



OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE

IMPACT IN 2020

COVID-19 IS A CHILDREN'S CRISIS

For children, COVID-19 has changed everything. Growing up in a pandemic, their rights to survival, health, education and protection are under threat. An entire generation of children is missing out on school, lacking lifesaving health care, worried about their next meal, falling into extreme poverty and at heightened risk of physical and emotional harm – with devastating, lifelong consequences.

What's more, this pandemic has revealed and reinforced deep and systemic inequalities within societies, in which the most vulnerable are paying the highest price. For example, children from the poorest families are missing out on much needed school meals or the technology needed to participate in distance learning. Girls, who have become caregivers, have taken on extra chores or have married, risk never returning to school. Children with disabilities do not have the support they need to learn and develop. These children are paying the highest price in this pandemic.

But there is hope in the spirit and resilience of children who are determined to overcome the odds. There is inspiration in the actions of children who are speaking out and demanding their rights be heard. And there is ambition in the work that Save the Children – and our partners and our peers - have done to respond to the biggest global crisis that we have ever faced in our hundred-year history.

WE'RE WORKING ALL OVER THE WORLD IN THIS FIGHT AGAINST THE PANDEMIC

Since the earliest days of this pandemic, Save the Children has been there for children in 88 countries, keeping them safe, helping them to learn, enabling their development and supporting them and their families' wellbeing in the face of lockdown restrictions.

So far, we have supported over 29.5 million people affected by coronavirus around the world, including 11.8 million children, on issues ranging from helping them with their physical and emotional health, to supporting their learning, safety and wellbeing, and financial resilience. We have adapted and expanded how we deliver our life-changing programmes and advocacy for children, and launched new and innovative initiatives to prevent and respond to the pandemic's devastating impacts, some of which have become sector-leading frameworks that our peers have adopted.

Our response has focussed on four areas – to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on children's health, help children learn, continue to develop and return to school safely, support families to survive the economic impact of the pandemic and keep children safe from harm in their homes and communities. You can find out more about our work across each of these areas in the following pages of this report.

CHILDREN HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT COVID-19

Throughout this pandemic, we've been listening to children to understand how they've been affected physically and emotionally – including conducting the largest ever global survey of its kind, in which some 25,000 children, parents and caregivers shared their experiences, hopes and fears for the future during this crisis.

All over the world, children have been taking action to protect themselves and their communities by campaigning for their rights and demanding their voices be heard during the pandemic. We've been helping to provide platforms for children to speak to leaders to demand action on education, including the re-opening of schools and improved distance learning, and increased access to healthcare, as well as a call for decision makers to support families' basic needs with social protection.

The spirit and resilience of children is inspiring, and we owe it to children like Johnathan (pictured below), and all the children who have been affected by this pandemic to put their needs first. We have to build a better, more equal world if we want to prevent the 2020's from becoming a "lost decade" of tragic reversals in progress made in newborn, child and maternal health; in lifting families out of poverty; in education for all; in combatting violence and abuse against children and inequality for girls and women.

We may beat this virus but we stand to lose so much more because of the pandemic if we do not ensure that children get back to school safely, have enough food to eat, stay healthy and are kept safe and protected. We owe it to children to get this right.



Johnathan, 15, is a South Sudanese boy living in a refugee settlement in northern Uganda. He has inspired other children in his community to go back to school and he is a Child Campaigner in Save the Children's Child Rights Group in the camp. In November 2020 he spoke on behalf of children in Uganda to The Minister of State for Higher Education and advocated for schools in Uganda to re-open for all classes.*

