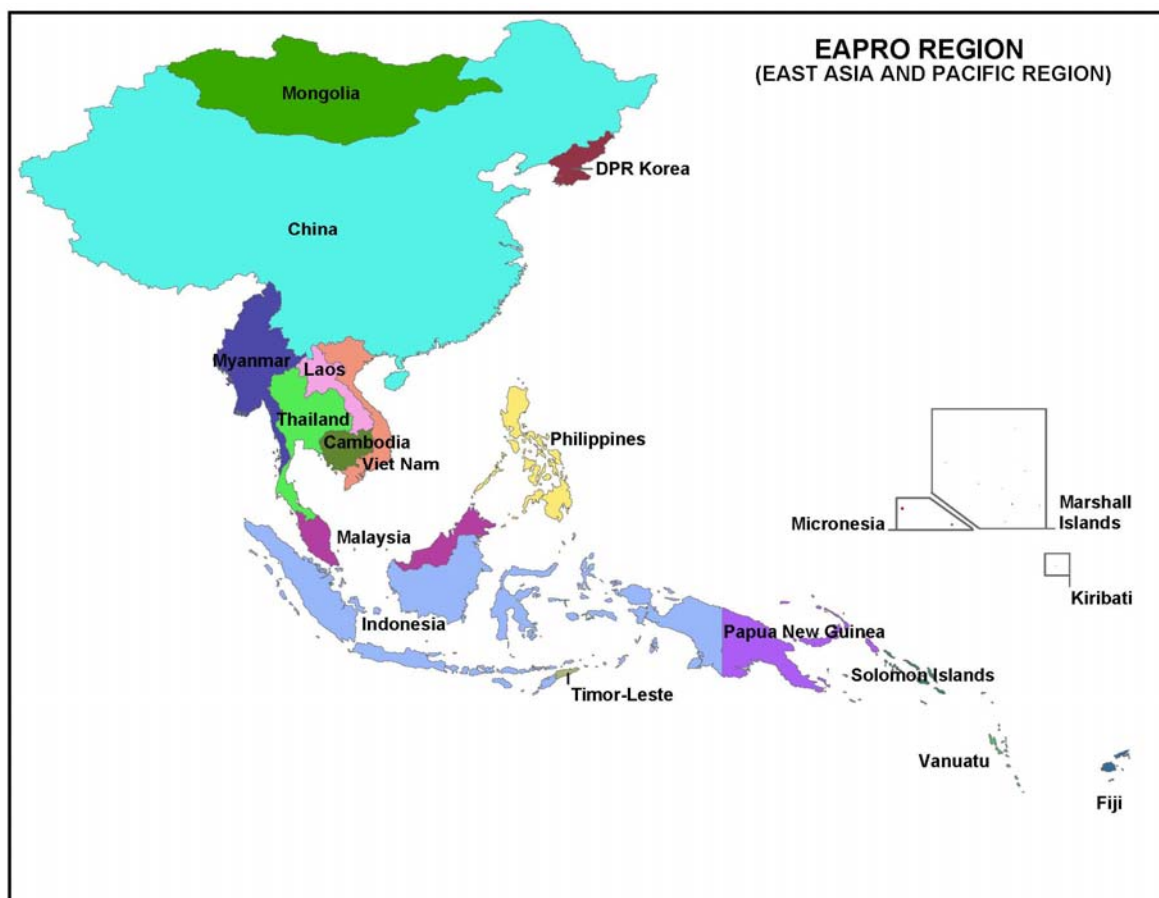


UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

EAST ASIA AND

THE PACIFIC

IN 2007



Regional Office financial needs for 2007

Sector	US\$
Emergency preparedness and disaster mitigation	400,000
Regional support for AHI preparedness and response	250,000
Child protection in emergency	250,000
Total*	900,000

* 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.

1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

The East Asia and the Pacific region faced an increase in the number and size of emergencies during 2006. The Regional Emergency Unit has had to focus its attention to frequent natural disasters affecting several countries in the region, while still maintaining a strong emphasis on the transition and rehabilitation efforts in Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand, as a result of the tsunami of December 2004.

Several earthquakes of medium to high intensity affected Indonesia and other countries located along the so-called Ring of Fire, spanning between northern Sumatra and the Pacific, and affecting the local populations to different extent. The quake which hit Jogjakarta in May 2006 killed more than 5,000 people, destroyed or damaged more than half a million houses and displaced hundreds of thousands. It even induced the intensification of the activity of the Merapi volcano, triggering the temporary displacement of an additional 6,000 people. The coast of Java was further hit by another quake and consequent tsunami in July, which killed more than 500 people. Disruption of basic services and increased risk for human and child rights abuses called for a strong UNICEF response that is still ongoing.

Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions also affected several other countries ranging from the Philippines to Papua New Guinea, and reaching the Pacific Island countries. The frequency and intensity of these events are under study for the identification of specific trends, although their unpredictability underlines the need for consistent preparedness work in coordination with governments and other international organizations. The risk of another large-size tsunami in the region, or a massive earthquake hitting one or more big cities, is unfortunately a concrete reality.

Cyclones, typhoons, heavy rains and consequent floods have affected China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam in 2006. In some cases the number of fatalities reached the hundreds – even if information from some of these countries is limited and scarce – and thousands have been displaced.

The dramatic rise in violence in Timor-Leste in April and May triggered massive displacement of people, mainly from the capital, Dili. About 150,000 people were living in camps in and around Dili or moved to other districts – where they lived with host families or in small clusters in makeshift shelters – for fear of ethnic violence. UNICEF was a key actor in the first phases of the humanitarian response and, with the assistance and support of the Regional Office, the Timor-Leste Country Office is reviewing the size and scope of the country programme for the next two years, in light of the recent events and the chronic humanitarian crisis.

Avian Influenza has been high on UNICEF's agenda in this region since 2003; but the escalation of the number of human cases worldwide from the beginning of the year, and the more recent spike of deaths in Indonesia (50 killed as per 23 September 2006), greatly increased the concerns of a possible transformation of the virus into a human-to-human transmissible form. According to some scientists, this has already happened in Indonesia. In addition to the ongoing efforts to contain the spread of Avian Influenza amongst birds and the number of bird-to-human cases, efforts are underway to operationalize preparedness actions in case of a human-to-human pandemic. Much of these activities are being undertaken in collaboration with FAO and WHO. The Regional Emergency Unit has a special role to play in assisting the UNICEF Country Offices in their preparedness planning at the national level as well as supporting consistent and comprehensive UNICEF engagement in the inter-agency collaboration.

In addition to the above disasters, armed conflict and its aftermath continued to cause disruption, displacement and death throughout the region, affecting women and children the worst. There are an estimated 600,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in Myanmar; several thousands in Indonesia and the Philippines and as many refugees from Myanmar living along the Thai-Myanmar border. Asylum seekers from Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR),

Myanmar and Viet Nam still struggle to have their rights protected in a region where several countries have not yet ratified the Refugee Convention. An emerging issue of concern is children associated with and/or being recruited by armed forces in Myanmar, the Philippines and the refugee camps in Thailand. Young involvement in violence is increasingly common in Bougainville (Papua New Guinea), the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste. Security Council Resolution 1612 establishing the parameters for monitoring and reporting child abuses in situations of conflict provides a new framework for intervention. The Resolution is being tested and its application in these countries will be a useful instrument for tackling some of the issues. In Bougainville, the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste, it must be coupled with a much more comprehensive understanding of the root causes of the problems.

2. KEY ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2006

The UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) supported several Country Offices in the region, namely DPRK, Malaysia, Mongolia, Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Timor-Leste to undertake their emergency preparedness and response (EPR) planning exercises. EAPRO was able to assist Country Offices in understanding and responding to their specific needs – in relation to their strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats – and come up with realistic and action-oriented EPR plans.

In August, the regional team, accompanied by the DevInfo Regional Officer, had the chance to contribute for the first time to an EPR planning exercise involving central, provincial and local level counterparts in Viet Nam. This laid the foundation for a set of efforts to integrate the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies' monitoring and evaluation indicators into the provincial assessment systems in selected natural disaster-prone provinces in Viet Nam. More similar events are scheduled for early 2007 in the Pacific Island countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu).

In addition, EAPRO, in a joint undertaking with the Regional Office for South Asia, developed special features for DevInfo to better address monitoring and evaluation requirements in emergencies. DevInfo now offers the following new features: 1) data capture for rapid assessments using personal digital assistance (PDA); 2) web data capture for surveys; 3) the ability to produce standard report formats; and 4) mapping of affected areas, including multi-layered maps and geospatial buffering (a geographical presentation of the affected area using a buffer zone – epicentre – to estimate numbers of people affected). These tools have been piloted in India, the Maldives and Sri Lanka and the features integrated into the global DevInfo. All of these provide instant assessments of impacts of emergencies to assist programming in the initial phases and beyond. There are also further plans, in November 2006, to explore opportunities with inter-agency and other partners to use DevInfo in emergency-affected areas.

The partially concomitant crises in Jogjakarta (Indonesia) and Timor-Leste provided a good test for EAPRO's capacity to support the Country Offices affected, and build upon the lessons learned from the tsunami. From the beginning, it was clear that the UNICEF Office in Indonesia was in a good position to respond to the new humanitarian crisis thanks to the quick deployment of staff and supplies from the Banda Aceh Office. EAPRO assisted the team by coordinating with Headquarters and other agencies, providing financial support, facilitating supply procurement and delivery, implementing the inter-agency cluster approach, finalizing fundraising documents and identifying and deploying surge capacity staff.

