

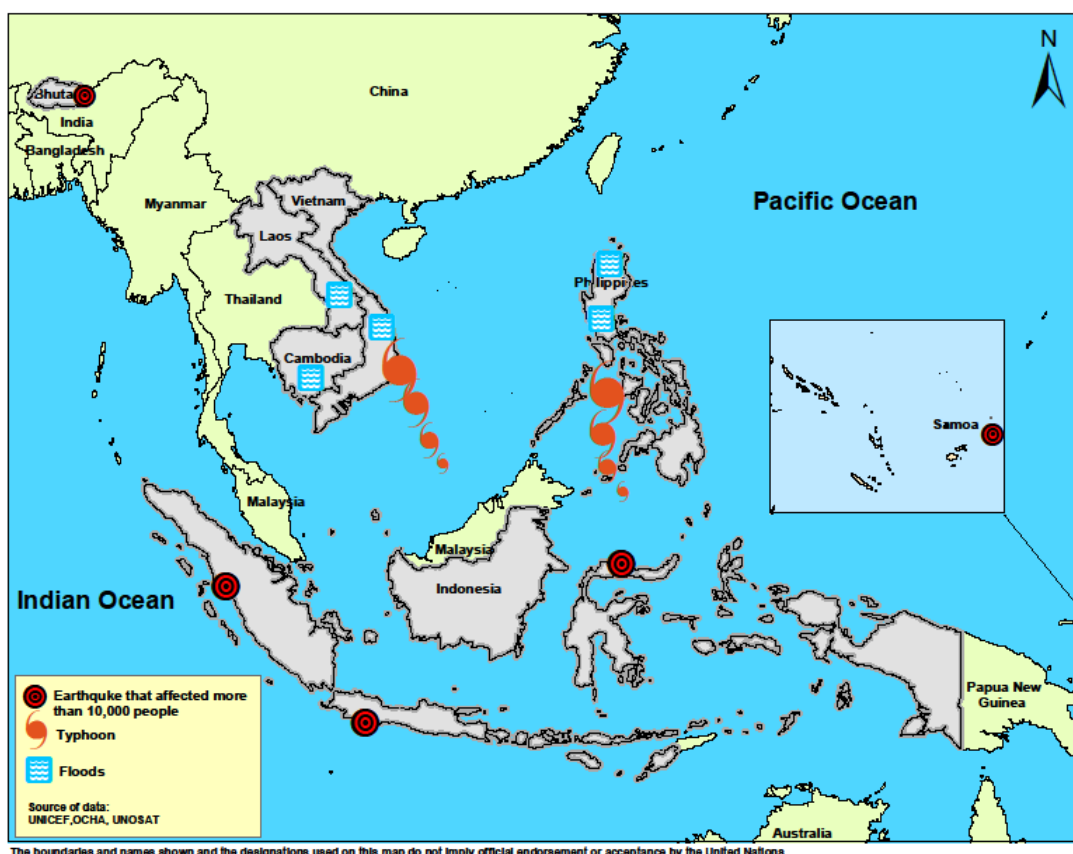
# UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION UPDATE

## ASIA-PACIFIC

16 October 2009

**UNICEF urgently requires US\$1,9 million to respond to the needs of nearly 10 million people directly affected by multiple disasters across the Asia-Pacific region**

- UNICEF is providing immediate life-saving assistance to children and women in seven countries following devastating earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, and flooding while also taking steps to help life return to normal as quickly as possible.
- Clean water, sanitation and hygiene support, family reunification, child protection, and prevention of malnutrition and communicable diseases are UNICEF's priorities in working with governments and civil society partners.
- Separate inter-agency appeals have been issued for targeted response in Indonesia and the Philippines.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

## 1. ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

The Asia-Pacific region has recently been hit by a series of natural disasters: typhoons and floods in the Philippines (26<sup>th</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> October); Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (29<sup>th</sup> September). Earthquakes struck Bhutan (21<sup>st</sup> September); the Pacific Islands (26<sup>th</sup> September) with a resulting tsunami; and Indonesia (30<sup>th</sup> September). In total, some 9.8 million people are affected, more than 1,600 are confirmed dead, and over 3,000 people are still missing. More than 3.8 million of the affected population are children.

