

I. Background

2017 has been exceptionally challenging for the humanitarian community with an alarming level of needs around the globe, including for the four countries struck by or on the brink of famine. Despite the challenging fundraising environment, CERF is projected to surpass the minimum threshold of \$450 million this year in view of the GA endorsement of \$1 billion CERF to effectively address the growing humanitarian needs.

As of 9 October 2017, 44 donors had contributed a total of \$433.1 million to CERF, and 7 other donors had pledged an additional \$22.4 million. CERF is therefore projecting an income of \$456.4 million for 2017

Thus far, **Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden** have committed to providing **additional contributions beyond their initial pledges**. In total, this year's top-ups amount to approximately \$42 million.

The following **Member States have increased their contributions to CERF in 2017 compare to 2016: Australia, Belgium, Chile, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Portugal, USA and UAE**. Five Member States - **Bhutan, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Qatar, Sri Lanka** - have returned as CERF donors. In addition, 8 countries which have been recipient of CERF funds in the past have contributed to CERF in 2017: Bhutan, Chile, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Peru and Turkey.

The following six Member States signed new multi-year agreement with CERF this year: **Australia, Belgium, Iceland, Luxembourg, Qatar and UK**.

Following the presentation of the papers on the Resource Mobilization Approach for 2017 as well as the Building Blocks for a \$1 billion CERF at the last Advisory Group meeting in May 2017, this note provides an update of resource mobilization and communication activities undertaken by the CERF secretariat in 2017.

II. 2017 Priority Areas and Key Actions

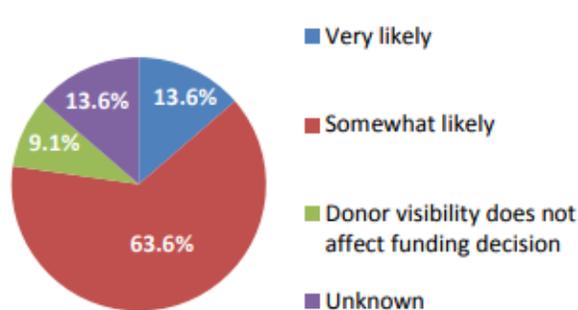
A. Strengthening Analytics

Advocacy and engagement based on a sound understanding of the resource mobilization landscape, in terms of partners, trends and good practices is vital. The CERF secretariat undertook the following initiatives:

- a) **Donor Survey:** In May, the CERF secretariat conducted a donor survey to obtain preliminary information to identify key priorities for advocacy and engagement as the fund reshapes its resource mobilization strategy. Top 50 donors were asked to undertake the survey, and 23 donor countries responded to the survey. The results were analyzed and discussed at the CERF Advisory Group (AG) meeting on 18-19 May. Highlights included:

Highlights for 2017:

- ❖ Minimum annual funding target of \$450M met
- ❖ 46 donors contributed and pledged
- ❖ 12 donors increased their contribution as compared to 2016
- ❖ 4 top donors contributed/pledged top-ups
- ❖ 5 Member States returned as CERF donors
- ❖ 6 new Multi-Year (MY) funding agreements with Member States, currently a total of 8 MY agreements are in effect.
- ❖ Enhanced communications with improved digital platforms and marketing tools



➤ Donor visibility topped the priorities for partners who wanted to see more recognition of their contributions with visible impact on the ground. Some 63 per cent of respondents said that increased donor visibility is likely affect their respective government's funding decision to CERF.

Fig.1. The chart outlines the responses with 63.3% of respondents saying that it is likely (very or somewhat likely) to influence decision-making.

- Other important criteria affecting decision-making to fund CERF included demonstrating, (i) results/outcome of their contributions; (ii) quality of reporting (e.g. on results); (iii) effectiveness, timeliness, flexibility, coordination and sound management; (iv) strengthened capacity to respond to sudden-onset and forgotten crises; (v) global reach of donor funds; (vi) general evolution of humanitarian budgets.
 - In view of \$1 billion CERF, heavy reliance on a small number of donors and urgent appeals by high-level UN officials for funding to country specific crises were highlighted among factors preventing increased support to CERF. Responders also expressed willingness to provide advocacy support with peer donors as well as high-level political leadership to promote partnerships towards mobilizing \$1 billion.
- b) **Donor Profiles:** Early in the year, and partly based on survey results and OCHA's existing profiles, the CERF secretariat created donor profiles for its top donors. The profiles are updated continuously on parameters such as engagement opportunities, funding trends and key interlocutors for well-informed donor engagements.
- c) **Global Milestones:** To enhance effective advocacy and outreach, CERF systematically scans key global humanitarian events and other milestones (special days such as World Water day). Opportunities are identified and targeted for proactive and timely outreach with partners to promote the global visibility of CERF. For this, advocacy and communication tools focusing on CERF supported results are vital to promote partners' advocacy for CERF.

