

THE POWER BEHIND THE PROMISE

Your Impact **for every child, everywhere**

Annual Report

The Power Behind the Promise

Why your funding is the foundation of progress for children

UNICEF's promise to protect the rights of every child, everywhere, is bold in ambition and global in scope. Delivering on that promise requires more than conviction. It depends on the right kind of support: funding that is flexible, sustained and grounded in trust. At UNICEF, this funding is the For Every Child Fund.

Official development assistance (ODA) has long been central to this mission. For decades, it has enabled scale, protected lives and helped build stronger, more resilient futures. This responsibility must be shared more broadly, and we are grateful to governments with UNICEF programmes for stepping up with financial contributions to the For Every Child Fund and other in-kind support. Today, growing private sector engagement – including from businesses, philanthropists, foundations and individuals – is amplifying that impact, creating a powerful coalition for children across public and private partners.

This support is changing lives. Since 2000, 7.9 million more children have survived to see their fifth birthdays. Vaccination efforts have saved an estimated 154 million lives. Stunting has been reduced by 56 million cases, and over 2 billion people have gained access to clean water. These are not inevitable outcomes. Consistent, flexible investment that spans regions, sectors and generations has been vital part of this success.

But progress is fragile. In too many places, it is already being reversed.

The For Every Child Fund is not just a funding source – it is the foundation of UNICEF's operating model. With a presence in 190 countries and territories, and trusted partnerships across government and civil society, UNICEF bridges delivery and policy, crisis response and long-term reform, national systems and local solutions. That model is only possible because of unrestricted funding.

In the Republic of Moldova, a small unrestricted fund investment catalysed nationwide social protection reform, increasing child benefits and expanding services to nearly 50,000 vulnerable children. In Viet Nam, the For Every Child Fund enabled inclusive education at scale, introducing Universal Design for Learning and digital tools for children with disabilities. In Sierra Leone, unrestricted funds supported the country's first legal accreditation for social workers, reaching over 20,000 cases through a digital management system. In West Africa, UNICEF helped Côte d'Ivoire and Cabo Verde achieve near-universal birth registration, unlocking access to essential services.

These are not one-off results – they are systems-level shifts that help children not only survive but thrive.

The For Every Child Fund creates the foundation. Thematic funding builds on it. Together, they create a transformational portfolio of investment, which is one of UNICEF's most strategic tools for achieving results at scale. The For Every Child Fund supports our presence and institutional strength. Thematic Funds accelerate impact across nutrition, education, WASH, health and protection – driving innovation, scale and sustainability in national systems.

In a world shaped by climate change, conflict and economic instability, integrated funding is not optional – it is essential. ODA remains vital today as it was a generation ago. And with the private sector stepping up in meaningful ways, we have never had more potential or shared responsibility to act boldly together.

The For Every Child Fund is not just about funding. It is how UNICEF keeps its promise – turning intent into impact and ensuring that progress for children continues to move forward, even in the toughest of times.



Highlights of investing in the For Every Child Fund

Investing in the For Every Child Fund is a clear way to help UNICEF work for every child and the SDGs. These highlights show how our five comparative advantages, all enabled by unrestricted funds, helped us achieve results for children around the world.

Before, during and after an emergency



Yemen: Your support safeguarded continued access and expansion of essential health services, **contributing to a 23 per cent drop in under-five mortality** over the course of the last decade of conflict.



Democratic Republic of the Congo: You helped **support more than 1,700 health-care facilities to stay operational**, securing lifesaving supplies and treatment for **more than 129,000 children** facing severe wasting.



Madagascar and Mozambique: Your support provided the seed funding for **UNICEF's Today and Tomorrow Initiative**, an integrated climate and disaster finance solution, **supporting more than 120,000 people** in Madagascar and Mozambique with life-saving services in the aftermath of cyclones.



Rwanda: Your support reinforced the government's response to the Marburg disease outbreak, contributing to **more lives being saved and a low fatality rate of 22.7 per cent**.

Leading, convening and pioneering

Horn of Africa: You helped scale up an innovative solution using satellite data to detect groundwater, mapping nearly a million square kilometres of territory in drought-prone countries, **with the potential to benefit 10 million people in need**.



