Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

Humanitarian situation
The programming context in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) is marked by a tense situation along the Korean peninsula, international sanctions, reduced funding opportunities, and mid-year flooding that affected many parts of the country, particularly in the North and South Pyongyang provinces. Remittances continued to be constrained in 2014. Despite substantial challenges, there were positive developments for children and women and the overall humanitarian situation improved slightly. External assistance continues to play a vital role in safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children and families whose food security, nutritional status and general health would otherwise be seriously compromised. Malnutrition rates continue to be of great concern, despite modest improvements. According to the 2012 National Nutrition Survey, 28 per cent and 4 per cent of children under 5 suffer from chronic malnutrition (stunting) and acute malnutrition (wasting), respectively. Without adequate nutrition and intake of the necessary proteins, vitamins and minerals, children will continue to face stunting and wasting and will suffer delayed growth and developmental challenges. Life-saving humanitarian assistance continues to be critical for nutrition, health, education and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) particularly in the north-eastern provinces and remote counties. Support is critically needed to address the underlying drivers of vulnerability.

Humanitarian strategy
UNICEF is working with partners to provide multi-sectoral support to the Government to sustain critical national interventions, while focusing on vulnerable communities and institutions, particularly in the north-eastern provinces and remote counties. UNICEF continues its coordination role in the nutrition, WASH and education ‘thematic groups’ within the United Nations Strategic Framework. Critical programmes include immunization, deworming, the provision of essential life-saving drugs, the promotion of breastfeeding and adequate complementary feeding. Children who survive the two major killers of children in DPRK (pneumonia and diarrhoea account for 14 and 5 per cent of child mortality respectively 1) are susceptible to undernutrition. UNICEF is working to address the immediate and underlying causes of undernutrition in DPRK in order to break the intergenerational cycle, including through curative interventions for severe acute malnutrition (SAM). UNICEF is supporting ongoing maternal and neonatal health interventions to protect 29,000 pregnant women target for the year by providing life-saving equipment, test kits and training (out of which 12,000 had been reached as of mid-year). In addition, the Maternal and Neonatal Health assessment, which was completed in May 2014 (results yet to be released by the Ministry of Public Health), is a major step towards evidence based planning and management. UNICEF is working on an integrated water supply system, based on proven cost-effective and environmentally-friendly methods, which, combined with hygiene promotion and improvement of basic sanitation, allows 200,000 people to access safe water and improved basic sanitation, and safely handle excreta recycled for agricultural use. Old and debilitating school infrastructure and lack of quality teaching learning materials are major issues in education. Several schools need immediate repair or rehabilitation after the rainy season or floods so that they remain safe for children. UNICEF is thus supporting the repair/rehabilitation of 15 schools which will benefit approximately 5,000 children aged 4 to 17 years. With the provision of early childhood development kits, and caregiver

1 UN Interagency Estimates, Trends in Child Mortality, September 2013 Report

2014 Programme Targets
Nutrition
• 500,000 children aged 6 to 24 months receive micronutrient supplementation
• 13,000 children aged 0 to 59 months affected by SAM admitted for treatment

Health
• 363,200 children under 12 months and 364,900 pregnant women immunized with Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) vaccines
• 1,413,000 children aged 12 to 24 months dewormed twice in a year
• 1,590,000 children aged 6 to 59 months receive two doses of vitamin A

WASH
• 209,000 people including school children access water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene.
• 1,000,000 people have access to critical WASH-related information on hygiene practices

Education
• 5,000 children access quality education opportunities in a child-friendly school environment through the rehabilitation of school infrastructure
• 20,000 children benefit from early learning kits and caregiver training provided to kindergartens
Training, UNICEF will also support improved learning in 150 kindergartens to benefit 20,000 pre-school children aged 4-6 years (50 per cent girls). To support preparedness, UNICEF seeks to replenish pre-positioned stocks with nutrition, health, education and WASH supplies for up to 100,000 persons who may be directly affected by recurring floods.

