



Central Emergency Response Fund  
High-level Pledging Event for 2024

A fund  
for all,  
by all



United Nations  
**CERF**

Central  
Emergency  
Response  
Fund



United Nations  
**CERF**



Photo: OCHA/Liz Loh Taylor

## Concept Note

Last updated: 27 November 2023

**The High-level Pledging Event (HLPE) on the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for 2024 aims to mobilize financial resources to ensure the CERF is well-placed to effectively provide time-critical, life-saving humanitarian assistance in response to the exponentially growing humanitarian needs.**

**The HLPE will therefore:**

- **Showcase CERF's achievements and unique value in alleviating the suffering of those most vulnerable through fast, coordinated and effective provision of life-saving assistance and sustaining relief operations in crises**, particularly those resource-constrained, and through anticipatory action.
- **Demonstrate CERF's increasingly important role in responding to climate-related humanitarian crises** that on average annually accounts for close to 30 per cent of funding from CERF.
- **Highlight CERF's ability to provide rapid, adaptable, and strategic funding** that harmonizes seamlessly with other financial sources, particularly Country-based Pooled Funds.
- **Provide an opportunity for donors and partners to express global solidarity and announce pledges to CERF for 2024 and additional funding for 2023** to ensure that CERF can effectively help meet acute humanitarian needs, where and when needed the most.

### Date and venue

**Wednesday, 6 December 2023**  
**10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** (New York, EST)

**Format:** In-person

**Venue:** ECOSOC Chamber, UN Headquarters, New York

### Registration

Kindly complete one form per delegation. Delegations may register a maximum of three delegates to attend in-person.

To register, please go to:

[REGISTRATION](#)

The deadline to register is Friday, **1 December, 2023.**

### Contacts

For more information you may visit the webpage at: [CERF HLPE 2024](#)

For inquiries, kindly contact the OCHA focal points for the event:

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**CERF is a dependable and predictable funding mechanism for the most urgent and critical humanitarian action.** It is often the first funding source in new and rapidly escalating emergencies, and one of the few funding sources in underfunded emergencies. Strong, reliable and inclusive donor support is essential for CERF to remain fit for purpose and be able to adapt continuously.

In the context of an unprecedented growth of humanitarian needs, a fully-resourced CERF at US\$1 billion, as endorsed by the General Assembly in 2016, is essential to ensure efficient, coordinated assistance reaches the people most in need.

#### Agenda:

- Opening segment: This will include opening remarks by UN Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres and remarks by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC) for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Mr. Martin Griffiths.
- High-level panel: a distinguished panel will focus on CERF's role in meeting the urgent life-saving needs of people in crises.
- Statements and announcements: Member States and partners to announce support and pledges to CERF for 2024 and potential additional top-ups for 2023. Interventions should be limited to **two minutes** each.
- Closing segment: Closing remarks by Mr. Martin Griffiths, USG/ERC, OCHA.

#### Participants

All Member States, Observer Missions, UN agencies and partners are invited.

#### Event Details

The Event will take place in-person on **Wednesday, 6 December 2023, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (EST) in the ECOSOC Chamber, UN Headquarters, New York.**

Member States are invited to participate at the Principal level. The HLPE will be live-streamed on UN Web TV and is to be held in English, with interpretation services in the six official UN languages. Each delegation may register a maximum of three delegates to attend the event in-person.

#### Media and social media

A dedicated communications campaign is expected to run from late November 2023, providing opportunities and assets for engagement, while multimedia content showcasing the impact of CERF allocations will be screened.

#### Background and highlights of CERF Achievements in 2023

Established in 2006, the CERF has allocated almost \$9 billion to provide life-saving assistance for millions of people in over 110 countries and territories. Global funding needs through humanitarian appeals have unfortunately increased tenfold – from \$5.2 billion in 2006 to assist 32 million people to some \$55.6 billion in 2023 to support over 250.2 million people in need. Since its inception, CERF has received contributions from 131 Member States, including 59 that have also benefited from CERF funding – a testament to the world's collective commitment to CERF as a "fund for all, by all".

**In 2023**, CERF again proved instrumental in enabling response to time-critical humanitarian needs, with the most urgent requests processed in as little as two days. This was demonstrated in CERF's swift response to the earthquake that hit **Syria** and **Türkiye** on 6 February. Immediately after the earthquake, CERF allocated \$50 million to support humanitarian assistance, ensuring critical life-saving aid reached affected people without delay. This was a lifeline while other funding sources were still being mobilised. CERF's support was strategically complemented by grants from the OCHA-managed Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund and Syria Humanitarian Fund, ultimately reaching a total of \$119 million.

Moreover, CERF displayed its agility in responding to the urgent situation in the **Occupied Palestinian Territory** (oPt). On 11 October, CERF promptly approved a \$9 million allocation to facilitate immediate relief efforts in the Gaza strip. This funding was strategically combined with an already approved \$6 million allocation from the CERF Underfunded Emergency window for underfunded humanitarian needs in oPt. This holistic approach

complemented a \$14 million allocation that was reprioritized by the Humanitarian Coordinator from the OCHA-managed oPt Humanitarian Fund, creating a well-coordinated and effective humanitarian response.

CERF also continued to play a significant role in **anticipatory humanitarian action** as the largest global funder in this domain. This support has facilitated the development of anticipatory action frameworks in 19 countries, enabling proactive measures to mitigate the impact of humanitarian disasters. Since 2020, CERF has contributed more than \$90 million to anticipatory actions that helped save lives, protect livelihoods, and preserve human dignity.

CERF has become the leading global humanitarian funding tool for responding to **climate-related humanitarian emergencies**, with an annual average of close to 30 per cent of total allocations going to climate-related disasters. The Fund's track record in providing rapid responses to climate-related emergencies makes it a pivotal player in addressing the increasing humanitarian impacts of such crises.

This year, CERF is introducing a **dedicated climate action account** to further strengthen its role in climate crisis financing. The account allows CERF to receive additional funding in the form of specific climate financing which are consolidated and attributed exclusively to CERF's climate-related disaster portfolio, encompassing anticipatory action and response towards addressing the impact of climate-related disasters.

To address global food insecurity, \$104 million was allocated early this year to eight high-risk **famine-prone countries**, facilitating urgent multi-sectoral actions to prevent the escalation of hunger and avert famine. By October, a total of \$119 million had been allocated to the food security sector, marking it as the most funded sector of the year. These allocations supported 60 projects in 28 countries.

In line with the Grand Bargain commitments to **localisation**, CERF supported local and national responders, aiming to increase their role in humanitarian efforts. This included boosting local partners engagement in the prioritisation of CERF funds at country level, CERF funding as recipients through sub-granting, allowing these organisations to play a more active role in the response.

CERF emphasised the need for greater **Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)**. An exclusive funding envelope in allocations under the Underfunded Emergencies window, aimed at empowering affected people to participate actively in humanitarian decision-making and enhance the overall responsiveness of humanitarian aid.

Another notable feature of CERF's activities in 2023 was the promotion of **Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)**. This approach, including multipurpose cash, enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian actions, meanwhile, empowering affected people to make their own choices. Of CERF's \$104 million allocation in February to combat food insecurity in Africa and the Middle East, close to a quarter of the funding was delivered as cash or vouchers to affected people. This approach offered flexibility and dignity to those in need, allowing them to prioritize their most urgent requirements.

CERF reinforced its commitment to boost operations in **underfunded crises** where unmet humanitarian needs remain alarmingly high. In 2023, CERF allocated an unprecedented allocation of \$271 million through its Underfunded Emergencies window, the highest ever annual amount.