

Guidance on Contingency in partnership with CSOs

Collaborative Contingency Planning with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) represents a critical component of emergency preparedness strategy, enhancing the speed and effectiveness of a response to humanitarian crises. This strategic approach aligns with UNICEF's mandate to uphold the [Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action](#) (CCCs).

The overarching objective of this collaborative contingency planning with CSOs is to proactively prepare for the rapid and efficient response to potential future emergencies or humanitarian crises.

The contingency program documents and related contingency activities are developed prior to the onset of an emergency, whether it arises suddenly or from a significant deterioration in the situation. When activated, their effective implementation is dependent on the needs, and on the availability of resources. This proactive approach ensures that UNICEF and its partners can provide a timely and effective humanitarian response.

Types of Contingency elements in partnership with CSOs

There are 2 types of contingency components: Contingency Simplified Programme Documents Humanitarian and Contingency Activities in all programme documents. This guidance covers each in turn.

1. Contingency Simplified Programme Document Humanitarian (SPD-H)

In-line with the Minimum Preparedness Standards (MPS), offices are required to develop and sign contingency SPD-H with CSO partners covering, at minimum, the main geographic and programmatic areas of the Joint CSO - UNICEF response. Contingency SPD-H are designed to ensure the flexibility for any kind of revision once activated based on actual context, needs, risks and opportunities.

Development and Review Stages

- All steps in module 2 Partner Selection, Risk Assessments & Partnership Agreements in Programme Implementation Handbook are applicable for SPD-H as well for contingency SPD-H: During development, offices are encouraged to plan the cash and supply resources to be allocated to the partner with a maximum ceiling based on partner capacity and estimated scale of the emergency.
- Offices ensures that contingency SPD-H indicators are aligned to the HAC, CO workplan and inter-agency response plan, as relevant. Planned resources (cash and supplies) in contingency SPD-H, are not required to be available at the review or signature stage. However, these need to be available at the activation stage.
- At the review stage, start and end date should reflect the validity of the contingency SPD-H (see [Validity of a contingency SPD-H](#)).
- Offices can adopt a flat, locally determined percentage for the calculation of “effective and efficient programme management costs” in the contingency SPD-H.
- A Program Cooperation Agreement (PCA) is signed with contingency SPD-H when partners do not have a valid agreement in place.

- Contingency SPD-H requires Non-PRC (desk review) review and recommend for approval by the Deputy Representative Programme or Chair of PRC as delegated in office Table of Authority. Offices develop multiple contingency SPDs as part of emergency preparedness which may requires detail review using PRC.
- Download the Contingency SPD-H for signature by UNICEF head of office or as per office Table of Authority and partner authorized officer, and attach the signed copy in eTools to move the Contingency SPD-H to signed status.
- UNICEF Office develops activation protocol during the contingency planning exercise, specifying how and which partners will be notified for their response to an emergency. This activation protocol facilitates a prompt and efficient start-up of the humanitarian response. It might encompass the following details:
 - The initiation of the emergency
 - The extent of UNICEF's available resources, whether full or partial
 - The level of response urgency and mobilization requirements

Validity of a Contingency Simplified Programme Document (Humanitarian)

Upon partner consultation and agreement, a contingency SPD-H can be activated as long as it is still relevant and required by the humanitarian situation, is covered by a valid PCA and that the partner has valid due diligence verification and other vendor master requirements.

Activation of Contingency Simplified Programme Document Humanitarian (SPD-H)

L2 and L3 Emergencies are activated through the [Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure](#) (CEAP), any emergency with a stand-alone Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) Appeal, which is not an L3 or L2 emergency, is considered an L1 emergency. If office is responding to a significant emergency that is not covered by a stand-alone HAC, but for which the Emergency Procedures would enable a timelier and more effective humanitarian response, a formal request is made from the Representative or RD to the Director of EMOPS to activate the use of the Emergency Procedures.

Upon such approval, Contingency programme interventions can be activated as relevant to the response needs and resources:

- Activation should be done via an exchange of written communication (email, letter etc.) from the UNICEF Authorized Officer to the Partner Authorized.
- At the time of activation, COs are encouraged to adapt the targets to meet the needs of the particular emergency.
- Actual resources and timeframe can be different than the original planned. This will require amendment by the focal person of the SPD-H to address the actual needs on the ground.
- In case of an increase in budget or targets, see [Revision of an activated contingency PD](#).
- The start and end date should be updated to reflect the actual duration of the contingency SPD-H
- The maximum duration of a contingency SPD-H, once activated, is up to 24 months. For prolonged emergency, same activated contingency SPD-H can be extended for additional 24 months through an amendment.