Guatemala: Your support positioned UNICEF as a key partner in the transformation of the social protection system, offering the government strategic policy advice and partnerships, which **resulted in a \$1 billion investment in social protection programmes and mitigation of a three-to-four-fold increase in poverty** during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Global: Your support fast tracked the **integration of cross-sectoral mental health services and care into national systems in 13 countries**, modelling new solutions, and **reaching more than 8.8 million children**, adolescents, caregivers and service providers.



This map is stylized and not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or area or the delimitation of any frontiers.

Taking the work to scale



India: Your support continued to play a vital role in the delivery and scaling up of the government's flagship water and sanitation programmes, **providing safely managed water supplies for 59.3 million people and sanitation services for 17.9 million people** in 2024.



Republic of Moldova: Your support **paved the way for \$68 million of government and other investment** in the RESTART social protection reform, **mitigating a 3.4 per cent rise in child poverty** and increasing the value of social benefits for families with children, including Ukrainian refugees, by 42 per cent.



Bangladesh: Your support helped UNICEF mobilize and sustain government action to transform children's nutrition outcomes, contributing to **a 40 per cent reduction in stunting** among children under five and **a nearly tenfold increase in domestic investments** in nutrition services over a decade.

Expert staff

Jordan: Your support funded the **first-ever One Stop Centre which offers a proven model for replication** across Jordan including Syrian refugee camps, successfully supporting an initial 500 children and women survivors and witnesses of violence, abuse or exploitation with multi-sectoral services.



Sierra Leone: Your support strengthened the child protection and case management system, **accrediting social workers for the first time and facilitating protection services for more than 675,000 children in five years**, including those who have faced violence, exploitation, abuse or neglect.



Meeting the holistic needs of children and adolescents



Côte d'Ivoire and Cabo Verde: You helped provide instrumental support to the governments to bring universal child registration within reach, **with more than 9 in 10 children registered before their first birthdays**.



Viet Nam: You helped support a more inclusive system for access to learning opportunities for children with disabilities, embedded disability inclusion into national teacher training, and **enabled scaling up the Inclusive Education Resource Centres across 14 provinces** to prepare children with disabilities to enter mainstream classrooms.



Scan the QR code or click on the image to read the **Impact Companion**.



Scan the QR code or click on the image to read **UNICEF's Data Companion and Scorecard** for more information on progress against SDG milestones and targets to which the For Every Child Fund contributes.

How We Invest in Priorities for Children Around the World

The For Every Child Fund is spent on holistic programmes which affect all areas of children's lives, and link to children's rights. Spending spans all five Goal Areas in UNICEF's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan covering children's health, nutrition, education, protection, and water and sanitation needs, and all seven regions where UNICEF works.

