



Introduction

The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) secretariat supports the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) in managing CERF's day-to-day operations, including vetting funding requests, ensuring efficient and effective management of the fund and communicating the fund's value and success.

Previously, CERF relied heavily upon External Relations and Partnerships Section within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for resource mobilization with Member States and the private sector, including relationship management and partnership building. Advocacy, marketing and promotion of CERF were heavily reliant upon OCHA's Communications Services Branch (CSB).

As per OCHA Senior Management decision (July 2013), the CERF secretariat assumed the expanded responsibility of leading its own resource mobilization, communications and advocacy efforts with targeted support from OCHA's Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Branch and CSB.

CERF has since strengthened its own ability to maintain and expand its donor base and to ensure visibility around the impact of the fund and the donors that support it. The secretariat's Reporting and Information Unit has been upgraded with additional staff capacity (1 P-3 and 1 P-4 upgraded to P-5) to become the Resource Mobilization and Communications Section (RMCS).

This strategy is informed by OCHA policies on Resource Mobilization, recommendations from major stakeholders, outcomes of recent evaluations and studies, and guidance from the CERF Advisory Group. The annex provides a reference list of relevant documents and outputs that support this strategy.

Rationale

While CERF has firmly established itself as a valued and reliable financial partner for the global humanitarian community, and has enjoyed growing support since its inception in 2006, two key resource mobilization challenges remain:

1. **Donor base:** Income is heavily dependent on contributions from a small group of UN Member States.
2. **Visibility:** The value and success of CERF is largely unrecognized beyond immediate CERF stakeholders.

Strategy

This strategy sets out how the CERF secretariat will ensure that the fund is replenished annually with its UN General Assembly mandated level of US\$450 million, at a minimum, so that it can continue to provide the humanitarian community with timely, reliable and equitable funding.

To ground CERF's resource mobilization, communications and advocacy ambitions within realistic and achievable goals and outcomes, this strategy is paired with an action plan that focuses on operational and prioritized implementation of five strategic objectives. Each of these objectives is supported by a detailed set of outcomes and activities.

The five strategic objectives are:

1. Ensure adequate staff capacity, procedures, tools and systems are in place to support resource mobilization efforts
2. Maintain and nurture relations with top-10 donors to secure higher levels of predictable funding
3. Realize the full funding potential of all Member States
4. Diversify the contribution base to include more varied sources of income
5. Develop innovative fundraising and promotional initiatives

An integrated approach

In an era of tightening financial constraints and increasing public scrutiny, there is growing pressure on CERF and its donors to demonstrate the positive impact of the fund. To promote CERF and help donors make the case for support among their own constituents, *marketing* the CERF *brand* to a wider audience – from traditional and non-traditional donors to the private sector and the general public – is a key cross-cutting component of this strategy. In this context, *marketing* CERF includes targeted advocacy, consistent communications and messaging, and sustained relationship management.

Resource mobilization and communications are activities that are the responsibility of the entire CERF secretariat but also draws upon support and advocacy of: the CERF Advisory Group, OCHA staff, senior UN leaders, partner agencies and all contributors to the fund. Each of these stakeholders is assigned responsibilities in the strategy's action plan. The success of this strategy will require dedicated support and advocacy from all stakeholders.

Strategic objectives

1. Ensure adequate staff capacity, procedures, tools and systems to support resource mobilization efforts

Dedicated staff capacity, functioning procedures, tools and systems within the CERF secretariat are a precondition to successful resource mobilization, communications and advocacy. Implementation of this strategic objective will provide an enabling environment for effective system-wide outreach, positioning the CERF secretariat as a trusted and reliable partner among the core stakeholders. The following outcomes are part of this strategic objective:

1. Resource mobilization and supporting activities are coordinated within CERF secretariat and relevant OCHA counterparts
2. Resource mobilization and supporting efforts are appropriately resourced and included in CERF and OCHA work plans
3. Resource mobilization and supporting activities are informed by analysis of systematically collected data
4. Standard operating procedures and systems can handle all levels of direct contributions (from major Member State contributions to nominal private donations)
5. Fiduciary partnership with the United Nations Foundation ensures reliable and transparent receipt and disbursement of indirect contributions

