

# MADAGASCAR CYCLONES

**UNICEF RESPONDS TO THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS  
OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN AFFECTED  
BY CYCLONES 'FAME' AND 'IVAN'**



**26 FEBRUARY 2008**

**URGENT REQUEST: US\$ 4.8 million**

## 1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

Category 3 Cyclone 'Ivan' hit the mainland of Madagascar at 09.00 (local time) on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2008 with winds of up to 230 km per hour, having passed over the Malagasy island of Ile Sainte Marie. It then wreaked havoc as it continued its path southwest through many of the most populated parts of the country, including the area surrounding Lake Alaotra, responsible for almost a third of Madagascar's rice production.

Damage is widespread; assessments are ongoing but air assessments have been hindered by the heavy winds and land-based assessments by flooded roads and submerged bridges. So far, based on the National Contingency Plan it is thought that at least 300,000 people have been affected within the initial impact zone alone, and that 30,000 are in need of immediate assistance. There is also extensive flooding in the capital Antananarivo and its surroundings; so far almost 18,930 people are known to be affected within the city.

Meanwhile, emergency assessments and response are also continuing for the impacts of Tropical cyclone 'Fame', which passed through Madagascar between the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of January 2008, affecting at least 9,447 people and leaving 2,792 without shelter.

As in any disaster, including these cyclones, children suffer the most. Of the estimated affected population, over half are children. Vulnerable to cold, hunger and trauma, women and children in these poverty-stricken areas require urgent life-saving assistance to be able to survive.

Cyclones are a regular occurrence in Madagascar, and have a severely detrimental effect on the country's development, undermining its immense potential to lift itself out of poverty. Considering that only 35%<sup>1</sup> of people have access to safe drinking water, 60%<sup>2</sup> of children complete primary school and 59%<sup>3</sup> are vaccinated against Measles, change is crucial for the future of Malagasy children. Remarkable recent progress in child survival illustrates the country's potential to move forward; the government is strongly committed to the development of its people, as illustrated by the 'Madagascar Action Plan', created in 2006 as a roadmap to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Therefore, quick and efficient response to emergencies is essential to minimise damage and allow Madagascar to realise its potential.

UNICEF and its partners, including sister UN agencies and international and national non-governmental organisations and civil society, are working closely through a cluster-configured approach to support the Government of Madagascar to respond swiftly and effectively to the crisis. To finance these efforts, the United Nations will soon launch a Flash Appeal and UNICEF will be part of this joint appeal process.

To respond to the emergency so far, UNICEF has reprogrammed US \$200,000 of its Regular Resources budget after consultation with the government, to finance rapid assessments. In addition, UNICEF has been distributing its pre-positioned stocks for 30,000 displaced people. Given the likelihood of further cyclones in the coming days and until the end of the cyclonic season in April, UNICEF will replenish these stocks immediately to ensure that water and sanitation kits, medicines and other items are available on a constant basis.

## 2. UNICEF'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE: ISSUES & ACTIONS

### HEALTH AND NUTRITION

#### Issues

Cyclones 'Fame' and 'Ivan' have left many families homeless, without access to basic health services. Even in non-emergency situations, diarrhoeal diseases, Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) and Malaria account for almost 60% of outpatient health treatment in Madagascar. In the context of these cyclones, children who were already vulnerable to contracting these diseases will be at an increased risk of doing so. An increased number of children with diarrhoea has been reported from certain areas in Vavatenana. Urgent medical supplies, nutrition support and preventive activities such as the provision of mosquito nets are needed to avert further loss of life.

#### Urgent Actions

- Coordination of the nutrition cluster;
- Vaccination of children against Measles;

<sup>1</sup> Source: Data Health Survey (DHS), 2003-4

<sup>2</sup> Source: Ministry of Education, 2006/2007

<sup>3</sup> Source: Data Health Survey (DHS), 2003-4

- Distribution of medical supplies to treat the most common diseases, including Oral Rehydration Salts, mosquito nets, Artemisinin Combined Treatment tablets, Rapid Diagnostic Test kits and antibiotics;
- Purchase and distribution of emergency medical kits;
- Cholera mitigation and response through the distribution of cholera kits, beds and equipment, gloves, boots, masks and the promotion of health and sanitation;
- Communication of life-saving messages including breast-feeding and the danger signs of Malaria and ARI;
- Supervision, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that women and children have adequate access to services;
- Distribution of high-energy biscuits for emergency feeding, and
- Nutritional surveillance using anthropometric kits.