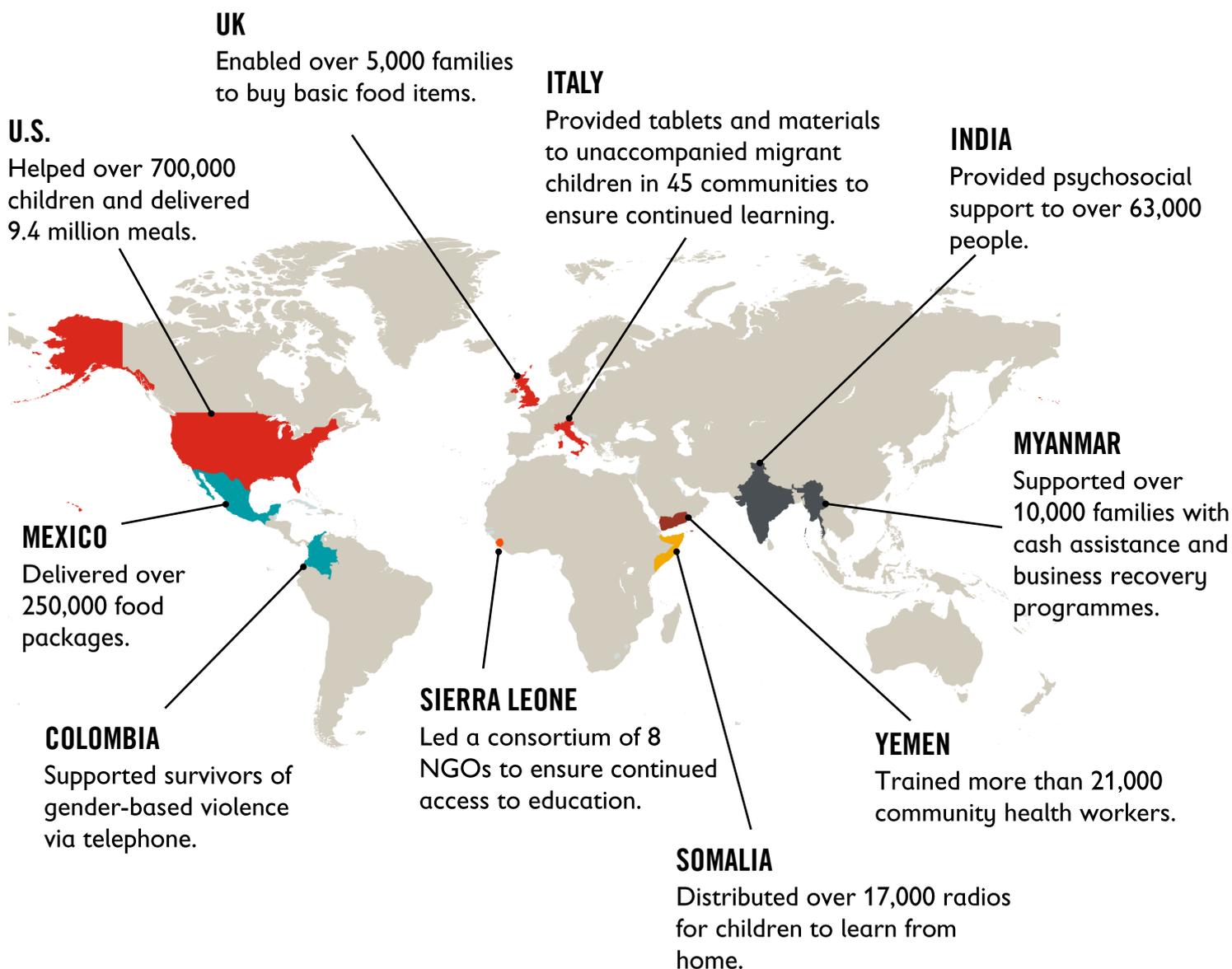
WE LAUNCHED A GLOBAL RESPONSE

In May 2020, Save the Children launched Protect A Generation, a [global response plan](#) to COVID-19 to act quickly to prevent, mitigate and respond to the devastating impact of the pandemic. Our response had four priorities underpinned by our global commitment to quality, accountability and partnership. To mitigate the impact of the pandemic on child survival; help children learn, stay safe, and return to school; support family survival and food security through safety nets; and keep children, families and communities safe.

We set out a target of US\$649 million to reach 69 million children and adults in 87 countries with assistance until the end of 2020, enabling us to protect children's access to essential services for their survival and development and prevent children and their families from slipping further into poverty.

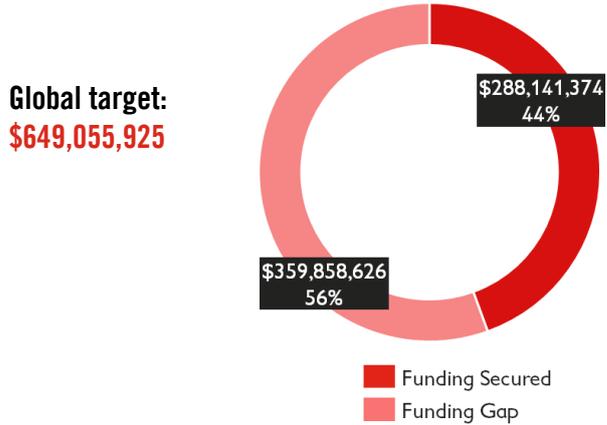
In order to reach our target, we launched a US\$100 million global public appeal, the largest ever in our history to support us in our efforts in the most wide-reaching humanitarian response in our history.

WE RESPONDED IN 87 COUNTRIES HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS...

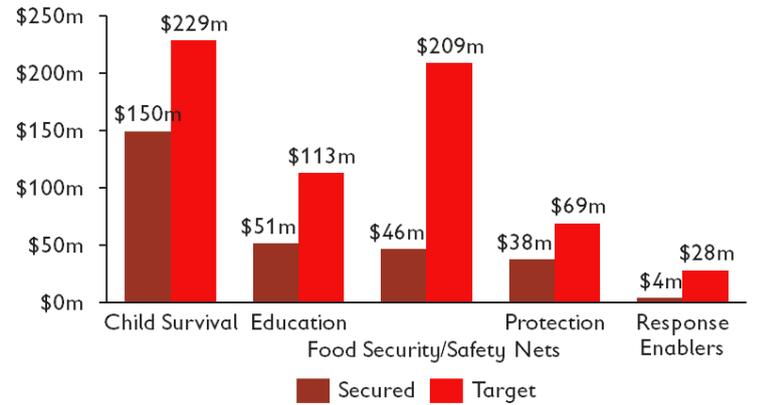


WE RAISED \$288.1 MILLION TOWARDS OUR GLOBAL RESPONSE IN 2020, AGAINST OUR TARGET OF \$649 MILLION

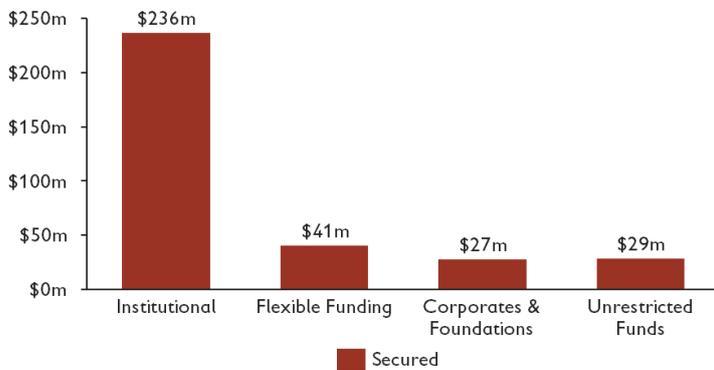
Global Response Plan Funding against global target



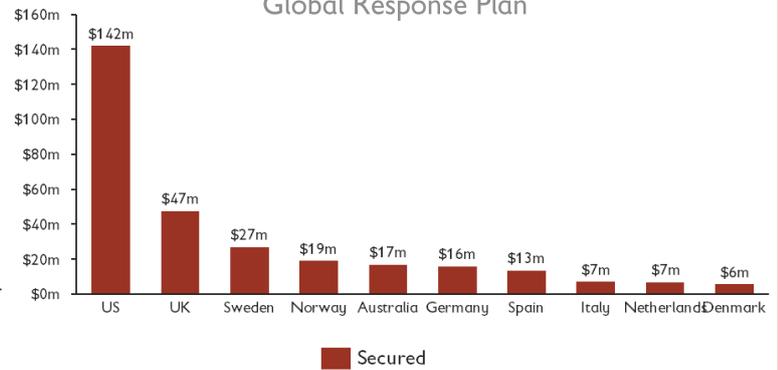
Global Response Plan Funding by response pillar