B. Engagement with Member States

Established by the United National General Assembly as a "fund by all, for all", engagement with Member States is central to the overall resource mobilization efforts to surpass the 2017 target and lay the base towards \$1 billion CERF. Evidence-based advocacy and engagement that links to partner priorities and is responsive to decision-making processes is vital to promote the strategic positioning of CERF in a challenging fundraising environment. The following outlines key priority areas for 2017:

a) **Engagement through events, briefings and CERF pledging conference:**

- CERF held an all Member States briefing in Geneva in May on the use and management of CERF in 2017. CERF also organized a joint event with the Country-Based Pooled Funds at the 2017 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment in June to discuss progress made on World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and Grand Bargain commitments through the pooled funds using examples from countries affected by, or at risk of, famine. This was followed by a briefing to Member States of the African Union held in Geneva in June 2017.

- In the lead up to the December High-level Conference (HLC), a CERF side-event planned in the margins of UNGA 72 was meant to reinforce CERF's mandate as the global emergency fund, promote shared commitments and encourage Member States to promote and expand support to CERF. Despite support from several Member States who promised high-level participation, the event was canceled due to scheduling difficulties by the UN Conference Services.
- As part of the two rounds of the under-funded allocations, CERF held an online briefing on the methodology and country selection for partners.
- Further regional briefings are planned for the remainder of 2017, and the HLC will be a critical milestone to mark the transition to the \$1 billion fund.

b) Targeted outreach to donors:

- In early December 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution endorsing the expansion of CERF's annual funding target to \$1 billion by 2018, and called upon all Member States to consider their voluntary contributions to the fund. Despite these positive developments, the CERF High-level Pledging Conference (HLC) that took place the following week in New York only secured \$273 million in pledges – one of the lowest amounts pledged at a CERF HLC as several donors were not able to pledge due to their budget cycles.
- In view of CERF's precarious cash position due to high demands for CERF funding in early 2017 and delayed transfer of pledges, enhanced outreach was made to donors including through OCHA's leadership. Several donors expedited fund transfer of their pledges, which led to more contributions received by end-April this year than in any previous year, enabling the fund to respond to the concurrent emergencies around the globe in the first and second quarter of 2017, albeit very modestly.
- With the risk of the canceling the second round of under-funded allocation, CERF made targeted outreach to several partners which resulted in additional contributions necessary to safeguard the second under-funded allocation. An emphasis on CERF's ability to demonstrate results across key priorities for donors was vital in securing these allocations.
- Throughout the year, CERF continued to identify priorities, decision-making timelines and budget situations for evidence-based engagement with partners for maximum impact. With tailored information packages, CERF proactively reached out to some donors undergoing budget appropriation to help strengthen the support to CERF.
- Through regular and extensive outreach with partners by providing targeted advocacy and communication tools in advance of key global milestones, CERF featured prominently in the statements of Ministers and high-level representatives at major pledging conferences (Lake Chad Basin, Four Famine events), as well as in the margins of ECOSOC humanitarian affairs segment and 72nd session of the UN General Assembly.

c) Supporting Partners' Advocacy on CERF:

A priority for CERF is to enable partners to advocate for CERF. Some of CERF's top donors provided strong advocacy support with their peers including in high level events and forums. For instance, Australia encouraged increased support to CERF through the MIKTA group (partnership group made up of Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia). Finland is facilitating a briefing on CERF to the Council working party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) through Estonia's presidency of the EU in November 2017. Other top donors as well as recipient countries have also highlighted CERF as a critical global emergency response fund in key global events.

d) Engagement through the Advisory Group:

Throughout the year, CERF has ensured close collaboration with the CERF Advisory Group members. The objective has been to ensure that members are aware of key developments in CERF, aware of their role as champions for CERF, as well as equipped to advocate for the fund. A few Advisory Group members during the year played significant roles in ensuring increased contributions from the own governments.

C. Leveraging the voice and visibility of UN senior leadership

- In the donor survey and at the CERF Advisory Group, partners have emphasized the importance of SG's advocacy for CERF. In August, the SG wrote a letter to all Permanent and Observer missions in New York and Geneva urging them to enhance support to urgent humanitarian action through CERF with predictable and sufficient financial support to the fund. More recently, the SG also recorded a video message encouraging all Member States to stand behind their endorsement of a \$1 billion CERF, and to show solidarity at the next CERF pledging conference in December.
- The leadership of the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and the Deputy ERC (DERC) is equally pivotal to expand and reinforce the global visibility of CERF. Both the ERC and the DERC have engaged in high-level advocacy efforts to ensure that CERF is featured in crisis specific pledging conferences and in relevant engagements with Member States.

