

Independent Review of the Added Value of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in Cuba and the eastern Caribbean for the Response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria

September 2017 – June 2018



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Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to affected communities
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community
CCRIF	The Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
EWS	Early Warning System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FTS	Financial Tracking Service
GNI	Gross National Income
HQ	Headquarters
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LTA	Long-term agreements
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-government Organization
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centres
NEP	National Employment Programme
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
ODA	Official development assistance
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PAF	Performance and Accountability Framework
PAMI	Programa Materno Infantil
PDM	Post-distribution monitoring
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
ROLAC	Regional Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RR	Rapid Response
RRM	Regional Response Mechanism
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNETE	United Nations Emergency Technical Team
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USD	United States Dollars
UNS	United Nations System
WHO/PAHO	World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization
WFP	World Food Program

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The constructive dialogue during this review and the openness to explore lessons learned was critical to understanding the context, especially given the relatively broad scope of the assessment and analysis.

This is an independent review and the authors assume responsibility for all opinions, recommendations and any unintentional errors that may appear in this report.

Executive Summary

The 2017 hurricane/storm season in the Caribbean produced 17 named storms of which 10 evolved into hurricanes, including 6 major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5). The strongest hurricanes made landfall in the region during September 2017 when hurricane Irma was followed by hurricane Maria two weeks later. They left behind several hundred dead and widespread destruction with a combined estimated economic loss of between USD 90 and USD 155 billion. A specific characteristic of these hurricanes that influenced the humanitarian response was the scale of devastation across the Caribbean region.

This review examined use of a total of USD 18,518,504 of rapid response funding provided by the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) covering seven countries and territories affected by the two hurricanes and included an analysis of use of lessons-learned from the response to Hurricane Matthew in Cuba during 2016. Given the differences in operating contexts between Cuba and small island states in the eastern Caribbean, this report is structured to provide an overall synthesis of CERF's support to the response with two separate reports attached as annexes, one reviewing the response to Hurricane Irma in Cuba and the other focusing on the response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the eastern Caribbean.

One of the main aims of this PAF review was to provide the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) with a performance assessment based on indicators in the 2015 version of CERF's Performance Accountability Framework (PAF). In addition to providing an analysis of CERF's added value to the humanitarian response in the Caribbean against these key indicators and benchmarks, this review also considered strategic questions related to broader policy issues. There were six questions¹ specific to this review:

1. *To what extent are CERF processes achieving key management benchmarks?*
2. *Have CERF-funded operations favoured specific results?*
3. *What has been CERF's role in crises with more limited donor response?*
4. *Given the challenges for fast response scale-up in countries with limited humanitarian presence, should there be pre-requisites for CERF funding based on an agency's implementation capacity?*
- 5a. *To what extent have lessons from hurricane Matthew been applied during the response to hurricane Irma in Cuba?*
- 5b. *What lessons can be drawn from providing an allocation that covers several countries and several Resident Coordinator (RC) areas of responsibility in the eastern Caribbean?*
6. *Does CERF have a role in anticipatory action for this type of crisis?*

The methodology for this review included desk research, semi-structured individual and group interviews, both remotely and during field visits, by one of the team members to Cuba during 11-16 February 2019 and by the other team member made field visits to Barbados, Dominica, the British Virgin Islands and Antigua & Barbuda during 17 November - 04 December 2018.

This review team found that CERF played an important role during the response, including creating a space for UN agencies to play meaningful roles as technical advisors and impartial humanitarian actors in these middle- and upper-income countries. This was the first time CERF had been used in the eastern Caribbean and the overall positive experience, supported by timely assessments by UNDAC teams, helped to strengthen coordination between the UN in-country, regional actors such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and governments. Four main conclusions emerged from findings relating to the achievements, challenges and areas for improvement for the different UN agencies who received CERF funding:

Conclusion 1. Value-added of larger CERF allocations – due to the particular context of the countries affected that limited the amount of other donor funding, CERF was a significant donor during this response. There were a number of unmet needs where additional CERF resources could potentially have added value to help address these needs, particularly during the initial phases of the response. However, since many of these interventions were timebound and some UN agencies struggled to use the allocated CERF funding in the eastern Caribbean it was

¹ A separate question 5 (5a) was developed for Cuba as part of the review matrix since question 5 in the TOR (5b) was only relevant to the eastern Caribbean.

unlikely that a significant amount of additional funding could have been used effectively. Findings nevertheless suggest that WFP and UNICEF, and UNDP (in Cuba) had sufficient capacity to absorb additional funding for logistics, emergency cash transfer and emergency education (including psychosocial support).

Conclusion 2. Anticipatory action for a tropical cyclone emergency – The window for anticipatory action to sudden-onset hazards is limited; 3-5 days to accurately predict the path of a hurricane but only around a day to be certain of the likely strength and location that will be impacted. The UN system in Cuba was found to provide a model for other CERF responses since it already practices anticipatory action. This was thanks to a combination of a reliable national early warning system, access to contingency stockpiles and protocols guiding actions between UN agencies and the government based on lessons learned from previous disasters. It was not feasible to use the Cuba model in the eastern Caribbean since UN agencies had very limited presence or preparedness measures in place, which caused delays in responding and significantly reduced the value-added of CERF. The fact that there were credible seasonal forecasts four months before Hurricane Irma made landfall that predicted with a high degree of confidence that 2017 would likely be a very active hurricane season indicates that CERF should consider different levels of triggers to release funding for anticipatory action when it is justified by contextual factors.

Conclusion 3. Variations in agency response capacities – UN agencies were challenged in the eastern Caribbean by the lack of operational presence, pre-existing networks in affected countries, lack of baseline data to inform needs assessments and insufficient preparedness. The added value of agencies was influenced by whether the agency was already present (WHO/PAHO, UNDP, UNICEF), the ability to deploy resources efficiently to fill priority needs (WHO/PAHO, WFP, UNICEF) and whether there was an institutional commitment to invest adequately in response and recovery efforts (WHO/PAHO, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, IOM). Some UN recipient agencies faced challenges in mounting a timely and effective response due to lack of a coherent response strategy and corresponding support systems, notably for procurement, deployment of surge and quality assurance. External factors, notably severe damage to port infrastructure and disruption to clearance and transportation systems in Dominica, caused significant delays for the response. These external and internal factors reduced the value added of CERF-funded interventions and left important gaps in assistance.

Conclusion 4. Gaps in UN coordination in affected small island states – leadership and interagency coordination in Cuba, Dominica and Barbados was of consistently high quality throughout the response, but there was little evidence that CERF contributed to strengthening coordination either between UN agencies or with host governments in other affected countries and territories in the eastern Caribbean.

Following from the above conclusions, a total of 15 recommendations were developed and are listed at the end of the main report. These recommendations have been specifically targeted at the CERF secretariat (3 recommendations), OCHA's regional office (4 recommendations), UN agencies who received CERF funding as part of the four allocations under review (2 recommendations), UNDP (1 recommendation), FAO/UNFPA/UN Women (2 recommendations), RC/HC for Cuba (1 recommendation), RCs for countries and territories in the eastern Caribbean (1 recommendation) and WHO/PAHO (1 recommendation). A two-pronged approach is recommended to make effective use of **larger CERF allocations** based on seasonal forecasts along with a pre-disaster regional assessments of recipient agency capacities along to guide allocations for anticipatory action.

Structure of the Report

This report has intentionally been structured using a modular format based on an understanding that there are three primary stakeholder groups targeted, including those at global and regional level (including the ERC, CERF Advisory Group and ROLAC), UN agencies in the eastern Caribbean sub-regional level and UN agencies in Cuba. The modular format has also taken into consideration the marked differences in operating contexts between Cuba and small island states in the eastern Caribbean. This synthesis report first describes the objectives and scope of the review, the methodology employed, followed by a high-level summary of the operating context, key findings and conclusions that provide the basis for the recommendations. Recommendations, some of which are applicable to both Cuba and the eastern Caribbean, have been targeted at the CERF secretariat, OCHA's regional office, UN agencies who use CERF funding, UNDP, FAO/UNFPA/UN Women, RC/HC for Cuba, RC/HCs for countries and territories in the eastern Caribbean and WHO/PAHO. Two separate reports, a report covering CERF support to the eastern Caribbean and a Cuba country report, are attached as annexes which each provide additional details of the operating context and findings together with evidence that support findings, conclusions and recommendations. Since the two annexed reports have been designed to be stand-alone reports specifically targeted at UN agency staff at a country- and sub-regional level, there has inevitably been a certain amount of overlap with the synthesis report.

Objectives and Scope

A major aim of this review was to provide the ERC with an appropriate level of assurance around the achievement of key performance benchmarks and planned results for the CERF mechanism around the intended inputs, outputs and outcomes as defined by CERF's PAF. The review has two main components; an analysis of CERF's added value to the humanitarian response in the Caribbean following the passage of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in addition to making forward-looking recommendations aimed at improving operational aspects of CERF while also identifying relevant global level policy issues emerging from this review. The review covers the time period from September 2017 until end of June 2018 and seeks to answer 6 key questions:²

1. *To what extent are CERF processes achieving key management benchmarks?*
2. *Have CERF-funded operations favoured specific results?*
3. *What has been CERF's role in crises with more limited donor response?*
4. *Given the challenges for fast response scale-up in countries with limited humanitarian presence, should there be pre-requisites for CERF funding based on an agency's implementation capacity?*
- 5a. *To what extent have lessons from hurricane Matthew been applied during the response to hurricane Irma in Cuba? (Cuba)*
- 5b. *What lessons can be drawn from providing an allocation that covers several countries and several RC areas of responsibility? (eastern Caribbean)*
6. *Does CERF have a role in anticipatory action for this type of crisis?*

Background for the PAF Review

The 2017 hurricane/storm season in the Caribbean produced 17 named storms of which 10 became hurricanes including six major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5).³ The strongest were Irma followed by Maria two weeks later with a combined estimated economic loss estimated at between \$90 and 155 billion.⁴ Antigua and Barbuda, Anguilla,

² Key question 5 focused on learning lessons and was adapted to take into account the different operating contexts of Cuba and the eastern Caribbean while also considering prior experience of using CERF in Cuba.

³ NOAA (2017) Extremely active 2017 Atlantic hurricane season finally ends. 30 November 2017.

⁴ Lloyd's (2018) After the storms Harvey, Irma and Maria: Lessons Learned. Market Insight Report 2018.

Bahamas, British Virgin Islands (BVI), Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico, St Barthélemy, St. Martin, Sint Maarten, Turks and Caicos, and the US Virgin Islands were all affected. 169,000 people and 75,000 buildings were exposed to wind speeds higher than 252km/h. 5.5 million people lived in the areas where winds blew in excess of 120km/h. At least 134 people were reported dead. Days later, hurricane Maria was the tenth most intense storm on record, causing catastrophic damage and at least 97 fatalities across the north-eastern Caribbean.

A specific characteristic of these hurricanes that affected the response was the extent of devastation in the Caribbean region (Figure 1). Puerto Rico received a direct hit from hurricane Maria and this had a knock-on effect throughout the region since the country has been the major supplier for medical and other humanitarian supplies. The prevailing view in the sub-region was that the USA had prioritized response and rebuilding in Puerto Rico, which reportedly increased the difficulty and expense of procuring construction materials and other essential supplies for the other affected countries/islands.

Figure 1 - Paths of Hurricanes Irma and Maria during September-October 2017



As shown in Table 1 below, this review covers a total of four CERF rapid response allocations with a total value of USD 18,518,504. Three of these are for responses to hurricanes Irma and Maria that struck the region during September 2017. A fourth allocation to support the response to Rapid Response Hurricane Matthew that struck Cuba in October 2016 provides an opportunity to compare prior use of CERF grants. The 2017 funding included two country-level allocations for Dominica and Cuba and a regional allocation covering several countries.

Table 1. CERF allocations that form part of the review

Country	Month	Window	Application Title	Recipient Agencies	Amount (USD)	Grant expiry date
Dominica	10/2017	Rapid Response	Hurricane Maria	FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO/PAHO	3,011,838	07 Jun 2018
Antigua and Barbuda, and other eastern Caribbean States	10/2017	Rapid Response	Hurricane Irma	IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, UN WOMEN	2,154,461	30 Jun 2018
Cuba	10/2017	Rapid Response	Hurricane Irma	FAO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO/PAHO, WFP	7,999,469	21 Mar 2018
Total (2017 only)					13,165,768	
Cuba	10/2016	Rapid Response	Hurricane Matthew	FAO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP, WHO/PAHO	5,352,736	02 May 2017
Total					18,518,504	

UN agencies implemented of CERF-funded activities in affected countries and territories in the eastern Caribbean (shown in Table 2). Most agencies had not maintained a permanent presence in most of the affected countries apart

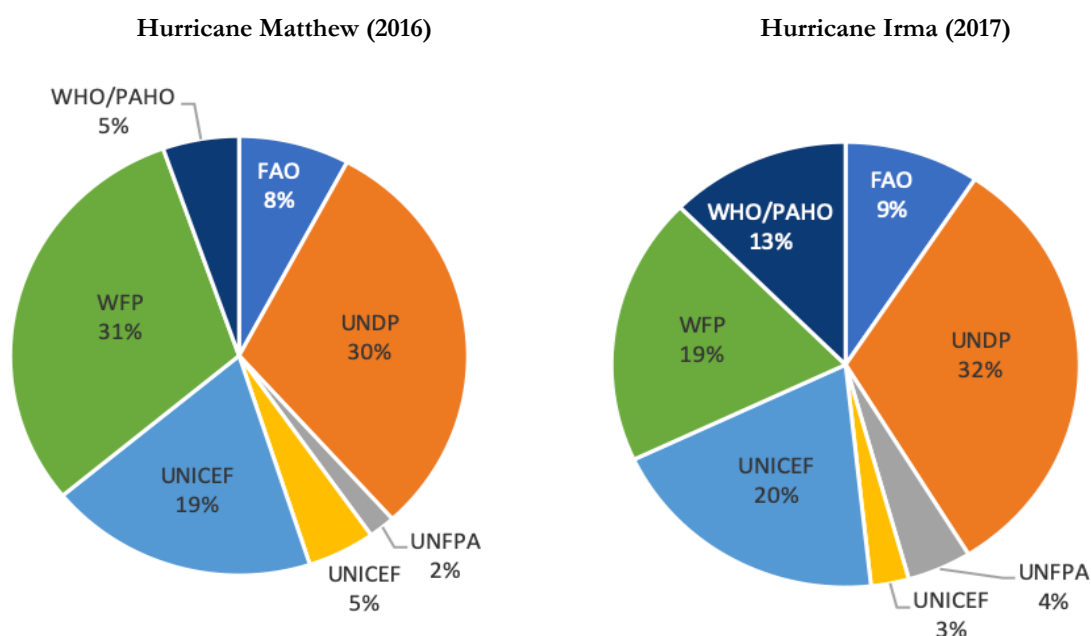
from WHO/PAHO, which had staff embedded with Ministries of Health throughout the sub-region working on longer term initiatives. UNICEF also had a staff member based in the British Virgin Islands supporting education projects and UNDP had project staff based in Dominica. Agencies, including WHO/PAHO, relied on surge to support their response. At the time the PAF review field mission took place in November 2018, UNDP had established and staffed offices in Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda and the British Virgin Islands to support recovery and reconstruction. IOM and UNICEF also had established a continuous presence in Dominica. All CERF recipient agencies in Cuba had a long-term presence in the country.

Table 2. CERF Allocations to recipient agencies for hurricanes Matthew (Cuba 2016), Irma or Maria (2017)

Agency	Cuba		Dominica	Antigua & Barbuda	Sint Maarten	British Virgin Islands	Turks & Caicos Islands	Anguilla	Jamaica ⁵
	2016	2017							
FAO	X	X	X						
IOM			X	X	X		X		
UN Women				X		X	X		
UNDP	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
UNFPA	X	X	X	X	X		X		
UNICEF	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
WFP	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
WHO/PAHO	X	X	X						

Figure 2 below shows allocations were divided amongst different recipient agencies during Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane Irma the following year. The larger allocations for UNDP, UNICEF and WFP indicate the significance of the shelter, WASH, and food security contributions respectively during each response.

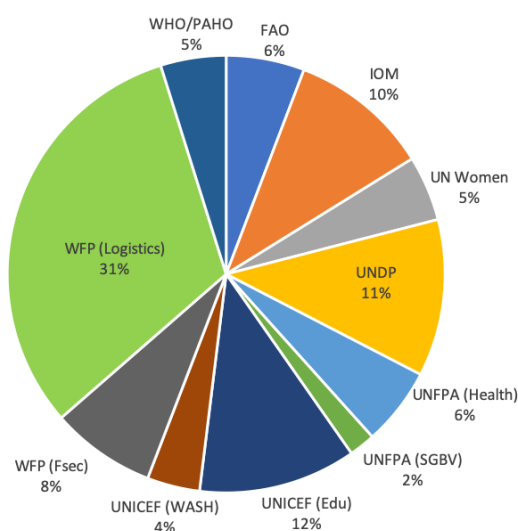
Figure 2 – CERF Allocations by agency for the responses to Hurricanes Matthew and Irma in Cuba



⁵ Jamaica was not affected by 2017 hurricanes. CERF funds were mainly used for logistics support to the response in Turks & Caicos Islands.

The large allocation to WFP common logistics (Figure 3) in the eastern Caribbean is indicative of the key role that logistics support played during this response in an operating context where dispersed island populations when communications and supply chains were severely disrupted. CERF contributions to UNDP in the eastern Caribbean supported cash-for-work debris removal activities.

Figure 3 – CERF Allocations for Hurricanes Maria and Irma in the eastern Caribbean



Methodology

Along with the six key questions listed above, indicators in the 2015 version of CERF's Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF)⁶ provided the main point of reference when assessing CERF performance during country visits, collecting data and structuring the reports. The methodology included a desk review, semi-structured individual and group interviews during field visits to selected countries in the eastern Caribbean during 17 November - 04 December 2018 and to Cuba during 11-16 February 2019. The approach for this review was deliberately kept rapid and light to reduce the burden on busy field staff. Due to time and cost considerations, not all countries and territories affected could be visited and there was relatively more reliance on secondary data from interviews and documents for these areas.

The field visit to Cuba included semi-structured group discussions, visits to affected communities in Vila Clara and observations of completed projects. Regional level stakeholders in Panama were interviewed remotely. The timing of the visit to Cuba coincided with the preparation of another CERF application for a response to a tornado. As a result, many interviewees were busy when the mission was taking place and discussions also touched upon the differences between different types of disasters. The other team member visited a total of four countries, Barbados, Dominica, British Virgin Islands along with Antigua and Barbuda in the eastern Caribbean.

Interviews with staff recipient UN agencies at country, region and HQ levels were complemented by interviews with selected external stakeholders that allowed team members to capture different perspectives from staff, implementing partners, donors, research institutions, governments and other humanitarian agencies. A total of 116 individuals were interviewed either during field visits or remotely, of which 67 were women (Table 3). A list of interviewees is provided as an annex. Since CERF-funded activities had been completed several months previously and many UN staff had left, most interviews with beneficiary communities were done on an *ad hoc* basis. While evaluative methods were employed to ensure an appropriate level of rigour and credibility, the team tailored their approach to optimise learning and utilisation of results for key stakeholders. The team developed a review matrix to guide data collection and

⁶ See Annex 5.

analysis, which is attached as an annex. The review matrix organises the sub-questions listed in the TOR under the key review questions, merging and adding sub-questions where appropriate while listing indicators and data sources.

Table 3 – Numbers and Categories of Key Informants

Location	Summary	♂	♀	Total	
Cuba	UN	10	10	20	
	Other interviewees	8	12	20	
	SUB-TOTAL	18	22	40	
Dominica	UN	5	1	6	
	Other interviewees	1	2	3	
	SUB-TOTAL	6	3	9	
Antigua & Barbuda	UN	1	3	4	
	Other interviewees	2	7	9	
	SUB-TOTAL	3	10	13	
British Virgin Islands	UN	1	2	3	
	Other interviewees	4	11	15	
	SUB-TOTAL	5	13	18	
Barbados (eastern Caribbean)	UN	11	10	21	
	Other interviewees	1	1	2	
	SUB-TOTAL	12	11	23	
Other region and global	UN	3	7	10	
	Other interviewees	2	1	3	
	SUB-TOTAL	5	8	13	
Overall	UN	31	33	64	
	Other interviewees	18	34	52	
	GRAND TOTAL	49	67	116	

Summary of Main Findings

Key Question 1. Achievement of key management benchmarks

1. To what extent are CERF processes achieving key management benchmarks?

Performance assessment ratings⁷ and findings relevant to the first question are summarized in Table 4 based on an assessment of the input, output and outcome indicators in the 2015 version of the PAF indicators for CERF country reviews (see Annex). Additional details are given in separate eastern Caribbean and Cuba country reports which are attached as annexes.

Table 4 – Performance Assessment of CERF based on PAF Indicators

Category	Indicator Categories	Performance	Supporting Narrative
CERF Inputs	Funding available to UN agencies	5	CERF rapid response grants represented a significant and timely contribution.
	Transparent & Inclusive Prioritization and Decision-Making Coherent Country Submission	5	An established UN emergency team in Cuba equipped with pre-agreed decision-making and response protocols facilitated consultative decision-making. Good leadership and teamwork amongst UN agencies in the eastern Caribbean yielded good results.
	Coherent Country Submission	4	Coherent submission in Cuba developed by the UN emergency team in close consultation with the government based on learning from previous responses. In the eastern Caribbean, the submission was coherent apart from some lack of coherence in strategies/ approaches for shelter and activities targeted specifically at women. A key challenge for humanitarian agencies was the lack of baseline data about vulnerabilities and local capacities. The CERF submission for Dominica was consistent with the Flash Appeal.
	Recipient Agency Capacity, M&E + Quality Assurance Systems in Place	2	UN agencies were allocated specific roles by the Cuban government and adapted accordingly. In the eastern Caribbean, there were significant differences between UN agencies' capacities and supporting systems. M&E was variable in quality and most UN agencies lacked post-distribution monitoring (PDM) systems to assess outcomes.
CERF Outputs	Time-Critical Life-Saving Activities Supported	3	The response in Cuba was relatively timely and appropriate due to a good understanding of the needs and availability of contingency stocks. In the eastern Caribbean, the combination of lack of baseline data, UN presence, local networks and contingency stocks along with logistics challenges and varying agency capacities caused delays in delivery of CERF-supported activities.
	Increased Coordination and HC Leadership	4	Effective leadership by the acting RC/HC and good working relations between UN and government counterparts in Cuba. In the eastern Caribbean, CERF helped to strengthen coordination in Dominica and, at a regional level, the UN's co-lead role with CDEMA in Barbados. However, there was

⁷ Performance ratings are as follows: 5) meets standards, 4) mostly meets standards, 3) mixed performance, 2) gaps evident, 1) evidence of numerous gaps.

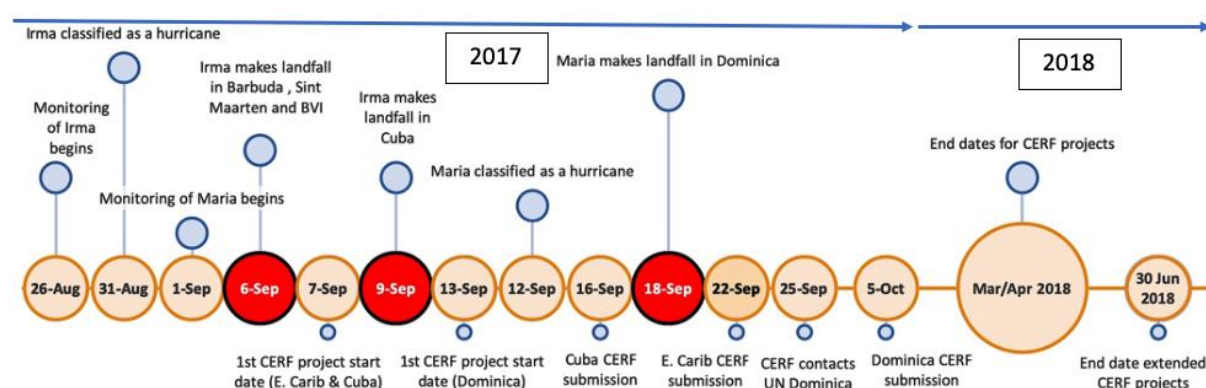
Category	Indicator Categories	Performance	Supporting Narrative
			little UN-led interagency coordination in other countries and territories in the eastern Caribbean.
	UN Agencies' Capacity Strengthened	4	In both Cuba and the eastern Caribbean, CERF supported UN-led coordination and often made it easier to access other funds. UN agencies participated in numerous agency-specific and interagency lessons-learned reviews aiming to improve their own capacities and strengthen interagency partnerships.
	Timely Response	3	In the eastern Caribbean, there were a total of five no-cost extensions, due mainly to limited capacities of UN recipient agencies and external factors. UN agencies in Cuba did not request any no-cost extensions.
CERF Outcomes	Humanitarian Reform Process, including the Transformative Agenda, Supported	4	Humanitarian response in Cuba has been significantly affected by the political context, which limits the ability of the UN agencies to implement reform processes. In the eastern Caribbean, CERF support helped the RC and UN agencies to demonstrate their value as professional and impartial humanitarian partners.
	Predictability and Reliability Enhanced	4	CERF was seen as an important support for decisions by UN agencies to deploy and begin operations in both Cuba and the eastern Caribbean.
	Quality of the Response	4	Beneficiary targets were met or exceeded in most sectors in both Cuba and the eastern Caribbean. Limited outcome data was available, but evidence indicated that effectiveness was reduced by significant delays in implementing some CERF-supported interventions in the eastern Caribbean.

