

EVALUATION REPORT

EVALUATION OF UNICEF'S EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SYSTEMS

EVALUATION OFFICE
DECEMBER 2013

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Evaluation of UNICEF's Emergency Preparedness Systems Final Report

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United Nations Children's Fund
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Preface

Emergencies have been growing ever more frequent and devastating, with dire consequences for children. In keeping with UNICEF's mandate, as the effects of emergencies have intensified, so too has the Organization's role in responding with life-saving humanitarian assistance. Given the higher frequency of emergencies in the foreseeable future, it is crucial that UNICEF be optimally prepared so as to minimize loss of life, reduce human suffering, and realize children's rights when emergencies occur. Despite considerable investments in this area to date, recent evaluative exercises have pointed to UNICEF's uneven preparedness levels from one emergency and context to the next, both in sudden-onset and slow-onset crises.

The Evaluation Office proposed the present evaluation to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, connectedness, sustainability and coverage of UNICEF's current emergency preparedness systems across its global operations. Its main purpose is to provide recommendations to enable UNICEF to become better braced for the wide range of emergencies it faces, and thus help it save more lives and reduce human suffering in ever-better ways.

The evaluation is based on a standard methodology, which include key informant interviews, semi-structured focus group workshops, field observations through visits to seven countries, a survey of UNICEF staff, secondary research and data analysis.

There is evidence to credit UNICEF for having made progress in incorporating emergency preparedness into its operations, and these measures have likely contributed to better emergency response. While this progress is documented in the evaluation, integration of emergency preparedness has been ad hoc and limited in nature. The evaluation found that UNICEF's humanitarian activities are oriented towards emergency response rather than preparation and mitigation, and even if emergency preparedness is recognised as a responsibility within UNICEF at all levels, the concept remains imprecise due to the lack of a common goal, strategy and definition. In addition, UNICEF's current financial commitments to emergency preparedness are inadequate to sustain the scope and depth of activities necessary for consistent and systematic emergency preparedness globally.

I would like to thank, on behalf of the Evaluation Office, International Solutions Group, and in particular Stephen Ladek, Michael Klein, Ann Schwartz, Colin McIlreavy, and Tim Ludford for conducting the evaluation. I would also like to express our sincere gratitude to our colleagues in UNICEF headquarters, in particular Ted Chaiban, Michel Le Pechoux, Frederick Spielberg and Guillaume Simonian, and to colleagues in the UNICEF regional offices and country offices that were involved in the evaluation in Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives and Morocco, as well as their government partners, for their contribution to the data collection process.

In conclusion, I would like to thank to the many external partners and individuals that contributed their time to this evaluation, as well as my colleagues in the Evaluation Office, including Robert McCouch, Erica Mattellone, Tammy Smith, Mathew Varghese and Dalma Rivero for their support and guidance to the evaluation team throughout the process.

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Acronyms

BCP	business continuity planning
CCCs	Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action
CEE-CIS	Central and Eastern Europe–Commonwealth of Independent States
COAR	Country Office Annual Report
CO	country office
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DHR	Division of Human Resources
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECHO	European Commission – Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection
EMOPS	Office of Emergency Programmes
EO	Evaluation Office
EP	emergency preparedness
EPRP	Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning
ERIP	Emergency Risk-Informed Programming
ERP	Emergency Response and Preparedness
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
EWEA	Early Warning Early Action
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GWR	Global Web Roster
HERMI	Harmonized Emergency Risk Management Initiative
HQ	Headquarters
HR	human resources
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ILM	Inferred Logic Model
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
KIIs	key informant interviews
KRC	Kenya Red Cross

LACRO	Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office
NGO	non-governmental organization
REA	regional emergency advisor
RO	regional office
RWP	Rolling Work Plan
SitAn	Country Situation Analysis Report
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Background and rationale for the evaluation

Emergencies have a negative effect on the realization of the rights of UNICEF's core beneficiary groups. In 2012, UNICEF and its partners responded to 286 humanitarian situations of varying degrees in 79 countries¹. UNICEF's involvement in emergency situations is expected to increase as emergencies become more frequent. It is therefore important that UNICEF effectively prepares for emergencies, both independently and in collaboration with national governments and partners, and also ensures that adequate investment has been made to this end. Recent audits and evaluations², however, have pointed to uneven emergency preparedness (EP) across emergencies.

This independent evaluation was commissioned by UNICEF's Evaluation Office (EO) to pinpoint the specific gaps in UNICEF's EP policies and systems that need to be addressed or strengthened.

Objective

The evaluation's objective is to examine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency³, connectedness, sustainability and coverage of UNICEF's current EP systems across its global operations⁴. Its main purpose is to help UNICEF become better prepared for the wide range of emergencies it faces – and to blunt the effects of emergencies when they do occur – and thus help it save more lives and reduce human suffering in ever-better ways. In order to look both back and ahead, the evaluation considers the evolution of UNICEF's EP systems to date as a means of tracking progress. The evaluation is both summative and formative (with emphasis on the latter).

Evaluation approach and methodology

The evaluation was based on standard methodology, which involved key informant interviews, semi-structured focus group workshops, field observations through visits to seven countries – carried out from December 2012 to April 2013 – a survey of UNICEF staff, secondary research and data analysis.

For the purpose of this evaluation, an Inferred Logic Model (ILM) was developed based on the range of activities and stated objectives of UNICEF's EP. The ILM outlines five outcomes that UNICEF's EP efforts would achieve, namely:

¹ Report on Regular Resources, United Nations Children's Fund, 2012.

² See: *Audit Report on the Management of Emergency Preparedness in UNICEF Country Offices*, Report 2007/32, United Nations Children's Fund Office of Internal Audit, March 2008. For UNICEF-led evaluative exercises, see: *UNICEF's Response to the Emergency in the Horn of Africa 2011-2012: Lesson-learning exercise, final report*, United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office, June 2012; *Independent Review of UNICEF's Operational Response to the January 2010 Earthquake in Haiti*, United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office, 2011; *Children and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Evaluation of UNICEF's response in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives (2005-2008)*, United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office, 2009; *Evaluation of DFID-UNICEF Programme Cooperation to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it Applies to Humanitarian Response, 2000-2005*, United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office, 2005. For donor-led exercises, see: *Multilateral Aid Review (MAR)*, United Kingdom Department for International Development, 2011; *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR)*, United Kingdom Department for International Development, 2011.

³ For the purpose of this evaluation, 'efficiency' is broadly defined to include areas ranging from how effectively UNICEF has allocated its human and financial resources to its preparedness work, to cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency considerations. The evaluation did not perform formal cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness analyses because preparedness activities are, generally, intermixed with normal programming expenditures.

⁴ The original Terms of Reference for this evaluation can be found in Annex F.

- strengthened UNICEF and inter-agency preparedness and capacities to respond to emergencies;
- strengthened national preparedness and capacities to respond to emergencies;
- specific programmatic outcomes achieved that target the root causes of emergencies;
- improved international humanitarian response; and
- increased capacity of national and sub-national actors (including communities) to prevent, respond and recover from emergencies.

The evaluation team examined the following five outcomes to construct its five specific areas of inquiry:

1. Management and organization
2. Resources
3. Short- and long-term programming
4. Partnership
5. Measuring outcomes for children

Findings and conclusions

UNICEF has made progress in incorporating EP into its operations, and these measures have likely contributed to better emergency response. While this progress was documented throughout the evaluation, integration of EP has been ad hoc and limited in nature.

This evaluation observed that UNICEF's humanitarian activities are orientated towards emergency response rather than preparation or mitigation. Constraints identified in this report that hinder improved EP include: inadequate articulation of vision, goals, definitions and strategy; ad hoc funding; inconsistent application of programming; lack of integration of policies, practices and standards; limited accountability and lack of performance measurement and reporting activities.

EP is recognized as a responsibility within UNICEF at all levels. However, the concept remains nebulous due to the lack of a common goal, strategy and definition articulated through the organization.

UNICEF does not employ a standardized or consistent risk analysis process that is implemented by all country offices (CO). This results in variations in risk assessment procedures and decreased accuracy of forecasting future emergencies. Inadequate risk assessment also contributes to insufficient or inappropriate EP activities.

In most cases, EP is better organized by COs in contexts where the emergency risk is high and where governments and other actors have a limited capacity for response. UNICEF is better organized to respond to sudden crises in comparison to slow onset crises.

Moving from the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRP) to the Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) system has resulted in a more transparent EP process at the CO level, except in those COs where EWEA is not used. EWEA provides an opportunity to develop a systematic and consistent EP process across all COs. However, usage of EWEA remains variable. While some COs use the EWEA tool to facilitate an EP process, others disregard it and in yet others, EWEA is used only for compliance with Headquarter's (HQ) requirements. EWEA may inadvertently contribute to a lack of EP because completing system requirements is sometimes equated with being prepared as a CO. Regional offices (RO) and HQ, which largely focus on the administrative and usage aspects of the EWEA system (rather

than on the outcome of EP activities), implicitly encourage this, rather than focusing on how the system can record, facilitate and ultimately contribute to better response outcomes. Staff do not have a general perception of the EWEA system as a practical tool to be used in a time of emergency.

UNICEF has organizational structures that have contributed to better EP. However, EP is marginalized in smaller offices where EP responsibilities become part of a portfolio of duties held by one staff person. ROs dedicate more time and support to COs with high risk of emergency situations or low capacities. The natural divide between programme development and humanitarian response impedes optimization and coordination of EP.

UNICEF's inconsistent and/or limited gathering and analysis of EP-related data has precluded adequate monitoring, evaluation, analysis and understanding of the impact and effectiveness of EP activities. The challenge in acquiring funding for EP is exacerbated by the difficulty in making a clear data-driven case for how EP contributes to better response.

UNICEF has created several human resources (HR) mechanisms to enhance its ability to respond rapidly to emergency situations. Currently, data that would allow for analysis of how these mechanisms specifically contribute to better EP outcomes at the CO level is not being collected. The HR mechanisms in place, such as the Immediate Response Team and Emergency Response Team, may be overwhelmed by large or multiple emergencies. EP is not formally prioritized as a core duty of UNICEF staff and therefore mechanisms for accountability and performance measurement of staff (such as regular appraisals) have not been institutionalized. Rosters provide an important surge response mechanism, but lack depth of experience and have gaps in necessary skill sets. Capacity building activities, while perceived by management to deliver improved EP, are inconsistent and unsystematic in their delivery/application across the organization.

UNICEF's current financial commitments to EP are inadequate to sustain the scope and depth of activities necessary for consistent and systematic EP globally. Delivering "predictable, effective and timely collective humanitarian action", as envisioned by the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) appears problematic given the inconsistency of funding allocated to EP activities. COs have been unable to re-programme or allocate financial resources for EP on a consistent or systematic basis because UNICEF has not specifically prioritized EP at the corporate level. UNICEF has not yet built a robust, evidence-based case for donors through effective monitoring and evaluation of EP activities that will result in consistent and adequate short- and long-term funding for EP.

Existing guidance for Emergency Risk Informed Programming (ERIP) is not used systematically, nor is there general awareness of ERIP across the organization. While measuring results for EP in programming is acknowledged and desired, execution of the same is questionable. Improving accountability structures related to preparedness, such as regular reporting requirements, will serve the adoption of ERIP design, implementation and monitoring.

UNICEF's participation in humanitarian response is substantial. While there is a positive trend in the number of emergencies UNICEF has responded to, this number has decreased in recent years. While UNICEF's participation in responses may continue to grow in the foreseeable future, it is also possible that participation has peaked. This evaluation is unable to determine specifically if/how EP activities have reduced risk or contributed to or detracted from specific responses, or impacted UNICEF's response to emergencies more generally, because of a lack of data.

Business continuity is generally well served at the CO level for UNICEF and contributes to sustaining operations in times of emergencies. A better understanding of the application of contingency planning would positively serve EP at the CO level.

The awareness and implementation of EP actions by major implementing partners is equivalent to, or more comprehensive than, UNICEF's EP actions. The majority of UNICEF CO staff are satisfied (particularly emergency staff and monitoring and evaluation staff – less so general management and operations staff) with the level of awareness among, and competence of, major partners with respect to EP. Satisfaction with coordination across other United Nations agencies was also high among UNICEF staff, particularly emergency coordinators, less so among operations staff.

UNICEF's efforts to mainstream EP concepts and practice into emergency rather than mainstream development programming has led to greater, though not yet universal, acceptance that an effective response to emergencies requires, among other things, good EP. UNICEF's Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)-level activities have influenced EP thinking in important ways, such as by highlighting the necessity for, and promoting the application of, a common EP framework. However, this advocacy at the IASC level has so far had limited tangible outputs in terms of policies and practices being implemented by other IASC members. Given the consensus among key stakeholders that UNICEF is a leader in the policy and practices of EP, energetic and constructive input from UNICEF on EP should be maintained for the foreseeable future.

UNICEF is committed to strengthening the capacity of its national, sub-national and community partners and EP capacity is one of many potential areas of collaboration.

Implementing partnerships with government, while a priority for UNICEF, is challenging for a variety of context-specific reasons. As such, while the evaluation finds that UNICEF is committed to this concept, it remains challenging in terms of systematic or consistent delivery.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions above, the evaluation presents the following recommendations for action:

1. **Design, communicate and implement a global strategy for EP that will result in a systematic implementation of a coherent system based on context and risk analysis across CO and RO levels.** The design and implementation of the system should provide for a clear definition of EP in the context of UNICEF's mission and ensure that accountabilities at various levels are clearly laid out to integrate it into regular work and programming. The EP systems and processes should ensure clear criteria for when and how response can be 'triggered' in slow-onset crises through a review of past experience, collaboration with peers and better information management of future situations. The design of the system should take into account the need to expand and deepen existing HR mechanisms and capacity building processes to support EP to ensure UNICEF has access to adequate personnel with the necessary skill sets, and that capacity development with respect to EP is available to existing staff.
2. **Increase the financial commitment to EP to match the needs of increasing emergency response in UNICEF and ensure that financial allocations for EP are integrated into CO programming as a percentage depending on risk perception.** The activities and financing of

EP do not match that allocated to emergency response. It is important to review needs at all levels and make realistic financial allocations with the understanding that better preparedness saves money and improves response.

3. **Expand linkages to existing national and global EP systems led by partners and governments to create added value.** While there is coherence between UNICEF's EP strategy at the county level and the EP strategies of its partners, there is room for innovation and improved systems. Furthermore, while developing links with government systems may be challenging, it is important to review the gaps and inconsistencies between national systems and UNICEF's EP strategy so they can be addressed at the design stage. Most importantly, national capacity building should be an integral part of any UNICEF EP strategy.
4. **Establish a simple and cost effective system to enhance data availability for monitoring, reporting and evaluation to promote understanding of how EP leads to better response, what works best, and how to improve and innovate in the future.** The indicators for data collection should be linked to the outcomes in the CCC and should show with a theory of change how the various indicators are linked to better lives for children. All EP activities should lead to clear conclusions about whether or not UNICEF's EP leads to achievement of the CCCs.

Résumé Analytique

Généralités et justification de l'évaluation

Les situations d'urgence ont un effet négatif sur la réalisation des droits des principaux groupes bénéficiaires de l'UNICEF. En 2012, l'UNICEF et ses partenaires sont intervenus dans 286 situations humanitaires de divers degrés de gravité dans 79 pays⁵. On s'attend à ce que les interventions de l'UNICEF dans les situations d'urgence se multiplient puisque celles-ci sont de plus en plus fréquentes. Il est donc important que l'UNICEF soit bien préparé pour y faire face, en tant qu'acteur indépendant mais aussi en collaboration avec les gouvernements et ses partenaires nationaux, et qu'un investissement suffisant ait été consenti à cet effet. Les évaluations et les audits récents⁶, ont toutefois mis en lumière une préparation inégale aux situations d'urgences selon les cas.

Cette évaluation indépendante a été réalisée à la demande du Bureau de l'évaluation de l'UNICEF dans le but de mettre en évidence les lacunes spécifiques des politiques et systèmes de préparation aux situations d'urgence de l'UNICEF auxquelles il convient de remédier.

Objectif

L'évaluation examine, aussi systématiquement et objectivement que possible, la pertinence, l'efficacité et l'utilisation rationnelle des ressources⁷, la connectivité, la viabilité et la couverture des systèmes actuels de préparation aux situations d'urgence de l'UNICEF dans l'ensemble de ses opérations mondiales⁸. L'objectif principal est d'aider l'UNICEF à être mieux préparé à faire face aux nombreuses situations d'urgence auxquelles il est confronté – et à atténuer les effets des situations d'urgence quand elles se produisent – afin que l'organisation puisse sauver un plus grand nombre de vies et alléger plus efficacement les souffrances humaines. Pour aller de l'avant, l'évaluation analyse l'évolution des systèmes de préparation aux situations d'urgence jusqu'à ce jour pour mesurer les progrès accomplis. L'évaluation est à la fois cumulative et formative (en privilégiant ce deuxième point).

Manière d'aborder l'évaluation et méthodologie

L'évaluation s'appuie sur une méthodologie standard, comprenant des entretiens avec les principaux informateurs, des ateliers semi-structurés de groupes thématiques, des observations de terrain grâce à

⁵ Rapport sur les ressources ordinaires, Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance, 2012.

⁶ Consulter : *Audit Report on the Management of Emergency Preparedness in UNICEF Country Offices*, Report 2007/32, Bureau de l'audit interne, Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance, mars 2008. Concernant les exercices d'évaluation dirigés par l'UNICEF, voir : *UNICEF's Response to the Emergency in the Horn of Africa 2011-2012: Lesson-learning exercise, final report*, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance, juin 2012; *Independent Review of UNICEF's Operational Response to the January 2010 Earthquake in Haiti*, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance, 2011; *Children and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Evaluation of UNICEF's response in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives (2005-2008)*, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance, 2009; *Evaluation of DFID-UNICEF Programme Cooperation to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it Applies to Humanitarian Response, 2000-2005*, Bureau de l'évaluation, Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance, 2005. Concernant les exercices menés à l'initiative des donateurs, consulter : *Multilateral Aid Review (MAR)*, United Kingdom Department for International Development, 2011; *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR)*, United Kingdom Department for International Development, 2011.

⁷ Aux fins de cette évaluation, « l'efficacité » est définie au sens large et inclut des secteurs allant de l'efficacité avec laquelle l'UNICEF affecte ses ressources humaines et financières à ses travaux de préparation, à des considérations d'économie et de rapport coût-efficacité et d'efficacité. L'évaluation n'a pas procédé à des analyses formelles d'efficacité et de rapports coûts-efficacité car les activités de préparation sont généralement liées aux dépenses normales de programmation.

⁸ Le mandat original de cette évaluation figure à l'annexe F.

des visites dans sept pays – qui se sont déroulées de décembre 2012 à avril 2013 – une enquête auprès du personnel de l'UNICEF, une recherche secondaire et une analyse des données.

Aux fins de cette évaluation, un modèle logique inféré a été élaboré sur la base des activités et des objectifs prévus dans le cadre de la préparation de l'UNICEF aux situations d'urgence, à savoir :

- Renforcement de l'UNICEF et préparation interorganisations, et capacités d'intervenir lors des situations d'urgence ;
- Renforcement de la préparation et des capacités nationales à faire face aux situations d'urgence ;
- Résultats programmatiques spécifiques qui ciblent les causes profondes des situations d'urgence ;
- Amélioration des interventions humanitaires internationales ; et
- Renforcement des capacités des acteurs nationaux et infranationaux (y compris les communautés) à prévenir les situations d'urgence, intervenir et se relever lorsqu'elles se produisent.

L'équipe chargée de l'évaluation a examiné les cinq résultats suivants de façon à définir les cinq secteurs spécifiques de l'enquête :

1. Gestion et organisation
2. Ressources
3. Programmation à court et à long terme
4. Partenariats
5. Mesure des résultats pour les enfants

Résultats et conclusions

L'UNICEF a fait des progrès en ce qui concerne l'intégration de la préparation aux situations d'urgence dans ses opérations, et il semble que ces mesures aient contribué à améliorer ses interventions d'urgence. Bien que ces progrès aient été rapportés pendant toute la durée de l'évaluation, l'intégration de la préparation aux situations d'urgence est restée ponctuelle et limitée.

L'évaluation a permis d'observer que les activités humanitaires de l'UNICEF sont plus orientées vers les interventions d'urgence que vers la préparation et l'atténuation. Les contraintes identifiées dans ce rapport qui entravent la préparation sont notamment les suivantes : un manque de précision dans l'énoncé de la vision, des objectifs, des définitions et de la stratégie ; un financement ponctuel ; une application non systématique des programmes, une mauvaise intégration des politiques, des pratiques et des normes ; une responsabilisation limitée et une absence de mesure des résultats et d'activités de communication.

