



Seraphine, 9, and her family have been living in a classroom that was repurposed as an emergency shelter after Tropical Cyclone Harold destroyed their homes in Vanuatu.

unicef   
for every child

## Humanitarian Action for Children

## East Asia and the Pacific

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Disasters are threatening the lives of millions of people across the East Asia and the Pacific region and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has contributed to rising numbers of children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM), unimmunized children and children without access to education. The risk of violence, exploitation and abuse is also increasing. Millions of people lack access to safe water and sanitation across the region.
- UNICEF will work on strengthening preparedness and risk-informed programming to better anticipate, reduce and respond to disasters in the region. UNICEF will also support governments and communities to control the spread of COVID-19 and address the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic.
- UNICEF is seeking US\$117.2 million to respond to these critical needs, including US\$85.7 million for the COVID-19 response and US\$31.5 million to address non-COVID-related humanitarian needs. Twenty-five countries and territories are directly covered by this regional appeal.<sup>1</sup>

### IN NEED<sup>2</sup>



**500,000**  
additional children  
have SAM due to  
COVID-19<sup>3</sup>



**6.9 million**  
children are not  
immunized against  
measles<sup>4</sup>



**369 million**  
people lack access to  
basic hygiene  
services<sup>5</sup>



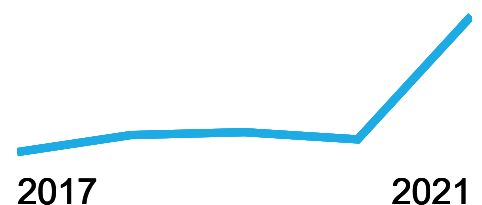
**114 million**  
children/adolescents  
lack access to  
education<sup>6</sup>



This map does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers. The countries in light blue are embedded in this regional appeal. The countries in dark blue have corresponding standalone appeals or are covered under crisis appeals.

### FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

**US\$ 117.2  
million**



2017

2021

## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Countries in East Asia and the Pacific bear the brunt of disasters triggered by natural hazards worldwide, with over 1.6 billion people in the region affected by natural disasters since 2000.<sup>7</sup> Several countries situated along the Pacific Ring of Fire are prone to earthquakes, volcanic activities and tsunamis. The region is significantly affected by the negative impacts of climate change, with cyclones, floods and droughts on the rise, both in frequency and intensity. Countries in the Mekong Delta have faced recurrent drought in recent years: In 2020, over 685,000 people were affected by drought-related saltwater intrusion in Viet Nam.<sup>8</sup> In the same year, two devastating tropical cyclones in the Pacific and the Philippines affected over 830,000 people.<sup>9</sup> In addition, chronic protracted humanitarian situations due to unresolved conflict and political instability continue to affect the lives of millions of children and their families, and lead to food insecurity and lack of access to basic life-saving services, with profound impacts on the most vulnerable.

These disasters occurred as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold and compounded existing vulnerabilities. Across the region, 50 million people urgently require access to safe drinking water and 369 million people lack access to basic hygiene services.<sup>10</sup> The number of severely malnourished children increased from 1.2 to 1.7 million over the course of 2020.<sup>11</sup> An additional 21 million children (over the existing 44 million) are at acute risk of falling into poverty with severe consequences for their well-being and development.<sup>12</sup> While most governments have started to reopen schools, 114 million children across the region are still without access to formal education.<sup>13</sup> Before COVID-19, 71 per cent of children<sup>14</sup> and 40 per cent of women in Southeast Asia and 68 per cent of women in the Pacific<sup>15</sup> experienced violence and 10 to 20 per cent of children experienced mental health conditions.<sup>16</sup> During the pandemic, household violence and mental health issues have reportedly worsened. Several countries have postponed vaccination campaigns, leaving unimmunized children susceptible to life-threatening diseases such as measles and polio and increasing the risk of outbreaks.

## HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

To respond to shocks and stresses amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office will focus on enhancing the emergency preparedness and response capabilities of country offices, government counterparts and partners by establishing adequate preparedness measures and providing technical expertise and strengthening systems for child-sensitive and inclusive humanitarian action. UNICEF will also strengthen risk-informed programming to address both the immediate and longer-term impacts of crises. This will include sustaining the delivery of life-saving interventions in chronic protracted humanitarian situations by providing basic and essential humanitarian supplies in line with global standards; strengthening the timely and effective delivery of essential health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, especially for the most vulnerable children under 5 years and pregnant and lactating women; and building the capacities of local service providers and caregivers. This will also include analysing multi-dimensional risks and threats to children; integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change strategies into development plans; and building inclusive shock-responsive social protection systems.

UNICEF will also strengthen the integration of cross-sectoral efforts to address the needs of children with disabilities, adolescents, women and girls in humanitarian settings, focusing on gender-based violence services, accountability to affected populations and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in emergencies. To ensure greater predictability and accountability in humanitarian settings and learn from previous emergencies, including the COVID-19 response, UNICEF will expand knowledge management efforts and advance humanitarian innovations.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF will continue to support governments and communities to control the spread of the virus and minimize morbidity and mortality, including by enhancing preparedness for the possible second and third waves of COVID-19. In addition, UNICEF will address the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic in the region by restoring children's mental and physical well-being in the areas of health, nutrition, WASH, child protection, education and social protection, focusing on the most vulnerable. This will be done in line with the concept of 'building back better' to ensure clear linkages between the humanitarian response and longer-term development efforts.

## STORY FROM THE FIELD



Ais, 7, lives in an orphanage in Jakarta, Indonesia, and attends a nearby school. During the pandemic, the orphanage implemented new rules for children to stay and study within the premises. Ais learned how to wash her hands correctly with the help of an educational song.

When schools in Indonesia were closed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, more than 60 million students, teachers and families were affected. UNICEF is working with the Government and partners to ensure that all children continue to learn, and is delivering sanitation and personal hygiene kits to childcare centres all over Indonesia.

**[Read more about this story here](#)**

Ais, 7, washes her hands at a UNICEF-supported orphanage in Jakarta, Indonesia.

# COVID-19 REGIONAL RESPONSE

Cambodia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Pacific (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu), Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION (COVID-19)

COVID-19 continues to have a devastating impact on the lives of children in East Asia and the Pacific in three ways: direct infection with the disease or infection of a caregiver; the consequences of actions taken to contain the pandemic, such as the closure of schools and early childhood development centres; and the socio-economic impacts of the crisis, such as the disruption of health services, sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation, child marriage, trafficking and abuse, which threaten the health and well-being of children and women. While tremendous progress has been made to improve hygiene practices, challenges remain to meet WASH standards in schools, quarantine centres and health facilities. Approximately 2.6 million<sup>17</sup> children across the region may never resume their education due to COVID-19. The economic consequences of COVID-19 will have long-lasting effects, especially on vulnerable groups such as the 11.6 million migrants in the region (of whom 5.6 million are women).<sup>18</sup> The region is also home to an estimated 190 million children with disabilities, whose physical, psychosocial and educational needs have been compromised by the pandemic.<sup>19</sup> Child wasting constitutes a pressing concern, as does pervasive household food insecurity, particularly among informal sector workers.

## HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY (COVID-19)

UNICEF's humanitarian strategy for COVID-19 in East Asia and Pacific focuses on three main areas: First, UNICEF will support governments and communities to control the spread of the virus and minimize morbidity and mortality. This includes providing accurate life-saving information on COVID-19 through risk communication and community engagement; improving infection prevention and control at health, education and communal facilities; and promoting hygiene and providing essential WASH services and supplies. Second, UNICEF will address the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on reaching the most vulnerable children and adolescents, including those living in low-income settings, children living with disabilities, migrant children and children of ethnic minorities. This includes supporting the continuity of essential health services and vaccinations; providing life-saving nutrition interventions; ensuring the continuity of learning through safe school operations; strengthening child protection, mental health and gender-based violence services to better protect children and women; and expanding social protection systems and emergency safety nets. Third, UNICEF will restore essential services in line with the concept of 'building back better' to reduce risks to future shocks and increase the resilience of children, families, communities, services and systems.

