



Families in Lambayeque, Peru look through the WASH items provided to them by UNICEF. The items help families cope in the aftermath of flooding caused by intense rains and Cyclone Yaku in early March 2023.

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Humanitarian Action for Children

Latin America and Caribbean Region

HIGHLIGHTS

- Latin America and the Caribbean remains the second most disaster-prone region in the world, with growing numbers of people affected by such disasters as storms or floods. Between the year 2000 and 2022, 190 million people were hit by disasters in the region, with an average of 8.6 million people affected each year.¹ The combination of extreme natural events (which are more frequent due to climate change), growing displacement and migration, increasing violence and poverty and socioeconomic instability in countries in the region impacts the well-being of thousands of highly vulnerable children.
- With country offices and partners, UNICEF supports emergency preparedness efforts throughout the region, including through training, pre-positioning supplies and generating critical data. When an emergency hits, UNICEF ensures rapid activation of its humanitarian response, including by reinforcing capacities in the field.
- UNICEF appeals for \$12.4 million to strengthen emergency preparedness to address compounding humanitarian situations and to respond to emerging crises.²

IN NEED^{3,4}



1.9 million

Children in need of health and nutrition services



2.5 million

children in need of protection services



2.3 million

children in need of education support



5.9 million

People in need of access to safe water



8.4 million

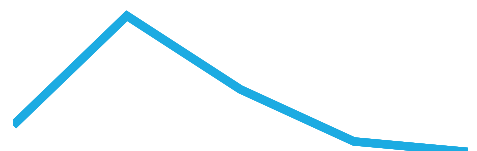
People affected by disasters⁵



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

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

US\$12.4 million



2020

2024

In absence of inter-agency humanitarian planning documents, figures are UNICEF estimates based on available data on the impact of disasters in the region.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

With 190 million people affected by disasters between 2000 and 2022, Latin America and the Caribbean is the second most disaster-prone region in the world. Three out of ten people in the region have been affected by disasters in their communities.⁷ Between January 2022 and September 2023, 13.4 million people, including 4 million children, were affected by disasters.⁸

In addition to the exposure to natural hazards and the effects of climate change, other risks intertwine to increase the need for enhanced preparedness, response and resilience capacities in countries in the region.

Migration through South and Central America increased substantially in 2023, overwhelming countries' capacities.⁶ Millions of vulnerable families and children are migrating across borders or within their countries due to poverty, inequality, violence (including gender-based violence) and climate-related shocks, and because of limited access to adequate nutrition, health, water, sanitation, protection and education services.

An estimated 32 million people face multidimensional poverty in the region⁹ and would be among the most vulnerable to new shocks. Women and children are increasingly exposed to risks in countries where socioeconomic and political instability, limited humanitarian access¹⁰ and state fragility¹¹ affect the ability of Governments and partners to respond to crises effectively.

In 2024, immediate impacts are expected related to the El Niño phenomenon. Drought in Central America and parts of South America, as well as heavy rains in the South, are expected to disrupt agricultural activities and food production, increasing levels of food insecurity and malnutrition for children in areas with already limited access to food and safe water.

Storms continue to be more frequent in the region, leaving affected people with less time to recover between events. Tropical cyclones in small island and developing states in the Caribbean are anticipated in 2024; this will challenge food security, access to income and basic services and living conditions for millions of children.

HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

UNICEF promotes strategies to address humanitarian needs while building local and regional capacities for emergency preparedness. Guided by the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, during emergencies that may occur in countries or related to crises not covered by other humanitarian appeals in the region, UNICEF will provide timely and integrated humanitarian responses to children and the most vulnerable populations, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, people with disabilities and indigenous communities.

The Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office will provide capacity building, technical support, tools, knowledge and financial resources to ensure that country offices and partners are better prepared to rapidly and effectively design, implement, monitor and evaluate multisectoral humanitarian action at scale. UNICEF will support teams at the country level to implement UNICEF humanitarian programmes with a nexus approach. And, by generating evidence and through advocacy and technical expertise, the Regional Office will support building and strengthening national shock-responsive systems; and will also support risk analysis and data readiness. This includes enabling platforms and data analysis capacity, with the ultimate goal of informing preparedness and programming. UNICEF's overarching and cross-sectoral commitments¹² as well as the Grand Bargain commitments¹³ will be mainstreamed.

Considering the multiple ongoing humanitarian crises – including those related to predictable threats – and given the region's risk profile, UNICEF is collaborating with partners to increase efforts to integrate and scale up anticipatory actions in the region. This is linked with ongoing preparedness and contingency processes.

UNICEF will ensure surge capacity for rapid deployment to any country in the region when an emergency hits,¹⁴ along with sustained investments in humanitarian learning and development for UNICEF staff and key counterparts. UNICEF is committed to supporting evidence-based advocacy and resource mobilization, and to leveraging partnerships to support children affected by crises. UNICEF also ensures representation and leadership in sectoral and cross-cutting humanitarian coordination platforms, at the national and regional levels.

This appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.

STORY FROM THE FIELD



At their school in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba, children receive first aid training.

In the province of Santiago de Cuba, Cuba, 45 schools are participating in a project that focuses on building children's resilience to the negative effects of climate change and on preparing the student community to reduce the multiple risks associated with natural hazards. Through this intervention, UNICEF supports more than 4,300 children and adolescents, including 175 with disabilities, to acquire skills and participate in actions for multi-risk disaster reduction and adolescent empowerment.

