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CERF ANNUAL
RESULTS REPORT



2021

A fund for all, by all

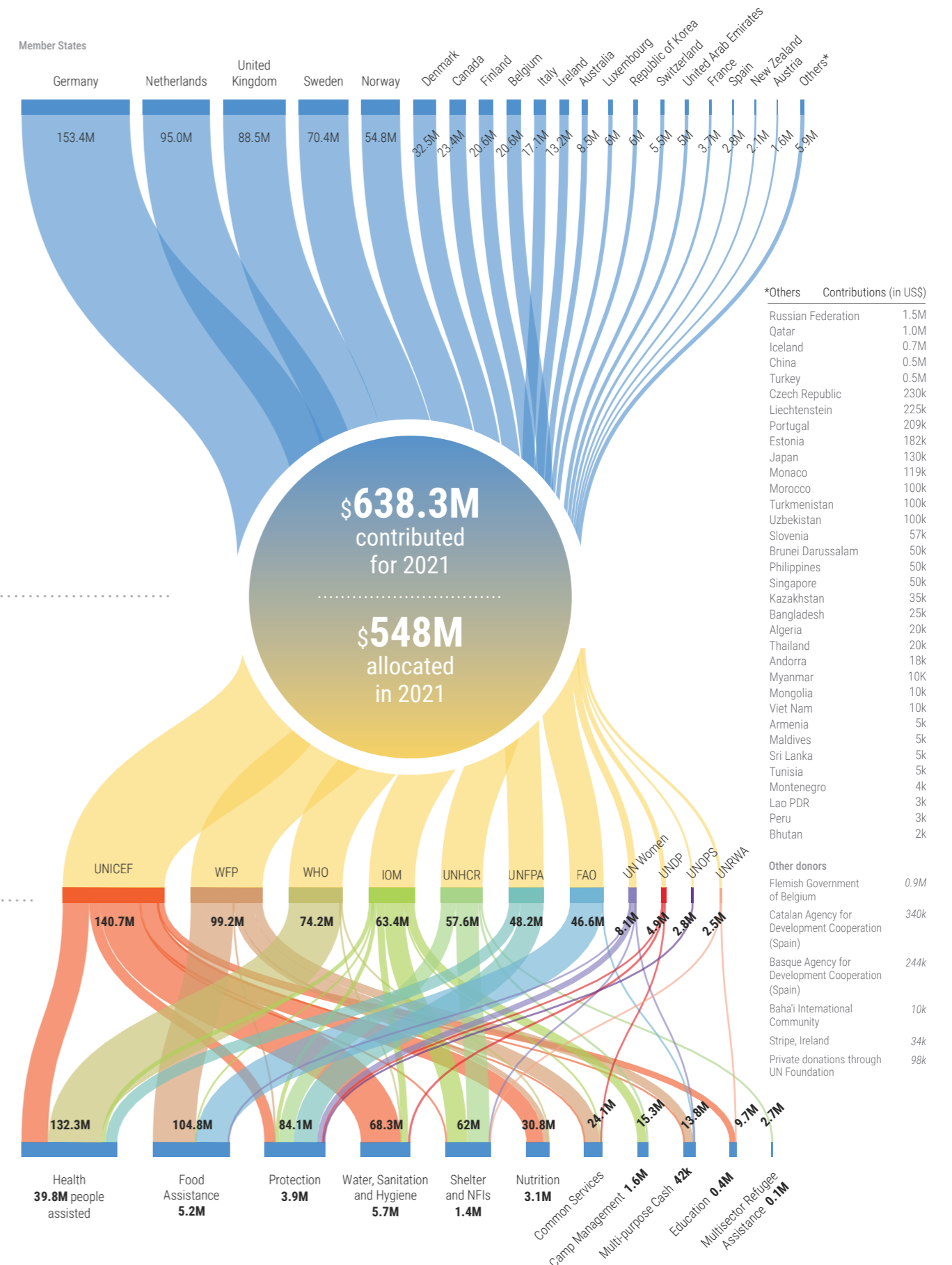
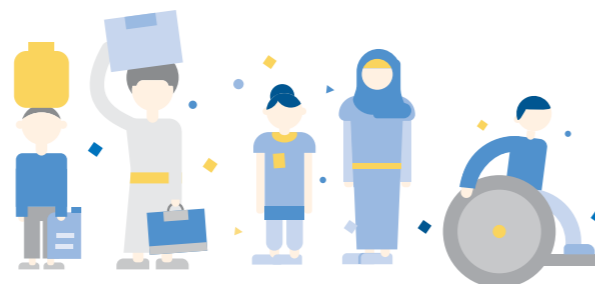
With humanitarian needs skyrocketing in 2021, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) remained an indispensable element of the global humanitarian architecture. Thanks to the generous support of its donors, CERF allocated US\$548 million for humanitarian assistance in 40 countries – the second highest amount in the Fund’s history. This enabled UN agencies and partners to provide life-saving assistance and protection for 51.5 million people across the globe. Despite the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021 CERF received \$638.3 million in paid contributions – the second highest amount in the Fund’s history. In the true spirit of “a fund for all, by all”, eight former recipients of CERF allocations also contributed to the Fund in 2021, bringing the total number of Member States that have given back to the Fund to 54.

\$638.3M
in contributions from
54 Member States and observers
3 Regional and local authorities
Multiple private contributions

\$548M allocated

11 UN agencies in partnership with
International NGOs
National NGOs
Government entities
Red Cross/Red Crescent societies

51.5M
people assisted
in 40 countries and territories



Credits

This document was produced by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). OCHA wishes to acknowledge the contributions of its committed staff at headquarters and in the field in preparing this document.

Full project details, financial updates and real-time allocation data are available at the [CERF Data Hub](#) and [CERF website](#).

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Front Cover

Yemen. A woman in front of her shelter in Marib. Fierce fighting continues to force thousands of families to flee their homes. With CERF funding, UNHCR is assisting some 13,000 displaced families with emergency shelters, kitchen sets, lamps, mattresses, blankets and other items. ©UNHCR/SHS

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Financial data is provisional and may vary upon financial certification.

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Foreword

For more than 51 million of the world's most vulnerable people, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was a lifeline in 2021, providing them with swift, high-quality assistance, no matter where they were.

CERF disbursed US\$548 million for humanitarian assistance in 40 countries in 2021 – the second-highest amount in the Fund's history. Over \$413 million was allocated through CERF's rapid response window. Living up to its reputation for speed, the Fund responded within days or even hours of crises hitting. For instance, within hours of an earthquake striking Haiti in August, CERF enabled relief agencies to step up life-saving support for 280,000 people in need.

Flexibility underpinned this speed, with CERF responding to requests from UN Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators even when information about crises was not yet complete. For instance, when a fire tore through the world's largest refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, UN agencies and partners immediately launched responses to help 59,000 people, confident that CERF funding was imminent.

In 2021, CERF continued to prioritize early and anticipatory action, to get appropriate help to people before the peak of a crisis. It launched three new anticipatory action pilots: in Nepal for severe flooding, in the Philippines for typhoons and in Malawi for dry spells. When Ebola broke out in Guinea in February, CERF quickly allocated \$5 million to contain the virus and prevent it from spreading to neighbouring countries. Later in the year, when thousands of people were projected to become displaced in Yemen's Marib and Al Jawf regions, CERF released funding to help them prepare.

CERF was also a lifeline for an estimated 8 million people caught in critically underfunded crises that did not receive sufficient donor support, disbursing \$135 million to 12 crises through its Underfunded Emergencies window. This funding was vital in sustaining and scaling up life-saving interventions.

CERF continued to enhance its practical measures to prioritize the most vulnerable people and ensure that women, girls and people living with disabilities had access to support. Through its tracking of age and gender in all programmes it funded, CERF ensured that 70 per cent of its 2021 funding contributed to gender equality.

OCHA has the unique privilege of managing CERF and the Country-Based Pooled Funds, allowing them to complement each other geographically, sectorally and sequentially. For instance, when Lebanon faced critical fuel shortages, CERF funding to the World Food Programme helped to keep water stations up and running, while the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund supported fuel for hospitals and health clinics.

My thanks to all donors who generously supported CERF's success. Once again, it lived up to its description as "a fund for all, by all", with 54 Member States and observers contributing to the Fund in 2021 – including eight past recipients of CERF funding.

Despite this generosity, we have a long way to go to reach the \$1 billion annual target that Member States committed to in 2016. I hope that in highlighting the unique potential and achievements of CERF, this report can help us reach that goal.

Martin Griffiths
Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian
Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

“

CERF continued to enhance its practical measures to prioritize the most vulnerable people and ensure that women, girls and people living with disabilities had access to support.

MARTIN GRIFFITHS
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN
AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR

”



Ethiopia. ERC, Martin Griffiths, meets Nigisti Gebregziher at what used to be her house in Hawzen, Tigray. ©OCHA/Saviano Abreu

Executive Summary

In 2021, with humanitarian needs skyrocketing, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) remained an indispensable element of the global humanitarian architecture. Throughout the year, CERF disbursed the second highest amount of annual funding in its history: \$548 million to support humanitarian action in 40 countries and territories. With this funding, UN agencies and partners were able to provide life-saving assistance and protection for 51.5 million people across the globe – the second highest number of people assisted by CERF in a single year.

CERF's ability to provide life-saving assistance to people in need across the globe was made possible by the generous support of its donors. Despite the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021 CERF received \$638.3 million in paid contributions – the second highest amount to date. Continued efforts to advocate for more predictable and earlier funding, resulted in a record number of active multi-year donor agreements. These commitments accounted for 69 per cent of the overall annual income; up from 63 per cent in 2020. In the true spirit of 'a fund for all, by all', eight former recipients of CERF allocations also contributed to the Fund, bringing the total number of Member States that have given back to the Fund to an impressive 56. [\(See pages 26-28\)](#)

Responding to the major drivers of humanitarian need

In 2021, conflict continued to be one of the main drivers of humanitarian need, with CERF allocating over two thirds of its annual funding – some \$353 million – to assist almost 44 million conflict-affected people in 19 countries. In Ethiopia, for example, the Fund released \$65 million through six allocations to address the humanitarian consequences of conflict and drought [\(see pages 42-46\)](#). In anticipation of and in response to climate-related and other natural disasters – another key driver of humanitarian needs in 2021 – CERF allocated some \$118 million for life-saving assistance for over 4.5 million people. Most of this (\$105 million or 19 per cent of all CERF funding) was allocated to climate-related disasters such as droughts, floods and storms, ensuring critical humanitarian assistance for almost 4.1 million people in 11 countries [\(see pages 47-49\)](#). In addition, CERF allocated over \$25 million in response to disease outbreaks such as Ebola and cholera in 10 countries across Africa. CERF funding was also used to tackle the secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which continued to exacerbate the political and socioeconomic conditions that drive humanitarian need across multiple contexts. [\(See pages 50-53\)](#)

Responding to population displacement

With displacement at an all-time high, CERF remained a lifeline for 19.4 million refugees, IDPs, returnees and members of host communities in 37 of the 40 countries that received CERF funding during the year. Several allocations in 2021 had a specific focus on mitigating and addressing the consequences of displacement, including a \$40 million allocation in anticipation of displacement in Yemen's Marib and Al Jawf regions. [\(See page 69\)](#)

Jump-starting time-critical operations

As in previous years, in 2021 CERF was often the first funding source for new emergencies. Thanks to CERF's speed and flexibility, UN agencies were able to initiate CERF-funded activities, on average, only four working days after the submission of their applications – often jump-starting response activities safe in the knowledge that CERF funding was forthcoming. For example, in Haiti, CERF funding from the Rapid Response (RR) window ensured that UN agencies and partners could start delivering life-saving assistance to 280,000 people within hours of the August 2021 earthquake. [\(See pages 70-71\)](#)

Getting ahead of predictable hazards

By making early and more forward-leaning allocations and facilitating anticipatory action frameworks, in 2021 CERF enabled partners to get ahead of predictable hazards. During the year, three new anticipatory action pilots were endorsed by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) – in Nepal for severe flooding, in the Philippines for typhoons and in Malawi for dry spells. CERF also released \$27 million through existing frameworks for drought in Ethiopia and Somalia. In addition to supporting the formal anticipatory action frameworks, CERF, through its RR window, sought to respond earlier to looming crises based on detailed risk analyses and projections of need. This included, for example, a regional allocation of \$5 million to prevent the spread of Ebola from Guinea into neighbouring countries. [\(See pages 54-58\)](#)

Providing a lifeline for people in crises

Funding from the Underfunded Emergencies window (UFE) continued to be a lifeline for people caught in crises that attract limited donor attention but where humanitarian needs remain significant. In 2021, CERF provided a total of \$135 million to 12 underfunded crises, enabling UN agencies and partners to deliver life-saving assistance to almost 9 million people, including through dedicated funding for transformative interventions to address the specific barriers and needs of people with disabilities. In Syria, for example, a UFE allocation of \$22 million was critical in sustaining and scaling up the response in the most underserved sectors by strengthening protection mechanisms and delivering essential health care and nutrition services. [\(See page 36\)](#)

Reaching the most vulnerable

In 2021, CERF helped improve the quality of humanitarian programming by prioritizing support for the most vulnerable, including women and girls, and people with disabilities. CERF funding to the protection sector reached a record high of \$84.1 million, equivalent to 15 per cent of all funding in 2021, up from 10 per cent in 2020. During the year, CERF earmarked \$10 million from its UFE envelope for implementing transformative interventions to address the specific barriers and needs of at least 200,000 people living with disabilities in six countries. In an effort to further strengthen attention to disability and gender, in early 2021 OCHA established contact groups on gender and disability inclusion. The groups supported learning on past and current practices, and provided advice on strengthening consideration of gender-based violence (GBV), gender issues and disability inclusion in the work of CERF and the Country-based Pooled Funds. [\(See page 37\)](#)

Delivering better assistance

Cash and voucher assistance (CVA) remained an integral part of effective and dignified CERF-funded humanitarian assistance in 2021. The Fund supported the transfer of \$43.4 million in CVA to 1.6 million people in 24 countries – accounting for 9 per cent of total CERF funding. WFP (\$14.9 million) and UNHCR (\$12.2 million) were the largest implementers of CVA projects. In Afghanistan, for example, UNHCR provided assistance to mitigate the impact of the winter almost entirely through CVA, enabling vulnerable families to decide for themselves how best to address their most urgent needs. [\(See page 40\)](#)

Enhancing partnerships and localization

Partnerships are at the heart of CERF-funded assistance. In 2020,¹ UN recipient agencies allocated the highest ever amount of CERF funding – some \$201 million – to a record number of 1,056 implementing partners. Of this, UN agencies sub-granted a record \$115 million to 688 national and local partners – a significant increase compared to 2019 when \$73 million went to 588 national and local partners. In 2021, UNFPA and UN Women started implementation of CERF's first-ever allocation directly in support of local women-led or women's rights organizations in their efforts to tackle GBV. [\(See pages 72-74\)](#)

Strengthening the quality of humanitarian response

Beyond enabling direct life-saving assistance, CERF allocations aim to strengthen the quality of humanitarian responses on the ground. Once again, feedback from UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators (RC/HCs) shows the added value that CERF brings to humanitarian responses. Overall, 92 per cent of CERF allocations enabled partners to respond to time-critical needs, 88 per cent helped improve coordination, and 69 per cent helped to mobilize further resources from other sources. The RC/HC for Guatemala, for instance, highlighted the vital role that CERF funding played in enhancing humanitarian coordination at the local level, mobilizing additional resources and scaling up humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of a devastating hurricane. In addition, RC/HCs reported that 90 per cent of CERF RR allocations enabled the rapid delivery of assistance. [\(See pages 20-25\)](#)

¹ Due to the nature of the CERF reporting cycle, comprehensive information on sub-grants only becomes available a full year after the calendar year under review. Information on sub-grants made under 2021 CERF allocations will only be available in early 2023.

Continuing to focus on learning

Throughout 2021, CERF remained committed to learning to ensure that its approaches and processes adapt to the changing humanitarian landscape. During the year, CERF concluded three reviews of innovative allocations launched in 2020: CERF's allocation to NGOs to support the COVID-19 response, a cash allocation to stave off famine in high-risk countries, and allocations to support GBV prevention and response. The reviews were important stocktaking exercises for CERF, helping to identify best practices and areas for improvement. At the same time, they provided relevant input for the broader humanitarian community, with lessons learned from these innovative allocations. OCHA has also made learning a cornerstone of CERF-supported anticipatory action frameworks, all of which include a systematic learning component to help demonstrate proof of concept and identify best practices and opportunities for improvement. [\(See pages 80-83\)](#)

Enhancing transparency

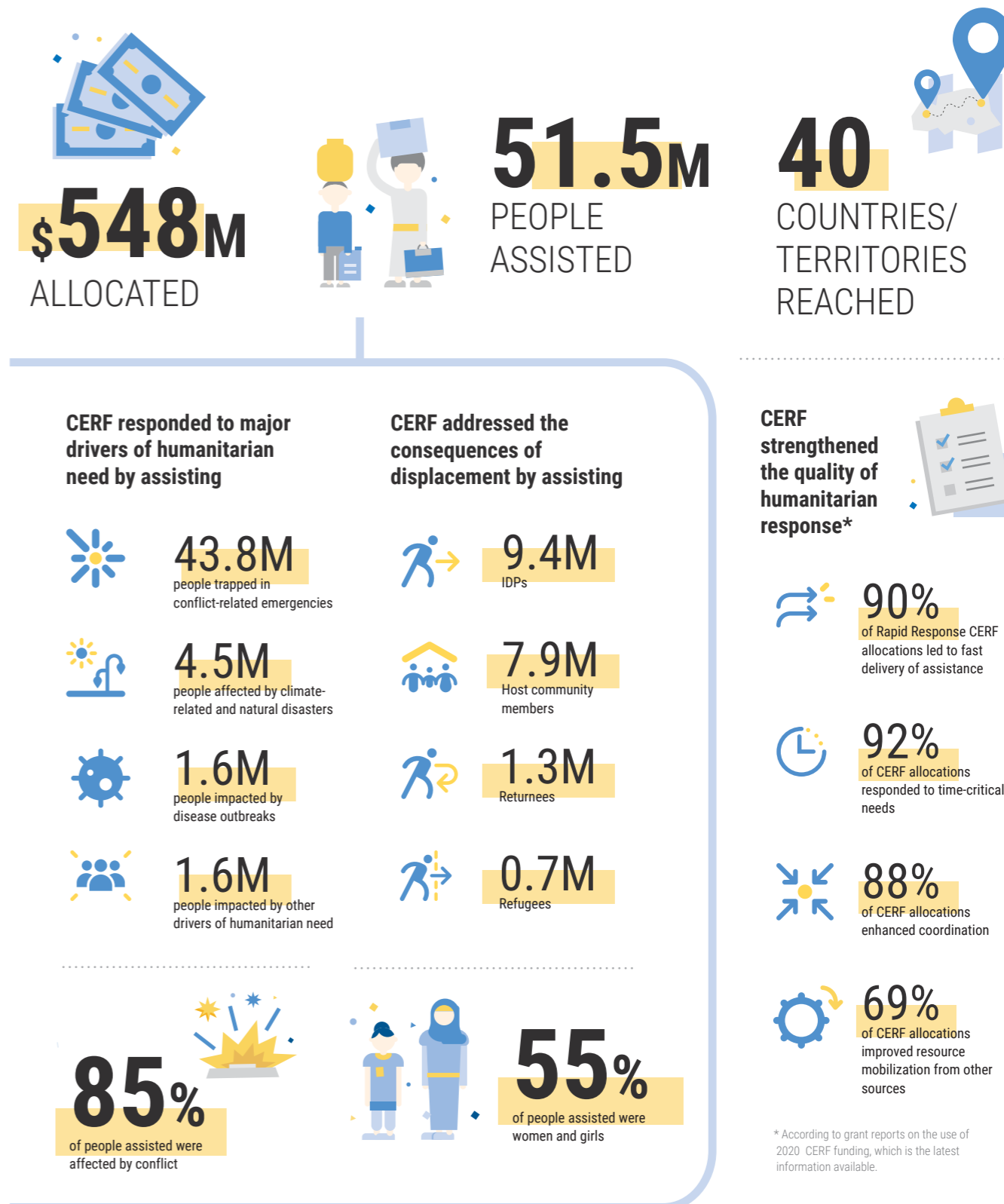
Ensuring transparency and real-time data on CERF-supported operations remained a top priority in 2021. Throughout the year, CERF continued to expand its online management and transparency tools. The Fund launched the [CERF Data Hub](#), which provides stakeholders easy access to data on how funding has been allocated across global humanitarian operations since CERF's inception in 2006. This complements the data already available through [CERF's website](#). Together with the Country-based Pooled Funds (CB-PFs), CERF also launched the [OCHA Pooled Funds Data Hub](#), a one-stop data visualization platform providing real-time data on CERF and CBPF allocations and donor contributions. The Hub also offers historical information on both CERF and CBPF allocations. [\(See pages 84-85\)](#)

Following strategic advice

During the year, the CERF Advisory Group provided valuable strategic advice to the Secretary-General and the ERC on the use and impact of the Fund. The Group held two official meetings, as well as two thematic webinars focusing on resource mobilization and external reviews of the Fund. During the official meetings, the Advisory Group advised the ERC on CERF's strategic positioning in the humanitarian landscape, explored CERF's ability to promote positive system change and considered ways to mobilize additional resources to help CERF achieve its \$1 billion target. [\(See page 79\)](#)

2021 CERF RESULTS AT A GLANCE

in US\$ million

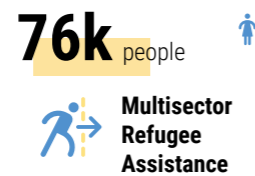
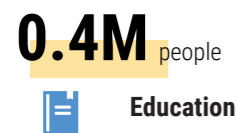
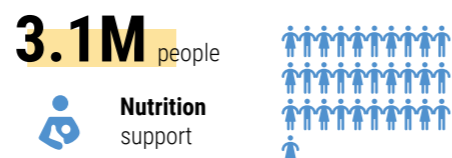
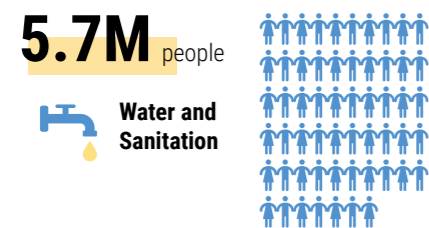


* According to grant reports on the use of 2020 CERF funding, which is the latest information available.

2021 CERF FUNDING ENABLED PARTNERS TO DELIVER:



* Of this, CERF assisted some 29 million in Afghanistan with health care services through a \$45 million allocation to keep health-care facilities operating across the country.



= 100k people = 100k people



About CERF

Burundi. With CERF funding, IOM provides assistance, including access to clean water, to residents of Kigaramango IDP camp. Many relocated to the camp following flooding in Gatumba in early 2020. ©OCHA/Carmille Marquis

Introduction to CERF

Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006 as the United Nations global emergency response fund, CERF's primary role is to provide fast and strategic funding to enable humanitarian actors to respond to emerging or escalating crises by delivering life-saving assistance to the most vulnerable, when and where needed the most. Funding from CERF allows UN agencies to collectively jump-start relief efforts before other funding sources are available. The Fund also serves as a strategic instrument for addressing critical funding gaps in underfunded emergencies.

Strong and predictable donor support has enabled CERF to continuously innovate and adapt to changes in humanitarian needs. Since its inception in 2006, contributions from 131 UN Member States and observers, as well as regional governments, corporate donors, foundations and individuals, have enabled CERF to provide some \$7.5 billion to deliver life-saving assistance in over 111 countries and territories. Acknowledging the importance of CERF's assistance, 56 recipient countries have also donated to CERF, making it truly a 'fund for all, by all'.



When a crisis hits, people's lives often change drastically. In the Horn of Africa, conflict and drought have recently threatened the livelihoods and food security of children, women and men. In these pivotal moments, CERF enables rapid and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance. Its rapid response mechanism enables humanitarian workers to deliver life-saving assistance almost instantaneously, alleviating suffering and restoring people's dignity. Germany is proud to have been CERF's largest donor in 2021, providing more than \$153 million in support of those who need it the most."

Susanne Fries-Gaier, Humanitarian Director, German Federal Foreign Office



The UN's Central Emergency Response Fund is always one of the first to disburse funding when crises strike, and now as CERF expands its anticipatory footprint it is there even before crises hit. CERF is also there when humanitarian crises are forgotten but suffering continues. I have seen for myself the tremendous positive impact CERF has on people's lives and this is only possible thanks to the generosity of our donors."

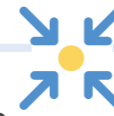
António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General

In 2021, CERF allocated a total of \$548 million to support humanitarian operations in 40 countries and territories, the second highest annual amount in the history of the Fund. At the same time, CERF continued to support positive change throughout the humanitarian system, including supporting anticipatory action, enabling partners to get ahead of predictable hazards and mitigate humanitarian impacts; and by ensuring dedicated funding to underfunded priority areas such as GBV and the needs of people living with disabilities.

With growing humanitarian needs predicted for 2022, a well-funded and agile CERF remains important. The humanitarian system continues to face unprecedented challenges, with an estimated 274 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection in 2022 – a 17 per cent increase from 2021. The UN and its partners will require a record \$41 billion to meet the needs of the 183 million most vulnerable people.² Given CERF's proven capacity to provide fast and time-critical funding for life-saving assistance in humanitarian crises across the globe, reaching its annual funding target of \$1 billion, as endorsed by the UN General Assembly, remains critical for enabling the global humanitarian system to meet the growing needs.

² OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2021](#).

