

Annex I Program Document:

UNICEF and SC Application to GPE for Accelerated Funding, 80% Allocation

Country	Syrian Arab Republic
Coordinating agency	USAID
Date of submission of this application package	22.10.2023
Grant currency	Dollar <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Euro <input type="checkbox"/>
Grant agents(s)	Save the Children Federation, Inc. (SC) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Program name	Supporting education continuity and system recovery in the earthquake-affected areas of Syria
This accelerated funding will be funded from	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System transformation grant allocation
Total Accelerated Funding amount requested	\$15,000,000
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	\$10,500,000
Save the Children Federation, Inc. (SC)	\$4,500,000
Is this a joint application for all grant agents listed above:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Agency fees (additional to grant allocation. If this is a joint application submitted by multiple grant agents list the agencies and corresponding fees)	UNICEF 7%, \$735,000 SC 7%, \$315,000
Estimated starting date	12/1/2023
Geographic Areas of Operation:	Northwest Syria Syrian Arab Republic (Government of Syria controlled areas) Northeast Syria
Name of individuals and their positions that will serve as the GPE Co-Grant Agent Points of Contract (POCs):	

1. Background

The Türkiye-Syria earthquakes in February 2023 have had a significant impact on the Syrian population, with 8.8 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. Four months following the first earthquake on 6 February, children and families continue to struggle to rebuild their lives, including 3.7 million children who face desperate conditions and need humanitarian assistance. According to reports from local and government sources, the multiple earthquakes that hit Syria and Türkiye killed an estimated 6,000 people and injured a further 12,000 in Syria alone. The situation further compounds the existing challenges in a region already grappling with more than 12 years of conflict, a persistent economic crisis, and the spread of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) and cholera. This combination of disasters is particularly concerning, especially considering that the affected governorates held already accounted for 48 per cent of the total people in need of humanitarian assistance prior to the earthquakes. Furthermore, the two most affected governorates, Aleppo and Idlib, already had faced some of the highest levels of humanitarian need in the country.

The prioritization of target areas and planning decisions are based on the Syria Earthquake Recovery Needs Assessment (SERNA), a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of the February 2023 earthquakes, conducted by the United Nations (UN). The SERNA provides a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the February 2023 earthquakes on communities across five of Syria's most affected governorates, namely Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Latakia and Tartous. It covers 26 districts across all earthquake-affected governorates in the Whole of Syria (WoS). The assessment spans social, infrastructure and productive sectors of the economy, as well as cross-cutting areas such as employment, livelihoods and disaster risk reduction (DRR). The findings of the SERNA show that 80 per cent of the assessed communities were directly impacted by the earthquakes. In these communities, respondents reported that there are 2,076 functioning schools, 227 fully damaged schools, and 702 partially damaged schools within the assessed communities. Approximately 75 per cent of schools were providing basic education. In areas controlled by the Government of Syria, 36 per cent of all schools functioning in the assessed areas were affected. In Northwest Syria (NWS), it is estimated that an estimated 40 per cent of functioning educational facilities incurred some level of damage. In both areas, many undamaged or lightly damaged schools were used as shelters. There were also losses in education material and equipment. Of equal concern is the fact that 96,274 teachers, 88 per cent of whom are women, were affected by the earthquakes. Given the major critical shortages in teaching personnel and the socioeconomic and logistical challenges they face, there is a risk of prolonged absenteeism post-earthquake, especially in the more marginalized rural areas.

In response to the Türkiye-Syria earthquake, both Save the Children (SC) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are engaging in the earthquake-affected areas of NWS as well as affected areas in Northeast Syria (NES). As part of the earthquake response in NWS, SC is working with 14 local partners to provide comprehensive relief services, reaching 344,018 beneficiaries, including 189,831 children. In alignment with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Flash Appeal and other locally operating actors such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), International and National Non-Governmental Organizations (I/NGOs) and local administrations, SC has prioritized the most urgent needs across sectors. SC's activities have included child protection services, mental health and psychosocial support (MH/PSS), education programming, including through the Safe Schools Common Approach, and primary healthcare services. Additionally, SC addresses critical needs by providing essential non-food items (NFIs), food security, and nutrition services, multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA), and essential water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. In NWS, SC's programming combines immediate relief with the restoration of basic social support services through integrated responses, with a focus on child protection and education in emergencies. In NES, SC also provides a comprehensive range of humanitarian education in emergencies and development programs. In NES, SC ensures access to quality services for vulnerable populations, even after the recent earthquake. In NES, education programming is delivered in host communities and internally displaced person (IDP) camps, ensuring access to education for all

children. Education programs delivered in both NWS and NES include the provision of non-formal education (NFE) for out-of-school children and children at risk of dropping out, the provision of teaching and learning materials for teachers and students, capacity strengthening for teachers and school personnel, including professional development, coaching and peer support. Community engagement is achieved through parent-teacher associations (PTAs), educational outreach and Back-to-School campaigns and awareness days. Rehabilitation of educational spaces, including schools, temporary learning spaces (TLs) and other NFE facilities is undertaken to improve educational facilities and promote access to schooling, and learning spaces are adapted for the unique needs of children and adults living with disability, boys and girls. Rehabilitation projects undertaken in NWS and NES have included the installation of ramps, handrails, adequate lighting and sex-segregated toilets for boys and girls.

UNICEF likewise services NWS communities through its Gaziantep Hub by cooperating with 19 local and international NGOs to provide a comprehensive suite of essential humanitarian services, in WASH, health, nutrition, education and child protection areas reaching 1,930,230 beneficiaries across all sectors. UNICEF has been working to improve access to quality education for Syrian children in Aleppo and Idlib governorates reaching 82,101 children (50 per cent girls) across 21 sub districts and 88 communities. These efforts include providing formal and non-formal education, early learning, self-learning, and remedial programs. Since February 2023, UNICEF Syria Country Office has supported 140,286 children (70,272 girls and 70,014 boys) in government-controlled areas [GoSAR]. These children have been able to access formal or non-formal education in a safe and gender sensitive environment. The support includes early learning, self-learning, remedial classes, and “Back to Learning” interventions that raise awareness and mobilize the community. To ensure the continuity of formal education in areas where schools are damaged or used as shelters, UNICEF has collaborated with the Directorates of Education in Lattakia, Aleppo, Hama and Homs to install prefabricated classrooms (prefabs) and WASH facilities. Moreover, academic, recreational and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services were integrated for over 1,200 children (50 per cent girls). Learning Cinemas and life skills and citizenship education programs were also introduced to support the adolescents and youth.

Through the Immediate Response Plan, UNICEF aims to reach 727,000 children and teachers through different education supplies and services activities to support children accessing formal or non-formal education in order to support the provision of lifesaving multisectoral assistance, support basic services and ensuring the protection of people affected by the earthquake. Both SC and UNICEF are united in their commitment to mitigate the impact of the earthquakes on children, their families and communities. SC and UNICEF’s shared goal is to mitigate learning loss and provide uninterrupted education for all children, including boys and girls with disabilities, in the severely affected areas of Syria due to the earthquake and its aftermath. Their efforts encompass several key aspects, including promoting children’s overall wellbeing, bolstering positive interaction with families and communities, and strengthening personal and environmental learning enablers. This includes fostering safe, nurturing and emotionally safe environments in schools and homes, developing cooperation and self-expression, and equipping schools and learning environments with a diverse range of high-quality, safe and inclusive education services that cater to the diverse needs of children.

2. Links with HRP/FER

The planned activities in this accelerated funding (AF) project are aligned with the 2022-2023 Syria Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). These activities include creating a safe learning environment, ensuring inclusive and high-quality education continuity, implementing medium-term strategies that bridge short- and long-term mitigation efforts, and supporting educational systems and structures for sustainable provision of education services. To ensure effective monitoring and evaluation, the AF results framework will be informed by data collected through the Annual Humanitarian Response Plan. Similarly, all activities described in the AF are aligned with the

Education Cluster priorities in the Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF). This includes providing minimal education in emergencies package, conducting rapid needs assessments, and offering psychosocial support. The selection of beneficiaries is based on the priorities identified in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Flash Appeal, and the 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview. In NWS, post-earthquake, the priorities are numerous, and the Education cluster and departments across NWS and NES have been working on the continuity of access to education for children (both formal and non-formal education service provision), conducting school safety assessments, implementing school safety plans, providing access to MHPSS and wellbeing support for children, teachers and school personnel, distributing recreational materials and key lifesaving messages for children, rehabilitating TLSs/schools/learning centres for children to return to school, offering school supplies and materials, training teachers, school structures and PTAs on disaster risk reduction and Psychosocial Support (PSS). Overall, these planned activities aim to enhance the continuity of GPE programs and complement ECW interventions in the selected locations, focusing on addressing needs and identified gaps.