Children have been severely affected by the disasters. The lack of access to safe water, food, blankets and clothing are alarming in all the crisis-affected areas. The psychosocial well-being of children and communities has been significantly affected, and tens of thousands of children face heightened risks while displaced, separated, or lacking access to basic services. The number of children orphaned or with one surviving parent is not yet known. Children sleeping in overcrowded evacuation shelters could be at risk of secondary separation as families start to look for alternative accommodations for their children, including placement in institutions. Orphaned children living with other families are also at increased risk of discrimination and dropping out of school as stressors accumulate. In flood-affected areas, children face health risks such as communicable diseases after long periods of exposure to the elements. Disruption of schooling has affected all school children in the crisis-affected areas. While hundreds of schools have been destroyed, others are being used as temporary shelters.

### ***Typhoons and floods***

In the **Philippines**, approximately six million people, of which 2.5 million are children, have been affected by typhoons Ketsana and Parma, with the latter triggering devastating landslides on 9 October. As of 12 October 2009, the two storms were responsible for the deaths of 536 people, injuring 462 and leaving 87 still missing. At the height of the crisis, more than 700,000 people were displaced; more than 330,000 remain in 700 evacuation centres two weeks later. The storms were also responsible for the total or partial destruction of more than 60,000 homes. More than 1,000 schools have experienced significant damage or are being used as evacuation centres. An urgent and systematic approach, in line with international emergency standards, is critically important to ensure safe drinking water, water for cleaning, soap (both for hand washing and laundry) as well as latrines. The psychosocial well being of children and communities has been significantly affected, and tens of thousands of children living in the streets now face particularly heightened risks from solid waste and stagnant water. UNICEF's highest priorities are ensuring the provision of immediate relief supplies, water, sanitation and hygiene and ensuring community health units are functioning well. In addition, UNICEF is working to ensure systems are in place for child reunification and psychosocial activities as well as getting more children back into pre-school and regular school classes.

In **Vietnam**, 3 million people have been affected by Typhoon Ketsana that struck the country on 29 September. Approximately one million of the affected are children, 163 deaths have been reported and 11 people are missing. More than 21,400 houses have collapsed and over 218,200 are flooded. Over 5,200 classrooms have been destroyed. In central Vietnam there has been a ten-fold increase in the number of hospitalized patients with flu, diarrhoea, and eye infections. Lack of drinking water, poor nutrition, environmental pollution (animal carcasses in the water) and damaged sanitation facilities are contributing factors to the emergence of diseases in the area.

On the same date tropical storm Ketsana struck **Cambodia**. Over 25,580 families are affected and 614 have been displaced to shelters and community centres. The estimated number of children affected is 49,500. The infrastructure in the country has been severely damaged and will require extensive support in rebuilding. More than a quarter of all schools have been closed. In Kampong Thom, it has been reported that water levels are still rising, while many roads are flooded and markets, schools and health facilities remain closed. Choeu tial commune in Sandan district is the most affected. Schools, health centres and other infrastructures of the village are flooded. All rice fields in the district have been completely destroyed. People and cattle have moved to higher grounds/safe areas along the main road and some pagodas. There is no toilet or well at the safety areas. Schools are still closed and the most of the flooded health centres are also closed, and health staff is working from home.

In **Lao PDR**, around 170,000 people, of which 78,200 are children, in five southern provinces were affected by the storm and floods due to Ketsana that hit the country on 3 October. At least 15 people were killed. The floods caused severe damage to infrastructure, farmland, schools, businesses and homes. Nearly 10,000

households have been displaced. The most severely affected is Attapeu province, where the government reports 81 villages are completely submerged. Approximately 18,000 hectares of crops have been lost, while roads, irrigation systems, bridges, schools, hospitals, dispensaries and other infrastructure in the province also suffered damage. A UNICEF field mission has reported that many schools need immediate cleaning as well as rehabilitation of damaged latrines and repairs to water supply. About 12 health centres also need water supply connections. Hygiene education with communication materials is urgently required. As floodwaters subside, hygiene conditions are very poor, requiring quick and concerted efforts to initiate hygiene education with communication materials and practical interventions.

