

# Making the case for an investment in the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)



United Nations

**CERF**

Central  
Emergency  
Response  
Fund

CERF secretariat,  
2018

# CERF's global reach

SINCE 2006 CERF HAS ALLOCATED SOME \$5.5 BILLION  
FOR LIFE-SAVING RESPONSES  
TO OVER 100 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

CERF allocations 2006-2018  
in US\$ million



CERF grants have on average each year helped UN agencies  
and their humanitarian partners deliver:



Critical  
health care to  
**16.1 million**  
people



Water and  
sanitation to  
**9.7 million**  
people



Food  
assistance to  
**7.1 million**  
people



Protection to  
**4.3 million**  
people



Livelihoods  
support to  
**3 million**  
people



Nutrition  
support to  
**2.7 million**  
people

.. as well as support services for refugees and migrants, nutrition programmes, mine action,  
emergency education and camp management, for millions of people in need.

## The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

was established in 2005 as the UN's global emergency response fund to pool voluntary contributions from donors around the world into a single fund, allowing humanitarian responders to deliver life-saving assistance whenever and wherever crises hit.



For more than a decade, the Central Emergency Response Fund has saved countless lives. It is there when diseases, natural disasters, conflict or the risk of famine hit. It helps kick-start a global life-saving response - impartially, efficiently and immediately. We can all be proud of its success.

—United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres



### CERF is...



#### Global

CERF provides humanitarian support across the globe, expanding the reach of its donors to all crises, whether new, worsening or forgotten.



#### Fast

CERF makes funding available when it is needed most at the beginning of a crisis and allocates funding within hours of a crisis when time lost means lives lost.



#### Catalytic

CERF enables humanitarian partners to quickly scale-up response and leverage additional donor support through demonstrated and timely humanitarian action.



#### Needs-based

CERF allocations are strictly life-saving and based on the needs identified and prioritized by humanitarian partners at the front lines of the emergency responses. This ensures early responses to the most time-critical humanitarian priorities.



#### Promoting coordination and coherence

CERF funding is jointly allocated to multiple organizations based on humanitarian partners' agreed priorities. This promotes coordination among humanitarian actors, eliminates duplication and overlaps, prevents fragmented responses and supports the achievement of collective outcomes.



#### Fostering partnerships

CERF interventions support the involvement of implementing partners. Each year, approximately 25% of CERF funds are implemented by more than 500 NGOs and local responders who have partnered with UN agencies.



#### Neutral, impartial and independent

CERF is fully unearmarked, principled and independent to ensure funding goes to meet the most urgent, life-saving needs wherever crises hit.



#### Predictable

CERF is a trusted and dependable source of predictable funding for the most urgent and critical humanitarian action.



#### Cost-Effective

CERF offers value-for-money, allowing donors to efficiently assist people in need wherever crises strike, making limited resources go as far as it can to save lives and reduce the suffering of millions of women, girls, boys and men caught up in crises around the world.



#### Embodying the Grand Bargain

CERF plays a key role in delivering the Grand Bargain: CERF funding is flexible, efficient, unearmarked, principled and transparent, supports cash programming, empowers humanitarian leadership and promotes a coordinated, inclusive and strategic humanitarian response.






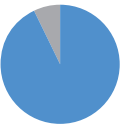

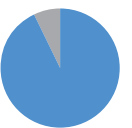

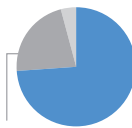
# WHAT IS CERF'S ADDED VALUE?

**CERF's value is not measured by how much money it raises, but by the number of lives it saves.**

To assess its added value on the ground, the CERF secretariat systematically gathers and analysis evidence through independent expert studies and partner feedback. In addition to information on people assisted and humanitarian results achieved with CERF funds, Resident Coordinators / Humanitarian Coordinators (RC/HCs) and UN agencies are asked to assess CERF's contribution to the below four objectives in their reports on the use of CERF funds.

