



20
23

REPORT ON
CERF-FUNDED
CLIMATE ACTION

Credits

This document was produced by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). OCHA wishes to acknowledge the contributions of its committed staff at headquarters and in the field in preparing this document.

Full project details, financial updates and real-time allocation data are available on the [CERF Data Hub](#) and [CERF website](#).

For additional information, please contact:

Donor Relations Section

ocha.donor.relations@un.org

Front Cover: **Bolipara, Bandarban, Bangladesh**. In the wake of torrential rain-triggered flash floods, Bandarban has suffered extensive damage estimated flooding has affected around 20,000 families. The Sangu River in the district was flowing 5 meters above the danger level due to excessive rainfall and an onrush of water from upstream. Photo: FAO/Saikat Mojumder

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Financial data is provisional and may vary upon financial certification.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	LETTER FROM THE EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR
6	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
10	CERF’S ROLE IN RESPONDING TO CLIMATE-RELATED DISASTERS
12	MOBILIZING DEDICATED FINANCING FOR CLIMATE-RELATED RESPONSES
12	The CERF Climate Action Account
15	CERF-FUNDED CLIMATE ACTION IN 2023
15	Responding to climate-driven humanitarian needs across countries
18	Jump-starting time-critical responses to climate shocks through the Rapid Response window
20	Getting ahead of expected climate crises
22	Providing a lifeline for people affected by climate change through the Underfunded Emergencies window
25	Ensuring life-saving responses that contribute to adaptation and resilience

Letter from the Emergency Relief Coordinator

The accelerating impact of climate change on global humanitarian needs is incontrovertible. Around the world, climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes, disrupting livelihoods, displacing communities and compromising public health. In the last 20 years, we have seen a staggering 800 per cent increase in climate-related humanitarian appeals.

In places such as Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan and Myanmar, I have seen for myself how climate change is combining with prolonged conflict and other drivers to dramatically compound people's struggles to survive, recover and thrive.

Since its inception in 2006, the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has been in the vanguard of the response. In that time, the Fund allocated an incredible \$2.4 billion to addressing climate-related emergencies, not just in much-needed rapid response funding, but increasingly towards pioneering innovative and effective solutions.

This year was no different, as this report amply shows.

In 2023, there were more than 363 climate- and weather-related disasters affecting nearly 73 million people and causing 24,000 recorded deaths – a figure which is likely a severe undercount.

In response, CERF allocated \$201.8 million in rapid and targeted funding to assist 10 million people across 19 countries – from the Horn of Africa to Vanuatu. More

than half of this came through CERF's rapid response window, enabling CERF-funded activities to start, on average, less than a day from the initial request.

Increasingly, however, CERF is going into action even before disaster strikes. Since 2020, CERF has allocated nearly \$88 million to support anticipatory responses to foreseeable climate shocks and spearheaded anticipatory action frameworks for droughts, floods and storms in 16 countries.

And CERF is more frequently offering funding for early action, even before we have a full picture of the potential impact of impending disasters. In 2023, CERF proactively disbursed \$36 million based on advance indications of imminent climate-related emergencies. This enabled prompt and targeted responses to El Niño-induced floods and droughts, benefiting over 800,000 people in Madagascar, Somalia and Zimbabwe alone.

In addition to addressing immediate humanitarian needs, CERF's life-saving work also supports efforts to boost community resilience to climate change. For example, in 2023, CERF supported the construction or rehabilitation of at least 1,395 communal water points and the distribution of agricultural and livestock assistance to some 1.7 million people. This includes Madagascar, among other countries, where 45,000 people at risk of drought-induced food insecurity received drought-resistant seeds and climate-smart agricultural training thanks to CERF funding.

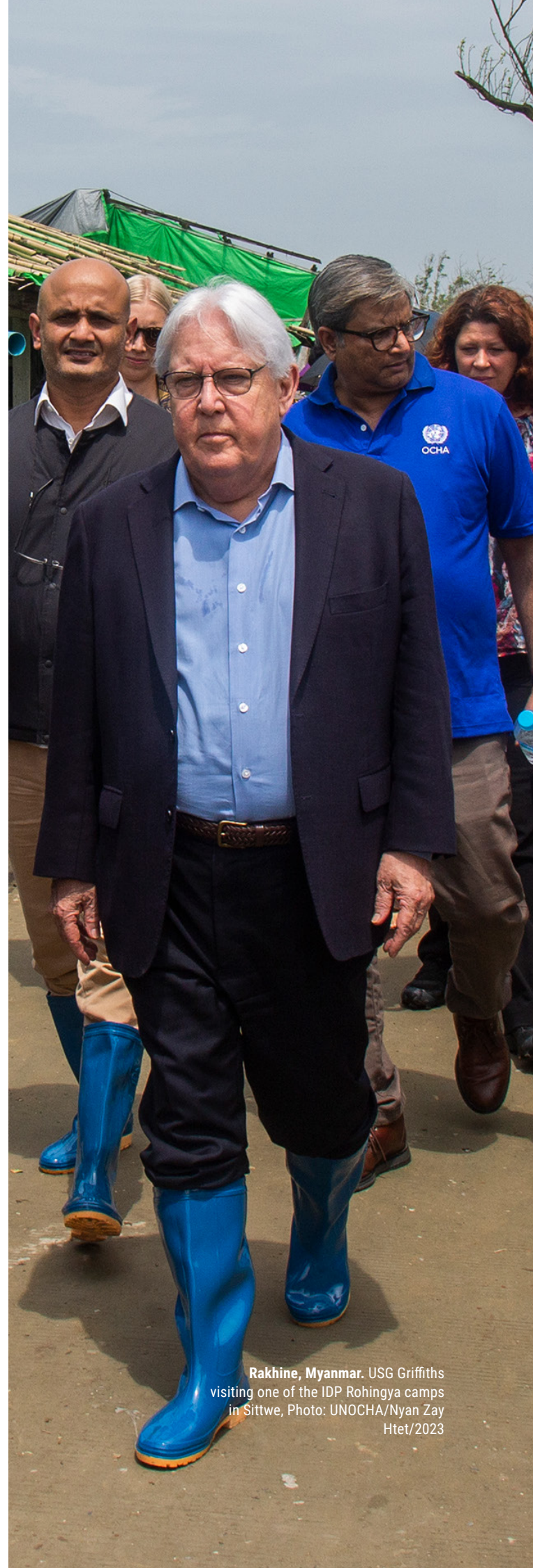
But as the shadow of climate change looms over an increasing number of people, we know we need to boost CERF's capacity to react. That is why in December 2023, we launched the CERF Climate Action Account at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai: a new and innovative financing solution that enables donors to fund CERF's response to climate-related shocks, without compromising support for other emergencies.

I am immensely proud of the leading role CERF has played in supporting millions of people around the world grappling with this burgeoning threat, alongside so many other challenges.

As the humanitarian impacts of climate change relentlessly build, I urge donors to redouble their support and fully fund CERF, so it can continue to be a lifeline and a bulwark in the formidable years ahead.

Martin Griffiths

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



Rakhine, Myanmar. USG Griffiths visiting one of the IDP Rohingya camps in Sittwe, Photo: UNOCHA/Nyan Zay Htet/2023

Executive Summary



\$2.4 B

allocated to humanitarian climate action since 2006



Including
\$88 M

for AA ahead of climate shocks

The preparation of this year's inaugural report on CERF-funded climate action is a response to a pivotal moment in history. Despite some progress, global greenhouse gas emissions trajectories are not yet in line with the targets of the Paris Agreement, and there is a rapidly narrowing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all¹. Climate change is already exacerbating extreme weather and climate events worldwide, leading to widespread adverse impacts on both ecosystems and communities – especially the most vulnerable ones, despite their minimal historical contribution to climate change² – and contributing to an increase in humanitarian needs and operational requirements over the last decades (see page 6).

Amid these challenges, CERF reaffirmed its role as the leading global humanitarian funding tool for responding to climate-related emergencies by launching its Climate Action Account at COP28 in December 2023. This significant milestone will enable the Fund to scale capacity for anticipatory action (AA) and humanitarian assistance in response to climate-related disasters, without compromising support for other emergencies.

These developments call for an improved articulation of CERF's crucial support towards climate-related humanitarian action. The focus of this inaugural annual CERF climate report is to provide a comprehensive overview of CERF-funded climate action, offering detailed insights into hazards, geographical locations, beneficiary demographics and supported sectors. Through compelling examples, the report also illustrates how CERF-supported projects contribute to building resilience and adapting to future climate shocks in affected communities (see page 25).

After presenting CERF's key role in responding to the global climate crisis and describing the introduction of the CERF Climate Action Account (see page 10), the report offers disaggregated data on CERF-funded climate action in 2023. It analyzes CERF allocations and people assisted across funding windows, emergency types, countries and sectors, providing a comprehensive understanding of CERF's impact (see page 15). Beyond data analysis, the report showcases concrete examples of CERF-funded initiatives, from Bangladesh (see page 29) to Zimbabwe (see page 21), highlighting the tangible difference made by CERF to the lives of people affected by climate emergencies.

