



OCHA

OCHA Humanitarian Pooled Funds in Action Empowering locally-led humanitarian response

In times of crisis, local and national partners play a fundamental role as frontline responders, drawing on their proximity to and understanding of affected communities to swiftly address urgent humanitarian needs. They also remain actively engaged with communities after crises occur and are critical to ensuring a lasting impact on the ground.

The UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Country-based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) play a pivotal role in advancing locally-led humanitarian responses. While CBPFs stand out as the primary tool for empowering local and national actors, CERF is also playing an important role in helping translate the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's commitment to advancing localization, on the ground.

OCHA-managed Pooled Funds...

Promote aid that is as local as possible, and as international as necessary. The Funds recognize the unique strengths of local and national partners, including their role in swift and efficient delivery of life-critical assistance during crises.

Support partnerships that enable an inclusive, locally-led response. The Funds empower local responders to be strategic partners in decision-making. This enables a more inclusive humanitarian response, that reflects the insights and priorities of communities and local partners.

Strengthen local and national actors. The Funds actively invest in local and national organizations by providing financial support, ensuring funding meets their specific needs, developing their capacity, and elevating their profile within the humanitarian response system.

In 2023,



40%

of CBPF allocations (\$419M) went to local and national partners

31%

of CBPF allocations went directly to local and national partners



900

local and national partners supported by CBPFs

23%

of CBPFs Advisory Board members were local and national actors

CBPFs provided training for nearly



930

local and national NGOs



265

women-led and women's rights organizations

A strategic approach to locally-led humanitarian action

OCHA-managed Pooled Funds recognize that strong relationships with local and national partners improve the quality of humanitarian assistance, enhance knowledge sharing, strengthen accountability to affected communities, and increase access and cost-effectiveness. In line with the Grand Bargain commitments, **CBPFs advance locally-led response through a multi-faceted approach:**



Quantity of funding



Quality of funding



Governance and partnerships



Capacity Development



Communications and visibility

Quantity of funding

Under the steer of UN humanitarian leadership, **CBPFs seek to maximize funding to local and national partners.** Each Fund develops a localization strategy to guide its efforts to establish new partners on the ground. It does so while maintaining rigorous operational and risk management standards. In 2023, local and national partners received 40 per cent of CBPF funding (US\$422 million) – a more than two-fold increase from 2016 (\$189 million). Of this, 31 per cent (\$336 million) of CBPF funding went directly to local and national partners.

Quality of funding

CBPFs prioritize the quality of funding to local and national partners, upholding high standards in allocating resources to foster constructive and equitable partnerships. The Funds recognize the spectrum of costs necessary for project implementation – ranging from staffing to security and other support expenses and offer budget flexibility to help partners adapt to dynamic conditions on the ground. The Funds also call on partners to fairly share overheads with sub-partners.

Governance and partnerships

CBPFs consistently strive to enhance the meaningful engagement of local and national partners in their governance and decision-making processes. The Fund Advisory Boards comprise a well-balanced representation of local and national partners, international NGOs, and UN agencies. They have also increasingly included women-led organizations and organizations of people with disabilities. Local and national partners are also integral to project review and selection processes.

Learn more

- [About OCHA's humanitarian financing mandate](#)
- [About CBPFs](#)
- [About CERF](#)
- [OCHA Pooled Funds Impact Story Hub](#)
- [About the Grand Bargain](#)
- [CBPF Global Guidelines \(2022\)](#)
- [The NGO perspective on CBPFs \(joint NRC-UN study\)](#)

To access, scan here:



Capacity development

CBPFs help enhance the institutional and technical capacities of local and national partners. The Funds work with partners towards meeting CBPF eligibility standards, advising them on policies and systems that can help reinforce their management of donor resources. The Funds also support partners during project development and implementation, and offer training on thematic issues that help ensure quality programming. Through this work OCHA seeks to improve the ability and autonomy of local and national NGOs to access new and additional funding.

Communications and visibility

OCHA seeks to consistently raise the profile of local and national partners, to showcase their achievements and to help them build wider partnerships. Stories of impact can be found on various OCHA channels, including in the pooled fund [Annual Reports](#).

CERF and localization

While CERF can only directly fund UN agencies, it is increasingly instrumental in advancing localization efforts, while saving lives. The Emergency Relief Coordinator has asked UN and humanitarian leaders on the ground to involve local and national actors in strategic decision-making on the use of Funds, whenever possible. He has also asked UN and humanitarian leaders to set ambitious targets for sub-granting CERF funds to local and national partners, and to help strengthen partnership arrangements between CERF recipient agencies and their implementing partners.



20%

of CERF funding (\$140M) was sub-granted to local and national partners

About OCHA-managed Pooled Funds

Managed by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Country-based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) are dedicated to saving lives, addressing critical humanitarian needs, and enhancing the efficiency and impact of humanitarian action globally. Combining CERF's rapid, global response capabilities with CBPFs' localized, context-specific approach, the Pooled Funds respond to needs and support solutions to collective, humanitarian challenges. They play a pivotal role in advancing key Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) policy priorities towards the betterment of aid, prioritizing those most in need. Collectively, OCHA Pooled Funds channel some \$1.75 billion from national governments, foundations, and private individuals to the world's most vulnerable populations.