CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND

Interim Review Management Response Matrix

INTERIM REVIEW
Management Response Matrix

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS TO OCHA	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND ACTION TAKEN OR TO BE TAKEN	Responsible Branch /Unit	Time frame	Status -
1. That OCHA, in consultation with donors, IASC members and the CERF Advisory Group, clarify the scope of the life-saving criterion for the CERF, including how it applies to the two funding windows and how it is used for the prioritization and approval of projects	**Accepted** *Guidelines on CERF Life-saving Criteria and Sectoral Activities* provide the scope of the CERF life-saving criteria/mandate, and were developed in close consultation with IASC members (UN agencies, IOM, and NGOs), and the CERF Advisory Group. The Guidelines were finalized and distributed to all relevant stakeholders on 7 August 2007 (at the time of the finalization of the report of the CERF Interim Review that was carried out from March to July 2007), and have been posted on the CERF website. The Guidelines are expected to be reviewed after two years (i.e. 2009) once experience has been gained on their use. In 2008, the CERF Secretariat prepared a draft handbook/guidelines on the CERF application process, which describes the differences between the two grant windows and provides tips on the prioritization of life-saving projects; it is expected to be finalized in 2009.	CERF Secretariat	Implemented (August 2007) Additional activities expected: December 2009 (Review/revision of the life-saving criteria guidelines and finalization of the handbook/ guidelines on the CERF application process)	Implemented Note: Status and follow-up regarding the addition activities related to the life-saving criteria will be tracked in the Management Response Matrix (MRM) of the CERF two year evaluation, under recommendation 7.
2. That, given the critical importance of needs assessment information in the allocation of CERF funds, OCHA, in collaboration with IASC members, continues to strengthen the development and use of high quality needs assessment information in the allocation of CERF funding.	**Accepted** Conducting coordinated needs assessments should form part of the standard operating procedures of country teams with respect to humanitarian planning and response, and should not be undertaken specifically for the development of a grant request. Furthermore, improvements to needs assessment frameworks and tools should be made on a system-wide basis. OCHA (PDSB/ACE) are undertaking efforts through the IASC to improve needs assessment frameworks for humanitarian response as a whole. In its review of funding applications, the CERF Secretariat takes particular note of needs assessment findings. Following a recommendation made in the CERF two-year evaluation, the CERF application template has been revised to collect additional information from HC/RCs on whether grant requests are based on coordinated and participatory needs assessments; this revised template, along with guidance, is expected to be finalized in 2009.	CERF Secretariat, PDSB (IASC)	Ongoing (improvements to needs assessment frameworks) Expected: December 2009 (finalization of the revised application template)	Partially Implemented Note: Status and follow-up with respect to the finalization of the revised application template will be tracked in the MRM of the CERF two year evaluation, under recommendation 11. Improvements to needs assessment frameworks are ongoing; reporting on work undertaken in this area will be done though the IASC.

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Date of final MRM: 10 February 2009

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3. That OCHA continues initiatives to strengthen the RC/HCs by: ▪ Extending HC training on the CERF to RCs; ▪ Identifying techniques to assist RC/HCs with their roles; and ▪ Including specific references to the CERF in the RC/HC Terms of Reference.	**Accepted** OCHA has prepared a training programme and conducted four regional workshops on humanitarian coordination for RCs in 2008; sessions on humanitarian financing/CERF were included in the workshops. Material on humanitarian financing/CERF also was included in the HC retreat in 2008. Synthesized guidance for HC/RCs was developed on the process and timeline for applying for funds from the CERF loan and grant elements, and on the types of funding tools available. A flowchart/checklist of the key steps HC/RCs need to take in the event of a disaster has also been drafted. The revised (draft) terms of reference for both HCs and RCs makes specific reference to their responsibilities with respect to humanitarian financing/CERF.	HCSS, CERF Secretariat (UNDOCO, IASC)	Implemented	Implemented
4. That OCHA continue initiatives to strengthen the OCHA country offices, UNRCO and the UN agencies at the country level, by encouraging the CERF Secretariat and OCHA Regional Support Office to provide in-country training of OCHA, UNRCO and UN agency staff.	**Accepted** About 500 partners participated in the CERF training programme in 2007 and 2008. In total, thirteen workshops (usually two-days long) were conducted in the following locations: Panama, Nairobi, Dakar, New York, Geneva, Rome, Bangkok, Johannesburg, and Cairo. Training participants included OCHA, UN agency/IOM, NGO and donor representatives from field, regional, and headquarters locations. On a regular basis, the CERF Secretariat has provided coaching/guidance to country teams on applying for and reporting on the use of CERF funds through teleconferences and email communication. In addition, in a number of crises where there was limited capacity to develop a CERF grant request, surge capacity support was provided. This took two forms – specific CERF surge missions to support the HC/RC in the prioritization of needs, selection of projects and preparation of the CERF grant request, or support provided more broadly from OCHA for the overall humanitarian response, which included the development of a CERF grant request. With respect to the CERF-specific surge missions, staff from OCHA or UN agencies were deployed to 10 countries[1] so far. Results from these missions showed that surge capacity was effective in improving the quality of proposals. The CERF Secretariat also visited in 2008 the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Pakistan, and Ethiopia to review CERF-funded programmes with a view to improving support to the field, providing guidance, and capturing best practices and lessons learned.	CERF Secretariat (UN agencies/ IOM, HC/RCs, NGOs)	Ongoing (Training and support form part of the regular work of the CERF Secretariat and will continue.)	Implemented

