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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Central Emergency Response Fund

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains a description of the activities of the Central Emergency Response Fund from 1 January to 31 December 2019, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/118](#). The Fund continued to be a global leader in humanitarian responses in 2019. During the reporting period, the Emergency Relief Coordinator approved \$538.7 million for support to life-saving humanitarian activities in 49 countries and territories. In addition, two loans were approved for a total value of \$50 million. As at 31 December 2019, the Fund had received record-level funding of \$834.6 million for 2019, which puts it on a positive trajectory towards its expanded annual funding target of \$1 billion, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [71/127](#).

* [A/75/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/118](#) on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a detailed report on the use of the Central Emergency Response Fund. The report covers the activities carried out under the Fund from 1 January to 31 December 2019.

II. Overview of the funding commitments of the Fund

2. With \$538.7 million for humanitarian activities in 49 countries and territories, the Emergency Relief Coordinator approved the largest amount in a single year in the history of the Fund (see table 1). The Emergency Relief Coordinator also approved two loans totalling \$50 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in March and November, to respond to critical and life-saving needs of Palestine refugees. Between its inception in 2005 and the end of 2019, the Fund provided \$6.5 billion for humanitarian assistance in 106 countries and territories. Grants were directly allocated to United Nations funds and programmes as well as specialized agencies.

Table 1
Central Emergency Response Fund allocations, 1 January to 31 December 2019
(United States dollars)

	<i>Rapid response window</i>	<i>Underfunded emergencies window</i>	<i>Total</i>
Amount approved	338 771 385	199 900 755	538 672 140
Number of recipient countries or territories	34	23 ^a	49 ^b
Number of projects funded	300	148	448

^a Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru benefitted from the regional allocation to the Venezuelan refugee and migration crisis.

^b Certain countries or territories received allocations from both funding windows.

Allocations from the rapid response funding window

3. In accordance with Secretary-General's Bulletin [ST/SGB/2010/5](#), some two thirds of the grant allocations of the Fund are intended for disbursement through its rapid response window. Allocations from that window promote response to humanitarian needs by funding critical, life-saving humanitarian activities in the initial stages of a sudden-onset crisis or in the case of a significant deterioration of an existing emergency. With \$338.8 million in 2019, the Fund provided the largest total annual funding amount through the rapid response window since the Fund's inception (see table 2).

Table 2
Central Emergency Response Fund, 2019 rapid response window allocations by country
(United States dollars)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Total allocations</i>
Angola	6 342 732
Bahamas	1 002 151
Bangladesh	5 239 236

<i>Country</i>	<i>Total allocations</i>
Burkina Faso	3 998 647
Burundi	2 384 881
Comoros	2 994 184
Congo	2 987 422
Cuba	1 995 221
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	5 999 898
Democratic Republic of the Congo	13 936 464
Djibouti	1 248 469
El Salvador	1 998 859
Ethiopia	21 109 759
Guatemala	1 986 599
Haiti	6 136 239
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1 971 476
Kenya	8 008 589
Lesotho	7 850 528
Libya	3 758 398
Malawi	13 352 471
Mozambique	28 946 686
Myanmar	3 494 397
Niger	8 945 682
Pakistan	10 280 648
Philippines	3 066 075
Sudan	29 362 710
Rwanda	1 798 007
Samoa	2 707 068
Somalia	49 869 672
South Sudan	27 932 833
Uganda	4 304 763
Yemen	31 666 052
Zambia	7 988 674
Zimbabwe	14 105 895
Total	338 771 385

Allocations from the underfunded emergencies funding window

4. Up to one third of the Fund allocations is intended for underfunded emergencies. Those allocations are made in two rounds during the year, and they allow partners to carry out life-saving activities in places where humanitarian responses are severely underfunded. Such an approach addresses critical humanitarian needs and helps to draw attention to funding gaps and to humanitarian crises where donor interest may have waned. With \$199.9 million in 2019, the Fund provided the largest annual funding amount through the underfunded emergencies funding window since the inception of the Fund (see table 3).

Table 3
Central Emergency Response Fund, 2019 underfunded emergencies window
allocations by country, territory or region

(United States dollars)

<i>Country, territory or region</i>	<i>Round I</i>	<i>Round II</i>	<i>Total</i>
Afghanistan		15 999 997	15 999 997
Bangladesh		10 104 523	10 104 523
Burkina Faso		6 011 883	6 011 883
Cameroon	11 295 158	5 002 518	16 297 676
Chad	10 979 313		10 979 313
Colombia	7 991 845		7 991 845
Democratic Republic of the Congo	31 753 453		31 753 453
Djibouti	4 003 125		4 003 125
Eritrea		2 000 112	2 000 112
Haiti	5 018 366		5 018 366
Honduras	2 999 924		2 999 924
Madagascar	4 998 919		4 998 919
Mali		6 000 086	6 000 086
Niger	7 989 787		7 989 787
Sudan		14 003 594	14 003 594
Uganda	17 991 573		17 991 573
Ukraine	6 003 065		6 003 065
United Republic of Tanzania	5 989 345		5 989 345
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)		10 015 686	10 015 686
Venezuelan regional refugee and migration crisis ^a		6 000 000	6 000 000
Occupied Palestinian Territory	7 748 483		7 748 483
Total	124 762 356	75 138 399	199 900 755

