



# Unprotected

Analysis of funding for child protection in humanitarian action in 2023







# Acknowledgements

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# Executive Summary

**In 2023, humanitarian needs reached unprecedented levels, driven by increasing armed conflicts, record levels of forced displacement, climate-induced emergencies, and disasters associated with natural hazards.** By the end of 2023, 363 million people required humanitarian assistance, with 245 million targeted under UN-coordinated response plans —a 7% increase from the initial 2023 Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) figures. These escalating crises pushed humanitarian funding requirements at the end of 2023 to \$56.7 billion. Despite historically high levels of funding, the funding rate for UN-coordinated appeals was only 43% - a record low. The brunt of this funding gap will be borne by children, who are disproportionately impacted by humanitarian crises.

**Child protection needs and funding requirements continued to rise in 2023, with total child protection requirements across all UN-coordinated appeals reaching \$1.5 billion.** This included \$1 billion under Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) and \$422 million under Refugee Response Plans (RRPs). Child protection accounted for 2.5% of total HRP requirements, though there was significant variation across responses.



Children under the age of six take part in early childhood education activities provided by a UNICEF-supported partner at the sport stadium in Lattakia City, Syria. UN0798727/Issah

**A total of \$505 million in humanitarian child protection funding was reported in 2023, including \$412 million within UN coordinated appeals.** Improved reporting on the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and improvements to the Refugee Funding Tracker (RFT) have enhanced the visibility of child protection funding. Despite some increases, child protection in HRP contexts remained disproportionately underfunded, with average funding coverage of 29.2% compared to 46.9% for HRPs overall. In refugee contexts, child protection funding coverage was 30.8%, closely matching the overall refugee response funding rate of 31.5%.

**Wide disparities in child protection funding rates between different responses, and fluctuations over time, have affected the ability of child protection actors to implement consistent, quality programming in line with the Child Protection Minimum Standards.** Over 40% of child protection funding in HRP contexts in 2023 went to 3 responses: Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen, while the best-funded appeals in percentage terms were Guatemala, the occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt), Myanmar, and the Central African Republic. The least funded appeals were found in refugee contexts, including South Sudan and Ethiopia.





**UN agencies and international NGOs continued to receive the vast majority of child protection humanitarian funding. Only 2% of child protection funding tracked on FTS went directly to local organisations.** While increased direct and quality funding is vital for strengthening the role and capacity of local and national child protection actors, limitations in current reporting mechanisms makes accurate monitoring difficult. Overall, while child protection funding has increased, significant funding challenges remain. In HRP contexts, the sector remains disproportionately underfunded compared to other humanitarian sectors. In refugee contexts, RRP overall are funded at lower levels compared to HRPs, which translates into a similar level of underfunding for child protection. Improved reporting and greater visibility of funding are steps forward, but securing consistent and adequate resources for a range of child protection actors across humanitarian contexts remains a critical challenge, forcing the humanitarian sector to sharpen its focus as the constrained funding environment continues in 2024.



A group of children are spotted running and playing in the afternoon at Azraq Camp, Jordan. © UNHCR/Mohammad Alyounes

**The recommendations emphasise the importance of prioritising child protection in humanitarian responses by integrating it into all planning, advocacy, and resource mobilisation efforts.** Humanitarian leadership should ensure that child protection is recognised as a life-saving priority and is adequately funded across all sectors. Donors are encouraged to provide equitable and quality funding, including multi-year models, to support and scale up effective child protection programmes, while requiring adherence to Child Protection Minimum Standards. Humanitarian organisations should advocate for child protection, mobilise new funding sources, and ensure that children’s needs and vulnerabilities are systematically considered in all programming.

**Additionally, there is a call for enhancing support for local and national child protection actors through direct funding and capacity-strengthening efforts.** Leadership structures must acknowledge the critical role of these actors, while donors and organisations should work to strengthen their institutional capacities and ensure their equitable access to resources.

**Continued improvements to financial reporting mechanisms are also crucial to track child protection funding effectively,** ensuring transparency and visibility across humanitarian and refugee contexts.





Children planting flowers at the playground of the kindergarten JEP in N'Djamena as part of a project to strengthen education and literacy in Chad. UN0794851/Dejongh


## Introduction

Increasing armed conflict, climate-induced emergencies, and disasters associated with natural hazards continued to have devastating impacts on children and their protection in 2023. Against this background of escalating humanitarian crises, this report, the fifth in a series of annual funding reports developed by The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (The Alliance), Save the Children, UNHCR, and the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility, provides an analysis of child protection humanitarian funding in 2023.

The report identifies funding availability and shortfalls, including across HRP and RRP, highlights the critical gaps in funding for child protection in humanitarian action and emphasises the need for quality and equitable funding for child protection. The report provides strategic recommendations to improve child protection funding and inform policies and practices tailored to the specific needs of children. By driving accountability and supporting advocacy efforts, the series aims to ensure that children affected by humanitarian crises receive the essential protection services they need.



Girls from Monreau Shepell school recite a poem during a World Refugee Day event in Kalobeyei settlement in Kenya. © UNHCR/Pauline Omagwa



# The impact of humanitarian crises on children and their protection in 2023

## Forced displacement and migration

In 2023, the number of forcibly displaced people reached a record high of over 117.3 million globally, including 47 million children.<sup>1</sup> Most displaced children will spend their entire childhoods in displacement, facing disrupted access to education, healthcare, social protection, and essential services, and heightened risk of violence, neglect, abuse, and exploitation.<sup>2</sup> In 2023, the number of children on the move along some of the world's most perilous migration routes - including the Darien Gap<sup>3</sup> and the Central Mediterranean - increased. Over 11,600 children crossed the Central Mediterranean Sea to Italy without guardians in 2023, a 60% increase from the previous year.<sup>4</sup> Unaccompanied and separated children face severe protection risks during displacement, including physical and psychological harm, trafficking, recruitment by armed groups, sexual violence, and violence from officials.<sup>5</sup>

## Conflict

Approximately 400 million children - or one in five children globally - live in or are fleeing from conflict-stricken areas. In 2023, children were living through conflict in countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Somalia, Syria, Ukraine, Israel and occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) and Yemen.<sup>6</sup> The eruption of conflict in Sudan triggered the world's largest child displacement crisis in 2023, with over 4.6 million children displaced since April 2023.<sup>7</sup> The crisis has been exacerbated by restricted humanitarian access, which has limited essential services like food and medicine and exposed children to severe protection risks including armed recruitment and sexual violence.<sup>8</sup> 2023 also saw the outbreak of conflict in Gaza - the deadliest conflict for children in recent times. In the first six months of the conflict, almost 26,000 children - or just over two percent of Gaza's child population - were estimated to have been killed or injured.<sup>9</sup> The UN Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict highlighted alarming levels of violence across conflict zones in 2023, with a record number of 32,990 grave violations<sup>10</sup> verified against 22,557 children. The report documented 11,649 cases of children being killed or maimed - a 35% increase from the previous year. Explosive weapons in populated areas significantly contributed to these casualties.

## Climate-related disasters

In 2023, climate-related disasters surged and are a main driver of the increase in humanitarian crises. An estimated 1 billion children are living in countries that are at an 'extremely high-risk' from the impacts of climate change, including heatwaves, cyclones, river and coastal flooding, and water scarcity.<sup>11</sup> These extreme weather events exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, increasing the risk of violence against children by disrupting livelihoods and straining local systems.<sup>12</sup> Economic vulnerability exacerbated by climate-related impacts correlates with higher levels of child trafficking, labour, violence, neglect, and abuse.<sup>13</sup> 2023 saw continuing drought across the Horn of Africa, where food insecurity has led to increased school dropouts, child marriage, and female genital mutilation,<sup>14</sup> while flooding in Libya threatened children's health and protection.<sup>15</sup>

## For more information about the impact of humanitarian crises on children and their protection in 2023, please see:

[The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, The Unprotected: Overview of the Impact of Humanitarian Crises on Children in 2023 \(2024\).](#)

[The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, Taking Action to Protect Children in Escalating Conflict and Crises: Armed Violence, Climate Shocks, and Displacement \(2024\).](#)





# Findings

## Overall humanitarian funding in 2023

2023 saw record humanitarian needs and funding requirements and a widening funding gap.