La préparation aux situations d'urgence est considérée comme une responsabilité qui incombe à l'UNICEF à tous les niveaux. Toutefois, le concept reste nébuleux en raison de l'absence de stratégie, de définition et d'objectif communs énoncés pour l'ensemble de l'organisation.

L'UNICEF ne possède pas de mécanisme standard et systématique d'analyse des risques appliqué par tous les bureaux de pays. Il en résulte des variations dans les procédures d'évaluation des risques et une

perte de précision dans la prévision des situations d'urgence. Une évaluation des risques peu efficace est responsable de la faiblesse des activités de préparation aux catastrophes.

Dans la majorité des cas, les bureaux de pays sont mieux organisés dans les contextes où le risque de situation d'urgence est élevé et lorsque la capacité de réagir des gouvernements et des autres acteurs est limitée. L'UNICEF est mieux armé pour intervenir lors de crises soudaines que lors des crises latentes.

Le passage de la phase de Préparation aux situations d'urgence et Plan d'intervention (EPRP, acronyme anglais) au système d'alerte rapide/action rapide (EWEA, acronyme anglais) a permis de bénéficier d'un processus de préparation aux situations d'urgence plus transparent au niveau des bureaux de pays, sauf dans ceux où le système EWEA n'est pas utilisé. Le système d'EWEA est l'occasion de mettre au point un mécanisme systématique et cohérent de préparation aux situations d'urgence dans tous les bureaux de pays. Cependant, l'utilisation de l'EWEA reste variable. Tandis que certains bureaux de pays utilisent l'outil de l'EWEA pour faciliter le processus de préparation aux situations d'urgence, d'autres l'ignorent et d'autres l'utilisent uniquement pour se conformer aux exigences du siège. Le système d'EWEA peut contribuer sans le vouloir à une absence de préparation aux situations d'urgence car les bureaux de pays pensent parfois que le fait de se conformer aux exigences du système équivaut à une préparation. Les bureaux régionaux et le siège, qui accordent beaucoup d'importance aux aspects administratifs et à l'usage du système d'EWEA (plutôt qu'au résultat des activités de préparation aux situations d'urgence), favorisent implicitement cette situation, dans la mesure où ils ne cherchent pas à savoir comment le système peut enregistrer, faciliter et en fin de compte contribuer aux meilleurs résultats de l'intervention. Le personnel ne perçoit généralement pas le système d'EWEA comme un outil pratique à utiliser lors des situations d'urgence.

L'UNICEF possède des structures administratives qui ont contribué à une meilleure préparation aux situations d'urgence. Cependant, cette préparation est marginalisée dans les bureaux plus petits où les responsabilités liées à la préparation aux situations d'urgence fait partie d'un ensemble de tâches qui n'incombent qu'à un seul fonctionnaire. Les bureaux régionaux accordent davantage de temps et de soutien aux bureaux de pays qui courent des risques plus élevés d'être frappés par des situations d'urgence ou qui affichent de faibles capacités. La fracture naturelle entre l'élaboration de programmes et l'action humanitaire porte atteinte à l'optimisation et à la coordination de la préparation aux situations d'urgence.

La collecte et l'analyse limitées et sporadiques des données liées à la préparation aux situations d'urgence ont entravé un suivi, une évaluation, une analyse et une compréhension de l'impact et de l'efficacité des activités de préparation aux situations d'urgence. La difficulté de réunir des fonds pour la préparation aux situations d'urgence est exacerbée par l'impossibilité de présenter des arguments fondés sur des données claires pour expliquer comment cette préparation contribue à améliorer les interventions.

L'UNICEF a créé plusieurs mécanismes de ressources humaines afin d'améliorer sa capacité à réagir rapidement lors des situations d'urgence. Actuellement, les données qui permettraient d'analyser la manière dont ces mécanismes contribuent spécifiquement à de meilleurs résultats de la préparation aux situations d'urgence au niveau des bureaux de pays ne sont pas réunies. Les mécanismes en place, tels que les équipes d'intervention immédiate et les équipes d'intervention d'urgence, risquent d'être surchargés par des situations d'urgence de grande envergure et multiples. La préparation aux situations

d'urgence n'est pas considérée comme une tâche fondamentale et prioritaire incombant au personnel de l'UNICEF, donc les mécanismes de responsabilité et de mesure de la performance du personnel (tels que les évaluations régulières) n'ont pas été institutionnalisés. Les registres représentent un mécanisme important de déploiement rapide, mais ils ne sont pas synonymes d'acuité et d'expérience, et ils comportent des lacunes en termes de qualifications. Les activités de renforcement des capacités, même si l'administration estime qu'elles renforcent la préparation aux situations d'urgence, ne sont ni systématiquement mises en œuvre ni appliquées de manière cohérente dans l'ensemble de l'organisation.

Les engagements financiers actuels de l'UNICEF envers la préparation aux situations d'urgence sont insuffisants pour soutenir l'envergure et l'intensité des activités nécessaires pour une préparation aux situations d'urgence à la fois cohérente et systématique au niveau mondial. Une « intervention humanitaire collective prévisible, efficace et menée en temps opportun », telle qu'elle est présentée dans les Principaux engagements pour les enfants dans l'action humanitaire pose problème en raison de l'inconsistance du financement attribué aux activités de préparation aux situations d'urgence. Les bureaux de pays n'ont pas pu reprogrammer ou affecter des ressources financières à cette préparation de manière constante et systématique car l'UNICEF n'a pas spécifiquement accordé la priorité à cette préparation au niveau de l'organisation. L'UNICEF n'a pas encore préparé d'argumentation solide, fondée sur des données probantes pour les donateurs grâce à un suivi et une évaluation des activités de préparation aux situations d'urgence qui pourrait rapporter un financement suivi et adéquat à long terme et à court terme à ces activités.

Les directives concernant une programmation tenant compte des risques de situation d'urgence ne sont pas systématiquement utilisées, et cette programmation est mal connue dans l'ensemble de l'organisation. Bien que la mesure des résultats de la préparation aux situations d'urgence soit jugée nécessaire, on peut se poser des questions sur son exécution. L'amélioration des structures de responsabilisation liées à la préparation, telles que la nécessité de présenter régulièrement des rapports, contribuera à l'adoption d'un concept de programmation tenant compte des risques de situation d'urgence, à sa mise en œuvre et à son suivi.

La participation de l'UNICEF aux interventions humanitaires est importante. Néanmoins malgré une tendance positive en termes d'interventions de l'UNICEF lors de situations d'urgence, on a constaté un recul au cours des dernières années. Même si la participation de l'UNICEF aux interventions continue à progresser dans un avenir proche, il est aussi possible qu'elle ait atteint son sommet. Cette évaluation ne permet pas de déterminer spécifiquement si ou comment les activités de préparation aux situations d'urgence ont réduit le risque, contribué à certaines interventions spécifiques ou au contraire ont détourné l'UNICEF de ces interventions, ou ont eu un impact sur les interventions de l'UNICEF plus généralement en raison de la pénurie de données.

La continuité opérationnelle est généralement bien présente au niveau des bureaux de pays et contribue à la poursuite des opérations en périodes d'urgence. Une meilleure compréhension de l'application d'une planification en cas d'urgence serait profitable à la préparation aux situations d'urgence au niveau des bureaux de pays.

La sensibilisation des principaux agents d'exécution aux actions de préparation aux situations d'urgence et à leur mise en œuvre est équivalente aux actions de l'UNICEF en matière de préparation aux situations d'urgence, voire plus complète. La majorité des fonctionnaires des bureaux de pays de l'UNICEF se dit satisfaite (en particulier le personnel d'urgence, ainsi que le personnel chargé du suivi et

de l'évaluation – un peu moins l'administration générale et les fonctionnaires chargés des opérations) du niveau de sensibilisation et des compétences de leurs principaux partenaires en termes de préparation aux situations d'urgence. Le niveau de satisfaction concernant la coordination avec les autres institutions des Nations Unies était aussi élevé chez les fonctionnaires de l'UNICEF, en particulier les coordonnateurs des opérations d'urgence, moins parmi les fonctionnaires chargés des opérations.

Les efforts déployés par l'UNICEF pour intégrer les concepts et la pratique de préparation aux situations d'urgence dans les urgences plutôt que d'intégrer la programmation du développement a favorisé une meilleure acceptation du fait, même si elle n'est pas universelle, qu'une intervention efficace en cas de situation d'urgence nécessite, entre autres, une bonne préparation. Les activités du Comité permanent interorganisations de l'UNICEF (IASC, acronyme anglais) ont fortement influencé la réflexion en matière de préparation, notamment en soulignant la nécessité de disposer d'un cadre commun de préparation aux situations d'urgence, et en encourageant son application. Cependant cette sensibilisation au niveau de l'IASC a eu jusqu'à présent des résultats tangibles limités en termes de politiques et de pratiques mises en œuvre par les autres membres de l'IASC. Compte tenu du consensus parmi les principaux acteurs selon lequel l'UNICEF est le chef de file, son apport constructif et énergique concernant la préparation aux situations d'urgence doit être maintenu dans un avenir prévisible.

L'engagement de l'UNICEF à renforcer les capacités de ses partenaires nationaux, infranationaux et communautaires, ainsi que la préparation aux situations d'urgence, représente un secteur potentiel de collaboration parmi tant d'autres.

Le partenariat avec les gouvernements, s'il est prioritaire pour l'UNICEF, n'est pas aisé pour toutes sortes de raisons liées au contexte. Bien que l'évaluation permette d'affirmer que l'UNICEF est attaché à ce concept, son application constante et systématique s'avère difficile.

Recommandations

Compte tenu des constatations et des conclusions mentionnées ci-dessus, l'évaluation permet de faire les recommandations suivantes :

1. **Concevoir, faire connaître et mettre en œuvre une stratégie générale en matière de préparation aux situations d'urgence permettant une application systématique d'un système cohérent fondé sur une analyse des risques et du contexte aux niveaux des bureaux de pays et des bureaux régionaux.** Le concept et la mise en œuvre du système devraient permettre d'obtenir une définition claire de la préparation aux situations d'urgence dans le contexte de la mission de l'UNICEF et garantir que les responsabilités sont clairement définies pour les divers niveaux de façon à les intégrer aux travaux et aux programmes réguliers. Les systèmes et processus de préparation aux situations d'urgence doivent comporter des critères clairs établissant quand et comment une intervention peut être lancée en cas de crises à évolution lente en se fondant sur les expériences du passé, la collaboration avec les pairs et une meilleure gestion de l'information à l'avenir. Lors de la conception du système, il conviendra de tenir compte de la nécessité d'élargir et d'approfondir les mécanismes de ressources humaines et de renforcement des capacités existants pour soutenir la préparation aux situations d'urgence, également pour s'assurer que l'UNICEF a accès à un personnel qualifié et que les fonctionnaires en place peuvent bénéficier d'un renforcement de leurs capacités en termes de préparation aux situations d'urgence.

2. **Augmenter les engagements financiers affectés à la préparation aux situations d'urgence de façon à ce qu'ils correspondent aux besoins liés au nombre croissant d'interventions d'urgence à l'UNICEF, et s'assurer que les fonds alloués à la préparation sont intégrés dans les programmes des bureaux de pays, le pourcentage de ces fonds étant proportionnel à la perception des risques.** Les activités et le financement de la préparation aux situations d'urgence ne correspondent pas à ceux qui sont attribués aux interventions d'urgence. Il est important d'examiner les besoins à tous les niveaux et d'affecter les ressources financières de manière réaliste, compte tenu du fait qu'une meilleure préparation permet de faire des économies et d'améliorer les interventions.
3. **Élargir les liens avec des systèmes de préparation nationaux et mondiaux mis en place par des partenaires et des gouvernements pour créer de la valeur ajoutée.** Bien qu'il existe une certaine cohérence entre la stratégie de l'UNICEF au niveau du pays et celles de ses partenaires, il y aurait moyen d'innover et de renforcer les systèmes de prévention des situations d'urgence. En outre, même s'il semble difficile d'établir des liens avec les systèmes gouvernementaux, il est important de comprendre les lacunes et les incohérences entre les systèmes nationaux et la stratégie de préparation de l'UNICEF de façon à les éliminer dès l'étape de la conception. Surtout, le renforcement des capacités nationales devrait faire partie intégrante de toute stratégie de l'UNICEF liée à la préparation aux situations d'urgence.
4. **Établir un système simple et économique pour renforcer la disponibilité de données à des fins de suivi, de communication et d'évaluation en vue de mieux comprendre comment la préparation aux situations d'urgence favorise de meilleures interventions, ce qui marche le mieux et comment apporter des améliorations et des innovations à l'avenir.** Les indicateurs de collecte de données devraient être liés aux résultats figurant dans les Principaux engagements pour les enfants dans l'action humanitaire et montrer, avec une théorie du changement, comment les divers indicateurs sont liés à une vie meilleure pour les enfants. Toutes les activités de préparation aux situations d'urgence devraient déboucher sur des conclusions claires sur la manière dont la préparation aux situations d'urgence de l'UNICEF aboutit ou non au respect des Principaux engagements pour les enfants dans l'action humanitaire.

Resumen Ejecutivo

Antecedentes y razones de la evaluación

Las emergencias tienen consecuencias negativas para los derechos de los sectores a los que benefician principalmente las labores de UNICEF. En 2012, UNICEF y sus aliados dieron respuesta a 286 situaciones de emergencia humanitaria de diversa gravedad en 79 países⁹. Se estima que la UNICEF tendrá una participación cada vez mayor en las futuras situaciones de emergencia debido a que éstas serán cada vez más frecuentes. Por lo tanto, resulta importante que UNICEF se prepare de manera eficaz para las emergencias, tanto individualmente como en colaboración con los gobiernos nacionales y sus aliados. También es importante que la organización se asegure de que se hayan realizado inversiones adecuadas para ese fin. Sin embargo, diversas auditorías y evaluaciones¹⁰ han dejado al descubierto diferencias y disparidades en los niveles de preparación para diversas situaciones de emergencia.

La presente evaluación independiente fue encargada por la Oficina de Evaluación de UNICEF (EO) con el propósito de establecer cuáles son las carencias en las políticas y sistemas de preparación para las emergencias de la organización, con vistas a darles respuesta y subsanarlas.

Objetivo

El objetivo de la evaluación consiste en examinar de la manera más sistemática y objetiva posible la eficacia, eficiencia¹¹, conectividad, sostenibilidad y cobertura de los actuales sistemas de preparación para las emergencias de UNICEF en sus operaciones en todo el mundo¹². El objetivo principal consiste en ayudar a que UNICEF cuente con una mejor preparación para la amplia gama de emergencias a las que debe dar respuesta, así como a moderar los efectos de esas emergencias y ayudar de esa manera a salvar más vidas y reducir el sufrimiento humano de una forma cada vez más eficaz. A fin de poder analizar tanto el pasado como el futuro, en esta evaluación se considera que la evolución de los sistemas de preparación para las emergencias de UNICEF hasta la fecha constituye un medio para mantener un registro de los avances logrados. Esta evaluación tiene carácter tanto sumatorio como formativo, con un mayor hincapié en este último aspecto.

⁹ Informe sobre los Recursos Ordinarios, Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia, 2012.

¹⁰ Consúltase *Audit Report on the Management of Emergency Preparedness in UNICEF Country Offices*, Informe 2007/32, Oficina de Auditoría Interna del Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia, marzo de 2008. Para las evaluaciones dirigidas por UNICEF, véase *UNICEF's Response to the Emergency in the Horn of Africa 2011-2012: Lesson-learning exercise, final report*, Oficina de Evaluación del Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia, junio de 2012; *Independent Review of UNICEF's Operational Response to the January 2010 Earthquake in Haiti*, Oficina de Evaluación del Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia, 2011; *Children and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Evaluation of UNICEF's response in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives (2005-2008)*, Oficina de Evaluación del Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia, 2009; y *Evaluation of DFID-UNICEF Programme Cooperation to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it Applies to Humanitarian Response, 2000-2005*, Oficina de Evaluación del Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia, 2005. Para las actividades dirigidas por los donantes, consúltase *Multilateral Aid Review (MAR)*, Departamento de Desarrollo Internacional del Reino Unido, 2011; y *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR)*, Departamento de Desarrollo Internacional del Reino Unido, 2011.

¹¹ A los efectos de la presente evaluación, se emplea una definición amplia de "eficiencia" que abarca desde el grado de eficacia con que UNICEF ha asignado sus recursos humanos y financieros a sus labores de preparación, hasta sus niveles de eficacia y eficiencia con relación a los costos. En la evaluación no se realizaron análisis estructurados de eficacia o eficiencia con relación a los costos porque por lo general las actividades de preparación se combinan con los gastos ordinarios de programación.

¹² Los términos de referencia de esta evaluación se puede encontrar en el Anexo F.

Enfoque y metodología de la evaluación

Para realizar la evaluación se empleó una metodología normal, que consistió en entrevistas con los principales informantes, talleres con grupos de consulta semiestructurados y observaciones en el terreno durante las visitas a siete países entre diciembre de 2012 y abril de 2013; además de una encuesta del personal de UNICEF, investigaciones secundarias y el análisis de datos.

A los efectos de la presente evaluación, se elaboró un Modelo de Lógica Inferida (ILM) sobre la base de las diversas actividades y los objetivos fijados de las labores de preparación para las emergencias de UNICEF. El ILM establece los cinco resultados que debería obtener UNICEF mediante sus actividades de preparación para las emergencias. A saber:

- Aumento de la capacidad y preparación interinstitucional y de UNICEF para responder a las situaciones de emergencia;
- Aumento de la capacidad y preparación a nivel nacional para responder a las situaciones de emergencia;
- Logro de resultados programáticos específicos que apunten a las causas fundamentales de las situaciones de emergencia;
- Mejora de la respuesta humanitaria internacional; y
- Aumento de la capacidad de los actores en los planos nacional y subnacional (incluso en las comunidades) en materia de prevención, respuesta y recuperación en las emergencias.

El equipo de evaluación examinó los cinco resultados siguientes para elaborar sus cinco esferas de investigación específicas:

1. Gestión y organización
2. Recursos
3. Programación a corto y largo plazo
4. Alianzas
5. Medición de los resultados en favor de los niños

Resultados y conclusiones

UNICEF ha logrado progresos con respecto a la integración de la preparación para las emergencias en sus operaciones, lo que probablemente ha servido para mejorar sus respuestas ante las situaciones de emergencia. Pese a que esos progresos están reflejados en esta evaluación, la integración de la preparación para las emergencias ha tenido carácter limitado y circunstancial.

En esta evaluación se observó que las actividades humanitarias de UNICEF se orientan en mayor medida a dar respuesta a las emergencias que a prepararse para ellas o mitigar sus efectos. Entre las limitaciones que dificultan el aumento de la preparación para las emergencias que se identificaron en la elaboración de este informe figuran las siguientes: la articulación inadecuada de la visión, los objetivos, las definiciones y la estrategia; la asignación ad hoc de fondos; la falta de coherencia en la aplicación de los programas; las deficiencias en la integración de las políticas, prácticas y normas; las deficiencias en materia de rendición de cuentas, medición del desempeño y presentación de informes sobre las actividades realizadas.

Pese a que se da por sentado que la preparación para las emergencias es una responsabilidad que atañe a todos los niveles de UNICEF, se trata de un concepto todavía difuso debido a la ausencia de metas, estrategias y definiciones comunes que se articulen en toda la organización.

UNICEF no cuenta con un proceso de análisis de riesgo normalizado o coherente que se aplique en todas las oficinas de países. Debido a ello, existen variaciones en los procedimientos de evaluación de riesgos e imprecisiones en el pronóstico de emergencias futuras. Las evaluaciones de riesgos deficientes también tienen como resultado ineficiencias e insuficiencias en las actividades de preparación para las emergencias.

En la mayoría de los casos, la preparación para las emergencias se organiza mejor cuando está a cargo de las oficinas de países en contextos con alto riesgo de emergencias y donde la capacidad de respuesta de los gobiernos y otros actores tiene carácter limitado. UNICEF cuenta con una mejor preparación para responder a crisis repentinas que a las emergencias de desarrollo gradual y lento.