D. Enhanced communications and marketing of CERF

Telling the story of CERF is vital to strengthen the global visibility of CERF in a crowded messaging landscape. Emphasizing results, CERF endeavors to enhance its global brand in a compelling, timely and relevant way, maximizing the potential of traditional and digital media to position itself among key stakeholders. Key highlights include:

a) *Enhanced digital platforms to promote outreach and user engagement*

- **Social media engagement:** With more than 70,000 followers on Twitter and 1,000 visitors per week on Facebook, CERF's digital platforms have a global reach that includes a wide range of partners. In 2017, CERF prioritized social media engagement by creating and disseminating compelling digital assets tailored for different platforms – including Graphics Interchange Formats (GIFs) and visuals – to showcase CERF actions and achievements. As a standard, digital advocacy toolkits are developed and shared with key partners on CERF actions/themes, including allocations to underfunded emergencies and major crises. Partners usually use this to acknowledge their contributions and amplify the reach of the messages.
- **Website:** CERF's website, as the fund's digital portal, conveys the global identity of the fund and is a vital tool to showcase CERF to the public. In the donor survey, partners noted that the website is the primary source of timely information on CERF. CERF is in the process of developing a new CERF website to allow for a more interactive, dynamic and compelling user experience. New features will also enable users to more easily track the fund's allocations and contributions across the world – an important aspect to promoting greater transparency and accountability of the fund.

b) *Key flagship publications and other communication products:*

- This year, the secretariat published CERF's first ever results report covering a full year of its allocations. The report includes global and regional summaries of the numbers of people who received CERF-funded assistance and contains an analysis of CERF's strategic added value to humanitarian response as reported by country level partners.
- CERF Annual Report and SG's Report are among the main performance and accountability tools that report on the detailed use of the fund. In addition, the Annual Report is a critical advocacy tool with an added emphasis on donor visibility enabling key partners to acknowledge their contributions to the results of the fund.
- CERF has continued to produce an array of communication materials, including infographics, monthly newsletters, web stories and short films that are compelling and emphasize results, human interest stories and donor visibility.
- Efforts are underway to focus on thematic features (e.g., health, food, water and sanitation) on key CERF result areas.
- Translation of specific communication products in key languages (Arabic, Chinese, French and Spanish) is a priority especially to enhance engagement with priority Member States.



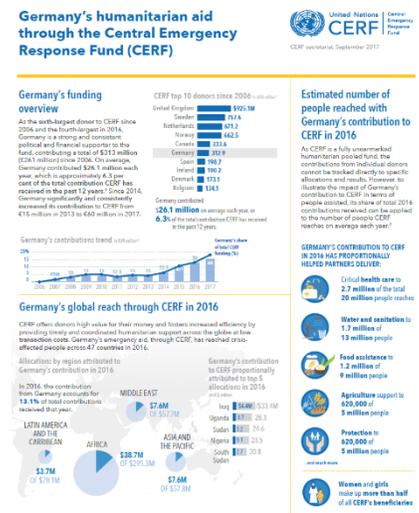
c) **Donor Visibility:** Donor visibility is a top priority for CERF and is central to all advocacy and communications efforts across all communication platforms. This includes press releases, flagship publications, communication assets for digital outreach and specific initiatives on results for donors. The following are key highlights:

➤ **Digital media:** CERF has announced every contribution received on Twitter and Facebook through targeted ‘thank you’ visuals with donors’ national flags, as well as photographs beneficiaries reached. Where possible, these are also translated in Arabic. E.g., the thank you tweet to Qatar partly in

Arabic was among the top most re-tweeted CERF tweet. In addition, digital toolkits on key CERF allocations are provided to partners for their adaptation and use to acknowledge their contributions. CERF actively monitors twitter to amplify donors’ messaging on humanitarian issues, including their references to CERF. In addition, the website also prominently displays donor contributions to CERF.

➤ **Special Signing Ceremonies with partners:** Where requested, CERF has also facilitated special ceremonies to mark partnership agreements with key donors. E.g., Foreign Minister Ms. Julie Bishop from Australia, Mr. Khalifah Al Khuwari, Director General of Qatar Fund for Development among others.