Global Response Plan funding by source

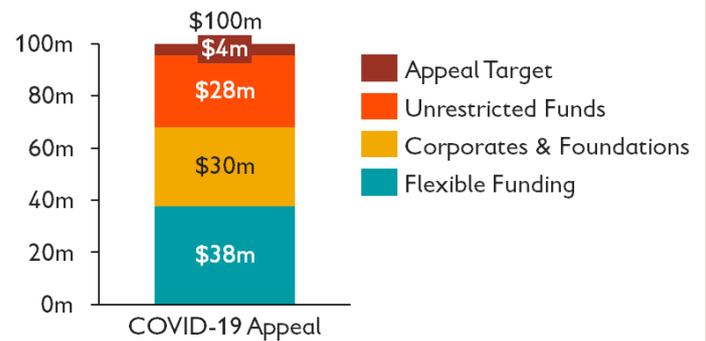


Save the Children Top 10 Member contributions to the Global Response Plan

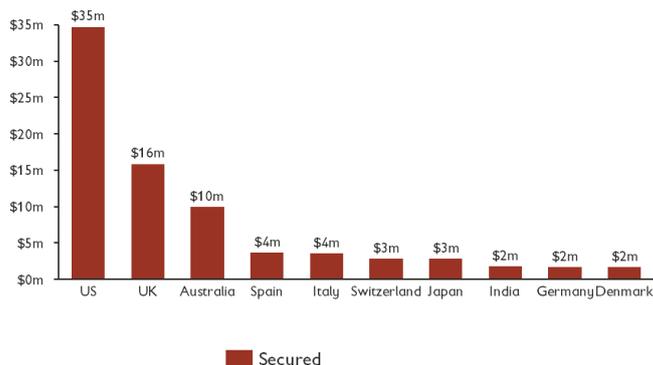


AND SO FAR, WE'VE RAISED \$96.5 MILLION TOWARDS OUR APPEAL. THAT'S 96.5% OF OUR \$100 MILLION TARGET

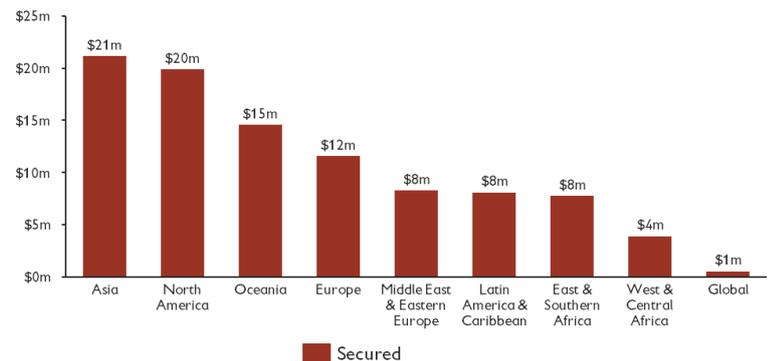
Global Appeal Funding against target, by income type



Save the Children Top 10 Member contributions to the Appeal



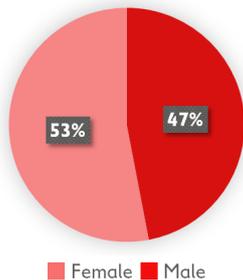
Appeal funding allocations, per region



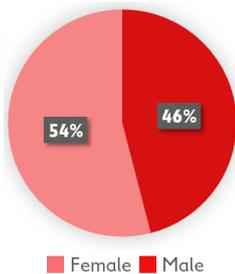
*All funding is shown in USD and appeal figures shown as of date of publication

WE REACHED 29.5 MILLION PEOPLE INCLUDING, 11.8 MILLION CHILDREN AND 17.6 MILLION ADULTS

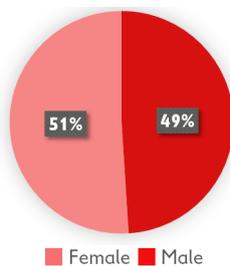
Total reached



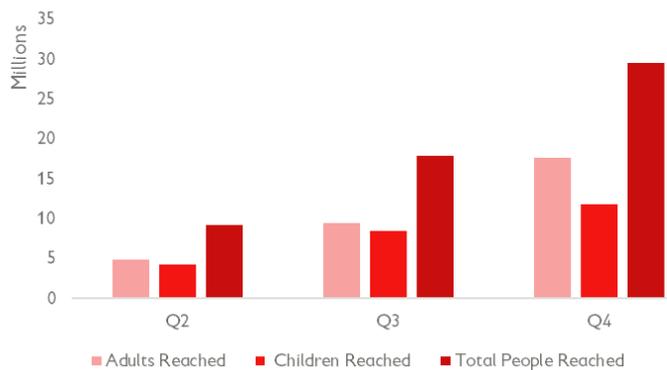
Adults reached



Children reached



Cumulative Total Reach Q2-Q4 2020



TOTAL REACH - REGIONAL BREAKDOWN (millions)

Region	Children	Adults	Total	% of Total Female	% of Total Male
Asia	3.2	4.5	7.7	58	42
East & Southern Africa	4.2	8.7	12.8	50	50
Latin America & Caribbean	0.8	0.8	1.6	57	43
Middle East & Eastern Europe	1	0.8	1.8	55	45
North America	0.7	0.7	1.4	55	45
Oceania	0.05	0.03	0.08	49	51
West & Central Africa	1.9	2	3.9	52	48
Western Europe	0.02	0.03	0.05	57	43

WE SUPPORTED CHILDREN ACROSS 4 KEY PILLARS



PILLAR 1

Mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on child survival



PILLAR 2

Help children learn stay safe and return to school



PILLAR 3

Support family survival and food security through safety nets



PILLAR 4

Keep children safe in their home and in communities

ENABLERS

Accountability to Affected Populations

Coordination

Partnership with Local National Actors

Real-Time Learning and Evidence

HERE'S HOW...

