



CERF Annual Results Report

2020

United Nations | Central
CERF | Emergency
Response
Fund

OCHA
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
FOR THE COORDINATION
OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS



United Nations

2020

A FUND FOR ALL, BY ALL

Thanks to the generous support of donors, CERF continued to demonstrate its unparalleled global reach. In 2020, CERF responded to the dramatic increase in humanitarian needs with the disbursement of a record-breaking \$848 million to support humanitarian action in 59 countries and territories. Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF again demonstrated the difference that it makes to the lives of people caught in humanitarian crises across the world. A record number of crisis-affected people – 69.3 million – received CERF-funded humanitarian assistance in 2020, reflecting the commitment of CERF donors to saving lives wherever crises strike and their trust in the Fund.

\$639M in contributions from
56 Member States and observers
3 Regional and local authorities
1 Foundation
 Multiple private contributions



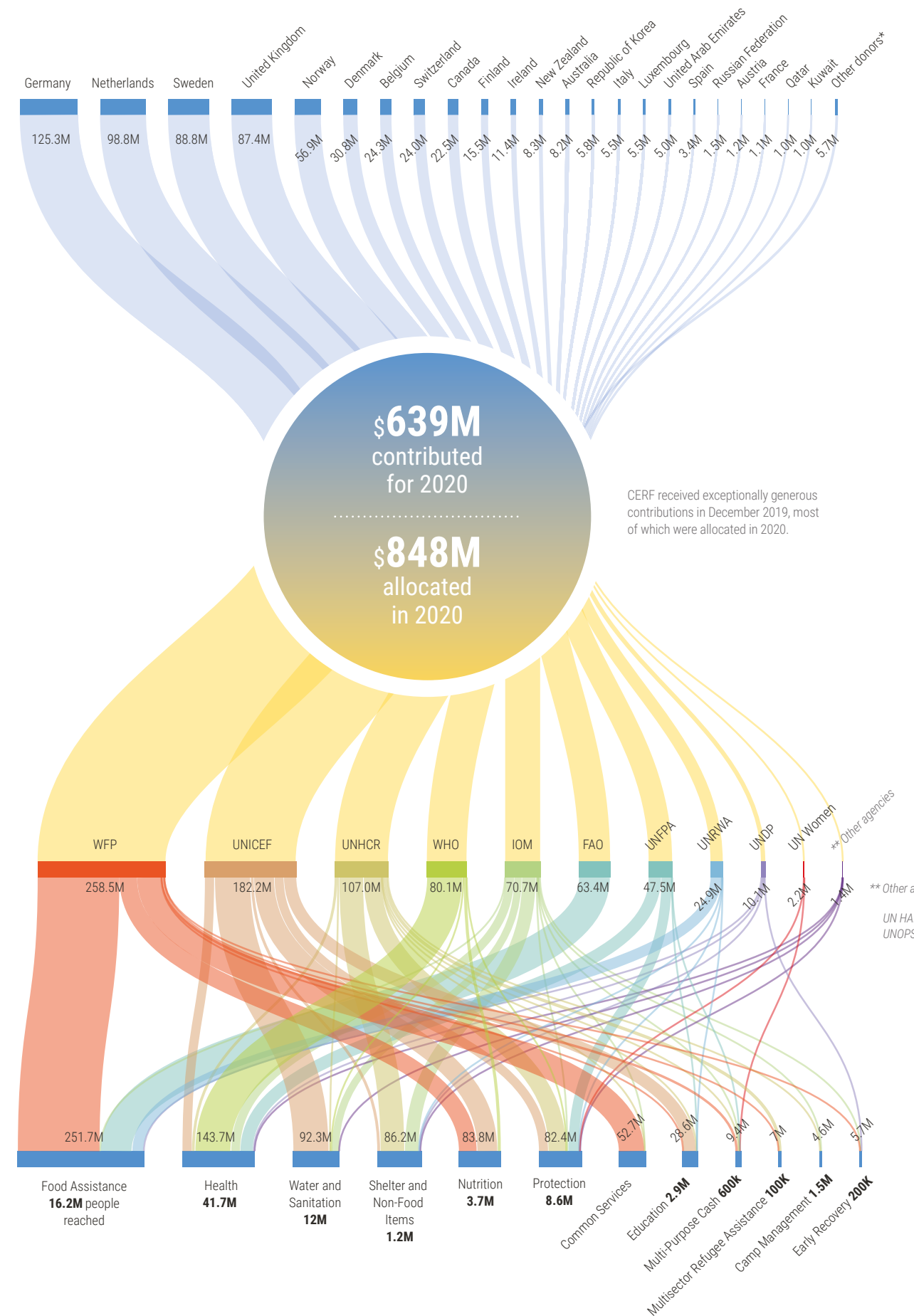
Donors	Contributions (in US\$)	* Donors	Contributions (in US\$)
Germany	125.3M	Iceland	708K
Netherlands	98.8M	China	500K
Sweden	88.8M	Turkey	450K
United Kingdom	87.4M	Japan	264K
Norway	56.9M	Poland	254K
Denmark	30.8M	Indonesia	220K
Belgium	24.3M	Liechtenstein	200K
Switzerland	24.0M	Portugal	193K
Canada	22.5M	Saudi Arabia	150K
Finland	15.5M	Estonia	111K
Ireland	11.4M	Monaco	111K
New Zealand	8.3M	Turkmenistan	100K
Australia	8.2M	South Africa	85K
Republic of Korea	5.8M	Morocco	50K
Italy	5.5M	Philippines	50K
Luxembourg	5.5M	Singapore	50K
United Arab Emirates	5.0M	Andorra	41K
Spain	3.4M	Slovenia	35K
Russian Federation	1.5M	Bangladesh	20K
Austria	1.2M	Cambodia	20K
France	1.1M	Thailand	20K
Kuwait	1.0M	Cyprus	17K
Qatar	1.0M	Islamic Republic of Iran	10K
		Mongolia	10K
		Myanmar	10K
		Pakistan	10K
		Sri Lanka	10K
		Vietnam	10K
		Armenia	5K
		Montenegro	3K
		Guyana	3K
		Peru	3K
		Bhutan	2K
		Belgian Government of Flanders	1.4M
		Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation	330K
		Basque Agency for Development Cooperation	220K
		Baha'i International Community	10K
		Private donations through UN Foundation	87K

12 UN agencies in partnership with
 International NGOs
 National NGOs
 Government entities
 Red Cross/Red Crescent societies

69.3M people assisted
 in 59 countries and territories



*consolidated in the graph as 'other donors'



CREDITS

This document is produced by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). OCHA wishes to acknowledge the contributions of our partners, particularly those from the programmes, funds and specialized agencies of the United Nations System.

Cover page photo:

A child washes his hands in Bujumbura, Burundi. With support from CERF and others, UNICEF Burundi has partnered with Savor, the biggest soap manufacturer in the country, to produce and sell “blue soap” at a reduced price. Every month, ten million bars are released onto the market to promote handwashing and limit the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases.

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The boundaries and names shown and the designations used in this report do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. The final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.

Map source: United Nations Geospatial Information Section

Numbers are rounded. Denominations are represented in United States dollars.

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Foreword



Bangladesh:
Emergency Relief
Coordinator, Mark
Lowcock, meets
young Rohingya
refugees at
Kutupalong camp.
© UNHCR

It is a pleasure to introduce the 2020 Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) Annual Results Report.

The year 2020 illustrates the need for an emergency fund ‘for all, by all’ that enables swift humanitarian action to save lives and protect people in crisis globally.

In a year of unprecedented need, driven in large part by the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF met the challenge, disbursing a record US\$ 848 million to assist 69 million people in need in 59 countries and territories.

CERF contributions enabled a timely pandemic response for some of the world’s most vulnerable people, while the Fund continued to respond to sudden-onset emergencies and ongoing crises worldwide – including, for example, shelter for civilians in north-west Syria following airstrikes, and support for a massive scale-up of locust monitoring and control efforts across East Africa and Southern Africa.

CERF was agile and innovative as never before. To respond to the evolving impacts of the pandemic, CERF provided flexible funding at scale to the UN system when needed the most, funded NGOs directly and allocated money specifically for local women-led organizations to combat gender-based violence.

CERF was also key in advancing anticipatory action – before floods struck in Bangladesh

and ahead of forecasted severe food insecurity in Somalia and Ethiopia. Support in this way allows people to make their own choices on how best to prepare.

Of the \$848 million disbursed, \$100 million went to fight rising food insecurity through cash assistance. CERF channelled a record \$225 million to 20 underfunded and neglected crises in 2020.

All the while, CERF continued to strengthen support to four priority areas that are often underfunded: programmes specifically for women and girls and people with disabilities; ensuring that children living in protracted emergencies receive education; and promoting protection and dignity for all people affected by crises.

CERF is a success story in the international community. No other fund enables humanitarian responders to act as rapidly and at scale when emergencies strike. No other fund embodies the spirit and the potential of the United Nations to respond in times of crisis.

This success is impossible without our donors’ support. Having a well-funded CERF meant that when the pandemic, floods, earthquakes or violence struck, we could immediately respond.

As we look ahead, we know that humanitarian need will unfortunately not abate. Unexpected challenges will inevitably arise. We can – and must – use CERF’s global reach to support people when – and if possible, before – disaster strikes, as well as assist the world’s most vulnerable people trapped year after year in protracted humanitarian crises.

MARK LOWCOCK

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian
Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

Executive Summary

2020 was yet another exceptional year for the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

With the generous support of donors, CERF responded to the dramatic increase in humanitarian needs, disbursing a record \$848 million to support humanitarian action worldwide – up from \$539 million in 2019.

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic

CERF was instrumental in facilitating the humanitarian community's response to COVID-19. The global pandemic, which created unprecedented challenges for the humanitarian system, called for a flexible and innovative approach.

CERF rose to the challenge, disbursing – with pace and agility – \$225 million to 39 countries. CERF funding helped initiate an immediate response. On 1 March, ahead of the declaration of a global pandemic, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) released \$15 million to help fund global efforts by WHO and UNICEF to contain the virus. Later in March, CERF allocated \$80 million in multi-country block grants to jump-start UN agency responses, focusing on health care, water and sanitation, and logistics. When funding for front-line NGO responders was critically low, CERF led the way, releasing \$25 million through IOM to support NGOs in delivering life-saving health, water and sanitation assistance in six countries – the first allocation in CERF's 14-year history to directly target NGOs. (See pages [22-24](#))

Later in the year, CERF also responded to the secondary humanitarian impacts of the pandemic, including through an \$80 million allocation to address rising food insecurity in six countries in Africa and the Middle East, as well as a dedicated allocation of \$25 million to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) in humanitarian settings – which saw a dramatic increase during the pandemic. (See pages [22-24](#))

Supporting people caught in crises

Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF again demonstrated the difference that it makes to the lives of people caught in humanitarian crises across the world. A record 69.3 million crisis-affected people received CERF-funded humanitarian assistance in 2020 – more than twice as many as in 2019. Almost half of these (32.5 million people) were affected by disease outbreaks – a 37 per cent increase from 2019 – reflecting CERF's unparalleled response to the COVID-19 pandemic. CERF also supported 16.7 million people affected by conflicts and 12.2 million by natural disasters – a slight decrease from 13.7 million and 12.7 million respectively in 2019. CERF funding allowed UN agencies and partners to assist an additional 7.8 million people affected by severe economic disruption and other compounding factors. (See pages [34-40](#))

CERF was also there to meet the needs of over 40.6 million refugees, IDPs, returnees and members of communities hosting displaced people. This represents 59 per cent of all people targeted with 2020 CERF funding (see page [39](#)). Several allocations in 2020 had a specific focus on addressing the consequences of displacement, most notably an historic \$100 million allocation to Sudan at a critical transitional juncture in its recent history. CERF's intervention contributed to the Government's agenda on peacebuilding, freedom and justice, and schools for all, including through support to durable solutions for the displaced and returnees.

Again, in 2020, CERF was often the first funding source in new emergencies. As well as providing some of the earliest humanitarian funding, CERF continued to demonstrate its speed – for example, in its response, in August, to the explosion in a warehouse in Beirut that caused widespread damage and loss of life. CERF approved \$6 million for response activities allowing WHO and WFP to kick-start their response on the day of the explosion, safe in the knowledge that CERF funds were imminent. In addition to making fast and timely allocation decisions, CERF also improved the speed with which applications are processed, reducing the average grant processing time by more than 11 per cent compared to 2019, leading to faster disbursements. Thanks to CERF’s speed and flexibility, agencies were able to initiate CERF-funded activities, on average, only 3.5 days after the submission of applications. (See pages [71-72](#))

CERF continued to be a lifeline for people caught in crises that attract limited donor attention and funding but where needs are just as urgent. Through its Underfunded Emergencies window (UFE) CERF provided a record \$225 million for life-saving assistance to 20 underfunded and neglected crises. In the first round of UFE allocations in February 2020, CERF allocated \$125 million towards 11 underfunded crises, assisting more than 7.7 million people. In the second UFE round, CERF released \$100 million to boost severely underfunded humanitarian responses, targeting 6.8 million people in 10 countries, including through dedicated funding to address the rising prevalence of GBV during the pandemic. In Burkina Faso, UN agencies and partners utilized the earmarked GBV funding to strengthen services for GBV survivors, support local women-led organizations and extend GBV activities to areas least covered by the humanitarian response. (See page [15](#))

Reaching the most vulnerable

In 2020, CERF continued to make significant headway in helping the humanitarian community reach the most vulnerable. CERF continued to prioritize four critical yet underfunded areas of humanitarian response: women and girls, people with disabilities, education in protracted crises and protection. Building on momentum from 2019, further positive results were achieved in 2020, with a record level of CERF funding going towards these important priorities. More than \$29 million was allocated to emergency education projects – up from the previous record of \$19 million set in 2019. CERF funding to the protection sector also reached record levels in 2020, with \$82 million allocated – a significant increase over the previous record of \$52 million in 2019. In addition, CERF strengthened support to projects focusing on GBV, including through a \$25 million allocation to UNFPA and UN Women dedicated entirely to GBV programming. Overall, an estimated record \$65 million in CERF funding went towards the prevention of and response to GBV. Furthermore, over 8.1 million of the people targeted with 2020 CERF funding were people with disabilities, of which the majority – 4.2 million or 53 per cent – were women and girls. (See pages [51-62](#))

Advancing system change

Record donor support allowed CERF to not only facilitate priority life-saving assistance and protection, but also to advance strategic initiatives and support positive change in the humanitarian system. Leveraging its speed, funding volume, effective systems and global reach, CERF in 2020 scaled up anticipatory action, enabling partners to get ahead of predictable hazards and mitigate humanitarian impacts by collectively providing timely life-saving support to people at risk. During the year, CERF successfully supported the activation of multi-stakeholder anticipatory

action frameworks in three countries – Bangladesh (for flooding), and Somalia and Ethiopia (for severe food insecurity linked to drought) – allocating a total of \$33.4 million. In Bangladesh, for example, CERF funded the provision of safe storage drums to protect grains, seeds and other assets; cash transfers to help at-risk communities take preparatory measures; and the distribution of essential hygiene items to women, girls and transgender people. These allocations were key to supporting partners in tackling complex humanitarian challenges in the most effective and efficient way – and reaffirmed CERF’s role as a strategic tool in humanitarian response. (See pages [43-50](#))

Promoting the use of cash

In 2020, CERF also made great progress in promoting the use of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) in humanitarian action. CERF’s support to CVA-based programming almost tripled in 2020 compared to 2019, with \$138 million in cash and vouchers provided to a record 5.7 million people in 38 countries. This was reinforced by large-scale targeted allocations specifically to promote the use of CVA in response to food insecurity, including \$80 million for CVA programming to address rising levels of food insecurity in six countries; and \$20 million to scale up WFP’s cash operations in Zimbabwe to strengthen social safety nets in urban and peri-urban areas. In Zimbabwe, unrestricted cash transfers helped around 151,500 people to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements, reduce the need for urgent assistance, and improve access to services, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. WFP prioritized the most vulnerable and food-insecure households, especially women-led households, and those caring for people with disabilities and people living with HIV. CVA also served as a response modality in CERF’s anticipatory action pilots in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Somalia. In addition to promoting CVA as response modality, CERF also aimed to support the increased use of multi-purpose cash, improve cash-coordination at country level, and promote strong links between CVA and gender equality. (See pages [67-70](#))

Growing partnerships and localization

CERF continued to expand its reach through its ever-growing partnership network, which included a record number of national and local organizations. With record funding of \$848 million in 2020, CERF was able to provide 12 UN agencies with the means to deliver life-saving assistance to people trapped in crises across the globe. A total of \$126 million was sub-granted by UN agencies to 735 implementing partners, including a record-equaling \$73 million (58 per cent) to 588 national and local actors – the highest number of national and local actors benefiting from CERF funding in a single year. CERF also actively promoted greater localization through its allocation decisions. A third of the recipients under CERF’s first-ever dedicated NGO allocation were local NGOs and the \$25 million global allocation to UN Women and UNFPA to tackle GBV included the condition that at least 30 per cent of funds were passed on by recipient agencies to local women-led or women’s rights organizations. An early estimation suggests this target will be exceeded by a wide margin. (See pages [73-75](#))

Supporting humanitarian leadership

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators (RC/HCs) continued to reiterate the Fund’s strategic added value in enabling fast, timely and more coordinated responses, as well as in catalysing the mobilization of additional resources.ⁱ Overall, 94 per cent of CERF allocations enabled partners to respond to time-critical needs, 83 per cent helped improve coordination and 74 per cent helped increase resource mobilization from other sources. For instance, the RC/HC in Burkina Faso confirmed that an allocation from the Rapid Response funding window in response to massive displacement at the beginning of 2020 helped leverage additional funding to one of the fastest growing displacement crises in the world. In addition, RC/HCs reaffirmed that CERF Rapid Response allocations led to the fast delivery of assistance. (See pages [43-50](#))

ⁱ From reports on all CERF funding provided in 2019 and implemented in 2019 and 2020.

Continuing focus on learning

During the year, CERF maintained its focus on continuous learning to ensure that the Fund's approaches and processes are adapted to the changing requirements of the humanitarian landscape. In addition to systematically gathering lessons learned through consultations with partners at the global and field levels, CERF concluded two external studies in 2020, one on CERF's support to four underfunded priority areas of humanitarian response, and the other on the role of CERF in smaller emergencies. CERF also launched studies to explore unique CERF allocations undertaken during the year, including the first-ever NGO allocation; the \$80 million cash allocation to help stave off famine in six high-risk countries; and CERF support to the prevention of and response to GBV. (See pages [81-83](#))

Ensuring transparency

In 2020, CERF renewed its efforts to improve transparency, particularly the availability of real-time data on CERF support to humanitarian operations. In 2020, CERF launched an [online allocation tracker](#) that provides real-time information on CERF allocations and developed a [CERF Data Hub](#) with a wide array of interactive visuals, allowing stakeholders easy access to data on individual contributions. Together with OCHA's Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs), CERF also improved funding visibility across the two funding mechanisms through the OCHA Pooled Funds Data Hub, which provides a one-stop gateway to funding data for CERF and the 19 CBPFs. (See pages [84-85](#))

In 2020, the Secretary-General appointed 10 new members to the Advisory Group. During the year, the Group held two official meetings, as well as three thematic webinars focusing on CERF's COVID-19 response, anticipatory action efforts and CERF global reporting. During the year, the Advisory Group discussed, among other things, CERF's COVID-19 response, advised the ERC on CERF's strategic positioning in the humanitarian landscape, explored CERF's ability to promote positive system change and considered ways to mobilize additional resources to help CERF achieve its \$1 billion target. (See page [80](#))

Thanks to the generous support of donors, CERF continued to demonstrate its unparalleled global reach. Following record contributions in 2019 – partly due to an exceptional one-off donation – CERF again in 2020 enjoyed strong support from its partners, receiving a total of \$639 million, the second highest annual income in CERF's history. Since 2006, 130 CERF donors (as of March 2021) have contributed more than \$7.5 billion to the Fund; this includes 55 countries that have also benefited from CERF allocations, demonstrating the extraordinary levels of solidarity that make CERF truly 'a fund for all, by all'. It is thanks to the continued support from Member States that 2020 was such a remarkable year. (See pages [10-12](#))

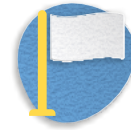
2020 CERF RESULTS AT A GLANCE



\$848M
ALLOCATED



69.3M
PEOPLE ASSISTED



59
COUNTRIES/
TERRITORIES

CERF GRANTS ENABLED HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS TO ASSIST:



32.6M
people impacted by
disease outbreaks
including COVID-19



16.7M
people trapped in
conflict-related
emergencies



12.7M
people impacted by
natural disasters



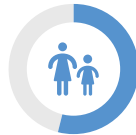
7.8M
people impacted by
severe **economic**
disruption



CERF REACHED THE MOST VULNERABLE:



59%
of people assisted were
affected by **displacement**



54%
of people assisted were
women and girls



12%
of people assisted were
people with disabilities

ACCORDING TO RC/HC REPORTS ON THE USE OF CERF FUNDING:



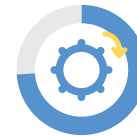
94%
of CERF allocations led
to **fast delivery** of
assistance



94%
of CERF allocations
helped respond to
time-critical needs



83%
of CERF allocations
helped **improve**
coordination



74%
of CERF allocations
helped **improve**
resource mobilization from
other sources

CERF GRANTS ENABLED HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS TO DELIVER

Critical Health Care



41.7M people



Food Assistance and Agricultural inputs



16.2M people



Water and Sanitation



12.0M people



Protection services



8.6M people



Nutrition support



3.7M people



Education



2.9M people



Camp Management assistance



1.5M people



Shelter and NFIs



1.2M people



Early Recovery assistance



200K people



Multisector Refugee Assistance



100K people



CERF Annual Results Report 2020




United Nations

CERF

Central
Emergency
Response
Fund

About CERF

CERF is one of the fastest and most effective ways to ensure that urgently needed humanitarian assistance reaches people caught up in crises. Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005 as the United Nations global emergency response fund, CERF enables humanitarian responders to deliver life-saving assistance whenever and wherever crises strike.



Burundi: Over 10,000 people were affected by floods in December 2019 and again in May 2020. The improved water source in Bundingoma Central Village, Kisuba, allowed people access to safer water. "Before the borehole was fixed, we had to fetch water from the River Lamiya... the water was dirty. Now the water is nearby." CERF supported UNICEF to alleviate water stress for flood-affected people in the district.

© UNICEF/Adriko

Introduction to CERF

Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005 as the United Nations global emergency response fund, CERF's primary role is to enable humanitarian responders on the ground to react immediately to emerging or escalating crises by delivering life-saving assistance when and where it is needed most. Funding from CERF allows UN agencies to kick-start relief efforts before other funding sources are available and to help partners scale up their relief operations in underfunded emergencies to avoid critical gaps.

UN organizations are directly eligible for CERF funding and implement grants in partnership with local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), host governments and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies. The Fund is an indispensable element of the global humanitarian architecture, enabling rapid, timely and more coordinated responses. It also serves as a catalyst for the mobilization of additional resources.

Strong and ongoing donor support has enabled CERF to continuously innovate and adapt to changes in humanitarian needs. Since its inception in 2006, contributions from 129 UN Member States and observers, as well as regional governments, corporate donors, foundations and individuals, have enabled CERF to provide almost \$7 billion to deliver life-saving assistance in 109 countries and territories. Acknowledging the importance of CERF's assistance, 52 recipient countries have also donated to CERF, making it truly a 'fund for all, by all'.

In 2020 alone, CERF allocated a record \$848 million to support humanitarian action in 59 countries and territories. CERF was at the forefront of the COVID-19 response and supported the earliest international relief efforts in response

“

As people around the world continue to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund is an expression of solidarity. I have seen the power it has to save lives and prevent suffering. Donor support for CERF is an investment in progress and in hope.

*- António Guterres,
United Nations Secretary-General*

to the multiple crises triggered by the pandemic, allocating a total of \$225 million to 39 countries through innovative and flexible allocation approaches. At the same time, CERF also continued to support life-saving humanitarian action in conflict settings and in response to natural disasters: some \$619 million went to kick-start and scale up operations in 58 countries, and \$225 million was released to bolster aid operations in 20 of the world's most neglected crises.

With a bleak humanitarian outlook for 2021 and beyond, a strong and agile CERF is more important than ever. A record 235 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection in 2021 – a 40 per cent increase compared to 2020. The UN and its partner organizations aim to assist 160 million people most in need across 56 countries. This will require \$35 billion. CERF's annual funding target of \$1 billion, as endorsed by the UN General Assembly, is consistent with the increase in humanitarian needs, particularly given CERF's central role in the humanitarian financing architecture and its impressive track record in supporting life-saving assistance. The global humanitarian system relies on a strong and well-funded CERF.

CERF is



PROMOTING COORDINATION AND COHERENCE

CERF funding is jointly allocated to multiple organizations based on humanitarian partners' agreed priorities. This promotes coordination among humanitarian actors, eliminates duplication and overlaps, prevents fragmented responses and supports the achievement of collective outcomes.



CATALYTIC

CERF enables humanitarian partners to quickly scale up response and leverage additional donor support through demonstrated and timely humanitarian action.



COST EFFECTIVE

CERF offers value for money by allowing donors to efficiently assist people in need wherever crises strike. When donors contribute to CERF, they ensure that limited resources go as far as they can to save lives and reduce the suffering of millions of women, men, girls and boys caught up in crises around the world.



EMBODYING THE GRAND BARGAIN

CERF plays a key role in delivering the Grand Bargain: CERF funding is flexible, efficient, unearmarked, principled and transparent, supports cash programming, empowers humanitarian leadership and promotes a coordinated, inclusive and strategic humanitarian response.



NEUTRAL, IMPARTIAL AND INDEPENDENT

CERF is fully unearmarked, principled and independent to ensure funding goes to meet the most urgent, life-saving needs wherever crises hit.



FAST

Time lost means lives lost. CERF allocates funding within hours of a crisis, making funding available at the beginning of a crisis when it is most needed.



FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS

CERF interventions support the involvement of implementing partners. Each year, approximately 25 per cent of CERF funds are implemented by more than 500 NGOs and local responders who have partnered with UN agencies.



GLOBAL

CERF provides humanitarian support across the globe, expanding the reach of its donors to all crises, whether new, worsening or forgotten.



NEEDS BASED

CERF allocations are strictly life-saving and based on the needs identified and prioritized by humanitarian partners on the front lines of the emergency responses. This ensures early responses to the most time-critical humanitarian priorities.



PREDICTABLE

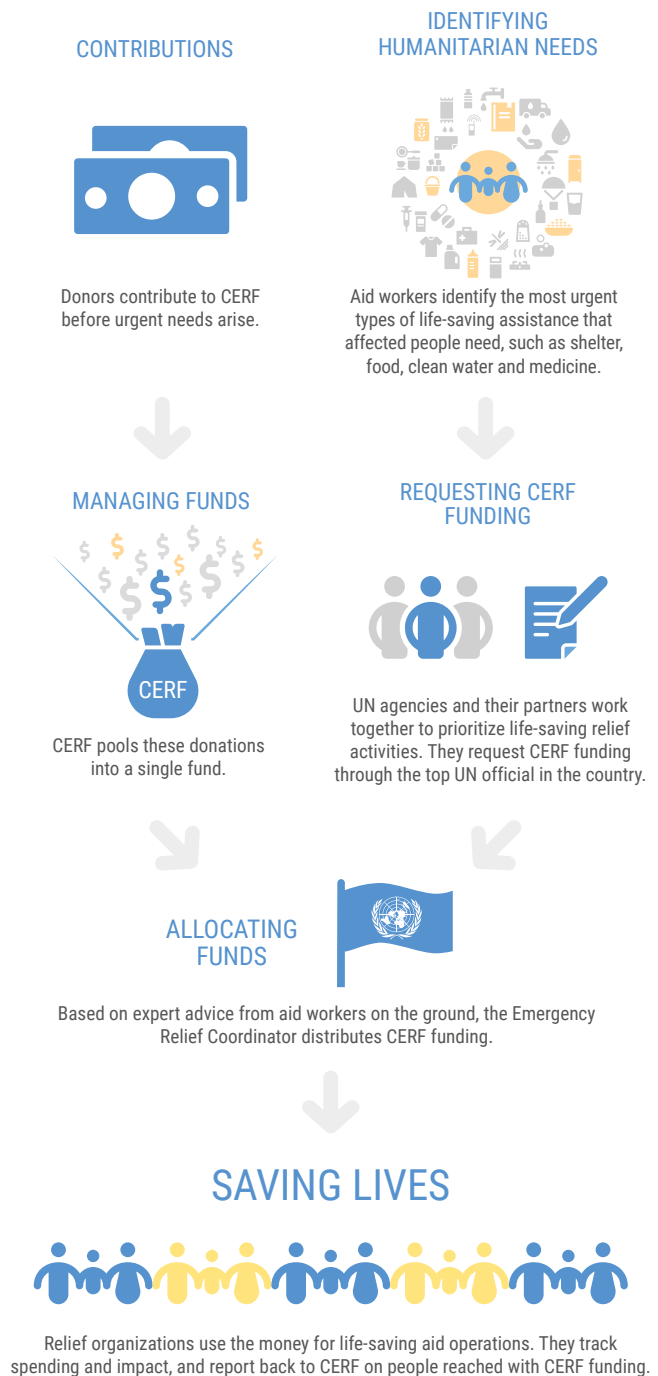
CERF is a trusted and dependable source of predictable funding for the most urgent and critical humanitarian action.

How CERF works

In a humanitarian crisis, humanitarian organizations on the ground jointly assess and prioritize humanitarian needs. They can apply for CERF funding when new needs exceed their capacity to respond. Determining the level and severity of needs and identifying people who most urgently need assistance requires joint planning and prioritization by Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators (RC/HC), UN/Humanitarian Country Teams (UNCT/HCT) and other humanitarian organizations.