Expense overview by goal area



Survive and thrive
\$327.9 million
34%



Learning and skills
\$170.5 million
18%



Protection from violence and exploitation
\$168.5 million
18%



WASH, climate and the environment
\$173.8 million
18%



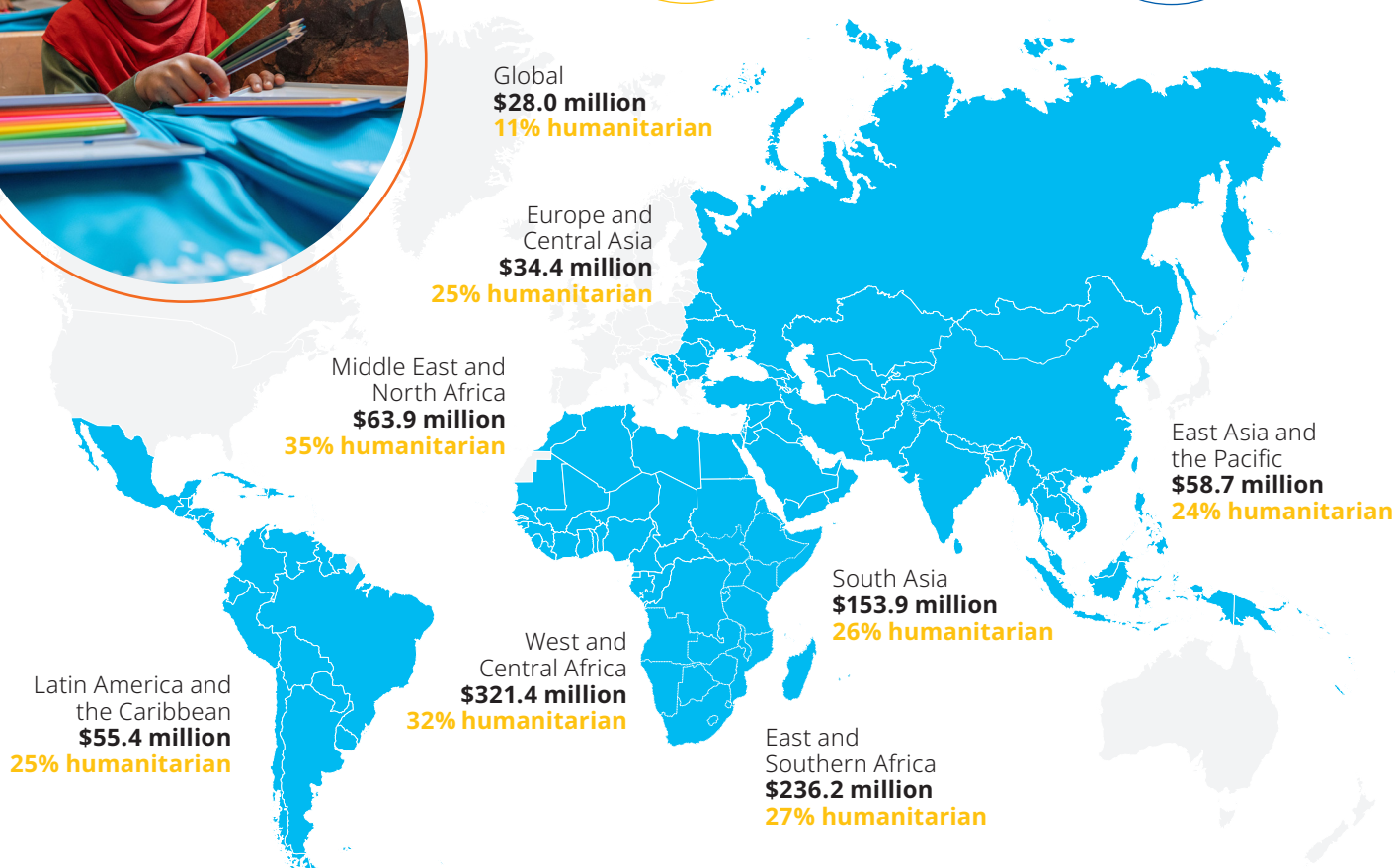
Freedom from poverty
\$111.3 million
12%

In 2024, over two thirds of the For Every Child Fund in regions was spent on development and less than a third on humanitarian programme. Most of the For Every Child Fund was spent in sub-Saharan Africa and the least developed countries, where children's deprivations and needs are the greatest.



28%
 spent on
 humanitarian
 action

59%
 spent in
 Sub-Saharan
 Africa



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A Lifeline Amid Crisis: How the For Every Child Fund helps children survive and hope in Democratic Republic of the Congo

For almost 30 years, children in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have been born into one of the world's most complex and difficult humanitarian situations. Families torn apart by violence. Children losing safety, stability and hope. Decades of recurrent violence, displacement, climate-related disasters and disease outbreaks have led to a significant breakdown in the social systems that keep children safe.

Today 14.9 million children are battling preventable diseases like mpox, cholera and measles. And the children in conflict areas are facing widespread rape, abuse, killing, maiming, abductions and other forms of harm. But despite this overwhelming need, humanitarian agencies – UNICEF included – have faced an increasingly severe funding crisis. As James Elder, UNICEF spokesperson, said after visiting DRC in April 2025: *"The cost of inaction isn't abstract. It's measured in preventable suffering and lost futures."*

UNICEF exists for every child. And it is in these difficult times that we call on the Emergency Programme Fund (EPF), a revolving loan supported by the For Every Child Fund. *"It is a lifeline: there when we need it most, when children's needs are greatest."* said Mariame Sylla, UNICEF Deputy Representative in DRC, in 2024.

