



5 January 2017

UNFPA humanitarian response funding

Summary

In line with decision 2015/3 of the UNFPA Executive Board, UNFPA was requested to report at the first regular session 2017 on the UNFPA emergency fund and its humanitarian response reserve to enable the Executive Board to review this arrangement and the criteria for disbursement of resources. In line with this request, the report provides an update on humanitarian response funding reflecting the emergency fund utilization between 2008 and 2016. From 2008 to November 2016, 85 UNFPA country offices received emergency fund disbursements with a total value of \$ 29.87 million. In 2016 alone, 30 country offices received emergency funds, totalling \$4.87 million. The humanitarian response reserve, an additional pillar of UNFPA humanitarian response funding, is currently unfunded due to financial austerity measures.

Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS
First regular session 2017
New York

UNFPA humanitarian response funding

I. The changing global humanitarian setting

1. Emergencies and other humanitarian situations affect an increasing number of people around the world. At the same time, these humanitarian crises are increasing in intensity, duration, frequency and variety. Moreover, the increase in armed conflicts and natural disasters has not only inflicted a high economic cost on affected communities, but also extracted a huge humanitarian cost, especially for women and girls.

2. The level of humanitarian needs has grown exponentially, with 128.6 million people currently in need of humanitarian assistance (*OCHA Global Humanitarian Needs Overview 2017*). Further, by the end of 2015, over 65.3 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide because of persecution, conflict, generalized violence or human rights violations. Some 21.3 million persons were refugees; a majority of the internally displaced persons and refugees were women and children (*UNHCR Global Trends 2015*). An immediate and swift response at the onset of a population's displacement can mitigate immediate and longer-term health and protection risks for women and girls.

3. In line with global trends, the demand for a UNFPA response to complex humanitarian situations has increased significantly over time, which has led to greater humanitarian funding requirements. This has led to a 160 per cent increase in the organization's humanitarian requirements, from about \$78 million in 2006 to about \$203 million in 2016 – the largest appeal in UNFPA history. While emergency funding requirements have risen, the average funding coverage for UNFPA humanitarian emergencies is just 41 per cent, with resources provided by external sources, including donors, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and other United Nations joint funding mechanisms.

4. In spite of resource limitations, in 2015 UNFPA humanitarian support provided life-saving assistance to an estimated 10.5 million people (mainly women, girls and youth). Around 9 million people were reached with essential sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services and 11,942 reproductive health kits were delivered to support needs. To provide the required services, 751 mobile clinics and 543 maternity homes/tents were operationalized in 2015, in addition to 430 safe spaces.

II. UNFPA emergency fund and humanitarian response reserve

UNFPA emergency fund

5. The UNFPA emergency fund continues to be the key source of initial funding that allows country offices to implement timely humanitarian response. Its main purpose is to provide immediate funding for country offices to enhance timely, life-saving humanitarian assistance, with a focus on sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence and population-related data.

6. The emergency fund, created by in Executive Board decision 2000/13, began with an annual allocation of \$1 million. The Executive Board has since increased the annual allocation three times – raising it to \$3 million annually in 2006; to \$5 million in 2013 (within the context of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and the Integrated Budget for 2014-2017), and again (in decision 2015/3) to \$10 million in 2015. Executive Board decision 2015/3 also established a humanitarian response reserve of \$10 million as a one-time allocation from regular resources.

7. The timing of Executive Board decision 2015/3 coincided with an acute drop in regular resources compared to funding targets, which forced UNFPA to implement financial austerity measures across all components of the Integrated Budget, 2014-2017. This also affected funding for the emergency fund, which was limited to \$5 million. UNFPA has regularly updated

the Executive Board on the overall financial situation and the resulting implications for the organization, including for humanitarian response funding.

