

A YEAR OF PROGRESS FOR CHILDREN IN CHINA AND BEYOND

Building on over 40 years of cooperation with the Government of China, in 2023 UNICEF continued to work towards realizing the rights of the world's second largest child population, who make up approximately 13 per cent of the world's children. UNICEF worked with 25 partners in 217 counties or districts across 31 provinces, autonomous regions or municipalities to achieve results for children, especially the most vulnerable.

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for children in China and beyond, UNICEF continued with its 'pilots to policy to scale' approach: UNICEF brings innovation and international expertise; the Government of China brings resources. Meeting the SDGs in China is essential if the world is to achieve these goals.

UNICEF made progress across child health and development, education, child protection, social policy, and South-South cooperation. To name just a few examples, UNICEF and its partners:

- Trained almost 748,000 health professionals in early essential newborn care.
- Trained more than 95,000 community health workers in early childhood services, and over 290,000 community health workers in infant and young child feeding (IYCF).
- Reached more than 1.1 million children and over 74,000 teachers with higher quality, more accessible, and more equitable education.
- Published data on children affected by migration to inform the government's action plan.
- Supported the development of the Law on Building Barrier Free Environments.
- Helped regulators keep children safe online.
- Advocated for policies that expand childcare services, particularly for rural areas.

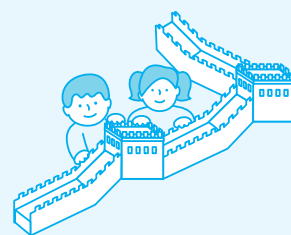
- Developed an industry standard for the design and use of AI relating to children.
- Drafted standard operating procedures for police and prosecutors for taking a victim-centred approach to child victim support.
- Developed a Nutrient Profiling Model to regulate unhealthy food marketing to children in China.
- Developed an interactive platform for sharing and visualizing child environmental health indicators.

UNICEF also continued to work with partners in China to accelerate the progress of other developing countries towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through South-South cooperation.

There is much work still to be done if we are to reach the most vulnerable children in China, including children in less developed regions, children with disabilities, and children affected by migration. Join us to realize the rights of every child.

Above: Special Olympics athletes and other participants play the rainbow umbrella game together.
Photo: © UNICEF/China/2023/Ma Yuyuan

Children in China



2020
child population
298 million



Male
158 million



Female
139 million

21%

of China's total population



China has
the world's
second largest
child population

13%

of the world's child population



CHILD HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

A healthy start, for every child

Supporting children at the earliest stages lays the foundation for their long-term health, development, and potential. UNICEF supported babies and mothers by training almost 748,000 health professionals in early essential newborn care. Some of the most vulnerable children live in rural communities. More than 95,000 community health workers received training to deliver high quality early childhood services. Over 290,000 community health workers in 1,212 counties were trained to provide infant and young child feeding counselling.

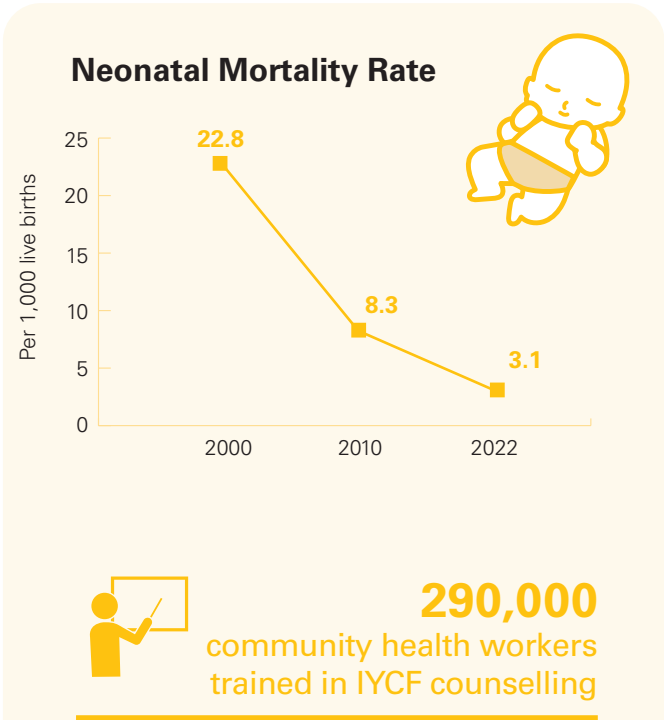
UNICEF and the China Center for Disease Control (CDC) developed the China’s Children’s Environmental Health Surveillance Interactive Platform, for sharing data on environmental hazards, exposure, and disease. UNICEF also supported the drafting of China’s first report on children’s environmental health.