- The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance - and the funding requested to meet these needs - reached an all-time high in 2023. By the end the year, 363 million people were identified as needing humanitarian assistance, of which 245 million people were targeted under UN-coordinated response plans<sup>16</sup> - a 7.1 % and 6.5% increase respectively from the initial figures outlined in the 2023 GHO.<sup>17</sup> Funding requirements for UN-coordinated appeals totalled \$56.7 billion by the end of 2023.<sup>18</sup>
- A total of \$34 billion of humanitarian funding was reported on FTS for 2023, with \$24 billion provided within UN-coordinated plans. While this level of funding is high by historical standards,<sup>19</sup> the level of need meant that 2023 GHO requirements were funded at a record low rate of 43%, according to FTS data. This compares to a total of \$41 billion recorded for 2022 and a funding rate of 59% for the 2022 GHO requirements (see Fig. 1).
- Overall funding coverage rates varied significantly across contexts. On average, HRP were funded at a higher rate than RRP. The average funding rate for HRPs in 2023 was 46.9%, compared to 31.5 % for RRP.<sup>20</sup>

Fig. 1 - Historical coverage of UN-coordinated plans (Source: FTS)







## Overview of child protection funding in 2023

Child protection funding requirements within UN-co-ordinated appeals in 2023 totalled \$1.5 billion, representing only a modest share of overall funding requirements: 2.5% of requirements in HRPs and 3.4% of requirements in RRP, on average. Notably, there is significant variation across contexts in terms of the share of child protection requirements relative to total requirements.

- Child protection needs, and funding requirements, continued to rise in 2023. Across all coordinated plans, total child protection requirements were \$1.5 billion<sup>21</sup> in 2023. Of this figure, child protection funding requirements totalled \$1 billion under HRPs, and \$422 million<sup>22</sup> under RRP (including the Bangladesh Joint Response Plan and Venezuela Refugee and Migrant Response Plan).
- Across all HRPs, child protection requirements in 2023 represented 2.5% of total requirements. However, there is significant variation in child protection's share of overall requirements amongst responses. Child protection represented less than 1% of the total requirements in Chad (0.7%) and Burundi (0.8%), but more than 7% in El Salvador (7.2%), Colombia (7.6%) and Burkina Faso (8.2%).
- Across all Refugee Response Plans, child protection requirements in 2023 represented 3.4% of total requirements. As with HRPs, there is significant variation in child protection's share of overall requirements amongst responses. Child protection represented less than 1% in Burundi within the Democratic Republic of Congo RRP (0.7%), but more than 10% in Slovakia (10.3%) and Romania (12.6%) in the Ukraine RRP, and 23.2% in Uzbekistan in the Afghanistan RRP.

**Improved reporting of funding on FTS, and improved disaggregation of data from refugee contexts provides greater visibility on child protection funding. While child protection is still disproportionately underfunded in humanitarian response contexts compared to responses overall, in refugee responses child protection is, on average, funded at a similar rate to responses overall.**

- A total of \$505 million of humanitarian child protection funding was reported for 2023. Of this figure, funding reported for child protection inside coordinated plans was \$412 million. Reported child protection funding outside coordinated plans was \$93 million.
- Between 2022 and 2023, FTS showed significant increases in funding reported for child protection. While in previous years, most reported child protection funding went to 'standalone' child protection programmes, 2023 reporting changes allow for much greater visibility of funding going to child protection as a component of multi-sector programmes UNHCR tracks requirements and funding received on a dedicated platform: the Refugee Funding Tracker (RFT). Recent improvements to the disaggregation of data on this platform mean that in 2023 there is more information available on child protection funding in refugee contexts.
- Across the specific coordinated plans analysed for this report, the average funding coverage for child protection was 29.6%, with child protection in HRP and RRP contexts funded at similar rates.





- In HRP contexts, the average funding coverage for child protection stood at 29.2% in 2023, an increase from 20% in 2022. However, this remains notably lower than the funding coverage of HRPs overall, which averaged 46.9% in 2023. This indicates that in HRP contexts child protection remains disproportionately underfunded compared to other sectors.
- In refugee contexts, across the response plans analysed, the average funding coverage for child protection was 30.8%. RRP requirements overall were only funded at an average rate of 31.5%. Child protection in refugee responses was therefore funded at a similar rate to response requirements overall and was impacted by underfunding of refugee responses to a similar degree as other sectors.
- In HRP contexts, the share of overall funding allocated to child protection was 1.6% - lower than child protection's share of requirements (2.5%), whereas in RRP contexts, across the coordinated plans analysed, 2.7% of the funding received across these appeals went to child protection.

## Analysis of child protection funding across humanitarian contexts

**Wide disparities in child protection funding rates between responses, and fluctuations over time, impacts the ability of child protection actors to implement consistent and quality programming.**

- Over 40% of child protection funding in HRP contexts in 2023 went to three responses: Syria (\$48 million), Ukraine (\$46 million), and Yemen (\$25 million). In refugee contexts, amongst the response plans analysed, countries receiving the most child protection funding were Lebanon (\$25 million) and Jordan (\$14 million) within the Syria 3RP, and Bangladesh (\$11 million).
- The best funded coordinated plans for child protection in percentage terms were found amongst HRP contexts. Nevertheless, child protection requirements were more than 50% funded in only six of the 26 HRPs: Guatemala (72%), oPt (61%), Myanmar (52%), CAR (52%), Yemen (51%), and Syria (50%). Amongst the RRP appeals analysed, child protection funding rates were highest in Bangladesh (52%), Pakistan (50%), and Jordan (49%).
- Conversely, the least funded coordinated plans for child protection in percentage terms were found amongst RRP contexts. In five of the 18 refugee plans analysed, child protection requirements were less than 10% funded: South Sudan (2%) and Ethiopia (4%) in the Sudan RRP; Kenya in the South Sudan RRP (6%); and Sudan (9%) in the South Sudan RRP. Amongst the HRPs, child protection funding rates were lowest in Mali (6%) and Burkina Faso (7%).







Fig. 2 - 2023 Child Protection funding across Humanitarian Response Plans (Source: FTS)

