



UNICEF supplies reach the community members in a remote Island of Yap State.  
©UNICEF/Pacific/Yap State Department of Health


**UNICEF Pacific MCO**  
**Federated States of**  
**Micronesia (FSM) & Republic**  
**of the Marshall Islands (RMI)**  
**Humanitarian Situation**  
**Report No. 2**  
**April 2024**



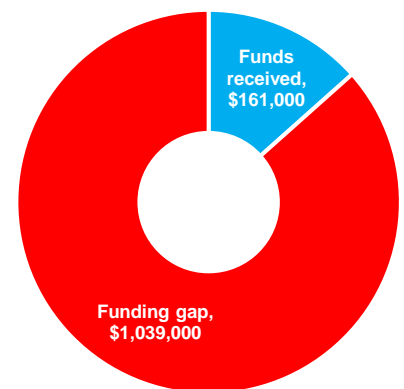
## Highlights

- The latest regional weather update as of April 23, 2024, confirms that extreme to exceptional drought conditions continue to affect areas including Yap State, Majuro, and the northern Marshall Islands, with forecasts predicting continued below-normal rainfall.
- The Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management (DECEM) reports that the drought has impacted approximately 22,700 people – about 20 per cent of the Federated States of Micronesia’s (FSM) population. In the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), drought and related inundation events have affected about 14,624 people, roughly 35 per cent of the population, across 23 atolls and islands.
- The primary necessities for the population affected by the ongoing drought are food and water. Immediate attention to these resources is essential to sustain health and life in the affected areas.
- UNICEF has successfully delivered essential emergency supplies, including collapsible water tanks, water containers, buckets, "School in a Box" kits, and health and nutrition supplies to both RMI and FSM in support of both the governments’ drought preparedness and response efforts. Furthermore, UNICEF has been actively supporting the Yap State Department of Health in initiating a WASH awareness campaign, focusing on the critical importance of water preservation, consuming safe water, and maintaining health during the ongoing drought situation.
- UNICEF is urgently supporting the distribution of WASH and dignity kits, while also raising community awareness concerning droughts – including water conservation, sanitation practices and correct use of WASH supplies. A total of 634 WASH & dignity kits have been distributed in Pohnpei’s outer islands, Chuuk outer islands, and Yap main island, reaching 3,620 individuals.

### Situation in Numbers

- 
**17,131 (8,394 girls and 8,737 boys) Children in need of humanitarian assistance (UNICEF estimation)**
- 
**37,324 (18,289 women and 19,035 men) people in need.**

### Funding Status (in US\$)



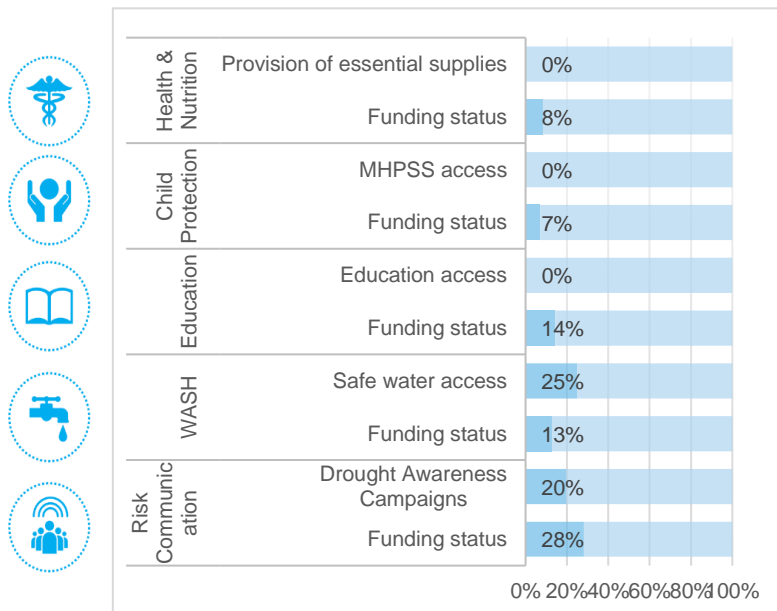
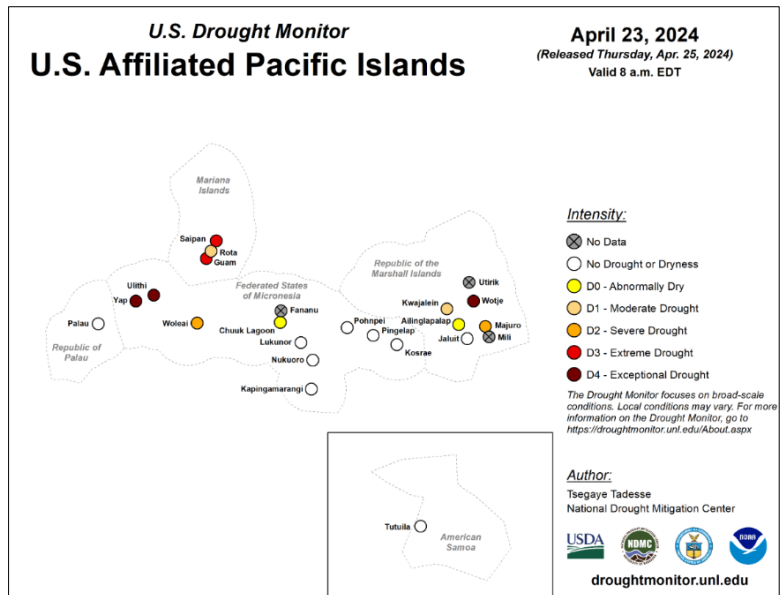
## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

