

## UNICEF PROCEDURE ON CORPORATE EMERGENCY ACTIVATION FOR LEVEL 3 EMERGENCIES

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### RATIONALE

1. In 2011, an Executive Directive (CF/EXD/2011-001) introduced the Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure (CEAP) to enable the organization to effectively mobilize urgently required support from Headquarters (HQ) and Regional Offices (RO) to relevant Country Offices (CO) to respond to a Level 3 (L3) 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 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:
  - The “graduation process” from special arrangements in procedures and management of L3 crises 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 emergency.
  - To limit the GEC function to the Surge Phase of L3s which has a maximum duration of 6 months.
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 details steps and accountabilities to strengthen UNICEF’s capacity to respond immediately and effectively to a L3 emergency. It outlines criteria and steps for activation of the corporate emergency procedure (CEAP), 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 L3 emergency. **This new procedure supersedes CF/EXD/2011 – 001.**

## APPLICABILITY / SCOPE

6. The CEAP Procedure applies to a L3 emergency, either a sudden-onset emergency, a significant and rapid deterioration of an ongoing complex emergency, or slow-onset emergency (e.g. famine alerts).

## PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

7. The determination of a L3 emergency is made based on scale; urgency; complexity; and capacity of RO and COs affected by a crisis. These are defined as follows.
  - 7.1. The determination of a L3 emergency is made based on scale; urgency; complexity; and capacity of RO and COs affected by a crisis. These are defined as follows:
    - Scale: number of affected/potentially affected people, including in proportion to total country population; size of affected areas)
    - Urgency: number of people displaced; crude mortality rates; minimal or no access to life-saving support; critical protection risks
    - Complexity: multi-layered emergency; presence of a multitude of actors; high risks of politicization; lack of humanitarian access; high security risks to humanitarian actors
    - Capacity: low levels of capacities of Country Office and Regional Office, including lack of required specialized or technical expertise; needs outweigh the capacity to respond; inadequate humanitarian leadership;
  - 7.2. An activation of L3 emergency “scale-up” does not indicate a ranking of the severity of a crisis.

## Steps for Activation

8. In case of an emergency and in accordance with the Core Commitments for Children (CCCs), the CO, with the support and guidance of the RO, will respond immediately to the needs of affected children triggered by the emergency.
9. Within 24 hours of receiving the initial report on the emergency, the EMOPS Director:
  - 9.1. consults relevant Regional Director (s) (RDs), key UN and IASC partners, and the Deputy Executive Directors (DEDs);
  - 9.2. presents his/her assessment of the level of the emergency to the Executive Director;
  - 9.3. recommends action needed related to the activation of the L3, duration of application, as appropriate and taking into account decisions on system wide activation.
10. The Executive Director (ED) within 24 hours of receiving the recommendation from the EMOPS Director:
  - Decides on the need for activation of L3. If the decision is to declare L3, a Global Broadcast from the ED is issued.
  - specifies the period of application (for a minimum of 6 months and initially up to a maximum of 6 months maximum. This can be subsequently extended to 9 months in exceptional cases which will be defined in the analysis of the four criteria);
  - informs key partners and the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC).
11. Phased Approach: the first 6 months (exceptionally 9 months) of L3 activation will be noted as the L3 Scale-up Phase. When an L3 emergency is deemed to be protracted, the CEAP will continue to an L3 Sustain Phase, with same elements of the procedure coming into effect. This phase could last up to a maximum of 12 months. Crises which are of complex nature (usually conflict related) may be deemed protracted when six months into an L3 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.

### **Measures to be implemented upon activation**

12. The ED appoints a Global Emergency Coordinator (GEC). The EMOPS Director serves as the GEC for the first 3 months of the scale-up phase, after which the GEC may be handed over to the RD. In exceptional circumstances, an alternative GEC can be appointed at the discretion of the ED.
13. In exceptional circumstances, the Executive Director may decide to implement the “step aside” procedure for the UNICEF Representative. The decision will be made on the recommendation of the GEC, in consultation with the concerned RD and Director, DHR.
14. Emergency Procedures and list of core tasks for the first days of the emergency are implemented immediately<sup>1</sup>.