CERF IS



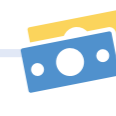
PROMOTING COORDINATION AND COHERENCE

CERF funding is allocated to multiple organizations based on humanitarian partners' agreed priorities. This promotes coordination among humanitarian actors, eliminates duplication and overlaps, prevents fragmented responses and supports the achievement of collective outcomes.



CATALYTIC

CERF enables humanitarian partners to quickly scale up response and leverage additional donor support through demonstrated and timely humanitarian action.



COST EFFECTIVE

CERF offers value for money by allowing donors to efficiently assist people in need wherever crises strike. When donors contribute to CERF, they ensure that limited resources go as far as they can to save lives and reduce the suffering of millions of women, men, girls and boys caught up in crises



EMBODYING THE GRAND BARGAIN

CERF plays a key role in delivering the Grand Bargain: CERF funding is flexible, efficient, unearmarked, principled and transparent, supports cash programming, empowers humanitarian leadership and promotes a coordinated, inclusive and strategic humanitarian response.



GLOBAL

CERF provides humanitarian support across the globe, expanding the reach of its donors to all crises, whether new, worsening or forgotten.



NEUTRAL, IMPARTIAL AND INDEPENDENT

CERF is fully unearmarked, principled and independent to ensure funding goes to meet the most urgent, life-saving needs wherever crises hit.



FAST

Time lost means lives lost. CERF allocates funding within hours of a crisis, making funding available at the beginning of a crisis when it is most needed.



FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS

CERF interventions support the involvement of implementing partners. Each year, approximately 25 per cent of CERF funds are implemented by more than 500 NGOs and local responders who have partnered with UN agencies.



NEEDS BASED

CERF allocations are strictly life-saving and based on the needs identified and prioritized by humanitarian partners on the front lines of the emergency responses. This ensures early responses to the most time-critical humanitarian priorities.



PREDICTABLE

CERF is a trusted and dependable source of predictable funding for the most urgent and critical humanitarian action.

How CERF works

In a humanitarian crisis, humanitarian organizations on the ground jointly assess and prioritize humanitarian needs. UN organizations are eligible for CERF funding and implement grants in partnership with local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), host governments and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies. Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators (RC/HC) can apply for CERF funding when new needs in the country exceed UN organizations' capacity to respond. Determining the level and severity of needs and identifying people who most urgently need assistance requires joint planning and prioritization by UN/Humanitarian Country Teams (UNCT/HCT) and other humanitarian organizations under the leadership of RC/HCs.

CERF is guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, and resources are allocated in line with CERF's Life-Saving Criteria. The Criteria serve as guidance for the RC/HC and UNCT/HCT on developing applications for CERF funding. CERF ensures that funds help meet the most urgent needs of people caught in crises around the world and are used where they have the greatest potential for saving lives.

By building on the UN and humanitarian coordination architecture, CERF provides resources based on needs, risks and collective priorities. Humanitarian partners work together to identify and prioritize activities to be included in the CERF request, based on evidence, assessments of need and, especially for sudden-onset disasters, on projections and forecasts. RC/HCs submit a prioritized proposal to CERF, which then reviews the application and supports the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) in deciding on the allocation of resources to partners on the ground.

Funding windows

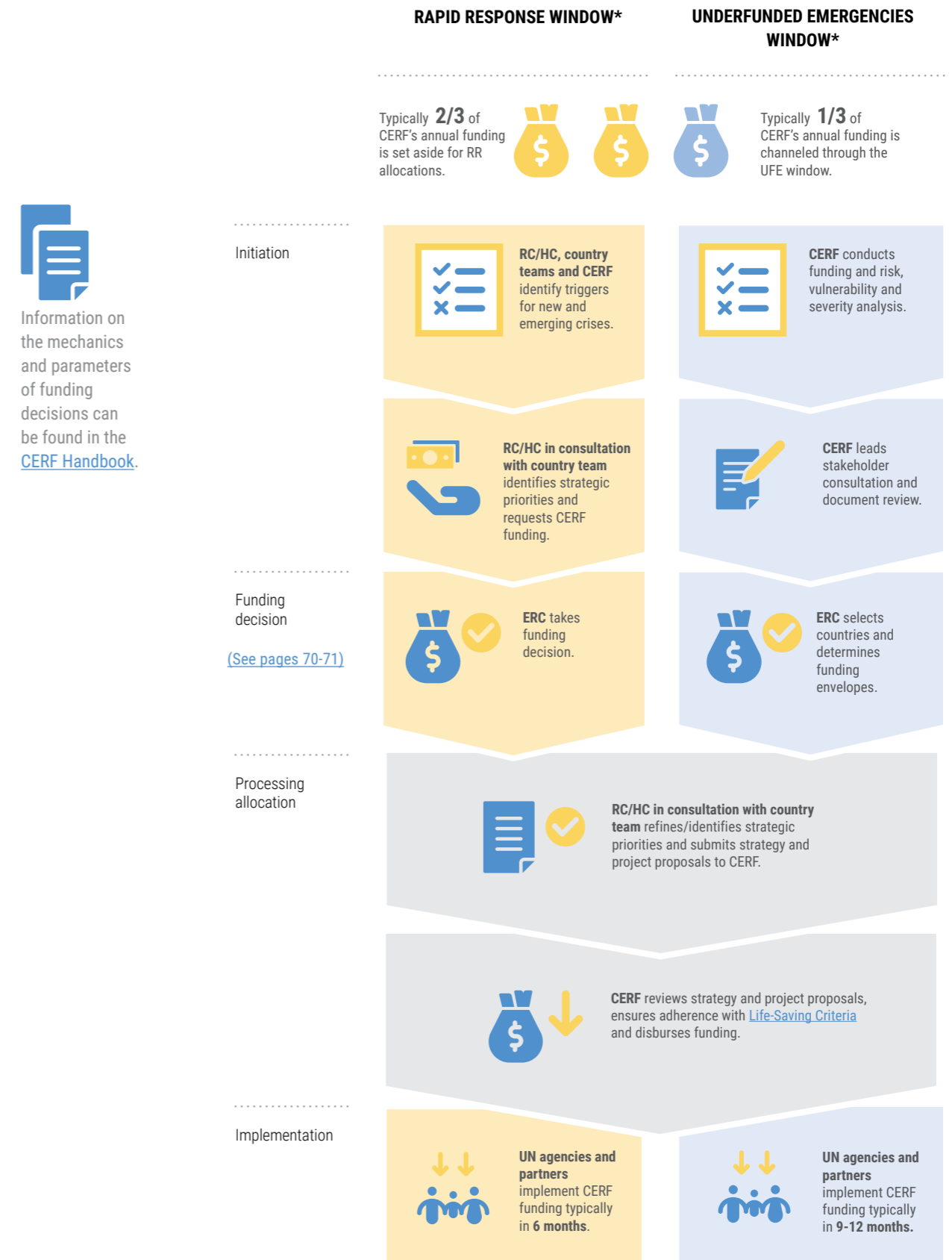
CERF channels funds to UN agencies through its Rapid Response (RR) and Underfunded Emergencies (UFE) windows. While the process of developing a formal application is similar for both funding windows, the starting point for allocations differs. For the RR window, the RC/HC – in consultation with humanitarian partners on the ground – can request funds at any time during the year in the event of new and unforeseen humanitarian needs. In these emergencies, timing is often the most important factor and CERF continues to be more forward-leaning through its RR window, both by making allocations earlier on a 'no-regrets' basis – even when information is still incomplete and uncertain – and by making allocations partially based on projections and forecasts (e.g., of drought, food insecurity and displacement). Thus, CERF-funded assistance reaches people sooner and, in some cases, before the peak of a humanitarian shock (see pages 54-58). To create a more solid evidence base for allocation decisions, CERF uses a real-time dashboard and a statistical model to facilitate the comparison of new crises with past allocations and is continuously improving its methodology.

UFE allocations, on the other hand, start with a comparative global analysis of risk, vulnerability and funding levels for ongoing humanitarian emergencies through a consultative process at headquarters level involving UN agencies, OCHA and NGOs. CERF has developed a rigorous methodology to establish a strong evidence base for the selection of the most underfunded and neglected humanitarian crises to receive funding. This includes three components: a quantitative analysis of funding levels and the severity of humanitarian needs and risks aggregated into the CERF Index for Risk and Vulnerability; consultations with UN agencies, NGOs and other partners; and a desk review of Humanitarian Needs Overviews, Response Plans and other documents.

Loan facility

In addition to the two funding windows, CERF has a \$30 million loan facility to cover cash-flow gaps in UN humanitarian operations. This facility can be used when UN agencies experience cash-flow problems in responding to humanitarian emergencies due to delays in receiving contributions from donors. The ERC determines the amount to be advanced in each situation.

CERF ALLOCATION PROCESS



Leveraging complementarity of OCHA Pooled Funds

In addition to CERF, OCHA manages 20 Country-based Pooled Funds (CBPFs), including a Regional Humanitarian Fund for West and Central Africa.³ While each fund has its own unique attributes: they all provide rapid, flexible resources for humanitarian responses and strategic support to emergency operations, while fostering a more coherent and coordinated response under the leadership of the RC/HC.

When CERF and CBPF resources are provided to the same contexts, HCs ensure that the resources are used in a complementary and coherent manner. In 2021, \$415 million or 75 per cent of CERF funding went to 15 countries with CBPFs. At the country level, the HCs can decide how best to use these different funding instruments based on the comparative advantage of each, as part of an 'integrated' approach. OCHA helps HCs and HCTs to translate this vision into allocation strategies and processes, ensuring coherence and the best overall operational use of resources. This ensures that funds are used to achieve the greatest collective impact – a continuing priority for OCHA and its partners.

While each context is unique, the following principles often underpin joint CERF–CBPF allocation strategies:

- » **Temporal sequencing:** CERF and CBPF allocations can be used to support different phases of an emergency response, allowing for continuity in the scaling up of critical humanitarian services.
- » **Complementary recipients:** CERF and CBPF allocations can be designed to provide funding to

different types of recipient organizations in a way that best addresses the overall humanitarian situation, with CBPFs typically providing most of their funding to a wide network of front-line national and international NGO partners, and CERF focusing on fewer, large-scale grants for direct operational requirements of UN agencies.

- » **Complementary sectoral focus:** Informed by each Fund's comparative advantage, CERF and CBPF allocations can be designed to address needs in different sectors, to achieve the desired programmatic coverage and support a comprehensive intersectoral response.
- » **Complementary geographical targeting:** CERF and CBPF allocations can be designed to target different geographical locations, to achieve the geographic coverage necessary to meet the needs of the most severely affected communities.
- » **Common promotion of global priorities and cross-cutting issues:** CERF and CBPF allocations can be used together to reinforce consideration of, and attention to, key themes, cross-cutting issues and good practices recognized by the wider humanitarian community as important to the quality of aid.

In 2021, the HCs' complementary use of the funds strengthened the overall humanitarian responses in several contexts, including in response to the multifaceted crisis in Afghanistan, the civil war in Yemen and the violent conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, as well as the crises in Lebanon and South Sudan.

³ With country envelopes for Niger (2021) and Burkina Faso (2022).



South Sudan: Mitigating the impacts of acute food insecurity

In 2021, under the leadership of the South Sudan HC, funding from CERF and the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF) was used in a complementary manner to address a sharp deterioration in food insecurity among the most vulnerable. To maximize the impact of the response, the two funding mechanisms were strategically sequenced to ensure broad and longer-term support for selected activities.

In 2021, due to loss of harvest and livestock caused by flooding and conflict, many vulnerable groups in South Sudan were facing acute levels of food insecurity. To enable immediate, unrestricted, multi-purpose cash-based assistance for people at urgent risk, CERF allocated \$7 million in January, in the midst of the dry season. Simultaneously, to mitigate the risk of longer-term food insecurity and promote resilience, the SSHF provided \$4 million for agricultural and livelihood support, including seed distributions, training on improved agronomic and fishing practices, and the promotion of backyard kitchen gardens. The allocation also encouraged partnerships with local and national actors, to benefit from their broad reach and proximity to communities.

Following a further deterioration in food security, the initial allocations were complemented by a second CERF allocation of \$10 million in April. This included \$3.4 million for food and livelihood assistance (in-kind

and/or cash assistance) for a six-month period, in addition to WASH support and nutrition support. The allocation was timed to coincide with the SSHF-funded seed distribution to ensure that households would plant the seeds rather than sell or consume them in the absence of sufficient food stocks. The CERF allocation focused specifically on households headed by women, children or persons with disabilities.

Three months later, the SSHF allocated a further \$28.5 million to sustain the humanitarian response to food insecurity for up to 12 months. Of this, some \$3 million was allocated to expand the CERF-funded food security, livelihood and agriculture programmes to other counties where acute food insecurity was on the rise (the allocation included nutrition, WASH and logistics support). The allocation was also used to pre-position and subsequently make available emergency food rations and livelihood kits for the dry season.

Benefiting from their comparative advantages, the complementary use of CERF and the SSHF enabled a rapid, sequenced and agile response that evolved in line with the developing humanitarian situation and ensured broad-reaching critical food security support and livelihood development for the most vulnerable.



Afghanistan: Preventing the collapse of the health-care system and averting hunger

In 2021, the escalation of the crisis in Afghanistan had a devastating impact on the already overburdened health system. In response, allocations from CERF and the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) were used strategically by the HC to enable a holistic response to the health crisis, with each funding mechanism prioritizing different elements of the health response in line with their comparative advantages.

Following the Taliban takeover in late August, CERF allocated \$45 million – the largest allocation of the year – to prevent a collapse of the country's health system. The funding enabled WHO and UNICEF – working through national and international NGOs – to keep health-care facilities operating until the end of year, including hospitals treating COVID-19 patients.

In parallel, the AHF provided \$12.6 million to support NGO mobile health services in 16 provinces, particularly those providing trauma care, mental health and psychosocial support, and other services outside of the Government's basic package of health services.

With CERF reinforcing the existing health-care system, and the AHF supporting additional trauma care and other health services, the funds were able to ensure a comprehensive package of critical health services with a broad geographic coverage.

CERF's strategic added value



With humanitarian needs steadily growing every year, it is of the utmost importance to respond in an increasingly flexible and coordinated way. To that end, Italy has strengthened its commitment to CERF, which is a key tool to effectively deliver timely and life-saving assistance to people caught up in humanitarian crises across the globe.”

Marina Sereni, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy

Beyond enabling life-saving assistance, CERF allocations can be strategically leveraged to help promote positive system change and strengthen the humanitarian response on the ground. As the gap between humanitarian needs and available resources continues to grow, innovative approaches to ensuring efficient and effective humanitarian action have become more important than ever. Although CERF represents a relatively small portion of global humanitarian funding – just under 3 per cent in 2021⁴ – its allocations have a critical multiplier effect. Strategic impact is sought at two levels: through global-level policy and approaches; and through strategic prioritization of individual allocations at country level.

Driving system change

In 2021, CERF worked to enhance the quality of humanitarian programming. The Fund reinforced support for the most vulnerable, including women, children and people with disabilities (see pages 39-41 and 64-66), both through a number of innovative targeted allocations and by mainstreaming support for the most vulnerable across all allocations. Building on the positive outcomes of previous thematic allocations, an envelope of \$10 million to support transformative interventions to address the specific barriers and needs of people with disabilities was allocated to seven countries through the UFE window (see page 36). To further strengthen approaches and processes, OCHA also established two expert groups on gender and disability inclusion, with the objective

⁴ This represents the portion of tracked global humanitarian funding towards 2021 appeals and response plans.

of advising on ways to improve the impact of OCHA's Pooled Funds in terms of GBV, gender equality and disability-related concerns (see page 37).

In support of a more accountable humanitarian response, CERF continued to empower communities to determine their own priorities. The Fund promotes the inclusion of AAP measures in all stages of the programme cycle, including organizational and collective feedback mechanisms that listen to and act upon the voices of affected communities. CERF also encourages the use of cash, particularly multi-purpose cash, as the default response modality wherever feasible, empowering affected people to make their own choices about the assistance they most need (see page 40). The joint CERF-CBPF online Grant Management System (see pages 84-85) and the new standard indicators (see page 65), both developed in 2021, will allow CERF to better assess and enhance compliance with AAP commitments and the quality of cash-based assistance in CERF-funded programming.

By making early and more 'forward-leaning' allocations, and facilitating anticipatory action frameworks, in 2021 CERF enabled partners to get ahead of predictable hazards. This included support to formal anticipatory action frameworks – led by OCHA, in close collaboration with the broader humanitarian system – as well as risk-informed allocations that adopted anticipatory or early action approaches to emerging needs. The CERF-supported anticipatory action pilots are designed to benefit from and contribute to a growing body of evidence on the merits of collective anticipatory action. (See pages 54-58)

Adding value at the country level

CERF is designed to ensure that every dollar it allocates leverages additional benefits in support of humanitarian response on the ground. For each CERF allocation, RC/HCs articulate, through a 'strategic statement', the added value and co-benefits that will be achieved through the use of CERF funding – in addition to the operational, life-saving objectives that are central to all CERF allocations. Setting out a clear, succinct strategic vision at the outset of an allocation process helps ensure that partners work towards a common strategic objective. This provides CERF and the ERC with assurance that CERF funds are utilized to their fullest potential.

When reporting on the use of CERF funding at the end of the grant period, RC/HCs are asked to reflect on the achievement of the strategic objectives set out in the initial strategic statement, and to assess how the allocation contributed to achieving the four overarching core objectives that underpin CERF's design and mandate:

- » **Speed** – enabling the rapid delivery of assistance
- » **Timeliness** – ensuring a better response to time-critical humanitarian needs
- » **Coherence** – improving coordination among the humanitarian community
- » **Catalytic effect** – leveraging additional resources from other sources

The following is an assessment of the four core objectives across all RC/HC reports covering all 2020 CERF grants (the latest year that reports are available).⁵ All the reports are published on the [CERF website](#).

⁵ Due to the nature of the CERF reporting cycle, the RC/HC assessments only become available a full year after the calendar year under review. Assessments of 2021 allocations will only be available in early 2022.

ACCORDING TO RC/HC REPORTS ON THE USE OF 2020 CERF FUNDING



90%
of Rapid Response CERF allocations led to **fast delivery of assistance**



92%
of CERF allocations responded to **time-critical needs**



88%
of CERF allocations **improved coordination**



69%
of CERF allocations **improved resource mobilization from other sources**



“[The] allocation contributed to raising awareness on the added-value of anticipatory action and to provide avenues for collective efforts in that regard. Moreover, the process of preparing for the implementation of the anticipatory action pilot as well as its implementation helped build national capacities for such an approach. The learning associated with the pilot helped to identify areas for increased effectiveness and efficiency in the future. [...] Bangladesh intends to scale up the approach in 2021 with strong government involvement and with additional partners.”

Mia Seppo, RC/HC Bangladesh



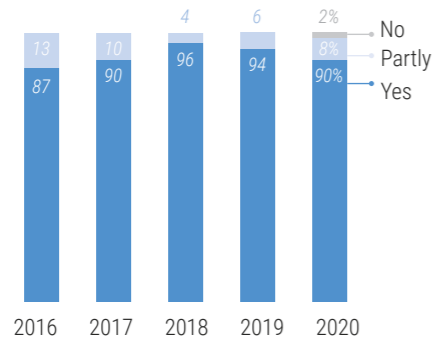
Speed of CERF allocations

CERF funds from the RR window enable fast delivery of assistance to people in need. Through its efficient allocation and disbursement systems, CERF provides funding quickly and efficiently when and where it is needed most. CERF allocations can be announced within hours of sudden onset emergencies or deteriorations of existing crises. Consequently, CERF is often the fastest source of external funding for immediate life-saving responses. Agencies are also able to begin life-saving humanitarian operations as soon as they know that CERF funds are forthcoming, helping to further speed up the response. [\(See pages 70-71\)](#)

RC/HCs of CERF-recipient countries confirmed that 90 per cent of 2020 RR allocations (46 of 51) led to fast delivery of assistance to people in need. Selected testimonies from RC/HCs in Somalia, South Sudan and Mozambique illustrate how CERF's speed enabled a quick and immediate response:

DID CERF LEAD TO FAST DELIVERY OF ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE IN NEED?

(RR allocations only)



Somalia continues to oscillate between floods and droughts under the impact of climate change. In April 2020, the sudden onset of riverine and flash flooding affected over 540,000 people across 27 districts, displacing more than 210,000 people. **The CERF funds allowed quick and timely response** at a time when the country was dealing with the additional burden of the COVID-19 pandemic and ravaging locust infestations.”

[Adam Abdelmoula, RC/HC Somalia](#)

The impact of the floods was overwhelming as the humanitarian community struggled with its rapidly dwindling resources in its effort to keep people safe in dry homes and avoid further displacement. As the humanitarian needs increased, the CERF grant offered a crucial bridging funding mechanism that augmented the response, as consultations continued bilaterally with donors for additional contributions. Furthermore, **CERF supported the scaling-up of immediate response** to mitigate the humanitarian effect of floods [...].”

[Matthew Hollingworth, RC/HC a.i. South Sudan](#)

CERF allocations enabled rapid funding to **kick-start immediate life-saving response** interventions from April to December 2020, and CERF funding was instrumental in the timely start of the emergency response through the 2020 Rapid Response Plan for Cabo Delgado, addressing the most urgent escalating humanitarian needs in the province.”

[Myrta Kaulard, RC Mozambique](#)

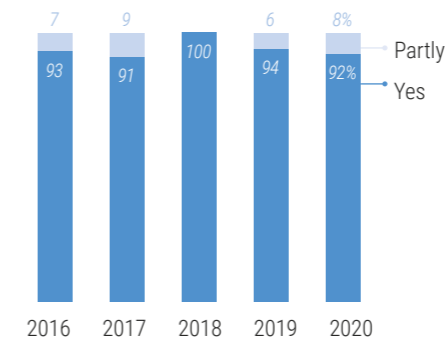


Timeliness of CERF allocations

CERF funds strengthen the humanitarian system's ability to deliver time-critical responses. Humanitarian needs must be addressed at a specific time to reduce loss of lives and livelihoods and minimize human suffering. CERF has the flexibility to provide funding to humanitarian operations when it is needed the most. RC/HCs can call upon CERF RR funding at any time to respond to time-critical needs, whether at the onset of a new emergency or at crucial moments during an ongoing response.

According to RC/HCs, 92 per cent of CERF allocations (66 of 72) in 2020 helped respond to time-critical needs. Selected testimonies by RC/HCs in Cameroon, oPt and South Sudan note CERF's role as a strategic enabler of time-critical humanitarian responses:

DID CERF HELP RESPOND TO TIME-CRITICAL NEEDS?



This rapid response CERF allocation arrived at **a critical point in time for the humanitarian response** in the north-west and south-west of Cameroon. [...] In such a highly politicized environment [...] it is of crucial importance to be able to respond to the most urgent needs, to gain access and acceptance by the population and by other key stakeholders. This CERF allocation went a long way to support the humanitarian partners' response ability and to further deepen trust with the affected population and the donors.”

[Matthias Naab, RC/HC Cameroon](#)

CERF funding enabled UNRWA to **immediately respond to urgent and critical humanitarian needs**, focusing on addressing the emergency food security needs of over one million vulnerable Palestinian refugees in the oPt, including women, children and people with disabilities, of which 59 per cent of the targeted households were the abject poor.”

[Lucia Elmi, RC/HC a.i. oPt](#)

CERF was timely in addressing the rising food insecurity. The US\$7 million allocated from the CERF rapid response window in October 2020 enabled fast delivery of assistance in response to the increasing food insecurity through cash and voucher programming.”

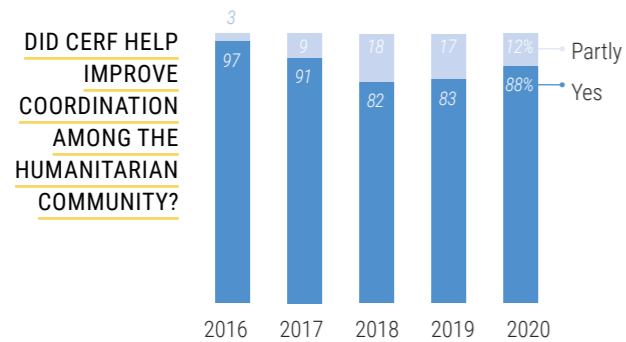
[Arafat Jamal, RC/HC a.i. South Sudan](#)



Coherence achieved through CERF allocations

The CERF allocation process is designed to improve coordination among the humanitarian community. Under the leadership of the RC/HC, CERF allocations are informed by strategic priorities agreed upon by country teams. The implementation of CERF funding and the results achieved are jointly reviewed and reported by implementing organizations, helping to foster collective ownership and accountability, and support the achievement of collective humanitarian outcomes.

As indicated by the RC/HC's, 88 per cent of allocations (63 of 72) in 2020, enhanced coordination among the humanitarian community. Selected RC/HC testimonies from Angola, Kenya and Nicaragua highlight the vital role that CERF played in strengthening coordination within the respective emergency responses:



The Fund enhanced coordination among the humanitarian community, including implementing partners in the field, by means of shared resources, joint monitoring and reporting of project results; and helped the UN's effort towards 'Delivering as One'."

Zahira Virani, RC/HC Angola

This CERF allocation enhanced sectoral and multi-sectoral coordination, improved information sharing and analysis for decision-making, as well as inter-agency collaboration, thus enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the response. Joint assessments and programmatic monitoring visits with partners helped to identify critical gaps and challenges that were addressed collaboratively."

Stephen Jackson, RC/HC Kenya

CERF has been critical in providing immediate life-saving humanitarian assistance in support of government efforts and initiatives. Additionally, it has provided an opportunity to re-establish sectoral coordination structures between agencies and government institutions through the National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Attention."

