

UNICEF Timor-Leste 2021 Floods Response



Highlights

Heavy rains across the country from 29 March to 4 April 2021 resulted in flash floods and landslides affecting all 13 municipalities in Timor-Leste to varying degrees, with the capital Dili and the surrounding low-lying areas being affected the worst.

Flooding and landslides caused 42 fatalities and affected 31,029 households across Timor-Leste. Of those, 82% - or 25,350 households - were in Dili municipality. 13,554 people were internally displaced in Dili, and 43 evacuation facilities were set up across the municipality. This natural disaster took place in the context of rising COVID-19 cases.

UNICEF started providing immediate humanitarian assistance, thanks to pre-positioned non-food items. UNICEF supported the Government in various sectors, acting as a sector lead for WASH, nutrition, and education, and as a sub-sector lead for child protection.

UNICEF's response enabled the provision of clean water to 14,010 people, medical consultations for 1,128 under-five children, malnutrition screening for 484 under-five children and referral for treatment when needed, psychosocial support activities for 4,009 children in child-friendly spaces in evacuation centres and communities, and learning activities for 460 children and life-skilled based education for 316 adolescents and youth in evacuation centres.

Situation in Numbers



1,434

Under five children sheltered temporarily in Dili at peak in April 2021



13,554

Internally displaced people (IDPs) in Dili at peak in April 2021



31,029

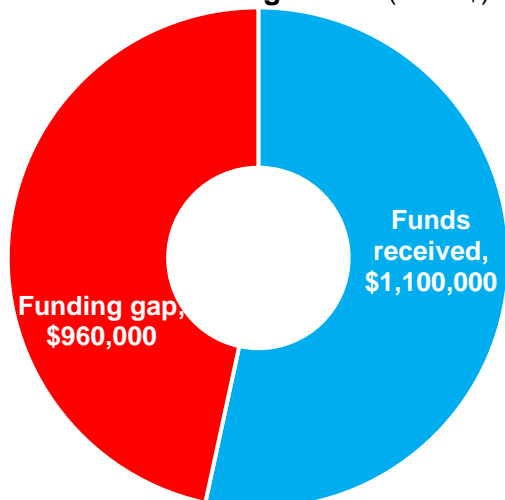
Total affected households across country



42

Fatalities

2021 Funding Status (in US\$)



Thank you! These results would not have been achieved without the precious financial support of the following resource partners:

European Union

Denmark

United Kingdom

New Zealand

UNICEF Humanitarian Thematic Fund

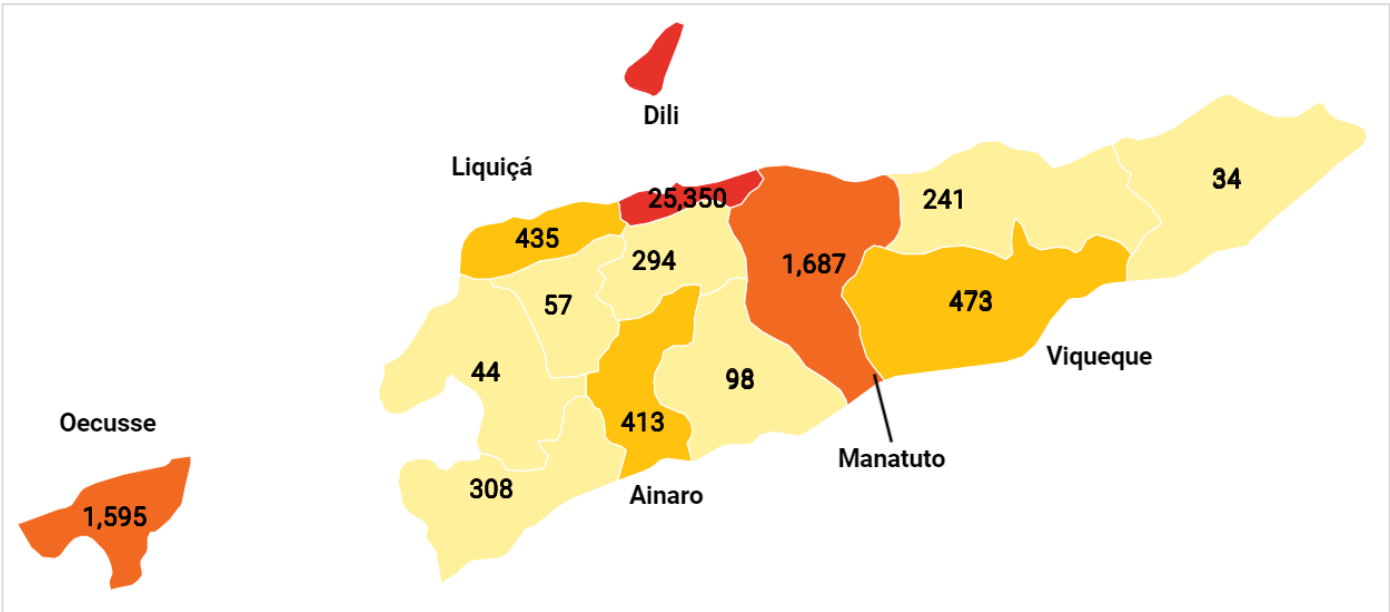
(a pooled, flexible multi-year fund supported by various donors that enables UNICEF to respond quickly to emergencies)

