

**Humanitarian  
Outcomes**

# Independent Review of the Value Added of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in Colombia

## **Final Report**

An independent team of professionals providing evidence-based analysis and policy consultations to governments and international organisations on their humanitarian response efforts.

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# Executive Summary

Colombia is a highly complex context for humanitarian operations and, consequently, for the application of the CERF. Humanitarian needs in Colombia fall into two categories; those primarily related to conflict and those resulting from natural disasters; and each has a distinct set of political sensitivities with central government and separate national response systems. As a single and ostensibly coordinated international system works to respond to both sets of need, the ‘normal’ issues in implementing humanitarian reform are especially challenging. The international system struggles to create a space in which to undertake a somewhat autonomous response based on humanitarian principles, whilst simultaneously acknowledging the right of the government to lead activities. It is essential that the findings and recommendations of this review are placed firmly in context, where coordination, as well as conflict, continues to evolve.

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## Transparency and inclusiveness of CERF process

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Simply put, the UN agencies in Colombia view the CERF (especially the under-funded envelope<sup>1</sup>) as a proprietary funding channel. To date, the initial geographical and sectoral priorities for allocation of each under-funded round have been taken in an ad hoc group, the ‘CERF Task Force’. To date, this group has consisted largely of UN Agencies who were recipients of the very first allocations of CERF funding. As such, the initial allocation decisions at national level has been very much Agency, rather than cluster-driven and partnership has been very much a secondary consideration.

The absence at the national level of a consolidated appeal (CAP) or similar instrument has been one major factor in undermining the prospect of a more open allocation process. The production of such a plan is a key priority in the IASC Inter-Cluster mission report<sup>2</sup> of 2010. The CERF report for Colombia in 2010, prepared by OCHA on behalf of the RC/HC, also notes that such a plan is urgently required and should serve as the basis for allocation decisions in the future. The ERF and its allocation mechanisms were not a specific focus of this study. A cursory analysis, however, suggests that the allocation and management structures of the ERF contain a number of features which could improve the openness of the CERF process, including the use of a risk index for decision making and an Advisory Board or other oversight group with donor participation.

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## CERF support to humanitarian reform

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In respect of humanitarian reform, the findings of the review are very consistent with those of the inter-cluster mission. In a challenging political environment and with questionable levels of support from all stakeholders, clusters were uneven

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1 Hereafter referred to as the ‘UFE’.

2 ‘Inter-cluster Coordination Mission to Colombia 21 - 30 June 2010’- Mission report: [http://www.who.int/hac/global\\_health\\_cluster/newsletter/2/colombia\\_inter\\_cluster\\_mission\\_report.pdf](http://www.who.int/hac/global_health_cluster/newsletter/2/colombia_inter_cluster_mission_report.pdf).

in terms of operational capacity at the start of 2010 and had little operational influence. Placed in this context, the CERF alone provides too small an incentive to strengthen the role of the clusters.

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### Timeliness of response and ‘gap filling’

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For both the windows, the CERF met performance targets. For the RR, while there was a consensus that international response was slow when seen against the whole arc of the ‘winter’ floods of early 2010, there was recognition of the importance of the interventions, especially given the absence of a rapid or effective response by government in isolated areas. For the UFE, where timing is perceived to be less of an issue, one significant delay was reported in arranging a sub-contracting arrangement with an INGO. The majority of partnership arrangements are with local entities and little data is available on these arrangements.

The coastal areas on Colombia, especially the Pacific Coast, are perceived to be underserved. The CERF goes some way to filling this gap in service provision and is perceived as important. As noted in the previous section, UN Agencies tend to use the UFE to deepen their presence in areas where they have projects running with other funding sources. Anecdotal evidence from Agencies and partners in El Charco suggests that the Fund was used successfully to fill programmatic gaps and to expand the coverage of key services.

There was no evidence that vertical reporting and monitoring is inadequate, but it is possible to say that the CERF has had little operational impact on monitoring or evaluation. As with the technical processes involved in putting together CERF submissions, there was a general sense that UN Agencies had become accustomed to CERF process and had time to match it to internal systems. The inter-agency mission<sup>3</sup> in Chocó sets a valuable precedent for inter-agency follow up, whilst falling short of a full evaluation. There is sufficient anecdotal evidence of successful outcomes from CERF projects that UN agencies should view evaluation as an opportunity to demonstrate value and for advocacy purposes. Ideally, improved joint planning and needs assessment, as part of the Common Humanitarian Framework, would be part of a joint management approach. .