Nazario Esposito, Inter-Agency Technical Coordinator of UN Agencies in Nicaragua

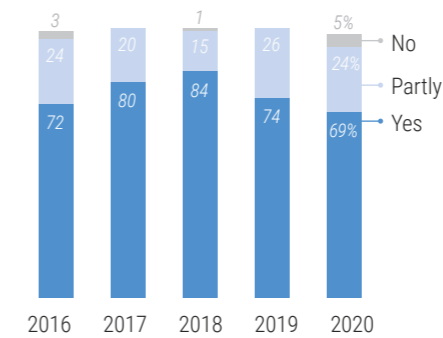


Catalytic effect of CERF allocations

CERF allocations are an important tool for leveraging additional funding from other sources. They signal the severity and urgency of humanitarian needs. As such, CERF allocations are often used by the humanitarian community to bring attention to crises and attract funding from other sources. Similarly, CERF allocations enable partners to jump-start humanitarian operations and achieve results, which provides donors assurance of the humanitarian community's readiness and capacity to deliver.

RCs/HCs of CERF-recipient countries confirmed that 69 per cent of 2020 CERF allocations (50 of 72) helped leverage funding from other sources. Selected testimonies by RC/HCs in Guatemala, Viet Nam and Mozambique highlight the catalytic effect of CERF allocations:

DID CERF HELP IMPROVE RESOURCE MOBILIZATION FROM OTHER SOURCES?



CERF interventions helped to enhance humanitarian coordination at the local level, mobilize additional resources and complement the efforts of other humanitarian actors, scaling up humanitarian assistance."

Rebeca Arias Flores, RC/HC Guatemala

The CERF allocation attracted additional funding from donors, including IFIs, which strengthened the UN's convening power and led to improved collaboration among humanitarian and development actors during last year's floods – and hopefully this will ensue in future disasters as well."

Kamal Malhotra, RC Viet Nam

[...] CERF funds were instrumental in kick-starting the emergency response in Cabo Delgado in April 2020 and they were significantly catalytic in raising additional funds from other international donors (DFID, ECHO, World Bank, UN Member States, etc.) over the subsequent months, in line with the 2020 Rapid Response Plan for Cabo Delgado."

Myrta Kaulard, RC/HC Mozambique

Contributions to CERF

CERF's response to humanitarian crises in 2021 was only possible thanks to donors' generous support to the Fund. CERF's income in 2021 was the second highest since the Fund's inception in 2006, and a testament to the commitment and trust of donors. As a result, and as documented in this publication, this funding enabled CERF to facilitate life-saving humanitarian assistance to people caught in crises in 40 countries.

In total, 54 Member States and observers, three regional authorities and numerous private donors contributed to CERF in 2021. Paid contributions reached \$638.3 million, second only to 2019 (\$831.4 million).⁶ CERF's largest donor in 2021 was Germany, followed by the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway. The top 10 donors, which also included Denmark, Canada, Finland, Belgium and Italy, collectively contributed over 90 per cent of CERF's annual income.

Despite the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF's existing donors remained steady in their support, with many increasing their funding, demonstrating a recognition of the Fund as a key global instrument for saving lives. Ten Member States increased their annual contribution to CERF from 2020, including Bangladesh, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Morocco and Slovenia. Ten countries also provided contributions in addition to their initial pledges, including Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Sweden.

⁶ This reflects paid contributions as of 1 June 2022.

The [CERF Data Hub](#) provides real-time information on contributions to CERF.

Continued efforts in 2021 to augment and diversify CERF's donor base resulted in a number of new and returning donors. During the year, seven Member States, including Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, the Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Maldives and Tunisia, returned as donors. CERF also welcomed Uzbekistan to its donor base. Among the ten returning or new donors from 2020, six Member States continued their support in 2021. In the true spirit of 'a fund for all, by all', eight past recipients of CERF allocations contributed to the Fund in 2021; a total of 56 recipient Member States have now given back to the Fund since 2006. During the year, private sector donors also continued to contribute to CERF. A total of some \$132,000 was received from private companies and individuals.

2021 saw an increase in levels of quality funding, with more predictable and earlier contributions. A record number of sixteen donors held multi-year agreements with CERF at a total annual value of over \$439.1 million. This included four new agreements signed with Belgium, Estonia, Germany and Finland. These long-term commitments jointly accounted for 69 per cent of the overall annual income for 2021; an increase from 2020, when 12 multi-year agreements provided 63 per cent (\$401.6 million) of contributions. Furthermore, nearly \$208.3 million, or 33 per cent of the overall annual income, was received during the first quarter of the year – an improvement from 2020 (\$184.6 million) and 2019 (\$150.8 million).



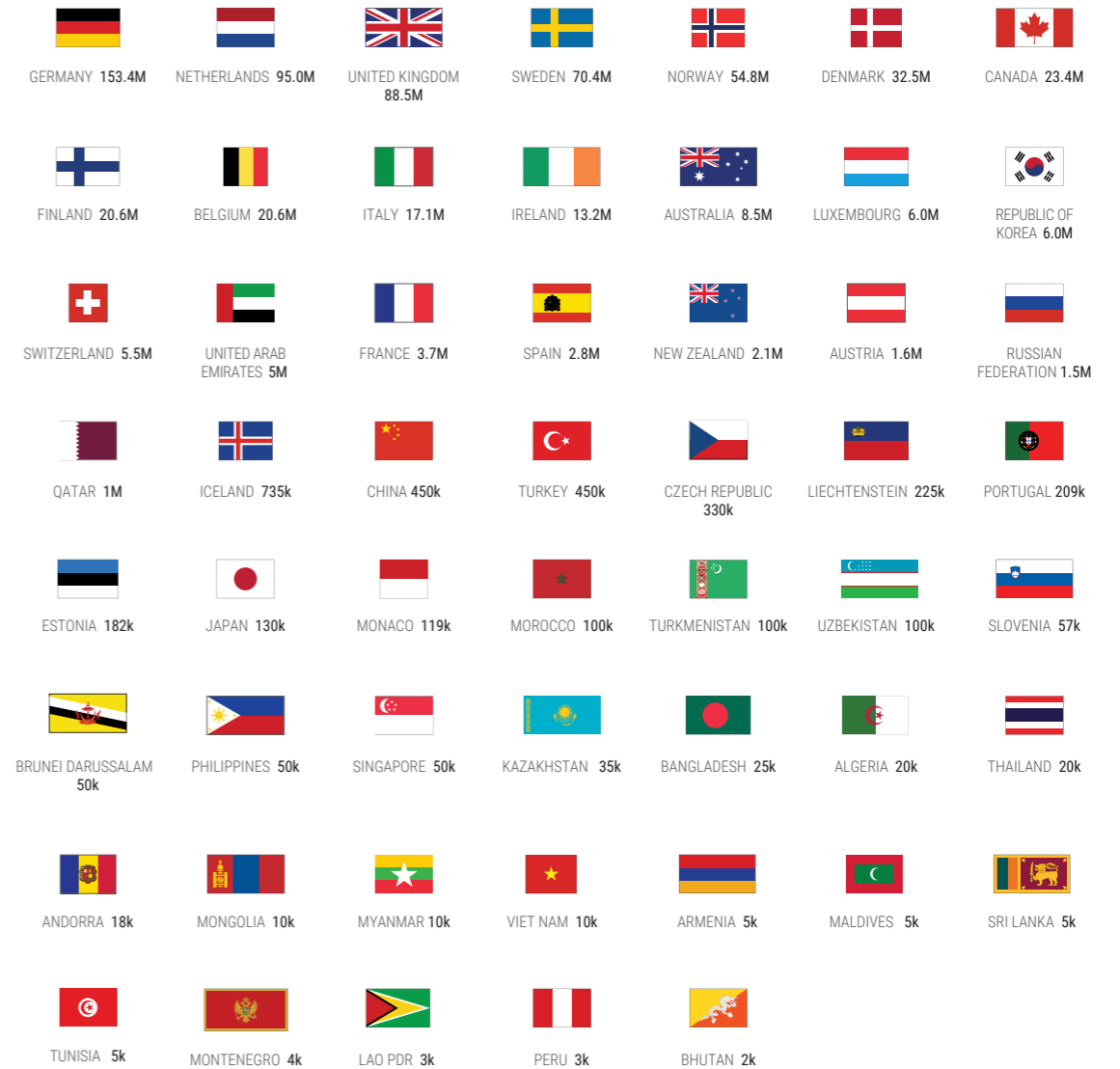
\$638.3M

TOTAL PAID CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2021

in US\$ million

54
MEMBER STATES

MEMBER STATES

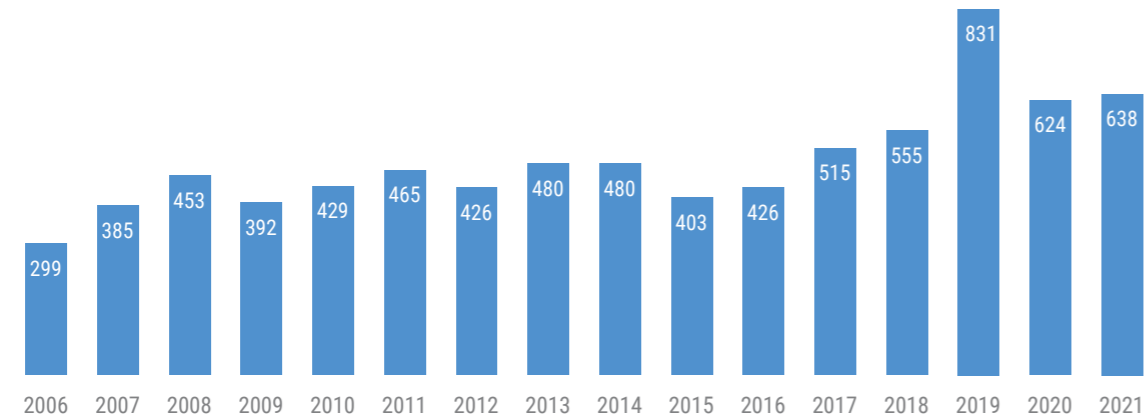


OTHER DONORS



PAID DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO CERF (2006-2021)

in US\$ million

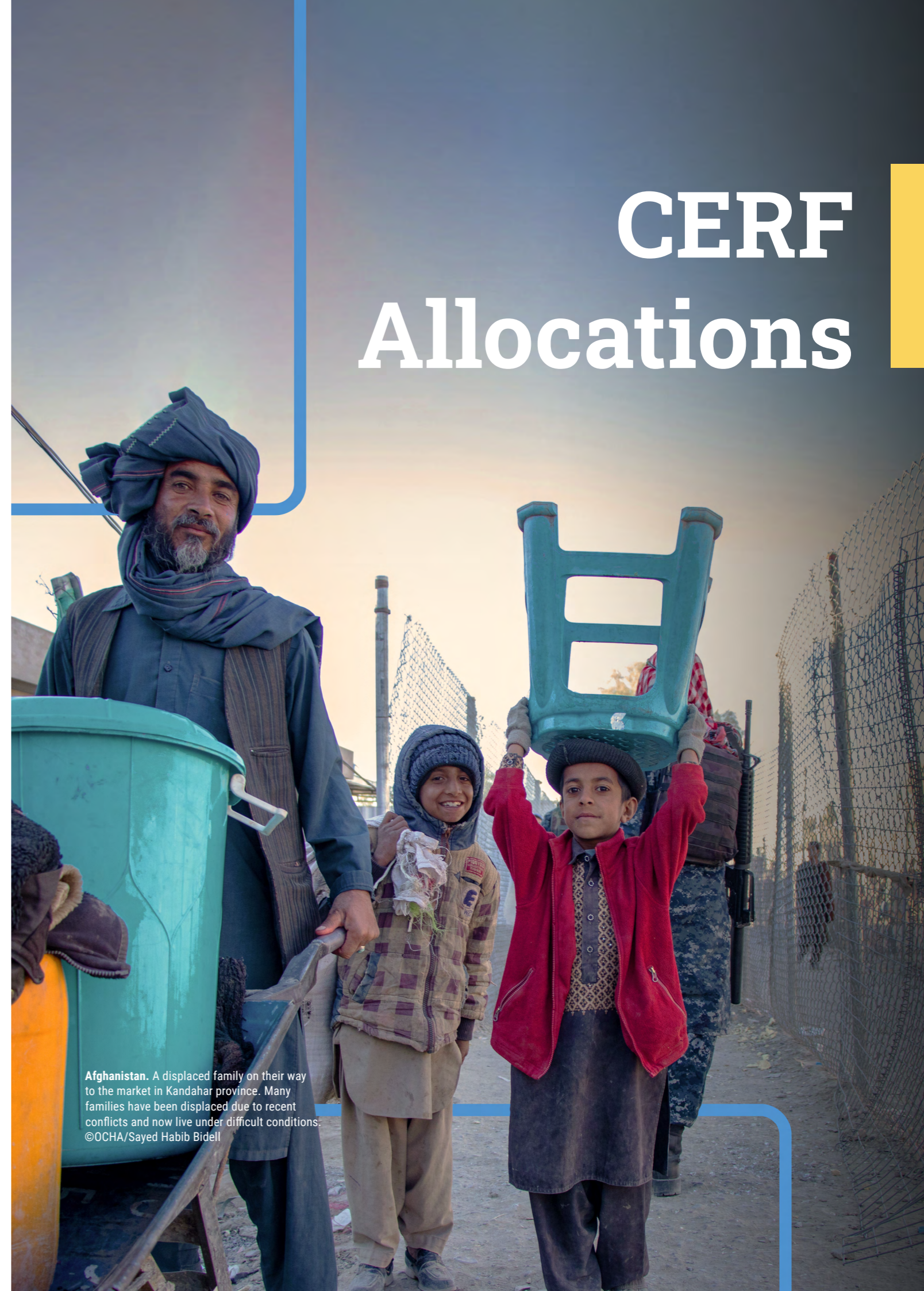


As the gap between global needs and available resources continues to expand, a fully resourced CERF at \$1 billion, as endorsed by the UN General Assembly, is more critical than ever. CERF continues to engage with Member States as well as private companies to diversify and enhance its donor base. Predictable and timely funding are key elements to expedite life-saving support to millions of people in need.

The impact of CERF in delivering help for people in need was showcased in 2021 to Member States, donors and other partners, using a range of digital products and platforms (see pages 84-85). Marking the Fund's 15th anniversary, public advocacy included new films showcasing CERF in action, an infographic capturing 15 years of CERF life-saving allocations, social media campaigns and other branded products, all of which are available on the [Trello platform](#).

The CERF online community continues to grow, with over 160,000 followers on [Twitter](#) (@UNCERF) and [Facebook](#) by the end of 2021, helping to promote content, including targeted outreach by the UN Secretary-General and the Emergency Relief Coordinator. [StoryHub](#), a new resource launched in 2021, allows donors and partners to search and share stories of people benefiting from the impact of CERF funding, while [CERF's website](#) serves as the Fund's digital portal, explaining its global mandate and providing real-time information and allocation resources. In 2021, CERF expanded successful collaboration with donors in creating tailored film content for audiences across Member States to demonstrate the value and impact of CERF funding.

CERF Allocations



Afghanistan. A displaced family on their way to the market in Kandahar province. Many families have been displaced due to recent conflicts and now live under difficult conditions. ©OCHA/Sayed Habib Bidell

Overview

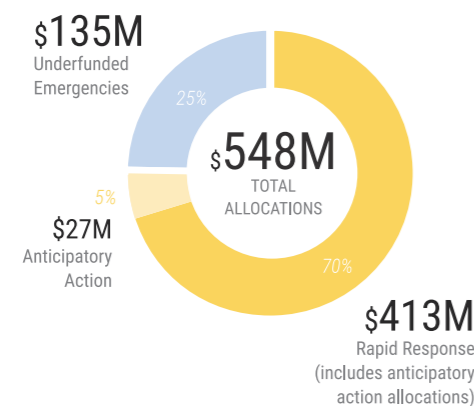
With humanitarian needs skyrocketing in 2021, CERF responded by allocating \$548 million across 40 countries – the second largest amount in a single year in the history of the Fund. Amid the increasing impact of climate-related disasters, CERF played a crucial role in advancing the global anticipatory action agenda, enabling partners to get ahead of predictable shocks. CERF also continued to make headway in helping the humanitarian community to assist the most vulnerable. Some \$10 million of earmarked UFE funding helped to boost transformative programming for people with disabilities in protracted crises; and a record 84 per cent of all CERF-funded projects in 2021 had either GBV protection as their main objective or featured it as a programming component.



When conflicts and natural disasters impact the most vulnerable populations around the globe – especially women and girls – CERF funds are critical in delivering international efforts to the humanitarian needs on the ground. Our support for the Central Emergency Response Fund helps provide quick and effective life-saving assistance to those affected.”

Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada

CERF FUNDING BY WINDOWS



In 2021, conflicts, climate-related and other natural disasters, disease outbreaks and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to record-high levels of humanitarian needs. At the beginning of the year, 235 million people needed humanitarian assistance – the highest number in decades – with UN-led humanitarian appeals initially requesting \$35 billion to assist 160 million people in 56 countries.⁷ Reflecting the increase in needs around the globe, by the end of the year, the adjusted requirements for UN-led humanitarian appeals were some \$38 billion to assist 174 million of the 250 million people in need in 59 countries.⁸

In the context of these unprecedented humanitarian needs, donors recognized the need for a strong and agile CERF to support the global humanitarian response. Thanks to generous donor support that resulted in the second highest level of contributions in the history of the Fund (see pages 26-28), CERF was able to rise to the challenge, enabling UN agencies and partners to deliver immediate assistance to people caught up in crises. During the year, CERF allocated \$548 million – the second largest amount in a single year – for life-saving assistance to almost 52 million people in 40 countries.

⁷ OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2021](#).

⁸ OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2021](#), December update.



Information on the mechanics and parameters of funding decisions can be found in the [CERF Handbook](#).

Jump-starting time-critical operations through the RR window

In 2021, the RR window continued to be a critical source of funding for jump-starting operations in anticipation of and response to emerging and deteriorating emergencies. Funding from the RR window amounted to \$413 million, 75 per cent of the total funds allocated by CERF in 2021. These funds enabled UN agencies and partners to provide immediate life-saving assistance to almost 43 million people in humanitarian emergencies across 37 countries and territories.

Throughout the year, this funding proved yet again to be instrumental in enabling time-critical responses to humanitarian crises. To respond to the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, for example, CERF allocated \$15 million in April, followed by some \$20 million in early October, enabling the HCT to ‘stay and deliver’ following the Taliban takeover. Another allocation of \$45 million in late October was critical in preventing the collapse of the country’s health-care system. (See page 43)

RR funding was also vital for kick-starting small-scale humanitarian responses. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), for example, CERF

allocated \$1.2 million within days of the eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano to prevent a cholera outbreak among displaced communities (see page 50); and in Haiti, a \$1 million RR grant enabled UN agencies and partners to respond to intercommunal conflict and gang violence, which had displaced some 110,000 people across the country. (See page 46)

In 2021, CERF played a crucial role in advancing the global anticipatory action agenda. During the year, three new anticipatory action pilots were endorsed by the ERC: in Nepal for severe flooding, in the Philippines for destructive typhoons and in Malawi for dry spells. In addition, some \$27 million was released through existing frameworks for drought in Ethiopia and Somalia. (See pages 54-58)

In addition to supporting the formal anticipatory action frameworks, CERF, through its RR window, continued to make early, forward-looking allocations that sought to respond earlier to looming crises based on analyses of risks and projections of need (see pages 54-58). This included a \$40 million allocation in anticipation of displacement in Yemen’s Marib and Al Jawf regions (see page 46) and a regional allocation of \$5 million to prevent the spread of Ebola from Guinea into neighbouring countries (see pages 52-53).



Afghanistan. Girls carry wheat bunches at a field in Nawju village, Kuz Kunar district of Nangarhar. With UFE funding, FAO and partners provided more than 250,000 vulnerable farming families with emergency agricultural inputs. ©FAO/Farshad Usyan

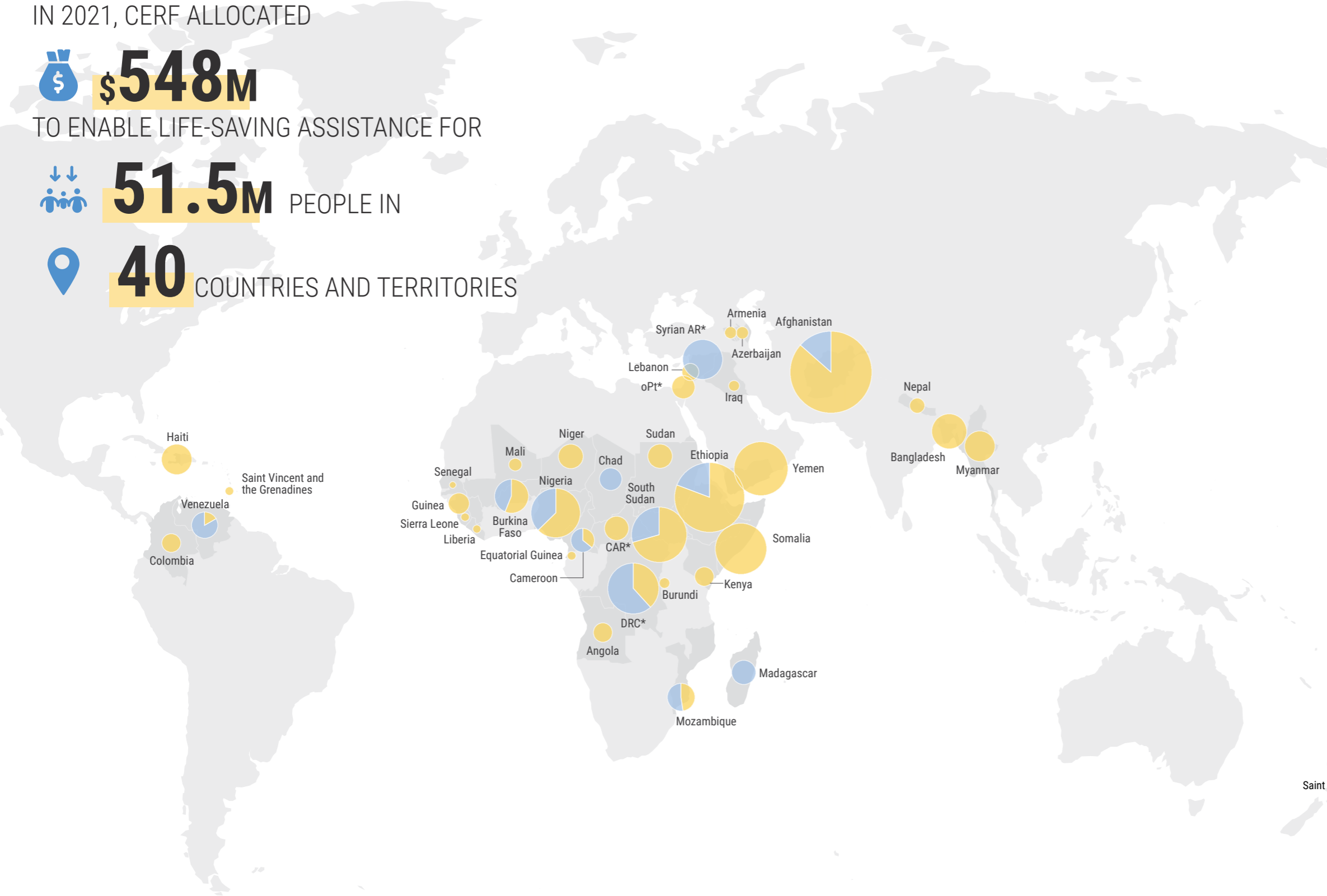
IN 2021, CERF ALLOCATED

\$548M

TO ENABLE LIFE-SAVING ASSISTANCE FOR

51.5M PEOPLE IN

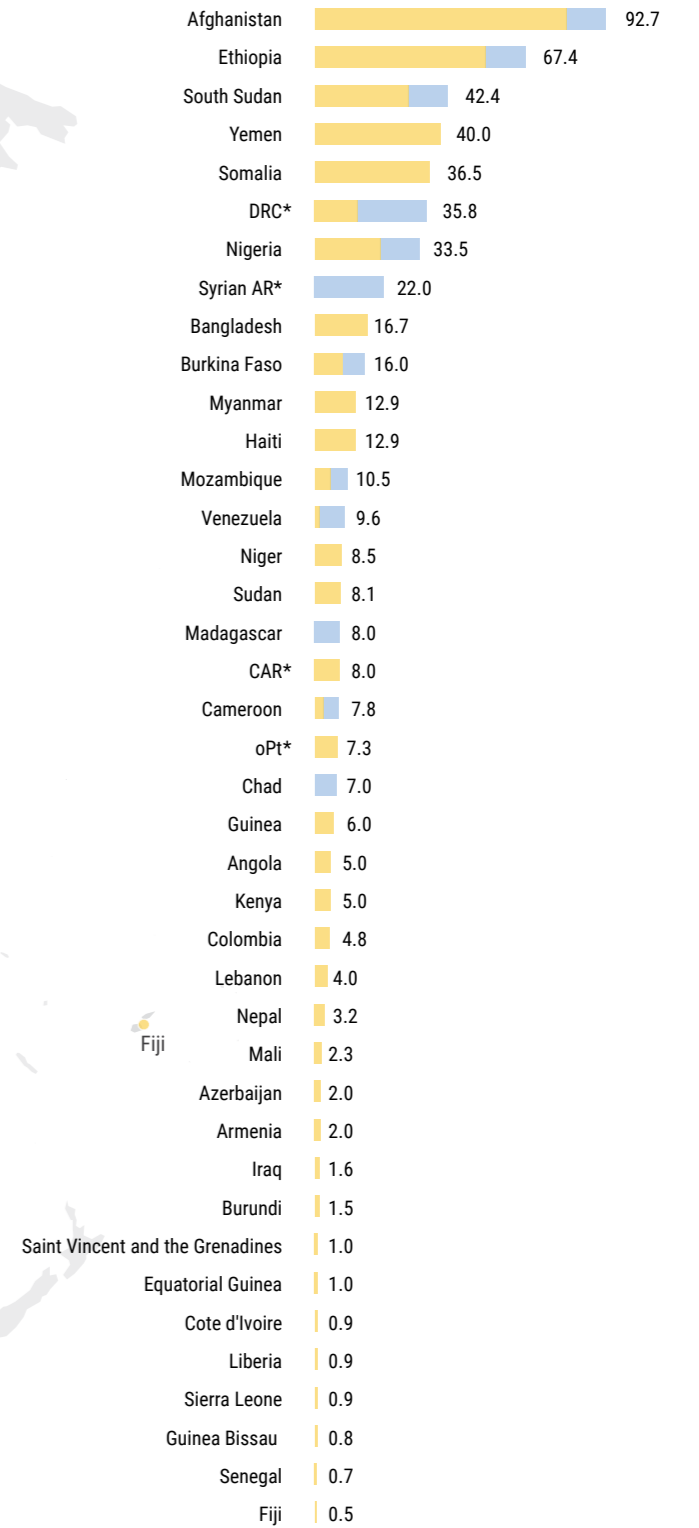
40 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES



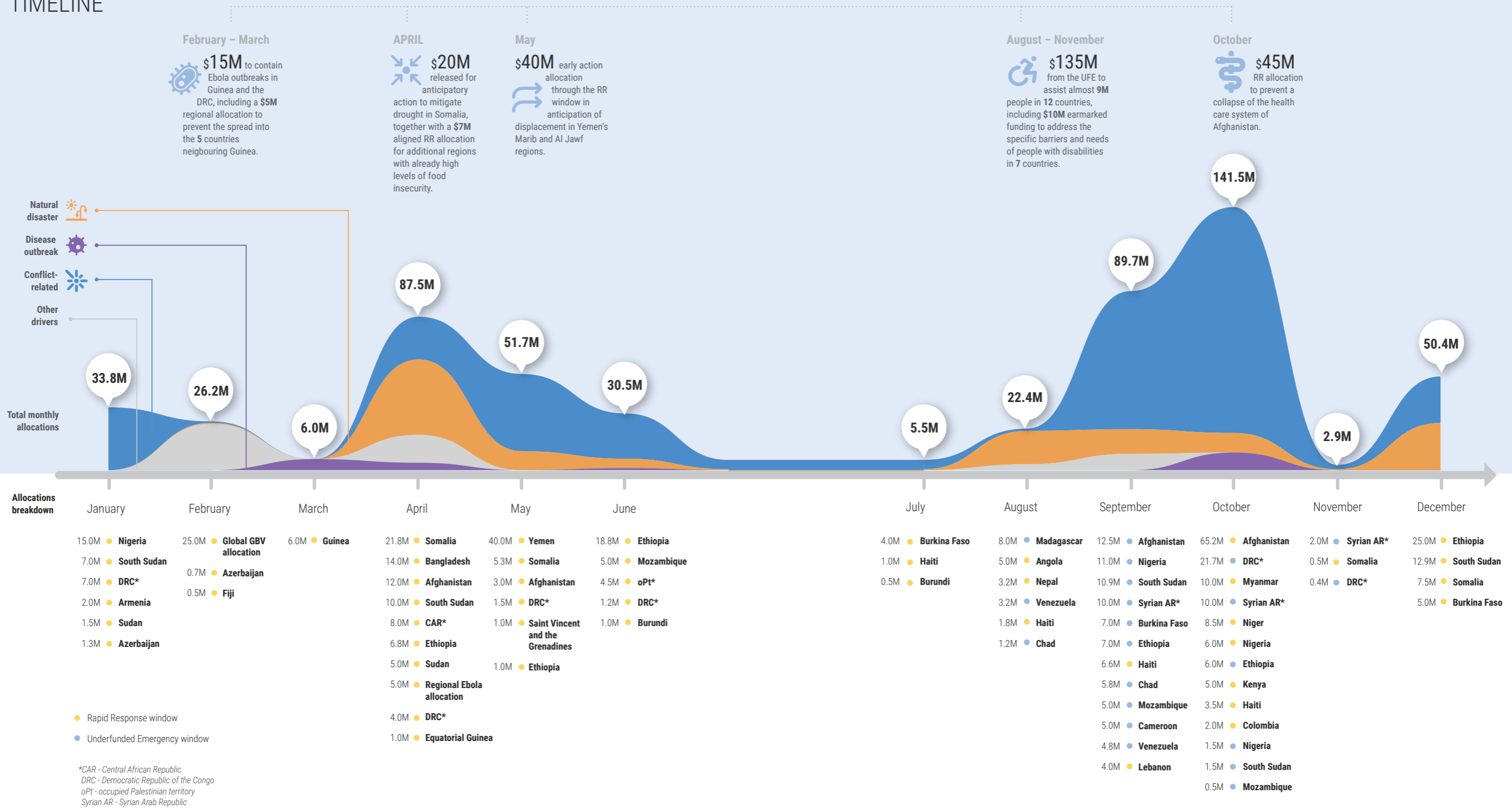
● Rapid Response window
● Underfunded Emergencies window

* CAR - Central African Republic
DRC - Democratic Republic of the Congo
oPt - occupied Palestinian territory
Syrian AR - Syrian Arab Republic
** Regional and global allocations are disaggregated by country

ALLOCATIONS BY COUNTRY ** in US\$ million



2021 CERF FUNDING TIMELINE





CERF has proved its effectiveness in immediately responding to humanitarian needs. In 2021, its timely and life-saving assistance was critical to those in urgent need in 12 underfunded emergencies, including the crises in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Republic of Korea has been a steadfast supporter of CERF since its establishment and looks forward to forging a stronger partnership.”

Ham Sang Wook, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea

Providing a lifeline for people in crises through the UFE window

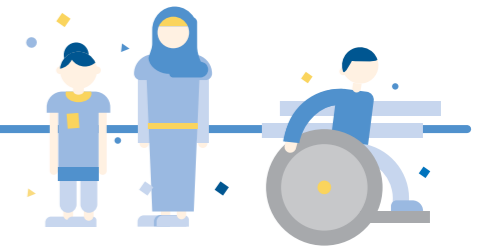
Funding from the UFE window continued to be a lifeline for people caught in crises that attract limited donor attention but where humanitarian needs remain significant. CERF provided a total of \$135 million to 12 underfunded and neglected crises, enabling UN agencies and partners to deliver life-saving assistance to almost 9 million people.

CERF funding through the UFE window was vital in sustaining and scaling up underfunded interventions. In Syria, for example, a UFE allocation of \$22 million was critical in sustaining and scaling up the response in the most underserved sectors, strengthening protection mechanisms and delivering essential health care and nutrition services. It enabled UN agencies and partners to deliver life-saving assistance to 1.5 million people affected by the ongoing conflict, severe water shortages, rising food insecurity and the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

UFE funding helped the humanitarian community to reach the most vulnerable and neglected people. The \$12.4 million allocation to South Sudan, for example, helped to promote access to education and provide protection services, including for the prevention of and response to GBV. It was a lifeline for over 180,000 children and women affected by the protracted conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic and widespread flooding – which threatened to jeopardize education gains made over recent years and increase the risk of GBV, exploitation and child marriage.

Funding from the UFE window helped to shed light on underfunded emergencies. For example, CERF made an UFE allocation of \$8 million to Madagascar, the only country in the world where catastrophic levels of food insecurity (IPC level 5) were driven by climate change rather than violent conflict. At least 1.31 million people – 47 per cent of the Grand Sud’s population – were expected to experience high levels of acute food insecurity between October and December 2021, including at least 28,000 people facing famine-like conditions.

Building on the positive outcomes of the Fund’s earmarking of UFE funding for GBV programming in 2020, CERF continued to target the most vulnerable (see pages 80-83). In 2021, an envelope of \$10 million to support transformative interventions to address the specific barriers and needs of people with disabilities was allocated to seven countries: Afghanistan, DRC, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Sudan, Syria and Venezuela. These countries were selected in consultations with global experts on disability within the humanitarian community, based on an analysis of needs, operational capacity and opportunities for innovation. The initiative sought to promote the ‘must do’ actions highlighted in the [IASC’s Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#), including removing barriers to accessing services, promoting meaningful participation and developing the knowledge of humanitarian actors on the rights and capacities of persons with disabilities.



Strengthening consideration of gender and people with disabilities in CERF allocations



Real-time information on CERF allocations is available on the [CERF Data Hub](#) and the [OCHA Pooled Funds Data Hub](#).

In 2021, OCHA established a Pooled Fund Gender Contact Group and a Pooled Fund Disability Inclusion Contact Group. Composed of independent experts, the time-bound groups provided advice on ways to improve the impact of the OCHA-managed Pooled Funds in terms of GBV, gender issues and disability-related concerns. The groups met in parallel and collectively over the course of 2021 to discuss a range of issues such as participation and representation, decision-making, technical support, data quality and allocation approaches.

The two expert groups provided valuable recommendations on ways to ensure adequate consideration of gender and disability in pooled fund processes and allocations, including through representation of women’s rights/women-led organizations and organ-

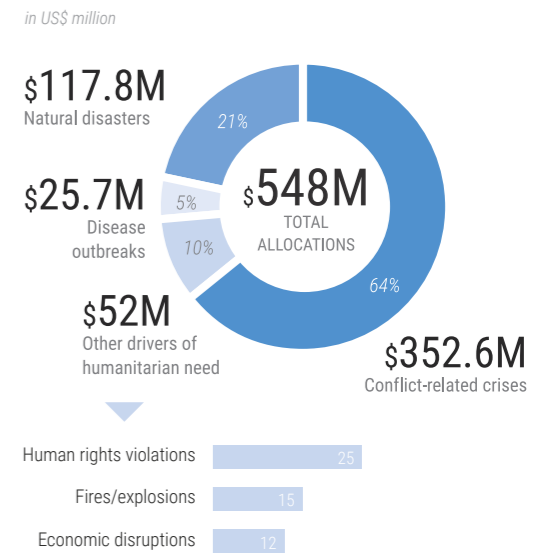
izations of people with disability in processes relating to CERF and CBPF funding, as well as opportunities for incorporating gender and disability expertise throughout the programme cycle. The groups also highlighted the need to further sensitize decision makers on GBV/gender- and disability-related issues and to ensure that gender-related data is appropriately incorporated into all CERF and CBPF guidance and templates. The contact groups encouraged CERF and CBPFs to continue pursuing both mainstreaming approaches and targeted gender/GBV and disability-inclusion allocations when relevant. Many of the groups’ recommendations build on existing workstreams, whereas others will inform new initiatives. While the work of the two groups has concluded, the Pooled Fund Management Branch will engage with its members on an ad hoc basis to draw on their expertise as issues arise.

Responding to the main drivers of humanitarian need

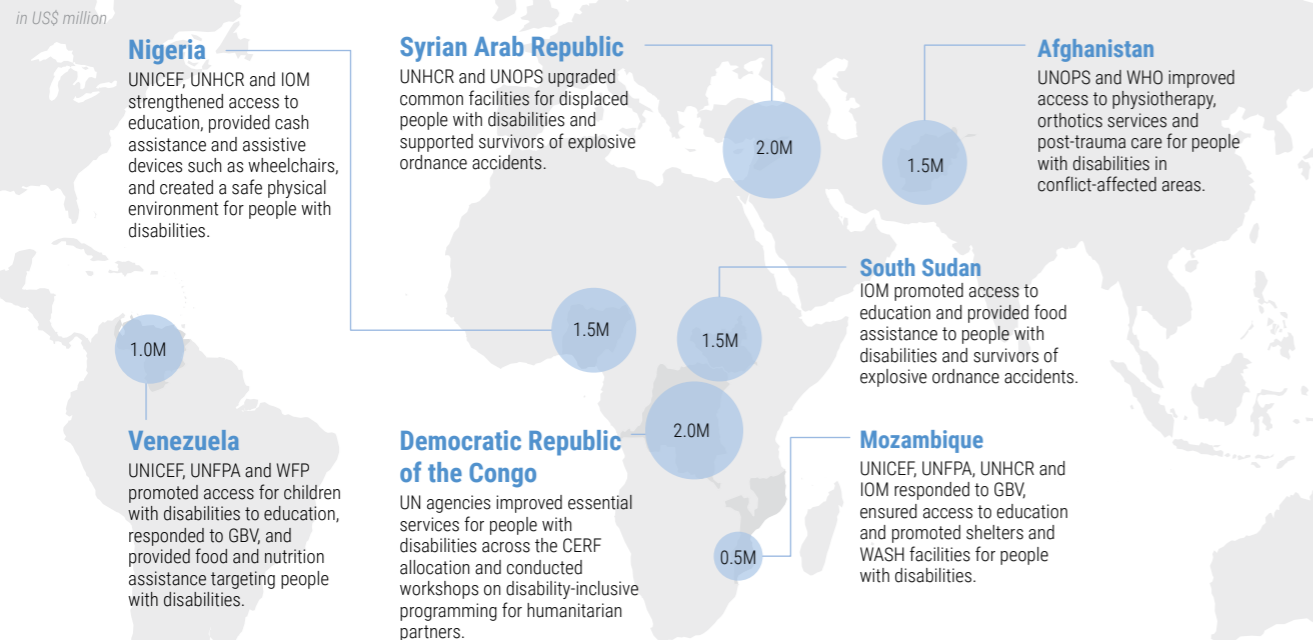
CERF continued to respond to humanitarian needs created by a variety of shocks, as well as by multiple, compounding humanitarian impacts. CERF categorizes each allocation according to the type of emergency most directly associated with the humanitarian needs addressed through CERF grants. While not a perfect categorization, it provides a useful global perspective on the main drivers of CERF allocations.

In 2021, violent conflict remained a major driver of humanitarian needs worldwide and accounted for the largest share of CERF allocations. A total of \$352.9 million (64 per cent) of CERF funding went towards assisting 43.8 million people affected by conflicts across 19 countries. Almost one third of this funding – some \$103 million – went to conflict-induced displacement across 10 countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, DRC, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria and Sudan (see pages 42-46).

CERF FUNDING BY MAIN DRIVER OF HUMANITARIAN NEED



EARMARKED UFE FUNDING TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



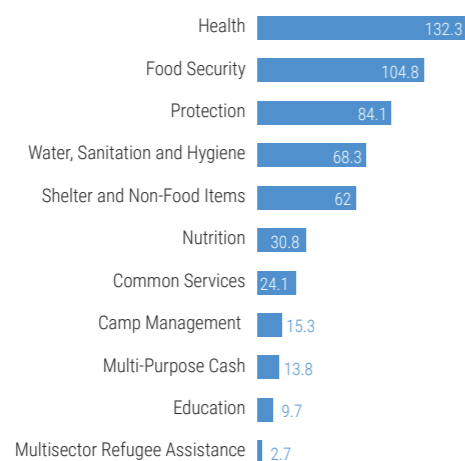
In 2021, more than 74 million people worldwide required immediate humanitarian assistance as a result of natural disasters.⁹ CERF responded by allocating some \$118 million to enable assistance to over 8 million people critically affected by climate-related and other natural disasters in 13 countries. This represents 21 per cent of CERF funding in 2021 – a slight increase from 20 per cent in 2020 (see pages 47-49). Most of this (\$105 million or 19 per cent of all CERF funding) was allocated to climate-related disasters – droughts, floods and storms – ensuring critical humanitarian assistance to almost 8 million vulnerable people in 11 countries. CERF provided \$54 million for the drought in the Horn of Africa alone, supporting anticipatory action, early action and rapid response (see pages 54-58).

While disease outbreaks also continued to be among the key drivers of humanitarian needs in 2021, CERF funding for these types of crises decreased in absolute and relative terms compared to 2020, which had been an exceptional year because of CERF's unparalleled response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, during the year, CERF provided \$25.7 million to 10 countries across Africa to contain Ebola and cholera outbreaks. CERF funding was also used to tackle the secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which continued to exacerbate the political and socioeconomic conditions that increase humanitarian need and fuel conflicts.

⁹ Estimation based on data provided by the [International Disaster Database](#).

CERF FUNDING BY SECTOR

in US\$ million



In addition to conflicts, disease outbreaks and natural disasters, CERF provided \$52 million in response to humanitarian needs caused by other drivers. The largest amount, some \$25 million, was allocated to prevent and respond to GBV in humanitarian settings across 11 countries, which saw an increase during the COVID-19 pandemic (see pages 80-83). CERF also provided two allocations in response to the humanitarian impact of the economic and financial meltdown in Lebanon, including an allocation of \$4 million that helped avert the collapse of essential services at the height of the fuel crisis in August. After a devastating fire tore through the world's largest refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, a CERF-funded intervention allowed agencies and partners to provide urgent shelter and other life-saving assistance to 59,000 Rohingya refugees.

Enabling needs-based responses

CERF allocations are based on strategic priorities for funding that are informed by solid needs assessments and determined by the RC/HC in consultation with the county teams. A joint application process sets the collective priorities of humanitarian partners and ensures a well-informed and prioritized CERF response across humanitarian sectors. (See pages 14-19)

Following the exceptional response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, CERF funding to the health sector remained at a very high level, making it the most funded sector in 2021. More than \$132 million – almost a quarter of annual CERF funding – went to the health sector, including \$16 million for sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. This is an increase of 7 per cent compared to 2020. Among other things, this enabled UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO to provide skilled personnel for almost 270,000 assisted births in Afghanistan, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, DRC, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen.¹⁰ Almost 35 per cent of CERF funding to the health sector, some \$45 million, was allocated to Afghanistan to help prevent a collapse of the health care system at a time when critical basic services were heavily impacted by economic sanctions and UN agencies were unable to access urgent funding. The allocation also had a catalytic effect, helping to leverage additional funding to ensure continuity of CERF-supported health systems (see page 43).

¹⁰ Based on standard indicators (see page 65).



Throughout the challenges of 2021, CERF continued to be a beacon of global solidarity. CERF's support for education in emergencies, for protection, to help address gender-based violence and to people with disabilities helps improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in the world, including women and girls. I am delighted that as part of our new multi-annual partnership Ireland will increase its funding to CERF in 2022.”

Colm Brophy T.D., Minister for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora, Ireland

Responding to deteriorating levels of global food security, CERF funding to the food security sector remained high, with life-saving food assistance and emergency agriculture programmes receiving some \$105 million or 19 per cent of CERF funding in 2021. CERF funding was vital for food and agriculture responses in 25 countries. For instance, CERF funding enabled WFP to provide at least 16,000 metric tons of food to the most vulnerable in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mozambique and South Sudan. It also helped FAO distribute some 5,000 animals in Chad and Sudan.¹¹ Two thirds of the overall funding to the food security sector was allocated in response to the crises in Afghanistan, Nigeria, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia – all of which are among CERF's top 10 recipients – illustrating the key role of climate-related disasters such as droughts and floods (see pages 47-49) and conflicts (see pages 42-46) in driving food insecurity.

With the number of people forcibly displaced worldwide higher than ever,¹² CERF funding for the camp coordination and management sector increased threefold to \$15.3 million or 3 per cent of overall CERF funding – up from \$4.6 million or 0.5 per cent in 2020. CERF-funded interventions in this sector enabled IOM and UNHCR to improve living conditions and ensure assistance and protection for displaced people in displacement sites across six countries: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Haiti, Mozambique and South Sudan.

¹¹ Based on standard indicators (see page 65).

¹² OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2022](#).

Supporting the protection of the most vulnerable

The protection of all persons affected and at risk informs humanitarian decision-making and is an integral part of CERF-funded responses. CERF funding to the protection sector reached a record high of \$84.1 million, equivalent to 15 per cent of all funding in 2021, up from 10 per cent in 2020. CERF funded protection interventions in 31 countries, highlighting the centrality of protection in CERF allocations. Ethiopia, South Sudan and Yemen received a third of the total funding allocated for protection.

Protection from and response to GBV remained central to CERF-funded humanitarian response. A record 84 per cent of all projects in 2021 had either GBV protection as their main objective or featured it as a programming component.¹³ This reflects the increasing centrality of protection from and response to GBV in CERF-funded interventions in 2021. While the percentage of projects with GBV as the main objective decreased to 6 per cent in 2021, a much larger share of projects, 78 per cent, featured protection from GBV as a programming component. This is the highest percentage since the GBV assessment was introduced and represents a significant increase from figures in 2020.

Some \$36 million of CERF funding was allocated towards GBV activities in 2021, including, for example, to psychosocial support or SRH services for survivors of GBV.¹⁴ The allocations had a vital impact for people at risk of and affected by GBV in humanitarian emergencies. Together, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM provided over 132,000 dignity kits to affected women and girls across 14 countries. UNFPA alone delivered some 28,000 kits to displaced women and girls in Yemen's Marib and Al Jawf regions (see page 46).¹⁵ An additional global allocation of \$25 million to UN Women (\$8 million) and UNFPA (\$17 million) to prevent and respond to GBV across 11 countries is currently being implemented. Of this allocation, some \$10 million, or 40 per cent, is passed on by recipient agencies to local women-led or women's rights organizations for implementing GBV programmes (see pages 80-83).

¹³ Based on mandatory GBV self-assessment in CERF's project proposal.

¹⁴ The estimation is based on an analysis of project data and budgets, and is most likely an underestimation as it only captures GBV interventions that are clearly costed through project budgets.

¹⁵ Based on standard indicators (see page 65).

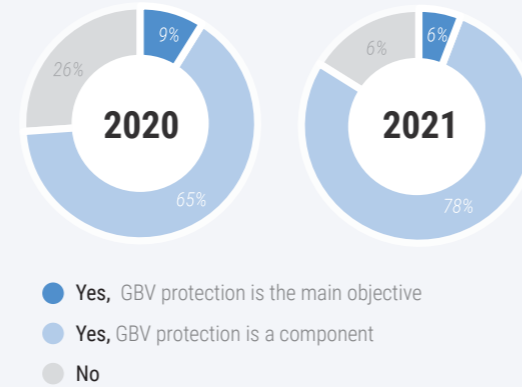


Enhancing gender equality

CERF funding promotes gender equality by effectively identifying and responding to the needs and priorities of women, girls, boys and men of various ages. Thus, all CERF-funded projects are informed by a gender analysis, with data disaggregated by sex and age, and a mandatory Gender with Age Marker (GAM). In 2021, CERF allocated \$372 million or 70 per cent of total CERF funding to projects that intended to contribute to gender equality (GAM 3 and 4 scores) – a significant increase from 63 per cent in 2020, the first year the GAM was fully applied to all CERF-funded projects.¹⁶

¹⁶ Common services such as humanitarian air services or logistics have been excluded from the analysis because they do not engage with affected people.

GBV ASSESSMENT IN CERF-FUNDED PROJECTS



Cash and voucher assistance in CERF-funded projects



\$43.4M
transferred
to vulnerable
communities



24
countries supported



1.6M
people assisted



29%
of all CERF-funded
projects included
CVA

In 2021, CERF supported the transfer of \$43.4 million in cash and voucher assistance (CVA) to 1.6 million people in 24 countries. This refers to the actual amount of cash and vouchers that beneficiaries received and does not include administrative/operational costs such as those involved in identifying the people most in need, monitoring and the transfer of fees. In 2021, CVA transfers accounted for 9 per cent of total CERF funding – in line with CVA levels in 2019 but below the levels of 2020 when exceptional cash-focused allocations to address severe food insecurity increased CVA levels to 15 per cent.

CERF encourages the use of CVA and particularly multi-purpose cash as the default response modality for contexts where it is considered the most effective approach to meet the needs of vulnerable people. For all projects that do not include CVA as a response modality, CERF requires agencies to provide specific justifications. Based on available data, CERF estimates that about two thirds of CVA was provided as multi-purpose cash and unconditional cash.

Some agencies increased their use of CERF-funded CVA. The percentage of CERF-funded projects with a CVA component remained steady, at 29 per cent in 2021, almost on par with the record level of 30 per cent in 2020. As in previous years, WFP and UNHCR were the largest and second largest implementers of CVA projects respectively. IOM's CERF-funded CVA interventions more than doubled in 2021, reaching \$4.9 million compared to \$2.3 million in 2020.



Bridging critical cash-flow gaps with CERF loans

In 2021, CERF's loan facility helped cover critical cash-flow gaps that hampered humanitarian operations. In August, CERF provided a short-term loan of \$15 million to UNRWA that enabled the agency to continue the delivery of essential services, including the national roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine campaign and a return to school in September for more than 540,000 girls and boys. In December, CERF provided an additional short-term loan of \$28 million to UNRWA to help manage a severe cash-flow crisis. The loan allowed the agency to continue providing essential relief assistance to 390,000 Palestine refugees through the agency's social safety net programme and to ensure the continued availability of basic health-care services, including the procurement of essential medicines, for almost 2 million Palestine refugees.

Yemen. Women learn tailoring skills as part of a vocational training programme at a UNFPA-supported safe space. ©UNFPA



YEMEN: OFFERING A SAFE SPACE FOR WOMEN

Sixteen-year-old Ibtisam* was married when she was 14. "Since I was young, I've dreamt of becoming a doctor of obstetrics and gynecology because of the increasing number of deaths due to early marriage. When war erupted, and the conflict escalated, many families suffered, losing their jobs and becoming displaced. I moved with my family from another district near relatives in search of safety."

