevention and control for 21,861 students.

UNICEF conducted **hygiene promotion** sessions for 2,931 people in Aleppo Governorate (1,091 boys, 1,224 girls and 589 women). These sessions included handwashing activities and group discussions, focusing on IDP centres and schools. In NW Syria, COVID-19 RCCE reached 29,366 (13,584 females) new beneficiaries in August. Outreach through animated video messaging on behavioural change promotion was transmitted via smart phones and social media. So far this year, UNICEF has reached 467,332 people (131,101 boys, 141,338 girls, 89,032 men and 105,861 women) with hygiene promotion.

### WASH Sector Response

The WASH Sector reached 749,159 beneficiaries (192,626 men, 224,948 women, 146,274 girls and 185,308 boys) in government-controlled areas. This includes 445 588 people supported through water and sanitation systems while 318,651 people were reached with humanitarian WASH services and supplies.

The WASH Sector continues to advocate for a neutral, protective zone to ensure access to Alouk water station as well as the electricity network that powers it. In addition to the water trucking by WASH Sector partners mentioned above, UNICEF is partnering with SARC to install seven RO units in Al-Hasakeh City, which should be completed by the end of the year.

In Dara'a, WASH Sector partners are trucking 120m<sup>3</sup> of water per day for 1,750 IDPs (413 boys, 391 girls, 493 men, 453 women) in collective shelters. The rehabilitation and repair of a sewage network was also completed, which will support 30,000 people in Dara'a Al-Balad.

### Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP)

During August, 43,765 young people (22,832 female) participated in ADAP activities in 13 governorates, including 211 young people with disabilities (105 female). Out of the total reach for August, 8,149 young people (3,648 female) participated in **life-skills and citizenship education** programmes to promote soft skills including basic literacy and employability skills. In addition, 2,775 young people (1,010 female) participated in **non-formal vocational education opportunities** to equip them for their transition from education to the workplace. Vocational opportunities in August included refrigeration and air conditioning, web design and programming, public relations, hairdressing and handicrafts.

Twenty-seven **Participatory Action Research (PAR)** youth researchers (8 females; 18 in Tartous and 9 in Hama) took part in a three-day training as a next step in developing their evidence-based advocacy campaigns. In the first phase of the training in 2020, the volunteers were trained on how to undertake research. The second phase focused on data cleaning, analysis and reporting, resulting in a draft PAR report. Based on their research, the participating young people chose to focus on issues of employability, environmental degradation and harassment. In March 2021, the young researchers learned data coding and began planning for the advocacy phase. In August 2021, another workshop was conducted by UNICEF Regional Office on the action plan, advocacy campaigns and key messages.

To increase **social cohesion and civic and digital engagement**, 3,152 young people (1,448 female) were supported to design, lead and implement their own initiatives. Sports for development activities also continued, with 4,569 youth (2,670 female) including IDPs and young people with disabilities encouraged to participate in friendly sessions of football, chess, ping pong and swimming, among others.

### Social Protection and Cash Transfers

UNICEF continued to implement the Integrated Social Protection Programme for Children with Disabilities. The programme aims to address the economic and social vulnerabilities of children with disabilities and their families. It



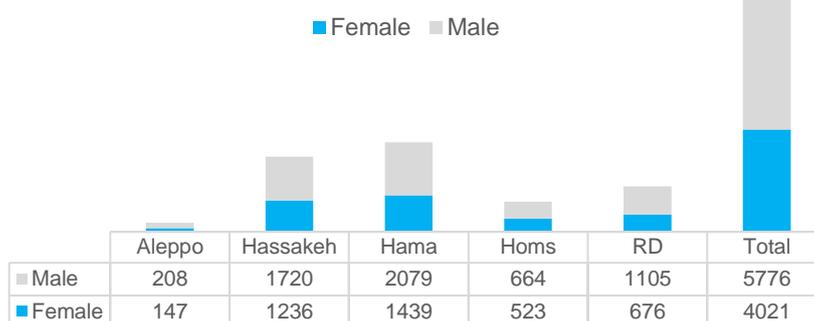
Syrian Olympiad

A group of 15 adolescents (10 male and 5 female) from Hama participated in training for the Syrian Olympiad. The adolescents who participated in the Technovation training received mentoring and incubation sessions from coaches to prepare them to participate in Olympiad competitions. Three participants were then nominated to represent Hama in the national Olympiad in September.

combines the provision of regular and un-conditional cash transfers with case management services to facilitate the referral of children with disabilities to available social services and increase their social inclusion.

During August 2021, 446 **children with disabilities (167 girls)** were reached with **cash transfers and case management services** in Hama and Rural Damascus. Among them, 95 were reached for the first time in Hama. This brings the total number of children reached since the beginning of the year to 9,797 (4,021 girls) in Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Al-Hasakeh and Rural Damascus (RD) Governorates. The programme has now reached 70 per cent of its target for the year. Key operational challenges to implement the programme in a timely manner persist, including the limited financial capacity of financial service providers.