El paso del Plan de preparación y respuesta ante situaciones de emergencia (EPRP) al sistema de Alerta temprana – Acción temprana (EWEA) ha dado como resultado una mayor transparencia en el proceso de preparación para las emergencias a nivel de oficinas de país, con la excepción de las oficinas de países donde no se emplea el sistema EWEA. Ese sistema posibilita la elaboración de procesos sistemáticos y coherentes de preparación para las emergencias en todas las oficinas de países. Sin embargo, el sistema EWEA se emplea de manera diversa e irregular. Mientras algunas oficinas de países aprovechan ese instrumento para facilitar el proceso de preparación para las emergencias, otras lo ignoran y otras más usan el sistema EWEA con el único objetivo de cumplir con los requerimientos de la sede. El sistema EWEA puede ser de motivo indirecto de deficiencias en la preparación para las emergencias, ya que algunas oficinas de países dan por supuesto que cumplir con los requisitos del sistema es lo mismo que estar preparado para una situación de emergencia. Las oficinas regionales y la sede fomentan implícitamente esa situación debido a que se concentran en los aspectos administrativos de EWEA, así como en las cuestiones relacionadas con su uso, en lugar de atender a la manera en que el sistema puede mantener un registro, además de facilitar y hacer aportaciones que sirvan para mejorar los resultados. De esta manera, el personal no percibe que el sistema EWEA sea una herramienta práctica que se debe emplear en tiempos de emergencia.

UNICEF cuenta con estructuras orgánicas que han ayudado a mejorar la preparación para las emergencias. Sin embargo, la preparación para las emergencias recibe menos atención en las oficinas más pequeñas donde la responsabilidad por esas labores constituye sólo una de las diversas obligaciones de un solo integrante del personal. Las oficinas regionales les dedican más tiempo y le prestan más apoyo a las oficinas de países que corren mayor riesgo de emergencias o cuya capacidad de respuesta ante las mismas es limitada. La división natural entre el desarrollo de programas y la respuesta humanitaria impide la coordinación y la optimización de la preparación para las emergencias.

La manera inconsistente y limitada en que UNICEF obtiene y analiza los datos relacionados con la preparación para las emergencias ha imposibilitado vigilar, evaluar, analizar y comprender adecuadamente las consecuencias y la eficacia de las actividades de preparación para las emergencias. Al desafío que conlleva la obtención de fondos para la preparación para las emergencias se suma la dificultad de demostrar con datos fehacientes la manera en que la preparación para las emergencias ayuda a dar mejor respuesta a las mismas.

UNICEF ha creado varios mecanismos de recursos humanos con el fin de aumentar su capacidad de respuesta rápida ante las situaciones de emergencia. En la actualidad se recopilan los datos que posibilitarán el análisis de la manera en que estos mecanismos servirán específicamente para mejorar la preparación para las emergencias a nivel de oficinas de países. Los mecanismos de recursos humanos ya existentes, como los equipos de respuesta y los equipos de respuesta de emergencia, pueden resultar desbordados ante emergencias múltiples con gran magnitud. El personal de UNICEF no considera como función prioritaria fundamental la preparación para las emergencias, y por ello no se ha dado carácter institucional a mecanismos de rendición de cuentas y medición del desempeño del personal como las evaluaciones periódicas. Las listas de personal constituyen importantes mecanismos para el despliegue rápido, pero sus integrantes carecen de experiencia suficiente y no cuentan con todas las aptitudes requeridas. Pese a que el personal superior considera que las actividades de creación de capacidad traen aparejada una mejor preparación para las emergencias, las mismas no se llevan a cabo ni se aplican de manera suficientemente sistemática y uniforme en toda la organización.

El actual nivel de compromiso financiero de UNICEF con respecto a la preparación para las emergencias no es suficiente para sustentar la profundidad y la amplitud de las actividades necesarias para lograr una preparación para las emergencias suficientemente uniforme y sistemática en todo el mundo. La prestación de la “acción humanitaria colectiva previsible, eficaz y oportuna” que se prevé en los Compromisos básicos para la infancia en las actividades humanitarias (CCC) resulta problemática debido a las inconsistencias en la asignación de fondos para las actividades de preparación para las emergencias. Las oficinas de países no han logrado reprogramar o asignar recursos financieros para EP de forma uniforme y sistemática porque UNICEF no ha otorgado específicamente prioridad a EP en el plano institucional. UNICEF todavía no ha elaborado razones convincentes y basadas en pruebas para presentar a los donantes. Esas pruebas, que se deberían obtener mediante la vigilancia eficaz y la evaluación de las actividades de emergencia, podrían lograr que se asignaran fondos para las actividades de EP a corto y largo plazo de manera uniforme y adecuada.

Tampoco se emplean de manera sistemática las directrices existentes sobre los Programas de Emergencia Basados en los Riesgos (ERIP) ni existe en toda la organización conciencia generalizada sobre ERIP. Pese a que la medición de los resultados de EP con fines programáticos es un objetivo aceptado y deseado, no se realiza de manera satisfactoria. Mediante el mejoramiento de las estructuras de rendición de cuentas relacionadas con la preparación, como las normas sobre la presentación periódica de informes, se contribuirá a la adopción del diseño, ejecución y vigilancia de ERIP.

UNICEF tiene una participación sustancial en las labores de respuesta humanitaria. Pese a que hay una tendencia positiva en el número de situaciones de emergencia a las que ha dado respuesta UNICEF, el número de las mismas ha ido disminuyendo en años recientes. Aunque la participación de UNICEF en las respuestas de ese tipo quizá siga aumentando en el futuro inmediato, también cabe la posibilidad de que la organización haya alcanzado ya el grado máximo de participación. Debido a que se carece de datos suficientes, esta evaluación no ha podido determinar específicamente si las actividades de preparación para las emergencias han reducido los riesgos, o de qué manera lo han hecho; si han tenido efectos positivos o negativos con relación a respuestas específicas; o si han afectado las respuestas de UNICEF ante las situaciones de emergencias de manera más general.

Las oficinas de países de UNICEF tienen por lo general un buen desempeño con respecto a la continuidad de las operaciones, lo que ayuda a dar carácter sostenible a las labores de la organización

durante las situaciones de emergencia. Las oficinas de países mejorarían aún más su desempeño en la esfera de EP si se comprendiera mejor cómo emplear la planificación para imprevistos.

El grado de conciencia de los aliados en la ejecución de las actividades de EP, así como sus niveles de ejecución, son similares, si no aún más amplios, que las acciones de UNICEF en materia de preparación para las emergencias. La mayoría de los integrantes del personal de las oficinas de países de UNICEF se muestran satisfechos con el nivel de conciencia y competencia de los principales aliados de la organización con respecto a EP. Esa satisfacción la comparte especialmente el personal de emergencias y de vigilancia y evaluación, y en menor medida los funcionarios directivos y el personal de operaciones. Los integrantes del personal de UNICEF, especialmente los que tienen a cargo la coordinación de las situaciones de emergencia, también se sienten altamente satisfechos con el grado de coordinación del organismo con otras organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas. Sin embargo, el nivel de satisfacción es más bajo entre el personal de operaciones.

Los esfuerzos realizados por UNICEF para integrar los conceptos y la práctica de EP en las labores de emergencia en mayor medida que en los programas de desarrollo han dado lugar a una mayor aceptación, aunque aún diste de ser universal, de que para dar respuesta eficaz a las emergencias se necesita, entre otras cosas, contar con buena EP. Las actividades de UNICEF en la esfera del Comité Permanente Interinstitucional (IASC) han ejercido una influencia importante en los conceptos fundamentales de EP. Han servido, por ejemplo, para destacar la necesidad de un marco común de EP, así como para fomentar el empleo del mismo. Sin embargo, los resultados concretos de las labores de promoción de la esfera de IASC han sido hasta ahora limitados en lo que concierne a las políticas y prácticas que emplean los demás miembros del Comité Permanente Interinstitucional. Teniendo en cuenta que las diversas partes interesadas están de acuerdo en que UNICEF tiene a su cargo la dirección de las políticas y prácticas de EP, UNICEF debería seguir realizando en el futuro inmediato aportaciones enérgicas y constructivas sobre EP.

UNICEF mantiene su compromiso de aumentar la capacidad de sus aliados a nivel nacional, subregional y comunitario, y en ese sentido, el aumento de la capacidad en materia de EP constituye una de las esferas que ofrece mayores posibilidades de cooperación.

Pese a que las alianzas operacionales con los gobiernos tienen carácter prioritario para UNICEF, las mismas presentan diversos desafíos debido a varias razones relacionadas específicamente con el contexto. Por lo tanto, pese a que esta evaluación estableció que UNICEF mantiene su compromiso con ese concepto, persisten las dificultades para ponerlo en práctica de manera sistemática y uniforme.

Recomendaciones

Sobre la base de las conclusiones y los resultados mencionados previamente, esta evaluación presenta las siguientes recomendaciones para la acción:

1. **Se recomienda diseñar, difundir y ejecutar una estrategia mundial de EP que tenga como resultado la implementación sistemática de un sistema coherente que se fundamente en el contexto y en el análisis de riesgo en los niveles de las oficinas de países y las oficinas regionales.** El diseño y la implementación del sistema deberían brindar una definición clara del concepto de EP en el contexto de la misión de UNICEF y garantizar el establecimiento de mecanismos de rendición de cuentas en los diversos niveles, a fin de integrar el sistema en las labores y programas ordinarios. Los sistemas y procesos de preparación para las emergencias

deberían fijar criterios claros acerca de dónde y cuándo se pueden “iniciar” las respuestas en las crisis de evolución lenta mediante el examen de las experiencias pasadas, la colaboración con los pares y la gestión mejorada de la información sobre situaciones futuras. Al diseñar el sistema se debería tener en cuenta la necesidad de ampliar y profundizar los mecanismos de recursos humanos y los procesos de creación de capacidad existentes destinados a dar respaldo a la EP, a fin de garantizar que UNICEF cuente con personal adecuado dotado de las aptitudes y conocimientos necesarios, y que el personal en funciones puede adquirir más capacidad con respecto a la EP.

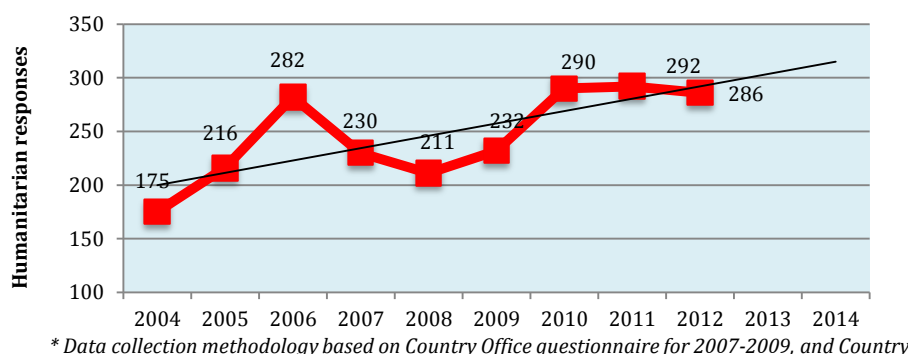
2. **Se recomienda aumentar el compromiso financiero con la EP de manera tal que se puedan cubrir las necesidades de una respuesta cada vez mayor de UNICEF ante las situaciones de emergencia, así como garantizar que las asignaciones financieras para la EP se integren en los programas de las oficinas de países en porcentajes que se correspondan con la percepción del riesgo potencial.** Las actividades y la financiación de la EP no se corresponden con lo que se asigna a las respuestas de emergencia. Es importante examinar las necesidades en todos los niveles y realizar asignaciones financieras realistas basadas en la convicción de que mediante una mayor preparación se ahorra dinero y se puede responder de manera más adecuada.
3. **A fin de generar valor agregado, se recomienda ampliar y profundizar los vínculos con los sistemas de preparación para las emergencias nacionales y mundiales encabezados por los aliados y los gobiernos.** Pese a que la preparación para las emergencias que contempla la estrategia de UNICEF a nivel de país se corresponde con las estrategias en materia de EP de sus aliados, siempre es posible innovar y mejorar los sistemas. Además, aunque el establecimiento de vínculos con los sistemas gubernamentales pueda presentar desafíos, resulta importante pasar revista a las lagunas e inconsistencias que puedan existir entre los sistemas nacionales y la estrategia de preparación para las emergencias de UNICEF, de manera que esas carencias y deficiencias se puedan subsanar durante la etapa de diseño. Más importante aún, la creación de capacidad nacional debería formar parte integral de toda estrategia de EP de UNICEF.
4. **Se recomienda establecer un sistema simple y eficaz con relación a su costo para aumentar y mejorar la disponibilidad de datos necesarios para las labores de vigilancia, presentación de informes y evaluación que ayuden a difundir el concepto de que la EP trae aparejadas mejores respuestas y a determinar de qué manera se pueden obtener resultados y mejorar e innovar las operaciones.** Los indicadores correspondientes a la obtención de datos deberían vincularse con los resultados en los CCC y deberían demostrar con una teoría del cambio la manera en que los diversos indicadores se relacionan con el mejoramiento de la vida de los niños. Todas las actividades de preparación para las emergencias deberían dar lugar a conclusiones claras sobre si las labores de EP de UNICEF se orientan o no al logro de los CCC.

1 Evaluation background

The importance of emergency preparedness (EP) has been increasing since the Hyogo Framework of Action was adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held at Kobe, Japan, in 2005. The increasing development losses resulting from disasters has made policy makers realize that progress towards development goals cannot be achieved without higher levels of investment in risk reduction and disaster preparedness by organizations, national authorities and donors. Evaluations such as the Joint Evaluation of the International Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami¹³ have shown that effectiveness of emergency response improves greatly if the organization invests in preparedness. As such, humanitarian agencies are now advocating for a more balanced allocation of resources by donors and national authorities between disaster preparedness and disaster response.

In 2012 alone, UNICEF and its partners responded to 286 humanitarian situations of varying degrees in 79 countries¹⁴. UNICEF's increasing involvement in responses to emergency situations is expected to continue if the trend as illustrated in Figure 1 continues.

Figure 1 - UNICEF humanitarian situation responses 2004–2012*



It is therefore important that UNICEF effectively invests and prepares for emergencies in collaboration with national governments and partners. Recent audits and evaluations¹⁵ have highlighted uneven EP activities across the organization. Although UNICEF has been acting on the recommendations of these accountability exercises¹⁶, an independent examination from a global perspective was required to pinpoint

¹³ See: <http://www.alnap.org/ourwork/tec>

¹⁴ See: http://www.unicef.org/parmo/files/RR_REPORT_2012_NY_FINAL_DOUBLEPAGE.pdf

¹⁵ See: *Audit Report on the Management of Emergency Preparedness in UNICEF Country Offices*, Report 2007/32, United Nations Children's Fund Office of Internal Audit, 2008. For UNICEF-led evaluative exercises, see: *UNICEF's Response to the Emergency in the Horn of Africa 2011-2012: Lesson-learning exercise, final report*, United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office, June 2012; *Independent Review of UNICEF's Operational Response to the January 2010 Earthquake in Haiti*, United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office, 2011; *Children and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Evaluation of UNICEF's response in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives (2005-2008)*, United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office, 2009; *Evaluation of DFID-UNICEF Programme Cooperation to Strengthen UNICEF Programming as it Applies to Humanitarian Response, 2000-2005*, United Nations Children's Fund Evaluation Office, 2005. For donor-led exercises, see: *Multilateral Aid Review (MAR)*, United Kingdom Department for International Development, 2011; *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR)*, United Kingdom Department for International Development, 2011.

¹⁶ Among the most noteworthy of these has been a series of Programmes of Cooperation (PoCs) between the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and UNICEF to strengthen UNICEF's broader capacity for preparing for and responding to

the specific gaps in UNICEF's EP policies and identify systems to be addressed or strengthened. The rationale for such an evaluation of UNICEF's EP activities is as follows:

1. the heightened human, financial and reputational risk to UNICEF in emergencies when UNICEF is (or is perceived to be) unprepared;
2. increasing evidence¹⁷ questioning the effectiveness and quality of UNICEF's EP activities, coupled with the lack of a focused evaluation of EP to date;
3. the significant investments in UNICEF's EP to date and, with this, the onus to demonstrate fiduciary responsibility and value for money for these investments;
4. the increasing focus on improving EP performance by humanitarian response organizations in the inter-agency policy arena, of which UNICEF is a key partner, most recently by way of the Transformative Agenda¹⁸, but also including the impending move from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals; and
5. the opportunity for effecting positive change within UNICEF's day-to-day operations¹⁹ and, at a broader strategic level, responding to the organization's recognized need to better integrate humanitarian action, and particularly resilience, into its 2014–2017 Strategic Plan.

1.1 Purpose and objectives

The evaluation's objective is to examine systematically and objectively the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency²⁰, connectedness, sustainability and coverage of UNICEF's current EP systems across its global operations²¹.

The evaluation is both summative and formative, with emphasis on the latter. It tracks progress and builds on UNICEF's accumulated experience to date. The evaluation also examines in detail the range of UNICEF's EP policies and processes.

Similar to all evaluations undertaken by the UNICEF Evaluation Office (EO), this evaluation serves two purposes:

1. enhancing accountability – to the Executive Board and senior management for results achieved; to donors by showing value for their investments in EP; and to programme countries and affected populations in emergency-prone countries; and
2. facilitating learning – to improve practice and policies for the future by capturing lessons from experience.

emergencies. The first of these consisted of a three-phased PoC from 2000-2009, and a second PoC has been agreed upon for the period 2012–2015.

¹⁷ See footnote 3 above.

¹⁸ For example, see: <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/genevaloader.aspx?page=content-template-default&bd=87>

¹⁹ During the research for this report, UNICEF had established a consolidated Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction Section in EMOPS Geneva. However, in 2013, this unit was dismantled and EP and DRR responsibilities were subsequently spread across other parts of UNICEF.

²⁰ For the purpose of this evaluation, 'efficiency' will be broadly defined to include areas ranging from how effectively UNICEF has allocated its human and financial resources to its preparedness work, to cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency considerations. The evaluation did not perform formal cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness analyses because preparedness activities are, generally, intermixed with normal programming expenditures.

²¹ The original Terms of Reference for this evaluation can be found in Annex F.

1.2 Scope

The evaluation:

- examines the range of organizational investments against outcomes and impacts to determine if UNICEF is making the right choices in building national capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies;
- investigates UNICEF's overall institutional effectiveness in the area of EP; and
- reviews EP at UNICEF through a series of country case studies²².

The evaluation is not intended to document the precise results or quality standards of every project-level intervention undertaken at every level of the organization. The evaluation is forward looking and takes account of progress made.

1.3 Organization of the evaluation

The evaluation was commissioned and managed by the EO. An internal steering committee consisting of representatives from the EO and the Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) guided the evaluation process, and an Evaluation Reference Group was also formed for transparent review of this work and implementation of recommendations.

The accountabilities of the EO and the Reference Group are to:

- include key stakeholders in the evaluation process to enhance ownership of analysis and recommendations;
- review and critique the scope and design of the evaluation, evaluation tools, intermediate reports and the draft report; and
- facilitate a management response to the evaluation.

²² While the evaluation includes a series of country case studies to illustrate emerging institutional issues at the field level, it does not focus in-depth on country-specific issues or include separate country-specific reports.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 UNICEF's framework for preparedness capacity building

For the purpose of this evaluation, an Inferred Logic Model (ILM) was developed based on the range of activities and stated objectives of UNICEF's EP. This ILM links ostensible EP inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact-level results²³.

The five categories of outputs related to EP activities in the ILM are:

Figure 2 - Outputs as described in the ILM framework for building EP capacity



Example activities that result in these outputs, as described in the ILM, include the following:

1. **Evidence generation and tool development:** Risk-informed Situation Analysis (SitAns)/ Common Country Assessment, Risk Assessment [e.g. national, early warning analysis in Early Warning Early Action (EWEA)], early warning reports [e.g. Operations Centre reports, Top 15, Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) EWEA report], inter-agency guidelines, programme, policy and procedures inputs, and the development of the EWEA.
2. **Development of UNICEF and inter-agency preparedness plans:** Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRP) up to 2009, business continuity plans, Country Office (CO) inputs in the EWEA system, UNICEF/inter-agency contingency plans and security plans, Emergency Risk Informed Country Programmes [e.g. United Nations Development Assistance Framework and

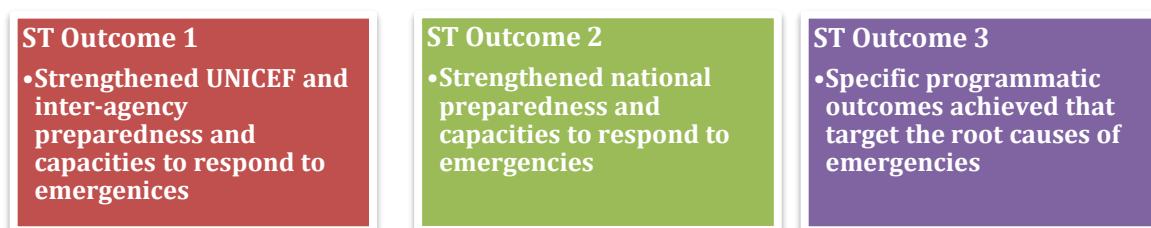
²³ Please see Annex F and the original Terms of Reference for this work. The original ILM can be found in Annex G.