**Results 2014 (January to June)**

From January to June 2014, UNICEF was able to see some concrete programme results. In nutrition, Community Management of Acute Malnutrition services were delivered in 1,000 service delivery sites in four northern-eastern provinces (with highest burden of SAM cases), as well as in 14 baby-homes and 29 county hospitals and 11 provincial paediatric hospitals (countrywide). Some 8,000 SAM affected children were treated, 1.6 million pre-pregnant women received three month rations of iron-folate, 222,000 pregnant lactating women received three month rations of multiple micronutrient tablets and 156,000 infants aged 6 to 24 months received multiple micronutrient powder. In health, although there was a slight dip in pentavalent coverage in late 2013, the current national vaccination coverage remains above 98 per cent across the country. In May, UNICEF supported National Child Health Day, which reached 98 per cent of young children with vitamin A supplementation and deworming. UNICEF continued to support the provision of essential and life-saving medicines, particularly for the treatment of diarrhoea and pneumonia, for children across six provinces.

In the WASH sector, approximately 100,000 people gained access to safe water through gravity fed water supply systems in 3 provinces Kangwon (Seno and Ichon Counties), North Pyongan (Unjon County) and South Hamgyong (Sudong County). UNICEF also procured WASH emergency kits for 100,000 people which were prepositioned in Ministry of City Management warehouses. Due to the absence of funding for humanitarian activities in education, combined with the problem of cash flow in the country, education activities remained severely constrained during this period, with limited results.

**2014 Programme Targets and Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUTRITION</th>
<th>UNICEF 2014 Targets (Jan - Dec)</th>
<th>UNICEF Results (as of 30 June 2014)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children under 5 with SAM admitted to CMSAM therapeutic care</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children aged 6 to 23 months received multiple micronutrient supplementation</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>156,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women aged 19 to 29 years receive Iron-folate; pregnant and lactating women receive multiple micronutrient supplements, and 6-59 months old children receive Vit. A supplement.</td>
<td>a) Women 19-29: 2 M</td>
<td>a) 1.6 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) PLW: 700,000</td>
<td>b) 222,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Vit. A: 1-7 M</td>
<td>c) 1,656,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HEALTH**

| Children under 1 fully covered with routine vaccines for EPI | 353,200 | 244,000 |
| Children under 5 receiving deworming medication (includes the EPI target) | 1,413,000 | 1,641,860* |
| Children under 5 receiving vitamin A supplements | 1,590,000 | 1,657,670** |

**WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE**

| Affected populations, including children and women living in remote towns and villages, access to sufficient water of appropriate quality and quantity for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene | 209,000 | 200,000 |
| Affected populations, including children and women, have access to critical WASH-related information on hygiene practices including prevention of childhood illnesses, especially diarrhoea | 1,000,000 | 900,000 |

**EDUCATION**

| Children including pre-school-aged children, access quality education opportunities in a child-friendly school environment through the rehabilitation of school infrastructure | 5,000 | Nil |
| Pre-school children access quality education opportunities through the provision of early childhood materials for better cognitive development | 20,000 | Nil |

*Calculated for 2nd quarter, **Results May 2014 Child Health Day

**Funding requirements**

UNICEF is appealing for US$20.3 million to meet the humanitarian needs of children and women in DPRK for 2014. As of 30 June 2014, a total of US$3.2 million, or 16 per cent of requirements, was available against the appeal, including funds carried over from 2013. Additional funding will enable UNICEF to support the national response to the country’s continuing silent under-nutrition emergency and to provide critical health, WASH and education services to the most vulnerable children and women in DPRK. At present, implementation of interventions is severely constrained and highly influenced by the current political climate. The tightened international sanctions and lack of in-country cash disbursement have resulted in constrained ability of program implementation. Efforts are not spared to find acceptable solutions to proceed with most essential services.

**Who to contact for further information:**

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