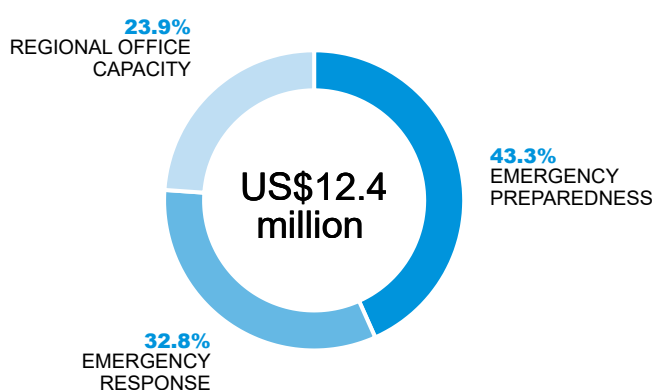
[Read more about this story here](#)

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2024

The Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office requests \$12.4 million to support emergency preparedness throughout the region, and to rapidly boost humanitarian response in case of emerging crises not covered by other UNICEF humanitarian appeals. This funding will allow UNICEF to strengthen links between humanitarian action and development programming; it will enable support for strengthening shock-responsive systems and for keeping the protection of children at the centre of these efforts. Funds will be strategically allocated to countries based on identified gaps and evidence-based needs.

Emergency preparedness will focus on building regional- and country-level capacity to respond to compounding and increasingly complex emergencies. Countries with increased vulnerabilities will receive tailored support to develop comprehensive emergency preparedness and contingency plans. Support will be provided through capacity building of staff and counterparts, by ensuring contingency stock items and by supplementing existing support to shock-responsive systems through regular programmes.¹⁵

The current and potential humanitarian scenarios in the region encompass cyclones, floods, drought, violence, civil unrest, migration, internal displacement, health emergencies including disease outbreaks, extreme weather, food insecurity and other impacts of climate change, compounded by humanitarian access constraints. Because of this, UNICEF requires flexible and multi-year resources to support priority preparedness initiatives at the country level that will improve response capacities. Without flexible funds, UNICEF will be unable to prepare for and immediately deploy support in rapid-onset emergencies.



Sector	2024 requirements (US\$)
Emergency response	4,050,000 ¹⁶
Emergency Preparedness	5,350,000 ¹⁷
Regional Office capacity	2,950,000 ¹⁸
Total	12,350,000

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ENDNOTES

1. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Overview of disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean 2000–2022, OCHA and UNDRR, September 2023. The number of people affected by storms increased 38 per cent between 2019 and 2022, and the number of those affected by floods increased 19.5 per cent over the same period.
2. This appeal covers emergency preparedness efforts at the regional level, and emergency responses to situations that may emerge over the year in countries, or related to crises that are not covered by other humanitarian appeals in the region.
3. The in-need figures reflect the number of people with pressing needs in the major sectors that UNICEF supports in countries covered by this regional appeal.
4. Sectoral 'in need' figures have been estimated on the basis of the estimated number of people affected by disasters in the whole region.
5. Preliminary estimation of 'at risk' populations, based on the average number of people affected by natural hazards per year in the Latin America and Caribbean region between 2018 and 2022, according to EM-DAT, The International Disaster Database. The figure does not take into account the expected increase in the impact of natural hazards in 2024 due to climate variability.
6. Humanitarian needs related to migration across Mexico and Central America are covered by the Mexico and Central America: Children on the move and other crises Humanitarian Action for Children appeal; while another appeal, the Children on the Move in South America, and crisis-affected communities appeal, covers needs related to migration flows mainly in South America, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago.
7. OCHA and UNDRR, Overview of disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean 2000–2022, September 2023.
8. EM-DAT, Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters/University of Louvain, Brussels, Belgium, The International Disaster Database, available at <<https://public.emdat.be/>>, accessed 11 September 2023.
9. Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023: Unstacking global poverty – Data for high impact action, UNDP and OHPI, 2023.
10. Fifteen countries in the region report humanitarian access constraints, including seven countries with high access constraints. Source: ACAPS, Humanitarian Access Overview: July 2023, ACAPS, Geneva, July 2023.
11. The Fragile States Index is at 'Warning' or 'Alert' levels in 16 countries in the region. Source: The Fund for Peace (FFP), Fragile States Index: Annual Report 2023, FFP, Washington, D.C., June 2023.
12. Overarching commitments include: preparedness, coordination, supply and logistics, humanitarian access, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and accountability to affected populations. Cross-sectoral commitments include: gender, disabilities, early childhood development and adolescents development and participation.
13. UNICEF is committed to empowering local responders in humanitarian crises in a variety of ways. The revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action made investing in strengthening the capacities of local actors in the humanitarian response a mandatory benchmark for UNICEF action. A more localized response will improve humanitarian action and is fundamental to achieving better accountability to affected populations.
14. Including with staff from the Regional Office or by supporting rapid deployments through other global or regional surge mechanisms.
15. Including health, nutrition, WASH, education, child protection and social protection.
16. Includes projected funding needs for responding to emerging situations not covered by other country/multi-country Humanitarian Action for Children appeals. The projected funding requirement for 2024 has been reduced compared with 2023, because at the time of the preparation of this appeal there were no mid- or large-scale emergency response plans ongoing in the region for situations outside of UNICEF's other Humanitarian Action for Children appeals. This regional appeal will be revisited if new crises emerge that would surpass the projected funding levels.
17. Emergency preparedness funding will focus on regional-level support and support to country office preparedness for the whole Latin America and Caribbean region. This includes risk analysis, scenario building, anticipated response analysis, technical assistance and quality assurance for emergency preparedness actions and contingency and preparedness planning through missions, workshops or remote support.
18. The Regional Office capacity line item focuses on strengthening Regional Office capacity in guidance, supervision and oversight, including through critical staff and resources.