### **Accountabilities and Decision-Making at HQ/RO in support of response**

15. The GEC is responsible for the mobilization of corporate-wide support; and for quality assurance of the response. (See the Terms of Reference of the GEC in annex).
16. The GEC reports directly to the ED during the first month after the onset of a crisis, and after that reports to the DED responsible for emergencies. He/she has direct access to RD(s), DEDs and ED to resolve any bottlenecks.
  - 16.1. Other accountabilities remain as specified by the accountability framework in the Executive Board document “The organization of the United Nations Children's Fund” (E/ICEF/Organization/Rev.3, 1998), mainly:
    - The Representative remains accountable for the response to an L3 emergency.
    - The RO will continue to lead the coordination of support and have oversight of the CO. 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 will organize themselves to provide enhanced and prioritized support and coordination to the RO and CO. This will entail: (a) prioritization of support to L3 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).
  - 16.2. The GEC will mobilize corporate capacities in support of the emergency response.
  - 16.3. The GEC establishes a TET and appoints its chairperson for coordination of information and technical follow up, looking closely at sectors and specific operational issues. The chair of the TET reports to the GEC. Meetings will be held on a weekly basis during the scale up phase.
  - 16.4. The GEC will mobilize an Emergency Management Team (EMT) at the Director level for corporate-wide decision-making to support and advise the GEC. Unless delegated, it will be chaired by the GEC.

<sup>1</sup> The Emergency Procedures are under development and will be finalized in 2019. These will replace the Simplified SOPs.

- 16.5. The GEC will identify and deploy surge staff to affected country(ies), or regional hub (in case of a multi-country emergency) on a “no regrets” basis. Deployment of surge staff will take place within 48 hours. Maximum effort will be made to expedite obtaining visa when needed.

### **Leadership of the response at Country Level**

17. Country Representative, or the appointed OIC, remains accountable for the design and implementation of the response to an L3 emergency at the country level.
- 17.1. Immediately upon activation, the GEC convenes RD(s) and relevant HQ directors for an initial assessment of the capabilities in place in CO. Based on the GEC’s recommendation, in consultation with the RD, the ED decides whether the country office leadership has to be changed.
- 17.2. If the current Country Representative is confirmed, the RD and Country Representative define the working methods between surge staff and current CO team. If ‘step aside’ is invoked, based on the GEC’s recommendation, in consultation with the RD, the ED temporarily appoints an OIC to lead the response at the country level until the new senior designated official arrives.

### **Emergency Procedures (activated automatically)**

18. Upon activation of L3 emergency, CO, RO and HQ Divisions are required to apply the Emergency Procedures to enable an immediate and effective response.
- 18.1. EMOPS puts in place a real-time monitoring mechanism to monitor the timeliness to implement the Emergency Procedures.
- 18.2. The Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI) assesses the implementation of the Emergency Procedures.
- 18.3. Evaluation Office assesses implementation of all L3 procedures and the impact on the speed and quality of emergency response.
- 18.4. Sectors covered by such procedures include: resource mobilization, human resources (including staff support), financial management, Civil Society Organizations procedures (CSO), Supply and logistics.

### **Deactivation and phased approach**

19. One month prior to the expiry date of the L3 emergency, the GEC, RD and/or EMOPS Director assess the four criteria (scale, urgency, complexity and capacity) and recommend to the Executive Director either to:
- deactivate the L3 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 of the CO and RO still needs additional support from the HQ;
  - transition to an L2 emergency - if the capacity of the CO still needs support from the RO.
- 19.1. Upon receiving the recommendation from the GEC, RD and/or EMOPS Director, the Executive Director will communicate the decision via Global Broadcast.
- 19.2. In case of deactivation, the GEC, RD and/or EMOPS Director define a specific ‘exit strategy’ in the weeks prior to the deactivation of the level 3 emergency.
- 19.3. After deactivation, some of the emergency procedures may continue to be applied where necessary. The GEC, RD and/or EMOPS Director decide which procedures remain applicable and the Executive Director will communicate the decision along with the deactivation message via Global Broadcast.

- 19.4. In the case of a 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 transition to L2 or deactivate the Sustain Phase.
- 19.5. At any point in the L3 'sustain phase' should the crisis escalate and further scale-up be required, there may be consideration to revert to an L3 'scale-up phase'.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Document Title: UNICEF Procedure on Corporate Emergency Activation for Level 3 Emergencies	
Corporate Risk Category: Strategic/Programmatic	
Risks of not adhering to Procedure	Mitigation Measures
The L3 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 L3 in the EMT. 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 L3 crisis.
L3 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 L3 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.
Lack of continuity or consistency in the directions and decisions where the GEC's role is shifted from EMOPS Director to the Regional Director, which leads to confusion among staff responsible for the response.	The handover is properly managed during the transition of GEC's function to ensure continuity and consistency of the humanitarian response.
The EMT is represented or delegated by technical staff rather than the Director level which hampers strategic decision making.	By having the TET as a forum for technical discussions and support, the EMT is only called for when strategic decision is needed. This would decrease the number of EMT meetings, which would facilitate commitment from Directors to attend EMTs. Where required, the GEC may restrict EMT meetings to Director and Deputy Director attendance only.

## **Annex 1**

### **UNICEF Global Emergency Coordinator**

#### **Terms of Reference**

Upon declaration of a Level 3 emergency, UNICEF's Executive Director will appoint a Global Emergency Coordinator (GEC) and activate the Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure (CEAP).