## **Earthquakes**

On 29 September 2009 an earthquake struck the southern part of the **Samoa Island chain** and caused tsunami waves over 6 metres high that hit both American and Western Samoa, as well as the northern island of **Tonga**. This has caused 137 fatalities, a majority of which were children. Approximately 4,500 people, of which more than 2,100 are children, have been directly affected, and more than 20 villages completely destroyed. People are living in makeshift shelters in their gardens on higher grounds and with host families. Five schools have been severely damaged in four districts, with approximately 1,000 school students directly affected by the disaster. While children affected have been reassigned to other schools in the surrounding area, temporary schooling facilities are also being considered. As some families have had to relocate, there are concerns that the new living arrangements pose protection risks for children. Government agencies and humanitarian partners have noted the need to support the emotional well-being for families and children in particular. Family water storage is still a priority in the relief efforts. The highest priorities for UNICEF's response in the Samoa Island chain are water and sanitation, education, health care, and psychosocial support for children and their families,

Eastern **Bhutan** was struck by an earthquake on 21 September, affecting approximately 6,800 children and in total more than 18,000 people and 4,595 homes in 12 districts. Some 5,500 people are still living in temporary shelters made of either crude sheds or tarpaulins. Over 100 schools were destroyed, hampering schooling for over 14,000 school-going children. The unpredictable weather conditions and poor shelter makes the population, especially children and old people, more susceptible to acute respiratory infection and other threats. Prevalence of diarrhoea among the affected population is increasing and immediate water supply and sanitation support is needed. The cold chain system for the expanded programme on immunization is disrupted with the destruction of cold chain equipment in about 12 affected community health centres. An estimated 2,500 children under five years are in the two worst hit districts of Mongar and Trashigangfour per cent of these children have already been identified as acutely malnourished and there are concerns that the current conditions will further aggravate the health conditions of all children in the affected areas. Reaching the affected population is challenging, time consuming and expensive due to the difficult terrain.

In **Indonesia**, nearly 700 people have been confirmed dead and thousands remain missing following the earthquake which struck the coastal area of West Sumatra Province on 30 September 2009. The Indonesian government estimates that 40 per cent of the population in the emergency areas have been affected by the disaster. Based on demographic data, UNICEF estimates that at least 180,000 children may be affected. More than 100,000 houses have been severely damaged and 241 schools are severely damaged, leaving an estimated 90,000 children in the need of educational support. According to the local water supply agency in Padang, 70 per cent of distribution networks are damaged, cutting off sustainable access to water for at least 60 per cent of its clients. The power supply remains sporadic. In Padang city, teachers have reported cases of children feeling nervous, isolated and scared. This situation requires monitoring, and teachers need to be supported to deal with psychosocial issues affecting children. Challenges remain with logistics and delivery of supplies, particularly in areas where roads and communication systems remain destroyed or badly damaged.

## **2. UNICEF RESPONSE: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS**

In order to assess the needs for the affected populations and in order to provide a rapid response, with focus on children, all UNICEF Country Offices have participated in joint assessments and distributed their pre-positioned supplies for the immediate response. Four countries (Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and Samoa) are currently applying the Cluster Approach in their response. In all four countries UNICEF is

leading or co-leading in WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) and Education. Nutrition<sup>1</sup> is an established cluster in the Philippines, in Indonesia is linked to the Food cluster, and in the Pacific Islands Nutrition has been incorporated into the health cluster. In the Philippines and Indonesia, UNICEF is taking the lead or co-leading in child protection coordination (Protection are of responsibility).

While providing the below mentioned immediate response to the various natural disasters in the Asia-Pacific Regions, UNICEF will also support interventions to sustain the results of life-saving interventions, support recovery, and increase the scope for recovery actions by the affected populations. Additional resources are also required to further strengthen preparedness, including pre-positioning or/and replenishing depleted stock, in order to be able to respond to any future likely emergency, in particular during this season of multiple natural disasters.

### **Asia-Pacific Shared Services Centre**

At regional level, the new structure UNICEF has put in place in Bangkok, the Asia Pacific Shared Service Centre (APSSC) is providing technical support to countries affected by the emergencies with special emphasis on the four UNICEF led cluster areas. APSSC will continue supporting countries in the implementation of their response plans and will strengthen their monitoring system through a set of performance monitoring indicators as lined out in the Core Commitments for Children (CCCs). Whenever required, additional resources will be provided for strengthening immediate emergency response capacity of COs, in which assessments are on-going. APSSC will also develop lessons learnt from the present emergencies and use them for strengthening preparedness and risk reduction in the region.

