

## UNICEF Humanitarian Action 2010

# CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES



### SITUATION UPDATE

Since the beginning of the year, a number of emergency events have impacted the lives and well-being of children and women in the Central and Eastern Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) region. On 2 January, a moderate earthquake in the Vanj district of Tajikistan caused massive destruction to essential infrastructure such as houses, schools and hospitals. In the spring, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan experienced flash floods which resulted in dozens of deaths and injuries. In March, an earthquake measuring six on the Richter scale occurred in eastern province of Turkey. Over 50 people were reported dead and some 75 injured. Although these disasters were moderate in scale, they left many children traumatized, disrupted their access to education and at times displaced them and their families. In April, an outbreak of polio was reported in Tajikistan, threatening the spread of virus into neighbouring countries in Central Asia, especially Uzbekistan. This was the first outbreak since 2002 when the country was declared free of polio. In summer, flooding caused by heavy rains affected several countries in Eastern Europe, notably Romania and Moldova, where thousands of families were evacuated, houses, schools and other public buildings were damaged and critical infrastructure such as roads and bridges was destroyed.

In early April, the incumbent president of Kyrgyzstan was ousted from power, followed by a spate of localized protests, violent clashes and general civil unrest in the country, especially in the southern provinces. On 10 June, the already volatile situation broke out into a violent conflict in the city of Osh, which rapidly spread to Jalalabad. At the peak of the emergency, some 1.1 million people were directly or indirectly affected by the conflict and destruction of homes and businesses, including some 300,000 people that were internally displaced within Kyrgyzstan, and over 100,000 people, mostly women and children, who were forced to flee to neighbouring Uzbekistan. Although the violence has since subsided allowing many displaced people and refugees to return to their native areas, tensions and uncertainties remain high. As of 1 July, the vast majority of almost 400,000 refugees and IDPs are now believed to be at home or in the vicinity of their homes, with host families or relatives, neighbours and friends. Many homes of the displaced, particularly of ethnic Uzbeks, are destroyed or damaged. Returnees live with host families in over-crowded houses,

often in yards and even stables, and in otherwise difficult conditions. Children have been particularly impacted from these events. In addition to poor living conditions, many schools have been damaged or are being used as IDP shelters. Children are in need of stability and care and most importantly need to be supported in returning them back to school for the upcoming academic year. At present, both host families and returnees need humanitarian assistance. The sudden return of refugees and IDPs has had immediate implication on UNICEF's and partners' programming, although shelter materials and protection are perceived the priorities at present.<sup>1</sup>

### KEY RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

The CEE/CIS Regional Office continues to actively support the country offices in preparing for responding to the needs of the children affected by the emergency events in the region. The office has provided technical guidance and support to the country offices in carrying out rapid needs assessments, organizing response interventions, mobilizing financial and human resources, contributing to the broader humanitarian effort by the governments and international community. At the onset of the crisis in Kyrgyzstan on 10 June, the regional office activated its Crisis Management Team (CMT) to coordinate the regional and global support to the country offices both in Bishkek and Tashkent. In close coordination with its Headquarters, the regional office has deployed and continues to facilitate deployment of experienced emergency staff, delivery of essential emergency supplies, establishment of operational capacity ensure rapid response to the humanitarian needs in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. It is also working closely with the two offices, especially in Bishkek, in developing specific strategies and plans to support rehabilitation and early recovery programmes.

In the area of Disaster Risk Reduction, UNICEF has recently received a multi-million grant from ECHO's Disaster Preparedness (DIPECHO) programme for Central Asia and South Caucasus, covering the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Although the project activities are being implemented at the country level, the Regional Office plays an important role in facilitating coordination between the relevant country offices as well as providing guidance and direction in the planning and execution of the project interventions. Overall, the programme will contribute to the achievement of global Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), especially Priority Three (knowledge and education) and Priority Five (disaster preparedness).

### KEY CHALLENGES

The sudden outbreak of crisis in Kyrgyzstan and the earthquake in Tajikistan and Turkey once again underscore the need for constant vigilance and monitoring in this region. In Kyrgyzstan, humanitarian response to the affected children and their families in the first few days after the crisis was constrained by the lack of access to the southern provinces of Osh and Jalalabad due to security concerns. In addition, activities planned to strengthen and formalize the regional surge capacity for humanitarian response have been constrained due to the lack of funds.

### INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

The Regional Office continues to be part of formal and informal mechanisms of inter-agency network around disaster preparedness and response, enabling UNICEF to share information and coordinate action with the key operational UN agencies, particularly UNHCR, the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. As part of this partnership, the RO has supported a number of UN Country Teams in the region with inter-agency contingency planning workshops and simulation exercises.

### FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

The following table provides an overview of the present funding situation of CEE/CIS RO's disaster preparedness and response programme. The RO wishes to express its appreciation to all the donors who have contributed to the humanitarian programme in the region, and in particular, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). Out of the US\$753,704 received as of 1 June, \$223,364 has been allocated to the RO to support UNICEF country offices in implementing the disaster risk reduction project in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The remaining amounts have been provided to Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. Funding requirements for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) have increased to reflect the increasing number of countries requiring DRR interventions.

<sup>1</sup> A Kyrgyzstan Flash Appeal was launched on 18 June and revised on 23 July.

Funds received against the HAR 2010 (US\$)				
Sector	Original 2010 HAR requirements	Revised HAR requirements	Funds received	Funding gap
Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning	200,000	200,000	0	200,000
Regional Surge Capacity	250,000	250,000	0	250,000
Disaster Risk Reduction	400,000	1,200,000	753,704	446,296
<b>Total*</b>	<b>850,000</b>	<b>1,650,000</b>	<b>753,704</b>	<b>896,296</b>

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

### EMERGENCY PROGRAMME PRIORITIES: JULY – DECEMBER 2010

**Kyrgyzstan: Humanitarian response and post-conflict recovery:** Kyrgyzstan will be a key arena for accelerated recovery programmes following on the recent conflict in Kyrgyzstan and rapid returnees from Uzbekistan. Priorities will be ensuring stability for communities, supporting peace and reconciliation, ensuring resumption of schooling and access to health services, and ensuring livelihoods and support to the families.

**Disaster Risk Reduction project in Central Asia and South Caucasus:** Another priority area will be the DRR/DIPECHO programme in Central Asia and South Caucasus. The Regional Office will continue to provide guidance, support and oversight on the two projects. Under the DRR programme, the RO will support the relevant country offices in strengthening national disaster preparedness and educational policies, thereby contributing to the building of a culture of safety and resilience. Capacity development initiatives will also be supported, specifically targeting teachers, school directors, local disaster management authorities as well as national policy makers. In a direct contribution to HFA Priority Three, mass awareness-raising activities will be implemented to raise the level of awareness and knowledge of parents and the wider community about disaster preparedness and risk reduction.