Child overweight and obesity rates are on the rise. UNICEF and the China Nutrition Society developed the Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM), ensuring it is in line with WHO principles and the context in China. The NPM is a benchmark in identifying pre-packaged food high in salt, sugar or fat, and it will be used to regulate unhealthy food marketing to children in China.

UNICEF’s ‘Fix My Food’ campaign pulled together the views of 1,300 young people in China on creating a healthy food environment. The views were shared with the government.

UNICEF initiated the Adolescent Mental Health and Development Programme. A service package and a peer-support toolkit are being tested in 100 pilot schools from 10 provinces, aiming to reach over 100,000 students by 2025.

Above: A mother breastfeeds her newborn son at a hospital in Guiyang, capital of Guizhou Province.
Photo: ©UNICEF/China/2023/Ma Yuyuan



290,000 community health workers trained in IYCF counselling



Watch video: <https://bit.ly/3Hk5oJy>

“I want healthier food” – over 60 young people in Beijing and Chengdu shared their opinions and ideas on the need for a healthier food environment.





EDUCATION

A high-quality, child-friendly education, for every child

In 2023, UNICEF supported high quality training for educators. Over 1,000 provincial and county-level experts and teacher trainers were trained in 13 capacity-building workshops. They later delivered over 300 training sessions at the local level with support from UNICEF and national partners.

To help some of the most vulnerable children, UNICEF supported innovation in education. This included the development of scalable models for inclusive education for children with disabilities in kindergartens and primary schools; holistic skill development, including social and emotional learning; and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education for adolescents, including girls from rural areas.

To support children affected by migration, UNICEF continued its Early Childhood Development centre programme. These centres provide safe spaces for children aged 0-6 years to learn through play and advice for caregivers on bringing up children.

UNICEF also helped protect children from violence and bullying, by introducing positive discipline resources and capacity development initiatives in schools.



1.1 million
children



74,000
teachers

Have benefited from UNICEF-Government of China cooperation



Watch video: <https://bit.ly/3vx78gg>

See how UNICEF China is supporting early childhood development (ECD) centres with play-based learning



Above: Girls from underdeveloped western regions during a STEM summer camp in Beijing.

Photo: Courtesy of the China Association for Science and Technology.



CHILD PROTECTION

Protection from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect, for every child

UNICEF aims for all children to be safe from violence and neglect by strengthening child protection systems with prevention and response services. In 2023 UNICEF worked with government partners to strengthen these services for more than 2 million children in need across 4 provinces and successfully advocated for the inclusion of this model in local and national policies for vulnerable children. UNICEF also worked with government partners to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) to support child victims of abuse, which will standardize the operations of the 2,053 'one-stop' service centres in China once approved.

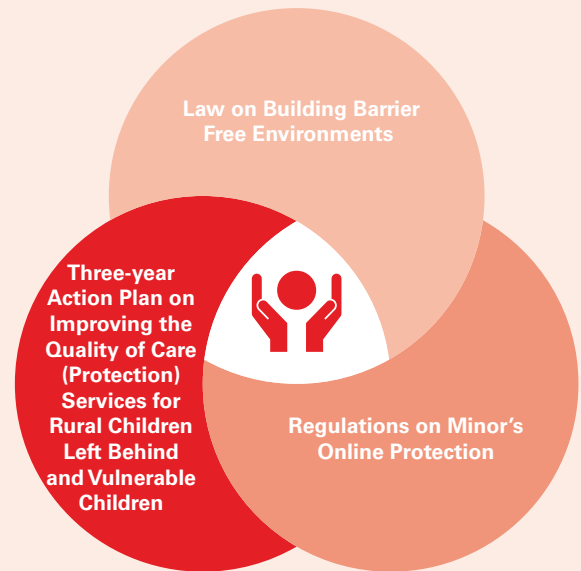
To change norms and practices that favour violent discipline, UNICEF launched the second phase of a positive parenting campaign in collaboration with government partners. The campaign gives parents practical tips on building trust and empathy with their children, and it garnered 90 million impressions online and in-person. Positive parenting sessions have been offered to more than 20,000 caregivers so far.

To promote a protective legal framework, UNICEF supported consultations and provided recommendations for The Law on Building Barrier Free Environments, adopted in September 2023. The Law includes provisions on accessible infrastructure, information, and social services for children with disabilities.