Since 2013, RC/HCs have assessed each allocation against CERF's key objectives as follows:

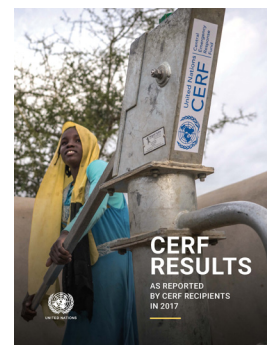
## RESIDENT COORDINATOR/ HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR'S FEEDBACK

 <b>Fast</b> Fast delivery of assistance to people in need	Did CERF funds lead to fast delivery of assistance to beneficiaries?  <b>84% Yes</b> 16% partially
 <b>Timely</b> Better response to time-critical humanitarian needs	Did CERF funds help respond to time-critical needs?  <b>93% Yes</b> 7% partially
 <b>Coherent</b> Improved coordination among humanitarian community	Did CERF improve coordination among the humanitarian community?  <b>97% Yes</b> 3% partially
 <b>Catalytic</b> Leveraging additional resources from other sources	Did CERF help improve resource mobilization from other sources?  <b>74% Yes</b> 22% partially 4% No

## CERF allocation windows

At least two thirds of CERF allocations are intended for disbursement through its Rapid Response window (RR). Allocations from this window promote early response to humanitarian needs by funding critical, life-saving humanitarian activities in the initial stages of a new humanitarian crises or in the case of a significant deterioration of an existing emergency.

Up to one third of CERF's allocations are intended for underfunded emergencies through its Underfunded Emergencies window (UFE). These allocations are made in two rounds during the year, and they allow partners to carry out life-saving activities in places where humanitarian responses are severely underfunded.



For more details about results achieved see CERF's results report at

<http://bit.ly/CERFResultsReport>



The CERF is an invaluable humanitarian financing instrument. It **enables needs-based** and life-saving support to people affected by humanitarian crises. I believe that the CERF would have an even **greater impact** if its capacity to support early humanitarian action was further strengthened. **Acting early saves lives, mitigates human suffering and reduces the cost** of the humanitarian response. The CERF should become a crucial financing tool to better anticipate crises and disasters in addition to responding to them - shaping a forward-looking humanitarian system.”

—Heiko Maas, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany

Sweden is a proud, long-standing, leading donor to the CERF and is impressed by results on **speed, transparency and impact**.

—Isabella Lövin, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden

A high level of **transparency and accountability** makes CERF an attractive funding mechanism to donors aiming at saving lives and assisting affected populations diligently and effectively. CERF does not only quickly catalyze further humanitarian assistance, it also supports under-funded and neglected crises. With its **comprehensive approach**, CERF counts the State of Qatar to its continued supporters since 2010.

—Mr. Khalifa bin Jassem Al-Kuwari, Director General of Qatar Fund for Development

Oftentimes, support from CERF is the **only** thing that keeps us running. We're thankful to CERF, and to all of the donors who provide resources for this **global** pooled fund, for enabling us to continue to provide **life-saving** health services, even under these extremely difficult circumstances.

—Dr. Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative in Libya

CERF is a **lifeline** for people caught up in crises that don't make the headlines but where **needs** are just as **urgent**.

—António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General

CERF was widely recognised by recipient agencies and their partners as a **timely** and **critical** support in all five countries and there were numerous examples where CERF played a key role in supporting start-up of operations for activities in **life-saving** sectors while at the same time **reinforcing** the role of the RC/HC and other **humanitarian** coordination systems.

—Independent Review of the Value Added of the CERF Fund in the Countries Affected by the South Sudan Crisis

Overall, the CERF rapid response window contributed to enhancing WFP's capacity to respond **rapidly** to **unforeseen** needs.

—WFP's Pooled Fund Evaluation

CERF funding was instrumental in **kick-starting life-saving** assistance and thereby enabled participating agencies to demonstrate results, which helped **mobilize** visibility and interest for the refugee response, leading to substantial **further funding**.