- For long-term and effective response, activities can be activated and implemented in sequential stages, such as when full funding is not available, with a defined mechanism of communication of funds availability between UNICEF and the partner.
- The agreed response timeframe refers to the duration of the activated contingency PD defined by a start date and an end date without any break in the implementation.
- When the implementation reaches the end-date, PD is considered concluded, prohibiting any further amendments or changes.

Revision of an activated Contingency Simplified Programme Document Humanitarian

When a contingency simplified programme document humanitarian is activated, it becomes a simplified programme document humanitarian. When there is a need to revise contingency interventions to respond to the evolving context, needs and risks and opportunities, such as when the actual population to be reached increases or there is a change in the main planned geographic and programmatic areas of the activated contingency SPD-H during implementation - the revision follows the approval process and considerations outlined in Module 5, section 2 in the Table 5.2: Types of Programme Intervention Revisions and Approval Process of the [UNICEF Programme implementation Handbook](#), **with the exception of Internal/PRC review being replaced by non-PRC review (desk review)-**

Activation Protocol Samples:

Subject: Activation of [Insert eTools Programme Document Reference Number]

Dear [Insert name of Partner's authorized officer]

In the spirit of partnership and given the urgency of implementing life-saving programme activities for children and communities affected by [Insert name of emergency situation], UNICEF and the Partner agree to activate [Insert eTools Programme Document Reference Number]

This activation automatically engages both programmatic and financial interventions.

I count on your usual cooperation in providing the required reports in accordance with UNICEF requirements as detailed in the signed Programme Document.

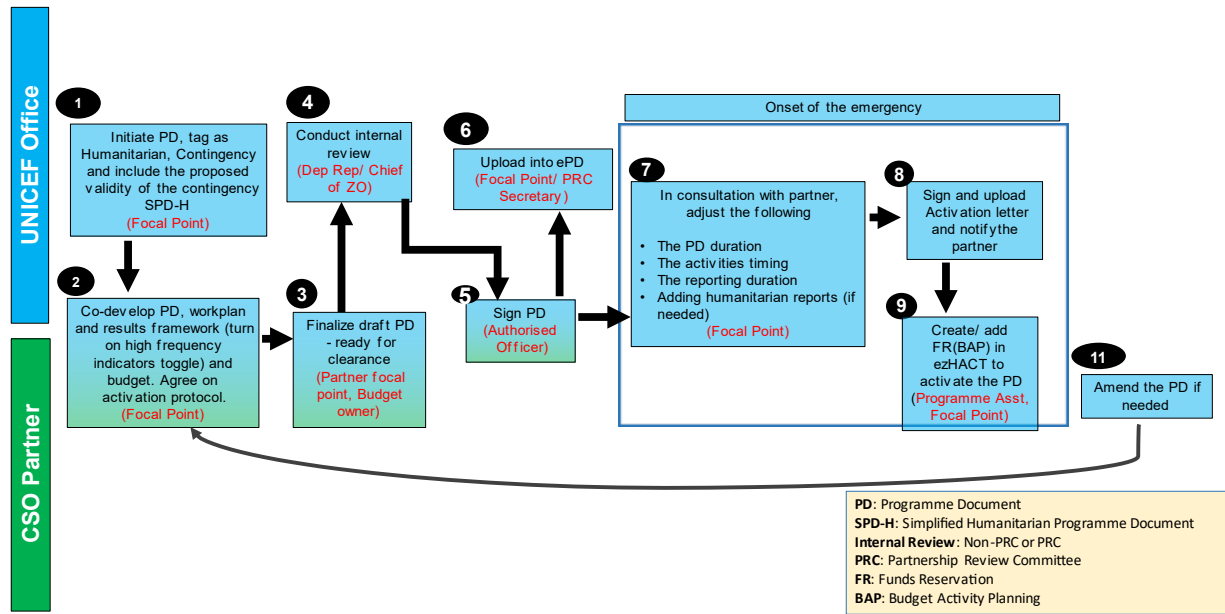
Sincerely,

*Deputy Representative – Programme
United Nations Children's Fund*

More Sample are available [here](#).

