

**Agenda item 4: UNICEF Humanitarian Action (E/ICEF/2026/13)
16-18 June 2026**

Mr. President, Madam Executive Director, distinguished Members of the Board,

I am honored to speak on behalf of [ChildFund Alliance](#), a global network of ten child-focused development and humanitarian organizations supporting 36 million children and families in 66 countries to end violence and exploitation, deliver child-sensitive humanitarian action in crises, and advance climate policies that elevate the voices of children and youth.

We deeply value our longstanding partnership with UNICEF and our shared commitment to protecting children living through conflict, disaster, and displacement. At a time of extraordinary global upheaval, we wish to express our profound appreciation for the dedication of UNICEF staff who continue to uphold the rights and dignity of every child.

Today, I wish to draw attention to the humanitarian situation of children and their families in Mali and to reaffirm our commitment to working alongside UNICEF and national partners to deliver program to protect children affected by conflict, displacement, and insecurity situation. Recent developments in Mali have further deteriorated an already fragile humanitarian context, leaving many more children and their families vulnerable.

Our [Child-Sensitive Humanitarian Action strategic objective](#) focuses on children and young people in fragile and crisis contexts; applying an integrated program approach across all sectors.

Climate-related shocks continue to exacerbate humanitarian needs and displacement across the Sahel. Investments in resilience, climate adaptation, and risk-informed programming are essential to protect children's rights and reduce future humanitarian needs.

Through [our members](#)—**Children Believe, ChildFund International, EDUCO, and WeWorld**—ChildFund Alliance has remained operational and steadfast in supporting children and their families, despite the increasingly challenging conditions since 2019.

In 2025 and more recently, our members reached more than **200,000** people directly and an additional **1 million indirectly** and many hundreds of thousands more through awareness-raising and community-based interventions. Our work spans Child Protection, Education in Emergencies, Health and Nutrition, Food Security and Livelihoods and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) with a particular focus on displaced and conflict-affected populations. In child protection specifically, we have strengthened protection systems and provided psychosocial support through child-friendly spaces and other educational activities.

As the situation continues, children remain at the epicenter of violence and instability. The [United Nations](#) warns of worsening humanitarian crisis and UNICEF warned that “it is children who are paying the highest price of ongoing violence in Mali” in Mali after the recent deadly attacks.

We also draw attention to children in other neglected crises: Ethiopia, Myanmar, Central Sahel, who are experiencing profound and preventable suffering.

ChildFund Alliance calls for:

1. Prioritize life-saving services for children in Mali, and other fragile contexts, including child protection, MHPSS, education in emergencies, and nutrition services.
2. Respect for International Humanitarian Law and for safe, sustained, and unimpeded humanitarian access to protect children and their families, including from grave violations.
3. Strengthen localization by investing in the leadership and capacities of local civil society, community structures, and local authorities, particularly in hard-to-reach areas.
4. Fund the [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan for Mali](#); humanitarian action in Mali remains chronically under-funded.
5. Invest in integrated humanitarian–development approaches that address the drivers of vulnerability and build resilience for children and families affected by recurrent crises in Mali.

ChildFund Alliance values its longstanding partnership with UNICEF and recognizes UNICEF’s leadership in coordinating and delivering critical services for children across Mali and other neglected crises.

Together, we can help ensure that even amid conflict and uncertainty, children are protected, supported, and given the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. Their future depends on the decisions we make today.

Thank you.

Meg Gardinier
Secretary General
ChildFund Alliance