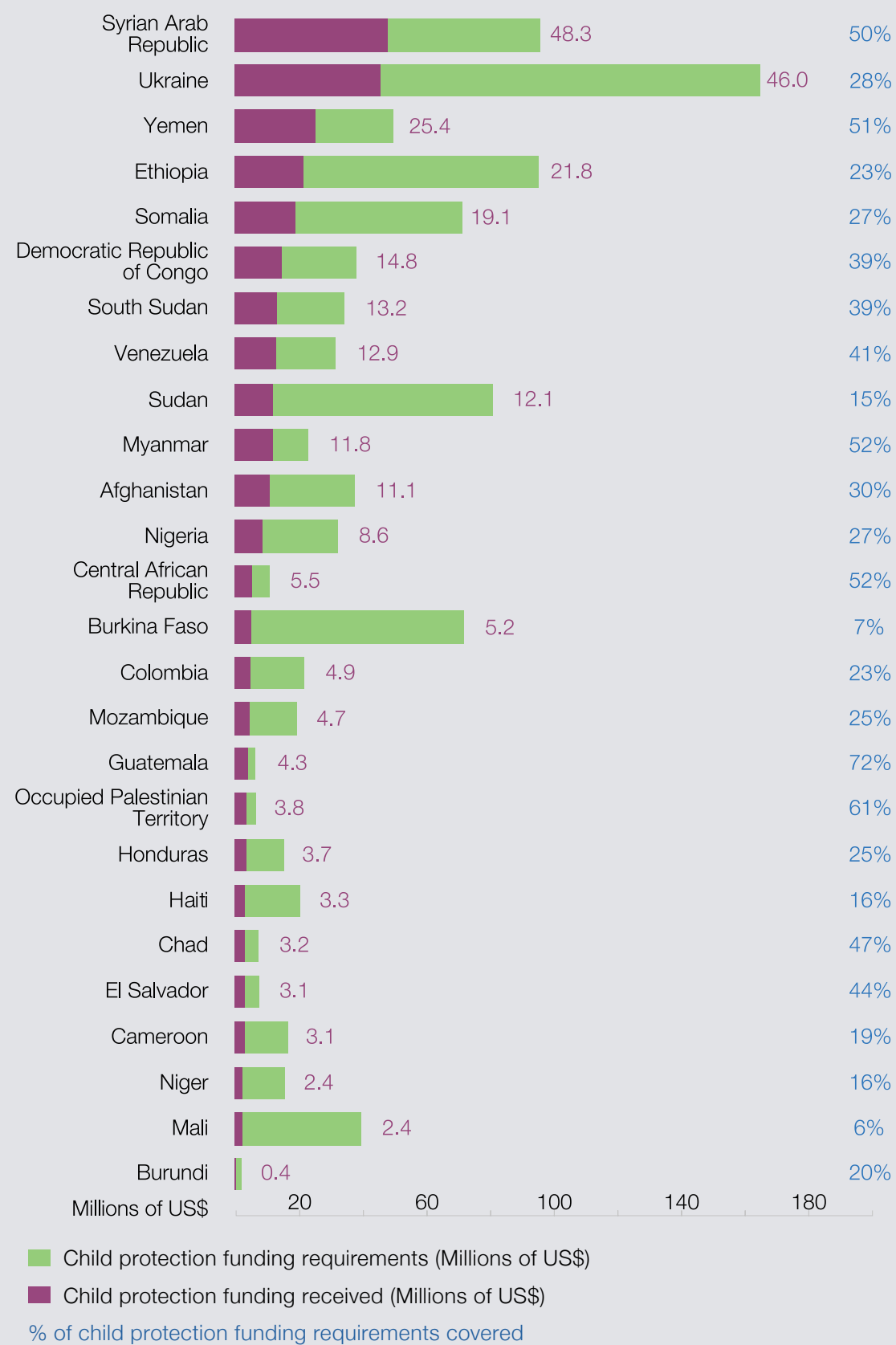
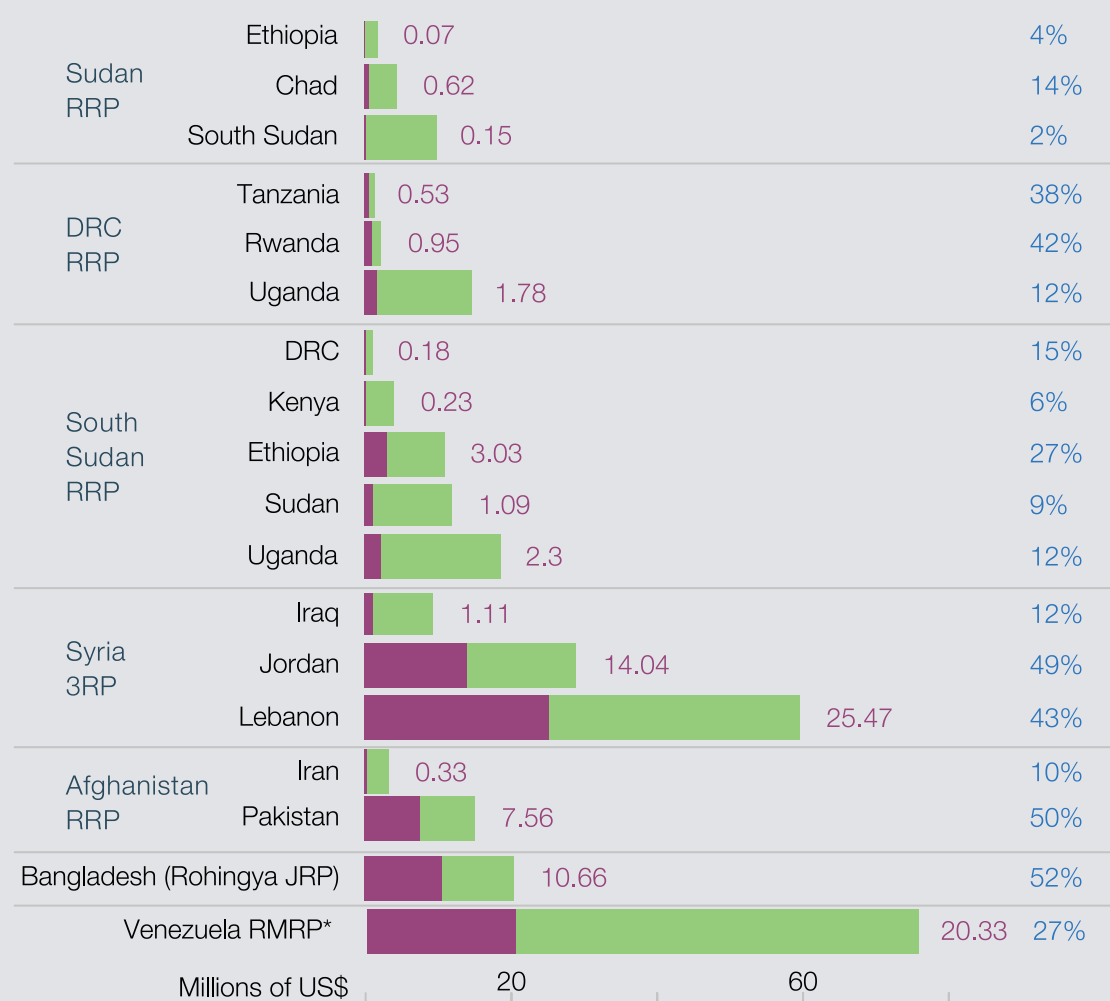




Fig.3 - Child Protection Funding across Country and Regional Refugee Response Plans (Source: RFT and FTS)<sup>23</sup>



■ Child protection funding received (Millions of US\$)  
■ Child protection funding requirements (Millions of US\$)  
% % of child protection funding requirements covered