CERF is guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, and resources are allocated in line with CERF's Life-Saving Criteria. The Criteria serve as guidance for the RC/HC and UNCT/HCT on developing applications for CERF funding. CERF ensures that funds help meet the most urgent needs of people caught in crises around the world and are used where they have the greatest potential for saving lives.

By building on the UN and humanitarian coordination architecture, CERF is able to provide resources in the most appropriate manner. Humanitarian partners work together to discuss and prioritize activities to be included in the CERF request, based on solid evidence and assessments of need. RC/HCs submit a prioritized proposal to the CERF Secretariat, which then reviews the application and supports the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) in deciding on the allocation of resources to partners on the ground.



CERF allocations

Main differences		
	Rapid Response	Underfunded Emergencies
Initiation	As needed throughout the year, based on a specific trigger	Typically twice a year
Initiated by	RC/HC (in-country)	ERC (at headquarters)
Emergency	Sudden-onset disasters, rapid and significant deterioration of existing crises, time-critical interventions	Protracted or neglected emergencies where vulnerability is high but funding is critically low
Maximum Standard grant duration	6 months	9 months
Amount available annually	Typically 2/3 of all CERF funding	Typically 1/3 of all CERF funding
Main commonalities		
Application process	Field-driven, led by RC/HC and in consultation with UNCT/HCT, consolidated package of proposals based on jointly agreed strategic priorities	
Eligible activities	Adherence to CERF's Life-Saving Criteria	

“ CERF has proven to be one of the fastest funding sources available to the UN system for responding to new or deteriorating crises. It brings humanitarian organizations together at country levels to collectively assess and prioritize humanitarian needs for urgent response. We are proud of our partnership with CERF and we reaffirm our ongoing support. The State of Qatar was among the first countries supporting CERF, ensuring more people will be reached with life-saving aid, faster. QFFD has committed to support CERF since 2017 and still maintains its ongoing annual support.

- Said Khalifa Al-Kuwari,
Director General of Qatar Fund for Development

Funding windows

CERF can channel funds to UN agencies through its **Rapid Response (RR) window** and its **Underfunded Emergencies (UFE) window**. While the process of developing a formal request is similar for both funding windows, the starting point for allocations differs. The RC/HC – in consultation with humanitarian partners on the ground – can request RR funding at any time during the year in the event of new and unforeseen humanitarian needs. UFE allocations, on the other hand, start with a comparative global analysis of vulnerability and funding levels through two annual consultative processes at headquarters level involving UN agencies, OCHA and NGOs.

Loan facility

In addition to the two funding windows, CERF has a \$30 million loan facility to cover funding gaps in UN humanitarian operations, particularly when an official donor commitment has been received but there is a delay in the transfer of funds. When a UN agency, fund or programme experiences a cash flow problem when attempting to provide a rapid and coordinated response to a humanitarian emergency, they can request a loan for up to one year for immediate response activities. The ERC determines the amount to be advanced in each situation.

“ CERF resonates strongly with Ireland’s commitment to principled humanitarian assistance that reaches the people furthest behind. In 2020, its response to the COVID-19 pandemic was fast, flexible and innovative, demonstrating once again its key role in the global humanitarian system. We are extremely proud of our strong and consistent support to CERF over the last 15 years.

- Colm Brophy TD, Minister of State for
Overseas Development and Diaspora, Ireland

Complementarity between OCHA-managed Pooled Funds

In addition to the global-level Central Emergency Response Fund, OCHA manages 19 Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) across different humanitarian contexts. There are many similarities between these financing instruments: they both provide rapid and flexible resources and strategic support to emergency response operations, help to foster a more coherent and coordinated response, and build on the leadership of RC/HCs.

In contrast to CERF, however, CBPFs allow donors to pool their contributions into country-specific funds to support local humanitarian efforts. With a focus on enabling humanitarian partners in crisis-affected countries to deliver timely, coordinated and principled assistance, CBPFs support the highest-priority projects of the best-placed responders (including international and national NGOs and UN agencies). This ensures that funding is available and prioritized locally by those closest to people in need.

When CERF and CBPF resources are provided to the same contexts, RC/HCs ensure that the resources are used in a complementary and coherent manner. At the country level, the RC/HC can decide how best to use these different funding sources based on the comparative advantage of each, as part of an ‘integrated’ approach. OCHA helps RC/HCs to translate this vision into allocation strategies and processes, ensuring coherence and the best overall operational use of resources. This ensures that funds are used to achieve the greatest collective impact – a continuing priority for OCHA and its partners.

Complementarity between CBPFs and CERF, globally and at country level, builds on the comparative advantages of each funding mechanism and their unique added value. CERF’s comparative advantage and distinct added value lies in its worldwide reach and agility, as well as its ability to supplement country-level resources rapidly

and at scale when needed. RR funding is often used to provide seed funding for scaling up new operations and responding to new humanitarian needs. CBPFs, on the other hand, are targeted more at ongoing humanitarian operations and provide a predictable and more flexible source of funding for RC/HCs working directly with a wide range of actors, including national and local organizations.

While each context is unique, the following principles often underpin joint CERF and CBPF allocation strategies:

- **Temporal sequencing:** CBPF and CERF allocations can be used to support different phases of an emergency response, allowing for continuity in the scaling up of critical humanitarian services.
- **Different, complementary Fund recipients:** CBPF and CERF allocations can be designed to provide funding to different types of recipient organizations in a way that best addresses the overall humanitarian situation. CBPFs typically provide most of their funding to a wide network of front-line national and international NGO partners, while CERF focuses on a smaller number of large-scale grants for UN agency operational requirements.



When the Covid-19 crisis hit us, and everything came to an abrupt halt, CERF took the lead by quickly releasing funds. It saved lives, as operational agencies could continue operations. Norway is a strong and committed supporter of CERF and proud to be one of the largest donors.

- Ine Eriksen Søreide, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Norway

CERF and CBPF allocations in 2020



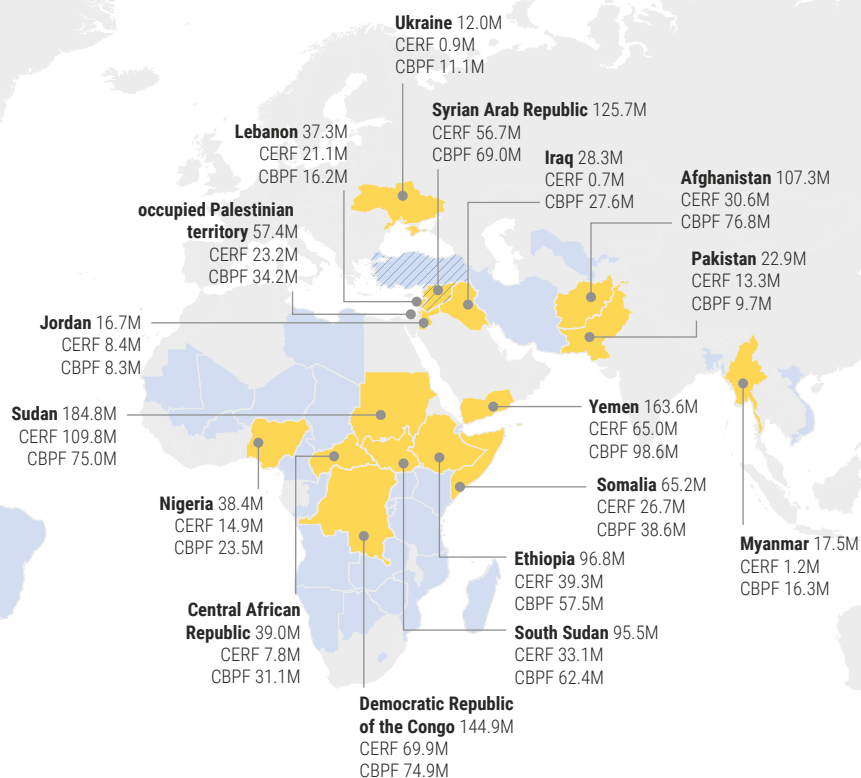
1.8B
ALLOCATED IN 2020

\$848.1M
by CERF

\$916.2M
by CBPFs

in US\$ million

- CERF recipient country/territory
- CERF and CBPF recipient country/territory
- Syria Cross Border (CBPF)



- Different, complementary sectoral focus:** Based on each Fund’s comparative advantage, CERF and CBPF allocations can be designed to address needs in different sectors to achieve the desired programmatic coverage.
- Different, complementary geographical targeting:** CBPF and CERF allocations can be designed to target different geographical locations to achieve the level of spatial coverage required to meet the needs of the most severely affected communities.
- Common promotion of global priorities and cross-cutting issues:** CBPF and CERF allocations can be used together to reinforce consideration of and attention to the key themes, cross-cutting issues and best practices that are recognized by the wider humanitarian community as important for the quality of aid.

COMPLEMENTARITY IN 2020

In 2020, an increased amount of CERF funding went to countries with CBPFs. CBPFs are typically located in countries that suffer from large-scale protracted crises and with high levels of vulnerability and risk, which also makes many of them priority recipients of CERF funding. CERF decision-making processes always consider available funding at the country level, including existing CBPF resources and potential planned allocations.

In 2020, CERF funds were allocated to 17 countries with a CBPF. This is a marked increase from 2019, when CERF funded 11 of the 18 CBPF countries. This increase was largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which required the deployment of complementary resources from both funds to help tackle the dramatic increase in humanitarian needs. It was also reflective of the need and opportunity to disburse increasingly large and strategic grants to large-scale protracted crises in Yemen, Syria and Sudan, among others.

HOW THE FUNDS WORK TOGETHER

Central African Republic

CERF and the Central African Republic Humanitarian Fund (CAR HF) worked together in 2020 to provide a timely and coordinated response to the impact of COVID-19. Early in 2020, CERF allocated \$1.8 million to WHO and UNICEF, as part of a large innovative global CERF block grant to front-load UN-led response to the pandemic. In CAR, this early funding focused on containing and preventing the further spread of the virus. Shortly after, CERF released a second RR allocation of \$5 million specifically to support front-line NGO responses to the virus, at a time when funding to NGOs was critically low. This allocation was instrumental in decentralizing the COVID-19 response. Following these CERF allocations, the CAR HF made two allocations to sustain the response activities enabled by CERF's initial funding. These were specifically aimed at continuing the COVID-19 risk mitigation efforts and scaling up the response to prevent further spread of the virus in the country. The sequencing of the funds and their complementary programmatic alignment helped ensure a well-coordinated, timely and sustained response that could not have been achieved by each fund alone.

Central African Republic: Victor had to abandon his fields, but is currently working as a weaver. He wants to get back to farming to support his children.

© OCHA CAR





Afghanistan: Afghanistan

The 6,000 displaced people in Dand fled fighting in southern Afghanistan in October. Many were farmers, and had to leave behind their homes, land and livestock. The UN and partners are supporting them with emergency assistance, including food, water and medicine.
© OCHA/Fariba Housaini

In the last quarter of 2020, the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) and CERF conducted a joint allocation to respond to COVID-19. These allocations demonstrated the advantage of joint funding in ensuring complementary geographical targeting. Each mechanism prioritized different districts within Herat region, with CERF supporting districts with higher numbers of cross border returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and marginalized migrant populations, while the AHF prioritized support through mobile services in districts with greater needs among host communities and other vulnerable groups.

Yemen: Children receive biscuits in Dar Saad camp in Aden City, November 2020.
© YPN/OCHA Yemen



Yemen

In November 2020, CERF made an allocation of \$35 million to Yemen from the UFE window. The allocation was part of a larger funding package to bolster the health response in the second half of 2020. Funding from the Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF) and bilateral donors was used to pay allowances to several thousand health workers, helping to lay the foundations for the implementation of key health-related humanitarian interventions throughout the country. Capitalizing on this intervention, CERF funding was used to implement high-priority, critically underfunded health-related programmes. The complementary allocations from CERF, YHF and bilateral donors collectively injected some \$80 million into a coherent health-related response in Yemen at a time of critical funding shortfalls and increased needs.

Contributions to CERF

CERF's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other humanitarian crises in 2020 was possible thanks to the unprecedented levels of donor generosity in 2019 and the sustained support in 2020. The record-high income received in 2019 – a large portion of it in December 2019 and carried over to 2020 – allowed flexible and innovative CERF allocations to be disbursed with pace and agility at the start of the year. As a result, and as documented in this publication, CERF was able to deliver unprecedented results, demonstrating that with an increase in resources, so much more can be achieved. In places like Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, CERF made significant strides in strengthening the humanitarian system. From the global 'block grants' at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and allocations to front-line NGOs, to the focus on underfunded areas, anticipatory action pilots, gender-based violence (GBV) and cash assistance for addressing food insecurity, CERF innovations were catalytic and impactful across the board.

Despite the volatile economic situation around the world, many donors continued their unwavering support throughout 2020, with several donors increasing their funding levels to support CERF's critical role in mitigating the primary and secondary impacts of the pandemic in many vulnerable countries.

In total, 56 Member States and Observers, and 3 regional governments, as well as numerous private sector and international organizations, and hundreds of individual donors, contributed to the Fund in 2020. Contributions to CERF were at their second-highest level this year, amounting to \$639 million. The largest contribution came from Germany, followed by the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway. Several donors provided new or additional funding to support CERF's critical role in the multilateral response to



In 2020, CERF played a pivotal role in fighting the adverse humanitarian effects of COVID-19. The Anticipatory Action frameworks progressed remarkably in the pilot countries, empowering humanitarians to provide support faster, cheaper and in a more dignified manner. Germany is proud of being CERF's biggest donor in 2020, providing more than \$125 million in support of CERF efforts to save lives.

*- Heiko Maas,
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Germany*

COVID-19, including Andorra, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the Belgian Government of Flanders and the Baha'i International Community.

Sixteen Member States and two regional/local authority donors increased their overall contributions to CERF in 2020, as compared to 2019.

OCHA also continued to strengthen and broaden the donor base, with two new donors, Cambodia and Turkmenistan, contributing to CERF for the first time. In addition, eight Member States returned as CERF donors in 2020. Some of CERF's core supporters made additional contributions of nearly \$109.9 million on top of their initial 2020 pledges. These included Andorra, Belgium, the Belgian Government of Flanders, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.



\$639M

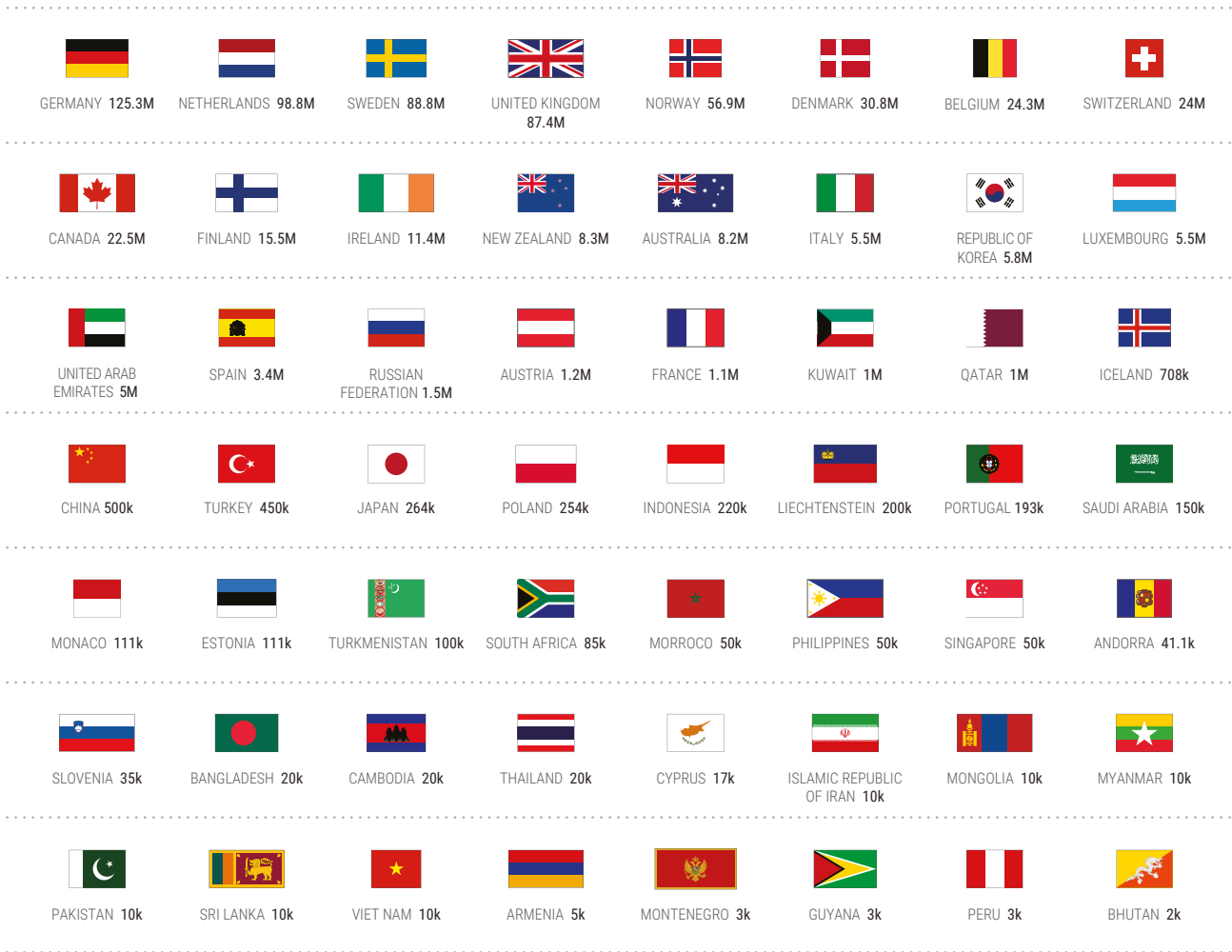
total contributions in 2020



56

MEMBER STATES

In US\$ million

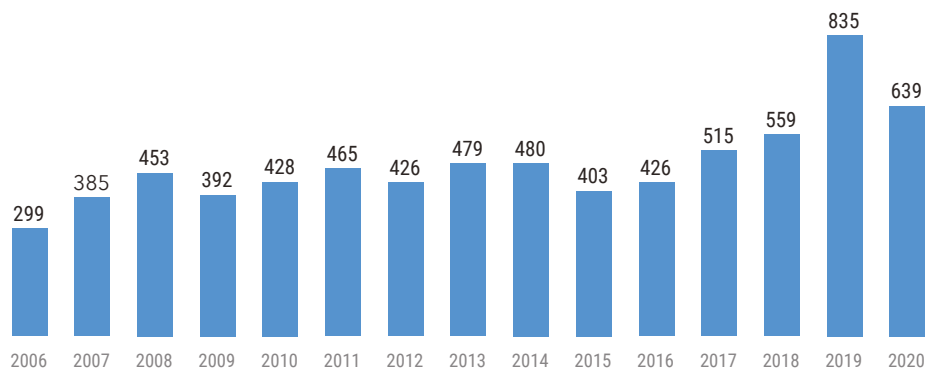


OTHER DONORS



Donor contributions to CERF (2006-2020)

In US\$ million



As a truly global instrument, CERF continuously seeks to augment and diversify the donor base. This is a medium- to long-term ambition as it relies on important policy shifts among high- or middle-income Member States that currently do not, or only minimally, contribute to CERF. This objective will be best achieved with the direct support of existing Member State donors. CERF's annual High-Level Pledging Event will also continue to feature as a key instrument to deepen and broaden the donor base. Ongoing advocacy and communication on CERF's unique added value and impact will support these efforts.

Fifteen past recipients of CERF allocations contributed a combined \$1.3 million to the Fund. They are part of the group of 55 recipient Member States that have given back to CERF since 2006 in solidarity with people in need around the world.

Predictable and timely funding remains of critical importance. Thanks to the support of donors, an increasing proportion of CERF's annual income comes through multi-year agreements. At the end of 2020, CERF had 12 active multi-year agreements with a total value of \$401.6 million, accounting for over 63 per cent of total contributions received. This is a significant increase from 2019, when CERF had 10 multi-year agreements totalling \$252.9 million.

Approximately 90 per cent of contributions to CERF for 2020 came from its top 10 donors. Nearly 99 per cent of total contributions received in 2020 were from the top 20 donors.

A range of public advocacy and digital outreach efforts helped mobilize resources by demonstrating the impact of CERF in meeting people's needs in 2020. This included film clips and social media posts highlighting the work of partners and donors, and translations of the [This is OCHA](#) brochure. With more than 137,700 followers by the end of 2020, [CERF's Twitter account](#) now has a global reach, amplifying targeted outreach by the ERC, humanitarian partners and donors themselves, as well as showcasing CERF value and impact. CERF's public website serves as the Fund's digital portal, conveying its global mandate and providing real-time information and allocation resources.

In 2020, CERF scaled up best practices in creating tailored content, helping donors to communicate to domestic audiences the value of investing in the Fund. A strong CERF able to deliver on its mandate is the collective responsibility of all Member States and an important step towards the humanitarian community's commitment to leave no one behind and reach the furthest left behind first.

CERF allocations

As an essential enabler of global humanitarian action, CERF's Rapid Response window allows country teams to kick-start relief efforts immediately in a coordinated and prioritized response when a new crisis emerges. CERF's Underfunded Emergencies window helps scale up and sustain protracted relief operations to avoid critical gaps when no other funding is available.



Overview

In 2020, CERF was central to the humanitarian community's ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to its secondary humanitarian impact. With the generous support of donors, CERF not only allocated a \$225 million to 39 countries, it did so in record speed, through a series of innovative and flexible approaches. The Fund also continued to support wider needs in humanitarian contexts – in total, allocating some \$848 million to 59 countries and territories.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted humanitarian responses around the world, exacerbating the alarming levels of existing humanitarian needs. Global humanitarian needs and funding requirements for UN-led appeals in 2020 skyrocketed beyond \$38 billion,¹ largely due to the primary and secondary effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 Global Response Plan alone requested \$9.5 billion to tackle both the direct public health impact and indirect, imminent humanitarian consequences of the pandemic. Despite increased funding (in absolute terms) for humanitarian action, the gap between requirements and allocations – 52 per cent – was larger than ever. This extraordinary level of need and growing funding gap increased the demand on CERF in 2020, compelling the Fund to find ways to be even more efficient and strategic in how limited resources are used to achieve greatest impact.

In the context of unprecedented humanitarian needs, donors recognized the need for a strong CERF to support the global humanitarian response. With a record-high funding available for 2020, CERF was able to rise to the challenge, disbursing flexible and innovative allocations right from the outset of the year. CERF allocated a record \$848 million in 2020 for life-saving assistance to 69.3 million people in 59 countries

and territories. CERF was able to maintain its ongoing support to conflicts, disasters and disease outbreaks, while at the same time, providing essential initial financial injections in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in humanitarian settings.

Rapid Response

In 2020, the RR window continued to be a critical source of funding for jump-starting operations at the beginning of a crisis or scaling up existing operations following a significant deterioration in ongoing crises. RR funding amounting to \$618.5 million enabled UN agencies and partners to provide immediate life-saving assistance to 54.8 million people in 58 countries and territories.

Beyond providing some of the earliest humanitarian COVID-19 funding, CERF continued to demonstrate its speed. In early February, the Fund released \$30 million from the RR window to immediately scale up shelter and other critical assistance to thousands of civilians in northwest Syria after air strikes and shelling forced an estimated 586,000 people to flee their homes. Shortly after,



Portugal recognizes and supports CERF's fundamental role in response to the increasing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling flexible, rapid and efficient delivery of humanitarian aid in different contexts, distributing humanitarian funding to people in vulnerable situations and strengthening the resilience of affected communities.

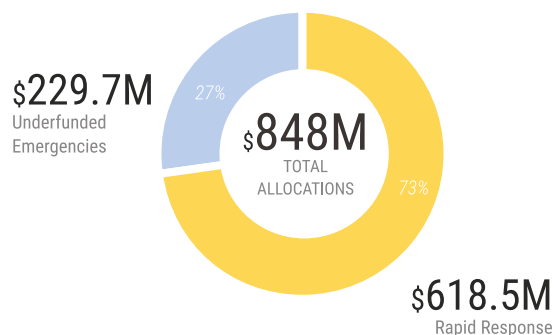
- Francisco André, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Portugal

¹ OCHA *Monthly Funding Update, December 2020* – Global Humanitarian Overview 2020.

Burundi: A child washes his hands in Bujumbura, Burundi. With support from CERF and others, UNICEF Burundi partnered with Savoror, the biggest soap manufacturer in the country, to produce and sell “blue soap” at a reduced price. Ten million bars are supplied every month to promote handwashing and limit the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases. © UNICEF/Nijimbere

2020 CERF funding by windows

In US\$ million



Switzerland continues supporting CERF to ensure that the most critical and underfunded areas of the United Nations system receive support in a rapid and un-bureaucratic way. Switzerland contributed a record-high total of 28 million CHF to CERF for the 2020 and 2021 to help OCHA and partners speed up humanitarian assistance to the world's most vulnerable.

- Manuel Bessler, Deputy Director-General,
Head of Humanitarian Aid Department
and Head of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA), Switzerland

CERF allocated \$10 million for early response to the devastating desert locust outbreak in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. The timely allocation ensured an immediate scale-up of efforts to control the infestation and mitigate its impact (see page 31). CERF also responded quickly to the warehouse explosion in Beirut that caused widespread damage and loss of life. With RR funding of \$6 million, WHO and WFP were able to kick-start their response on the day of the explosion, safe in the knowledge that CERF funds were imminent.

The countries that received the highest levels of funding through the RR window were Sudan (\$109.8 million), DRC (\$39.9 million), Ethiopia (\$39.3 million), Zimbabwe (\$35.3 million) and South Sudan (\$33.1 million). An additional \$42.3 million supported global logistics services to facilitate the global response to COVID-19.

Underfunded Emergencies

Funding from the UFE window continued to be a lifeline for people caught in crises that attract limited donor attention but where needs are just as urgent. CERF allocated a record \$225 million² to 20 underfunded and neglected crises, providing life-saving assistance to 14.5 million people. This is the highest annual amount of UFE funding in the history of CERF, up from the previous record of \$200 million in 2019.

The majority of 2020 UFE funding – \$189.9 million or 83 per cent – was allocated to address the needs of 9.9 million people affected by conflicts and/or forcibly displaced in 15 countries including Syria, Yemen, Jordan, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Burundi. With \$22 million, CERF enabled UN agencies and partners to respond to the humanitarian needs of some 700,000 people stemming from severe droughts in Guatemala, Honduras, Mauritania and Pakistan. Haiti received \$12 million in two consecutive rounds in response to severe economic disruption to support life-saving interventions to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition and increase protection for 300,000 people. Finally, \$5 million was allocated to the chronically underfunded response in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to tackle severe food insecurity and undernutrition.

For the first time, CERF earmarked a portion of UFE funding for GBV response activities. The initial provision of \$5.5 million from the overall envelope of \$100 million in the second allocation round had a significant catalytic effect. Across the 10 recipient countries, almost \$22 million was allocated to dedicated GBV programming or to health projects that contribute to GBV prevention and mitigation. Several countries – Nigeria and Uganda among them – made GBV response a focus of their allocation. Earmarking a portion of CERF funding for GBV response activities illustrated a new approach to strategic giving, which can now be replicated in other thematic areas such as disability. It is also a good example of CERF fostering and promoting systemic change, encouraging RC/HCs and UNCT/HCTs to address strategic issues and areas of chronic underfunding and neglect.

² CERF also allocated the second tranche of multi-year grant of \$5 million to support education in emergencies for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Funding by type of emergency

Humanitarian needs can be created by a variety of shocks, as well as by multiple, compounding humanitarian impacts. CERF categorizes each allocation according to the type of emergency most directly associated with the humanitarian needs addressed through CERF funding. While not a perfect categorization, it provides a useful global perspective on what drives CERF allocations in a given year.

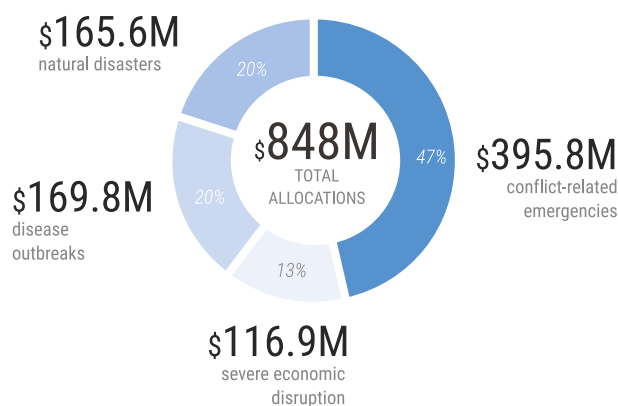
Violent conflict remained the main driver of humanitarian needs worldwide, and accounted for the largest share of CERF allocations in 2020. A total of \$395.8 million (47 per cent) of CERF funding went towards assisting 16.7 million people trapped in conflicts. This represents an absolute increase of over \$100 million compared to 2019, but a slight decrease as a proportion of overall funding – down from 54 per cent in 2019. The second largest portion of funding, \$169.8 million (20 per cent) – up from \$33.9 million in 2019 (6 per cent) – was used to support coordinated, multisectoral responses to disease outbreaks, targeting 32.5 million people. Of this, \$120 million enabled a swift and flexible response to the primary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.³

While natural disasters continued to be a key driver of humanitarian need in 2020, CERF funding for these types of crisis decreased in absolute and relative terms compared to 2019 – when \$214 million or 40 per cent of funding went to natural disasters – but, nonetheless, still amounted to

³ CERF also allocated a further \$105 million to address secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020 CERF funding by emergency type

In US\$ million



Humanitarian crises have rarely been so frequent, protracted and complex. It is necessary to scale up our collective response and make it more flexible and coordinated. Italy is proud to contribute to CERF, a powerful tool supporting the humanitarian system in delivering global life-saving assistance to people in need.