Flexible funds were particularly critical, enabling UNICEF to respond to evolving needs and seize opportunities as they arose

Assessments and Coordination

Number of flood-affected households by municipality

Data source: Timor-Leste Secretariat of State for Civil Protection, Sept 2021



UNICEF played a key role in supporting the Secretariat of State for Civil Protection with humanitarian coordination. Sectors were led by line ministries with UN agencies as co-leads. UNICEF was the co-lead agency for the WASH, nutrition and education sectors, and the child protection sub-group within the gender and protection sector.

UNICEF led or participated in assessments, with a WASH, health, nutrition, education and child protection perspective, to evaluate the degree of damage and identify needs of affected people in the evacuation centres as well as communities. Substantial support was also provided to the Government in drafting response plans.

Non-Food Items in numbers

25,000

Units of non-food items distributed by UNICEF, with logistical support from the World Food Programme (WFP)

Including

3,036

Cleaning kits

1,909

Plastic mats

1,956

Blankets

134

Tarpaulins

343

Solar lanterns



© UNICEF Timor-Leste 2021/ Soares

Response and results achieved



WASH



© UNICEF Timor-Leste 2021 / Benavides

UNICEF supported the Government to provide safe water to over 14,010 people. This included the provision of 11 large capacity water tanks for interim water supply to evacuation sites and affected communities, which served 2,210 people. UNICEF also hired a local truck company to facilitate the distribution of clean water to 5 tanks serving over 1,700 affected people in 1 evacuation centre and 3 communities. A floating raft was constructed with a pump and tank onboard, which was handed over to the Secretariat of State for Civil Protection, to transport water to stranded communities across a flooded lake in Dili, reaching

approximately 2,500 people whose water supply and access roads were cut off by the floods.

UNICEF also handed over 200,000 water purification tablets to the MoH for distribution to flood-affected families both in communities and in evacuation centres. Over 7,600 people in communities received the tablets. Portable water containers for treating water with the tablets and flyers on how to use the tablets, were also distributed.

In addition, UNICEF distributed more than 5,000 buckets and collapsible jerrycans among affected families for collecting and storing water safely.

UNICEF improved sanitation and hygiene by installing 12 mobile toilets in 6 major evacuation centres and continued their cleaning and excreta management for 7 months. This is estimated to have served 660 people.



Health

Prevention of water-borne diseases, vector-borne diseases and skin diseases was a key priority, particularly for under-five children and pregnant women. In response, UNICEF swiftly provided three tents and rental cars for the Ministry of Health to set up mobile health clinics to provide health care and essential supplies in evacuation centres. The mobile health clinics reached 7,896 people (3,978 girls/women and 3,918 boys/men) with outpatient consultation services, including 1,128 under five children (544 girls and 584 boys). The most common morbidities were respiratory infections and skin diseases in children, and gastritis in adults.

There was also an urgent need to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in evacuation centres and amongst other temporarily displaced people. The situation was complicated by the loss of medicines, medical supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) due to the floods. UNICEF supported SAMES (autonomous body under Ministry of Health that manages medical supplies including vaccines), which was affected by the floods, to

strengthen the backup generator and fuel supply system to ensure a functional cold chain, temporarily move the routine vaccine from SAMES to a secured place in order to store the vaccine at the recommended temperature, and to procure additional personal protective equipment for health professionals and frontline health workers to replenish the supplies destroyed by the floods.



