

# UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

# NORTHERN CAUCASUS

## DONOR UPDATE 25 NOVEMBER 2004

- **All IDP camps have been closed by the authorities in Ingushetia; however, some 40,000 IDPs from Chechnya remain in the republic.**
- **Insecurity has been rising in Ingushetia and North Ossetia (where over 330 civilians, including 172 children, died as a result of the hostage-taking crisis in Beslan).**
- **Funds are urgently required to complete planned interventions and ensure the continuation of essential projects into early 2005.**

### 1. EMERGENCY OVERVIEW AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

#### **All IDP camps closed down in Ingushetia**

The situation in the North Caucasus continues to be characterized by complexity, instability and unpredictability. Since the last UNICEF Donor Update (issued on 25 May), the last remaining IDP tented camp ('Satsita') was declared closed by the authorities in June, which led to the departure of the 1,300 IDPs who remained in the camp at the end of May. Some of them moved to temporary settlements in Ingushetia, while other IDPs returned to Chechnya. Following these movements, the number of IDPs from Chechnya living in Ingushetia has continued to decrease steadily and currently stands at some 40,000.

#### **The security situation worsens in the region**

During the last six months the overall security situation in the North Caucasus republics has significantly worsened. On 21-22 June, a violent raid conducted by a large group of armed militants in Nazran (Ingushetia) led to the death of almost 90 people, including over 50 soldiers, law enforcement agents or public officials. As a result, international staff from the UN and most international NGOs left Ingushetia for a temporary relocation (they later returned). Significant armed violence also took place in Grozny ahead of the extraordinary presidential elections held on 29 August, which resulted in the inauguration of Alu Alkhanov, the former republican Minister of the Interior, as President of the Chechen Republic. On 1 September, a group of more than 30 armed individuals seized school n. 1 in Beslan (North Ossetia) and took over 1,200 people – most of them children – as hostages. Two days later, the hostage crisis came to an end following the intervention of the security forces: at least 331 civilians were left dead, including 172 children. It was the gravest attack targeting children ever occurred in the North Caucasus since the beginning of the first conflict in Chechnya (1994). Instances of violent crime and other human rights violations against civilians also continue to be reported in Chechnya. The operational environment continues to present



humanitarian organizations with serious challenges. While access to Chechnya has recently improved, staff safety is still one of the main concerns for relief agencies.

### **The humanitarian situation remains critical**

As consistently reported in previous Donor Updates, more than five years after the start of the second conflict in Chechnya (Autumn 1999), much of the republic's social and physical infrastructure remains destroyed or seriously damaged. The quality of essential social services that are available to the population, and in particular to women and children, remains inadequate, especially in the education, health and water and sanitation sectors. Internally displaced persons (IDPs), estimated by the Chechen government at over 210,000 - with 10-20% of this number concentrated in official Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs) - comprise a large portion of the vulnerable population in the republic. Approximately half of the population lives in conditions of material poverty, even by the low standards of the Chechen average household — the poverty threshold being 21-33 roubles (US \$0.70-1.10) per person per day. Data from a recent workshop on Mother and Child Health (MCH) suggested stagnating if not deteriorating health indicators in the first half of 2004 compared to 2003, with an infant mortality of 29.4 per 1,000 newborn children in Ingushetia and 28.9 in Chechnya (13.3 is the average for the Russian Federation). Of those children below one year of age who die, 40% die at home before having reached any medical care.

In Chechnya, functioning education facilities, particularly kindergartens, are still in short supply. Most schools remain overcrowded, operate in two or three shifts and are affected by a persisting shortage of essential educational materials, including textbooks. Financial constraints aggravate the existing tendency to keep girls out of school, particularly in areas where education facilities are not easily accessible. There remains also a need for psychosocial support for traumatized children, many of whom have experienced suffering and loss, including following the dramatic events in Beslan. The situation of children and adolescents who, because of social or personal factors, are not enrolled in school also requires a qualified intervention, so as to provide them with recreational or vocational opportunities. In Ingushetia, fulfilling the right to education for some 8,000 IDP children attending schools remains a priority. In addition, Chechnya remains one of the areas most heavily polluted by landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). According to a database managed by UNICEF, at least 3,124 civilians (including almost 700 children) have been killed or injured by mine/UXO since 1995.