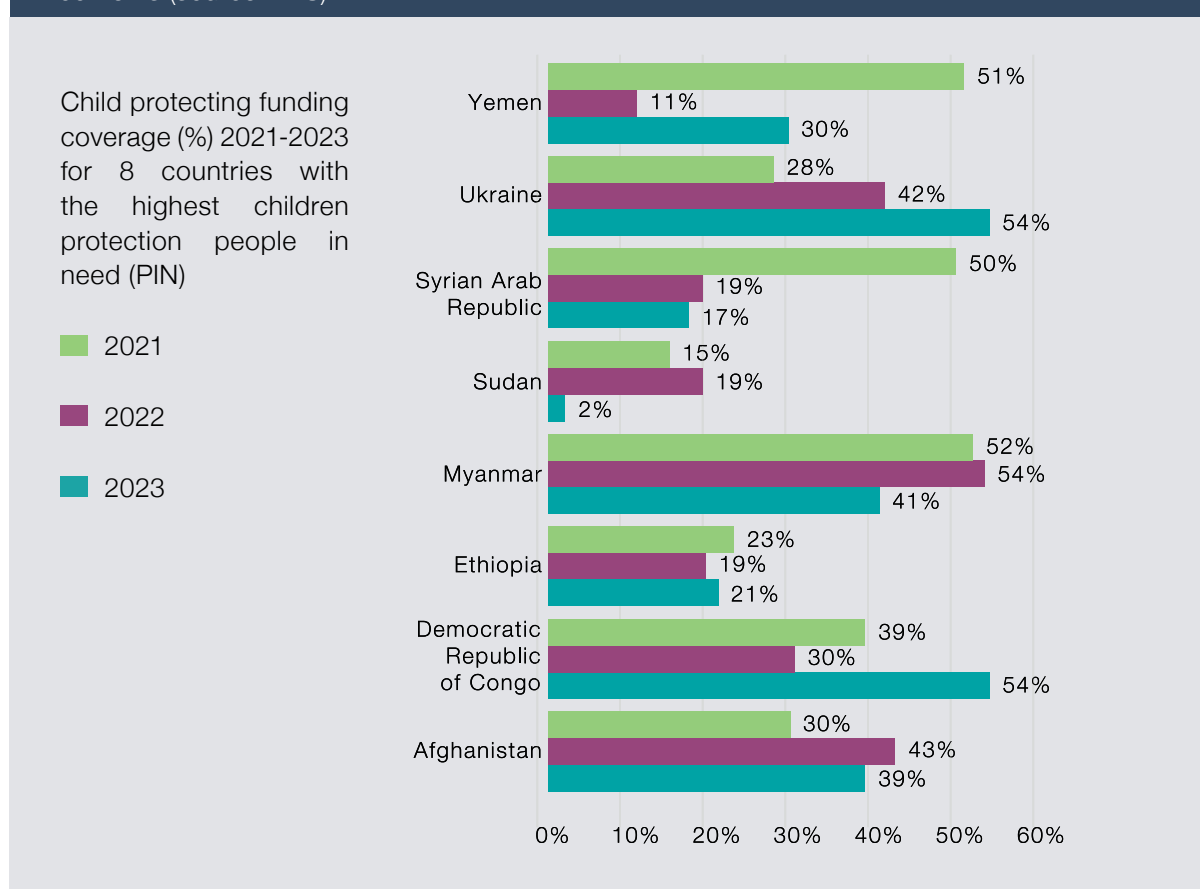
\*Figures for the Venezuela RMRP include funding requirements and reported funding for the regional plan.

- In some HRP contexts,<sup>24</sup> such as Syria, South Sudan, and Chad, child protection has become better funded over time. In other contexts, such as Yemen, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Afghanistan, funding coverage has fluctuated. In the case of DRC, child protection fell from 54% funded in 2021 to 30% funded in 2022, recovering to 39% funded in 2023. Increases in funding rates in 2023 may, however, have been driven in part by significant improvements in FTS reporting, as described above. Similarly, decreases in funding may be underestimated due to these improvements.





Fig. 4 - Fluctuations in child protection funding coverage over time in selected HRP contexts (source: FTS)



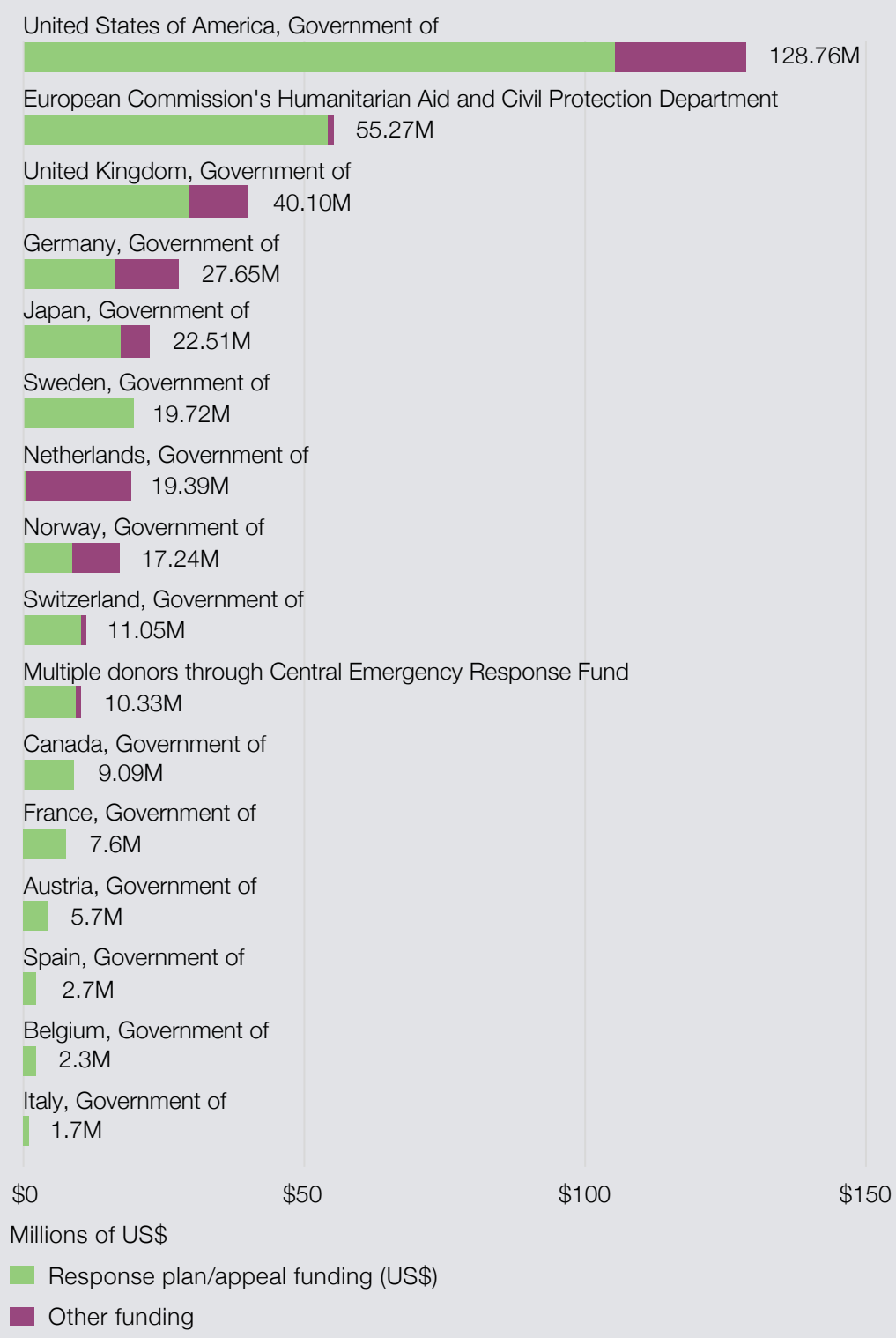
## Sources and recipients of child protection funding

The main source of funding for child protection in humanitarian settings remains institutional donors. Improved reporting of child protection funding within multi-sector programmes highlights the contributions of a wider range of donors than in previous years and allows recognition of child protection donors as part of multi-sector programmes.

- Improvements in FTS reporting<sup>25</sup> allow for a more complete picture of donor contributions to child protection. In previous years, data primarily captured donor contributions to ‘standalone’ child protection programmes; funding to child protection as part of multi-sector programmes was not visible. 2023 data, however, reveals notable contributions to child protection from donors including the UK (\$40.1 million), Sweden (\$19.7 million) and the Netherlands (\$19.4 million), each of which reported minimal child protection contributions in previous years. While we are unable to discern from the data to what degree the increase in reported funding from these donors is a result of improved reporting, it appears likely that this is a key factor.
- Leading child protection donors also increased their reported contributions in 2023. The United States remained the largest donor to child protection by a significant margin, reporting \$128.8 million in contributions in 2023, compared to \$109.4 million in 2022. Likewise, the European Commission, the second largest institutional donor to child protection, also significantly increased its reported funding to the sector in 2023 to \$55.8 million from \$19.4 million in 2022. As above, these reported increases appear to be attributable, at least in part, to improvements in FTS reporting.



