

## WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

### CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN

The risk of medium- and large-scale emergencies in the West and Central Africa region remains high in 2009. In addition to volatile political and socio-economic situations in Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau, the region continues to confront malnutrition in the Sahel countries and recurrent emergencies, such as cholera, meningitis and floods. The impact of high food prices across the region could add further risks to the ongoing fragility of countries and vulnerable groups within the region.

### PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2009

At the regional level, UNICEF is the cluster lead for nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and is a member of consultative groups on health and protection.

**Strengthening Emergency Response:** The UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) will provide technical and operational support to Country Offices and partners (through inter-agency simulation exercises and disaster preparedness planning) to strengthen their preparedness. In the event of a rapid onset emergency, urgent human resource surge capacity will be provided as well as essential supplies and bridge emergency funds.

**Child Survival and Nutrition:** At both regional and country level, WCARO will continue to strengthen inter-agency coordination, synergy and accountability among UN agencies and humanitarian partners as per the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) agreements for effective implementation. In Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Togo, WCARO will focus on the management of malnutrition among children under age five, and on the prevention of malnutrition among children under age five and pregnant/lactating women.

**Health:** WCARO will aim to reduce morbidity and mortality due to meningitis by strengthening preparedness and response to meningitis epidemics in West African countries in the 'meningitis belt'.

**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:** WCARO will continue to strengthen inter-agency coordination, synergy and accountability among UN agencies and humanitarian partners in WASH as per IASC agreements. In addition, WCARO will develop an integrated cholera mitigation and response plan to reduce the occurrence and incidence of cholera outbreaks and improve emergency response in hotspot areas of Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

**Education:** WCARO will continue to strengthen and expand the realm of support to countries' efforts to plan and implement adequate responses in emergency situations. Capacity and partnership building will be consolidated through inter-agency trainings, the creation of an emergency roster and the monitoring of the impact of high food prices on education systems and on children's learning and development.

#### West and Central Africa Emergency Needs for 2009\*

Sector	US\$
Strengthening Emergency Response	2,600,000
Child Survival and Nutrition	11,011,594
Health (preparedness and response to meningitis)	1'280,000
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	13,382,580
Education	900,000
Child Protection	724,700
HIV and AIDS	260,000
<b>Total**</b>	<b>30,158,874</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 underfunded emergencies.

\*\* 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.

**Child Protection:** WCARO will support Country Offices (who have adopted the cluster approach) for a stronger articulation of child protection within the broader protection cluster and continue to facilitate cross-border and subregional coordination and collaboration for child protection interventions in Mano River countries, Great Lakes' region countries as well as Central African Republic, Chad and Cameroon. WCARO will focus not only on strengthening its own capacity but also support capacity-building amongst government partners, international and national NGOs to respond to emergencies in five countries.

**HIV and AIDS:** WCARO will reach refugees and host communities in Cameroon, who are increasingly vulnerable to HIV and AIDS; train 3,000 service providers, volunteers and peer educators in community mobilization and sensitization on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PTMCT), on orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) and provision of life skills training for adolescents and youth.