PILLAR 1 MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILD SURVIVAL

Our goal was to reduce excess morbidity and mortality of children due to the effects of COVID-19 and its impact on health and nutrition systems.

With decades of experience in community-based health care, we know it's the first line of defence against this crisis. We've been working with and training frontline health workers to detect, refer and manage cases, while resourcing health facilities and equipping their staff with the materials and information they need to prevent the spread of the virus and help themselves and others stay safe.

Teaching families how to properly wash their hands and ensuring they have access to soap and water are two basic, highly effective ways of preventing the virus from spreading. We also work with schools to make sure children can return safely, and that the institutions are supported to attain minimum public health standards where possible.

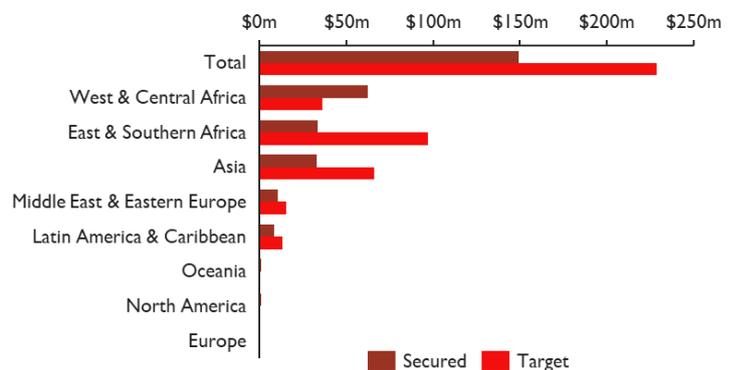
Keeping communities healthy means educating people about how the virus is transmitted and giving them the resources to stay safe. We have found innovative ways to provide families with the knowledge and resources to slow the spread and keep them safe from the disease through our existing work. To get the message out, we've been sharing information about COVID-19 through national radio programming, social media, TV, mass media, through megaphones in remote locations, and even written on bars of soap.

We have successfully advocated in countries for essential health services to be prioritised and strengthened during the pandemic in line with recommendations in our briefing [‘COVID-19 and the Case for Universal Health Coverage’](#). Globally, we worked closely with our partners to influence the international community to meet the \$8 billion financing target at the Global Pledging Conference on the Health Response to COVID-

19. We also launched our [‘Nutrition Critical’](#) report, which calls for action to end malnutrition, calling on leaders to make urgently needed commitments to tackle child malnutrition.

Now, as the focus of this crisis now turns to the distribution of the vaccine, we have developed a framework for our programmes to support the communication, preparation and delivery of the vaccine to population groups where it's needed most, including advocating for fair and equitable access to the vaccine for all countries and prioritising the people most at risk. At the same time, we are working hard to monitor and support the maintenance of essential health and nutrition services, including routine immunisation, so that children continue to receive routine health and nutrition services even as we support on the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine.

WE SECURED A TOTAL OF \$150 MILLION AGAINST PILLAR 1



64

COUNTRIES SUPPORTED RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Eréndira*, 8, José*, 11 and Elena*, 6, (pictured) with their hygiene kits in Mexico. These children came from Honduras with their mother and met our teams, along with their aunts and cousins, in a shelter they were staying in while trying to seek political asylum in the United States. Save the Children ran a “what is coronavirus?” workshop back in March 2020, where staff demonstrated hand-washing and delivered hygiene kits for migrant children in Tijuana, Baja California (northern Mexico) to ensure they knew how to keep themselves safe during the pandemic.



391,455

CHILDREN UNDER 5 RECEIVED TREATMENT FOR ACUTE MALNUTRITION

49% MALE, 51% FEMALE

**Falmata is 28-years-old and lives in an IDP camp in Maiduguri in North East Nigeria. Her husband couldn't work during the pandemic because the market was closed where he used to sell his farm produce. Her daughter, Aisha*, 1, (pictured) has been suffering from malnutrition since birth, but she was unaware of this until a screening team diagnosed her on a home visit. She was then given treatment at a Save the Children supported hospital, to try and help improve her condition.*



117,088

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS SUPPORTED OR TRAINED

43% MALE, 57% FEMALE

Community health workers attend a COVID-19 training in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh - the world's largest refugee settlement - to equip them with necessary information to inform the Rohingya refugee community about how to protect themselves during the pandemic.



1,147,905

HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED TO ACCESS SAFE WATER, HANDWASHING FACILITIES WITH SOAP AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

Martha (pictured) washes her hands at her home in Kapoeta, South Sudan. Save the Children is primarily working with Community-Based Distributors and Health promoters in these areas to raise awareness of COVID-19 risks and preparedness and mitigation measures. Save the Children also supported water storage tanks for facilities and communities, and distributed hygiene products such as soap, to facilitate hand washing.*

PILLAR 2 HELP CHILDREN LEARN, STAY SAFE AND RETURN TO SCHOOL

Our goal was to ensure children affected by school closures continued to learn and ensure their physical, psychosocial and learning needs were supported.

At the height of the pandemic in June 2020, over 90% of the world's children were out of school, taking away the chance for children, to learn and also impacting their health, wellbeing and safety.

In response to this global education crisis, we launched the [Save our Education campaign](#), and set out actions needed to keep learning alive throughout the crisis. As part of the Save our Future Coalition, we were involved in the UNESCO Extraordinary Global Education Meeting where over 65 Member States pledged to maintain or increase financing on domestic education, and to make education a central part of COVID-19 stimulus packages. And leveraging our global presence, we pushed for debt relief for the poorest countries to be used to finance education and other essential services for children.