In addition, UNICEF and SC will continue to work in the schools covered by the ongoing GPE AF grant (20 per cent) and will scale up the coverage to more schools with expanded education activities including school safety, child protection and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in this proposal.

3. Progress on current AF funding 20%

To support the earthquake response, GPE approved the allocation of AF in the amount of US\$ 3.75 million to both UNICEF and SC. On February 24th, 2023, GPE approved the allocation, with 70 per cent to UNICEF, and 30 percent to Save the Children. UNICEF and SC are supporting girls and boys affected by the earthquake, including those with disabilities, to have equitable access to safe and protective learning environments under three components:

- Component 1. The most marginalized girls and boys, affected by the earthquake including those with disabilities, have equitable access to gender- and age- appropriate learning to mitigate learning loss.
- Component 2. Girls and boys, including youth, affected by the earthquake access safe, inclusive, and protective learning environments.
- Component 3. Teachers, children, and youth receive psycho-social support through safe and protective learning environments.

Immediate response activities since February 2023 have focused on ensuring children return to education in safe environment and the provision of catch-up classes to address the learning gap caused by the disruption of education. The GPE contribution has steadily made progress against the expected results for both agencies as of August 2023, with the key results being:

- 15,466 children have been reached with non-formal education services
- 15,466 children have received educational supplies
- 2,770 children and 96 teachers have benefitted from PSS
- 136 schools have been assessed for rehabilitation

4. Interventions

Objective 1: Safe, inclusive and quality educational continuity

- 1) Provision of education services (including back-to-school campaigns, TLS, Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) centers, home-based learning, distribution of materials, NFE programming (e.g., remedial, catch-up, Accelerated Learning Programme, Basic Literacy and Numeracy, Empowered Learning Materials); as well as running costs and winterization support)
- 2) Teachers stipends, capacity building, and PTAs
- 3) School safety and adaptations (incl. safety plans, rehabilitation, safety assessments, distribution of key, life-saving messages etc.)
- 4) Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and PSS, preventing violence in schools and communities, awareness raising to community and local actors

Objective 2: Recovery in the medium term

- 1) Support for teachers including professional development, integration of Child Protection (CP) and social and emotional learning (SEL), safe identifications and referrals of cases of violence, teacher learning circles, coaching and mentoring, positive discipline and referral; wellbeing support; awareness raising for children on how to identify and respond to violence; in-service training on gender responsiveness and Student Needs Action Pack (SNAP), safe identification and referral (SIR), Child Protection in Emergencies (CPIE), Psychological First Aid (PFA)
- 2) Training for PTAs to support school improvement/safety, gender equality, GBV/MHPSS awareness raising sessions, SIR, CPIE, PFA etc.; provision of parenting programmes and peer-to-peer support

Objective 3: Preparedness for and prevention of future crises

- 1) Training for children and teachers on disaster risk and emergency response with a focus on services required by different groups, including update of school safety plans, school drills/evacuation, service mapping for referrals
- 2) Contingency planning at school, community and system levels with a focus on needs of different groups including students with disabilities; and strengthening of data management systems including evidence building
- 3) Disaster-resistant school design (i.e., Awareness raising on climate change)

5. Results

Objective 1: Safe, inclusive and quality educational continuity

- 1) 81,300 school-aged (3-18 years old) children (91,725 girls and 89,575 boys, including 89,065 CWD) in earthquake-affected areas benefit from education services, such as back-to-school campaigns, ECCD centers, home-based learning, NFE programme.
- 2) 70 per cent of children show improvement in their learning after enrolment in the NFE programme
- 3) 110,500 children (56,075 girls and 49,925 boys, including 5,525 CWD) benefit from recreational materials

- 4) 675 teachers and school personnel (319 women and 356 men) are provided with stipends/in-kind support
- 5) 73 TLS established/supported
- 6) 81 schools/TLS/learning centres received light rehabilitation (The rehabilitation works will ensure that all rehabilitated schools including WASH facilities will be gender and disability sensitive to ensure safe accessibility. Climate/seismic resilience will also be taken into consideration. This includes gray water recycling and rainwater collection, planting trees, installing solar energy, providing fire extinguishers, distributing pamphlets on “Earthquake emergency measures”, including conducting a “drill exercise” with children on anti-seismic prevention etc.)
- 7) 38,300 children (19,365 girls and 18,935 boys, including 1,911 CWD benefit from light school rehabilitation
- 8) 110,500 children (56,075 girls and 54,425 boys, including 5,516 CWD) and 1,600 caregivers (800 women and 800 men) reached with PSS and CP activities
- 9) 70% of children who participate in SEL and unstructured PSS show at least a 10% improvement in their social and emotional learning competencies.

Objective 2: Recovery in the medium term

- 1) 6,385 teachers and school personnel (3,349 women and 3,036 men) reached through PSS programme
- 2) 70 per cent of trained teachers have improved knowledge of PSS
- 3) 10,915 caregivers and PTA members (5,445 women and 5,470 men) are reached with awareness key messages, back to learning campaigns, parenting skills and peer to peer support. PTAs are engaged in the revision of school risk matrices, emergency preparedness planning, and are trained in child protection topics to improve the learning environments of children.

Objective 3: Preparedness for and prevention of future crises

- 1) 231 school safety plans developed/revised and implemented.
- 2) 223 non-formal learning centres (NFLCs) and schools supported to create early warning systems to prevent and mitigate threats, vulnerabilities and attacks on schools. Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) are trained in emergency response, and have increased understanding of the needs of children with disabilities and inclusive teaching strategies.
- 3) 231 schools/TLSs/learning centers are trained in school safety planning and early warning systems.

6. Budget

Table 1: Budget by calendar year

Components/ objectives	Calendar year 2023 (Dec 2023)	Calendar year 2024 (Jan-Dec 2024)	Calendar year 2025 (Jan-May 2025)	Total	%

Component 1: Safe, inclusive and quality educational continuity	133,698	7,801,315	2,355,403	10,290,416	69%
Component 2: Recovery in the Medium Term	28,457	937,866	202,724	1,169,047	8%
Component 3: Preparedness for and prevention of future crises	16,118	464,535	110,867	591,519	4%
Technical & implementation support costs	46,056	2,087,467	815,494	2,949,017	20%

UNICEF

UNICEF's budgets include a component of "Direct costs", over which a standard cost recovery is applied as mandated by the Executive Board to calculate the "Indirect Costs". This is a similar approach to most other UN agencies. The sum of Direct and Indirect costs provides the total value of a contribution. Noted that the budget provided to GPE only includes the "Direct costs".

Direct costs are incurred for and can be traced in full to specific UNICEF programmes/projects in fulfilment of its mandate. UNICEF's direct costs are directly linked to programme activity and implementation, i.e., costs incurred to run a specific programme (such as programme supplies, programme staff entitlements/benefits). It is important to note that these direct costs also include direct programme support costs associated to the programme being delivered, whether provision of security; support staff from operations, information and communication; field offices and maintenance; vehicle running and maintenance costs; travel; electricity and water; office supplies and consumables; cost-sharing for the UN common services; and other such provisions. Programmes do not exist without direct programme support costs.

The total direct programme support costs and proportion to the overall programme delivered by UNICEF in a country depends on the context within which the programme operates, as well as the size of the overall operations, and varies from office to office. In a context such as Syria, these costs will tend to be substantially higher than average, in particular due to factors such as security, transportation, monitoring and so on; the rather fluid security situation, the limited infrastructure and systems and inadequate national capacity for service delivery and monitoring has significantly increased the cost of doing business in Syria or other similar geographic areas of operations such as Yemen and Afghanistan. Functioning in such an environment imposes, among other things, a very high standard on UNICEF for security procedures and logistics to ensure the best possible security for personnel and property. The higher operational costs include costs of ensuring vehicles, offices and accommodation at country office and at provincial level are adequately secure in line with the UN's Minimum Operating Security Standard (MOSS).