Progress against the 2020 programme targets is available in the humanitarian situation reports:

<https://www.unicef.org/appeals/eap/situation-reports>

## 2021 PROGRAMME TARGETS<sup>20</sup>



### Nutrition

- **357,115** children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment
- **16,746,000** children and adolescents receiving messages on healthy diets



### Health

- **7,138,000** children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities
- **14,493,000** children vaccinated against measles<sup>21</sup>



### Water, sanitation and hygiene

- **1,887,328** people reached with critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies (including hygiene items) and services
- **932,420** people provided with access to appropriately designed hygiene and sanitation facilities



### Child protection, GBViE and PSEA<sup>22</sup>

- **6,468,700** children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support
- **3,539,800** women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions
- **34,800** unaccompanied and separated children reunified with their primary caregiver or provided with family-based care/alternative care services



### Education

- **29,171,000** children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning<sup>23</sup>
- **213,914** schools implementing safe school protocols
- **38,054** children with disabilities supported with access to learning



### Social protection and cash transfers

- **7,469,000** households benefiting from new or additional social transfers



### C4D, community engagement and AAP

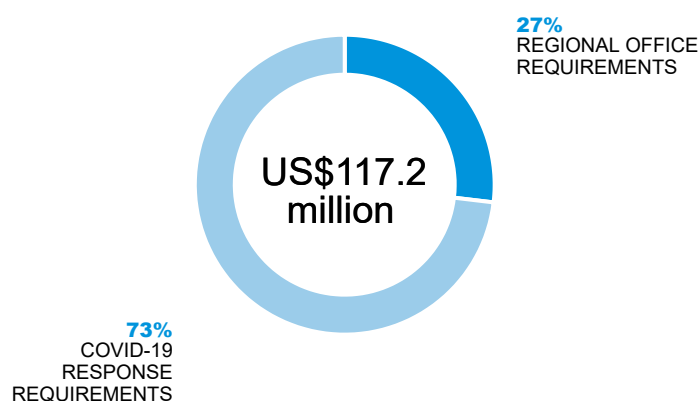
- **136,126,000** people reached through messaging on key life-saving behaviours and access to services

## FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2021

In 2021, UNICEF requires US\$117.2 million to meet the humanitarian needs of children, adolescents and women affected by emergencies, including chronic, protracted humanitarian situations, in East Asia and the Pacific. The larger request compared with 2020 is due to the inclusion of UNICEF's response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in the region.

Non-COVID-19 requirements amount to US\$31.5 million. These funds will allow UNICEF to support the response to protracted humanitarian situations, as well as small- and medium-scale sudden-onset emergencies that may not benefit from inter-agency appeals. This support will also be instrumental to strengthening regional partnerships, building national and regional preparedness and response capacities, advancing risk-informed programming, facilitating accountability to affected populations and promoting strong linkages between humanitarian and development programming. This is particularly important in the East Asia and Pacific context, where recurring disasters continuously impact people's lives and livelihoods and threaten to erode development gains.

UNICEF is requesting US\$85.7 million to continue its humanitarian response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 25 countries. This work will focus on interventions that control the spread of the virus and address its socio-economic impacts, including through the expansion of social protection schemes. Without these funds, children in the region may suffer grave and irreparable consequences to their physical and mental well-being due to lack of immunization against fatal diseases, other health concerns, severe malnutrition, lack of access to clean water and sanitation, the inability to start or continue learning and disrupted child protection and gender-based violence services.