Timor-Leste required a much more consistent effort. The Regional Emergency Adviser joined the team in Dili at the initial stage of the crisis to assist Country Offices in identifying weaknesses and gaps in both programmes and operations, to support coordination between EAPRO and Headquarters as well as inter-agency collaboration, which ranged from the request for a Central

Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to the preparation of the Flash Appeal. The Regional Emergency Unit also coordinated EAPRO's technical support visits in the areas of education, child protection, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, human resources, etc. The success of the Flash Appeal ensured a sound financial status and the strengthening of the team in Dili. Recently, due to the overall changes in the humanitarian and developmental context of the country, the increasing needs of the population, the special momentum underlined by the deployment of a new United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), EAPRO undertook an intersectoral mission to Timor-Leste to review and reshape the programme for the next two to five years. It is expected that Timor-Leste will require extended assistance and support from EAPRO during 2007 and 2008.

Based on an evaluation of EAPRO's role during the tsunami and on the lessons learned exercise that followed, the Regional Emergency Unit organized a three-day workshop in July to review EAPRO's roles and responsibilities in the event of a humanitarian crisis in one or more countries in the Region. The exercise was an opportunity to develop a sound, realistic and action-oriented EPR plan for the Regional Office, as well as an extremely useful document to define triggers and roles when an emergency occurs in the Region. Both documents were shared with Country Offices in the Region as well as with the Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) at Headquarters. Its implementation will start at the end of 2006.

The third day of the July workshop was dedicated to Avian/Pandemic Influenza, based on the risk of a full-fledged pandemic in the region. The event allowed to set the basis for a comprehensive review of the Regional Avian/Human Influenza EPR plan developed in June and to focus on business continuity in case of a human pandemic. The magnitude and importance of the issue, as well as the amount of time and attention that it deserves, induced EAPRO to identify an Avian and Human Influenza focal person, working in the Regional Emergency Team. This person will ensure coordination between EAPRO's units involved with Avian/Human Influenza (communications, health, preparedness, human resources and administration) as well as contribute to the development of the regional inter-agency coordination/collaboration. While the role of UNICEF in programme communications is expected to be the highlight of its engagement with this very special threat in the coming months and years, the EPR aspects are gaining importance, both at country and regional levels. The role of this focal person will therefore be essential – eventually expanding – during 2007.

In light of the increasing relevance of Security Council Resolution 1612 on the monitoring and reporting mechanisms on children affected by armed conflict violations, a mapping exercise of existing organizations and actors dealing with this critical issue was carried out in May and June in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand (focusing on the Thai-Myanmar border problems). The report from this mapping exercise should become one of the baselines for the future implementation of the Resolution in South-East Asia, and underscore – together with the ongoing worrying situations in Timor-Leste, the Solomon Islands and Bougainville – the need for sound regional involvement with issues related to children in armed conflict and to post-conflict situations. Additionally, in collaboration with the Australian International Development Aid Bureau and the International Renaissance Foundation (AusAID/IRF), EAPRO supported Country Offices in Myanmar, the Philippines and the Solomon Islands to undertake 'Action for the Rights of Children' (ARC) training that focuses on child protection issues in emergencies. Here the Regional Emergency Unit worked closely with the Regional Child Protection Unit.

The Regional Emergency Unit played a key role during 2006 in facilitating communications between Country Offices and EMOPS in Headquarters on a variety of emerging issues. The humanitarian component of the UN Reform calls for new initiatives and approaches, requiring continuous coordination with other UN agencies as well as other organizations. While the new role of the Humanitarian Coordinators and the creation of a new Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) are concepts easily absorbed by the humanitarian community, the cluster leadership approach has still some 'grey areas' that are in need of further clarification and, eventually,

discussion. When the United Nations in Indonesia was asked to implement – overall successfully – this approach in Jakarta, many questions arose, and several lessons learned were collected. It is expected that this specific issue will require further attention in the coming months and the Regional Emergency Unit will have the responsibility to work closely with the Country Offices to foster a common understanding of the related issues.

Stronger links and contacts have been developed with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM). It is expected that these contacts will evolve in more comprehensive collaborations in the coming months.

3. PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2007

INDONESIA

Indonesia is highly susceptible to natural disasters. This vulnerability is compounded by socio-economic conditions that are steadily increasing the impact of disasters. Population size and other demographic changes have decreased the availability of habitable land, forcing settlements in hazard-prone, marginal areas, such as flood plains and steep slopes. Greater population size has led to an increased number of affected people per disaster. Environmental degradation, such as land erosion and deforestation, has augmented the severity of disasters.