8. Since the emergency fund was first created in 2000, it has proven to be an effective mechanism for initiating immediate life-saving support to crisis-affected countries. It has also been used to fund preparedness activities, as well as to bridge emergency needs and advance support before other funding becomes available. The emergency fund has been paramount for demonstrating immediate capacity and for mobilizing future resources, including in Iraq, where the initial allocation of \$100,000 led to an increase in donor confidence and resulted in an additional \$11 million in funding.

9. While the UNFPA emergency fund has increased modestly over the years, it remains small in proportion to overall needs. At its current level, the emergency fund constitutes 2 per cent of UNFPA humanitarian funding. If fully funded, the emergency fund would represent less than 5 per cent of total humanitarian requirements, which amounted to \$203 million at the end of 2015.

10. The emergency fund is available to country offices for the following purposes:

(a) *Acute phases of emergencies.* For all humanitarian assistance programmes (aimed at saving lives and alleviating suffering of a crisis-affected population) in response to armed conflicts or natural disasters;

(b) *Chronic humanitarian situations.* For country offices to expand the humanitarian response.

(c) *Preparedness planning.* Contributing to the implementation of a national contingency or preparedness plan; or initiating or implementing minimum preparedness actions by the United Nations country team.

11. UNFPA provides emergency funds to countries facing crises based on the following criteria:

(a) Regular country programme funds are not available;

(b) Regular country programme funds are not immediately available but could be used later for reimbursement with the approval of the Government;

12. The emergency fund has consistently proven to be an effective method for providing funds to UNFPA offices in a timely manner and allowing the organization to initiate its response to crises before donor and CERF funds become available. Today, the emergency fund remains the quickest, most reliable and most adaptable source of emergency funding for UNFPA.

UNFPA humanitarian response reserve

13. The financial austerity measures implemented by UNFPA also affected funding for the humanitarian response reserve, leading to a suspension of the planned one-time \$10 million allocation. Once funded, the humanitarian response reserve will enable UNFPA offices to initiate or sustain activities and commitments against a signed co-financing agreement in advance of the receipt of the committed funds. Eligibility to access the humanitarian response reserve will be based upon the need to carry out humanitarian activities specified in the co-financing agreement.

14. UNFPA has procedures in place on use of the humanitarian response fund which will enable readiness to implement once funding becomes available. UNFPA welcomes the opportunity to further discuss the scope and functioning of the humanitarian response reserve with the Executive Board in the future.

III. Emergency fund allocation trends

15. In order to provide a snapshot of the most recent period of UNFPA emergency funding, table 1 below details the funding allocation per country in 2016. From 2008 through 2016,

85 country offices received UNFPA emergency funds, with \$29.87 million disbursed, while in 2016, 30 country offices received emergency funds, with \$ 4.87 million disbursed (see table 1 below).