SC

SC's budget has been developed utilising the GPE template, which allocates costs directly to Sub-Components, and to Grant Agent Support Costs. The budget as such includes both Direct Costs (allocated to Sub-Components) and Indirect Costs (allocated to Support Costs). Indirect costs are vital for the functioning of SC as a Grant Agent of GPE funds, and enable the high

quality, efficient and technical support for the delivery of program activities, and ensure that the interventions SC deliver within schools and communities have the greatest impact possible for the children and families they aim to support. SC remain committed to ensuring that indirect/support costs remain as low as possible to support education continuity and system recovery in the earthquake-affected areas. However, because of the significant complexity of the Syrian context, both direct and indirect costs contain aspects that require more significant investment for needs based programming.

Direct costs: are costs that are directly associated with the implementation of specific program activities/sub-components. Direct costs for SC encompass a broad spectrum of expenses that are inherent to running a particular activity. In the budget submitted, SC have allocated programmatic staff by sub-component to reflect their work on implementation of program activities. This means that often the same 'role' is split across multiple activities/sub-components. Budget narrative has been added to the document to show the specific role of the staff member, and why this role has been split over multiple activities/sub-components. Direct costs for SC include:

- Activity costs
- Transportation for implementing staff
- Monitoring and oversight
- Main Office, Area Office, Field Office and Implementing Staff responsible for program implementation and technical support and oversight
- Child safeguarding costs

Indirect costs: are integral to the functioning of SC as a Grant Agent of GPE funding in Syria. These costs support the overarching framework within which SC programs operate and are critical for achieving high-quality and efficient program delivery. SC and implementing partners cannot operate quality programming without their indirect costs being met, and as such employ a method by which support costs are spread across their entire portfolio, so that each individual award is not over-burdened with support costs, and each award includes its fair share. Indirect encompass a wide range of critical support functions, which include:

- Administrative and Financial Management
- Safety and Security
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Grant Management

In line with this objective, SC's GPE AF 80% application budget has been developed to accurately reflect expenditure both by activity, and through the support costs. Implementation modality through multiple Area and Field Offices, as well as through local implementing Partners, does mean that support costs in the budget cover the costs for 3 organisations and 4 SC offices, which is a reflection of the complexity of the Syrian context, particularly post-earthquake. However, SC are committed to ensuring that GPE funds are utilised to support the most acutely affected schools and communities affected by the earthquake through this grant, in addition to ensuring that commitments under the Grand Bargain are met. This means that it is vital to ensure that SC meet the support cost needs of local partners.

In response to GPE feedback on the previous round of submission, SC have reduced support costs by USD\$317,339.00. The reallocation of funds to program activities has also meant an increase in our overall reach by 3,050 children. SC's budget reflects an overall combined support cost and cross-cutting cost percentage of 19.6%, which includes support costs for SC,

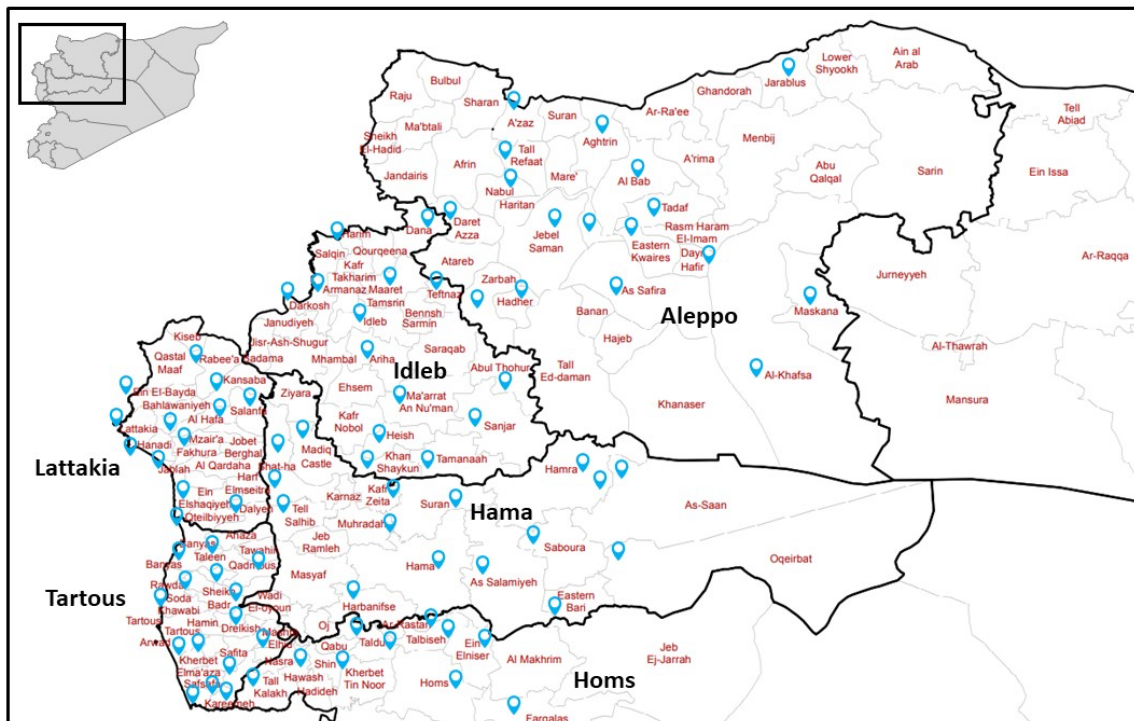
and 2 local implementing partners. Partner 1's support costs constitute 7% of the overall budget, Partner 2's support costs are 1.69%, and SC support costs are 10.91% of the overall budget. Included within these costs are the vital functions for SC's and Partners' operational delivery at the scale and quality required for a holistic emergency response and early recovery program under GPE Accelerated Funds. The remaining 80.4% of the program funding for SC is allocated directly to programmatic implementation, or direct costs.

7. Geographic focus:

Both SC and UNICEF remain committed to addressing the needs of earthquake-affected children in Syria, with a focus on the most severely impacted areas of Idlib, Aleppo, Lattakia, Tartous, Hama, and Homs governorates in Northwest Syria, and Government of Syria-controlled areas (GoSAR). The impact of the February 2023 earthquakes also extends to parts of Northeast Syria (NES), which have received little support and are in urgent, ongoing need for rehabilitation in schools and learning facilities.

To ensure reach to the most acutely impacted children and educational facilities, SC propose to target 23 earthquake-affected schools/temporary learning spaces (TLSs) in NWS, and 8 earthquake-affected schools/temporary learning spaces (TLSs) in NES. Likewise, UNICEF ensures reaching the most acutely affected children and education facilities in 50 schools/temporary learning centers – TLSs - (20 in NWS and 30 in GoSAR). UNICEF locations in GoSAR are in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Lattakia and Tartous, and the locations in NWS are also shown on the Map 1.

Map 1: UNICEF Locations in GoSAR and NWS



8. Targeting and Selection of Beneficiaries:

SC and UNICEF are prioritizing continuity and expansion of education services that are safe and child friendly. SC and UNICEF will work closely in partnerships with local organisations and focus on facilities already activated under the GPE-ESPIG and GPE-AF 20% programs. Additionally, SC and UNICEF will be expanding support to additional facilities under the GPE-AF 80% program to reach the most acutely earthquake-affected schools, temporary learning spaces, educational facilities, children, their families, and communities. SC and UNICEF will coordinate with Cluster/Working Group members to target the most affected schools. Alongside existing programs, SC and UNICEF have conducted mapping and needs assessments for affected schools with the support of local education actors to tailor the program's scope, ensuring coverage for earthquake-impacted facilities not supported by other actors, and avoiding duplication of effort when targeting earthquake-affected facilities.