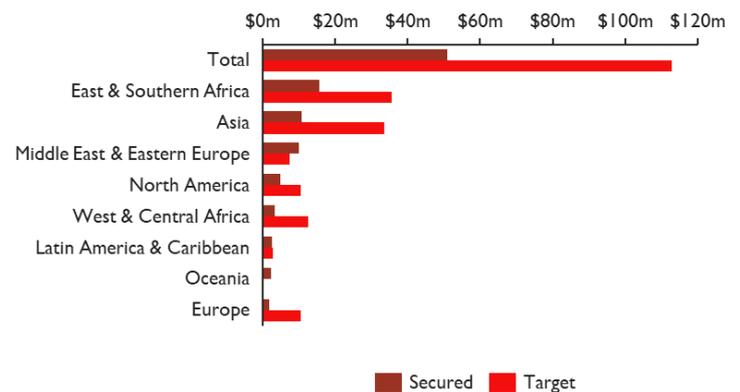
When schools closed, we set up innovative, and inclusive ways to keep children learning through TV, radio, audio files, and simple pen and paper that supported nearly three million children across the world. With the help of teachers and governments, we created comprehensive distance learning materials to support parents who are educating their children at home, including specialised measures for children under five -- a crucial stage of a child's development -- and for girls, while we enhanced our gender-sensitive messaging to parents and teachers to emphasize the importance of girls' education and empowerment.

Wellbeing has been integrated into our education response, such as by providing journals and other opportunities for children to identify their feelings. Where

families depend on school meal programmes, we have adapted existing feeding programs, set up food distribution sites, and delivered food and vital messages about the virus to families in rural communities via bus, bicycle, rickshaws and pickup trucks. In some places, cash programming has also helped ensure children return to school, where their parents had been financially impacted by lockdown measures.

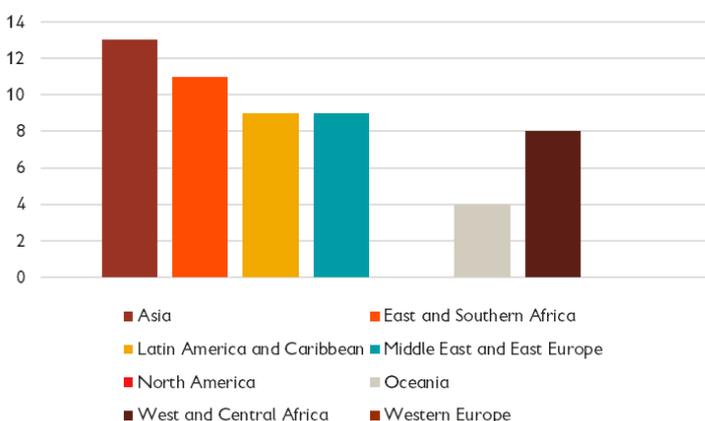
Ensuring all children can return to school safely has been central to Save the Children's response to COVID-19. It is a key priority for the organisation to support the return of over 150 million children back into learning, across more than 60 countries. We are doing this through a mix of program adaptations, data and evidence, advocacy, fundraising and partnerships. Our role as co-lead in the Global Education Cluster has also helped to influence others' response plans and how we prioritise learning and the safe return to school in multiple countries.

WE SECURED A TOTAL OF \$51 MILLION AGAINST PILLAR 2



53 COUNTRIES SUPPORTED MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION TO ADAPT CURRICULUMS TO THE COVID-19 CONTEXT

Number of countries per region supported Ministries of Education to adapt curriculums to the COVID-19 context



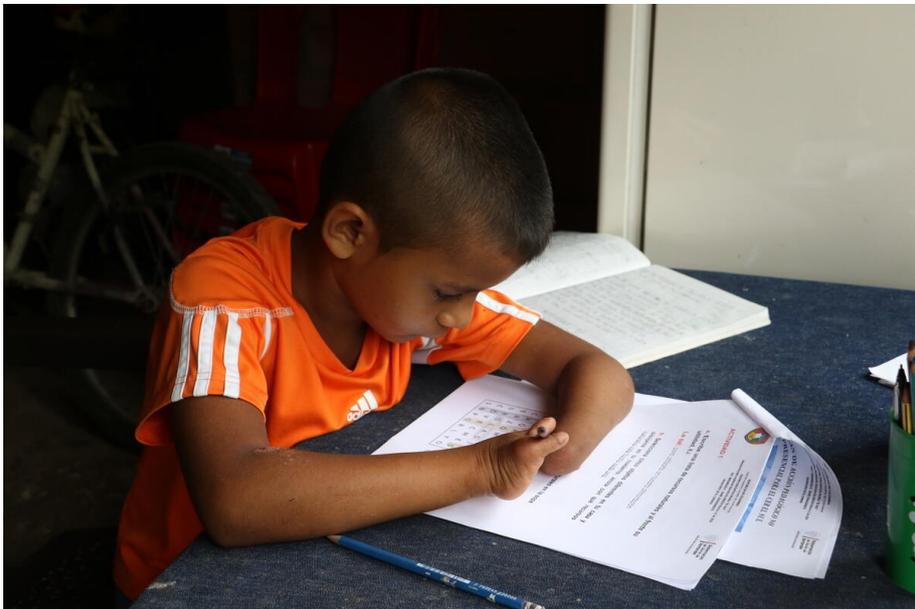


3,469,524

CHILDREN SUPPORTED WITH DISTANCE LEARNING

49% MALE, 51% FEMALE

Ameen* (pictured) is 12 years old, and lives with his mother and siblings in a camp in northern rural Idlib, North West Syria. Ameen* had to drop out of school when schools were suspended, as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak in the camp and he resorted to working to support his family and secure food for them. A month after dropping out, Ameen* was able to get a mobile phone and was enrolled into the distance learning programme that Save the Children's partner organisation, Syria Relief, provided in the area. Ameen* now works during the day and studies in the evenings.



87,830

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES SUPPORT TO ACCESS DISTANCE LEARNING

52% MALE, 48% FEMALE

At the top of a small mountain in Colombia, Isaac, 7, (pictured) has received distance learning support during COVID-19. Isaac, at age 7, dreams of becoming a police officer or a footballer, both passions that he is already strengthening. Isaac and his sister Merly, told us that studying at home takes the fun out of school and keeps them from playing with their friends. Save the Children supports children like Merly and Isaac with food, hygiene and educational kits during the COVID-19 pandemic when they are unable to attend school due to school closures.