Without the EPF we would not have been able to:

- **Provide safe drinking water and lifesaving supplies** to nearly 1,770,000 people in almost 300,000 households affected by or at risk of cholera. These included oral rehydration solution, soap, water treatment products, jerrycans and more. These items save lives today and strengthen resilience to tomorrow's outbreaks
- **Help children facing malnutrition.** EPF funds paid for nutritional supplies and support to help ensure that more than 1,700 health facilities stayed operational, securing essential treatment for more than 129,000 children facing severe wasting
- **Provide safety to children.** The funds enabled UNICEF to keep providing child protection services with partners, despite increased insecurity. UNICEF assisted over 500 children formerly associated with armed groups (20 per cent of whom were girls), and close to 1,900 children separated from their families were either helped with referrals to other key services or were reunited with their families

With your continued support for the For Every Child Fund, UNICEF will carry on helping children in underfunded emergencies and ensure their suffering is not forgotten.



SDG target 2.2

UNICEF secured lifesaving supplies and treatment for more than 129,000 children facing severe wasting.



Viet Nam: Making inclusive education a reality for every child

Viet Nam has made impressive progress for children and is rapidly advancing on the global stage – with near-universal access to basic education, sustained gender parity, and high learning outcomes as demonstrated by regional and international assessments. A key challenge that remains is ensuring that every child – regardless of ability, background or location – can access quality education.

In Viet Nam, more than 400,000 children with disabilities remain out of school. Many who do enrol find themselves in classrooms that lack the resources, training and infrastructure needed to support their learning. Just 3 per cent of schools are physically accessible, and only 1 in 10 lower-secondary schools have any teachers trained in inclusive education. **These barriers reflect a broader truth: that without intentional investment, education systems often leave the most vulnerable behind.**



SDG target 4.5

Inclusive system for access to learning opportunities for children with disabilities. New Universal Design for Learning framework which embedded disability inclusion into national teacher training rolled out.



But with government leadership and sustained support from UNICEF, powered by unrestricted funding, this is beginning to change.

Viet Nam now boasts a 98 per cent primary school enrolment rate, and one of the fastest-growing education technology markets in the region. With 9 in 10 schools connected to the internet, digital transformation is reshaping how children learn and how systems

respond. **UNICEF has seized this opportunity to drive inclusive innovation, in order to ensure that connectivity reaches the children who need it most.**

Across 14 provinces, UNICEF has helped to scale up a network of Inclusive Education Resource Centres, community-based hubs that prepare children with disabilities to enter mainstream classrooms and support their families along the way. In Ninh Thuan province, Le Thanh Ngan describes how her son Nhan, once isolated and uncommunicative, began speaking, waiting his turn, and engaging with others after attending one of these centres. “Suddenly, our child has made fantastic progress,” she said. “It’s better than what we thought was possible.”

With unrestricted funding, UNICEF has also supported the development and national roll-out of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), a game-changing framework that equips teachers to deliver inclusive, child-centred instruction.

In partnership with Ha Noi University of Education, UNICEF has produced national UDL guidance and teacher training tools that are now being adopted by the Ministry of Education and Training for use nationwide.

SDG target 4.5

Inclusive Education Resource Centres preparing children with disabilities to enter mainstream classrooms, scaled across 14 provinces, bringing closer the government goal to convert the functions of all special schools into 160 Inclusive Education Resource Centres by 2045.



The digital frontier is also opening new doors. In Viet Nam’s Mekong Delta, UNICEF works with the Global Digital Library to adapt books into Vietnamese Sign Language. In Soc Trang, special education teacher Ms Tong Ta Kieu Mi describes how the new tools have expanded her students’ vocabulary, lightened her teaching

load, and made room for more interactive group learning. Meanwhile, a UNICEF partnership with Viet Nam's National Centre for Special Education and an ed-tech startup has produced five virtual reality (VR) game modules for children with disabilities and neurodevelopmental differences, including ADHD, enhancing focus and cognitive development through immersive play.

Together, these innovations are changing how learning is delivered and who gets to learn. From sign language books to VR-based skills development, inclusive digital tools are no longer theoretical; they are in schools, in hands, and making a difference.

