



### Early Action to Humanitarian Emergencies: What Role for the CERF?

#### Background

ODI is leading an independent study considering what type of programmatic activities may be suitable for CERF funding under an anticipatory approach. The study examines the theoretical justification and technical delivery options for providing early anticipatory action<sup>1</sup> to various types of natural hazards and crises, and how these align with the CERF's mandate.

The study also investigates how CERF funding might build on ongoing opportunities and initiatives to improve risk monitoring, planning, and coordinated early action at the national level. Lastly, the study considers what value added the CERF brings to forecast-based financing and early action landscape.

#### Key research questions

1. What kinds of early actions can be considered “lifesaving” humanitarian action for different kinds of emergencies?
2. If CERF were to systematically fund a broader range of early action interventions, what kinds of activities should it fund that it does not already?
3. How do organisations currently enact early action? What kinds of lead times are required? How are activities funded?
4. If CERF anticipatory funding was available, would that provide incentives to key actors for improved early action? How?

#### Proposed outline

1. Introduction
2. Mapping out emergencies: Drought, Flood, Storm, Epidemic, Conflict
  - Generic phases of [storm / drought / flood / epidemic / conflict ]
    - i. When do human impacts manifest?
    - ii. What are lead times for these impacts?
    - iii. What kind of forecasting evidence may exist?
    - iv. What actions are appropriate to mitigate impacts and save lives?
  - b. Challenges and advantages to early action for different shocks
3. When does ‘anticipatory early action’ fit into a humanitarian mandate?
  - a. Evidence from literature and experts on whether ‘early action’ saves lives
  - b. Evidence from HCs / RCs and humanitarian organisations about what kinds of ‘early action’ they would like to be doing or are already doing

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<sup>1</sup> Referred to simply as ‘Early Action’ throughout the note

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- c. Summary of CERF experiences in funding early action
  4. How do these early actions align with CERF's current mandate?
    - a. Where are existing overlaps?
    - b. What are new areas that CERF should consider?
    - c. What revisions, if any, are required for CERF's lifesaving criteria?
    - d. What early actions are less suited to CERF's mandate?
    - e. Is CERF anticipatory approach better suited to responding to certain types of crises?
  5. Does CERF have a comparative advantage in funding anticipatory action?
    - a. What are the needs or gaps in early action landscape?
    - b. How can CERF funding compliment and further ongoing early action efforts?
    - c. What incentives does CERF early action funding provide to key actors?
  6. Areas for future research
    - a. What is CERF's added value as a global early action contingency financing mechanism compared to local funding tools (including Humanitarian Country Based Pooled Funds), and how could it complement these?
    - b. What kinds of information, processes, risk monitoring, response plans are necessary for a new range of EA activities?

## Outputs and Impact

This will result in a 6 – 14 page working paper intended to inform CERF's approach to anticipatory action and design of future funding instruments.



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Ideas.  
Change.**

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