

UNICEF PROCEDURE ON REGIONAL EMERGENCY ACTIVATION FOR LEVEL 2 EMERGENCIES

Document Number: EMOPS/PROCEDURE/2019/002

Effective Date: 1 June 2019

RATIONALE

1. In line with the Executive Directive (CF/EXD/2011-001) and its addendum on the Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure (CEAP), the Executive Directive (CF/EXD/2013-003) was issued in 2013 to enable the organization to effectively mobilize urgently required support from Regional Offices as well as the Headquarters to relevant Country Offices to respond to a Level 2 (L2) emergency in a timely and effective fashion. In 2018, a review of UNICEF emergency procedures found that the CEAP was generally seen as working well for sudden onset emergencies, having the intended results. However, the challenge was identified in simultaneously attending to multiple Level 3 (L3) and L2 emergencies due to increasingly protracted nature of each crisis which stretched the organization beyond its capacity.
2. The review concluded with a set of recommendations:
 - Should not continue beyond 18 months and be replaced by a corporate protocol for continued support from RO/HQs to the relevant Country Office.
 - To clarify accountabilities of the EMOPS Director and Regional Directors in relation to the GEC function with “a single chain of command”.
 - To explicitly state that the Country Representative remains accountable for the response in an L3 and L2 emergency.
 - The “graduation process” from special arrangements in procedures and management of L3 crises
3. In November 2018, the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) issued the standard operating procedures (SOP) for the new Humanitarian System-wide Scale-up Activation, replacing the April 2012 Transformative Agenda Level 3 definition and procedures. The IASC Scale-Up activation is a system-wide mobilization in response to a sudden onset and/or rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation, and similar SOPs are under development for sustain/severe crises and will be shared with IASC Principals for decision in 2019. Within the system-wide Scale-Up, the IASC also issues in April 2019 a Protocol for the Control of Infectious Disease Events. As a member of the IASC, UNICEF adheres to and aligns its internal corporate emergency procedures to the ones developed by the IASC.
4. Considering the reputational risks associated with humanitarian situations, it is important to ensure the CEAP procedures respect the accountabilities at all levels.
5. This procedure outlines criteria and steps for activation of the corporate emergency procedure, accountability and decision-making at each level of the organization i.e. HQ, RO and CO, and measures to be activated in the event of a L2 emergency. This new procedure supersedes CF/EXD/2011 – 001.

APPLICABILITY / SCOPE

6. The Regional Emergency Activation Procedure applies to L2 emergencies, defined as situations where the magnitude of the emergency is such that a Country Office (CO) needs additional and prioritized support from other parts of the organization (Headquarters, Regional and Country Offices) to respond, and where the Regional Office (RO) must provide dedicated leadership and support. It

is designed for the UNICEF Country Programme's response (sectors and cross-cutting areas) to be timely, appropriately assessed, designed and executed according to the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs).

PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

7. Situations defined as L2 emergencies could be sudden-onset emergencies, a significant deterioration in an ongoing complex emergency or a slow-onset emergency (e.g. famine alerts) which is not sufficiently addressed through the regular UNICEF Country Programme, or a situation where CCC-based emergency preparedness measures need to be urgently augmented to avoid imminent risks to children. In addition, L2 emergencies can be country-specific, cover a region or many regions within a country, multi-country and/or sub-regional in nature or potentially span more than one region.
8. In all cases, the determination of what constitutes an L2 is based on analysis of the same four criteria as those which are used to define L3 emergencies: scale, urgency, complexity, and capacity.
9. When a crisis spans countries within more than one Regional Office, the multi-country response will be designated as L3 based on the analysis of the four criteria