- Marina Sereni, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy

\$165.6 million (20 per cent). This included \$33.4 million⁴ in support of three anticipatory action pilots in Somalia and Ethiopia for severe droughts and in Bangladesh for riverine flooding.

In addition to conflicts, disease outbreaks and natural disasters, CERF also provided \$116.9 million to enable UN agencies and partners to respond to the humanitarian consequences primarily linked to severe economic disruption in already highly fragile contexts. An allocation to Sudan of \$99.8 million – the largest single country allocation to date – enabled UN agencies and partners to support life-saving interventions to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition and increase protection for 3.9 million people.

⁴ In Bangladesh, \$2.4 million of the initial \$5.2 million allocation was reprogrammed for life-saving response after the floods.

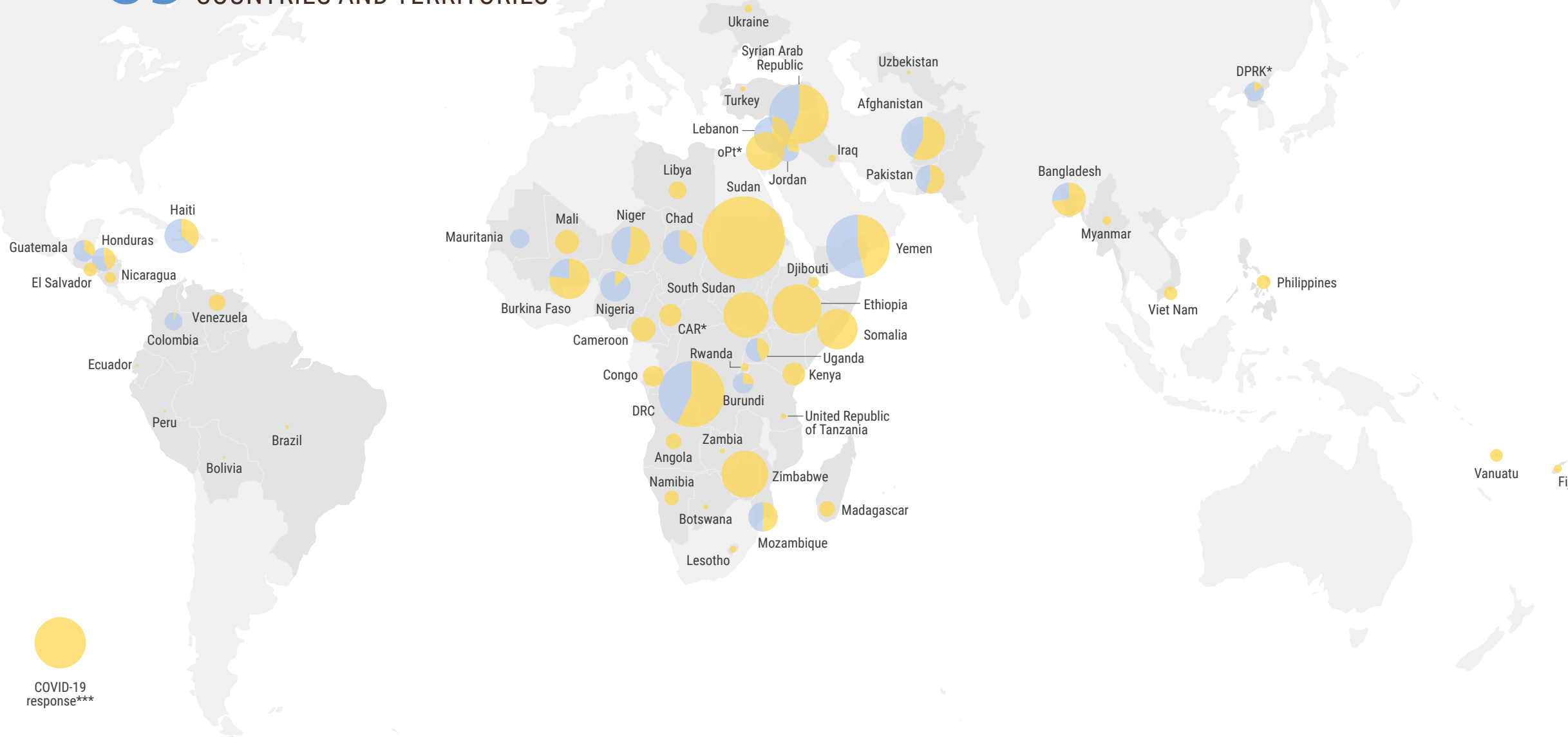
IN 2020, CERF ALLOCATED

\$848 million

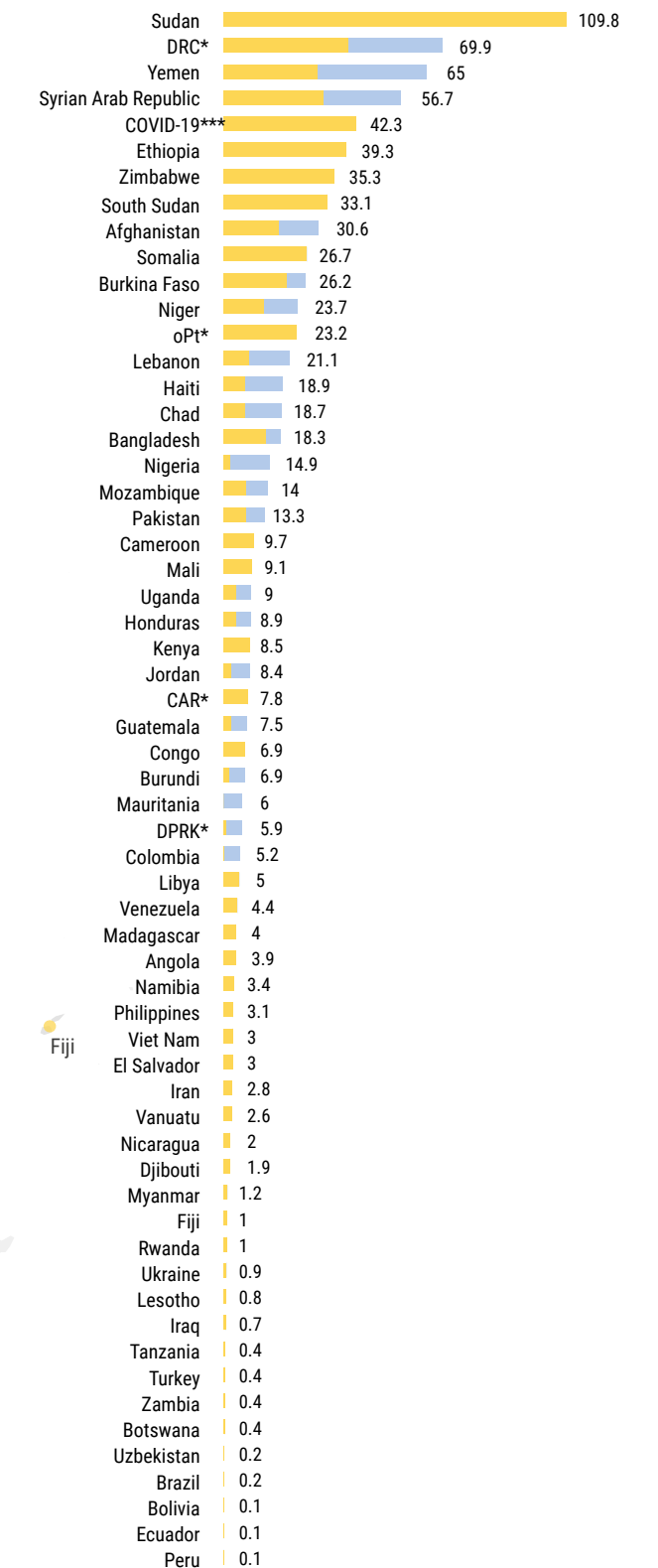
TO ENABLE LIFE-SAVING ASSISTANCE FOR

69.3 million PEOPLE IN

59 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES



ALLOCATIONS BY COUNTRY ** in US\$ million

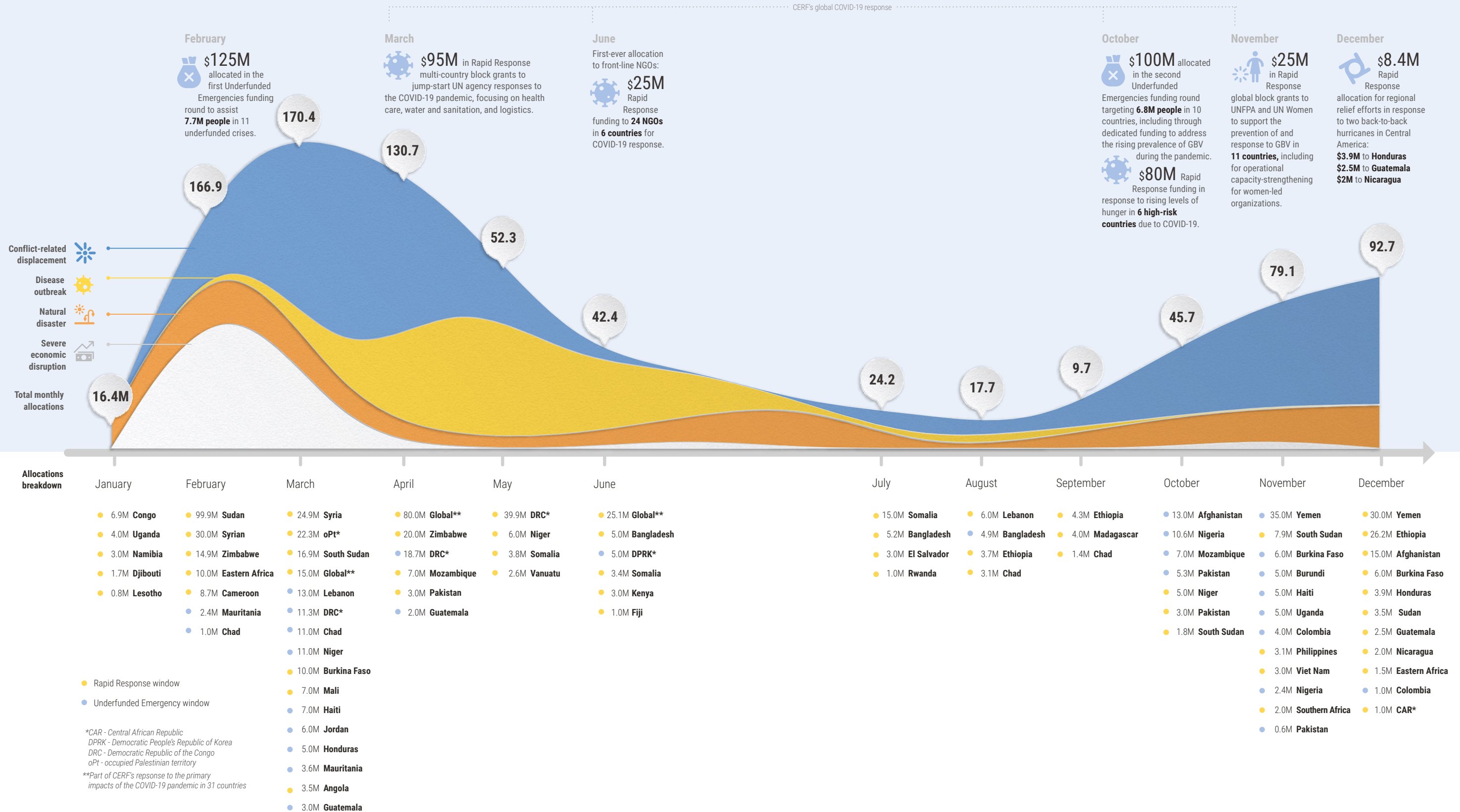


COVID-19 response***

● Rapid Response window
● Underfunded Emergencies window

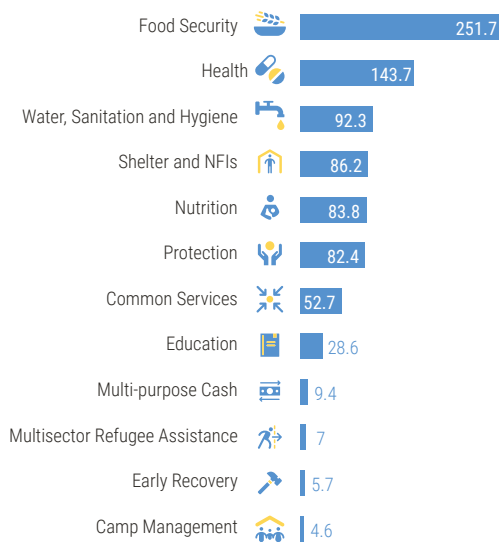
*CAR - Central African Republic
DRC - Democratic Republic of the Congo
DPRK - Democratic People's Republic of Korea
oPt - occupied Palestinian territory
**Regional and global allocations are disaggregated by country
***Global logistical services as part of CERF's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

2020 CERF FUNDING TIMELINE



2020 CERF funding by sector

In US\$ million



Funding by sector

In 2020, the food security, health, and water and sanitation sectors remained CERF's top funded sectors, collectively accounting for 58 per cent of overall funding. Food security, which comprises food assistance (\$182.1 million) and agriculture-based livelihood support (\$69.9 million), received \$251.7 million, making it the highest funded sector again in 2020. The proportion of funding to food security more than doubled from 14 per cent in 2019 to 30 per cent in 2020. In addition, \$83.8 million (10 per cent) was approved for nutrition assistance, bringing the total for food security and nutrition to \$335.6 million – 40 per cent of all allocated CERF funds in 2020.

As a reflection of the ERC's ambition for CERF to lead the way in supporting chronically under-funded priority areas of humanitarian response, protection and education remained high on CERF's agenda in 2020. CERF funding to the protection sector reached a record high of \$82.4 million, remaining at 10 per cent of overall CERF funding.⁵ 2020 also saw the highest levels of CERF funding for the education sector since the Fund was established in 2006, with more than \$28.6 million allocated to emergency education projects. An analysis of project data and budgets across sectors shows that at least \$65 million in CERF funding went towards the prevention and response to GBV in 2020.⁶ This record-level amount is most likely an underestimation as it only captures GBV interventions that are clearly costed through project budgets.

Loans

In addition to the two funding windows, CERF has a \$30 million loan facility to cover cash-flow gaps in UN humanitarian operations – particularly when an official donor commitment has been received by an agency but there is a delay in the transfer of funds. In March 2020, CERF provided a loan of \$10 million to FAO to scale up desert locust control operations, which included procuring pesticides, hiring helicopters and aircraft, purchasing vehicles with spray equipment and conducting environmental impact assessments in the worst-affected areas in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In September and November, CERF provided two loans totalling \$30 million to UNRWA to help manage a severe cash flow crisis and avert an imminent interruption of the provision of life-saving assistance and protection to 5.7 million Palestine refugees.

⁵ This figure does not include funding for protection activities mainstreamed into projects financed through other sectors.

⁶ Including \$25 million that was allocated to UNFPA and UN Women in late 2020 and disbursed in early 2021.

CERF'S GLOBAL COVID-19 RESPONSE



The UK is proud to be one of the leading supporters of CERF. In 2020, CERF responded to the unprecedented rise in humanitarian need and were one of the first humanitarian actors to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. This speed and agility make CERF one of the most valuable tools in the international humanitarian system.

- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, United Kingdom

CERF played a critical role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. It provided \$120 million to help address the primary impacts of COVID-19, including \$40 million to address logistics and common services, and a further \$105 million to help address the secondary impacts of the pandemic.

CERF was early to react to the challenges posed by COVID-19. In March 2020, at the outset of the pandemic, CERF provided \$95 million in multi-country block grants to jump-start UN agency responses, focusing on health care, water and sanitation, and logistics. An innovative approach to allocating resources was introduced to increase speed and flexibility in light of the challenges posed by the global pandemic. Rather than disbursing funds directly to country teams, CERF provided resources to nine UN agencies, allowing them to prioritize distribution to contexts with the greatest needs. A significant portion (42 per cent; \$40 million) of these resources were provided to WFP and partners to expand logistics services, including the transportation of supplies and emergency workers, in response to the severe disruption of international commercial supply chains. This first



Nigeria: A girl in the CERF-funded Child Friendly Space set up by UNICEF in Stadium IDP Camp, Maiduguri, Borno State. With the COVID-19 pandemic, activities had to be adapted; the centre can now only host 50 children at a time, instead of the 200 children that could be accommodated before the onset of the pandemic. © OCHA/Eve Sabbagh

injection of resources was critical to supporting the bulk procurement of medical and protective equipment, and hygiene items, as well as community-level COVID-19 sensitization and risk mitigation.

In June, CERF complemented this response with an allocation targeted to front-line NGOs – addressing one of the key challenges highlighted by the humanitarian community during the COVID-19 pandemic: the under-resourcing of the NGO community. Through its first-ever allocation to front-line NGOs, CERF provided \$25.1 million in funding to 24 NGOs in six countries for COVID-19 response: Bangladesh, Central African Republic, Haiti, Libya, South Sudan and Sudan. One third of the recipient NGOs were national or local NGOs. IOM acted as a grant manager, helping to ensure that the funding was flexible and based on similar terms to the funding that is customarily provided to UN agencies.

As the impact of COVID-19 evolved, CERF continued to respond with speed and agility to remain in step with new needs, channelling resources where they were needed most. In November, CERF allocated \$80 million to respond to rising levels of hunger in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, DRC, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen. This allocation was dedicated to cash and voucher programmes, which were seen as particularly effective and quick in channelling resources to the frontline during the pandemic.

In November, CERF made an allocation to respond to the increasing numbers of GBV incidents due to COVID-19. CERF provided \$25 million to UNFPA and UN Women to support GBV prevention and response programming in 11 countries, including for operational capacity-strengthening for women-led organizations working to prevent, respond to and mitigate the effects of GBV in humanitarian settings.



Overview of CERF's COVID-19 response



\$225M
ALLOCATED FOR
COVID-19 RESPONSE

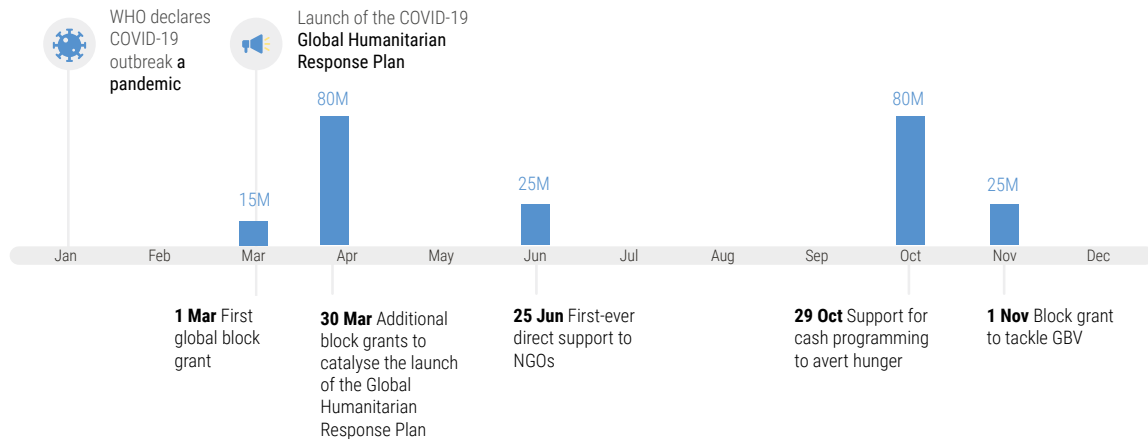


10
UN AGENCIES



39
COUNTRIES

COVID-19 RESPONSE ALLOCATION TIMELINE



INTERIM RESULTS OF CERF'S RESPONSE TO PRIMARY IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



18 million people reached through **health awareness campaigns** and **hygiene promotion** activities



5 million children supported with distance or **home-based learning**



Over **3.5 million units** of **personal protective equipment, health kits** and **medical supplies** delivered



2.5 million people received **hygiene and sanitation kits**



Essential **protection services** for **460,000 people** including psychosocial support and GBV prevention



75,000 people received **cash assistance** for household essentials including food, water, medicine, utilities and rent



Livelihood support including agricultural and livestock inputs for **32,000 people**



3 humanitarian hubs established to **facilitate cargo movement** and 750 passenger and cargo flights operated



Nigeria: A group of internally displaced women discuss COVID-19 prevention measures at NYSC camp, Maiduguri.

© Mshelia Yakubu/
IOM 2021

Nigeria

Protecting one another from COVID-19

Seven years ago, Hajara and her children fled their home in Konduga in northeast Nigeria. Their village was attacked by non-state armed groups commonly known as Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province.

Her husband was one of 70 people killed in the attack. She and her children now live in NYSC Camp in Maiduguri, home to about 2,000 other displaced people.


Hajara joined 50 other women last year to train as WASH hygiene promotion volunteers, working to share information on COVID-19 prevention measures throughout the camp and keep the community as safe as possible. With CERF support, IOM implemented the training as part of a global block grant allocation to support COVID-19 community awareness projects for IDPs.

“We told people about the importance of reporting symptoms and that they should adhere to the protocols; for example, sneezing into a napkin or on the elbow. If they use a napkin, we tell them they should throw it in a dustbin after use because children could pick it up and play with it,” explains Hajara. Along with the other trainees, Hajara visited households one-by-one, emphasizing the importance of washing hands properly.

For their work, Hajara and her colleagues received a small stipend. Hajara plans to use it to pay her children’s school fees and to buy supplies for her knitting business.


CERF and conflict-related crises

2020 CERF allocations to conflict-related crises

 **\$395.8M**
ALLOCATED

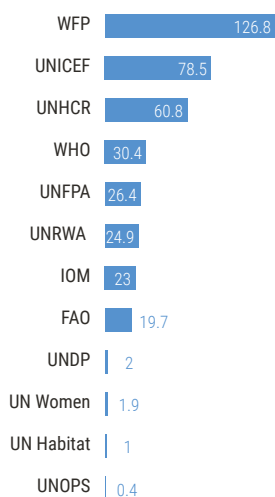
 **23**
COUNTRIES

 **16.7M**
PEOPLE ASSISTED

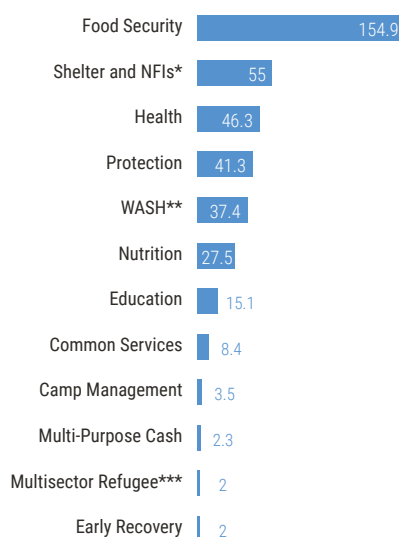
 **\$206M** Rapid Response
\$189.9M Underfunded Emergencies



Funding by agency in US\$ million



Funding by sector in US\$ million

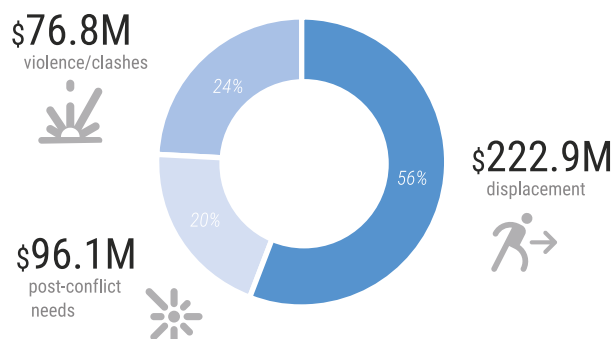


*Non-Food Items, **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
***Multisector Refugee Assistance

With 40 highly violent conflicts worldwide in 2020, conflict remained one of the primary drivers of humanitarian needs⁷ – and accounted for the largest share of CERF funding. Civilian populations continued to bear the brunt; for the ninth consecutive year, they accounted for more than 90 per cent of total casualties of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.⁸ Providing a much-needed lifeline to civilians caught in violent conflicts, CERF allocated over \$395.8 million in 2020 – some 56 per cent of its total funding – to ensure the provision of life-saving assistance to 16.7 million people in 23 countries.

Half of this funding – \$206 million or 52 per cent – was provided from the RR window, enabling the provision of immediate assistance to people in sudden-onset or quickly deteriorating emergencies. A further \$189.8 million was allocated through the UFE window for assistance to people caught in protracted, conflict-related crises.

Funding by emergency type in US\$ million



⁷ Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, [Conflict Barometer 2020](#).

⁸ OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2021](#).



Conflict-related displacement in Syria

After a decade of violent conflict in Syria, humanitarian needs remain extensive across the country. Responding to an increase in conflict-related internal displacement resulting from an escalation in military hostilities, CERF made two parallel allocations through its RR and UFE windows in February 2020, amounting to \$54.9 million. Both allocations supported the response to the displacement of more than 800,000 people, primarily from southern Idlib and the western parts of Aleppo governorate. The vast majority of those fleeing new outbreaks of violence had already been displaced in the previous months, reflecting a trend of compounding and repeated displacements in the region. Harsh winter conditions exacerbated the vulnerability and needs of displaced people, 80 per cent of whom were women and girls.

The first allocation, totalling \$25 million, targeted the most urgent needs of 420,000 people fleeing hostilities in northwest Syria and enabled UN agencies and partners to scale up the construction

of shelter and facilitate the provision of critical relief items and other services. CERF-funded activities provided essential items to help displaced people withstand the winter (including hygiene kits, shelter kits and food rations), and protection services and mine risk education, among others.

Complementing this allocation, a further \$24.9 million was provided from the UFE window, enabling UN agencies to continue providing life-saving activities in some of the most chronically underfunded sectors in northern and southern parts of the country. Targeting almost 1.3 million of people in the most vulnerable groups, including internally displaced people, recent returnees and people with disabilities, the allocation played a critical role in providing assistance to women and girls, particularly GBV survivors, scaling up emergency education capacities as well as enhancing child protection services.

Syria: Ahmed lives in Al-Tah IDP camp, in Idlib. Having fled violence in his village, he and his family lived in the camp throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Ahmed knows the virus can kill people, and he hopes there is a cure soon. He is making paper masks to share with his friends.

© OCHA



Burkina Faso:

Women who have been internally displaced by the ongoing violence sit by their shelter in Kaya.

© OCHA/Olympia de maismont

Displacement and food insecurity in Burkina Faso

An increase in deadly attacks carried out by non-state armed groups during the first quarter of 2020 accelerated the displacement crisis in Burkina Faso – one of the fastest growing in the world. As of October 2020, more than 1 million people have been displaced in less than two years. In addition, protection and human rights violations committed by state security forces and non-state actors led to a significant deterioration in security, leaving at least 940,000 people in need of critical protection assistance. With the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing violence and climate shocks driving a dramatic food crisis across the Central Sahel region, Burkina Faso also faced increasingly dire levels of food security, with the number of food-insecure people nearly tripling in 2020 from 1.2 million to 3.3 million.


CERF made three separate allocations to Burkina Faso in 2020, amounting to a total of \$22 million. This included two RR allocations (totaling \$16 million) made in response to the massive increase in newly displaced and food-insecure people, and an UFE allocation (\$6 million) to provide much-needed assistance in the most un-


derstood sectors. For the UFE allocation, the HCT prioritized GBV programming, apportioning an additional \$0.25 million on top of the \$0.5 million earmarked in the UFE second funding round. This funding was used to strengthen services for GBV survivors, support local women-led organizations and extend GBV activities to areas least covered by the humanitarian response.


The third allocation, made later in the year, focused on addressing food insecurity through cash assistance. Some \$6 million in RR funding was provided to Burkina Faso in December as part of a broader initiative by CERF to provide resources to some of the most food-insecure countries in the world (\$80 million was allocated to six of the most food-insecure countries). The allocation enabled WFP to provide life-saving cash assistance to more than 95,000 IDPs and was used to support and complement the ongoing UFE allocation in central, eastern and northern Burkina Faso aimed at strengthening livelihoods and improving the management of IDP camps through targeted health and logistics interventions.

CERF and disease outbreaks


2020 CERF allocations to disease outbreaks

 **\$169.8M**
ALLOCATED

 **32.5M**
PEOPLE ASSISTED

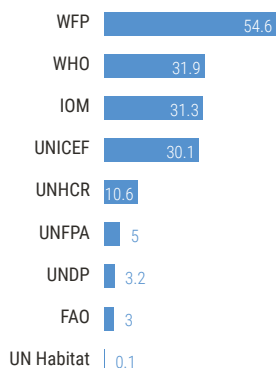
 **\$105M** additional funding allocated to secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

 **48**
COUNTRIES

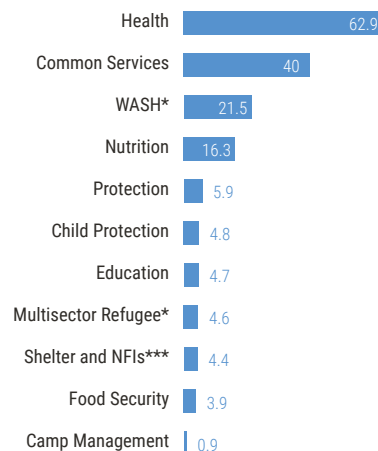
 **\$168.9M** Rapid Response
\$0.9M Underfunded Emergencies



By agency in US\$ million

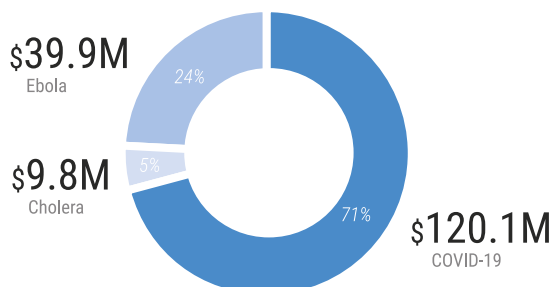


By sector in US\$ million



*Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
Multisector Refugee Assistance, *Non-Food Items

By emergency type in US\$ million



Disease outbreaks have been on the increase over the past few years in almost all countries with recurrent humanitarian emergencies.⁹ In 2020, COVID-19 compounded the situation, hindering essential health services, disrupting supply chains and impacting livelihoods. Throughout 2020, CERF was central to the humanitarian community's response to the growing needs caused by disease outbreaks, allocating \$169.8 million to address primary impacts (COVID-19, Ebola, cholera). An additional \$105 million was allocated in response to the secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly food insecurity and GBV.¹⁰

⁹ As determined by WHO's Global Health Observatory – Health Emergencies data from 2015-2019.