Fig. 5 - Institutional donors' contributions to humanitarian child protection funding in 2023  
(Source: FTS)





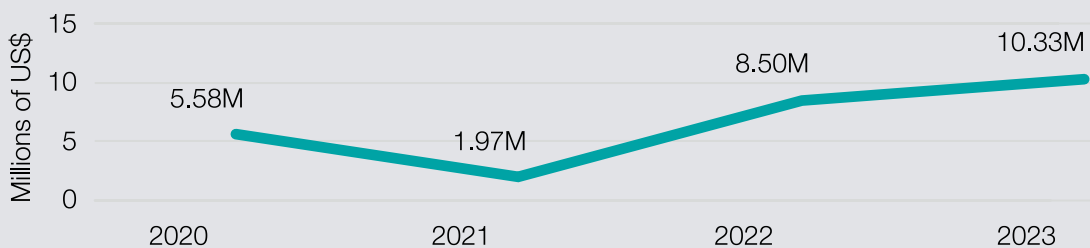


In Ukraine, UNHCR restores family's hope with house repairs support. © UNHCR/Diana Zeyneb Alhindawi

Pooled funds, including Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPF)<sup>27</sup> and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) are essential mechanisms for providing financing, and an important source of funding in underfunded responses. While the total volume of funding allocated to child protection from pooled funds fluctuates over time, pooled funds are contributing a declining proportion of overall child protection funding.

- In 2023, \$28.5 million of child protection funding came from pooled funds. In comparison, this figure was \$18.9 million in 2022 and \$20.3 million in 2021. With overall funding for child protection increasing, the proportion sourced from pooled funds has reduced over time, falling from 10% of overall child protection funding in 2021 to 7% in 2022 and 5.6% in 2023.
- Funding for child protection allocated from the CERF showed a modest rise with time, reaching \$10.3 million in 2023. However, child protection still only represented a very small proportion of the CERF's overall allocations (1.4% of a total \$733.3 million in 2023 CERF allocations).

Fig. 6 - CERF funding allocated to child protection 2020 - 2023 (Source: FTS)

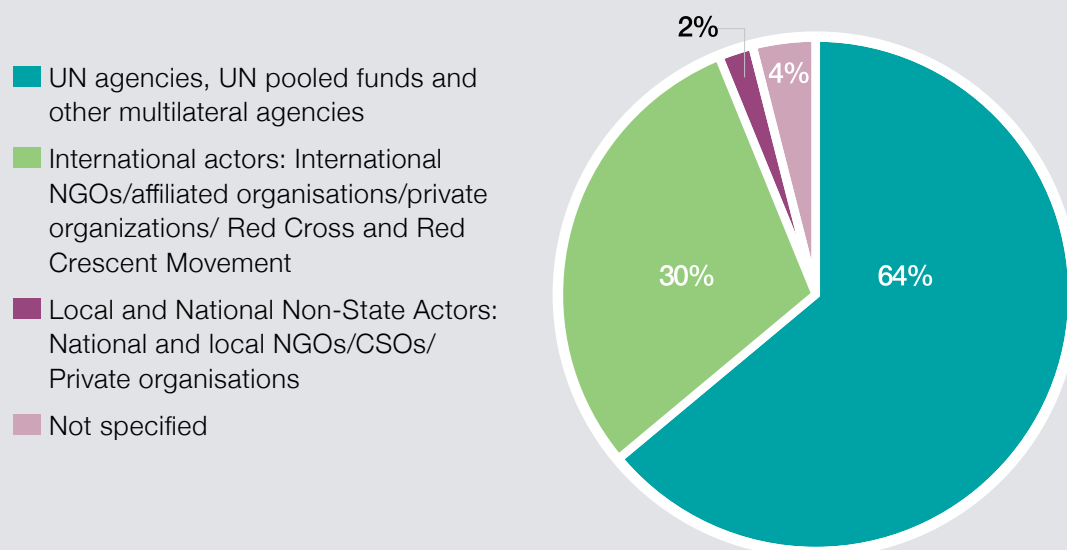




The vast majority of child protection funding continues to be received by UN agencies and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs). Only 2% tracked funding went directly to local and national organisations. Limited visibility beyond first tier recipients means that indirect funding to local actors remains challenging to track. UN agencies received an increased share of child protection funding in 2023.

- UN agencies, UN pooled funds and other multilateral agencies received the largest portion of child protection funding reported on FTS in 2023 with 64% of the funding<sup>28</sup> - a notable increase from the 43% share estimated in 2022.<sup>29</sup> As with other shifts in child protection funding data in 2023, there are indications this increase can be attributed, in part, to improved child protection reporting within multi-sector funding. International NGOs and other international organisations received almost 30% of child protection funding. The two largest recipient organisations of child protection funding in 2023 were UNICEF and Save the Children, which received 60% and 12%, respectively.
- FTS data suggests that 2% of child protection funding was received directly by local and national actors as first tier recipients in 2023, only slightly higher than the 1.8% share in 2022. While a proportion of the funding received by international organisations funds local and national actors, this data is difficult to track due to incomplete and inconsistent reporting by first tier recipients.<sup>30</sup> One additional source of data on funding to local child protection actors, which includes indirect funding, is the Global Protection Cluster, which estimated that at mid-year 2023, 27% of child protection funding went to national and local actors. This was the highest proportion amongst the AoRs in the Protection cluster. The figure was estimated at 19% in the mid-year 2022 analysis.<sup>31</sup>

Fig. 7 - Recipients of child protection funding in 2023 (Source: FTS)







Children play during UNICEF supported recreational activities in shelters in Rafah city southern Gaza Strip, amid continuous hostilities. UNI463115/El Baba

## Looking ahead to 2024

**In 2024, the humanitarian sector has been forced to sharpen its focus and cut overall funding requirements as the constrained funding environment continues.**

- Despite no sign of humanitarian crises abating, the number of people identified in need of humanitarian assistance at the launch of the 2024 GHO<sup>32</sup> was 18% lower than at the end of 2023 (299.4 million people in need at the 2024 GHO launch compared to 363.2 million at the end of 2023). Meanwhile, the number of people targeted decreased by 26% to 180.5 million at the beginning of 2024 from 245 million at the end of 2023. This contributed to a reduction of \$10 billion in overall financial requirements for UN coordinated appeals (to \$46.4 billion requested for 2024 compared to \$56.7 billion requested at the end of 2023).
- A number of factors are driving this reduction. Several plans have been discontinued,<sup>33</sup> while the expected decrease in humanitarian budgets resulted in a demand from key donors to ensure more credible and compelling appeals. A revised approach to the 2024 Humanitarian Programme Cycle process was consequently rolled out at country-level. This resulted in a prioritisation process, which included a clear division of approaches between life-saving activities inside HRP and RRP, humanitarian programmes outside UN-coordinated appeals, and those of government and development actors in other plans and frameworks. This process caused significant changes in the numbers of people in need, response targets and financial requirements.