To protect children online, UNICEF informed the development of an industry standard for the design and use of AI products for children, by supporting roundtables with AI practitioners and experts. The State Council approved the Regulations on Minors'

Online Protection in September, clarifying stakeholders' accountability, establishing prevention and response mechanisms for cyberbullying and online violence, and defining 'harmful information'. The provisions on the responsibilities of companies and child-centred design reflect inputs provided by UNICEF's experts.

Building a Child Protection System



Watch video: <https://bit.ly/3vBU0oo>

A father of four in Jiangxi Province gave up on corporal punishment after participating in a UNICEF-supported positive parenting programme.



Above: Children play at the Children's Place of Dalu Village, Lingshan County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, on 13 May 2023.

Photo: ©UNICEF/China/2023/Ma Yuyuan



SOCIAL POLICY

Child-sensitive, evidence-based social policy, for every child

In 2023 UNICEF supported the development of policies that are gender sensitive and attuned to the needs of the most vulnerable children. UNICEF also supported the development of child-friendly cities and family policies for working parents.

To meet children’s needs, decision makers need sound data. With the National Bureau of Statistics, UNICEF and UNFPA developed a flagship data brochure, *What the 2020 Census Can Tell Us About Children in China – Facts and Figures*. Using this data and other UNICEF-supported research, the Ministry of Civil Affairs and other ministries drafted a plan to strengthen community-based psychological support services for vulnerable children, particularly those affected by migration.

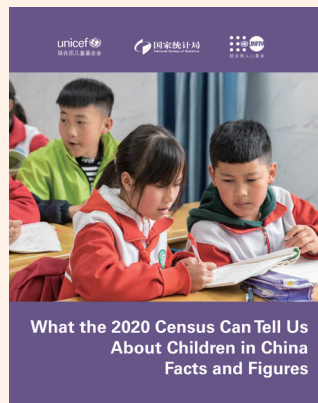
High quality childcare can help give children a strong start, while supporting working parents. UNICEF generated evidence and advocated for policies that expand affordable, high quality childcare services, particularly for rural areas. The Ministry of Finance and the National Health Commission launched new demonstration projects, earmarking CNY 100 million (USD 14 million) for each province in financial support that will mainly support the renovation of existing venues, provide incentive subsidies, train practitioners and more.

*Above: A volunteer captivates young children with picture books at the early childhood development (ECD) centre of Chengxi Community in Zhang County on 2 August, 2023.
Photo: ©UNICEF/China/2023/Chai Chunxia*



\$14 million

for each province earmarked for ECC services



<https://www.unicef.cn/en/reports/population-status-children-china-2020-census>



Watch video: <https://bit.ly/3TTHefM>

How UNICEF China is advocating for comprehensive family policies for every child.





SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, for every child

South-South cooperation (SSC) – the exchange of knowledge, solutions, know-how and resources – can accelerate the progress of developing countries towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for children, reduce inequities, and safeguard the rights of vulnerable children.

In 2023 UNICEF co-organized exchanges between developing countries in maternal and newborn child health; early childhood development; disaster risk reduction, water, sanitation, and hygiene; and climate change. Over 600 participants from 31 countries benefited. UNICEF also worked with the Rural Sanitation Clinic SSC training facility to build capacity in climate-resilient, inclusive, and rights-based international norms and practices. This work benefited professionals from China and 14 other developing countries.

UNICEF worked with the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) to prioritize children in CIDCA’s programmes. In 2023 CIDCA provided support to Timor-Leste, and a new project in Afghanistan has been approved. UNICEF initiated two other water, sanitation and hygiene pilot projects with Cambodia and South Africa.



19 countries have benefited from CIDCA’s Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund (total 25 million USD):

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Somalia | Lebanon | DR Congo |
| Ethiopia | Kenya | Niger |
| Nigeria | Sierra Leone | Sudan |
| Zimbabwe | Malawi | Mozambique |
| South Sudan | Cameroon | Ghana |
| Liberia | Senegal | Timor-Leste |
| Afghanistan | | |



Watch video: <https://bit.ly/3vrpeAd>

Above: Germaine, a neonatology student at the Beroua regional hospital in Cameroon, holds a premature baby wearing an electronic bracelet that sends an alert if there is a drop in body temperature.
 Photo: ©UNICEF/Cameroon/2021

UNICEF and China are supporting children in 15 African countries