The focus of the report is on CERF allocations triggered in response to climate-related disasters, alongside CERF's pioneering role in funding anticipatory and early action that saves lives, reduces suffering, enhances cost-efficiency and helps communities mitigate humanitarian impacts ahead of imminent climate shocks (see page 20). Through case studies such as Madagascar (see page 25) and Vanuatu (see page 27), it also illustrates how immediate life-saving humanitarian assistance can support increased resilience to climate shocks in the longer term.

¹ [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Outcome of the first global stocktake. December 2023.](#)

² [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023.](#)



With the recent launch of the Climate Action Account of CERF, I believe the Fund will be able to enhance its effectiveness in responding to climate change that frequently intersects with ongoing crises. The Republic of Korea, a long-standing partner of CERF, will continue to stand firmly behind OCHA's efforts.

*Cho Tae-yul,
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Korea*

IN 2023, CERF:



Committed **\$71.5 M**
in pre-arranged funding for
8 AA frameworks for
climate-related disasters



Disbursed **\$36 M**
for early action based on weather
forecasts and other analyses benefiting
over **800,000** people




Bangladesh. Indigenous farmers are farming at their field beside the River Sangu in Bandarban. In the wake of torrential rain, Bandarban has suffered extensive damage, with flash floods affecting around 20,000 families. Photo FAO/Saikat Mojumder

IN 2023, CERF RESPONDED
TO CLIMATE-RELATED EMERGENCIES BY ALLOCATING

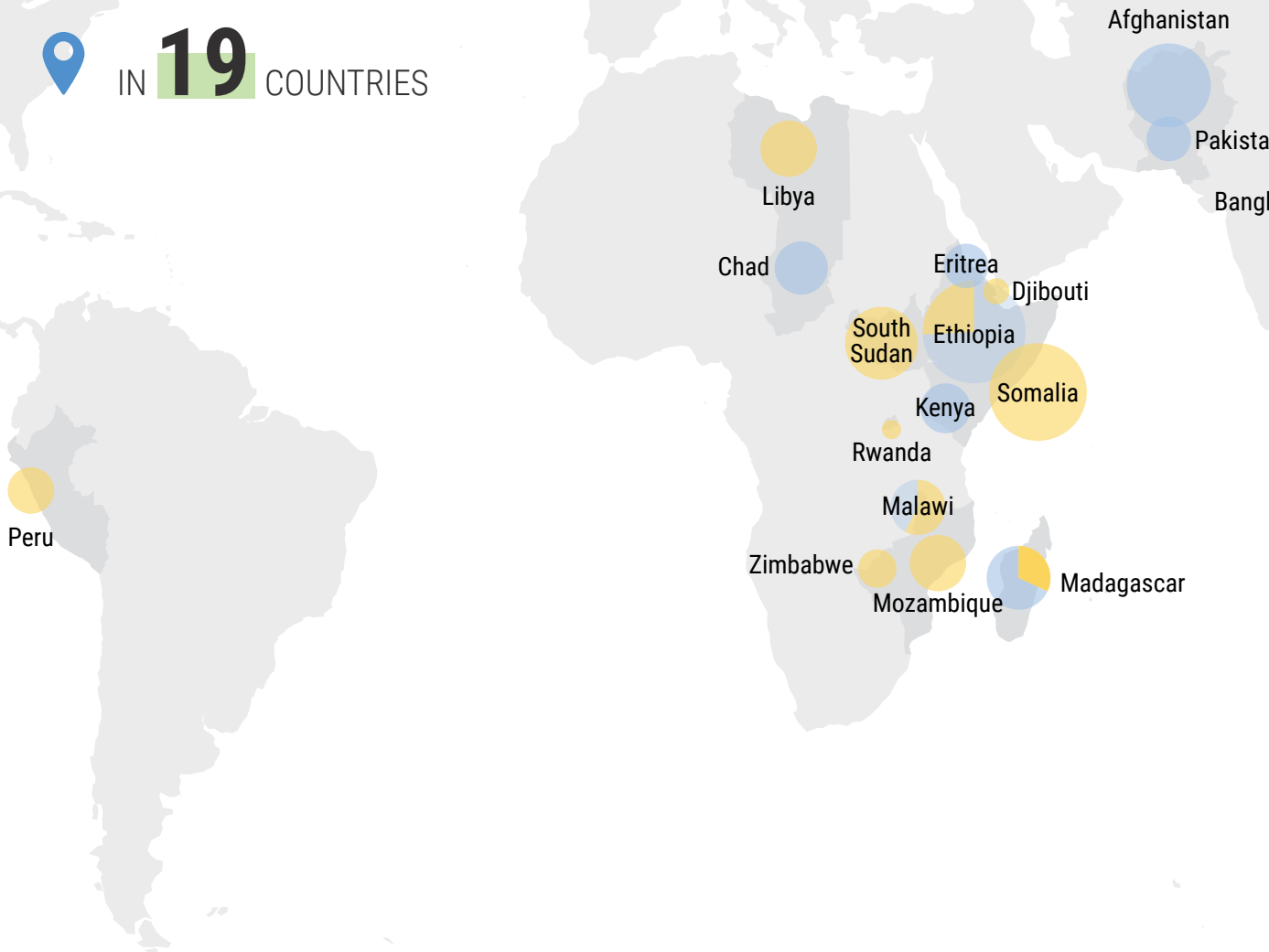
 APPROXIMATELY **\$202M** OR

1/3 OF ITS FUNDING TO

 **11** UN AGENCIES
AND THEIR HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS,
HELPING TO ASSIST

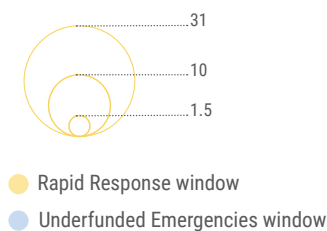
 **10M** AFFECTED PEOPLE

 IN **19** COUNTRIES



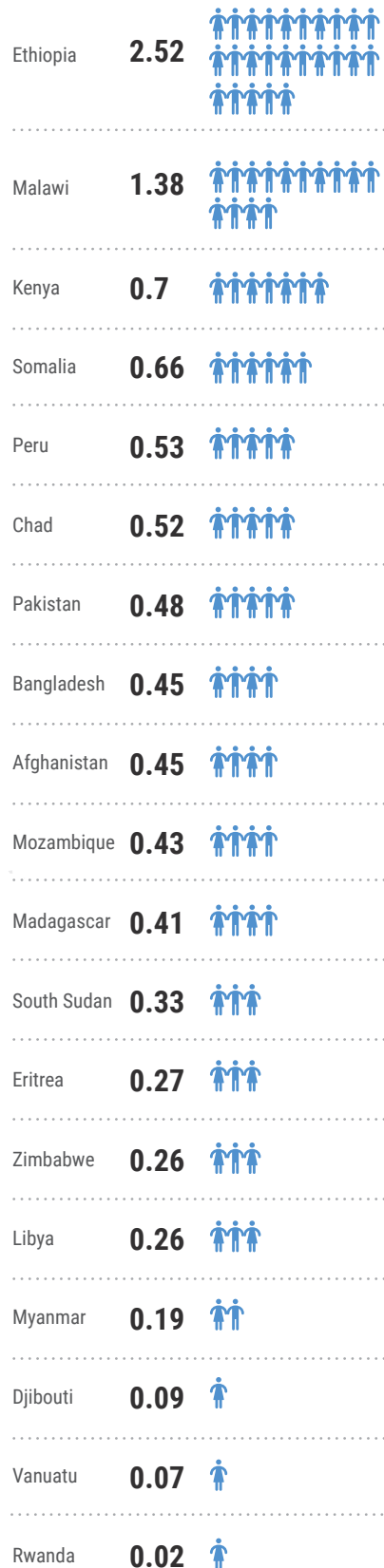


**CERF climate-related allocations
by country and window
in US\$ million**



**People assisted with climate-related
CERF funding by country**

In million



CERF's role in responding to climate-related disasters



\$2.4 B

in response to climate disasters since 2006

Climate change is causing more frequent and severe weather events, significantly escalating global humanitarian needs. Within humanitarian settings, coping mechanisms against climate shocks are often depleted, fueling a vicious cycle of need.

The escalating climate crisis has caused an eightfold increase in funding requirements for UN humanitarian appeals linked to extreme weather compared to 20 years ago.³ While there is no humanitarian solution to the climate crisis, humanitarians play a key role in addressing its consequences by minimizing and addressing loss and damages from climate-related disasters and supporting communities living in areas affected by humanitarian crises to build their resilience.