—Rwanda RC/HC Report

CERF acted as a **catalyst**. It is an act of **trust** by the donors in the ability the United Nations and agencies to **prioritize** in the most **neglected** situations. CERF is **vital** and UNHCR supports the expansion of CERF to \$1B.

—Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

CERF has substantially contributed to improving **coordination** at all levels among UN agencies, local NGOs, Government, local authorities, health centers and other stakeholders.

—Honduras RC/HC Report

CERF is bringing **life-saving reproductive health** services closer to the beneficiaries, reducing significantly travel time for the provision of emergency care.

—Bangladesh RC/HC Report

... Livelihoods are people's best defence against famine and this \$22 million loan from CERF was **critical** to FAO's **famine prevention** and drought response in Somalia...

—Daniel Gustafson, FAO Deputy Director-General

UNICEF cannot do all that we do without CERF and its generous donors. Since its establishment, CERF has supported UNICEF's humanitarian response in almost **100 countries**, helping us **provide millions of children** with critical life-saving assistance in their time of need. We renew our call for a larger and more robust CERF – **the most effective way** to serve the most vulnerable children, wherever they live.

—Henrietta H. Fore, Executive Director of United Nations Children's Fund



# CERF IN ACTION

From earthquakes, storms and droughts to displacement and disruption of basic services, supporting responses to natural disasters and conflicts remains central to CERF's work. Crises have grown more severe, protracted and complex, as can be seen in the "Mega-Crises" in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, as well as catastrophic storms and widespread floods that expand across hundreds of communities. Along with these, there are also protracted and neglected emergencies such as in Afghanistan, the Lake Chad Basin and the Horn of Africa. Every emergency is unique, but all have two things in common: great human suffering and a need for resources to alleviate that suffering. **CERF as the essential enabler of global humanitarian action** allows country teams to kick-start relief efforts immediately in a coordinated and prioritized response through a vast network of partners wherever and whenever a new crisis emerges. It also helps scale-up and sustain protracted relief operations to avoid critical gaps when no other funding is available.

## Famine Prevention

In 2017, CERF was one of the first responders to warning signs in **north-east Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia** and **Yemen**, where more than **20 million people were facing near famine conditions**. CERF released **\$128 million** to support the most critical early action and life-saving activities prioritized by the humanitarian team on the ground, making it one of the largest funding sources for the four affected countries in the early stages of the response:

- In north-east **Nigeria**, CERF allocated **\$32 million** to reach approximately 1.3 million people affected by Boko Haram-related violence and food insecurity with emergency assistance, services and the establishment of humanitarian hubs to enable operations.
- In **Somalia**, CERF allocated **\$33 million** to help more than 500,000 people affected by conflict and drought in Puntland, Somaliland and South Central. During this time, FAO also received and repaid a loan of \$22 million to ensure a scale-up of famine prevention.
- In **Yemen**, CERF allocated **\$26 million** to famine prevention and cholera response, focusing on the provision of food, nutrition and health supplies, as well as necessary logistical and security support for all humanitarian partners.
- In **South Sudan**, CERF allocated **\$16 million** to support humanitarian action in locations where famine or elevated risk of famine had been declared - as well as urgent needs in areas of new and/or active conflict.

## Natural Disasters

CERF has been fast to respond when disaster strikes, **allocating emergency funding in a matter of days following a 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck Ecuador** in April 2016 and **after Hurricane Irma and Maria hit the Caribbean region** in September 2017. CERF has also been one of the **first and largest supporters of early humanitarian action in response to El Niño**. From mid-2015 to end of 2016, CERF disbursed **\$118 million**