Key Question 2. Specific Results

2. Have CERF-funded operations favored specific results?

CERF was one of the first sources of financing available, especially since funding could be back-dated up to six weeks in line with CERF guidance on early start date (see timeline in Figure 4 below).⁸ Some UN agencies were able to access other funding to help with the start-up of their interventions. In the eastern Caribbean, CERF funding was viewed as a useful complement for WFP, UNICEF and WHO/PAHO were able to draw upon their revolving reserve funds and pre-existing agreements with other donors. CERF funds played a more important role in kick-starting responses by IOM, UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and FAO.

⁸ Not all agencies can request early start date due to their own internal procedures/policies.

Figure 4 – Timeline for the CERF Response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria

CERF helped to strengthen coordination in Cuba, Dominica and, at a regional level, in Barbados where there were experienced and competent UN staff with overall coordination mandates. Technical and coordination support from the OCHA regional office along with an UNDAC mission and OCHA surge deployments to Dominica to coordinate humanitarian operations enhanced CERF processes in addition to strengthening overall coordination.

A significant difference between the responses in Cuba and in the eastern Caribbean was the much higher levels of disaster preparedness by the government and UN agencies in Cuba, including prior knowledge of likely vulnerabilities and humanitarian needs during the response. Logistics and communications in Cuba were more challenging than for the response to Hurricane Matthew, when the impact was more localised, but did not impose the same level of constraints to the response as in the eastern Caribbean and this was reflected in sectoral allocations of CERF funds.

An important outcome of CERF's support to the response to Hurricanes Matthew and Irma was the effect on humanitarian partnerships with governments. National governments in all countries visited were very positive about the humanitarian role of the UN agencies and during field visits for this review it was evident that the partnership between UN agencies, CDEMA and governments in the region had been strengthened during the response and this was already resulting in substantial improvements in disaster preparedness.

Key Question 3. CERF's role with limited donor response

3. What has been CERF's role in crises with more limited donor response?

CERF assumed a higher donor profile than usual during this response due to the relatively limited donor funding pool, particularly in Cuba and most islands in the eastern Caribbean where CERF contributed 38% and 47%, respectively, of total contributions for response plans for Cuba and the Regional Response Plan for the Caribbean Region respectively. CERF grants amounted to 14% of total contributions to the Flash Appeal for Dominica, which could be attributed to a combination of the scale of the disaster, the country's eligibility for OECD/DAC assistance and positions of the respective governments about accepting external assistance and partnering with international agencies.⁹ CERF demonstrated its value-added in meeting humanitarian needs in countries where political constraints, economic status and/or imperfect understanding of the context places limits on funding from other donors. CERF also played an important role in supporting RCs/HC coordination and provided UN agencies with the necessary legitimacy to engage with host governments as an important technical resource and provided them with a platform to advocate for funding from other donors.

⁹ As of the end of 2018, total contributions to the 2017 Dominica Hurricane Maria Flash Appeal amounted to USD 25.5 million, representing just over 70% of requirements.

Key Question 4. Pre-requisites for CERF funding

4. Given the challenges for fast response scale-up and CERF's quick implementation requirements, should there be pre-requisites for CERF funding based on an agency's implementation capacity?

The different operating contexts of Cuba and eastern Caribbean required different types of capacities. In Cuba, UN agencies operate in a specific environment supporting a government-led response. In the eastern Caribbean, UN agencies faced challenges since, apart from WHO/PAHO, they had virtually no presence in the affected countries, low levels of preparedness and little knowledge of local response capacities or experience of working with national actors while at the same time needing to deal with formidable logistics obstacles in delivering aid to affected communities.

In the eastern Caribbean, UN agencies required sufficient capacity to bring in external resources, staff, systems and relief materials to be able to rapidly carry out assessments, establish offices, develop partnerships and start operations. Feedback from staff from government departments, CDEMA and other humanitarian agencies indicated that most UN personnel who were deployed as surge capacity had suitable experience and skills but there were significant differences in agency capacities. Some agencies were able to set up quickly and make effective use of CERF funds, despite being faced with destruction of infrastructure and the impact of the storms on supply chains and government systems. Other agencies struggled with surge deployments, procurement processes, delivery, building national capacities and monitoring.

The combination of the US-imposed embargo and the Cuban government's own restrictions on customs clearance for relief items meant that much of the UN agencies' capacity to respond depended on their respective capacity, partnership with government counterparts and understanding of the context, together with sufficient availability of contingency stocks for meeting priority humanitarian needs.

Key Question 5a. Using learning from a previous CERF-supported hurricane response in Cuba

5. To what extent have lessons from hurricane Matthew been applied during the response to hurricane Irma in Cuba?

UN agencies in Cuba receiving CERF funding have together with OCHA systematically carried out after action reviews and lessons learning exercises following each hurricane response. UN agencies have also learned from various disaster risk reduction interventions funded by donors such as ECHO that offered an opportunity for agencies to review and improve their disaster management systems and approaches.

While there was evidence of applying learning from previous hurricanes such as Sandy in 2012, there was limited evidence that learning specifically from Matthew that struck Cuba in 2016 had been applied and UN agency staff actually felt that the response to hurricane Matthew had been better than Irma due to a combination of factors. Some of these factors were external. The impact of Hurricane Matthew was concentrated in a specific location, whereas Hurricane Irma affected a large number of provinces including the capital. The combined effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria throughout the region increased demand and prices for commodities such as roofing sheets. An example of lessons learned from the response to Matthew that had not been successfully applied included national customs clearance and distribution regulations introduced in 2016 which were found to be causing delays in the distribution of relief materials to communities. This mirrored a lesson highlighted during the AAR following Hurricane Irma which found decentralized import management mechanisms and roles were distributed among multiple actors, each with their own distinct standards and procedures that increased the complexity for obtaining import permits, causing delays in international procurement.

The CERF application processes were also reported to be quicker during the response to Hurricane Matthew in 2016, something that was mainly attributed to additional inter-agency negotiations required after less CERF funding had been allocated to the Hurricane Irma response than anticipated.

Key Question 5b. Lessons from CERF allocations covering several countries

5. What lessons can be drawn from providing an allocation that covers several countries and several RC areas of responsibility in the eastern Caribbean?

Most countries in the eastern Caribbean fell under the coordination mandate of the RC in Barbados and, given his previous role as Chief of the CERF secretariat and prior experience with relief operations with OCHA and international NGOs, it was natural for other RCs and UN agencies in the eastern Caribbean sub-region that he took on an overall coordination role for the response. Feedback from interviews and results of different CERF After

Action Reviews (AARs) confirmed this was a good decision.

UN agencies used a variety of systems to support and manage the response depending on where their staff and contingency stocks were located. Most UN recipient agencies, with the exception of WFP and IOM, had an existing presence in the sub-regional office in Barbados where the RC was given an overall role for coordination of the response in the eastern Caribbean. WFP and WHO/PAHO were able to draw upon pre-positioned contingency stocks and LTAs with suppliers in different parts of the region. Other agencies relied mainly on support from the regional hub in Panama and contingency stocks sourced overseas, which caused significant delays.

CERF allocations for several islands only made sense where transaction costs could be justified. This was easier where UN agencies already had a presence in most or all of the affected countries such as WHO/PAHO and UNICEF. WFP relied on their rapid surge capacity to establish timebound operations and UNDP decided to invest in setting up a presence in selected countries to support response and recovery efforts. Other agencies relied solely on periodic staff missions instead of establishing a presence which generally resulted in a lack of continuity, gaps in coordination and negative influence on the effectiveness of use of CERF funds. Recipient agencies that implemented activities in several islands, including relatively small allocations of tens of thousands of dollars felt that the reporting requirements were somewhat onerous. A positive finding was that CERF funding, even relatively small allocations, provided an entry point for UN agencies with the government and affected communities since it helped communicate that the UN was paying attention to their humanitarian needs and was engaging, even though the results and coverage were limited in many of the affected islands.

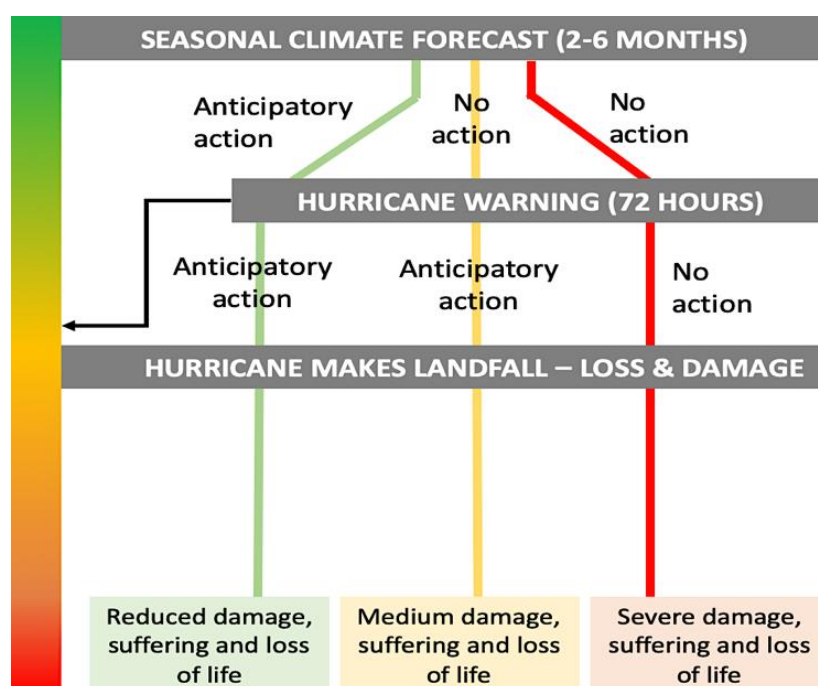
Key Question 6. Anticipatory action¹⁰

6. *Does CERF have a role in anticipatory action for this type of crisis?*

There were two categories of early warning indicators that the UN system, including CERF, could have potentially used to trigger an anticipatory response to tropical cyclones in order to mobilize external resources to meet humanitarian needs that have a high probability of overwhelming national capacities. One category was based on seasonal forecast, i.e. a higher than usual probability that major hurricanes will have a significant humanitarian impact during the hurricane season. Forecasters had predicted in May at the beginning of the hurricane season that 2017 was very likely to be very active, including an above-average number of major hurricanes. The second category of early warning indicators were much more immediate. The path of hurricane can be predicted with reasonable accuracy within 3-5 days and the likely location and impact of the hurricane can typically only be accurately predicted around a day in advance.¹¹ Findings from this PAF review indicate that anticipatory action based on early warning indicators at both levels, seasonal forecasts in May 2018 and imminent warnings 3-5 days before the hurricanes made landfall could have significantly improved the value-added of CERF (Figure 5), particularly in the eastern Caribbean where there was relatively less understanding of the humanitarian context and relatively low UN response capacities.

¹⁰ This review follows the CERF secretariat's guidance in considering that "anticipatory action" as a concept is defined by FAO, ODI, and the Inter-Agency SOPs for Early Action to El Niño/La Niña Episodes as "...an activity taking place between an early warning trigger or a high-probability forecast and the actual occurrence of the corresponding disaster in order to mitigate or prevent the humanitarian impact of the anticipated disaster". See CERF secretariat (2018a) CERF for the Future: Anticipatory Humanitarian Action: Update for the CERF Advisory Group – October 2018.

¹¹ While forecasting has been improving the comparison between the two hurricanes showed that there is still progress to be made. There was a consensus amongst experts that predictions for hurricane Irma were reasonably accurate, but that hurricane Maria was not well forecast due mainly to a failure of the global models to definitively predict tropical cyclone formation until very soon before it actually occurred. Sources: Pasch, R. et al. (2019) and Cangialosi, J.P. (2018).

Figure 5 – Anticipatory Action Flowchart¹²

Supported by an effective early warning system (EWS) and anticipatory action protocols at a national level, UN agencies in Cuba have over the years developed anticipatory action systems and protocols. This approach has partly evolved out of necessity due to the frequency of disasters and the complexities of importing relief materials so that adequate contingency stocks in-country are essential component of any response.

In the eastern Caribbean, there was little UN presence or existing contingency stocks in the islands that experienced the worst effects which would have ruled out CERF-supported anticipatory action in the same way as in Cuba. On the other hand, anticipatory action by CERF based on early warning indicators of excessive tropical storm activity at the beginning of the hurricane season could potentially have acted as a catalyst for collective mobilisation of UN agencies and pre-positioning of relief supplies at strategic locations within the sub-region to improve the timeliness and quality of the response.

¹² Adapted from Wilkinson, E. and Weingartner, L. (2018) FbA, early response and late response in the case of droughts and cyclones. March 2018. ODI.

Conclusions

Overall Conclusions (Cuba and the eastern Caribbean)

Hurricanes Irma and Maria were amongst the most devastating disasters in recorded history and capacities of national and regional actors were overwhelmed. CERF was an important resource during the response, adding value by opening space for UN agencies to play meaningful roles in these middle- and upper-income countries as professional and impartial humanitarian actors in often politically-charged operating environments. Effective leadership for CERF-supported activities by the RC based in Barbados and the acting RC in Cuba was viewed by UN agency staff as one of the primary underlying factors for a relatively successful response. It was evident that many UN agencies receiving CERF funds, notably WHO/PAHO, WFP and UNICEF, left a positive impression with senior government figures thanks to the speed and appropriateness of their respective responses. During the field visits for this review there were indications that the partnership between the UN, regional actors such as CDEMA and new and existing partnerships with governments in the region had been reinforced and it was evident during field visits that this had already resulted in improvements to disaster preparedness.

Conclusion 1. Larger CERF allocations (eastern Caribbean)

Findings from this review identified a number of gaps where additional CERF resources could potentially have added value to the response, especially considering CERF's role as a major donor in this response due to limited alternative funding. However, many of these interventions funded by CERF were time-critical and, as described above, some UN agencies struggled to use the CERF funding they had been allocated and it was unlikely that they would have used additional funding any more effectively. This was the case for agencies implementing activities such as debris removal, cash transfers during the relief phase, distribution of essential supplies such as dignity kits and additional support to agriculture in Dominica. These activities could have alleviated greater suffering if carried out earlier and with greater coverage. On the other hand, based on available evidence it appears that WFP could have made good use of CERF funds to reinforce logistic and communication support at the beginning of the response and UNICEF could have absorbed more funding to support education activities; initially emergency education that transitioned into psycho-social support. Finally, the importance of timeliness of the response indicates that CERF support would have added more value with anticipatory action as described below.

Conclusion 2. Anticipatory action for a tropical cyclone emergency (Cuba and the eastern Caribbean)

The relatively short advance warning for tropical cyclones limited anticipatory actions for locations where high impact is certain; 3-5 days to have a reasonable idea of the path of the hurricane but just over a day to know the likely strength and impact. In the eastern Caribbean, agencies faced an additional challenge since, with few exceptions, UN agencies had no operational presence or preparedness measures in place prior to the hurricanes. There was much more advance warning with a region-based approach. Early warning indicators three months before Hurricane Irma made landfall in the Caribbean had pointed to an unusually active hurricane season with a 70 percent confidence level. Subsequent events indicated that these warnings did not translate into any meaningful anticipatory action by the UN system in the eastern Caribbean sub-region. An injection of CERF funding, even relatively modest allocations, to support the RCs and UN agencies to initiate collective early action in the form of pre-disaster impact assessments based on these seasonal early warning indicators could have potentially significantly increased the effectiveness and value-added of contributions from the CERF by helping humanitarian agencies to leverage additional resources that would have allowed a more timely and effective response.

The UN system in Cuba was able to implement anticipatory action since they were confident that CERF funding for response would be forthcoming if an event occurred. The way that the UN anticipated the hurricane

(prepositioning stocks, pre-drafting a CERF application, etc.) could be considered as a model for emergency response preparedness and a useful foundation for the application of anticipatory action approaches using CERF.

Conclusion 3. Variations in agency response capacities (eastern Caribbean)

With the exception of WHO/PAHO, most UN agencies were challenged by the lack of presence, pre-existing networks in affected countries and insufficient preparedness, including a lack of baseline data, pre-positioning of relief items, lack of pre-existing agreements with host governments and systems to efficiently channel funds from UN agencies). Some UN agencies used government safety net systems for channel cash transfers for CERF and other funding which, although appropriate, were subject to delays since government systems and processes were not set up to quickly channel funds from international donors to targeted community members.

Given the relatively high transaction costs in the eastern Caribbean, covering multiple countries was justified where the recipient agency adds overall value. Added-value was influenced by whether the agency already was present in affected countries (WHO/PAHO, UNICEF), ability to deploy resources efficiently to fill priority needs (WFP, UNICEF) and/or the necessary organizational commitment to invest in response and recovery efforts (UNDP, IOM).

Gaps in systems and capacities were evident in other agencies. Value added of CERF-funded interventions for these three agencies appears to have been marginal and left important gaps in assistance. Many external stakeholders commented on the lack of a coherent and complimentary response strategy of UNFPA and UN Women. UNDP's CERF-funded debris removal activities in Dominica demonstrated the value added of this intervention modality and helped to position UNDP to engage in recovery. In other island states, however, debris removal activities took 6-9 months to start, which limited their value-added due to a combination of capacity gaps and cumbersome procurement systems.

Conclusion 4. Gaps in UN coordination in affected small island states (eastern Caribbean)

While in Dominica and Barbados interagency coordination was of consistently high quality throughout the response, there was little evidence of coordination between UN agencies or effective coordinated support for host governments in other countries affected in the eastern Caribbean. The UN could have improved its added value in other countries if the RC had designated UN coordination focal points in each affected country who were supported with information management capacity to provide more coherent support to host governments, including facilitating more effective use of NGO resources and capacities. Given WHO/PAHO's large "footprint" and considerable emergency response capacity in the Caribbean sub-region, they could have potentially played a more significant facilitation role in the overall UN response, including supporting interagency coordination where needed.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are linked to conclusions above and are targeted at the CERF secretariat, the OCHA regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC), RCs/HCs in the Caribbean region and UN recipient agencies of CERF funds.

Larger CERF allocations

CERF secretariat

1. Decisions to make larger allocations should take account of the capacity of recipient agencies to use CERF funds effectively (see Recommendation 3) along with evidence from assessments and relevant lessons from previous similar emergencies that allocation of additional funding would be justified. Given the importance of timeliness in this response to major hurricanes, the CERF secretariat should explore funding anticipatory action when early warning indicators point to significant disaster risk of an active hurricane season in operating contexts that are comparable to the eastern Caribbean (link with Recommendation 2).

Anticipatory action

CERF secretariat

2. In specific contexts,¹³ the CERF secretariat should consider funding for anticipatory action for tropical cyclones that are based on early warning indicators at two levels; seasonal forecasts which point to significant risks of severe humanitarian impact due to an unusually active hurricane season (link with Recommendation 1) which in turn should help to position UN agencies to better implement anticipatory action once the area of impact has been identified 3-5 days before the hurricane makes landfall.¹⁴ CERF support for anticipatory action based on seasonal forecast triggers should provide an incentive to help kick-start collective mobilisation of humanitarian agencies, leverage additional funding to support anticipatory action and preparedness by individual agencies, provide an opportunity to assess UN agency capacity (link with Recommendation 3) and generally increase the value-added of CERF support for an eventual disaster. Funding for anticipatory action should be on a no regrets basis, but this need not mean that funds are “wasted” if the predicted humanitarian impact does not occur or is significantly less than was forecast. While CERF does not specifically support preparedness or resilience, a criteria of funding anticipatory action should be that recipient agencies will be able to describe in their proposals how CERF investments will support resilience in the event that the humanitarian impact and/or scale of the response is less than predicted. A set of criteria specifically adapted for anticipatory action will need to be created to complement life-saving criteria.

¹³ It is envisaged that seasonal forecast triggers would be restricted to specific situations, including in middle-income countries where governments are not used to responding jointly with international agencies and where, as in the case in the eastern Caribbean, few UN staff had previous humanitarian experience. In such a context, it is unlikely that CERF funding for anticipatory action would be requested. The OCHA regional office and CERF secretariat staff who work on anticipatory action can proactively engage with the country teams in countries most at risk based on an analysis of seasonal forecasts and response capacities. Over time, it is expected to cold shift to a partially demand-driven system as early warning systems improve, and humanitarian leadership develops a better understanding of CERF’s specific value-added in anticipatory action. An example of a suitable CERF-funded intervention could be a joint capacity assessment that would both raise awareness of critical gaps in response capacities of UN agencies and their partners and help leverage additional funding for sector-specific anticipatory action and preparedness.

¹⁴ An example of early action just before a hurricane makes landfall could be a cash transfer via a UN partner to help communities protect assets, pay for transportation for family members away from at-risk areas, etc.

Improving the consistency and added value of UN agency responses

CERF secretariat

3. CERF should require UN agencies to pre-qualify for CERF funding at a regional level¹⁵ with continued eligibility contingent on satisfactory periodic performance reviews based on past performance. This system should not be designed as a way to restrict access to CERF funding, but rather to incentivise agencies to make strategic decisions about resource allocations, strengthen support systems and improve quality assurance with the overall aim of optimising value added and accountability to affected communities (AAP).

OCHA ROLAC

4. OCHA should facilitate and coordinate the establishment of Long-Term Agreements (LTA) between UN agencies and CDEMA for prepositioning, storage and transportation of emergency items through its regional hubs in the eastern Caribbean while providing WFP with an appropriate role to support logistics.
5. To help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of cash transfers through government safety net systems, OCHA should work with governments and UN agencies to adapt such systems so that there is an effective interface for channelling of external relief funding.¹⁶

UN Recipient Agencies

6. UN agencies should preposition necessary items by sector to enable more immediate response. Specifications of items needed in a response and number of Long-Term Agreements (LTA) with suppliers per sector can be expanded.
7. Improve post monitoring systems to provide rapid feedback on the appropriateness and quality of assistance, improve accountability to affected populations and as a means to update needs assessments in real-time.

Specific to UNDP

8. UNDP should increase the timeliness of setting up of debris removal operations by streamlining procurement systems, including applying a “good enough approach”¹⁷ to debris removal.

Specific to FAO, UNFPA and UN Women

9. FAO, UNFPA and UN Women should increase the value-added of CERF-funded interventions by systematically reviewing their capacities, developing action plans to fill gaps identified and ensure adequate resourcing and buy-in by senior management.¹⁸
10. For UNFPA and UN Women, one of the outcomes of the capacity reviews (Recommendation 9) should be a MOU with attached protocols between UNFPA and UN Women clarifying intervention strategies and partnership approaches to ensure complementarity and optimise value added to affected communities when

¹⁵ Note that this recommendation is that agencies should be required to pre-qualify for CERF funding on a regional (not global) basis. There are two main reasons for a regional approach. Firstly, it is evident that emergency response capacities of agencies vary significantly between regions. Secondly, responses to major disasters will require external support and lessons from this CERF PAF review indicated that those agencies which were most effective were able to draw mainly on resources such as surge staff, pre-positioned relief supplies, etc., from within the region. Apart from surge and pre-positioned relief stocks, pre-qualification criteria should also consider financial, procurement and post-distribution monitoring systems adapted to quick-onset responses.