**Figure 4: Children with disabilities supported in 2021 by governorate**



UNICEF also activated partnerships to expand the implementation of the **Cash for Basic Needs Support** programme, which aims to provide a one-off unconditional cash transfer to 42,000 families with children in urban and peri-urban areas in four governorates from September to December. Similarly, the procurement process began for 71,164 **winter clothing kits** for the upcoming winter response. Kits will be distributed to children 0 to 14 years of age in IDP camps and collective shelters in eight governorates. All efforts are being made to ensure that the clothes reach children prior to the start of the 2021-2022 winter season. UNICEF does not expect to meet its targets for cash for basic needs or winter support in 2021, with a critical funding gap of 74 per cent for Social Protection and Cash Transfers along with volatile economic circumstances in the country.

### Communication for Development (C4D), Community Engagement and Accountability for Affected Populations (AAP)

Misinformation and rumours related to COVID-19 and particularly to the efficacy and safety of the COVID-19 vaccine have increased. During monitoring exercises conducted with 595 UNICEF beneficiaries in 11 governorates, 72 per cent of the interviewees had heard about the COVID-19 vaccine, while 26 per cent had not. Social media and TV were indicated as the main source of information for those who had heard about the vaccine. More than half of respondents had concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine, including around a fear of serious side-effects and questionable efficacy.

With this in mind, UNICEF in coordination with MOH and WHO as well as the members of national RCCE Working Group agreed on a detailed plan for mass media, including the timeframe and key messages to be amplified. On 25 August, UNICEF and Ministry of Health launched the **mass media and social media campaign** aimed at creating the demand for the COVID-19 vaccine. UNICEF aims to reach 13,300,000 individuals with information on the COVID-19 vaccine.

The messages and creative materials designed for the mass and social media campaign incorporate diversity, inclusion and gender aspects. A variety of models are demonstrated, including men and women, the elderly and young people, doctors, health workers and religious leaders. For NE Syria, the messages and materials are tailored to reflect the local language for better reach and dissemination through local communication channels. A series of cascaded RCCE trainings for SARC field volunteers took place throughout August in close coordination with the Directorates of Health. Sixty-two SARC volunteers in Homs, Hama, Idlib, Al-Hasakeh and Deir- ez-Zor participated. The training covered vaccine hesitancy, social listening and feedback mechanisms and community engagement and mobilization to promote COVID-19 sensitive and specific practices. So far, COVID-19 messaging on prevention and access to services has reached 174,332 people (82,227 female), while 13,654 people (6,581 female) have been engaged through RCCE actions.



**COVID-19 vaccination awareness session ©UNICEF/2021**

As part of the **response in Dara'a**, UNICEF delivered hygiene promotion sessions and personal safety advice to 482 children in IDP shelters. The sessions were coupled with the distribution of lice shampoo. Additionally, materials were provided and 888 people (583 females) engaged to design education interventions for children in IDP shelters.

### Human Interest Stories and External Media

During the reporting period, UNICEF Syria continued to highlight its support to the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine through [risk communication and community engagement campaigns](#), including in Al-Hol Camp in NE Syria. UNICEF also documented the impact of its [Cash for Children with Disabilities Programme in Rural Damascus](#) through a human interest story.

Marking World Humanitarian Day, UNICEF published the [story](#) of a UNICEF Health and Nutrition Officer, highlighting the human side of humanitarian work. SCO underlined its support to mothers and women through a [photo essay](#) about its IYCF programme in Damascus. Also, UNICEF documented its psychosocial support and awareness raising interventions reaching children in rural Hama with a [photo essay](#). UNICEF highlighted its support to early childhood development with a [video](#) product. Finally, marking World Water Week, SCO published a [story](#) about its supporting helping bring water back to villages in Dara'a.

## Annex A: Summary of Programme Results

Sector	Overall Needs	UNICEF and IPs response			Sector response		
		2021 target	Total results	Change since last report	2021 target	Total results	Change since last report
<b>Health</b>							
# of children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against polio	12.4M	3,200,000	3,415,489 <sup>16</sup>	0			
# of children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities		1,800,000	1,218,578	132,976			
# of health care facility staff and community health workers trained on infection prevention and control		1,000	751	136			
<b>Nutrition</b>							
# of children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment	4.9M	13,500	7,615 <sup>17</sup>	981	17,447	7,880	1,285
# of primary caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling		1,450,000	767,675 <sup>17</sup>	79,698	915,063	1,024,902	86,920
# of children and pregnant and lactating women receiving micronutrients		960,000	589,881 <sup>18</sup>	62,312	2,563,000	555,072	71,000
<b>Child Protection, GBVIE &amp; PESA</b>							
# of children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support	5.9M	415,000	164,072 <sup>19</sup>	12,341	880,000	453,502	42,588
# of women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions		120,500	101,193	17,012			
# of children and caregivers <sup>20</sup> accessing explosive weapons-related risk education and survivor assistance interventions		2,380,000	666,136 <sup>21</sup>	36,181			
<b>Education</b>							
# of children supported with educational services and supplies in formal settings	6.9M	1,750,000	235,799 <sup>22</sup>	17,128	3,300,000	1,355,231	20,119
# of children in non-formal education benefiting from education services		400,000	552,053 <sup>23</sup>	57,452	1,256,530	643,731	39,341
# of teachers and education personnel trained		44,000	13,231 <sup>24</sup>	1,639	76,524	15,325	616
<b>Water, Sanitation &amp; Hygiene</b>							
# of people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene	12.2M	4,140,000	1,692,667 <sup>25</sup>	236,998	8,000,000	3,137,272	366,863
# of people reached with handwashing behaviour change programmes		550,000	467,332	32,270	5,500,000	1,770,064	190,194
# of people have improved access to sanitation services		1,360,000	1,002,583	17,844	4,000,000	1,567,084	154,031