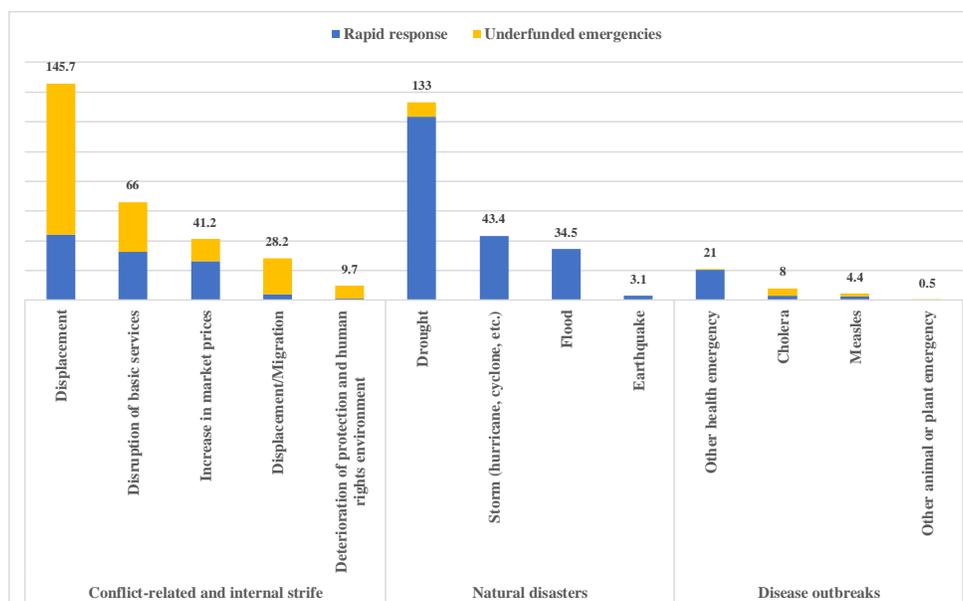
^a Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru benefitted from the regional allocation to the Venezuelan refugee and migration crisis.

Allocations by emergency type

5. Crises related to conflict or internal strife received the most assistance in 2019, totalling \$290.8 million (54 per cent). An amount of \$213.9 million (40 per cent) was allocated for addressing humanitarian consequences of natural disaster and \$33.9 million (6 per cent) in response to disease outbreaks.

Figure I
Central Emergency Response Fund, 2019 allocations by emergency type

(Millions of United States dollars)

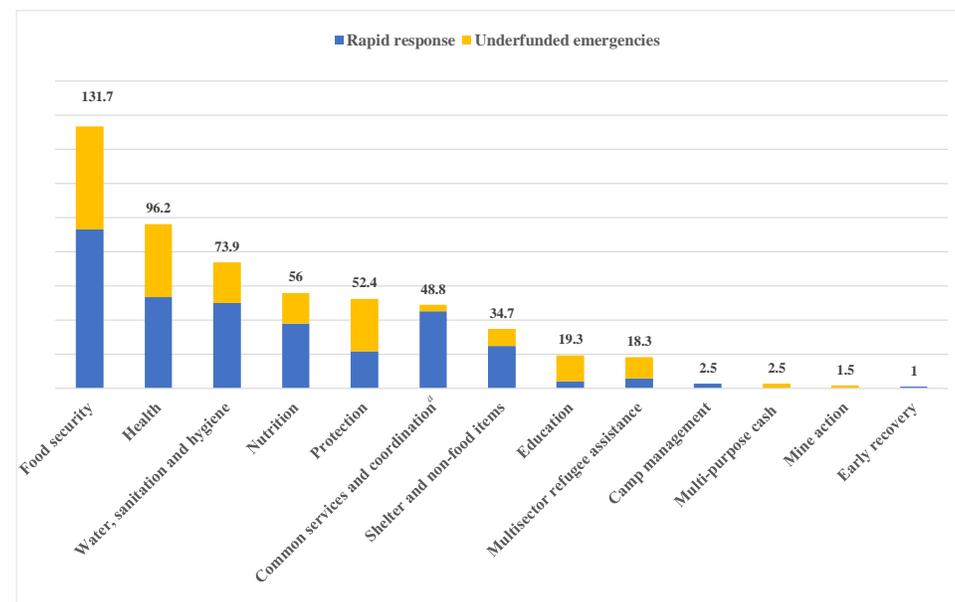


Allocations by sector

6. The food security, health, and water, sanitation and hygiene sectors received the most funding collectively, accounting for 56 per cent of the overall funding amount. Food security, comprising food assistance (\$77.2 million) and agriculture-based livelihood support (\$54.4 million), received \$131.7 million (24 per cent).

Figure II
Central Emergency Response Fund, 2019 grant allocations by sector

(Millions of United States dollars)



^a Common services and coordination include common humanitarian air service, common logistics, common telecommunications, and safety and security of staff and operations.

Allocations by region

7. Figure III shows the allocation of funding by region. In Africa, funding totalling \$190.7 million (49 per cent) addressed needs stemming from conflict or internal strife, and \$172.3 million (44 per cent) addressed needs arising from natural disasters, mainly drought (\$110.6 million). In addition, \$26.2 million (7 per cent) was allocated to respond to disease outbreaks.

8. Some \$25.1 million (56 per cent) of funded interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean responded to needs stemming from conflict or internal strife, of which \$16 million went to address the humanitarian needs of people in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and in four neighbouring countries, namely, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, affected by the Venezuelan regional refugee and migration crisis. Emergencies related to natural disasters amounted to \$15.1 million (33 per cent). A total of \$5 million (11 per cent) was allocated in response to residual underfunded humanitarian needs and a cholera outbreak in Haiti.