¹⁶ Use of adapted social safety net systems to channel cash transfers to meet humanitarian needs is particularly relevant to middle- and upper-income countries such as those in the Caribbean and can be an integral part of emergency preparedness.

¹⁷ “Good enough” approach here is defined as choosing a simple solution rather than an elaborate one. “Good enough” does not mean second best: it means acknowledging that, in an emergency response, adopting a quick and simple approach may be the only practical possibility. As the situation evolves the approach should be periodically reviewed and revised appropriately.

¹⁸ UN Women had already commissioned a review of their humanitarian operations by a team of independent consultants.

Improving the consistency and added value of UN agency responses

both agencies respond to the same disaster. This should be approached as a pilot, systematically capturing lessons learned during joint reviews and improving as needed.

Addressing gaps in UN coordination in dispersed island states

OCHA and RC/HCs in ROLAC

11. OCHA ROLAC should continue to play its important role during CERF-supported hurricane responses in the region by bringing in its knowledge of the context, lessons learned, information management expertise and tools to support coordination.
12. Information gathering and management can be improved to improve coordinated reporting on the response and outstanding needs. More effective information sharing can also help strengthen resource mobilization efforts. A report on the status of the Action Plan six months into the response, coinciding with the completion of CERF projects could help establish a baseline post CERF implementation and provide a basis for a mid-year report that could also help mobilise additional funds for outstanding humanitarian needs.

RC/HC in Cuba

13. Given the close relationship and dialogue with authorities, the RC/HC in Cuba should lead a process to clarify and improve processes around emergency items' importation, nationalization and distribution processes, related to humanitarian response in an effort to avoid delays. Discussions can also cover areas for further improvement: information sharing, joint monitoring, lack of transportation to move the goods from the ports to destination and the possibility of identifying sectoral focal points in the affected areas to obtain the information

Resident Coordinators in the eastern Caribbean

14. RC tasked with coordinating a disaster response in the sub-region should improve the added value of the UN by designating humanitarian coordination focal points, familiar with IASC products, tools and services in each affected in each country/territory,¹⁹ supported with appropriate information management capacities, to increase the effectiveness of CERF-supported interventions and provide more coherent support to host governments and affected communities.

WHO/PAHO in the eastern Caribbean

15. WHO/PAHO should make use of its extensive footprint, established networks and significant regional emergency response capacities in the eastern Caribbean to play a meaningful facilitation role in supporting an overall UN response to future disasters by updating its protocols to include support to interagency coordination.

¹⁹ This is comparable to standard practice of cluster lead agencies designating other agencies who are cluster members to lead clusters at a sub-national (e.g. provincial) level where the cluster lead agency lacks the necessary capacity. In the eastern Caribbean context WHO/PAHO was well-positioned to play such a role in the early stages, with the possibility of handing over this coordination focal point role as other agencies established a presence.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE ADDED VALUE OF THE CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND (CERF)

Annex 1. EASTERN CARIBBEAN REPORT



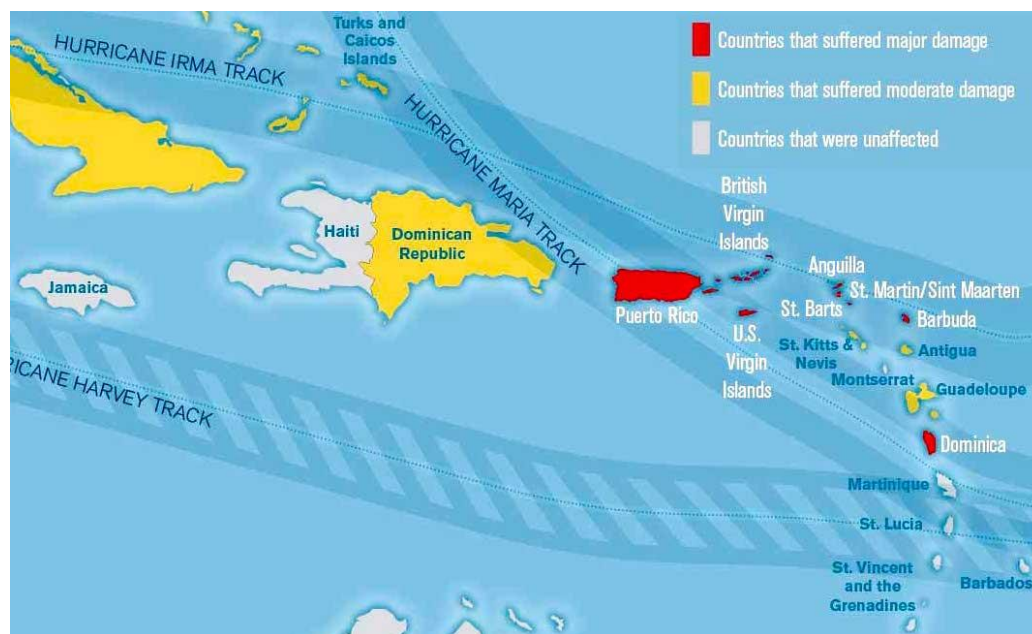
Photo: The capital city of Dominica, Roseau, after the passage of Hurricane Maria in September 2017 (STR/AFP)

Introduction

In the eastern Caribbean an estimated 70-90% of the housing stock was damaged and entire populations were affected, including 65,000 people in Dominica²⁰ and 129,285 people in Anguilla, Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Sint Maarten and Turks and Caicos²¹ and were affected. Total damages in Dominica alone were estimated at some USD 931 million.²²

The UN also issued a Flash Appeal for USD 27 million for islands in the eastern Caribbean impacted by Irma.²³ Following the passage of Maria, the UN launched a Flash Appeal for USD 31.1 million for Dominica for the period September-December 2017. CERF grants amounted to USD 3 million to support Dominica's response to Hurricane Maria and another USD 2.15 million of CERF funding was allocated by recipient agencies across six different island states, primarily to Antigua and Barbuda. These were the first CERF grants ever allocated to the eastern Caribbean. This report covers the response in the eastern Caribbean as part of an overall review of the added value of CERF funding towards the humanitarian response across the Caribbean impacted by hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 (Figure 6).

Figure 6 – Paths of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the eastern Caribbean



Source: Travel Weekly

Eastern Caribbean Context

Many of the countries and territories impacted by the hurricanes are classified as high-income countries and this had

²⁰ UN (2017) Flash Appeal: Hurricane Maria

²¹ UN Barbados and the OECS (2017) Resident / Humanitarian Coordinator Report on the Use of CERF Funds: Antigua and Barbuda Rapid Response Storm

²² Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica and partners (2017) Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Hurricane Maria. Government of Antigua and Barbuda and partners (2017) Antigua and Barbuda Post Disaster Needs Assessment.

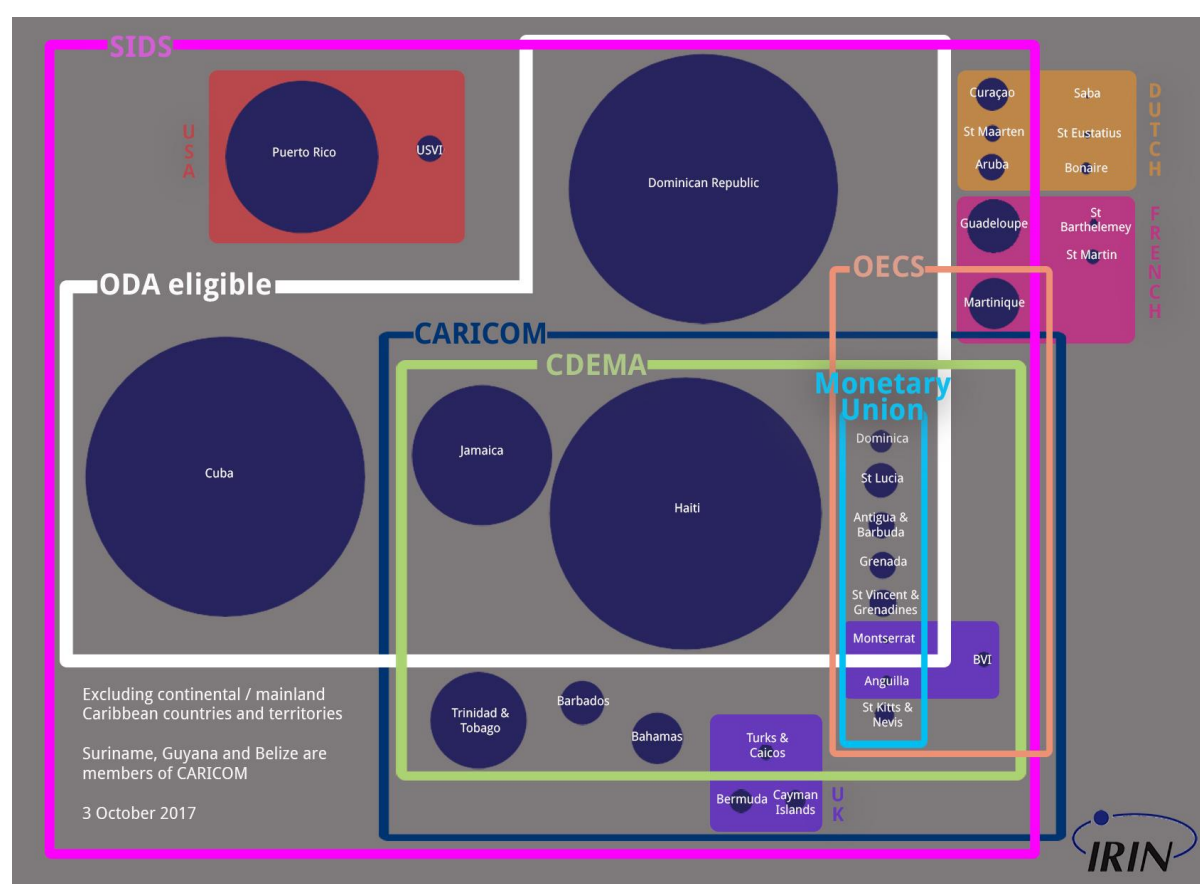
²³ IFRC and some international NGOs also launched their own appeals, but the UK-based Disasters Emergency Committee decided not to launch an Appeal for a response to Hurricane Irma since many of the islands that have been affected have links to the UK, France, the Netherlands and the US and those governments are responsible for providing the assistance needed. <https://www.dec.org.uk/article/hurricane-irma>

important consequences for aid eligibility. Of the countries directly impacted which received CERF funding, as shown in Figure 7 below only Dominica, Cuba and Antigua and Barbuda were eligible for overseas development funding (ODA). Upper-middle- or high-income countries are not as relatively needy as others, particularly if they are generally seen as luxury tourist destinations and/or tax havens. Others that argue that small island developing states (SIDS) have development imperatives (remoteness, limited natural resources, lack of economies of scale, unequal wealth distribution, indebtedness) and special vulnerabilities (economic and climate shocks in particular) that justify their treatment as developing countries. The remainder of the affected countries were categorised as high-income economies which, along with initial uncertainty about aid provision in overseas territories of OECD-DAC members,²⁴ led to some debates within the UN system on what constituted an appropriate response.

Regional Networks and Humanitarian Capacity

National wealth determined which countries are eligible for aid and concessional loans and membership of regional bodies such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) played an important part in reconstruction and preparedness activities as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7 – Caribbean regional grouping (source IRIN)



Economy and Economic Impact in the eastern Caribbean

These island-based economic systems are characterized by relatively small populations, different governance systems and economic status. Tourism contributed approximately 15% of the Caribbean's GDP and 14% of employment and, in those Caribbean countries affected, the sector accounts for over 25% of GDP. The hurricane season resulted in an estimated loss in 2017 of 826,100 visitors to the Caribbean, compared to pre-hurricane forecasts. It was

²⁴ Anders, M. and Edwards, S. (2017) [UK proposal on aid for overseas territories withdrawn at DAC, but sparks debate](#). Devex.

estimated that these visitors could have generated over USD 700 million and supported 11,000 jobs and industry estimates indicate that it will take the sector up to four years to recover to previous levels.²⁵ Puerto Rico was also severely impacted by hurricane Maria, which adversely affected subsequent recovery efforts in the region since the country has been the major supplier for medical and other humanitarian supplies. The USA prioritized response and rebuilding in Puerto Rico, which increased the difficulty and expense of procuring construction materials and other essential supplies.

UN Presence in the eastern Caribbean

In the eastern Caribbean, apart from Dominica, CERF funding was mainly channelled to Antigua and Barbuda, where 1,423 people were evacuated by the government from the island Barbuda to Antigua, which had suffered only minor damage. Most recipient agencies did not have a permanent presence in any of affected countries. The exceptions were the World Health Organization (WHO/PAHO), which already had staff embedded within the various Ministries of Health supporting long term programmes, and UNICEF, which had a staff member based in the British Virgin Islands (BVI) supporting education projects. Recipient agencies, including WHO/PAHO, had to rely mainly on surge deployments to support their response. This surge included senior-level coordinators deployed by OCHA and UNDP to Dominica to jointly coordinate emergency and recovery efforts. UN operations in the eastern Caribbean were coordinated by the Barbados-based UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC). At the time the field mission for this PAF review took place during November 2018, UNDP had established and staffed offices in Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda and the British Virgin Islands to support their response and recovery efforts. IOM and UNICEF had also established offices in Dominica. UNFPA relied on internal and external surge capacity for its response.

Main Findings: eastern Caribbean

Main findings below are structured for each of the six key questions, starting with an assessment of performance based on the 2015 version of the PAF indicators. Those PAF indicators which are relevant to other Key Questions appear in those sections.

Key Question 1. Achievement of key management benchmarks

1. To what extent are CERF processes achieving key management benchmarks?

CERF Inputs: This section covers the PAF indicators on funding available to UN agencies (Input I) Transparent & Inclusive Prioritization and Decision Making (Input II) Coherent Country Submission (Input III), Recipient Agency Capacity, M/R & E + Quality Assurance Systems in Place (Input IV)

The UN Appeal for Dominica was 67% funded, with CERF amounting to over 14% of total contributions.²⁶ The contribution of CERF to the Regional Response Plan for the Caribbean Region was an even higher percentage, amounting to nearly 47% of the total contributions allocated to this plan due to the significant amounts of funding provided outside the plan.²⁷ The main contributors to the Dominica Flash Appeal and the Regional Response Plan apart from CERF included the USA, UK, the European Commission and China.

The request for Irma was submitted with a few days' delay since the hurricane impacted several islands, the RC/HC had to consult with other RCs in the region and gather necessary information before submitting regional request. There were also some delays due to questions around the eligibility of overseas territories benefitting from CERF-funded activities. The CERF was carved out of the initial priorities of the Flash Appeal for Dominica. Feedback

²⁵ World Travel & Tourism Council (2018) The Impact of the 2017 Hurricane Season on the Caribbean's Tourism Sector

²⁶ Source FTS

²⁷ *ibid*

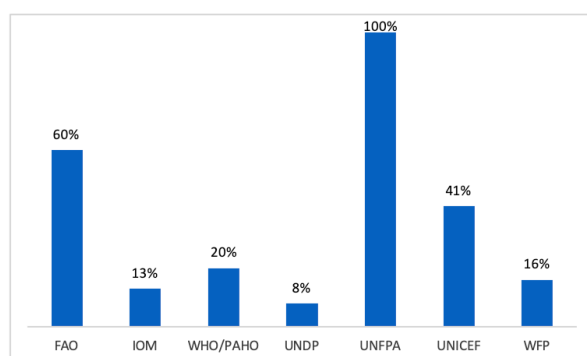
from UN agencies confirmed that CERF proposal processes had been inclusive. Since most UN staff in the eastern Caribbean were not familiar with CERF, training was provided by OCHA in real-time.

Early support to CDEMA by United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC)²⁸ and Map Action units was useful for collection and management of needs assessment data.²⁹ However, a key challenge for the response in the eastern Caribbean was the lack of baseline data that could have helped UN agencies to quickly understand roles and capacities of potential partners, vulnerability data that could help with prioritisation and even who to contact in the different countries.³⁰ Some agencies, in particular WHO/PAHO, which already had a presence in affected countries, were quicker than others in assessing capacities, identifying how best to work with local partners and signing agreements. WFP conducted a vulnerability assessment in Dominica, interviewing 18,000 people to gather basic information. IOM used their Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) methodology in Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda to help identify the collective centres and monitor displacement across the country with identification of vulnerable populations. This lack of baseline data not only delayed implementation, but also posed challenges to provide the required amount of information in CERF proposal formats.

CERF Outputs: This section covers the PAF indicators on Time-Critical Life Saving Activities Supported Humanitarian Actors Able to Respond More Quickly (Output I) Increased Coordination and RC Leadership (Output II) UN agencies capacities strengthened (Output III), Timely Response (Output IV)

CERF funding helped some agencies to demonstrate their capacity to deliver and were able to leverage funding from other donors. Given the lack of comprehensive assessment data it was important for agencies to be able to demonstrate to donors that they were meeting humanitarian needs. Based on agency reporting to the CERF secretariat, CERF contributions amounted to 21% of the total amount of funding agencies had received for the response in Dominica and 34% for the response to Irma in the eastern Caribbean. As shown in Figure 8, the proportion of CERF funding for each agency's response in Dominica varied from 8% (UNDP) to 100% (UNFPA). Based on the results of this review, higher dependence on CERF funding could be seen as an indicator of difficulties in attracting funding from other donors and low percentages indicate that CERF may not have been treated as a priority due to competing pressures from other donors, notably in cases where the agency experienced delays in establishing an operational presence.

Figure 8 – Proportion of funding from CERF for each agency's response in Dominica under the Flash Appeal³¹



²⁸ Staff from UN recipient agencies in the sub-region also participated in these UNDAC missions.

²⁹ Collymore J. *et al.* (2017) Real-time Review Regional Response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

³⁰ ACAPS, OCHA and UNDP (2017) Regional Overview: Impact of Hurricanes Irma and Maria and interviews.

³¹ This figure shows the percentage of CERF funding compared to overall funding received by a specific agency under the Dominica Flash Appeal 2017 as reported to the Financial Tracking Service (FTS). Source: FTS (2017) Dominica Flash Appeal. These percentages do not consider funding that was received by UN agencies outside of the Flash Appeal.

Various factors that delayed the implementation of activities funded by CERF in the respective beneficiary countries, including coordination difficulties within national civil service, delays in deployment and procurement of expertise/capacity required to implement the programmes, and challenges in mobilizing key stakeholders. Commencing implementation of activities has proved particularly challenging in Antigua and Barbuda with the tense political climate and the evacuation of the entire resident population of the island of Barbuda to Antigua, returning in numbers only in February 2018.

A total of five no-cost extensions were approved in April 2018 by the ERC, two for Antigua and Barbuda and three for Dominica.³² Reasons included upcoming elections in Antigua and Barbuda during March 2018 and identification of new needs as programmes had evolved. Available evidence from AARs and interviews indicate that the delays in implementation were also linked to insufficient capacities and system bottlenecks.

CERF Outcomes: This section covers the PAF indicators on Humanitarian Performance Strengthened Humanitarian Reform Process Supported (Outcome I) Predictability and Reliability Enhanced (Outcome II) Quality Response (Outcome III)

The entire population of Dominica, 71,293 persons, was affected by Hurricane Maria. Most agencies reported achieving or exceeding their targets. Health- (WHO/PAHO) and SGBV related interventions (UNFPA) were reported as reaching 100% of the population.

Table 5 – Direct Beneficiaries by Sector: CERF RR Dominica³³

	Agriculture	E. Recovery	Education	Food Security ³⁴	Shelter	WASH
Girls	1,568	0	5,436	3,301	651	2,197
Women	3,381	134	0	8,924	1,566	4,837
Boys	1,634	0	5,435	3,449	679	2,278
Men	3,217	179	0	9,326	1,623	5,013
Total	9,800	313	10,871	25,000	4,519	14,325

Across the five affected countries in the eastern Caribbean affected by Hurricane Irma, 70-90% of the housing stock was damaged. Almost 130,000 people were affected, representing entire populations of Anguilla, Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Sint Maarten and Turks and Caicos. Of the affected population, up to 32,000 were displaced, 20,000 children were affected, and 17,000 individuals needed immediate shelter. Assistance to Barbuda was challenging since virtually the entire population of Barbuda had been evacuated to Antigua, which had largely escaped the effects of Irma, and did not return in great numbers until February 2018 which contributed to missed targets.

³² The allocations for projects approved for no-cost extensions amounted to USD 200,003 for UNFPA, USD 600,014 for UNDP and USD 248,975 for UN Women.

³³ Best estimate of the number of individuals (girls, women, boys, and men) directly supported through CERF funding by cluster/sector as reported by recipient agencies. Source: UN RC/HC (2017b) RC/HC Report on the Use of CERF Funds: Dominica Rapid Response Storm.

³⁴ Joint WFP/UNICEF Emergency Cash Transfer programme implemented through the government.

Table 6 – Direct Beneficiaries by Sector: CERF for the eastern Caribbean affected by Hurricane Irma ³⁵

	Child Protection	E. Recovery	Education	Health	SGBV	Shelter
Girls	6,978	134	6,978	14,101	-	694
Women	-	-	-	2,346	2,000	1,945
Boys	6,978	179	6,978	11,281	-	647
Men	-	-	-	1,877	1,000	1,708
Total	13,956	313	13,956	29,605	3,000	4,994

A total of USD 532,380 of CERF funding for the Dominica response was transferred to government counterparts by WFP and UNDP for cash transfer and debris removal activities respectively. UNICEF transferred another USD 150,891 to international NGOs for education and WASH activities. In other islands in the eastern Caribbean, UNDP disbursed a total of USD 155,788 through government, the Red Cross and a national NGO for debris removal. UNICEF also disbursed USD 58,966 through the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States to support education.

In addition to the CERF AAR for this response, UN agencies also commissioned their own AARs. Most of these were internal exercises, a notable exception being UNDP which commissioned an external consultant to carry out an independent review.

Key Question 2. Specific Results

2. Have CERF-funded operations favored specific results?

This question looked at results from the perspective of how CERF supported coordination by the RC/HC and sector lead agencies, facilitated coverage and division of roles, timeliness of the response, its catalytic role and recipient agencies partnership with governments.

Support to Coordination

UN agency staff confirmed that CERF helped to considerably strengthen coordination in Dominica and, at a regional level in Barbados, led competent UN staff empowered by coordination mandates. Technical and coordination support from the OCHA regional office along with an OCHA surge deployment to Dominica to coordinate humanitarian operations enhanced CERF processes in addition to strengthening overall coordination. Coordination in Barbados for the sub-regional was jointly led by CDEMA's Executive Director and the RC/HC. Although there were strong coordinators with a clear mandate in Dominica and Barbados, there was little evidence of coordination between UN actors beyond government-led coordination mechanisms in other countries.

Division of Sectoral Roles

Overall there was an effective division of roles in the response amongst sectors between UN agencies (see Figures 9 and 10) based on results of needs assessments. The relatively high allocations for logistics reflect the reality of the operating context where transportation was in high demand, harbour facilities had been severely damaged and staff and supplies had to be brought in from the outside.

