BASIC FACTS ABOUT COUNTRY BASED HUMANITARIAN POOLED FUNDS

FEBRUARY 2010

EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUNDS

The name **Emergency Response Fund (ERF)** is used as an umbrella term covering a broad number of country-based funds sharing the general characteristics outlined below. The specifics of the individual funds reflect the country contexts in which they have been established and therefore vary. ERFs are known under different names in different countries including Humanitarian Response Funds (HRF).

An ERF is established to provide NGOs and UN with a rapid and flexible in-country funding mechanism to help respond to small shocks and meet the short-term emergency needs of vulnerable communities. The aim of an ERF is to provide initial funding for a sudden onset emergency to enable humanitarian partners to respond to a crisis without delay. An ERF is not intended to provide core funding to projects or programmes in a protracted crises, although some ERFs may provide funding to critical gaps in the CAP (Consolidated Appeals Process) on an exceptional basis.

An ERF is under the overall management and oversight of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) with day to day management and financial administration performed by OCHA. Funds are channelled through OCHA to NGOs and UN agencies. When needs emerge partners submit proposals for funding to OCHA, and the HC makes decisions on ERF grants supported by a technical Review Board and by sector/cluster groups. An Advisory Board with donor, UN and NGO participation advises the HC on policy issues and strategic direction of the fund.

Generally, ERFs are relatively small in size (less than $10 million), provides small to medium sized grants (less then $500,000) and predominantly funds NGOs. However, the flexibility of ERFs mean that not all funds adhere to this profile.

As at February 2010 there are 16 ERFs managed by OCHA: Afghanistan, Columbia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, oPt, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

COMMON HUMANITARIAN FUNDS

The main objective of a **Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF)** is to enable the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and the humanitarian community to ensure timely and predictable funding of core activities within a Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) by providing CHF grants to priority projects included in the CAP. All organisations participating in the CAP are eligible to receive CHF funding. Allocations from a CHF are based on a consultative allocation process that engages sector/cluster groups and other relevant stakeholders at country level in a comprehensive prioritisation exercise. Allocation rounds are typically undertaken two to three times a year, with the majority of CHF funds allocated at the beginning of the year.

While the HC is responsible for the overall management and oversight of the CHF, the day to day management is performed by OCHA, and the financial administration is undertaken by UNDP. UNDP receives and manages donor contributions to the fund. Based on allocation proposals developed and submitted by sector/cluster groups, and supported by a technical Review Board, the HC makes final decisions on CHF grants. An Advisory Board with donor, UN and NGO participation advises the HC on policy issues and strategic direction of the fund.

A CHF also maintains an Emergency Reserve that is used by the HC to respond to unforeseen emergency needs outside the CAP. The CHF Emergency Reserve is similar in function to an ERF and the reserve typically consists of 10% of donor funds contributed to the CHF.

CHFs are established to respond to protracted humanitarian emergencies and should have a critical mass of funding compared to the size of the overall humanitarian response.

As at February 2010, CHFs exist in Central African Republic (CAR), DRC, and Sudan. The DRC and Sudan funds each attract more than $100 million from donors annually.

For further details on ERFs and CHFs - including on specific country funds - please contact:
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