FROM 2006 TO 2018 CERF HAS ALLOCATED SOME **\$5.5 BILLION** TO OVER **100 COUNTRIES & TERRITORIES**


2005/**2006**

15 DEC 2005  
CERF established by UN General Assembly resolution 60/124

**2007**

**DRC, Bangladesh and Sudan** are **top recipients** of CERF funds for the year (**\$104M** combined)


**2008**

 **Haiti hurricanes and tropical storm** - CERF allocates over **\$9M** in response to three hurricanes; Fay, Gustav and Ike and Tropical Storm Hanna  
CERF surpasses the annual **\$450M** funding target by **\$3M**  
**Surging food prices** - CERF allocates **\$100M**, reaching **17.8M** people in **26** countries

**2009**

 **Horn of Africa** - CERF allocates **\$132M**, one third of all 2009 funding to address drought and high food prices in the region  
CERF sees the highest number of Member States and observers contributing in a single year:  
**84**

**2010**

 **Haiti earthquake** - CERF allocates **\$10M** within 10 hours. An additional **\$15M** allocation is made four days later  
In 2010, CERF ensures that  
**22M** people receive food aid  
**19M** people receive water and sanitation aid  
**19.5M** children immunized  
**1.5M** people receive emergency shelter

**2011**

 **Horn of Africa drought** - CERF allocates more than **\$128M** for response in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia

to support humanitarian response to El Niño in 19 countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific Islands. CERF's support to global humanitarian action against El Niño phenomena illustrates the fund's global reach and its important role in triggering timely response to emergencies while other funding is being raised.

## Underfunded Emergencies (UFE)

CERF is a **lifeline for the world's most underfunded and protracted crises** that fail to attract adequate resources. In January 2018, CERF released \$100 million to sustain aid operations in nine countries. This allocation is reaching more than 4 million people in emergencies where levels of vulnerability are alarmingly high but funding remains critically low, and is targeting populations affected by conflict in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Pakistan and the Philippines. In addition to these crises, funding to Tanzania and Uganda is assisting refugees and asylum seekers and in Eritrea funding is addressing food insecurity and malnutrition needs for the local and refugee population. In Haiti, funding is assisting those affected by disease outbreaks and recent hurricanes. The Emergency Relief Coordinator selects these emergencies based on a rigorous analysis and consultation process to ensure funding targets crises with the highest levels of risk, vulnerability and humanitarian needs. The second round of UFE planned for 2018 will be \$80 million, the largest amount released for a second round in CERF's history.

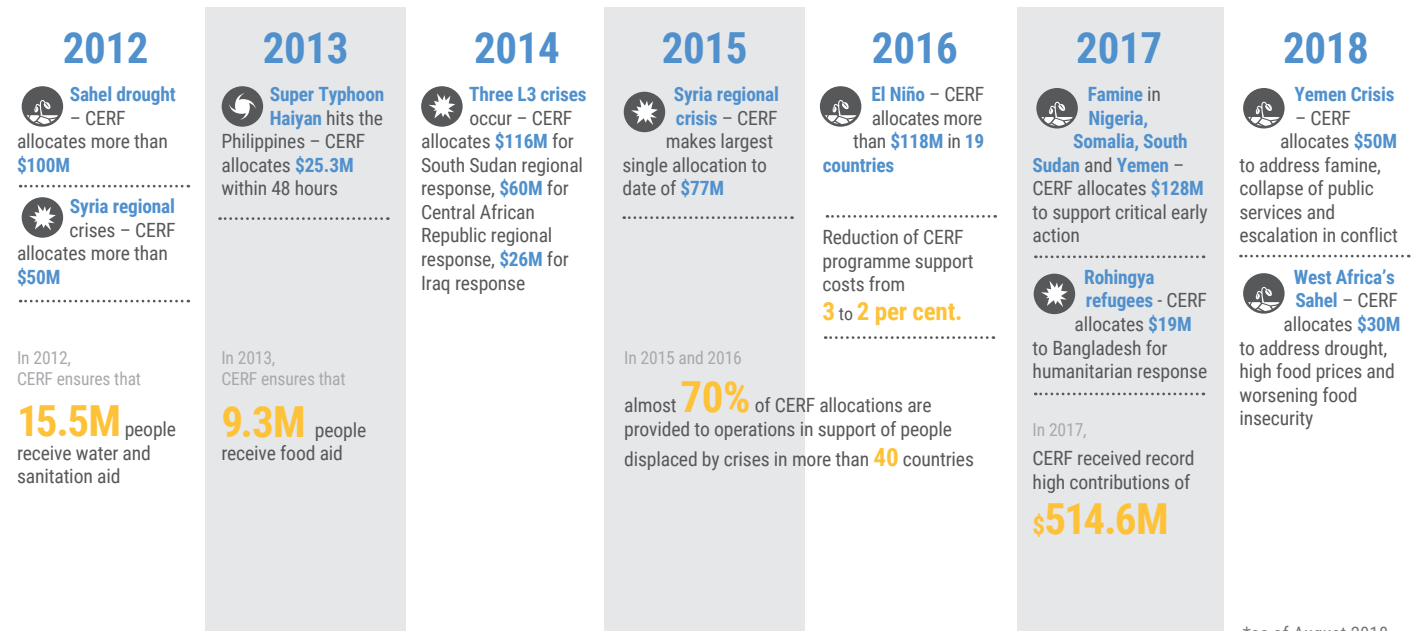
## "Mega-Crises"