Nutrition

The priority needs in the nutrition sector were to provide access to quality curative services through the most appropriate modalities, systematic identification, referral, and treatment of acutely malnourished cases. UNICEF distributed nutrition supplies and essential cooking items to 13 evacuation centres. In partnership with WHO and the European Union, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to establish infant and young child feeding (IYCF) corners in 22 evacuation centres to promote, protect, and support IYCF practices. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Health to monitor adherence to the statement on appropriate support for IYCF in the evacuation centres.

In addition, UNICEF, in partnership with Alola Foundation, provided orientation and deployed 44 mother support group (MSG) members to 22 evacuation centres to conduct malnutrition screening, referral and follow-up, and to promote counselling and promotion of optimal IYCF practices. The MSG members screened 67 pregnant women and 484 children under-five, and treatment was provided when needed. MSG members also provided counselling services to 668 mothers, including pregnant women.



© UNICEF Timor-Leste 2021 / Benavides



Child Protection

Children in evacuation centres and affected communities faced various child protection risks in addition to trauma induced by the floods. UNICEF rapidly established child friendly spaces (CFS) in 13 evacuation centres, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion, the Commission on the Rights of the Child, and several CSOs and youth groups, to deliver Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) activities to children. Over the course of the response, UNICEF provided a series of training for volunteers on CFS activities on a weekly basis. More than 1,600 children were reached in the evacuation centres. As families returned home, CFSs continued their activities in 23 affected communities, in partnership with Ba Futuru, and reached 2,409 children. Moreover, 85 CFS volunteers were trained to deliver parenting education to the parents of children attending CFS MHPSS activities. UNICEF also distributed posters with child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) reporting and referral information, including key messages on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) in the evacuation centres and CFS sites.

“Since this activity started in this camp, the children sleep well, they no longer cry and wake up screaming at night”

A parent at ‘12 October school’
evacuation centre in Dili

UNICEF also provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion's national child protection officers in 13 municipalities to coordinate responses to children affected by the floods. In addition, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to re-start the national hotline for mental health, with a series of trainings of operators. The hotline recorded 1,927 calls in 2021.



© World Vision 2021 / JCamoes

Education

In the education sector, there was an immediate need to address the psychosocial and learning needs of affected children. UNICEF with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and other partners mobilized and trained 88 volunteers from the National University of Timor-Leste and schools in Dili, who provided structured learning activities to children in 8 evacuation centres 3 days a week. In total, 460 children in evacuation centres, as well as neighbouring communities, benefited from learning activities.

In addition to the learning activities in the evacuation centres, the education sector also undertook community outreach through 9 volunteers who supported a community member in providing learning activities reaching 55 children in the community.



© UNICEF Timor-Leste 2021 / Soares



Social Protection and Inclusion

UNICEF supported the Secretariat of State of Youth and Sports and the youth CSO Alumni Association of Youth Parliament (APFTL), which mobilized large numbers of adolescents and youth and set up the Youth Action Posku. UNICEF provided 50 cleaning kits, 10 liters of hand sanitizer and 500 masks to the Youth Action Posku who helped vulnerable families in Dili to clean their house, and distributed non-food items to 125 families. UNICEF provided additional 30 cleaning kits to support families in Aileu municipality through the Youth Action Posku.



© UNICEF 2021 / Collet

Non-food items were also handed out to organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), to enable them to clean their offices, and to further distribute supplies to 150 families of persons with disabilities.

UNICEF organized life-skills based education (LSBE) sessions for 316 adolescents and youth (67% girls/women) in 10 evacuation centres and 1 affected community in Dili. This helped them develop knowledge and skills such as self-awareness, coping with emotion and reflecting on gender roles. The sessions were facilitated by APFTL and by current adolescent members of the Youth Parliament, who first received a briefing on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), referral of adolescents in need of specialized services, and prevention of COVID-19.



© UNICEF 2021 / Collet

Who to contact for further information:

Bilal Aurang Zeb Durrani
Representative
UNICEF Timor-Leste
Tel: (+670) 7858 0345
Email: bazdurrani@unicef.org

Ainhua Jaureguibeitia
Deputy Representative
UNICEF Timor-Leste
Tel: (+670) 7723 1101
Email: ajaureguibeitia@unicef.org

Rukshan Ratnam
Communication Specialist
UNICEF Timor-Leste
Tel: (+670) 7723 1103
Email: rratnam@unicef.org