## **WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION**

### **Issues**

In Madagascar, even in non-emergency periods, the rates of access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in rural areas are already critical, at between 6 and 12 per cent<sup>4</sup>. Flooding caused by Cyclones 'Fame' and 'Ivan' considerably increased the amount of water present in almost all districts of Madagascar, with the potability of this water uncertain. People faced with a lack of alternatives are being forced to use stagnant, untreated water, putting the health of women and children in particular at increased risk. Continued rain is aggravating the situation further, and water-borne diseases are likely to be transmitted.

### **Urgent Actions**

- Coordination of the water and sanitation cluster;
- Provision and distribution of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) kits (including buckets, water purification liquid and powder, cups, and soap) to at least 30,000 people;
- Making safe drinking water available to all through the rehabilitation and disinfection of flooded wells, the creation of new water points for affected populations, and the provision of water filters to health centres;
- Disinfect flooded schools and health centres;
- Facilitation of safe excreta and solid waste disposal by distributing and constructing latrines (mobile and permanent) for flood affected populations, and
- Intensive water, sanitation and hygiene behaviour change communication targeting affected populations.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Issues**

The two cyclones have also caused wide scale destruction to school buildings; 400 classrooms are known to have been damaged or destroyed, and at least 60,000 Malagasy children will suffer interruptions to their education. The immediate challenge will be to provide shelter and materials to get children back to school to continue their learning. Communities are engaged in repairs where possible, and UNICEF is distributing tents and tarpaulins from the available pre-positioned contingency stock.

### **Urgent Actions**

- Coordination of Education cluster, and as such ensuring collaboration and information sharing between the Ministry of Education, the BNGRC and other partners;
- Provision of tents, tarpaulins, 'School in a Box' kits and Recreation kits<sup>5</sup>, and
- Procurement of additional school tents, 'School in a Box' kits and Recreation kits.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

### **Issues**

With the movement of the population into new areas, there is an increased risk for women and children to various forms of maltreatment and abuse. The number of homeless families as a result of the cyclones is likely to increase day by day, including those who will be forced to leave their homes due to the threat of flooding in geographically vulnerable areas of Antananarivo (the capitol city). Additional support must

<sup>4</sup> Source: Government of Madagascar, Ministry of Energy and Mines, 2004

<sup>5</sup> These have already been provided or distribution is underway for the most affected areas, even as assessments are ongoing to estimate further needs

therefore be provided to ensure populations already devastated by wind damage and flooding are not also affected by other forms of abuse.

### **Urgent Actions**

- Creation of 'child friendly' and 'safe' spaces for children in all accommodation centres for displaced populations (including the provision of tents, educational and didactic games kits, and linkages with water and sanitation emergency provisions), to benefit at least 10,000 children in Antananarivo alone;
- Support to local authorities and partners to provide a protective environment in accommodation centres for displaced populations, and to monitor and report any incidences of abuse or exploitation, and
- Ensuring that child protection measures are taken into account as part of the health, nutrition, water and sanitation and education cluster approaches.

## **COORDINATION AND LOGISTICS**

### **Issues**

Coordination and logistics are critical components of in response to the cyclone damage in Madagascar. UNICEF has assumed the cluster leadership in water and sanitation, nutrition and education, and is providing key support in health. Under the overall coordination of the BNGRC<sup>6</sup>, the clusters map out needs, identify the most appropriate response under the leadership of the government, and ensure that efforts are complimentary and prevent both overlap and gaps in the overall response.

### **Urgent Actions**

- Coordination, monitoring and support of Nutrition, Water and Sanitation and Education sectors;
- Facilitation of assessments in these sectors;
- Establishment of a temporary emergency satellite offices to facilitate coordination, monitoring and logistics support for UNICEF field operations;
- Procurement and distribution of telecommunications and other operational equipment, and
- Performance monitoring and evaluation.

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<sup>6</sup> The Government of Madagascar's 'Bureau National de Gestion des Risques et des Catastrophes', or National Office for Disaster Risk Management

### 3. ESTIMATED FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANNED ACTION FROM FEBRUARY TO APRIL 2008

UNICEF is currently working with partners and sister agencies in the preparation of a United Nations joint appeal that will be launched in the coming days. In the meantime and in order to respond quickly, UNICEF is requesting an initial **US \$4.8 million** to meet the immediate needs of children and women throughout the affected areas for the coming three months.

**Table 1: Estimated funding requirements from February to April 2008\***

Sector	US\$
Health and Nutrition	820,000
Water and Sanitation	2,830,000
Education	730,000
Protection	320,000
Coordination and Logistics	300,000
Reprogrammed UNICEF Regular Resources	- 200,000
<b>Total**</b>	<b>4,800,000</b>

\*Funds received against this appeal will be used to respond to both the immediate and medium-term needs of children and women as outlined above. If UNICEF should receive funds in excess of the medium-term funding requirements for this emergency, UNICEF will use those funds to support other, under-funded emergencies.

\*\*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 Madagascar can be obtained from:

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