Central Emergency Response Fund Guidelines

CERF Funding for Common Emergency Safety and Security

A. PURPOSE

These guidelines clarify definitions and outline emergency safety and security equipment and services that fall within the scope of the Rapid Response and Underfunded Emergency windows of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

CERF is a stand-by fund established by the United Nations to enable more timely and reliable humanitarian assistance to victims of disasters and complex emergencies. The CERF was approved by consensus by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 December 2005 to achieve the following objectives:

- Promote early action and response to reduce loss of life;
- Enhance response to time-critical requirements; and
- Strengthen core elements of humanitarian response in underfunded crises.

The need to enable an environment in which humanitarian agencies can reach beneficiaries and effectively deliver assistance in locations crucial and life-saving, especially in the first days of an emergency.

Staff safety and security is aimed at providing a reliable backbone for UN agencies and cluster partners to facilitate common security support measures. The common network does not replace the responsibility of each individual UN Agency to meet its Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) compliance requirements.

Concern has been expressed by a number of stakeholders, including members of the CERF Advisory Group and donors, regarding the use of the CERF to provide funds for common services, including safety and security activities, which should be funded by the usual administrative support budget of each agency. The main issues of concern include the following: a) recurrent costs; b) budget lines for staff, training, and equipment; and c) MOSS upgrades.

In this regard, these guidelines serve to define the scope and criteria for CERF funding allocations to emergency safety and security equipment and services and aim to ensure consistency and transparency regarding the funding of these activities.

These guidelines are intended for use by the Resident Coordinators/Humanitarian Coordinators (RCs/HCs) and the respective country teams at the field level, as well as the UN and its funds, programmes, and specialized agencies and IOM at the headquarters level to guide the prioritization, formulation and selection of CERF grant requests.
Adherence to these guidelines will be monitored by the ERC, as Fund Manager, with support from the CERF Secretariat. It is imperative that the guidelines are complied with in order to ensure a timely, effective and transparent process for accessing funding from the CERF. Each grantee is also required to comply with the terms of the grant agreement as established in the Secretary-General's Bulletin on the Establishment and Operation of the CERF, and the Letter of Understanding (LoU), including project monitoring and reporting requirements.

B. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Disaster\(^1\) is a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human suffering, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. Disasters can be caused by a variety of factors including natural hazards or be induced by human processes.

Complex emergencies are characterized by extensive violence and loss of life, massive displacement of people, widespread damage to social and economic assets, and multi-faceted humanitarian responses. Additionally, complex emergencies are also characterized as an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency. (IASC December 1994).

Life-saving and/or core emergency humanitarian programmes are those actions that, within a short time span, remedy, mitigate or avert direct loss of life, physical harm or threats to a population or major portion thereof. Also permissible are common humanitarian services that are necessary to enable life-saving activities.

Time-critical response refers to necessary, rapid and time-limited actions required to minimize additional loss of lives and damage to social and economic assets. It relates to the opportunities for the rapid injection of resources to save lives either in complex emergencies or after natural disasters.

C. GUIDELINES

Proposals to the CERF should address critical security gaps which are necessary to carry out emerging humanitarian activities and should be time-critical as per CERF Life-Saving Criteria. CERF funds will only be made available for emergency safety and security equipment and services under the following circumstances:

1. The onset of a natural disaster, a severe outbreak of disease or new complex emergency where there are critical security gaps for security common services implemented via the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) which enable all agencies and humanitarian actors to deliver critical life-saving activities.

2. In on-going complex emergencies, on an exceptional basis, when there is a deterioration of the situation and when humanitarian activities are hampered by security.

As a general rule, CERF will fund safety and security equipment and/or services on the basis of a security risk assessment.

Only provision of extra-ordinary security programmes and equipment can be requested. No recurrent costs for activities or line item. Permissible programmes and equipment generally fall within two basic categories:

1. Security equipment to achieve UN MOSS compliance: only security equipment may be funded and should be part of the approved country MOSS, or a specific Security Risk

\(^1\) UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction (2009).
Assessment. Other equipment would need to be funded by other donors, or by the agency itself.

2. Specific security projects, e.g. Security Information Operations Cell, which can benefit all UN field agencies and INGOs/NGOs; management of emergency communications system; and specific trainings to enhance the safety and security of UN Personnel (funding of training will be evaluated individually and as related to the SRA and as part of a larger project).

United Nations Department of Safety and Security (DSS)\(^2\) remains reliant upon donor contributions to support humanitarian security requirements above and beyond DSS core assets. While DSS may submit proposals at any time, UNDP needs to sign the Letter of Understanding for funds that they accept on behalf of DSS. As a result, UNDP will be responsible for the financial reporting. In some instances, the World Food Programme (WFP) has been appealing on behalf of DSS.

- The agency receiving the funds is ultimately responsible for the implementation and reporting.
- UN Agencies can as well appeal individually when DSS do not have a presence in an area of operation.