CERF has supported the scale-up of humanitarian operations at critical junctures in 'Mega Crises'. Since 2016, Yemen has received over \$90 million from CERF to stave off the growing risk of famine, mitigate the impact of an accelerated collapse of public services and assist civilians affected by the recent escalation in conflict. In 2017 and 2018, CERF allocated more than \$75 million to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the children and families affected by armed conflict and insecurity in the country.

## Displacement

With the rising number of displaced people, since 2011 CERF has allocated over **\$1.5 billion** to support millions of people forced from their homes by violence, instability and natural disasters. In 2015 and 2016, **two-thirds of CERF allocations** supported operations targeting **IDPs, refugees and host communities**.

This trend continues in 2018. In response to the world's fastest growing refugee crisis, CERF allocated nearly \$25 million in 2017 and 2018 to assist the most vulnerable people fleeing violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State and their host communities in Bangladesh.



\*as of August 2018

# CERF STRETCHED TO THE LIMIT

The humanitarian reality in which CERF operates today is very different from when it was established over a decade ago. Due to an increase in frequency, scale and magnitude of humanitarian emergencies, the number of people in need has tripled since 2006. In 2018, \$25.4 billion is required to provide assistance to the most vulnerable, compared to \$5.2 billion in 2006.

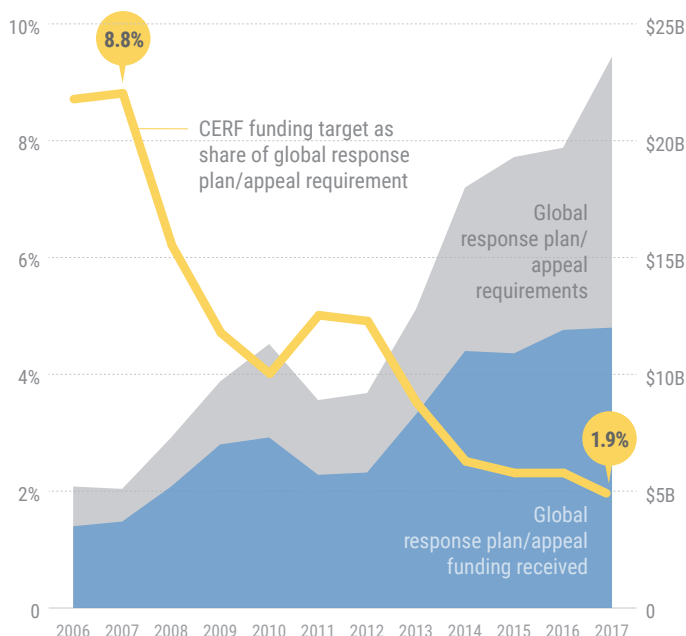
By contrast, CERF's annual funding target of \$450 million remained unchanged, for over a decade which means that the share of CERF funding against the global requirements decreased from 8.7 per cent in 2006 to 1.9 per cent in 2017.<sup>1</sup>

