



Basic Guidance on Drought Submissions for CERF Rapid Response

This brief aims to provide some basic guidance for country teams that are in the preparatory stages of a drought response and considering accessing funding from CERF's rapid response window. Understanding that every CERF application is unique and based on country level needs, the below outlines some standard parameters on CERF rapid response eligibility requirements, and what maybe or may not be suitable for CERF funding.

I. Eligibility Requirements

The CERF rapid response window funds: i) sudden onset emergencies, ii) significant deteriorations in existing emergencies and ii) time-critical interventions.

Trigger: While identifying the trigger for most rapid onset emergencies such as an earthquake or a flood is straightforward, it is more challenging to do so for a slow onset drought emergency. In order to demonstrate eligibility for a drought the situation must be significantly worse than usual. This can be demonstrated by comparing current data¹ (for example rainfall, crop production/crop loss, malnutrition prevalence) this year against a comparable time in the previous year or compared to a 5 year average. And/or, compare the current available data to a previous drought year. This can help demonstrate that while the full impact of drought has not yet materialized drought is imminent and a time critical response can help mitigate a humanitarian crisis. CERF must balance timely funding on the one hand, but requires evidence of a looming food security crisis. ***CERF does not fund preparedness – therefore evidence of a deteriorating situation must be provided. CERF's niche is in earliest part of the response.***

Humanitarian impact: Use data or the most recent available assessments at household level to describe how the data or drought conditions mentioned above translate into a crisis for the affected population. This can include, indicators of water usage, food consumption, coping strategies, nutrition admission rates etc.

Capacity: The current response is over and beyond the 'normal' situation in country. Demonstrate that the emergency is beyond the capacity of the Government/UN agencies to respond. Where, how and/or why is capacity overwhelmed or lacking?

II. Approval Requirements:

Coordinated Response: The package should include an integrated response with several sectors/agencies working together towards the same objective(s). Single agency submissions are not recommended.

Assessments: The response should be based on recent needs assessments. If joint missions, coordinated needs assessments have been conducted, the findings and how it's shaped the response should be summarized.

Response linked to current drought/food insecurity: All sectors, projects and activities must directly respond to the needs arising from the current drought. The HCT should not prioritize sectors or activities that respond

¹ This is not a comprehensive list of indicators but is indicative of the kind of data that should be used.



to pre-existing needs or those that address chronic issues – these activities should be funded through regular programme funds.

Amount Requested: CERF rapid response should only ‘jump start’ responses rather than fully fund projects or funding the gap or shortfalls. CERF cannot fund 100% or even a large share of project requirements. Rather, the most time critical and lifesaving² projects/activities should be identified and prioritized by the HCT and put forward for CERF rapid response funding. Typically CERF funds around 10% of the requirements, but this may vary depending on the context and situation. Only a portion of ‘new’ or ‘additional’ needs should be requested. For example if 1 million people were affected in 2014 or are chronically affected, and 1.5 million are assessed as currently and severely affected by the drought and require assistance only the ‘additional’ caseload of 500,000 can be supported through CERF.

Projects or activities that require long lead times to set up, or expect impact several months later are not appropriate for rapid response funds.

III. Tips & suggestions

- **New Needs:** CERF request should be based on ‘additional’ needs only. CERF funds cannot go towards ongoing programmes (addressing pre-existing needs) and therefore applications should demonstrate that planning for CERF is based on **a portion of new needs (additional caseload, newly targeted geographic areas, new activities)**
- **Be selective:** In which activities are best suited for CERF funds. For example in nutrition, UNICEF may include activities related to the immediate treatment of severe acute malnutrition (rapid procurement and distribution of RUTF) rather than large scale sensitization campaigns for nutrition/WASH or capacity building targeting health workers which are less suitable for CERF rapid response funding. WFP may consider including general food distributions rather than asset creation activities and FAO may consider quick impact activities such as distribution of quick maturing seeds rather than activities focusing on the uptake of drought tolerant crops. **Thought should go into how to maximize impact of the CERF grant.**
- **Prioritize and Focus:** Restrict scope of the application to prioritized sectors and activities only. Do not present a wish list of activities to be included, keeping in mind the interest of affected population.
- **Ensure coherence in the application:** Describe how projects are inter related and complement one another. Are the same beneficiaries being targeted by multiple sectors for maximum impact? What is the link between food and nutrition sector activities implemented by WFP and UNICEF or what linkages are evident between food assistance and agriculture activities implemented by WFP and FAO? These should be described in the chapeau and in individual projects.
- **Keep it simple:** Each sector should focus on a key objective and prioritize only one or two activities that are urgent and avoid secondary and tertiary objectives and long list of activities.
- **Implementation timeframe:** Keep activities to 4 – 5 months, particularly where funds will be transferred to Government, NGO’s or any implementing partner. The 6 month maximum for rapid response is from disbursement date and activities must be completed and all funds expended by that time. Time to transfer funds and any other foreseeable challenges should be factored into planning as no-cost-extensions will not be granted for administrative or implementation delays.

² Please refer to CERF’s lifesaving criteria document available on CERF’s website: <http://www.unocha.org/cerf/>