66.67%

OF SAVE THE CHILDREN-LED EDUCATION CLUSTERS/WORKING GROUPS OPERATING WITH A COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

In Iraq...

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 in Iraq, the Ministries of Education (Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Federal) closed all schools and suspended all education activities throughout the country until the end of the school year.

The Education Cluster, co-led by Save the Children, developed a plan to mitigate against the effects of disruption to learning. This involved sharing guidance notes on remote and self-learning modalities set up by the Ministries of Education (such as e-learning, free Apps which connect teachers to students and parents and digital story books) to ensure uptake by children.

The Cluster also led work to contextualise the Framework for the Safe Reopening of Schools in Iraq. This work

emphasised the importance of remote learning modalities in case schools were to close again, ongoing support for teachers and psychosocial and case management support for children. The need to provide disinfection and PPE, build on existing structures such as Parent-Teacher Associations and School Management Committees, and support these groups to monitor Safe Back to School efforts was emphasized.

The Cluster commissioned a study to understand the impact of learning on young people aged 13-24 years. The results were that 42% did no learning during lockdown, 50% did not attempt to study, read books or engage in recreational activities and 52% were worried they might struggle when learning spaces reopened.

PILLAR 3

SUPPORT FAMILY SURVIVAL AND FOOD SECURITY THROUGH SAFETY NETS

Our goal was to ensure families, particularly the most deprived and marginalised, were able to meet children’s most basic needs and avoid hunger, malnutrition and other negative coping strategies due to lost livelihoods.

The unprecedented global economic shock brought about by COVID-19 could set back more than a decade of progress in reducing child poverty. Even before the pandemic, far too many children were living in poverty - 585 million children in low and middle-income countries, almost 1 in 3, lived in households below their national poverty line - facing deprivations that will limit their future potential. Getting children and families out of poverty is not just a moral imperative but also an economic and social priority, and our response has focussed strongly on this area.

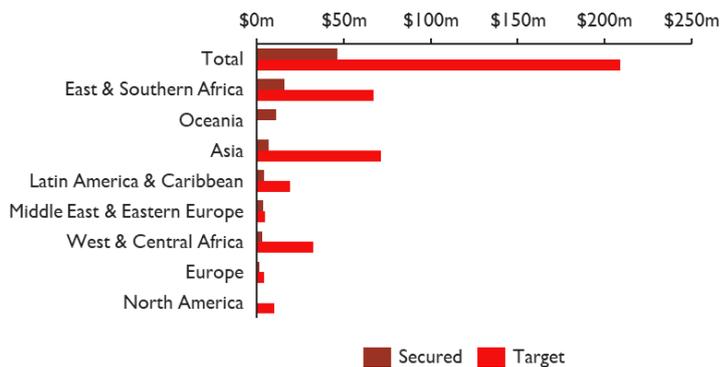
We know that cash transfers are one of the best evidence-based, anti-poverty tools available. During the pandemic, where lockdown restrictions had an immediate impact on families’ livelihoods, we leveraged this expertise to support families at risk of falling into poverty, and helped families already in humanitarian crises, providing them with the resources they need to ensure their children are fed and taken care of. We’re currently providing these programmes all around the world, as well as advocating for countries to ensure their people have the means to provide for children’s basic needs.

Globally, we’ve provided cash and vouchers to help 554,000 families put food on the table and meet other basic needs, in 37 countries, often using electronic

transfers through mobile phones to get much needed assistance directly to families.

We’ve worked with over 40 government to adapt and expand safety nets for the poorest families whose livelihoods have been hit the hardest by the pandemic and who lost income, as well as access to things like free school meals for their children. Through our report, [A Foundation to End Child Poverty](#), we put a spotlight on how child-specific benefits for families are needed in the fight against child poverty, and why we need to move progressively towards Universal Child Benefits to protect a generation from the impact of COVID-19 and the Climate Crisis.

WE SECURED A TOTAL OF \$46 MILLION AGAINST PILLAR 3



553,896

HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED GLOBALLY TO RECEIVE CASH AND/OR VOUCHER TRANSFERS

Georgina and her five-year-old daughter Lexi-Mae (pictured) live in a deprived area in the North of the UK. Like many other families, Georgina has been home schooling Lexi-Mae during lockdown. Struggling with their finances, Save the Children (with help from Lexi-Mae’s primary school) provided them with emergency food vouchers, a gift card they used to buy a new bed for Lexi-Mae, and an early learning pack including toys and books.

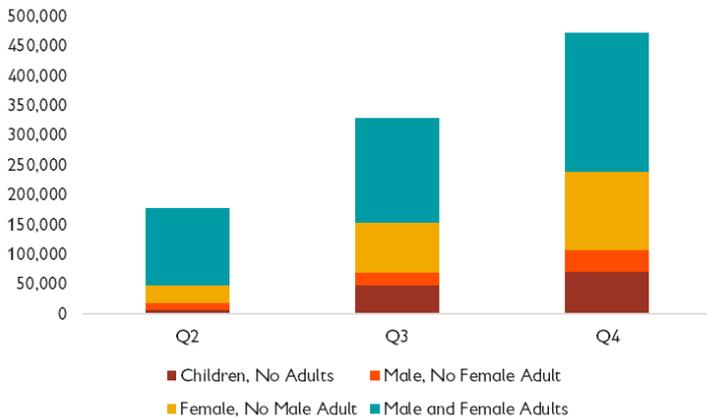


Jesica, 15, (pictured) is a third year high-school student in El Alto, Bolivia. In 2019, Jesica participated in Save the Children's "Adolescents as Protagonists of Development" project. Her family's business had just started to improve, but due to the pandemic, sales fell and their income stopped. In the midst of the pandemic, a new opportunity arose for Jesica and her family: producing mattresses for the COVID-19 isolation center of the Municipal Government of La Paz. Although the pandemic diminished the sale of quilts, Jesica and her family's business was able to diversify their products by manufacturing mattresses for the isolation center with support from Save the Children.