Table 1. 2016 allocation by country

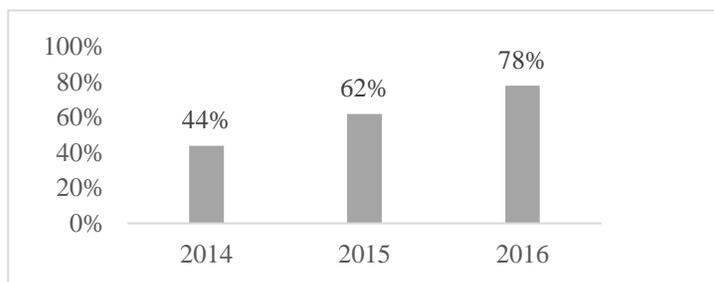
Country	Region	Requested (USD)	Received (USD)	Shortfall (USD)	Shortfall (%)	Implementation rate (%)
Bangladesh – Dhaka	Asia-Pacific	400,000	358,000	42,000	11%	91%
Fiji – Subregional Office/Suva		100,000	78,387	21,613	22%	100%
Nepal – Kathmandu		184,125	100,570	83,555	45%	87%
Philippines – Manila		25,492	25,492	-	0%	83%
Djibouti – Djibouti City	Arab States	18,400	18,400	-	0%	0%
Egypt – Cairo		155,000	13,364	141,636	91%	100%
Iraq - Baghdad		592,080	461,920	130,160	22%	75%
Jordan – Amman		299,537	299,537	-	0%	100%
Libya – Tripoli		152,000	152,000	-	0%	82%
Republic of Yemen – Sana'a		121,620	121,620	-	0%	99%
Somalia – Mogadishu		146,400	146,400	-	0%	73%
Greece – EECARO	Eastern Europe and Central Asia	329,000	215,000	114,000	35%	59%
Serbia		70,000	70,000	-	0%	90%
Turkey – Ankara		407,000	225,000	182,000	45%	100%
ESARO	East and Southern Africa	17,005	17,005	-	0%	52%
Kenya – Nairobi		137,962	97,772	40,190	29%	95%
South Sudan - Juba		550,861	547,861	3,000	1%	98%
Swaziland – Mbabane		111,285	86,000	25,285	23%	48%
Uganda – Kampala		200,035	145,040	54,995	27%	100%
Brazil – Brasilia	Latin America and Caribbean	200,000	200,000	-	0%	99%
Cuba – Havana		95,620	55,000	40,620	42%	93%
Ecuador – Quito		200,000	130,000	70,000	35%	100%
Haiti – Port-au-Prince		150,000	110,500	39,500	26%	51%
Paraguay – Asuncion		146,418	126,366	20,052	14%	100%
Congo – Brazzaville	West and Central Africa	106,218	83,100	23,118	22%	100%
Cameroon – Yaoundé		317,531	296,698	20,833	7%	59%
Gambia – Banjul		60,030	37,000	23,030	38%	73%
Ghana – Accra		42,489	26,000	16,489	39%	92%
Mali – Bamako		400,000	328,000	72,000	18%	46%
Nigeria – Abuja		523,316	300,000	223,316	43%	84%
TOTAL			6,259,424	4,872,032	1,387,392	22%

16. The largest allocation, totalling \$547,000, was disbursed in South Sudan to support increased access to life-saving reproductive health and gender-based violence services. The second highest amount, \$461,000, was provided to the Iraq country office for preparedness and acute response programming in Mosul, while the third highest disbursement, \$358,000, went to Bangladesh, where funds were directed for emergency response to Cyclone Roanu for sexual

and reproductive health and gender-based violence life-saving support. Mali and Nigeria round out the top five disbursements, with \$328,000 and \$300,000 respectively, to support sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence programming in conflict response (Mali) and emergency response funding for the Boko Haram conflict (Nigeria).

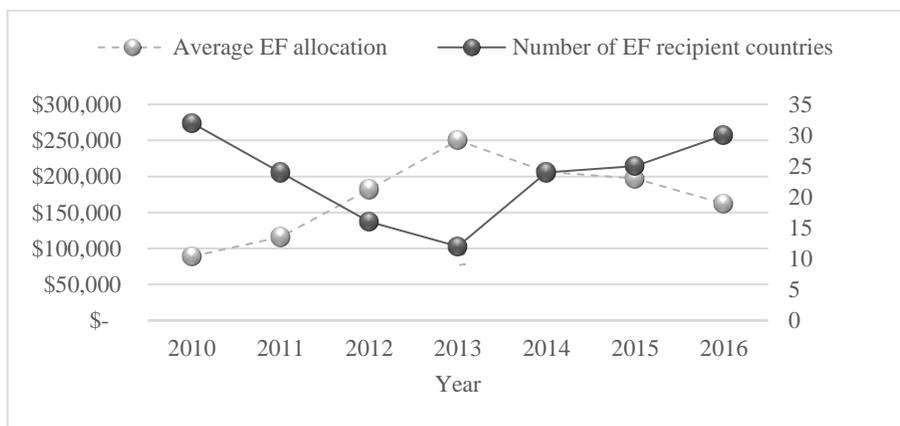
17. The UNFPA emergency fund was able to meet 78 per cent of the total emergency funds requested (see figure 1 below). This represents an increase of 16 per cent, compared to 2015, and of 34 per cent, compared to 2014.

