



Current Partnerships of the CERF Secretariat with Agencies Evaluation Departments

CERF secretariat
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A. Background

Project-level evaluations of activities supported by CERF funds remain under the purview of UN agencies and IOM¹ as described in the CERF's Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF). The CERF secretariat has, therefore, reached out to agencies' evaluation departments to forge a closer relationship with a view to ensuring that key lessons-learned at project-level relevant to CERF are captured and made available to the CERF secretariat. To date, the following initiatives are underway.

B. CERF-Specific Evaluations

The five-year evaluation of the CERF noted with approval the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) 2010 evaluation of its use of CERF-funding. The Five-Year Evaluation recommended that agencies "conduct an evaluation of their use of CERF funds within 18 months to determine what internal factors, including partnership policies and practices, influence the effectiveness of CERF projects." The CERF secretariat has discussed the possibility of carrying out such an evaluation with a number of agencies with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) agreeing to conduct such an evaluation in 2012. The World Food Programme (WFP) will also conduct such an evaluation and is currently determining the timing and scope of this exercise. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is considering this initiative and examining its feasibility.

C. Standard CERF-Related Questions in Agency Evaluations:

The CERF secretariat has discussed with a number of agencies the possibility of including a number of standard CERF-related questions in evaluations of projects or programmes that have received significant funding from CERF. Experience has shown that when CERF-specific issues are not included in project or emergency evaluations, such as inter-agency real-time evaluations or agencies own internal programme or country evaluations, only limited information on CERF will emerge. This is the case even where CERF has contributed substantial funding. Including sample CERF-specific evaluation questions in agencies regular evaluations might go some way towards alleviating this. The CERF secretariat had drafted a list of sample questions and discussed these with several agencies. FAO has agreed to use the questions on a trial basis in an upcoming evaluation in Sri Lanka during the first half of 2012. The FAO evaluation in Sri Lanka will serve as a pilot and FAO and the CERF secretariat will review the outcome and make recommendations for future replication. Other agencies are open to the idea and discussions are ongoing. No other concrete evaluations, however, have been identified at this stage.

¹ Referred to as "agencies" henceforward.

D. Mapping of Agency Evaluation Resources

The CERF secretariat has also conducted a mapping exercise of agency evaluations resources, such as identifying information contained on agencies' online evaluation portal, mapping agencies' evaluation procedures and identifying evaluation focal points.

E. Next steps

Over the coming months, the CERF secretariat will support those agencies who have decided to conduct CERF-specific evaluations and continue to liaise with those still considering this possibility.

The CERF secretariat has reviewed a sample of agency evaluation reports to determine the extent to which these include CERF-specific issues. In future, the CERF secretariat will continue to systematically review agency evaluation reports for CERF-relevant information and map the findings.

The CERF secretariat will also identify lessons-learned from the FAO evaluation in Sri Lanka piloting the CERF-specific evaluation questions. Based on the outcomes of this, the CERF secretariat will draft a concept note in consultation with agencies evaluation focal points to be used to inform similar exercises in the future. Regular interaction with agencies evaluation sections on performance and evaluation issues will also be maintained.