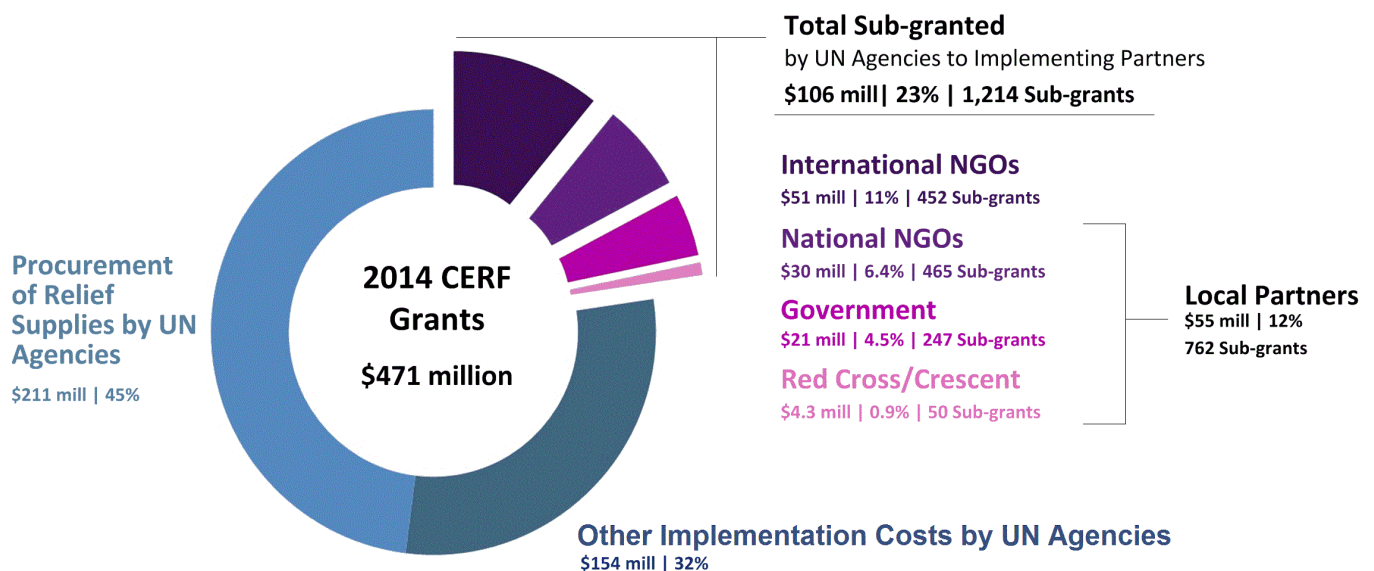


The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is a global humanitarian emergency fund established by the United Nations. While anchored in the UN system, CERF is a mechanism that benefits the entire humanitarian community as it is prioritised, planned and implemented jointly by country-level humanitarian actors. CERF provides high-quality funding that facilitates a strategic and effective humanitarian response, and that enhances coordination and leadership of humanitarian action. CERF can provide funding directly only to UN agencies¹ but CERF grants are implemented in close partnerships with local and international NGOs, host governments and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies. They receive close to one-quarter of all CERF funding through sub-grants². In 2014 alone, over 550 partners in 45 countries received more than \$100 million in CERF funding through partnerships with UN agencies. More than half of sub-granted CERF funds are provided to local partners, which helps “localise” humanitarian response and build the capacity of national actors in crisis-affected countries.



Key Information on Partnerships under CERF Grants

CERF and other pooled funds represent a departure from the bilateral funding model, which focuses on organisations’ individual outputs. Instead, pooled funds shift towards the provision of flexible funding to the humanitarian community focusing on the achievement of **collective outcomes** through a coordinated and coherent response. As such, **CERF adds value to the humanitarian system** beyond simply being a source of funding.

A CERF-funded response is a collective effort by in-country humanitarian partners under the leadership of Humanitarian Coordinators. CERF requests are prioritized and planned by the Humanitarian Country Teams and cluster/sector structures, which include **NGOs as active participants**.

General Assembly Resolution 46/182 sets out that CERF can only directly fund UN organisations. By limiting recipients of grants to UN agencies, **CERF can disburse funding quickly and efficiently** with streamlined processes, enabling it to meet its rapid response mandate. However, while international NGOs and local partners cannot receive CERF funds directly they play a critical role in implementing CERF grants in partnerships with UN agencies.