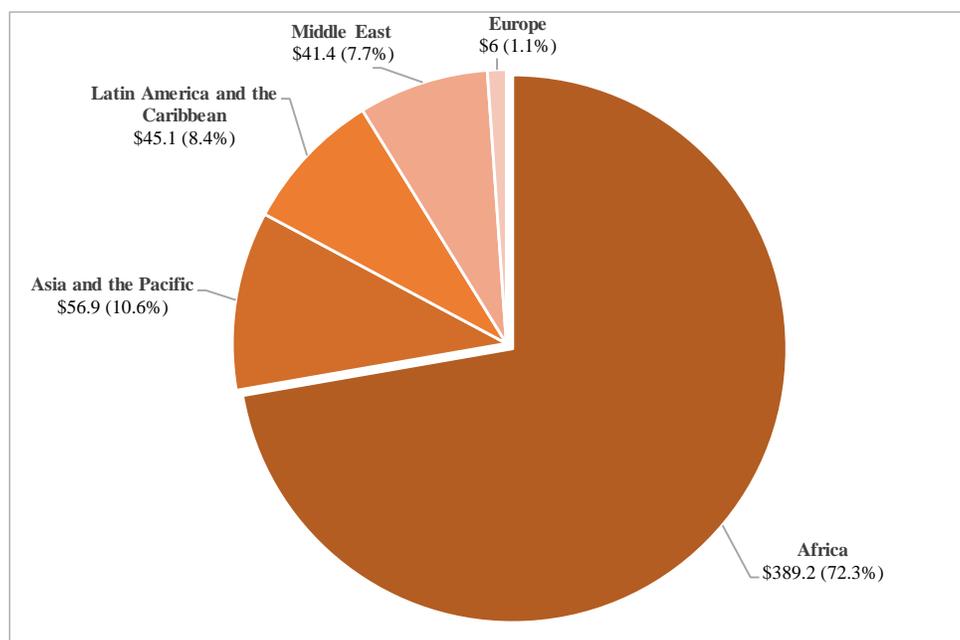
9. In the Middle East, more than \$39.4 million (95 per cent) of funding went to address humanitarian needs arising from conflict or internal strife in Yemen and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. An additional \$2 million (5 per cent) was allocated in response to floods in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

10. In Eastern Europe, \$6 million was allocated through the underfunded emergencies window to address conflict-related needs in Ukraine.

Figure III

Central Emergency Response Fund, 2019 grant allocations by region

(Millions of United States dollars)

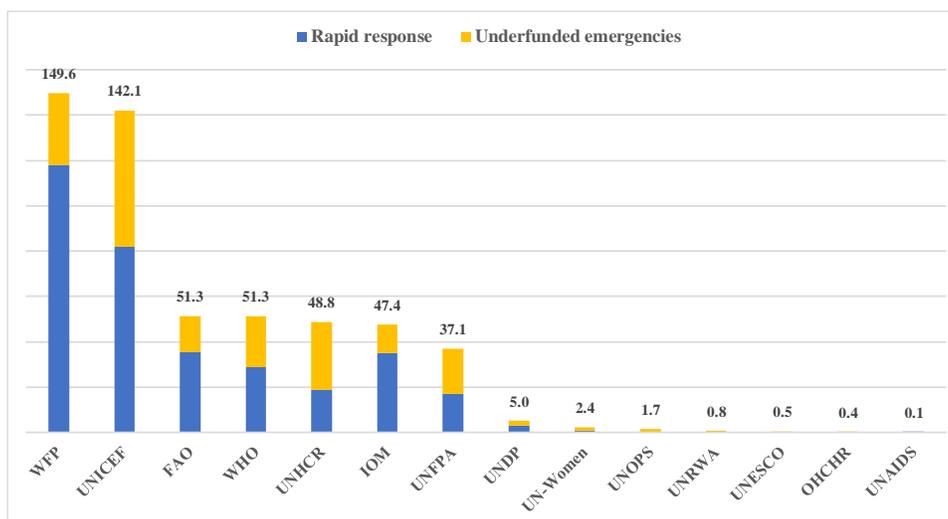


Allocations by United Nations agencies

11. The World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) received a combined total of more than 54 per cent of the overall funding. The high level of funding to those agencies is directly linked to their expertise in the most funded sectors, namely, food security, health and water, hygiene and sanitation, which combined accounted for 56 per cent of funding in 2019.

Figure IV
Central Emergency Response Fund, 2019 grant allocations by agency

(Millions of United States dollars)



Abbreviations: FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IOM, International Organization for Migration; OHCHR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; UNAIDS, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UN-Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UNHCR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund; UNOPS, United Nations Office for Project Services; UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; WFP, World Food Programme; WHO, World Health Organization.

III. Use of the Fund

12. The funding allocated in 2019 enabled the provision of life-saving assistance to 29.4 million people,¹ of whom some 53 per cent were women and girls. The share of women and girls receiving support from the Fund was higher in some sectors, such as nutrition at 62 per cent and protection at 60 per cent. The funding made it possible to provide critical aid to 18.2 million displaced persons and host communities, which represented 61 per cent of all people reached with 2019 funding.

13. With 2019 funding:

- 15.9 million people received access to health care
- 7.1 million people benefited from water and sanitation assistance
- 5.6 million people benefited from protection interventions
- 4.9 million people received food
- 3.9 million people received agriculture-based livelihood support

¹ The figure represents people targeted with 2019 funding from the Fund. According to the information received in the reports of resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators on the use of Fund allocations, humanitarian projects collectively reached more people than planned for in the approved submissions in each of the past four years (2015 to 2018). Hence, the numbers of people targeted with funding are a good proxy of the numbers of people reached, and likely an underestimate.

- 2.7 million people received nutritional support
- Many more people benefited from camp management interventions, common services and coordination, education assistance, mine action, multi-purpose cash support, multi-sector refugee assistance, and shelter and relief items.