As a result, CERF funding has been spread thinner. In 2017, CERF's support was stretched to the maximum with early and catalytic funding disbursed, amongst others, to partners in the four countries facing famine (Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen), to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Congolese refugees in Angola, the Rohingya refugee crisis and multiple hurricanes in the Caribbean.

As many protracted emergencies fail to attract sufficient donor funding to meet humanitarian needs, CERF is an increasingly important donor to underfunded crises. But in the summer of

1 FTS and 2017 global humanitarian overview. <http://interactive.unocha.org/publication/globalhumanitarianoverview/>

## CERF FUNDING TARGET AS A SHARE OF GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN NEEDS



Source: Financial Tracking Service (FTS) as of 13 November 2017

2017 CERF's resources had been so stretched that the second semi-annual CERF allocation to underfunded emergencies was at risk of being cancelled and ultimately had to be reduced from \$50 to \$45 million. The \$5 million that CERF did not have available could have enabled additional life-saving assistance. For instance, a \$5 million allocation to Rwanda last year led to the delivery of critical aid to 132,000 people.

Due to the overwhelming number of requests and the limited amount of funding available, reducing amounts allocated to individual crises has become a necessity for CERF. For example:

- In Sudan, a funding request of \$9 million for assistance to conflict-affected people had to be lowered to \$5 million, resulting in **halving the rations of general food distribution** and **reducing** the number of **households assisted** with livelihood support by a third.
- In Nigeria, \$10 million was allocated to famine prevention although \$20 million was needed, so the planned response component providing **assistance for returning displaced people could not be funded**.
- In Palestine, a request for \$8 million had to be reduced to \$4 million, meaning the supply of **fuel** powering medical facilities could only be provided **for three months instead of six**.
- In Cuba, \$8 million was allocated, which was \$2.4 million short of the request. This meant that 8,000 people were at risk of being left **without adequate shelter**, 25,000 people could **not access vital reproductive health services** like safe delivery equipment, 56,000 people **did not receive water purification tablets** and safe water storage supplies, and 559,000 people had to survive on **food rations reduced from 30 to 22 days**.

Despite challenges in meeting increasing requests for emergency funding, CERF's allocations were essential and life-saving in the situations above and in the many other crises that CERF responded to in 2017. During the remainder of the year, donors stepped up and provided additional contributions to CERF. A total of 12 donors collectively contributed nearly \$100 million on top of their initial 2017 pledges resulting in CERF reaching a record-high income. A total of \$514.6 million was received for 2017 from 56 Member States and observers, a regional authority and private sector donors. This significant surpassing of the \$450 million funding target for 2017 allowed CERF to make exceptional allocations in the early part of 2018 and will ensure the largest ever UFE allocation of \$80 million in the second 2018 UFE round. But more funding is needed so that CERF can continue to enable a timely, robust and strategic humanitarian response and efficiently fulfil its mandate as the UN's global emergency fund.



# A CERF FIT FOR TODAY AND THE FUTURE

Recognizing the critical need for increased and more strategic humanitarian financing, and considering CERF's impressive track record in enabling the provision of life-saving assistance to crisis-affected people, the UN General Assembly has endorsed the Secretary-General's call to expand CERF's annual funding target to \$1 billion. In resolution A/RES/71/127, the General Assembly called on all Member States and the private sector to ensure a fully funded \$1 billion CERF that is commensurate with today's humanitarian needs.

