



Key Messages on the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) November 2024

The following are a menu of key messages that can be used in advocacy and outreach efforts on the added value of CERF with some targeted messages for the different regions. They can be used selectively depending on the background of each interlocutor.

Overall points on the added value of CERF:

- **CERF is fast and expands donor's global reach.** Allocating funding within hours, CERF enables partners to quickly scale up. Because of its unearmarked nature, resources from contributing member states enable response in emergencies around the world.
- **CERF is a cost-efficient global emergency relief mechanism.** Donors to CERF save on the management costs of their support. By pooling contributions, only one entity bears the cost of reviewing and selecting priority projects, identifying partners with comparative advantage, planning for best impact, oversight, and risk management.
- **CERF funds the most relevant and impactful projects.** Funding decisions are made on the front lines by aid partners under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator and directly support the most critical components of humanitarian responses based on humanitarian prioritised need.
- **CERF fosters partnership building.** While CERF directly funds UN agencies, CERF also supports localized humanitarian action, with funds implemented through national and local aid partners.
- **CERF is an easy one-stop shop to support humanitarian action.** Donors who fund CERF achieve bigger impact than bilateral funding by generating critical mass and leverage CERF's global reach.
- **CERF is a reliable and trusted tool, managed according to the highest standards of transparency, accountability and risk-management.** CERF is ranked the top 10th most transparent international aid entity among the 1,550 organizations publishing their data (ref; IATI). All information is available live on [OCHA - CERF DATA HUB](#).
- **CERF benefits from the expert advice of both affected and donor Member States.** The CERF Advisory Group is an independent body, comprised of diverse individuals drawn from donor and affected Member States nominated by the UN Secretary General.
- **CERF promotes innovative approaches for improved, accountable and dignified humanitarian action, notably via Early and Anticipatory Action.** The establishment of anticipatory action (AA) frameworks ensures the delivery of assistance ahead of predictable emergencies and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the response. CERF aims to allocate 10% of its annual funding to support coordinated AA.
- **CERF is a leading global humanitarian funding tool to respond to natural disasters and climate-related humanitarian emergencies.** In recent years, the proportion of CERF funding for climate-related response has increased to close to a third of its annual allocations. The CERF Climate Action Account launched at the end of 2023 allows the fund to further scale-up climate-related humanitarian action.
- **CERF operates in complementarity with other sources of funding, including Country Based Pooled Funds,** as well as peace building and stabilization funding wherever they co-exist.

Specific to the Asia Pacific region

- **CERF is a major humanitarian player in Asia Pacific.** In 2023, CERF allocated \$107 million to life-saving activities for 3.8 million people across Asia and the Pacific, including in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Vanuatu to address displacement, conflict, climate-related and natural disasters. Total funding to the Asia and Pacific region since CERF's inception in 2006 is almost \$1.4 billion.
- **CERF advances accountable and dignified humanitarian action through Anticipatory Action, which is crucial in disaster-prone regions like Asia Pacific.** The establishment of anticipatory action (AA) frameworks ensures the delivery of assistance ahead of predictable emergencies, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian actions. CERF aims to allocate 10% of its annual funding to support coordinated AA. Currently, \$108.2 million is pre-arranged through AA frameworks, including \$24.7 million in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Fiji, Nepal, and the Philippines for climate-related shocks such as drought, floods, tropical storms, and typhoons. In July and September 2024, AA triggers for floods were reached in Bangladesh and Nepal, respectively, prompting the immediate disbursement of \$6.2 million in pre-arranged CERF funds for Bangladesh and \$3.4 million for Nepal.
- **CERF was proactive in ensuring early and effective responses to El Niño-driven events.** In its approach to the 2023-2024 El Niño, CERF allocated over \$70 million in early action and rapid response funding across 13 countries. This included \$2.1 million for Timor-Leste in January 2024 to mitigate anticipated droughts and related food insecurity, water scarcity, and malnutrition, and \$1.6 million for Mongolia in April 2024 to kickstart life-saving activities in response to the harsh winter, or *dzud*.
- **With the Asia Pacific being the region hardest hit by climate change and extreme weather events, the CERF Climate Action Account provides a channel to enable CERF to continue providing rapid funding** in response to the humanitarian impacts of climate related disasters. In October 2024, CERF allocated \$2 million to kickstart the humanitarian response to Typhoon Yagi - the strongest Typhoon experienced in Viet Nam's in 30 years, - supporting government efforts to assist those affected by severe flooding, landslides, and extensive damage to infrastructure.