As a result of their displacement, Ibtisam's parents married her to a cousin ten years older than her. Ibtisam was forced to leave school and soon became pregnant. "When circumstances became stable enough, my parents moved back to our old house, leaving me alone with my husband, who started to mistreat me and attempted to end the pregnancy."

Ibtisam reached out to a UNFPA-supported safe space, where she received psychological support and health care, and was referred to a safe shelter. Ibtisam explains:

"I did not want to go. Instead, the safe space contacted my parents and provided me with a case manager to accompany me on my move home."

UNFPA helped Ibtisam – and other girls in her situation – to prepare for the birth of her first child. Ibtisam also took part in a vocational training programme where she learned tailoring. She then went on to become a trainer, teaching other women the new skills she had acquired.

At a UNFPA-supported hospital, Ibtisam gave birth to a baby via emergency Caesarean and, with help from a lawyer provided by UNFPA, she was granted a divorce and monthly child support.

With the support of CERF and other donors, UNFPA supports safe spaces, shelters and mental health centres across Yemen.

*Name changed for privacy and protection.

Conflict-related crises



CERF's response to conflict-related crises

\$352.6M allocated

\$223.6M Rapid Response

\$119M Underfunded Emergencies

19 countries

43.8M people assisted



In 2021, CERF once again proved its relevance. When conflict broke out in Ethiopia and the Taliban took power in Afghanistan, CERF rapidly allocated funds for urgent humanitarian action to meet the dire needs of civilians. Norway is a staunch supporter of CERF and is proud to be one of its largest donors.”

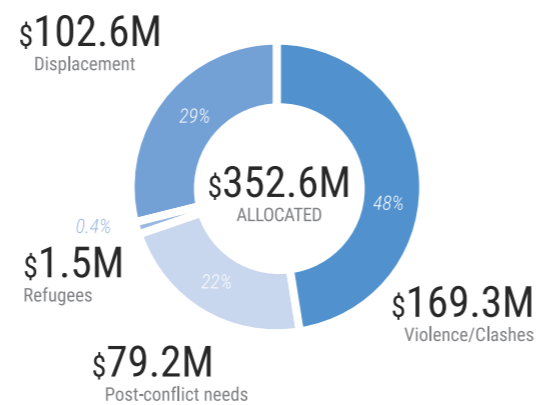
Anniken Huitfeldt, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Norway

In 2021, conflict continued to be a major driver of humanitarian needs. During the year, escalating conflicts in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Myanmar and elsewhere forced millions of people to flee their homes. Intercommunal and localized fighting, for example in South Sudan and Sudan's Darfur region, also continued to cause widespread harm, as did gang violence in Haiti. Despite calls for global ceasefires during the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts continued to severely impact civilian populations and exacerbate the needs of the most vulnerable.

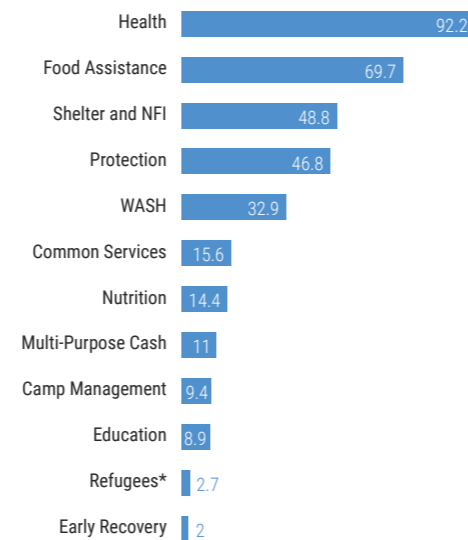
CERF responded by allocating some \$353 million – over two thirds of its annual funding – to assist 43.8 million conflict-affected people in 19 countries. Most of this (\$145 million or 40 per cent) was allocated in response to active violent conflicts, ensuring life-saving assistance to almost 14 million people in six countries. In addition, CERF provided \$103 million for post-conflict needs in five countries and territories. To address the humanitarian consequences of growing population displacement and mitigate new displacement, CERF allocated \$103 million to enable life-saving assistance to 3.5 million people in 10 countries. CERF allocated an additional \$1.5 million to provide multisectoral assistance to refugees from CAR in DRC.

FUNDING TO CONFLICT-RELATED CRISES

By type



By sector
In US\$ million



*Multisector Refugee Assistance

Afghanistan. A displaced child in Kandahar province. Many families have been displaced due to recent conflicts and now live under difficult conditions. ©OCHA/Sayed Habib Bidell



Afghanistan: Responding to conflict-driven needs

2021 saw a massive increase in human suffering in Afghanistan, with an estimated 18.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. In the first six months of 2021, the UN registered a 47 per cent increase in civilian casualties across the country¹⁷ compared to the same period in 2020.¹⁸ With \$93 million through four allocations, Afghanistan was the largest recipient of CERF funds in 2021.

In April, CERF supported the country team's contingency plan for early action with \$15 million from the RR window to assist some 800,000 of the most vulnerable people. With CERF funding, partners kick-started a multisectoral response to the humanitarian consequences of a severe drought, intensifying conflict, the continued impact of COVID-19 and imminent flooding – all of which were expected to intensify over the spring.

Following the takeover of the country by the Taliban in August, CERF allocated another \$33 million in support of the country team's commitment to 'stay and deliver' to address the further deterioration of the humanitarian and protection situation

caused by the political, social and economic shocks that reverberated across the country. With \$13 million through the UFE window in late August, and \$20 million through the RR window at the beginning of September, CERF enabled UN agencies and partners to provide winterization support, shelter, protection and food assistance to some 1.3 million people.

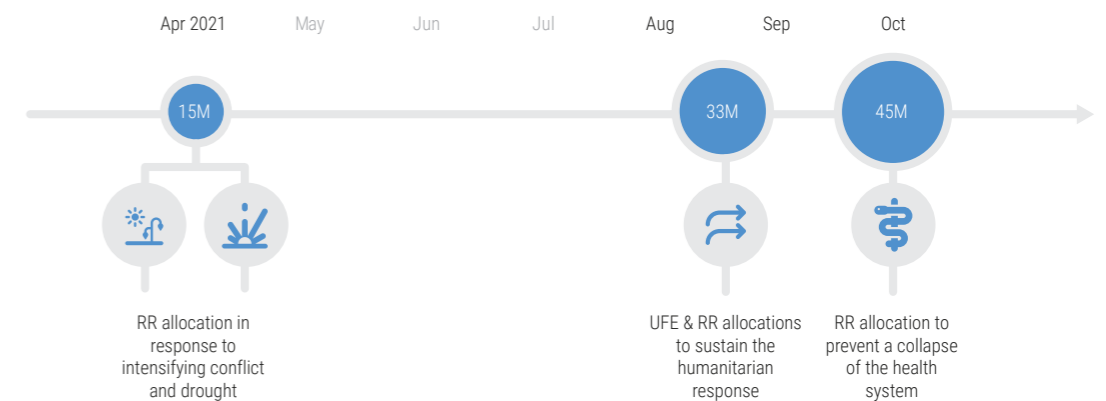
In October, at a time when critical basic services were heavily impacted by economic sanctions and agencies were unable to access urgent funding, CERF stepped in with an allocation of \$45 million to prevent a collapse of Afghanistan's health system. The allocation from the RR window was the largest of the year and enabled WHO and UNICEF – working through national and international NGOs – to keep health-care facilities operating until the end of the year. In addition to ensuring a life-saving response to critical needs, this CERF allocation had an important catalytic effect, helping to leverage funding from other sources. In December 2021, to ensure continuity of CERF-supported health systems, the World Bank announced \$100 million of follow-on funding to UNICEF to provide essential health services in partnership with WHO.

¹⁷ OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2021](#).

¹⁸ UNAMA, [Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict](#), Midyear Update: 1 January to June 2021.

TIMELINE FOR 2021 AFGHANISTAN ALLOCATIONS

in US\$ million



Ethiopia. Hundreds of people arrive daily at Afdera town after fleeing the conflict in the Ethiopia's Amhara, Afar and Tigray regions. With CERF funding IOM provides relocation and resettlement support to IDPs. ©IOM/Hiyas Bagabaldo



Ethiopia: Averting conflict-induced hunger

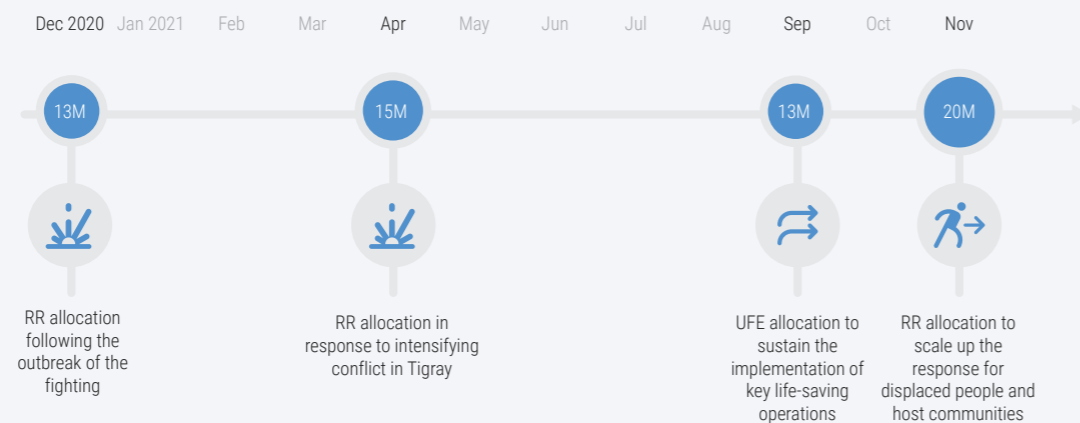
The conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region continued to intensify in 2021, spilling over to the Amhara and Afar regions. At the end of 2021, an estimated 5.2 million people needed humanitarian assistance in northern Ethiopia, up from 2.3 million in 2020.¹⁹ Of these, some 400,000 people faced famine-like conditions. CERF released over \$60 million through four allocations to address the humanitarian consequences of the conflict.

In December 2020, CERF provided a rapid and time-critical allocation of \$13 million through its RR window following the outbreak of fighting. This allocation – partly disbursed in 2021 – was instrumental in assisting newly displaced people. As the conflict in Tigray intensified in the first quarter of 2021, CERF allocated \$15 million to assist the most affected communities. The funding provided an integrated package of life-saving shelter and basic household items, with \$2.5 million dedicated to GBV programming. This allocation was pivotal in scaling up the UN response, and demonstrated to the Government of Ethiopia the continued commitment of the UN and its donors to support vulnerable populations affected by the conflict.

This allocation was followed by two more allocations later in the year totaling \$33 million. In September, some \$13 million was allocated from the UFE window to sustain the implementation of key life-saving operations in northern Ethiopia, including Tigray, Amhara and Afar regions. It played an essential role in averting the looming famine and in preventing some 3 million people from sliding into even more drastic levels of vulnerability. In November, \$20 million was allocated from the RR window to scale up the response and address the most immediate needs of 1.1 million recently displaced people and host communities. It helped to provide a multisectoral response in support of the safe and dignified return or relocation of IDPs. With an estimated 2.7 million children affected by the crisis and 80 per cent of essential medication no longer available at the time of the allocation, CERF-funded assistance also supported emergency education and access to essential health care.

¹⁹ OCHA, [Northern Ethiopia Humanitarian Response Plan Snapshot \(December 2020\)](#).

TIMELINE FOR 2021 ALLOCATIONS TO CONFLICT IN ETHIOPIA
in US\$ million



Ethiopia. Semira*, a former teacher displaced by the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region. ©IOM/Kaye Viray



ETHIOPIA: A SAFE REFUGE AFTER FLEEING VIOLENCE

"I was in the middle of teaching my class when we heard gunshots and explosions. I had to calm myself down and make sure all my students were safe," recalls Semira*, a former teacher who fled the conflict in Tigray.

A single mother to four children, 'Teacher Semira' as she is known, shares her struggles after fleeing her home: "We walked for five days to reach Shire, in search of safety. When we arrived, the host community was welcoming and provided us with some *injera* (traditional flatbread) and water, among other things. However, we had to sleep under trees for the first few days as we had no shelter – I feared for our safety all the time."

With CERF funding, IOM, alongside other partners, provided Semira's family and others like hers with shelter, non-food items and other support crucial for their survival. Despite the drastic changes to her family's sit-

uation, she refuses to dwell on their difficulties. "I am grateful for this shelter, for everything. Life has not been easy since we left, but I've learned not to take anything for granted."

Public buildings, including schools, across the Tigray region have served as emergency housing for people as they fled the conflict. At the height of the conflict access to the region was limited, but by mid-April IOM's Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) team were able to initiate camp management activities.

Thanks to these efforts, families like Semira's no longer need to sleep out in the open. While they wait until it is safe to return home, they can rest more peacefully with, at the very least, a makeshift roof over their heads.

*Name changed for privacy and protection.

Yemen. A UNICEF staff visits a mobile clinic in Al Jufaina IDP camp that provides people with access to a doctor. Families are coming to have their children screened for malnutrition or vaccinated.
©UNICEF/Gabreez



Yemen: Acting early to support displaced people

In February 2021, violent clashes broke out in several districts of Marib and Al Jawf governorates of Yemen, forcing people to flee their homes and seek shelter in camps and host communities. To ensure an immediate response to the needs of the displaced and to support the expansion of common services, CERF provided some \$40 million through an RR allocation.

By acting early, CERF helped ensure that sufficient funding was swiftly made available to respond to a severe escalation in the conflict and to maintain operational readiness in preparation for the projected displacement of an additional 123,000 people in

Marib and Al Jawf over the following months (see pages 54-58). CERF funding enabled UN agencies and partners to provide some 770,000 displaced people with food, water, shelter, health care and protection, including child protection and protection from GBV. It also helped partners to keep pace with the speed and scale of forced movements in the two districts, and swiftly respond to new displacements as they happened. At the same time, CERF funding enabled the immediate scale-up of the response capacity in Marib and Al Jawf through the provision of air transport and logistics, which had been identified as key limitations to an effective response.



Haiti: Responding to intercommunal conflict and gang violence

CERF also responded to more localized, intercommunal conflict. In Haiti, a sharp escalation in gang violence, especially in the metropolitan areas of Port-au-Prince, displaced 17,000 residents in June alone, and affected a total of 1.5 million people. In response, CERF allocated \$1 million from the RR window to UN agencies and partners to support some 110,000 people displaced by intercommunal violence.

CERF funding was critical in enabling the country team to assist affected populations, including survivors of rape and other forms of GBV, and to relocate displaced people, many with disabilities, to locations with more dignified living conditions. The country team worked closely with local organizations to reach people in gang-controlled areas. Ensuring complementarity with other funding sources, the CERF allocation protected gains made with funding from the UN's Peacebuilding Fund to support durable solutions to internal displacement.

Climate-related and other natural disasters



CERF's response to climate-related and natural disasters

\$117.8M allocated

\$109.8M Rapid Response

\$8M Underfunded Emergencies

13 countries

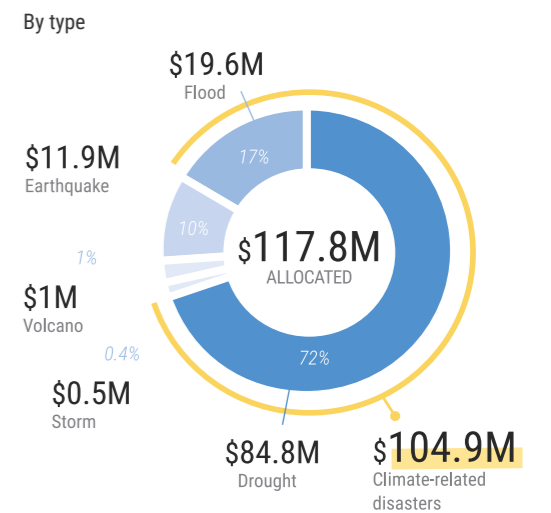
4.5M people assisted

In 2021, more than 74 million people worldwide caught in natural disasters required immediate assistance.²⁰ Alarming evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows that climate change is already contributing to humanitarian crises in vulnerable contexts and that weather and climate extremes are increasingly driving displacement across the world.²¹ In anticipation of and response to these needs, CERF allocated \$117.8 million to enable the provision of life-saving assistance to over 4.5 million people critically affected by climate-related and other natural disasters in 13 countries. This represents 21 per cent of CERF funding in 2021.

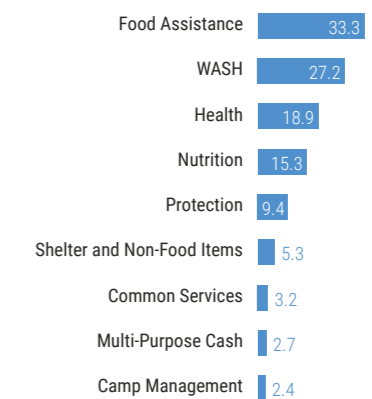
Most of this (\$105 million or 19 per cent of all CERF funding) was allocated to climate-related disasters – droughts, floods and storms – ensuring critical humanitarian assistance to 4.1 million vulnerable people in 11 countries. Acting prior to a predictable shock can be much more effective than responding only when the full humanitarian impact of the shock has materialized. Thus, in 2021, CERF provided \$54 million for anticipatory action, early action and rapid response for the drought in the Horn of Africa, half of which was automatically allocated when the anticipatory action frameworks in Somalia and Ethiopia were triggered (see pages 54-58). In addition, CERF provided \$32 million for drought responses across

²⁰ Estimation based on data provided by the International Disaster Database.
²¹ IPCC, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*.

FUNDING TO CLIMATE-RELATED AND NATURAL DISASTERS

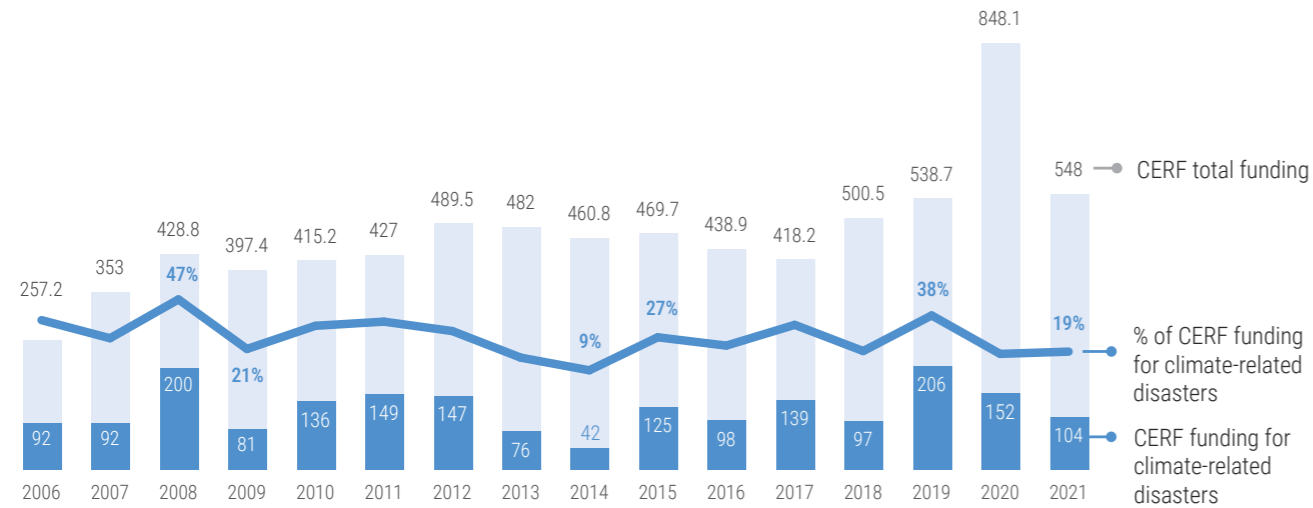


By sector
In US\$ million



CERF FUNDING FOR CLIMATE DISASTERS VERSUS TOTAL ANNUAL FUNDING SINCE 2006

In US\$ million



Angola, Kenya, Madagascar and Afghanistan; \$20 million for floods in Eastern and Central Africa, South Asia and South America; and \$0.5 million in response to Cyclone Yasa in Fiji. At the very end of the year, CERF allocated an additional \$12 million in response to Super Typhoon Rai in the Philippines, enabling an immediate response when the typhoon made landfall.²² CERF also provided \$13 million in response to two other natural disasters: an earthquake in Haiti and a volcanic eruption in St Vincent and the Grenadines.

Climate-induced disasters exacerbate humanitarian needs in a wide range of countries, not only those with pre-existing humanitarian crises. Almost two thirds

²² Funding was disbursed during the first days of January and is thus counted for 2022.

of countries receiving CERF funding for climate-related disasters in 2021 did not have a Humanitarian Response Plan.

Since 2006, CERF has provided almost \$2 billion for humanitarian action in response to climate-induced disasters. The annual share of CERF funding for climate emergencies has fluctuated, largely because of climate patterns such as El Niño and trends in other pressing emergencies such as conflicts. Since its inception, more than a quarter (26 per cent) of all CERF funding has been allocated in response to the needs generated by droughts, floods, storms, heat waves and cold waves.



Philippines: Acting fast during typhoon season

The response to Super Typhoon Rai in the Philippines illustrates how CERF can support timely and effective life-saving assistance after a climate-related disaster. On 16 December 2021, the typhoon – known locally as Odette – made landfall across the Visayas and Mindanao islands. The typhoon caused widespread damage, affecting almost 10 million people, many of whom were already affected by an increase in poverty and unemployment and the rollback of development gains following two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. The national authorities declared a 'state of calamity' on 20 December. In response to the crisis, on 23 December, the ERC allocated \$12 million from CERF's RR window for the immediate commencement of life-saving activities.²³

Close monitoring of the typhoon by CERF and the country team in the days leading up to the landfall meant that it was ready to act quickly. UN agencies and partners were able to kick-start their response activities as early as 18 December, using their internal reserves to initiate the response in the knowledge that CERF funds would be forthcoming (see pages 70-71). CERF funding was used to provide medical care, including reproductive health care and psychosocial support, and food and drinking water, as well as protection from GBV (which increases during natural disasters and displacement) to some 250,000 people.

²³ The funding was disbursed in early 2022.



Haiti: Responding quickly to multiple natural disasters

CERF also proved its ability to act very fast in unpredictable and sudden-onset disasters, such as the earthquake that struck Haiti on 14 August. The 7.2-magnitude earthquake was followed by a tropical depression, causing widespread damage across the country. This took place amid the ongoing COVID-19 emergency and population displacements driven by gang violence. The complex, multiple-hazard crisis further compromised people's coping capacities, placing the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable groups at risk, including women, children, people with disabilities and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Within 32 hours of the earthquake, the ERC allocated

\$8 million (later increased to \$12 million) to deliver immediate, life-saving humanitarian assistance.

While the extent of the damage was still being assessed, CERF's 'no-regrets' approach allowed it to make quick decisions. This enabled UN agencies and partners to kick-start their response on the day of the earthquake safe in the knowledge that CERF funds were imminent (see pages 70-71). CERF funding was used to deliver life-saving assistance including food and water, child protection, and logistics support to address the needs of the 280,000 most affected people.

Haiti. OCHA staff conducts humanitarian needs assessment after the earthquake. ©OCHA/Matteo Minasi



Disease outbreaks



CERF's response to disease outbreaks

\$25.7M allocated

\$25.7M Rapid Response

10 countries

1.6M people assisted

Disease outbreaks have been on the increase over the past few years in almost all countries with recurrent humanitarian emergencies.²⁴ In response to these rising needs, in 2021 CERF allocated \$25.7 million to disease outbreaks across 10 countries: cholera in the DRC, Niger and Nigeria; and Ebola in Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone. With this funding, humanitarian agencies and partners assisted 1.6 million people.

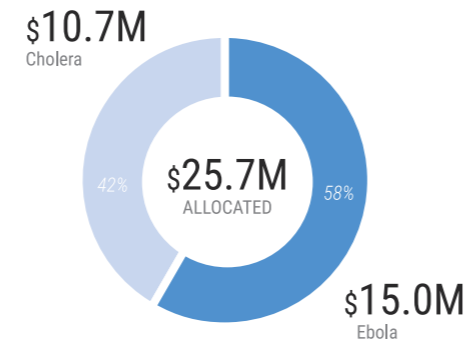
Several of the allocations were forward-looking, in that they aimed to contain outbreaks while the number of cases was still small, thereby avoiding the need for a larger, more costly humanitarian response at a later stage (see pages 54-58). These included a regional allocation to prevent the spread of Ebola from Guinea into neighbouring countries, and an allocation to prevent an outbreak of cholera among IDPs and host communities following a volcanic eruption in the DRC.

During the year, CERF funding was used to tackle the knock-on effects of disease outbreaks. As part of the Ebola response in Guinea, for example, CERF supported protection measures such as protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and GBV programming.

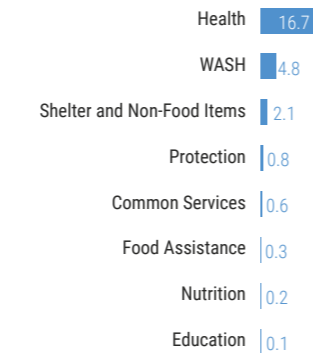
²⁴ Elsevier, *Global Research Trends in Infectious Disease, March 2020*.