As global warming continues to drive more frequent and more extreme weather events, the gap between humanitarian needs and the capacity to respond will only grow. As resources become ever more scarce, humanitarian actors will need to adapt their support to affected communities. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) estimates the need for an additional \$20 billion annually by 2030 to cope with climate-related disasters.⁴

CERF fills an important niche in the climate-financing landscape in addressing the humanitarian impacts of climate shocks and working to reduce vulnerability. Over the years, the Fund has become the leading global humanitarian funding tool for responding to climate-related humanitarian emergencies. CERF stands out for its efficient and rapid disbursement mechanisms, enabling timely responses to emergencies. Historically, more than a quarter of all CERF funding has been provided in response to climate-related disasters. Since its inception in 2006, CERF has

allocated \$2.4 billion for response to climate hazards, which has enabled life-saving assistance for millions of people across 87 countries. In recent years, the proportion of CERF funding for climate-related response increased to close to a third of its annual allocations.

Humanitarian action funded by CERF plays a key role in helping to minimize and address the loss and damages⁵ caused by climate-related emergencies, while also building the resilience of communities to future shocks. The Fund's time-tested comparative advantages and strategic added value in responding to climate-related disasters include:

- **A credible Fund with broad donor support.** Established by the [United Nations General Assembly \(UNGA\)](#) in 2005 as the United Nations global emergency response fund, CERF has become a trusted partner of several UN agencies and benefitted from contributions from over 133 UN Member States and observers, as well as regional governments, corporate donors, foundations and individuals.
- **Timely and quick response** to climate shocks, reaching the most affected people globally. On average, CERF-funded rapid response activities in 2023 started within less than two days of a request; for rapid response allocations in response to climate-related disasters, CERF-funded activities started less than one working day after the submission of a funding application. For anticipatory and early action, CERF disburses funding based on forecasts and early warnings.



Less than a day,

on average, to initiate CERF-funded action in response to climate-related shocks following funding requests in 2023*

* Recipient agencies 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. An early implementation date can be approved if it does not predate the onset of the emergency.

³ [Carty, T., & Walsh, L. \(2022\). Footing the Bill: Fair finance for loss and damage in an era of escalating climate impacts. Oxfam.](#)

⁴ [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. \(2019\). The cost of doing nothing. The humanitarian price of climate change and how it can be avoided.](#)

⁵ 'Loss and damage' refers to the negative effects of climate change that occur despite mitigation and adaptation efforts. While mitigation addresses the causes of climate change (like reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation addresses its impacts (like building sea walls to prevent flooding), loss and damage is concerned with the unavoidable and irreversible impacts of the climate crisis. UNEP, [About Loss and Damage](#).

- **Focus on reaching the most vulnerable people in fragile contexts**, who are disproportionately impacted by climate change while having historically contributed to it the least. CERF's ability to reach those furthest behind bridges a critical gap, as evidence demonstrates that fragile countries receive the least climate-related finance⁶, supporting the idea that climate finance is often not reaching the most vulnerable.
- **Enabling prioritized and coordinated field-led action.** CERF funding is strategically allocated to the sectors addressing the most urgent needs and in line with humanitarian partners' commonly agreed priorities – established, for example, through Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) – helping to enhance coordination and reduce fragmentation of responses.
- **Supporting local and international humanitarian organizations** including by empowering humanitarian leadership and providing access to humanitarian funding. In 2022, 20 per cent of CERF funds allocated were implemented through a large network of local and international responders who have partnered with UN agencies.⁷
- **Catalysing coordinated, collective AA at scale.** Where feasible, CERF supports the establishment of AA frameworks for the delivery of life-saving assistance to people ahead of predictable emergencies, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the humanitarian system. In 2023 alone, CERF provided more than 50 per cent of all global pre-arranged funding for anticipatory action.⁸
- **Readiness to act on weather forecasts and other projections**, providing 'no-regrets' funding for early action quickly. CERF's approach to getting ahead of the projected El Niño-induced droughts and floods in 2023 is testament to this.



Madagascar. People collect brackish water for consumption in the village of Tanindrato in South Western Madagascar. Consecutive years of severe drought have wiped out crops and hampered access to food in the Deep South regions of Madagascar. Photo UNICEF/Prinsloo



88 M

provided for humanitarian AA for predictable climate shocks since 2020

⁶ [OECD \(2023\). Development finance for climate and environment-related fragility: Cooling the hotspots.](#)

⁷ The breakdown of sub-grants is not always available at the time of the disbursement of CERF funds. The information on sub-grants in this report will be updated on a rolling basis as the final grant reports become available once projects have been finalized. A total overview of sub-grants for 2023 will become available in 2025.

⁸ [Anticipation Hub, 2023 Global Overview Report](#)

Mobilizing dedicated financing for climate-related responses



Since its inception in 2006, around one quarter of CERF allocations have gone towards responding to climate-related disasters. [...] [In 2023], the proportion increased to one third – but we must still be able to do more. [...] [The CERF Climate Account Account] will enable donors to channel additional financing directly to address the risks and impacts of climate-related disasters.

*António Guterres,
United Nations-Secretary
General*

The CERF Climate Action Account

CERF has increasingly led the way in developing innovative humanitarian finance solutions in climate-related emergencies, including pioneering AA to save lives, reduce suffering, enhance cost-efficiency and help communities mitigate humanitarian impacts ahead of imminent climate-related disasters. Today, CERF is the largest source of pre-arranged funding for AA in the face of climate-induced crises. As well as facilitating and coordinating AA frameworks, CERF is readier than ever to act on weather forecasts and other climate-related projections, and provide funding for early action, even when information is uncertain or incomplete (see page 20). In addition, for many years CERF has supported life-saving activities that also build the resilience of individuals and communities to withstand climate shocks in the future (see "Ensuring life-saving responses that contribute to adaptation and resilience" on page 25).

To enable donors to support the response to a rapidly increasing number of climate-related shocks, without compromising support for other emergencies, CERF launched a new [Climate Action Account](#) at COP28 in Dubai in December 2023. The account provides a channel for donors to provide climate financing to CERF, allowing the Fund to scale up its capacity for AA, support and incentivize life-saving activities that support adaptation and build resilience, and boost humanitarian assistance in response to climate-related needs. Importantly, it upholds the Fund's life-saving mandate and preserves its established, needs-based decision-making processes, and administrative and operational frameworks.

Contributions to the account directly support scaling up anticipatory action and humanitarian responses to climate-related disasters anywhere in the world. And importantly, contributions are used to finance and promote life-saving action that support adaptation and resilience, helping individuals and communities to better cope with future climate-related shocks and stresses.

CERF allocations will continue to focus on the most pressing humanitarian needs, in an independent, impartial and neutral manner. They will enable humanitarian partners to swiftly initiate relief efforts in response to, or in anticipation of, humanitarian disasters – whether instigated by climate factors or other causes.

Additionality of funding is key for the [Climate Action Account](#) and donors are encouraged to confirm that climate dedicated contributions are made up of resources that would otherwise not have been available to CERF. Upon its launch, the account received strong donor support from Ireland (\$5.5 million⁹), Luxembourg (\$541,000) and Latvia (\$110,000).



Ireland is proud to be the largest contributor to the CERF Climate Action Account. Our contribution of €5 million is entirely additional to our humanitarian funding and is part of the Government's ambitious target to provide at least €225 million in international climate finance per annum by 2025. Through our partnership with the CERF Climate Action Account, Ireland is delivering on its commitment to protect and empower the most vulnerable communities on the frontline of the climate crisis. I firmly believe that we have a collective duty to stand by those who have contributed the least but are most impacted by climate change. Action is needed urgently and at scale. The CERF Climate Action Account offers a vehicle to do just that. I urge others to join us in our support.

*Seán Fleming,
Minister of State for International Development and
Diaspora of Ireland*

⁹ 2024 pledge.



In 2023, CERF continued its vital role in providing rapid and life-saving aid during humanitarian crises. Luxembourg is proud to be a consistent and predictable supporter of CERF and was among the first countries to support its new Climate Action Account. This new initiative has already contributed to an urgent response to floods in the DRC in 2024, marking a crucial step towards addressing the humanitarian consequences of climate change.

*Xavier Bettel,
Vice Prime Minister, Minister for Development Cooperation
and Humanitarian Affairs of Luxembourg*

Reporting on climate action

CERF will provide dedicated reporting on its climate action portfolio on an annual basis. Reporting will be improved through additional climate-relevant indicators and will include analysis, learning, and insights from case studies that illustrate CERF's important niche in responding to the climate crisis. The report will also attribute results to the Climate Action Account and demonstrate its added value in strengthening CERF's climate action.



Rwanda. With support from the Central Emergency Response Fund, FAO implemented a project to mitigate the negative impact of the floods and landslides on the lives and livelihoods of 4 962 households. Photo: FAO

CERF helping to improve people's lives in the longer-term

CERF will not deviate from its humanitarian mandate to provide life-saving assistance based on the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. For many years, however, humanitarian actors, including CERF, have aimed to deliver their life-saving mandate in ways that also contribute to building the resilience of communities to future shocks.