“ We needed income, and the project seemed like a great opportunity to learn...I did not know how to work, but I learned to be an entrepreneur. ”

Jesica, Bolivia

Households supported by Save the Children to receive cash and/or voucher transfers, by composition from Q2-Q4 2020



45 GOVERNMENTS SUPPORTED TO PROTECT, ADAPT AND/OR SCALE SAFETY NETS FOR COVID-19 AFFECTED POPULATIONS

Number of governments per region supported to protect, adapt and/or scale safety nets for COVID-19 affected populations



PILLAR 4

PROTECT CHILDREN FROM RISK OF VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN THEIR HOMES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

Our goal was to ensure children at-risk of, or experiencing, violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect had access to quality child protection services during COVID-19.

The global pandemic has put children's safety and wellbeing at greater risk, while at the same time, disrupting the child protection support services on which many children rely. The impact of lockdown restrictions and school closures have led to an increased risk of violence in the home, and more children at risk of harmful work or marriage to relieve economic pressures in families. The risks of harm to children are even for children affected by armed conflict; children on the move and children living in institutions.

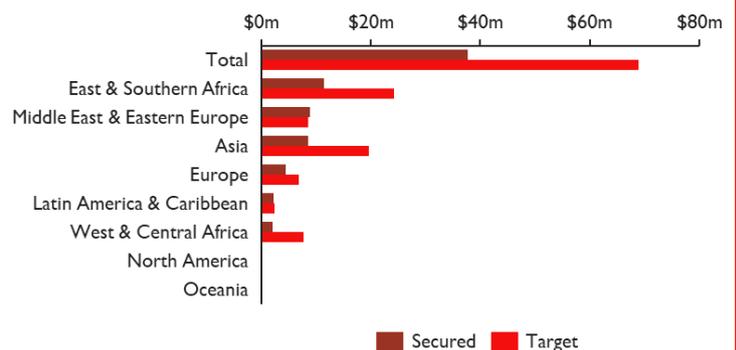
From the start, our child protection teams rapidly adapted to the realities of lockdown restrictions to ensure continuity of vital child protection interventions. This includes support for children in humanitarian crises, survivors of sexual violence, those at risk of recruitment by armed forces and groups, and those separated from their families.

We helped mobilize communities to ensure children are not left in fear and isolation, and when child help-lines closed, Save the Children supported them to be re-opened and classified as essential services. We trained social workers and governments to support children who have experienced violence and provided support to the mental and psychosocial wellbeing of children, parents and caregivers, through 'stress buster' and other messages transmitted over radio, videos, and other media, adapting messages to reach and support parents in this stressful time. As children spent more time on the internet for online learning, we also shared tips on keeping safe online

with them and their families.

Along with our partners, we urged leaders to make children's protection a central consideration in COVID-19 response and recovery plans. Through research and reports, we provided evidence on [The Hidden Impacts of COVID-19 on Children's Protection and Wellbeing](#), and on gaps in funding [Still Unprotected: Child Protection in Humanitarian Funding](#), which were exacerbated by COVID-19 in 2020. Our [Global Girlhood Report](#), highlighted the devastating secondary impact of the pandemic on girls specifically. The urgency of tackling the rise in gender-based violence was recognised in the Global Humanitarian Overview for 2021, and a UN COVID-19 Gender Response Tracker was set up to hold countries to account for measures to address violence against women and girls.

WE SECURED A TOTAL OF \$51 MILLION AGAINST PILLAR 4



112,087

CHILDREN RECEIVED CASE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

50% MALE, 50% FEMALE

The economic downturn and the coronavirus pandemic had already had a huge impact. Lama, 11, (pictured), her brother Jad, 14, and their parents. When the Beirut explosion occurred in August 2020, the family were all psychologically affected. Save the Children supported the children to deal with what they had experienced, and we provided the family with cash assistance to help them provide basic essentials including nutritious food for their children.



246,838

CHILDREN RECEIVED MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

46% MALE, 54% FEMALE

Oleksander*, 8, (pictured) and his family in Eastern Ukraine have been impacted by the conflict and COVID-19. His brother, Roma* was badly hurt five years ago when artillery shells hit their home. With school closures due to COVID-19, Oleksander* has to wait for his mother to return from work before he can do his homework. Save the Children has supported Oleksander* with counselling to overcome the trauma of the shelling and to help deal with life's current difficulties.

378,685

ADULTS RECEIVED MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

45% MALE, 55% FEMALE

RESPONSE ENABLERS

The response pillars highlight what we aimed to achieve for children, the response enablers demonstrate the policy principles upon how we planned to get there. This included accountability to affected populations, coordination and collaboration, partnership with local and national organisations and real-time learning and evidence.

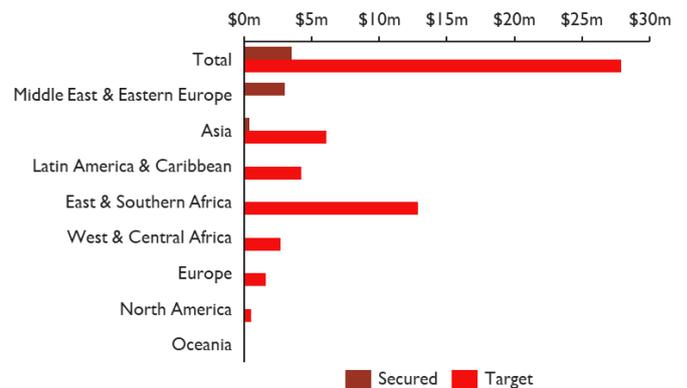
65

NATIONAL COVID-19 RESPONSES SUPPORTED TO PROVIDE FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH, LEARNING, PROTECTION, AND SOCIAL PROTECTION WITH A FOCUS ON THE MOST MARGINALISED

41

NATIONAL COVID-19 RESPONSES SUPPORTED TO INCLUDE CHILDREN'S VOICES IN NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

WE SECURED A TOTAL OF \$3.5 MILLION FOR RESPONSE ENABLERS



Children have the right to engage in decision-making. They want to influence change and their situations improve when they have a say in discussions that affect them.

