

ISSUE

The cyclone Gafilo is one of the strongest to have hit Madagascar in twenty years. An estimated 390,000 children are seriously affected, including 138,600 children aged under-five. Many of these are now homeless, have little or no access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, receive insufficient nourishment, and cannot attend school. If assistance is not provided immediately, this precarious situation will worsen. There is a high risk of an increase in cases of diarrhea and other water-borne diseases such as pneumonia, malaria and cholera. These children are in desperate need, requiring an urgent restoration of their right to basic healthy living conditions and security, including resumption of schooling.

Between 26 January and 4 February 2004, the tropical cyclone Elita hit Madagascar several times, causing havoc in a number of districts and leaving 29 people dead, 100 injured and 44,190 homeless. Barely a month after, another intense tropical cyclone, Gafilo, hit the country on 7 March 2004. It is estimated that the impact of cyclone Gafilo has affected the lives and livelihoods of an estimated 774,000 people, of whom 390,000 are children. As of 22 March 2004, 198 people have been officially confirmed dead, 879 injured and 166 are still unaccounted for. The total number of people reported to have lost their homes now stands at 216,581.



EARLY RESPONSE

Within a few days of the emergency, UNICEF mobilized US\$ 300,000 of its own resources (both from emergency funds and office regular resources) to assist the Government in providing emergency relief to children and women affected by the cyclone's aftermath. These funds were used to procure water purification tablets, soap, jerry cans, plastic sheeting and tents for some 5,000 families as well as provide school-in-a-box kits for 5,200 children. Details of the early response activities are noted below:

- Provision of 150 tents for temporary housing
- Provision of blankets and tarpaulin for 5,000 families
- Distribution of sheeting, rope and other equipment to construct provisional latrines for 20,000 families
- Provision of water purification tablets, soap and jerry cans for 150,000 people
- Provision of 50 tonnes of food
- Provision of essential drug kits (antibiotics, SRO, anti-malarials) for 20,000 families
- Provision of 65 school-in-a-box kits to enable 800 classrooms to reopen

URGENT ACTIVITIES

Water and Sanitation

- In the estimated 50 sites sheltering 20,000 displaced persons, including 10,600 children, UNICEF will provide tools, shovels and buckets for the building and maintenance of 5 provisional latrines per site. In the 200 damaged or destroyed schools, UNICEF will build provisional latrines and distribute water purification solution, jerry cans, buckets and soap. These actions will help to prevent outbreak of cholera and water-borne illnesses.
- In the severely hit communities, UNICEF will cover the water and sanitation needs of 14,000 households and provide calcium hypochlorite for 150 community wells.
- This support also aims to strengthen local coordination capacity for distribution of water treatment products, installation and repair of sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion. Community animators will be identified, trained and provided with hygiene promotion materials that focus on personal hygiene/hand-washing, latrine use and proper management and storage of water at household level.

Nutrition

- It is anticipated that the loss of 150,000 ha of food crops will significantly worsen the food security situation of some 110,000 people, including 58,300 children, in the three affected provinces until the next main harvest. While WFP, the UN agency primarily responsible for food security issues, is already fully operational in providing food to those most affected, UNICEF will ensure supplies of F-100 for an estimated 1,000 acute malnourished children for 3 months. A stock of 12MTs of BP5 will be made available for immediate distribution. In collaboration with NGOs, UNICEF will also undertake nutritional surveys to ensure that the nutritional status of children under-five, and pregnant and lactating women does not deteriorate.

Shelter

- While the concerted effort of the CNS, with the support of UNICEF and NGOs, has provided essential shelter supplies for some of the most affected people, additional tarpaulins, tents and blankets are necessary to meet basic needs. These will be distributed by NGOs and community structures under the supervision of the CNS.

Health

- As anticipated, an increase of acute respiratory infection (ARI) has already been noted among young children in the aftermath of the cyclone, as well as a higher incidence of scabies and conjunctivitis. The risk of an outbreak of cholera and other diarrheal diseases is high, as well as increased incidence of malaria because of stagnant floodwater. While interventions in the area of water and sanitation will assist in reducing this risk, rehabilitation of health services and treatment capacity is also necessary. Lack of additional funds may create serious health problems for some 138,600 children under-five.
- UNICEF aims to support the Ministry of Health (MoH) to undertake minimal infrastructure repairs to the 200 health centres that have been damaged so that they can re-open immediately. Material provided will include tarpaulin (24 m²) and an allocation of \$200 per health centre for basic repairs (roofs, floors, etc). As essential drug supplies have been

destroyed in some of these health centres, a basic stock will be provided in close coordination with WHO.

- UNICEF aims to strengthen national capacity to implement and coordinate national assistance structures and will therefore work primarily through national counterparts and local health authorities.

Education

- The importance of resuming educational activities in order to provide some measure of normalcy for children in emergencies has been internationally acknowledged. UNICEF has already provided some emergency educational material to enable teachers to resume classes. This assistance needs to be extended to provide education materials (writing pads, paper, pencils, teacher's manuals and materials) in both urban and rural zones of the most affected regions by Gafilo and the five districts that were hit by both Elita and Gafilo. This will enable classes to resume for 50,000 students, with 800 teachers.

3. APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND RECEIPTS

Requirements

The table below shows budget requirements as part of the UN Inter-Agency Flash Appeal of 19 March.

TABLE 1: 2004 APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING BY SECTOR AS OF 14 APRIL 2004	
Sector	Funds required (US\$)
Education	406,420
Water and Sanitation	503,955
Nutrition	172,211
Shelter	233,856
Health	325,947
Total	1,642,389

Receipts

Donor response has been very limited in terms of supporting the emergency activities outlined in the UNICEF portion of the Flash Appeal. To date, support has only been received from the Norwegian government in the form of donations in-kind of cholera kits and BP5 (36MT). The donation comprises includes air transport as well as cash grant to cover support costs.

Details of the Madagascar Emergency Programme can be obtained from:

Barbara Bentein
Representative
Madagascar
Tel: + 261 20 22 626 45
Fax: + 261 20 22 628 45
E-mail: bbentein@unicef.org

Olivier Degreef
UNICEF EMOPS
Geneva
Tel: + 41 22 909 5655
Fax: + 41 22 909 5902
E-mail: odegreef@unicef.org

Dan Rohrmann
UNICEF PFO
New York
Tel: + 1 212 326 7009
Fax: + 1 212 326 7165
E-mail: drohrmann@unicef.org