Sector	2021 requirements (US\$)
<b>Regional office requirements</b>	<b>31,514,448</b>
Emergency response	28,417,448
Preparedness and disaster reduction	1,327,000
Regional office technical capacity	1,770,000
<b>COVID-19 response requirements</b>	<b>85,704,040</b>
Nutrition	8,470,339
Health	15,578,670
Water, sanitation and hygiene	19,201,651
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA	7,733,163 <sup>24</sup>
Education	19,954,452
Social protection and cash transfers	6,145,703
C4D, community engagement and AAP	8,620,062
<b>Total</b>	<b>117,218,488</b>

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## ENDNOTES

1. The 25 countries and territories directly covered by this regional appeal are Cambodia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Pacific (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu), Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.
2. The in-need figures reflect the pressing needs of the major sectors that UNICEF supports for all countries in the region.
3. SAM refers to severe acute malnutrition. UNICEF regional calculations based on United Nations Children's Fund, World Health Organization and the World Bank Group, 'Levels and Trends in Child Malnutrition: UNICEF / WHO / World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates - key findings of the 2020 edition', March 2020.
4. UNICEF/World Health Organization (WHO) joint estimates of children that missed out on measles vaccination through routine immunization programmes due to COVID-19, 2020.
5. United Nations Children's Fund East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, 'Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Annual Results Report 2019', UNICEF, March 2020.
6. United Nations Children's Fund East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, 'Learning Against the Odds: Evidence and policies to support adolescents in East Asia and the Pacific', UNICEF, August 2019; United Nations Children's Fund, 'COVID-19: Are children able to continue learning during school closures? A global analysis of the potential reach of remote learning policies using data from 100 countries', UNICEF, August 2020.
7. Jha, Abhas K. and Zuzana Stanton-Geddes, 'Strong, Safe and Resilient: A strategic policy guide for disaster risk management in East Asia and the Pacific', World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2013.
8. Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, 'Viet Nam: Drought and saltwater intrusion', Flash Update No. 2, UNRC, 27 February 2020.
9. Government of the Philippines Department of Social Welfare and Development, 'Situation Report No. 5', May 2020; and United Nations Children's Fund, 'Pacific Islands: Tropical Cyclone Harold', Humanitarian Situation Report No. 3, May 2020.
10. 'Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Annual Results Report 2019'.
11. 'Levels and Trends in Child Malnutrition: UNICEF / WHO / World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates - key findings of the 2020 edition'.
12. United Nations Children's Fund, 'Children in Monetary Poor Households and COVID-19: Technical note', UNICEF, <[www.unicef.org/documents/children-monetary-poor-households-and-covid-19](http://www.unicef.org/documents/children-monetary-poor-households-and-covid-19)>, accessed 29 September 2020.
13. 'Learning Against the Odds: Evidence and policies to support adolescents in East Asia and the Pacific'; and 'COVID-19: Are children able to continue learning during school closures? A global analysis of the potential reach of remote learning policies using data from 100 countries'.
14. United Nations Children's Fund East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, 'Child Maltreatment: Prevalence, incidence and consequences in the East Asia and Pacific region - A systematic review of research', UNICEF, Bangkok, 2012.
15. United Nations Entity for Gender Equity and the Empowerment of Women, 'The First 100 Days of COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific: A gender lens', UN Women, 2020.
16. World Health Organization, 'Child and Adolescent Health', WHO, <[www.who.int/mental\\_health/maternal-child/child\\_adolescent/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/maternal-child/child_adolescent/en/)>, accessed 29 September 2020.
17. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 'UNESCO COVID-19 Education Response: How many students are at risk of not returning to school?' UNESCO, 30 July 2020.
18. United Nations Children's Fund East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, 'Recover, Rebound, Reimagine: Building a better future for every child in East Asia and the Pacific, post COVID-19', UNICEF, August 2020.
19. United Nations Children's Fund East Asia and the Pacific, 'Education for Every Ability: A review and roadmap of disability-inclusive education in East Asia and Pacific region', UNICEF, July 2020.
20. This section reflects the consolidated targets of the countries included in the regional appeal only.
21. The target figure includes the 6.9 million children that missed measles vaccination due to COVID-19 in 2020, as well as other children aged 6/9 months to 5/10 years reached through mass vaccination campaigns.
22. Due to space constraints, the following acronyms appear in the appeal: GBViE (gender-based violence in emergencies); PSEA (prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse); C4D (communication for development); and AAP (accountability to affected populations).
23. This includes children supported with distance/online or blended learning.
24. This includes US\$5,371,317 for child protection interventions; US\$1,656,846 for gender-based violence interventions; and US\$705,000 for prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse interventions.