Country Programme Action Plans (CPAP)] and workplans (e.g. Annual Work Plan / Rolling Work Plan).

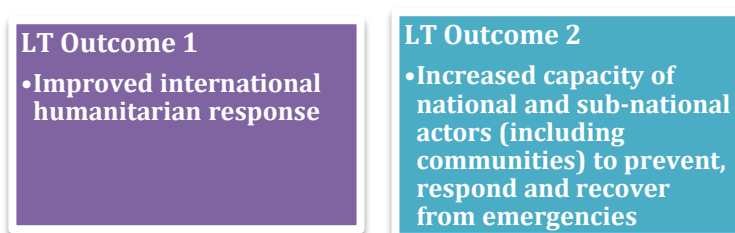
3. **Preparedness partnership building:** Country-level partnerships with government, civil society organizations, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), IASC preparedness sub-working group, global partnerships (United Nations, NGOs, donors, regional organizations).
4. **Technical assistance:** Emergency Preparedness Response training, contingency planning and simulations, capacity development of government, partners and communities, sector or operation preparedness (standards development, logistics).
5. **Policy change based on advocacy:** Increased attention to inter-agency preparedness, expanded focus on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), strengthened focus on capacity development of national and local actors.

The logic implied by the ILM is that, by producing the outputs above, UNICEF's EP efforts would achieve three short-term outcomes:

Figure 3 – Short- and long-term outcomes of ILM



In turn, these UNICEF-specific outcomes would contribute to an implied longer-term vision of:



The evaluation team examined these five outcomes to construct its five specific areas of inquiry.

6. **Key Area 1 – Management and organization:** Does UNICEF have appropriate management and organizational structures in place to realize its preparedness goals?
7. **Key Area 2 – Resources:** Does UNICEF have sufficient inputs (i.e. human and financial resources) to realize its preparedness goals?
8. **Key Area 3 – Short- and long-term programming:** Is UNICEF's short- and long-term programming adequately addressing preparedness goals?
9. **Key Area 4 – Partnership:** Do UNICEF's partnerships with other entities (i.e. IASC, NGOs and government) lead to the attainment of its preparedness goals?
10. **Key Area 5 – Measuring outcomes for children:** Does UNICEF's preparedness lead to achievement of the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs)?

1.4.2 Key issues/questions examined in the evaluation

The following key questions for the evaluation were identified in the inception report.

Key question	Areas of enquiry
<p>Management and organization: Does UNICEF have appropriate management and organizational structures in place to realize its preparedness goals?</p>	<p>How fit for purpose are UNICEF’s preparedness systems for capturing key contextual factors that influence both the likelihood and impact of specific emergencies and is this process based upon appropriate risk/ hazard analysis?</p> <p>Is UNICEF’s risk/hazard analysis appropriately used for preparedness planning and activities?</p> <p>How accurate has UNICEF’s risk/hazard analysis been in recent emergencies?</p> <p>Is UNICEF’s approach to CO preparedness relevant across a variety of contexts?</p> <p>Is UNICEF’s current standardized approach to the emergency risk classification of COs appropriate? (UNICEF classifies COs as low, medium or high risk)</p> <p>To what extent, if any, does UNICEF use its preparedness plans in actual emergencies?</p> <p>Do UNICEF’s preparedness plans result in ante-emergency early actions and post-emergency responses that are proportional to actual needs?</p> <p>How relevant, appropriate and timely has the support from Headquarters (HQ) to regional offices (RO)/COs, and from ROs to COs, been in boosting overall preparedness?</p> <p>Are UNICEF’s preparedness policies understood and implemented across HQ, ROs and COs?</p> <p>What was the rationale to switch from the EPRP system to the EWEA system? What has been affected by the switch and how have these effects enhanced or detracted from UNICEF’s preparedness?</p> <p>How clear are roles and responsibilities throughout UNICEF for ensuring adequate preparedness?</p> <p>How effectively have roles and responsibilities been met according to UNICEF’s existing accountability framework?</p> <p>How effectively has information and knowledge been harnessed to optimize preparedness?</p>

Key question	Areas of enquiry
<p>Resources: Does UNICEF have sufficient quality and quantity of human, financial and supply resources to realize its preparedness goals?</p>	<p>How has UNICEF harnessed the human resources (HR) at its disposal to achieve its intended preparedness outcomes? Which HR mechanisms should be added or enhanced to improve outcomes?</p> <p>How has UNICEF harnessed the financial resources at its disposal to achieve its intended preparedness outcomes?</p> <p>How financially well integrated is EP within UNICEF for ensuring sustainability of EP internally and among partners?</p> <p>Are any of UNICEF's automated risk analysis systems potentially counterproductive to achieving a change in staff and partners toward a risk-aware mindset?</p>
<p>Short- and long-term programming: Is UNICEF's short- and long-term programming adequately addressing preparedness goals?</p>	<p>How systematically are provisions for longer-term recovery incorporated into preparedness plans?</p> <p>How well integrated are EP and humanitarian response into regular programmes?</p> <p>How has business continuity planning ensured sustained action in recent emergencies?</p> <p>What patterns can be observed in UNICEF's preparedness in different contexts?</p> <p>Is there evidence that heightened preparedness has resulted in timelier, strengthened responses?</p> <p>Is there evidence that UNICEF's preparedness activities have reduced risk and vulnerability to the impact of hazards?</p> <p>Which preparedness activities and outputs are high value for money? Which are potentially low value for money and which alternatives might be considered?</p>
<p>Partnership: Do UNICEF's partnerships with other entities (i.e. IASC, NGOs and government) lead to the attainment of its preparedness goals?</p>	<p>How uniformly well understood and applied are the various aspects of preparedness by UNICEF's major partners?</p> <p>What has been UNICEF's added value to inter-agency and regional partners' preparedness efforts?</p> <p>To what extent have the gains reaped through UNICEF's engagement in inter-agency processes justified the investments in the same?</p> <p>How effective have preparedness efforts been with respect to UNICEF's actions as cluster lead agency at CO as well as HQ levels?</p> <p>To what extent have UNICEF's preparedness interventions supported its commitment under the revised CCCs to strengthen national capacity?</p>

Has UNICEF advocated for equity in its preparedness efforts as part of its national capacity development and other upstream activities?

**Outcomes for children:
Does UNICEF's
preparedness lead to
achievement of the CCCs?**

To what extent have the various preparedness related outputs and activities of the ILM achieved their intended outcomes? What has been the contribution of each to the achievement of results?

To what extent has UNICEF met its CCCs in emergencies where achievement has been measured?

When achievement of the CCCs has been measured, to what extent has this been girded by preparedness actions undertaken explicitly in support of the CCCs?

Which of UNICEF's preparedness activities or systems exemplify best practice?

1.4.3 Data collection

The evaluation employed a range of social science research approaches common to humanitarian evaluation, specifically:

1. A scoping mission to UNICEF HQ – both New York and Geneva offices – and preliminary documentation review that resulted in the production of an Inception Report outlining the key questions and methodology for the evaluation, which were agreed upon with the EO and Reference Group.
2. Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) in HQ, selected ROs and eight COs. These interviews were administered both face-to-face and via telephone and included a broad range of stakeholders within and external to UNICEF²⁴.
3. Focus group workshops during country visits with external stakeholders that included a simulation based upon an emergency previously identified by the CO.
4. A comprehensive three-tiered desk study.
5. An online structured survey of internal UNICEF staff.
6. Direct observations of ongoing EP activities during country visits to seven UNICEF COs²⁵.

²⁴ A full list of interviewees can be found in Annex A.

²⁵ The evaluation team intended to visit eight COs, but the team's trip to Indonesia was cancelled due to a flooding emergency. While this would have provided a significant opportunity to observe how EP activities translate into response, the decision to cancel was based on the Indonesia CO's determination that staff would not be available for interviews because of their duties related to responding to the emergency. Throughout the report, we refer to eight field visits as we considered the responses from interviews conducted with the Indonesia CO staff alongside data collected from other COs.

1.4.3.1 Key informant interviews

The team interviewed 282 key informants during the various stages of the evaluation. Key informants included:

- managers and stakeholders in UNICEF HQ, selected ROs and COs;
- Regional emergency advisors (REA) and key regional staff involved in preparedness activities;
- UNICEF staff in COs selected for field visits;
- government officials in countries selected for field visits;
- other United Nations agencies active in EP and emergency response;
- other UNICEF partners and humanitarian actors such as the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and international NGOs; and
- other stakeholders as identified during and after the completion of fieldwork.

1.4.3.2 Focus group workshops

When possible, focus group workshops were conducted during field visits using a 'disaster scenario' as a catalyst for understanding how responses would flow from EP activities across a wide group of stakeholders. The scenario was drawn from the CO's EWEA profile and used a disaster that was identified as a real possibility by the CO in its annual planning.

1.4.3.3 Desk study

The desk study²⁶ examined three levels of documentation:

- First, the study analysed the accuracy of UNICEF's risk/hazard analysis by comparing the risks identified in the EWEA for 30 COs with actual emergency responses undertaken by these offices in 2012²⁷, as reported in Country Office Annual Reports (COAR). The 30 countries were grouped into 3 sets of 10 in consultation with the EO: high emergency risk/low government capacity for emergency response [e.g. Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)], medium risk/medium government capacity for emergency response (e.g. Colombia) and low risk/high government emergency response capacity (e.g. Argentina).
- Second, the desk study examined the preparedness actions planned and actually undertaken for a subset of 17 COs by reviewing EWEA, COAR and other documentation accessible during CO visits and by analysing material from the UNICEF Intranet. The purpose was to review what actions are undertaken and how these are reported.

²⁶ A full description of the desk study, including rationale for country selection, can be found in Annex D.

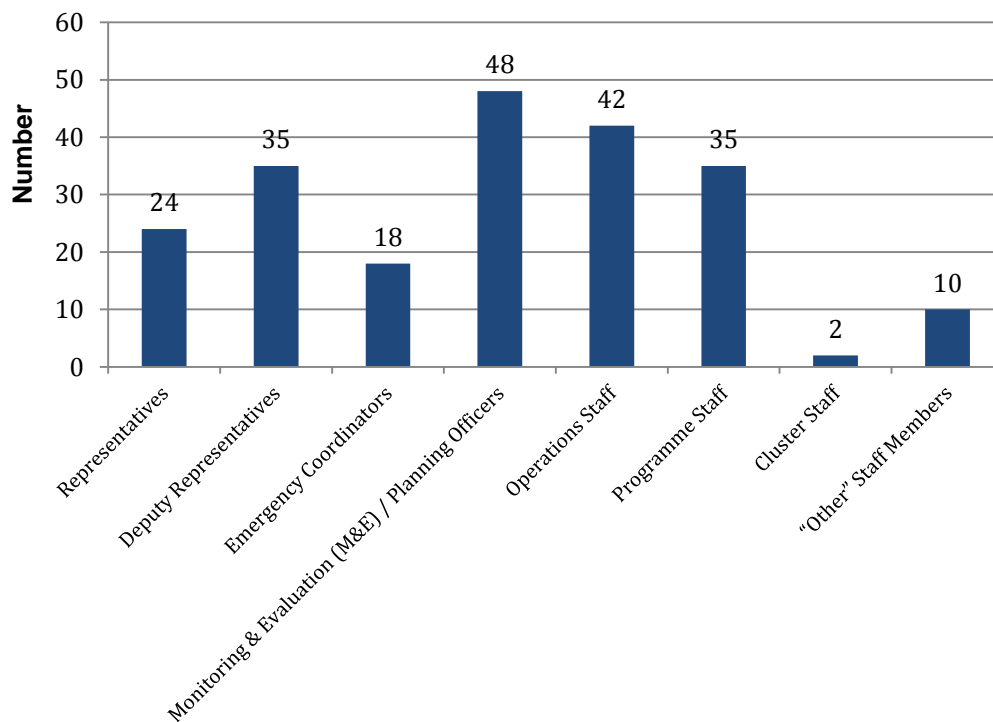
²⁷ For the study, the following definitions were generally understood. *Resource*: Indicative of a government's financial resources and/or the resources and capacities of the population. A low resource setting would describe a context where the government has meagre financial resources and/or a substantial portion of the populace lives at or below the poverty line. Hence a low resource setting would describe communities that lack resilience to shocks of emergencies and/or where the government has limited means to mitigate risks or respond. *Governance*: Indicative of a government's willingness to deploy its financial and technical resources for emergency preparedness and response. Willingness is distinct from resources as while the means may exist, in a poor governance situation or under an authoritarian government, these resources may not be effectively utilized due to factors such as corruption, discrimination towards certain sections of the population and mismanagement or politics.

- Third, the desk study included an in-depth examination of documentation and evaluations by UNICEF and other organizations relating to two major, recent emergency responses – the Horn of Africa crisis in 2011 and the Pakistan floods in 2010. The purpose was to assess how UNICEF compares with other organizations regarding EP. Detailed descriptions and findings can be found in Annex C.

1.4.3.4 Survey

A survey²⁸ of UNICEF staff was conducted to supplement findings from the other evaluation tools. A summary of results can be found in Annex B. A broad selection of individuals across the agency was invited to respond to the survey via existing UNICEF email distribution lists. The survey request received 214 responses, distributed across eight broad staffing categories.

Figure 4 - Survey respondents



1.4.3.5 Direct observation

In addition, where significant planning activities, cluster/sector meetings or simulations took place, the evaluation team used direct observation to collect additional data. The fieldwork guides, desk study guide and survey used in this evaluation are included in Annex E.

²⁸ The survey tool can be found in Annex D.

1.4.3.6 Visits to ROs and COs

Visits were made to the Eastern and Southern Africa RO (ESARO), Central and Eastern Europe-Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE–CIS) RO and the Latin America and Caribbean RO (LACRO). Field missions were undertaken to the following countries: Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives and Morocco. The details of the criteria used for country selection are provided in Annex E. In addition to the visits, interviews were conducted via Skype with staff from the UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen.

1.5 Triangulation of data

The evaluation team utilized different data sources throughout the process of evaluation to triangulate information, i.e. validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. Specific instances of data triangulation were:

1. Findings from the country visits were validated by the COs during fieldwork, at a debriefing at the end of fieldwork and in a CO validation workshop held at the completion of all fieldwork.
2. The team met regularly, via Skype and in person, to review findings from interviews and the survey and desk study in order to consolidate findings, check consistency, identify gaps and identify themes for analysis and conclusion.
3. As the various CO and RO visits were undertaken by different team members, the evaluation team also held an internal workshop at the end of the data collection period to consolidate findings, explore commonalities and identify patterns in the gathered data. The EO participated in the final day of this workshop where the evaluation team presented its initial findings and a proposed structure for this report.
4. A final validation workshop was held in New York and attended by members of the EO and the Reference Group. At this meeting, the evaluation team presented its overall findings and received feedback, which has been incorporated into this report.

1.6 Limitations and constraints

As is inevitable in an evaluation seeking to research a topic of this size and complexity, the study is limited by several factors:

- **Available time:** The range of preparedness topics the evaluation team sought to address is very comprehensive. However, the breadth of the research made it difficult – and in some cases impossible (particularly during country visits) – to cover each topic in significant depth. As such, some findings warrant greater depth of analysis than afforded in this evaluation and the team encourages UNICEF to explore these in subsequent investigations.
- **Limited quantitative data:** Where possible, the evaluation team sought quantitative data (e.g. rapid assessment survey data) during CO visits and document reviews that might help to connect and trace specific EP activities and outputs to outcomes. However, quantitative evidence on the link between EP activities, outputs and outcomes and results was generally absent due to inconsistent data collection and storage activities at the CO level.
- **Limited travel capacity:** The site visits undertaken by the evaluation team were limited to capital cities and peripheral regions because of UNICEF security restrictions and time restrictions. The evaluation team members were unable to take advantage of ongoing emergency responses to

generate real-time data and validate findings from the remainder of the study. As such, the evaluation is restricted to individuals' recollections of events.

- **Changing environment:** UNICEF's EP initiatives are evolving and changing constantly. During the course of this evaluation, several change initiatives were either being launched or were under active consideration, such as changes to the EWEA system. Where appropriate, the evaluation team has noted some of these change initiatives but has consciously refrained from assessing or commenting on them as they might relate to future outcomes different from those in the ILM.

2 Emergency preparedness at UNICEF

A single definition of EP had not yet been established at UNICEF. In the broadest sense, EP refers to all measures taken in advance of emergencies to prevent or reduce their impact. However, a large number of humanitarian organizations use a more restrictive definition that includes measures undertaken to anticipate emergencies (i.e. early warning), and respond to and recover from them. There is wide recognition that EP is a key component of DRR – and that it is to be distinguished from *prevention*, which focuses on lowering the likelihood of an emergency event occurring in the first instance, and from *mitigation*, which focuses on reducing the impact of an emergency before the actual event. The official definition used by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) states that EP refers to the “...knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.” This definition’s emphasis on capacity makes EP a critical component of the resilience²⁹ agenda, which is gaining momentum in the international arena³⁰.

Within UNICEF, EP plays a critical role in enabling COs to meet their CCCs. The CCCs entail a set of indicative EP actions under programmatic and operational activities, including those related to national capacity development across all programmatic sectors, including through DRR. Specifically, the CCCs include:

“...explicit strategies to reduce disaster risk and develop local capacity at all stages of humanitarian action, including preparedness (p. 4) ... [They] underscore the critical role of EP for rapid response using disaster risk reduction to minimize vulnerabilities and reduce disaster risks for children and women in all programming. This is achieved by investing in early warning and emergency preparedness and strengthening resilience to disasters.” (p.11)

Moreover, UNICEF’s EP commitments are also enshrined in its Mid-Term Strategic Plan (2006-2013) Focus Area 5: policy advocacy and partnerships for children’s rights, which includes “...supporting national emergency preparedness capacities”. (p. 7) This dual focus on internal EP as well as national capacity-building for EP signals a relatively recent shift, reflecting a growing recognition of the latter’s importance for longer-term sustainability.

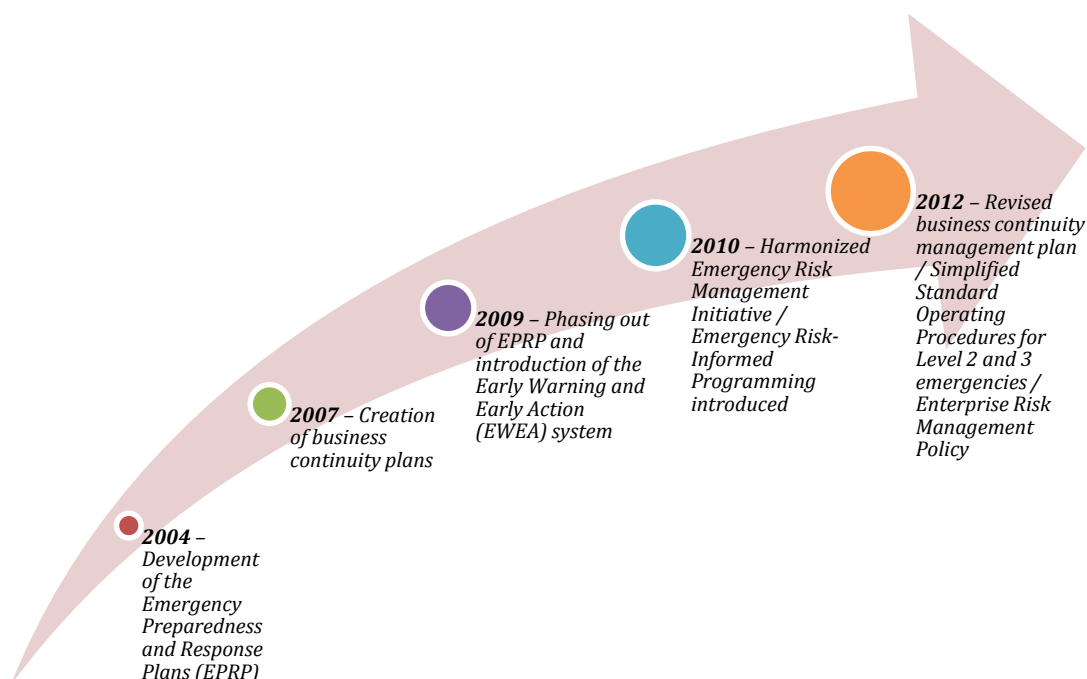
2.1 Overview of UNICEF emergency preparedness

Prior to 2009, the main EP process of UNICEF COs was the development of annually updated EPRPs, which focused on analysing how a given CO would respond in the event of various emergency scenarios. Parallel to the creation of EPRPs, beginning in 2004, EMOPS developed an initial version of the EWEA system, which focused primarily on early warning and also required regular CO inputs. In 2007, UNICEF introduced the requirement for all COs to develop business continuity plans in addition to their EPRPs as a part of overall preparedness.

