



ECOSOC HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS SEGMENT

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

21–23 June 2017

Title:

Meeting Urgent Humanitarian Needs: the UN Humanitarian Pooled Funds in the Post WHS era

Sponsors and Organizers:

UNOCHA (Funding Coordination Section & CERF secretariat)

Date and Time: Friday, 23 June 2017, 13:15 – 14:45

Room XXVI, Palais des Nations, Geneva

This is one of the side-events to be convened during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, in keeping with this year's theme: *Restoring Humanity and Leaving No One Behind: Working together to reduce people's humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.*

Background and objectives

The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) identified financing as a key enabling and catalytic factor in meeting and reducing humanitarian needs. In response, aid organizations and donors agreed on a “Grand Bargain” (GB) to promote a more efficient, effective and accountable humanitarian financing system. As part of a broader set of reforms, signatories to the GB sought to better leverage UN humanitarian pooled funds and agreed to increase funding channelled through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs). In his 2016 *Agenda for Humanity*, the UN Secretary-General called for an increase in CERF's annual funding target to \$1 billion and for the proportion of humanitarian appeal funding channelled through CBPFs to increase to 15 per cent by 2018. The increase of CERF's annual funding target was endorsed by the General Assembly in December 2016.

Over the past year, CERF and CBPFs have played a key role in delivering against WHS and GB commitments, strengthening the humanitarian community's ability to deliver timely, coordinated and principled assistance as an important step towards the global commitment to “leave no one behind”. This was particularly evident in the four countries currently facing, or at risk of, famine - Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen - where some \$240 million in coordinated allocations from CERF and CBPFs have enabled quick humanitarian action. Under the leadership of Humanitarian Coordinators, the Funds were used in synergy as complementary tools to support the most critical famine response and prevention activities prioritized in Humanitarian Response Plans. By leveraging their comparative advantages – such as CERF's disbursement speed and CBPFs' ability to directly fund local NGOs – strategic use of these Funds helped partners deliver a stronger collective response, ensuring maximum impact of limited resources.

By exploring the impact of the funds in these countries, this side event will give Member States and key stakeholders an opportunity to better understand how CERF and CBPFs have advanced WHS and GB ambitions in areas such as more unearmarked funding, improved support to national/local responders, greater transparency and wider

participation. Country-level examples will be used to demonstrate how the funds work in synergy as mutually reinforcing tools to enable the humanitarian community to save lives, alleviate suffering and preserve the dignity of people affected by conflict and disasters. The audience in the room will be asked to contribute to discussions around the discussion points mentioned below.

Discussion points

1. What comparative advantages do CERF and CBPFs bring in terms of advancing the commitments of the WHS and GB (particularly using examples from the countries facing or at risk of famine)?

Areas for discussion:

- The unique nature of the CERF and CBPFs and their added value for donors, UN agencies and implementing partners.
- Availability of fast and timely funding for better-planned responses (e.g. early action).
- Less earmarking and funding channeled to the greatest needs and to the best-placed frontline responders (including local actors).
- Strengthened leadership and coordination systems at the country level.
- Improved allocation of limited resources based on need and context, through an inclusive and transparent process in support of coordinated, prioritized response plans.
- Investment in improved operational conditions and activities that empower the wider response (e.g. common services like security, communications and logistics).
- Trusted, transparent and cost-effective funding options for large and small donors to support coordinated responses to major and often complex emergencies.
- Support to cash-based programming.

2. How could larger pooled funds have further contributed to prevent and respond to 2016-2017 famine?

Areas for discussion:

- Enhanced capacity of the humanitarian community's ability to deliver more timely, coordinated, strategic and effective response.
- Earlier initial allocations.
- Other benefits of larger funds.

3. How do we ensure that OCHA's pooled funds are resourced at a level that furthers WHS commitments?

Areas for discussion:

- Member States' responsibility to ensure fully funded pooled funds (announcements by Member States of recent donation increases and call on other Member States for solidary funding).
- Initiatives that Member States could lead to support advocacy and resource mobilization for pooled funds.
- Other avenues that can be pursued to complement Member State outreach and contributions, e.g. innovative finance and private sector.

Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations

The side-event will demonstrate progress in delivering against WHS and GB commitments through CERF and CBPFs using examples from countries affected by, or at risk of, famine. Stakeholders will also be able to provide concrete suggestions on how to improve the strategic use of the Funds.

By promoting a better understanding of the value, role and combined potential of CERF and CBPFs, and their contribution to improving the humanitarian financing system, stakeholders will better appreciate the advantages, potential gains and urgency of increased funding channeled through these mechanisms.

Format:

Panel discussion followed by Q&A

Chair and moderator:

- *Mr. Stephen O'Brien*, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Panel composition:

- *Ms. Antje Leendertse*, Ambassador for Germany, Geneva
- *Mr. Eugene Owusu*, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UN Resident Coordinator, and Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Representative of UNDP in South Sudan
- *Mr. Amir Abdulla*, Deputy Executive Director of the WFP
- *Mr. James Keah Ninrew*, Executive Director, Universal Intervention and Development Organization (UNIDO) South Sudan

Background Material

1. [About CERF](#) and [About CBPFs](#)
2. [CERF and the Grand Bargain](#) and [CBPFs and the Grand Bargain](#)
3. ["Too important to fail" - Report of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing"](#)
4. [Agenda for Humanity: Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit](#)
5. [The Grand Bargain: A Shared Commitment to Help People in Need](#)
6. [WHS High-Level Leaders' Roundtable – Financing: Investing in Humanity](#)
7. [Pooled funds support for famine prevention and response \(Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen\)](#)
8. [CERF Results Report](#)
9. [CERF – Country Based Pooled Fund Complementarity Paper](#)
10. [Biographies panelists](#)

Contact

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