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

During the last five months UNICEF has continued to implement – in Chechnya, Ingushetia and North Ossetia – its emergency programme for the North Caucasus, which is articulated in four key components: education, mine action (i.e. mine risk education and survivor assistance), health as well as water and sanitation. In particular, the agency continued to act as coordination focal point for the education and mine action sectors. In this capacity, it worked to further strengthen the existing partnership among all stakeholders (UN agencies, government counterparts – both at the federal and local level – ICRC, international and local NGOs) and ensure a more effective global intervention. In the course of 2004 UNICEF has also continued to pursue its policy of progressively shifting most of its activities to Chechnya (where over 70% of UNICEF's resources are currently being utilized), while progressively strengthening the 'rehabilitation/recovery' element of its projects. The fact that a sizeable share of the 2004 CAP financial requirements has not been funded could soon have an impact on the level of services/supplies delivered.

### **EDUCATION**

In Ingushetia, UNICEF continues to support, through various NGO partners, a network of over 30 'parallel' schools catering for some 3,500 IDP children living in Ingushetia (their number has been slowly decreasing following the steady IDP return movement to Chechnya), where UNICEF has also promoted and supported a wide range of extra-curricular recreational projects, thus promoting the development of a 'normal' social environment and reducing the children's exposure to dangerous and illegal activities. UNICEF also continues to provide support to 4 Children Centres (kindergartens) hosting approximately 570 pre-school age IDP children and run by Caritas International (an additional kindergarten was relocated to Chechnya following the return to Chechnya of several IDP families). In Chechnya, UNICEF has completed the establishment of 10 community-based Early Childhood Education (ECE) centres for 500 young children in rural areas, as well as launched a professional vocational training for about 360 'drop-out' adolescents in Grozny.

Due to funding constraints, the organization is unable to implement some of the planned activities for 2004, including the distribution of winter shoes/jackets to children living in rural areas and a number of capacity-building and training initiatives, while also downsizing the planned procurement of a range of educational supplies. Ensuring the smooth continuation into early 2005 of the education projects mentioned above – which are instrumental in fulfilling the fundamental right to education for about 5,000 conflict-affected children – is also a key concern to UNICEF.

## WATER AND SANITATION

UNICEF continued, through the Polish Humanitarian organisation (PHO), to manage its water purification and distribution project in Grozny, which is currently benefiting some 94,000 residents (with a special focus on health and education facilities). In addition, in July UNICEF completed the distribution/installation of water supplies (bladders, jerry cans, canisters) as well as of hygiene items – such as disinfectants, anti-parasite products and various types of soap – in order to mitigate the threat of epidemics and improve basic sanitation in vulnerable households in Chechnya and Ingushetia. UNICEF, in cooperation with the Ministries of Health and, also pursued its awareness-raising efforts on appropriate hygiene practices, with a special emphasis on 75 school teachers from 15 schools in Achkhoy-Martan district (Chechnya). Some 50,000 pocket calendars, 1,000 roof-type calendars and 8,000 additional posters are being produced and distributed in Chechnya. Due to the shortage of funding, UNICEF could not contribute to the planned strengthening the capacity of the public providers of water (Vodokanal) and other communal services (ZhKKh) in Grozny.

## HEALTH

Due to the lack of sufficient funding, UNICEF has not been able to launch the procurement of essential medical equipment and consumables for up to 40 MCH (Mother and Child Health) care facilities in Chechnya and Ingushetia, as well as to provide infant starter kits to 18 maternity wards in the two republics. In addition, the organization has not been able to undertake the upgrading of the recording and maintenance system of EPI coverage and had to reduce the quantity of cold-chain equipment and consumables to be distributed in Chechnya and Ingushetia. The expansion of the awareness-raising Mother Empowerment Programme (MEP) into Achkhoy-Martan district and the launching of the new HIV/AIDS prevention project have also been hindered by funding shortages. Meanwhile, UNICEF has been able to undertake the physical rehabilitation of two selected health structures in Grozny (the Polyclinic n. 4 and the Children Ward in Hospital n.4) and carry on its MEP in Ingushetia and in Grozny.