²⁹ Resilience is often defined as the ability of governments and communities to absorb and cope with different shocks and stresses.

³⁰ For the purpose of this assignment, the evaluation team has used the following definition to guide its analysis and conclusions: “Good emergency preparedness is the optimization of capacities, processes and initiatives such that the organization can meet the Core Commitments for Children.” This was created in coordination with the EO during the scoping missions.

Figure 5 – Timeline of emergency preparedness at UNICEF



In 2009, in response to a call to streamline its various CO preparedness planning requirements³¹, UNICEF began phasing out the EPRP and introduced a revised version of the EWEA system. This system required COs to undertake an annual assessment of the risk of emergencies in their respective country contexts, assess their actual level of preparedness to respond to the identified emergency risk and identify preparedness activities to be included in the programme sector and operational annual work plans. The EWEA system also aimed to enhance organizational capacity for emergency/crisis preparedness monitoring and support, namely through an interactive functionality that allows UNICEF ROs, as the overseers of CO accountability in UNICEF, to provide feedback on EWEA outputs to the COs within their remit. EWEA thus functions as the performance monitoring system of ROs' and COs' self-reported emergency preparedness through an online portal. This portal is now linked to UNICEF's overall performance management system³².

The EWEA system is an integral component of the Emergency Risk-Informed Programming (ERIP) approach, which was introduced in 2010. ERIP aims to integrate emergency risk analysis in the formulation and/or mid-term reviews of UNICEF's regular country programmes. It requires COs to undertake emergency risk analysis in their Situation Analyses (SitAns)³³ so they may formulate appropriate strategies and results to address priority emergency risks while developing their planning,

³¹ See: *DFID-UNICEF Programme of Cooperation, Investing in Humanitarian Action, Phase III (2006-2009)*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2009.

³² Although the EWEA system was initially intended to bring together EP and business continuity planning, these processes have remained separate.

³³ Preferably in collaboration with other United Nations agencies through the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

budgeting and management documents³⁴. ERIP thus aims to better integrate various risk programming streams such as DRR, climate change adaptation, conflict sensitivity and peace building.

Acknowledging that CO investments in EP and risk-informed programming cannot be the same across all COs, but rather need to be commensurate to the level of emergency risk in the country at hand³⁵, EMOPS maintains an Emergency Risk Classification of all countries where UNICEF has a country programme. The classification of COs is updated yearly in collaboration with ROs, based on the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Global Focus Model. It is being increasingly used to determine preparedness standards based on the risk level of the country at hand. For example, as the CO preparedness score reported in the global dashboard differs based on whether a country is at low risk or medium/high risk, the analysis of emergency risks in the SitAn should also differ based on the risk level of the country, as should the results and strategies formulated to address the priority risks.

With respect to DRR,³⁶ at the global level, UNICEF works closely with the ISDR, which is tasked with supporting governments in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action³⁷: 2005–2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disaster. Finally, UNICEF is working within the United Nations Development Group to promote the integration of DRR and climate change adaptation into common United Nations plans and frameworks. At the country level, UNICEF works to strengthen its programming in preparedness given its presence and focus on building partnerships with government and civil society from the national to the community level.

In addition to preparedness planning, UNICEF has also invested significant resources in developing and conducting preparedness training and simulations to strengthen staff capacity to respond in emergencies. These include general emergency preparedness and response as well as sector-specific trainings that are regularly conducted in all UNICEF COs, mainly with support from the RO. It also includes emergency simulations of UNICEF's own response, as well as simulations of UNICEF's response in collaboration with inter-agency partners and with government. These simulations are conducted at the country level, with the emergency response training being staged in simulated environments.

UNICEF also has several other mechanisms in place at the procedural level to enhance overall consistency of action in its organizational response in the event of an emergency:

- At the highest level these include, most notably, the recently approved Simplified Standard Operating Procedures for Level 2 and 3 emergencies³⁸, aimed at strengthening UNICEF's ability

³⁴ At UNICEF, these main documents include the Country Programme Documents (CPDs), Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs), Country Programme Management Plans (CPMPs) and consecutively in Annual Workplans (AWPs), Rolling Workplans (RWPs) and Annual Management Plans (AMPs).

³⁵ 'Risk' is understood here as a function of exposure to both natural and man-made hazards, coupled with the vulnerability of children and the capacity of governments.

³⁶ DRR is defined as, "...a systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing natural disaster risk. Specifically, the purpose of DRR is to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society in order to avoid (prevent) or to limit (mitigate and prepare for) the adverse impacts of natural hazards on populations and facilitate sustainable development." *UNICEF and Disaster Risk Reduction*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2011.

³⁷ The framework contains the following five building blocks for effective disaster risk reduction: governance, risk assessment, knowledge and education, risk management and vulnerability reduction, and disaster preparedness and response.

³⁸ For example see: http://www.unicefinemergencies.com/downloads/eresource/docs/SSOP/SimplifiedSOPs_L3_01_03_2012_HPM_PLANNING.pdf

to rapidly harness its corporate resources and streamline processes for maximum timeliness, effectiveness, efficiency and relevance in large-scale and corporate disasters³⁹.

- A business impact analysis at HQ is informing a revised business continuity management plan, which aims to strengthen UNICEF's ability to maintain continuity of critical functions during and after a crisis incident of any nature.
- UNICEF's enterprise risk management policy, though not specifically geared to emergency situations, has some complementarities as well as overlaps with the organization's preparedness activities. Enterprise risk management is a systematic and integrated approach to manage opportunities and risks that could affect the achievement of planned results and objectives at all levels of the organization. It allows managers to systematically deal with events that cause uncertainty and respond in a way to reduce the likelihood and impact of significant risks and maximize opportunities.
- Finally, individual divisions, such as the Division of Human Resources (DHR), Programme Division and Supply Division, have developed a host of domain-specific initiatives intended to streamline procedures and support specific preparedness at the country level within their respective functions.

Since 2001, UNICEF, together with WFP, has been co-chairing the IASC Strategic Working Group on preparedness. In recognition that UNICEF's emergency response is part of a broader international humanitarian system, including actions undertaken to meet UNICEF's accountabilities as a Global Cluster and Area of Responsibility Lead in some situations, significant resources and staff time have been devoted to inter-agency preparedness work. Key results include enhanced inter-agency early warning (e.g. Humanitarian Early Warning Service, IASC EWEA reports), contingency planning and simulations (e.g. Intern-Agency Contingency Plan Guidelines, Inter-Agency Emergency Simulation Guidelines, and Government Emergency Simulation Guidelines as well as the increased practice of inter-agency contingency planning and simulations at the country level), and enhanced inter-agency focus on developing national and local capacities for emergency preparedness (e.g. Five Country Initiative in 2011, Country Capacity Development Study in 2012).

In addition to UNICEF-wide structured preparedness initiatives, UNICEF's COs and ROs also engage in a range of preparedness activities that meet emerging local needs that fall beyond what the above-noted standard mechanisms or systems prescribe. These measures increasingly target building the capacity of partners/government on preparedness, or on engaging in joint preparedness planning, and reflect risks identified within the planning process through SitAns and Common Country Assessments.

³⁹ *Simplified Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs) for Level 3 Emergencies*, United Nations Children's Fund, Office of Emergency Programmes, July 2011; *Simplified Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs) for Level 2 Emergencies*, United Nations Children's Fund, Office of Emergency Programmes, January 2013.

3 Key area 1: Management and organization

Analytical lens: Does UNICEF have appropriate management and organizational structures in place to realize its preparedness goals?

3.1 Conceptual understanding of preparedness

The successful implementation of any initiative, such as EP, by an organization begins with a shared understanding and agreement among staff about concepts and intended outcomes. The results of the survey indicated that emergency response is recognized, at the most senior levels, as a core function of UNICEF. However, how emergency response is specifically improved or bolstered by EP remains unclear. For example, KIIs from seven of the eight field visits resulted in different definitions of EP and varying perceptions of how EP at the CO level can or should be realized. In areas prone to chronic emergency (e.g. DRC) or where a major emergency had occurred recently (e.g. Haiti), more experienced programme staff had a more robust and clearer definition of EP. At the other end of the spectrum (i.e. COs with a relatively lower risk profile), definitions were more ambiguous and general in nature.

The results of the desk study, KIIs and survey suggest that a range of ad-hoc activities and outputs related to EP are being undertaken at the CO and RO levels. There is a lack of alignment and coherence of EP activities at the CO and RO level, which hampers the achievement of the overall organizational EP goal of realizing the CCCs. The divergence is not context specific but is based on the knowledge and exposure of the CO staff to EP. Without this alignment, EP activities can easily be blurred with other CO activities. The desk study component of the evaluation only identified one CO (i.e. Kenya) with EP activities reported in detail. Other CO reports studied only had brief (i.e. typically one-line) references. The available data suggests that EP activities are typically conflated with similar, but different, resilience and DRR activities.

This lack of alignment also contributes to a situation where, when a CO or RO undertakes EP activities, the relative importance of these activities to other programming is not established. Without clear prioritization, EP often happens ‘in the margins’. In smaller COs, lack of prioritization and differentiation of EP activities from other programming can lead to confusion of EP with other activities and insufficient resources being made available to implement it adequately. For example, in Maldives, while completion of EWEA requirements is overseen by the emergency focal point, all EP activities are the responsibility of the monitoring and evaluation officer.

3.1.1 Conclusions

EP is recognized as important within UNICEF at all levels. However, the concept is understood and applied differently in various COs and there is an overall lack of coherence and execution globally.

3.2 Risk analysis

A thorough understanding of the risks and hazards faced by a CO or region is a necessary component to effective EP⁴⁰. As such, risk analysis is critical to the success of EP at UNICEF. The evaluation

⁴⁰ *Harmonized Emergency Risk Management Initiative Recommendations*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2010.

investigated the use of risk analysis in EP planning and implementation and how accurate risk analysis has been in recent years.

The data collected by all of the evaluation tools used by the team – desk review, KIIs, focus group workshop and survey – shows a significant variation in the appropriateness and use of risk/hazard analysis across COs. The following examples from the evaluation’s fieldwork are illustrative:

- The DRC CO has developed a specific system for risk analysis that involves a simple template to capture risks in specific locations. Every three months, risks are identified in detail at the provincial level and their potential impact and the capacity of the CO to respond is analysed. In zones where emergencies are chronic, risks are assessed continuously.
- In Morocco, the risk assessment methodology associated with the EWEA is applied every six months via the inter-agency contingency plan update.
- In Haiti, key informants stated that risk assessment is still a challenge. For example, in 2012, data related to risk estimation in reports was overstated due to an overestimation of risks. This overestimation was a result of the experience with the 2010 earthquake.
- In the Maldives, an annual review of risk is performed with staff experience as the fundamental criteria for risk identification and analysis.
- At a regional level, in LACRO, risk analysis is not performed in a systematic or consistent fashion across the COs in the region.

Variation in risk analysis by COs is independently confirmed in the EMOPS report, *Use of the EWEA System in 2012* (p.3). The variation in specific risk/hazard analysis tools, methodologies and outcomes across COs indicates that a standardized, organization-wide risk/hazard analysis is not currently employed.

This variation is due in part to the lack of availability of resources and tools to assess risk: only 9 per cent of survey respondents indicated they were “very satisfied” and 39 per cent “satisfied” that their section has the tools and information necessary to assess risks related to the types of emergencies they face. Another factor driving variation is the different levels of experience of the Representatives at the CO level or REAs at the RO level. This was noted in all field visits at the CO and RO level.

In some cases, variation in risk analysis is linked to the push by host governments to attain middle-income country status, as is the case in Maldives and Morocco. The change in status of a country (i.e. to middle income) necessitates a change in the type of programming and support the CO provides. KIIs in Maldives indicated that this contributes to the reluctance of the United Nations Country Team to push a host government to institute EP processes, highlight relevant risk and take appropriate measures against an emergency.

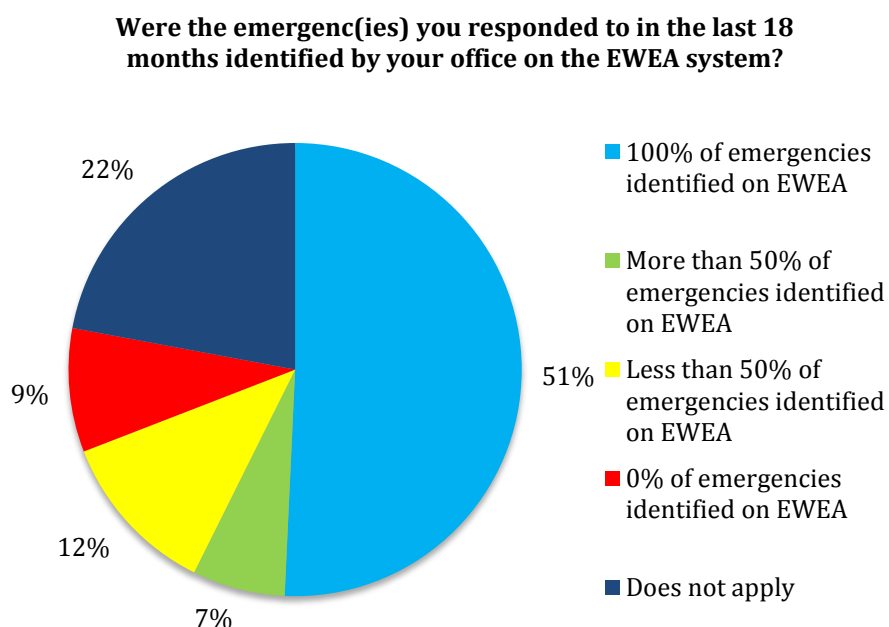
A further cause of variation in risk analysis and subsequent action taken for EP, as evidenced by KIIs performed during field visits to Colombia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Morocco, ESARO, LACRO and CEE-CIS, is that staff is overwhelmed with expectations related to regular duties (i.e. programming). For example in Morocco, the process underlying EP – risk analysis, design, implementation, monitoring – is accorded a lower priority because the emergency focal point can only allocate a small percentage of time to EP. This is also the case in the Maldives where the emergency focal point has many other primary duties.

The ultimate result of risk analysis should be the increased predictability of emergency events in both the short and long runs so that a CO and RO can prepare for necessary response activities, or, in partnership

with host governments, mitigate the need for response altogether⁴¹. The evaluation's desk study determined that many COs had outdated risk analyses (e.g. Colombia, Lebanon). The desk study also indicated that although some COs have adhered to the EWEA review schedule prescribed by EMOPS, they missed current local developments (e.g. Lebanon). These findings were corroborated through KIIs with staff in EMOPS. One consequence of this is that the reported likelihood and impact of risks are either under- or overstated. This can lead to EP activities that are either inadequate or excessive in relation to risks. For example, there was insufficient prediction of and preparation for the influx of refugees into Jordan and Lebanon from Syria⁴² in 2012. In Haiti, introduction of a system used in other COs (e.g. the risk management system from DRC) for EP created a situation of pre-positioned supply overabundance that was unnecessary⁴³.

Taken as a whole, as pictured below in Figure 6, survey responses related to the accuracy of emergency prediction by a CO indicate mixed confidence in the ability to foresee future hazards.

Figure 6 - Emergencies identified in EWEA system by COs



The survey shows that more than 50 per cent of CO staff seem capable of predicting emergencies on the EWEA system. That said, one-fifth of CO staff do not have a clear understanding of what risks are to be considered or excluded, resulting in inaccuracies in the prediction of crises.

3.2.1 Conclusions

While UNICEF has numerous tools and policies focused on risk analysis, it does not employ a standardized or consistent process at the CO level that is understood and implemented by staff. The

⁴¹ *Harmonized Emergency Risk Management Initiative Recommendations*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2010.

⁴² The evaluation team compared what was in the EWEA system during the evaluation as the Syria crisis continued to unfold.

⁴³ *Independent Review of UNICEF's Operational Response to the January 2010 Earthquake in Haiti*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2011.

result is significant variation in risk assessment and decreased accuracy of prediction of future emergencies.

3.3 Risk assessment across different contexts

Contextual differences have a significant influence upon the quality of UNICEF's EP efforts. How context influences quality of response can be analysed across four broad categories of contexts⁴⁴:

1. low-resource settings where there is a high risk of emergencies and absent or minimal governance;
2. low-resource, medium/high risk settings with good governance and strong political will for preparedness;
3. relatively well-resourced, medium/low risk settings with poor/authoritarian governance; and
4. well-resourced, medium-risk settings where service provision is largely performed by the government.

Analysis of the data gathered via the desk study and CO visits indicates that UNICEF is relatively strong in EP in category 1 and progressively weaker in categories 2, 3 and 4. This seems to correlate to the depth of capacity and experience within COs, as measured by the number of emergencies responded to annually and the number of dedicated emergency staff in the CO. Further, analysis of evaluation data indicates that the specific type of emergency responded to influences the precise nature of the EP activities undertaken in advance of the emergency.

Eight per cent of survey respondents indicated their CO was "very accurate" in assessing the early signs of emergencies and 42 per cent said their COs were "accurate". Interviews at HQ indicated that UNICEF seems to be better at identifying and preparing for sudden emergencies (vs. slow-onset crises) and for natural disasters (vs. complex or conflict-affected crises). This was corroborated by the desk study, which compared EWEA with actual events by looking at COAR reports of emergencies actually experienced. In comparison, EP for slow onset crises (e.g. Horn of Africa in 2011 and the ongoing crisis in the Sahel) is problematic. The evaluation found a gap between early warning and early action in the Horn of Africa crisis and there was a lack of new measures instituted that might better reconcile these aspects if a similar crisis were to re-occur in the region or elsewhere. In the Sahel, while some lessons learned from the Horn of Africa were implemented, a breakdown in management processes led to a gap between the regularity of preparedness/risk analysis reviews and the evolving crisis. Specifically, COs became caught up in the day-to-day response and failed to consider other scenarios affecting refugees.

In contrast, EP for sudden onset crises (e.g. the Pakistan floods in 2010) is relatively better organized. The lessons from 2010 also inform current preparedness measures⁴⁵.

UNICEF's current standardized approach to risk classification ranks COs as low, medium or high risk to help simplify, guide and standardize risk assessment approaches across COs and permit some

⁴⁴ These categories were proposed to the evaluation team by EMOPS.

⁴⁵ The 2010 floods were unprecedented in terms of scale but major floods in Pakistan have been a feature for centuries. The direct death toll for the 2010 floods was 2,000 and approximately 25 million people were displaced. The area affected was much larger, and the duration of flood waters and the extent of flood damage was much more severe as compared to earlier floods. For example, the floods of 2007 caused the direct death of over 800 people and displaced 2.5 million. It is the indirect effects of the 2010 floods that are the most significant – due to loss of health facilities, lack of access to clean water etc., the death toll was much greater.

comparison of resource allocation, results, etc.⁴⁶. This approach is, however, misunderstood in some contexts and disregarded in other contexts (e.g. Colombia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives). This risk classification is often incorrectly assumed to be decisive by those performing risk analysis in the CO or RO. In these cases, the classification is accepted without questioning its relevance or accuracy, whereas HQ actually encourages an independent assessment of risk. Moreover, this passive role in risk assessment by both COs and ROs can lead to a CO and/or RO failing to understand or disregarding the necessity to actively consider what other features or emergency risks require attention.

3.3.1 Conclusions

EP is better organized in contexts where emergency risk is high and the capacity of the governments is weak. The current approach to risk classification may contribute to passive risk assessment at the CO level.

3.4 Usage of EP plans

To understand how UNICEF operationalizes its EP plans, the evaluation investigated the rationale for moving to the current EWEA system and how the same is being employed at the CO level. Subsequently, the evaluation researched the use of EP plans in times of emergency, and whether or not EP planning results in action before an emergency and contributes to early recovery after an emergency event.

3.4.1 Moving from the EPRP to the EWEA

UNICEF's primary EP planning tool, the EPRP, was implemented prior to 2009, at which time it was superseded by the EWEA system. A 2010 evaluation of UNICEF's joint humanitarian response with the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID)⁴⁷ focused on UNICEF's development as a humanitarian response organization, and in particular the transition from the EPRP to the EWEA system. The evaluation concluded that the now-defunct EPRP system had made a significant positive contribution to the area of EP and the institution of the EWEA system would create:

“a much more operational exercise that will constantly monitor and measure key elements of preparedness of Country Offices in areas like pre-positioning of supplies and/or framework agreements with suppliers; pre-selection of partners; rosters of skilled people (or agreements with the Regional Office to ensure internal redeployment); staff requirements for response and cluster role; knowledge of assessment tools and methods; streamlined procedure for cash release, etc.”

The rationale for switching from the EPRP system to the EWEA system was:

1. to create an EP process requiring less staff time;
2. to provide real time access for COs, ROs and HQ via an online, intranet platform for overview and revision of EP risk analysis and activities; and
3. to promote a more consistent approach to UNICEF's preparedness activities.