➤ **Donor Results overview:** As CERF is an unearmarked humanitarian pooled fund, the contributions from individual donors cannot be tracked directly to specific allocations and results. However, to highlight the results that can be attributed to a specific donor, the share of top donors’ contributions was applied for the proportion of crisis-affected people the fund reached in 2016 attributable to that donor. The same rationale is applied to suggest how much of the CERF allocation in the regions and top 5 recipient countries in 2016 can be attributed to top donors’ contribution to CERF, as well as other highlights. These are produced in donor specific results overview that also captures other donor priorities. These overviews will be updated twice a year to adapt to changes in CERF allocations. This is an extension of CERF’s efforts to help partners advocate for continued investment in the fund, especially as an unearmarked funding mechanism.



d) **Promoting joint communication efforts with Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs):** Recognizing the wider ambitions to raise the profile of and advocacy for humanitarian financing and generate higher levels of contribution for OCHA-managed pooled funds, CERF has worked with Field Co-ordination Section (FCS) to enhance communications on the complementarity and comparative advantages of CERF and CBPFs. Priority is given to joint infographics on specific emergencies, as well as fact sheets.

III. Achievement under new initiatives to deepen and diversify the donor base

A. **Innovative Financing:** As proposed to the CERF Advisory Group (AG) in October 2015, CERF has continued to explore the potential of innovative finance focusing on disaster risk insurance as a potential area for CERF. Following discussions at the May CERF AG, a few members expressed interest in pursuing this initiative. As part of this, the UK proposed a pre-inception step in which their Government Actuary Department (GAD) would

provide an impartial review of the initiative. A report is expected by early October. This will define the next steps.

- B. ***Fairsharing Initiative:*** Based on discussion at the October 2016 CERF Advisory Group, a preliminary concept note was shared with the CERF Advisory Group in May 2017. On this basis, CERF explored expertise to conduct a review of fairsharing initiatives that could outline parameters for a possible approach for CERF. However, the leadership changes in OCHA and limited capacity in team which prioritized preparations for the (cancelled) GA side event on CERF led to delays in the process. Based on additional consultations with partners, CERF will conduct a review of successful fairsharing initiatives to assess whether such an initiative could be of benefit to CERF in terms of reinforcing and expanding broader engagement by Member States and securing additional contributions to CERF. The political nature of such initiatives emphasizes good leadership and broad-based political partnerships to ensure that CERF

IV. Challenges

1. CERF continues to be primarily funded by its top donors. The top 10 donors have provided almost 90 per cent of all contributions and the top 20 donors account for more than 98 per cent of all funding. Due to limited capacity in the Resource Mobilization and Communications section in the CERF secretariat, engagement with donors is limited largely to the CERF Advisory Group, with even less outreach to the non-top 15 donors. While the donor survey provided important information on core donors, a key challenge is the lack of information and analytics required to enhance engagement with the non-top donors to CERF. This is a priority moving forward, especially to tailor country specific strategies to incentivize greater support from priority countries. The planned regional briefings; support through OCHA's External Relations and Partnerships section based in New York; and, the Gulf and Brussels Liaison offices have been the primary channels for engagement, but fall short of the type of outreach needed.
2. As outlined by partners in the donor survey and by the CERF Advisory Group, high-level advocacy and championship by the Secretary-General remains critical to mobilise the global political leadership required for a \$1 billion CERF. In addition, building on the success of mobilizing key partners at ministerial levels for key events on CERF, further emphasis on the identification and mobilization of global leaders is important as part of a more structured approach to advocacy on CERF.
3. While CERF attempts to proactively map out the relevant global meetings and events for advocacy on CERF, these usually fall within the standard humanitarian events. While important, more needs to be done to identify other events and platforms of potential opportunity specially to engage with non-core partners (e.g., Financing for Development; South-South co-operation; Belt and Road initiative etc.). In addition, while partners have appreciated CERF's proactive outreach through advocacy and communication tools in advance of key global meetings (e.g., famine response, Lake Chad Basin), additional efforts are required to ensure that they receive these products in advance to fully maximize their role in promoting the visibility of CERF within their systems and with peers in global forums.
4. Progress on special initiatives to incentivize and diversify partnerships to CERF, in collaboration with lead partners is vital is important to infuse a certain momentum and dynamism that sets CERF apart from standard donor outreach related resource mobilization efforts. The pending report on the review of the disaster risk insurance proposal by the UK's Government Actuary Department (GAD) is important and will shape the next steps for the implementation of the initiative. Similarly, progress on fairsharing is a challenging concept and requires political leadership and broad-based engagement with Member States to stimulate the engagement and commitments related to a 'fund by all, for all'.

-
5. Moving to the threshold of \$1 billion, requires a shared understanding of the success factors and priorities to be addressed to achieve this target. Consultations with key partners on the investment case for CERF as well as a structured process towards meeting the \$1 billion target with collectively defined benchmarks and timelines will be vital to drive the narrative of success and mobilise the partnerships vital to secure \$1 billion on an annual basis.