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### Recommendations

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1. In keeping with the findings of the Inter Cluster mission report and the CERF annual report of 2010; decisions on the CERF UFE allocation need to be taken in light of the evolving Common Humanitarian Framework, cluster and inter-cluster based process.<sup>4</sup> The more that this process is based on joint needs assessment, the better.

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3 ‘Informe de Misión Interagencial Balance CERF UFE – Quibdó (2009-10), OCHA – 11 April 2011’. Report of an OCHA led, inter-agency assessment exercise.

4 This does not automatically mean that a greater proportion of funds would be implemented through INGOs. An open and inclusive discussion of geographical and sectoral priorities is, however, required.

2. Greater complementarity should be sought between processes for the ERF and CERF. As is practiced in some other countries where two pooled funding mechanisms operate, both looking at priority needs, joint mechanisms, either formal or informal could be instituted.
3. Whilst standard monitoring and reporting mechanisms are in place, evaluation mechanisms need to be strengthened in general:
  - In a context where national partners are implementing a high proportion of CERF projects and oversight is relatively light on the ground, **UN agencies should follow up projects more rigorously as a matter of course.**
  - Whilst the CERF is only ever likely to provide partial and short term funding, the HC, via OCHA use the Fund as a lever to institutionalise joint working on evaluation.

Map of Colombia



The map shows the enormous extent of flooding in Colombia as of April 2010. It also demonstrates the challenge of summarising the effects of flooding at a national level, given the relatively small numbers of affected families over huge and diverse geographical areas.

**Source:** [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CCE5AF6D98D1A262C125770C002C0838-FL-2010-000076-COL\\_0421.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CCE5AF6D98D1A262C125770C002C0838-FL-2010-000076-COL_0421.pdf)

# Section 1. Introduction and the Colombian Context

This report is the result of an independent review of CERF funding in Colombia. It is one of four country studies which make up part of the implementation of the Fund's Performance and Evaluation Framework (PAF) for 2010. The findings are based on a visit to Colombia between 25 April and 4 May 2011 and a complementary review of documents related to the Colombian context. As per the studies TOR, the primary focus of the discussions was CERF funding to Colombia during 2010, however, discussions related to earlier CERF allocations, and the first CERF allocation in 2011 are included where relevant. The visit consisted of a series of interviews with those involved with CERF processes in 2010, including UN staff, officials of the Government of Colombia and NGOs. In order to gather the views of government officials and understand the influence of coordination structures at sub-nation level, the visit also included a two-day trip to El Charco, in Narino Province, an area affected by flooding and violence in the southern Pacific coastal area. The full TOR is at annex B. In keeping with the TOR and discussions with the CERF Secretariat, interviews were semi-structured and based on an interview guide expanded from a template developed for the pilot study in Kenya in 2009. A full list of those interviewed is at Annex A. Sincere thanks are due to María José Torres and Gianni Morelli at OCHA Colombia for organising a comprehensive itinerary and for enthusiastic support throughout the research process.

Coordination systems in Colombia continue to evolve, as does the country's ongoing conflict. The CERF is utilised in a complex environment into which a number of dynamics are at play. It is essential that the findings and recommendations of this review are placed in context and viewed in light of recent studies on coordination in Colombia. The description below aims to set a backdrop specifically for the use of the CERF and, as such to introduce issues deemed of particular importance by respondents for this review. It does not set out to detail government structures or the political environment in Colombia in a comprehensive fashion.

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## Colombian context

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Colombia covers over 1.1 million square kilometres in four topographic zones: central highlands, Caribbean and Pacific coastal lowlands and the Eastern lowlands, which extend into the Amazon rainforest at their extremity. Colombia has a long history of democratic government but has been home to an internal armed conflict for over 50 years. Violence has been exacerbated by the production and trafficking of narcotics and has caused high levels of internal displacement. Human rights and protection issues remain prevalent. Over the course of the last few years, the Government of Colombia has greatly increased its military presence in formerly occupied areas and has declared that the main armed group, the FARC,<sup>5</sup> no longer poses a military threat.

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<sup>5</sup> Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)

Ongoing violence related issues in Colombia include: forced displacement<sup>6</sup> and relatively large-scale recruitment of children by armed groups; sexual violence; threats, pressure, extortion and attacks on civilian populations; massacres and killings; landmine accidents and mobility restrictions. These issues, taken together, are considered by the Humanitarian Country Team to constitute an ongoing-armed conflict with a resultant state of humanitarian crisis, albeit in varying degrees and in some cases localised pockets across the country.