⁴⁶ For more detail, please see Annex C.

⁴⁷ See: *DFID-UNICEF Programme of Cooperation, Investing in Humanitarian Action, Phase III (2006-2009)*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2009.

Despite the formal transition to the EWEA system, data from the desk study and KIIs indicate that some COs continue to use the EPRP system (i.e., DRC, Indonesia). This indicates that CO management and RO oversight has not insisted upon compliance with current policy. In the case of the DRC, the EWEA system has not been adopted as it is not perceived to meet the complexities and requirements particular to the country context. The DRC CO prefers to use EP systems that are locally developed and specifically tailored to their requirements.

EWEA has a solid rationale, with component tasks for different functions at the CO level. EWEA, if used appropriately and complemented by other EP processes and guidance, offers the opportunity for transparency in EP and progress assessment. Furthermore, it can identify gaps and support requirements in each CO. Responses to KIIs and direct observations during field visits indicate EWEA has made a positive contribution to UNICEF's EP, leading to greater transparency, heightened dialogue and consistent information requirements. EWEA also has the advantage of being a 'one-stop shop' for EP. When used properly, EWEA can prompt CO and RO staff to think through multiple dimensions of EP planning. Responses to KIIs in HQ included observations that when EWEA is used effectively, it has facilitated a more consistent and structured approach to EP and has enabled both users at the CO level and overseers at the RO and HQ levels to access EP updates in real time (unlike the case in the EPRP system). KIIs at the Morocco CO suggested EWEA encouraged different sections of the office to consider EP, which might not otherwise be the case. This clarity of structure has contributed to a more regular discussion on EP (especially via commenting within the EWEA system) and influenced a greater inclusion of EP in longer-term programming.

While EMOPS views EWEA as a move in the right direction, like any tool it has limitations and will be effective only if used appropriately and competently. The results of the survey indicate that only seven per cent of respondents believe the EWEA is "very useful" in preparing their office for an emergency. Only 30 per cent indicated it was "useful" (comparatively, 28 per cent indicated it is "not useful" or "not useful at all"). This strongly suggests that significant change management advocacy continues to be required to effectively mainstream EWEA across UNICEF offices. The perceptions regarding its usefulness (or lack of) may be because merely completing the minimum criteria required by the EWEA system for a CO is equated with EP, rather than viewing EWEA as a tool intended to facilitate a set of actions that result in satisfactory EP. Responses to the KIIs in Colombia, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan and the Maldives indicate engagement with EWEA only to the extent necessary to 'check the boxes'.

When responding to the question regarding when they last accessed the EWEA system, only 21 per cent of those surveyed indicated "less than 30 days ago" and 33 per cent indicated "less than 6 months ago". Importantly, however, 100 per cent of Emergency Coordinators who responded indicated accessing EWEA sometime in the past 12 months. There were significant gaps in other sections (25 per cent of all respondents indicated they had "never accessed" the EWEA system).

The evaluation desk study identified the following challenges with EWEA, many of which are corroborated by the EMOPS *Report on the Use of the EWEA System in 2012*:

- ROs do not consistently perform in their oversight role over EWEA. In some cases there is simply a check to see if EWEA has been completed in the required time. In other cases there is real dialogue via the review and feedback section of the EWEA. In still other cases there is no dialogue.

- COs have not yet taken on the responsibility of fully understanding EWEA procedures – the rates of compliance between 2011 and 2012⁴⁸ show only marginal improvement.
- COs have not yet assumed ownership of EP through EWEA. A poor EWEA score by a CO may be correlated to the opinion expressed by CO-level interviewees that EWEA is still perceived as a tool for HQ rather than something owned by CO-level actors.
- HQ has not provided clear guidance on how EWEA integrates with other processes. For example, whereas EWEA is a tool that is implemented at the CO level, a Level 2 or Level 3 crisis preparation requires actions on the part of HQ and the RO as well as the CO. The existing EWEA system does not facilitate inputs across multiple organizational levels.
- Clear links between short-term EWEA-related activities and longer-term programming are lacking.
- Neither EWEA nor other key reporting tools adequately record what is actually accomplished for EP.
- The first step in the EWEA process is performing a risk analysis in the CO, however, this is not carried out systematically or uniformly across COs, resulting in wide variations.
- EWEA is perceived as a ‘requirement’ rather than a constructive preparation process.
- The current practice whereby COs assess their own level of EP under the EWEA system is unrealistic and often inaccurate⁴⁹.
- EWEA does not facilitate linkages on preparedness between sectors or between regular sector structures and clusters.
- EWEA is in English only, which limits its usefulness in non-English speaking contexts.
- The requirement that only Key Actions 1–10 be completed by low and medium-risk COs needs to be reconsidered. These offices are frequently less prepared and need to take into account some, or indeed all, actions.

The forthcoming inter-agency Emergency Response and Preparedness (ERP) guidance⁵⁰ has the potential to address some of the above challenges. As a set of inter-agency tools, the ERP will promote greater uniformity of preparedness approaches among agencies and facilitate greater compatibility of preparedness efforts among sectors. In addition, ERP will include a more comprehensive and prescriptive suite of inter-agency tools for contingency planning and risk analysis, providing definitive steps for practitioners at the field level.

3.4.2 Using EP plans

Given that EWEA is the foundation for EP activities, the evaluation team analysed the extent to which UNICEF uses its plans in actual emergencies. In 50 per cent of the country visits, the majority of interviewees indicated that EWEA, while sometimes a catalyst for COs’ thinking about EP, is considered a ‘box-checking’ exercise. The underlying message was that EWEA and its associated tools were not seen

⁴⁸ See: Office of Emergency Programmes, *Report on the Use of the EWEA System for 2011 and 2012*, United Nations Children’s Fund.

⁴⁹ See: *Emergency Preparedness section of Humanitarian Action Study*, United Nations Children’s Fund, 2012.

⁵⁰ See: http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/ERP%20Dec%202012_0.pdf

as operationally useful and would not be referred to in an emergency. This is in contrast to the former EPRP system, which was paper based and could be used even in times when power and the Internet were unavailable.

Similarly, responses to KIs were mixed on whether EP activities result in ante-emergency early actions and post-emergency responses that are proportional to actual needs. The team heard examples where EP activities contributed to appropriate ante-emergency early actions and post-emergency response. For example, in LACRO, interviewees believe that EP activities have helped to blunt the effects of annual flooding and impact from hurricanes. These examples highlight EP successes that were contingent upon several factors, such as available funding, staffing and willingness of the host government to participate in EP. The evaluation was unable to obtain consistent and reliable evidence, however, as to the extent and modality of the contribution of UNICEF's EP mechanisms and actions to more effective pre- and post-emergency activities. This evidence was unavailable due to insufficient and/or unsystematic follow-up, analysis and documentation of specific EP activities.

3.4.3 Conclusion

Moving from the EPRP to the EWEA system has resulted in a more transparent and systematic EP process at the CO level, except in COs where EWEA is not yet used. However, usage of EWEA remains inconsistent. While some COs use the EWEA tool to facilitate an EP process, others disregard it and in yet others EWEA is used only for compliance with HQ requirements.

3.5 Organizational structure and accountability

The evaluation researched the accountability for EP via organizational structure, policies and guidance and specifically analysed the following:

- how relevant, appropriate and timely has the support from HQ to ROs/COs, and from ROs to COs, been in boosting overall EP;
- are UNICEF's EP policies understood and implemented across HQ, ROs and COs;
- how clear are roles and responsibilities throughout UNICEF for ensuring adequate EP; and
- how effectively have roles and responsibilities been met according to UNICEF's existing Accountability Framework.

3.5.1 Supporting EP in UNICEF

UNICEF has been working to restructure and realign management and organizational solutions at all levels for better EP and response. As described below, progress has been made in improving organizational structure to enable quality EP.

3.5.1.1 CO organizational structure solutions

Organizational solutions include an emergency coordinator in many of the larger COs, while in smaller offices there is an emergency focal point who coordinates with each programme section and partners. All offices are required to have one or the other. Ninety-three per cent of survey respondents indicated their office had either an emergency coordinator or focal point. It is assumed that the remaining 7 per cent of offices simply do not have this position currently filled. The focal point and coordinator positions have the potential to focus emergency response and EP activities, integrate emergency risk and EP into programming work, provide for coordination within the CO and technical support to field offices and establish contact points and coordination responsibilities with other agencies.

However, as evidenced by observations and interviews in Colombia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan and Maldives, these positive solutions are sometimes undermined where emergency focal points and/or emergency coordinators have duties in addition to their EP roles. Similarly, emergency focal points and coordinators often do not receive sufficient support from programme and operations colleagues, because the latter are fully committed or overwhelmed by regular duties.

In some cases, such as in Morocco and Maldives, emergency focal points are heading up a Programme Section and thus are unable to spend much time on emergency preparedness/coordination. At the other end of the spectrum, in larger offices, and in countries such as the DRC that are responding to multiple simultaneous emergencies, the emergency coordinators, their team members and emergency focal points report ongoing challenges in separating EP and emergency response.

3.5.1.2 RO support to COs

ROs are directly responsible for supporting COs with EP. The desk study and responses to KIIs indicate that the engagement and support provided to COs varied according to the emergencies actually happening in the region. For example, a small CO in a region where other countries are experiencing acute emergencies receives less attention on EP (e.g. Maldives, Morocco), especially if the context of the office is very different from other countries in the region. At the other extreme, COs in ongoing or chronic emergency situations tend to become more self-reliant, as is the case with DRC.

Responses to KIIs in the three ROs visited indicated that each RO focuses on what it deems appropriate for its region in terms of EP. Findings from the desk study indicate significant differences in the level of engagement of different ROs in monitoring and commenting on CO EP. While it is possible that other dialogue occurs (e.g. face-to-face, email, phone), some ROs consistently provide feedback to COs (e.g. ESARO, LACRO) regarding EWEA, while others do not. The EMOPS 2012 Annual Report on EWEA usage corroborates this, indicating significant differences in the level of support that ROs provide to COs.

3.5.1.3 HQ support to COs

While mechanisms exist for HQ to support COs (e.g. EWEA, roster maintenance, via DHR), the findings from multiple evaluation tools did not identify consistent connections between COs and HQ regarding EP, other than ad-hoc, one-to-one relationships.

3.5.1.4 Structure of EMOPS and support for EP

EMOPS is organized to provide support to COs and ROs in an emergency. However, EP has not yet resulted in consistent or systematic coordination between EMOPS and programme staff. This lack of interaction is apparent in:

- the lack of risk-informed SitAns;
- the lack of exchange between EMOPS and Programme Division indicated in KIIs in COs and HQ (e.g. attendance by both EMOPS and Programme Division staff at key annual global and regional meetings occurs rarely); and
- the perceptions expressed by programme staff that practical responsibility for EP lies with the emergency focal point or coordinator. The evaluation found that Programme Division staff does not perceive EP as a truly shared responsibility in which the focal point or coordinator has a special function to facilitate.

3.5.1.5 Supply and EP

The rollout and use of VISION – UNICEF’s current enterprise resource management system – has caused change management pains for some COs. Interviews with CO staff expressed the perception that some of this upheaval could have been avoided had the rollout been staggered. Use of VISION remains a challenge in offices with slow Internet connections. Larger offices with more resources, such as Haiti and the DRC, have developed solutions for more efficiency: they have centralized VISION work (as much as possible) within ‘business centres’ staffed by VISION ‘experts’, or staff who work almost exclusively on VISION.

Key informants identified limited resources as a significant constraint. Sixty-three per cent of the survey respondents in COs and 66 per cent in ROs who considered that their offices would play a significant role in emergency responses reported that, given sufficient access to funding, they would pre-position supplies. Prepositioning of supplies is, however, expensive and comes with logistical challenges. Donor representatives interviewed in DRC, Morocco and Haiti voiced scepticism of the benefits. This is partly due to the donors’ own financial systems, which do not allow for long-term funding commitments for pre-positioning. In the DRC, interviewees cited this lack of donor flexibility as a key frustration due to the chronic nature of the emergencies faced. In Haiti, pre-positioning was tried when funding was available in 2011. However, when funding was subsequently reduced, pre-positioning was decreased and interviewees felt that this reduction would not impact the quality of their future response.

Interviews with staff in the Supply Division indicated that an emergency such as the one in Syria in 2012 and 2013 presents unique challenges. Initially, the Syria CO developed methods for delivering supplies to traditional refugee camps, which are typically spread over a large area. However, the situation in Syria differed in important ways because the emergency unfolded predominantly in congested urban areas with little space for refugee camps and among a population that does not look favourably upon traditional emergency structures or modalities (such as refugee/internally displaced persons camps). This implied the need to use different modalities for relief assistance, such as cash transfers, which allow for more flexible applications of assistance. As noted in interviews with staff in the DRC, recipients of non-food item distributions will explore means of converting such items into more useful goods or cash if the distributed items do not offer sufficient value. Gaps exist not just in preparation for these kinds of emergencies, but also in what, from a supply perspective, preparation should mean in these kinds of contexts.

3.5.2 Conclusions

While UNICEF’s EP goals and priorities should be aligned across the entire organization, how EP is actually realized within each CO will vary, especially when it comes to supplies. UNICEF has implemented organizational structures at all levels that have contributed to better EP. However, EP is marginalized in smaller offices where EP responsibilities become part of a portfolio of duties held by one staff person. The experience from Syria shows that the nature of emergencies is changing and EP has to be flexible in order to adapt to changing circumstances.

3.6 Information management

The evaluation researched how effectively information and knowledge has been harnessed to optimize EP at UNICEF.

DFID’s *Humanitarian Response Review* in 2011 provides a perspective on how information management in the humanitarian sector has been used to understand EP results:

“The humanitarian sector has traditionally been reluctant to collect, systematize and share evidence on what works, what does not and why. There has been a lack of demand for this kind of information, and sometimes an inability to find answers.”

UNICEF does not have structures in place at the CO level to systematically and consistently collect data related to EP. Datasets that would allow an assessment of the benefits of EP are not available. As such, there is a significant need for basic data gathering systems that would allow staff to effectively and efficiently monitor, evaluate and report on EP outcomes.

This lack of data may be due to the fact that monitoring and evaluation of EP activities, specifically, is not enumerated in the CCCs, alongside specific commitments for the same with response activities⁵¹. Currently, data is gathered at the onset of an emergency in cooperation with partners to determine the likely need for, and the projected scope of, a response. Subsequently, monitoring data that is collected during and after emergency responses is related to activities and/or outputs. Outcomes and/or impact, as well as more qualitative information (such as that related to best practices or lessons learned) are not yet consistently addressed as part of the monitoring and evaluation systems reviewed by this evaluation.

3.6.1 Conclusions

UNICEF’s inconsistent and/or limited gathering and analysis of data related to outcomes of EP-related activities has precluded adequate monitoring, evaluation, analysis and understanding of the impact and effectiveness of EP activities.

⁵¹ See *Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action*, United Nations Children’s Fund, 2010, p. 9.

4 Key area 2: Resources

Analytical lens: Does UNICEF have sufficient quality and quantity of human, financial and supply resources to realize its preparedness goals?

4.1 Human resources

This evaluation researched how UNICEF has harnessed its human resources to achieve its EP outcomes and discusses what might be done to improve or enhance existing HR mechanisms.

UNICEF's current HR mechanisms for achieving its EP goals are those that provide for or enhance immediate emergency response needs. HR skills and expertise that contribute to longer-term solutions, such as DRR, or potentially 'preventative' activities, such as local partner/government capacity building, are discussed in the section on Key Area 3 – short- and long-term programming.

4.1.1 Current mechanisms

Immediate emergency response mechanisms include:

UNICEF has established a Global Web Roster (GWR) to provide for reallocation of staff within administrative regions in times of emergency. It is designed to identify and position personnel for emergency deployment. Since the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the DHR has 'owned' the maintenance and upkeep of the GWR. The GWR contains two different listings:

- 1) individuals who are pre-screened and available for deployment; and
- 2) expertise and skills that have been identified as required.

All individuals listed on the GWR have been identified and screened for specific areas of expertise. According to key DHR informants, the process of identifying GWR personnel should ideally be an integral part of the EWEA system, whereby the CO focal point or emergency coordinator is constantly monitoring and reviewing both personnel selection as well as the skills and expertise required. Requirements identified during the EWEA process are then automatically communicated to the RO and HQ. At the time of evaluation, the GWR included 2,302 names and 481 individuals were deployed in 2012 (down from 618 in 2011)⁵².

The Immediate Response Team was established following the Haiti earthquake. All the members of the team have been trained and/or have experience in a live emergency scenario and all have committed to making themselves available in the event of a Level 3 emergency. The team includes senior managers who have the capacity and authority to assume management control of a CO should this be dictated by the emergency.

The Emergency Response Team is comprised of UNICEF staff whose exclusive role is response to emergencies. It is currently comprised of two emergency coordinators and one logistics specialist.

Seed funding from DFID has been used to establish a fund to hire Humanitarian Support People. A team of five consultants will be hired, who will be on permanent standby for emergencies. This fund is operated

⁵² *Humanitarian Action Study*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2012.

on a refundable basis with unexpended costs reallocated to subsequent emergency-related funds or appeals.

Staff exchange mechanisms have also been established. These permit preselected COs to provide specific expertise to other COs for emergency responses. During an emergency, a CO can request staff support for temporary assignments. Upon approval, DHR then deploys the temporary personnel to support the CO while they recruit long-term personnel. This mechanism is most likely to be used for 'hard-to-fill' positions.

A Stand-by Human Resource Surge Roster, managed by EMOPS, has been an innovative and positive approach to building emergency capacity. The Roster is populated through stand-by agreements with approximately 20 partners, including NGOs, government and the private sector. This mechanism has the potential to effectively expand UNICEF's access to experts with diverse and specialized emergency competencies. This complements other HR surge capacity mechanisms and has the potential to be a cost-effective solution. Another possible use of this roster is collaboration on specific long-term projects, such as DRR. Donors are interested in these global stand-by partnerships, especially from a value-for-money perspective.

Some ROs (e.g. LACRO, CEE–CIS) have established a Regional Roster of expertise that can be accessed quickly in an emergency. Expertise on these rosters is diverse, pre-screened and has the advantage of geographical proximity, common language and cultural understanding.

Staff capacity building covers trainings, simulations and other activities designed to ensure that regular CO and RO staff have the skills and expertise needed to effectively contribute to an emergency response. Our interviews and observations in the field indicate these activities are not conducted consistently or systematically across UNICEF.

The above mechanisms are intended to help UNICEF build capacity to respond to an emergency in a timely manner. In the past, the Key Performance Indicator for the CCCs in all emergencies was to deploy 80 per cent of staff required in an emergency within 56 days. After receiving DFID funding in 2012, this indicator was changed to an average deployment time of 10 days, which is in line with the Key Performance Indicators of UNICEF's NGO partners (e.g. Save the Children UK). However, without consistent and dedicated funding to maintain the roster/surge structure in UNICEF, there is no guarantee that UNICEF will be able to continuously meet such a fast turnaround. As such, UNICEF's official current strategic plan indicator remains at 56 days for all emergencies.

4.1.2 Issues and challenges

The evaluation team observed the following issues and challenges related to the HR mechanisms above:

The evaluation team's visits to COs underscored that when CO leadership (i.e. senior management) has both emergency experience and a commitment to EP, the commitment is transmitted to both operations and programme staff, as evidenced by KIIs and observations within 75 per cent of field visits and 66 per cent of the RO visits. Leadership from REAs is also an important factor with regard to support for EP activities. Interviews within 50 per cent of CO visits and 66 per cent of RO visits indicated that when REAs were highly committed to EP, it became a focus of their visits and support to COs in their region. In LACRO, the REA uses EWEA information as an opportunity to initiate and structure discussions on preparedness planning and implementation. In ESARO, the REA uses EWEA as a lever to push for a more solid understanding of risks the CO might be facing.

The evaluation team identified several issues related to staffing. Most importantly, stakeholders in HQ impressed upon the evaluation team that response, and not EP, remains the critical focus of CO staff.

Global Cluster leads highlighted an inconsistency regarding clusters in that they have an uncertain role within EP and no formal requirement to perform or report, even though they are tasked with the responsibility of EP when activated. Further, the evaluation team observed that in five of the eight COs visited (or interviewed in the case of Indonesia) and in one of the three ROs visited, timely action on EP does not feature in performance appraisals (i.e. EP is not a consistent performance appraisal item via DHR). While stakeholders reported to the evaluation team that it is accepted that EP can bolster or even prevent the need for emergency responses, staff members are not held accountable for any actions taken. As such, as noted elsewhere in this report, EP is assigned a low priority and is undertaken by individuals only when possible, as a supplement or complement to mainstream programming.