Steps for Activation

10. For each of the situations to be designated as an L2 emergency, the Regional Director (RD) will prepare a recommendation memo¹.
 - 10.1. The recommendation memo will include an analysis of the four criteria and explain why the emergency is justified as an L2 emergency. It will also include a succinct assessment of risks, with a focus on those risks that are likely to result from simplified procedures, and proposed measures to mitigate those increased risks. The memo will be submitted to the Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) Director for endorsement. Once endorsed, the EMOPS Director will forward the recommendation memo to the Deputy Executive Director (DED) Programmes² for consideration. If he/she agrees, the DED Programmes will seek the final approval of the Executive Director (ED). Once this approval is obtained, a global broadcast message is sent to all staff to inform the designation of this situation as an L2 emergency. The process between submission of the recommendation memo by the Regional Director and the broadcast message, should occur within two days.
 - 10.2. If a disagreement between an RD and the EMOPS Director regarding a specific humanitarian situation cannot be resolved within two days after receiving the RD's recommendation memo for either a new L2 or for a continuation of a given L2, the DED Programmes will recommend a final decision for approval by the ED.

Deactivation and phased approach

11. One month prior to the expiry date of the L2 emergency, the RD and EMOPS Director assess the four criteria (scale, urgency, complexity and capacity) and recommend to the DED Programmes either to:
 - deactivate the L2 emergency;
 - extend the scale-up phase for another three months;
 - transition to a sustain phase and specify for how long - if the complexity of the crisis persists and the capacity still needs additional support from the RO;

¹ Using OED's decision memo cover sheet and attach an analysis of activation criteria (Annex)

² The other UNICEF DEDs should be copied on this communication.

12. Upon receiving the recommendation from the RD and EMOPS Director, the DED Programme will communicate the decision to the GMT.
 - 12.1. In case of deactivation, the RD and EMOPS Director define a specific 'exit strategy' in the weeks prior to the deactivation of the level 2 emergency.
 - 12.2. After deactivation, the RD and EMOPS Director decide which emergency procedures remain applicable and the DED Programmes will communicate the decision along with the deactivation message to the GMT.

13. **Phased Approach:** The first six months (exceptionally nine months) of L2 activation will be noted as the **L2 Scale-up Phase**. When an L2 emergency is deemed to be protracted, the CEAP will continue to an **L2 Sustain Phase**. This phase should last **up to twelve months**.
 - 13.1. Crises which are of complex nature (usually conflict related) may be deemed protracted when six months into an L2 emergency declaration the following factors, not mutually exclusive, prevail:
 - Continued large scale displacement of people.
 - Widespread/systematic violation of human rights, particularly grave violations of child rights.
 - Continued/intensified crisis/conflict.
 - Unstable security situation and constraints to access.
 - No imminent (political) resolution to crisis and need for political support and focus.
 - Continued need for organization wide attention on a priority basis.
 - 13.2. After the transition to a sustain phase, an analysis of the four criteria (scale, urgency, complexity, and capacity) and accompanying mitigating measures will be the basis for the recommendation/ decision to deactivate the Sustain Phase.
 - 13.3. At any point in the L2 Sustain Phase should the crisis escalate and further scale-up be required, there may be consideration to revert to an L2 Scale-up Phase.

Simplifications put in place by L2 designation

14. Upon activation of the L2 emergency, CO, RO and HQ Divisions are required to apply the Emergency Procedures (formerly called SSOPs) automatically with immediate effect in order to enable an immediate and effective response.
 - 14.1. EMOPS will put in place a real-time monitoring mechanism to monitor the timeliness to implement the Emergency Procedures.
 - 14.2. As part of its audits, the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI) will assess the extent to which the Emergency Procedures were implemented.
 - 14.3. Similarly, all the L2 evaluations are required to assess the extent to which the Emergency Procedures were implemented and the impact on the speed and quality of emergency response.
 - 14.4. Sectors covered by such procedures include: Resource Mobilization, HR (including staff support), Financial Management, CSO procedure (PCAs), Supply and Logistics.

Other measures put in place by L2 designation

15. Although all emergencies require support from HQ Divisions and Regional Offices, the L2 designation will become an overall tool for prioritization, enhanced support from RO and HQ, access to and application of the Emergency Procedures, as well as the requirements outlined below.
 - CO leadership remains accountable for the response to an L2 emergency.
 - The RO's role in leading the coordination of support and in having oversight over the CO(s) is also unchanged but will be reinforced by the L2 designation. The support provided by the RO to the CO is enhanced in comparison to the support regularly provided to emergency preparedness and response.