The Fund also funded a large-scale response to the Ebola virus disease and operational readiness for timely Ebola detection and response in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan and Uganda in 2019, which indirectly benefitted an estimated 57 million people.

A. The Fund and conflict-related and protracted crises

Cameroon

14. Throughout 2019, Cameroon experienced the impact of distinct, complex humanitarian crises caused by violence and insecurity, which left some 4.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. While a resurgence in violence in the far north area of the country uprooted more than 486,000 people, insecurity and attacks against civilians left more than 1.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in the North-West and South-West Regions. In its East and North Regions, Cameroon hosted some 280,000 refugees from the Central African Republic.

15. Considering the complex humanitarian situation and the critically low level of funding, the Fund allocated a total of \$16.3 million through the underfunded emergencies window in 2019 to assist more than 2 million people in Cameroon. A first allocation of \$11.3 million in March enabled United Nations agencies and partners to provide life-saving assistance to more than 1.3 million people, including some 689,000 internally displaced persons; 30,000 host communities and more than 565,000 returnees in the South-West, North-West and Far North Regions. The Fund's activities helped more than 197,000 people, including 50,000 who received emergency food assistance through food and cash transfers, and included various interventions to combat gender-based violence.

16. A second, top-up allocation of \$5 million through the underfunded emergencies window in November supported United Nations agencies and partners in addressing the needs of more than 711,000 people in the North-West and South-West Regions. Activities included the provision of essential health care to almost 510,000 people and multi-purpose cash assistance to an additional 7,500 persons considered to be the most vulnerable.

Afghanistan

17. Ongoing conflict, the worst drought in decades and deepening poverty contributed to a deteriorating humanitarian situation across Afghanistan in 2019. As many as 6.3 million people required humanitarian assistance in 2019. Half the population of Afghanistan, some 17 million people, lived in areas that were highly affected by conflict and were routinely exposed to human rights violations, including the deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure, sexual and gender-based violence and forced recruitment. The ongoing conflict displaced more than 350,000 in 2019.

18. In September 2019, the Fund allocated \$16 million through the underfunded emergencies window to support the provision of life-saving assistance to almost 995,000 people affected by the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan as well as to returnees from neighbouring countries. The response of the Fund included the improvement of water supply and sanitation facilities and the distribution of hygiene kits along with the promotion of hygiene practices reaching some 150,000 people. In addition, it enabled

United Nations agencies and partners to improve access to health-care services for more than 993,000 people and provide protection services to 15,000 people.

B. Central Emergency Response Fund and natural disasters

Cyclone Idai and Cyclone Kenneth

19. In March and April 2019, Southern Africa was hit by Cyclone Idai and Cyclone Kenneth, which brought heavy flooding and left a trail of destruction across several countries in the region. The Fund allocated a total of \$34.4 million through the rapid response window to provide life-saving assistance to some 3.1 million of the most vulnerable people among the 3.4 million directly affected by the cyclones in the Comoros, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Within 48 hours after Cyclone Idai made landfall, the Emergency Relief Coordinator announced an allocation of \$21.4 million to support relief efforts in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. A second allocation of \$13 million provided life-saving assistance to people affected by Tropical Cyclone Kenneth in the Comoros and Mozambique.

20. Combined, the two tropical cyclones killed at least 648 people and damaged or destroyed more than 277,700 homes in Mozambique. The first Fund allocation of \$14 million to the Government-led humanitarian response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique was disbursed within five days of the grant application submission, which allowed United Nations agencies and partners to scale up the humanitarian response. The Fund response targeted some 1.3 million of the most vulnerable among the 1.85 million directly affected by Cyclone Idai, allowing United Nations agencies and partners to kick-start the humanitarian response. A second allocation of \$10 million in response to tropical Cyclone Kenneth enabled United Nations agencies and partners to provide life-saving assistance to as many as 620,000 people.

21. In Zimbabwe, preliminary reports indicated that some 270,000 people with existing acute levels of vulnerability were affected by the impact of Cyclone Idai across the Eastern part of the country. The Fund allocation of \$4 million to Zimbabwe allowed United Nations agencies and partners to assist host communities through time-critical interventions and provide life-saving assistance to some 350,000 people directly affected.

22. In Malawi, Cyclone Idai affected some 870,000 people and displaced as many as 87,000. The Fund allocation of \$3.4 million was critical to kick-start the response efforts in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone. Targeting the 600,000 most vulnerable people, the allocation allowed United Nations agencies and partners, among others, to provide food assistance in the form of cash transfers, which benefitted some 68,100 people, and dignity kits to 12,200 women.

23. In the Comoros, preliminary reports indicated that more than 186,000 people needed humanitarian assistance after Cyclone Kenneth hit the archipelago. The passage of the cyclone left 19,372 displaced; 4,482 houses destroyed; and 7,013 houses damaged. A Fund allocation of \$3 million in support of the Government-led response allowed United Nations agencies and partners to provide life-saving assistance to some 280,000 affected people.

Drought in the Horn of Africa

24. By June 2019, drought in the Horn of Africa had left about 11.7 million people severely food insecure, over 785,000 children severely malnourished and some 1.8 million people displaced across Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda. In response, the Fund allocated \$45 million through the rapid response window to immediately scale up food and nutrition assistance to drought-affected people across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

25. In Somalia, the Fund had already provided funding in March 2019 following below-average short rains in late 2018. A \$12 million allocation from the rapid response window enabled United Nations agencies and partners to provide life-saving assistance to 245,000 people living in the most critical areas in the north of Somalia. Only a couple of months later, a delayed and erratic long rainy season and a particularly hot dry season then resulted in the poorest harvest since record-keeping began in 1995. With some 1.7 million people severely food insecure across the country in June, the prevailing drought also led to displacements of households and a deterioration of the health situation owing to outbreaks of cholera, measles and other drought-related diseases. The Fund allocation of \$30 million in support of the Government-led response allowed United Nations agencies and partners to provide immediate life-saving assistance to some 545,000 people.