<sup>16</sup> Over-reach due, in part, to IDP movements and insufficiently reliable population data.

<sup>17</sup> UNICEF has a 64 per cent funding gap for Nutrition in 2021; as such, targets for 2021 are unlikely to be achieved.

<sup>18</sup> Underachievement due to logistical delays; while import delays have been resolved, results are still catching up to the target.

<sup>19</sup> Underachievement due to delayed approvals and funding gaps, which are particularly acute in NW Syria.

<sup>20</sup> Caregivers has been added to the indicator language. The target and results are based on children and caregivers.

<sup>21</sup> Underachievement due to delayed approvals and funding gaps, which are particularly acute in NW Syria.

<sup>22</sup> UNICEF has a 51 per cent funding gap for Education in 2021; as such, targets for 2021 are unlikely to be achieved.

<sup>23</sup> The significant over-reach is due to Self-Learning Materials that were purchased late in 2020 and distributed in mid-2021. The target will be modified with the 2021 targets.

<sup>24</sup> Teacher training activities remain critically under-funded.

<sup>25</sup> UNICEF has a 57 per cent funding gap for WASH in 2021; as such, targets for 2021 are unlikely to be achieved.

Social Protection & Cash Transfers						
# of households reached with humanitarian cash transfers across sectors		86,000	21,174 <sup>26</sup>	0 <sup>27</sup>		
# of girls and boys protected from extreme weather through the provision of non-food items		490,000	84,525	0		
Adolescents & Youth						
# of adolescents and youth aged 10 to 24 years promoting social cohesion and civic engagement at the community level		200,000	198,700	37,057		
# of affected adolescents and youth aged 10 to 24 years receiving life-skills and citizenship education and employability skills		300,000	63,507 <sup>28</sup>	8,445		
C4D, Community Engagement & AAP						
# of people participating in engagement actions for social and behavioural change		1,002,500	2,190,710 <sup>29</sup>	32,389		

## Annex B: Funding Status

Section	Requirements	Funds available		Funding gap	
		Received Current Year	Carry-Over	\$	%
Health	\$38,819,971	\$12,146,887	\$6,095,740	\$20,577,345	53%
Nutrition	\$23,920,391	\$5,318,869	\$3,371,929	\$15,229,593	64%
Child Protection, GBViE & PSEA	\$34,221,760	\$3,938,879	\$5,110,860	\$25,172,021	74%
Education	\$74,666,581	\$26,099,266	\$10,729,076	\$37,838,240	51%
WASH	\$98,314,219	\$29,540,147	\$12,680,355	\$56,093,717	57%
Social Protection & Cash Transfers	\$48,850,736	\$3,724,297	\$8,754,090	\$36,372,350	74%
Adolescents & Youth	\$10,912,957	\$2,770,308	\$1,288,323	\$6,854,325	63%
C4D, Community Engagement & AAP	\$1,119,960	\$247,394	0	\$872,566	78%
Being allocated		\$189,523			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$330,826,575</b>	<b>\$83,975,570</b>	<b>\$48,030,373</b>	<b>\$198,820,632</b>	<b>60%</b>

\*Funding for COVAX demand generation has been made available as part of health, and C4D funds have also been integrated into relevant sector funds.

## Next SitRep: 20 October 2021

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

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

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<sup>26</sup> UNICEF does not expect to meet its targets for cash for basic needs in 2021, with a critical funding gap of 74 per cent for Social Protection and Cash Transfers along with volatile economic circumstances in the country.

<sup>27</sup> During the reporting period, UNICEF activated partnerships to provide a one-off unconditional cash transfer to 42,000 families with children in urban and peri-urban areas in four governorates from September to December

<sup>28</sup> Programming faces underfunding and delayed approvals.

<sup>29</sup> Due to the recent establishment of reporting mechanisms required for this indicator, it is being reported for the first time in this sitrep. Significant over-reach in the response is due to the fact that the planned target includes the caseload of Health and Education programmes only, while all other programmes are reporting now against it. The target will be modified with the 2021 targets.