



Background and overview

The refugee and migrant crisis in Europe is unlike any other in the scope and scale as well as speed at which it is unfolding. It involves multiple countries and is characterized by a mass movement of people unwilling to stop in their quest to reach destination countries, such as Germany and Sweden, even as winter approaches. The number of children and women on the move has steadily increased since early 2015, with a sharp spike since the summer.

As of mid-November 2015, over 850,000 people have arrived on European shores since the beginning of the year.¹ In recent months, the proportion of refugees and migrants from Syria who registered at Gevgelija at the border of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece has decreased from 80 per cent in August to 62 per cent in October, while the proportion of people from Afghanistan has increased from 5 per cent in August to 30 per cent in October.

UNICEF country offices have observed increased numbers of women and children, including newborn babies. For example, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, children represented 26 per cent of all registered people in October, while in Serbia they accounted for 30 per cent of the number of 180,344 registered refugees and migrants (33,819 boys and 19,430 girls). In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the numbers of unaccompanied children and adolescents increased sixfold from 932 in August 2015 to 5,676 in October. In the first 10 months of 2015, more than 23,000 unaccompanied children and adolescents applied for asylum in Sweden alone. More than 30,000 unaccompanied children are expected to apply for asylum in Germany by the end of 2015.

From the onset of the crisis, UNICEF has been responding to the need to protect refugee and migrant children and their families on the move in Europe, prioritizing activities in the areas of child protection, health and nutrition – especially infant and young children feeding – and water and sanitation. UNICEF is also advising its government partners on the national response for children and developing the capacity of front-line responders,

especially related to the best interests determination for children and providing protection to unaccompanied and separated children.

UNICEF is refining its operational response plans to scale up its response and adapt it to the context of different scenarios related to the movement of refugees and migrants to Europe, most notably the possible slow-down of populations movements, given the winter and possible tighter measures to manage the flow of people in countries on the refugee and migrant route.

At the same time, UNICEF is consolidating its priority interventions through a network of child-friendly spaces, which are evolving into Children and Family Support Hubs designed to provide an integrated package of assistance and protection to children and their caregivers and are operated jointly with UNHCR and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

To address the specific needs of the population on the move in the context of winter, UNICEF is procuring winter clothing and footwear for children, blankets, and hygiene supplies and equipment to improve conditions in all UNICEF-supported child-friendly spaces. At present, these activities are ongoing in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia and preparations are underway to extend the scope of UNICEF's response in other countries on the route – including Greece and Slovenia – and to scale up the overall volume of this winterization programme.

Proposed activities, including rationale and scope

UNICEF's initial and current response to the needs of children on the move has been taking place under relatively favorable weather conditions, extending fortunately to early November. However, with winter now arrived, the likely slow-down of population movements and subsequent longer stays of people in some of the affected countries, UNICEF is looking into strategies to adequately calibrate the scale and effectiveness

¹ UNHCR, Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response – Mediterranean, accessed at <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php> on 23 November 2015.

UNICEF – Winterization plan

of its response. UNICEF is also taking steps to further scale up preparedness and contingency planning in the areas considered at high probability of being affected by the refugee and migrant crisis.

As much harsher weather conditions arrive in Europe, refugee and migrant families are now battling rain and colder weather, many walking in the only shoes and clothes they have. Children are physically exhausted, anxious and psychologically distressed, and some need medical assistance. They need a safe place to rest as well as food and water, warm clothes, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

UNICEF's planned programme for winterization is focused on the procurement of clothing and footwear for children and adolescents, hygiene packages and supply and equipment for existing and planned new child-friendly spaces in the countries with the highest number of children on the move. Due to still unpredictable flows of people, which can be altered by worsening weather conditions and changes within the overall policy and security environment, UNICEF is designing its plan for winterization activities to target estimated flows of 6,000 refugees and migrants per day in transit in each of the countries, of which an estimated 45 per cent are women and children – 25 per cent of them being children.

Between November 2015 and February 2016, it is estimated that there could be an average of 5,000 arrivals per day from Turkey, resulting in up to 700,000 new arrivals passing through Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. In addition to this, UNICEF is factoring in a number of refugees and migrants in registration centres in Greece, predominantly those on the islands in the Aegean Sea to which the majority of people on the move arrive from Turkey. Finally, UNICEF is building into its winterization plan the provision of contingency supplies to be able to respond in places that might be affected by an increased number of people on the move due to sudden changes in the pattern of migratory routes – this includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Italy, Montenegro and Romania, as well as Kosovo (UNSCR1244).

As UNICEF continues to roll out its response to the crisis in order to cover the highest number of children on the move and is finalizing agreements on its presence with host governments (e.g. Greece and Slovenia), a portion of resources will be allocated for regional procurement of prioritized winterization supply and equipment. In this way, mobilization of resources will be enabled in all affected countries as well as in countries that might alternatively be chosen for migration routes.

UNICEF will procure a package of prioritized supplies and equipment for its winterization intervention, which will include:

- Blankets for babies
- Winter shoes/boots for children
- Winter socks for children
- Overall outerwear for children under the age of 1
- Winter jackets for children
- Thermal covers for children under the age of 1
- Sets of winter hats, scarves and gloves
- Semi-solid food (fruit/vegetable/meat mix) for children aged 6-24 months
- Power generators, for selected sites on the migration route

Implementation of this plan will imply additional logistics and operational costs, including warehousing capacity at strategically selected locations on the migration route. The implementation strategy underpinning this programme will be based on using existing human resources at UNICEF country offices in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia, UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen, UNICEF Headquarters in Geneva and New York, as well as Technical Response Capacity teams (to be deployed as required) and dedicated capacity in the Crisis Cell based in Geneva.

Implementation of the UNICEF winterization plan will be closely coordinated with Government counterparts in countries where the plan is to be rolled out as well with other partners in the region, most notably UNHCR, IOM, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement.

Required resources

Office/activity	Total supply plan planning value (USD)	Remarks
TfYRo Macedonia	\$469,400	
Serbia	\$819,574	
Croatia	\$849,111	
Regional*	\$5,452,687	It refers to countries where UNICEF does not currently have a programme of cooperation and countries that might be affected due to changes of migration routes or increased numbers of stranded refugees and migrants
Operation and logistics (including HR)	\$516,000	
Support costs (8%)	\$648,542	
Grand Total	\$8,755,314	

*Due to the current situation in Greece and potential future changes in routes, it includes but is not limited to Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Kosovo (UNSCR1244), and Slovenia.

For more information, contact:

Sarah Crowe

Chief, Crisis Communication
Geneva Coordination Cell,
Refugee and Migrant Crisis in Europe
Tel: +41 79 543 8029
Email: scrowe@unicef.org

Kristen Elsby

Regional Chief of Communication
UNICEF Regional Office for Central &
Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Geneva
Tel: +41 22 909 5286
Email: kelsby@unicef.org

Jeremy Hartley

Chief, Communication & Marketing
Private Fundraising and Partnership Division
UNICEF, Geneva
Tel: +41 22 909 5406
Email: jhartley@unicef.org