

Dear colleagues

I am writing to seek your help with an important initiative I am keen to progress this year.

Last year, we raised record resources for the CERF: \$550 million.

Much of the increase, those providing it have told me, was based on our plans to further improve the CERF. One aspect of this is to enhance CERF's role in early action. We will be in touch later on that.

Another is to expand CERF activities in some important underfunded areas. These include (a) support for women and girls, including tackling gender based violence, reproductive health and empowerment, (b) programmes targeting disabled people, (c) education in protracted crises and (d) other aspects of protection.

The CERF has invested in all these areas in the past: but not to the desirable degree.

I would be grateful if, in considering CERF applications for both the rapid response window and the underfunded crises window, you would bear this in mind. CERF will of course remain needs-based, but I expect an increased focus on these key priorities.

My office will be reviewing all proposals as they come to me so we can track progress.

Other activities will of course continue to be assessed on their merits, and will, I expect, continue to absorb most CERF resources.

We cannot promise to fund everything you propose in the new priority areas, but we will consider them all carefully.

For any help or questions on this, please contact Lisa Carty, the Director for Humanitarian Finance in OCHA.

With many thanks for your help.

Best wishes

Mark

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