East Asia and the Pacific

East Asia and the Pacific is one of the most hazard-prone regions in the world, with eight of the world’s 15 most emergency-prone countries in its territories. Natural disasters only aggravate a humanitarian situation in the region that is already negatively impacted by population growth, climate change and urbanization. Predictions are that Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Pacific Islands are likely to be faced with more frequent and intense natural disasters. In addition, hundreds of thousands of people in the region are displaced within or across borders due to internal conflicts, ethnic violence and/or social exclusion. In certain countries, chronic under-nutrition is a significant public health concern. In all these contexts, children and women are among the most vulnerable to crises and at risk of being most severely impacted by them – their health, security and well-being are inevitably compromised when families, communities and basic social infrastructures are destroyed. UNICEF continues to support and complement Government efforts in preparing and responding to recurrent emergencies, and invests in mitigating the impact through resilience-building of caretakers and communities with an aim to join efforts in meeting basic needs of the most vulnerable children and realising their fundamental rights.

Regional strategy and planned results for 2015

Acknowledging that many Governments in the region have accrued considerable capacity in emergency response, UNICEF will continue to complement their relief efforts as necessary through its regional support mechanisms. Each year, especially for monsoon-related floods, earthquakes or volcano eruptions, technical support is provided in line with UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, particularly in the sectors of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Nutrition, Education and Child Protection. With equity focus in humanitarian action, UNICEF will reach out to the most vulnerable children and their families, including boys and girls with disabilities, migrant households, ethnic minorities and others, in an innovative way to fulfil their basic rights in the changing working environment of East Asia and the Pacific, where there are increasing numbers of middle income countries. UNICEF is also fully committed to accountability to affected populations, the Governments and donors. In addition, humanitarian performance monitoring will be strengthened and stepped up.

To this end, in 2015, EAPRO, in collaboration with and support to UNICEF’s 14 country offices in this region, will continue to work on all aspects of disaster risk reduction in relation to both conflicts and natural disasters. In particular, support to governments will focus on enhancing emergency preparedness and response with the provision of collective training, through setting up appropriate Early Warning, Early Action systems, and through the organization of simulation exercises. Risk management capacities will also be strengthened with the aim to reduce children’s vulnerability and to build the resilience of their communities. Efforts to build resilience are not only pursued through aligning humanitarian and development interventions, but are also aligned with ongoing global initiatives, including the Post-2015 framework on DRR, World Humanitarian Summit and Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Several country offices in the region have engaged in disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and peacebuilding programmes. Interventions such as the "Safe School" initiative for Education, and Climate Change Adaptation initiatives for WASH, are only possible through solid and long-lasting partnerships with governments, regional or sub-regional partners such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Secretariat for the Pacific Community, and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Regional Network.

Results in 2014

In 2014, UNICEF appealed for US$4,261,400, and as of end October 2014, a total of US$3,894,932 or 91 per cent of requirements, had been newly received this year while a total of US$5,199,141 were carried over from 2013. These funds enabled UNICEF to build its regional capacity to ensure efficient and effective response to humanitarian crises, and to enhance and further invest in emergency preparedness as well as disaster risk reduction/management to better support 14 UNICEF country offices and partners. Among these funds available in 2014, US$1,364,863 was directly used in the regional office while US$7,729,210 went to country offices.

In the region, UNICEF in coordination with the Government of Cambodia has been responding to the flood emergency there since late 2013, including through procuring and distributing emergency WASH relief items, rehabilitating facilities, and producing information, education and communication materials for over 60,000 affected people. In addition, UNICEF has supported training in water supply rehabilitation and sanitation, and hygiene promotion in Cambodia. In China, following the earthquake in Sichuan Province, UNICEF provided technical support to the Government in the earthquake-affected areas of Ya’an prefecture, including by establishing five child-friendly spaces and providing psychosocial support to over 8,000 children and caregivers, and by replacing damaged maternal and child health equipment to restore local capacity. In Indonesia, UNICEF supported the Government’s disaster management offices to jointly develop emergency preparedness and response training packages, and the trainings will be rolled out at the national and sub-national levels.

UNICEF and partners supported governments in the Pacific in their response to flood emergencies caused by cyclones in Tonga (January) and the Solomon Islands (April), including by: deploying WASH, nutrition and education cluster coordinators to affected islands; supporting
procurement and delivery of emergency supplies (such as water purification kits, therapeutic milk, school tents and kits); and ensuring access to essential services for over 50,000 affected people (half of whom are children), living both in and outside of evacuation centers. Furthermore, a measles immunization campaign was carried out together with the Ministry of Health to prevent an outbreak after the emergency in the Solomon Islands.

In order to exchange knowledge and expertise and ensure the East Asia and Pacific perspectives are mutually reinforced in policy and strategic frameworks, regional debates were facilitated on Strengthening Humanitarian Action within UNICEF, and in Inter-Agency partnerships on global initiatives such as the Post-2015 framework on DRR and the World Humanitarian Summit. Regional preparedness and response capacities were enhanced through two Regional Rapid Roster Mechanism trainings for 38 staff in the regional roster from 13 country offices. To date, some 70 UNICEF colleagues in the region are on standby to deploy to countries faced with a disaster, and a modest yet critical targeted support will be given from within the EAP region. The regional knowledge management function was improved through webinars and emergency updates to promote knowledge exchange and information sharing among country offices on key topics, including DRR, and the Early Warning, Early Action system.

UNICEF organized country-specific and office-wide trainings to increase staff awareness on emergencies and identify opportunities to bridge the gap between development and humanitarian work in the region. Cambodia, China, the Democratic Republic of Korea, Myanmar and Mongolia undertook Emergency Preparedness and Response trainings with simulation exercises or received dedicated support missions on DRR and the implementation of humanitarian performance monitoring.

Likewise, sector-specific technical support in WASH, Education, Nutrition and Child Protection was given to country offices in the Philippines, Myanmar, Indonesia, the Pacific and Vietnam (with Education activities funded with regular resources). Although governments in the region have invested in increasing their capacity in emergency preparedness, many have requested humanitarian support from UNICEF and other external actors to complement their relief efforts, especially for monsoon-related floods, earthquakes or volcano eruptions.

**Funding requirements**

EAPRO is requesting US$3,594,000 to carry out planned regional activities in resilience-building, disaster risk reduction, preparedness and emergency response. The budgeted amount includes US$2,500,000 to respond to situations elsewhere in the region that are not included in separate chapters of the Humanitarian Action for Children appeal 2015 – and that may not benefit from inter-agency flash appeals to respond to small or medium-size emergencies. The funding is also critical to continuously strengthen the technical and coordination capacity of country offices in the region, and the capacity of their national partners to support children affected by emergencies in the sectors of WASH, Health, HIV and AIDS, Nutrition, Education and Child Protection as outlined in UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2015 Requirements (US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Preparedness</td>
<td>108,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster/Sector Coordination Support</td>
<td>726,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Partnership &amp; Knowledge Management</td>
<td>32,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Office Technical Capacity</td>
<td>226,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Response Support</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,594,000</strong></td>
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