For instance, during droughts, CERF often finances drought-resistant agricultural activities, such as distributing drought-resistant seeds coupled with orientation trainings on climate-smart agricultural techniques. Thanks to these activities, farmers receive timely support that may help them through the immediate crisis, while also strengthening their capacity to adapt to future drought shocks. The same is true for rehabilitating boreholes, which provide immediate access to safe water for people and livestock, while also supporting sustainable access for years to come when coupled with complementary investments to maintain these water points. A similar case can be made for other types of humanitarian action spanning food security, water and sanitation, as well as health sectors.

By considering both immediate needs and long-term resilience-building efforts, CERF strives to maximize its impact and ensure the well-being of affected people both now and in the future.



Our duty is to protect and empower those who find themselves on the frontline of climate adversity. Yet they are the least responsible for the carbon footprint. By bolstering CERF, we are sending a message of solidarity and support for immediate action today.

*H.E. Edgars Rinkēvičs,
President of Latvia*



Bangladesh. An indigenous flood-affected smallholder farmer and receiver of CERF-funded lifesaving agricultural inputs such as rice, seeds, fertilizer and spades working in her vegetable field.
Photo: FAO/Salkat Mojumder

CERF-funded climate action in 2023

Responding to climate-driven humanitarian needs across countries

2023 was the warmest year on record.¹⁰ With the unprecedented rise in temperatures, the global climate emergency continued to increase levels of risk and vulnerability, disrupting livelihoods, triggering displacement and undermining global public health – thereby exacerbating humanitarian needs worldwide. By year-end, there had been 363 climate- and weather-related disasters affecting nearly 73 million people and resulting in at least 24,000 deaths and \$150.7 billion-worth of economic losses.¹¹ This includes climate-related shocks driven by the El Niño cycle, which impacts many communities already reeling from the climate crisis.

In response, CERF allocated \$201.8 million, or 30 per cent of its total 2023 funding (\$667.9 million), to enable 11 UN agencies and their humanitarian partners to assist some 10 million people¹² affected by climate-related emergencies in 19 countries – 30 per cent of the total number of people assisted with CERF funding during the year. These emergencies frequently occurred within contexts compounded by other crises, such as conflicts.

Ethiopia (\$31 million) and Somalia (\$28 million) were the largest recipients of CERF funding for climate-related disasters, benefiting 2.5 million and 663,000 people, respectively.¹³ This was mainly driven by persistent cycles of drought and flooding that have affected both countries, induced, in part, by El Niño.



It is encouraging that CERF has recently established a Climate Action Account to push for climate financing to reach those most in need. CERF already used more than a quarter of its funding to address the humanitarian consequences of the climate crisis. An example is supporting action against El Niño-related crises in parts of Ethiopia in 2023 when 1.5 million people were affected by flooding and mudslides.

*Dan Jørgensen,
Minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate
Policy of Denmark*

¹⁰ [State of the Global Climate 2023 report](#)

¹¹ Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), [2023 Disasters in numbers: A Significant Year of Disaster Impact](#).

The calculation includes all natural hazard disaster groups listed by CRED's Emergency Events Database, except earthquake and volcanic activity.

¹² CERF uses the number of people targeted as a proxy for the number of people assisted. This approach allows for timely global reporting and is justified by an analysis covering the last four years, which demonstrates that CERF consistently reaches significantly more people than it targets. CERF will continue to monitor the data on people targeted and reached to ensure the validity of this approach.

¹³ The assistance cost per beneficiary varies depending on specific circumstances. These include, among others, the varying costs of different humanitarian sectors, responses to multiple needs, the operating costs within a specific country, currency fluctuations and the security environment.

CERF FUNDING TO CLIMATE-RELATED DISASTERS



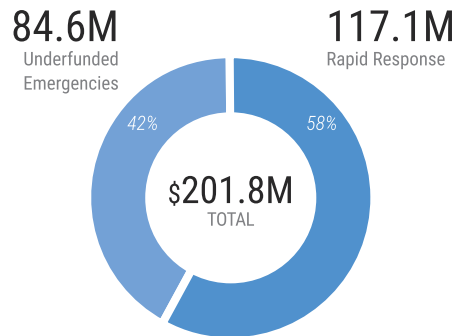
APPROXIMATELY

\$202M

TOTAL CERF FUNDING TO
CLIMATE-RELATED DISASTERS

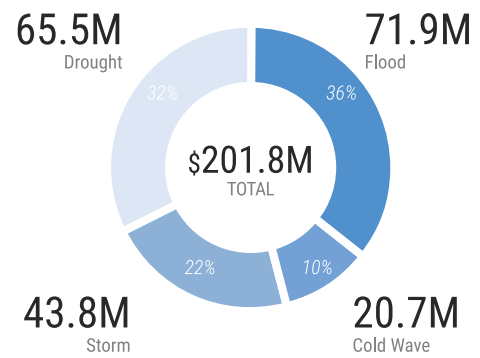
BY FUNDING WINDOW

In US\$



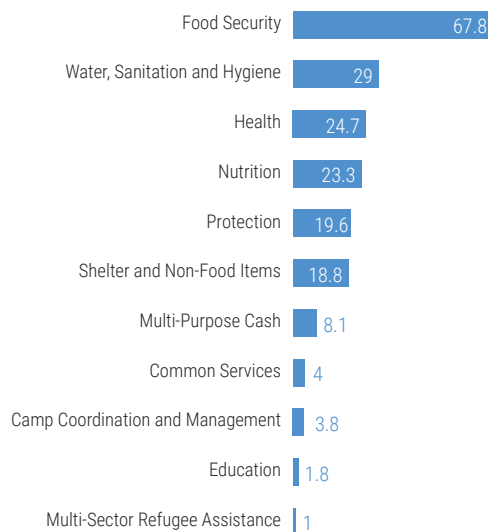
BY TYPE OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY

In US\$



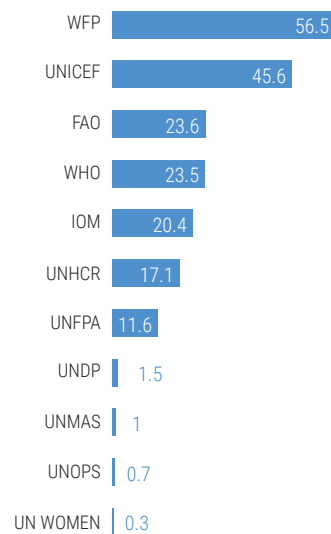
BY SECTOR

In US\$



BY UN RECIPIENT AGENCY

In US\$



2023

CERF CLIMATE FUNDING TIMELINE

Allocations highlights

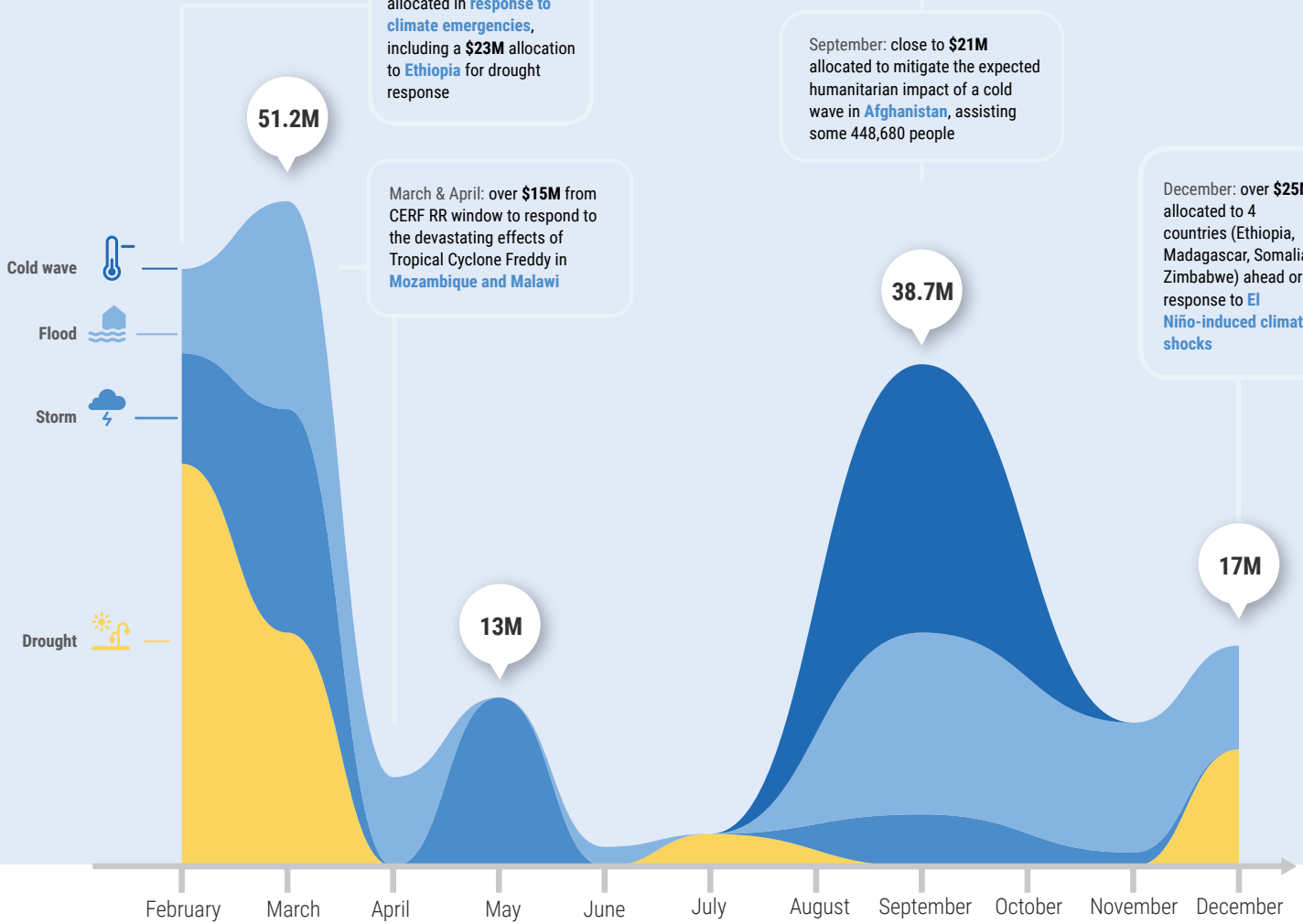
February: over **40%** of the first 2023 CERF UFE round allocated in **response to climate emergencies**, including a **\$23M** allocation to **Ethiopia** for drought response