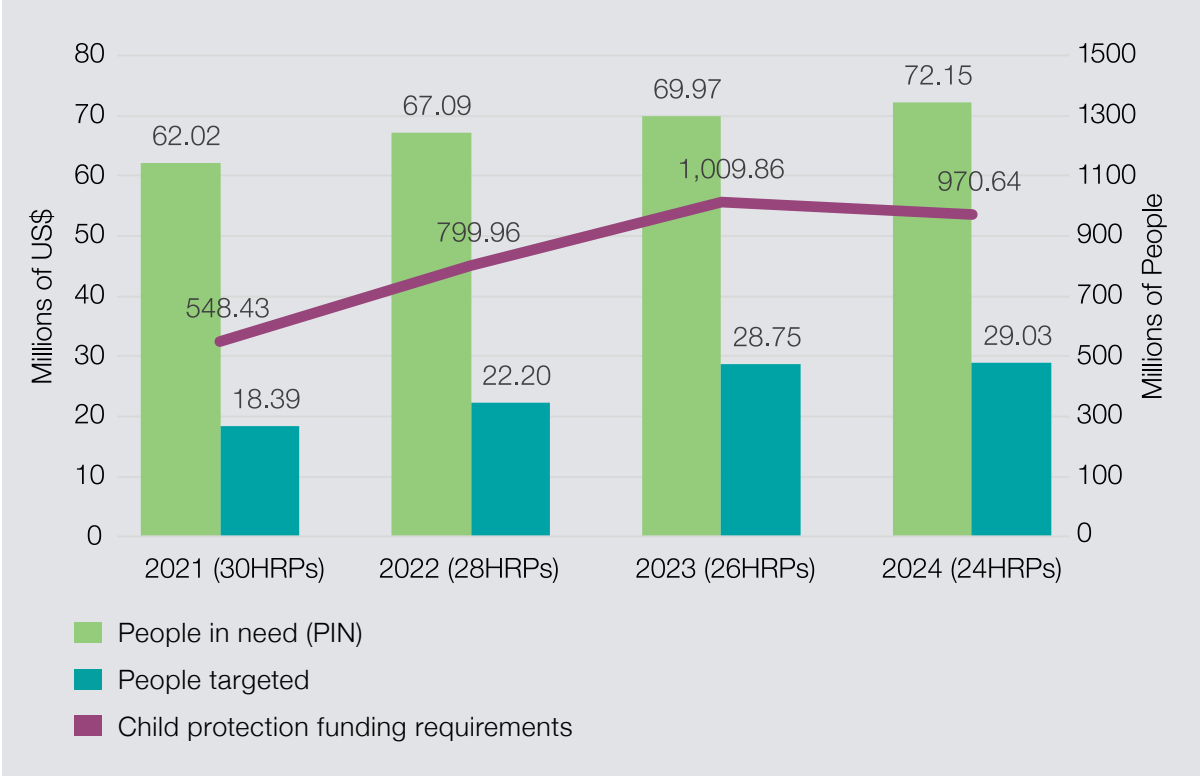
**Despite the increases in child protection needs and numbers of people targeted for child protection services under HRPs, as in other sectors, overall child protection funding requirements decreased in 2024, and a majority of HRPs have seen reduced child protection funding requirements. In RRPs however, in contexts with available data, there was an overall increase in requirements in 2024.**

- The number of people identified as being in need of child protection services under HRPs increased between 2023 and 2024: from 70 million people in need in the 26 HRPs of 2023 to 72 million people in need in the 24 HRPs for 2024.<sup>34</sup>



- In 2024, child protection actors are targeting a slightly smaller proportion of people in need than in 2023. In 2023, 28.8 million people (41% of the people in need) were targeted; in 2024, this figure is 29 million (40% of the people in need).
- Child protection funding requirements increased steadily until 2023, but in 2024 child protection requirements in HRP decreased by 4% (from \$1 billion to \$970 million). Conversely, across 26 country-level refugee plans across 5 RRP in 2024, there has been a 4% increase.
- In 2024, child protection requirements decreased across 16 HRP, even for those which had previously seen year on year increases. However, the scale of the reduction varied between responses. Ukraine has seen the largest reduction in child protection requirements (from \$165 million in 2023 to \$140 million in 2024). Colombia, Nigeria, Mali, and Yemen saw the greatest decreases proportional to their 2023 child protection requirements.
- Among 26 country-level refugee plans across 5 RRP in 2024,<sup>35</sup> 17 plans showed an increase in child protection requirements, while nine countries experienced a decrease. The largest decrease was observed in Ethiopia under the South Sudan RRP, with a reduction of \$7.2 million (-65%). Countries under the Ukraine RRP also experienced a relatively large reduction. On the other hand, there was a \$6.7 million increase in Chad under the Sudan RRP. Among these 26 RRP, this indicates an overall increase of 4%.<sup>36</sup>
- Child protection's share of overall requirements for HRP has slightly increased. In 2024, child protection represents 2.9% of all sector requirements, compared to 2.5% in 2023. For RRP,<sup>37</sup> the percentage was 3.4% in 2023 and 4.3% in 2024, showing a slightly larger increase than in HRP.

Fig. 8 - Child Protection People in Need (PIN) and People Targeted in HRP 2021 - 2024  
(Source: FTS)







# Case studies

Child protection risks in humanitarian crises and forced displacement are predictable and violence against children is preventable. The solutions required to protect children in humanitarian contexts are known. These case studies demonstrate that with sufficient, quality funding, child protection actors are able to better prevent and respond to violence against children.

## Case Study 1:

### Well-resourced child protection coordination in Ukraine supports child protection actors to secure funding and deliver critical services for children

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine continues to devastate children, and the 2024 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) highlights that 3.2 million children, including 10% with disabilities, require immediate child protection services. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that there are approximately 3.67 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 4.57 million returnees in Ukraine, 25% of which are children. These children face heightened risks of injury or death due to weapons and explosive ordnance in their communities. Many continue to seek shelter in dire conditions, and the conflict has severely impacted their access to education and healthcare. The United Nations verified 938 grave violations against children in 2023, including the killing and maiming of 419 children.<sup>38</sup>



In 2023, Ukraine received \$46 million out of the \$146 million requested for child protection. While there are still funding shortfalls, this relatively high level of funding compared to many other HRP contexts has positively impacted service delivery. Despite ongoing challenges, particularly in implementing specialised services in frontline areas, the increased funding has enabled more effective child protection interventions, benefiting vulnerable children and their families.

Well-resourced child protection coordination in Ukraine has had a direct impact on these child protection efforts. The Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) supported service delivery with an updated strategy and monitoring framework, a robust child protection data and information management system, and a comprehensive referral system involving over 1,200 partners, ensuring timely and effective support. As of December 2023, 91 CP AoR members reached a total 1.93 million children (55% girls and 28,000 children with disabilities), with critical child protection prevention and response services, and over one million caregivers to these children. With dedicated funding and training, 77 registered organisations and 509 users are now managing thousands of cases in the Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS+), facilitating improved follow-up, referral tracking, family tracing, and trend analysis for overall better programming.

Additionally, the CP AoR's Resource Mobilisation Helpdesk significantly improved project quality and direct funding for national NGOs, enabling better protection and support for children and families through coordinated, high-quality interventions. The CP AoR provided orientations on proposal requirements and offered coaching to national NGOs on proposal development, including on cross-cutting issues, indicators and budgeting. Feedback from the CP AoR Coordinator highlighted significant improvements in child protection proposals, resulting in a substantial increase in funding for child protection from the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund, to \$9.5 million in 2023 from \$2.5 million in 2022.





