

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY



UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES IN 2008



Regional Office financial needs for 2008	
Sector	US\$
Strengthening emergency response to natural disasters and other rapid onset emergencies (incl. contingency planning and regional surge response capacity)	200,000
Humanitarian capacity development: Assistance to Country Offices and inter-agency partners in strengthening capacities in emergency preparedness and response. Training on humanitarian principles, <i>Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies</i> and cluster approach	200,000
Risk reduction activities: Assistance to Country Offices in developing and implementing disaster risk reduction activities, mainly through education and early childhood development programmes	200,000
Total	600,000

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

1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

Women and children will continue to be vulnerable to both natural and man-made disasters in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS).

Natural disasters. The CEE/CIS region is continually prey to a number of natural disasters. Throughout 2007 UNICEF Country Offices supported local initiatives responding to floods, earthquakes and winter-related avalanches and mudslides. Most countries in the region are vulnerable to earthquakes, which can have a devastating impact in heavily populated urban areas. In 2007, minor earthquakes were recorded in Central Asia which damaged school buildings, roads and other communication infrastructure. Flooding and landslides are frequent in mountainous countries, such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and, when occurring in Central Asia areas where vulnerable chemical and nuclear plants are located, they pose a serious threat to densely populated regions. These emergencies negatively affect children and women, particularly in distant rural areas with limited basic services. Drought is also a major issue in all Central Asian countries. This year, South-Eastern Europe suffered severe drought, mainly Bulgaria, Moldova and Romania. Along with drought, unusually hot weather also caused large forest fires which had serious consequences for agricultural and timber production. Droughts are particularly devastating for the pastoralist and agricultural communities and their families who are dependent on livestock and crops for their livelihood.

As the climate change accelerates, natural disasters are likely to strike more frequently and ferociously the CEE/CIS region, especially impacting countries which, in the past, were considered much less vulnerable to disasters.

Other vulnerabilities. Other risks and vulnerabilities are due to unresolved political tensions. The Regional Office ensured preparedness in the event of worsening crises. Areas of concern include the situation of internally displaced persons, the condition of populations living in the unresolved frozen conflict areas, and any potential 'spillover' effect of the deteriorating situation in the UN Administered Province of Kosovo. At the same time, the situation in neighbouring countries, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, could also have serious implications for border countries in the region.

2. KEY ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2007

The UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office supported Country Offices with emergency preparedness and response. Thanks to the financial support from both the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DfID) and the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), the Regional Office was able to assist Country Offices in reviewing and updating their emergency preparedness and response plans; disseminating information to staff about new humanitarian policies and guidelines, such as the cluster approach; training staff on key humanitarian principles and emergency response procedures and mechanisms; and providing country-level response through rapid staff deployment. Emergency trainings and simulation exercises were held for UNICEF staff in Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the UN Administered Province of Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkmenistan. In some cases, these events involved sister UN agencies and other organizations, such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Within the framework of the humanitarian reform and the regional inter-agency cooperation, the Regional Office actively supported inter-agency initiatives, including logistics and procurement capacity assessment in Kazakhstan with World Food Programme (WFP), UN Country Team (UNCT) simulation exercise in Armenia, school earthquake safety workshop in Tajikistan with UN/International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), as well as preparedness planning consultation in Almaty with inter-agency partners, such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), ISDR, WFP and the World Health Organization (WHO). In addition, a series of water and sanitation assessments were supported covering almost half of the countries in the CEE/CIS region. These were followed by a consultation to discuss and develop a regional strategy for the water, sanitation and hygiene sector.

3. PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2008

Coordination and partnership

The CEE/CIS Regional Office has made significant progress in strengthening collaboration with key UN agencies at the regional level. The regional inter-agency network meets on a regular basis and undertakes joint capacity-building activities in the region. The further strengthening and expansion of the network to other members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) will be a priority.

Regular programme

In addition to emergency preparedness and response, disaster risk reduction activities will be supported in 2008. The main strategy will be to build on UNICEF's existing education and/or early childhood development programmes.

Strengthening emergency response to natural disasters and other rapid onset emergencies (incl. contingency planning and regional surge response capacity): (US\$ 200,000)

This emergency fund will support the immediate needs of countries in emergencies and enable the following activities:

Monitoring and assessment

The Regional Office will continue to monitor existing and potential emergencies in the region and advise Country Offices on adequate preparedness measures. It will continue to maintain contacts with other UN agencies at the regional level for information-sharing, joint preparedness planning and coordinated response actions.

Emergency response

Direct technical assistance will be provided to those Country Offices which are involved in contingency planning and humanitarian response. Country Offices will be supported in conducting rapid needs assessments, coordinating with government, UN and other humanitarian partners, liaising with Headquarters divisions, mobilizing resources (financial, staffing and supplies), and implementing response activities.

Humanitarian capacity development (US\$ 200,000)

Emergency preparedness and response planning

The Regional Office will continue to provide technical guidance to Country Offices and other humanitarian partners (UNCTs, other IASC partners and governments) on child rights, UNICEF's *Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCCs)* and cluster approach modalities. A series of specialist coaching and simulation exercises will be organized for various Country Offices in 2008. The events will focus on the core 'cluster' responsibilities and programmes identified for UNICEF in water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, information technologies (IT), education and child protection, as well as continued training in human rights, humanitarian principles and the CCCs, which underpin UNICEF's work in emergency situations. These activities will be implemented within the inter-agency capacity development framework. In addition, the Regional Office will support knowledge development initiatives at country and regional levels by organizing briefing sessions, holding inter-country/agency consultations and commissioning and disseminating relevant studies related to humanitarian and regional issues.

Disaster risk reduction (US\$ 200,000)

Risk reduction

The Regional Office will actively work with inter-agency partners, especially UN/ISDR, in mobilizing government, civil society and other relevant actors to implement disaster risk reduction activities in the region. Ongoing national and subregional disparity reduction rates (DRR) initiatives will be supported. The Regional Office will assist Country Offices in identifying, developing and implementing disaster risk reduction, primarily through existing education and early childhood development programmes. Country Offices will be provided with relevant policy guidance and support to establish links with key players and mobilize funds.