March & April: over **\$15M** from CERF RR window to respond to the devastating effects of Tropical Cyclone Freddy in **Mozambique and Malawi**

September: **\$10M** allocated to Libya to jump-start timely humanitarian action **in response to flooding**

September: close to **\$21M** allocated to mitigate the expected humanitarian impact of a cold wave in **Afghanistan**, assisting some 448,680 people

December: over **\$25M** allocated to 4 countries (Ethiopia, Madagascar, Somalia, Zimbabwe) ahead or in response to **El Niño-induced climate shocks**



Allocations breakdown

- Ethiopia 23.0M
- Chad 9.0M
- Kenya 8.0M
- Madagascar 8.5M
- Pakistan 6.5M
- Eritrea 5.0M
- Somalia 18.0M
- South Sudan 16.0M
- Mozambique 10.0M
- Malawi 5.5M
- Vanuatu 1.7M
- Peru 6.9M
- Myanmar 10.0M
- Bangladesh 3.0M
- Rwanda 1.5M
- Djibouti 2.5M
- Afghanistan 20.6M
- Libya 10.0M
- Bangladesh 4.0M
- Malawi 4.0M
- Somalia 10.0M
- Vanuatu 1.0M
- Ethiopia 8.0M
- Zimbabwe 5.0M
- Madagascar 4.0M

- Rapid Response window
- Underfunded Emergency window



Afghanistan. Over the past 30 years, climate change has impacted previously cultivated and fertile land. Photo: UNOCHA/Liz Loh Taylor

CERF allocations were largely driven by humanitarian responses to floods (\$71.9 million) and droughts (\$65.5 million). Together, these accounted for 68 per cent of the total allocations made by CERF in response to climate-induced emergencies and assisted 6.8 million people across 14 countries. Another \$43.8 million, or 22 per cent of total funding towards climate-related emergencies, was allocated in response to tropical storms, assisting nearly 2.8 million people across six countries. Furthermore, \$20.7 million, equivalent to 10 per cent of the total climate-related funding, was allocated by CERF to mitigate the impacts of a projected cold wave in Afghanistan.

During the year, the food security sector was the most funded sector in CERF allocations that responded to climate-related emergencies, receiving \$67.8 million – more than a third of CERF’s allocations towards climate-related disasters in 2023. Funding for this sector was vital for food assistance and agriculture responses that benefited some 3.2 million people in 19 countries. For instance, nearly 72 per cent (\$11.5 million) of the CERF-funded response to floods in South Sudan was directed towards food assistance. Similarly, 63 per cent (\$13 million) of the CERF allocation to Afghanistan went to food assistance activities. Agricultural support was also a key component of CERF-funded responses to droughts in Somalia (\$5 million), Ethiopia (\$4 million) and Eritrea (\$3 million).

The WASH (\$29 million) and health (\$27.7 million) sectors jointly accounted for a further quarter of CERF 2023 funding towards climate-related emergencies, assisting some 8 million people across 17 countries.

Mitigating humanitarian impact of extreme temperatures in Afghanistan

In 2023/2024, weather forecasts and projections expected that El Niño would induce wetter-than-normal conditions throughout Afghanistan, accompanied by significant snowfall, exacerbating preexisting food insecurity and protection concerns in the country. The previous year, Afghanistan had experienced its coldest winter in more than a decade, affecting the central highlands and northern/north-eastern areas of the country the hardest.

A \$20.7 million CERF allocation in September 2023 was strategically used to mitigate the expected humanitarian impact of extreme winter temperatures, assisting some 449,000 people. CERF funding was directed towards areas where seasonal risks during the October to December period (early onset winter season) intersected with underserved locations with high vulnerability.

The allocation came at a critical time when the 2023 Afghanistan HRP was only 28 per cent funded, hindering the ability of humanitarian actors to address critical, time-sensitive needs such as food security, emergency shelter and non-food items for vulnerable populations during winter. Timely and forward-leaning, this CERF funding complemented the inter-cluster Winter Prioritization Plan and a \$117 million allocation from the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, supporting winterization and famine risk reduction activities, especially with heavy snow and rainfall predicted across most of Afghanistan’s provinces in early 2024.

Jump-starting time-critical responses to climate shocks through the Rapid Response window

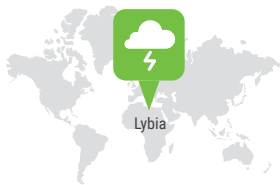
Over half of CERF funding towards climate-related emergencies (\$117.1 million, or 58 per cent) was provided through the Fund’s Rapid Response (RR) window, assisting 4.7 million people across 14 countries – demonstrating the Fund’s comparative advantage in responding quickly to climate-related shocks and reaching those most in need. On average, CERF-funded RR activities in response to climate-related disasters started less than one working day after the submission of a funding request.¹⁴

¹⁴ Recipient agencies 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. An early implementation date can be approved if it does not predate the onset of the emergency.



Libya. Floods in September destroyed parts of Derna's city centre.

Photo: OCHA/Basma Ourfali



Storm Daniel: Ensuring timely humanitarian action while improving preparedness

In September 2023, Libya faced the brunt of Storm Daniel, the deadliest Mediterranean tropical cyclone on record. Studies suggest such storms are now 50 times more probable and up to 50 per cent stronger due to a warming climate.¹⁵ Daniel made landfall in Libya on September 10, after months of unrelenting drought. The devastating floods led to some 12,352 casualties and extensive damage to infrastructure, directly impacting about 884,000 people across five provinces, particularly in towns along rivers and in coastal areas. The city of Derna was particularly hard-hit after two dams broke upstream, releasing over 30 million cubic metres of water into the city. The arrival of the storm compounded an already complex humanitarian context, marked by instability, conflict and displacement.

In response, CERF allocated \$10 million across the shelter, WASH, health and protection sectors to address immediate and critical humanitarian needs, with a particular focus on at-risk demographics such as women, children, people living with disabilities and migrants. Nearly all CERF-supported projects started within one day of the flooding, assisting over 259,000 affected people by restoring critical services and fortifying protection mechanisms. The focus on

immediate life-saving measures, coupled with a comprehensive approach to addressing the diverse needs of affected communities, highlights the strategic focus of CERF's intervention in line with the [OCHA-coordinated Flash Appeal](#).

These funds not only helped alleviate suffering in the immediate aftermath of the storm, but also strengthened systems and mechanisms that can support affected people in coping with similar future shocks.

For instance, in addition to providing life-saving health services to address the impacts of the storm, CERF funds enabled WHO, in collaboration with local health authorities, to support the revitalization of the health-care delivery system in the flood-affected areas. This included restoring ambulatory referral services, improving functionality of health facilities and the deployment and coordination of mobile medical teams and clinics to expand access to essential healthcare to displaced populations. Similarly, UNICEF was able to leverage CERF funding to meet time-critical needs of affected people in the WASH sector, while also promoting adaptation through water improvement activities, helping to ensure a more sustainable water supply in the future.