FSM and RMI are both facing severe drought conditions worsened by El Niño's effects, which have significantly decreased the precipitation levels. Since December 2023, RMI and FSM have recorded weekly rainfall totals below the minimum threshold.

The latest regional weather update as of April 23, 2024, confirms that extreme to exceptional drought conditions continue to affect areas including Yap State, Majuro, and the Northern Marshall Islands, with forecasts predicting continued below-normal rainfall. DECEM reports that the drought has impacted approximately 22,700 people – about 20 per cent of the FSM population. In the RMI, drought and related inundation events, due to storm and king tide surge, have affected about 14,624 people, roughly 35 per cent of the population, across 23 atolls and islands. In addition, around 10 schools (seven in FSM and three in RMI) are reported to have been damaged by the storm surge in February this year.

Recent updates from Yap State indicate that the northern regions, including Maap, Gagil, and Tomil, are preparing for scheduled water shutoffs due to low water availability. Additionally, fires have erupted in Dalipebinaw, Nimgil, and Dinay Rull, further exacerbated by the prevailing dry conditions. The water dam that supplies the Colonia town is nearing depletion, and all outer islands of Yap state are currently experiencing significant water shortages.

In response to these crises, the FSM government declared a national emergency on March 11, 2024, following emergency declarations from Pohnpei, Yap, and Chuuk, to mobilize USD 1.2M. Similarly, on April 9, 2024, the RMI's National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) outlined a drought and inundation response plan.



UNICEF, in coordination with FSM DECEM, State Disaster Coordinating Offices (DCOs), and the RMI National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), including the Public School System (PSS), has been supporting the government's drought preparedness and response efforts in FSM and RMI, through provision of essential emergencies supplies such as WASH and human dignity kits, collapsible water tanks, "School in a Box" kits, and health and nutrition supplies. These supplies are crucial for safeguarding the well-being of those affected.

Looking ahead, the situation in Yap and the RMI is expected to worsen in the coming months, leading to rain catchment depletion across the islands. The RMI's response plan for drought and inundation notes that even with potential rainfall resumption by late April or early May, it will take months for water sources to replenish and water quality to improve. Furthermore, high surf and inundation increase water salinity and damage crops, posing significant risks to livelihoods, public health, and WASH services, especially in remote outer islands.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

### WASH

UNICEF is closely working with the FSM government to ensure access to safe drinking water and promote proper sanitation and hygiene practices in the drought-affected communities. UNICEF, in collaboration with DECEM and the State DCO, has distributed 634 WASH and human dignity kits, which include hygiene supplies such as collapsible water containers, buckets, soap, sanitary pads, and educational materials on hygiene practices. The current distribution has reached only 14 per cent of the population in need (5,225), highlighting the scale of the challenge and urgent requirement for additional support.

Essential WASH supplies including six (6) collapsible water tanks, 3,000 collapsible water containers, and 740 buckets were successfully delivered to RMI and FSM to support the government drought preparedness and response efforts.

### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

UNICEF is working with DECEM, NDMO, department of health, and PSS education, to raise awareness on importance of water preservation, consuming safe water, and maintaining health during the ongoing drought situation. Awareness materials such as low-cost water treatment, drought awareness, handwashing, water quality testing, and rainwater catchment risk assessment have been shared with the technical working groups in FSM and RMI.

Yap state's department of health team has conducted awareness campaign on WASH and communicable as well as waterborne diseases, such as leptospirosis, dengue, diarrhoea, amoeba, respiratory infections, rotavirus, and flu, at Ruu, Daboch and Makiy communities with total population of 650 people. Face-to-face engagement meetings were held with 70 communities to discuss the drought situation and key behaviours and practices for mitigating the impact on households. Community members are still requesting for more supplies and increased regular in-person visits to their communities. A message grid has been shared by UNICEF to the drought response coordinator. Based on key messages and guidelines, a youth group is developing a script for a radio jingle. Finally, in partnership with FSM telecom, UNICEF is coordinating SMS blasts – expected to reach an estimated 4000 subscribers.