### **Philippines**

In response to the lack of safe water where children are exposed to health risks, UNICEF, coordinating the WASH cluster, is working towards ensuring that 135,000 families in evacuation centres have immediate access to sufficient quantities of water, appropriate sanitation facilities and are able to maintain personal hygiene. This is done through the establishment of latrines and water points in addition to the distribution of 13,500 water family kits each serving 10 families, water purification tablets, jerry cans and water tanks and the provision of hygiene materials, including soap, buckets and educational materials containing hygiene messages in local languages. The distribution of fifty emergency health kits will cater for 500,000 affected persons in evacuation centres. Restoring medical facilities throughout the affected areas is another priority where UNICEF estimates that at least 50 health facilities serving a total of half a million people will require immediate support for the next three months to be operational. In order to avert further loss of life urgent medical supplies and nutrition support are being provided. UNICEF since the onset of the emergency has been working closely with the Department of Social Welfare to put in place a system of registering unaccompanied and separated children; however additional support is needed to increase coverage and to improve capacity to reunify children with their families. UNICEF, together with its partners, aims to reach at least 50,000 children with psychosocial support and activities in the geographical areas of the project, as well as establish an immediate rapid registration system for unaccompanied and separated children. To complement these efforts, UNICEF will work with communities and partners to establish community-based protection systems in at least 100 communities. In education, the key target is to restore education opportunities for at least 20,000 preschool and school-aged children in within metro Manila. A separate inter-agency appeal has been issued for targeted response in the Philippines.



*A family sits atop a raft, which is being propelled by a man wading through waist-high floodwater, in Pasig City in Manila, the capital.*

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<sup>1</sup> APSSC is stressing the importance of the Nutrition cluster, or at least the presence of a strong coordination system, especially in view of the uncontrolled distribution of powder milk which has already started in some countries.

## **Vietnam**

The disaster management working group has deployed six teams to carry out rapid assessments in Quang Tri, Hue, Da Nang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Kon Tum. To date, the full reports of the rapid assessment missions on two provinces are available. The findings confirm significant loss and damage/destruction. UNICEF, as cluster co-leads, is working with partners to provide effective support to the government, especially through WASH and Education clusters. To date, UNICEF has delivered six tons of PuR (water purifier) sachets to 11 affected provinces and is now in the process of procuring 20 tons of chloramines B for disinfecting/cleaning of 100,000 contaminated wells and four million aqua tabs tablets for provision of safe drinking water to 200,000 affected families for 20 days. Educational/recreational materials for about 5,000 3-5 year old children, 3,500 primary school children, 2,500 lower secondary students and 300 teachers will be distributed.

## **Cambodia**

UNICEF province-based staff continues to monitor the situation and have visited affected communes in the most affected provinces of Kampong Thom and in Stung Treng. The coordination mechanisms are led by the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) which includes membership from UN agencies (including UNICEF), the RC Office, Cambodia Red Cross, NGOs and representatives from key ministries. In addition the Provincial Committees for disaster management (PCDM) have conducted rapid assessments in other provinces involving NGO partners, as well as UNICEF province-based staff whenever possible.

UNICEF has received a request for further support from Cambodia Red Cross (CRC) and will activate a response under the standing agreement between UNICEF and CRC. The situation of water supply is seriously compromised due to flooded wells. UNICEF will contribute water filters, and water containers to ensure appropriate access to clean water by affected families and is also planning to support interventions to ensure wells rehabilitation in collaboration with PCDM and rural development authorities.

In sanitation, UNICEF is planning to work with PCDM, Communes committees for disaster Management and Rural development authorities to rehabilitate destroyed latrines. UNICEF field based staff is in the meantime accelerating hygiene promotion and communication activities in collaboration with partners, particularly in Stung Treng and Kampong Thom. Soap has been distributed to affected areas as part of basic household kits provided by CRC and other NGOs. Chloramine tablets have been distributed by health centres, and additional supplies will be dispatched from UNICEF stocks next week if requested.

A detailed assessment of damage caused to schools in affected areas is being conducted by the Provincial and district education authorities, with active involvement of UNICEF field based staff. Initial reports from Kampong Thom at 8 October note that there are 137 schools (121 primary schools and 16 secondary schools) throughout the province that are still under water and closed. In total, there are 36,119 preschool, primary and secondary school students not being able to go to school. Plans are now for normal operations to resume by end October at the earliest. In the interim the MoE is planning additional support to run "double shifts".

All affected provinces report a number of health centres flooded and closed. Reports from Kampong Thom note that 17 out of 50 health centres have flooded, in a number of cases water levels rose to 15cm inside buildings. Health centre staff provided health and hygiene education on the use of chloramine, oral rehydration salts (ORS) and safe drinking water, as well as how to prevent drowning and common disease that may occurred during flood such as diarrhea, dysentery, acute respiratory infections, and skin infection.