Targeted locations are prioritized by education authorities and both Education and CCCM Sector/Clusters. This includes out-of-school boys and girls, children with disabilities, and those at risk of dropping out of school. Both SC and UNICEF focus on eliminating physical, cultural, structural, and gender-based barriers and violence for various groups, adopting a gender-responsive and inclusive approach. Recognizing gender inequality and intersectional vulnerabilities exacerbated by the impact of the disaster, UNICEF and SC will collaborate with local education and community structures like PTAs and CPCs to implement tailored education services addressing educational needs of earthquake-affected children, their families and communities, while providing learning opportunities, and promoting safety, wellbeing and dignity. Targeted activities, including the provision of non-formal education (NFE) support through remedial classes, and the provision of stipends to teachers and school personnel have specific criteria. For SC-supported interventions in NWS, children targeted for participation in non-formal education (NFE) remedial classes will be referred by school teachers and personnel in their existing classes. The referral will be based on the children's academic achievements and scores in formative tests and ASER testing scores. Teachers and school personnel targeted to receive stipends will be selected based on their roles as NFE teachers and support staff. All NFE teachers and support staff in the targeted schools in NWS will receive stipend support.

Prioritization of target areas and planning decisions are based on the Syria Earthquake Recovery Needs Assessment (SERNA), carried out through a UN led exercise to provide a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the February 2023 earthquakes on communities across five of Syria's most affected governorates, namely Aleppo, Hama, Idlib, Latakia and Tartous. The SERNA covers 26 districts across all earthquake-affected governorates in the Whole of Syria. The assessment spans social, infrastructure and productive sectors of the economy as well as cross cutting areas such as employment and livelihoods and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

The proposed program will be critical to ensure continuity of access to inclusive and quality education for children who have been reached under the first GPE AF allocation, and expansion of acutely needed education, child protection and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services, transitioning into early recovery.

9. Implementation Arrangements:

Information on program management structures, flow of funds, proposed financial management arrangements, sub-contracting arrangements, grant agent's implementation support and oversight arrangements, and grievance redress mechanisms.

a. Implementing Partner Selection and Contracting

No direct support will be provided through the program to for-profit providers of core education services, in line with the GPE's Private Sector Engagement Strategy. Partner selection will follow SC's guidelines, and is accompanied by internal controls, tracking, and monitoring systems, taking all reasonable steps to ensure funds are used for their intended purpose. Implementing Partner Agreements are multi-year where possible to ensure consistency and continuity, including ongoing access to SC-supported capacity development and strengthening opportunities, depending on partners' annual performance and analysis of the political context. A Partnership Review Committee system allows for quality assurance of contracts and partnerships, including value for money, mapping of potential risks and identification of required risk mitigation measures. It also helps ensure high-quality standards in financial controls of partnerships, as well as impartiality in the evaluation of program documents.

All UNICEF contractors and implementing partners undergo eligibility screening in addition to rigorous selection processes with oversight committees in place. Potential candidates that meet preliminary eligibility criteria and are determined to have the technical experience and management capacity to successfully carry out the program and manage the funds will be further vetted, using the following procedures:

- CSOs/NGOs/INGOs not yet vetted will require to complete a Partner Declaration, Profile and Due Diligence Verification Form. Through this form, the partner organization confirms, amongst other things, that:
- It is committed to the core values of the UN, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Neither the organization nor any of its members is mentioned on the United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List, and that the organization has not supported and does not support, directly or indirectly, individuals and entities sanctioned by the Committee or any person involved in any other manner that is prohibited by a resolution of the United Nations Security Council adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and that the organization has not supported and does not support, directly or indirectly, individuals and entities sanctioned by the Committee or any person involved in any other manner that is prohibited by a resolution of the United Nations Security Council adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations
- Declarations will be verified and confirmed by UNICEF
- Legal agreements with CSO implementing partners and suppliers contain General Terms and Conditions with numerous clauses related to expectations related to ethical behavior, PSEA, fraud, and investigations

b. Program Management Structure, Implementation Support and Oversight Arrangements

As co-Grant Agents (GAs) SC and UNICEF will facilitate: (i) the Grant Application including planning and budgeting, in coordination with the WoS Education Cluster; (ii) post-application arrangements for funds transfer; (iii) managing accountability; (iv) activity implementation, monitoring and evaluation; (v) reporting to the necessary entities including the Board of GPE.

SC's Syria Response Office recruits staff with specialized expertise in education, protection, health, livelihoods, and humanitarian response to ensure quality implementation that will promote lasting change for children at scale.

The program will be managed by SC's Syria Senior Education Manager who, supported by the Education Technical Advisor, will lead program implementation and day-to-day running of the Program. The Senior Education Manager will be also supported by SC's Program Development and Quality and Program Operations departments. Financial management, monitoring, program supplies, and logistics support will be provided by SC's Syria Response Office. SC's Syria Country Office has staff with specialized expertise in education, protection, health, livelihoods, and humanitarian response to ensure quality implementation that will promote lasting change for children at scale.

GPE funds will be granted to the selected national NGOs (selected by a partnership selection committee) that have been assessed and vetted, and are working in target areas of implementation to ensure full access to the most vulnerable and marginalized children, and to enhance community ownership, acceptance, participation and sustainability.

In their roles as co-GAs, SC and UNICEF provide technical support in line with the objectives of the project. More specifically, SC and UNICEF will be responsible for the overall effective and efficient programmatic oversight, fiduciary management and financial disbursement, and reporting. For SC, all SC staff and local implementing partners are required to complete mandatory awareness training on fraud, bribery, and corruption, which includes aid diversion and financing of terrorism. SC additionally have clear channels for reporting suspicions of fraud and/or aid diversion for SC staff and partners, and that vetting systems are in place for staff, partners, suppliers, service providers, incentive workers and volunteers.

SC has a strong coordination and supervision system in place when working with partners, and provides extensive partnership management and support, including ongoing capacity assessment and provision of capacity building opportunities. Regular programmatic follow-up is completed through regular meetings between parties and focus on progress on project implementation to identify challenges and find ways to improve and meet the project targets. Throughout the implementation, SC further ensures proper communication and coordination with its partners via review meetings that include management teams of both organisations and focus on the quality of the partnership itself and investigates gaps and challenges on the specific project. SC proactively seeks information and feedback from its implementing partners to ensure their experiences and recommendations are reflected in the ways of working.

c. Monitoring of Implementation

Both SC and UNICEF will report against the aligned and common logical framework submitted in this proposal package. Each co-GA has also developed a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEAL) plan that is shared as an annex to this document.

UNICEF:

UNICEF closely monitors the delivery of programmes, including through partners, and Third-Party Monitors. Third party monitoring (TPM) through regular spot checks will be used to ensure operation compliance of programs and in terms of:

- Verifying results/indicators and progress against plan;

- Due diligence with regard the resources allocated (in line with the agreements);
- Possible changes in the context

UNICEF will verify TPM reports and implementing partner report through supervisory visits in places where there is access and through Key Informant interviews with partner organizations and beneficiaries in other cases. UNICEF works closely with partners to ensure that any attempt by controlling entities/local authorities to interfere with targeting is reported and appropriate action is taken.

Mitigation actions:

- UNICEF will follow up on monitoring and support IPs on identified programme weaknesses or measures to address gaps in meeting indicators
- UNICEF will communicate immediately to the GPE Steering Committee of any changes in the risk profile or non-compliance with due diligence arrangements
- Partnership will be stopped, in case IPs no longer comply or conform to the clauses in the contract
- Beneficiary feedback mechanism and fraud prevention policies and procedures are in place to facilitate “whistleblowing”

Save the Children:

A comprehensive MEAL staffing structure will be deployed to ensure effective coordination and implementation of MEAL activities. In addition to this, an Accountability focal point will be assigned. Resources have been allocated for learning workshops, capacity building, and final evaluation, and resources will also be utilised for incentive workers, refreshments, venue rental, and materials like paper and pens to conduct MEAL activities.

In addition to MEAL staffing costs, a small amount has been allocated for learning activities, such as workshops, and ongoing investment in SC accountability systems, including our online feedback and response mechanism (FRM).

The SC SRO MEAL Framework employs a mixed-methods approach tailored to the specific context of each area, with monitoring activities conducted directly by SC and by Partners, with verification from SC.

Partners' M&E staff conducts regular surveys among beneficiaries to gather pertinent feedback, enabling analysis of the efficacy and efficiency of provided services. Data collection tools will be collaboratively developed between SC and partners.