Supporting Marketing outcomes

1. Corporate key messages consistently support resource mobilization
2. CERF established as a brand
3. Suite of CERF information and advocacy products defined and continuously updated
4. Online platforms optimized to support resource mobilization efforts
5. Key multimedia and promotional materials produced to demonstrate CERF added-value

2. Maintain and nurture relations with CERF's top-10 donors

CERF's top-10 donors account for 88 per cent of total funding received since 2006.¹ Their support must not be taken for granted, particularly given harsh economic realities, evolving political priorities and the growing influence of public opinion on major funding decisions. The following outcomes are part of this strategic objective:

1. Donor-specific engagement plans developed based on analysis of available profiles and analysis of trend data
2. High-level (CERF chief and senior OCHA staff) engagement proactively encouraged and supported
3. Technical-level relationships nurtured and managed

Supporting Marketing outcomes

1. Encourage donors to become champions of CERF

3. Realize the full funding potential of all Member States

Although CERF is recognized as a success and enjoys wide financial and political support from UN Member States and Observers, it is evident that certain Member States have the capacity to increase their funding levels to CERF. The following outcomes are part of this strategic objective:

1. Donor-specific engagement plans (investment cases) developed based on analysis of available profiles and analysis of trend data
2. High-level (CERF chief and senior OCHA staff) engagement proactively encouraged and supported
3. Technical-level relationships managed

Supporting Marketing outcomes

1. Relevant regional bodies and groups targeted in advocacy efforts
2. Encourage donors to become champions of CERF

4. Diversify the contribution base to include more varied sources of income

As a UN mechanism, CERF has traditionally targeted UN Member States and Observers for funding. However, CERF believes that there are additional funding sources that have untapped potential. CERF will

¹ Since 2006, the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Canada, Spain, Ireland, Germany, Denmark and Australia have contributed \$3.12 billion to CERF which is 88% per cent of the \$3.5 billion received by the fund to date.

dedicate some capacity to exploring the funding potential of alternative public sector bodies (e.g. regional and local authorities), the private sector and individuals. An added benefit of targeting these new groups is wider support and recognition of CERF among the constituencies of donors to CERF. The following outcomes are part of this strategic objective:

1. Understand and maximize charitable giving potential of national Regional Authorities
2. Understand and maximize charitable giving potential of major foundations and charities
3. Understand and maximize charitable giving potential of the private sector
4. Understand and maximize charitable giving potential of individuals

Supporting Marketing outcomes

1. Develop and utilize targeted messaging and promotional material as needed

5. Develop innovative funding and branding initiatives

CERF is established, successful, trusted and agile funding source for emergencies – and its direct and immediate impact at field level means it has a positive story to tell. These are highly valued marketable assets that can be used to promote awareness and financial support for the fund. Promotional activities would bring CERF closer to the general public, making it easier for both public and private contributors to justify their support to the fund. The following outcomes are part of this strategic objective:

1. All major OCHA campaigns such as World Humanitarian Day contribute to fundraising and awareness-raising for CERF
2. All major OCHA-led initiatives such as the World Humanitarian Summit contribute to fundraising and awareness-raising for CERF
3. CERF is a key partner in all United Nations Foundation’s campaign efforts
4. CERF is recognized as the trusted and appropriate beneficiary of UN-wide campaigns and fundraising initiatives
5. CERF High-Level Conference engages existing and new donors in a meaningful way
6. CERF targets other key international events to promotes itself

Annex

A reference list of documents and outputs supporting the resource mobilization and communications strategy:

1. CERF 2014-2015 Resource Mobilization Action Plan (sample)
2. CERF Quarterly Update (Q1 2014)
3. CERF Weekly Update (OCHA internal)
4. CERF Monthly Update (OCHA internal)
5. CERF contributions quarterly (CERF internal)
6. CERF contribution cycle standard operating procedures (CERF internal, being drafted)
7. CERF due diligence SOP (CERF internal, being drafted)
8. CERF *key asks* sample
9. CERF regional briefing sample materials
10. CERF presentation sample