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[1] Niger, Burkina Faso, Pakistan, Cote d'Ivoire, Republic of Congo, Kenya, oPt, Chad, Angola, and Haiti.

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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS TO OCHA	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND ACTION TAKEN OR TO BE TAKEN	Responsible Branch /Unit	Time frame	Status -
	Training, surge support, and coaching/guidance form part of the ongoing and regular work of the CERF Secretariat.			
5. That OCHA, in consultation with donors, IASC members and the CERF Advisory Group, clarify the relationship between the CERF and the humanitarian reform agenda, specifically with respect to increasing partnerships, particularly with NGOs.	**Partially accepted** Since the Fund was upgraded, it has formed part of the humanitarian reform as an element of the humanitarian financing pillar. Specific reference regarding the relationship between the CERF and the humanitarian reform was included in the *Report of the Secretary-General on the Improvement of the CERF* (dated 20 October 2005). Further clarification is not required. Several initiatives - including developing improved guidance and training material - have been undertaken by the CERF Secretariat to support increasing partnerships and to improve NGO involvement in processes related to the Fund. Furthermore, a CERF partnership task force was established in June 2007 to examine issues regarding UN-NGO partnership arrangements. While the work of this task force is ongoing, it has had three notable achievements: the development of a matrix mapping UN agencies' partnership frameworks for information-sharing purposes; the development of a series of recommendations focused on improving partnerships through enhanced communications and training, as well as improved sub-agreement and disbursement arrangements; and expanded information-sharing and communication channels between UN agencies and NGOs. In line with the work of the task force, several UN agencies are undertaking initiatives to review and improve their partnership arrangements. The IASC Working Group has taken up the recommendations developed by the CERF partnership task force at its meetings in June and November 2008; the Working Group agreed to continue to discuss ways to resolve system-wide partnership issues, which were identified by the CERF two-year evaluation and other studies on humanitarian financing. These activities are in complement to the work of the Global Humanitarian Platform, which seeks to promote humanitarian country teams and the application of the Principles of Partnership at country level.	CERF Secretariat, HCSS (UN agencies/ IOM, NGOs)	Ongoing (Supporting partnerships is part of the regular work of the CERF Secretariat.)	Implemented Note: Additional activities related to increasing partnerships will be tracked in the MRM of the CERF two year evaluation, under recommendations 1, 6, 21, 23, 31, and 32.
6. That OCHA, in consultation with donors, IASC members and the CERF Advisory Group, clarify the responsibilities and accountabilities of the field and global levels for the preparation of recommendations to the ERC for CERF funding, the disbursement of funds and the monitoring, evaluation and reporting on CERF grants.	**Accepted** Guidance/training materials and background papers have outlined the key steps in the processing of grant requests (from project review to disbursement of funds) and the requirements for reporting on the use of funds. Furthermore, a matrix of roles and responsibilities within OCHA (CERF Secretariat, CRD, Director of OCHA NY) for the approval process of CERF submissions has been developed in consultation with relevant OCHA headquarters and field staff. A framework for agency and HC/RC narrative	CERF Secretariat	Partially Implemented (except for monitoring and evaluation which is expected to be completed by September 2009)	Partially implemented Note: Status and follow-up with respect to monitoring and evaluation will be tracked in the MRM of the CERF two year evaluation, under recommendation 27.