SC also employs a quasi-TPM methodology to further verify the data received by partners.

SC Quality Benchmarks (QBs) seek to take SC’s programmes beyond ‘minimum requirements’ and consist of check-list assessments that define what high-quality programming looks like. These regular QB assessments are conducted by programme teams, coordinated by MEAL, and form the basis of action plans that seek to make adjustments to programs in real-time to achieve high quality programming. QBs are already developed per sector (including for safeguarding) across

Save the Children globally, and are contextualised and updated by SC country offices, including the Syria Response Office (SRO).

d. Program Delivery Team and in-Country Capacity

Since 2012, SC has provided humanitarian aid to over 5.6 million program participants in Syria, including 3.4 million children. SC's programming combines immediate relief with the restoration of basic social support services through integrated responses, with a focus on child protection and education in emergencies. Skilled Technical Advisors (TAs), including the Education TA, Child Protection TA, WASH TA, Food Security and Livelihood TA, and MHPSS TA, support the design and implementation of SC's interventions across various sectors. Implementation is coordinated by experienced Program Specialists in Education, CP, and MHPSS, Partnership Coordinators, MEAL personnel, and other relevant functions such as human resources, finance, and award management. The education and CP teams at SC, along with their partners, have built the relevant and necessary experience to support the education needs on the ground. They possess expertise in non-formal education, social and emotional learning (SEL), school safety, child protection, MHPSS, emergency response, working in humanitarian settings, and they also collaborate with other teams, in an integrated manner.

UNICEF has been present in Syria since the 1950s and has assisted Syria's children across the country throughout the crisis for the past 12 years. UNICEF operates hubs in Damascus and Gaziantep, and furthermore runs Field Offices in Aleppo, Deir-es-Zoor, Homs, Lattakia, Qamishli and Rural Damascus. UNICEF SCO employs a team of approximately 236 staff in total. For more than a decade active in school rehabilitation, Back-to-Learning Campaigns, development of accelerated and nonformal education curricula, coaching and strengthening education civil society organizations, teacher training (pedagogy, PSS and violence in schools prevention), monitoring and evaluation. UNICEF supports formal, nonformal and community-based schooling.

e. Implementation Readiness:

Both SC and UNICEF are already operational in the targeted geographical locations, and where new locations are proposed for expansion, both organisations have a presence on the ground, and are coordinating with Sector/Clusters/Working Groups to select targeted schools/TLSS/educational facilities. Considering both organisation's existing presence, and extensive experience in implementing emergency support to earthquake-affected children, their families, and communities across NWS, GoSAR and NES, both organisations are ready to begin implementation from the 1st of December. This will allow seamless continuation of services and support to schools/TLSS/education facilities supported under the ongoing Accelerated Funding program (20%) to ensure there is no gap in service provision. Scale-up to expanded locations in a timely manner (as detailed in the Workplan, attached as Annex IV), will be prioritised in close coordination with local implementing partners and Sector/Clusters/Working Groups.

f. Coordination

In terms of co-grantee coordination, SC and UNICEF will continue to hold regular meetings to coordinate program updates to GPE as relevant. In line with the coordination structure implemented under the current GPE Accelerated Fund program, both agencies have developed an aligned and common logical framework to ensure a holistic approach to education service provision across multiple areas in Syria. SC and UNICEF will additionally keep the DPG informed on the program progress update on a bi-annual basis. SC and UNICEF will leverage their positions as education sector co-lead agencies for the education cluster to continue ensuring the

approach to the GPE-funded program is aligned with the new ECW MYRP programming that is well tailored to the context and it will be closely coordinated across education actors. SC and UNICEF, as co-Grant Agents, will moreover continue and expand strong partnerships with local implementors through technical harmonization, knowledge sharing, joint planning, and coordinated implementation.

Coordination between ECW FER and GPE AF activities is ensured through the EDF, DPG, and Cluster structures. UNICEF and SC ensure the ECW/GPE steering committee is updated and engaged with the implementation updates, challenges, needs and opportunities during quarterly review meetings; as well as provide timely and well-reasoned improvements to overall governance structures and appropriate communication and liaison with the Grant Agents in respect of program implementation.

The Whole of Syria (WoS) education response is co-led by UNICEF and SC, who collaborate to support hub coordination and engage with various actors for effective coordination. In each hub, an education cluster/sector actively disseminates HNO findings, provides expert consultation, and collaborates with the community to improve partners' capacity and awareness of education needs. The cluster/sector collaborates with different actors, for example, departments from OCHA, research, and HF, engagement with HNAP, IOM on dignified shelter, MHPSS TWG, CCCM sector, Health sector, and CP AOR for effective coordination. All education in emergency activities are reported by the cluster/sector members through regular monthly 4Ws, discussed in regular meetings and published on monthly dashboards. Monthly meetings are held for strategic decision-making, planning, and coordination, while capacity building and localization plans are pursued. Working groups focus on assessment and technical standardization. Outside of GoS areas, the Education cluster meets monthly for strategic decision making, planning and coordination. Advocacy is another mechanism that the cluster utilizes through advocacy papers on the key education needs and priorities to increase awareness and funding.

Capacity building for local partners and the cluster members is the cluster's strategy and localization plan. This is mainly happening through the 'Technical Working Group' which offers a forum to discuss technical workstreams to strengthen the cluster members' technical knowledge and support through harmonizing and contextualization of terms, guidelines, SOPs, tools, minimum requirements and standardization for different activities and costs. For instance, developing guidelines on how to implement cash for education, definitions and types of non-formal education, and establishment of dignified and safe learning spaces. Both SC and UNICEF are active members of various coordination mechanisms, such as the CP Sub-Cluster and Family Tracing and Reunification (FTR) Task Force, MHPSS technical working group both in NWS and NES, the Whole of Syria Strategic Steering Group (SSG), and the NES Forum Steering Committee. The Grant Agents coordinate with relevant stakeholders inside Syria, including local governing structures, security stakeholders, NGOs, and UN agencies, to ensure safe access to target locations and maximize the impact of their multi-sector intervention. Both SC and UNICEF's operational multi-sector presence in Syria builds on strong coordination with local partners, relief committees, community stakeholders, other NGOs and UN agencies, alongside robust security protocols. Humanitarian assistance is deployed in a targeted manner, where more than one sector is reaching the same communities to maximize the impact of the intervention.

g. Gender Equality and Inclusion

UNICEF and SC both have gender equality policies in place, which recognize gender equality not only as a basic human right for all people, including boys and girls, but also emphasize the importance of directly addressing gender discrimination and promoting gender equality. The goal

is to ensure that no harm comes to children and to advance the vision of a world where every child attains their equal rights to survival, protection, development, and participation. For both agencies, the gender equality policies dictate that all projects must be gender-sensitive at a minimum, while aiming to implement gender transformative approaches in the areas of operations. As a result, the proposed activities have identified specific needs, aspirations, and wishes for boys and girls, including those with disabilities and from minority groups. Both agencies have internal technical expertise in mainstreaming gender equality and inclusion in all projects. They will ensure that project staff have increased capacity in gender-responsive implementation of the proposed activities through planned training, coaching, and ongoing mentoring. The organizations will also ensure that boys and girls, women, and men, including those with disabilities, have equitable access, participation, and benefit from the proposed actions. Regular gender and age-segregated consultations will be conducted during the project to identify any barriers and risks. Measures will be taken to eliminate those barriers and risks.

UNICEF and SC will both ensure that deliberate measures are taken to identify and address gender-based barriers that may prevent boys and girls from accessing, participating in, and benefiting from education and child protection services. This will be achieved through regular planned analysis of feedback and separate consultations with boys and girls regarding the services provided. The project teams will place particular emphasis on the importance of girls' education and the rights of children with disabilities during back-to-school campaigns. To challenge harmful social norms and roles that promote gender inequality in the community, caregivers, and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) will be engaged in guided dialogues. Teachers and school staff will also receive training and support to promote positive gender norms within the classroom and school environment, ensuring equal and equitable participation of boys and girls, including those with disabilities, in classroom activities. During the rehabilitation of school infrastructure, both agencies will ensure the inclusion of accessibility features such as ramps, handrails, and wide doors to facilitate access for children with disabilities. Additionally, sex-segregated latrines will be provided in all schools, and action plans will be developed to address any identified safety risks from the school safety audit assessment. Both agencies will ensure that project data is collected, analysed, and disaggregated by sex, age, and disability. Children facing protection concerns or requiring specific assistance based on individual needs will be identified and referred to child protection or other specialized agencies for appropriate support.