¹⁵ The interplay between climate change-exacerbated rainfall, exposure and vulnerability led to widespread impacts in the Mediterranean region, [World Weather Attribution](#)

El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Nicaragua
Droughts

Chad
Droughts/
floods

Niger
Droughts/
floods

South Sudan
Floods

Ethiopia
Droughts

Yemen
Floods

Burkina
Faso
Droughts

Somalia
Droughts

Malawi
Dry spells

Nepal
Floods

Bangladesh
Cyclone/
Floods

Philippines
Typhoon

Fiji
Tropical
cyclones

Framework

- Activated
- Endorsed
- In development

CERF collaborates with a wide range of partners to set up coordinated frameworks for AA. Each AA framework consists of four core components that enable predictable and rapid action ahead of climate disasters: (1) a robust forecasting mechanism, such as seasonal weather forecasts, linked to a clear decision-making process; (2) pre-agreed activities; (3) pre-arranged funds that can be released to immediately initiate time-critical activities; and (4) dedicated learning activities to systematically capture evidence from these initiatives.

Getting ahead of expected climate crises

By facilitating AA frameworks, CERF enables partners to get ahead of predictable climate hazards, thereby ensuring a more efficient, effective and dignified humanitarian response. This proactive approach ensures that funding is used to initiate action to address emerging disasters before they escalate into full-blown crises. While no AA frameworks reached the agreed threshold for triggering a response to climate-related disasters in 2023,¹⁶ the ERC endorsed two new frameworks in Bangladesh and Fiji for tropical cyclones and agreed to continue CERF support for improved frameworks in Bangladesh and Nepal for floods, in the Philippines for storms, and in Niger for droughts.

By promoting interventions that address the humanitarian impacts of climate shocks before they fully unfold, anticipatory action frameworks play a crucial role in facilitating swift recovery and sustaining communities' adaptation to future climate risks. Through forward-thinking and proactive planning, anticipatory action serves as a strategy to enhance resilience in the face of escalating climate crises, complementing longer-term approaches like disaster risk reduction and poverty alleviation, and has the potential to be

integrated into government-led systems, including social protection systems. One example is providing cash transfers ahead of extreme weather events, which has shown to not only help families in meeting immediate and time-critical needs, but also promote their long-term welfare and well-being¹⁷. Several other activities integrated into anticipatory action frameworks contribute to both minimizing loss and damage and building resilience. These activities include strengthening early warning systems, improving or rehabilitating water infrastructure alongside the cultivation of drought-resistant crops, and capacity-building initiatives for climate-smart agricultural practices and water management.

As of December 2023, eight ERC-endorsed frameworks for climate-related disasters were operational,¹⁸ ready to be activated if the pre-agreed triggers are reached, with a total of \$71.5 million in pre-arranged funding. These frameworks – which could be triggered at any moment – can enable life-saving AA ahead of climate hazards for up to 2.2 million people across seven countries. Additionally, three other frameworks are under development: one in Niger and two in Ethiopia.

¹⁷ Chaves-Gonzalez, J. et al. (2022). "Anticipatory action: Lessons for the future." *Frontiers in Climate*

¹⁸ Bangladesh (storms/floods); Burkina Faso (drought); Chad (drought); Fiji (storms); Nepal (floods); Niger (drought); the Philippines (storms).

¹⁶ Although, one framework was triggered in anticipation of a cholera outbreak.

In addition to formalized AA frameworks, CERF is increasingly prepared to fund early action within its traditional funding functions through its RR window, based on projections or forecasts on a 'no-regrets' basis – even when information is uncertain or incomplete.¹⁹ This helps to ensure that people exposed to climate disasters receive assistance as early as possible. In 2023, CERF provided \$36 million for early action to get ahead of flooding and droughts, including events driven by El Niño – assisting over 800,000 people across three countries (Madagascar, Somalia and Zimbabwe).



Zimbabwe and Madagascar

Enhancing the timeliness and impact of the El Niño response

After the World Meteorological Organization declared an El Niño event in July 2023, CERF developed a proactive approach for 2023-2024, leveraging on lessons learned from past El Niño events²⁰ to enhance the effectiveness and timeliness of its allocations. As a result, in 2023 CERF took early measures to minimize the impact of the El Niño and enhance cost-effectiveness in countries that were more likely to be adversely impacted, including Zimbabwe and Madagascar.

In recent years, a number of regions in Zimbabwe and Madagascar have reported below-average rainfall levels. El Niño is expected to exacerbate these conditions and severely disrupt food production, nutrition, education and WASH in many provinces in 2023/2024 – as predicted by multiple extreme weather warnings and seasonal forecasting.

In December 2023, to get ahead of the projected El Niño-induced deterioration in drought conditions, CERF allocated \$4 million each to Zimbabwe and Madagascar through the RR window, to commence immediate early response activities. This funding enabled UN agencies and partners to provide life-saving assistance to some 145,300 people across the two countries, through timely actions in the food security,

¹⁹ CERF defines AA as acting ahead of predicted hazards to prevent or reduce acute humanitarian impacts before they fully unfold. This involves a framework, with pre-agreed activities and triggers, that facilitates the rapid release of pre-arranged financing. Early action allocations, on the other hand, are made without a formal framework on a 'no-regrets basis' while a crisis is still emerging or developing and when information is still incomplete and uncertain; or are made partially based on forecasts and projections.

²⁰ Notably, an [independent review](#) of CERF's response to the 2015-2016 El Niño recommended an earlier disbursement of funds to mitigate El Niño-related impacts more effectively.

Madagascar. Children play on a rainwater catchment tank in Ampotaka village. UNICEF built an underwater aquifer here, with CERF support. Photo: UNICEF/Prinsloo



health, nutrition, protection and WASH sectors as well as income-generating activities set up in alignment with the seasonal calendar to enhance resilience. In Madagascar, the allocation is being implemented by over 14 NGOs and government partners, capitalizing on the critical expertise and knowledge that they bring. Beyond this, the partnerships also serve to enhance local and national coordination and the sustainability of projects.

Taking advantage of extreme weather warnings and seasonal forecasting, CERF was able to enhance the timeliness and impact of responses by making allocations at opportune moments along the crisis timeline. By supporting timely multi-sectoral and multi-agency actions, these early CERF allocations contributed to a more harmonized and holistic approach. The early allocation for Madagascar also afforded humanitarian partners the time to meticulously plan and achieve a high degree of geographic and sectoral coordination in local-level interventions. These measures have enabled humanitarian actors to get 'ahead of the crisis', thereby enhancing effectiveness and efficiency of projects, as well as contributing to mitigating the loss of life, stemming disease outbreaks and averting an increase in food insecurity.

Providing a lifeline for people affected by climate change through the Underfunded Emergencies window

Ethiopia. A woman brings her one-year-old daughter to a mobile outreach health site near her home in Chifra, Afar, in north-eastern Ethiopia, for vaccination and a check-up.
Photo: WHO

Through its Underfunded Emergencies (UFE) window, CERF in 2023 reinforced its commitment to leaving no one behind by allocating \$84.6 million towards severely underfunded climate-related humanitarian operations, assisting 5.3 million people across eight countries. CERF funding through the UFE window was vital in sustaining and scaling up underfunded operations, helping the humanitarian community reach the most vulnerable and neglected people.



CERF played an invaluable role in 2023 in responding to forgotten and underfunded crises and was central to global humanitarian efforts – including rapid response [...] [to] drought and displacement in Ethiopia. CERF continues to play a key role in anticipatory action, allowing humanitarian actors to undertake preparedness activities and offer long-term solutions.

*Andrew Mitchell,
Minister for Development of the United Kingdom*



In February 2023, CERF allocated \$23 million through the UFE window to boost the response by humanitarian partners to support the most vulnerable populations in the most drought-affected and underserved areas. CERF funding enabled UN agencies to provide multi-purpose cash, agricultural support, nutrition and health interventions, and WASH services to nearly 703,000 people in these areas. Projects included adaptation efforts – for example, the construction and rehabilitation of water supply systems in Ethiopia – helping to enhance resilience against future droughts.

The CERF allocation focused on the districts in the Oromia, Somali, and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' (SNNP) regions that were not covered by previous funding from CERF or the Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund (EHF), increasing visibility of underserved geographical and sectoral areas to strengthen resource mobilization efforts. The allocation strategy was developed in conjunction with a \$17 million allocation from the EHF, which had a strong focus on NGO partnerships to maximize the impact, complementarity, and the catalytic nature of the OCHA-managed pooled funds. This parallel approach was in line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee system-wide scale-up protocol, which was extended until September 2023 to increase the response to the worsening drought. Through geographical convergence and sectoral complementarity, both allocations aimed at contributing to the requirements of the 2023 Joint Operational Action Plan for the Drought Response, a subset of the 2023 HRP, while improving collaboration between UN agencies, NGOs and the clusters.



CERF boosting underfunded drought response in Ethiopia

Five consecutive failed rainy seasons, exacerbated by a three-year long La Niña event, plunged Ethiopia into a worsening drought crisis in the lead-up to the 2023 lean season (period between harvests). Climate change has intensified these weather patterns, making droughts like the one in Ethiopia more frequent and severe. The southern and eastern regions bore the brunt of the impact. Due to insufficient resources and access challenges in these areas, five out of nine humanitarian clusters managed to assist only 50 per cent or less of the people they targeted during 2022. As a result, many communities did not recover from previous years of drought and remained highly vulnerable to future shocks.