## Case Study 2:

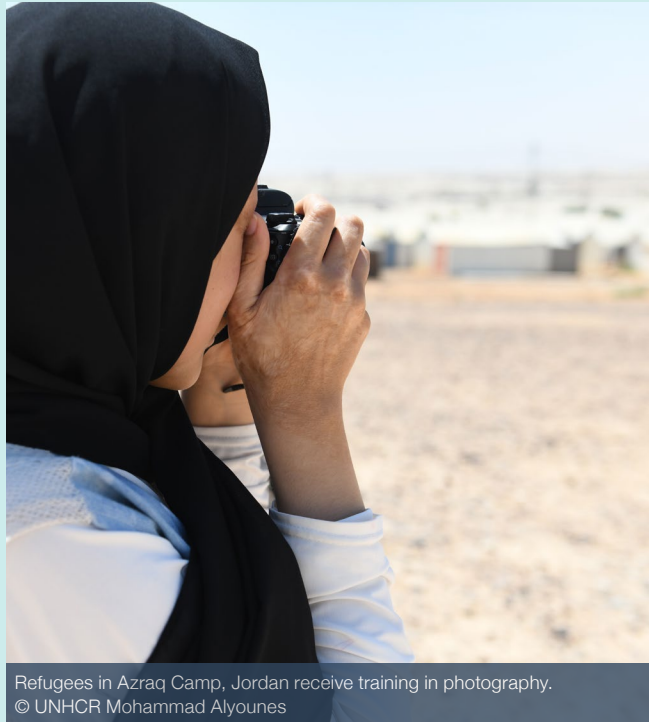
### Higher than average funding levels have facilitated preventive child protection initiatives in Jordan

In 2023, Jordan's humanitarian situation was marked by the ongoing strain of hosting a large refugee population, currently at 3.1 million refugees of Palestine, Syrian and other nationalities.<sup>39</sup> Children, both refugees and from vulnerable Jordanian families, faced significant child protection risks, including child marriage, child labour, violence, abuse or neglect, including sexual and gender based violence, and family separation.<sup>40</sup> The strain on resources<sup>41</sup> further exacerbated these issues, leaving many children in need of protection and support amidst a struggling economy.

Child protection was funded at 49% in 2023, making it one of the better-funded refugee appeals. This level of funding has enabled child protection programmes to focus not only on immediate response but also on preventing child protection risks.

UNHCR Jordan's Youth programme exemplifies this, empowering children and young people by providing tools, knowledge, and opportunities to contribute to their communities while gaining socio-

psychological awareness. This approach is a form of child protection prevention, addressing the crucial transition from childhood to adulthood, a phase often neglected in humanitarian interventions. This age group faces unique challenges like identity formation, peer pressure, and the need for life skills, which are often overlooked since the interventions may not show immediate results, making them less likely to receive attention compared to more urgent life-saving interventions. One illustration of the power of such prevention programmes is the story of a 17-year-old refugee girl who transformed her life through the programme, acquiring skills, reconnecting with her community, resuming education, and improving her family situation. She is now a pharmaceutical student and youth leader, teaching young girls about protection and sharing her experiences.



Refugees in Azraq Camp, Jordan receive training in photography.  
© UNHCR Mohammad Alyounes

With any further funding cuts, such critical programmes would be severely impacted. Maintaining or enhancing this level of funding will help build on the progress achieved and will strengthen efforts to protect and empower children and youth. Adequate funding allows child protection actors to address issues early through preventative measures, which helps to prevent challenges from escalating into more complex cases in the future, minimizing risks such as child labour, child marriage, and other protection concerns.



# Recommendations

## 1. Promote the Centrality of Children and their protection in all planning, advocacy and resource mobilisation efforts across all levels of humanitarian response

### Humanitarian leadership, including Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams:

- Emphasise the life-saving and essential nature of child protection in advocacy and resource mobilisation efforts.
- Ensure child protection - both standalone and when integrated within other sectors - receives funding proportional to the overall funding levels in humanitarian and refugee response plans.
- Promote the integration of children and their protection into all sectoral strategies within HRPs, RRP, and other strategic planning documents, ensuring that child protection risks are addressed comprehensively across all areas of programming and costed accordingly.

### Humanitarian Donors:

- Ensure child protection appeals across HRPs and RRP are funded at least at parity with the overall response. Allocate funds to child protection equitably across humanitarian and refugee responses, with focus on most underfunded HRP and RRP appeals.
- Provide quality funding, including multi-year funding models, that allows for investment in scaling up and improving the quality of local child protection systems and services, with a focus on empowering local actors.
- Require all proposals be in line with the Child Protection Minimum Standards, ensuring these are costed accordingly. For example, ensure funding allows for sufficient staff to child ratios in Case Management, MHPSS group activities and other child protection interventions.

### Humanitarian Organisations:

- Advocate for prioritising and resourcing child protection in interactions with stakeholders, including their own leadership, partners, and donors.
- Mobilise new sources of funding for child protection, and work across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, as well as across sectors, to ensure children are protected, recover, and their rights are met. This includes prioritising prevention by systematically addressing root causes of harm to children.
- Systematically consider children's capacities, needs, and vulnerabilities in all humanitarian advocacy and programming.



## 2. Invest in scaling-up effective child protection programming, in line with the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

<b>Humanitarian leadership, including Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote the scaling-up of effective child protection programmes.</li><li>• Ensure that systems and capacities are in place to engage and consult with children through age- and developmental stage-appropriate processes.</li></ul>
<b>Humanitarian Donors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support the scale-up of effective child protection programmes.</li><li>• Provide flexibility in funding to support contextualization of successful models in different contexts.</li><li>• Allocate resources dedicated to capacity sharing and capacity strengthening efforts which contributes to a robust cadre of locally trained child protection staff in order to deliver quality child protection programmes.</li><li>• Ensure that resources are provided for meaningful participation of affected children, communities, and local actors in programme design and implementation.</li><li>• Advocate for accountability mechanisms that systematically include children with governments, humanitarian leadership, and the wider donor community, including procedures that are accessible to children in all their diversity.</li></ul>
<b>Humanitarian Organisations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct evidence-informed advocacy efforts for the prioritisation and scale-up of effective child protection programmes.</li><li>• Create opportunities and allocate sufficient resources for the safe and meaningful participation of children and communities throughout all stages of the humanitarian programme cycle, including preparedness. Use their feedback to adapt and improve programmes.</li></ul>

## 3. Enhance Support for Local and National Child Protection Actors

<b>Humanitarian leadership, including Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocate for direct and quality funding to enhance the role and capacity of local and national child protection actors and support strengthening of local child protection systems.</li><li>• Ensure leadership and coordination structures actively recognise the pivotal role of local and national actors in humanitarian responses and engage them meaningfully.</li></ul>
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### Humanitarian Donors:

- Allocate increased direct and quality funding for local and national child protection actors within humanitarian contexts.
- Support inter-agency efforts to enhance institutional capacity strengthening for local and national actors. Emphasise the importance of institutional capacity strengthening through principled partnerships between international and local and national child protection actors.

### Humanitarian Organisations:

- Highlight the indispensable role of local child protection workers in all communication and advocacy efforts. Ensure that their contributions are acknowledged and adequately reported.
- Implement principled partnerships with local and national actors which support technical and institutional capacity strengthening which enhance their equitable access to financial resources.

## 4. Continue to improve financial reporting and accountability mechanisms to effectively track child protection funding across humanitarian and refugee contexts

### Humanitarian leadership, including Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams:

- Advocate for timely, detailed and accurate reporting of all funding received across humanitarian and refugee responses, including for child protection.

### Humanitarian Donors:

- Further improve their own reporting into the FTS and RFT, to provide greater accountability and visibility of child protection funding
- Require funding recipients to enhance their reporting of humanitarian funding, including for child protection, across all humanitarian and refugee responses. This includes full visibility of child protection within multi-sectoral programmes as well as funding flows to local and national organisations.

### Humanitarian Organisations:

- Ensure that they report all funding received or passed through accurately, comprehensively and in a timely manner to provide greater visibility of and accountability for child protection funding.
- Report on funds that are channels to local and national NGOs so there is a more accurate understanding of funds received by local and national actors.



# Data sources

The main data source for this study is the UN OCHA managed Financial Tracking Service (FTS). The FTS tracks international humanitarian funding, inside and outside humanitarian response plans and appeals, based on reports provided on a voluntary basis by donors and recipient organisations. The FTS has been undertaking a results-oriented transformation to make the platform more reliable, accurate and timely. One of the improvements has been to increase the granularity of data, including data on funding to specific sectors under multi-sectoral programmes.