An expanded CERF can make larger allocations and have greater coverage; hence it will be able to better address today's humanitarian needs. It will have a greater impact, in line with prioritized needs, while maintaining its focus, scope and speed. In addition, an expansion of the fund will multiply its strategic and catalytic role in the provision of humanitarian funding so that more people are protected and more lives are saved.

## A larger CERF will:



Enable more comprehensive humanitarian response through larger allocations reflective of the scale and range of needs.



Allow for more timely humanitarian response, as more funding will be frontloaded, so more people will be reached with time-critical life-saving assistance in the immediate aftermath of crises.



Enable greater strategic impact, as a broader humanitarian response will be based on joint assessment and prioritization of needs by humanitarian organizations on the ground.



Lead to a better coordinated humanitarian response by further empowering RC/HCs to bring key partners together to address needs coherently.



Have greater catalytic impact, as mobilizing funds from other sources will be easier for humanitarian partners once comprehensive response activities are kick-started.



Expand essential, life-saving support to smaller and less visible crises that receive little donor attention, and to which CERF often is the top or only humanitarian donor.



Capitalize on economies of scale to achieve higher efficiency and greater value for money as transaction costs decrease with larger CERF allocations.

A larger CERF can also address emerging humanitarian challenges differently and better than at current funding levels. New strategies and approaches will be developed in close consultation with partners and in sync with increasing funding available to CERF. These approaches will build on CERF's existing strengths and experiences.

## New CERF strategies could:



Strengthen strategic response to **regional emergencies**, which pose challenges for country-based humanitarian coordination systems. As the UN's global emergency fund, CERF is uniquely placed to respond coherently to regional funding requirements by taking a broader perspective on needs and priorities.



Expand its role in enabling **early action in sudden and slow onset natural disasters** by allocating more resources earlier based on early warning indicators and triggers. This will not only save more lives but will also reduce humanitarian response requirements in predictable emergencies.



Engage more strategically and with greater impact in **large-scale, protracted emergencies** through larger and more predictable CERF allocations, which take into consideration country-specific financing strategies and New Way of Working priorities.



More clearly define CERF's role in responding to **disease outbreaks**, including identifying what a larger CERF could potentially do differently to facilitate a more robust and predictable response to such outbreaks.

# IT'S EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

While CERF was established as a “Fund for all, by all”, Member States have accounted for 99.7 per cent of all donations since 2006; the top 10 donors have provided almost 90 per cent of all contributions received and the top 20 donors have accounted for more than 98 per cent. Reliance upon a few donors makes the fund vulnerable to the risks pertaining to domestic policy shifts.

The CERF secretariat consistently seeks to broaden the diversity of donors and expand its financial support base while still maintaining and where possible increasing funding from CERF’s strongest supporters. New and additional support from a diverse range of Member States and regional and private entities

is needed for the fund to be able to provide urgent ‘first aid’ to people trapped in the midst of the worst natural catastrophes and human atrocities of our lifetime. Currently there are 134 million people requiring urgent humanitarian assistance. A \$1 billion CERF is an ambitious goal, but essential when we consider the many lives that depend on its success.

A strong CERF able to deliver on its mandate is every Member State’s responsibility and a step towards our commitments to leave no one behind and reach the furthest left behind first.

