East Asia and the Pacific

With eight of the world’s top 15 high-risk countries, East Asia and the Pacific is one of the most hazard-prone regions in the world. High exposure to geophysical and hydro-meteorological hazards, including earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical storms, floods and droughts, and vulnerability in the extreme to the effects of climate change are exacerbated by poverty and weak infrastructure. Children and women, among the most vulnerable groups, bear the brunt of the disaster impact. Almost 2 million people in Asia-Pacific were killed in disasters between 1970 and 2011, representing 75 per cent of global disaster fatalities in that period. In 2011, the region’s economic losses from disasters amounted to US$294 billion, representing 80 per cent of global disaster losses that year. Political instability and conflict in several countries, including Myanmar and the Philippines, also affect women and children. In both countries, however, positive developments are under way, including a signed action plan for the release of child soldiers in Myanmar and a ceasefire between the Government of the Philippines and one of the armed groups active in that country, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which had previously signed an action plan for the release of its child soldiers.

Planned results for 2013

UNICEF’s East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), in close collaboration with the region’s country offices, works on all aspects of disaster risk management in order to reduce risk for children, strengthen emergency preparedness, invest in capacity development and enhance the coordination of swift and effective aid in disasters across the region, including:

- Advancing the integration of development and humanitarian action through risk-informed planning, by incorporating natural hazards, climate change and conflict prevention issues in policy, programme and field interventions. This includes developing technical guidance for risk assessments, integration of social protection and disaster risk reduction (DRR), and enhanced humanitarian accountability.
- Strengthening the emergency preparedness capacity of governments, vulnerable communities and partner organizations. Priority will be given to proactive interventions in high-risk areas (including enhanced early warning systems, contingency planning and simulation exercises).
- Strengthening regional support to UNICEF country offices faced with an emergency situation, to ensure response in UNICEF-led cluster areas, including WASH, nutrition, education and child protection in the Pacific and in East and South Asia.
- Enhancing regional knowledge management and partnership arrangements in DRR, preparedness and response, including collaboration with regional organizations and coordination platforms (e.g., regional working groups under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the ISDR Asia Partnership and the Children in a Changing Climate coalition).
- Strengthening South-South learning and cooperation through the Community of Practice on Child Protection in Emergencies.

Results from 2012

As of the end of October, the regional office had received only US$428,825, or 9 per cent of the US$4.7 million required for its activities.

The regional emergency team provided support to 8 of the 14 countries where UNICEF has an office for DRR, emergency preparedness and capacity-building, undertaking a total of 42 missions. The unit provided training, policy and strategy setting, and served as backup support for country teams faced with unfolding conflict and floods during the cyclone season (e.g., Myanmar, Fiji). Specific cluster coordination support was also provided through education and child protection cluster training for UNICEF and partners in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

A beginner’s guide to child-centred DRR, climate change adaptation, and multi-sectoral risk assessments notes were developed by the regional office. Contributions were also made to the development of a framework for comprehensive school safety, in collaboration with partners in UNESCO, Save the Children, Plan International and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center.

With the support of a standby partner, a regional Community of Practice on Child Protection in Emergencies was established, bringing together more than 300 members from 22 countries and contributing to South-South cooperation. Additional capacity-building was undertaken by a training-of-trainers of 57 country-level UNICEF staff and partners on Child Protection in Emergencies rapid assessments. A regional study on the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, as well as on Early Warning, Early Action systems, preparedness, regional partnerships and middle-income countries was finalized to inform future activity planning.

All UNICEF country offices in the region work closely with governments before, during and after disasters. Frequently, monsoon and cyclone seasons lead to seasonal floods, and UNICEF complements governments’ efforts. In Cambodia, for example, UNICEF’s response to the 2011/2012 floods consisted of distributing basic water, sanitation and hygiene supplies, education kits and other services, reaching more than 400,000 people, including 160,000 children.

All 14 country offices in the East Asia and Pacific region will be supported by the regional office in Thailand. In the case of a small- to medium-scale emergency where an inter-agency appeal is not initiated, this chapter of the Humanitarian Action for Children will provide a channel for funding and providing technical assistance support to reach children affected by disasters, complementing...
UNICEF has been able to support response activities through this mechanism in Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

**UNICEF funding requirements for 2013**

The UNICEF regional office is requesting US$4,252,000 to carry out its planned regional DRR and emergency support activities. This amount includes US$3,000,000 for DRR, preparedness and response activities in countries that are not profiled in the following individual country chapters.

This funding is critical in order to continue to strengthen emergency preparedness and DRR and to provide support for the UNICEF-led WASH, nutrition, education and child protection clusters/sectors in all phases of humanitarian action. Fulfilled funding needs will enable the regional office to deliver on its full range of regional accountabilities under UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional office</th>
<th>HAC 2013 requirements (US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional office technical capacity</td>
<td>321,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional office emergency support activities</td>
<td>75,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional office cluster coordination technical capacity shared with the Regional Office for South Asia</td>
<td>749,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster coordination support activities to countries in the region</td>
<td>107,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster risk management, preparedness and response in emergency-prone countries in the region</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,252,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Photo caption: Two children in a flood evacuation centre in Thailand read a brochure on nutrition, health and hygiene awareness.