CERF submissions were coherent as a whole. One exception was some confusion about the complementarity of UN strategies and approaches by Women and UNFPA relating to CERF-funded interventions which focused on procurement and distribution of dignity kits. Another exception was a lack of coherence between emergency shelter,

³⁵ Best estimate of the number of individuals (girls, women, boys, and men) directly supported through CERF funding by cluster/sector as reported by recipient agencies. Source: UN RC/HC (2017b) RC/HC Report on the Use of CERF Funds: Dominica Rapid Response Storm.

led by IOM, who was partially funded by CERF and UNDP's longer-term shelter approach.³⁶ IOM used CERF funding to launch the DTM and carry out a household intentions survey and provided emergency shelters for collective centers. It was planned that DTM should also guide prioritization by other agencies and some UN interviewees suggested that the DTM could have been improved to make it more useful.³⁷

Figure 9 – CERF Funding Sectoral Allocations: Dominica

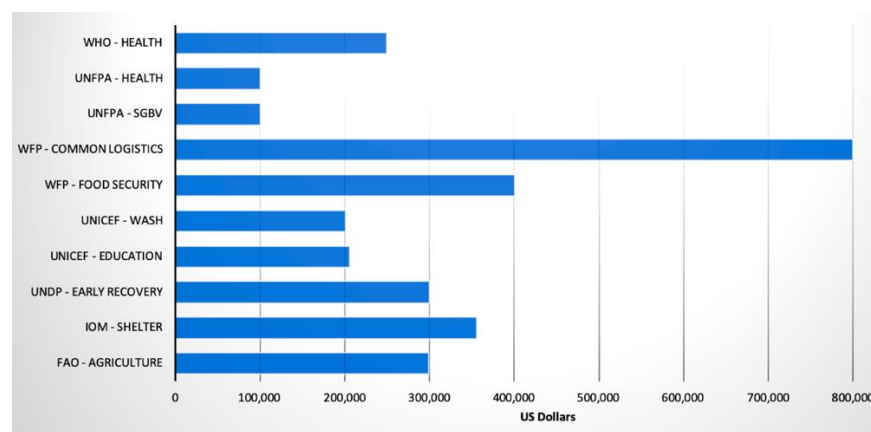
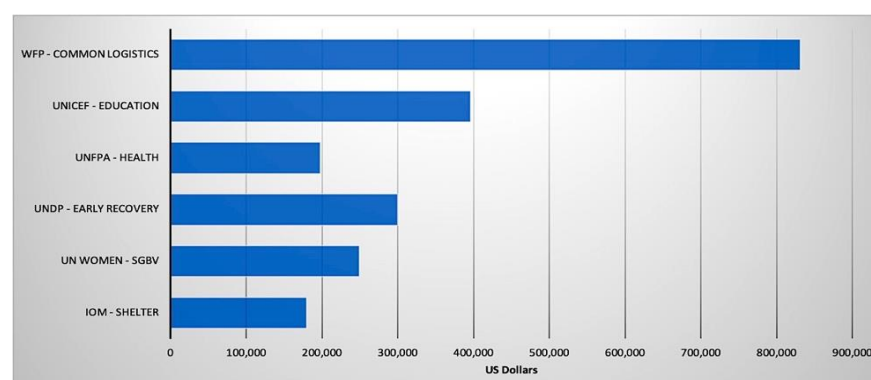


Figure 10 – CERF Funding Sectoral Allocations: Other eastern Caribbean Islands



Timeliness of Responses of UN Recipient Agencies and the CERF secretariat

Time critical interventions supported by CERF that were viewed as particularly effective by interviewees from national governments and humanitarian agencies include WFP's logistics and communications support for humanitarian agencies, WASH interventions,³⁸ WFP cash transfers (some of which were implemented jointly with UNICEF and FAO) and UNICEF's support to education, including psycho-social support to teachers and students. Timeliness was influenced by whether the agency already was present in affected countries (WHO/PAHO, UNICEF), ability to deploy resources efficiently to fill priority needs (WFP, UNICEF) and/or the necessary organizational commitment to invest in response and recovery efforts (UNDP). Severe damage to port infrastructure and disruption to clearance and transportation systems in Dominica was a significant bottleneck in off-loading, importing and transporting relief materials.

³⁶ Interviews, Murray, J. (2018) After Action Review of UNDP's response to hurricanes Irma and Maria.

³⁷ IOM did not conduct any PDMs on its interventions to understand how DTM information was being used.

³⁸ In Dominica, WASH activities were initially implemented by WHO/PAHO and subsequently handed over to UNICEF with a relatively smooth transition.

UNDP's debris removal projects in Dominica started more than two months after the hurricane struck due to a combination of lack of pre-existing networks, delays in agreeing on delivery modalities and procurement delays. The intervention was nevertheless timely, providing much-needed incomes to many people who had lost their jobs and to subsequently vulnerable individuals. Similar UNDP debris removal activities in Barbuda and the British Virgin Islands were delayed by several months and were less effective. An independent UNDP review found that deployments were quick and of high quality, external coordination was enhanced by the Crisis Management Unit but could have been better on the needs assessments, and the programming achieved its results but only after operational and procurement delays.³⁹ UNDP actively promoted participation of women in debris removal and many of the team leaders were women.

FAO's support to the agricultural sector in Dominica supported by CERF was a highly relevant intervention, given the important role of agriculture in Dominica both for its own consumption and as a major export, including to surrounding island states.⁴⁰ Due to a reported lack of capacity in FAO and in the Ministry of Agriculture, beneficiary selection and lack of monitoring, notably the absence of PDM systems, the intervention was not as effective as it could have been. UN Women and UNFPA both experienced delays of several months in procuring and distributing dignity kits purchased with CERF funding and the interventions were not effective since the emergency phase had ended and markets were functioning. UNFPA deployed an external team leader as part of its surge who was unable to enter affected countries until March 2018, six months after the hurricanes, due mainly to lengthy processes required to obtain visas. None of these agencies used PDM systems that could have helped to better understand the effectiveness of their respective interventions.

Even though proposals were submitted a few days after the hurricanes had made landfall, project start dates were backdated to the date of the hurricane which enabled agencies to start responding immediately. A combination of response capacities of different agencies and logistic challenges caused delays in some assistance reaching populations in need. 80% of the allocations, nearly 88% of the total funding allocated, supported activities that had been backdated to the date of the disaster event.

CERF was a useful complementary source of start-up funding for WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA and, to some extent, WHO/PAHO, who had access to additional sources of emergency funding. CERF was one of the first funding sources available, especially since funding could be back-dated (see timeline in Figure 2). Most donors were looking for agencies who were already operating. In Dominica, for example, the UK and the EU both provided additional funding for UNDP's debris removal programme after observing ongoing activities. As noted elsewhere, implementing capacity was limited for some agencies and interviews and lessons-learned reviews cited cases where agencies either chose not to apply for donor funding on offer or implementation of CERF-funded activities was delayed due to pressure from other donors.

Partnership with Host Governments

Most, although not all, of the countries affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the eastern Caribbean were members of the CDEMA. CDEMA's Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) was activated for the hurricane response to coordinate disaster response among CDEMA participating states and regional and international agencies (Figure 11).

The mechanism foresees coordination with international humanitarian agencies both at a regional with CDEMA Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) and with the National Emergency Operations Centres (NEOC) at a country level.⁴¹ An independent review commissioned by CDEMA, the extent and scale of humanitarian needs and

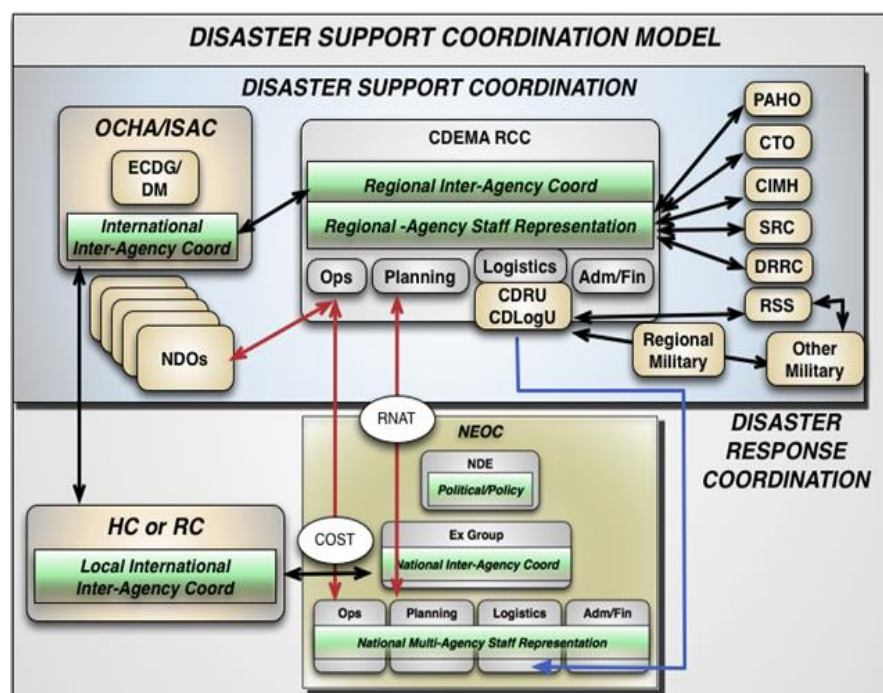
³⁹ Murray, J. (2018) After Action Review of UNDP's response to hurricanes Irma and Maria

⁴⁰ FAO (2017) [FAO assesses the impact of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on agriculture sector in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and St. Kitts and Nevis](#) October 2017

⁴¹ The positioning of WHO/PAHO at the right of the diagram together with regional inter-government institutions illustrates how this agency is perceived differently from other UN agencies by governments CDEMA and governments in the sub-region.

destruction caused by Irma and Maria highlighted many gaps in the interface with international organisations.⁴² To help address these gaps in future, a MoU was signed between CDEMA and OCHA in November 2017.

Figure 11 – CDEMA's Disaster Support Coordination Model⁴³



Unlike in Cuba, most UN agencies lacked robust pre-existing networks with regional and national level humanitarian networks and there was a considerable amount of real-time learning on both sides. One of the main conclusions of a CDEMA lessons-learned review was that it would have been preferable if the international humanitarian community could have worked with CDEMA to help address capacity and capability gaps prior to the hurricanes rather than to try and replace or duplicate the RRM services during a response. At the same time, CDEMA recognised the value-added of partnership opportunities where UN and other external actors could support the delivery of humanitarian assistance with appropriate technical skills and capacity, notably during large scale disasters where capacities are overstretched.⁴⁴ As described in more detail under Key Question 6 below, parametric pay-outs by the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) provided some USD 54 million to governments in nine countries in the eastern Caribbean of which nearly 60% were used for immediate post-disaster activities.

UN agencies made a significant effort to partner with government counterparts to promote a more appropriate and effective response. In Dominica, for example, WFP and UNICEF conducted joint vulnerability assessments and cash transfer activities in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Services, Family and Gender Affairs, UNFPA established a women-friendly space for survivors of SGBV and UNDP partnered with the National Employment Programme, a social safety net programme within the Ministry of Trade, Energy and Employment, to implement debris removal activities.⁴⁵

⁴² Collymore J. *et al.* (2017) Real-time Review Regional Response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴ *idem.*

⁴⁵ A similar example was found in BVI, where UNDP worked in partnership with the Department of Waste Management.

Key Question 3. CERF's role with limited donor response

3. *What has been CERF's role in crises with more limited donor response?*

Scale of unmet needs

In Antigua and Barbuda, 43% named food, water and housing materials as most important unmet needs. In Dominica 45% cited food and building material and support for rebuilding as being important and not met. Communities expressed a desire for temporary housing solutions which would allow them to get back into their homes even as repairs were being done. Galvanized roofing and lumber, along with household items, and for some persons, clothing was mentioned as a priority.⁴⁶

A survey carried out during February 2018 found that 70% of respondent reported unemployment and financial hardship as the top reason for people leaving Dominica. Over half of participants in Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda said that their most important needs continue to be unmet.⁴⁷

Estimates of uninsured or under-insured losses for Hurricanes Irma and Maria were estimated at 50% of total losses,⁴⁸ with higher proportions amongst poorer members of communities. During the field visit for this review to Dominica, BVI and Barbados over a year after the hurricanes damaged or destroyed up to 90% of houses remained a significant number of households who still lacked shelter and seemed unsure about future prospects.

CERF provided only limited support to emergency shelter response through IOM,⁴⁹ even though this sector had been identified as a priority need in initial assessments and subsequent surveys. As shown in Figure 8 in the Synthesis Report, CERF funding amounted to only 8% of UNDP's total funding for the response in Dominica and UNDP had to give attention to whole project portfolio. This was particularly true for support for re-roofing of damaged houses, which was mainly funded by the Chinese government and cited as one of the main reasons for delayed implementation in Barbuda and BVI.

CERF comparative advantage in supporting smaller low-profile crises

In the post-hurricane context of the eastern Caribbean response limited donor response had three specific features. Firstly, the contexts of these countries were little known outside the sub-region⁵⁰ and there was little baseline vulnerability data available to guide prioritisation during the initial response. Secondly, it is not a region that receives much donor funding and the outside perspective, promoted by the countries themselves, is that these are relatively wealthy tourist "paradises". This element was particularly evident in BVI and other overseas territories where it was assumed that the UK, Dutch, US and French governments would fully fund the responses. A third element is that the political contexts in these small island states was quite complex. A frequent response to the question about the value-added of the UN's impartiality. UN agencies were perceived to be relatively insulated from political pressures and better able to allocate assistance on the basis of needs.

In such a context, UN agencies were challenged to deploy at full strength and hit the ground running, which influenced the effectiveness and efficiency of CERF support. A notable exception was WHO/PAHO, which already had a long-term presence that was integrated into government systems, had a good reputation with donors and were able to use these assets to rapidly deploy surge and send materials and supplies to assist with restoration of health services. WFP and UNICEF both scaled up fairly quickly and, based on available evidence, delivered a good quality response. For IOM, which had not been present in the sub-region prior to the emergency response, performance was reported to

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ Ground Truth Solutions (2018) [Hurricane response and recovery in the Caribbean](#)

⁴⁸ ODI (2018) [Building Back Better: A resilient Caribbean after the 2017 hurricanes](#).

⁴⁹ IOM's shelter interventions included leading the CCCM cluster and capacity building for national actors.

⁵⁰ Staff from a recipient agency noted that when they first alerted their HQ about the situation in Dominica, they were told that Dominican Republic was not affected. They then had to explain that Dominica was actually a different country.

be mixed. UNDP performance was a mix of timely and relevant interventions in Dominica and delayed interventions in other islands. UNFPA, FAO and UN Women all experienced difficulties in delivering CERF-funded assistance although UN Women were able to show achievements in strengthening humanitarian response capacities of gender departments in different countries. Difficulties by these organisations were attributed to a combination of factors, including a lack of a presence in affected islands prior to the hurricanes, no pre-positioned contingency stocks in the sub-region making it necessary to procure much of the materials internationally along with the logistics challenges described above.

There were unmet humanitarian needs where more funding from CERF could have provided value with additional but, due to the scale and magnitude of impact of the disaster, value-added would have been limited by the lack of preparedness (including lack of baseline vulnerability data), limited humanitarian response capacities of some of UN recipient agencies and their partners (regional bodies such as CDEMA, host governments and local NGOs) and limited operating space for INGOs. Findings indicate that UNICEF and WFP could probably have made good use of additional CERF funds for debris removal, education (including psycho-social support) and logistics support which would have helped to improve the overall quality of the response.

Logistics proved to be a significant obstacle to a timely response due to the island context where significant parts of their supply chain had disappeared (notably Puerto Rico, which then soaked up much of US-sourced supplies due to political priorities) and ports were destroyed (notably in Dominica and BVI).

For UNDP debris removal (cash-for-work) was an appropriate intervention whose value-added was compromised by delays in implementation.⁵¹ UNDP only had a permanent regional presence in Barbados (and other countries) prior to the storms so had to establish offices. They did this relatively quickly and had someone on the ground in Dominica 10 days after the hurricane hit but they didn't start implementation until the beginning of December (almost three months after the hurricane struck) after a process which included assessment, partner selection, negotiating terms/conditions, procuring equipment and transferring funds. Implementation in BVI didn't happen until February 2018 and in Barbuda in June 2018. The staff UNDP had in place were competent. A timelier response by UNDP and better preparedness could have made very good use of additional CERF funds.

While education receives a relatively low proportion of CERF funds,⁵² in the eastern Caribbean context UNICEF's work appears to have been quite relevant and useful notably in helping to "normalise" the situation by helping children to get back to school and, after some initial resistance by some teachers, playing a significant psychosocial support role. These interventions could have been timelier with expanded coverage with additional funding and UNICEF probably could get the necessary capacity.

Given the relatively high transaction costs in the eastern Caribbean, covering multiple countries was justified where the recipient agency adds overall value. Added-value was influenced by whether the agency already was present in affected countries (WHO/PAHO, UNICEF), ability to deploy resources efficiently to fill priority needs (WFP, UNICEF) and/or the necessary organizational commitment to invest in response and recovery efforts (UNDP). Deployments of UN agency staff were not well-coordinated and, although there were strong coordinators with a clear mandate in Dominica and Barbados, there was little evidence of coordination between UN actors beyond government-led coordination mechanisms in other countries.

Key Question 4. Pre-requisites for CERF funding

4. Given the challenges for fast response scale-up and CERF's quick implementation requirements, should there be pre-requisites for CERF funding based on an agency's implementation capacity?

In the response in the eastern Caribbean, UN agencies needed to rapidly and efficiently bring in external resources, including staff, systems and relief materials. They also needed to carry out rapid assessments, establish offices, identify

⁵¹ Murray, J. (2018) After Action Review of UNDP's response to hurricanes Irma and Maria.

⁵² Only 3 percent of CERF funds were allocated to education during 2019 <https://cerf.un.org/what-we-do/allocation-by-sector/2019>

partners, agree on operational modalities and begin delivery of assistance. Feedback from staff from government departments, CDEMA and peer humanitarian agencies indicated that most of UN personnel who were deployed as surge capacity had suitable experience and skills but there were significant differences in agency capacities. There were also significant differences regarding external awareness about the agency's role and programme objectives.

Based on feedback from key informants and AARs, it was evident that agencies such as WFP and UNICEF were able to quickly establish their operations and effectively use donor funding, including CERF. WHO/PAHO, which had staff already embedded in different Ministries of Health, was also able to scale up rapidly although feedback from peer UN agencies indicated that, apart from the regional office, there was insufficient coordination with peer UN agencies. Other UN agencies struggled with inefficient surge deployments, procurement processes, delivery and quality assurance. Capacity of government counterparts was also a factor that placed additional demands on UN agencies. Responses of WHO/PAHO and UNICEF benefited from robust actions of the Health and Education Ministries respectively, but other UN agencies needed to prioritise resources in building national capacities. The resulting delays and gaps in assistance was observed to have considerably reduced the value of CERF funded interventions and indicated that UN agencies should be required to meet appropriate pre-qualification criteria to be eligible for CERF funding.

Specific examples from agencies that struggled with procurement processes and delivery of assistance demonstrated proof of concept and they could have been very affected communities if they have been implemented earlier as illustrated below.

Immediately after Hurricane Irma struck, UN Women was able to re-programme USD 25,000 from one of their development projects which they used to assemble dignity kits using locally-procured items. They dispatched them to their government counterparts in different island territories where they were distributed within 2-3 weeks after the hurricane struck. Interviews with government counterparts, local officials and beneficiaries in BVI indicated that these kits were considered as some the most useful relief items they had received. Distributions were carried out at a time when markets were not yet functioning, and it was extremely difficult to get many items in the dignity kits, which were seen as essential. UN Women and UNFPA distributed larger quantities of dignity kits by using CERF funds months later in BVI and other island territories, but it was evident that they were of less value.

UNDP's CERF-funded debris removal activities in Dominica was a good demonstration of the value added of this intervention modality, which also helped position UNDP for a meaningful role in the recovery. The activity was based on a safety net programme under the National Employment Programme (NEP) that provided modest incomes to vulnerable individuals for clean-up activities, which was reoriented in order to clear debris left behind by the hurricane. It took almost a month for UNDP to finalise the agreement with the government counterpart to ensure certain standards, including safety standards and employment of vulnerable individuals, of which 50% had to be women. When operations started in December 2017, two months after the hurricane, UNDP discovered that those working were predominantly unemployed construction workers, resort staff and other men who had suddenly lost their jobs due to the hurricane. These workers gradually left during the six-month implementation period as better paid employment opportunities end opened up and by the end of the project, beneficiaries were almost all women or vulnerable individuals as originally foreseen in the agreement with NEP. As WFP had found with their vulnerability assessments, income was a priority need during the emergency phase both to procure essential items to support families and help markets restart. UNDP's project helped with this, especially during the initial phase. In other island states, however, UNDP debris removal activities added less value since it took 6-9 months to start due to a combination of cumbersome procurement procedures and capacity limitations since UNDP was managing several projects at the same time, including a highly-politicized shelter reconstruction project in Barbuda.

Key Question 5b. Lessons from covering multiple countries

5. What lessons can be drawn from providing an allocation that covers several countries and several RC areas of responsibility?

Overall coordination of the UN in the eastern Caribbean

Most countries in the eastern Caribbean fell under the coordination mandate of the RC/HC in Barbados and, given his previous role as Director of the CERF secretariat and prior experience with relief operations with OCHA and international NGOs, it was natural for other RCs and UN agencies in the eastern Caribbean sub-region to given him an overall coordination role for the response in the sub-region. Feedback from interviews and results of different AARs confirmed that this had been the right decision. Not only was he able to fill his coordination of the UN response very effectively, but his humanitarian background and experience helped to reassure senior government officials who had not faced an emergency of this scale before that the UN could provide valuable support.

UN agencies used a variety of systems to support and manage the response depending on where staff and contingency stocks were located. Most UN recipient agencies, with the exception of WFP and IOM, had an existing presence in Barbados where the RC/HC with an overall role for coordination of the response in the eastern Caribbean was based which facilitated interagency coordination. Barbados was also where WHO/PAHO had a large HQ for the eastern Caribbean. WFP and WHO/PAHO were able to draw upon pre-positioned contingency stocks and LTAs with suppliers in different parts of the region. Other agencies relied mainly on support from the regional hub in Panama

CERF funding to UN agencies supported the RC by providing a tangible example of support, even in countries such as Sint Maarten where only USD 60,000 was utilized in country as part of the overall allocation for the eastern Caribbean. CERF funding, even such small levels, provided an entry point and helped communicate that the UN was giving attention to the humanitarian crisis and was involved even if the programmatic impact of small allocations was limited.

Coverage of several islands with CERF allocations made sense where transaction costs could be justified. This was easier where UN agencies already had a presence in most or all of the affected countries such as WHO/PAHO and UNICEF. WFP relied on their rapid surge capacity to establish timebound operations and UNDP decided to invest in setting up a presence in selected countries to support response and recovery efforts.

Key Question 6. Anticipatory action

6. Does CERF have a role in anticipatory action for this type of crisis?

CERF's potential anticipatory action role for tropical cyclones

There were two categories of early warning indicators that the UN, supported by CERF, could have potentially used to trigger an anticipatory response to tropical cyclones in order to mobilize external resources to meet humanitarian needs that look likely to overwhelm national capacities. One category is based on early warning indicators in seasonal forecasts, i.e. the probability that one or more major hurricanes will strike the sub-region during the hurricane season. Forecasters at the NOAA had already predicted with a 70% degree of confidence at the beginning of the hurricane season in May 2017 that this was going to be an exceptionally active season (Table 7). The second category of early warning indicators are impact-based: 1) the path of hurricane which can be predicted with reasonable accuracy within 3-5 days⁵³ and 2) the likely location and impact the hurricane will have, which usually can only be accurately predicted just over a day in advance.⁵⁴

⁵³ <http://armorscreen.com/predictions-hurricanes-not-exact-science/>

⁵⁴ As an example, the trigger for release of Forecast-based-funding by the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) in the Standard Operating Procedure for in Bangladesh is when the government issues a forecast of a cyclone making landfall in

Table 7 – 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season

Storm category	Predicted ⁵⁵	Actual ⁵⁶	Average season ⁵⁷
Named tropical storms and cyclones: >63 kph	11-17	17	12
Hurricanes: >74 kph	5-9	10	6
Major hurricanes: >178 kph	2-4	6	3

There was little UN presence or contingency stocks in the islands in the eastern Caribbean that experienced the worst effects which would have ruled out anticipatory actions supported by CERF in the same way as in Cuba. An injection of CERF funding, even relatively modest allocations, to support the RCs and UN agencies to initiate collective early action in the form of pre-disaster impact assessments based on these seasonal early warning indicators could have potentially significantly increased the effectiveness and value-added of contributions from the CERF by helping humanitarian agencies to leverage additional resources to allow a more timely and effective response. The added value of anticipatory action was demonstrated to a limited extent by WHO/PAHO, UNICEF and WFP which had access to alternative sources of funding and were able to start their respective operations before the hurricanes made landfall.

Timeliness of CERF compared to other funding sources

As described above, some UN agencies were able to kick start their operations using a combination of their own emergency reserve funds or by reprogramming funds from other projects or programmes. Governments of affected countries received a total of over USD54 million from the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) to both support their response Hurricanes Irma and Maria (Figure 12). CCRIF is a regional fund utilising a parametric insurance approach which was able to quickly provide short-term liquidity to members after parametric insurance policy was triggered which, in the case of a tropical cyclone, was when a country is affected by winds greater than 63 km/h.⁵⁸ Nearly 60% of total pay-outs during 2017 were used for immediate post-event activities.⁵⁹ For example, a large portion of CCRIF pay-out to Dominica was reportedly used to clear roads that had been blocked by the hurricane.