UNICEF has noted that disasters such as the recent earthquake do not affect women, men, boys, and girls, equally. Due to already existing gender inequalities, and traditional gender roles in the home and the community, women and girls are usually disproportionately impacted. As a result, the earthquake has exacerbated the existing inequalities, or even create new ones. Across Syria, social norms and traditional gender dynamics tend to disadvantage women and girls, particularly those with disabilities, widows, divorced women and girls, and women-headed households. Girls are expected to take care of injured family members and older persons, which may limit their access to basic services, including education. To ensure that the response to the earthquake will not exacerbate existing inequalities, or create new ones, UNICEF, and partners, will continue promoting equal and equitable access to emergency response services, with appropriate gender-specific measures taken to promote enrolment and retention of girls in schools, and mitigate protection and GBV risks. All UNICEF's activities, from BTL to supply's distribution and teachers' training, will have a specific attention to girls, and messages, as well as supplies are tailored to girls related aspects.

In addition, people with disabilities are also likely to be disproportionately affected by disasters such as the recent earthquake. Indeed, before the earthquake, it was estimated that 20% of

individuals above the age of two suffer from disabilities in Syria, including 23% of children aged two to 17. Children with disabilities belong to some of the most marginalised groups in times of crisis and disaster, due to the lack of reliable data regarding their needs, and significant disruptions created by the loss of family and community support systems. As many individuals have suffered new injuries because of the earthquake, hundreds of boys and girls are expected to acquire new impairments, which may limit their access to humanitarian assistance, including education, due to environmental, structural, communication, and attitudinal barriers. To ensure that children with disabilities are included and benefit from the proposed intervention, UNICEF and implementing partners, will ensure that data on children with different impairments is collected during enrolment along with gender disaggregation, and that learning methodologies are adapted to meet the specific needs of children with disabilities, ensuring that school facilities are accessible to all, and referring children who require specific assistance, such as assistive devices, to available services in the community.

As a result, throughout this project, all targets will include 60% of girls, and collected data will be gender and age disaggregated. The intervention will ensure gender balance within teachers targeted for psychosocial support and other services. Special attention will be paid to gender-specific protection issues for girls and boys, such as access to WASH facilities in learning spaces. All teachers will be trained on inclusive principles. Likewise, topics of inclusion, diversity, and tolerance, will be mainstreamed across UNICEF's education curricula, and activities such as teacher trainings, and awareness-raising sessions (parent-teacher sessions, etc.).

SC have considered the unique vulnerabilities of girls following the impact of the earthquakes, and has ensured that their needs are met, and the risks they face are addressed through programmatic interventions. Further detail on the specific approaches designed to meet the needs of girls (and children with disability), includes:

NWS: SC in NWS are implementing project activities across all sub-components. Through these programmatic activities, SC will ensure:

- Distribution of learning, teaching and recreational materials are gender-sensitive to both girls and boys.
- Back-to-Learning campaigns and awareness raising campaigns include specific messages related to girl's education. Messages will be followed up with the PTAs under 1.2 for discussion and engagement on overall effectiveness, and additional identified barriers to education for girls. Suggested actions will be taken forward and considered as much as possible, so schools can contribute to mitigating such barriers through PTAs.
- Teachers and school personnel targeted through incentives will have a gender balance, to ensure that both men and women are engaged to deliver education services in the non-formal education centres.
- The teacher training package will include gender-responsive pedagogy and gender-responsive schools. These trainings aim to ensure that teachers are supported with guidance on how they can consider the different learning and safety needs of girls while teaching in a classroom and delivering SEL sessions. Gender-responsive training for teachers additionally aims to ensure that their lesson plans are gender-responsive and build upon teaching practices to ensure they are gender-responsive.
- Teacher's Learning Circles will further enable the teachers to share gender-responsive

teaching strategies and help them to share and develop strategies and methods of responding to the unique needs of both girls and boys and create a more equal learning environment in the classroom.

- Training on safe identification and referral (SIR) will cover the identification of risks that are experienced by girls more frequently in NES. This includes topics such as gender-based violence, and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH). These measures include:
- Confidentiality and Privacy: Emphasize the significance of confidentiality and privacy when identifying and referring girls. Girls should feel safe and assured that their information will be kept confidential.
- Age-Appropriate Techniques: Provide training on age-appropriate techniques for identifying and communicating with girls of different age groups. Younger girls may require different approaches than adolescents or young adults.
- Referral Pathways: Provide clear guidance on referral pathways to connect girls with appropriate support services, such as counselling, medical care, legal assistance, or shelter. Ensure that participants know how to access these services for girls.
- Monitoring and Reporting: Train individuals to monitor the well-being of girls and report any signs of continued or escalating violence. This may involve ongoing follow-up and support.
- Documentation: Teach participants how to accurately document cases of violence or abuse involving girls, ensuring that records are maintained securely and in compliance with privacy regulations.
- SEL sessions aim to promote positive gender norms by enhancing the social and emotional mindsets of learners through the various improved SEL competencies and skills that both girls and boys develop.
- Rehabilitation activities in schools will ensure gender and disability inclusive WASH facilities are rehabilitated (gender segregated WASH facilities, and physically accessible for children with disability).
- In school risk assessments and emergency preparedness planning, sessions are designed and implemented to ensure safe spaces for girls and boys to openly share issues related to both visible and invisible risks that they face. This is achieved by ensuring that girls are included in the safe schools committees, and targeted consultation with girls is undertaken.
- SC and partner staff undergo comprehensive child protection training, which encompasses essential aspects of addressing violence against children. These training sessions place a strong emphasis on safeguarding girls from gender-based violence, which tends to intensify in crisis scenarios. Information covered includes how to report instances of violence, access secure spaces, and seek assistance from humanitarian organizations. Moreover, SC and partners stress the significance of child protection, underscoring the necessity to shield girls from exploitation, trafficking, and involvement in child labour. This involves disseminating guidance on recognizing and reporting child protection concerns.
- Boys and girls, including children with disability, will be supported with psychosocial support,

mindfulness activities and brain games that are gender, age and culturally appropriate as well as disability inclusive. SC and partner psychosocial support activities play a crucial role in the project. Girls may experience psychological distress acutely during times of emergency, and this continues long into the recovery period. As a result, psychosocial support activities draw attention to the availability of services designed to provide emotional and mental support. SC and partners also offer coping mechanisms to help girls manage trauma and stress effectively.

- Child protection awareness campaigns will engage community groups, including women-led organisations and adolescent men and women will be engaged for this activity, and awareness-raising will include specific information on the child protection risks of girls.

NES: SC in NES are focusing on the following activities across sub-components 1.3 and 3.1.

- Rehabilitation of 5 schools
- Develop & roll-out (including life-saving messages & drills) school safety plan & safety equipment distribution
- Training on risk matrix, safe identification & referral processes

While implementing these programmatic activities, SC will ensure:

- In coordination with the Education Cluster, SC will select the targeted schools based on a criterion of highest need, in addition to the with highest number of girls in need.
- During rehabilitation activities, SC will ensure gender and disability inclusive WASH facilities are rehabilitated (gender segregated WASH facilities, and physically accessible for children with disability).
- School safety plan includes various risks and mitigation measures (identified with the school staff, teachers, and PTAs). SC will ensure a gendered lens is applied, and schools are able to identify and effectively mitigate risks that are specific to girls, such as safety concerns for girls to attend the education facilities.
- SC will ensure meaningful participation of children (including girls) in school safety plan development process.
- Training on safe identification and referral (SIR) will cover the identification of risks that are experienced by girls more frequently in NES. This includes topics such as gender-based violence, and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH).

h. Financial Management Arrangements

SC's Financial Management follows several structured financial management procedures, systems and processes that are set out globally. SC will comply with the GPE Risk Management Policy; and to ensure that funds used for the intended purposes and that they achieve value for money; SC will manage 100% of the funds and oversee the day-to-day operations of the program.