## **Lao People's Democratic Republic**

UNICEF's response is being undertaken in coordination with Government and UN partners. As an initial emergency response, a consignment of chlorine tablets and soap covering the needs of 12,000 people for two weeks has been handed over from existing UNICEF stocks to the authorities for distribution. Two de-watering pumps have been transported to Attapeu province and others are being obtained. Rehabilitation of

hand pumps, de-watering, cleaning and disinfection of bore holes, distribution of soap, chlorine tablets and coagulants to treat turbid water will continue. As part of its initial response, UNICEF will supply additional Non Food Items such as water containers, soap, coagulants and chlorine to the affected provinces. UNICEF will extend support for restoration/construction of 500 temporary latrines in three provinces and improve the water supply for 8,500 families through the distribution of water containers. Restoration of damaged latrines and water supply connections in schools and health centres will further be supported together with partners. Hygiene education with communication materials and practical interventions will be initiated together with partners with immediate effect.

UNICEF supported MOH health outreach teams to visit evacuation centres and affected areas and provide health outreach services to women and children in 159 villages in 5 districts of Attapeu province. The outreach services include preventative and curative care including vaccination, Vitamin A, de-worming distribution and medical treatment. Some 2,000 insecticide treated bed nets are being procured for distribution to affected poor families in Attapeu for prevention of malaria and dengue fever. Vaccines, supplies and cold chain equipment, which were destroyed by the storm, have been replaced from existing government stock, pending mobilisation of funding for replenishment. UNICEF support will further be determined based on identified priority needs within the clusters, with the inclusion of support to mobile health teams and the distribution of insecticide bed nets and life saving communication materials in affected provinces.

UNICEF will help ensure that schooling continues to function as a safe and protective environment. Basic school supplies will be replaced to facilitate the teaching and learning process and severely damaged primary school will be repaired. Thirty-two affected schools will be reached by the planned interventions benefiting approximately 5,600 school-aged children. The child protection component of UNICEF's emergency response will focus on providing psychosocial support to affected children and their families and provide referral or counselling as needed. Community-based mechanisms to support children without parental care as a prevention to abuse and violence intervention will be strengthened. This component is expected to reach at least 20,000 children and their families in the affected provinces.

UNICEF has assumed sector leadership in Water/Sanitation, Nutrition, Child Protection and Education while actively participating within the Health and Early recovery / Shelter clusters. UNICEF is further working to strengthen local partners and Government authorities to restore health and nutrition service delivery and water and sanitation services. UNICEF and WFP are leading joint needs assessment, on the basis of which a joint appeal will be developed.

## **Samoa**

Since the tsunami hit the south beaches of Samoa on 29 September, the need for safe drinking water has been stated as a priority by the Government of Samoa, with UNICEF prioritizing restoration of waterlines in affected areas. UNICEF has airlifted and distributed 3,500 collapsible water containers as well as soap and is expecting shortly to distribute water purifying tablets. Hygiene promotion messages in the Samoan language have been produced and are currently being printed. UNICEF further airlifted ten Early Childhood Education kits and 14 Enhanced Education kits into Samoa. To promote good hygiene and health practices in a hazardous environment, pocket guides promoting ten key behaviours related to health, protection, and water and sanitation have been distributed as well as information promoting breast feeding throughout the affected regions.

On 7 October, the Water Sector Tsunami Response Team (WSRT) led by the Government of Samoa announced that all water supplies are back online in affected areas. This will enable children and their families to resume good hygiene practices necessary to prevent new infections, and importantly provide them with a sense of normalcy. For the displaced children and families from the 40 worst hit villages, the Samoa Water Authority with assistance from UNICEF and the WSRT will provide water from trucks. Children have resumed schooling since 5 October. The provision of water and re-establishment of sanitation facilities in schools in affected areas however remains a concern. UNICEF is coordinating the support to re-establish and improve water and sanitation facilities in the 'host' schools as well as provision of transportation to these schools for the displaced children. For the many children who lost their school uniform during the tsunami – along everything else in their possession – UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Education to ensure that they are equipped with a new uniform. Up to 20 tents and/or temporary school buildings will be provided by UNICEF to those schools hosting the affected students.

## **Bhutan**

Within 48 hours after the 21 September earthquake, the first UNICEF consignment of relief materials, consisting of 1,000 blankets, 150 tarpaulins and 23 tents was dispatched to the two most affected centres of Mongar and Trashigang. Not only are the materials important for shelter purposes, they protect children from cold and wet weather conditions thus reducing the incidence of acute respiratory infections. UNICEF further provided over 500 Emergency Family Kits consisting of cooking utensils, jerry cans and blankets to the affected families. These kits are essential in ensuring preparation of properly cooked food and boiled water to reduce risks of diarrhoea and other infectious diseases.