Figure 1. Funding percentage vis-à-vis country office request



18. In 2016, the average emergency fund allocation amount per country was \$162,401. This represents a decrease from the average amount awarded in the two prior years: \$197,099 in 2015 and \$206,335 in 2014 (see figure 2).

Figure 2. Trends in the number of emergency fund recipient countries and average emergency fund allocation

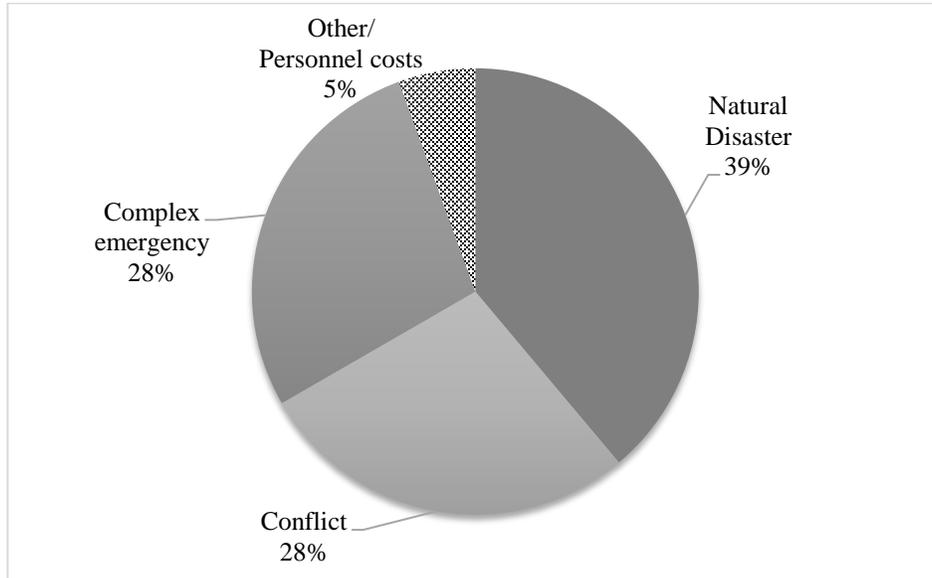


19. In terms of allocation by type of emergency, in 2016, some 39 per cent of UNFPA emergency fund resources were allocated in response to natural disasters, including hurricanes in Cuba and Haiti, earthquakes in Ecuador and Nepal, cyclones in Bangladesh and Fiji, floods in Kenya and Paraguay, drought in Swaziland, drought and floods in Somalia and the Zika epidemic in Brazil.

20. Responses to complex emergencies (28 per cent of all emergency fund allocations) included refugees from the Central African Republic in the Republic of Congo, Yemeni refugees in Djibouti, refugees and internal displaced persons in Iraq, and reproductive health programming for the Syrian crisis in Jordan.