The evaluation team's survey of UNICEF staff across a broad range of sections (and therefore skill sets) determined that 57 per cent of respondents were not on a roster. However, 9 per cent indicated they did not know whether or not they were on a roster. While it is certainly not necessary for all staff to be on rosters, the usefulness of rosters, internal or otherwise, is directly related to the quality of individuals on the list and their available skill sets. In particular, stakeholders interviewed in the COs of DRC, Haiti, Kenya and in ESARO and LACRO stated that Water, Sanitation and Hygiene experts are in high demand and it was usually possible to identify and obtain these experts from rosters. However, shortcomings were highlighted in the areas of HR experts, finance experts with knowledge of UNICEF-specific finance processes, IT experts and administrative experts⁵³. Further, as related in KIIs with Supply Division, difficulties in identifying and mobilizing logistics expertise were highlighted as a significant shortcoming that constrained supply distribution in emergencies.

To achieve quality EP at the CO level, staff must be experienced and well trained to analyse, enact and maintain EP systems. To this end, UNICEF conducts a variety of capacity building exercises for its staff and partners. Of particular interest was the use of simulations to build awareness and experience of staff and partners regarding emergencies, as these were often cited by key stakeholders at COs, ROs and HQ. However, as reported in 2010⁵⁴:

“UNICEF has utilised simulation exercises on an ad hoc basis at country level for the past decade, and with a bit more frequency over the past five years. These simulations have generally been mounted at the request of a Country Office or upon the suggestion of the Regional Emergency Advisor (REA). The organisation has never made use of simulations in a systematic manner nor has it undertaken any objective evaluation of simulation exercises as a tool for preparedness.”

UNICEF continues to use simulations to improve awareness of EP, and, as reported by key informants in six of the eight COs and in two of the three ROs visited, it is believed that simulations increase the appreciation for, and understanding of, the requirements for EP. However, the evaluation's findings from the desk study showed that some COs have not participated in a simulation for as long as four years. Also, 64 per cent of survey respondents reported that they had not participated in a simulation activity in the past 12 months.

⁵³ See also: *Independent review of UNICEF's operational response to the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2011.

⁵⁴ Spielberg, Fredrick, *The play's the thing: The use of simulation exercises to enhance emergency preparedness in UNICEF*, 2010.

Training, either internal, UNICEF-led with partners or external, is another way UNICEF seeks to ensure its staff has the skills and knowledge necessary to enhance quality EP. As with simulations, interviews indicated there is currently no systematic or consistent training provided to staff regarding EP – it is conducted ad-hoc when funding is available, initiative is taken by a CO or particular staff member and there is available time and interest. Data from the survey indicates that 59 per cent of respondents have not participated in training related to EP in the past 12 months. Key informants within 88 per cent of the COs indicated that not all staff has the opportunity to participate in trainings – this was specifically noted in DRC, Haiti and Morocco. In the Maldives, interviewees indicated that they had specifically requested training for EP but it had been denied.

Capacity building can also be undertaken via staff exchanges. This type of capacity building was emphasized in interviews in Morocco and in Haiti by staff who had participated in these exchanges and by senior leadership overseeing the same. Interviewees expressed the opinion that exchanges between offices in regions that spoke the same language appeared to be particularly beneficial and cost-effective.

4.1.3 Conclusions

UNICEF has created several HR mechanisms to enhance its ability to respond rapidly to emergency situations. However, there is a need for clear standards on the use of trainings, simulations, contingency planning and other preparedness activities on a regular basis, in accordance with the capacity, risk-exposure and type of CO in a given country.

4.2 Financial resources

The evaluation researched EP financing with a focus on UNICEF's ability to enhance the sustainability of EP activities internally and among its partners.

4.2.1 Sources of funding for preparedness

Interviews with key stakeholders at COs and HQ demonstrated that the responsibility for allocation of funding for EP activities rests with the CO. This is in line with the decentralized nature of UNICEF's organizational structure. Each CO has several avenues through which it might fund EP activities. These include:

- 1) The CO annual budget: Each CO has the option of including EP as a part of its annual budget, either as an exclusive line item or as a part of other programming.
- 2) Funds from RO: A CO could receive EP support from its associated RO, especially for EP activities that are regional in scope.
- 3) External sources: Each CO has the option of pursuing funds from local, regional and international sources through mainstream fundraising activities (i.e. project proposals).
- 4) Other UNICEF sources: Each CO may access EP funds from pools of money maintained at the HQ or global level. A specific example of this is UNICEF's Emergency Programme Fund⁵⁵. There

⁵⁵ The Emergency Programme Fund is a revolving loan facility. While largely used for rapid emergency response, it is also available to each CO for "Preparedness to promote rapid response to deliver on UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action." See p. 17, http://www.unicef.org/parmo/files/RR_REPORT_2012_NY_FINAL_DOUBLEPAGE.pdf

is also significant funding received that is earmarked as 'Other Resources Emergency'⁵⁶ however, these funds are designated for use in emergency response only.

Responses to interviews and the desk study indicated that when considering funding EP activities from annual budgets, EP is not regularly afforded a specific line item in the CO annual budget. Exceptions were found in countries that are in a constant state of emergency (e.g. DRC). Other exceptions include

Example of external funding source

The experience of the Kenya Red Cross (KRC) in responding to the 2011 famine in Kenya is particularly illuminating regarding external funding sources. The KRC took the lead in responding to the famine, challenging the lethargy of the Kenyan government and aid organizations (including UNICEF) in taking action. It launched a fundraising campaign and was able to raise over \$20 million in four weeks from among the citizens of the country. This enabled KRC to respond to the crisis faster and on a far larger scale than agencies that were reliant on the traditional and sluggish donor mechanisms.

some countries that have developed a 2014–2017 CPAP. In these cases, the evaluation team identified programme sections with specific emergency and EP objectives. Importantly, however, a consistent theme from KIIs in non-chronic emergency COs was that annual budgets were already stretched thin – to the detriment of core programming via under-staffing, etc. – and that EP activities would need to be funded ad-hoc. As a result, financial resources dedicated to EP are limited, or unavailable, across all aspects – risk analysis, supplies, training, capacity building, innovation, etc. – within a CO.

Support from ROs is mostly limited to staff/technical support (i.e. completion of the EWEA, incorporating EP into programme plans, etc.). Current funding limitations and scarcity at the CO level are compounded at the RO level. An exception is LACRO.

The RO maintains an EP unit that focuses on providing support to its COs to enable them to better prepare for emergencies. However, the evaluation team learned that funding for this unit is set to end in 2013 and there are no current plans to re-fund the team in Panama.

Fundraising from external sources is a mixed bag. Interviews with CO staff indicate that funds for EP are among the most difficult to procure; the vast majority of funding is allocated for response activities⁵⁷. In countries that rarely experience emergencies, EP fundraising is almost non-existent. In the Maldives, which experiences cyclical emergencies (e.g. floods, water shortages), key CO stakeholders reported inadequate staff capacity to pursue funds from external resources in any consistent or reliable fashion (e.g. the emergency coordinator is also responsible for communication for development; there is only one programme staff member for all programme activities).

There exist strong opportunities for UNICEF to utilize innovative and non-conventional sources of emergency funding. The example from Kenya (see boxed text above) highlights how an increasingly affluent middle class in many developing countries can be a potential source of funding for preparedness and response.

Procurement of funding from other UNICEF sources for EP activities, such as the Emergency Programme Fund, is an unrealistic pursuit for COs without the imminent threat of emergency. In 2012, UNICEF received \$837 million classified as Other Resources Emergency, of which, \$809 million was expended in

⁵⁶ UNICEF realized \$837 million in 2012 for Other Resources Emergency. Source: *Humanitarian Action Study*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2012.

⁵⁷ *Humanitarian Action Study*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2012.

the same period⁵⁸. As this funding is prioritized for active emergencies, stakeholders reported that requests for funds for EP from this source are typically not granted. Interviewees held the perception that funds for EP were not available from internal pools of money. The evaluation concludes that the challenges in obtaining funding for EP are a reflection of the low priority assigned to EP within UNICEF.

4.2.2 Donor challenges

Data from multiple research tools indicate that both the current absolute level of financing and the present rate of increase in funding dedicated to EP from donors is not commensurate with UNICEF's EP ambitions. This significantly limits the possibility for sustainable EP action and activity.

There exist two significant barriers to securing sustainable EP funding:

1. tracking EP financing remains a challenge due to differing and blurred definitions employed by donors and agencies⁵⁹; and
2. empirical evidence that EP activities result in more efficient, less costly and more effective responses across different contexts is currently insufficient to make a compelling argument for EP financing⁶⁰.

While donor support for EP has increased over the past decade, growing from less than 1 per cent of humanitarian financing in 2004 to 4.2 per cent in 2011⁶¹, support for EP activities from major donors remains inconsistent⁶². Although the overall donor preference for EP has increased, partly due to the emerging resilience agenda⁶³, actual financial commitments are relatively small compared to EP needs for fulfilling the CCCs. Implementing agencies have difficulty determining which EP activities are eligible for financing from specific donors.

4.2.3 Conclusions

UNICEF's current financial commitments to EP do not match the needs of the organization's increasing humanitarian response activities. Therefore, delivering "predictable, effective and timely collective humanitarian action"⁶⁴, as envisioned by the CCCs, appears problematic at best given the inconsistency of funding allocated to EP activities. Furthermore, COs have been unable to allocate financial resources for EP on a consistent or systematic basis because UNICEF has not specifically prioritized EP at the corporate level.

⁵⁸ *Humanitarian Action Study*, UNICEF, 2012.

⁵⁹ Conclusions drawn from interviews with UNICEF staff, FAO Chair of IASC Strategic Working Group on preparedness financing and review of: FAO/Development Initiatives 2011 study: *Analysis of financing mechanisms and funding streams to enhance emergency preparedness*, Overseas Development Institute background note, *Emergency preparedness financing and its links to resilience*, January 2013.

⁶⁰ Development Initiatives study, p. 72.

⁶¹ The UK, Germany, Poland and the European Union/European Commission – Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) are among donors taking a more progressive approach to funding preparedness.

⁶² For every \$100 spent on humanitarian assistance in the top 20 recipient nations, only 62 cents were spent on preparedness and prevention activities. (Development Initiatives study p. 21). The percentage spending on preparedness in Bangladesh was 24 per cent, and only 1 per cent and 2 per cent in DRC and Somalia respectively (Development Initiatives study, p. 52).

⁶³ For example, see: United Nations system task team on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda: building resilience to disasters through partnerships at <http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/30374>

⁶⁴ *Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action*, United Nations Children's Fund, May 2010.

5 Key area 3: Short- and long-term programming

Analytical lens: Is UNICEF's short- and long-term programming adequately addressing preparedness goals?

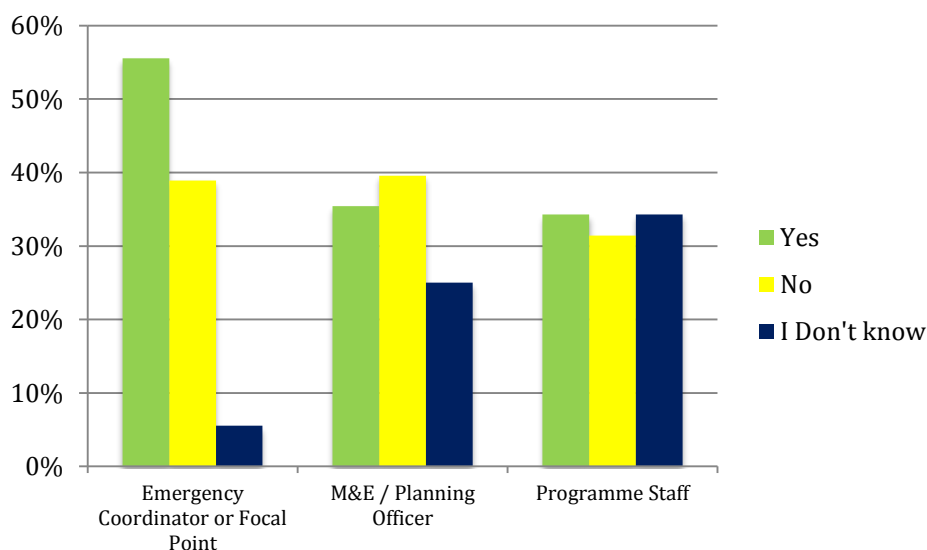
5.1 Risk informed programming

This evaluation investigated the integration of UNICEF's EP and humanitarian response into regular programmes and how provisions for longer-term recovery are incorporated into preparedness plans. The evaluation also attempted to identify patterns in UNICEF's preparedness in different contexts.

In 2010, an internal audit found that the integration of emergency risk management into regular programming is not systematic within UNICEF⁶⁵. Building on this audit, EMOPS initiated the Harmonized Emergency Risk Management Initiative (HERMI) in collaboration with other divisions. The goal of HERMI is to harmonize emergency/crisis planning processes currently employed and integrate them into the country programme cycle⁶⁶. These planning processes include, among others, DRR, EP, emergency response, business continuity, inter-agency security planning and contingency planning.

When asked directly about the integration of EP into regular programming, KII responses from only two COs and one RO indicated some level of integration. This was corroborated via survey responses:

Figure 7 - Does your section have guidance for ERIP?

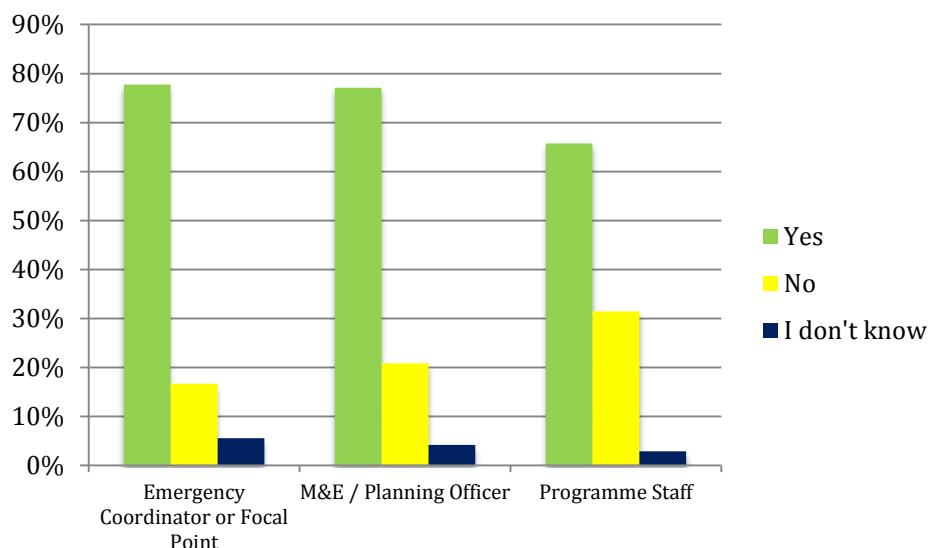


Another way to determine if EP is integrated into regular programming is to understand where results are monitored and measured as a part of the same:

⁶⁵ *Harmonized Emergency Risk Management Initiative Recommendations*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2010.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Figure 8 - Does your current country programme include programme component results or intermediate results that specifically support EP?



A review of the programme documents of the COs visited by the evaluation team showed considerable variation in the extent to which EP and humanitarian response were incorporated into country-level programme documents (e.g. COARs, CPAPs). This included variations in the inclusion of programme component results and intermediate results. Further, where intermediate results existed, indicators were sometimes not easily measurable. Data for the measurement of these programme component results and intermediate results was unavailable.

Perhaps most importantly, the desk study showed that EP is not a prominent feature in standard reporting documents (e.g. COAR). In cases where EP is reported, it is only afforded one or two sentences, allowing for little or no detail. As with other areas discussed in this report, this indicates that prioritization and accountability for EP has not taken hold throughout the organization.

This evaluation is unable to determine specifically if/how EP activities have reduced risk or contributed or detracted from specific responses, or assess UNICEF’s response to emergencies more generally, because of a lack of data.

Interviewees within 38 per cent of COs visited and 33 per cent of ROs visited indicated that there is little provision for incorporating long-term recovery into EP planning. Similarly, there is no established system in these locations for systematically or consistently ensuring that long-term recovery is included as a part of EP.

5.1.1 Conclusions

Despite the initiation of HERMI, the integration of emergency risk management into regular programming is limited due to the general lack of awareness on emergency risk informed programming across the organization.

5.2 Business continuity planning

The aim of UNICEF's business continuity planning⁶⁷ (BCP) is to ensure its COs can continue to operate within a country during an emergency. BCP provides for a chain of action covering items such as:

- provisions for staff security in an emergency;
- determination of who are essential staff;
- contact information for CO staff;
- setting up new sub-offices in emergency regions as required;
- setting up emergency information and communications technology systems;
- methods for data back up and providing hardware and supplies;
- maintaining dispatch, transportation and logistics mechanisms;
- system of emergency contacts with government focal points;
- systems for emergency contacts under Programme Cooperation Agreements; and
- mechanisms for maintaining continued contact with local authorities.

The evaluation team researched how BCP has enhanced continuous operation at the CO level in recent emergencies. Fifty per cent of key stakeholders interviewed within visited COs and 33 per cent at visited ROs were of the opinion that BCP has done a thorough job of providing for minimum operational needs in times of emergencies, even when this is done via remote locations⁶⁸. Seventy nine per cent of survey respondents indicated they had participated in the creation or updating of their office BCP within the last 12 months. Interviews and workshops with staff in locations that experience chronic (e.g. DRC) or high emergencies (e.g. Haiti) indicated that BCP is an especially critical EP tool.

5.2.1 Conclusions

Business continuity is generally well served at the CO level for UNICEF and contributes to sustaining operations, especially in chronic or high emergency contexts.

5.3 Contingency planning

Interviewee responses within 50 per cent of COs and 33 per cent of ROs visited indicated confusion regarding the use of contingency planning at the CO level. BCP is used to ensure that UNICEF has processes and systems in place for minimal operations of its own COs in times of emergency, while contingency plans are created to describe which services will be maintained and the policies and procedures to be followed when there is reasonable likelihood of an emergency occurring⁶⁹.

⁶⁷ See: *Business Continuity in the United Nations System*, Joint Inspection Unit, 2011.

⁶⁸ There are clear examples of when BCP has failed (e.g. New York during the Sandy 'superstorm') at UNICEF. However, UNICEF is a leader in the United Nations system with regard to BCP (see: *Business Continuity in the United Nations System*, Joint Inspection Unit, 2011).

⁶⁹ Contingency planning is defined as "A management process that analyses specific potential events or emerging situations that might threaten society or the environment and establishes arrangements in advance to enable timely, effective and appropriate responses to such events and situations." *Synthesis report: Analysis of financing mechanisms and funding streams to enhance emergency preparedness*, Development Initiatives, October 2011.

Typical elements of a contingency plan include⁷⁰:

- overall strategy;
- rationale for intervention;
- justification for proposed scale of intervention;
- impact targets;
- well defined triggers for when to implement and a process for monitoring these triggers;
- a clear link to budgets;
- specific division of responsibilities between actors and duties;
- a link to situation/contextual analysis, especially if access is anticipated as an obstacle; and
- a link between contingency activities and preparedness actions necessary to implement the contingency plan.

The desk study and interview responses from six out of eight COs visited indicate contingency planning is used as a standard preparedness tool regardless of whether or not an emergency is expected. In Morocco, stakeholders claimed that emergency planning is seen as equivalent to contingency planning. An example of inappropriate contingency planning was found in Kyrgyzstan, where the CO has developed contingency plans for events that would happen only every '100 years', such as an earthquake. This is improper because contingency planning should only be performed for events considered highly likely in the near term.

5.3.1 Conclusions

A better understanding and application of contingency planning would positively serve EP at the CO level to sustain operations in times of emergencies.

⁷⁰ See: *Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance*, Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2007.

6 Key area 4: Partnerships

Analytical lens: Do UNICEF's partnerships with other entities (i.e. IASC, NGOs and government) lead to the attainment of its preparedness goals?