SC are committed to transparency and accountability in all operations. As part of the GPE AF program, SC will conduct an external financial audit to ensure that donor funds are utilized efficiently and in accordance with established financial guidelines.

SC has a management operating system in place guided by well-defined standards to support its large and complex portfolio of development and emergency grants. Staff in SCUS' Department of Humanitarian Response will provide day-to-day backstopping support to the program for implementation and monitoring, including key award management, finance, M&E oversight, with support from additional sector-specific technical advisors from across SCUS. Oversight includes check-in calls, country visits, report reviews, etc., as well as the use of SC's standard monitoring tools. SC has standardized risk-based award monitoring protocols and tools to ensure tailored cross-functional support (including SCUS' Grants & Contracts, Finance, and Legal units) for adherence to established processes for risk identification, mitigation, resolution, and escalation.

Each month Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which focus on budget versus actuals spending, on time and quality reporting, among other indicators, are issued through SC's Award Management System (AMS) to monitor performance and are used to assess the need for additional oversight and support. Beginning from the opportunity stage for a prospective award, SC HQ and the relevant Country Office together conduct a collaborative assessment to identify risks that may be germane to that project type, location, etc. SC conducts another formal Award Risk Assessment at the proposal and implementation stage to again identify risks that may arise in the project as details of the project progressed.

While the budget will be managed by SC, implementing partners will be responsible for managing their own costs provided in implementing partner agreements. These costs will be paid to the implementation partners in three instalments: first payment after signing the agreement, a second payment once 80% of the initial budget is spent, and a remaining 10% at the completion of the award (subject to satisfactory reporting).

Implementing partner agreements will be signed for periods covering the life of award. Serious violations of funding agreements, including non-delivery results in non-renewal of or termination of the sub-award agreement. Templates of contracts, grants and letters of agreement will be reviewed by both parties, prior to signing.

UNICEF's fund management will be done through the UN system Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). HACT is a common operational framework for UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF for transferring cash to government and non-government implementing partners. HACT is based on risk management approach based on understanding of partner's financial management capacity and to shift towards progressive use of national systems for management and accountability. UNICEF HACT procedure defines minimum level of requirements with regards to: spot-checks, audits and other mitigating measures depending on the defined risk level of the implementing partner. Additional measures will be put in place, considering the risk level of the operating environment, with cross-border operations and in the Northwest.

UNICEF's monitoring and evaluation system uses three complementary modalities, to ensure fidelity to the intended design of interventions, and timely course corrections for the achievement of intended outputs and outcomes. **1 - Internal Monitoring:** Done in accessible areas by UNICEF staff, in the central hubs of Gaziantep and Damascus, as well as the five field offices of Homs, Lattakia, Aleppo, Qamishli, Deir Ezzor, and Rural Damascus. UNICEF-trained staff conduct regular programme monitoring visits, using standard monitoring and assurance tools, to assess progress of interventions against planned results, and to maintain dynamic and up-to-date

understanding of the situation of children. **2 - Monitoring through Implementing Partners:** UNICEF partners with a large network of international and local NGOs to deliver programmes for children and their families. These partners conduct continuous programme monitoring visits, to provide the necessary technical guidance and assess the status of interventions; they also provide monthly updates on the status of their interventions through the Whole of Syria 4Ws (including the number of beneficiaries in specific locations), so as to assist in the coordination of efforts, as well as bilateral reports used for joint reviews and identification of corrective measures as needed. **3 - Third-party Monitoring:** UNICEF contracts a third-party monitoring organisation to perform regular monitoring visits in all programme implementation sites, using trained monitoring personnel, with focus on areas that UNICEF staff may not be able to access, due to security constraints. Third party monitors provide real-time data on programme-supported interventions and help inform course corrections as needed. The engagement of this modality has helped strengthening the effectiveness of UNICEF Syria's humanitarian assistance and has been instrumental to keeping the sector informed of the situation on the ground.

UNICEF also uses three main tools to capture and report on progress: **1. Cluster Monitoring (4W System):** Progress is captured and updated on a monthly basis through the sector coordination database; **2. Child-level Monitoring System (CMS):** This was established in collaboration with WoS to obtain child-level data that inform the NFE programme's progress, and helps identify bottlenecks and trends, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of each intervention. The CMS tracks each child enrolled in an NFE intervention, following their progress and transition into formal education. **3. Teacher Capacity Assessment:** A specific tool will be developed to measure the extent to which teachers improve their theoretical knowledge in psycho-social support, risk reduction in contexts of natural disasters, and remedial education, as well as their awareness of implementation strategies, through the use of pre-/post-tests and self-reported attitudinal change.

i. Accountability to Affected Populations, and Grievance Redress Mechanisms

Using SC's Accountability Framework, a range of mechanisms will be applied to ensure accountability to the affected population. Information on SC and the planned activities will be made available to target communities through appropriate media (verbally and written in local languages). SC will also create opportunities for communities, including children, to participate in programming decisions and provide feedback throughout the program cycle. Program staff and partners will be oriented on their responsibilities in collecting and reporting community feedback.

- Program related information is effectively shared with beneficiaries. Information is shared with affected communities through appropriate means, covering:
- Information about donor and SC (e.g. vision/mission) and how SC staff are expected to conduct themselves (e.g. code of conduct, child safe-guarding practices). This means to disseminate the translated version and it will be done at community level during community meetings.
- Information about the program (e.g. activities, timelines, budget, deliverables, target beneficiaries and selection criteria) - This will be at community level during community meetings.
- Information about how communities (men, women, boys and girls) can participate, give feedback and make complaints.

Several modalities will be explored to ensure affected populations are informed on the existing feedback mechanism and how to use it. A particular focus will be put on solving people's complaints within a reasonable timeframe, and informing them back of the solution, and closing feedback loops. Communities will also be informed of relevant conditionality's that can limit what the program can do where and with whom. This may take the form of various local groups, through schools and learning spaces and other local dialogue forms that are appropriate. Feedback mechanisms will also be another way for communities and stakeholders to participate in the process.

Feedback and Reporting Mechanisms (FRMs) are in place for every program (clear, transparent procedures that provide beneficiaries, staff and other stakeholders with access to a safe, confidential means of voicing complaints on issues within the control of the agency).

Complaints handling process: A Process is established of no later than two weeks that enables community to safely raise complaints regarding SC staff or actions through appropriate mechanisms- toll free/Hot line numbers will be printed as stickers and fixed at community level after sensitization of FRM handling system.

UNICEF works with implementing partners at inception of the project to ensure that partners are sensitized to the issues of gender equality and accountability to affected populations, as well as ensuring gender elements are mainstreamed in programming. In addition, to ensure accountability to affected populations, NGO partners communicate with children's caretakers to identify the preferred/best modes of communication.

UNICEF will inform the community leaders in the targeted areas about the project activities that will take place. Community leaders, stakeholders and caregivers will be consulted prior to the implementation of the project objectives, activities, targeted population, and key messages of the programme.

UNICEF's implementing partners are already present in most of the targeted areas and have positive communications/interactions with the local communities. There are complaints boxes in fixed health centres for the purpose of gathering/receiving beneficiary complaints and feedback. UNICEF considers service accessibility and quality and accountability to affected populations from a beneficiary perspective and monitors this on a regular basis.

As part of evaluation and UNICEF's commitment to the participation of and accountability to affected persons, the beneficiaries are requested to provide end-use feedback on their experience. Through this feedback mechanism, beneficiaries have: (a) a complaint and grievance mechanism established to receive beneficiaries' feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, and (b) monitoring surveys to collect feedback about the satisfaction level of beneficiaries, which are used to continuously improve the actions.

In line with the humanitarian principles guiding the education cluster's response in Syria, the program will ensure accountability to beneficiaries by means of a complaints' mechanism established with the support of Implementing Partners. This mechanism will allow for beneficiaries to submit complaints or concerns either through telephone/hotline or in written form and will be received and categorized by the M&E/Accountability staff of the respective NGO. A categorization system for complaints is currently in place, with pre-determined levels of severity, and in which cases flagged as red are immediately submitted for further investigation. Throughout an investigation, the complainants' confidentiality, safety and security are prioritized.