All submissions to the ERC need to be cleared by the Designated Official (DO) and DSS Executive Office and Division of Regional Operations, prior to being sent to the CERF Secretariat/ERC through the RC/HC, as per the regular procedure\(^3\).

The DO has the responsibility to ensure that security requirements and initiatives are an integral component of humanitarian operations and has the task to reinforce this through all aspects of the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) and other appeal document. He/she is responsible for ensuring the efficacy and appropriateness of the overall security sector.

For agencies that have signed the umbrella letter of understanding (LoU), CERF funds for emergency ICT projects must be expensed within six months following disbursement from CERF.

Considerations for CERF submissions and specific explanation for narrative and budget lines

Beneficiary of the service: Provision of safety and security services shall benefit national and international UN and NGO staff present in the operational areas and shall be explicitly indicated in all proposals.

Sustainability: The proposing agency should ensure that the project is sustainable. The overall management and all operational costs of the deployed infrastructure and personnel should be described in the project. All participating agencies need to agree to cost-share the provision of activities beyond the period being funded from the CERF. CERF will not fund regular maintenance of equipment.

Cost-sharing among agencies: Proposed projects should include a description of each agency’s in-country security capacity including local infrastructure and confirm that additional common services are required by partners in common operational areas as approved by the HCT/UNCT. Proposing agencies are expected and requested to look for alternate source(s) of funds.

\(^2\) UNDSS Mandate: All Field Security Projects contained in a CERF proposal must be consistent with the DSS Mission Statement: “To ensure an effective and fully deployed security management system through the development of security strategy, plans and policy and to coordinate their implementation by all actors within the United Nations security management system, so as to enable the effective and efficient conduct of United Nations activities while ensuring the security, safety and well being of staff as a high priority.”

\(^3\) DSS is responsible to ensure that the clearance is obtained as quickly as possible so as not to impede the RC/HC’s submission.
Type of equipment: Only core ICT equipment needed for a common communications network infrastructure will be funded. Other equipment will need to be funded by other donors or by the agency itself.

Staff costs: CERF will not fund individual agency security staff needs. Staff costs can only be considered for the first six months of intervention in an ongoing emergency (to give agencies enough time to work out a suitable cost-sharing mechanism for sustainability), or a new sudden onset disaster. The CERF acknowledges that the cost of specialized technical experts is part of the service delivery cost and a critical part to allow the implementation of the project. However, relevant agencies need to ensure that the cost-sharing mechanism is initiated as soon as possible to ensure sustainability of operations.

CERF does not cover technical experts and consultants at the regional or headquarters levels. Standard procedure charges by agencies (e.g. fixed percentage for services for equipment, freight, and staff) need to be justified for each application and reduced to a minimum.

Training: Agencies are encouraged to minimize training costs as much as possible by pooling local resources and standardizing training material and methodologies including online delivery of standard training modules.

Initial safety and security assessments: As per other sectors, the CERF will not fund initial assessments for provision of safety and security services. Consideration will only be given to exceptions for inter-agency assessments including initial safety and security requirements on a case by case basis.

For CAP/Flash Appeal countries: All projects submitted to CERF must be included in the CAP or Flash Appeal, respectively, under the appealing agency.

Humanitarian Principles

CERF supported interventions are to be consistent with basic humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. In addition, agencies implementing CERF funded projects, as part of the United Nations and of the larger humanitarian community, should take into consideration:

Vulnerability of particular groups: Children and women represent the largest group of individuals affected by emergencies. Particular concern should be paid to the situation of girls and women in all emergency situations. The CERF emphasizes the importance of ensuring that principles provided in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989, together with the CRC's Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (adopted in 2000), and other related resolutions such as Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted in October 2000, be pillars to the implementation of CERF funded programmes and projects. In all sectors of response, agencies would ensure the application of gender equity principles and promote the empowerment and protection of women and girls.

Environment: Given the increasing fragility on the natural environment and the irreversible deterioration of soil and water quality, agencies are requested to ensure a maximum consideration for the use of funds to advert negative impact on the environment.

Partnerships: UN agencies and humanitarian actors at large are at the heart of planning, prioritization and decision making in regards to the CERF. They are encouraged to maximize the interaction and collaboration with governments and national and international non-governmental organizations in order to effectively respond to emergencies and to ensure that the basic principles and priorities of the CERF are followed and effectively applied.
Empowerment of affected populations: Focusing on the immediate aftermath of emergencies, the CERF expects agencies implementing programs and projects to make direct efforts to contribute to the durability of solutions and the improvement of livelihoods of the most affected population, with special consideration to gender and minority groups.

Supports the Principles of “Good Humanitarian Donorship” and “Do No Harm”: Agencies will make all efforts to ensure that assistance funded by the CERF empowers local communities and promotes self-sufficiency; conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of impact; avoid contributing to conflict and inequity; contribute to recovery and sustainable interventions; and ensure effective participation of civil society and local governments.

D. REFERENCES

Normative or Superior References
- CERF Life-Saving Criteria

SIGNED:  

Steve O’Malley  
Chief  
Central Emergency Response Fund

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