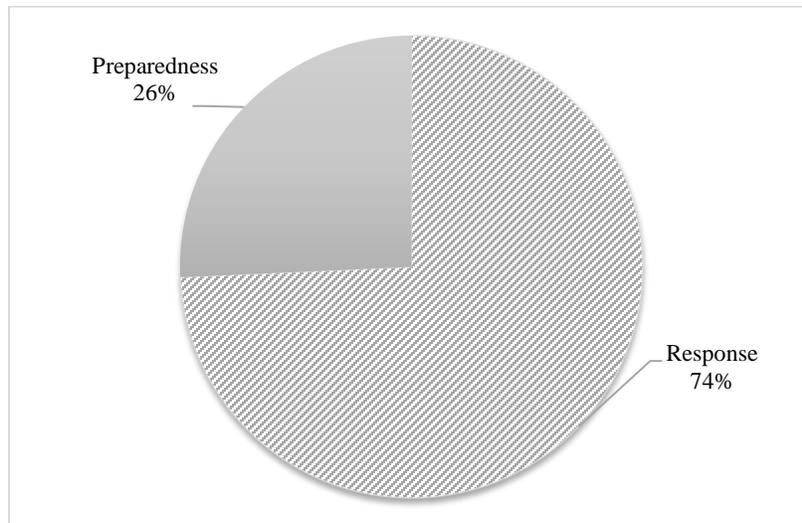
21. Equally significant was UNFPA support for preparedness and response to conflicts (28 per cent each) in Cameroon, Mali, Nigeria, South Sudan, Turkey and Yemen. The remaining five per cent of emergency fund allocations were associated with surge staff replacement and backfilling costs (see figure 3).

Figure 3. Allocation per type of emergency



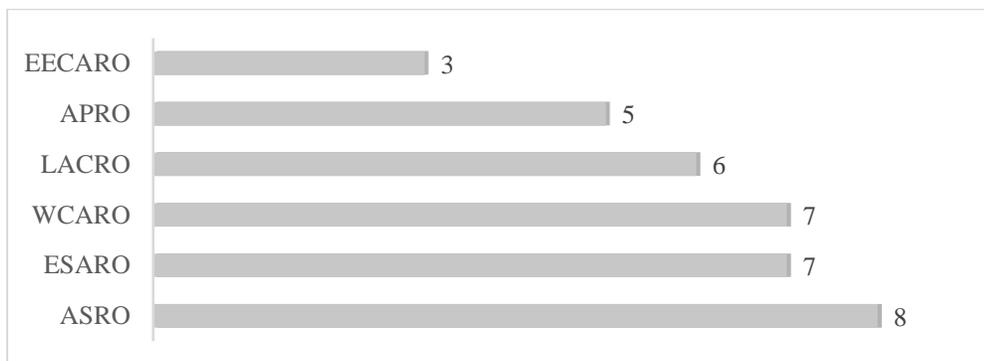
22. Regarding the primary use of the funds, in 2016, nearly three quarters of the emergency fund went toward rapid response activities, while preparedness activities constituted 26 per cent of funds allotted (see figure 4). This reflects UNFPA commitment to ensuring an effective humanitarian response in the immediate aftermath of an emergency, as well as ensuring long-term resilience, to respond more effectively to emergencies with life-saving services.

Figure 4. Primary use of allocated funds



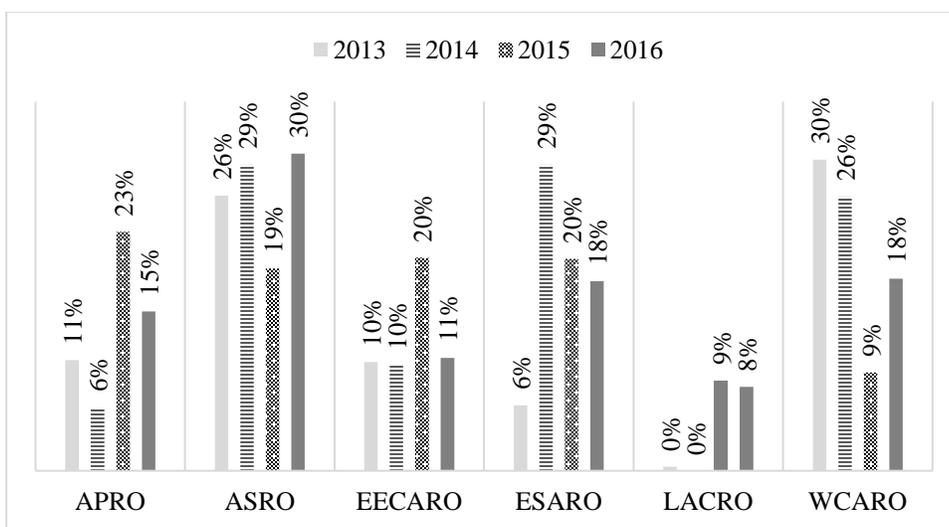
23. The Arab States region received the most disbursements in 2016, with eight in total, followed by the West and Central Africa and East and Southern Africa regions, which received seven disbursements each. Latin America and the Caribbean received six disbursements, Asia and the Pacific five, and Eastern Europe and Central Asia three (see figure 4).