In line with the MYRP framework, codes of conduct will be a requirement for all organisations partnering in program delivery. These Codes will be visibly posted so that all staff in the NFE centers as well as the parents of children attending the NFE sites are aware of them. Further, teachers, education personnel and organisations staff will be required to carefully read through the code of conduct and indicate they have understood the expectations and accountabilities by providing their signature against this.

Furthermore, the target population will play an active role in the program design and implementation by being involved in various activities that promote a participatory approach. For instance, key education messages will be shared with affected children in target areas through tailored and age-appropriate modalities, including child-friendly games and community engagement activities. Additionally, during the school year, school committees will be formed/supported, consisting of school staff, children, community members/caregivers, and possibly members of pre-existing structures like PTAs. School committees will receive capacity-building support throughout the program to effectively deliver their mandate and promote child participation in schools. In addition, PTAs will be involved in safety and improvement processes. They will be capacitated to deliver community-driven activities, thereby strengthening community capacity and ensuring that the program design and implementation consider the needs and perspectives of the target population. Co-grantees will conduct awareness-raising sessions for adults and caregivers regarding the importance of children's participation in programs. This ensures that community perceptions of children's participation are addressed for ensuring a more participatory approach to addressing education and child protection challenges in the medium to long term.

j. Child Safeguarding and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Assault and Harassment (PSEAH)

UNICEF, as co-lead agency for the inter-agency network (ICN) on PSEA (Prevention on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse), will continue to support and work closely with other agencies aiming at enhancing the portfolio of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. The main goal of the ICN is to enhance the networking for the benefit of people at risk and ensure access to complaint mechanisms and specialized services for victims. Therefore, continuous capacity building for humanitarian workers on zero tolerance for SEA and awareness raising for the community on rights to humanitarian aid free of any exchange in a dignified way is integrated in program activities. Consequently, as per-condition for contracting implementing partners, PSEA assurance and capacity building plan are guaranteed.

UNICEF is deeply concerned about the risks of GBV/SEA. With the reduced community sensitization and awareness of PSEA risk mitigation, we will see a rise in cases of SEA and gender-based violence (GBV) and further underreporting. However, UNICEF and partners continue to ensure quality and accessible survivor assistance and additional protection measures, such as enhancing the capacity of the service providers and the frontline workers on PSEA prevention, risk mitigation, reporting, and response; staff are also equipped with skills and guidance on how to report allegations safely and confidentially.

UNICEF SCO established an office-wide Action Plan with clear roles and responsibilities for Country Management Team, Operations, Human Resources, Programs, and sub-offices, including CFOs and FO PSEA Focal Points; UNICEF is also drafting an internal PSEA sector-specific risk mitigation checklist that will guide UNICEF partners to adequately respond to the risk of SEA. Consequently, continuous capacity building for humanitarian workers and partners on zero tolerance for SEAH and awareness raising for the community on rights to humanitarian aid

free of any exchange in a dignified way is integrated in programme activities. Consequently, as per-condition for contracting implementing partners, PSEA declaration and capacity building plan are guaranteed.

In August 2023, UNICEF conducted a staff survey on PSEAH to understand the gaps and capacity around PSEA risks and mitigations measures. In situations where there is a displaced population in need of humanitarian support, the risk of SEA and GBV incidents is more likely to face a sharp increase. Since 2015, the increase in the number of reported cases of SEA by humanitarian workers against children in many contexts prompted an urgent need to scale up UNICEF's efforts for prevention of and response to SEAH. As part of this commitment, UNICEF has committed to take all necessary steps to prevent and respond to SEA cases involving UNICEF's personnel swiftly and decisively, including staff, contractors, and volunteers, as well as cases involving UNICEF's partners at times.

SC prioritizes safeguarding and preventing harm to children and beneficiaries by integrating PSEA guidelines, processes, accountability, SEAH risk assessment, and staff capacity into its programming. To achieve this, all staff members and partners receive training on Child Safeguarding, PSEA and Safe Programming. Staff capacity is further enhanced by providing training on conflict sensitivity, protection analysis, and participatory approaches. Before any fieldwork or contact with beneficiaries, all staff must complete mandatory training on SCs Code of Conduct, PSEA Policy, and Child Safeguarding. Partners must also complete CSG training to ensure adequate, accessible, and friendly reporting mechanisms are in place and have the capacity to respond to any safeguarding concern, taking the survivor care approach into account. To ensure the quality and safety of programming, regular supervision is conducted using a quality benchmark checklist that assesses potential child safeguarding and GBV concerns. Additionally, a safeguarding focal point is established at each program site, and a risk assessment is conducted at the beginning of the program to ensure safe programming. This action will be taken as part of the overall SC approach to increase partner capacity, based on the results of the Partner Assessment Tool (PAT), and the general trainings provided to all partners on a bi-annual basis. Each partner will be assessed to determine their capacity level in terms of safeguarding, and training will be customized based on their specific needs and gaps. By conducting these assessments and providing tailored training, SC aims to enhance partners' abilities to effectively safeguard children and promote a safe working environment.

SC prioritizes safeguarding and preventing harm to children and beneficiaries by integrating PSEAH guidelines, processes, accountability, SEAH risk assessment, and staff capacity into its programming. To achieve this:

- All staff members, including volunteers, and partners receive training on Child Safeguarding, PSEAH and Safe Programming.
- Staff capacity is further enhanced by providing training on conflict sensitivity, protection analysis, and participatory approaches.
- Before any fieldwork or contact with beneficiaries, all staff must sign and complete mandatory training on SCs Code of Conduct, PSEAH Policy, and Child Safeguarding (CSG).
- Partners must also complete CSG training to ensure adequate, accessible, and friendly reporting mechanisms are in place and have the capacity to respond to any safeguarding concern, taking the survivor care approach into account.

Child-friendly Feedback and Reporting Mechanisms are put in place in the centers and beneficiaries made aware of these, and also awareness-raising posters, where possible.

- SC uses an online incident reporting system to report and manage Safeguarding, PSEAH, Staff, Safety & Security and Fraud concerns, and has clear investigation procedures in place, and responds immediately to reports with an internal deadline to close cases within 65 days.
- Mapping of services is in place for both NWS and NES, to refer cases of abuse, as needed.
- SC has 100% dedicated Safeguarding positions: SG Coordinator (National FP), SG Positions SG Field Focal Points, ensuring awareness-raising, prevention and responding to concerns.
- SC conduct background checks, adhering to Safer Recruitment practices even when rapid recruitment is necessary
- SC strive for at least 50% representation of female staff, and consider the number of staff members in the team, especially when there is an increased risk of isolated 1:1 time with a child
- SC ensure all partners and local organizations' staff and volunteers are trained on CSG and PSEAH or receive refresher, even when partners have previously worked with SC
- Where possible, posting of child-friendly CSG awareness materials and reporting mechanism (hotline, complaints box...) in locations of activities
- SC include content on safe/unsafe touch and relationships within the activities
- SC do not allow children to contact staff or volunteers on their personal mobiles
- SC ensure data protection around beneficiaries' personal information
- SC staff are trained on safe identification and referrals, and on PFA, child and youth resilience, gender equality, child participation
- SC support staff well-being to reduce stress to a manageable level

SC Quality and Safety Assurances:

To ensure the quality and safety of programming, SC:

- Conduct regular supervision using a quality benchmark checklist that assesses potential child safeguarding and GBV concerns.
- A safeguarding focal point is established at each programme site
- A risk assessment is conducted at the beginning of the programme to ensure safe programming. These actions will be taken as part of the overall SC approach to increase partner capacity, based on the results of the Partner Assessment Tool (PAT), and the general trainings provided to all partners on a bi-annual basis.

- Each partner will be assessed to determine their capacity level in terms of safeguarding, and training will be customized based on their specific needs and gaps. By conducting these assessments and providing tailored training, SC aims to enhance partners' abilities to effectively safeguard children and promote a safe working environment.

10. Annexes to the Application Form and Program Document and Implementation Arrangements:

Annex II: GPE AF II Results Framework

Annex III: GPE AF II Risk Matrix

Annex IV: GPE AF II Workplan

Annex V: GPE AF II Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Annex VI: GPE AF II Program Budget