¹⁰ Of the \$105 million allocated by CERF to address the secondary impacts of COVID-19 (including \$80 million for food security and \$25 million for GBV), \$54 million was disbursed in 2021. Further details on CERF's support for COVID-19 can be found in the Progress Reports for the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP).

Syria: WFP warehouse staff in Damascus wear masks to reduce the risk of COVID-19.

© WFP/Hussam Al Saleh



Democratic Republic of the Congo: As part of the Ebola emergency response, 800 community volunteers shared information on how to conduct burials safely when someone dies of Ebola. This volunteer is wearing protective clothing to take the dead from their homes. © UN Photo



Mozambique: Rosa, aged 1.5 years, with her aunt at the Ibo Health Center. The family escaped violence in Capo Delgado and are living with a host family. © UNICEF/Bisol



Global COVID-19 response

In 2020, the COVID-19 virus brought death and suffering to all corners of the world, with a particularly devastating and destabilizing effect on the world's poorest countries. It also led to a deterioration in the conditions of millions of people already caught up in humanitarian crises. The pandemic far exceeded any earlier challenges faced by the humanitarian system. CERF was central to the humanitarian community's ability to respond to the growing needs and allocated a total of \$225 million to the primary and secondary effects of the pandemic through flexible and innovative allocations that could be disbursed with pace and agility.

The pandemic will continue to pose humanitarian challenges in 2021 and beyond. The economic effects of the pandemic will be particularly hard-felt in lower middle- and lower-income countries. In 2021, COVID-19 is being integrated into 'regular' Humanitarian Needs Overviews and inter-agency coordinated plans. CERF will continue to respond to needs caused by the pandemic.

Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

While COVID-19 dominated the headlines for much of 2020, the discovery of new Ebola cases in the DRC on 10 April – just three days before officials were set to declare the end of the tenth Ebola outbreak – was a stark reminder of the continuing threat of this disease. In response, CERF allocated \$39.9 million from its RR window to avoid further flare-ups of Ebola. Funding went towards strengthening local health services, supporting Ebola survivors, establishing community-based surveillance, investing in alert and rapid response systems, and providing humanitarian assistance in the most vulnerable areas. CERF has consistently supported efforts to tackle Ebola outbreaks in DRC and neighbouring countries, allocating \$68 million since CERF's inception in 2006.

Cholera in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Mozambique

In 2020, CERF allocated \$9.8 million for cholera projects as part of broader allocations to tackle multiple emergencies within particular countries. For instance, in August 2020, CERF allocated \$8 million from its RR window to WHO and UNICEF to support people affected by flooding and cholera in Ethiopia. Similarly, a CERF allocation to Cameroon for displacement included \$0.7 million for UNICEF and WHO to respond to a cholera outbreak, while a CERF allocation to Mozambique for conflict included \$0.5 million for WHO to tackle the disease.

CERF is also involved in an important pilot to test anticipatory action for projected cholera outbreaks. Anticipatory action presents an important opportunity to rapidly control new outbreaks, reduce mortality and prevent the spread of the disease. Anticipatory action requires pre-agreed resources to implement pre-planned activities following the activation of a trigger. CERF's role in ensuring the availability of resources was critical in establishing the anticipatory action pilots. (See pages [63-66](#))



CERF and natural disasters

In 2020, more than 95 million people worldwide were caught in natural disasters and required immediate assistance.¹¹ This was an increase from the estimated 91 million in 2019. CERF allocated \$165 million in 2020 to ensure the provision of life-saving assistance to 12.2 million people critically affected by natural disasters in 27 countries. This represented 20 per cent of the total funding allocated by CERF in 2020.

The majority of 2020 CERF funding to natural disasters – \$76.2 million or 46 per cent – went to droughts in Eastern, Central, Southern and North-Western Africa, Central America and South Asia, followed by \$49.7 million (30 per cent) to floods in Eastern Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia. CERF also provided \$26.2 million in response to hurricanes, cyclones and other tropical storms, primarily in Central America and South Asia, as well as \$13.5 million in response to locust outbreaks in Southern and Eastern Africa.

Building on growing evidence that acting prior to the onset of a predictable shock can be significantly more (cost-) effective than traditional modes of response – where assistance is provided after the shock has materialized and caused human suffering – in 2020, CERF helped to set up three anticipatory action pilots intended to mitigate the impact of specific natural hazards. Anticipatory action pilot allocations were implemented in Somalia and Ethiopia for severe droughts and in Bangladesh for riverine flooding, with CERF allocating a total of \$33.4 million for anticipatory activities.¹² (See pages 63-66)

¹¹ Estimation based on data provided by the [International Disaster Database EM-DAT](#).

¹² In Bangladesh, \$2.4 million of the initial \$5.2 million allocation was reprogrammed for life-saving response after the floods.

2020 CERF allocations to natural disasters



\$165.6M
ALLOCATED



27
COUNTRIES

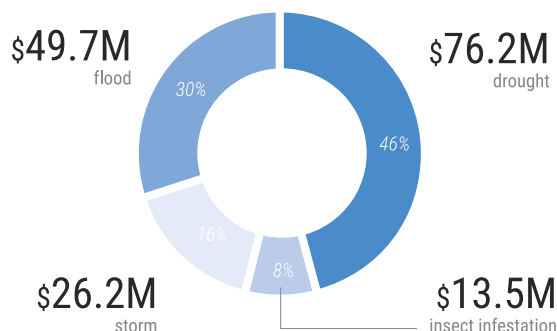


12.2M
PEOPLE ASSISTED

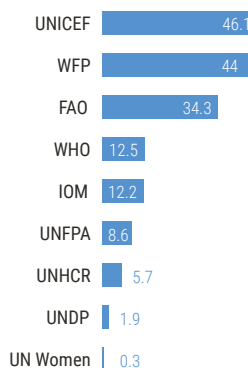


\$143.6M Rapid Response
\$22M Underfunded Emergencies

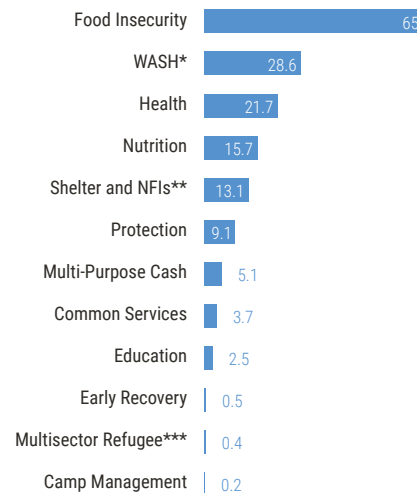
By emergency type in US\$ million



By agency in US\$ million



By sector in US\$ million



*Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, ** Non-Food Items
***Multisector Refugee Assistance



Somalia: A swarm of desert locust in Chidhi village, Somaliland, in November. The desert locust situation threatened livelihoods across the region. The locusts multiply rapidly and can travel up to 150 kilometers a day, devouring vast swathes of crops and pastureland on the way.
© OSRO

Locust outbreaks in Southern and Eastern Africa

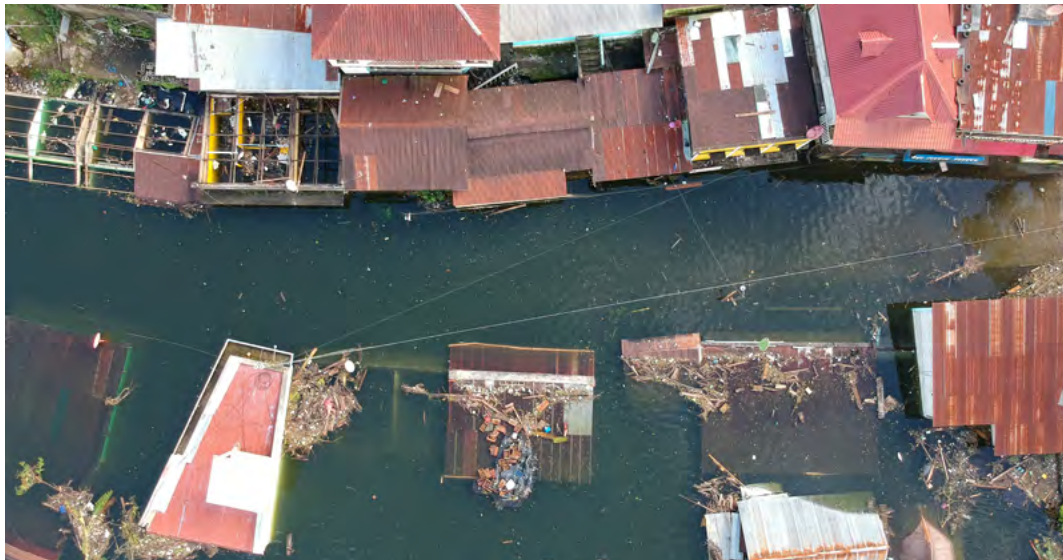
In 2020, multiple countries in Eastern and Southern Africa were affected by the rapid spread of locusts. Benefiting from exceptionally productive breeding conditions, massive swarms of insects threatened the agricultural production of countries whose food security was already compromised by recurrent drought, conflict, high food prices and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Without a coordinated response, the outbreak in Eastern Africa threatened to evolve into a regional plague, endangering the livelihoods of millions of people across multiple countries.

Responding to the worst outbreak of desert locust in the Horn of Africa in 25 years, CERF provided FAO with two regional allocations totalling \$11.5 million from its RR window and a loan of \$10 million to support the government response to locusts in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In January, CERF disbursed \$10 million to FAO to support a massive scale-up of its locust monitoring and control efforts across the three countries. CERF-funded activities, including increased pesticide aerial spraying operations, helped to protect the food security of an estimated 24.3 million people across Eastern Africa, while preventing the potential loss of more than \$1 billion-worth of agricultural outputs. Supplementing the allocation of \$10 million, a loan of another \$10 million helped bridge a gap in donor contributions and allowed FAO to further scale up the desert locust control operations. Funding was

used to procure pesticides, hire helicopters and aircraft, purchase vehicles with spray equipment and conduct environmental impact assessments in the worst-affected countries. FAO also made use of its [eLocust3 App](#), a ground-breaking tool that field teams could employ to transmit information from remote desert areas and map the movement of locusts across countries. This enabled them to kick-start action to bring swarms under control before they caused severe damage.

In December, CERF allocated an additional \$1.5 million to FAO in Kenya, the country most severely affected by the outbreaks, to ensure that efforts to control locust swarms were not disrupted by funding gaps and to secure critical gains in the fight against one of the world's most dangerous migratory pests.

In November 2020, CERF allocated a further \$2 million from its RR window, enabling FAO to scale up its support to the Governments of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe in their efforts to contain outbreaks of African Migratory Locust and Red Locust. Funds released from CERF enabled FAO to provide immediate operational support, including the hire of planes, vehicles and sprayers as well as the provision of critical surveillance and technical support. This helped to control the spread of locusts and mitigate the impact on an estimated 2.3 million farmers and pastoralists already vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity.



Back-to-back hurricanes in Central America

In November 2020, over the course of two weeks, back-to-back hurricanes made landfall in Central America, causing devastation and a dramatic increase in humanitarian needs in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Hurricane Eta, a devastating Category 4 tropical storm and the third most intense November Atlantic hurricane on record, hit the region in the first week of November, causing flooding and significant damage to infrastructure. It left hundreds of thousands of people without proper shelter and secure access to food and safe drinking water. Two weeks after the first hurricane, a second, even more devastating tropical storm hit Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Hurricane Iota, a Category 5 storm and the second most intense November Atlantic storm on record, brought further devastation to a humanitarian situation already characterized by instability and multifaceted needs.

A combination of the compounding impacts of two of the most devastating hurricanes to hit the region and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic significantly compromised people's coping capacities, placing the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable groups at risk, including women, children, people with disabilities, indigenous people and members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

In response to the emergency, throughout the month of November CERF allocated \$8.4 million from the RR window to support regional relief efforts, with Honduras receiving \$3.9 million, Guatemala \$2.5 million and Nicaragua \$2 million. CERF enabled the provision of critical life-saving support to more than 483,000 people across the three countries, including immediate food assistance and access to potable water, personal hygiene facilities and critical health care services. Given the relatively high incidence of sexual- and gender-based violence in the region, CERF-funded activities were used to fill critical gaps in contexts where women, children and the LGBTQIA+ population faced significant protection risks – in line with CERF's efforts to contribute to gender equality (see pages [53-54](#)).

Nicaragua: Category 4 Hurricane Eta made landfall in Nicaragua early on 3 November 2020. At-risk communities in the region were already reeling from COVID-19 and pre-existing humanitarian needs.

© OCHA/ Luis Echeverria

CERF results

In the face of ever-worsening humanitarian needs, CERF remains central to the humanitarian community's ability to meet the most urgent, life-saving needs of people caught in crisis. Thanks to the support of its donors and partners, CERF enables high-impact responses at scale and innovations that deliver unprecedented results.

Bangladesh: A women affected by the floods takes a silo during distribution ceremony organized by FAO in Shaghata Upazila, Gaibandha District.
© FAO/Fahad Kaizer



People assisted with 2020 CERF funding

In 2020, CERF supported humanitarian action across the globe, helping to expand the reach of its donors. CERF funding enabled partners to deliver life-saving assistance to more than 69 million of the most vulnerable crises-affected people in 59 countries and territories, including 31 million requiring assistance due to the primary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With a record-high allocation level of \$848.1 million in 2020, CERF enabled partners to provide fast, predictable and flexible life-saving assistance and protection to 69.3 million¹³ people in 59 countries and territories. Close to half the people reached – 31 million people¹⁴ in 37 countries – were assisted thanks to CERF’s flexible and innovative response to the primary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with allocations totalling \$120 million.

Almost half of people assisted with CERF funding (32.5 million people) were affected by disease outbreaks. This is an increase of almost 30 million people compared to 2019 and is linked to CERF’s unparalleled response to the COVID-19 pandemic. CERF also supported 16.7 million people affected by conflicts and 12.2 million by natural disasters – a slight decrease from 13.7 million and 12.7 million respectively in 2019. CERF funding allowed UN agencies and partners to assist an additional 7.8 million people affected by severe economic disruption in, among other countries, Sudan and Haiti.

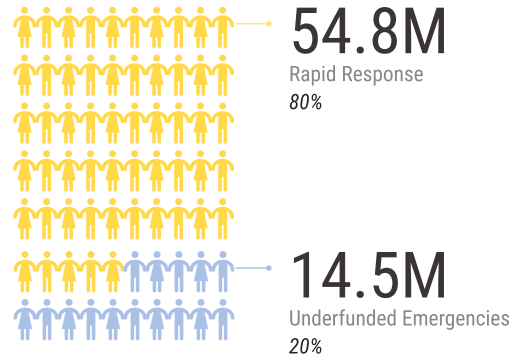
¹³ This number may include a limited number of people indirectly targeted through COVID-19 awareness campaigns.

¹⁴ An additional 26 million people were assisted indirectly through COVID-19 awareness campaigns, risk communication and community engagement initiatives, and distance learning lessons.

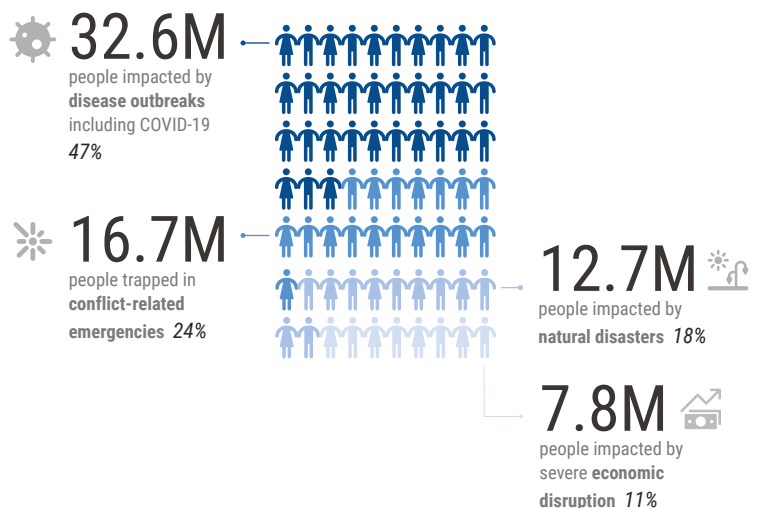
People targeted with 2020 CERF funding



By window



By emergency type



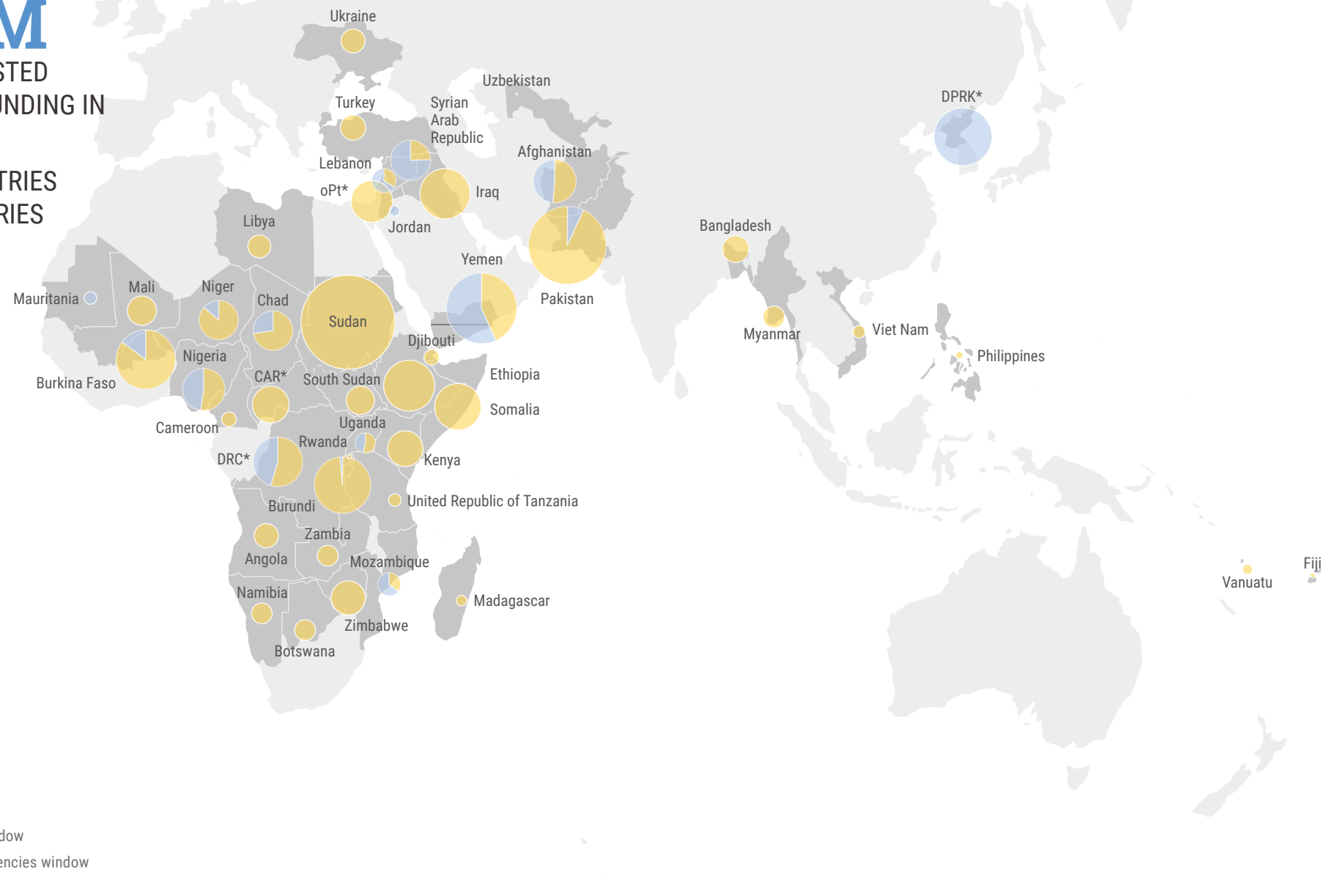


69.3M

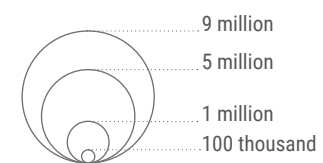
PEOPLE ASSISTED
WITH CERF FUNDING IN

59

COUNTRIES
AND TERRITORIES



NUMBER OF PEOPLE ASSISTED



* CAR - Central African Republic
DPRK - Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DRC - Democratic Republic of the Congo
oPt - occupied Palestinian territory

Top-10 countries with highest number of people targeted with CERF funding

Sudan
9.5M people

Pakistan
6.5M people

Yemen
5.3M people

Burkina Faso
3.7M people

Democratic People's Republic of Korea
3.6M people

Burundi
3.4M people



Ethiopia
2.8M people

Iraq
2.7M people

Democratic Republic of the Congo
2.6M people

Somalia
2.3M people

IN 2020 CERF GRANTS ENABLED PARTNERS TO DELIVER

SECTOR	PEOPLE TARGETED	FEMALE	MALE	CHILDREN	ADULTS
 Critical Health Care	41.7M 	53% 	47% 	41% 	59% 
 Food Assistance & Agricultural inputs	16.2M 	51% 	49% 	49% 	51% 
 Water and Sanitation	12.0M 	53% 	47% 	48% 	52% 
 Protection services	8.6M 	56% 	44% 	53% 	47% 
 Nutrition support	3.7M 	66% 	34% 	65% 	35% 
 Education	2.9M 	48% 	52% 	82% 	18% 
 Camp Management assistance	1.5M 	53% 	47% 	59% 	41% 
 Shelter and NFIs	1.2M 	53% 	47% 	51% 	49% 
 Early Recovery assistance	0.2M 	54% 	46% 	38% 	62% 
 Multisector Refugee Assistance	0.1M 	54% 	46% 	41% 	59% 

MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE

Again in 2020, the majority of people targeted with CERF funding – 37.1 million or 54 per cent – were women and girls; some 31.4 million (45 per cent) were children under the age of 18. Over 8.1 million of the people targeted with 2020 CERF funding were people with disabilities, of whom the majority – 4.2 million or 53 per cent – were women and girls. CERF’s COVID-19 response, in particular, played a critical role in assisting people with disabilities. Thanks to these allocations, some 5.7 million people with disabilities in 37 countries benefited from, among others, critical health care, access to education, protection and shelter (see pages 51-62).

Methodology for tracking numbers of people assisted with CERF funding

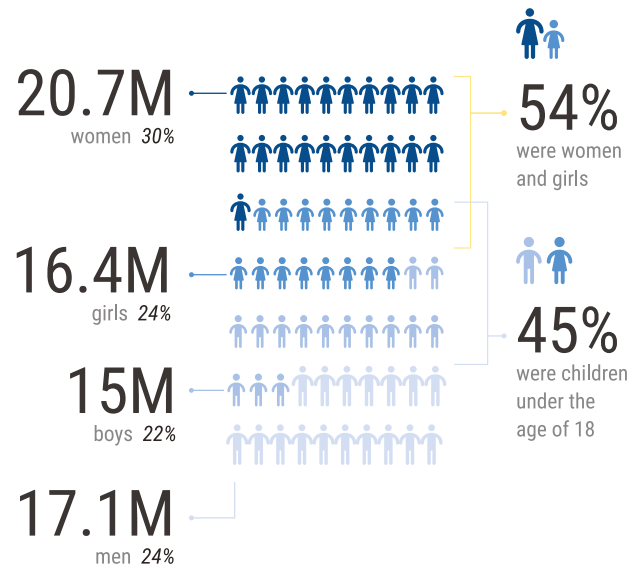
CERF applies a consistent methodology for tracking the number of people targeted and reached. Nevertheless, the global figures remain estimates due to the great complexity of humanitarian situations and the multisectoral nature of CERF-funded assistance. The challenge of accurately gauging the number of people targeted and reached is not unique to CERF; it is an inherent problem across humanitarian action.

CERF requires all recipient agencies to provide detailed information on the number of people directly targeted and reached with each CERF-funded project. However, calculating sectoral totals is not simply a case of adding together the number of people reached by each project. Likewise, adding together the totals for each sector does not provide an accurate estimate of allocation totals. Due to the comprehensive multisectoral nature of CERF responses, people often receive CERF-funded assistance from a number of different projects and sectors. For instance, the same individual could, thanks to CERF funding, receive a vaccination, food and relief items, and benefit from protection efforts. If the number of people reached by all CERF-funded projects were simply added together, this person would be counted four times, leading to inflated beneficiary numbers.

CERF uses a two-step methodology to avoid counting the same people multiple times. First, sector leads, in consultation with implementing agencies, identify duplications of beneficiaries within sectors. Second, OCHA field offices or RC/HC offices identify duplications between sectors within the same CERF allocation.

People targeted with 2020 CERF funding

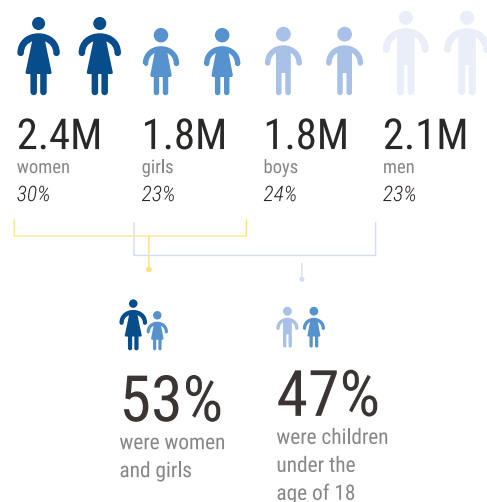
By gender and age



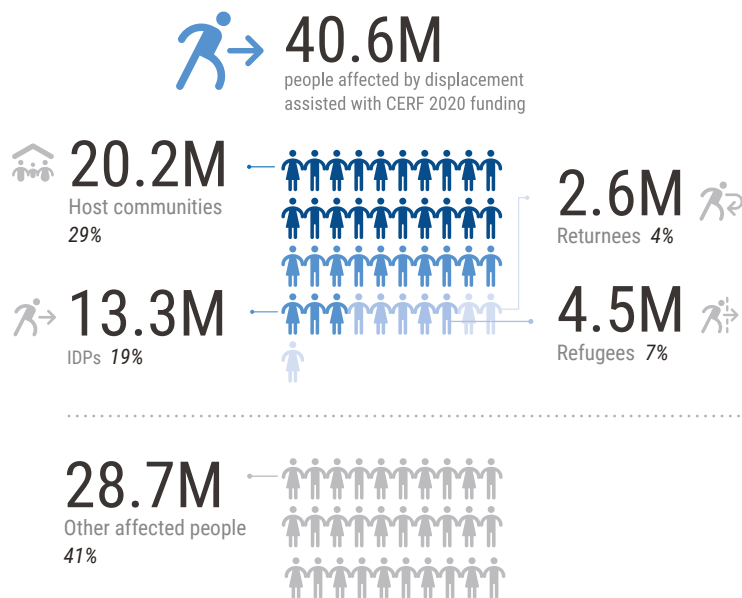
People with disabilities targeted with 2020 CERF funding



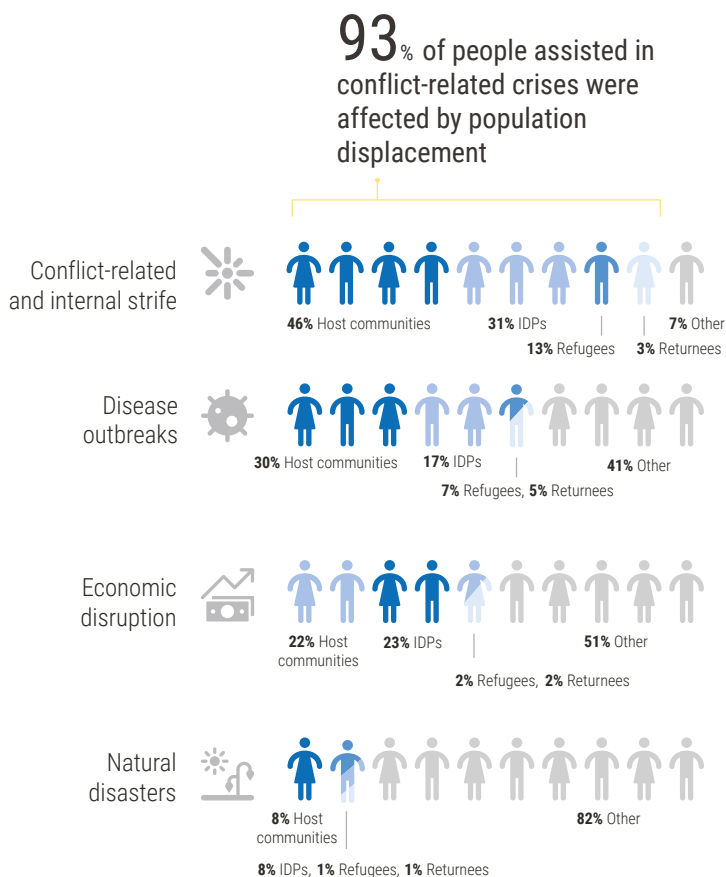
By gender and age



Displaced people assisted with 2020 CERF funding



By emergency type



In today's world, humanitarian needs, and global displacement are at unprecedented levels. Crises are complex and increasingly protracted. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of flexible funding for organizations to allocate resources quickly. CERF plays a critical role in deploying resources flexibly and rapidly to the most vulnerable.