## MINE ACTION

UNICEF has continued to conduct, through its key NGO partner 'Voice of the Mountains' (VoM), interactive MRE presentations/sessions in Chechnya and completed the monitoring of the MRE core course that is included in the official school curriculum in the republic. In addition, through the Chechen Drama Theatre, UNICEF continued to support MRE interactive drama presentations targeting residents of at-risk communities in Chechnya. Due to funding uncertainties, UNICEF is concerned about the possibility of continuing beyond end-December its engagement in the important fields of psycho-social assistance and vocational training (carpentry, tailoring and informatics) for mine/UXO child survivors and other disabled children. In the area of mine-risk reduction, UNICEF – which has implemented a pilot-project through the establishment of 6 'leisure centres' in the summer of 2004 – could not launch additional actions that had been planned (targeted distribution of gas cylinders, firewood, etc.), while the quantities of prosthetic/orthopaedic and assistive devices for mine/UXO survivors, such as wheelchairs, crutches and walking sticks, also had to be reduced.

### 3. UNICEF: 2004 APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND RECEIPTS

UNICEF participated with all other UN agencies and NGOs active in the North Caucasus in the preparation of the 2004 Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal (CAP) for Chechnya and Neighbouring Republics (Russian Federation), which was launched in November 2003. A Mid-Year Review of the CAP was finalised in June 2004, with a view to reassessing agencies' priorities and financial requirements. As a result, UNICEF's overall requirements were slightly reduced to \$6,265,000 million (see details in table 2). UNICEF is grateful to the donors whose generous contributions have covered some 73% of the revised requirements as of 25 November 2004.

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Income/Pledge (US\$)</b>	<b>Sector</b>
Netherlands	445,000	Unearmarked
Canada	76,336	Education
German Nat. Committee	453,400	Education
Dutch National Committee	282,963	Mine Action
Germany	158,536	Mine Action
Sweden	741,235	Unearmarked
ECHO	182,704	Mine Action
ECHO	609,015	Education
ECHO	665,063	Water and Sanitation
USA/BPRM	1,000,000	Unearmarked
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,614,252</b>	

In addition, but outside the framework of the 2004 CAP, the Emergency Programme has benefited from two contributions provided through UNICEF New York: \$40,000 (for Mine Risk Education) from the Swedish International Development Agency, and \$132,000 (for Mine Action) from the Department for International Development (UK).

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Original Target (US\$)</b>	<b>Revised Target (US\$)</b>	<b>Funds received (US\$)</b>	<b>Unfunded (US\$)</b>
Education	3,606,000	3,352,000	2,517,277	834,723
Health and nutrition	1,183,100	1,087,500	604,754	482,746
Water and sanitation	1,111,400	1,040,400	865,063	175,337
Mine Action	789,400	785,300	627,158	158,142
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,689,900</b>	<b>6,265,200</b>	<b>4,614,252</b>	<b>1,650,948</b>

As the table above shows, UNICEF's financial requirements for 2004 remain unmet. Consequently, a few key projects and procurements are kept on stand-by due to the shortage of funds. In addition, should additional contributions fail to materialize soon, UNICEF may face difficulties in ensuring the continuation into 2005 of some of its key activities, such as the management of 'parallel' schools and kindergartens for IDP children in Ingushetia and the provision of vocational training as well psychosocial assistance to mine/UXO child survivors and other disabled children in Chechnya.

UNICEF expresses its gratitude to the donors that have promptly contributed towards the 2004 CAP and hopes that other donors will soon extend their support to its Emergency Programme in the North Caucasus. The timely provision of resources, in fact, will allow the organisation to avoid any critical disruption in the provision of essential services and supplies across its four sectors of intervention, as well as to ensure a smooth transition of its key projects into the new year.

