



DELIVERING SUPPLIES WHEN CRISIS STRIKES

Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings

OVERVIEW

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, responds to emergencies in some of the world's poorest countries, delivering lifesaving sexual and reproductive health supplies and services to protect the rights, safety and dignity of women and young people affected by crises. In 2017, UNFPA reached 16 million people in 58 countries with humanitarian assistance, including 10.8 million people reached with sexual and reproductive health services and 3.9 million people reached with gender-based violence (GBV) services. In the last decade, UNFPA's humanitarian activities have grown exponentially.

UNFPA Supplies, the thematic fund for family planning, and the UNFPA Humanitarian Action Thematic Fund are the major providers of the reproductive health kits that UNFPA dispatches in emergencies. These Funds also support countries in the preparedness, response, and recovery phases to develop strong supply chains for contraceptives and key maternal health medicines.

The consequences of conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies can be staggering. More than half of maternal deaths occur in fragile and humanitarian settings, where pregnant women are at risk of life-threatening complications. Disrupted access to family planning services exposes women and adolescent girls to unintended pregnancies in perilous conditions. The breakdown of protection systems heightens the risk of sexual violence, exploitation and HIV infection. Hygiene needs are often neglected.

UNFPA is a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Global Health Cluster and often convenes Reproductive Health Working Groups (RHWG) under the Health Cluster. UNFPA is also a member of the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on Reproductive Health in Crises Steering Committee. In 2017, UNFPA assumed sole leadership of the GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR), the global-level forum for coordination on GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response in humanitarian settings that functions as part of the Global Protection Cluster.

PREPAREDNESS

UNFPA builds national health systems and workforce capacities so that countries can respond swiftly to crises, and provide high-quality integrated sexual and reproductive health services and gender-based violence services. UNFPA's humanitarian strategy addresses key aspects of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, including data readiness. UNFPA prepositions essential reproductive health supplies, strengthens supply chain management, develops capacity of the health workforce, and facilitates local partnerships to enhance emergency preparedness.

RESPONSE

At the onset of a crisis, UNFPA immediately coordinates Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) lifesaving activities and supports partners in implementing the MISP. UNFPA provides logistical support for timely delivery of emergency reproductive health kits. Rapid response mechanisms and fast-track procedures are used to support a timely and effective response. UNFPA also deploys mobile health teams and surge specialists to provide instant support on the ground in crisis settings.

RECOVERY

When the situation allows, UNFPA supports countries in the transition to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including the transition to sustainable supply chains. UNFPA works with partners to strengthen national health systems and build resilience.

Emergency Reproductive Health Kits

Standardized reproductive health kits designed for worldwide use are prepackaged and ready for immediate dispatch to meet urgent and emergency requests.

UNFPA has been globally managing these inter-agency emergency reproductive health kits since 1998, on behalf of the IAWG, supplying global and regional partners in addition to UNFPA country offices and implementing partners. These kits are designed to respond to various population sizes and needs. Family planning kits

contain condoms, oral and injectable contraceptives, and intrauterine devices. Maternal and neonatal health kits cover clinical delivery assistance and basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric care, with essential equipment and medical supplies. Other kits contain supplies used in the treatment of sexually transmitted infections, the management of miscarriage and blood transfusions.

The most basic, the clean delivery kit, is designed for visibly pregnant women and contains a bar of soap, a razor blade

Emergency
Reproductive
Health Kits
2017

13,000 RH kits
delivered by UNFPA in 48 countries

17 million
people in humanitarian settings
targeted through these kits

PARTNERSHIP



Despite extreme challenges posed by famine, brutal conflict and cholera, UNFPA support is reaching women and girls in **Yemen**. UNFPA leads the rapid response mechanism, coordinating with UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Reproductive health supplies are prepositioned at five UN humanitarian hubs. Extensive partnerships and effective collaboration with the Yemeni Government, local non-profits, UN agencies and donors heighten the impact of UNFPA's humanitarian response.



For the **Rohingya** in Bangladesh, UNFPA works with civil society and government partners to deliver emergency supplies, including sharing warehouses with the WFP. With the Ministry of Health and Sports, UNFPA supports supply chain management and integrates the MISP. Working

with local ethnic health organizations helps reach marginalized populations. More than 30 partners participate in the UNFPA-led GBV Sub-Cluster in the Cox's Bazar area.



In **Nigeria**, UNFPA's implementing partners set up safe spaces for the kidnapped Chibok girls and other GBV survivors. The rescued girls received support through UNFPA's partnership with the Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development and the Government of Canada, which included psychosocial support and counseling, reproductive health services and medical care, and skills acquisition and empowerment.

PREPOSITIONING OF SUPPLIES



Hubs in Australia and Fiji quickly transport supplies from stocked warehouses when typhoons and tsunamis strike or conflicts erupt across 11 countries in **Asia and the Pacific**, the most disaster-prone region in the world.