- Per Olsson-Fridh, Minister for International Development Cooperation, Sweden

Displaced people assisted

Addressing the humanitarian consequences of growing population displacement and mitigating new displacement is an essential part of CERF-funded humanitarian action. Going into 2020, almost 80 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide.

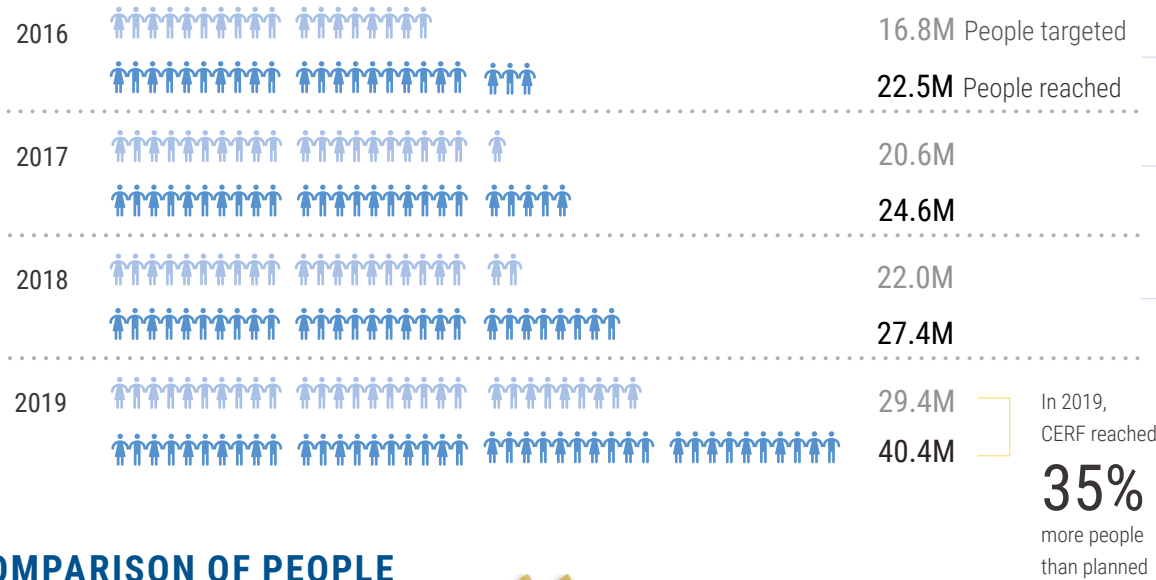
With 2020 CERF funding, UN agencies and partners assisted over 40.6 million refugees, IDPs, returnees and members of communities hosting displaced people in the world's most severe new or deteriorating emergencies, as well as in critically underfunded protracted crises. This represents 59 per cent of all people targeted with 2020 CERF funding.

CERF allocations in 2020 enabled the provision of life-saving assistance to 13.3 million IDPs, 4.5 million refugees, 2.6 million returnees and 20.2 million people hosting displaced populations. In conflict-related situations, these groups made up almost all of the people assisted with CERF funding – 93 per cent.

The top five countries with the highest number of people affected by displacement assisted with CERF funding – Sudan, Yemen, Burkina Faso, Iraq and Nigeria – accounted for 55 per cent of refugees, IDPs, returnees and members of host communities assisted by CERF in 2020.

Total number of people targeted and reached with CERF funding (2016-2019)

The number of people reached with 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 CERF funding **significantly exceeded** the number of people originally targeted in each of the four years.



COMPARISON OF PEOPLE TARGETED AND REACHED

In 2020, based on the findings of a comprehensive analysis,¹⁵ CERF started to use the number of people targeted as a proxy for the number of people reached. This approach allows for more timely global reporting as the final data on people reached only becomes available around a year after the allocation of CERF funds.¹⁶

The analysis of information from the RC/HC reports on the use of 2019 CERF funding – the most recent year for which the numbers of both people targeted and reached are available – shows that CERF reached 35 per cent more people than initially planned. Of the 68 allocations made in 2019, only 11 did not reach their targets, with only two allocations reaching less than 65 per cent of the people initially targeted. The information from RC/HC reports also shows that, cumulatively, 2019 CERF-funded humanitarian programming exceeded the numbers of people targeted in almost all sectors – with the exception of camp management (68 per cent) and shelter and NFIs.

“ We highly appreciate the work of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in providing life-saving assistance and protection to millions of people in need to overcome the consequences of disasters. The role of CERF has assumed added significance amid the global community’s fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. We aim at providing predictable and regular support to CERF and humanitarian operations undertaken by international organizations of the UN.

- *Sergey Vershinin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Russia*

¹⁵ For more information, please see [CERF Annual Results Report 2019 Edition](#).

¹⁶ Six months after the implementation of standard RR projects or nine months after the implementation of standard UFE projects, followed by a three-month reporting period.

Bangladesh: Women affected by flooding in northern and north-eastern districts in the last week of June, 2020. All 16 rivers that flow through Kurigram far exceeded their limits, inundating village after village. When severe flooding was predicted for July 2020, CERF released \$5.2 million to provide 220,000 people with assistance – including cash, livestock feed, storage and hygiene kits – before the floods hit.

© FAO/Fahad Kaizer



CERF's strategic added value

In 2020, CERF continued to advance key strategic initiatives and support important strategic change in the humanitarian system. This included a number of innovative allocations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, other strategic allocations at scale, and an increase in the use of anticipatory action. Once again, RC/HCs reaffirmed CERF's strategic added value, emphasizing CERF's role in enabling the fast delivery of assistance, enhancing in-field coordination and facilitating timely humanitarian responses, as well as the Fund's catalytic effect in leveraging additional funding.

CERF is designed to ensure that every dollar it allocates leverages additional strategic capacities in support of humanitarian response.

Although it represents a relatively small portion of global humanitarian funding, CERF funding has an important multiplier effect, acting as a catalyst for further action. This makes the Fund an indispensable element of the global humanitarian architecture. CERF results are therefore measured not only in terms of the number of people assisted and lives saved but also in terms of the strategic benefits generated.

“The CERF allocation will also strongly signal the affirmative action intended by the ERC to focus on the most vulnerable, including women and children, and on protection, GBV, SRH and women's empowerment. Efforts will be made to use CERF funding as a catalyst [for] additional sources of funding for the activities proposed.

*- Jessica Faieta, RC a.i. in Colombia
(UFE allocation with GBV envelope, October 2020)*

Record-breaking donor support allowed CERF to not only facilitate priority life-saving assistance to more than 69 million people in 2020, but also to advance strategic initiatives and to support positive change in the humanitarian system.

“The CERF anticipatory action in Ethiopia presents a new strategy for the country facing recurrent drought episodes. By anticipating shocks and mitigating the effects before they can cause lasting damage to people's lives and livelihoods, the multi-sector package of interventions provides an opportunity to anticipate and reduce needs, which will prove to be more effective and cost-efficient.

*- Catherine Sozi, RC/HC Ethiopia
(RR Anticipatory Action allocation for drought, December 2020)*

STRATEGIC ALLOCATION OF FUNDING IN 2020

While strategic considerations underpin every CERF funding decision, some allocations in 2020 were particularly noteworthy in terms of their innovative quality and focus on global policy areas. These included:



An innovative COVID-19 response:

CERF introduced new and innovative approaches to meet the unique challenges of the global pandemic. CERF provided \$95 million in fully flexible global block grants to UN agencies in support of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan. In addition to providing some of the first funding towards the plan, the block grants gave recipient agencies the flexibility to direct resources to where they were needed the most. This is the first time that CERF has used such a modality – allocating resources at headquarters, for onwards disbursement to the field. When insufficient funding to front-line NGO responders emerged as a key challenge in the global humanitarian response to the impacts of the pandemic, CERF stepped in and provided its first-ever direct allocation to NGOs, channelling \$25 million through IOM to 24 NGOs in six countries, including eight national NGOs. (See pages [22-24](#))



A strategic push for the use of cash-based assistance

To encourage greater use of cash-based assistance in the humanitarian system, CERF systematically promoted cash programming as the preferred modality where possible. In addition, CERF undertook two large-scale allocations totalling \$100 million that proactively promoted cash assistance as the preferred modality in addressing food insecurity. This included releasing \$20 million to scale up WFP's 14-month cash operation in Zimbabwe to strengthen social safety nets in urban and peri-urban areas; and \$80 million for cash and voucher programming to address rising levels of hunger in six countries: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, DRC, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen. (See pages [67-70](#))



A more anticipatory humanitarian system

CERF also sought to enhance its strategic impact by accelerating the agenda on anticipatory action, which is based on the realization that when shocks are predictable and can be mitigated, it is better to act early rather than wait until the shock has materialized and caused human suffering. It not only costs less, it is also the most humane approach, offering dignified solutions for vulnerable people. In 2020, CERF activated three anticipatory action pilots designed to predict and mitigate the impacts of imminent droughts and floods. Anticipatory action approaches were activated in Somalia and Ethiopia for projected severe food insecurity and in Bangladesh for riverine flooding, with CERF allocating a total of \$33.4 million for anticipatory activities. In addition to delivering immediate benefits for affected people, the pilots have also helped demonstrate proof-of-concept – and have supported broader change towards a more anticipatory humanitarian system. (See pages [63-66](#))



Supporting peacebuilding and durable solutions

Thanks to record levels of donor funding, CERF was able to enhance its impact through scale and greater strategic focus in several 2020 allocations – most notably, when the Fund provided an historic \$100 million allocation to Sudan at a critical transitional juncture in its recent history. This humanitarian intervention contributed to the Government's agenda on peacebuilding, freedom and justice, and schools for all, including for the displaced and returnees.



Addressing GBV

In 2020, CERF continued to promote positive system change by strengthening its focus on four important but consistently underfunded areas of humanitarian response: support for women and girls, including tackling gender-based violence, reproductive health and empowerment; programmes targeting people with disabilities; education in protracted crises; and other aspects of protection. In addition to mainstreaming the four areas into CERF allocations, in 2020 CERF gave special focus to the issue of GBV, making two innovative allocations to support prevention and response to the increasing prevalence of GBV due to the global pandemic. This included a dedicated GBV envelope of \$5.5 million, made under a \$100 million UFE allocation to 10 countries. The allocation had an important catalytic effect, with country teams across recipient countries prioritizing \$22 million for programmes with GBV outcomes (including in the health sector). Towards the end of 2020, CERF provided \$25 million to UNFPA and UN Women in the form of a unique global multi-year grant to support women-led and women's rights organizations working on GBV in 11 priority countries. At least 30 per cent of funding will go to local women-led organizations in these countries. (See page [53](#))

These and other innovative allocation approaches in 2020 helped increase the added value of CERF as a global funding mechanism, enhancing its strategic impact beyond its role as a source of humanitarian funding. In 2021, CERF will continue to look for ways of maximizing its impact through its allocation decisions, including by adopting innovative allocation approaches when needed to better address humanitarian challenges. Innovation will be underpinned by a commitment to systematic learning and transparency. (See pages [81-83](#))

CERF PERFORMANCE MATRIX

In 2020, CERF made efforts to better capture how CERF allocations can add value beyond the operational results they deliver and how they will be used strategically to strengthen humanitarian responses. The new CERF application format introduced in 2020 requires RC/HCs to articulate through a 'strategic statement' the added value and co-benefits that will be achieved through the use of CERF funding – in addition to the operational, life-saving objectives that are central to all CERF allocations. While collective, strategic thinking has always been at the heart of CERF submissions, setting out a clear, succinct strategic vision at the outset of an allocation process helps ensure that partners work towards a common strategic objective, and provides CERF and the ERC with assurance that CERF funds are utilized to their fullest potential.

There are four overarching objectives at the heart of CERF's design and mandate: enabling the rapid delivery of assistance (speed); improving coordination among the humanitarian community (coherence); ensuring a better response to time-critical humanitarian needs (timeliness); and leveraging additional resources from other sources (catalytic effects). To gauge CERF's strategic added value, RC/HCs and UNCT/HCTs are asked to assess CERF's contribution to the four strategic benefits in their reports. The reports include a qualitative rating along with a narrative justification against each of the four objectives. The following is an analysis of added value assessments from all RC/HC reports submitted in 2020 covering 2019 CERF grants.

According to RC/HC reports on the use of 2019 CERF funding:*



Beyond the operational results, the CERF allocation will also assist in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the most vulnerable people in Uganda, particularly people living with disabilities, women and girls, refugees, youth, elderly, widows, female-headed households, market women, street vendors, people living with HIV and TB, migrants and those displaced by natural disasters.

- Rosa Malango, RC Uganda, (UFE allocation, October 2020)



Speed

ENABLING FAST DELIVERY OF ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE IN NEED

CERF funds are mobilized prior to emergencies and are always on standby. With its tried and tested allocation and disbursement systems, CERF provides funding quickly and efficiently when and where it is needed most. CERF allocations can be announced within hours of sudden-onset emergencies or deteriorations of existing crises. Consequently, CERF is often the fastest source of external funds for immediate life-saving responses. The speed is further amplified by agencies being able to begin life-saving humanitarian operations as soon as they know that CERF funds are forthcoming.



Coherence

IMPROVING COORDINATION AMONG THE HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

CERF funding is allocated by HCTs under the leadership of the RC/HC. The allocations are informed by priorities identified jointly by sector partners under the leadership of sector leads. This strengthens leadership and coordination and improves the coherence of humanitarian action. The highest priority needs are determined jointly by the humanitarian organizations involved in the response, which ensures that CERF funding is used where it is most needed. CERF funding is allocated to multiple humanitarian organizations according to a joint intersectoral strategy. As such, CERF goes beyond focusing on individual projects and supports the achievement of collective humanitarian outcomes. The implementation of CERF funding and the results achieved are later reviewed and reported on jointly by implementing organizations, which fosters collective ownership and accountability for the use of CERF funds.



Timeliness

ENSURING BETTER RESPONSE TO TIME-CRITICAL HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

The ability to meet time-critical needs is just as important as speed of delivery. These are needs that must be addressed at a specific time to reduce loss of lives and livelihoods and minimize human suffering. Since CERF funds are always on standby, CERF has the flexibility to provide funds to humanitarian operations when they are needed the most. RC/HCs can call upon CERF any time to respond to top-priority time-critical needs, whether at the onset of a new emergency or at crucial moments during an ongoing response.



Catalytic effect

LEVERAGING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM OTHER SOURCES

CERF allocations signal the severity and urgency of humanitarian needs and are often leveraged by the humanitarian community to bring attention to crises and attract funding from other sources. CERF funds allow partners to kick-start humanitarian operations and achieve results, which gives donors assurance of the humanitarian community's readiness and capacity to deliver.



94% of CERF allocations led to fast delivery of assistance



94% of CERF allocations helped respond to time-critical needs



83% of CERF allocations helped improve coordination

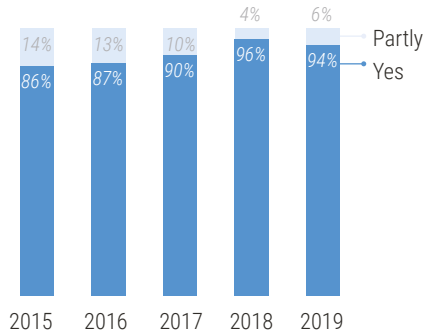


74% of CERF allocations improved resource mobilization from other sources

* From reports on all CERF funding provided in 2019 and 2020



Did CERF lead to fast delivery of assistance to people in need (RR allocations only)?



CERF funding provided **immediate assistance** to populations in the days [following] Cyclone Idai and Kenneth. With rapid approval of funding for both responses, agencies were able to quickly deploy emergency supplies to save lives, providing emergency shelter, food, health and protection assistance to alleviate the suffering for people affected by Cyclones Idai and Kenneth.

- Mozambique RC/HC report (Cyclone Kenneth and Idai)

The CERF allocation helped the **fast delivery of assistance**, which led to the quick containment of cholera and other diarrhoeal diseases in the cholera-affected states. It also helped [in] delivering preventive services in neighbouring states.

- Sudan RC/HC report (cholera)

CERF funds were essential to provide an immediate response at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, thus ensuring the **fast and continuous delivery of assistance** to people in need.

- Venezuela RC/HC report (displacement)

The RC/HC reports on 2019 RR allocations reaffirmed CERF’s important strategic role in enabling the rapid delivery of life-saving assistance. Similar to the trend in previous years, 94 per cent of RC/HC reports on 2019 RR allocations indicated that CERF funding enabled the rapid implementation of humanitarian response.

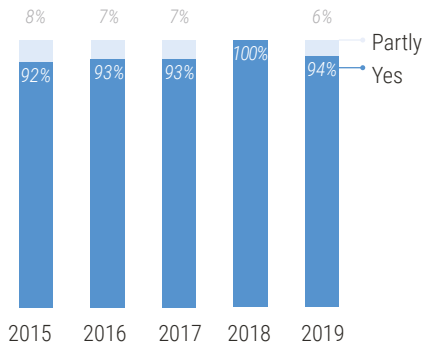
Only 6 per cent indicated that CERF allocations only partially led to the fast delivery of assistance to people in need. Two of these RC/HC reports – on the allocations in response to Cyclone Idai in Malawi and drought in Angola – indicated that delays were due to changes in the situation on the ground, lengthy procurement processes and capacity challenges facing local partners and suppliers. The RC/HC report on the CERF allocation in response to Cyclone Lingling in the DPRK, noted that, while CERF funding was instrumental in the delivery of assistance, COVID-19-related restrictions were a major obstacle, slowing down the implementation of the response.

In addition, the independent review of CERF’s role in smaller emergencies¹⁷ concluded that in the three humanitarian contexts that it examined – Djibouti, Haiti and Lesotho – CERF had been a “life saver”, supporting time-critical, multi-sector innovations. The review also concluded that CERF’s agility and speed of disbursement is exceptional and highly appreciated by donors. (See chapter [81-83](#)).

¹⁷ The definition of ‘smaller-scale emergencies’ in the independent review is based on two criteria: firstly, total funding requirements for the humanitarian response did not exceed \$150 million; and secondly, CERF provided 20 per cent or more of the donor funding required.



Did CERF funds help respond to time-critical needs?



The RC/HC reports on CERF allocations in 2019 reaffirmed CERF’s ability to provide timely funding that strengthens the humanitarian system’s response to time-critical needs. A total of 94 per cent of RC/HC reports on 2019 allocations indicated that CERF helped respond to time-critical needs, while 6 per cent indicated that CERF helped to partially achieve this objective. None of the reports stated that CERF did not contribute.

The RC/HC reports on CERF allocations to Cameroon (displacement), Comoros (Cyclone Kenneth), the DPRK (Cyclone Lingling) and the Venezuela Regional Refugee and Migration Crisis stated that CERF only partially helped respond to time-critical needs. The RC/HC reports from Cameroon and the DPRK noted that CERF funding was provided in a timely manner, but that the volume of funding did not cover all time-critical needs, largely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report from Comoros noted delays in implementation due to the situation on the ground.



The CERF funding was announced at the **most critical time** when early response was required to save lives and livelihoods from the worst effects of drought conditions such as livestock death, poor livestock production, shortage of safe drinking water, and outbreak of waterborne diseases such as cholera.

- Ethiopia RC/HC report (drought)



The CERF UFE allocation helped to respond to **time-critical needs** through the early provision of emergency shelter and winterization interventions ahead of the 2019-2020 winter, and provision of agricultural assistance ahead of the planting and harvesting season. It also helped in maintaining and strengthening the confidence and trust built [in the existing] entities [...] created by the previous CERF Rapid Response allocation in 2018.

- Ukraine RC/HC report (post-conflict needs)

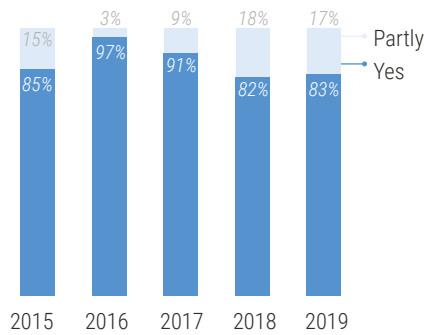


The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak needed **immediate response** to prevent a spillover effect. CERF funding enabled agencies to put in place readiness measures and strengthen areas of weakness and vulnerability which could facilitate the spread of EVD.

- Uganda RC/HC report (Ebola readiness)



Did CERF help improve coordination among the humanitarian community?



Lead agencies have especially commended the **improved coordination** and the successful joint inter-agency efforts amongst the different partners, within the one cluster and amongst various stakeholders such as Palestinian Authority ministries and with sub-implementing partners.

- oPt RC/HC report (post-conflict needs)

The intersectoral approach to respond to the identified needs greatly contributed to the improvement **of the coordination among the humanitarian community**. Regular intersectoral coordination group meetings were complemented with the bi-monthly field visits of the Cluster Coordinators [...] to the eastern part of Ukraine to visit projects and communities.

- Ukraine RC/HC report (post-conflict needs)

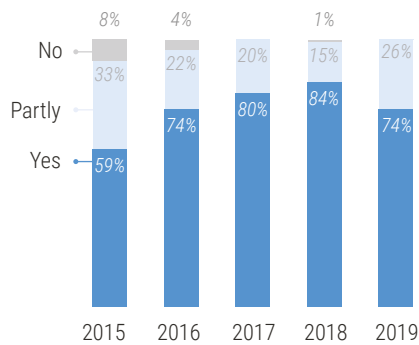
In addition to being an effective enabler of effective humanitarian response, CERF also helps to promote coordination and coherence among humanitarian partners. This trend continued for CERF’s 2019 allocations: 83 per cent stated that CERF improved coordination among the humanitarian community, while 17 per cent indicated it partially did so. None of the reports stated that CERF did not help improve coordination.

The 2019 RC/HC reports on CERF allocations to Cameroon (displacement), the Bahamas (Hurricane Dorian), DPRK (Cyclone Lingling), Haiti (drought and cholera), Malawi (Cyclone Idai), South Sudan (displacement), Sudan (economic disruption) and Zimbabwe (Cyclone Idai and drought) as well in response to the Venezuela Regional Refugee and Migration Crisis indicated that CERF partially helped improve coordination among the humanitarian community. Most of these reports emphasized CERF’s positive impact on coordination but pointed to a lack of joint planning between agencies and local authorities or among clusters. The RC/HC reports on allocations to the DPRK, Haiti and the Venezuela Regional Refugee and Migration Crisis did not provide clear reasons as to why CERF’s contribution was assessed as only partially supportive of coordination among the humanitarian community but, in general, emphasized the positive impact that CERF had on coordination. The report on the allocation to the Bahamas in response to Hurricane Dorian noted that coordination was not always effective due to the lack of local presence of UN entities.

The independent review of CERF’s role in smaller emergencies found that CERF plays an important role in bringing partners together (or sustaining engagement in coordination). The RC/HCs interviewed for the review noted the impact of CERF allocations on inter-agency coordination and the division of responsibilities, among others. For instance, in Djibouti – a development focused country with no Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) – the CERF allocation process provided agencies with an opportunity to focus on emergency needs and design complementary, multisectoral responses that helped build a strong humanitarian-development nexus. (See pages [81-83](#))



Did CERF help improve resource mobilization from other sources?



CERF’s role in leveraging additional funding can be difficult to assess as there are seldom direct and documented links between CERF allocations and donor funding decisions. Nevertheless, 74 per cent of RC/HC reports on CERF allocations made in 2019 assessed that CERF funds helped to improve resource mobilization from other sources, and 26 per cent stated that CERF partially contributed to leveraging additional financing. None of the reports stated that CERF did not contribute to improving resource mobilization in some way.

The RC/HC reports on 2019 CERF allocations that indicated that CERF only partially helped improve resource mobilization from other sources justified their responses by explaining that it was difficult to measure the impact of CERF funding on broader resource mobilization.

The RC/HC reports from the DPRK, Haiti and Lesotho, for example, pointed out that CERF allocations led to resource mobilization for a few agencies or in some sectors, but that a restricted financial environment, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, posed significant challenges in leveraging further funding. In the cases of Sudan, South Sudan and the Bahamas, agencies used CERF funding to leverage other internal resources to complement CERF funding or mobilize funding for other interventions in the region. The report from Sudan, for example, noted that while CERF funding in response to the cholera outbreak did not immediately improve resource mobilization from external sources, the success of the outbreak response was used as an example in other resource mobilization efforts.



The CERF contribution was **catalytic [in] mobilizing additional resources**. It was the first funding available. Other donors quickly mobilized resources to respond to the crisis.

- [Mozambique RC/HC report \(Cyclone Idai and Kenneth\)](#)

CERF funds helped the RC to convene the international community and thus improved coordination of the delivered assistance as well as the **mobilization of funding from other sources**.

- [Iran RC/HC report \(floods\)](#)

With the injection of CERF funding, UN agencies reported that they were **successful in mobilising additional resources** into the response, as they were able to highlight where the needs were.

- [Malawi RC/HC report \(drought\)](#)

Support to underfunded priority areas

In 2020, CERF made further headway in helping the humanitarian community reach the most vulnerable by strengthening support for programmes that address particular underfunded areas: women and girls, people with disabilities, education in protracted crises and other aspects of protection. Building on momentum from 2019, further positive results were achieved in 2020, with a record level of CERF funding going towards these important priorities.

Underfunded areas of humanitarian response



Support for **women and girls**, including tackling gender-based violence, reproductive health and empowerment



Programmes targeting **people with disabilities**



Education in protracted crises



Other aspects of **protection**

Reaching and transforming the lives of those most at risk of being left behind is the third core responsibility of the Agenda for Humanity.

This involves, among other things, empowering and protecting women and girls, ending gaps in education, and making targeted efforts to support people with disabilities (PwD). Underpinning these priorities is the centrality of protection, which should inform all humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people caught in crisis. Despite international commitments, these areas remain the most chronically underfunded in humanitarian assistance. Therefore, in 2019, the ERC sent a communication to RC/HCs in countries with ongoing humanitarian operations on leveraging CERF funding requests to ensure more attention to these priority areas. The ERC requested that RC/HCs give due consideration to these four areas when developing CERF applications, as well as during the preparation of allocation strategies for CBPFs. Using CERF to increase attention to these underfunded priorities will help emphasize their importance to humanitarian response, and thereby leverage further funding and encourage the mobilization of additional resources through bilateral donor contributions and other channels.



Burkina Faso:

Ramata Sawadogo, has fled her village because of the violence. “We were in our village, peaceful, it was before the start of the planting season. And then we saw them arrive; and they killed 22 people close to our village. We fled to come here.”

Violence has forced one million people to flee their homes in Burkina Faso since early 2019. Women and children are the most affected.

A \$10 million CERF allocation allowed humanitarian partners to scale-up the response in early 2020. In November, as violence and hunger spread, CERF released another \$6 million.

© OCHA/Olympia de maismont

To this end, CERF has revised its application and reporting templates, along with the associated guidance, to reflect the importance of these priority areas and capture the required data. This is accompanied by regular updates to CERF’s Grant Management System, which will allow CERF to better track data and funding towards the four areas. All CERF applications now require UNCT/HCTs and implementing UN agencies to outline how the four areas are taken into consideration during the preparation of funding requests at both strategy and project levels. CERF has also updated its outreach and training activities (e.g. strategy and project webinars held with field partners) to reflect this change in emphasis.

CERF has also updated the [CERF Life-Saving Criteria](#), a document that codifies the type of activities that can be funded by CERF. The new version was developed in close consultation with stakeholders including UN agencies, global clusters and the CERF Advisory Group. It reflects changes in humanitarian response and agreements since the document was last updated in 2010. The revision provided an opportunity to strengthen the inclusion of key cross-cutting priorities in the Criteria, including the four underfunded priority areas. The updated Life-Saving Criteria include a dedicated section on cross-cutting issues that UN agencies and partners are required to consider when implementing CERF-funded projects. Spe-

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF clearly demonstrated its value as an agile and flexible instrument. I truly appreciate that CERF expanded its cooperation with front-line NGOs in order to provide a faster response to people in need during the pandemic. And I highly welcome the strategic priority given to the protection of women and girls against gender-based violence in humanitarian situations. Denmark has supported CERF since its inception in 2006, and it continues to be a key part of our toolbox to address global humanitarian needs.

- [Flemming Møller Mortensen, Minister for Development Cooperation, Denmark](#)

cific eligible activities were also added or amended, where appropriate, including in relation to GBV and other aspects of protection.

Since the introduction of the initiative, CERF has made considerable progress in strengthening its support to the four areas.

SUPPORT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Gender norms and pre-existing inequalities mean that women and girls are disproportionately impacted in emergencies. Crises can deepen the risks of GBV for women and girls, especially when family and community protections break down or become strained. Early and forced marriage, trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse, rape, harassment and intimate partner violence are common types of GBV in emergencies. And, while women often play a critical role in supporting their families and communities, they frequently face challenges in accessing and benefiting from humanitarian assistance.

Recognizing the different needs, challenges and opportunities faced by women, men, girls and boys is central to CERF-funded humanitarian action. Gender is integrated in CERF's programme cycle in a number of ways. CERF has made the use of the IASC Gender



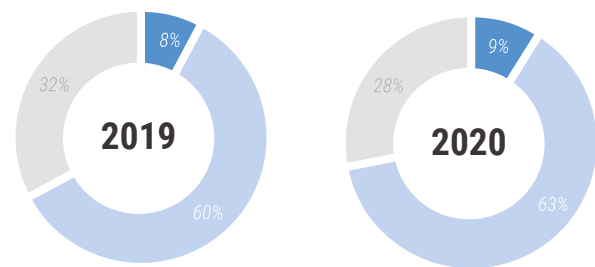
with Age Marker (GAM) mandatory in funding applications and is promoting the use of gender advisers or other experts in in-country project reviews. CERF is also tracking sex- and age-disaggregated data and has recently revised its templates and processes to ensure that UNCT/HCTs and agencies explain, at both strategic and project levels, how gender equality has been considered in the prioritization of CERF funds.