On top of this long-running crisis, Colombia is prone to natural disasters, including floods, landslides and a high earthquake risk. This winter (since November 2010) has seen flooding on an unprecedented scale. Estimates at the time of the field visit indicated that 2.2 million people were affected. Colombia has been acknowledged as having model disaster response mechanisms for the region, as well as the political will and financial capacity to launch a major response. In the case of this year's floods, however, national capacity has effectively been overwhelmed.

The flooding has affected communities across the country, in many cases *relatively* affluent urban areas of the country. The effects on geographically remote areas, however, have been disproportionately high. In particular, Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations, already considered marginalised and underserved by government structures have seen little response from the central authorities. For logistical as well as security reasons, these areas are less likely to have functioning government services and more likely to need complementary actions by non-governmental actors. For the first UFE allocation in 2011, and with a small number of dissenters, OCHA and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) have taken the stance that the most impoverished, remote and underserved areas affected by localised conflict **and** flooding in combination (so called 'double affected' areas) were those targeted as the key areas for intervention.

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### Humanitarian coordination in Colombia

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The Government of Colombia at the central level is focussed on improving the image of Colombia on the international stage and acknowledges neither an ongoing state of internal conflict, nor the need for external assistance for humanitarian response. At least partially as a result, the Government has not allowed a standing UN appeal (or CAP) in respect of conflict related issues, nor Flash Appeal for flood related issues. Whilst humanitarian actors in Colombia remain seized of the need for ongoing humanitarian programmes, and Government representatives at the local level or in technical positions speak openly of the issues related to armed conflict, any appeal for funds supporting an autonomous, or semi autonomous response mechanism, even informally, in Bogotá, New York or Geneva is extremely sensitive.

Although coordination mechanisms are not the direct focus of this study, the CERF (as all pooled funding mechanisms to a greater or lesser extent) uses them as core structures through which to make allocation decisions. The CERF Secretariat, through its own guidance notes and the PAF indicator set, makes it clear that it

<sup>6</sup> Forced displacement in Colombia is estimated at approximately 250,000 per year. 2010 included 72 mass displacement events, defined as those involving 50 persons or more.

expects an allocation process to be led by the HC and rooted in the ‘cluster’ system. Given the stance of the government on international assistance, coordination mechanisms which bring together government, UN and NGO actors around the two central themes of response to conflict and natural disasters exist in a permanent state of tension. The process of coordinating the international response is, in part, one of managing tensions between the government and the international system, as well as the recognised tensions inherent within the global humanitarian system and the humanitarian reform process.

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### Standing coordination structures

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The Government of Colombia has two main bodies with emergency response functions:

- As part of a broad remit for social programmes, La Agencia Presidencial para la Acción Social y la Cooperación Internacional (Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation – commonly known as ‘Acción Social’), holds the mandates for response to displacement and for the interface with foreign assistance.
- Dirección de Gestión del Riesgo (Directorate for Risk Management, commonly known as DGR) has a mandate for natural disaster response. Until the floods of late 2009, DGR had been responsible for allocating money from the Government of Colombia’s central ‘calamity fund’. With the huge increase in the size of the fund for this flood response, the role was passed to ‘Colombia Humanitaria’, an entity within the office of the President. During the height of the crises in late 2010, DGR was reportedly forced to work out new management arrangements with ‘Colombia Humanitaria’, an organisation with no specialist humanitarian staff.

The highest level of humanitarian coordination in the international system is ostensibly the HCT. This is a relatively new IASC styled mechanism, in keeping with humanitarian reform, and which brings together UN agencies and partners, including the Red Cross and donors as observers. The HCT has no representation from Government and aims to focus on the humanitarian issues related to armed conflict. That the HCT focuses directly on only conflict related needs, the more politically sensitive ‘half’ of the humanitarian issues in Colombia presents a challenge for humanitarian reform more broadly.

The humanitarian coordinator generally seen as playing an increasing role in CERF processes, particularly in respect of the UFE in 2011 and the decision to focus CERF funding in Cordoba. Overall, however, he is perceived as a development specialist who does not play a strong leadership role in humanitarian issues. Whilst OCHA is seen as playing a strong secretariat function, reform is perceived to be weakened by the lack of a strong leader above the UNCT.