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	reporting, along with a reporting template for HC/RCs, was rolled out in 2006 and streamlined in 2008. The point on monitoring and evaluation will be taken up as part of the follow-up to the two year evaluation, which also included a recommendation in this regard.			
7. That OCHA clarify the roles and accountabilities of the CERF Secretariat and identifies the appropriate resources for the Secretariat to meet its tasks.	**Accepted** The work of the CERF Secretariat is defined by an annual work plan, and its role is outlined in various policy/guidance documents. The accountabilities of the CERF Secretariat will be further defined in the Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF), which will be finalized in late 2009. OCHA and the Office of the Controller have discussed the need for appropriate resources for the CERF Secretariat to meet its tasks and this led to the approval of additional posts in 2007 and 2008. According to current practice, 40 percent of the 3 percent in programme support costs retained by the UN Secretariat is provided to OCHA for the CERF Secretariat cost plan.	CERF Secretariat, OCHA NY Director (Office of the Controller)	Implemented (Additional clarification on CERF Secretariat's accountabilities will be addressed through the finalization of the PAF in 2009.)	Implemented Note: Status and follow-up with respect to the finalization of the PAF will be tracked in the MRM of the CERF two year evaluation, under strategic recommendation 4.
8. That OCHA clarify the roles of the Coordination Response Division (CRD) and other OCHA units in support of the CERF.	**Accepted** A matrix of roles and responsibilities within OCHA for the CERF grant request review and approval process has been developed in consultation with relevant OCHA staff in the field and at headquarters. As part of efforts to finalize a Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF) for the Fund, guidance (SOPs) for OCHA units and offices on the CERF application process will be finalized in 2009. Further, the work plan of the CERF Secretariat has been harmonized with those of other units within OCHA that support the CERF Secretariat (i.e. AIMB, DERS, CRD, PDSB/ESS, etc) in order to maximize synergies.	CERF Secretariat, OCHA NY Director, CRD, other OCHA units	Implemented (Additional clarification/guidance on roles and responsibilities related to CERF will be addressed through the finalization of the PAF in 2009.)	Implemented Note: Additional points related to clarifying OCHA's roles/responsibilities will be tracked in the MRM of the CERF two year evaluation, under recommendations 13 and strategic recommendation 4.
9. That OCHA, in consultation with IASC members and donors, clarify the roles and accountabilities for field level actors and identify the appropriate resources, including for the RC/HC offices and OCHA field offices, where necessary.	**Accepted** The CERF application handbook/guidelines, currently in draft form and expected to be finalized in 2009, will provide guidance on the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the CERF process. Also, roles and accountabilities will be further defined in the Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF), which will be finalized in late 2009. Surge support will continue to be provided to HC/RCs and country teams to support the prioritization and application process for Fund allocations; an increased number of surge support missions is planned for 2009 and budgeted within the CERF Secretariat cost plan. Additional support for field staff will be provided through guidance, as well as coaching and training on the CERF application and reporting process, including roles and responsibilities. The revised (draft)	CERF Secretariat (UN agencies/ IOM, NGOs, HC/RCs)	Expected: December 2009 (Finalization of the handbook/guidelines on the CERF application process; additional clarification/guidance on roles and responsibilities related to CERF will be addressed through the finalization of the PAF)	Partially Implemented Note: Additional activities related to clarifying roles and accountabilities and providing support to the field will be tracked in the MRM of the CERF two year evaluation, under recommendations 5 and 14 and strategic recommendation 4.

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	terms of reference for both HCs and RCs makes specific reference to their responsibilities with respect to humanitarian financing/CERF.			
10. That OCHA, in consultation with donors, IASC members and the CERF Advisory Group, develop a performance framework for the CERF.	**Accepted** A series of initiatives have been undertaken to improve performance and accountability with respect to the use and management of the Fund, including enhancements to the CERF website/database; improved guidelines/templates and training materials on the application and reporting processes; review of HC/RC narrative reports against project proposals to ensure that funds were spent properly and that the target population was reached with the proposed activities; field visits to several countries to review CERF-funded programmes; development of a communication strategy and so on. Existing accountability and performance measures are being incorporated into a broader framework, which will be finalized in late 2009.	CERF Secretariat, OCHA NY Director, ERC (UN agencies/ IOM, NGOs, HC/RCs)	Expected: September 2009 (framework finalized)	Partially implemented Note: Status and follow-up with respect to the finalization of a Performance and Accountability Framework will be tracked in the MRM of the CERF two year evaluation, under strategic recommendation 4.
11. That OCHA improves the CERF website to make it more accessible and transparent, enabling stakeholders to link financial and narrative project information.	**Accepted** Enhancements to the website were made with the addition of approved project data in I-frames for each country page on the website. I-frames include the following information: agency, project title, sector, window, amount approved and disbursement date. The website also includes narrative text on the overall country allocations, including the humanitarian needs, beneficiary populations targeted, and partners implementing projects. Information on grant request packages, funded projects, disbursement of funds, and contributions and pledges are updated on the CERF website almost hourly, as information becomes available. Additional enhancements to the website are planned for 2009, as part of the ongoing work of the CERF Secretariat.	CERF Secretariat	Implemented	Implemented
12. That OCHA, in collaboration with donors, IASC members and the CERF Advisory Group work proactively with INGOs at the global level to encourage them to stimulate their country offices to engage in the CERF processes at the country level.	**Accepted** As part of ongoing efforts to increase partnerships as well as NGO involvement with the Fund, the CERF Secretariat has contributed to strengthening information-sharing and discussion on partnership issues between UN and NGO partners by creating a CERF partnership task force and regularly raising system-wide partnership issues to the IASC Working Group; to improving access to funding by allocating CERF grants to several ERFs; to providing more targeted guidance and training material that have emphasized the importance of NGOs in the field-based grant development process, and have requested HC/RCs to detail the involvement of NGOs in the CERF application process when submitting a request. Overall, OCHA has worked with humanitarian partners to strengthen response through the	HCSS, CERF Secretariat (NGOs, UN agencies/IOM, HC/RCs)	Ongoing (Supporting partnerships is part of the regular work of the CERF Secretariat.)	Implemented Note: Additional points related to partnerships were included in the two year evaluation and will be tracked in that MRM under recommendations 1, 6, 21, 23, 31, and 32.