Approximately 54 per cent of the 69.3 million people targeted with life-saving assistance through CERF in 2020 were women and girls. This overall ratio has remained the same since 2016, when CERF started capturing global statistics for people assisted with CERF funding. However, the ratio of women and girls assisted varied across the range of sectoral responses supported by CERF. (See pages 34-40)

Protection from and response to GBV is central to humanitarian response. Accurately estimating the amount of CERF funding going to GBV activities across all sectors is difficult as GBV activities are often embedded into other sectors. Nevertheless, an analysis of project data and budgets across sectors shows that at least \$65 million in CERF funding went towards the prevention and response to GBV in 2020.¹⁸ This record amount is most likely an underestimation as it only captures GBV interventions that are clearly costed through project budgets.

¹⁸ Including \$25 million that was allocated to UNFPA and UN Women in late 2020 and disbursed in early 2021.

Protection from GBV in CERF-funded projects

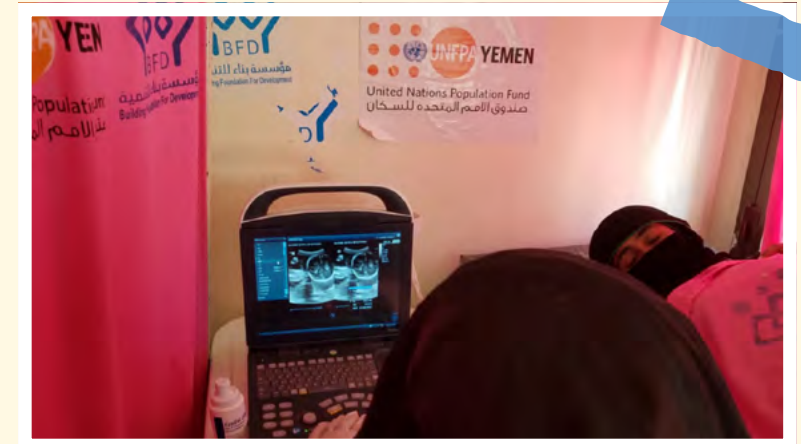


- Yes, protection from GBV is the main objective
- Yes, protection from GBV is a component
- No

Yemen: Huda receives life-saving reproductive health services at the Al Matoun hospital in Al Jawf governorate.
© UNFPA/Yemen

As a follow-up to OCHA's commitments to the [Call to Action on Protection from GBV in Emergencies](#), the CERF Secretariat incorporated a dedicated mandatory GBV self-assessment in its project template. According to the GBV self-assessments, 9 per cent of CERF-funded projects in 2020 had protection from GBV as their main objective. A much larger share of projects, 63 per cent, featured protection from GBV as a programming component. This is the highest percentage since the GBV assessment was introduced and represents a slight increase from the figures in 2019.

In 2020, CERF introduced several innovative approaches to promote GBV programming. For the first time, CERF made available a dedicated GBV envelope of \$5.5 million in the second round of UFE allocations. Moreover, the allocation had an important catalytic effect: country teams across 10 recipient countries increased funding for GBV more than fourfold, prioritizing an estimated \$22 million for programming that supported the prevention and response to GBV. CERF also allocated \$25 million to UNFPA and UN Women in the form of a global grant to support women-led and women's rights organizations working on GBV in priority countries. The grant will help prevent and respond to GBV in 11 countries and at least 30 per cent of funding will go to local women-led organizations in these countries. An early estimate suggests that both agencies will exceed this target, with over 50 per cent of CERF funding to UN Women and 35 per cent to UNFPA going to local women-led or women's rights organizations.



YEMEN

Medical and psychological support for safe births

Huda and her husband left home due to conflict. They were living in a camp in very basic conditions when they learned Huda was pregnant. She lost her first child shortly after it was born. "After my second pregnancy was confirmed, I felt intense fear and anxiety, remembering the time when I lost my baby."

Her husband was also afraid. "I kept thinking about how to save my wife and child when there is not even a single qualified health centre in the whole area that could help us. I decided to take a risk and go with my wife in search of help."

Huda and her husband travelled to Al Jawf governorate to access medical care at the Al Matoun hospital. There, Dr Hanan provided nutrition and psychological support before preparing Huda for the birth. The medical team identified meconium in the baby's amniotic fluid – a potentially fatal condition that they were able to safely address.

"When I first saw my child, I couldn't believe it. I thought she was going to die just like her sister had," Huda said. Dr Hanan referred Huda for a psychological and medical follow-up at a specialized centre.

In Yemen, CERF supported 55 health facilities in conflict-affected areas, providing sexual and reproductive health services to over 125,000 women and girls, including 18,000 safe deliveries for women like Huda. More than 100 midwives and outreach teams were deployed to remote areas to ensure women with high-risk pregnancies or deliveries requiring medical intervention were referred to hospitals.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In emergencies, PwD are often among the most vulnerable because they are frequently less visible during the assessment phase and may be unable to access goods and services offered by relief organizations. CERF encourages UN agencies and their implementing partners to ensure that humanitarian action is inclusive of PwD and that they take the necessary steps to meet the essential needs and ensure the protection, safety and dignity of all PwD in humanitarian crises.

In 2020, all CERF projects provided information on PwD in data on people targeted. This is a marked improvement from 2019, when only about half of the projects submitted included this information. This provides CERF with a stronger basis for assessing CERF's role in meeting the needs of PwD caught in

“Luxembourg recognizes the unique value of CERF as an international financial instrument enabling principled, coordinated and rapid humanitarian response. In 2020 CERF has, once again, demonstrated its efficiency in the very challenging environment imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Providing reliable and predictable funding is the best way to enable CERF to operate at its fullest potential.

- Franz Fayot, Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, Luxembourg



humanitarian crises. Overall, in 2020, UN agencies aimed to aid 8.1 million PwD through CERF funds.

Since the enhanced focus on disability inclusion in early 2019, a number of agencies have reported efforts to strengthen the provision of support to PwDs – as detailed in their annual reports to CERF. FAO, for example, noted that its country offices prioritize PwD during beneficiary targeting following a needs assessment. When they cannot target PwD directly because of the specific type of activities envisaged in the project, their households are targeted instead. In CERF-funded projects, households caring for PwD receive tailored support that takes into account physical limitations, helping them to establish feasible livelihood strategies and improve food security.



Jordan: 12-year-old Hamza washes his hands in a newly renovated accessible bathroom in his house in Za'atari camp.
© UNICEF/Saman

JORDAN

Safe water and sanitation facilities for disabled children

Hamza is 12 years old. Since 2013, he and his family have lived in the Za'atari refugee camp. Hamza is paralysed from the waist down, a genetic condition that his father also suffers from. "His mother and I make sure he knows that his disabilities will not prevent him from having friends, playing and living a normal life," explains Hamza's father, a life skills trainer.

"Sometimes when I am outdoors, I come across other children who treat me nicely; some even ask if I need help pushing my wheelchair, but I usually say 'no thanks', because I like the exercise – and then there are the bad kids who make fun of me, but I just ignore them and go on my way," says Hamza.

Hamza's house was fitted with an accessible bathroom, with a ramp for wheelchair access, ceramic tiles and grab bars that enable him to use it independently.

"Before they renovated our bathroom, my mum would help me use the toilet, and it took me forever! It's so much better now."

CERF funding has helped UNICEF provide accessible WASH services to over 6,000 people living with disabilities in Za'atari and Azraq camps. These people continue to benefit from private household toilets that are now connected to the water and wastewater networks in the Za'atari camp. More than 1,600 private latrines were installed following a camp-wide needs assessment.

The renovation has also helped Hamza in other ways. "Now that I've seen these engineers who think about people with disabilities, I'm inspired to be just like them and to build a new future – one that doesn't discriminate based on whether or not you have a disability – because you have to think about everyone."

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

Children's educational needs are often neglected in humanitarian emergencies. This is particularly damaging in protracted emergencies where children may miss multiple years of schooling that are difficult to make up. 2020 saw the highest level of absolute CERF funding to the education sector since the Fund was established in 2006, with close to \$28.6 million allocated to emergency education projects – up from the previous record of \$19.3 million set in 2019. This represents 3.4 per cent of 2020 CERF funding, which is similar to 2019 but above the global share of funding towards the education sector across all UN-led HRPs and appeals (2.8 per cent).

With the record-high funding for education, CERF in 2020 targeted the largest number of people in a single year. An estimated 2.4 million children and 500,000 adults in 19 countries benefited from CERF funding in the education sector, a dramatic increase from 550,000 people in 2019.

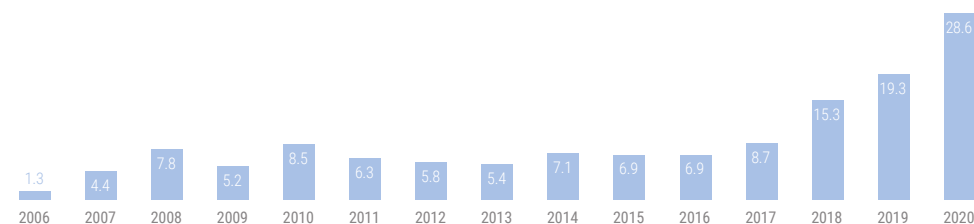


“Canada is a strong and consistent supporter of this unique and critical mechanism. As COVID-19 maintains its hold on the world, CERF will continue to play an indispensable role in delivering urgent, coordinated, and flexible support to the most vulnerable.”

- Karina Gould, Minister of International Development, Canada

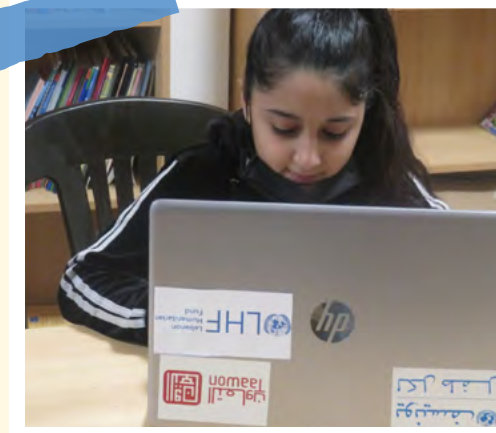
CERF funding to education (2006-2020)

In US\$ million



LEBANON

Access to education during the global pandemic



Lebanon: Children living in Burj El Barajneh camp in Beirut receive online learning sessions.
© UNICEF

Education provides a ray of hope for children living in Burj El Barajneh Palestinian Camp, home to Lebanon's largest population of Palestinian refugees. Globally, refugee children are five times more likely to be out of school than other children.

Last year, with the help of CERF UFE funding, UNICEF's Palestinian Programme supported in-class and online access to early childhood education (ECE) programmes for around 3,000 girls and boys aged between three and five, enabling children to continue their education during the pandemic.

Before the pandemic, children in the camp attended four hours of classes a day, five days a week. Following the outbreak, UNICEF and partners supported online learning through videos and games. Throughout the year, the hybrid curriculum alternated between in-class and online learning as lockdown restrictions allowed.

Facilitators and teachers also recognized the protection challenges facing families during periods of lockdown and offered classes for parents and children on child protection and positive discipline.

Classes were taught in Arabic and English, and involved creative online exercises designed to develop fine-motor skills, including for children with disabilities. As Mariam, one of the teachers, explains: "We have children with various difficulties including autism and reduced mobility. With a specially adapted classroom – and appropriate activities – our teachers are trained to work on special needs and, when necessary, a speech therapist comes too."

While the ECE project initially targeted 1,400 children, the lockdowns and school closures presented an opportunity to divert resources; due to the shift to online and distance learning, UNICEF has succeeded in reaching 3,000 children. Improving the online curriculum also allowed partners to provide tailored support to 100 children with disabilities in the camp.

"Investment in education remains crucial to giving children hope for a better future", explains Nazih Yacoub, UNICEF Palestinian Programme Specialist. "We all need to remind ourselves to put the most vulnerable children at the core of everything we do."

PROTECTION

Humanitarian crises threaten the lives, safety and dignity of affected populations. Humanitarian response seeks to enhance protection by minimizing the risks people face and by ensuring full respect of their rights, whether they are affected by disaster or armed conflict. CERF recognizes that protection is one of the main purposes and intended outcomes of humanitarian action. The protection of all persons affected and at risk informs humanitarian decision-making and is an integral part of CERF-funded responses.

CERF funding to the protection sector reached \$82.4 million in 2020, the highest amount to date, and a significant increase over the previous record of \$52.4 million set in 2019. This represented close to 10 per cent of all CERF funding in 2020 and is more than twice as high as the global share of funding (4.3 per cent) towards the protection sector¹⁹ across all UN-led HRP and appeals.

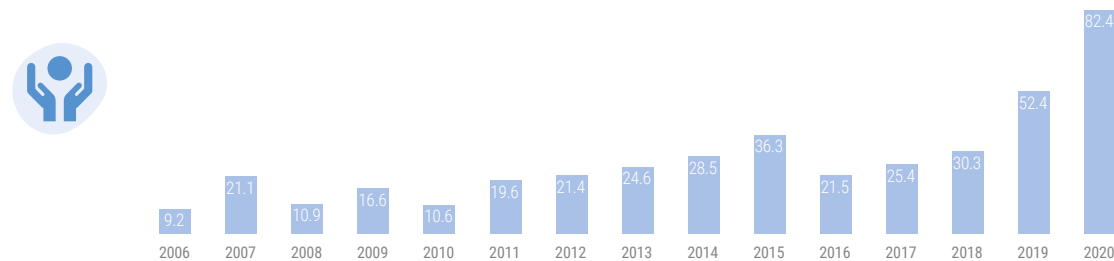
¹⁹ It includes funding to child protection, GBV, housing, land and property, mine action and protection.



The number of people targeted with CERF-funded life-saving assistance in the protection sector also reached a record high of 8.7 million in 2020, up from 5.6 million in the previous year. Over 5.4 million people targeted with CERF-funded protection services, equivalent to 56 per cent, were women and girls. It is important to note that these figures only represent dedicated protection projects in the protection sector. The total amount of CERF funding going towards protection activities and the number of people benefiting from protection assistance under CERF-supported projects is much higher if we take into account protection activities mainstreamed into projects funded through other sectors. However, this is often difficult to track and quantify.

CERF funding to protection (2006-2020)

In US\$ million



Sudan: UNHCR Protection Officers meeting with residents and community leaders to discuss the security situation and identify protection incidents. © UNHCR/Modesta Ndubi

SUDAN

Supporting resilience and protection

“I still remember what happened. The killing, looting and burning. It makes me scared, and I find it difficult to concentrate. I keep fearing that my family will be attacked again, and I am afraid of going back,” says Fatima, who was displaced by violence in West Darfur.

Two months after an attack on her village, the schools remained occupied by people living in fear of further violence. Students had to travel a long way to attend their exams at Dar Elelim High Secondary School.

“I feared for my safety during my travels, but I managed to come,” explains another student, 17-year-old Safina, who lost her father and two older sisters in the attack.

Following fighting in West Darfur in July 2020, when many houses were burned to the ground, people sought refuge in schools and public buildings.

Supported by CERF through an historic \$100 million allocation, partners responded with life-saving assistance, including protection monitoring and community engagement initiatives. UNHCR Protection Officers met with residents and community leaders to discuss the security situation, identify protection incidents – and ways to redress them or mitigate their effects – and, where relevant, refer them to other services.

Protection monitoring also helped to identify people who are at particular risk and link them to more specialized assistance.

The support provided to displaced people in Geneina is part of a project implemented across Darfur, South Kordofan and the Blue Nile, targeting more than 1.7 million people who are caught up in protracted displacement situations or, in many cases, newly displaced by local conflicts.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED PEOPLE

CERF is committed to promoting Accountability to Affected People (AAP) by ensuring that agencies consider the appropriate operational steps for engaging with affected communities when developing projects and that AAP measures are fully visible throughout the CERF programme cycle. Similarly, CERF requires that UN agencies develop and maintain appropriate mechanisms for reporting and addressing SEA-related complaints.

During 2020, CERF continued to promote compliance with the IASC AAP commitments on participation and partnership, and on information, feedback and action.²⁰ As part of a broader effort to update and streamline application templates, CERF has refined the way it assesses compliance with AAP commitments in CERF-funded projects. This enables CERF to seek more specific information from UN agencies and partners on aspects such as participatory processes, and empowerment of communities, vulnerable individuals and at-risk groups. Particular emphasis is put on closed-loop feedback and complaint mechanisms,²¹ including issues related to confidentiality and accessibility for PwD, vulnerable people and at-risk individuals and community groups. In addition, CERF also seeks information from RC/HCs on how allocations will support or use collective AAP mechanisms, where these exist, as part of the humanitarian response architecture or at national level.

²⁰ The other two updated IASC commitments, leadership and results, were not included in CERF analysis because they involve activities that go beyond a single project and are measured at the UN agency and overall response level.

²¹ Closed-loop mechanisms involve following up on feedback or complaints, rather than just treating feedback as useful data.



For over 15 years, the Central Emergency Response Fund has played a major role in providing timely and flexible funding to enable rapid humanitarian response when emergencies occur. Estonia has supported CERF since its establishment and we reaffirm our continued support for this excellent Fund.

- Estonia Eva-Maria Liimets, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia

IASC Commitments

In November 2017, the IASC endorsed four updated commitments on AAP and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA):

1. Leadership
2. Participation and partnership
3. Information, feedback and action
4. Results

These principles replaced the previous five commitments adopted in 2011, to reflect essential developments such as the Core Humanitarian Standards and the work by the IASC on inter-agency community-based complaints mechanisms, including for PSEA. The updated commitments also reflect the importance of meaningful collaboration with local stakeholders – a priority recommendation from the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit and in the Grand Bargain. For more information [see here](#).

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Despite the progress achieved, more remains to be done. CERF commissioned an independent review in early 2020 to assess progress in the priority areas and identify steps to further integrate them in CERF allocations. The review noted progress in both inclusion of and funding to the four areas in CERF allocations, but also identified several challenges. It proposed a set of recommended actions to overcome these, many of which have been implemented by CERF. These include a revision of CERF's Life-Saving Criteria to better reflect the implementation of the priority areas; a revision of CERF's application and reporting templates, including more targeted questions around the priority areas to enable better tracking of key data; and the use of targeted allocations for projects in the priority areas to ensure they receive adequate funding.

The review also recommended that CERF draws further on technical expertise within OCHA and the IASC technical groups. In response to this recommendation, the CERF Secretariat has created an inter-agency Pooled Fund Gender Contact Group and an inter-agency Pooled Fund Disability Contact Group.



With a view to strengthening CERF's gender- and disability-related efforts, the groups bring together a range of programming practitioners and technical experts to provide OCHA's Pooled Fund Management Branch with unbiased expert guidance on ways to improve the impact of CERF and CBPFs in these areas. The discussions in the group are generally guided by the following key strategic topics:

- **Strategic-level decision-making:** How to best ensure that gender and disability issues are prioritized at the highest level, as part of CERF allocation strategies.
- **Project-level decision-making/quality assurance:** How to best ensure that CERF-funded projects reflect best practices in gender- and disability-related programming.
- **Localization:** How to best advance support for local women's rights/women-led organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities.
- **Participation and representation:** How to best ensure that gender and disability experts participate in decision-making at the country level.
- **Data and indicators:** How to best measure and track programmatic impact and financial support to gender- and disability-related programming.
- **Accountability to Affected People:** How to best ensure that the views of women and girls and people living with disabilities are considered before, during and after project implementation.
- **Technical support:** How to best organize gender- and disability-related technical support to the field.

CERF will use the technical advice of the Contact Group as a basis for improving consideration of gender and disability in CERF allocations in 2021.

CERF and anticipatory action

In 2020, CERF successfully supported the activation of multi-stakeholder anticipatory action frameworks in three countries – Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Somalia – allocating a total of \$33.4 million. Leveraging its speed, funding volume, effective systems and global reach, CERF has brought anticipatory action to greater scale, enabling partners to work together across sectors, to respond to predictable hazards in a more timely and effective way.

BACKGROUND

Today, it is possible to predict with increasing confidence the occurrence and humanitarian impact of certain crises, especially climatic shocks and communicable diseases. With the increasing reliability and availability of risk assessment and forecasting tools, there has been a growing demand to make the humanitarian system more anticipatory and less reactive. There is now a general consensus that acting prior to the onset of a predictable and specific hazard is significantly faster, more (cost-)effective and more dignified than traditional humanitarian responses, where resources are only mobilized after the onset of an emergency.

Since 2018, when CERF initially started promoting a more anticipatory response to predictable humanitarian shocks, CERF has been involved in the development and roll-out of anticipatory action frameworks in five pilot countries (Bangladesh, Chad, Ethiopia, Malawi, Somalia) and one thematic area (cholera). Each framework combines three elements: (1) a robust forecasting mechanism linked to a clear decision-making process; (2) a set of pre-agreed actions that can alter the trajectory of a crisis; and (3) pre-arranged funds that can be released to immediately initiate time-critical activities.

Elements of anticipatory action frameworks

THE MODEL

A robust forecasting embedded in a clear decision-making process

THE MONEY

Pre-arranged finance

THE DELIVERY

Pre-agreed action plan that can fundamentally alter the trajectory of the crisis



Bangladesh: "I am so happy to see these arrangements for us," says Kajli, from Kurigram District.

© UNFPA

PROGRESS IN 2020

In 2020, following two years of preparation and planning, including multiple studies and technical evaluations, OCHA successfully developed and activated three anticipatory action frameworks, with CERF allocating a total of \$33.4 million for anticipatory activities in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Somalia. Each of the three frameworks has provided some preliminary lessons, as well as initial evidence of the merits of multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral anticipatory action at scale. To capture these lessons and expand the evidence base, OCHA has invested in rigorous learning, reviewing the process of setting up and activating the framework, collecting and consolidating agency-specific monitoring and evaluation, and undertaking an independent impact assessment for each of the pilots.

Thanks to generous donor contributions, the Fund is well-positioned to support the development and roll-out of additional anticipatory action pilots in the coming years. CERF will continue to play a central role in supporting innovation, facilitating the introduction and testing of new ways of making the humanitarian system more responsive to predictable hazards – which are expected to be more frequent as a result of climate change.



BANGLADESH

Inclusive dignity kits help people prepare

Anticipatory action – helping people before disaster strikes – saves lives and resources. Mobilizing early also allows people to prepare with dignity and on their own terms.

On 4 July, a high probability of severe flooding was forecast for mid-July along the Jamuna River in Bangladesh, with one third of the area's total population likely to be affected. CERF released a \$5.2 million emergency grant to UN agencies in Bangladesh to help people prepare.

With CERF support, UNFPA distributed a dignity kit that included hygiene, menstrual and reproductive health supplies to over 15,000 people in Bogura, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Jamalpur and Sirajgonj districts. Kits were tailored to meet the needs of women, girls and Hijra, members of Bangladesh's transgender community.

Since 2013, Bangladesh has recognized the Hijra community as a third gender. However, many of them continue to suffer due to misconceptions, harmful superstitions and increased economic vulnerability – which COVID-19 has only exacerbated.

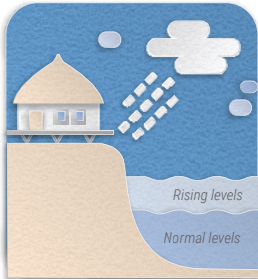
Kajli was one of the people who received a dignity kit prior to the predicted floods. "I am so happy to see these arrangements for us. After the pandemic, we were scattered about, and we don't have any income. I don't even have a proper place to live at the moment, and the place where I am staying could go underwater any minute."

CERF's anticipatory funding helped Kajli and thousands of others better prepare for the floods in July.

STAGE 1
READINESS TRIGGER

15 day forecast

READINESS TRIGGER



READINESS ACTIVITIES



STAGE 2
ACTIVATION TRIGGER

5 day forecast

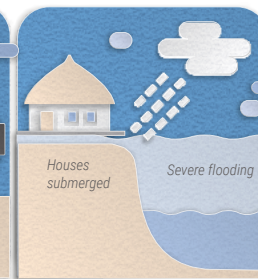
ACTIVATION TRIGGER



HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE



FLOOD



Getting ahead of severe monsoon flooding in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is one of the 10 most disaster-affected countries in the world. Since the beginning of the millennium, more than 112 million people have been affected by climate-related events.²² In an ‘average’ year about a quarter of the country is inundated during the monsoon season; every four to five years the intensity of floods is so severe that up to two thirds of Bangladesh is submerged. These extraordinarily intense floods surpass the ability of communities to cope, resulting in the loss of lives and livelihoods, as well as the destruction of homes and other key infrastructure. This has made the country a repeat recipient of humanitarian assistance, including from CERF, traditionally delivered after homes and fields have been inundated.

In 2020, OCHA, under the leadership of the RC and in cooperation with FAO, UNFPA, WFP, IFRC and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), set up a framework to anticipate severe flooding and enable the implementation of pre-agreed activities to mitigate the impact. Based around a specifically developed two-stage trigger mechanism that uses hydrological forecasts to predict – with a high level of certainty – the occurrence of an out-of-the-ordinary flood, the framework puts into place a pre-agreed response plan that can be implemented as soon as pre-determined thresholds are reached.

On 4 July 2020, the framework was triggered, enabling agencies to deliver humanitarian assistance to more than 220,000 people before the peak of the floods. With projects and funding mechanisms already agreed, CERF was able to allocate \$5.2 million within four hours – the fastest allocation ever.²³ This allowed agencies to implement a multi-sectoral response specifically designed to alter the trajectory of the crisis. This included the provision of safe storage drums to protect grains, seeds and other assets; cash transfers to help at-risk communities take preparatory measures; and the distribution of essential hygiene items to women, girls and transgender people.

Following the implementation of anticipatory activities, the Bangladesh pilot was subjected to an external evaluation, including quantitative beneficiary assessments and agency-specific monitoring and evaluation. Findings from both learning initiatives show that, overall, people were reached earlier, faster and at half the cost of a regular response (when compared, for instance, to the 2019 floods) and in a manner that people found more empowering. Confirming the underlying assumptions of anticipatory action – that it is faster, cheaper, more (cost-)effective and more dignified – the Bangladesh pilot provides firm evidence of the merits of collective, multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral anticipatory action.

²² UNDRR (2020), *The human costs of disasters: an overview of the last 20 years (2000-2019)*

²³ Of the initial \$5.2 million allocation in support of the framework, \$2.8 million was used for anticipatory action, reaching 220,000 people ahead of the peak floods. The remaining \$2.4 million was reprogrammed for rapid response covering an additional 182,500 flood-affected people through cash transfers after the peak floods.

Mitigating the impact of drought in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has long suffered from chronic food insecurity associated with recurrent and cyclical droughts and erratic rainy seasons. Over the last decade, the frequency of droughts due to global weather phenomena such as El Niño, La Niña and the Indian Ocean Dipole has increased from every 10 years to every five years, and the impact of drought on the lives and livelihoods of Ethiopians has become increasingly severe. In light of these changes, a 2019 inter-agency humanitarian evaluation called for the development of anticipatory initiatives (including the pre-positioning of funding structures) to more effectively respond to the needs of vulnerable people in the country.

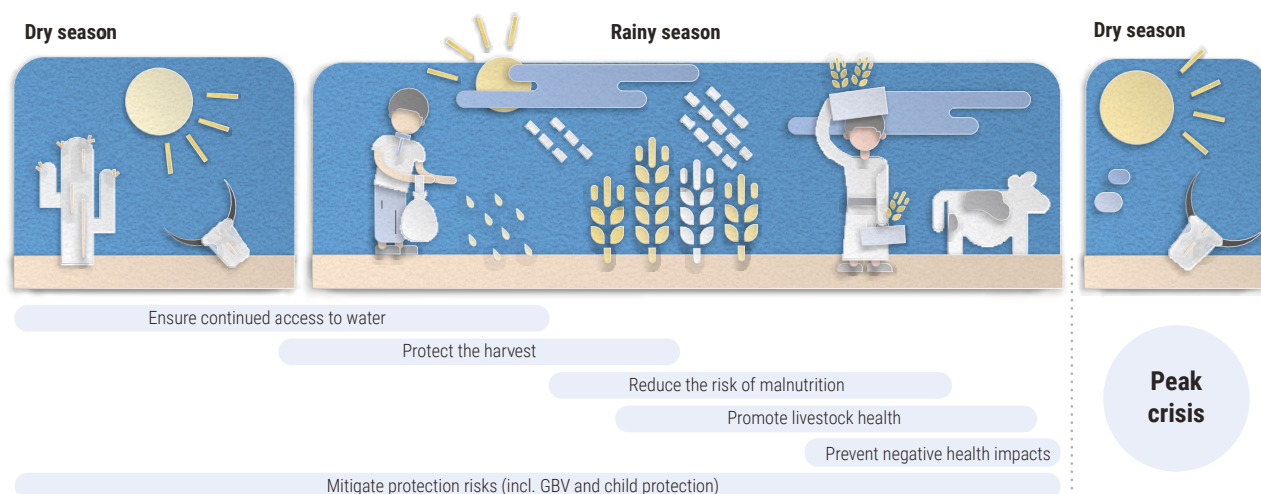
Following comprehensive consultations with stakeholders at the country, regional and global level, OCHA, in cooperation with humanitarian partners, set up an anticipatory action framework for drought that was endorsed by the HCT in October 2020. Employing lessons learned from the Somalia Anticipatory Action pilot, three key improvements were made: (a) the use of sub-national rather than national trigger thresholds, (b) the inclusion of drought indicators in the trigger

(in addition to food insecurity forecasts), and (c) the development of a more detailed activation plan to speed up the allocation process.