26. In Ethiopia, drought mainly affected the Somali region and lowland pastoral areas of Oromia. In June, as many as 7.9 million people were severely food insecure. The Fund allocation of \$10 million enabled United Nations agencies and partners to support 735,000 people with the most time-critical and life-saving assistance, including access to safe and reliable water supplies for an estimated 332,000 people, and agricultural and livestock interventions for 435,000 people.

27. In Kenya, drought dramatically affected the Baringo, Garissa, Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, Tana River, Turkana and Wajir Counties. In June, some 1.6 million people were already food insecure, while the prevailing drought also aggravated the health situation with outbreaks of cholera, measles and other drought-related diseases. A Fund allocation of \$5 million supported the Government-led response in providing time-critical and life-saving assistance to 550,000 people. The funding allowed United Nations agencies and partners to provide, among other things, emergency livelihood support to 168,000 people and access to health-care services, focusing on sexual and reproductive health, to 371,000 people.

C. The Fund and the health crisis

Ebola virus disease outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

28. In 2019, efforts continued in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to contain the outbreak of Ebola virus disease, mainly in the provinces of Ituri and North Kivu, which had been initially declared by the Ministry of Health in August 2018. By March 2019, more than 1,000 cases had been reported in the affected region. However, between April and June 2019, that number doubled. Between early June and the beginning of August, the number of new cases per week averaged between 75 and 100.

29. In September 2019, the Fund allocated \$10 million through the rapid response window to support the fast delivery of assistance to people in need in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The funding enabled the United Nations agencies and partners to decontaminate 100 Ebola-infected patient houses, equip four public nurseries, procure and distribute water, sanitation and hygiene supplies, and rehabilitate 100 screening sites at different points of entry into the country.

30. That allocation was made in addition to an earlier \$2.8 million grant in response to the same outbreak as well as a \$2 million grant in response to an outbreak in the Équateur Province in May 2018. In both cases, the funding allowed the humanitarian country team to kick-start responses and save thousands of lives while the country mobilized additional resources.

31. Moreover, in December 2018 and January 2019 the Fund allocated \$10.5 million through the rapid response window to support readiness activities to respond to the Ebola virus disease in Burundi (\$2.4 million), Rwanda (\$1.8 million), South Sudan

(\$2 million) and Uganda (\$4.3 million). Those countries were identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as being at high risk of potential cross-border spread of the Ebola virus disease from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

IV. Strategic initiatives of the Fund

32. In the face of complex humanitarian challenges the Fund tested several innovative approaches. At the beginning of 2019, the Emergency Relief Coordinator identified four chronically underfunded priority areas and encouraged resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators to consider those areas when applying for funding. Moreover, the Fund explored multi-year funding for protracted humanitarian needs through the underfunded emergencies window and piloted an anticipatory action approach through the rapid response window. The aim is for the Fund to lead by example through those initiatives, resulting in further expansion by the broader humanitarian system.

Four priority areas

33. In the beginning of 2019, the Emergency Relief Coordinator advised resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators with ongoing humanitarian operations to leverage funding from the Fund to ensure more attention to four strategic areas that remain chronically underfunded despite international commitments – and that are critical to quality assistance. The four priority areas encompass: support for women and girls, including tackling gender-based violence, reproductive health and empowerment; programmes targeting persons with disabilities; education in protracted crises; and other aspects of protection.

34. The aim is to ensure additional consideration of the four strategic areas in the Fund allocation strategies and projects. Using the Fund to increase focus on the four priority areas will also draw attention to those underfunded areas at the global level. Comprehensive information on the impact of the initiative will be available when all grant reports on 2019 allocations become available at the end of 2020 and when an ongoing review of the initiative is finalized in 2020. Preliminary findings from data analysis and anecdotal evidence indicate that the initiative has helped ensure that agencies' efforts in those areas are more clearly and consistently addressed in funding.

Multi-year funding

35. A growing evidence base points to the benefits of predictable multi-year humanitarian funding. The often-repetitive listing of recipients of underfunded emergencies allocations suggest a possible unrealized potential for increasing the impact of available funding through strategic multi-year funding especially for certain protracted humanitarian situations. The Fund piloted a multi-year grant to Bangladesh in 2019, allocating \$10 million over two years to support education in emergencies for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. In the context of deep linkages between education in emergencies and protection, as well as the associated protection risks experienced by out-of-school children, the pilot falls squarely within the life-saving criteria.

36. The pilot is intended to demonstrate the benefits of coordinated multi-year humanitarian funding and identify lessons to inform the possible future use of funds for multi-year humanitarian programmes in relevant contexts. So far, the implementing agencies, namely the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF, have underlined the positive impact of multi-year funding. They have emphasized that the longer-term perspective provides them with more programming flexibility and much needed predictability, which is particularly important for education in emergencies.

Anticipatory action

37. Following the completion of several studies and technical consultations, in 2019 the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, together with the World Bank and other partners, developed an anticipatory action framework for drought in Somalia. The Fund will release funding if an out-of-the-ordinary drought shock is expected to result in extraordinary humanitarian need. The framework consists of forecasting and decision-making rules, with triggers to activate pre-arranged financing agreements. It also includes a pre-agreed plan of humanitarian actions and implementation arrangements. Funding will be released if the predefined forecast thresholds are reached and will enable timely implementation of the planned actions to reduce the humanitarian impact of the forecasted drought, protect vulnerable people and mitigate worsening conditions. The threshold for triggering a disbursement was not reached in 2019. The humanitarian country team continues to monitor the forecast and, thanks to the preparatory work, the anticipatory action framework will be operational should the threshold be reached.