### Health and Nutrition

Drought conditions in FSM and RMI have led to the depletion of wells and drying of rivers, crucial sources for household and agricultural use. This has triggered a rise in diarrheal diseases in Yap state (e.g., Yap state reported total eight diarrhoea cases in the last week of April, exceeding the state threshold benchmark -> six cases) and, coupled with failed agricultural outputs, is elevating risk of malnutrition

among local communities. UNICEF is supporting the department/ministry of health through provision of essential health and nutrition supplies (ORS and Zinc, first aid kit, and therapeutic spread). These crucial health and nutrition supplies have arrived in RMI and FSM in the third week of April.

## Education

According to reports from both RMI and FSM, impacts were mostly related to shortage of water and infrastructure damage, and requests were mainly for water storage tanks and reverse osmosis units. RMI PSS reported that 10 schools were impacted although actual information on learning loss due to closure of schools or inaccessibility has not been received. In FSM, schools impacted are mainly in Chuuk and Yap. UNICEF has been working with the PSS to support education continuity in the affected schools through provision of educational materials. A total of 20 school in the box kits, 8 ECD kits, and 5 school tents arrived in RMI and FSM during the third week of April.

## Child Protection (CP)

The current drought situation harms the most vulnerable populations and groups in the FSM and RMI, especially children and women. Without a child protection system's presence, there is a high risk of GBV occurring against children, women, and girls in the islands. During emergency, the privacy and dignity of women and children becomes more difficult due to lack of water and the need to commute to collecting water for family needs. In the FSM, there are no social workers or frontliners to be deployed prior, during, and after such emergency to provide support in mental wellness, psychological support, or protection in general. In the RMI, there are only three social workers in the Child Rights Office to provide services in the country. There is a gap in services to be provided in general for Child Protection, and CP in emergencies becomes a need that is not prioritized for the country.

To address this situation, UNICEF continues to commit to supporting FSM by strengthening the leadership with support in the Department of Health and Social Affairs through funding the National Child Protection Coordinator and developing CP policy for the national government. UNICEF also supports Pohnpei State with a CP officer to support the national and the state government. UNICEF continues coordinating with other UN and government agencies at the policy level for the implementation to ensure CP activities are included in all discussions and plannings. UNICEF is committed to providing Child Protection in Emergency/CPiE and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) service to children and their care givers prior to, during, and after an emergency by training community members as frontliners to address the MHPSS needs in their respective communities or islands. Service providers are being targeted for training in CPiE and MHPSS. UNICEF will support the relevant line ministry in the establishment of a CPiE coordination mechanism for FSM. We will work with community volunteers to run structural recreational and play activity for children through mobile child friendly spaces to serve as an entry point for CP case management in targeted communities.

## Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

The FSM government plays a central role in coordinating the overall response to the crisis, including issuing emergency declarations, mobilizing resources, and coordinating with international partners. Government leadership ensures a unified and organized approach to addressing the needs of affected populations. The National Disaster Coordination Team (NDCT) is established to manage disaster events together with NEOC. UNICEF and IOM are members of the NDCT. In RMI, UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Education and NDMO to dispatch UNICEF WASH and education supplies to Majuro atolls, which are the most affected areas.

## Funding Overview and Partnerships

UNICEF has an initial response plan of US\$ 1,200,000 to sustain life-saving services for 10,000 women and children in FSM (Pohnpei, Chuuk and Yap States) and RMI. In early February, with its own resources, UNICEF dispatched preposition supplies and allocated an initial budget of US\$40,000 from the Global Humanitarian Thematic Funding (GHTF). In April, UNICEF dispatched a second batch of emergency supplies, the total value for supplies dispatched is USD 111,000. However, the response plan still faces a funding gap of 87 per cent. Without sufficient funding, over 21,000 people will not have access to safe water, and more than 10,000 children will be at risk of waterborne diseases.

Sector	Requirements USD	Funding Gap USD		
		Humanitarian resources allocated	\$	%
WASH	674,000	85,000	589,000	87
SBC & AAP	124,000	35,000	89,000	72
Health & Nutrition	134,000	11,000	123,000	92
Education	154,000	22,000	132,000	86
Child Protection	114,000	8,000	106,000	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,200,000</b>	<b>161,000</b>	<b>1,039,000</b>	<b>87</b>

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

- [Micronesia drought leaves thousands desperate for food - UNICEF](#)

### Press release:

- [This World Water Day, thousands still affected by severe drought in the Federated States of Micronesia](#)

	Jonathan Veitch	Cromwell Bacareza	Diego López
<b>Who to contact for further information:</b>	Representative UNICEF Pacific Multi Country Office Tel: +6793300439 Email: <a href="mailto:jveitch@unicef.org">jveitch@unicef.org</a>	Chief Field Office – North Pacific (FSM, Palau, The Marshall Islands) UNICEF Pacific Multi Country Office Tel: +6353(053) 832 1154 Email: <a href="mailto:cbacareza@unicef.org">cbacareza@unicef.org</a>	Emergency Specialist UNICEF Pacific Multi Country Office Tel: +6799920863 Email: <a href="mailto:dflopez@unicef.org">dflopez@unicef.org</a>