In December 2020, as the pre-defined trigger thresholds for food insecurity and drought were reached in multiple regions of Ethiopia, the ERC set aside \$20 million from CERF for the implementation of pre-agreed anticipatory activities. Given the slow evolution of the anticipated shock, the ERC and the RC/HC for Ethiopia agreed to activate the framework in multiple tranches. The ERC allocated \$13.2 million for the initiation of time-critical activities with longer lead times in December, releasing the remaining \$6.8 million for activities with shorter lead times after trigger thresholds were reconfirmed in February 2021.

As of March 2021, the implementation of the CERF anticipatory action plan, which includes targeted interventions across six sectors, is ongoing. Similar to the other pilots, the allocation in Ethiopia will be subjected to an independent evaluation to determine the extent to which anticipatory action offers a comparative advantage over traditional humanitarian responses. Findings will be shared with stakeholders as soon as they become available.

Anticipatory action framework for Ethiopia



Cash and voucher assistance in CERF-funded projects

CERF continues to promote the use of cash and voucher assistance in humanitarian action. In 2020, CERF support to CVA-based programming almost tripled compared to 2019, reaching a record 5.7 million people in 38 countries with \$138 million. This is an increase from 9 per cent of overall annual allocations in 2019 to 15 per cent in 2020.

CERF encourages the use of cash and voucher assistance (CVA), and multi-purpose cash (MPC) in particular, as the default response modality when it is the most effective approach to meet the needs of vulnerable people. MPC gives affected people maximum flexibility in deciding how best to address their most urgent needs. For all projects that do not include CVA as a response modality, CERF requires agencies to provide specific justifications for why CVA was not used. For projects utilizing CVA, CERF specifically asks about consideration given to the provision of MPC and whether linkages to existing social protection systems have been explored. That said, the decision to use CVA for CERF-funded interventions, and the choice of modality, ultimately lies with the RC/HC and humanitarian partners in the field – based on evidence, for example, from cash feasibility assessments.



The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for rapid and strategic humanitarian funding. CERF serves well for those purposes.

- Ville Skinnari, Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade of Finland

CERF's support for CVA increased from \$49 million transferred to people caught in humanitarian crises in 2019 to \$138 million in 2020.²⁴

As well as a significant increase in actual numbers, this is also a notable relative increase from 9 per cent of annual funding in 2019 to 15 per cent in 2020.²⁵ This enabled UN agencies and partners to target 5.7 million people in 38 countries, compared to 2.6 million in 32 countries in 2019. The percentage of CERF-funded projects with a CVA component rose from 18 per cent in 2019 to 30 per cent in 2020 – the highest proportion in CERF's history. Cash assistance under CERF grants in 2020 provided vulnerable people a high degree of flexibility in meeting their needs, with 72 per cent provided as unrestricted cash assistance – a similar level to 2019 and a significant increase from 2018 (45 per cent).

In addition to promoting the use of flexible CVA as the default response modality at project level, CERF also supported strategic, collective initiatives to prioritize cash assistance. The Fund has promoted system-wide CVA priorities and acted as a catalyst for system change. Two examples of this stand out: CERF's response to drought and economic disruption in Zimbabwe and to food insecurity issues across six countries:

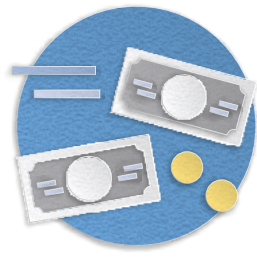
²⁴ This figure represents the amount of CVA transferred to affected people, not the overall value of CERF-funded CVA programmes. All figures are based on information provided by agencies in approved 2020 CERF applications. The actual amount will be determined in 2021 once all RC/HC reports on 2020 CERF grants have been submitted.

²⁵ This includes some funds allocated in 2020 but disbursed in 2021.

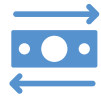
South Sudan: Winnie Modo Loboka, WFP Programme Policy Officer with staff from World Vision, checking people's cards before they receive cash at a distribution center in Gumbo, Juba. With CERF funding, WFP has provided cash assistance to some 150,000 vulnerable people in Juba. The cash assistance is part of WFP's urban safety net programme aimed at addressing emergency food insecurity of households. © WFP/Musa Mahadi



- Following a prolonged drought in **Zimbabwe**, CERF released \$20 million from its RR window to scale up WFP's cash operation over 14 months, to strengthen social safety nets in urban and peri-urban areas. The project provides unrestricted cash transfers to some 151,500 people to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements, reduce their need for urgent assistance, and improve their access to services, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. WFP prioritized the most vulnerable and food-insecure households, especially women-led households, and those caring for people with disabilities and people living with HIV.
- CERF released \$80 million for cash and voucher programming in response to rising levels of hunger in six countries: **Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, DRC, Nigeria, South Sudan** and **Yemen**. In announcing the allocation, the ERC called for international support to prevent communities in the target countries from sliding into famine. In recognition of the multiplicity of needs, the announcement called for the use of unrestricted multi-purpose cash wherever possible, highlighting CVA as one of the most efficient, flexible and cost-effective ways of helping those in need. CERF funding will support over 3.6 million people through CVA interventions planned via WFP and FAO. CERF has commissioned an independent review to capture important lessons from this allocation.



CERF support to CVA



\$138M
TRANSFERRED TO
VULNERABLE
COMMUNITIES



38
COUNTRIES
SUPPORTED



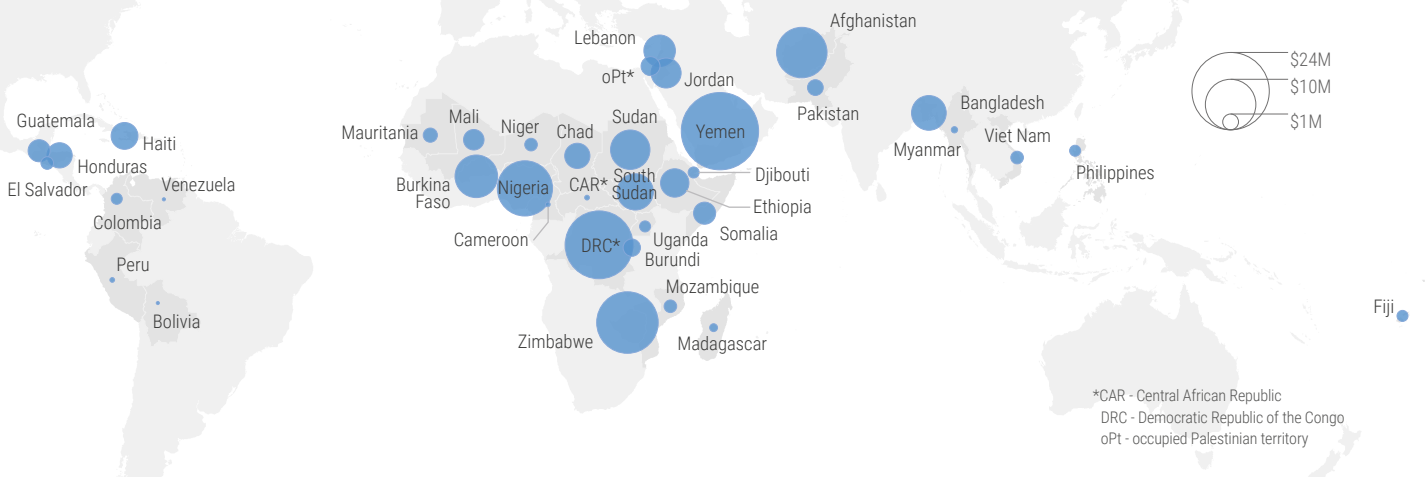
5.7M
PEOPLE
TARGETED



30%
OF ALL ALL CERF-FUNDED
PROJECTS INCLUDED CVA

CVA ALLOCATIONS BY COUNTRY

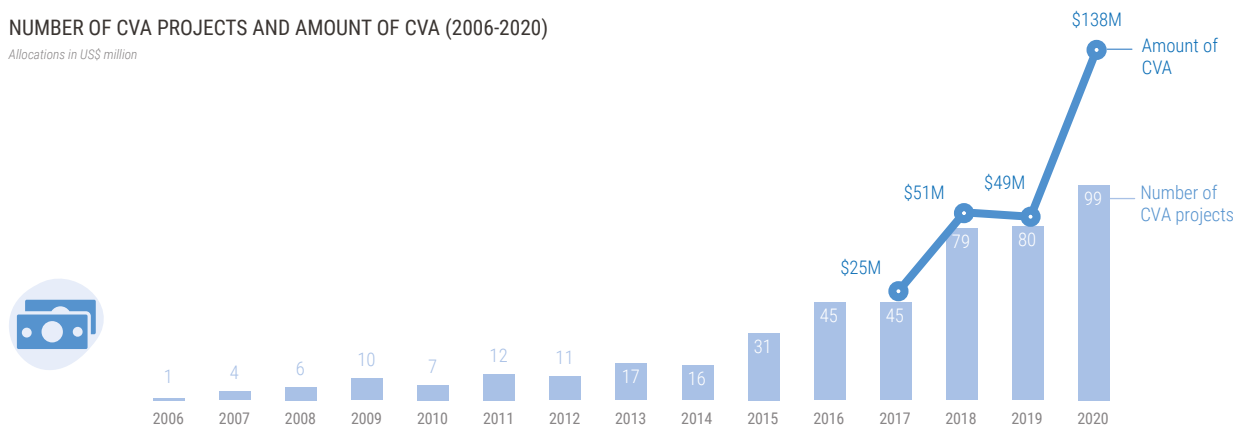
In US\$ million



*CAR - Central African Republic
DRC - Democratic Republic of the Congo
oPt - occupied Palestinian territory

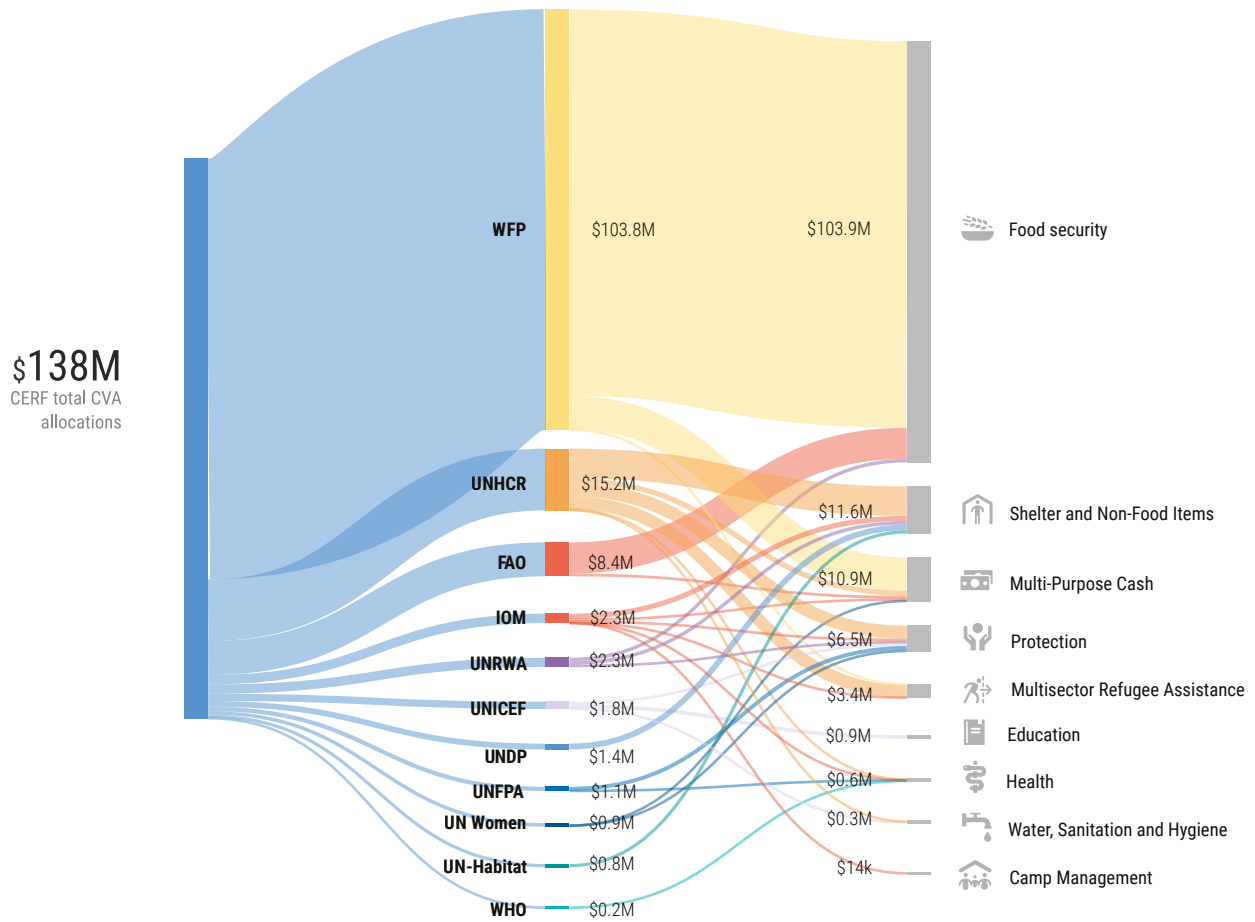
NUMBER OF CVA PROJECTS AND AMOUNT OF CVA (2006-2020)

Allocations in US\$ million



CVA allocations by agency and sector

In US\$ million



In 2020, CERF funding for CVA was allocated to 11 UN agencies, up from 8 in 2019. As in previous years, WFP was the largest implementer of CVA projects. CERF provided \$103.8 million to WFP and its partners to transfer to affected people (75 per cent of the total amount of CERF-funded CVA in 2020), primarily as part of food security projects. The second largest recipient was UNHCR (\$15.2 million in transfers) and the second largest sector was shelter and essential household items.

Speed of CERF allocations

In 2020, not only did CERF allocate the largest amount of funding to date, it did so in record time. Using CERF's fast-track procedures, the most urgent grants were processed in as little as two working days.

One of the most important strategic advantages of CERF is its ability to provide life-saving funding when and where it is needed most. In sudden-onset crises or rapidly deteriorating emergencies, the speed of CERF allocations through the RR window is of critical importance. In other situations, such as slow-onset emergencies and protracted crisis, the ability to provide funding at the right time to the right interventions is more important than the speed with which this happens. The timeliness of CERF allocations is explored in more depth in the section on CERF's strategic added value. (See pages [43-50](#))

Time-critical funding at record speed

Despite a record amount (\$618.5 million) allocated through the RR window in 2020, CERF was able to significantly increase the speed with which it makes critical funding available in the initial stages of sudden-onset crises or when existing emergencies rapidly deteriorate. With an average duration of 10.7 working days between the first submission of an application and the disbursement of funds, CERF was able to reduce the processing time by one and a half days compared to 2019. The most urgent grants were processed in as little as two days.

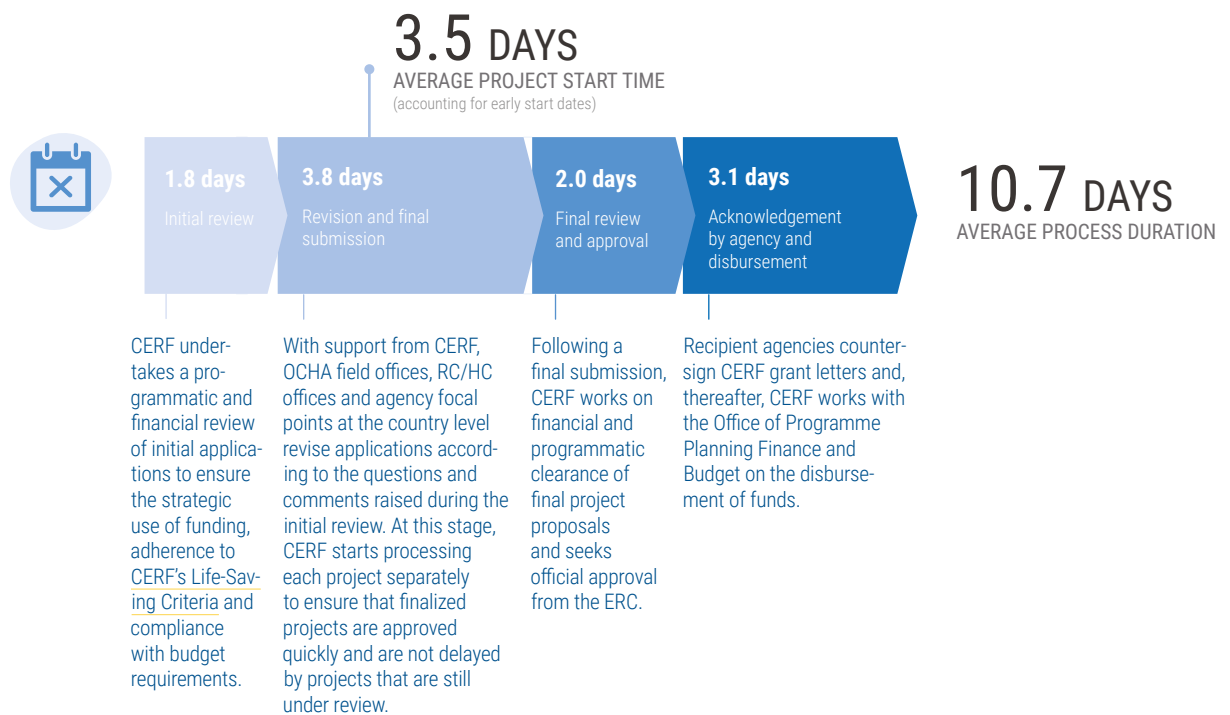
Processing funding for fewer but larger RR projects due to more focused allocations was a crucial factor in CERF's ability to increase its speed in 2020. While the number of RR projects decreased to 205 – a reduction of just under one-third compared to 2019 – the average RR project size increased almost threefold in the same period.

Certain aspects of CERF processes, such as the ability to rapidly review applications or disburse funding, are within the control of CERF and can serve as useful internal operational benchmarks. While CERF always processes grants as fast as possible, other aspects, such as the time it takes for country-level partners to submit or revise application documents, or for agencies to countersign and submit allocation letters, are beyond the direct control of CERF.

Fast-tracking the most urgent allocations

To accommodate the most critical emergencies, CERF applies internal emergency fast-track procedures to ensure fast processing and disbursement of time-critical allocations. This requires deprioritizing other workstreams to focus CERF's resources on expediting priority grant processing tasks, as well as applying lighter fast-track processes where possible. CERF can therefore only evoke its fast-tracking procedures in exceptional cases – for example, when a given humanitarian situation requires an immediate response to kick-start collective action and create momentum. Fast-tracked projects in 2020 were processed within an average of 5.5 working days after the submission of an application.

In 2020, the fast-track procedures proved to be effective – for example, when CERF responded to an increase in conflict-related internal displacement in northern Syria. CERF disbursed grants for life-saving assistance and protection services to 420,000 people fleeing violence in 4.6 working days (on average) after the initial submission of application documents (see pages [23](#)). CERF also made the



fastest ever allocation after the anticipatory action framework in Bangladesh was triggered, enabling it to get ahead of severe monsoon flooding. Using its fast-tracking procedures, CERF processed the pre-agreed anticipatory action grants within hours and disbursed \$5.2 million in only two working days (see pages [63-66](#)).

Flexibility to meet time-critical needs

While CERF strives to process RR allocations in the shortest time possible, recipient agencies do not have to wait for funds to arrive in their accounts before initiating life-saving activities. They can charge expenditures to the CERF project for activities undertaken up to six weeks before the receipt of CERF funds, using their internal reserves to initiate the response in the knowledge that CERF funds will be forthcoming.²⁶ This flexibility allows humanitarian partners to proceed with implementing CERF funds even if all allocation processes are not concluded.

²⁶ An early implementation date can be approved if it does not predate the onset of the emergency. However, not all agencies can use early implementation start dates due to internal administrative limitations.

Factoring in the early start dates reduced the average time between the initial submission of a CERF request and the project start date to only 3.5 working days across all 2020 RR projects.

CERF's speed and agility was particularly important in ensuring that responses to the impacts of COVID-19 remained in step with the evolving nature of the pandemic, disbursing \$95 million in block grants. Some UN agencies took advantage of an early start date. WHO, for example, was able to jump-start its critical operations with activities funded by CERF only three days after the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a "public health emergency of international concern" on 30 January 2020.

When, in August 2020, an explosion in a warehouse in Beirut caused widespread damage and loss of life, CERF allocated \$6 million for response activities. While CERF funds were disbursed within days, using an early start date WHO and WFP were able to kick-start their response immediately on the day of the explosion, safe in the knowledge that CERF funds were imminent.

Partnerships

To implement CERF funding, UN agencies engaged a record number of implementing partners in 2019 including a record number of national and local organizations. CERF continues to explore ways to support greater localization; for example, in 2020, CERF undertook its first-ever direct allocation to NGOs and an innovative global allocation supporting local women-led or women’s rights organizations tackling GBV.

PARTNERSHIPS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CERF FUNDS

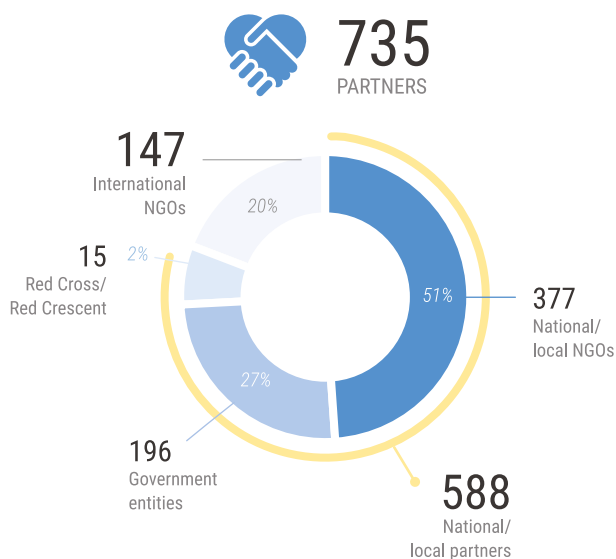
Partnerships are at the heart of the CERF-funded response. CERF funding is jointly prioritized and planned by UNCT/HCTs and cluster or sector groups, which actively involve NGOs, sometimes as leads. Subsequently, CERF funding is implemented through partnerships between UN agencies and NGOs, host governments and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies.

Information from RC/HC reports shows that to implement 2019 CERF funding,²⁷ UN agencies built the broadest partnership network recorded in a single year in the history of the Fund. UN agencies entered into partnerships with 735 implementing partner organizations in 46 out of 49 countries and territories supported by CERF in 2019.²⁸ Of these, 588 were local and national partners – a record high.

²⁷ Due to the nature of the CERF reporting cycle, comprehensive information on sub-grants only becomes available a full year after the calendar year under review. Information on sub-grants made under 2020 CERF allocations will only be available in early 2022.

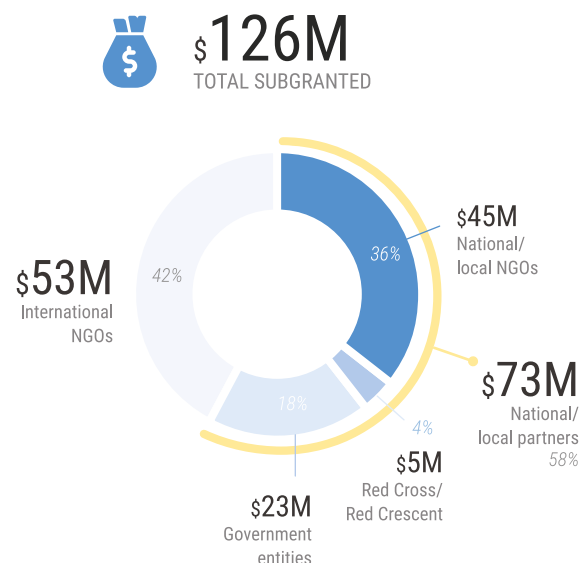
²⁸ CERF-funded humanitarian activities in Cuba, the DPRK and Yemen were implemented entirely by UN agencies. The allocation to Yemen of \$32 million was used to help ramp up humanitarian logistical operations in the country and was directly implemented by WFP.

Partners in the implementation of 2019 CERF funding

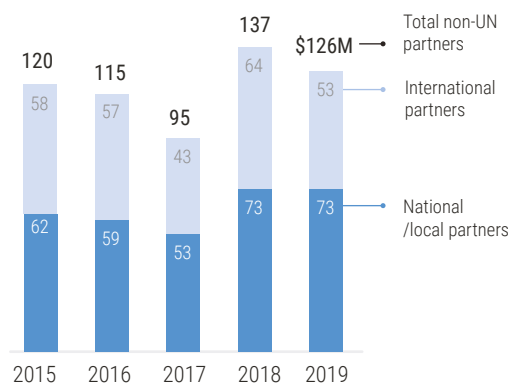


Subgranted 2019 CERF funding

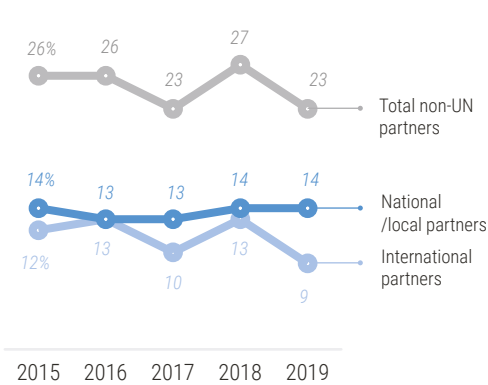
In US\$ million



Amount of sub-granted CERF funding (2015-2019)
in US\$ million



Percentage of sub-granted CERF funding (2015-2019)



Of the \$539 million allocated by CERF in 2019, \$126 million, or 23 per cent, was sub-granted to UN implementing partners, down from \$137 million (27 per cent) in the previous year. This decrease in sub-granting compared to the previous year can be explained by the threefold increase of CERF funding to common humanitarian services such as logistics or humanitarian air services – from \$16 million in 2018 to \$48 million in 2019. This big increase was largely due to an allocation of \$32 million to WFP in Yemen to help ramp up humanitarian logistical operations in the country.

However, while common services are traditionally implemented by UN agencies, they benefit all humanitarian actors on the ground. Moreover, the amount sub-granted only captures funding passed on to implementing partners; it does not include the value of in-kind arrangements between UN agencies and their partners. In addition, in 2019, an estimated \$212 million, or 40 per cent²⁹ of all CERF funding, went towards procurement of relief goods such as food, shelter or medicines. Implementing partners play an important role in distributing these relief supplies and their programming may also benefit from this portion of CERF funding.

²⁹ This number is based on the budget breakdown of all 2019 CERF-funded projects.

An unprecedented allocation in support of NGOs

To reinforce support to NGOs, at a time when financial flows to front-line responders were delayed, CERF launched a unique allocation in 2020. Due to the increasing need for urgent funding to front-line NGOs in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF explored ways of supporting them more directly. Through an innovative allocation of \$25 million via IOM, CERF supported front-line NGO responses to COVID-19 needs in six countries: Bangladesh, the Central African Republic, Haiti, Libya, South Sudan and Sudan. NGOs were selected at country level through multi-stakeholder consultations under the leadership of the RC/HC, and CERF funds were provided to the chosen NGOs through IOM, which acted as the grants manager. A third of the 24 recipient NGOs were local organizations. This innovative allocation modality allowed CERF to provide funding more directly to select front-line NGOs on terms similar to those used for UN agencies. While the implementation is still ongoing at the time of writing, preliminary findings indicate that the allocation approach has been successful; in a follow-up survey, all NGOs noted that CERF funds made a significant and strategic difference to their ability to respond to the crisis in question.

LOCALIZATION

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the important role of local and national actors in humanitarian emergencies. The signatories to the Grand Bargain committed to making principled humanitarian action “as local as possible and as international as necessary” by providing at least 25 per cent of global humanitarian funding to local and national responders.

As a signatory of the Grand Bargain, OCHA has committed to support localization, including through financing. The nature of CERF, however, does not allow it to directly fund local and national actors. In line with its General Assembly mandate, CERF can only directly fund UN agencies. Nonetheless, CERF still plays an important role in supporting humanitarian action by local and national actors who, as implementing partners with UN agencies, are key to delivering CERF-funded humanitarian programmes.

In 2019, UN agencies engaged 588 local and national partners in the implementation of CERF funding – the highest number ever recorded. This included 377 national or local NGOs, 196 government entities and 15 Red Cross/Red Crescent societies. There was a particular increase in the number of government partners implementing CERF-funded humanitarian activities compared to the previous year. In addition, the majority of sub-granted CERF funding in 2019, some \$73 million or 14 per cent of annual CERF funding, went to national and local partners, similar to the record amount of \$73.2 million (14 per cent of annual CERF funding) in the previous year. Of this, national and local NGOs received \$45 million, government partners \$23 million and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies \$5 million. Three recipient agencies passed on the most significant amounts to national and local partners: UNICEF with \$37 million, UNHCR with \$10 million and UNFPA with \$9 million. As highlighted above, the extraordinary high proportion of CERF funding to common services in 2019 undoubtedly had an adverse impact on the level of sub-granting compared to the previous year, including for national and local partners.