Somalia. Maryama and her daughter at the clinic, accessing treatment for malnutrition. CERF is supporting stabilization centers across Somalia. Photo: WHO/Ismail Taxta



“Without this, I would have certainly lost my daughter. As well as the treatment for her, we have been provided with three meals a day, food packages, a warm blanket and cleaning supplies,” recounts her mother.

Responding to the climate emergency in Somalia

Dollow and Mogadishu, Somalia. Decades of violence, several years of unprecedented drought, and major floods have severely affected people in Somalia, leading to increased displacement, food insecurity and malnutrition. An \$18 million allocation from CERF in 2023 helped to address the urgent needs of those most at risk.

“I have lived here all my life and have never seen a drought like the one we are experiencing now. Everything just dried up right in front of our eyes,” said Sahra Abdi, a 29-year-old mother who, along with her children, is among the thousands of internally displaced people in Dollow.

Sahra fled her home in the Somali Region of Ethiopia in 2021 because of the drought. Apart from the lack of work, she says that one of the biggest challenges they face in the camp is the constant lack of safe water. “For us to get clean and safe drinking water, it often meant long, arduous hours of walking to the nearest water source, which is an unsafe journey. This is a task I did not look forward to,” she says.

With support from CERF, UNICEF built 25 elevated water tanks that are filled at least twice a day and benefit around 5,000 people. “With this newly constructed water source, the water is a few meters from my home, and this has solved many challenges for me and the community here. It was a big relief,” says Sahra.

Maryama – who lives in Mogadishu – has also been struggling due to the relentless drought. Her life took a devastating turn when she lost her livestock and was

left to provide for her children alone, without support from her extended family. Like many others, she was unable to find enough food for her family and the children were constantly hungry.

In July, the Mother and Child Hospital in Heliwa district – supported with essential life-saving medical supplies from WHO, with funding from CERF – admitted Maryama’s three-year-old daughter, Amina. At the hospital’s stabilization centre, Amina was diagnosed with severe acute malnutrition, compounded by a range of medical complications. During her stay in hospital, Amina received essential medication and therapeutic milk to stabilize her and help her grow.

In the weeks that followed, Amina continued her journey towards full recovery as Maryama brought her to the hospital for ongoing outpatient treatment. Such was the impact of Amina’s recovery that her neighbours gave her a new name, ‘Xabaal Diid’, meaning ‘triumph over illness’.

Alongside Amina’s treatment, the whole family received food and basic household supplies. “Without this, I would have certainly lost my daughter. As well as the treatment for her, we have been provided with three meals a day, food packages, a warm blanket and cleaning supplies,” recounts her mother.

“CERF assistance enables the Mother and Child Hospital to provide life-saving treatment and care for children like Amina, ensuring they have access to medical support and a chance for a better future,” explains Dr Mahmud, who works at the hospital.



Read more
impact stories
on [StoryHub](#)

Madagascar. Mobile clinics offer better health surveillance during cyclones. Photo: WHO.



Improved preparedness for cyclones in Madagascar

South-east Madagascar. “A year ago, getting health care would have been a luxury,” explains Toky Rabe-maharo, a leader from Marokarima commune.

The far south-east of Madagascar was ravaged by successive cyclones: Batsirai and Emnati in 2022, and Freddy in 2023. “After the two cyclones hit, we couldn’t get to the health centre.” Toky explains that his pregnant wife died from preventable complications, as did several other people he knew.

“Today, we have this ‘luxury’ again,” he added.

Supported by a \$700,000 allocation from CERF, WHO and partners were able to deploy mobile clinics to give a million people access to health care in areas heavily affected by the cyclones, including in Toky’s community. “The interventions of the mobile clinics have been of considerable value because they have helped restore healthcare services, especially vaccination services in basic health centres, and also covered areas that are usually inaccessible to healthcare, like remote villages and localities,” says Dr. Yasmine Laetitia Lydie, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Health.

Beyond immediate life-saving assistance to cyclone-affected Malagasies in the far south-east, the CERF allocation played a crucial bridging function, address-

ing the most acute needs while strengthening the long-term health response in cyclone-affected districts.

Cyclones are a common phenomenon in this region. However, with climate change, they are becoming more severe and more frequent. This increases the likelihood of waterborne and vector-borne diseases. In preparation for Cyclone Freddy in February 2023, some 17 doctors and laboratory technicians from the Fitovinany, Vatovavy and Atsim Atsinanana regions – where water-related diseases had been reported after the first two cyclones – were trained to manage health care in a crisis, including blood transfusion services.

Learning from the cyclone season of 2022, when medicine stocks were destroyed, WHO built a storage warehouse for essential supplies and medical equipment in Manakara to serve the three regions in the south-east. The organization also provided kits, including medicines for malaria and diarrheal diseases. Consequently, before Cyclone Freddy arrived, healthcare teams were permanently present at each site to address any potential diseases and epidemics.

CERF-funded responses contributed to the absence of recorded cholera cases despite the torrential rains and numerous floods caused by Cyclone Freddy, while also enabling communities to better cope with the health impacts of climate change in the future.

Ensuring life-saving responses that contribute to adaptation and resilience

CERF's support in 2023 to the response by UN agencies and their partners to the humanitarian consequences of climate-related loss and damage also enabled life-saving humanitarian activities that support and integrate adaptation to climate change (see page 13). This included the construction or rehabilitation of at least 1,395 communal water points – such as wells, boreholes, water tap stands and supply systems – that improve access to adequate and safe water for affected communities, while ensuring adaptation to future water-related impacts of climate change. In November 2023, for instance, Somalia received a \$10 million allocation from CERF to respond to a major flood event induced by El Niño. As part of the provision of life-saving assistance to 333,000 flood-affected people (food security and livelihoods, health, water and sanitation, and shelter/non-food items), the allocation enabled UN agencies, notably UNICEF and IOM, to implement projects that helped communities to cope better with future floods. Activities included the protection of water sources in flood-prone areas – rehabilitating damaged sources and constructing new sites – and the provision of flood-resistant latrines.

CERF funding during the year also enabled critical livelihoods support that helps communities build resilience to climate-related shocks, with some 1.7 million people benefiting from agricultural and livestock inputs and at least 252,620 trainings on agricultural techniques funded. For instance, the \$4 million early action allocation to Madagascar (see page 21) allowed FAO to assist 45,000 people at risk of drought-induced food insecurity. This support included agricultural and livestock inputs, such as drought-resistant seeds, and training on climate-smart agricultural practices. As well as providing life-saving food security assistance for drought-affected communities, this CERF-funded project also helped improve food availability and accessibility, along with diversifying income sources for affected households, making them more resilient to future shocks. Additionally, the funding helped establish Early Warning and Anticipatory Action committees, enabling communities to create action plans based on weather forecasts and access climate information directly for better preparedness and adaptation in the future.



Bangladesh. CERF-funded projects implemented by FAO Bangladesh at Coxs Bazaar.

Photo: FAO/Saikat Mojumder

Eritrea. Thanks to UNDP's CERF-funded project, farmers in Eritrea were able to produce good quality dates, improving their livelihoods and contributing to the building of a sustainable value chain system for date palms. Photo: Ministry of Information, Eritrea.



Enhancing food security and resilience amid drought in Eritrea



“Through our work, we have gained expertise in identifying date palm tree offshoots and planting them. As a woman among many others who have found employment in this project, I can support my family and provide for my children,” explains Ms. Kalifa.

Anseba, Northern Red Sea and Southern Red Sea Regions, Eritrea. Eritrea is facing a humanitarian crisis in the midst of an ongoing drought worsened by climate change. The failure of the 'Bahri' rainy season for four consecutive years has severely impacted water supplies, food production and health, particularly for pastoralist communities.

In response to this drought, CERF is funding a project led by UNDP and partners supporting the cultivation of the date palm, a drought-resistant crop, as a sustainable solution to food insecurity and a means of building resilience.

This initiative integrates food security with environmental management, promoting climate risk mitigation and sustainable practices to break the cycle of humanitarian dependency.

The date palm is an ideal crop for the drought-stricken regions of Eritrea. Renowned for its resilience to arid conditions, it thrives where other plants struggle. It also offers environmental benefits. As Nashida Sattar, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, explains, "the date palm is a crop that is very climate-friendly," with a carbon-capturing ability surpassing that of most other trees.

The date palm is also a highly profitable crop, with a lifespan of up to 70 years, offering both environmental and economic sustainability benefits.

The project goes beyond crop cultivation to restoring grazing lands, farming lands and livestock water points, enhancing the overall resilience of communities to drought and environmental challenges.

Another core objective is to promote gender equality and empower youth by equipping women and young people with the necessary skills for date production, helping to foster economic independence and inclusivity.

Saasa Kalifa is one of these women. Employed through the project, she is responsible for preparing the land and planting palm trees. Her commitment goes beyond the tasks at hand; she sees her work as an investment in her children's future. “Through our work, we have gained expertise in identifying date palm tree offshoots and planting them. As a woman among many others who have found employment in this project, I can support my family and provide for my children,” explains Ms. Kalifa.