Bangladesh with wind speeds greater than 125km/h to priority households at risk at being affected within the next 30 hours. IFRC (2019) [Bangladesh: Cyclone Early Action Protocol summary](#)

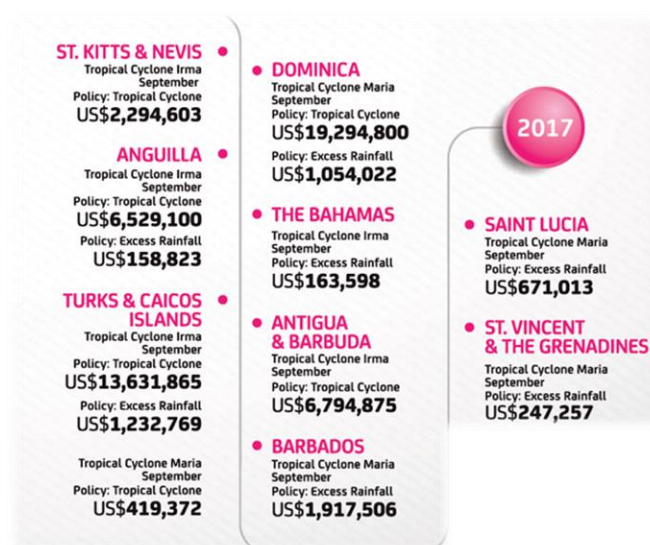
⁵⁵ NOAA (2017) [Above-normal Atlantic hurricane season is most likely this year](#) 25 May 2017.

⁵⁶ Belles, Jonathan (2017) [2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season Recap: 17 Moments We'll Never Forget](#) 28 November 2017

⁵⁷ NOAA (2017) idem

⁵⁸ This is at the lower end of the scale for a tropical storm (63-118 km/h). A category 1 hurricane is 119-153 km/h and a category 5 is greater than 252 km/h on the Saffir-Simpson scale.

⁵⁹ Source: CCRIF (2018) Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Annual Report 2017-2018

Figure 12 – CCRIF Pay-outs for the Response to Irma and Maria⁶⁰

Conclusions: eastern Caribbean

Hurricanes Irma and Maria were the most devastating disasters in the recorded history of many of the countries affected and capacities of national and regional actors were overwhelmed. CERF was an important resource during the response, including by adding value by opening space for UN agencies to play meaningful roles in these middle- and upper-income countries as professional and impartial humanitarian actors in often politically-charged operating environments. Effective leadership by the RC/HC during the response in the eastern Caribbean was viewed by both government and UN agency staff as one of the primary underlying factors of a relatively successful response. It was evident that many UN agencies receiving CERF, notably WHO/PAHO, WFP and UNICEF, made a very positive impression with senior government figures thanks to the speed and appropriateness of their respective responses.

Findings indicate there were a number of humanitarian gaps where **larger CERF allocations** additional CERF resources could potentially have added value to the response. However, many of these intervention areas were timebound and, as described below, some UN agencies struggled to use the CERF funding they had been allocated and it was unlikely that they would have used additional funding any more effectively. This was the case for agencies implementing activities such as debris removal, cash transfers during the relief phase, distribution of essential supplies such as dignity kits and additional support to agriculture in Dominica. These activities could have alleviated greater suffering if carried out earlier and with greater coverage. On the other hand, based on available evidence it appears that WFP could have made good use of CERF funds to reinforce logistic and communication support at the beginning of the response and UNICEF could have absorbed more funding to support education activities; initially emergency education that transitioned into psycho-social support. Finally, the importance of timeliness of the response indicates that CERF support would have added more value with anticipatory action.

The relatively short advance warning for tropical cyclones limited **anticipatory actions** for locations where high impact is certain; 3-5 days to have a reasonable idea of the path of the hurricane but just over a day to know the likely strength and impact. In the eastern Caribbean agencies faced an additional challenge since the UN agencies had very limited presence or preparedness measures in place prior to the hurricanes. There would have been much more advance warning with a region-based approach. Early warning indicators three months prior to Hurricane Irma pointed to an unusually active hurricane season with a 70% confidence level but this did not translate into adequate

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

anticipatory action by the collective UN system.⁶¹

Apart from WHO/PAHO, **UN agencies were challenged by the lack of presence**, pre-existing networks in affected countries and insufficient preparedness, including a lack of baseline data, pre-positioning of relief items, lack of pre-existing agreements with host governments and systems to efficiently channel funds from UN agencies. Given the relatively high transaction costs in the eastern Caribbean, covering multiple countries was justified where the recipient agency adds overall value. Added-value was influenced by whether the agency already was present in affected countries (WHO/PAHO, UNICEF), ability to deploy resources efficiently to fill priority needs (WFP, UNICEF) and/or the necessary organizational commitment to invest in response and recovery efforts (UNDP, IOM).

Gaps in systems and capacities were evident in some UN agencies. Value added of CERF-funded interventions for these three agencies appears to have been marginal and left important gaps in assistance. Many external stakeholders commented on the lack of a coherent and complimentary response strategy of UNFPA and UN Women. UNDP's CERF-funded debris removal activities in Dominica demonstrated the value added of this intervention modality and helped to position UNDP to engage in recovery. In other island states, however, debris removal activities took 6-9 months to start which limited their value-added due to a combination of capacity gaps and cumbersome procurement systems.

While in Dominica and Barbados interagency coordination was of consistently high quality throughout the response, there was little evidence of coordination between UN agencies or effective coordinated support for host governments in other countries affected in the eastern Caribbean. The UN system could have improved its added value in other countries if the UN RC/HC had designated UN coordination focal points in each affected country who were supported with information management capacity to provide more coherent support to host governments, including facilitating more effective use of NGO resources and capacities. Given WHO/PAHO's large "footprint" and considerable emergency response capacity in the Caribbean sub-region, they could have potentially played a more significant facilitation role in the overall UN response, including supporting interagency coordination where needed.

⁶¹ It is worth noting that the Start Fund has been rethinking its approach. As of early 2019, not a single anticipatory action grant had been allocated by the Start Network for a tropical cyclone emergency. See Klassen, Sarah (2019) [Anticipating cyclones is difficult - but not impossible](#). Start Network

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE ADDED VALUE OF THE CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND (CERF)

Annex 2. CUBA COUNTRY REPORT



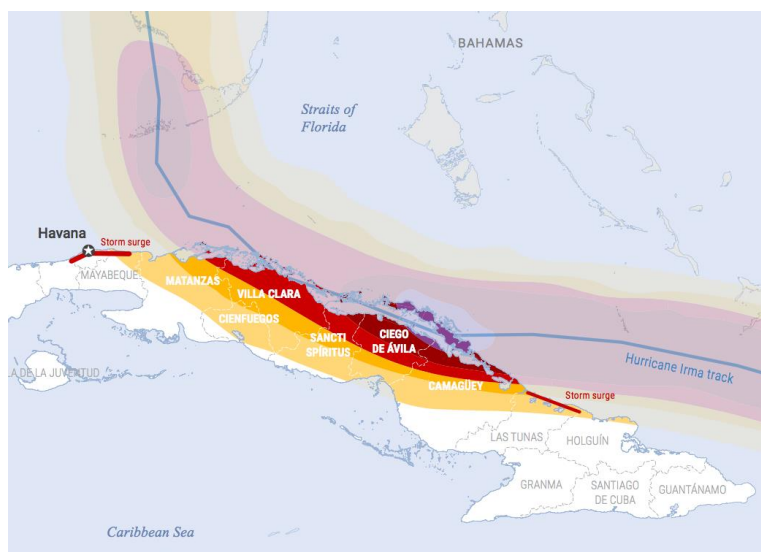
Photo: Ismael Francisco/ Cubadebate.

Introduction

Hurricane Irma, one of the strongest hurricanes in recorded history, struck Cuba from September 8th-10th 2017 for more than 72 hours (longer than any hurricane ever reported in the Atlantic) and less than a year after the impact of Hurricane Matthew.⁶² The 800 km diameter area of impact was so wide that much of the national territory was affected with 10.5 million people (93.7% of the country's population) simultaneously under the Hurricane Alarm Phase and 1.7 million people (15.2% of the Cuban population) evacuated. Despite extensive preparedness efforts there were 10 deaths and 13.6 billion pesos (\$513.3 million) in damage. The 2017 Atlantic hurricane season was rated as one of the most active since 1851 and Cuba's Central region, which had experienced severe drought over the last three years, was heavily affected by Hurricane Irma, causing significant damage to homes and livelihoods.⁶³ Immediate and most urgent needs included providing basic shelter to affected families, access to safe and sufficient water, maintenance of health and sanitation conditions, the immediate restoration of food production, nutritional assistance and support to safe educational spaces.

The UN agencies and partners in Cuba appealed for USD 55.8 million in its UN inter-agency Plan of Action to support 2.2 million people in 33 municipalities and respond to the most urgent needs in the most affected provinces (Camaguey, Ciego de Avila, Sancti Spiritus, Villa Clara, Matanzas y La Habana).⁶⁴ The CERF allocated close to USD 8 million in Rapid Response funding in response to Hurricane Irma.⁶⁵ This represents the largest allocation that the CERF has ever granted in Cuba to what was considered the island nation's worst disaster in recent times. This review covers CERF funding for Cuba in response to hurricane Irma in September 2017, while considering lessons learned from the prior allocation to hurricane Matthew in October 2016.⁶⁶ This country report is part of the larger review of the added value of CERF funding towards the humanitarian response in Cuba and the Caribbean following hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017.

Figure 13 – Hurricane Irma's passage through Cuba



⁶² No other hurricane has matched the strength of Irma's winds so far east in the Atlantic. Hurricane Irma Is One of the Strongest Storms in History. New York Times, September 9, 2017 <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/09/09/us/hurricane-irma-records.html>

⁶³ WFP Standard Project Report 2017 Cuba, Republic of (CU) 4 Single Country EMOP - 201108

⁶⁴ Cuba Plan of Action 2017, United Nations System in Cuba (2017)

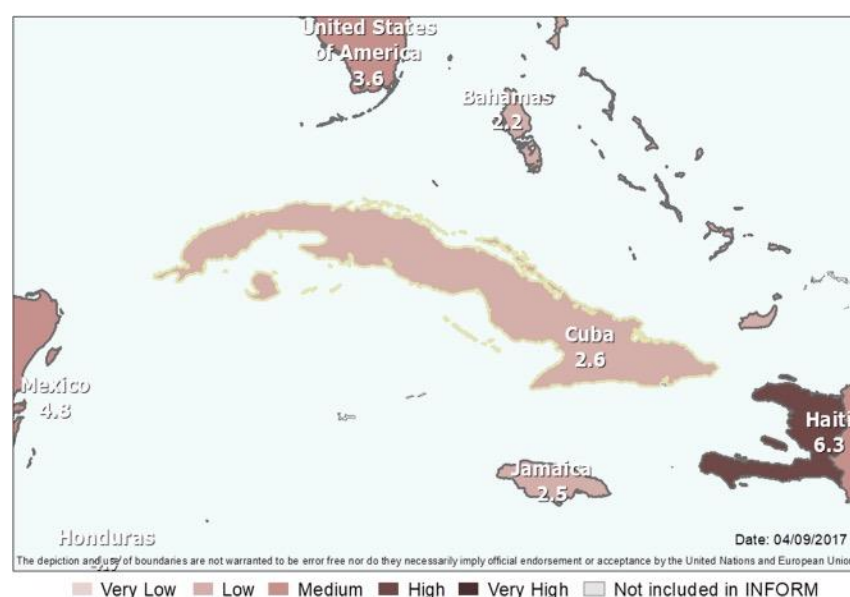
⁶⁵ Specifically, USD 7,999,469 representing 1.91% of the total CERF allocations in 2017.

⁶⁶ The CERF allocated USD 5,352,736 in Cuba in response to Hurricane Matthew in October 2016.

Cuban Context

Cuba is especially vulnerable to hydro-meteorological hazards such as hurricanes, floods, drought, high magnitude rainfall and other related hazards. From 1998 to 2017 Cuba was affected by 19 hurricanes, nine of them of high intensity, with a death toll of 66 people.⁶⁸ Cuba is considered a model for hurricane risk management by UNISDR based on the relatively small number of casualties and damage caused by the same hurricane compared to neighboring countries. Cuba has advanced disaster risk management (DRM) addressing preparedness and mitigation measures and involving a wide cross-section of stakeholders.⁶⁹ Local risk management centers, nationwide multi-hazard risk assessment, and early warning systems and risk communication are recognized as important factors for the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction, self-protection and response in the country.⁷⁰ Despite its exposure to hazards, Cuba ranks only 2.6 on the Inform 2018 Risk Index⁷¹ in view of its relatively high coping capacity (Figure 14).⁷²

Figure 14 – INFORM 2018 Risk Index



⁶⁷ Only the province of Isla de la Juventud was not affected by Hurricane Irma's trajectory.

⁶⁸ Pardo Guerra. (2017). Declaración Oficial de la Delegación de la República de Cuba. Quinta Plataforma Global para la reducción del riesgo de desastres. Geneva: UNISDR.

⁶⁹ When hurricanes approach Cuba, the response phase is divided into different phases: "informative" (approximately 72 hours before landfall), "alert" (48 hours in advance), and "alarm" (24 hours in advance).

⁷⁰ Risk Reduction Management Centers are located in every municipality and province in Cuba and were initially developed in some territories with financial support from the UNDP. The Cuban government later extended coverage to the rest of the country (UNDP, 2010).

⁷¹ The INFORM model adopts the three aspects of vulnerability reflected in the UNISDR definition. The aspects of physical exposure and physical vulnerability are integrated in the hazard & exposure dimension, the aspect of fragility of the socio-economic system becomes INFORM's vulnerability dimension while lack of resilience to cope and recover is treated under the lack of coping capacity dimension <http://www.inform-index.org>

⁷² Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction for the UN, described Cuba as an example of a country with "very strong social organization" building a disaster management system that most "people trust and respect". See UN News Center. (2012). [Interview with Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction.](#)

United Nations agencies, through their various mandates, have among their priorities to support the preparation and response to disasters in the country, and have established a United Nations Team for Disaster Preparedness and Response (UNETE) that is mobilized in advance of disasters and during the response. The economy of the island is such that there is an enormous investment in preparedness in advance of a disaster. In contrast to most countries in the eastern Caribbean, UN agencies receiving CERF funding had an established permanent presence in Cuba. UN agency staff in Cuba have developed considerable expertise and when discussing disaster preparedness and response often referred to lessons from Gustav, Ike, Sandy, Matthew and Irma.⁷³

Humanitarian response in Cuba faces a number of challenges. While Cuba is cited as an example of successful Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in terms of protecting lives, the amount of physical damage from natural hazards is considered high with the country frequently responding to one or two devastating hurricanes each year and subsequent recovery taking time. Housing/shelter is seen as a major challenge with the recovery process not keeping up with the frequency of hurricanes.⁷⁴ Given its geopolitical context, the country prefers not to issue an emergency appeal for international assistance, regardless of the magnitude and scale of the disaster. Similarly, inter-agency flash appeals in response to a sudden-onset humanitarian emergency are not drafted. Instead, the UNCT⁷⁵ in Cuba has issued a plan of action articulating a shared vision of how to respond and recover according to the affected population's needs. The presence of international donors in Cuba has been limited and the country has not had access to many sources of funding. As in the case of other Caribbean island nations when a disaster strikes, there has been an immediate need for imports to respond to the needs of the disaster-affected population. UN agencies in the past have faced a number of challenges importing commodities from abroad given the bureaucratic procedures involved.

The economic, financial, and commercial blockade imposed by successive US administrations has imposed further constraints on disaster response in Cuba with sanctions covering almost all imports and negatively affecting the timeliness and cost of the response. The blockade also requires third-party countries to also apply sanctions against Cuba in order to maintain preferential trade agreements with the USA. UN agencies reported a number of challenges related to paying suppliers due to banks restricting transfers to Cuba.⁷⁶ Similarly, as a result of US government restrictions imposed, Cuba is not eligible for disaster recovery funds from financial organizations such as the World Bank or the Inter-American Development Bank.⁷⁷

⁷³ Tropical storm Alberto in May 2018 caused 9 deaths and required the evacuation of several thousands of people in Cienfuegos.

⁷⁴ Castellanos A. and Wisner B., Natural Hazards Governance in Cuba, Research Encyclopedia, Natural Hazard Science (oxfordre.com/naturalhazardscience). (c) Oxford University Press USA, 2019.

⁷⁵ The UNCT is known as the “UN System” in Cuba.

⁷⁶ For example, after the Friendship Society FRG-CUBA (*Freundschaftsgesellschaft BRD-Kuba*) collected funds to help the Cuban people impacted by Hurricane Irma, the Netherlands ING bank refused to deliver the money to Cuba, stating that they do not conduct transactions which have “direct or indirect connection with certain countries” including Cuba⁷⁶ (*Freundschaftsgesellschaft BRD-Cuba*, 2017). In addition, during 2017, UNDP reported that financial transfers related to payments to suppliers of goods were returned by Multibank, Panama due to the financial sanctions that would be imposed on the bank if it performed these operations. Report of the Secretary-General, Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against **Cuba** resolution [72/4](#) (2018)

⁷⁷ Castellanos A. and Wisner B., Natural Hazards Governance in Cuba Research Encyclopedia, Natural Hazard Science (oxfordre.com/naturalhazardscience). (c) Oxford University Press USA, 2019.

Main Findings: Cuba

Key Question 1. Achievement of key management benchmarks

CERF Inputs: This section covers the PAF indicators on funding available to UN agencies (Input I) Transparent & Inclusive Prioritization and Decision Making (Input II) Coherent Country Submission (Input III), Recipient Agency Capacity, M/R & E + Quality Assurance Systems in Place (Input IV)

1. To what extent are CERF processes achieving key management benchmarks?

The CERF has been considered to be a “lifeline” in Cuba making an extremely positive and unique contribution to hurricane response in the country. CERF rapid response grants in 2016 and 2017 represented an essential and timely contribution to alleviating the severe humanitarian impacts of natural hazards in the country. In the case of hurricane Irma, the fund’s significant and predictable response was equally indispensable. The CERF provides **key inputs into the humanitarian response as it provides a critical source of funding, encourages disaster preparedness and prevention, anticipatory action, inter-agency processes and UN System planning process and reaction.** UN agencies have prepositioned food and non-food items in Cuba so that these can be immediately used in a disaster response and restocked using CERF funding. In response to hurricane Irma, the prepositioning of goods helped ensure an initial immediate and effective response. The immediate response phase began with the distribution of basic items already pre-positioned in Cuba, including 9,828 tarpaulins distributed by UNDP and 1,606 tons of food by WFP. WFP mobile food warehouses and three million water purification tablets procured by UNICEF were immediately available in the country.

UNETE, the UN inter-agency mechanism in Cuba to support and increase disaster risk reduction and response, in an emergency context prepares for the response and a draft CERF application and draft action plan which are updated as information on the storm’s strength, path and consequences become known. In the lead up to a natural hazard, as in the case of Irma and Matthew and Sandy before that, UNETE led by WFP, prepared draft 0 action plans several weeks prior to the hurricane and a related CERF application (including individual project proposals). Without the availability of CERF funding there would have been less of an incentive for these joint efforts and planning for the response. **CERF's contribution represented 38% of the total funds mobilized for the Hurricane Irma Action Plan.** In some critical sectors like health and education a much greater percentage of needs were covered by the CERF.

The immediate assistance provided through the CERF was of extreme importance in complementing national efforts and ensured immediate response to priority needs of affected populations and, to some extent, leveraged additional resources from other international donors. The CERF and OCHA’s sound understanding of the Cuban context, which acknowledged limited alternative sources of funding available to Cuba and the need for funding a higher proportion of the response than CERF would normally provide. The economy of the island is such that there was an enormous investment in preparedness in advance of a disaster where waterproof covering was widely used for emergency shelter and to protect health supplies, storage facilities, schools etc. CERF has successfully encouraged a prepositioning strategy in the island nation that will never have the possibility of mobilising cargo immediately also understanding that funding for Cuba will be limited given that importing supplies can take up to two months. Stock was replaced and repositioned within the six-month time frame foreseen by the CERF. It is a strategy which has some risks for agencies that have to decide to have these items prepositioned in storage by Cuban authorities without knowing in advance when and if they will be used, considering the lifespan of certain goods and that certain commodities will only be useful for certain types of disasters. The prepositioning strategy has been mainly based on hurricane response (e.g. commodities that are useful in response to hurricanes vs. for instance earthquakes) and having draft 0 responses in place that defined projects and interventions that included these prepositioned items.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ This year the response and simulations were to also include planning for a potential response to an earthquake in Santiago.

Agencies and respective ministries expressed satisfaction on the close working relationship they have developed over time. There was frequent constructive dialogue with authorities when developing response strategies.

With CERF funding, UNETE prioritized 14 municipalities for urgent, time-critical activities in the sectors of shelter/NFI, food security, WASH, health and education in times of emergency. Led by WFP, the UNETE has worked as an inter-agency inter-sectoral team in Cuba on disaster-related issues, including preparedness, early warning alerts as needed and, during a response, is the first team to engage in data gathering and assessment. There is an information management (IM) team working on SITREPs. There is an IM group and one on drafting documents working with Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) and OCHA. A team in the RCO works on sharing information and negotiating with authorities. It is an established working relationship and there is a good level of capacity and understanding within UN agencies with staff that has previously worked in the government on disaster planning and response. The RCO took the lead in negotiation processes with the government.

The prioritisation process was carried out in consultation with the government at the UNETE and UN agencies⁷⁹ level and at the sector level with ministries. The RC, supported by the RCO and the OCHA regional office, led discussions. Agencies and the Resident Coordinator (RC) have close working relationships and ongoing dialogue with authorities and relevant ministries that facilitate communication and exchange and enable that a draft 0 Action Plan and CERF application be prepared in advance of a disaster. All CERF funded projects in response to Hurricane Irma and Matthew were proposed and carried out under the direct implementation modality.

NGOs like Oxfam participate in coordination at the sector level but did not participate in coordination meetings during the response although they did receive SitReps. Organisations like the Red Cross are included in meetings with the government. There was coordination with the Red Cross both at the sector level with WHO/PAHO in Health and UNDP in Shelter. Projects submitted to the CERF included complementary efforts and synergies with these actors.

Disaster response in Cuba was very much **community based**. The government of Cuba carried out the needs assessment and agencies relied on official information provided. The close working relationships with authorities in different ministries and at the field level and field visits helped to provide additional information and get feedback on the assistance provided. At the initial proposal stage feedback and learning from communities involved in previous responses were factored into prioritisation and decision-making processes.

Overall amounts requested were consistent with the role that CERF has had when responding to disasters in Cuba with limited alternative sources of funding. CERF contributed proportionately more to the health and education sectors in both the response to Matthew and to Irma which consistently received less funding in Cuba. Submission to the RC was consistent with prioritisation processes carried out in consultation with the government with the UNETE and the UN agencies, including at the sector level with different ministries. Humanitarian priorities were defined by the government in their leading role for the response. The submission to CERF took into account both humanitarian priorities established by the government and CERF quality standards and criteria.

CERF Outputs: This section covers the PAF indicators on Time-Critical Life Saving Activities Supported Humanitarian Actors Able to Respond More Quickly (Output I) Increased Coordination and RC Leadership (Output II) UN agencies capacities strengthened (Output III), Timely Response (Output IV)

CERF funding for certain sectors, notably Shelter and Food Security, helped demonstrate that UN recipient agencies were able to successfully implement and helped to improve confidence of other donors. This was particularly evident for UNDP in shelter, WFP and FAO in food security which later received ECHO funding.⁸⁰ UN agency efforts also persuaded the government to introduce tarpaulins as a key commodity in disaster mitigation and response in Cuba.

⁷⁹ In Cuba, this grouping is known as “United Nations System” (UNS)

⁸⁰ DG ECHO Humanitarian Aid Decision providing 2.3 million euros in shelter, food security and DRR in Cuba in response to Hurricane Irma over a month after. Ref. Ares (2017)5806628 - 28/11/2017

In response to Irma, and to Matthew before that, OCHA approved USD 100,000 through the Emergency Cash Grant,⁸¹ which were managed by UNDP and focused on procuring plastic tarpaulins to strengthen and complement CERF efforts.

While authorities had in the past some resistance to tarpaulins, they are now clearly seen as a critical commodity in all sectors of the response. Tarps provide individual, family household and community solutions in a versatile, flexible and important manner and are used several times over. They are for all types to protect medicines, food stuffs. It has become a key and preferred commodity in the response and ministries across different sectors ask that these be prepositioned.