FUNDING TO DISEASE OUTBREAK

By type



By sector
In US\$ million



DRC, Niger and Nigeria: Containing cholera outbreaks

Within days of the May 2021 eruption of Mount Nyiragongo in the DRC, CERF allocated \$1.2 million that prevented the spread of cholera among IDPs and host communities living in nearby Goma city. With CERF funding, UNICEF provided drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, while WHO delivered cholera vaccinations, as well as other preventative and surveillance measures. Together they assisted some 130,000 IDPs and host community members.

In August, CERF stepped in quickly with \$3.2 million to address a significant funding gap hampering the response to an increase in cholera cases in Niger. With CERF funding, UN agencies and partners assisted 640,000 of the most affected people. CERF funding enabled WHO to provide health-care services (including cholera treatment centres), conduct awareness-raising campaigns and strengthen surveillance measures.

UNICEF delivered WASH assistance, including the distribution of hygiene and water-treatment products. In addition to the cholera response, IOM provided shelter items and basic household goods to people who had lost their possessions in the floods.

In September, a \$6 million CERF allocation helped to contain the worst cholera outbreak in Nigeria in a decade, with more than 100,000 suspected cases. CERF funding enabled WHO to set up cholera treatment centres and provide health care, both to treat cholera patients and prevent further transmission. UNICEF delivered WASH assistance to improve access to clean water and proper sanitation and hygiene, which was critical for preventing the spread of the disease. Both agencies also conducted public awareness campaigns on how to prevent cholera infections in sites for displaced people, among host communities and in high-risk areas. Together they assisted some 410,000 people.

DRC. IDPs wait in a CERF-supported health-care facility in Saké city to receive a Cholera vaccination. With CERF funding, WHO also implemented preventative and surveillance measures. ©OCHA/Pamela Tulizo.





Guinea and DRC: Bringing Ebola under control

In February, two Ebola outbreaks occurred within a week of one another, one in Guinea and the other in the DRC. Using its forward-looking 'no-regrets' approach, CERF made a series of three allocations totalling \$15 million to prevent a spread of the virus across the region at a time when information was still uncertain. CERF funding also helped to support the treatment of Ebola patients and address knock-on effects such as GBV.

Shortly after the declaration of an Ebola outbreak in North Kivu in the DRC, CERF allocated \$4 million to prevent further transmission, targeting some 200,000 people. CERF funded a multisector response with a focus on health care, including medical care for Ebola patients, SRH services and psychosocial support. CERF also supported early detection, contact tracing and other control measures to contain the outbreak, as well as protection measures (such as PSEA) and GBV programming to address secondary impacts.

Within 48 hours of the Ebola outbreak in Guinea, the ERC allocated \$6 million, targeting some 340,000 people. CERF funded a multisector response, supporting not only health care and WASH services, but also food assistance, nutrition, education and psychosocial support to address the secondary impacts of the outbreak. The response helped to strengthen the capacity of community actors, especially women's groups, reduce food insecurity and malnutrition among people in areas affected by restrictions related to the outbreak, and support children return to school. As there was no ongoing humanitarian operation in the country, CERF also funded the scale-up of critical logistics

services through UNHAS, which was vital in enabling UN agencies and partners to kick-start the response.

Given the high risk of transmission to neighbouring countries, CERF allocated \$5 million to prevent the spread of the virus. In the six countries neighbouring Guinea – Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau – WHO and UNICEF supported surveillance and prevention at points of entry, and provided technical support for laboratories to ensure early detection. Based on lessons learned from the 2013-2015 Ebola epidemic in West Africa and from Ebola outbreaks in the DRC, UN agencies and partners quickly scaled up activities across the region, including community engagement and PSEA. The CERF allocation also ensured that partners did not have to divert funding from COVID-19 activities.

Thanks to CERF's fast and time-critical response, the Ebola outbreak was quickly brought under control. Both in the DRC and Guinea, the initial outbreaks did not develop into large-scale epidemics and there was no major transmission from Guinea to neighbouring countries.

CERF has consistently supported efforts to tackle Ebola outbreaks in the DRC and neighbouring countries, allocating some \$100 million since CERF's inception in 2006. This includes an allocation of \$40 million to the DRC in May 2020 to strengthen health and surveillance systems in the wake of a new Ebola outbreak. This helped UN agencies to detect the 2021 outbreak early and react quickly.

DRC. With CERF funding, UNICEF has installed handwashing facilities in many public places to help protect people from Ebola, COVID-19 and other infectious diseases.
©UNICEF/Wenga



Guinea. A man gets his temperature checked as part of community activities to mitigate Ebola. ©WHO



GUINEA: WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO CONTAIN EBOLA

A few days after he referred one of his patients to the regional hospital, Dr. Emmanuel Goepogui, a private practitioner in N'Zerekore prefecture in south-eastern Guinea, received a visit from a community disease surveillance team. "They came to inform me that my patient had tested positive for Ebola and that I was a direct contact... I was then vaccinated along with my family members. After 21 days of follow-up, I was told that I was safe."

Ebola re-emerged in Guinea on 14 February, the first time since the 2014-2016 outbreak in West Africa. With CERF funding, the health authorities, in collaboration with teams from WHO and partner agencies, swiftly set up a community disease surveillance system alongside other Ebola prevention and control measures. Tracking the spread – identifying who has developed symptoms, where they live and who they have been in contact with – is a key part of curbing the virus. It helps in detecting cases quickly and isolating any close contacts.

The disease surveillance teams go into communities to seek out suspected Ebola cases. This includes any person, alive or dead, who is presenting or has presented with a sudden onset of fever and at least three other symptoms of Ebola. "I have reported an average of 15 suspected cases a day to [Ebola case] investigators," explains Dr Kebe Kalivogui, one of the 43 experts trained to find cases by WHO and Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

However, alerts for suspected cases remain low and deaths in communities are not always reported to the health authorities. Fear of being stigmatized, or traditional or religious practices, sometimes undermine Ebola prevention measures. Community engagement is key to successfully controlling outbreaks. In N'Zerekore, a community engagement team is working to overcome people's reluctance to engage in Ebola prevention measures.

Anticipatory and early action

To ensure a timelier and more effective and efficient response to humanitarian needs, CERF is increasingly forward-leaning – ready to act on forecasts and projections, and provide ‘no-regrets’ funding quickly, even when information is still uncertain or incomplete. Thus, CERF funding for anticipatory and early action complements the core funding functions in support of sudden onset and protracted crises.

Anticipatory action allocations

Since 2019, the ERC has approved a portfolio of 12 anticipatory action pilots linked to drought, floods, storms and disease outbreaks, setting aside up to \$140 million in funding. So far, CERF has released a total of \$60 million for anticipatory action – for drought in Somalia and Ethiopia, and for flooding in Bangladesh.

OCHA collaborates with a wide range of partners to set up frameworks for each anticipatory action pilot. Each anticipatory action framework consists of three core components that enable predictable and rapid action ahead of crises: (1) a robust forecasting mechanism linked to a clear decision-making process; (2) pre-agreed finance; and (3) prearranged funds that can be released to immediately initiate time-critical activities.

CERF is now supporting a portfolio of multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral anticipatory action frameworks across a range of geographical contexts and shocks. The aim is to move beyond project-based, single-agency initiatives and bring anticipatory action to scale, as well as generate critical learning and demonstrate proof of concept.



Since 2006, Luxembourg has continuously supported CERF in its fundamental role of deploying a rapid and increasingly anticipatory humanitarian response. Faced with a growing number of people in need of humanitarian assistance, reliable and multiannual funding is indispensable for CERF to continue its efficient interventions.”

Franz Fayot, Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, Luxembourg

OCHA and its partners have made considerable progress towards scaling up anticipatory humanitarian action. Building on growing evidence that acting before the onset of a predictable hazard can reduce the impact and costs of a humanitarian emergency, CERF has played a crucial role in advancing the anticipatory action agenda.

Progress in 2021 and next steps

In 2021, \$27 million was released through anticipatory action frameworks for drought in Somalia and Ethiopia. In addition, the ERC endorsed three new anticipatory action frameworks for CERF support: for severe flooding in Nepal, destructive typhoons in the Philippines, and dry spells in Malawi.

Additional pilots under development in 2021 include three anticipatory action frameworks for drought in Chad, Burkina Faso and Niger²⁵ – designed around the similarities between the three contexts and built on learning from the Somalia and Ethiopia frameworks. In addition, CERF and partners in 2021 started working on frameworks in Madagascar for containing outbreaks of the plague, in South Sudan for reoccurring flooding and in DRC for cholera outbreaks. All frameworks are expected to become operational in 2022.

²⁵ The frameworks for Burkina Faso and Niger were endorsed in early 2022.

OCHA-FACILITATED ANTICIPATORY ACTION PORTFOLIO



Lessons learned



Status updates on the anticipatory action frameworks, including supplementary information on the iterative process of designing and learning from the pilots, can be found at aa.unocha.org.

To capture evidence and learning systematically, OCHA and partners have developed a learning framework that combines process learning, UN agency-led monitoring and evaluation, and external impact evaluations. OCHA is collaborating with expert organizations on the implementation of these learning activities. ([See pages 80-83](#))

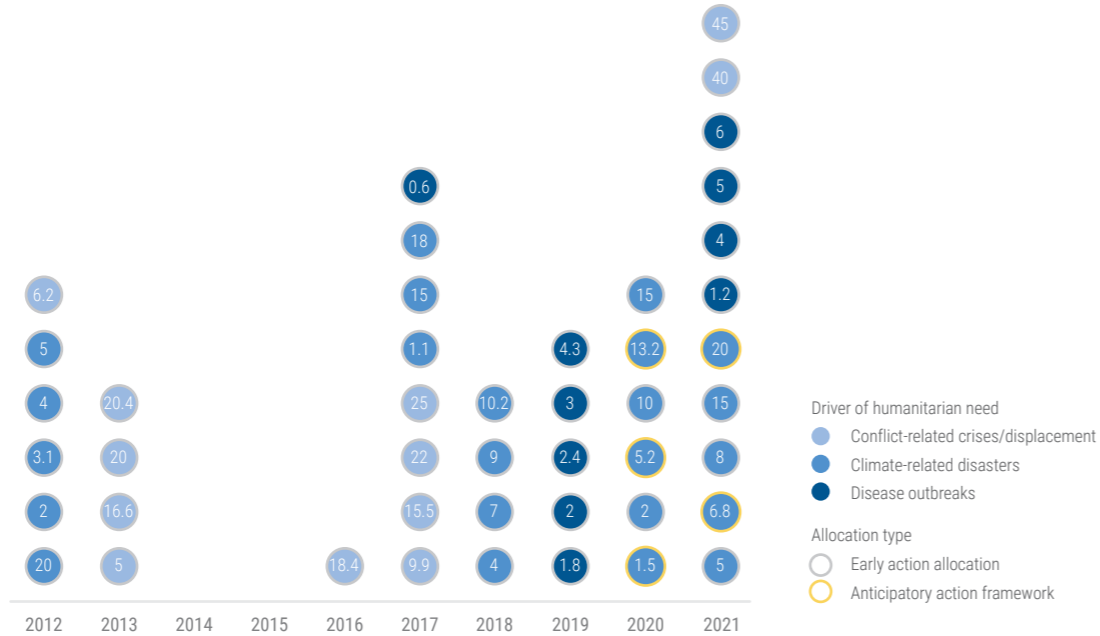
The CERF-funded anticipatory action pilots have provided important evidence of the effectiveness of collective anticipatory action, and lessons and best practices for further scaling up the approach. Pilot activations in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Somalia have yielded compelling results, demonstrating that anticipatory action strengthens the resilience and coping capacity of affected people, enabling them to face shocks with dignity and on their own terms. In Somalia, IOM found that the anticipatory rehabilitation and upgrading of boreholes improved household finances, increased mental health, kept livestock healthier, reduced disputes related to water sources, and mitigated migration due to drought. In Bangladesh, post-flood monitoring conducted by UNFPA (on the

2020 CERF anticipatory action allocation), found that some 76 per cent of women and girls who received dignity and menstrual health management kits were more likely to access regular health care, continue school, generate income or participate in social and community activities compared to non-recipients. In Ethiopia, in 2021, local government authorities confirmed that cash transfers to families and the provision of water in schools enabled girls and boys to continue their education throughout the drought.

Furthermore, by allowing partners to mobilize before a crisis has fully materialized, the pilot allocations in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Somalia have helped to provide assistance significantly faster and, at times, in a more cost-effective manner. Built around a ‘no-regrets’ approach that targets the most vulnerable, CERF-funded pilots have proven to be sufficiently flexible and adaptable to ensure life-saving impacts, even in scenarios where risks do not materialize exactly as predicted. In Ethiopia, for example, agreed implementation timelines and action plans were adapted after areas

**CERF'S EARLY ACTION
AND ANTICIPATORY
ACTION ALLOCATIONS**

in US\$ million



Switzerland encourages CERF to continue driving innovation in anticipatory humanitarian action ahead of predictable shocks. CERF is a key instrument for improving the international humanitarian system by promoting new and forward-looking approaches to push for positive and transformative change.”

Manuel Bessler, Deputy Director General, Head of Humanitarian Aid Department and Head of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit, Ambassador

in Afar region became temporarily inaccessible due to conflict in the neighbouring Tigray region. As highlighted by the RC/HC, despite the unforeseen delays, assistance still reached targeted communities before the full effects of drought materialized, demonstrating that CERF-funded anticipatory action can add value, even in extremely complex operational contexts. In Somalia, FAO was able to switch their assistance modality in line with changes in the local context: instead of providing farmers with vouchers for cropland irrigation services, the farmers, who already possessed irrigation pumps, were given cash to buy fuel to run their pumps.

Early action allocations

In addition to supporting the formal anticipatory action frameworks, and in line with its mandate, CERF in 2021 continued to be more forward-leaning through its RR window, both by making allocations earlier on a 'no-regrets' basis – even when information was still incomplete and uncertain – and by making allocations partially based on projections and forecasts.

Such allocations included funding for the contingency plan for drought and conflict in Afghanistan, funds in anticipation of further displacement in Marib, Yemen (see pages 42-46), allocations to prevent the spread of Ebola and cholera (see pages 50-53), and allocations for drought in Somalia and Ethiopia (see above). Complementing its support for anticipatory action frameworks, CERF will continue to pursue opportunities to systematically respond earlier to predictable shocks through risk-informed early action allocations.



Somalia. A farmer in Dolow, Somalia working at his field. With CERF funding, FAO works with local communities to create new jobs, increase and diversify livelihoods, foster inclusive economic opportunities. ©FAO Somalia/Ismail Taxta

CERF Results

Somalia and Ethiopia in focus: Anticipatory and early action for drought

For many years, Somalia and Ethiopia have been severely affected by consecutive poor rainy seasons, with an increase in hunger, water shortages and displacement. Since late 2020, delayed and erratic rainfall affected many parts of the countries, resulting in devastating water shortages, including drought conditions in some locations, with widely depleted water reservoirs and loss of pasture and livestock. Simultaneously, the combined impact of locusts, COVID-19, floods and conflict severely eroded the coping capacity of Ethiopians and Somalis. Over the course of 2021, the number of food insecure people increased to 2.4 million in Somalia and 18 million in Ethiopia (equivalent to 15 per cent of the total population in both countries).¹

In 2021, CERF provided \$52 million for anticipatory action, early action and rapid response for the drought in the Horn of Africa. The anticipatory action framework in Somalia was triggered in April 2021 when projected food insecurity in the country – based on predictions of below average spring (gu) rainfall – crossed the pre-agreed trigger threshold. CERF provided \$20 million for anticipatory actions, together with a \$7 million aligned rapid response allocation for areas already experiencing high levels of food insecurity. In November, in view of forecasts indicating poor performance of the autumn rains (deyr) and in anticipation of worsening food insecurity, CERF provided an additional \$8 million for early action and response to mitigate the impact of deteriorating conditions.

¹ This refers to people in situations of acute food insecurity (IPC phase 3 and above). For Somalia, see FSNAU FEWSNET, Post Deyr Technical Release, 22 February 2022. The information for Somalia is provided by the OCHA country office.

In Ethiopia, the activation of the anticipatory action framework followed a two-step approach: after initially releasing \$13 million upon confirmation of pre-agreed trigger thresholds in late December 2020 – three months ahead of the predicted failed rains – CERF provided a second tranche of \$6.8 million for anticipatory action after reconfirming in February 2021 that trigger conditions were still met. In April, CERF provided a \$5 million aligned rapid response allocation for areas experiencing high levels of food insecurity. In November 2021, based on forecasts indicating a high likelihood of a third consecutive failed rainfall season, CERF released an additional \$5 million for early action aimed at addressing developing and projected needs in a timely manner.

The anticipatory allocations provided funds weeks or even months earlier than in previous years, and allowed humanitarian organizations to reach people much sooner, even before the rains had failed. In total, CERF-funded anticipatory action supported 345,000 vulnerable people across Somalia and 890,000 people in drought-affected regions in eastern and southern Ethiopia.² CERF funding was used, among other things, to ensure continued access to water through the rehabilitation and construction of boreholes and wells. To mitigate the loss of livelihoods and declines in food consumption, UN agencies and partners distributed drought-resistant seeds to protect the harvest and provided animal feed and veterinary treatment to allow herders to keep animals alive. To mitigate knock-on effects, CERF funded the deployment of rapid response teams to ensure early detection of disease outbreaks and the provision of cash for education to help parents keep their children in school. Awareness-raising around protection risks helped to keep the most vulnerable, especially women and children, safe.

² The difference in the number of people reached is due to the funding of a large-scale animal vaccination campaign in Ethiopia; in Somalia, the vaccination programme was already under way and therefore not included in the 2021 allocation.



Somalia. A farmer harvests beans at her farm in Dolow. CERF funding allows FAO to work with local communities to create new jobs, increase and diversify livelihoods, foster inclusive economic opportunities. ©FAO Somalia/Ismael Taxta

People assisted with CERF funding

In response to record needs in 2021, CERF enabled partners to provide life-saving assistance to 51.5 million people in 40 countries and territories. This included 19.4 million people affected by displacement, the second largest number in CERF's history. Conflicts emerged as the main driver of CERF allocations, with 85 per cent of the people assisted with CERF funding affected by conflict. CERF also continued to help the humanitarian community to support the most vulnerable, with women and girls comprising 55 per cent of people assisted with CERF funding.

Throughout 2021, CERF enabled fast, predictable and flexible life-saving assistance and protection to 51.5 million people across the globe – second only to 2020 when, largely as a result of the Fund's unparalleled response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF-funded assistance benefited 69.3 million. Afghanistan accounted for more than half of all people assisted during 2021, with some 29 million provided with life-saving health care through a \$45 million CERF allocation to keep health-care facilities operating across the country (see page 43).

Responding to the main drivers of humanitarian need

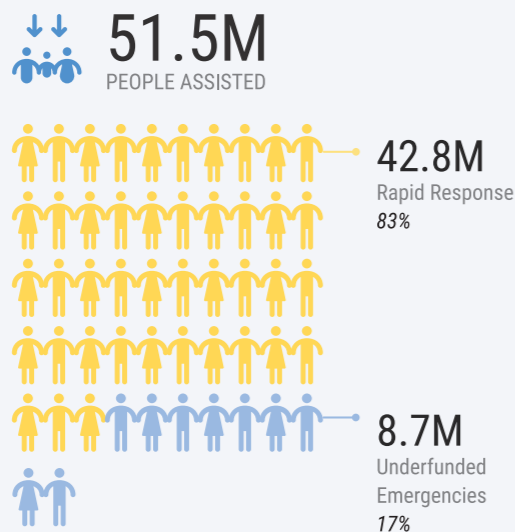
Almost 44 million people were assisted through CERF's allocations to contexts where conflict was the main driver of humanitarian need – 85 per cent of the total number of people assisted. This is an increase of over 25 million people from 2020, predominantly driven by CERF's response to the crisis in Afghanistan, where escalating conflict and climate shocks resulted in a huge increase in humanitarian needs (see page 43). While climate stresses often compound humanitarian needs driven by conflict or other shocks, CERF also supported 4.5 million people (9 per cent) affected by natural disasters alone, of whom the majority (4.1 million) were affected by climate-related disasters such as floods, storms and droughts (see pages 47-49). Another 1.6 million people (3 per cent) were assisted through CERF-funded responses to disease outbreaks such as Ebola and cholera.²⁶ CERF also funded regional Ebola operational readiness efforts in six countries neighbouring Guinea, which indirectly benefited an estimated 37 million people through awareness-raising campaigns and surveillance activities (see pages 50-53).²⁷

²⁶ The significant decrease from 32.6 million in 2020 is largely linked to CERF's response to the primary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic that year, through which UN agencies and partners assisted some 31 million people.

²⁷ This figure is not part of the data in this report because CERF only counts people directly assisted.

PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH 2021 CERF FUNDING

By funding window



Haiti. Carline* preparing a meal for her family in the church where they sought refuge. ©IOM/Monica Chiriac



HAITI: A NEW HOME FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FLEEING VIOLENCE

“When Brice* grows up, I don’t want him to feel inferior to other children his age,” says his mother, Carline*. The youngest of three siblings, Brice was born with a psychomotor disability that left him with impaired balance and unable to speak. Initially, he received physical therapy at St. Vincent, a facility for children with disabilities in the capital, Port-au-Prince, but his family could not afford to continue the treatment.

When gang violence erupted in Port-au-Prince in June 2021, Brice and his family had to flee their home in Lapiste camp after their house was burned to the ground in a sudden attack. Like many residents, they sought safety in a local church and later in a school.

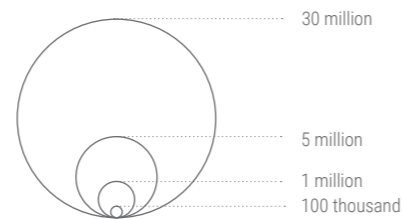
With the support of CERF, IOM and partners provided disabled residents and their families with new homes. They were also given rental subsidies, assistance to cover medical expenses, counselling services and basic livelihood training.

Now that they are safe, his mother wants Brice to attend a specialist school, and she is planning to pay the fees by starting a business with her husband. “I will not neglect Brice because of his disability,” says Carline. “On the contrary, I love him all the more because he is so fragile.”

*Name changed for privacy and protection.

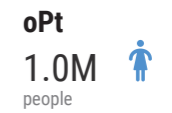
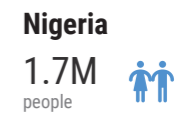
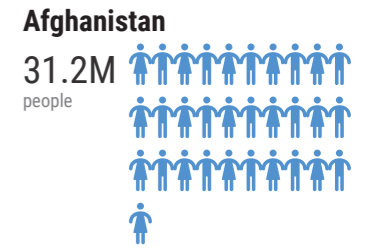


51.5M
PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH CERF FUNDING IN **40**
COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES



* CAR - Central African Republic
DRC - Democratic Republic of the Congo
oPt - occupied Palestinian territory
Syrian AR - Syrian Arab Republic

TOP-10 COUNTRIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH CERF FUNDING



👤 = 1M people 👤 = 1M people

In addition to conflicts, disease outbreaks and natural disasters, CERF funding also enabled UN agencies and partners to assist 1.6 million people in 14 countries in need of humanitarian assistance due to other drivers. In Bangladesh, for example, a CERF-funded intervention helped to provide urgent shelter and other life-saving assistance to 59,000 Rohingya refugees following a fire in the world's largest refugee camp in Cox's Bazar.

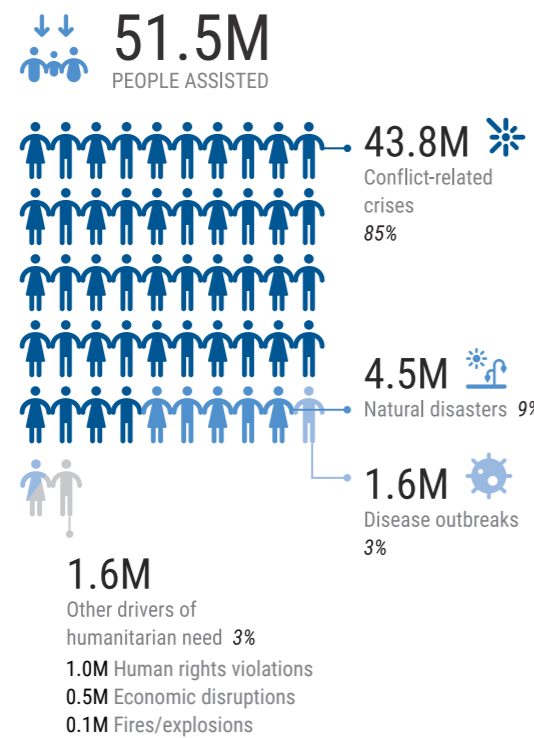
Assisting the most vulnerable

Throughout the year, CERF continued to prioritize life-saving assistance for the most vulnerable. Over 28 million (55 per cent) of people assisted with 2021 CERF funding were women and girls, and some 23 million (44 per cent) were children under the age of 18. CERF-funded assistance in the protection and nutrition sectors had a particularly strong focus on women and girls; in both sectors, 64 per cent of all people assisted were female. For the protection sector, this was a notable 8 per cent increase from 2020. The gender and disability inclusion contact groups established in 2021, provided valuable advice that further strengthened GBV and gender programming, as well as disability inclusion in the work of CERF during 2021. Many of the groups' recommendations build on existing workstreams, while others will inform new initiatives going forward (see page 37).

CERF also supported the sexual, reproductive and mental health of the most vulnerable people. With CERF funding, UN agencies and partners ensured that over 1 million people in 14 countries, mainly women, had access to life-saving sexual and reproductive health services, and that at least 440,000 people were provided with mental health and psychosocial support services. CERF-funded interventions also ensured that some 260,000 children were born in the presence of skilled health personnel.

PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH 2021 CERF FUNDING

By main driver of humanitarian need



Strengthening CERF's ability to measure and showcase performance

In 2021, CERF took steps to further strengthen the Fund's ability to measure and report on results. In close collaboration with UN agencies and other stakeholders, CERF developed a set of [standard indicators](#) that provide added insights into the use of CERF funding, helping to showcase the impressive track record of UN agencies and partners in delivering CERF-funded assistance through improved reporting.

The list of 100 standard indicators is based on the most frequently funded activities. During the year CERF encouraged their use in funding proposals, while also leaving room for UN agencies to use customized indicators when required. The standard indicators are organized by clusters and include, for example, information on the number of people screened for acute malnutrition, the

number of births attended by skilled health personnel, and the number of people provided with mental health and psychosocial support services.

During the year, 85 per cent of CERF-funded projects used at least one standard indicator and, overall, standard indicators represented 42 per cent of all indicators in 2021. Going forward, CERF will continue to refine the list of standard indicators and encourage agencies to adopt them whenever possible. Increased use of standard indicators in CERF projects will yield additional data on results – information not previously available – helping to better understand and report on CERF-funded humanitarian action and related results. Once finalized, the joint CERF–CBPF online Grant Management System (One GMS) will also further enhance their use (see pages 84-85).

CERF'S STANDARD INDICATORS SHOW THAT WITH 2021 CERF FUNDING AT LEAST:

2.5M
people were screened for acute malnutrition

1.3M
people gained access to a sufficient quantity of safe water

1.2M
people benefited from agricultural inputs

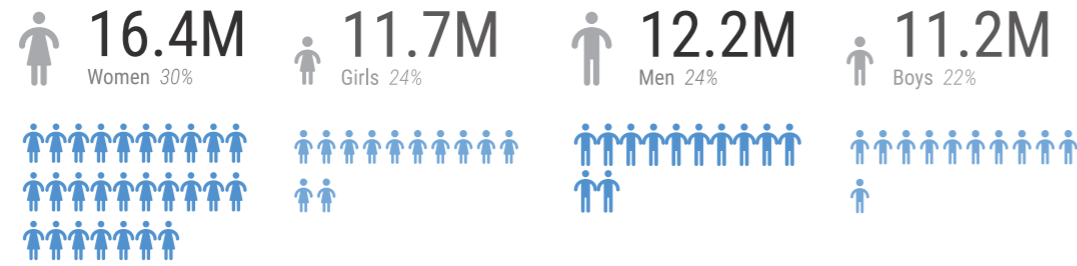
440k
people were provided with mental health and psychosocial support services

350k
people received in-kind shelter assistance

260k
children were born in the presence of skilled health personnel

PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH 2021 CERF FUNDING

By gender and age



CERF offers us a strategic and rapid instrument to ensure resources to underfunded crises and important thematic priorities. The focus on persons with disabilities has been especially welcome.”

Ville Skinnari, Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade of Finland

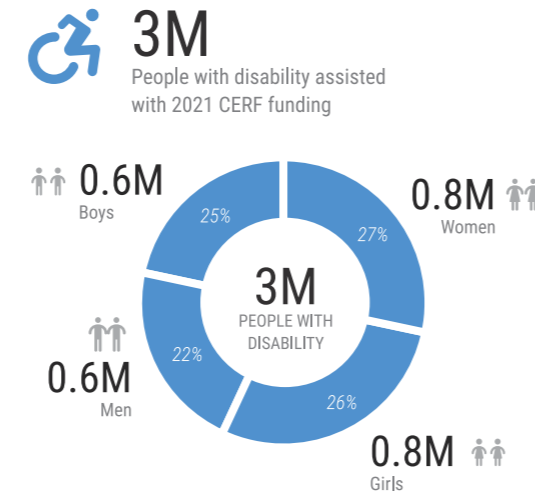
The protection of people caught in humanitarian crises remained an integral part of CERF-funded responses in 2021 and, during the year, the Fund supported dedicated protection projects assisting some 4 million people. Almost half of them benefited from GBV protection and prevention services (1.7 million), while 600,000 children were assisted with protection interventions. For example, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM provided safe spaces for almost 150,000 people, mainly women and children, in humanitarian emergencies across 9 countries, while UNICEF and UNHCR facilitated family tracing and reunification for some 25,000 children in 13 countries.²⁸ CERF also continued to encourage UN agencies and partners to mainstream protection across sectors, and continued efforts to better track such assistance. For example, UNICEF and IOM ensured that some 210,000 people in six countries had access to safe and dignified toilets or latrines with functional handwashing facilities.²⁹

Supporting people with disabilities

Over 3 million of the people assisted with 2021 CERF funding were people living with disabilities, of whom the majority – 1.6 million or 53 per cent – were women and girls. A \$10 million earmarked UFE envelope, in particular, enabled UN agencies and partners to implement transformative interventions in humanitarian response in seven countries to address the specific barriers and needs of some 200,000 people living with disabilities (see page 36).

²⁸ Based on standard indicator (see page 65).

²⁹ Based on standard indicator (see page 65).



IN 2021 CERF FUNDING ENABLED PARTNERS TO DELIVER

People assisted by sector	Male	Female	Adults	Children
Critical Health Care 39.8M people	56%	54%	58%	42%
Water and Sanitation 5.7M people	48%	52%	48%	52%
Food Assistance and Agricultural inputs 5.2M people	49%	51%	48%	52%
Protection services 3.9M people	36%	64%	55%	45%
Nutrition support 3.1M people	36%	64%	27%	73%
Camp Management assistance 1.6M people	49%	51%	48%	52%
Shelter and NFIs 1.4M people	48%	52%	38%	62%
Education 0.4M people	51%	49%	2%	98%
Multisector Refugee Assistance 76k people	46%	54%	41%	59%
Multi-Purpose Cash 42k people	48%	52%	75%	25%

* Of this, CERF assisted some 29 million in Afghanistan with health care services through a \$45 million allocation to keep health-care facilities operating across the country.

= 100k people = 100k people

Myanmar. Ko Aung Lin is a father to three young boys and is determined to teach them how to respect women and girls. ©UN Women/Lesly Lotha



MYANMAR: CHANGING PATTERNS OF ABUSE

“Men think that once you marry a woman, you own her, and that if she doesn’t listen to you, you can blame her and hit her. This thinking needs to change,” says Ko Aung Lin, a 36-year-old farmer from Sittwe in Myanmar’s Rakhine state. A father of three boys, he confesses to hitting his wife during an argument. Now he volunteers to convince other men to change their abusive and domineering behaviour.

He is the only man among the 10 volunteers chosen in Rakhine for a CERF-supported project led by UN Women and UNFPA to prevent violence against women and girls and help survivors during the COVID-19 pandemic. “Rather than reporting cases, people pay money or offer livestock to the survivors to resolve the issues,” Ko Aung Lin says. “These practices need to change because

the survivors do not get justice through this [form of] traditional resolution.” The project helps survivors and women at risk of violence to find work and, in some cases, provides cash-based assistance, as well as referring them to legal counseling and psychosocial support services.

Ko Aung Lin and the other volunteers participated in training sessions on gender norms, gender-based violence and social power dynamics. To raise awareness of these issues, the volunteers organized community outreach sessions, where Ko Aung Lin speaks with men and boys in his village. “Being a man myself, I think it will be easier to organize and facilitate the session – and they can also relate more to me,” he explains.

Providing a lifeline to displaced people

With an estimated 84 million people worldwide forcibly displaced by mid-2021, addressing the devastating humanitarian consequences of population displacement remained an integral part of CERF-funded assistance.³⁰ During the year, CERF assisted 19.4 million refugees, IDPs, returnees and host community members in 37 of the 40 CERF-recipient countries.

With internal displacement at an all-time high, CERF remained a lifeline for 9.4 million IDPs in 18 countries. This represents 18 per cent of all people assisted with 2021 CERF funding – similar to the previous three years. Over 7.8 million (83 per cent) of these IDPs were predominantly affected by conflict-related crises, including in Ethiopia (2.8 million) and Afghanistan (1.1 million) (see pages 42-46); and almost 1 million by climate-related and other natural disasters – for example, by severe drought in Somalia (400,000) (see pages 54-58).

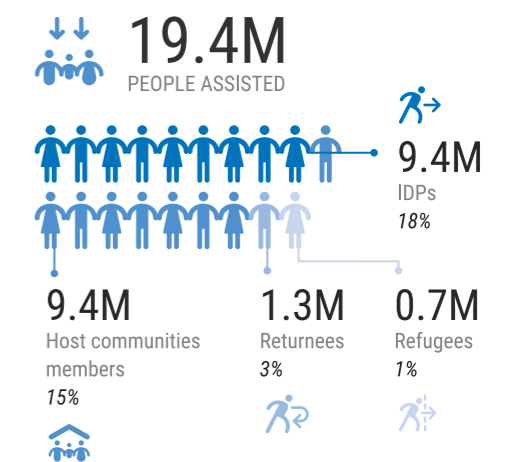
CERF also demonstrated its commitment to displaced people through its strong support for the camp coordination and management sector. This allowed IOM and UNHCR to improve the living conditions of 1.6 million people living in displacement

³⁰ Based on UNHCR’s Refugee Data Finder.

sites. The majority of people assisted in this sector were living in sites across Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Haiti, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mozambique and South Sudan.³¹

³¹ Based on standard indicator.

DISPLACED PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH 2021 CERF FUNDING



Methodology for calculating numbers of people assisted

CERF uses the number of people directly targeted as a proxy for the number of people assisted. This approach allows for timely global reporting as the final data on people reached with CERF funding only becomes available when RCs/HCs share grant reports with the Fund – up to one year after receiving the allocations. In fact, analyses from the past five years have shown that CERF consistently reaches significantly more people than planned. CERF will continue to monitor the reported data.

CERF applies a consistent methodology for tracking the number of people targeted. CERF requires all recipient agencies to provide de-

tailed information on the number of people directly targeted and reached with each CERF-funded project. The multisectoral nature of CERF-funded assistance means that people may receive CERF-funded life-saving assistance through several different sectors. For instance, the same individual could receive a vaccination, food and relief items, and also benefit from protection efforts. To avoid the risk of double-counting, CERF uses a two-step methodology to calculate the total number of people assisted through an allocation. First, sector leads, in consultation with implementing agencies, identify areas of duplication within sectors. Second, OCHA field offices or RC/HC offices identify duplications between sectors within the same CERF allocation.

Speed of CERF allocations

In 2021, CERF was able to maintain its speed, swiftly processing grants to ensure the timely availability of life-saving humanitarian funding for recipient agencies. CERF disbursed grants through its RR window in an average of 11 working days from the submission of an application, with the fastest grants disbursed in as little as four working days.

One of the most important strategic advantages of CERF is its ability to provide life-saving funding when and where it is needed most. In sudden-onset crises or rapidly deteriorating emergencies, the speed of CERF RR allocations is of critical importance. In other situations, such as slow-onset emergencies and protracted crises, the ability to provide funding at the right time to the right interventions is more important than the speed with which it is disbursed. The timeliness of CERF allocations is explored in more depth in the section on CERF's strategic added value. [\(See pages 20-25\)](#)



As humanitarian needs continue to rise, Belgium chooses to prioritize predictable, flexible humanitarian funding. CERF has proven to be an essential instrument to respond quickly to new crises around the world and to protracted underfunded crises. I am proud that Belgium is a loyal donor to CERF, enabling life-saving aid to reach those in need.

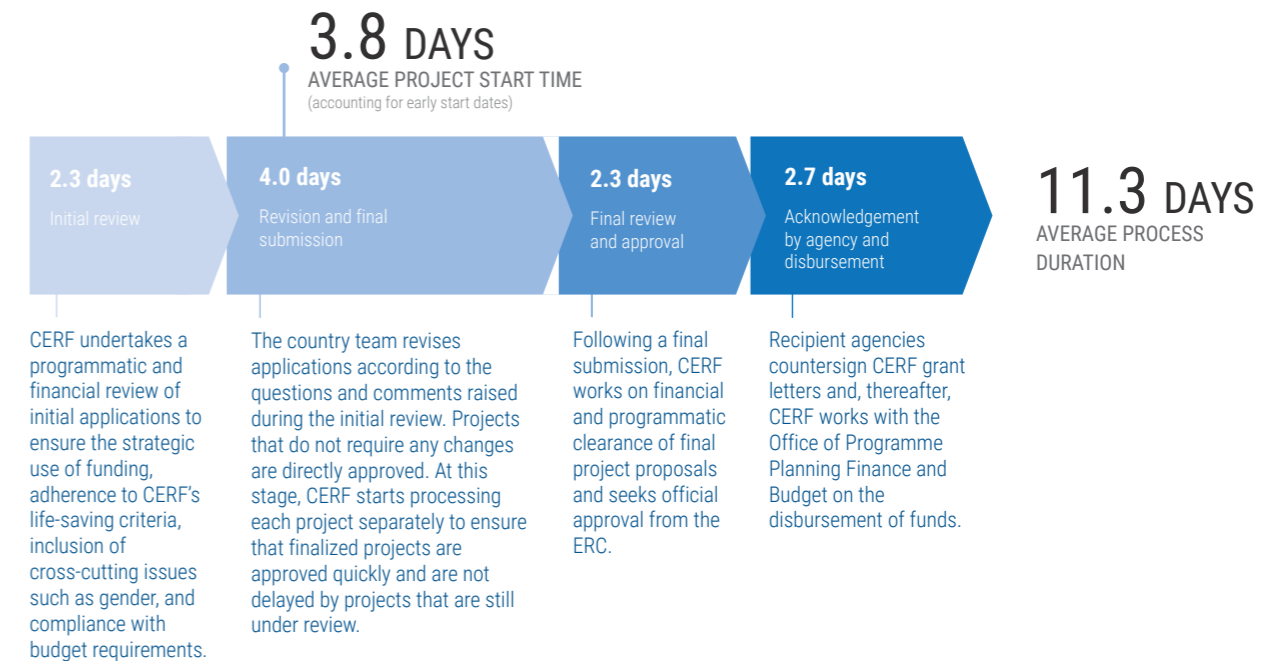
H.E. Meryame Kitir, Minister of Development Cooperation and Major Cities, Belgium

Time-critical funding at record speed

In 2021, CERF was able to maintain its speed in making critical funding available in the initial stages of new or deteriorating emergencies. CERF disbursed standard RR allocations³² on average 11 working days after receiving the application documents. The fastest grants were disbursed in as little as four working days. The speed of CERF allocations is comparable to recent years, despite an increase in the volume of funding.

Certain aspects of CERF processes, such as the ability to rapidly review applications or disburse funding, are within the control of CERF and serve as useful internal operational benchmarks. While CERF always processes grants as fast as possible, other aspects, such as the time it takes for country-level partners to submit or revise application documents, or for agencies to countersign and submit allocation letters, are beyond the direct control of CERF.

³² The anticipatory action pilots and the non-standard global block grants to UNFPA and UN Women have been excluded from this analysis because they constitute a distinct way of providing funding.



Flexibility to meet time-critical needs

While CERF strives to process RR allocations in the shortest time possible, recipient agencies do not have to wait for funds to arrive in their accounts before initiating life-saving activities. They can charge expenditures to the CERF project for activities undertaken up to six weeks before the receipt of CERF funds, using their internal reserves to initiate the response in the knowledge that CERF funds will be forthcoming.³³ This flexibility allows humanitarian partners to proceed with implementing CERF funds even before all allocation processes have been concluded. If the early start dates for CERF grants are considered, the average time from initial submission of the CERF request to project start date was 3.8 working days across all 2021 RR projects.

In 2021, early start dates enabled partners to kick-start their responses within hours of the onset of emergencies. This flexibility allowed UN agencies and partners to start delivering life-saving assistance to the 280,000 most affected people within hours of an earthquake in Haiti ([see page 49](#)). Similarly, UN agencies and partners were able to kick-start their response to the needs of some 60,000 Rohingya refugees and members of host communities on the day a fire tore through the world's largest refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

³³ An early implementation date can be approved if it does not predate the onset of the emergency. However, not all agencies can use early implementation start dates due to internal administrative limitations.

Fast-tracking the most urgent allocations

To accommodate the most critical emergencies, CERF applies internal emergency fast-track procedures to speed up the processing and disbursement of time-critical allocations. This entails deprioritizing other workstreams to focus CERF's resources on expediting priority grant processing tasks, as well as applying lighter fast-track processes where possible. CERF can only evoke these procedures in exceptional cases, when a humanitarian situation requires an immediate response to kick-start collective action and create momentum.

In 2021, CERF's fast-tracking procedures continued to be efficient – as demonstrated by the accelerated allocation to Guinea, where CERF's swift support was vital in containing an Ebola outbreak and preventing it from spreading into neighbouring countries. The approval of CERF grants within only two days (on average) after the submission of application documents provided recipient agencies with the necessary security to kick-start their interventions, safe in the knowledge that CERF funds were imminent ([see page 52](#)).

Partnerships and localization

In 2020,³⁴ UN agencies sub-granted \$201 million of CERF funding – the highest amount in the Fund’s history – to a record 1,056 implementing partners, with over half of the funds going to national and local partners. In the same year, CERF made its first-ever allocation directly in support of efforts by local women-led or women’s rights organizations to tackle GBV.



Partnerships are at the heart of the CERF-funded response. CERF allocations are prioritized and planned through a collaborative process involving country teams and clusters/sectors led by UN agencies and NGOs to ensure efficient use of resources. CERF funding is implemented through partnerships between UN agencies and NGOs, host governments and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies, helping to support a localized response and expand the reach of CERF-funded humanitarian action.

As implementing partners to UN agencies, local and national actors are key to delivering CERF-funded humanitarian programmes. OCHA, as a signatory of the Grand Bargain, has committed to supporting localization. Although CERF can only directly fund UN agencies – in line with its General Assembly mandate – it still plays an important role in enabling humanitarian action by non-UN humanitarian organizations, including local and national actors.

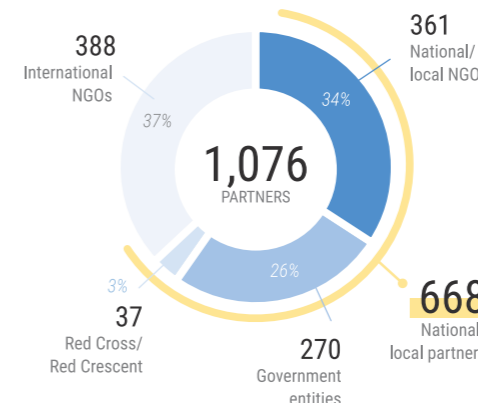


CERF is a swift and effective tool for aid to people affected by sudden humanitarian crises. At the same time, it provides assistance in forgotten crises where needs are massive. That is why Denmark has been a partner to CERF since its start in 2006. I highly appreciate the Fund’s heightened focus on local actors, and that the protection of women and girls against gender-based violence is a strategic priority. CERF is truly a fund for all, by all.”

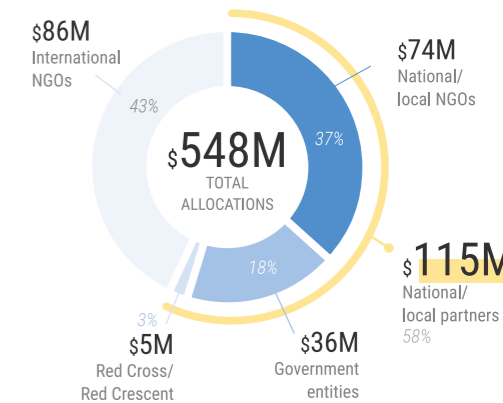
Flemming Møller Mortensen, Minister for Development Cooperation, Denmark

³⁴ Due to the nature of the CERF reporting cycle, comprehensive information on sub-grants only becomes available a full year after the calendar year under review. Information on sub-grants made under 2021 CERF allocations will only be available in early 2023.

NUMBER OF PARTNERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 2020 CERF FUNDING



SUB-GRANTED 2020 CERF FUNDING



In 2020, a record \$201 million was sub-granted to implementing partners, equivalent to 24 per cent of CERF funding in 2020 (\$848 million). This is a significant increase from \$126 million in 2019; although, proportionally, it remains largely in line with 2019 figures (23 per cent). The record amount of sub-granted CERF funding to NGOs includes CERF’s first-ever allocation to front-line NGOs to address the under-resourcing of NGO programming in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. With IOM acting as the grant manager, this allocation channelled \$25 million to front-line NGOs, including national and local organizations. An independent review found that, for many front-line NGOs, the allocation had been the first source of funding for COVID-19 response activities, and that it was successful in enabling NGOs to deliver immediate life-saving assistance (see pages 80-83).

With 2020 CERF funding, UN agencies implemented CERF grants with the broadest global network of partners to date. CERF’s extensive partnerships with international NGOs and national/local partners

helped to ensure greater coordination and enhance knowledge and capacity to deliver the most effective response.

Partnerships between UN agencies and NGOs leverage their comparative strengths. UN agencies, for example, are able to procure relief goods such as food, shelter or medicines, which are then distributed by partners on the ground. In 2020, an estimated \$345 million, or 41 per cent³⁵ of all CERF funding, went towards procurement of relief goods. UN agencies also implement common humanitarian services such as logistics, air services or emergency telecommunication, which benefit the entire humanitarian community. In 2020, a record \$53 million went to common services, including \$40 million to boost logistics and humanitarian air services for the global COVID-19 response.

³⁵ This number is based on the budget breakdown of all 2020 CERF-funded projects.

Colombia. Women in Barbacoas receive resilience kits. Implemented by Fundeas and local municipalities, this CERF-funded project aims to strengthen the emergency response to GBV by providing resilience kits with emergency aid, food and hygiene products to women-headed households. ©UN Women





Through this CERF allocation, capacities of the humanitarian and disaster response community, including central and local government, the UN, INGOs and the Viet Nam Red Cross, were strengthened, in particular the systems and procedures for receiving and delivering large-scale assistance, both in size and scope.”

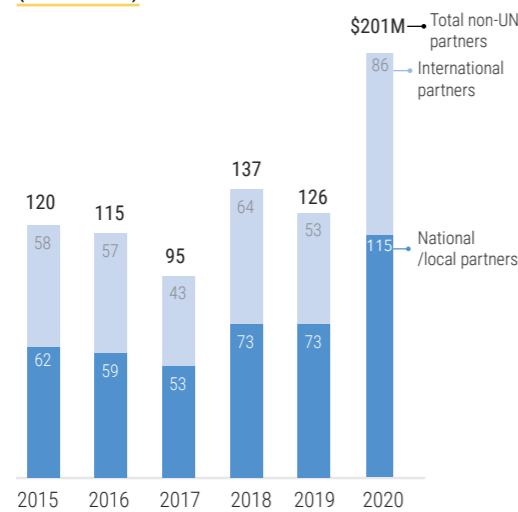
Kamal Malhotra, RC Viet Nam

Localization of CERF funding

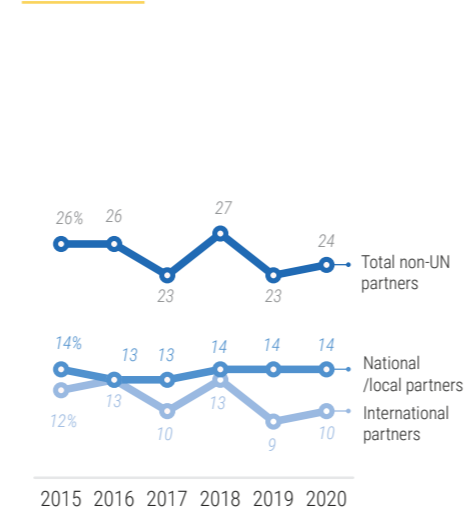
Of the \$201 million in sub-grants, a record \$115 million went to national and local partners, equivalent to 14 per cent of total CERF funding in 2020. Of this, national and local NGOs received \$74 million, government entities \$36 million and Red Cross/Red Crescent societies \$5 million. UN agencies worked with a record 668 national and local partners in the implementation of CERF funding, an increase of 14 per cent from 2019. This included 361 national or local NGOs, 270 government entities and 37 Red Cross/Red Crescent societies. For the majority of CERF allocations in 2020 (80 per cent), UN agencies worked with more national/local partners than international ones. In fact, in Pakistan, Syria, Somalia, Samoa, Fiji, Angola and Namibia, UN agencies relied solely on national/local partners to support CERF-funded responses.

To support women-led and women’s rights organizations in their work on GBV prevention and response programming, CERF allocated \$25 million in the form of block grants to UNFPA and UN Women in late 2020. Following guidance from CERF to ensure maximum impact, both agencies prioritized recipient countries. The grants were given on the condition that at least 30 per cent of funds were granted on to local women-led or women’s rights organizations. Because of the extended two-year time frame to allow agencies to build new and effective partnerships with local and national actors, the results of this allocation are not yet available. However, estimates suggest that both agencies have exceeded the 30 per cent target by some margin, with more than 50 per cent of funding from UN Women and 35 per cent from UNFPA going to local women-led or women’s rights organizations. An independent review of the early phases of the allocation noted that this type of approach was seen as innovative and should be considered for any future GBV-specific allocations (see pages 80-83).