#### **4. BESLAN EMERGENCY APPEAL: REQUIREMENTS AND RECEIPTS**

In response to the Beslan events, UNICEF promptly developed a response strategy based on **four critical action points addressing short, medium long term needs**:

- 1) Phase 1 – Medical supplies: Delivery of essential medical (consumables, equipment, drugs) and non-food items to the hospitals treating child survivors (**most essential needs covered**);
- 2) Phase 2 – School Equipment: Provision of support to equipping 6 Beslan schools so that they can receive children from school number 1 (**most essential needs covered**);
- 3) Phase 3 – Psychological Counseling: Provision of qualified psychological counseling to the survivors, their families and other affected children in Beslan (**ongoing**);
- 4) Phase 4 – Peace and Tolerance Education Support: Expose education and culture ministry officials, and possibly civil society participants, from several North Caucasus Republics to experiences on this front elsewhere such as in the Balkans. The purpose is to assist them to develop coherent and sustained interventions to promote tolerance and peaceful coexistence among children and youth in this region (**planned for 2005**).

Thanks to the prompt support provided by a group of key donors, UNICEF has been able to deliver much-needed assistance for the first two points, mainly through the provision of some \$105,000-worth of medical supplies to five hospitals in Vladikavkaz and Beslan (North Ossetia) as well as of over \$200,000-worth of educational supplies to the six remaining schools in Beslan. In addition, UNICEF has been supporting the Ministry of Education of North Ossetia and the Republican Psychosocial Rehabilitation Centre of Vladikavkaz in providing medium- and long-term psychosocial support to children and parents affected by the tragic events in Beslan. The project, to be implemented until the end of 2005, will include, *inter alia*, the provision of some \$205,000 equipment, materials and furniture for two Psychosocial Centres (one in Vladikavkaz and one in Beslan).

**Contributions and pledges received by UNICEF for Beslan response  
(as of 18 November 2004)**

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Component</b>	<b>Estimated Contribution (US\$)</b>
Canadian Embassy in Moscow	Health supplies	37,986
German Natcom for UNICEF	Not earmarked	120,337
UK Natcom for UNICEF	Health supplies	100,806
UK Natcom for UNICEF	Education supplies	<b>(pledged) 165,000</b>
German Natcom for UNICEF	Psycho-social rehabilitation	369,459
GE Foundation	Not earmarked	<b>(pledged) 50,000</b>
Belgian Embassy in Moscow	Psycho-social rehabilitation	<b>(pledged) 123,000</b>
Danish Embassy in Moscow	Psycho-social rehabilitation	50,790
Italian Natcom for UNICEF	Psycho-social rehabilitation	123,153
<b>TOTAL Contributions and Pledges</b>		<b>1,140,531</b>

**Summary of the revised Beslan emergency response budget  
(as of 18 November 2004)**

<b>Emergency Response Component</b>	<b>Estimated Cost (US\$)</b>	<b>Requirements (US\$)</b>
Phase 1: Delivery of emergency medical supplies	140,000	1,208
Phase 2: Support to equipping of 6 schools in Beslan	400,000	64,663
Phase 3: Provision of psychosocial rehabilitation and counseling	700,000	33,598
Phase 4: Support to peace and tolerance education	500,000	500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,740,000</b>	<b>599,469</b>

Further details of the North Caucasus Emergency Programme can be obtained from:

Carel de Rooy  
Area Representative  
UNICEF Moscow

Olivier Degreef  
UNICEF EMOPS  
Geneva

Gary Stahl  
UNICEF PFO  
New York

Tel: + 7 095 9338818  
Fax: + 7 095 9338819  
E-mail: [cderooy@unicef.org](mailto:cderooy@unicef.org)

Tel: + 41 22 909 5655  
Fax: + 41 22 909 5902  
E-mail: [odegreef@unicef.org](mailto:odegreef@unicef.org)

Tel: + 1 212 326 7009  
Fax: + 1 212 326 7165  
E-mail: [gstahl@unicef.org](mailto:gstahl@unicef.org)