In the coming weeks, additional school-in-a-box kits and school tents will be provided so that children can continue their education in the make-shift classrooms. Community-based management of severe malnutrition, including the provision of ready-to-use therapeutic feeding, will be supported. Community health centres will be equipped with cold chain equipment to support measles vaccination, and tents will be provided as temporary health centres to ensure that access to basic services is maintained.

Emergency water kits with collapsible water tank bucket, soap and water purification tablets are being procured and hygiene education is being provided. Affected children will receive necessary psychosocial support and basic protection, based on the recently concluded assessments.



*Affected families in Bhutan receives Emergency Family kits*

## **Indonesia**

The UN country team in Indonesia launched an inter-agency Action Plan to respond to the disaster. UNICEF's component includes support for WASH, Health, Nutrition, Education, Child Protection, Communication and Advocacy, and Coordination and Logistics. In **WASH**, UNICEF's initial response will ensure that some 50,000 families have access to safe drinking water and storage as well as hygiene material. In **Health**, a measles vaccination campaign covering at least 30,000 children is planned for within a week. In **Nutrition**, UNICEF is cluster lead for nutrition at national level, with Mercy Corps taking the lead, in collaboration with UNICEF, at provincial level. Major concerns remain over the use of infant formula being donated. AIMI and World Vision have already deployed counsellors to provide counselling and mapping of pregnant and lactating mothers. Support has been provided to the Indonesia Paediatrician Association, who will conduct training for 100 medical students, nurses and midwives on IFE.

Over the next weeks, UNICEF will support the training of 95 health workers and community members on infant and young child feeding practices in five districts, expected to benefit some 90,000 children. In **Education**, UNICEF is cluster lead for education at national and provincial level. UNICEF has supplied 250 school tents, 60 schools-in-a-box and 60 recreation kits to assist with a rapid return from school that saw nearly 70,000 children in Padang alone return to classes less than a week after the earthquake. Further support will include provision of 700 school tents for temporary learning spaces; 1,000 sets of basic teaching-learning materials for temporary learning space, including schools-in-a-box, black boards and other teaching aids, and to replenish those already deployed; 400 recreation kits to support post-traumatic counselling for affected children; 400 Early Childhood Development kits; structural assessment for around 1,000 damaged classrooms and support for redeployment of teachers to support temporary learning spaces.

In **Protection**, UNICEF shares cluster coordination with UNFPA and has specific responsibility for Child Protection. Rapid assessments have identified key protection issues requiring response – these include a full registration of all children whose care situation has been affected by the emergency, to ensure that they

are placed with their extended families in line with their best interests, and that all necessary measures are duly taken to prevent institutionalization, joint interventions to mitigate child labour linked to relief efforts, and psychosocial support coordinated with the Education Cluster. In **Communication and Advocacy**, UNICEF is the lead agency for communication on prevention of H1N1 virus transmission and will support the integration of H1N1 information and awareness activities such as hand washing and improved hygiene with a particular focus on areas with large population gatherings.

### 3. IMMEDIATE FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

The US\$1.3 million appealed for by the Asia Pacific region in the UNICEF Humanitarian Action Report 2009 remain unfunded. This Humanitarian Action Update is highlighting the priority needs until the end of the year, which amount to US\$ 420,000 for the Asia Pacific Shared Services Centre to strengthen regional and country office capacities to respond to the immediate needs of the multiple emergencies across the Asia Pacific Region. In the Philippines and Indonesia, UNICEF is working through an inter-agency appeal process, requesting US\$12.7 million and US\$3 million respectively. For other countries in the Asia Pacific, namely, Bhutan, Lao PDR and Samoa/Tonga, UNICEF currently needs US\$ 1.5 million to be able to adequately respond to the needs of children and women affected by the disasters.

Emergency Response	Requirements (US\$)
Bhutan earthquake	460,000
Lao PDR floods due to typhoon Ketsana	600,000
Samoa/ Tonga earthquake and tsunami	441,500
Asia Pacific Shared Services Centre – coordination, capacity resources support	420,000
<b>Total*</b>	<b>1,921,500</b>

\* The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7%. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF's Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

Further information on the UNICEF emergency programme in the Asia-Pacific region can be obtained from:

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