AMOUNT OF SUB-GRANTED CERF FUNDING (2015-2020) in US\$ million



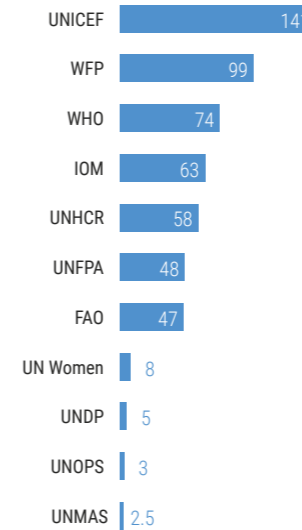
PERCENTAGE OF SUB-GRANTED CERF FUNDING (2015-2020)



CERF recipient agencies

In 2021, CERF allocated a total of \$548 million to 11 UN agencies. Together with their partners on the ground, they provided life-saving assistance to 51.5 million people in 40 countries and territories across the globe. For the first time since the inception of CERF, UNICEF in 2021 was the Fund’s top recipient agency. UN Women and UNFPA both received their highest annual amount of CERF funding to date, reflecting CERF’s commitment to promote gender equality in humanitarian action and the protection of the most vulnerable.

2021 CERF FUNDING TO UN AGENCIES in US\$ million



UNICEF



With **\$141M** or **26%** of overall CERF funding, UNICEF was the top recipient agency in 2021. CERF enabled UNICEF’s critical response in **35 countries**, including the provision of critical health and nutrition services in Afghanistan.



The humanitarian needs of children around the world are greater now than ever before. Conflicts, climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and increasing poverty all are threatening children’s lives and futures. Without the fast, flexible support CERF provides, UNICEF could not respond to these rapidly increasing humanitarian needs. In 2021, CERF helped UNICEF reach tens of millions of children and families in 30 crisis-affected countries – including Afghanistan, where CERF helped prevent the collapse of Afghanistan’s health system through the Sehatmandi project. By investing in CERF, our resource partners are investing in children’s lives and futures – and in building a better world for every child.”

Catherine Russell, Executive Director

Mozambique. UNICEF staff visits the Nangade Permanent Accommodation Center where families displaced by armed attacks in northern Cabo Delgado found a new home. CERF funding allows UNICEF to provide some 152,000 people with access to appropriate sanitation facilities. ©UNICEF/Franco



WFP



With **\$99M** in CERF funding, WFP was the Fund's second biggest recipient in 2021. Funding from CERF enabled WFP to respond to food insecurity and malnutrition across **26 countries**. CERF funding also contributed to WFP's provision of essential common services for humanitarian actors, including the transportation of over **14K passengers** in **8 countries**.*



Food insecurity soared in 2021 and today the world is facing an unprecedented hunger catastrophe – unless we work together to stop it. Conflict, climate change and COVID-19 are stoking humanitarian crises in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Madagascar, while extending protracted emergencies such as those in Nigeria, Syria, DRC and South Sudan. As a result, millions are being pushed to the brink of starvation. CERF has been critical in responding to these rising needs – providing funds fast and enabling front-line agencies like WFP to save lives. This speed and flexibility are critical and required now more than ever. WFP thanks the donors who support CERF for another year of strong and effective partnership. Together we can, and we will, support those who need it most.

David Beasley, Executive Director

WHO



CERF allocated **\$74M** or **14%** of overall funding to WHO – an increase from 9% in 2020. WHO's health interventions across **31 countries** accounted for 56% of CERF funding to the health sector – the top recipient sector in 2021. CERF-funded emergency health kits enabled WHO to provide essential services to **2.7M people** in **12 countries*** and helped to avert a collapse of the health care system in Afghanistan.



In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic and recent Ebola epidemics in Africa, CERF was a key source for the prompt, flexible funding WHO needs to respond quickly and efficiently. In emergency situations, delays cost lives.

Dr. Tedros A. Ghebreyesus, Director General

IOM



IOM received **\$63M** equivalent to 12% of total CERF funding – up from 8% in 2020. In 2021, IOM more than doubled its CERF-funded **CVA** to **\$4.9M** and provided life-saving assistance to displaced people and host communities in **19 countries**.



CERF provided substantial and critical funding to IOM in 2021. With CERF's essential support, IOM delivered life-saving assistance and protection services to displaced populations and vulnerable returnees in over 20 new and protracted emergencies. It allowed IOM to quickly address the needs of the most vulnerable affected populations in critical emergencies including in Afghanistan, Haiti, Yemen and across Africa in Ethiopia, DRC, Mozambique, South Sudan and Somalia as well as the Sahel.

António Vitorino, Director General

UNHCR



With **\$58M**, CERF enabled UNHCR to assist vulnerable refugees and displaced people across **19 countries**, including the provision of shelter and non-food items for some **221K people** across **8 countries**.* In 2021, CERF became UNHCR's largest donor to support the needs of IDPs – accounting for 16% of the available funding.



CERF continues to be a crucial donor for UNHCR. As forced displacement reached record levels in 2021 and vulnerabilities were compounded by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, CERF contributions are often the first resources available to UNHCR at the outset of emergencies, enabling the delivery of time-critical assistance and protection that saves the lives of millions of people caught up in crisis. In addition, CERF funds provide a lifeline to refugees and displaced people in otherwise forgotten and underfunded crises, reducing their suffering and undoubtedly saving lives.

Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner

UNFPA

UNFPA received a record **\$48M**, or **9%** of overall CERF funding – an increase from 6% in 2020. A global block grant of **\$17M** enabled UNFPA in close collaboration with local women's organizations to assist almost **1M people** across **11 countries** with GBV protection and SRH services.



CERF funding can mean the difference between life and death for women in humanitarian crises seeking protection, services to give birth safely and treatment for rape and intimate partner violence. UNFPA thanks all governments that contribute to the Fund. Your support for essential sexual and reproductive health care and services to prevent and respond to gender-based violence is a lifeline to women and girls in their time of dire need.

Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director



FAO

With **\$47M**, CERF enabled FAO to respond to food security crises and threats to people's livelihoods in **17 countries**. With CERF support, FAO was able to provide agricultural inputs such as seeds or tools to almost **1M people** in **15 countries**.



Thanks to CERF, FAO can act fast to assist farmers hit by shocks get quickly back on their feet and produce food for their communities. In Afghanistan, the wheat seed and fertilizers provided to drought-affected farmers in time for winter planting will enable them to feed their families for an entire year. CERF contributions have also been essential to FAO's response in northern Ethiopia, through the provision of agricultural and livestock inputs to conflict-affected farmers and pastoralists. Anticipating hunger means protecting livelihoods so food continues being produced where it is needed most. That means investing in humanitarian agricultural assistance.

Qu Dongyu, Director General



UNDP



UNDP received a total of **\$5M** from CERF in 2021 to support livelihoods recovery for the most vulnerable in **5 countries**.

UNMAS



With **\$3M** in CERF funding, UNMAS reached **142K** people with critical mine awareness and risk reduction activities in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, oPt and Syria. UNOPS served as the grant manager.

UNWRA



With **\$2.5M** in CERF funding, UNWRA provided education services and shelter for over **153K** Palestine refugees. UNWRA also received **2** loans totalling **\$43M** to avert an imminent interruption of essential assistance.



In the aftermath of the May 2021 hostilities in Gaza, a CERF grant helped UNRWA scale up its immediate humanitarian response in support of Palestine refugees. Grants and loans provided by CERF in recent years have been crucial to maintain UNRWA critical lifeline services to millions of Palestine refugees across the Middle East. UNRWA remains sincerely grateful for the support of CERF and OCHA.

Phillippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General

UN Women



UN Women received a record **\$8M**, CERF enabled \$8M – an increase from 2.2M in 2020 – largely due to a global grant. Together with local women's organizations, the agency assisted some **180K people** in **6 countries** with protection and health services in response to GBV.

Sima Bahous, Executive Director

Thanks to CERF's Global Grant support, UN Women, partnering with UNFPA, has responded to the humanitarian crises in Bangladesh (Cox's Bazar), Cameroon, Colombia, Ethiopia, Myanmar and the occupied Palestinian territory. Targeted support across these six countries strengthened the leadership and gender-based violence (GBV) services provided by 161 local women's organizations and 93 community protection networks. The inclusion of women's organizations to strengthen gender equitable humanitarian outcomes is a priority for UN Women. This support from CERF is a significant contribution to our efforts to meet these goals.



*Based on standard indicator (see page 65).

CERF Advisory Group

The **CERF Advisory Group** was established to advise the Secretary-General, through the ERC, on the use and impact of the Fund. Membership selection procedures are designed to ensure gender and geographic diversity amongst the 19 members of the Group. Two official Advisory Group meetings were held in 2021 in May and November (due to the COVID-19 pandemic these were held virtually). Additionally, CERF organized two thematic webinars on CERF resource mobilization and external reviews of the Fund ([see pages 20-25](#) and [80-83](#)).

In May, the Advisory Group discussed the role of CERF in the humanitarian landscape and the humanitarian system's response capacity with the former ERC, Mark Lowcock. The group commended CERF for its increasingly important strategic role in the humanitarian landscape, including the innovations introduced by the Fund to enable a more effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as CERF's contribution to ensuring positive system change throughout its efforts to bring anticipatory action to scale.

In November, the Advisory Group was introduced to the new ERC, Martin Griffiths, and discussed the broader humanitarian landscape and the humanitarian system's response capacity, as well as the ERC's views on CERF's role as an enabler of humanitarian response. The ERC outlined priority areas for ensuring that the humanitarian system is fit-for-purpose and able to provide the best possible support to people

in crises, including: the need for more clearly defined efforts for protracted crises, and more coordinated and defined roles across the triple-nexus; the importance of improved humanitarian access; and the need to ensure improved protection for vulnerable people caught in humanitarian emergencies. The ERC emphasized CERF's ability to enable fast, agile and strategic funding towards key priorities, and the importance of anticipatory action as a key tool for saving lives in a timely and cost-efficient manner. Finally, the ERC called upon the Advisory Group to support CERF fundraising and advocacy efforts, and to help ensure that CERF remains aligned with the priorities of the evolving humanitarian context.

In both official meetings, the Group reaffirmed its support to prioritizing the needs of the most vulnerable in CERF allocations, including women and girls, people living with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, through both mainstreaming and targeted allocations ([see pages 20-25](#) and [80-83](#)).

The Group commended CERF's innovations to better meet humanitarian needs, including its support for anticipatory action. At the same time, the Group noted the importance of CERF remaining true to its mandate and continuing its regular allocations from the RR and UFE windows. To support system-wide learning, the group emphasized the importance of documenting lessons from innovative CERF allocations and sharing them with the broader humanitarian system. The Advisory Group applauded CERF for the improvements to its reporting and for the development of online tools.

Other topics discussed included ways to deepen and diversify the CERF donor base, and opportunities for strengthening reporting on impact of CERF funding. Throughout the year, CERF worked closely with the CERF Advisory Group, not least with a view to helping members fulfil their functions as champions of CERF. Advisory Group members played a significant role as advocates for the Fund in 2021. Detailed recommendations and conclusions are published on the [CERF website](#).



Enabling girls in Afghanistan to go to school. Helping mothers in the Democratic Republic of Congo to overcome gender-based violence. Providing families in Haiti with shelter following an earthquake. Three telling examples of how, in 2021, CERF supported people affected by crises to survive and strengthen their resilience. And there are many more. They are my inspiration in chairing the Advisory Group of this 'fund for all, by all'.

Marriët Schuurman, Chair of the CERF Advisory Group and Director of the Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

Governance of CERF

ERC, Martin Griffiths, signs a contribution agreement for CERF and the CBPFs between OCHA and the Qatar Fund for Development.
©OCHA/Palmero

Commitment to learning

CERF is committed to continuous learning to ensure that its approaches and processes are fit-for-purpose and well adapted to the changing requirements of the humanitarian landscape, while at the same time disseminating learning with partners and thereby contributing to support positive change in the humanitarian system.

CERF builds knowledge in several ways, including through consultations with partners at the global and field levels, and through formal evaluations and studies, as well as through CERF After Action Reviews, grant reports and dedicated learning initiatives of thematic allocations—all of which provide valuable insights into in CERF's strategic impact.

New learning initiatives in 2021

In 2021, new initiatives were launched to further improve learning for CERF and the broader humanitarian system, including the establishment of contact groups on gender and disability inclusion. Internally, OCHA has made significant investments to boost learning and knowledge transfer for the OCHA-managed funds.



Guidance, Learning and Reporting Section

In 2021, the **Guidance, Learning and Reporting Section (GLRS) was established within the Pooled Fund Management Branch**. The objective of the GLRS is to further improve the strategic use of the OCHA-managed funds through strengthened learning for CERF and the CBPFs and joined-up approaches to policy development across the Funds. The Section will also lead on improving reporting and communication of CERF and CBPFs results and added value informed by better data and evaluative evidence.



Anticipatory action

During 2021, CERF continued to ensure that **dedicated learning activities were built into all CERF allocations made under the anticipatory action frameworks**. OCHA and its partners have developed a multi-component learning framework that combines agency-specific monitoring and evaluation, process learning and independent impact evaluations to systematically capture evidence and learning from these initiatives. Pilot activations in, for example, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Somalia have already yielded compelling



Gender and Disability Contact Groups

results, indicating that anticipatory action strengthens the resilience and coping capacity of affected people, enabling them to better face shocks with dignity and on their own terms. Learning from the anticipatory action frameworks is considered a common good for the humanitarian community and results and reports will be made [publicly available](#). (See pages 54-58)

In 2021, OCHA established a **Pooled Fund Gender Contact Group and a Pooled Fund Disability Inclusion Contact Group**. Composed of independent experts from the humanitarian sector, the groups were set up to support learning on past and current practices, and provide advice on further strengthening GBV and gender, as well as disability inclusion in the work of CERF and the CBPFs. During 2021, the groups provided several important recommendations to inform and improve Fund practices going forward (see page 37).



Somalia. A local farmer herds livestock at her farm near Badham. CERF funding allows FAO to provide emergency support and training for drought-affected communities in Somalia.
©FAO Somalia/Isak Amin

Thematic reviews in 2021

Every year since 2009, CERF has commissioned independent studies under CERF's [Performance and Accountability Framework](#). These studies assess CERF's added value to humanitarian responses around the world and seek to provide an appropriate level of assurance that funds are managed properly and lead to meaningful results in line with CERF's mandate.

In 2021, CERF commissioned three reviews of four innovative allocations launched in 2020: CERF's allocation to [NGOs to support the COVID-19 response, cash allocations](#) to stave off famine in high-risk countries, and two allocations to support [GBV prevention and response](#). The reviews were important stocktaking exercises for CERF, helping to identify best practices, lessons learned and areas for improvement. They also provided relevant input for the broader humanitarian community by informing of lessons learned through these innovative allocations. Detailed management responses to each set of recommendations will inform the Fund's future work in these areas.



Review of CERF cash allocation

In November 2020, the ERC announced an allocation of \$100 million from CERF's RR window to help stave off famine in high-risk countries, of which \$80 million was to support CVA in six countries.³⁶ CERF subsequently commissioned a study to assess the added value of this allocation. Since the allocation was the first of its kind to focus exclusively on one specific assistance modality across multiple crises, the study sought to identify best practices, lessons learned and areas for improvement to help orient future allocations.

The study found that by providing a crucial boost to funding for CVA responses in severely food-insecure contexts, the CERF allocation had largely met its objective of helping to avert hunger and promoting the use of cash, especially multi-purpose cash, in emergency famine responses. Moreover, the allocation was an important signal to other donors that multi-purpose cash was relevant and effective for famine response, even in volatile contexts with fluctuating markets such as in Afghanistan and South Sudan. Multi-purpose cash proved to be a feasible response option in areas at highest risk and findings from post-distribution monitoring demonstrated that providing cash to the most vulnerable households improved their food security.

The study observed that at the strategic level the CERF allocation helped to unblock obstacles to multi-purpose cash in famine response: it promoted the use of multi-purpose cash as a strategic priority; demonstrated that cash-based responses can reach the most food-insecure areas; strengthened partners' capacity to deliver cash at scale; and provided an injection of funds for new ways of programming.

Finally, the study concluded that by promoting a "cash first" approach, in line with global commitments, CERF can be a dynamic source of funding for cash-based emergency responses, and CERF allocations can play a pivotal role in strengthening the ability of country operations to support the most vulnerable with multi-purpose cash assistance.

³⁶ Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, DRC, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen.



Review of CERF COVID-19 allocation to NGOs

In 2020, the ERC announced an unprecedented CERF allocation to increase funding to front-line NGOs to enable life-saving activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of CERF's wider response to the COVID-19 crisis, the allocation channelled \$25 million to 24 NGOs supporting programming across six countries, with IOM serving as a grant manager. The allocation focused on health (including mental health and psychosocial support) and WASH, with particular consideration given to projects addressing gender equality issues and GBV, as well as the needs of people with disabilities.

The study found that the NGO allocation was a pragmatic response to an exceptional set of challenges that humanitarian actors faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was seen as a laudable effort to use the tools that OCHA has at its disposal to fashion a solution to a clear and pressing problem in resource allocation across the humanitarian system. Overall, the allocation was able to meet its primary objective of moving money to front-line NGOs to enable them to deliver life-saving activities. The allocation was, in most cases, the first funding – or the first significant funding – NGO partners had received for their COVID-19 response.

The study also found that the allocation helped to ensure coverage of key priorities and gaps. The allocation targeted funds in complementarity with established COVID-19 preparedness and response priorities, and in line with geographic priorities determined with reference to assessments of severity and risk, and underfunding. The size of the allocations allowed NGOs to deliver programmes of meaningful impact and scale, including setting up critical services such as isolation and treatment centres.

At a strategic level, the study recommended that, ahead of any potential future allocations of a similar nature, CERF should identify the respective comparative advantages of the grant-manager model employed through IOM versus the traditional UN partnership model. Nevertheless, the study concluded that the allocation demonstrated that OCHA now has a new potential tool in its financing toolbox should it need to deploy such a model again, and observed that the allocation had generated many practical lessons that could strengthen any potential future NGO allocations.

Jordan. A woman learns tailoring skills as part of a vocational training programme at a UN Women-supported safe space. Through a CERF block grant, UN Women supports women and girls who have experienced GBV or are at risk of GBV across 11 countries.

©UN Women/Lauren Rooney



Review of CERF GBV allocations



In 2020, CERF made two allocations to increase its support to the prevention of and response to GBV. The first initiative involved the provision of a dedicated GBV envelope of \$5.5 million as part of CERF's second UFE round of 2020. As with other UFE allocations, priorities were determined at the country level under the leadership of the RC/HC.

The second initiative involved a \$25 million special allocation from CERF's RR window specifically to support GBV programming using a two-year block-grant. Under this allocation, UNFPA was granted \$17 million and UN Women \$8 million, with the stipulation that at least 30 per cent of the funding should be passed on to local women-led organizations working on GBV. The two recipient agencies distributed the funding to their country offices in the first quarter of 2021, supporting GBV programming in 11 countries.

In 2021, CERF commissioned a review to examine how the allocations had catalysed GBV programming and to identify initial lessons learned on the potential advantages and disadvantages of these two approaches.

Almost all the interviewees in the study had very positive perceptions of the earmarked allocations. The UFE allocation was also seen as an effective means of signalling to the humanitarian system and other donors the critical need for greater attention to GBV. The study noted that the recent GBV-related updates to the CERF life-saving criteria were widely considered to be very positive and that the block-grant's flexibility in the application of the criteria – along with the extended duration of the grants – had allowed recipient agencies working in partnership with local women-led organizations to better address identified GBV needs.

The study also noted that CERF's requirement that at least 30 per cent of the block-grant should be passed on to women-led organizations was seen as innovative and should be considered for all GBV-specific allocations. Identifying and partnering with new organizations, however, was a challenge given the short time frames for preparing proposals. The study recommended continued advocacy on the importance of using CERF funds for GBV and argued that GBV-specific allocations should continue, with a view to increasing attention to and funding for GBV in emergencies.

Transparency and accountability



Ensuring full transparency and real-time data on CERF-supported operations is a top priority for CERF. Donors entrust the ERC on behalf of the Secretary-General, with managing hundreds of millions in unearmarked CERF funding to achieve the best possible humanitarian outcomes. CERF's transparency and accountability processes are guided by the CERF [Performance and Accountability Framework](#) that delineates accountability mechanisms and reporting processes for the Fund. The framework is used by CERF to clarify accountability, performance and management expectations among different actors and around a set of agreed outputs, outcomes and impacts.



Milestones towards greater transparency

In 2021, CERF continued to diversify its online management and transparency tools. These include an [online allocation tracker](#) that provides real-time information on each CERF allocation, including the rationale for CERF funding and the assistance provided. This tool gives stakeholders the option of receiving e-mail notifications of new allocations as soon as these are decided.

In 2021, OCHA saw the launch of the [CERF Data Hub](#), which provides a wide array of interactive visuals, allowing stakeholders easy access to data on how individual contributions have been allocated across

global humanitarian operations since CERF's inception in 2006. It complements the allocation data already available through CERF's website.

2021 also launched the [OCHA Pooled Funds Data Hub](#), a one-stop data visualization platform providing data on CERF and CBPF allocations and donor contributions. The Hub also offers historical information on both CERF and CBPF allocations, and funding flows can be viewed by region, country, partner, donor and project.

In 2021, CERF and CBPFs continued working on One GMS. This will enhance real-time communication of allocations through the standardization of data published across the Pooled Funds Data Hubs. One GMS will also help to harmonize CERF and CBPF processes. OCHA expects to launch One GMS in two phases in 2022. The first will include the launch of a common CERF and CBPF project proposal form and online CERF allocation module. The second phase will include modules governing project revisions, as well as narrative and financial reports.

In line with its commitment to promote transparency, CERF abides by International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards to ensure information is easy to access, understand and use for the broader public.

In 2021, CERF continued to invest in robust reporting under the IATI. As a result, CERF's IATI transparency score has remained stable at 95 per cent, placing CERF



Monitoring fraud investigations

Fraud poses a serious risk to humanitarian efforts. Potential cases of fraud related to CERF grants are treated in accordance with the rules, regulations and oversight mechanisms of the recipient UN agencies.

To ensure adequate transparency and accountability, CERF guidance sets out procedures for informing donors of potential cases of fraud in CERF-funded projects implemented by UN agencies and their partners. The guidance, developed in consultation with the CERF Advisory Group and recipient agencies, outlines the communication responsibilities of recipient agencies and CERF.

To ensure effective and consistent monitoring of potential fraud cases, CERF employs internal standard operating procedures covering all phases of the process, from initial notification by partners to the conclusion of investigations. In line with the communications guidance, interested donors are kept informed of any new cases reported to CERF, as well as any developments in ongoing investigations. The annual report of the Secretary-General on CERF also provides a summary of reported cases each year.

Twice a year, CERF contacts agencies to remind them to report any new cases of possible fraudulent use of CERF funds and to provide updates on existing cases. CERF monitors ongoing cases and remains in close contact with the relevant agencies until cases have been fully investigated. Subject to the outcome of investigations, CERF may work with recipient agencies to recover funds where feasible and appropriate. CERF shares information through twice-yearly letters with contributing donors and provides an overview to the Advisory Group in its official meetings. In 2021, OCHA consolidated its management of fraud processes for both CERF and CBPFs into one organizational Oversight and Compliance Unit to ensure standardization of fraud processes between the two funds.

among the top 10 of the 1,400 organizations publishing their data in IATI standards. CERF also continues to publish all grant decisions on its [website](#), with the [Financial Tracking Service](#) and via the [Humanitarian Data Exchange](#). CERF's Annual Results Reports and a broad range of infographics are also available on the CERF website, along with allocation methodologies, data sets and summaries of country selection processes for all UFE allocations.



Accountability in the use of funds

Reporting and monitoring at country-level is the basis for giving an account of the use of CERF funds to the Secretary-General and donors.

The RC/HC has the overall responsibility at country-level for overseeing the prioritization and implementation of a CERF-funded response and reporting on the implementation progress and results achieved when project activities are completed. Recipient agencies are responsible for monitoring the implementation of individual CERF projects, providing interim updates to give the RC/HC and the HCT assurance that CERF-funded activities are implemented as intended and to enable corrective actions to be taken if necessary. While the RC/HC takes the lead, the reporting process after the implementation of CERF grants is a joint effort by all relevant stakeholders at country level, helping to foster a collective reflection on the CERF process and the results achieved. These reports are published on the CERF website and shared by the RC/HC with all relevant stakeholders at country level.

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	Accountability to affected people	MPC	Multi-purpose cash
AHF	Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund	NGO	Non-governmental organization
CAR	Central African Republic	OCHA	Organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
CBPF	Country-based Pooled Fund	PSEA	Protection against sexual exploitation
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund	RR	Rapid Response
CVA	Cash and voucher assistance	SEA	Sexual exploitation and abuse
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator	SSHF	South Sudan Humanitarian Fund
GAM	Gender with Age Marker	UFE	Underfunded Emergencies
GBV	Gender-based violence	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
GLRS	Guidance, Learning and Reporting Section	UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Services
GMS	Grant Management System	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team	UNOPS	United Nations Operations Services
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative	WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
IDP	Internally displaced person	WFP	World Food Programme
IOM	International Organization for Migration	WHO	World Health Organization
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification		
LGBTQIA	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual		

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BANK TRANSFER TO CERF

Contact the CERF secretariat in New York, USA

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PAYMENT BY CHEQUE

Cheques need to be made out to the United Nations Foundation. The memo line of the cheques should read "Donation to CERF."

Cheques should be mailed to:
United Nations Foundation/Central Emergency Response Fund
P.O. Box 96721
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Please include your name and contact details so that CERF can track and respond to your contribution accordingly. Note: US tax-deductible donations can also be made via money order or wire transfer.

REAL-TIME INFORMATION



For real-time contribution and allocation data with easy-to-use filters and views please visit:

Pooled Fund Data Hub
<https://pfdata.unocha.org>

CERF Data Hub
cerf.data.unocha.org

POOLED FUND IMPACT STORIES



For a collection of impact stories from OCHA's pooled funds:
pooledfunds.impact.unocha.org/fund/cerf

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