V. Management and administration of the Fund**Central Emergency Response Fund Advisory Group**

38. The Central Emergency Response Fund Advisory Group was established following the adoption of General Assembly resolution [60/124](#) to advise the Secretary-General, through the Emergency Relief Coordinator, on the use and impact of the Fund. In 2019, the Advisory Group met in June and December. At the meeting in June, the Group and the Emergency Relief Coordinator discussed the role the Fund could play in supporting improvements in the humanitarian system. The Advisory Group agreed that within its humanitarian life-saving mandate, the Fund could play a role in funding activities ahead of developing crises and reiterated its support for the efforts of the Fund in the area of anticipatory action. The Group also agreed that new allocation approaches should be undertaken in a structured manner, with built-in learning opportunities to inform decisions on future innovation.

39. At the meeting in December, the Group discussed with the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators for Cameroon and Ukraine the implementation of the Emergency Relief Coordinator's four priority areas in Fund-supported humanitarian action. The Advisory Group expressed appreciation for the initiative and reiterated the importance of ensuring increased attention to the four areas in humanitarian response.

Global reach of the Fund's partnerships

40. While the Fund is mandated to provide grants solely to United Nations agencies, many of its grants are implemented by United Nations agencies in partnership with non-governmental organizations, host Governments and Red Cross and Red Crescent societies.

41. Of the total \$500.5 million provided by the Fund in allocations in 2018 (the latest year for which partnership data is available),² \$137 million was reported as subgranted by recipient United Nations agencies to 717 implementing partners across 45 countries. That vast network of partnerships represents an unparalleled global reach that would be difficult to achieve through direct donor-funding agreements.

² It normally takes up to nine months to implement the funded projects and three months to report on their results.

42. Subgranted funds represented 27 per cent of overall funding allocated by the Fund in 2018. That figure does not include the value of in-kind partnership arrangements.

43. Most of the organizations that implemented the subgranted funding were national and local partners. They included 373 national or local non-governmental organizations, 176 government partners and 18 Red Cross or Red Crescent societies. The remaining 150 partners were international non-governmental organizations. The agencies that subgranted the most funding were UNICEF (\$60 million), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (\$30 million) and the World Food Programme (\$12 million).

Transparency

44. The Fund continued to advance the transparency of funding management in 2019. All grant decisions are made available in real time through the website of the Fund and are published on several platforms, including the Financial Tracking Service, the Humanitarian Data Exchange and the International Aid Transparency Initiative. In 2019, the transparency score of the Fund on the platform of the Initiative increased to 95 per cent, making the Fund one of the top 12 of over 1,100 organizations publishing their data to Initiative standards.

45. In 2019, the Fund developed a new online module that publishes narrative summaries of funding allocations in real-time.³ Summaries are published as soon as the Emergency Relief Coordinator endorses an overall allocation for a given emergency, and additional information is added as individual projects are finalized and approved. Once implementation of an allocation has been completed and a resident coordinator and a humanitarian coordinator have submitted a narrative report on the results achieved, that information is reflected in the online summaries.

46. In that regard, the Fund has developed a service that gives stakeholders the option of receiving real-time email notifications of new allocations. The email notifications will help partners stay abreast of the ongoing work of the Fund and provide easy reference to the most up-to-date allocation information.

Risk management

47. The Fund continued to track and communicate information related to cases of potential fraud involving its funds in 2019. In keeping with its communication guidelines and standard operating procedures, the Fund secretariat continued to liaise with agencies and donors regarding potential fraud cases.

48. Partners reported six cases of possible fraudulent use of funds under projects using a grant from the Fund. Communication and follow-up were conducted in accordance with the guidelines and standard operating procedures. Based on evidence gathered during a recipient agency-led investigation, it was found that the allegations could not be substantiated in two of the six cases. Investigations are continuing in the remaining four cases.

Strategic added value of the Fund

49. Beyond being a source of rapid and time-critical funding, the Fund provides significant strategic value. When asked to assess the strategic value added of 2018 funding, 96 per cent of resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators stated in their reports that Fund allocations led to fast implementation of humanitarian response, 100 per cent said that the funding helped to respond to time-critical

³ The allocation summaries were previously published once yearly, as a core component of the results report of the Fund.

humanitarian needs, 82 per cent stated that the funds helped to improve the coordination of humanitarian action, and 84 per cent reported that the Fund improved resource mobilization from other sources.

Fund country reviews

50. To provide the Emergency Relief Coordinator and Fund stakeholders with assurance of the achievements of the Fund, its secretariat commissions annual independent reviews of the contribution of the Fund to the humanitarian response in selected countries or regions.

51. In 2019, the secretariat engaged independent consultants for two such reviews to assess the value added by the Fund around key performance and accountability measures. The purpose of one review was to assess support provided by the Fund for the four priority underfunded areas identified by the Emergency Relief Coordinator in January 2019. It was designed to contribute to a wider assessment of the preliminary results of the Emergency Relief Coordinator's guidance. The second review was focused on the role of the Fund in smaller emergencies that often attract limited donor funding. It was conducted to examine how the Fund added value to the humanitarian responses in selected small-scale emergencies and served to explore whether the Fund should consider adopting different approaches in those types of emergencies in the future.

52. Launched in late 2019, final reports for the reviews are expected for the third quarter of 2020.

Update of the Secretary-General's bulletin

53. The Secretary-General's Bulletin [ST/SGB/2010/5](#) on the establishment and operation of the Fund guides the management of the Fund. It was initially issued in 2006 and updated in 2010. Upon the request of the Secretary-General, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs started a process for updating the Secretary-General's Bulletin.