Shelter support provided with CERF funding was considered a priority in the emergency, as a way of protecting dwellings with total or partial roof collapse and creating habitable conditions. CERF funds also allowed for access to clean water and sanitation in the most affected municipalities. In support of the health sector, CERF contributed to restore health services and to control diseases common to these kinds of disasters. Sexual and reproductive health was also prioritized and the consequences of having a disruption in these related services better understood. Food assistance to the entire population of affected areas and vulnerable groups was also significant. Rapid return to safe learning environments in the education sector was also a critical need that CERF supported.

CERF funding was clearly recognised as critical in the response in Cuba where CERF plays a role as the main source of funding given the limited availability of other sources of funding. Other sources of funding were less readily available during the initial response. Capacities of agencies for response will have however benefitted from other sources of funding that are available in Cuba, such as funding provided via the Red Cross to improve disaster preparedness. The CERF helped to position the RC as a key coordinator among donors in a response. The RC has a leadership role with the CERF providing a key contribution and the RC being in a position to approach other donors to help fill gaps that cannot be covered by CERF or agency contributions. Donors welcomed further exchange and information from the UN AGENCIES on coordinated reporting on the CERF projects and the Action Plan. CERF focused on geographic area affected by the disaster and main sectors identified by the UN's work and priorities.

With the CERF, intra-sector coordination, inter-sector meetings and UNETE's function were enhanced during the initial response and After-Action Review. Agencies coordinated with their counterparts at the ministry and local levels within their sectors to a greater extent. Lessons from the response to Irma pointed to the need for additional coordination across agencies during the implementation phase and improved joint monitoring and common reporting. There is limited need to coordinate across limited sources of funding, but the RC is in regular contact with donors present in country and has an understanding of their priorities and funding capacity. The Cuban government has been in the lead position to coordinate and direct sources of funding to address gaps and outstanding needs.

CERF has consistently been the fastest donor providing funding before other donors and covering the majority of UN's humanitarian funding received. CERF was also recognised as enhancing the capacity of agencies to respond to humanitarian crises in Cuba by supporting the prepositioning strategies of agencies by supporting replenishment of stocks of emergency relief supplies used during the response, encouraging rapid response and solutions to existing bottlenecks. Examples of this included the establishment of LTAs with suppliers, predefining technical specifications of commodities required in an emergency both at the national level and at the agency HQ level both ahead of the CERF allocation and following the CERF's contribution. CERF funding also prompted agencies to provide additional, resources both financial and human, to the response. CERF has enabled agencies in Cuba to further engage in anticipatory action by supporting a process that encourages an initial response in advance of when the disaster strikes and further supports national efforts.

⁸¹ General Assembly (GA) Resolution 2816 of December 1971 established the Emergency Cash Grant provision to assist countries affected by natural and other major disasters and to urgently release cash grants to support relief efforts in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. The UN General Fund releases USD 1.5 million per biennium to OCHA to fund the Grant Facility.

CERF Outcomes: This section covers the PAF indicators on Humanitarian Performance Strengthened Humanitarian Reform Process Supported (Outcome I) Predictability and Reliability Enhanced (Outcome II) Quality Response (Outcome III)

The fact that no no-cost extensions were requested for the response was seen as an indicator of agency capacity to respond within the timeframe despite contextual challenges. Agencies prioritised the completion of CERF projects in time and find solutions to the obstacles that they encountered.

Given the knowledge that CERF is a reliable source of funding and that it ensures that operations are deployed more rapidly, a strong CERF PAF outcome in Cuba has been “predictability and reliability enhanced”. CERF enabled agencies in Cuba to further engage in anticipatory action providing an example for response in other countries. Cuba is recognised for its good practice in preparedness, early warning and early action. The UN agencies plays a critical role supporting the national response and CERF as the main donor to the Action Plan is critical to the UN’s ability to respond. The UN engages in coordinated anticipatory action through the UNETE which was established prior to the 2005 Humanitarian Reform and the Cluster Approach. Lessons are learned from each disaster and capacities and systems strengthened to improve the quality of humanitarian response and better support the Cuban government’s priorities and plans. The UN system in the country has an established dialogue with national authorities to continue working on a common strategy to help protect the most vulnerable populations, considering increasing frequency of hurricanes and the country’s exposure to hazards. This strategy has been coherent with the CERF life-saving criteria and included pre-positioning of food and non-food items to ensure an effective response during the first moments after the impact of the hurricane. While CERF does not fund prepositioning at present it supports this effort by reimbursing restocking.

Key Question 2. Specific Results

2. Have CERF-funded operations favored specific results?

In terms of specific results, the total number of direct beneficiaries across different sectors amounted to 544,636. Key results as reported by agencies included:

- 68,337 affected people received tarpaulins, roof sheets and tool kits for roofing. An additional 58,550 benefited from the expanded use of tarpaulins to other high-impact humanitarian priorities, such as protection of food processing centres and food, medicines and other basic needs that were found in damaged storehouses, distribution and sales establishments.
- 17,900 affected people received mattresses to improve their living conditions in temporary shelter facilities
- Access to safe drinking water was improved for 351,854 people (140,178 women and 67,829 children and adolescents) through the prevention of vector-borne diseases, waterborne diseases and lack of hygiene, in eight of the most affected municipalities.
- 28% of all affected health care institutions have restored proper operational capacity to provide life-saving care and implement effective interventions to prevent consequences in public health, in particular water and vector borne diseases
- Maternal morbidity and mortality were prevented with emphasis on emergency obstetric care, including the supply of commodities to provide prenatal, neonatal and maternal care, the prevention of unwanted pregnancies through the provisions of contraceptives and to address sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in young people.
- Local food production capacity and livelihood in the communities of the most affected municipalities was rehabilitated.
- People in the most affected municipalities were provided food to avoid a deterioration of their food security and nutritional status.
- 20,371 girls and 21,233 boys of the 6 most affected municipalities were given access to early childhood, primary and secondary education in safe and protective temporary learning spaces.

These results were achieved despite contextual challenges. The embargo affected the day-to-day work of UN agencies in Cuba, who considered that they are at a disadvantage compared with other agency country offices.⁸² Access to internet services limited the effective use of web-based platforms and increased the amount of time required to perform activities and posed challenges in communicating with regional offices and HQ. Agencies reported not being able to use corporate accounts with United States banks or use the United States dollar as a currency of payment and needing to take additional administrative measures to carry out programme-related financial operations; for example, using third-country banks, which resulted in higher costs. For UN agencies providing immediate relief such as WHO/PAHO, supplies needed to be flown in from Europe, increasing costs by as much five times as much compared to procuring them in the United States. According to the agency, over USD 280,000 could not be spent on buying supplies, because it had to rely on air freight and not use maritime transport that they could not find within the 6 month time period given that any ship docking in Cuba must wait six months before entering a port in the United States.⁸³ For all agencies, finding alternative shipping companies required additional time and effort. WFP reported similar challenges in its response to Hurricane Irma with delays and additional costs in the procurement and shipment of food and non-food commodities, including fortified food as vessels are obliged to make a stopover in a neighbouring country for trans-shipment.⁸⁴ Suppliers both in the region and beyond were often prevented from selling directly to Cuba. There are also a number of limitations that agencies face in Cuba on the type of funding and support they can receive. In UNICEF's case, it was not able to draw on its partnership with UPS to receive in-kind shipping, freight and expertise.

CERF support to coordination

Agencies noted the key leadership role that the Resident Coordinator (RC) plays in the context of a crisis when the UN system and all agencies were mobilised in the context of a response. When Irma struck the acting RC took on a key role which was described as effective and agile. Several examples were provided on enhanced coordination and cooperation within and between sectors. UNDP and UNICEF effectively coordinated the response in the shelter and WASH sectors. WFP and UNICEF data bases helped provide information on needs. There was also a positive collaboration between WFP and FAO coordinating sectoral information for progress reports. An added value of the CERF is the convening power it has and how it managed to enhance collaboration around specific targets and coordinate an intervention geographically as the main donor of the response.

The current RC observed that the CERF is a critical fund in Cuba considering the challenges the country faces. The RC further emphasized the efficiency and effectiveness of the response which is very much community based and the importance of the UN being in a position to support such remarkable efforts. CERF gives the RC the necessary legitimacy and enables the UN to be a real partner in the response and have leverage with other donors.

Division of sectoral roles

There was an effective division of roles in the response across sectors. Although agencies reported inter-agency collaboration to be excellent, the role and presence of the OCHA focal point during the response is regarded as key in the prioritisation process. At another level, the amount of coverage was limited to the funding received. Agencies were not always able to cover the level of needs identified in the Action Plan given funding limitations. Even for agencies such as UNICEF that tend to have access to more funding there is a real appreciation for CERF and reliance on its funding and the processes it supports. UNICEF experienced challenges in communicating on the response in Cuba given more limited number of communication products (e.g. life stories) than would be readily available in other responses. CERF funding in response to hurricane Irma accounted for 61% of the overall funding received by UNFPA

⁸² Report of the Secretary-General, Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. Resolution 72/4 (2018) Effects of the embargo on country operations of the United Nations Development Programme, http://misiones.minrex.gob.cu/en/articulo/report-secretary-general-necessity-ending-economic-commercial-and-financialembargo-imposed#_ftn20

⁸³ Idem.

⁸⁴ Idem.

for the response and 20% of UNDP's total funding.

Timeliness of Responses of UN Recipient Agencies and the CERF secretariat

CERF contributed to a timely response to needs given its practice of covering the replacement of prepositioned stock. As agencies consider the CERF a reliable source of funding, they start responding as early as possible. Contingency stocks have greatly reduced delivery times of the immediate response. Stocks were however limited and the availability of CERF funding did not necessarily ensure a rapid continuation of the assistance provided with the prepositioned stock items. Agencies were not always able to provide supply for continued distribution of assistance. Due to the limited availability of goods in Cuba, most items required for the response to be imported from more distant international markets which often lengthens international purchase processes.

The response in Cuba at all levels focused on an effective and efficient use of commodities provided. As an example, in response to Irma, a total 23,419 tarpaulins were purchased with CERF funding. At the request of Cuban authorities, the use of tarpaulins, after serving an initial purpose, was extended to other high-impact humanitarian priorities which had not been initially identified, such as protection of food, medicines and other first need goods in damaged warehouses or distribution establishments, as well as for the protection of such goods during their distribution and additional households affected by the continued rain. In addition to the planned 68,337 people, another 58,550 benefited as a result of expanding the use of tarpaulins.

When reviewing the timeliness of the CERF secretariat, most agencies found that the process had been slower in response to Hurricane Irma application than in the past. In response to Irma agencies had to engage in more difficult inter-agency discussions on amounts after less funding was made available for the response to Irma than initially anticipated when the acting RC and OCHA ROLAC had to play a key facilitating role. The CERF secretariat was also seen by agencies in the region as having taken slightly more time to respond to Hurricane Irma possibly as a result of the process coinciding with other disasters in LAC and new ERC.

CERF as a catalyst to kick-start a humanitarian response

The CERF served as a catalyst for the immediate response as agencies present in country, knowing that CERF is a predictable source of funding, decide to preposition emergency relief items with the understanding that they will in all likelihood be able to rely on CERF funding to replace these commodities. All agencies consulted felt that the CERF was an essential mechanism for the overall response and for subsequent additional donor contributions enabling the drafting of the action plan. The CERF also served as a catalyst for longer term programming and more sustainable efforts. There were several examples provided illustrating the multiple use of basic inputs provided by the CERF. There were several examples of CERF projects kick-starting other recovery efforts such as UNDP's ECHO funded support to 8,000 Cuban families affected by Hurricane Irma restoring their homes and living conditions and contributing to strengthening local capacities to withstand disasters by promoting hurricane-resilient repair with locally-produced materials. The ECHO contribution was in addition to the USD 2.5 million from the CERF and the USD 500,000 contributed by UNDP from its own resources for the procurement of tarpaulins, mattresses, roof modules and equipment for local production of construction materials, to help the victims of the northern coast in central Cuba, from Villa Clara to Camagüey.

CERF's contribution represented 38% of the total funds mobilized for the Hurricane Irma Action Plan. Additional funding provided for the response mainly came from the European Union, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (COSUDE), Canada, Italy in addition to each recipient agency's own resources.

Partnership with host governments

A key outcome of the CERF has been enabling an effective and meaningful partnership with the government in the response to both hurricanes Matthew and Irma. The CERF has been able to successfully play this role thanks to the good understanding that the Panama-based OCHA focal point has of the Cuban context. Agencies have a close supporting relationship established with their respective ministry counterparts and endeavour to help them in the response. As ministries are in regular contact with agencies they were able to immediately provide information on the effects of (e.g. the Ministry of Education to UNICEF, MINSAP provided areal images to WHO/PAHO to show

evidence of damage and include in SitReps).

Key Question 3. CERF's role with limited donor response

3. What has been CERF's role in crises with more limited donor response?

The CERF has had a prominent role in Cuba and proportionally provided more funding and addressed a greater proportion of the overall needs than usual. This has been part of its key success. As noted above, CERF's contribution represented 49 per cent of the total funds mobilized for the post-Hurricane Matthew Action Plan emergency and 38 per cent in response to Irma. The importance of the CERF as a fund not only encouraged the UN to prepare for the response and be a stronger and more effective actor but provided the RC with the necessary legitimacy to lobby other donors and cultivate a close working relationship with the Cuban authorities as a trusted partner for lifesaving humanitarian response. In a context like Cuba responses will require immediate CERF rapid response funding but at the same time account for the requirements of response that will have an underfunded nature.

In Cuba, the CERF has acted as a key and main response fund and supported, among others, the provision of galvanized roof tiles that are less common in CERF supported projects. In response to hurricane Irma, the Infrastructure and Services cluster/sector focused on providing items and support for temporary emergency shelter of two types:

- a) Temporary facilities covered with plastic tarpaulins, including the supply of the tarpaulins; and
- b) Shelter houses covered with galvanized roof tiles, including the supply of the galvanized tiles.

Immediate removal of rubble and solid wastes and the restoration of basic services were undertaken by local authorities and not included in the CERF response in Cuba. Galvanized roof tiles are not something that the CERF usually considers a basic lifesaving item. The Cuban government however sees this as an essential support to the response favouring resilience. The item is perceived as a real need by authorities and communities and the CERF contributed to a process where there is a real systematization, capitalization and implementation of this process in the next response. The use of these galvanized tiles has evolved and improved projects over time. The Red Cross provides nails and the attachments needed for the roofs. To persons outside the Cuban context, it may remain controversial that CERF supported this supply. It is considered by OCHA and other agencies as one of the ways in which the CERF has most impact. The costs of galvanized tiles are relatively high but the way the response was calculated (e.g. 32 units per household), specifically targeting and disaggregating families based on the actual number of tiles needed, implies that in practice more families benefitted with the number of being tiles revised according to actual need.

The CERF and UN agencies have an altogether different role in Cuba primarily supporting national efforts. At the community level in Cuba, there is a lot of embedded community level targeting based on vulnerability usually prioritizing coverage of the disabled and elderly. Cuba has had a long-standing tradition of targeting based on vulnerability similar to what a "leave no one behind" agenda would foresee. Agencies were not able to monitor to the extent they would like either because of limited capacity or restrictions on access by authorities. UN agencies did establish partnerships with national local authorities in the affected municipalities enabling proper monitoring of the arrival and distribution of items. In addition, at the local level, activities are monitored based on a detailed workplan agreed upon with local authorities. Information at distribution points on criteria and entitlements are visible as well as beneficiary complaints mechanisms. Authorities altogether feel that they had sufficient capacity in place to undertake assessments on their own and organize and coordinate agency monitoring visits. Projects could have potentially benefited from further beneficiary feedback but the tendency was for recipients to convey their appreciation for the support provided.⁸⁵ A relationship built on the understanding that UN agencies support the government's lead role in the response in addition to the funding provided makes the CERF a main contributor to hurricane response in Cuba.

⁸⁵ One example of use of feedback could be an increased understanding of the preference and acceptance of the shelter solutions provided.

Key Question 4. Pre-requisites for CERF funding

4. Given the challenges for fast response scale-up and CERF's quick implementation requirements, should there be pre-requisites for CERF funding based on an agency's implementation capacity?

All agencies funded by the CERF in Cuba under both allocations had a permanent presence and regular programmes in Cuba. There are however differences across agencies with the response requiring additional need for support. Overall, the response was reported to have greatly benefitted from OCHA's know-how and support at the regional level from project and strategy formulation and throughout the implementation phase. Agencies in Cuba were also supported by regional experts with specific knowledge humanitarian expertise that helped strengthen agencies' capacities for response. Agencies were also supported regionally with procurement. In the case of WFP, collaboration with the Panama United Nations Humanitarian Depot (UNHRD) allowed the swift purchase of mobile storage units.

Between September 11-15, the RCO and OCHA closely engaged with all agencies in order to support the design of a high-quality, well-articulated and coherent CERF proposal. As mentioned, all agencies funded in the response in Cuba have a permanent presence and programmes in country which was a critical factor. The contextual challenges and specificities meant it would not have been feasible to fund agencies that did not have the required level of familiarity and relationships in country. All CERF projects in Cuba were implemented by the UN agencies under the direct implementation modality, in close coordination with the Ministry of External Trade and Foreign Investment (MINCEX),⁸⁶ as the entity responsible of international cooperation in Cuba. The following criteria were applied to the CERF application:

- All CERF-funded projects were included in the Plan of Action;
- Agencies committed to having the necessary operational capacity to carry out activities and complete them within six months;
- Agencies designed projects in dialogue with their national institutional counterparts.
- Geographically, projects mostly focused on the most affected municipalities in the provinces of Villa Clara and Sancti Spiritus.

The acting Resident Coordinator in Cuba was aware that certain agencies, such as IOM (which did not receive CERF funding), had relatively limited in-country capacity but recognized that they could provide relevant technical capacity. It may be challenging to appreciate an agency's level of capacity in advance as for instance the level of dedication of staff to emergencies within agencies will vary as agencies in Cuba focus on development programmes and some specifically on DRR. UNDP has the largest well-established procurement unit in Cuba and is therefore a key actor in the humanitarian response in Cuba. Previous RC leadership of UNDP is also seen to have also helped facilitate this positioning.

As noted earlier, the immediate response to Hurricane Irma in Cuba began with the distribution of basic items already pre-positioned in Cuba, including 9,828 tarps (UNDP) and 1,606 tons of food (WFP). WFP mobile food warehouses and three million water purification tablets acquired by UNICEF were immediately available in the country. Agency capacity to preposition was a key factor in the effectiveness of the initial response and agencies are looking for ways of increasing their stocks (both in volume and in the nature) and capacity in this regard.

Key Question 5a. Lessons learned from hurricane Matthew

5. To what extent were lessons from hurricane Matthew applied during the response to hurricane Irma in Cuba?

UN agencies receiving CERF funding and OCHA have consistently applied learning from each hurricane response to the next disaster. The UN system in Cuba and the technical group UNETE engaged in after action reviews and lessons

⁸⁶ MINCEX It is the body of the Cuban Central State Administration responsible for proposing, and once approved, directing, implementing and controlling the policies of the State and the Government in matters of foreign trade, foreign investment and international economic collaboration.

learning exercises. Agencies also undertook DRR efforts funded by other donors (e.g. ECHO) that facilitated improvement of management and response efforts.⁸⁷ Agencies have increasingly resorted to prepositioning a greater amount and number of products. Given the additional challenges in Cuba, there is also considerable efforts that have gone into defining the technical specifications of commodities needed for disaster response in advance of an event and establishing long term agreements with suppliers. There have been limits to this strategy, since it has been constrained by the amount of time that certain commodities can be stored before they expire (e.g. body bags only last three years before they start to deteriorate). UNDP is considered by the RCO, agencies and the government to have established very good procurement mechanisms. Improvements also consider having more joint procurement of certain commodities such as mattresses. UNDP specialized shelter repair brigades equipped and trained for the placement of ceilings in response to Irma used roofing technical manuals that had been updated after hurricanes Sandy and Matthew in 2012 and 2016 respectively. In certain sectors and, for specialized agencies such as FAO, prepositioning, specifications and LTAs while still necessary are more challenging as needs and response depend and vary according to the specific location and timing of the natural hazard. For the CERF-funded hurricane Irma response project given the spread of commodities involved, up to six different offices in FAO at the HQ level were involved in technical specifications.

Overall agencies felt that the response to hurricane Matthew had been better than Irma due to a combination of factors, including the nature and impact of the event itself and its timing. Hurricane Matthew had severely affected Guantanamo but was more concentrated. The response to Matthew in certain sectors like shelter was difficult because more than 80% of the affected area was mountainous. Irma however was considered by agencies to be more complex and difficult to respond to given the large number of provinces affected and the fact that Havana itself had also suffered the effects of the storm. The scale of the damage caused by Irma and coinciding with hurricane Maria also led to a greater demand for certain commodities in certain sectors and increased prices (e.g. zinc roof tiles). There was initially less of a comprehensive damage assessment due to the large extension of the damage and the affected areas and agencies were not able to obtain complete data on beneficiary figures until after 5 months into the response.

The CERF application process was also quicker in response to Matthew (2016) as agencies did not have to enter into more difficult additional inter-agency discussions on amounts after less funding was available for the response to Irma than initially anticipated (i.e. 6 days more between the original and final submission dates as per table 8 below). The CERF secretariat was also seen by agencies in the region as having taken slightly more time to respond to Hurricane Irma in what some agencies felt may have been a result of Irma's timing competing for attention with response to other disasters in the LAC region.

Table 8. CERF Submission and Review Dates for Hurricane Matthew and Irma

Hurricane	Date of Original Submission	Date of Final Submission	Date Initial Budget Review Completed
Irma	16/09/2017	25/09/2017	18/09/2017
Matthew	13/10/2016	16/10/2016	13/10/2016

In response to Matthew, monitoring efforts around implementation were also considered stronger and better coordinated in one province and with additional staff designated as focal points for the response.⁸⁸

While the Cuban government facilitated the UN's humanitarian work by applying flexible mechanisms for fast response in implementing CERF funded projects, the distribution of emergency items, nationalized under the expedited mechanism (Fast Track) was reported to not have functioned properly in the different sectors resulting in considerable delays in the delivery of many items to the beneficiaries for both allocations but more so for Irma than

⁸⁷ For example, WFP, UNDP and UNICEF implement joint operations on drought resilience.

⁸⁸ Sistema de Naciones Unidas - Lecciones aprendidas Huracan Irma (2018)

Matthew. The distribution process was less agile in Irma than on the previous CERF allocation related to Hurricane Matthew. The main reasons cited for this lesser agility is a change in the national logistic mechanisms and the distribution agreed with the MINCEX in the case of inputs now distributed by MINCIN (Ministry of Internal Commerce). The existence of several national entities interacting in the nationalization and circulation of imported articles delayed the distribution of items. There were also some difficulties due to lack of available transportation to move the goods from the ports to the destination which led to delivery delays. There was also less of a fluid feedback mechanism to monitor the distribution of the products received, although this was mitigated through the monitoring visits and systematic meetings with the National Programme for Maternal and Child Care (Programa Materno Infantil - PAMI). There were no issues related to transparency and accountability. Given existing community-based mechanisms and the fact that institutions engaged in the distribution of items are required by law to publicly display the ration entitlement of each beneficiary, affected populations understood how assistance was targeted. Beneficiary feedback mechanisms were also in place to collect complaints related to distribution.

Many of the identified good practices during the response to Matthew such as the support from regional experts, the importance of metallic roofing tiles, contingency stocks, anticipatory action (see key question 6 for more details) were maintained or strengthened in the response to Irma. Also, the UN in Cuba managed to mobilise a greater proportion of funding from other donors in response to Hurricane Irma. CERF's contribution represented 49 per cent of the total funds mobilized for the post-Hurricane Matthew Action Plan emergency (vs. 38 per cent in Irma). In some critical sectors like health and education the CERF contributed respectively 60 per cent and 78 per cent of the funding provided. While WFP managed to receive funding for much of its response to Irma, its emergency operation in response to Hurricane Matthew despite the extent of devastation and the active fundraising strategy, coordinated with other UN agencies, only two-thirds of the operation were funded over the nine months of project duration. In addition to the CERF, donors to this operation in response to Irma included the governments of Canada, Italy and the Republic of Korea. Given financial constraints, WFP reported that it was unable to purchase food commodities to assist the target populations at the level foreseen in response to Matthew.⁸⁹

Challenges were noted during AARs for both hurricane responses regarding the national customs clearance and distribution regulations introduced in 2016 that were perceived as causing delays in the distribution of relief materials. Decentralized import management mechanisms were revised and roles distributed among multiple actors, each with their own distinct standards and procedures. These new regulations have resulted in complex procedures to obtain import permits and caused various delays in international procurement processes. The need to organize visits to the affected early on, also identified as a lesson from Matthew was not acted upon in response to Irma.⁹⁰

Despite the close dialogue and relationship with MINCEX and relevant ministries, progress on a range of issues that needs to occur in between emergency is slow given among others the need to frequently respond to disasters (e.g. Tropical Storm Albert in 2018 and the Tornado in Havana in 2019) which takes precedent.