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	implementation of the humanitarian reform, which also should serve to facilitate the development of more equitable partnerships within the humanitarian community.			
13. That OCHA put in place measures to ensure that complete documentation on CERF processes and grants is maintained and readily available, at the field and global levels, for the GA-mandated review.	**Accepted** A CERF-specific, shared hard-drive was put in place in 2008 to facilitate information exchange within the CERF Secretariat and to ensure that documents (including applications/project proposals, correspondence on allocations, reports) are saved and available. This shared-drive is periodically backed-up and archived. Documents are also kept in hard copy, in accordance with an established filing system. Various guidance documents were developed on CERF processes, which have been made available to field and headquarters partners through the CERF website and through training workshops. Information on grant allocations are documented internally, and shared externally through the CERF website and in CERF inter-agency meetings. The CERF database has been enhanced to collect more information on proposals and an expanded search feature has been introduced that allows for the easy extraction and use of data, including time series analysis. All data on project applications, including approval of projects and disbursement of funds, are updated daily in the database and pushed to the CERF website in real time. The CERF website includes allocation information in I-frames on the country pages as well as copies of the HC/RC narrative reports on the use and impact of CERF funds. All necessary and requested documents/files and database reports/spreadsheets were made available to the evaluation team conducting the two year evaluation in 2008.	CERF Secretariat	Implemented	Implemented
14. That OCHA include in the review Terms of Reference a systematic analysis of CERF grants at the global level in order to profile adequately the full range of CERF funding.	**Accepted** The TORs for the CERF evaluation (developed in October-November 2007) took into account this recommendation and stated that a quantitative analysis should be conducted on the data, reports and files available at the HQ level. With the support of the CERF Secretariat and the OCHA Financial Tracking Service, the evaluation team was able to consider: global humanitarian funding data, including funding from sources other than the CERF; timelines on sums requested, allocated from CERF database; CERF financial spreadsheets on funds pledged and contributed; CERF country reports on context, needs, status of implementation, activities, results and lessons learned; CERF meeting minutes and notifications of application decisions; CERF project files; RTEs and other evaluations with findings on the CERF. The analysis and profiling of this data was included in the evaluation report. However the evaluation team acknowledged and	PDSB (ESS)	Implemented	Implemented

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	reported that it was difficult to 1) quantify the number of days it takes for funding to go from UN agency HQ to NGO implementation in the field and 2) to determine conclusively whether the CERF had led to an increase in humanitarian funding.			
15. That OCHA initiate the review process early and include sufficient resources to allow for an in-depth evaluation at both the country and project level.	**Accepted** The evaluation team began its work in January 2008 and completed its final report by 31 July 2008. The necessary resources were allotted for the evaluation. The team of four independent consultants was supported by national staff during the 7 country visits to allow in-depth analysis. The team focused on the areas set out in the General Assembly resolution for this review, namely to assess both the grant and loan elements of the Fund; its administration; criteria for resource allocation; actions and responses supported by it; and its ability to meet its objectives. The team employed a wide-range of methods for gathering and assessing information, including interviews with relevant stakeholders; a survey of perceptions on key aspects of the Fund; field visits to seven countries; telephone interviews/desk reviews of an additional seven countries; and a review of 66 project proposals from the countries selected. This enabled the evaluation to cover both the country and project levels. The evaluation findings were presented in the annual Secretary General's report to the General Assembly on the CERF.	PDSB (ESS)	Implemented	Implemented

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