Update of the life-saving criteria of the Fund

54. The General Assembly, in its resolution [60/124](#) sets out the mandate of the Fund, and the life-saving criteria codify activities that can be supported by grants from the Fund. The current version was finalized and approved by the Emergency Relief Coordinator in January 2010. Although the mandate conferred on the Fund by the Assembly has not changed, the humanitarian landscape in which the Fund operates has evolved significantly, necessitating an update of the life-saving criteria. Throughout 2019 the Fund consulted United Nations agencies, the Global Cluster Coordinators and the Advisory Group to identify key aspects and areas of the criteria that required further refinement, in accordance with Inter-Agency Standing Committee agreements since 2010. The updated version of the life-saving criteria is expected to be approved by the Emergency Relief Coordinator in 2020.

VI. Funding levels and donor base of the Fund

Funding levels

55. The Fund again reached record-level pledged contributions in 2019. A total of \$834.6 million was pledged for 2019, of which \$831.6 million was received by 31 December 2019 (consisting of \$21.2 million received in 2018 and \$810.4 million received in 2019). That is \$276.0 million higher than in 2018 and only \$165.4 million short of the \$1 billion annual funding target endorsed by the General Assembly. The

significant increase in the funding level is due to the exceptionally high contributions received in the month of December totalling \$390.8 million. That led to an unusual high carry-over that will be available for programming in 2020.

56. A total of 55 Member States and observers and three regional authorities, as well as private sector donors contributed to the Fund in 2019. Four new multi-year commitments were signed with Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and New Zealand. The largest contributions were received from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, followed by Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and Norway.

Diversifying and deepening the donor base

57. Since its establishment in 2005, the Fund has enjoyed a wide donor base with contributions from 129 Member States and observers, as well as regional and local authorities, the private sector and individuals. The donor base includes 53 recipient countries that have given back in solidarity to crisis-affected people in other parts of the world through the Fund. In 2019, seven such Member States (Colombia, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Moldova, Tunisia and Viet Nam) returned as donors, and one Member State (Islamic Republic of Iran) and one regional authority (the Basque Agency for Development Cooperation, Spain) contributed to the Fund for the first time.

58. However, the Fund continues to rely on the top 20 donors for over 99 per cent of its income. The share of the top 10 donors increased from 92.4 per cent of total income in 2018 to 94.2 per cent in 2019. The annual number of donors to the Fund has significantly fluctuated over the years. In 2019, a total of 54 Member States and observers contributed to the Fund, whereas the highest number was 65, in 2009. Most of the donors that stopped contributing to the Fund after 2009 and 2011, where the Fund saw a high number of contributors, were one-time small donors, whose support was triggered by large-scale and high-profile disasters (e.g. the earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010).

59. To maximize the level and predictability of funding, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continues to call on all Member States to contribute on a regular basis to the Central Emergency Response Fund, in compliance with General Assembly resolution [71/127](#).

Annex I**A. Central Emergency Response Fund grant element: statement of financial performance, 1 January to 31 December 2019^a**

(United States dollars)

Revenue	
Voluntary contributions ^b	794 964 972
Other transfers and allocations	338 393
Investment revenue ^c	5 967 355
Total revenue	801 270 720
Expenses	
Grants and other transfers	527 691 479
Other operating expenses ^d	17 204 403
Total expenses	544 895 882
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	256 374 838

B. Central Emergency Response Fund grant element: statement of changes in net assets, 1 January to 31 December 2019^a

(United States dollars)

<i>Net assets</i>	
Net assets as at 31 December 2018	711 017 097
Change in net assets	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	256 374 838
Total changes in net assets	256 374 838
Net assets as at 31 December 2019	967 391 935

^a Statements were prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

^b Represents voluntary contributions in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. See annex II for contributions pledged.

^c Includes net investment revenue of \$222,924 earned on the loan component of Central Emergency Response Fund in accordance with General Assembly resolution [66/119](#).

^d Includes programme support costs (United Nations) of \$9,865,041 and loss on exchange of \$7,317,573.

Annex II

Central Emergency Response Fund grant element: contributions pledged, 1 January to 31 December 2019

(United States dollars)

<i>Contributor</i>	<i>Pledged contributions^a</i>
Member States and observers	
Andorra	16 943
Armenia	5 000
Australia	8 184 524
Azerbaijan	20 000
Bangladesh	20 000
Belgium	18 952 062
Bhutan	1 500
Canada	22 528 736
Chile	30 000
China	500 000
Colombia	90 000
Czechia	219 106
Denmark	25 814 414
Estonia	113 766
Finland	8 978 676
Germany	106 002 359
Guyana	2 158
Iceland	465 030
Indonesia	220 000
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	23 873
Ireland	11 394 770
Italy	3 928 171
Japan	680 357
Kazakhstan	10 000
Kuwait	1 000 000
Liechtenstein	200 803
Luxembourg	5 470 460
Monaco	113 766
Mongolia	10 000
Myanmar	10 000
Netherlands	62 500 000
New Zealand	2 039 429
Norway	54 707 311
Oman	50 000
Pakistan	10 000
Peru	2 943
Philippines	2 500

<i>Contributor</i>	<i>Pledged contributions^a</i>
Portugal	170 455
Qatar	1 000 000
Republic of Korea	5 000 000
Republic of Moldova	3 000
Russian Federation	1 500 000
Saudi Arabia	150 000
Singapore	50 000
Spain	3 409 091
Sri Lanka	10 000
Sweden	88 943 146
Switzerland	6 913 289
Thailand	20 000
Tunisia	5 000
Turkey	400 000
United Arab Emirates	5 000 000
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	386 100 386
Viet Nam	10 000
Total, Member States and observers	833 003 022
Regional and local authorities	
Basque Agency for Development Cooperation (Spain)	109 409
Government of Flanders (Belgium)	688 863
Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation (Spain)	325 477
Total, regional and local authorities	1 123 750
Others	
Late Mrs. Barbara Cahill	114 060
Private donations through the United Nations Foundation (under \$10,000)	338 393
Private donations outside the United Nations Foundation (under \$10,000)	237
Total, others	452 691
Total	834 579 462

^a Contributions are based on the pledged year of the donors and differ from the amount reported as revenue under the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. Actual received contributions may differ from the originally recorded pledges, owing to fluctuations in exchange rates.