6.1 Partner awareness and application of preparedness

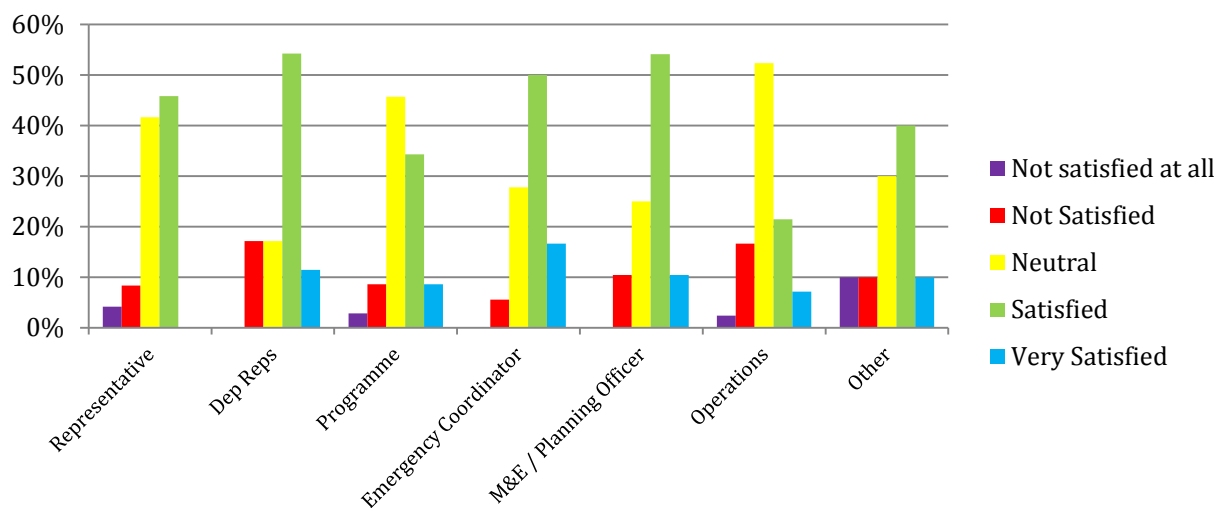
While UNICEF is an implementing agency in the area of emergency response, it also relies heavily on its work with partners – governments, other United Nations agencies and NGOs – to successfully meet its programme goals. In 2012 and 2011, respectively, UNICEF worked with 1,248 and 1,218 partners on emergency response⁷¹. This significant level of interaction with, and reliance on, partners necessitates application of similar approaches and practices, including an understanding of the principles and applications of EP.

Data from the evaluation field research (interviews, workshops and observations of major partner organizations) indicated that interviewed partners have an understanding of EP commensurate with that of their respective UNICEF counterpart CO. In some cases, the level of expertise and commitment among partners exceeded that of their UNICEF counterpart. For example, the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, a UNICEF partner in the Maldives, has a national integrated EP strategy and ongoing EP implementation activities. In contrast, as observed during the field visit, the UNICEF CO's design and implementation of EP-related programming outside of Male was very limited.

UNICEF staff ratings of implementing partners' competence were high. Seventy-eight per cent of survey respondents reported that they were neutral or satisfied with their CO's ability to coordinate with non-United Nations partners with respect to EP activities. The levels of satisfaction with coordination differed across specific sectorial areas within UNICEF offices, as follows:

⁷¹ *Humanitarian Action Study*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2011 and 2012.

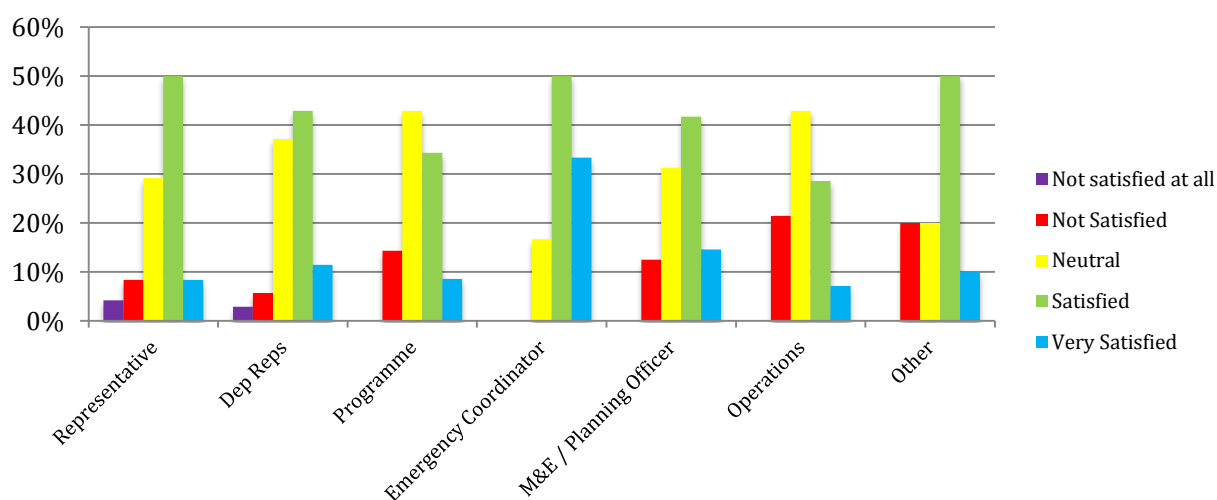
Figure 9 - Are you satisfied with your office's ability to coordinate with partners on issues related to EP?



6.1.1 Other United Nations agencies

Coordination with other United Nations agencies is a key element of a successful UNICEF EP strategy. The evaluation survey findings demonstrate that the majority of respondents (75 per cent) were satisfied with their ability to coordinate with United Nations partners on EP. As with implementing partners, levels of satisfaction differed across different sections within COs:

Figure 10 - Are you satisfied with your office's ability to coordinate with other United Nations agencies on issues related to EP?



6.1.2 Conclusions

Major implementing partner awareness and implementation of EP actions is equivalent to, or more comprehensive than, UNICEF's EP actions. The majority of UNICEF CO staff is satisfied with the level of awareness among, and competence of, major partners with respect to EP. Satisfaction with coordination across other United Nations agencies was also high among UNICEF staff, particularly emergency coordinators, but less so among operations staff.

6.2 Participation in inter-agency efforts

The evaluation investigated the extent to which UNICEF has added value to inter-agency efforts and how UNICEF has benefitted from its intensive engagement with the IASC.

At the regional level, interviews with key stakeholders indicated that perceptions of UNICEF's added value to inter-agency efforts, and the perceived benefits derived from such efforts, have been mixed. Interviewees report that the level of coordination, sharing of resources and interaction with support networks is largely driven by the personal motivation or level of expertise of the staff involved, rather than by strategic and organizational initiatives. Interviewees from LACRO all reported intensive, regular participation and contribution to EP and to specific emergency responses of other organizations in the region. This coordination is facilitated by the physical proximity of the office to other United Nations agencies and international NGOs (e.g. UNHCR, WHO, FAO, Plan International, IOM). Stakeholders reported this proximity as facilitating face-to-face meetings and general coordination with other organizations.

In visits to other ROs (CEE/CIS and ESARO), stakeholders reported that the value of the inter-agency process, and specifically UNICEF's contribution, was limited. The specific dynamics of these regions precluded contributions to inter-agency processes beyond normal coordination activities and communication.

At the global level, UNICEF has co-chaired the IASC sub-working group on EP since 2001. The evaluation team assessed UNICEF's contribution and added value to IASC via recorded outputs of IASC meetings from 2010-2013. The research indicated that at the IASC level, UNICEF's efforts to promote the concept of EP have resulted in increased attention being paid to EP by the wider humanitarian community. UNICEF's leadership in this area was further corroborated by interviews with sub-working group members who indicated the positive contribution of UNICEF.

6.2.1 Conclusions

UNICEF's efforts to mainstream EP concepts and practice into emergency rather than mainstream development programming has led to a greater, though not yet universal, acceptance that good response to emergencies requires, among other things, good EP. UNICEF's IASC level activities have influenced EP thinking in important ways, such as by highlighting the necessity for, and application of, a common framework on EP. However, this advocacy at the IASC level has so far had limited tangible outputs in terms of policies and practices being implemented by other IASC members.

6.3 Strengthening national capacity

A long-term goal of the ILM is 'increased capacity of national and sub-national actors' in EP. The evaluation researched the extent to which UNICEF's EP interventions have supported this commitment.

The evaluation also investigated if UNICEF has advocated for equity in its EP efforts as part of its national capacity development.

Example of strengthening national capacity

The evaluation found that the Maldives Ministry of Education had, through the support and help of UNICEF, developed a robust EP programme for schools throughout the country. This included thorough documentation. However, the Ministry was unable to execute this programme because of budget constraints; EP is not very high up on the priority scale.

Interviewees within 38 per cent of COs and 66 per cent of ROs surveyed and in HQ indicated UNICEF's commitment to building capacity in EP and undertaking EP in collaboration with host governments and other national and sub-national entities. This finding is supported by a review of UNICEF's published policies and strategies. It is further reinforced via the survey of field staff, more than 80 per cent of whom indicated that they expect the EP tools and processes developed by UNICEF to lead to "improved capacity building of national and sub-national partners to respond to emergencies."

The evaluation identified examples of government capacity building even in countries with limited (or diminishing) staff and resources. One such CO, the Maldives (see boxed text above), directly engages in capacity-building activities with several ministries and government bodies (e.g. Ministry of Education, Local Development Authority, National Disaster Management Center) to respond to emergencies through the use of rapid assessment tools and provides technical assistance for programming.

While UNICEF espouses a strong policy-based commitment to build capacity, the practice of working with government agencies, typically in areas of initial low capacity or in particularly emergency-prone areas, can be challenging. UNICEF stakeholders interviewed within 50 per cent of COs surveyed, 33 per cent of ROs surveyed and in HQ expressed the belief that working with governments on EP is part of a continuum supporting improved response, recovery, transition and, ultimately, longer-term development. Working with government assumes the ability to coordinate with (and ultimately influence) government activities. At the field level, where actual capacity-building activities take place, confidence in the effectiveness of such activities was similarly limited. The evaluation determined that 42 per cent of Representatives, 35 per cent of programme staff and 50 per cent of emergency coordinators expressed satisfaction with their ability to coordinate with host government partners.

These findings are supported by the conclusions of the 2013 *Humanitarian Action for Children* appeal. UNICEF's response outputs for 2012 reported across four categories: sector targets, sector results, UNICEF targets and UNICEF results. In all but a few cases, the bulk of the sector results come close to, or exactly matched, the UNICEF results. This suggests the possibility that:

1. despite a stated commitment to working with partners and strengthening national capacities, UNICEF does not often actively engage with other actors in emergencies; and/or
2. partners and national governments may be contributing to responses, but do not report these activities to UNICEF, and thus are missing opportunities to engage and transfer skills.

Both of these possibilities suggest that additional efforts and approaches are required by UNICEF to build local capacity and engage with governments.

The evaluation team's review of country-level planning documents and intermediate results indicated an increased focus by UNICEF COs on working with government and building government capacity in EP. However, stakeholders within 63 per cent of the COs and 66 per cent of the ROs surveyed stated that

opportunities for working more closely with government and capacity building on EP vary significantly among countries and across different levels of government.

Examples of such variability across and within governments include:

- Morocco: Opportunities to contribute to preparedness are limited as the governmental emergency coordinating body keeps its plans confidential and does not often formally request assistance. UNICEF focuses on finding opportunities to assist individual ministries. UNICEF builds capacity and relationships through provision of programmatic tools or technical assistance useful for EP. The evaluation research indicated a proactive approach on the part of the CO to identify opportunities for assistance, such as the 2013 *Moroccan National Strategy for Risk Management*, which offered the UNICEF Deputy Representative in Morocco potential areas in which to engage the Moroccan government.
- DRC: Opportunities exist to engage with government officials on EP at the local level and to participate in coordination meetings. However, stakeholders reported that at the national level, opportunities were fewer given the significant dysfunction within the DRC administration. Government representatives do not participate in the meetings of the humanitarian group nor do they actively participate in Clusters. Stakeholders interviewed noted that the crisis-led modality of programming in DRC tacitly encourages humanitarian actors to take the lead on any programming, without significant participation by government officials. Stakeholders expressed a significant need to proactively encourage government to assume responsibility for emergency preparation and response, though they did not articulate practical solutions or strategies as to how this could be achieved.
- Haiti: Government stakeholders identified several opportunities for UNICEF to contribute to capacity building and empowerment of government. The challenge, as seen by UNICEF CO stakeholders, is to identify entry points that have the greatest potential for added value given the number of capacity-building initiatives with government being undertaken by other organizations. Stakeholders in the Haiti CO expressed the belief that the greatest potential for added value is at the regional and local levels and the CO is therefore currently focusing its efforts on the same.
- Colombia: Stakeholders noted that UNICEF's capacity to work at the local/regional levels is far weaker than its capacity to work at the central level. This is largely due to the regional discrimination, political infighting and economic marginalization prevalent in the country, which make it difficult to develop and maintain relationships outside of the capital area.

Example of collaboration challenges

In the case of Colombia, UNICEF stakeholders reported that opportunities to collaborate on EP with government varied within areas of the national administration itself (primarily between central and regional administrations) due to differing capacities and/or willingness to engage. This was exacerbated by vested economic interests and political marginalization of specific subgroups (such as indigenous communities). These internal conflicts and tensions reportedly led to disparities in preparedness for, and willingness to engage in responses to, certain types of emergencies, such as conflict-based and natural disaster-based.

6.3.1 Conclusions

UNICEF is committed to strengthening the capacity of its national, sub-national and community partners and EP capacity is one of many potential areas of collaboration. Implementing partnerships with government, while a priority for UNICEF, is difficult for a variety of context-specific reasons. As such,

while the evaluation finds that UNICEF is committed to this concept, it remains challenging in terms of systematic or consistent delivery.

7 Key area 5: Measuring outcomes for children

Analytical lens: Do UNICEF's preparedness activities lead to achievement of the CCCs?

Throughout the research, the evaluation team requested monitoring and/or evaluation data related to the contribution of EP activities to the CCCs. However, such data was not available at any of the levels of research undertaken. An examination of information resources throughout UNICEF did not provide the evaluation team with data related to this area. In addition, the evaluation was unable to identify suitable data sources that address the extent to which EP-related outputs and activities of the ILM have achieved their intended outcomes. As such, the evaluation is unable to comment on the extent to which UNICEF has met its CCCs in emergencies and how emergency activities have supported the CCCs through EP. With respect to EP and emergency response reporting, this evaluation concludes that UNICEF focuses primarily on outputs, and does not go further to analyse outcomes for children. The following examples highlight some of the challenges regarding UNICEF's achievement of CCC outcomes:

1. The *Report on the Use of the EWEA System in 2012* is an annual internal review of the EWEA system by EMOPS staff. This document focuses exclusively on how COs, ROs and HQ engage with the system – ultimately resulting in a 'system usage' report. There is little discussion on linking usage (i.e. the self-reported actions taken at the CO level) to EP action or how these actions result in better, timelier and more effective responses. It should be noted that the section of the report dealing with the EP component of the EWEA (p. 8) states that, "...this is the least used part of the system and inputs don't usually include the information that could be useful for HQ/RO support." Indeed, the report also contains a recommendation by REAs to remove this section completely from the system.
2. Since 2005, UNICEF has produced the *Humanitarian Action Study*⁷², which annually details how UNICEF has responded to humanitarian emergencies, including EP activities. This document reports extensively on delivery of services, funding, deployments, capacity building, etc., but undertakes no further analysis, specifically lessons learned or recommendations for further/improved action.
3. UNICEF releases an annual *Humanitarian Action for Children*⁷³ appeal that consolidates future funding requirements for emergency response programming for the year. As above, the report details funding required and services delivered, but does not offer insight about how actions might lead to longer-term outcomes or how activities can be made more efficient, relevant, timely, cost-effective, impactful or sustainable.
4. Other evaluations have expressed concern regarding the effectiveness of UNICEF response (i.e. *Multilateral Aid Review*)⁷⁴.

7.1.1 Conclusions

UNICEF regularly prepares management reports containing information on response outputs and the extent to which COs are prepared for handling emergencies. However, a deeper analysis of outcomes or impact of these outputs does not take place. While there is strong anecdotal and peripheral information

⁷² *Emergency Response Report or Emergency Response Study*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2009.

⁷³ See <http://www.unicef.org/appeals/index.html>

⁷⁴ "Effectiveness of UNICEF's response in acute emergency situations is a concern." *Multilateral Aid Review: Assessment of the United Nations Children's Fund*, United Nations Children's Fund, 2011.

that UNICEF's EP interventions have potentially contributed to positive outcomes for children in emergency situations, there is little data available to promote understanding of how EP leads to better outcomes, what works best, and how to improve and innovate in the future.

8 Overall conclusion

The overall conclusion of this evaluation is that UNICEF has made progress in incorporating EP into its operations, and that these measures have likely contributed to better emergency response. While this progress was documented throughout the evaluation, integration of EP has been ad-hoc and limited in nature. UNICEF considers EP to be important, but the conceptual understanding of preparedness varies greatly across the organization.

Management and organization: Although UNICEF does not employ a standardized or consistent risk analysis process that is easily understood and implemented by CO staff, this evaluation concludes that overall, UNICEF has shown increasing understanding and analysis of risk at the local level as well as a better understanding of how to prepare for and respond to future emergencies. Different interpretations and inadequate assessments of risk can however result in decreased accuracy of prediction of future emergencies and contribute to insufficient or inappropriate EP activities.

Human resources: UNICEF has established and implemented organizational structures at all levels that have contributed to better EP. However, EP is marginalized in smaller offices where EP responsibilities become part of a portfolio of duties held by one staff person. Furthermore, the experience from Haiti as well as the current crisis in Syria have shown that the nature of emergencies is changing, shifting from a rural to a more urban context. Accordingly, EP has to be flexible to adapt to changing circumstances.

Financial resources: UNICEF's current financial commitments to EP do not match the needs of the organization's increasing humanitarian response activities. Therefore, delivering "predictable, effective and timely collective humanitarian action"⁷⁵, as envisioned by the CCCs, appears problematic given the inconsistency of funding allocated to EP activities. Furthermore, COs have so far been unable to allocate financial resources for EP on a consistent or systematic basis because UNICEF has not specifically prioritized EP at the corporate level.

Short- and long-term programming: Despite the initiation of HERMI, the integration of emergency risk management into regular programming is limited due to limited ERIP awareness across the organization.

Partnerships: Awareness and implementation of EP actions among major implementing partners is equivalent to, or more comprehensive than that of UNICEF. It can however be said that UNICEF's EP strategy is coherent with that of its partners.

Strengthening national capacity: UNICEF is committed to strengthening the capacity of its national, sub-national and community partners and EP capacity is one of many potential areas of collaboration. Implementing partnerships with government, while a priority for UNICEF, is difficult for a variety of context-specific reasons. As such, while the evaluation finds that UNICEF is committed to this concept, it remains challenging in terms of systematic or consistent delivery.

Measuring outcomes for children: UNICEF's inconsistent and/or limited gathering and analysis of EP-related data has precluded adequate monitoring, evaluation, analysis and understanding of the impact and effectiveness of EP activities. UNICEF regularly prepares management reports containing information on response outputs and the extent to which COs are prepared to handle emergencies. However, deeper analysis of outcomes or impact of these outputs does not take place. While there is strong anecdotal and peripheral information that UNICEF's EP interventions have potentially contributed

⁷⁵ *Core Commitments for Children In Humanitarian Action*, United Nations Children's Fund, May 2010.

to positive outcomes for children in emergency situations, there is little data available to promote an understanding of how EP leads to better response, what works best, and how to improve and innovate in the future.

9 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions above, the evaluation presents the following recommendations for action:

1. **Design, communicate and implement a global strategy for EP that will result in a systematic implementation of a coherent system based on context and risk analysis across CO and RO levels.** The design and implementation of the system should provide for a clear definition of EP in the context of UNICEF's mission and ensure that accountabilities at various levels are clearly laid out to integrate EP into regular work and programming. The EP systems and processes should ensure clear criteria for when and how response can be 'triggered' in slow-onset crises through a review of past experience, collaboration with peers and better information management of future situations. The design of the system should take into account the need to expand and deepen existing HR mechanisms and capacity building processes to support EP to ensure UNICEF has access to adequate personnel with necessary skill sets, and that capacity development with respect to EP is available to existing staff.
2. **Increase the financial commitment to EP to match the needs of increasing emergency response in UNICEF and ensure that financial allocations for EP are integrated into country office programming as a percentage depending on risk perception.** The financing of EP does not match that allocated to emergency response. It is important to review needs at all levels and make realistic financial allocations with the understanding that better preparedness saves money and improves response.
3. **Expand linkages to existing national and global EP systems led by partners and governments to create added value.** While there is coherence between UNICEF's EP strategy at the country level and the EP strategies of its partners, there is room for innovation and improved systems. Furthermore, while developing links with government systems might be challenging, it is important to review the gaps and inconsistencies between national systems and UNICEF's EP strategy so they can be addressed at the design stage. Most importantly, national capacity building should be an integral part of any UNICEF EP strategy.
4. **Establish a simple and cost effective system to enhance data availability for monitoring, reporting and evaluation to promote understanding of how EP leads to better response, what works best, and how to improve and innovate in the future.** The indicators for data collection should be linked to the outcomes in the CCC and should show with a theory of change how the various indicators are linked to better lives for children. All EP activities should lead to clear conclusions about whether or not UNICEF's EP leads to achievement of the CCCs.