Supporting the localization of GBV response

In December, CERF provided an allocation of \$25 million to UNFPA (\$17 million) and UN Women (\$8 million) in the form of global grants for tackling GBV in 11 priority countries. A key objective of the allocation is to support local actors responding to GBV. As such, the grants were given on the condition that at least 30 per cent of funds were passed on to local women-led or women’s rights organizations that work to prevent, respond to and mitigate violence against women and girls.³⁰ In addition, the timeframe for implementation of the allocation was extended to allow agencies to build new and effective partnerships with local and national actors. An early estimate suggests that both agencies will exceed this target, with over 50 per cent of CERF funding to UN Women and 35 per cent to UNFPA going to local women-led or women’s rights organizations.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASING LOCALIZATION

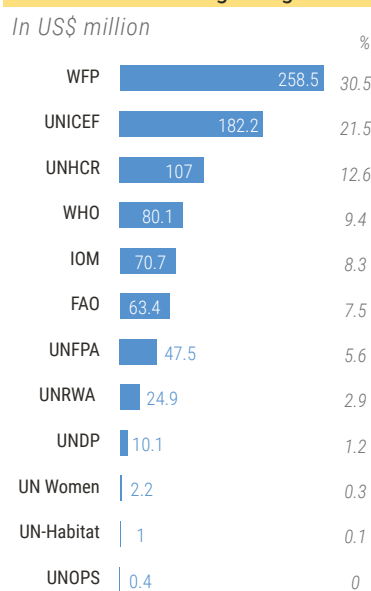
While the degree of localization under CERF grants remains the prerogative of recipient UN agencies, CERF will continue to advocate for greater localization and explore ways to further support involvement of national and local actors in CERF implementation. This will include identifying possible unintended barriers in CERF’s operational and administrative framework that may hinder efforts to engage more local and national actors in CERF-funded humanitarian response. CERF will also improve information on the inclusion of local and national actors in CERF allocations through more accurate and timely data on the involvement of partners in the implementation of CERF projects. Finally, in 2021, CERF will undertake a systematic evaluation of the two innovative allocations in 2020 that directly or indirectly targeted NGOs and, based on this, will consider whether similar allocation approaches should be adopted in the future to advance localization in relevant contexts.

³⁰ The funding was disbursed in early 2021.

Overview of CERF recipient agencies

With record-high funding of \$848 million in 2020, CERF was able to provide 12 UN agencies with the means to deliver life-saving assistance to 69.3 million people in 59 countries and territories across the globe. Of these, eight agencies received their highest annual amount of CERF funding to date.

2020 CERF funding to agencies*



*As part of a global allocation to tackle GBV, CERF allocated an additional \$17million to UNFPA and \$8 million to UN WOMEN in late 2020 which was disbursed in early 2021

WFP

In 2020, WFP remained CERF's top recipient agency with a total of

\$258.5M equivalent to

31% of total funding, reflecting the continuous prevalence of **food insecurity** as the main manifestation of humanitarian need.



In 2020, alongside long-running humanitarian crises such as those in Yemen, Syria and DRC, CERF also provided funding for new emergencies – including the response to the unprecedented COVID-19 global pandemic. The Fund's \$40 million contribution enabled WFP to set up, on behalf of the global health and humanitarian community, Common Services to ensure essential passenger and cargo could reach the frontlines of the pandemic response. Our sincere thanks go to the government donors who support CERF, and we urge them to continue their vital support in 2021, which will be another hugely challenging year with record humanitarian needs. More than ever, we need to join forces to ensure the world's most vulnerable people and communities get the help they need to cope with the challenges ahead.

- David Beasley, Executive Director

UNICEF

As in the previous year, UNICEF received the **second-highest amount** of CERF funding in 2020 – a record

\$182.2M



This included

\$16M to help jump-start **health care**, and **water and sanitation assistance** in response to the **COVID-19 pandemic**.



CERF continues to be an indispensable financial mechanism, providing urgent, life-saving support for people living through humanitarian crises in 56 countries last year. Under the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF has once again proven its critical value. Thanks to CERF's fast and flexible allocation, UNICEF was able to provide essential services and support to tens of millions of children and women – including refugees and internally displaced people – across 27 countries. We're counting on the generosity of donors to keep CERF strong and well-funded – through and beyond the pandemic.

- Henrietta Fore, Executive Director

UNHCR

The impacts of **displacement and the plight of refugees** continued to drive CERF allocations in 2020.

With **\$107M** of CERF funding in 2020, UNHCR became the **third largest recipient agency**, with

13% of overall funding.



CERF continues to be a crucial donor for UNHCR. As forced displacement reached record levels in 2020 and vulnerabilities were compounded by the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, CERF contributions are often the first resources available to UNHCR at the outset of emergencies, enabling the delivery of time-critical assistance and protection that saves the lives of millions of people caught up in crisis. In addition, CERF funds provide a lifeline to refugees and displaced people in otherwise forgotten and underfunded crises, reducing their suffering and undoubtedly saving lives.

- Filippo Grandi,
High Commissioner

WHO

CERF was vital in enabling WHO's response to the **COVID-19 pandemic**, as well as to a range of **health emergencies** in

31 countries, with funding amounting to

\$80.1M



From the very onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF stood at the side of WHO to make sure our support reached those most at risk in Africa and the Middle East. At the same time, humanitarian emergencies were not forgotten and CERF enabled WHO to provide health care to millions of people affected by disease outbreaks, conflicts and natural disasters.

- Dr. Tedros A. Ghebreyesus,
Director General

IOM



With **\$70.1M** in CERF allocations, IOM was able to provide immediate emergency response and life-saving assistance to **displaced persons and host communities** in

26 countries

as well as support **front-line NGO responses** to **COVID-19** through an innovative allocation of **\$25 million**.



Throughout 2020, CERF remained a critical partner to IOM and has been instrumental in mobilizing resources during emergencies and in protracted, underfunded crises. It allowed IOM to scale up a flexible and multisectoral response to reach the most vulnerable populations, including the displaced, and to save lives. We also thank CERF for its leading role in anticipatory action and for the flexible funding which IOM cascaded to NGOs and front-line partners, enabling the decentralization of critical health care and WASH COVID-19 response. Finally, we thank the donors for their robust and flexible response in support of displaced and affected populations in complex emergencies globally.

- António Vitorino,
Director General

FAO

FAO received

\$63.4M

to address immediate **food and livelihoods needs** in

31 countries.

CERF provided two regional grants totalling **\$11.5 million** and a **\$10 million** loan to enable FAO to respond to the worst outbreak of **desert locust** in the **Horn of Africa** in 25 years.



In 2020, time-critical funding of \$63.4 million from CERF allowed FAO to assist 9.4 million people facing acute food insecurity in 31 countries. In addition to assisting vulnerable populations affected by natural disasters and conflict, CERF was the first donor to allocate resources for FAO's work on mitigating the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security. CERF contributions have also been instrumental in containing the unprecedented desert locust upsurge in the Greater Horn of Africa, as well as anticipating and reducing its negative effects on food security and people's livelihoods.

- QU Dongyu,
Director General

UNFPA



UNFPA received

\$47.4M

– a threefold increase from 2015 – making CERF UNFPA's **top humanitarian contributor** in 2020. With this funding, UNFPA was able to **support time-critical and life-saving** SRH and GBV responses in

34 countries.



CERF has brought transformative change for women and girls in humanitarian crises around the world, helping ensure their rights, safety and dignity. The Fund has had an outsized impact during the COVID-19 pandemic, including through its support for grass-roots, women-led organizations. UNFPA is very grateful to all of our donors as we work together to provide life-saving services and protection.

- Dr. Natalia Kanem,
Executive Director

UNRWA

UNRWA received a record

\$24.9M

in CERF allocations to provide **critical assistance to Palestine refugees**. CERF provided two loans totalling **\$30 million** to help manage a **severe cash flow crisis** and avert an imminent interruption of humanitarian assistance.



Thanks to CERF, UNRWA was able to maintain health, education and other critical services to Palestine refugees in the Middle East, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Grants and loans that CERF provides can be a lifeline for an agency as big as UNRWA, especially as it tried to confront its worst financial crisis in 2020 – thanks to the real solidarity demonstrated by CERF and OCHA.

- Phillippe Lazzarini,
Commissioner-General



UN Women

With **\$2.2M** in CERF allocations, UN Women **supported women and girls** affected by conflict and natural disaster in

5 countries, contributing to UN Women's **gender equality strategic goals** for humanitarian action.



Lockdowns, quarantining and limitations on the delivery of vital protection services during the global pandemic have exacerbated the risk of gender-based violence for crisis-affected women and girls. With CERF support, UN Women, working with its UN partners, national authorities and local women's rights organizations, was able to provide much-needed service delivery to mitigate and respond to gender-based violence in Colombia, Guatemala, Jordan, Pakistan and Uganda, where existing crisis contexts had been further complicated by the COVID-19 emergency. Thanks to CERF's flexibility and strong gender focus over the past difficult year, UN Women has been able to reach some 50,000 women and girls.

- Phumzile
Mlambo-Ngcuka,
Executive Director



UNMAS

With a grant of

\$405K

UNMAS provided critical **mine awareness** and risk reduction activities for **IDPs and host communities** in **Burkina Faso**. UNOPS served as the grant manager.



Through critical, time-sensitive and flexible funding from CERF, UN-Habitat was able to immediately contribute to the wider United Nations and humanitarian response following the tragic Beirut Port explosion – through ensuring that an urban and multi-sector area-based approach and lens was applied to what necessitated an urban crisis response. Ensuring and responding to the urgent shelter needs following the explosion was a priority for UN-Habitat – and CERF funding enabled this, while contributing to the dignified living of over 4,000 direct beneficiaries.

- Maimunah Mohd Sharif,
Executive Director

UNDP



With **\$10.1M**

in allocations, CERF enabled UNDP to carry out timely **life-saving interventions** in

14 countries.

UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat received

\$1M in CERF funding

to address needs stemming from the **COVID-19 pandemic** and the **port explosion** in **Greater Beirut, Lebanon**.

CERF Governance



The ERC manages CERF on behalf of the UN Secretary-General and is supported by the CERF secretariat, which ensures that funds are allocated properly, disbursed in a timely manner, and that the use of funds is reported appropriately and transparently. The CERF Advisory Group provides policy guidance to the Secretary-General on the use and impact of the Fund.

Democratic Republic of the Congo:

OCHA staff attending a briefing on the humanitarian situation in the country.

© OCHA DRC

CERF Advisory Group

The CERF Advisory Group was established to advise the Secretary-General, through the ERC, on the use and impact of the Fund. In 2020, the Secretary-General appointed 10 new members to the Advisory Group, bringing the total number to 19 and helping to ensure a representative diversity of membership. Two official Advisory Group meetings were held in 2020 (due to the COVID-19 pandemic these were held virtually). To support exchange of information, CERF organized three thematic webinars – focusing on CERF’s COVID-19 response, anticipatory action efforts, and CERF global reporting – to facilitate in-depth discussions on key areas related to the operation of the Fund.

During the official Advisory Group meetings in June and December, the group discussed CERF’s COVID-19 response with the ERC. The group commended CERF for its global response to the pandemic, and the pace and agility with which grants were disbursed. The Group agreed that CERF’s COVID-19 response demonstrates the unique added value of the Fund and underlines the need for increased funding for CERF.

In both official meetings, the group also discussed CERF’s role in the humanitarian landscape and new CERF initiatives in 2020, which aimed to enhance the strategic and operational impact of funding and encourage positive system change. The Advisory Group acknowledged the challenges relating to growing humanitarian needs and the limited availability of resources and praised CERF for being a catalyst for efficiency and effectiveness in the humanitarian system. The group expressed support for recent innovations and the way CERF helps drive reform across the humanitarian system. The group also emphasized the importance of documenting and sharing learning to enable continued improvements and encourage other partners to build on these initiatives.



During the COVID-19 crisis CERF has once again proven its added value by supporting swift, flexible and relevant humanitarian aid. That is why CERF remains a key instrument in the Netherlands’ policy for humanitarian aid. It is an honor to chair the Advisory Group of this indispensable Fund.

- Marriët Schuurman, Chair of the CERF Advisory Group and Director of the Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

The group reaffirmed its strong support for CERF’s efforts to ensure humanitarian action in advance of forecasted climate shocks – including support for the anticipatory action pilots – and the positive impact this has on reducing human suffering and minimizing response costs.

The Advisory Group also discussed the ERC’s four underfunded priority areas for humanitarian action. The group reiterated the importance of increased attention to these areas in humanitarian response and highlighted the important role of CERF in influencing the system’s response in this regard.

Other topics discussed included ways to broaden and deepen the CERF donor base, and potential opportunities for strengthening CERF’s impact reporting. Throughout the year, the CERF Secretariat worked closely with the CERF Advisory Group, not least with a view to helping members fulfil their functions as champions of CERF. Advisory Group members played a significant role as advocates for CERF in 2020.

Additional information on topics discussed and decisions reached during Advisory Group meetings in 2020 are available on the [CERF website](#), together with an overview of the members of the CERF Advisory Group.

Commitment to learning

CERF is committed to continuous learning to ensure that its approaches and processes are adapted to the changing requirements of the humanitarian landscape. Internally, CERF continuously gathers lessons learned through consultations with partners at the global and field levels. In addition, CERF commissions independent consultants to carry out a number of studies every year, under CERF's Performance and Accountability Framework. These studies assess CERF's added value to humanitarian responses around the world. They also seek to provide an appropriate level of assurance that funds are managed properly and lead to meaningful results in line with CERF's mandate.

In 2020, CERF concluded two studies – one on [CERF's support to the four underfunded priority areas](#), and the other on [the role of CERF in smaller emergencies](#). Due to COVID-related travel restrictions, both reviews had to adapt their approach, limiting direct in-depth engagement with country-level stakeholders.

Nigeria: At the child-friendly space in Stadium IDP Camp, Maiduguri, Borno state. The safe space provides children displaced by conflict a place to access education and play, learn, and use clean water. The center also helps children recruited by non-state armed groups to recover and rebuild a normal childhood.

© OCHA/Eve Sabbagh



Four underfunded priority areas

In 2019, the ERC reached out to RC/HCs in countries with ongoing humanitarian operations to ensure more attention to four priority areas: support for women and girls, including GBV, reproductive health and empowerment; programmes for people with disabilities; education in protracted crises; and other aspects of protection.

The ERC requested that RC/HCs give due consideration to these four areas when developing CERF applications, as well as during the preparation of allocation strategies for CBPFs. To take stock of progress in promoting the four areas in CERF allocations and to learn lessons and identify opportunities for strengthening the initiative, CERF commissioned a study conducted by external consultants.

The study³¹ found that the ERC's underfunded priorities initiative is highly relevant for delivering quality and inclusive humanitarian assistance and has successfully increased attention to these core areas in CERF allocations. The review noted that despite a system-wide challenge with tracking funding for assistance to PwD and for mainstreamed activities in support of women and girls and protection, there was qualitative evidence

³¹ The study covered three countries in-depth (Ukraine, Cameroon, and Sudan) and four via a desk review (Bangladesh, DRC, Somalia and Zimbabwe).

that the initiative has led to greater attention to the priority areas during funding allocation discussions at country level. Specifically, the study found that CERF funding for the education and protection sectors has increased following the introduction of the initiative. Notably, the initiative has also helped increase attention to the provision of assistance to PwD, typically the least developed of the four priorities in humanitarian response.

The review suggested several possible areas for further improvement. At a strategic level, the review findings indicate that discussions on the priority areas in UNCT/HCTs and efforts to link CERF funding to UNCT/HCT protection strategies could be strengthened. The review also noted that information on the four areas could be strengthened at project level in CERF proposals in order to allow improved analysis of how the priorities are integrated into the assistance delivered to affected people.

The review also noted that despite wide-ranging commitments, technical capacity within the humanitarian system in these areas remains mixed. There are, however, opportunities to help address technical weaknesses within the system by linking up funding with regional and global level support.

Lastly, the review considered approaches to funding these strategic priorities. It reaffirmed that mainstreaming the cross-cutting priorities into all humanitarian assistance is essential but highlighted that it remains important to fund stand-alone service delivery alongside this to ensure that specialized services can be applied when needed.

The review represents an important stocktaking exercise after the first year of implementing this new initiative. CERF has used the findings to strengthen its support to the four underfunded priority areas. Efforts are ongoing on strengthening CERF's templates and guidance to improve field processes and project-level data; involving IASC technical experts in advancing the thematic areas in the CERF programme cycle, including through field support; and piloting targeted CERF allocations that specifically address one or several of the four areas.



CERF's role in smaller emergencies

Each year, CERF supports humanitarian operations in a variety of emergency contexts. While most CERF funds continue to go towards large-scale humanitarian operations, CERF also plays a critical role in supporting response to smaller-scale emergencies in countries with limited existing humanitarian capacity.

Recognizing the different dynamics in different emergency contexts, the review of CERF's role in smaller emergencies sought to examine the role of CERF allocations in situations where they are the only or main source of emergency funding in a humanitarian response. The review also explored whether CERF should consider different allocation approaches in these contexts to ensure maximum impact. Due to COVID-19 restrictions only three countries were part of the review (Djibouti, Haiti and Lesotho) and only one country mission was possible (Djibouti), somewhat limiting the scope of the study.

Overall, the review confirmed CERF's important role in supporting emergency response in low-profile emergencies. The study found that in the countries reviewed, CERF provided a critical and reliable source of funding for each new shock and was seen as an essential source of last-resort funding in resource-scarce environments with limited donor attention. In line with findings from other reviews, donors often prioritize their humanitarian funding for larger higher-profile emergencies in the respective regions, relying on CERF to step in to address emergency response needs in some low-profile crises.

In all three countries, CERF's RR window supported time-critical, multi-sector innovations, and its speed and agility were seen as a 'life-saver', even if the amounts provided were less than the overall requirements. An important value of the CERF allocation processes was that it often supported and generated important vulnerability data, helping to drive government action in emergencies and inform agency fundraising for international donors. The review also highlighted how the UFE window allowed responses the time to prepare, coordinate and include government counterparts in proposals, thus helping to improve engagement beyond the CERF allocations.

The review noted the vital role that CERF plays in addressing humanitarian needs that result from chronic structural gaps. It also noted that in addition to supporting life-saving humanitarian action, CERF allocations have helped to enhance nexus approaches. The review found that CERF allocations in the review countries play out in the space between relatively limited national response capacity and a UN system struggling to address emergency needs. There was little evidence to suggest that an ongoing reliance on CERF during shocks would undermine resilience programming, government ownership or national preparedness. Rather, CERF allocation processes supported national partners by shaping institutional orientation and responsiveness at critical moments, pre- and post-disaster.

Lastly, the review explored whether CERF should increase the size of its allocations to these types of emergencies from the outset, recognizing that UN agencies often have difficulty leveraging additional funds from CERF contributions in these contexts. While larger allocations may be warranted in some contexts, the review did not recommend this as a default practice because of the limited absorption capacity of agencies and their partners, especially for short-term RR grants. The review concluded that, where absorption capacity exists, larger allocations could be considered in combination with longer implementation

times, in line with existing CERF criteria, and if agencies can make a clear case that they are providing resilient solutions, while also saving lives, and that this requires additional funding or a longer implementation window.

While the review did note UN agencies' difficulties in leveraging additional funds from CERF contributions, **it also referenced three agency reports that detailed their success in using RR funds to seek larger internal allocations that build on the proven results of early CERF financing** as well as clear evidence of CERF allocations influencing donors' decision-making processes, even if this did not result in rapid, follow-on funding.

CERF will use the findings of the review, where relevant, to inform its allocation approaches for similar types of small-scale emergencies, including exploring opportunities for supporting the mobilization of further resources in these types of emergencies.

2021 Reviews

In early 2021, CERF launched three studies exploring unique CERF allocations undertaken during 2020. The first of these is a review of CERF's first-ever NGO allocation, which channelled \$25 million in funding via IOM to 24 front-line NGOs for COVID-19 response. The second study reviews **CERF's use of CVA support as an assistance modality,** as part of its \$80 million allocation to help stave off famine in high-risk countries. The third study reviews **CERF's support to the prevention of and response to GBV.** Specifically, the study will review targeted allocations made by CERF in 2020 to complement regular mainstreaming of GBV support, including a global grant to UNFPA and UN Women for GBV prevention and response.

Once finalized, the reports on these three studies will be published on the CERF website and findings discussed with the CERF Advisory Group.

Transparency and accountability

CERF's donors entrust the ERC and CERF with managing hundreds of millions in unearmarked funding to achieve the best possible humanitarian outcomes, without interfering in allocation decisions. Ensuring full transparency and real-time data on CERF-supported operations therefore remains a top priority.

The RC/HC has the overall responsibility at country level of overseeing the activities implemented with CERF funds, and reporting on the use of CERF funds when project activities are completed. While the RC/HC takes the lead, the grant reporting process is a collective effort by all relevant stakeholders at country level, helping to foster a collective reflection on the CERF process and the results achieved. These reports are published on the CERF [website](#) and shared by the RC/HC with all relevant stakeholders at country level.

MILESTONES TOWARDS GREATER TRANSPARENCY

In March 2020, CERF launched an [online allocation tracker](#) that, for each CERF allocation, provides real-time information on the humanitarian emergency, the rationale for CERF funding and the assistance provided through agency projects. Previously, these allocation summaries were published once a year, as part of the CERF Results Report. In conjunction with the online tracker, CERF has developed a service that gives stakeholders the option of receiving e-mail notifications of new allocations as soon as these are decided. These help partners stay abreast of ongoing work and provide easy reference to the most up-to-date allocation information.



Another transparency and accountability related milestone is the CERF Data Hub, which was developed in 2020 and launched in early 2021. It provides a wide array of interactive visuals, allowing stakeholders easy access to data on how individual contributions have been allocated across global humanitarian operations since CERF's inception in 2006. It complements the data already available through CERF's website.

In 2020, CERF, together with CBPFs, also worked to improve visibility of funding across the two funding mechanisms. Of particular note is the [OCHA Pooled Funds Data Hub](#), developed in 2020 and launched in early 2021. The joint data hub has dramatically increased the transparency of OCHA's humanitarian financing mechanisms by providing a one-stop gateway to funding data for CERF and the 19 CBPFs. It allows donors and stakeholders to analyse country-level responses across the pooled funds through an interactive interface, increasing the efficiency of information gathering and significantly enhancing visibility of pooled funds allocations. In addition to providing real-time information on core funding and allocations, historical information on both CBPF and CERF allocations and donor contributions can be viewed by region, country, partner, donor and project.



MONITORING FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS

Fraud poses a serious risk to humanitarian efforts. Potential cases of fraud related to CERF grants are treated in accordance with the rules, regulations and oversight mechanisms of the recipient UN agencies. To ensure adequate transparency and accountability, CERF guidance sets out procedures for informing donors of potential cases of fraud in CERF-funded projects implemented by UN agencies and their partners. The guidance, developed in consultation with the CERF Advisory Group and recipient agencies, outlines the communication responsibilities of recipient agencies and CERF.

In 2020, CERF and CBPFs also started working on a joint online Grant Management System (One GMS), to be rolled out in 2021. This will enhance real-time communication of humanitarian data through the standardization of allocation data published across the Pooled Fund Data Hubs. One GMS will also help to harmonize processes between CERF and the CBPFs.

To ensure effective and consistent monitoring of potential fraud cases, CERF employs internal standard operating procedures covering all phases of the process, from initial notification by partners to the conclusion of investigations and follow-up actions. In line with the communications guidance, interested donors are kept informed of any new cases reported to CERF, as well as any developments in ongoing investigations. The annual report of the Secretary-General on CERF also provides an overview of all investigations each year.

In line with its commitment to promote transparency, CERF abides by International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards to ensure information is easy to access, understand and use for the broader public. In 2020, CERF continued to improve its reporting under the IATI. As a result, CERF's IATI transparency score has remained stable at 95 per cent, placing CERF among the top 15 of the 1,200 organizations publishing their data in IATI standards.³² CERF continues to publish all grant decisions on its [website](#), with the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and via the Humanitarian Data Exchange. CERF's Annual Results Reports and a broad range of infographics are also available on the website, along with allocation methodologies, data sets and summaries of country selection processes for all UFE allocations.

Twice a year, CERF contacts agencies to remind them to report any new cases of possible fraudulent use of CERF funds and to provide updates on existing cases. CERF monitors ongoing cases and remains in close contact with the relevant agencies until cases have been fully investigated and follow-up actions implemented. Subject to the outcome of investigations, CERF may work with recipient agencies to recover funds where feasible and appropriate. CERF shares information through twice-yearly letters with its top donors and those donors who have expressed an interest in being informed. In addition, the CERF Advisory Group is regularly notified of potential fraud cases that have been communicated to CERF and updated on their status.

³² The overall score is a composite of the ratings for timeliness, the extent to which data is forward looking, and comprehensiveness: http://publishingstats.iatistandard.org/summary_stats.html

Future Priorities

Following an unprecedented year, both in terms of humanitarian needs and available resources, CERF will continue pursuing initiatives that enhance the Fund's strategic impact. In 2021 and beyond, CERF will continue to be guided by its core mandate. It will continue to ensure timely and targeted funding for life-saving humanitarian action in new and forgotten emergencies worldwide. In its constant pursuit of maximizing impact, CERF will maintain efforts to reinforce its role as an effective and agile global humanitarian funding instrument – one that facilitates an impactful and efficient global humanitarian response, while promoting positive system change beyond individual allocations.



The Kingdom of Morocco, in line with the humanitarian vision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, continues to support UN efforts aiming at saving lives, which is the noblest humanitarian action. As donor and member of CERF's Advisory Group, Morocco strongly believes in CERF's critical role in enabling fast and timely response to emergencies.

- H. E. Nasser Bourita, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco

CERF will continue to pursue a number of initiatives to enhance the Fund's strategic impact, including:

- **Increasing CERF support to the anticipatory action agenda.** CERF has played a key role in promoting a more anticipatory response to predictable humanitarian shocks (see pages 63-66). In 2020, CERF and partners successfully launched anticipatory action pilots in three countries to demonstrate proof-of-concept for coordinated anticipatory action at scale. In 2021, CERF will support additional pilots covering a broader range of shocks and contexts, each with a two-year duration, and will carry out systematic learning in support of wider system change.
- **Strengthening support for women and girls:** In recent years, CERF has strengthened its response to programmes targeting women and girls, including those tackling GBV, and efforts to further bolster support will remain a priority in 2021. To this end, CERF has brought together programming practitioners and technical experts from across the humanitarian system to advise OCHA's Pooled Fund Management Branch on strengthening gender aspects of pooled funds allocations.
- **Strengthening support for people with disabilities:** In 2020, CERF continued to leverage funding to ensure added attention and financing to people with disabilities caught in humanitarian crises. This will remain a priority in 2021, and with the support of experts and practitioners, CERF will work to further increase attention and funding to the needs of these vulnerable groups.



The COVID-19 pandemic, together with existing crises, posed unprecedented challenges to the humanitarian system. Rapid and concrete action as well as greater international solidarity is necessary more than ever. This is particularly true for equitable and direct access to COVID-19 vaccines for the populations in conflict settings. As a leading nation in terms of humanitarian assistance and one of the largest financial contributors to the United Nations system, Turkey remains firmly committed to CERF and will continue supporting all collective efforts towards this end.

*- Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu,
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Republic of Turkey*

- **Strengthening support for PSEA and AAP:** CERF will continue to strategically leverage CERF funding to address cross-cutting priorities across the humanitarian system, as well as support transformative initiatives to catalyse wider system change. This includes continuing to reinforce efforts to promote PSEA by requiring UN agencies to develop and maintain appropriate mechanisms for reporting and addressing SEA-related complaints in relation to CERF-funded programmes and exploring ways of funding collective PSEA initiatives in humanitarian operations when relevant. CERF will also remain committed to promoting AAP by ensuring that agencies consider the appropriate operational steps for engaging with affected communities
- **Greater use of cash:** In line with the Grand Bargain commitments, CERF will continue to promote the use of cash in CERF allocations and in doing so seek to advance broader cash priorities within the humanitarian system, including greater use of unrestricted multi-purpose cash. (See pages [61](#)).
- **Supporting localization:** Recognizing the important role of local and national actors in humanitarian emergencies, CERF will continue to advocate for greater localization and explore ways to further support involvement of local actors in CERF implementation. (See pages [73-75](#)).
- **Increasing effectiveness and impact through innovation:** In 2020, CERF undertook a number of unique innovative allocations to better meet emerging humanitarian needs. Building on learning and experience from 2020, CERF in 2021 will continue to explore innovation in allocation approaches to achieve greater effectiveness in responding to humanitarian needs and challenges. Innovation will continue to be underpinned by systematic learning and transparency. Similarly, CERF will continue efforts to make CERF processes in the field and at headquarters as efficient and effective as possible, to lower transaction costs and increase the speed of disbursements.

when developing projects and that AAP measures are fully integrated throughout the CERF programme cycle. In addition, efforts to enhance CERF support to, or use of, collective AAP mechanisms (where these exist) as part of the humanitarian response architecture will remain a priority. (See pages [61](#))



Zimbabwe: Children playing in Epworth, Zimbabwe. Cash provided through the WFP is allowing their parents to buy basics like bread, cooking oil, and sugar.

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Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected People	MPC	Multi-purpose cash
AHF	Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund	NFI	Non-food items
CAR	Central African Republic	NGO	Non-governmental organizations
CBPF	Country-Based Pooled Funds	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund	PSEA	Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse
CVA	Cash and voucher assistance	PWD	People with disabilities
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	RC	Resident Coordinator
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	RR	Rapid Response
ECE	Early childhood education	SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator	UFE	Underfunded Emergencies
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
FTS	Financial Tracking Service	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
GAM	Gender with Age Marker	UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
GBV	Gender-based violence	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
GHRP	Global Humanitarian Response Plan	UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator	UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team	UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan	WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	WFP	World Food Programme
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative	YHF	Yemen Humanitarian Fund
IDP	Internally displaced person		
IOM	International Organization for Migration		
JHF	Jordan Humanitarian Fund		
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual and/or Ally		

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2 Bank transfer to CERF

Contact the CERF secretariat in New York, USA

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3 Payment by cheque

Cheques need to be made out to the United Nations Foundation. The memo line of the cheques should read "Donation to CERF"

Cheques should be mailed to:

United Nations Foundation/Central Emergency Response Fund

P.O. Box 96721

Washington, D.C. 20090-6721, USA

Please include your name and contact details so that we can track and respond to your contribution accordingly. Note: US tax-deductible donations can also be made via money order or wire transfer.

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