Key Question 6. Anticipatory action

6. Does CERF have a role in anticipatory action for this type of crisis?

The CERF in Cuba has had a role in anticipatory action for hurricane response where the UN system acts in advance of crises, using forecast information. UN agencies prepare drafts of a response plan several weeks in advance of disasters during the early warning stage. It does this through UNETE, which is a group that predates Humanitarian Reform processes. The fact that most UN agencies have established DRR programmes in Cuba has strengthened capacities, including for humanitarian response. UN agencies are supported at the regional level by the OCHA focal point and their own agencies. The CERF has made finance available to UN agencies to respond in a coordinated way to forecasts and been a significant early contributor to the UN Plan of Action in response to hurricanes. The UN system in the country has established an ongoing dialogue with national authorities to continue working on a common strategy to help protect the most affected populations, considering increasing frequency of hurricanes and the

⁸⁹ WFP Standard Project Report 2017 Cuba, Republic of (CU) 4 Single Country EMOP - 201108

⁹⁰ Progress in this area was noted on the response to the tornado in February 2019.

country's exposure to hazards. Anticipatory action in Cuba was enabled by a largely effective Early Warning System (EWS). EWSs in Cuba are part of the civil defense system that can activate four response stages by producing an official declaration (informational, alert, alarm, and recovery). When a hurricane approaches, the response is divided into different stages: "informative", "alert" and "alarm". In the case of tropical cyclones like Irma and Matthew, every stage had particular implications for provincial and municipal authorities. Measures to be taken were indicated in disaster reduction plans for every municipality and millions of people could be evacuated over a period of days. Communities and personnel in schools and health facilities know what to do once a stage is declared by civil defence authorities.⁹¹ Actions included protecting or relocating equipment and supplies, anchoring fragile structures, covering stockpiled products with tarpaulins, relocating goods to safer areas, and distributing prepositioned stored items to the population when relevant. Other actions have included cleaning the sewer system, securing roofs with sand bags, protecting windows and doors, and preparing shelters for those that needed to be evacuated.⁹² Risk communication has been a tool for keeping the population's perception of risk at an effective level and for encouraging effective self-protection during hazard events. CERF funds have been a critical factor for UN agencies in supporting national authorities in humanitarian response. The strategy includes effective pre-positioning of food and non-food items to ensure an effective response during the early warning stages when for example plastic tarpaulin is used for protection purposes before a disaster and during the first moments after the impact of the hurricane. CERF has allowed agencies to include prepositioned commodities in the response by replenishing stocks and backdating applications to cover costs incurred between the disaster event and proposal approval and disbursement of funds from CERF. Ultimately, the UN has been supporting the Cuban government's initiative and leadership in the response. UN agencies in Cuba supports anticipatory action and could be a model for other CERF responses. Anticipatory action however has remained modest as the response for instance could benefit from additional prepositioning of commodities both in volume and in variety and agencies could be further supported in their efforts.

Conclusions: Cuba

The response to natural hazard events in Cuba was an example of how CERF can support the UN System's efforts to support an organized and principled process where the affected State who has the primary responsibility initiates and leads the organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.⁹³ The CERF has contributed to improving the overall response by strengthening systems, capacities, processes and contributing to learning.

The UN in Cuba supported by CERF processes included anticipatory action and provided a model for other CERF responses more broadly. Identifying the trigger for anticipatory action is far more straightforward during the hurricane season and in response to cyclonic events when there is an advance early warning. While CERF does not fund preparedness and prevention programs *per se*, CERF fund can support anticipatory as in the case of Cuba and early action that provides a time critical response aimed at reducing the loss of life and suffering in emergencies as in the case of Cuba by encouraging agency preparedness and response capacity, propositioning stocks, establishing commodity specifications and LTAs with suppliers across different sectors.⁹⁴ The speed of the CERF submission process in Cuba relies heavily on the efficiency of leadership and established mechanisms in country, the strong dialogue with authorities and OCHA's support. The CERF secretariat has understood the context in Cuba and has taken on a more prominent role considering the contextual challenges facing the island nation and the limited funding available, the scale and severity of the needs and the operational capacity of agencies requesting funding.

⁹¹ This was ascertained during the field visit to Vila Clara.

⁹² These actions were previously designed in disaster reduction plans and practiced during the annual national exercise, METEORO.

⁹³ Resolution 46/182

⁹⁴ See Pichon, F Anticipatory Action: What Role for the CERF. ODI (2019) On how allowing partners to pre-arrange contracts with suppliers in order to respond to triggers without delaying decisions and processes by waiting for confirmation for funding constitutes "anticipatory action".

Hurricane Irma's passage practically coinciding with Hurricane Maria in the Caribbean affected a large number of islands and this was also initially challenging in terms of mobilizing funds for Cuba. The Action Plan and CERF application fostered a coordinated and harmonized response, covering all clusters (i.e. food security and nutrition, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, health and education). Coordination among all UN agencies was particularly effective in avoiding duplication of efforts and optimizing the geographic coverage of activities.

Given the specific Cuban context and related challenges and the CERF's major role in the response, it could be argued that projects could benefit from a longer implementation period so as to favour greater efficiencies and for instance not be pushed in to costlier procurement or transportation options. Findings, however, suggest that UN agencies are able to further implement a response within a six-month time frame (four months in the case of Hurricane Matthew) when CERF requests are made based on operational realities and agencies' operational capacity. Overall the consideration is that agencies have to be responsible with respect to their real implementation capacity when applying for CERF projects and account for identified challenges.

Annex 3. List of Reference Documents

The list of documents below contributed to the evidence base for this the report. It is presented by order of author (alphabetical) and year (ascending).

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In addition to the above list, a range of partner reports, meeting minutes, correspondence and other relevant documents were also consulted during the course of this review.

Annex 4. List of Interviewees

UN Agency Staff

<i>Name</i>	<i>Org. and function</i>	♂	♀	<i>Date</i>	<i>Interviewee Location</i>
Stephen O'Malley	Former Humanitarian Coordinator, Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States	1	1	15-Dec-18	Juba (Skype)
Marlon Clarke	Technical Coordinator for Disaster Risk Resilience, UNDP	1	1	22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Aloys Kamuragiye	Representative, UNICEF Eastern Caribbean	1	1	22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Dwayne Nurse and Selena Gooding	Procurement Associate and Programme Assistant	1	1	22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Daniele Barelli	Emergency Focal Point & DRM Specialist, FAO		1	22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Chisa Mikami, Ugo Blanco	Resident Representative a.i., Regional Advisor, UNDP	1		22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Denise Blackstock, Randy Warner	Officer-in-Charge, Programme Clerk, UNFPA	1	1	23-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Muriel Mafico	Deputy Representative, UNICEF		1	23-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Francesca Ciardi, Benjamin de Barros	Programme Policy Officer, Head of Programme, WFP	1	1	23-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Godfrey Xuereb	Representative WHO/PAHO	1		23-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Clemens Buter, Atiba Clarke	Planning and Operations Advisor, Administrative Assistant	2		23-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Tonni Ann Brodber, Tanya Cumbermack-May, Marcia Lavine	Deputy Representative, Operations Manager, Programme Associate - UN Women		3	22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Alison Mclean	UN Women Representative		1	22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Unai Sacona	Education Manager, UNICEF	1		22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Jan-Willem Wegdam	Team Leader, IOM	1		19-Nov-18	Roseau, Dominica
Massimiliano Tozzi, Ian King	Programme Manager, Head of Project Office, UNDP	2		19-Nov-18	Roseau, Dominica
Antonio Andres	WASH Officer, UNICEF	1		21-Nov-18	Roseau, Dominica
Luca Renda	Senior Strategic Advisor for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP	1		5-Dec-18	New York
Marie Spaak	Former Team Leader, OCHA		1	5-Dec-18	Bamako (phone)
Hewitt Reynold	Country Program Specialist PAHO	1		26-Nov-18	Saint John's, Antigua
Maureen Lance-Onyeiwu, Herbert Martinez, Paola Solda	Head of Project Office, Project Engineer, Project Manager, UNDP		1	27-Nov-18	Codrington, Barbuda
Laura Ivey	Emergency Coordinator, UNICEF BVI		1	29-Nov-18	Road Town, BVI

<i>Name</i>	<i>Org. and function</i>	♂	♀	<i>Date</i>	<i>Interviewee Location</i>
Luis Francisco Thais, Reshmi Theckethil	Head of Office and Early Recovery Specialist, UNDP BVI	1	1	3-Dec-18	Road Town, BVI
Richard Blewitt	former UN Resident Coordinator for Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Curaçao, Sint Marteen and Aruba	1		16-Oct-18	New York
Shelley Cheatham, Marie Karpenko, Nanjin, Julia Wittig	Programme Officers, CERF secretariat		4	05-Dec-18	New York
Jennie Trow	HAO, OCHA		1	4-Jan-19	Panama
Luz Tantaruna	Regional Emergency & Post Crisis Adviser, IOM		1	8-Jan-19	Panama
Luiza Carvalho	Regional Director, UN Women		1	18-Feb-19	Panama
Aimee Betancourt Blanco	UNICEF		1	15-Feb-19	Havana
Jose Angel Sotolongo	UNFPA	1		15-Feb-19	Havana
Rosendo Mesias	UNDP	1		15-Feb-19	Havana
Elvilayne Vidal	UNDP		1	15-Feb-19	Havana
Dumesky Cintra	WHO/PAHO	1		15-Feb-19	Havana
Miguel Angel Puig	WFP	1		12-Feb-19	Havana
Rafael Cuestas	UNFPA	1		15-Feb-19	Havana
Marielys del Toro	UNICEF		1	<u>15-Feb-19</u>	Havana
Soren Ronge	FAO	1		15-Feb-19	Havana
Victoria Colarmarco	UNICEF		1	15-Feb-19	Havana
Yainea Doimeadios	RCO		1	15-Feb-19	Havana
Soledad	UNDP		1	11-Feb-19	Havana
Miguel Angel Puig	WFP	1		11-Feb-19	Havana
Jorge Enrique Fernandez Esperon	FAO	1		11-Feb-19	Havana
Juliet Fernandez Alvarez	FAO		1	11-Feb-19	Havana
Marisol Alfonso	UNFPA		1	11-Feb-19	Havana
Jose Luis di Fabio	WHO/PAHO	1		11-Feb-19	Havana
Consuelo Vidal	RC		1	12-Feb-19	Havana
Dario Alvarez	OCHA	1		20-Feb-19	Panama
Liliana Pino	UNDP		1	14-Feb-19	Santa Clara

Other Interviewees

<i>Name</i>	<i>Org. and function</i>	♂	♀	<i>Date</i>	<i>Interviewee Location</i>
Ron Jackson, Andria Grosvenor	Executive Director, Planning & Business Development Manager, CDEMA	1	1	22-Nov-18	Bridgetown, Barbados
Valdee Dejean, Charles Lazou	Employment Officer, Field Officer, National Employment Program	1	1	20-Nov-18	Roseau, Dominica

Name	Org. and function	♂	♀	Date	Interviewee Location
Careen Prevost	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Ministry of Environment		1	21-Nov-18	Roseau, Dominica
T'miara Looby & Farmala Jacobs	Resident Councillor, Director a.i., Dept. of Gender Affairs		2	26-Nov-18	Saint John's, Antigua
Diann Black-Layne	Director, Department of Environment		1	26-Nov-18	Saint John's, Antigua
Philmore Mullin	Director, National Office of Disaster Services	1		26-Nov-18	Saint John's, Antigua
Ruth V. Spencer	National Coordinator-GEF/SGP		1	7-Dec-18	Poland (Skype)
Anne-Marie Gore	Team Leader, Debris Management Brigade		1	27-Nov-18	Codrington, Barbuda
Members	Debris Management Brigades	1	2	27-Nov-18	Codrington, Barbuda
Tonya Bertie, Mika George, Pearlette Frazer-Smith	Principals for Ivan Dosson Primary and Leonara Deliville Schools		3	29-Nov-18	West End, BVI
Helen Frett	Director, BVI Red Cross		1	29-Nov-18	Road Town, BVI
Sandrine Underhill	Principal of Elmor Stout High School		1	29-Nov-18	Road Town, BVI
Greg Massicote, Adan Doward	Department of Waste Management, Ministry of Health	2		29-Nov-18	Road Town, BVI
Brodrick Penn	Chairman, Disaster Recovery Coordinating Committee	1		30-Nov-18	Road Town, BVI
Natalie Smith, Tara-sue Morgan	Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health & Social Development, Office of Gender Affairs		2	30-Nov-18	Road Town, BVI
Sharlene Dabreo	Director, Disaster Management		1	30-Nov-18	Road Town, BVI
Carmen Blyden	District Officer, Jost Van Dyke		1	3-Dec-18	Jost Van Dyke, BVI
Julie Swartz	Managing Director, Green and Clean VI		1	1-Dec-18	Virgin Gorda, BVI
Zehra Rizvi, Charlie Peschardt	Humanitarian Policy Advisor at Ministry of Health and Social Development / Caribbean Programme Manager Team Rubicon UK	1	1	3-Dec-18	Road Town, BVI

Annex 5. Field Visit Itinerary in the eastern Caribbean

Dates	Country	Activities
Nov 18	Barbados	Meeting with heads of WHO/PAHO (and acting RC) and UNICEF
Nov 19 - 21	Dominica	Meetings with community members and staff from UN agencies and government.
Nov 22 - 23	Barbados	Meetings with UN agencies and CDEMA
Nov 26 - 28	Antigua and Barbuda	Meetings with community members in Barbuda and staff from UN agencies and government in Antigua.
Nov 29 – Dec 4	BVI	Meetings with community members and staff from UN agencies, NGOs, the Red Cross and government.

Annex 6. CERF Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF)

Revised PAF indicators used for 2015 CERF country reviews

Inputs: CERF Funding			
Input I: Funding Available to UN Agencies/IOM			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
1	Funding available for crises (rapid response & underfunded window) by country. CERF as a percentage of other sources of funding available.	CERF secretariat	Global
Input II: Transparent and Inclusive Prioritization and Decision Making			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
2	Intra- and inter-cluster/sector prioritization process is inclusive of all relevant stakeholders and adheres to Principles of Partnership (endorsed by the Global Humanitarian Platform, 12 July 2007).	RC/HC, cluster leads, recipient agencies	Country
3	Agencies involve their intended implementing partners in CERF project selection and formulation.	Cluster leads, recipient agencies	Country
4	Demonstrated involvement of affected community in needs assessment and programme design (required for underfunded emergencies and if unavailable for rapid onset, justification and plan for consultation in place).	RC/HC and Cluster Leads/Co-Cluster Leads, Recipient agencies	Country
5	Analysis of funding undertaken to inform prioritization process and facilitate appropriate direction of funds	RC/HC	Country
6	CERF underfunded (UFE) country selection/apportionment process at headquarters level undertaken in a transparent manner.	CERF secretariat	Global
7	Where applicable, the analysis, consultation and prioritization processes for CERF allocation take into consideration Country Based Pooled Funds.	RC/HC	Country
Input III: Coherent Country Submission (including complementarity with other sources of funding)			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
8	CERF submission to the HC is of high quality and consistent with humanitarian priorities.	Cluster Leads, Recipient agencies	Country
9	CERF request adheres to relevant quality standards and the CERF life-saving criteria.	RC/HC	Country
10	CERF request is considered timely and appropriate with respect to needs and context.	RC/HC	Country
11	CERF where applicable uses existing Country Based Pooled Fund processes and structures to support CERF allocations.	RC/HC	Country
12	RC/HC allocates CERF funds through a strategy that considers other sources of funding (including Country Based Pooled Funds where	RC/HC	Country

	these exists) and uses these according to their comparative advantage.		
13	The IASC Principals' 2011 Commitments on AAP demonstrably incorporated into project submissions and reporting as per the guidelines (This includes that agency commitments on such cross-cutting issues as gender, protection, diversity and disability are identified and addressed in the proposed response).	RC/HC, cluster leads, recipient agencies	Country
Input IV. Agency Capacity, M/R & E + Quality Assurance Systems in Place			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
14	Agency performance (capacity to implement within the timeframe of the grant, past performance, speed of distribution and absorptive capacity) is considered when developing and reviewing the proposal.	RC/HC, cluster leads, recipient agencies, implementing partners	Country
15	Agencies, both at HQ and in the field provide satisfactory (quality and timeliness) inputs (as defined by CERF secretariat guidelines) to the RC/HC CERF Report and the UN Agency/IOM HQ narrative report, which adhere to reporting guidelines	UN agencies/IOM CO and HQ	Country, Global
16	The RC/HC CERF report is prepared in an inclusive and transparent manner involving relevant stakeholders	UN agencies, cluster leads, implementing partners, OCHA CO/RO	Country
17	Agencies have the procurement/sub-contracting procedures suited for emergency situations and sufficient staff, access, etc.	UN agencies/ IOM CO and HQ	Country, Global
18	Agencies receiving grants have internal monitoring, evaluation, quality assurance and accountability mechanisms.	UN agencies/ IOM HQ	Country, Global
19	CERF secretariat has provided adequate global guidance on the standards for reporting and CERF-related processes.	CERF secretariat	Global
20	OCHA CO/RO, in support of the RC/HC, provides guidance to agencies, and facilitates input for RC/HC CERF report.	OCHA CO/RO	Country
Input V: Streamlined Review, Allocation, Distribution and Overall Reporting			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
21	Average number of working days between final submission of a CERF grant request package from	CERF secretariat, Office of the Controller, ERC	Global

	RC/HC and fund disbursement by OPPBA to UN HQ		
22	Average number of working days from disbursement from UN HQ to country office	UN HQ	Country, Global
23	Timely sub-granting arrangements between CERF recipient agencies and their implementing partners. Number of days from UN agency/IOM HQ receives CERF funding to first instalment disbursed to implementing partners (IPs). c) Number of days from UN agency/IOM HQ receives CERF funding to their implementing partners (IPs) start implementation of CERF funded activities.	Recipient agencies with partners	Country (a), Global (a, b, c)
24	Overall quality and timeliness of the RC/HC CERF report	RC, UN agencies	Country
Outputs: Humanitarian Actors Better Able to Respond			
Output I: Time-Critical Life-Saving Activities Supported			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
25	CERF funds allow agencies to demonstrate capability to leverage donor confidence for future contributions.	UN agency/IOM financial data and qualitative feedback from Country Reviews, After Action Reviews and Evaluations.	Country, Global
26	Availability of CERF funding recognized by relevant stakeholders (recipient agencies, NGOs, INGOs, Government, other donors) as being fundamental to ability to respond to life saving needs and gaps.	Qualitative Feedback from RC/HC CERF reports, Country Reviews, After Action Reviews and Evaluations	Country
27	Extent to which gaps, both geographic and sectoral, have been identified and addressed through use of CERF funds.	Country reviews, Project/cluster documents	Country
Output II: Increased Coordination and HC Leadership			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
28	CERF contributes to improve coordination and to enhance HC leadership.	Qualitative Feedback from RC/HC CERF reports and Country Reviews, After Action Reviews and Evaluations	Country
29	Strengthened function of clusters and of inter-cluster forum.	Qualitative feedback from Stakeholders	Country

30	RC/HC leverages CERF and complementarity between different sources of funding is enhanced. (e.g. funds are used jointly and strategically according to their respective comparative advantages).	Qualitative Feedback from Country Reviews, After Action Reviews and Evaluations, OCHA CO/RO	Country
31	The RC/HC CERF reporting process fosters joint reflection on results achieved with CERF funds and lessons learned	UN agencies, cluster leads, implementing partners, OCHA CO/RO	Country
Output III: UN Agencies' Capacity Strengthened			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
32	Extent to which CERF enhances the ability of recipient agencies to respond to humanitarian crises.	Qualitative Feedback from Country Reviews, After Action Reviews and Evaluations HQ level bilateral partnership reporting and meetings	Country
Output IV. Timely Response			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
33	Number and cause of no-cost extension requests.	CERF Internal Tracking, Third Party Monitoring, After Action Reviews, Country Reviews	Country
34	CERF funds fill a critical time gap as measured in relation to time that other contributions are received.	UN Agency/IOM specific financial data, Qualitative Feedback from Country Reviews, RC/HC CERF reports	Country
35	Utilization rates of CERF funding.	CERF Financial Reports	Global
Outcomes: Humanitarian Performance Strengthened			
Outcome I: Humanitarian Reform Process, incl. Transformative Agenda, Supported			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
36	Extent to which CERF supports the full Humanitarian Programme Cycle and the collective results that the humanitarian community aims to achieve.	Indicators when available. Qualitative Feedback from Country Reviews, After Action Reviews and Evaluations	Country
37	Extent to which CERF has acted as a tool to incentivize overall coordination, empowered RC/HC leadership and strengthened accountability, including accountability to affected populations.	Qualitative Feedback from Country Reviews, RC/HC CERF reports, After Action Reviews and Evaluations	Country
Outcome II: Predictability and Reliability Enhanced			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level

38	Response capacity is strengthened given knowledge that CERF is a reliable source of funding.	Qualitative Feedback from UN agencies/IOM	Country
39	Operations deployed more rapidly due to 'predictability' of CERF as a quick funding source.	UN Agency/IOM reporting	Country
Outcome III: Quality Response			
#	Indicator	Responsible	Level
40	Extent of coverage of beneficiary targets in relation to the initial proposal (e.g. number, type).	Monitoring data when available, RC CERF report template, Qualitative Feedback	Country
41	Agencies' CERF-related outcomes are reported to CERF and the RC/HC on the basis of their M/R & E and quality assurance systems	UN agencies/IOM reporting, third party monitoring, evaluations, Qualitative Feedback from Country Reviews	Country
42	For the CERF, evaluative processes enable continuous improvement and ensure a quality response. Evaluations are undertaken regularly and there is a management response to recommendations.	Qualitative Feedback from Country Reviews, After Action Reviews and Evaluations Website analytics	Global
43	Evaluations undertaken demonstrate CERF's contribution to a more coherent and effective quality response.	Qualitative Feedback from Country Reviews, After Action Reviews and Evaluations	Global

Annex 7. Terms of Reference

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE ADDED VALUE OF THE CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND (CERF) IN CUBA AND THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

14 September 2018

1. Background to the CERF and Performance and Accountability Framework

It is widely recognized that the key strengths of CERF lie in its ability to respond quickly and in the relatively high degree of flexibility it affords users compared with other sources of humanitarian funding. Member States and private donors require appropriate assurances that the considerable funds involved are managed appropriately and meaningful results are being achieved. The Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) function is charged with a formal fiduciary responsibility over the proper use of CERF funds, and relies upon the CERF secretariat to assist with the proper discharge of these responsibilities. In this context, the development of a Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF) for CERF is regarded as an effective tool.

Paragraph 19 of General Assembly Resolution 60/124 calls for “the establishment of an appropriate reporting and accountability mechanism to ensure that the funds allocated through the Fund are used in the most efficient, effective and transparent manner possible.” Consequently, the CERF Advisory Group at its meeting on 12 October 2006 called for the development of a Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF). In addition, the 2008 CERF Two-Year Evaluation gave as Key Recommendation 4: “The multiple lines of accountability for CERF need to be clarified, in consultation with the UN Controller and the operational agencies, to specify the roles of each actor.” In response, the CERF secretariat developed a PAF, a first draft of which was circulated in 2009. The PAF was formally adopted in 2010.

