



THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to uphold and promote children's rights, as outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its vision is that every child should have the opportunity to survive, thrive and fulfil their potential, free from discrimination, bias or favoritism.

UNICEF is one of the UN's largest development and humanitarian organizations, working across more than 190 countries and territories. In its capacity as a global advocate for children, UNICEF also mobilises political will and resources for the promotion of children's rights.

Strategic Objectives

UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 aims to deliver tangible results for children, especially the most disadvantaged, in both development and humanitarian contexts. Working with with a broad range of stakeholders, UNICEF strives to accelerate progress toward child-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across five interconnected Goal Areas:

1. Health & Nutrition
2. Education
3. Protection
4. Water, Sanitation & Environment
5. Social Protection & Poverty Reduction

Key Results and Challenges

In 2024, UNICEF operated in an increasingly complex global landscape marked by political volatility, economic uncertainty and deepening humanitarian crises. The organisation responded to 448 emergencies across 104 countries, with two-thirds of total spending devoted to humanitarian action. Funding cuts and limited flexible resources constrained its ability to act quickly and address root causes of child poverty, and total income fell by 7% to USD 8.6 billion compared with 2023.

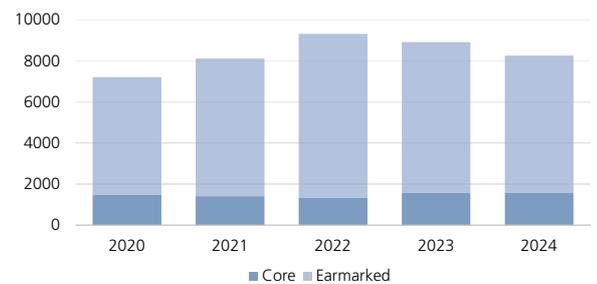
Despite these challenges, UNICEF achieved major results in 2024: 1.5 billion polio vaccine doses helped drive a 25% drop in global cases; 251 million young children were screened for wasting and 9.3 million treated for severe wasting; 26 million out-of-school children gained access to education; and 6.2 million children affected by violence received essential support. In addition, 18 million people gained basic sanitation, 33 million access to safe water, and 21 million access to hygiene services.

FACTSHEET

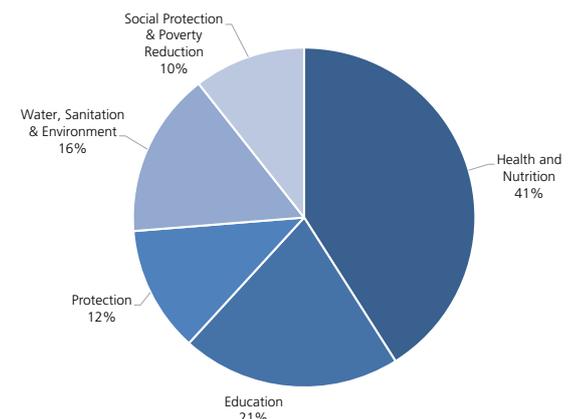
FACTS AND FIGURES

Type of organisation
Fund financed through voluntary contributions
Head of organisation:
Catherine Russell (USA), Executive Director
Headquarter:
New York (USA)
Country Offices:
155 (plus 7 Regional Offices and 32 National Committees)
Total Personnel:
Approx. 15'000
Established in:
1946
Steering:
Executive board with 36 rotating members

UNICEF Revenues 2020-24, Core vs. Ear-marked Funding (USD million)



UNICEF Expenditure 2024 per thematic area (%), Total: USD 7'801 million





A vaccination assistant in remote Agig locality located in Red Sea state, Sudan, vaccinates a seven-months old against polio during the house-to-house polio vaccination campaign. ©UNICEF/UNI562985/Elfatih

SWITZERLAND AND UNICEF

Switzerland's Strategic Priorities

UNICEF is Switzerland's most important partner in the promotion of children's rights. Its activities and priorities align with Switzerland's Strategy for International Cooperation. Switzerland particularly values UNICEF's ability to link humanitarian response with development cooperation, and to respond to evolving challenges in protracted and post-conflict situations.

Swiss priorities for the Strategic Plan Period 2022–2025:

- Enhancement of UNICEF's capacity for the protection and education of children, at both humanitarian and development level;
- Reinforcement of UNICEF evaluation capacities, UNICEF's engagement with the private sector and the promotion of gender equality;
- UNICEF's active contribution to the reforms of the UN's development system and to system-wide results.

Cooperation with EMOPS

Switzerland is a key partner of UNICEF's Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS), which coordinates global support to humanitarian action. In 2024, Switzerland contributed CHF 2 million for EMOPS presence in Geneva. Beyond its financial commitment, Switzerland also plays a vital role in strengthening UNICEF's emergency response capacity by rapidly deploying external experts through the Standby Partner (SBP) mechanism. In 2024 alone, Switzerland supported 18 deployments in more than 10 countries. Between 2018 and 2024, Switzerland facilitated 79 SBP deployments, primarily in the areas of WASH and child protection.

UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein

The 32 National Committees (independent local non-governmental organisations) are an integral part of UNICEF's global organisation and a unique feature of UNICEF. Collectively, they raise around one-third of UNICEF's annual income. In 2024, UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein raised USD 52 million for UNICEF.

SWITZERLAND

Contributions 2024:

Total: CHF 60.8 million

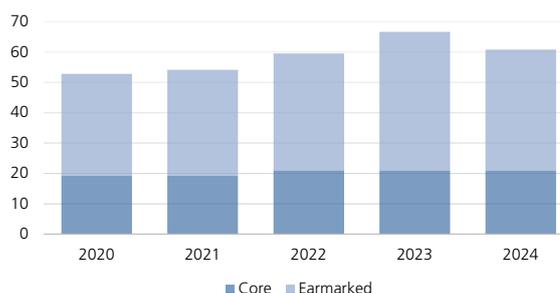
Core: CHF 21 million
(6th among gov. donors)

Earmarked: CHF 39.8 million

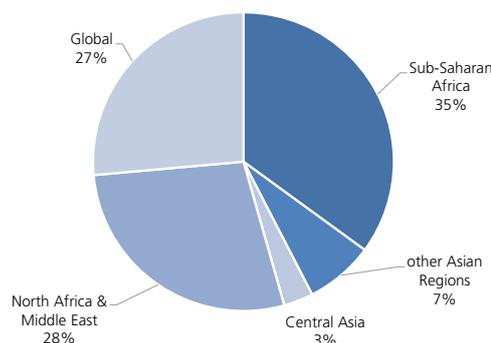
Number of Swiss Personnel (JPO, UNV incl.): 47

Involved Swiss government entities
SDC (UNO & MDBs unit)

Swiss Contributions 2020-24 Core vs. Earmarked Funding (CHF million)



Swiss Earmarked Contributions 2024, per Region (%) Total: CHF 39.8 million



Burundi: Transforming Eating Habits for Better Nutrition

With support from the Swiss Government, families in Burundi are embracing healthier diets, promoting child nutrition in provinces like Ngozi, Kayanza, and Muyinga. Mothers now prepare balanced meals using local foods, guided by training from health volunteers. This shift has made children more active, playful, and energetic. Through the awareness campaign in 2023 that reached 216 447 persons, the rate of chronic malnutrition in the country decreased from 56% to 52% within a year. The initiative fosters lasting change by enhancing local food access and equipping households with practical skills to sustain better nutrition in vulnerable communities.

Contact:

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Multilateral Affairs and NGO Division

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