In 2015, UNFPA established the Regional Prepositioning Initiative with support from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). In 2018, it made lifesaving supplies immediately available in 17 emergency responses in nine countries across the region.



Only 40 per cent of health facilities in **South Sudan** remain functional. As part of prepositioning and preparedness, five hubs stock post-rape treatment kits and other emergency RH kits. More than 30 MoUs have been signed with partners to deliver supplies

to the last mile. UNFPA also supports safe spaces, youth corners and a one-stop-centre in Juba as part of its GBV response. UNFPA is the sole provider of contraceptives for all health partners in South Sudan.

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to cut the umbilical cord and string to tie it, and plastic gloves and sheeting to prevent infections. The largest kit, weighing more than a ton, is the referral-level kit for reproductive health that **serves the needs of a population of 150,000 for three months** and contains all equipment and supplies to set up a surgical maternity ward and provide emergency caesarean sections to save the lives of mothers and newborns.

As part of integrated sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services, UNFPA provides the

post-rape treatment kit to health centres, hospitals and trained providers for the clinical management of rape services for survivors. Survivors of rape and sexual assault require an immediate medical response to heal injuries, prevent unintended pregnancies with emergency contraceptives (where local laws allow), and administer medication to prevent or treat infections.

1,200 RH kits

dispatched to referral hospitals for lifesaving caesarean sections and other emergency obstetric surgical interventions in 37 countries

\$7.4 million

Total cost of emergency reproductive health kits

MOBILE HEALTH TEAMS



In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, UNFPA deployed mobile health teams to treat women fleeing violence in the Kasai region, many who were too frightened to venture far from the bush. The mobile clinics were stocked with emergency RH kits including

post-rape treatment kits and emergency obstetric supplies. The conflict affected 170 health centres in Kasai. UNFPA supplied reproductive health kits to 25 health facilities in the eight worst-affected health zones.



In **Iraq**, UNFPA deployed mobile health teams along routes of displacement for women fleeing military operations in Mosul, bringing supplies and services to where they were needed most. This strategy was part of a Rapid Response Mechanism with UNICEF

and the WFP that saved women's lives through mobile and static clinics serving populations on the move, in camps and in host communities. Rebuilding of facilities such as Al-Qaim Hospital is underway.

HEALTH SYSTEMS AND SUPPLY CHAINS



Zero maternal deaths in Za'atari refugee camp in **Jordan** inspired the government to work with UNFPA to mainstream affordable and high-quality sexual and reproductive health into the national health system and improve capacity and institutional resilience. After a needs assessment,

the partners launched an RMNCAH initiative and addressed gaps in skilled staff, supply chain management and safe access to services. Bulk procurement improved cost-effectiveness and reduced delays.



In **Libya**, years of crisis have negatively affected the national health system. Fast-tracking of reproductive health kits, with accelerated procurement and distribution, prevented the collapse of maternal health services. UNFPA is working with the Ministry

of Health to rebuild supply chain management and the health information system while responding to humanitarian needs.

UNFPA manages prepackaged kits for immediate dispatch in emergencies

- Kit 1** Condoms
- Kit 2** Clean delivery
- Kit 3** Post-rape treatment
- Kit 4** Oral and injectable contraception
- Kit 5** Treatment of sexually transmitted infections
- Kit 6** Clinical delivery assistance
- Kit 7** Intrauterine devices (IUDs)
- Kit 8** Management of miscarriage and complications of abortion
- Kit 9** Suture of tears and vaginal examination
- Kit 10** Vacuum extraction delivery
- Kit 11** Referral level kit for reproductive health
- Kit 12** Blood transfusion kit

16 million

people reached with humanitarian assistance in 58 countries affected by emergencies



10.8 million

people reached with sexual and reproductive health services in 53 countries



3.9 million

women and girls reached with gender-based violence information and services



1.5 million

young people reached with adolescent sexual and reproductive health services



Strengthening cooperation and complementarity among development, humanitarian action and sustaining peace

Collaboration and coordination enable a rapid, effective and holistic humanitarian response. UNFPA engages with numerous global partners, regional and subregional partners, inter-agency working groups, United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organizations, universities, research institutes, NGOs, private sector companies and a growing network of local partners to leverage relatively limited resources. Collective action and strategic partnerships help deliver supplies and services that save and improve lives. Funding gaps hinder humanitarian response and, despite many valued donors, UNFPA's 2017 humanitarian response received only \$215 million, just 51 per cent of the \$424 million required.

UNFPA implements the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, which affirms that the right to sexual and reproductive health, and the right to live free of sexual and other forms of GBV, apply to all people at all times – including to those affected by emergencies. A comprehensive emergency response contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Whether in humanitarian or development settings, UNFPA delivers on three transformative results: end preventable maternal deaths; end the unmet need for family planning and end gender-based violence and all harmful practices, including child marriage.

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