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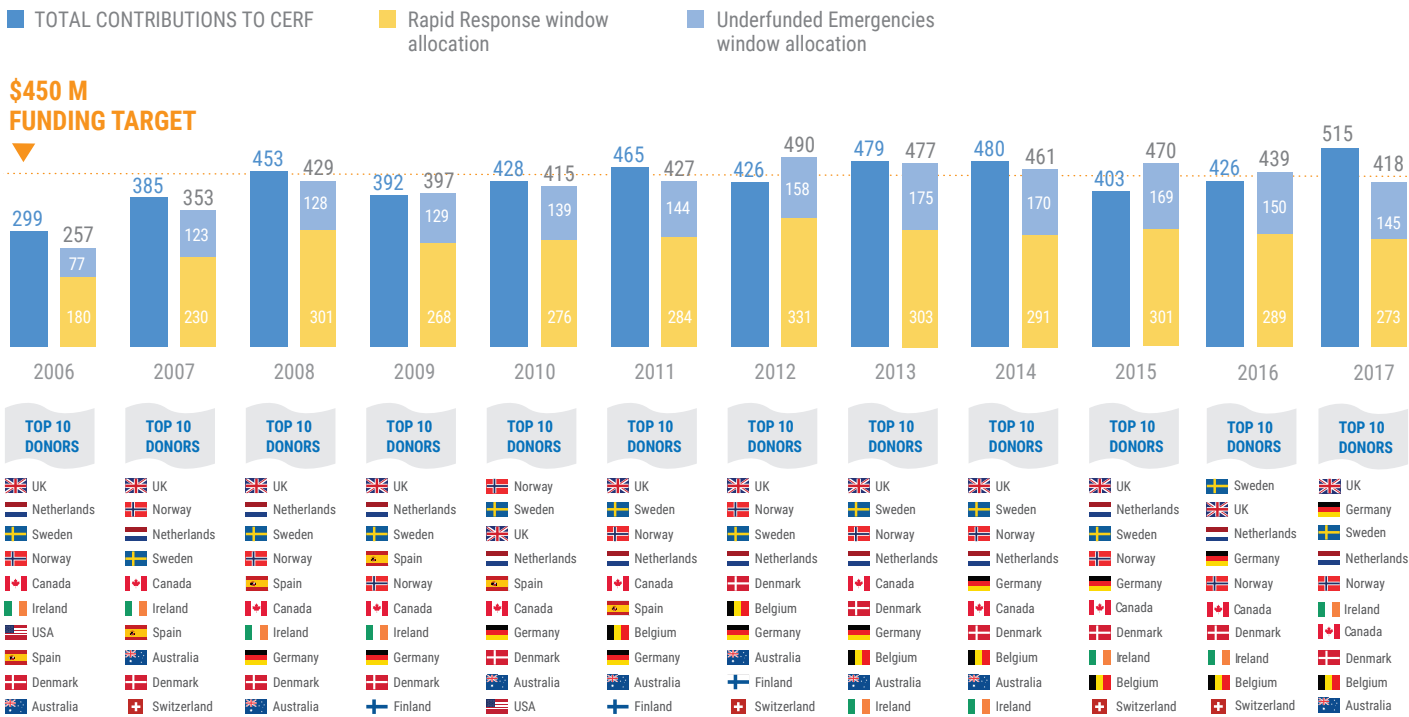
A strong United Nations needs a strong, reliable CERF to reach people trapped in crises and to respond to the needs of those furthest behind.

—UN Secretary-General, António Guterres

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## CERF FUNDING (2006-2017)

in US\$ million



# Donate to CERF

## Member States, observers and other authorities

OCHA Donor Relations Section in  
Geneva, Switzerland

**Mose An**

Humanitarian Affairs Officer

E-mail: [an@un.org](mailto:an@un.org)

Tel: +41 22 917 1091

OCHA External Relations and Partnerships  
Section in New York, United States

**Chunyao Yi (Ms)**

Humanitarian Affairs Officer

E-mail: [yil@un.org](mailto:yil@un.org)

Tel: +1 917 367 2098

## Private donors and individuals

### 1 Online donations

Visit: <http://bit.ly/GIVETOCERF>

### 2 Bank transfer to CERF

Contact the CERF secretariat in New York,  
United States

**Chulmin Kang**

Chief, Finance and  
Administration Unit

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**Zhendai Yang**

Finance Officer

[yangz@un.org](mailto:yangz@un.org)

+1 212 963 3193

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



United Nations  
**CERF**

Central  
Emergency  
Response  
Fund

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**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.**

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**#InvestInHumanity**