Annex III

Total grants allocated from the Central Emergency Response Fund, 1 January to 31 December 2019

(United States dollars)

<i>Country, territory or region</i>	<i>Rapid response</i>	<i>Underfunded emergencies</i>	<i>Total</i>
Afghanistan		15 999 997	15 999 997
Angola	6 342 732		6 342 732
Bahamas	1 002 151		1 002 151
Bangladesh	5 239 236	10 104 523	15 343 759
Burkina Faso	3 998 647	6 011 883	10 010 530
Burundi	2 384 881		2 384 881
Cameroon		16 297 676	16 297 676
Chad		10 979 313	10 979 313
Colombia		7 991 845	7 991 845
Comoros	2 994 184		2 994 184
Congo	2 987 422		2 987 422
Cuba	1 995 221		1 995 221
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	5 999 898		5 999 898
Democratic Republic of the Congo	13 936 464	31 753 453	45 689 917
Djibouti	1 248 469	4 003 125	5 251 594
El Salvador	1 998 859		1 998 859
Eritrea		2 000 112	2 000 112
Ethiopia	21 109 759		21 109 759
Guatemala	1 986 599		1 986 599
Haiti	6 136 239	5 018 366	11 154 605
Honduras		2 999 924	2 999 924
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1 971 476		1 971 476
Kenya	8 008 589		8 008 589
Lesotho	7 850 528		7 850 528
Libya	3 758 398		3 758 398
Madagascar		4 998 919	4 998 919
Malawi	13 352 471		13 352 471
Mali		6 000 086	6 000 086
Mozambique	28 946 686		28 946 686
Myanmar	3 494 397		3 494 397
Niger	8 945 682	7 989 787	16 935 469
Pakistan	10 280 648		10 280 648
Philippines	3 066 075		3 066 075
Rwanda	1 798 007		1 798 007
Samoa	2 707 068		2 707 068
Somalia	49 869 672		49 869 672
South Sudan	27 932 833		27 932 833
Sudan	29 362 710	14 003 594	43 366 304

<i>Country, territory or region</i>	<i>Rapid response</i>	<i>Underfunded emergencies</i>	<i>Total</i>
Uganda	4 304 763	17 991 573	22 296 336
Ukraine		6 003 065	6 003 065
United Republic of Tanzania		5 989 345	5 989 345
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)		10 015 686	10 015 686
Venezuelan regional refugee and migration crisis ^a		6 000 000	6 000 000
Yemen	31 666 052		31 666 052
Zambia	7 988 674		7 988 674
Zimbabwe	14 105 895		14 105 895
Occupied Palestinian Territory		7 748 483	7 748 483
Total	338 771 385	199 900 755	538 672 140

^a Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru benefitted from the regional allocation to the Venezuelan refugee and migration crisis.

Annex IV

A. Central Emergency Response Fund loan element: statement of financial performance, 1 January to 31 December 2019^a

(United States dollars)

Revenue	
Investment revenue ^b	–
Total	–
Expenses	
Total	–
Surplus for the year	–

^a Statements were prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

^b Net investment revenue of \$222,924 was reflected in the grant element of the Central Emergency Response Fund in accordance with General Assembly resolution 66/119.

B. Central Emergency Response Fund loan element: statement of changes in net assets, 1 January to 31 December 2019^a

(United States dollars)

	<i>Net assets</i>
Net assets as at 31 December 2018	30 000 000
Change in net assets	
Surplus for the year	–
Total changes in net assets	–
Net assets as at 31 December 2019^b	30 000 000

^a Statements were prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

^b Represents outstanding loan of \$30 million.

Annex V

Central Emergency Response Fund loans, 1 January to 31 December 2019

(United States dollars)

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Country/territory/region</i>	<i>Year of disbursement</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Outstanding loans as at 1 January 2019			
UNRWA	Occupied Palestinian Territory (West Bank and Gaza, including occupied East Jerusalem), Jordan, Lebanon and Syrian Arab Republic	2018	15 000 000
Total			15 000 000
Loans disbursed from 1 January to 31 December 2019			
UNRWA	Occupied Palestinian Territory (Gaza Strip)	2019	20 000 000
UNRWA	Occupied Palestinian Territory (Gaza Strip) and Syrian Arab Republic	2019	30 000 000
Total			50 000 000
Loans repaid from 1 January to 31 December 2019			
UNRWA	Occupied Palestinian Territory (West Bank and Gaza, including occupied East Jerusalem), Jordan, Lebanon and Syrian Arab Republic	2018	15 000 000
UNRWA	Occupied Palestinian Territory (Gaza Strip)	2019	10 000 000
UNRWA	Occupied Palestinian Territory (Gaza Strip) and Syrian Arab Republic	2019	10 000 000
Total			35 000 000
Outstanding loans as at 31 December 2019			
Total			30 000 000

Abbreviation: UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.