The CERF PAF proposes, among other things, the introduction of independent reviews to be conducted annually within a sample of three to five countries as determined by the ERC. The CERF Advisory Group supported the inclusion of such an independent country-level mechanism. Following a pilot review conducted in Kenya in early 2010, the CERF Advisory Group met on 1 July 2010 and endorsed the PAF. Since then, the CERF secretariat has aimed to conduct between three and five country-level reviews per year.⁹⁵

2. Scope and Purpose

The main purpose of the present regional-level review will be to assess the value added by CERF funding towards the humanitarian response in Cuba and the Caribbean following hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. A major aim of the review will be to provide the ERC with an appropriate level of assurance around the achievement of key performance benchmarks and planned results for the CERF mechanism around the intended inputs, outputs and outcomes as defined by the PAF. In addition, the review will explore certain strategic questions unique to specific allocations. The review will include recommendations aimed at improving operational aspects of CERF and may also identify relevant policy issues which need to be addressed at a global level.

The review will cover the time period from September 2016 until August 2018. Three Rapid Response allocations will be covered in depth: the Rapid Response allocation to Cuba in response to Hurricane Irma;

⁹⁵ A full list of reviews conducted to date and final reports are available online at <http://unocha.org/cerf/reportsevaluations/evaluations/country-reviews/performance-and-accountability-framework>

the Rapid Response allocation for life-saving activities in several Eastern Caribbean islands affected by Hurricane Irma; and the Rapid Response allocation to Dominica in response to Hurricane Maria. In addition, the review will take into consideration the Rapid Response allocation to Cuba in response to Hurricane Matthew in 2016.

CERF Rapid Response allocation to Cuba in response to Hurricane Matthew (16-RR-CUB-22839, October 2016): CERF provided a Rapid Response allocation of \$5.4 million in response to Hurricane Matthew that hit the eastern provinces of Cuba on 4 and 5 October 2016. Following the hurricane, UN partners developed a Plan of Response to complement the Government's efforts. The plan was launched in Havana on 20 October and CERF allocated \$5.4 million on the same day, with a focus on the Food Security, Shelter, WASH, Health and Education sectors. This Rapid Response allocation will mainly serve for comparison with the 2017 allocation to Cuba in response to Hurricane Irma (see below).

CERF Rapid Response allocation to Cuba in response to Hurricane Irma (17-RR-CUB-27383, September 2017): CERF provided a Rapid Response allocation of \$8 million to support immediate response activities in Cuba following Hurricane Irma that passed over Cuba from 8 to 10 September 2017. In line with the Plan of Action agreed by the Government and the UN Country Team, CERF-funded assistance sought to ensure the provision of basic shelter to affected families, access to safe and sufficient water, maintenance of health and sanitation conditions, the immediate restoration of food production, nutritional assistance and support to safe educational spaces. Key achievements made thanks to the CERF allocation were distribution of food to 544,636 people; provision of water purification means for 117,284 families; delivery of tarpaulins, roof sheets and tool kits for roofing to 68,337 people; distribution of education materials to 20,223 girls and boys; and restoration of 113 health care facilities. According to FTS, the Cuba Plan of Action for Hurricane Irma remained only 24.5% funded (\$13.6 million) nearly a year after it was launched. CERF's contribution represented 66.1% of overall funding to the Plan with other (but much smaller) contributions coming from a few other donors. In Education CERF was the only donor and in Health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) CERF provided more than 90% of the funding received.

CERF Rapid Response allocation to Antigua and Barbuda and other eastern Caribbean islands in response to Hurricane Irma (17-RR-ATG-27500, September 2017): CERF provided a Rapid Response allocation of \$2.2 million to support life-saving activities in Antigua and Barbuda, Sint Maarten, British Virgin Islands and Turks and Caicos following Hurricane Irma. The hurricane affected several islands in the Caribbean under the leadership of several UN Resident Coordinators and with a limited UN presence prior to the storm. The CERF allocation was the first funding available and focused on provision of shelter material, access to sexual and reproductive health, clearance of debris in connection with early recovery and cash for work, education, child protection, and mental health and psychological support. Key achievements include provision of shelter materials like tents and tarpaulins for 2,250 of the most vulnerable households; clean delivery kits for 1,800 pregnant women and emergency obstetric care for 563 pregnant women; dignity kits for 4,152 affected people; education materials for 8,152 girls and boys; and emergency psychological support for 300 individuals. CERF was the largest donor for the Hurricane Irma Regional Response Plan for the Caribbean, providing 46.6% of all funding contributed. Overall, the plan remained only 17.1% funded. For the Education and Protection sectors CERF was the only donor.

CERF Rapid Response allocation to Dominica in response to Hurricane Maria (17-RR-DMA-27733, October 2017): CERF provided a Rapid Response allocation of \$3 million to support life-saving activities in Dominica following Hurricane Maria which struck the island on 18 September 2017. The hurricane caused widespread damage and destruction in Dominica, one of the poorest countries in the Caribbean. Access to food, building material, education and other essential needs were critical to those most affected by the hurricane. In line with the priorities outlined in the Flash Appeal and Regional

Response Plan, CERF enabled partners to respond in key sectors such as Food Security, Health and WASH. Among the key achievements were provision of access to clean water for 12,850 affected people; water and sanitation facilities for 8,092 children; cash-based transfers to meet the essential needs of 3,666 people; educational supplies for over 2,040 students and early childhood development kits for 1,435 children under five; psychosocial support for 10,871 children and adolescents; and provision of 16 clinical delivery assistance kits with essential drugs, supplies and equipment to facilities in seven health districts. According to FTS, the Dominica Flash Appeal in response to Hurricane Maria reached a funding level of 67.1% (\$20.9 million), with CERF being the fourth largest donor contributing 14.4% of overall funding to the response. At the same time, CERF was one of the first sources of funding for a multitude of sectors and was the only donor in WASH, Protection and Camp Management and the main donor in Education and Health.

3. Key issues

The critical overriding question on which assurance is sought is: **Have CERF operations in the country/ies successfully added value to the broader humanitarian endeavor?**

CERF's added value refers to the following four objectives: (a) fast delivery of assistance to people in need, (b) better response to time-critical needs, (c) improved coordination among the humanitarian community, and (d) leveraging additional resources from other sources.

Using the indicators from the CERF PAF, assurances will be sought around the following specific areas of concern:

1. *CERF processes are achieving key management benchmarks in that:*
 - CERF submissions are based on an inclusive planning process and adhere to established quality criteria.
 - Transparent systems are in place for correct allocation, efficient flow and use of CERF by agencies.
 - Adequate monitoring and evaluation systems are in place at the agency level for measuring and reporting on results.
2. *There are reasonable grounds to believe that CERF operations favour the following results:*
 - CERF strengthens humanitarian response by empowering the RC/HC and enhancing the quality of coordination within the cluster approach and across clusters.
 - CERF facilitates adequate coverage, eliminates gaps and facilitates an effective division of labor among humanitarian actors.
 - CERF contributes to a timelier response to needs.
 - CERF favors the delivery of relevant life-saving actions at critical moments.
 - CERF serves as a catalyst to kick-start humanitarian response while other resources are mobilized.
 - CERF enables UN agencies to play a meaningful partnership role with the host government.

Further key issues specific to this review and to the individual allocations include:

CERF's role in small, low-profile crises

- Given the fact that these emergencies were unable to attract significant funding beyond CERF, could CERF have boosted its added value by taking on a bigger role in supporting the humanitarian response than it did (i.e. larger allocation amount)?
- More broadly, should CERF systematically utilize its comparative advantage as a needs-based global humanitarian fund by taking on a more prominent role in supporting this type of smaller low-profile crises? For example, by providing more funding to address a greater proportion of the overall needs than what the fund typically does?

CERF in countries with limited humanitarian presence

- Given the challenges for fast response scale-up in countries with limited humanitarian presence, should there be pre-requisites for CERF funding in terms of an agency's implementation capacity?

CERF in regional crises

- What lessons can be drawn from providing an allocation that covers several countries and several RC areas of responsibility? How can prioritization and coordination be promoted across country teams? How can information sharing on implementation be promoted? How does the regional allocation of funding affect reporting on implementation?

CERF's role in anticipatory action

- What lessons can be drawn from the hurricane response in the Caribbean for CERF's role in anticipatory action more broadly?
- How could (a larger) CERF potentially add more value in responding to sudden onset crises based on early warning signs and risk indicators?
- How does CERF timeliness compare to other funding available for response to natural disasters in the region (including parametric mechanisms like the Caribbean Risk Insurance Facility)?

4. Review Methodology

The formal assessment of agency performance vis-à-vis CERF-funded activities remains the prerogative of recipient agencies via their own internal oversight procedures (internal performance reporting, audit and evaluation etc.). The review approach will therefore be designed in a manner that avoids duplication with such procedures and meets only the immediate assurance needs of the ERC in relation to the PAF.

Recognizing that CERF funds are often co-mingled with other donor funds by agencies and that the in-depth assessment of beneficiary-level impact is formally the charge of recipient agencies, the review will not attempt to link beneficiary-level changes to CERF activity, except where recipient agencies already have this data. The review mechanism will not seek to provide comprehensive coverage linked to detailed narratives and contextual analysis around how and why results are being achieved. Rather it will focus instead on providing an assurance around issues of the fund's strategic and operational impact.

The review has two main components: (1) an analysis of CERF's added value to the humanitarian response in Cuba and the Caribbean following Hurricanes Irma and Maria; and (2) forward-looking questions on CERF's role in (a) small, low-profile crises (b) contexts with limited humanitarian presence, (c) regional crises and (d) anticipatory finance.

The review will consist of a desk review of relevant documents, remote interviews of stakeholders and a visit to Cuba and several Caribbean islands as well as visits to Panama City as the regional hub and headquarters as required. The country visits will allow meetings and interviews with relevant in-country stakeholders and may include travel to CERF-funded humanitarian projects. The analytical approach will be deliberately kept rapid and light.

Prior to leaving the Caribbean, the Consultant will brief the RCs/HCs and may provide a short analytical summary of initial observations and potential recommendations in relation to the key assurance issues identified above. The RCs/HCs, together with the HCTs/UNCTs, may subsequently be requested to provide a "management response" to any recommendations in the report once it has been finalized.

5. Data Collection

Desk review: A quantitative analysis will be conducted on the data, reports and files available at the HQ and country level. The desk review includes:

- Remote interviews with key stakeholders,

- If relevant, surveys targeted at key stakeholders,
- Review of relevant studies and evaluations,
- Funding data, including funding from sources other than the CERF (e.g. OCHA's Financial Tracking Service),
- Timelines on sums requested, allocated from CERF database,
- CERF country-level reports on context, needs, status of implementation, activities, results and lessons learned,
- CERF meeting minutes at HQ and country-level and notifications of application decisions,
- CERF Project files at HQ and country-level,
- Humanitarian appeals and other humanitarian strategy documents.

Semi-structured interviews at country level may include: RC/HC, OCHA staff, Cluster leads, cluster coordinators at capital level, HCT members, agency CERF focal points, I/NGO partner implementing CERF projects and those without access to CERF funds, affected people, host government, donors. UN Agencies will be asked to provide relevant documents and indicate interview partners to facilitate the review.

Interviews at headquarters and/or regional level may include: Stakeholders at OCHA headquarters in New York and Geneva, relevant agency focal points, and selected donor representatives as relevant. Interviews will also take place with selected CERF secretariat staff to get further background and perspective.

Select project site visits: The consultant may visit sites of CERF-funded projects to help provide some limited anecdotal information regarding the use of funding at the affected population level and can provide a field-level snapshot and some direct contact with affected people and other key informants in field locations.

In-Country working session to review provisional results. This will be used as learning opportunities to discuss, validate and fill key gaps in the findings and recommendations.

6. Proposed Consultant(s)

The consultant(s) will be independent and should have the following skills:

- Expertise in UN humanitarian action and financing and knowledge of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle
- Expertise and extensive experience in humanitarian evaluation
- Expertise in analysing financial data in tandem with other types of information
- Expertise in project management and implementation
- Knowledge, including field experience with a broad range of humanitarian actors, such as UN agencies, Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, local government disaster response structures and systems, and NGOs
- Familiarity with natural disaster settings
- Expertise in climate variability and change and disaster risk reduction
- Ability to analyse and integrate diverse and complex quantitative and qualitative data from a wide range of sources
- Proven project and programme evaluation skills.
- Fluency in written and spoken English. Knowledge of Spanish is desirable.

7. Management and Support

The review will be managed by the CERF secretariat, which will identify country-level focal points to support the review mission. Their responsibilities will include:

- Provide necessary administrative, coordination and logistical support to the consultants,
- Facilitate the consultants' access to specific information, key informants and expertise necessary to perform the assessment,
- Monitor and assess the quality of the review and its process,
- Ensure sufficient engagement by the HCT during the mission and in response to the draft and final report,
- Disseminate final report,
- Facilitate relevant management response to the final report and subsequent follow up.

The OCHA country office will support the consultant to liaise with key partners and other stakeholders, make available to the consultant necessary information regarding CERF-funded programmes, projects and activities in the country. Following the preparation of a draft report, the country office will provide factual verifications of the report. The country office will provide the review consultant support in kind (e.g. arranging meetings with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries; and assistance for any project site visit).

8. Deliverables

The consultant(s) will be expected to produce the following main outputs:

- (1) An inception report outlining, among other things, a detailed methodology, format of deliverables and timeline.
- (2) Country visits (including final presentation/debrief for RCs/HCs and OCHA Country Offices/Resident Coordinator's Offices)
- (3) Draft report (including solicitation of comments from all stakeholders)
- (4) Final report in English to the ERC, through the CERF secretariat, in an electronic version, plus an Executive Summary.

The final report will be structured in the form of short observations and conclusions around the different assurance concerns linked to the review. Country specific analysis and observations will be included in the report in support of the strategic questions outlined above. The report will also include, as appropriate, a set of specific, well-targeted and action-oriented recommendations whose purpose should be to improve the performance of the CERF within the country or raising any policy issues. The annexes will include a brief description of the methods used and the analysis performed, and a list of persons interviewed.

9. Process

Phase 1: Preparation

Phase 2: Data collection and analysis

Phase 3: Synthesis, report writing and review

Phase 4: Submission, dissemination and follow up

Annex A

CERF allocations that form part of the review

Country	Month	Window	Application Title	Agency	Amount	Grant expiry date
Dominica	10/2017	Rapid Response	Hurricane Maria	FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO/PAHO	\$3,011,838	07 June 2018
Cuba	10/2017	Rapid Response	Hurricane Irma	FAO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO/PAHO, WFP	\$7,999,469	21 March 2018
Antigua and Barbuda, and other eastern Caribbean States	10/2017	Rapid Response	Hurricane Irma	IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, UN WOMEN	\$2,154,461	30 June 2018
Cuba	10/2016	Rapid Response	Hurricane Matthew*	FAO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP, WHO/PAHO	\$5,352,736	02 May 2017
Total					\$ 13,165,768	

*The 2016 Rapid Response allocation to Cuba in response to Hurricane Matthew will serve mainly for purposes of comparison with the 2017 Cuba allocation and response.

CERF allocations in response to storms (hurricanes, cyclones, etc.)⁹⁶

Year	CERF storm allocations
2006	\$3,125,286
2007	\$51,828,954
2008	\$44,717,252
2009	\$8,539,270
2010	\$15,532,896
2011	\$3,178,682
2012	\$9,470,727
2013	\$25,284,204
2014	\$-
2015	\$6,550,482
2016	\$23,758,358
2017	\$28,277,028
2018	\$1,196,791
Total	\$221,459,930

⁹⁶ As of 06 September 2018

Annex 8. Review Matrix

Review questions	Indicators	Data sources
Key question 1: To what extent are CERF processes achieving key management benchmarks?		
1.1 Summary of CERF performance based on PAF <u>input</u> indicators (2015 version)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant input indicators in the PAF (1-24) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports • HC CERF report and AAR
1.2 Summary of CERF performance based PAF <u>output</u> indicators (2015 version)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant output indicators in the PAF (25-35) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports • HC CERF report and AAR
1.3 Summary of CERF performance based PAF <u>outcome</u> indicators (2015 version)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant outcome indicators in the PAF (36-44) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports • HC CERF report and AAR
Key question 2: Have CERF-funded operations favoured specific results?		
2.1 To what extent has CERF empowered the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and enhancing coordination within and between clusters?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HC coordination and leadership improved. • Strengthened sectoral coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports • HC CERF report and AAR
2.2 To what extent has CERF facilitated adequate coverage, eliminating gaps and facilitating an effective division of roles??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RC/HC leverages CERF and complementarity between different sources of funding is enhanced. (e.g. funds are used jointly and strategically according to their respective comparative advantages). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports • HC CERF report and AAR
2.3 To what extent has CERF contributed to a timely response to needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which timing of CERF funding was optimal compared to other funding for humanitarian response • Extent to which CERF guidance and secretariat support facilitated a rapid and effective response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency monitoring reports and reviews • HC CERF report and AAR
2.4 To what extent has CERF allowed the delivery of relevant life-saving actions at critical moments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which CERF funding was able to contribute to addressing time-critical needs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency monitoring reports and reviews • HC CERF report and AAR
2.5 To what extent has CERF served as a catalyst to kick-start humanitarian response while other funds are mobilized?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness of CERF funding compared to other funding. • CERF funds allow agencies to demonstrate capability to leverage donor confidence for future contributions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews with CERF secretariat, RC/HCs, recipient agencies, donors at a global/regional level

Review questions	Indicators	Data sources
2.6 To what extent has CERF enabled UN agencies to play a meaningful partnership role with the host government?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways in which local response mechanisms/systems and safety nets responded to the humanitarian impact. • Extent to which CERF recipient agencies aligned funding to local response mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency monitoring reports and reviews • Government reports
Key question 3: What has been CERF's role in small, low-profile crises?		
3.1 Given the fact that these emergencies were unable to attract significant funding beyond CERF, could CERF have boosted its added value by taking on a bigger role in supporting the humanitarian response than it did (i.e. larger allocation amount)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale and nature (sector) of unmet humanitarian needs that CERF funding could have addressed. • Absorptive capacity of recipient agencies and partners to address additional unmet needs. • The extent to which larger allocations could have facilitated more efficient and effective response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency monitoring reports and reviews • Needs assessments
3.2 Should CERF systematically utilize its comparative advantage as a needs-based global humanitarian fund by taking on a more prominent role in supporting this type of smaller low-profile crises? For example, by providing more funding to address a greater proportion of the overall needs than what the fund typically does?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CERF funding relative to overall funding allocated for the response in comparison to other comparable previous responses. • Funding gaps in the response • Scale and nature (sector) of unmet humanitarian needs that CERF funding could have addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency monitoring reports and reviews • HC CERF report and AAR
Key question 4: Given the challenges for fast response scale-up in countries with limited humanitarian presence, should there be pre-requisites for CERF funding based on an agency's implementation capacity?		
4.1 How did UN recipient agencies cover the affected countries prior to the response?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence and activities of agencies prior to the 2017 hurricanes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency monitoring reports and reviews
4.2 How were recipient agencies able to scale up humanitarian response capacities to use CERF funds effectively? What were the main internal and external factors that limited scale-up?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures taken to scale up (surge, procurement, establishment of offices, etc.). • Differences between response plans and what happened in practice. • Main internal and external challenges to effective use of CERF funds and overall response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports and strategy documents • CERF project proposals • CERF project revisions (requests for no-cost extensions and reprogramming) • HC CERF report • Lessons-learned reviews, including the CERF AAR
Key question 5 (Cuba country review only): What lessons were applied from previous CERF allocations?		

Annex – Independent Review of the Added Value of CERF: CERF Allocations by Country and Sub-Region

Review questions	Indicators	Data sources
5.1 To what extent have lessons from hurricane Matthew been applied during the response to hurricane Irma in Cuba?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of lessons applied, taking into account contextual variations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports and strategy documents • Lessons-learned documents
Key question 5 (eastern Caribbean only): What lessons can be drawn from providing an allocation that covers several countries and several RC areas of responsibility?		
5.1 How did RC's decided who was in charge of overall coordination (and ultimately accountable) and what kind of challenges this presented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for deciding on overall coordination responsibility. • Effectiveness of leadership and coordination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports and strategy documents • Lessons-learned reviews
5.2 Given recipient agencies divided up areas of responsibility differently in the region, how did they coordinate? What were the main lessons learned?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of interagency coordination (sectoral and/or overall) during planning, implementation and/or monitoring. • Coordinated approaches with host governments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Coordination meeting minutes • Agency reports and strategy documents • Lessons-learned reviews, including the CERF AAR
Key question 6: Does CERF have a role in anticipatory action for this type of crisis?		
6.1 What lessons can be drawn from the hurricane response in the Caribbean for CERF's role in anticipatory action more broadly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early warning triggers for the hurricane response which could be relevant to CERF. • Evidence of early action for this response that potentially has some bearing on CERF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Agency reports and strategy documents • Lessons-learned reviews
6.2 How could (a larger) CERF potentially add more value in responding to sudden onset crises based on early warning signs and risk indicators?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of gaps in assistance and unmet needs that could have benefited from early action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Monitoring reports and reviews
6.3 How does CERF timeliness compare to other funding available for response to natural disasters in the region (including parametric mechanisms like the Caribbean Risk Insurance Facility)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline of funding for recipient agencies. • Timeliness and use of Caribbean Risk Insurance Facility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding timelines for CERF and other comparable sources of funding • Reports • Key informant interviews

Annex 9. CERF Allocations by Country and Sub-Region

The table below lists the countries that received CERF rapid response funding during 2017 to respond to the hurricanes based on RC final reports submitted to the CERF secretariat. The rapid response grant allocated to Cuba during 2016 for the response to Hurricane Matthew is also listed.

Country / Region & Agency	Project Code	Sector	Total Amount	Implementation Modality			Returned to CERF	Date of disaster	Submission Date
				UN	RC/NGOs	Govt			
Cuba (Hurricane Matthew)									
FAO	16-RR-FAO-026	Agriculture	419,148						
UNDP	16-RR-UDP-010	Shelter	1,632,301						
UNFPA	16-RR-FPA-046	Health	101,012						
UNICEF	16-RR-CEF-114	Education	255,868						
UNICEF	16-RR-CEF-115	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	1,018,337						
WFP	16-RR-WFP-065	Food Aid	1,637,595						
WHO/PAHO	16-RR-WHO-043	Health	288,475						
TOTAL			5,352,736	5,352,736	0	0	0	04 Oct 2016	13 Oct 2016
Cuba (Hurricane Irma)									
FAO	17-RR-FAO-026	Agriculture	746,142						
UNDP	17-RR-UDP-011	Shelter	2,550,000						
UNFPA	17-RR-FPA-049	Health	355,008						
UNICEF	17-RR-CEF-100	Education	209,573						
UNICEF	17-RR-CEF-101	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	1,579,013						
WFP	17-RR-WFP-055	Food Aid	1,559,750						
WHO/PAHO	17-RR-WHO-036	Health	999,983						
TOTAL			7,999,469	7,999,469	0	0	0	8-10 Sep	25 Sep 2017
Dominica (Hurricane Maria)									
FAO	17-RR-FAO-029	Agriculture	299,249						
IOM	17-RR-IOM-042	Shelter	355,615						
UNDP	17-RR-UDP-013	Early Recovery	300,007						
UNFPA	17-RR-FPA-052	Health	100,003						
UNFPA	17-RR-FPA-053	Sexual and/or Gender-Based Violence	100,000						
UNICEF	17-RR-CEF-106	Education	205,615						
UNICEF	17-RR-CEF-107	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	201,215						
WFP	17-RR-WFP-060	Food Aid	400,210						

Annex – Independent Review of the Added Value of CERF: CERF Allocations by Country and Sub-Region

Country / Region & Agency	Project Code	Sector	Total Amount	Implementation Modality			Returned to CERF	Date of disaster	Submission Date
				UN	RC/NGOs	Govt			
WFP	17-RR-WFP-061	Common Logistics	800,000						
WHO/PAHO	17-RR-WHO-039	Health	249,924						
TOTAL			3,011,838	2,328,567	150,891	532,380	0	8-10 Sep	05 Oct 2017
eastern Caribbean (Hurricane Irma)									
IOM	17-RR-IOM-041	Shelter	180,006						
UN Women	17-RR-WOM-002	Sexual and/or Gender-Based Violence	248,975						
UNDP	17-RR-UDP-012	Early Recovery	300,007						
UNFPA	17-RR-FPA-051	Health	197,860						
UNICEF	17-RR-CEF-105	Education	396,300						
WFP	17-RR-WFP-059	Common Logistics	831,313						
TOTAL			2,154,461	1,866,847	116,788	97,966	72,860	06 Sep 2017	02 Oct 2017