#### **The role of the GEC**

The role of the GEC will be limited to the scale-up phase, usually lasting six months, or in exceptional cases, up to nine months. Unless the Executive Director decides otherwise, the Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) will serve as the GEC for the first three months of a Level 3 emergency. The GEC designation will subsequently pass to the concerned Regional Director.

The GEC role is established with clear delegations of authority to: a) mobilize corporate-wide support for capacities and resources; b) oversee the formulation of the emergency response plan; and c) support and oversee the quality of the immediate emergency response.

#### **Reporting lines**

The GEC reports directly to the Executive Director during the first month after the onset of a crisis. Following this, the GEC reports to the Deputy Executive Director responsible for emergencies. S/he has direct access to the Regional Director(s), Deputy Executive Directors and the Executive Director to resolve any bottlenecks.

#### **Responsibilities:**

The GEC is responsible for the following:

- a) Mobilization of corporate-wide support for capacities and resources.
  - Appointing a secretariat to support his/her functions for the duration of the Level 3 emergency.
  - Leading, chairing and convening the Emergency Management Team (EMT)<sup>2</sup>, when support for corporate wide decision-making is required.
  - Appointing a chair of the Technical Emergency Team (TET), which will be comprised of technical staff working at the country, regional and headquarters levels;
  - Overseeing the mobilization of corporate resources and the coordination of all required support from UNICEF Headquarters and the concerned Regional Office for the in-country response;
  - Resolving any bottlenecks that require corporate-level action and providing troubleshooting for the response as needed;
  - Ensuring coordinated key messages and an advocacy strategy in consultation with the regional director, the EMOPS Director, the Division of Communications (DOC) and the Public Partnership Division (PPD).
  
- b) Oversight of the formulation of the emergency response plan.
  - Overseeing strategic planning and emergency response planning according to the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action standards for coverage and quality (including links to inter-agency and system-wide plans, sequencing and ensuring supply and human resource plans are in line with the overall integrated programmatic response plan);
  - Deciding on the appropriate composition of the initial surge deployment and ensuring that the deployments are made in a timely manner;
  - Deciding whether cluster coordinators should be deployed for UNICEF-led clusters;
  - In collaboration with the regional director and/or EMOPS Director, defining a specific 'transition strategy', including reinforcing the capacity of the Regional Office where necessary, in the weeks

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<sup>2</sup> The Emergency Management Team is comprised of key country office staff, relevant Regional Director(s) and Headquarters Division Directors, to ensure a fully coordinated and speedy corporate response.

prior to: 1) the deactivation of the scale-up phase of the Level 3 emergency; 2) the transition from the scale-up phase to the sustain phase; or 3) the transition from the sustain phase to either deactivation or downgrading to a Level 2 emergency.

- c) Support and oversight of the quality of the immediate emergency response.
- Supporting the Executive Director in determining whether, in exceptional circumstances, to implement the 'step aside' procedure and replace the country representative. The decision will be made at the GEC's recommendation, in consultation with the Regional Director and/or the EMOPS Director;
  - Ensuring the implementation of the emergency procedures (currently called the Simplified Standard Operating Procedures) and relevant key tasks according to the CEAP, in line with agreed timelines, and supporting country offices on controlled risk-taking;
  - Supporting the EMOPS Director in coordinating and troubleshooting the response at the global level with other United Nations agencies through regular Emergency Directors Group meetings or bilateral consultations;

**DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION PAGE**

Document Title	UNICEF PROCEDURE ON CORPORATE EMERGENCY ACTIVATION FOR LEVEL 3 EMERGENCIES
Document Number	EMOPS/PROCEDURE/2019/001
Effective Date	01.06.2019
Mandatory Review Date	01.06.2021
Responsible Business Owner	EMOPS
Responsible Manager	Grant Leaity
Document Summary	The procedure outlines criteria and steps for activation of the corporate emergency procedure (CEAP), accountability and decision-making at each level of the organization; and measures to be activated in the event of a L3 emergency.
Regulatory content the Document Replaces	This new procedure supersedes <a href="#">CF/EXD/2011 – 001</a>
Topics Covered	Humanitarian response, Programmes, Operations, Business Processes
Corporate Risk Area	Strategic/Programmatic
Reference / Links to Enabling Legislation and Background	<a href="#">Convention of the Rights of the Child</a>
Links to Relevant Policy	<a href="#">Core Commitments for Children</a>
Links to Relevant Procedure	<a href="#">Simplified Standard Operating Procedures</a> <a href="#">Linking Humanitarian and Development Programming Procedure</a>
Links to Relevant Guidance	
Links to Relevant Training Materials	<a href="https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=30">https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=30</a>
Links to Other Knowledge & Information Resources	<a href="https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/PD-RRFP">https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/PD-RRFP</a>