In this report, the FTS has been used as the source for overall humanitarian funding (inside and outside appeals), for all data on HRP, and for all data on funding to the Venezuela RMRP and the Bangladesh Rohingya JRP. FTS data is also used as the source for analysis of donors and recipients of child protection funding.

The FTS does not, however, present a complete overview of funding data for country and regional refugee responses. This report therefore also uses data on tracked funding from the UNHCR-led Refugee Funding Tracker (RFT) and data provided by UNHCR. Data on child protection requirements for all RRP, except for the Venezuela RMRP and the Bangladesh Rohingya JRP, have been sourced from UNHCR.

Enhanced disaggregation of RFT data from 2023 has allowed for analysis of child protection funding for 17 country level refugee plans across five regional RRP. These plans have been selected for analysis based on data availability of both child protection funding requirements and child protection funding received.

## **Note on calculation of overall child protection funding requirements:**

To calculate total child protection funding requirements, data from FTS was used for all HRP, Flash appeals and other appeals, the Bangladesh Rohingya JRP and the Venezuela RMRP. For all other RRP, requirements data from the RFT was used, with the exception of Ukraine, for which requirements data was sourced from the RRP document. Note that child protection requirements for the Syria RRP do not include Egypt and Turkiye, for which data are not available.

When calculating the GHO total requirements, the figures for some regional refugee response plans are adjusted to avoid double counting their overlap with the refugee response chapter of HRP. However, at the level of child protection, the refugee response requirements under HRP are not disaggregated. Substituting RFT data on child protection requirements for those on FTS allows for a more complete and accurate picture of child protection requirements without double counting.

## **Note on calculation of overall child protection funding received:**

To calculate total child protection funding received, data from FTS was used for all HRP, Flash Appeals and other appeals, the Bangladesh Rohingya JRP, the Venezuela RMRP and Ukraine. For all other RRP, tracked funding data from the RFT was used.

## **Note on coordinated appeals analysed:**

Child protection coverage rates were calculated for all 26 2023 HRP, Bangladesh Rohingya JRP and Venezuela RMRP (using FTS data) and 16 country level refugee plans across five regional RRP (using RFT data). These country level plans were selected where data were available for both funding requirements and funding received, for the response overall and for child protection. No countries under the Ukraine RRP were included in the plans analysed, and Ukraine was excluded from the calculation of overall RRP coverage rates as child protection funding data on RFT were incomplete and, as with other regional plans, no country level data were available on RFT or FTS.

All data was correct as of 9th July 2024.



# Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>
- 2 [https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/WRD2023\\_Report.pdf](https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/WRD2023_Report.pdf)
- 3 <https://hias.org/statements/displaced-women-high-risk-gender-based-violence-latin-america/>
- 4 <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/number-unaccompanied-children-crossing-deadly-central-mediterranean-sea-migration>
- 5 [https://alliancecpha.org/sites/default/files/technical/attachments/handbook-web-2017-0322\\_3.pdf](https://alliancecpha.org/sites/default/files/technical/attachments/handbook-web-2017-0322_3.pdf)
- 6 <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/children-live-world-increasingly-hostile-their-rights>
- 7 The Sudan crisis - A children's crisis | UNICEF Sudan
- 8 Sudan conflict: 24 million children exposed to a year of brutality and rights violations, UN committee says | OHCHR
- 9 Gaza: One in 50 children killed or injured in 6 months | Save the Children
- 10 Grave violations of children's rights are: killing and maiming, recruitment and use of children in armed forces and armed groups; attacks on schools or hospitals; rape or other grave sexual violence; abduction of children; Denial of humanitarian access for children.
- 11 <https://www.unicef.org/reports/climate-crisis-child-rights-crisis>
- 12 <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/climate-insecurity-impacts-children-and-armed-conflict-discussion-paper>
- 13 <https://www.end-violence.org/articles/how-climate-crisis-driving-violence-against-children-and-what-we-can-do-about-it>
- 14 <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/child-marriage-rise-horn-africa-drought-crisis-intensifies>
- 15 Devastating floods in Libya | UNICEF
- 16 This includes HRPs, components of RRP (countries without HRPs), flash appeals and other appeals.
- 17 At the launch of the 2030 GNO, 339 million people were identified as being in need and 230 million were targeted.
- 18 Response Plans: Results from 2023 | Humanitarian Action
- 19 This was the second highest amount of tracked humanitarian funding ever received within appeals. Only 2022 saw a higher level of tracked funding
- 20 Average RRP coverage rate calculated based on RFT data. Excludes Ukraine: child protection requirements and funding data not available from the same source therefore overall coverage rates excluded to align with calculation of CP coverage rates.
- 21 Note that this figure is higher than that reported on FTS. CP requirements data from UNHCR have been used for the Ukraine RRP and the Syria 3RP to align with requirements in published plans.
- 22 CP requirements data from UNHCR has been for the Ukraine RRP and the Syria 3RP to align with requirements in published plans.
- 23 Note: this is combination of regional RRP and country RRP, based on available data. Data is from the RFT with the exception of Bangladesh and Venezuela, which is from FTS
- 24 Note: it is not possible to analyse changes in child protection funding over time for RRP as 2023 is the first year for which CP funding data at the level of individual appeals has been available.
- 25 Data on sources and recipients of child protection funding is only from FTS as this data is not available from the RFT.
- 26 In addition to the institutional donors listed, \$47.6 million came from multiple donors through the Central Emergency response Fund (CERF) and Save the Children's Humanitarian Fund.





- 27 Country Based Pooled Funds are multi-donor and unearmarked financing instruments, which are established when an emergency occurs or when an existing crisis deteriorates to support high-priority projects being undertaken by those best placed to respond. They are managed by OCHA under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) or UN Resident Coordinators (RCs) and in close consultation with the humanitarian community.
- 28 Note: This is only from FTS data as the RFT does not allow tracking of the recipients of child protection funding
- 29 Note that this % share differs from that referenced in the 2023 Unprotected report due to changes in categories.
- 30 Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2023 ([ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com](https://ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com))
- 31 This includes indirect funding and is based on data where the recipient of the funding was reported. [https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/gpc\\_protection\\_funding\\_report\\_final.pdf](https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/gpc_protection_funding_report_final.pdf)
- 32 Data correct as of launch of 2024 GHO. Some requirements have subsequently increased. Current requirements available here: <https://humanitarianaction.info/>
- 33 Ten plans, including one HRP (Burundi HRP) worth \$4,2 billion were not continued into 2024. <https://humanitarianfundingforecast.org/stories-2024-prioritisation/>
- 34 Note that child protection PIN data for 2024 for Niger was unavailable at the time of writing. 2023 CP PIN data has been substituted in place of this missing data.
- 35 This covers country-level refugee plans where there is CP requirement data for 2023 and 2024 from RFT. Please note that the Syria Regional 3RP is not included due to missing data, which could have implications for the total CP requirement.
- 36 This does not include data from 3RP countries, for which there was an overall decrease.
- 37 This covers country-level refugee plans where there is CP requirement data for that year from RFT, as well as data for the Rohingya (JRP) and Venezuela (RMRP) from FTS.
- 38 <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/095/07/pdf/n2409507.pdf>
- 39 [https://jordan.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-07/UN%20Jordan\\_%20Annual%20Results%20Report%202023.pdf](https://jordan.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-07/UN%20Jordan_%20Annual%20Results%20Report%202023.pdf)
- 40 <https://data.unhcr.org/en/working-group/71>
- 41 <https://www.unicef.org/media/152581/file/Jordan-2023-COAR.pdf>