Throughout 2020, Save the Children's National and Global Digital Hangouts have brought together children around the world with global leaders in online meetings, so that decision-makers can hear what children's priorities are in the response to COVID-19, with Save the Children facilitating the conversation.

Children from many different countries - such as Albania, Palestine, Cambodia, Uganda and Nepal - shared their views and recommendations for their leaders. The children had the opportunity to engage not only with their national leaders but also the leaders of other countries, who shared lessons learned and best practices.

“ I ask you to put yourself in the shoes of a small child that has to deal with their parents arguing, that has to deal with not seeing their friends, that can't hug their grandparents, a child who may be going to sleep hungry. And I ask you to imagine being this child while trying to learn from a screen, while no one is helping you out. ”

Vesa, Kosovo

“ With schools closing, a lot of students have been involved in child labour. Child labour is mostly due to financial difficulties at home and when schools are closed, children are working instead. Sexual abuse, violence, rape, drug abuse also increasing... for students like us who don't have internet and mobile, what plan have you made? ”

Punita, Nepal

13% OF COVID-19 RESPONSE FUNDING PROVIDED TO LOCAL AND CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS

In South Sudan...

Save the Children has been working with local partners such as Action for Children Development Foundation—South Sudan (ACDF-SS) and Diar for Rehabilitation and Development Association (DRDA) since 2018 in Western Lakes and in Aweil East. The programmes address child protection and gender-based violence concerns, advance women's rights by building capacities and increase youth civic participation.

When the first COVID-19 cases were reported in South Sudan, our programmes were adapted to ensure new needs created by the pandemic were met and to ensure the safety of communities. Staff safety and welfare plans were also extended to our partners and the country office disseminated key information about COVID-19 to both partners in local languages.

Additional funding was given to these two partners, via Save the Children, to increase the scale of outreach in the communities.

Our partners worked to spread mitigation and prevention messages through jingles on the radio and posters to educate communities and they distributed soaps, face masks, banners and posters, which were translated into local languages. Youth and children played a critical role in awareness-raising activities in their own communities through the support provided by Save the Children.

We leveraged existing project and community structures such as youth groups, advisory committees and local advocacy teams to raise awareness of COVID-19.

By working closely with local organisations such as these, we were also able to establish community surveillance mechanisms to ensure reporting of suspected cases of COVID-19.



WE CONTINUED TO EMPOWER GIRLS AND THEIR RIGHTS

Hibo* (pictured) and her family live in one of the IDP settlements in Mogadishu, Somalia. She is one of the many students who have been impacted by school closures in Somalia. Save the Children and partners organizations are reporting a spike in child rights violations including an increase in cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced and child marriages and other forms of violence against children.

Uncertain of her future and if she will ever return to school, her parents accepted a marriage proposal from a much older man in an attempt to prepare her for marriage. Hibo*, who has been an active member of a child rights group in her school, supported by Save the Children, knew this was not what she wanted for herself. She reached out to her headmaster and asked him to intervene on her behalf. When he spoke to her parents they agreed to cancel the marriage and allow her to study.

WE GATHERED **REAL-TIME LEARNING AND EVIDENCE** TO INFORM OUR RESPONSE

Throughout 2020, Save the Children carried out a global survey to understand the true impact that COVID-19 has had on children and their families, and to hear directly from children themselves. The survey is the largest and most comprehensive of its kind to date, capturing the voices of over 25,000 children, parents and caregivers from 37 countries, and the results were captured in our report, [Protect a Generation: The impact of COVID-19 on children's lives](#).

The survey found that:

80% of children surveyed said they've learned little or nothing during the pandemic.

90% of people surveyed have struggled to access healthcare and medicine, with two-thirds having issues with getting the food they need.

77% of households surveyed said they had lost income during the pandemic, with poorer households hit harder.

19% of children reported violence occurring in homes that had seen a loss of income, compared to 5% where there had been no lost income.

Also contained within the report is the Children's Agenda for Action - a section of the report based on children's responses to the question: 'If you were asked to write a letter to leaders in your country, what would you say?' Children demanded action on education, including the re-opening of schools and improved distance learning, an acceleration in the response to the pandemic and increased access to healthcare, as well as a call for decision makers to prioritise meeting families' basic needs with social protection.

These findings send a clear message: the COVID-19 pandemic has widened pre-existing inequalities. The most marginalised and vulnerable, already struggling to stay healthy, stay safe or go to school, are being pushed even further behind and, left unchecked, there is a real danger that there will be a reversal of progress made over the last 20 years.

LESSONS LEARNED

We are immensely proud of everything our staff and partners achieved in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also reflected on lessons learnt throughout the response and identified areas where we can improve to increase our accountability to children and partners.

Out of the total funding for the response, only 13% was disbursed to local and national civil society actors. We will focus on increasing direct and indirect funding to local and national civil society actors in line with our commitment to the Grand Bargain.

Overall, we secured less than half our overall funding requirements which had direct implications for both overall reach and delivery of integrated programmes and advocacy in line with children's own priorities. Critical response interventions including providing safety nets to families and helping children to learn, were under resourced, receiving the least funding against targets. This contrasts sharply with views expressed directly by children as part of the global survey who highlighted safety nets and education as top two priorities from their perspective.

It is critical that integrated programmes and advocacy correspond directly to children's priorities. To do so requires an increase in flexible funding which enables us to pivot response and advocacy to children's priorities.

In 2021, Save the Children plans to respond to the needs of 15.7 million people including 9.4 million children. Our response strategy is outlined in the [Humanitarian Plan 2021: Children Cannot Wait](#), which reflects lessons learnt from the COVID response.



Save the Children

Our response in 2020 would not have been possible without all of our supporters, partners, staff and friends. But our work does not stop here.

Save the Children believes that every child deserves a future. Around the world we will continue to ensure every child has the right to survival, education and protection in the years ahead.

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