- HQ Divisions are required to organize themselves to provide enhanced and prioritized support and coordination to the RO and CO. This could entail: (a) prioritization of support to L2 emergencies in allocating capacity and staff time, (b) enhanced role of the RO in quality assurance, and (c) rapid response time for requests from COs (a maximum of 24 hours).
 - A Regional Technical Emergency Team (RTET) is established for coordination of information and technical follow up, looking closely at sectors and specific operational issues. A chair of the RTET is appointed by and reports to the RD. Meetings will be held on a weekly basis during the scale up phase. Where relevant, a Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT) bringing together relevant HQ Divisions, RO and CO may be established to cover L2 emergencies.
16. The RD or the RTET calls for an REMT meeting when a strategic decision is required to ensure a fully coordinated and speedy corporate response. Meetings will be held on an “as needed” basis.
 17. HQ divisions have a role to oversee and provide support so that critical gaps in the emergency response are addressed. The RD tracks follow up of CO/RO requests to RO/HQ in the REMT, where key actions and deliverables are reviewed and specific follow up actions and accompanying accountabilities are determined. EMOPS has a coordinating role in delivering requested HQ division support to COs/ROs.
 18. It is clear that the capacity to respond and coordinate will depend on resource availability and personnel. If additional capacity needs are identified, surge should be prioritized both to affected COs as well as the relevant ROs.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Document Title: UNICEF Procedure on Corporate Emergency Activation for Level 2 Emergencies	
Corporate Risk Category: Strategic/Programmatic	
Risks of not adhering to Procedure	Mitigation Measures
The L2 procedure is not adhered to, affecting the timeliness and effectiveness of the response and decision-making.	Develop a monitoring checklist on the application of the procedure, which will be monitored in the first weeks of the L2 in the REMT. Organise webinars on the new procedure for all staff and for staff working on the crisis in the first week of the declaration of the L2 crisis.
L2 Scale-up phase is unnecessarily extended or transitioned to the sustain phase not based on the analysis of four criteria (scale, urgency, complexity, capacity), but due to other reasons such as political or visibility purposes.	Rationale for extension or transition is documented by EMOPS and Executive Director and Director of Emergency Programmes ensure the decision is made based strictly on four criteria.
Discontinuation of L2 without measures in place for the CO to continue responding in a timely and effective manner.	Establish an exit strategy and take measures to ensure the readiness of the CO, RO and HQ to continue enhanced support post deactivation as required.
REMT is represented or delegated by technical staff rather than the Director level which hampers strategic decision making.	By having the Regional Technical Emergency Team as a forum for technical discussions and support, the REMT is only called for when strategic decision is needed. This would decrease the number of REMT meetings, which would facilitate commitment from Directors to attend REMTs. Where required, the GEC may restrict REMT meetings to Director and Deputy Director attendance only.

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION PAGE

Document Title	UNICEF PROCEDURE ON REGIONAL EMERGENCY ACTIVATION FOR LEVEL 2 EMERGENCIES
Document Number	EMOPS/PROCEDURE/2019/002
Effective Date	01.06.2019
Mandatory Review Date	01.06.2021
Responsible Business Owner	EMOPS
Responsible Manager	Grant Leaity
Document Summary	This procedure outlines criteria and steps for activation of the corporate emergency procedure, accountability and decision-making at each level of the organization i.e. HQ, RO and CO, and measures to be activated in the event of a L2 emergency.
Regulatory content the Document Replaces	This new procedure supersedes CF/EXD/2011 – 001 .
Topics Covered	Humanitarian response, Programmes, Operations, Business Processes
Corporate Risk Area	Strategic/Programmatic
Reference / Links to Enabling Legislation and Background	Convention of the Rights of the Child
Links to Relevant Policy	Core Commitments for Children
Links to Relevant Procedure	Simplified Standard Operating Procedures Linking Humanitarian and Development Programming Procedure
Links to Relevant Guidance	
Links to Relevant Training Materials	https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=30
Links to Other Knowledge & Information Resources	https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/PD-RRFP