Contingency SPD-H workflow in eTools

Contingency ePD development and activation workflow



2. Contingency Activities in all Programme Documents:

- When developing a new PD or amending existing PDs (Regular Programme Document, Simplified Programme Document or Simplified Programme Document (Humanitarian)) to provide flexibility for quick, initial humanitarian response, a contingency clause for 10% calculated on total budget for all activities/outputs of the PD should appear under a separate activity line titled Contingency Clause - Emergency Response (activation required).
- There is a text to be included in “other” section in “strategy” tab: “In the event of an emergency or disaster requiring rapid response, within or outside the program areas of this PD, UNICEF and Partner agree to a reallocation of a maximum of 10 (ten)% of the budget to lifesaving emergency response activities to help ensure the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action and for life-saving emergency response activities upon agreement from UNICEF (email exchange is considered evidence of agreement and sufficient to trigger the contingency clause). Based on needs, UNICEF agrees to replenish the reallocated resources for this emergency in order to achieve the primary objective of this PD.”

Implications on governance and systems arrangements (ePD and eZHACT 2.0)

1. When the PD goes through the internal review process (PRC or non-PRC, depending on value and CO threshold for PRC), the review process covers the full value of the PD including the PD’s primary activities and budget plus the 10% (which is calculated prior to inclusion of the 7% for capacity strengthening costs) and the 7%.
2. When the team develops the Budget and Activity Plan (BAP) in eZHACT 2.0 it should be for the value of the primary PD activities based on funding available. The 10% contingency clause

- should be in the unfunded column. This means the resources will not be blocked if not needed.
3. The BAP can be amended to include the 10% if the clause is activated and the PD topped up to cover all activities originally planned.
 4. When the contingency clause is activated following the exchange of emails, the partner will submit a FACE form to request the complementary funding for the existing PD or include the 10% in the next quarterly request.
 5. 7% capacity building costs are reimbursed based on actual reported expenses.
 6. If additional response to the emergency is required, the CO can either amend the PD, or create an SPD-H. In both cases, additional funding would be required

UNICEF STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CONTINGENCY ELEMENTS IN CSO PARTNERSHIP

UNICEF STAFF MEMBER(S)	RESPONSIBILITIES
Representative (Head of Office)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responsible for activating emergency and all simplifications including contingency simplified programme document Humanitarian (SPD-H). ○ Sign or delegate authority (TOA) for signature of contingency SPD-H
Deputy Representative Programme - Chief of Field Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oversees and approves the non-PRC (desk review) for contingency SPDs-H. ○ Ensure all Programme Documents (PDs) have contingency clause of up to 10% of the budget.
Head/Chief of Section or Budget Owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responsible for establishing contingency SPD-H in the programme area in line with the contingency plan. ○ Oversees establishment of contingency partnerships and associated interventions in the programme area ○ Responsible for activating contingency lines up to 10% in PDs
Programme Officer or Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Works in a consultative manner with the CSO on the development and finalization of the contingency SPD-H or the contingency clause of up to 10% of the budget of regular PDs. ○ Works in a consultative manner with the CSO to alert Head of Section OR Budget Owner on the occurrence of events that can trigger the activation of the contingency SPDs-H or the contingency clause. ○ Initiates the creation/amendment of the intervention in eTools.
PRC Secretary / Partnership Focal Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides administrative support to the non-PRC (desk review). ○ Verifies the accuracy of presented information and ensure the availability and maintenance of all relative documentation in eTools. ○ Responsible for changing timelines/reporting frequency and other details in contingency SPD-H upon activation.
Regional Emergency Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensures that preparedness measures include the completion of PSEA assessments and appropriate PSEA capacity development support for CSOs with whom UNICEF develops contingency SPDs-H that are susceptible to be activated if and when a humanitarian crisis arises.

Relevant Documentation

- UNICEF PROCEDURE ON PREPAREDNESS FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE
[PROCEDURE/EMOPS/2020/001](#)
- UNICEF EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: [PROCEDURE/EMOPS/2021/001](#)
- [The Emergency Guidance Handbook](#)
- Programme Implementation Procedure: [PROCEDURE/DAPM/2022/003](#)
- [Programme Implementation Handbook](#) (updated link 2024 Version)
- [Instruction on adjusting the PD \(Programme Document\) in Signature Status](#)
- [Additional Resources related to Humanitarian Response through CSOs](#)