Specific to the Latin America and Caribbean region

- **CERF is an impactful humanitarian player in the Latin America and Caribbean region.** In 2023, CERF allocated \$58 million to over 1.7 million people in need of life-saving assistance across the region, including in Colombia, Haiti, Honduras, Panama, and Venezuela to address displacement, conflict, floods and economic disruption. Total funding to the Latin American and Caribbean region since CERF's inception in 2006 amounts to \$578 million.
- **CERF promotes innovative approaches for improved, accountable and dignified humanitarian action via Early and Anticipatory Action.** The establishment of anticipatory action (AA) frameworks ensures the delivery of assistance ahead of predictable emergencies and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the response. CERF aims to allocate 10% of its annual funding to support coordinated AA. Currently, \$108.2 million is pre-arranged through AA frameworks, including \$16.5 million in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti for droughts and tropical storms.
- **CERF funding enables comprehensive needs-based responses to humanitarian crises.** For instance, following a sudden surge in violence in Haiti since the end of February, CERF allocated \$12 million from its Rapid Response window to provide immediate, life-saving assistance across multiple sectors. To sustain critical activities, an additional \$10.5 million was allocated in August through CERF's Underfunded Emergencies window, prioritizing

protection—particularly GBV—as well as food security and nutrition. This support was essential as funding levels for these sectors remained critically low.

- **With the Latin America and Caribbean region being hard hit by climate change and extreme weather events, the CERF Climate Action Account provides a channel to enable CERF to continue providing rapid funding** in response to the humanitarian impacts of climate related disasters. In response to Hurricane Beryl in July 2024, CERF allocated \$4 million within a day to kickstart humanitarian operations in Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Specific to the Africa region

- **CERF is a major humanitarian player in Africa.** In 2023, CERF allocated \$382 million across the continent, addressing humanitarian needs stemming from conflict, disease and climate shocks. This funding benefitted 19.8 million people, representing over half of the total people assisted with CERF funding in 2023. Sudan, the DRC and Ethiopia were among the five largest recipients of allocations globally. Total funding to the Africa region since CERF's inception in 2006 amounts to \$9.2 billion.
- **CERF promotes innovative approaches for improved, accountable and dignified humanitarian action via Anticipatory Action.** The establishment of anticipatory action (AA) frameworks ensures the delivery of assistance ahead of predictable emergencies and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the response. CERF aims to allocate 10% of its annual funding to support coordinated AA. Currently, \$108.2 million is pre-arranged through AA frameworks, including \$67 million in Burkina Faso, Chad, DRC, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique and Niger for drought, floods, storms and cholera. In October 2024, AA triggers for floods were reached in Chad, prompting CERF to disburse \$5 million in pre-arranged funds.
- **With Africa being hard hit by climate change and extreme weather events, the CERF Climate Action Account provides a channel to enable CERF to continue providing rapid funding** in response to the humanitarian impacts of climate-related disasters. To support communities affected by the most devastating floods in recent years in West, Central and East Africa, CERF has allocated \$56.5 million, including for Anticipatory Action, to support nine flood-affected countries (Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, DRC, Guinea, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan) to date in 2024. This amount exceeds the total CERF funding allocated to flood responses in these countries from 2020 to 2023.
- **CERF plays a critical role in addressing humanitarian needs arising from conflict, including food security.** In October 2024, as large parts of Sudan's population were on the brink of famine, CERF swiftly allocated \$25 million to address the food crisis in 19 priority locations, providing food assistance, health support, and WASH services. This allocation follows two others earlier this year, totaling \$41 million, with over 60% directed to food security responses. CERF has released over \$205 million to deliver lifesaving aid within Sudan and to neighboring countries impacted by the related displacement crisis, including the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Libya.

Additional Key Messages on CERF for the Private Sector:

- **CERF is the emergency Fund of the UN** Secretary General. It enables humanitarian responders to deliver life-saving assistance whenever and wherever crises strike.
- **CERF funds are distributed to United Nations agencies** like the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) that are active on the frontlines of a humanitarian emergency.
- **CERF funding allocations are decided by local experts** under the guidance of the UN Humanitarian and Resident Coordinators, the senior-most UN officials in countries experiencing humanitarian emergencies.

- **Awards are based on the best local data and timely information.** Humanitarian partners jointly assess and prioritize the most urgent humanitarian needs under the leadership of the UN, fostering coordination as well as collaboration and collective ownership of the emergency response.
- **Companies and individual donors can trust that CERF funds are only spent on urgent lifesaving assistance, and only given to trusted, vetted UN agencies.** All funds are spent in accordance with the strictest standards to ensure aid is not diverted.
- **Global reach: CERF funds reached nearly 33 million people in 40 countries in 2023.** Some \$668 million – mostly from governments – was channeled to the best placed humanitarian organizations in the most acute emergencies in the world.
- **CERF funding is quick,** with initial awards made within days of a sudden emergency, enabling very rapid response in a crisis and serving as a catalytic tool that then allows partners to leverage additional funding from government and private sources.