Behind this progress is a clear vision: that education in Viet Nam must be for all children. **Unrestricted funding allows UNICEF to stay at the table over the long term, to bring what works to scale, and to integrate inclusion into the heart of system reform.**

And the results are real. New national guidelines on inclusive education have been introduced, and fourteen provinces have already expanded access for children with disabilities. Building on this momentum, UNICEF is supporting the Government of Viet Nam in bringing to life its ambitious 2025 master plan on inclusive education institutions. The plan envisions at least one Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC) in every province by 2030, while gradually transforming existing specialized schools into IERCs. These centres aim to support the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream classrooms – where they can learn, play, and grow alongside their peers. This progress comes at a pivotal time. In a landmark move, Viet Nam has waived tuition fees for all students in public primary and secondary schools, removing one of the most persistent financial barriers to education. But while this opens more doors, financial access alone is not enough. To make education truly inclusive, other barriers – physical, social, and attitudinal – must also be addressed so that every child, including those with disabilities, can fully participate and thrive in school.

Viet Nam's transformation is far from over. But the direction is clear – and so is the evidence. When governments lead boldly and partners invest flexibly, real change becomes possible.

This is the power of unrestricted funding: not just to open classroom doors, but to unlock a child's full potential.



Vang A Huy 5 years old and Ly May Anh (both members of the Dao minority ethnic group) interact with the augmented reality (AR) technology on the tablet and glasses equipment supported by UNICEF in Viet Nam.



Students with hearing impairments using free digital books/digital learning programmes supported by UNICEF in Soc Trang Primary School for Children with Disabilities in My Xuyen District, Soc Trang.

How we Champion Transparency with the For Every Child Fund

UNICEF values the trust that our donors and partners have placed in us. Equally, we provide unparalleled transparency and accountability to our partners, and the wider public. We are proud to share:

- We are in the top 10 out of 50 organizations reviewed by the International Aid Transparency Initiative for our transparency in 2024 and have a perfect score for budgets and finance
- As part of the International Aid Transparency Initiative, we have achieved an industry-leading 99 per cent data publishing rate
- We provide real-time and public financial and results insights on UNICEF's programmes for children worldwide on the Transparency Portal



100 per cent of the For Every Child Fund is spent to advance UNICEF's mission for children worldwide. Our spending is firmly grounded in the principles of transparency and accountability, maximizing what goes to programmes for children.



How much of the For Every Child Fund was spent on programmes* for children in 2024?

84% which includes high-quality and results-based programmes at all levels, but also the technical excellence, data and advocacy that power programme implementation. The remaining 16 per cent is spent on a set of strategic programme enablers such as United Nations coordination to achieve the SDGs, the management of resources for results, and the generation of new funding – including innovative financing for children.

The For Every Child Fund reporting helps companies meet ESG goals while demonstrating real, long-term impact

This funding forms the foundation for UNICEF to strengthen systems – from health to education to water – that children and communities depend on. When those systems are resilient, societies are better able to withstand shocks like conflict, climate change and pandemics.

UNICEF is deeply committed to the SDGs, and contributes to 12 of the 17 goals. An investment in the Every Child Fund reflects a commitment to shared global priorities and systemic progress for children. Results are reported annually, demonstrating the short-, medium- and long-term change UNICEF delivers every day for children around the world.

Our For Every Child Report and companion publications offer clear, credible and consistent insights that support ESG reporting, even when contributions are not linked to a specific initiative.

Every dollar contributes to stronger systems, greater equity and lasting change. This is value worth showcasing.



*This figure shows combined expenditure of Direct Programmes and Development Effectiveness to demonstrate the total unrestricted funding spent on programmes for children in 2024.

About UNICEF

We are the world's largest children's organization, an agency of the United Nations, and 100 per cent voluntarily funded. Mandated at the highest levels, we ensure that children and adolescents are protected, healthy, and educated. We have a presence in over 190 countries and territories, working during times of peace and stability and when emergency strikes. We partner with national governments and local communities, other United Nations agencies and NGO partners, and the public and private sectors to achieve our mission to create a better future for children and adolescents.

Importantly, UNICEF provides support to children from before birth all the way through to adolescence. Thus, please note that within this report the terms "children" and "childhood" encompass the full spectrum of a child's life, up to age 18.

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Cover

I am a child, not a bride. In the drought-stricken Afar region of north-eastern Ethiopia, water scarcity and loss of livelihoods are threatening the future of girls who are increasingly forced into child marriage. UNICEF is conducting awareness-raising activities on the ground to ensure that young girls like Aissa remain in school as long as possible!

For more information,
please contact us at 1 800 567 4483
or visit [unicef.ca](https://www.unicef.ca).