Figure 4. 2016 emergency fund allocation by region



24. Figure 5 illustrates emergency fund allocation trends per region between 2013 and 2016, in dollar terms.

Figure 5. Annual emergency fund allocation per region (per cent in dollar terms)



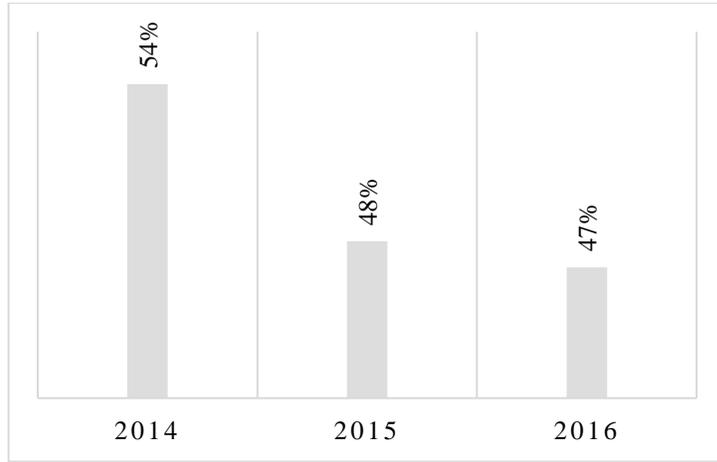
25. In 2016, the average speed of emergency fund disbursement, from the moment of a funding proposal’s final submission to the time of approval is 1.8 days (see table 2). Although the speed decreased slightly in 2016, it remains the quickest modality for ensuring resources are deployed quickly in emergency response.

Table 2. Average speed of emergency fund disbursement (in days)

Year	2014	2015	2016
Number of days	2.8	1	1.8

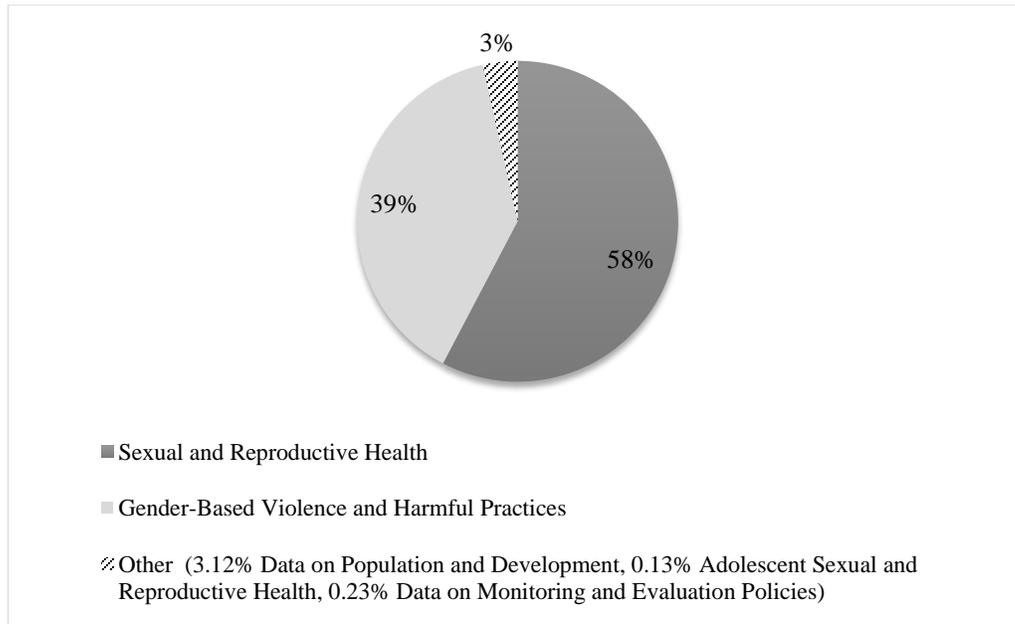
26. In 2016, 47 per cent of country offices receiving emergency fund allocations also received CERF funding. This number represents a decrease in the number of countries receiving funding from both sources since 2014 (see figure 6). The reduction in countries receiving funds from both sources indicates that the emergency fund is increasingly utilized in contexts that would otherwise not have received CERF or other funding.