Through the far reaching and long-term partnership networks of UN agencies in countries affected by crises **hundreds of implementing partners** receive CERF funds to deliver life-saving humanitarian assistance each year. In 2014, CERF funds reached more than **420 local partners** and over **130 international NGOs** in support of

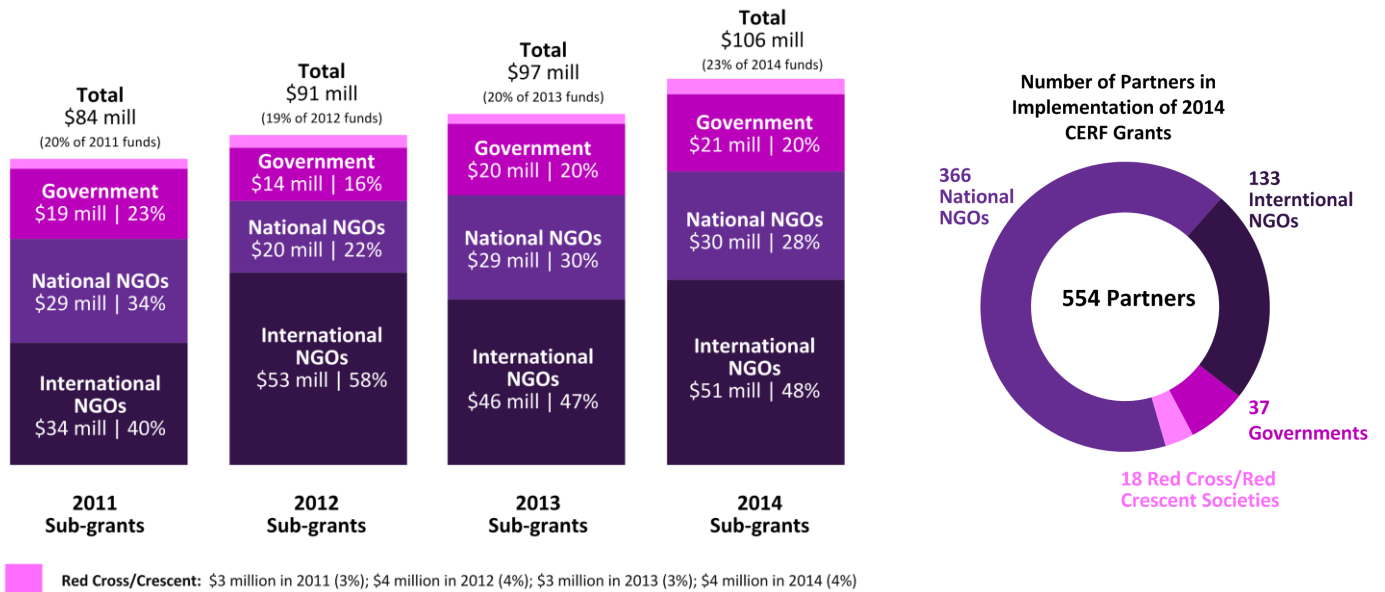
¹ In the remainder of the note the term UN agencies will refer to UN Agencies, Funds, Programmes and IOM

² Based on 2014 CERF grants data, 2015 data not yet available: https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CERF/20160318_2014%20Sub-grants_Final.pdf

humanitarian action in **45 countries**. This represents an **unparalleled global reach** that would be difficult to achieve for CERF or CERF’s donors through direct funding agreements. Since inception in 2006, CERF has funded humanitarian action in 96 different countries.

CERF thus represents an important **global source of funding for NGOs and other frontline responders**. Out of \$471 million allocated by CERF in 2014, \$106 million - almost a quarter - was sub-granted by UN agencies to NGOs and other partners for joint implementation³. More than **half of sub-granted CERF funding reached local partners** including national NGOs, host governments and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies.

The portion of CERF funding transferred by recipient UN agencies to partners has been on a steady increase. In the **four-year period** since CERF started tracking and recording sub-grant data, close to **\$380 million has been reported as sub-granted** to NGOs and other partners of which **\$195 million has been for local partners**.



The extensive partnerships under CERF grants between UN agencies and local organisations in crises across the world **help localise humanitarian response and enhance the capacity of national actors**, while at the same time fostering a **coordinated and coherent response** to needs.

Apart from implementing sub-granted CERF funding, international NGOs and local partners also play an important role in **distributing relief supplies** procured by UN agencies with CERF funds. Approximately half of CERF funding is used by UN agencies for procurement of relief supplies such as food, shelters or medicines.

CERF has a **broad donor base** including over 120 governments. CERF facilitates donors to increase humanitarian spending due to its low transaction costs. In addition, Member States that would otherwise not have funded humanitarian action, nor would have been able to directly fund national actors, have contributed significant funding to CERF. CERF, therefore, brings **additional funding to humanitarian action**, including to local partners.

CERF increases aid **transparency** by publishing grant decisions and reports and by tracking and reporting the flow of its funding **from disbursement to front line delivery**. This enhances transparency and accountability and provides valuable information on the delivery of CERF funded humanitarian assistance, including on local partner involvement and timeliness of activities.

The CERF secretariat and the CERF Advisory Group continue to work closely with CERF recipient agencies and other IASC partners to ensure that partnerships under CERF grants are effective and efficient, which has already resulted in several initiatives to **improve the quality of partnership arrangements** between UN agencies and their partners.

³ This amount does not include in-kind support in the form of relief supplies.