With the income from the project, she has a valuable source of income to meet the immediate needs of her family and build resilience against future shocks, all the while contributing to the restoration of the environment for her children.

Vanuatu. Restoring Vanuatu's agriculture sector: FAO delivers tangible results breathing life into Tongoa Island's agricultural landscape. Photo: FAO



Cyclone-affected people restore their home gardens in Vanuatu

Port Vila, Vanuatu. Jane Sola, a farmer in Teuma, Port Vila, has been affected by two cyclones this year. In an unprecedented occurrence, Vanuatu experienced the wrath of Tropical Cyclone Judy, immediately followed by Tropical Cyclone Kevin just days later. The devastation inflicted upon the island nation by Cyclone Kevin, exacerbated the significant damage caused by the initial storm.

In response, CERF provided two allocations through its RR window during the year, totaling some \$2.8 million. Half a million was granted to FAO, to improve food and nutrition security for households affected by the cyclones through the restoration of productive assets and capacity.

As part of the CERF-funded project, FAO supported trainings for 6,700 people on agricultural skills and 1,900 people on livestock rearing. The project also provided critical inputs to support the livelihoods of some 22,000 cyclone-affected people, including the distribution of seeds to affected areas and support for harvesting.

Ms. Sola and others were able to re-sow and grow food in their home gardens. Not only did this help affected communities meet their immediate food security needs, but also contributed to households' self-sufficiency in the long-term. With local and government actors, and FAO's expertise, sustainable crops were selected to suit the region's agroecological conditions. Diverse cropping systems and agroforestry practices enhance resilience against future climate shocks, including cyclones, by spreading the risk of crop failure and providing protection through windbreaks and soil stabilization. "The backyard gardens have been improved. Tools and seeds provided by FAO have been instrumental in helping us overcome the effects of the two cyclones," explains Ms. Sola.

Targeting the most vulnerable to climate change

Throughout 2023, CERF mainstreamed support for the most vulnerable to the climate crisis through its funding towards climate-related disasters.

Climate change exacerbates existing gender inequalities and poses unique threats to the livelihoods, health and safety of women and girls, especially when combined with poor essential services such as water, sanitation and healthcare. People living with disabilities are also among those most adversely affected during climate hazards, sustaining disproportionately higher rates of morbidity and mortality; at the same time, they are less able to access emergency support.

In 2023, 5.6 million people assisted with CERF funding towards climate-related disasters (56 per cent of the total) were women and girls, and 5.3 million (over half) were children under the age of 18. CERF-funded assistance in the health and protection sectors had a particularly strong focus on women and girls in climate-related emergencies.

During the year, nearly a million people living with disabilities benefited from CERF-funded responses to climate-related emergencies, 57 per cent of

whom were children. Women and girls represented 53 per cent of this group.

The climate crisis and human displacement are increasingly interconnected, with 21.5 million people displaced by climate-induced events per year on average.²¹ Nearly 60 per cent of refugees and IDPs today live in countries that are among the most vulnerable to climate change.²² Addressing the devastating humanitarian consequences of population displacement in these contexts remained a critical part of CERF-funded assistance in 2023.

In 2023, 60 per cent (or 6.2 million) of people assisted by CERF in response to climate-related emergencies were affected by forced displacement. Of these, 1.8 million were internally displaced people (IDPs), 679,000 were refugees, 791,000 were returnees and nearly 3 million were people from host communities. Ethiopia (2.5 million people) and Somalia (602,000), both suffering from adverse cycles of droughts and floods compounded by conflict, were the countries with highest number of people affected by displacement in the context of climate emergencies that were assisted through CERF funding.

²¹ [Climate change link to displacement of most vulnerable is clear: UNHCR | UN News](#)

²² [Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts | UNHCR](#)

Piura, Peru. Massive flooding in north-western Peru left more than 840,000 people affected, driving thousands of people to take shelter and wait for floodwaters to recede. Photo: OCHA/Marcel Velásquez



Bangladesh. Tasmin Akter is one of the many adolescent girls who received menstrual hygiene management kits provided by UNFPA. Photo: UNFPA



Responding to the needs of women and girls during floods



“Many things in the kit were new to me, but the UNFPA volunteers explained how to use them,” Tasmin says, smiling.

Chattogram Division, Bangladesh. In August 2023, flash floods in Chattogram Division, Bangladesh, affected 1.3 million people, displacing 600,000 and causing 51 deaths. In response, CERF allocated \$4 million from its RR window for life-saving activities in sectors such as WASH, food security, livelihoods, protection against gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive health.

As part of this allocation, half a million was allocated to UNFPA to help achieve zero maternal mortality during the flooding. Through the deployment of mobile clinics and emergency midwives, along with the distribution of baby kits, CERF-funded assistance benefited over 13,000 people. UNFPA and partners also provided other critical services relating to sexual and reproductive health, such as support for pregnant women with complications, and the provision of menstrual health kits to adolescent girls.

Tasmin is one of the many adolescent girls who received menstrual hygiene management kits provided by UNFPA. Tasmin, who needs assistance due to her disability, faced challenges during the flash flood and was forced to take shelter in a school with her family. Managing menstruation can be particularly challenging during natural disasters, especially if living with a disability, and the support provided through the kits has been a relief for Tasmin and her family. “Many things in the kit were new to me, but the UNFPA volunteers explained how to use them,” Tasmin says, smiling.

Madagascar. Fanyah boosts her life skills to adapt to the drought. Photo: UNICEF, Ramasomanana



Resilience to droughts through education in Madagascar



“Thanks to this programme, I exchanged ideas with other young people like me. I made a lot of new friends, and it helped me grow and evolve in everything I undertake”, says Fanyah.

Anarabe, Madagascar. 14-year-old Fanyah, who was born blind, lives in Anarabe, a small village in the south of Madagascar. Here, consecutive years of severe drought have wiped out crops and endangered access to food. Between cyclones, floods and droughts, the island is battered by the effects of climate change.

Madagascar is ranked 10th among countries where children are the most exposed to climate change and environmental degradation.²³ The effects of climate change are putting families under pressure to adopt negative coping mechanisms such as child exploitation through child labor, begging, or marrying children to have fewer ‘mouths to feed’. Children living with disabilities, like Fanyah, are disproportionately impacted.

Fanyah has found support in a CERF-funded program implemented by UNICEF and partners to enhance life skills within the framework of child protection. Through 16 sessions, Fanyah and her peers were empowered with invaluable tools to thrive despite the harsh realities of drought-stricken communities.

The life skills program equips children with knowledge about the environmental, children’s rights and how to address negative coping mechanisms. In addition, parents also receive a parenting program focusing on child rights and child protection against violence, exploitation, and positive parenting.

According to Rakotozandry Violette, an instructor in the programme, “it is important to provide children and youth, especially those with disabilities, with practical advice so that they can reach their full potential in an environment where drought has been plaguing the communities for years.”

“Thanks to this programme, I exchanged ideas with other young people like me. I made a lot of new friends, and it helped me grow and evolve in everything I undertake”, says Fanyah.

23 [UNICEF. \(2021\). The climate crisis is a child rights crisis](#)

#InvestInHumanity

DONATE TO CERF



Member States, observers and other authorities

OCHA Donor Relations Section Geneva, Switzerland
ocha.donor.relations@un.org

Private donors and individuals

ONLINE DONATIONS

Visit: bit.ly/GIVETOCERF

BANK TRANSFER TO CERF

Contact the CERF secretariat in New York, USA

Chulmin Kang
Chief, Finance and Administration Unit
kang@un.org
+1 212 963 6362

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 CERF can track and respond to your contribution accordingly. Note: US tax-deductible donations can also be made via money order or wire transfer.

REAL-TIME INFORMATION

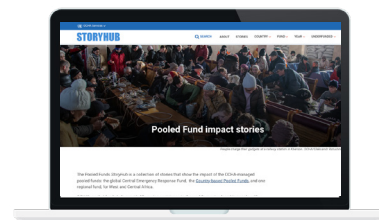


For real-time contribution and allocation data with easy-to-use filters and views please visit:

Pooled Fund Data Hub
<https://pfddata.unocha.org>

CERF Data Hub
cerf.data.unocha.org

POOLED FUND IMPACT STORIES



For more impact stories showing CERF and the Country-based Pooled Funds in action:

pooledfunds.impact.unocha.org/fund/cerf

CERF was born out of necessity and it continues through generosity. Donors enable CERF to support emergency life-saving humanitarian activities throughout the world.

As crises persist, so does our resolve.


With your help, we respond.

DIGITAL CERF

 cerf.un.org

 [@UNCerf](https://twitter.com/UNCerf)

 facebook.com/UnitedNationsCERF

 bit.ly/CERFYoutube



United Nations
CERF

Central
Emergency
Response
Fund