Figure 6. Countries that receive both emergency fund and CERF allocations



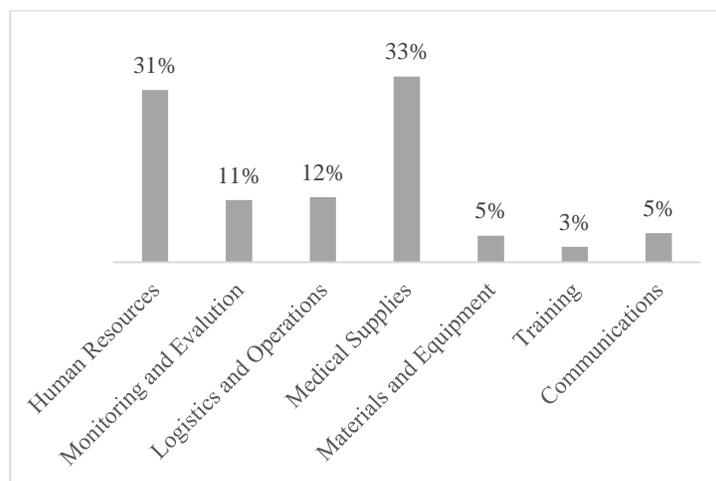
27. In 2016, \$1.76 million (57.7 per cent) was spent on sexual and reproductive health programming, and \$1.18 million (38.8 per cent) on gender-based violence programming. The remaining funds were invested in data on population and development (3.1 per cent); adolescent sexual and reproductive health (<1 per cent); and data for monitoring and evaluating policies (<1 per cent) (see figure 7).

Figure 7. 2016 emergency fund expenditure, by UNFPA Strategic Plan 2014-2017 output theme



28. With respect to expenditures by budget line, the UNFPA emergency fund was used by country offices primarily to purchase medical supplies such as reproductive health kits, pharmaceuticals and other medical goods (33 per cent of all expenditures), support human resources such as gender-based violence coordinators and sexual and reproductive health programme officers (31 per cent), manage logistics and operations (12 per cent), and undertake monitoring and evaluation (11 per cent). Other expenditures included materials and equipment (5 per cent), training (3 per cent), and communications (5 per cent).

Figure 8. Emergency fund summary by budget line category, 2016



IV. Conclusion

29. Humanitarian response funding is vital to the success of UNFPA humanitarian operations. Now in its 16th year, the UNFPA emergency fund has become an increasingly reliable and timely source of initial humanitarian funding for country and subnational offices. The emergency fund is a vital pillar in the UNFPA humanitarian portfolio, enabling the organization to provide timely, life-saving support for response and preparedness activities in a multitude of contexts around the world. Although UNFPA humanitarian response funding is limited, the organization's capacity to respond with life-saving gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health services in emergency settings is greatly strengthened as a result of the emergency fund. UNFPA capacity would be further strengthened by the humanitarian response reserve, but this funding channel is presently unavailable due to financial constraints. With additional financial support, UNFPA will be better positioned to deliver on its core objectives related to humanitarian response.