In 2006, Indonesia experienced flash floods in South and Central Sulawesi, the eruption of the Merapi volcano in Central Java, flash floods in the southern and eastern part of Kalimantan, and hot mud flooding in East Java. In May 2006, a powerful quake of 6.1 on the Richter scale killed more than 6,000 people, destroyed or damaged more than half a million houses and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. It even induced the intensification of the activity of the Merapi volcano, triggering the temporary displacement of an additional 20,000 people. The coast of Java was further hit by another quake and consequent tsunami in July, which killed more than 500 people.

As part of its response plan, UNICEF has provided cluster leadership and supports local communities and civil authorities in child protection, education, and water and sanitation.

Among other things, UNICEF has been working to provide a safe environment for children affected by the earthquake, setting up temporary schools and opening special centres to restore a sense of normalcy to their young lives. These centres provide care and counselling to children who exhibit psychosocial problems, such as fear of entering buildings and crying at the sight of ambulances in the quake's aftermath.

The situation in Indonesia can be best described as unstable and unpredictable with the constant threat of conflicts, natural disasters and the possibility of an influenza epidemic. A workshop held by the Government of Indonesia and the United Nations provided an overview of the response to the tsunami crisis from the standpoint of the Indonesian Government. Although the tsunami was recognized as an exceptional event, it was noted that particular attention should be given to improving risk awareness, especially in the absence of early warning systems. In addition, the workshop found that the legal framework for disaster management continues to be weak, fragmented and duplicative, lacking a clear division of responsibilities among various components of the public administration. The workshop's main and cross-cutting recommendation was for the quick passing into law of the draft Bill on National Disaster Management, shortly to be discussed by the Parliament.

UNICEF will continue to develop organizational and institutional capacities to adequately respond to the emergency needs of the most vulnerable segments of the population at greater risk of being affected by disasters, i.e. children and women, and call for increased international support to reduce such vulnerabilities.

Emergency preparedness and disaster mitigation (US\$ 400,000)

Key activities will include:

- Provide technical support to Country Offices to undertake and/or review and update their EPR planning and operationalize their plans in the event of an emergency. It is expected that at least six countries will go through a comprehensive EPR review exercise during 2007, requiring support from the Regional Office;
- Support Country Offices to undertake EPR planning with inter-agency and other partners (at national and sub-national level where relevant). In light of the changing context, the UN Reform process and the increasing relevance of Avian and Human Influenza in the Region, it is expected that these issues will be part of all EPR planning exercises;
- In collaboration with the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, continue to build on the current process in Viet Nam and expand the testing and application of new monitoring and evaluation tools and indicators in emergencies to other interested Country Offices;
- Provide technical support to Country Offices in strategy development to mainstream emergencies in the UNICEF Country Programme and to develop the Common Country Assessment and the UN Development Assistance Framework;
- Building on EAPRO's EPR process, the Regional Emergency Unit will work with the Regional team to finalize and review its roles and responsibilities in emergencies. EAPRO's EPR plan will be monitored, in collaboration with the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, to ensure that the Regional team is fully abreast of preparedness issues and ready to assist any country affected by a new crisis;
- Establish regional internal surge capacity rosters and further strengthen and fine tune available external regional surge capacity rosters;
- Support the Regional team to extend and strengthen support to the cluster leadership approach in countries in emergencies;
- Continue working with EMOPS at Headquarters on ongoing/new emergency-related issues and processes at global level and facilitate involvement and participation of Country Offices;
- Strengthen inter-agency coordination and establish new collaborations with IFRC and ACDM to promote coordinated and comprehensive approaches in emergency preparedness and disaster mitigation;
- Strengthen the capacity of the Regional Emergency Unit by ensuring the permanence of the current Emergency Project Officer and by hiring a more senior Emergency Programme Officer to act also as Deputy Chief of the Unit and support the Regional Emergency Adviser.

Regional support for Avian/Human Influenza preparedness and response (US\$ 250,000)

Key activities will include:

- Support Country Offices in their Avian/Pandemic Influenza (API) preparedness plans;
- Undertake a coordinating role on API issues in the Regional Office to ensure consistent and comprehensive engagement of the technical advisers on this issue;
- Represent and support the positioning of UNICEF's role and engage in inter-agency collaboration for API preparedness and response.

Child protection in emergency (US\$ 250,000)

The ongoing displacements and refugee situations accounting for hundreds of thousands of victims in the Region; the chronic post-conflict problems affecting children and adolescents in several island countries (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste); the ongoing recruitment by and involvement of children with armed forces; the application and future follow-up of Security Council Resolution 1612; all underscore the importance of the development of regional and sub-regional strategies for supporting Country Offices and to engage other regional actors and organizations in this complex environment. The Regional Emergency Unit aims at strengthening EAPRO's approach to child protection issues in emergencies by hiring a Programme Officer who will work closely with the Regional Child Protection Unit and support Country Offices in related issues.