The inter-cluster (IC), also a relatively new group, also reports to the HCT. However, as noted in the organogram at Annex C, the intra-UN mechanism for disaster coordination, the ‘Equipo Técnico de Naciones Unidas para Emergencias’



or 'UNETE' (known in English as the 'UNETT'-United Nations Emergency Technical Team), operates in a somewhat parallel fashion to the IC group and is significantly more established as a mechanism. The UNETT was created as a light but standing mechanism for the coordination of operational response to natural disasters. This group, with a primary core of UN agencies, would meet regularly but infrequently, except in the event of natural disasters, when it would meet more frequently and with more senior participation to take a lead role in response coordination. During these times, the UNETT could also meet in an expanded form which included Government (through DGR – see below) and NGO partners.

OCHA has three sub-offices in regional hubs but UN agencies do not synchronise the location of regional and local hubs. Nine 'Local' Humanitarian Teams mirror the IASC styling of the HCT at the field level. Although a limited selection of agencies and sectors is represented in each team, they were generally described as more focused and coherent than national structures, offering a small number of operational agencies a platform to discuss a set of common operational issues.

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### INGO/UN and Red Cross relations

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In comparison to many long-standing humanitarian crises where humanitarian reform is being implemented, the Government of Colombia has well defined systems for emergency response and *some* strong technical ministries. As such, and where feasible, government institutions are the default partner. Where these mechanisms are relatively strong at the central level, but do not extend country wide (e.g. health), the UN system bolsters this capacity and does not tend to support parallel delivery channels.

UNHCR has listed a number of INGOs as implementers for its activities under the RR window in late 2010. Otherwise, there are very few instances of implementation through INGOs. WFP, amongst other Agencies, cited cost as the main reason: '*INGOs are too expensive*'. Overall UN agencies expressed a preference for working with local actors, in many cases the local authorities<sup>7</sup> or local Catholic Diocese. A number of these groups have considerable reach and access; they also tend to have basic running costs and a certain level of transport and basic infrastructure funded. For these reason, they are able to undertake distributions and other activities at relatively little costs.

Most humanitarian actors describe Colombia as a resource scarce environment (see humanitarian funding to Colombia below). Within this overall context, however, the EC and such bilateral donors as are present give a *relatively* large proportion of funding to INGOs. This, at least in part, seems to be in recognition of the need to complement government and UN interventions through more 'independent' actors, avoiding the tensions in central coordination and focussing on geographical priorities.

Overall, this means that 'normal' dynamics of partnership between UN Agencies and INGOs that exist in long standing humanitarian contexts in Africa and other parts of the world cannot be taken for granted in Colombia.

<sup>7</sup> The smallest 'unit' of local authority is that controlled by the mayors or 'alcaldías.'

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## The 'Inter-cluster' report of 2010

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The most recent and comprehensive review of coordination in Colombia is offered by the 'Inter-Cluster' mission report of 2010, itself a follow up to the IASC mission report of 2006. As an over-arching comment, the 2006 mission report found that Colombia, the only country in the region prioritised for the implementation of humanitarian reform, required '*... greater cohesion amongst members of the international humanitarian community to ensure ... the effectiveness of the overall response.*' Four years on, the 2010 mission found that there '*... is still a lack of shared vision and mechanisms for prioritisation, collective decision-making and accountability. ...*' In specific regard to the joint-working and the cluster system, the 2010 report made the following recommendations:

- *'A common humanitarian framework should be developed, which reflects the HCT collective understanding of needs and priorities in the context of Colombia*
- *'Clarity is needed on the role and scope of clusters in supporting joint humanitarian action in Colombia, along with their relationship to the HCT.'*

The mission report also noted that the HCT was '*fragmented ... with reported ad hoc participation of heads of agencies and NGOs in meetings*'. In respect of clusters, the report found that there were '*significant issues related to capacity to establish and maintain thematic groups*' and '*exhaustion over the meetings lacking focus and clear agendas*'. It also noted a lack of institutional backing and Agency support for cluster coordinators. Similar views were made frequently in the course of this review.

The Inter-cluster mission, however, made a clear and extensive set of recommendations. OCHA is pursuing the report's key suggestions and, specifically, looking for improvements to joint working practices. The report, however, provides a backdrop against which to view the challenges of implementing a 'model' allocation process.

With the heavy involvement of INGOs, a draft 'Position Paper' has been completed and shared with the Government. It represents a common advocacy and position piece on behalf of the international humanitarian community on conflict related humanitarian issues. In addition, the final two days of the review mission coincided with a workshop aimed at finalising a 'Common Humanitarian Framework' (essentially a CHAP) for Colombia (the document to which the Inter-cluster mission referred). Although unlikely to be signed by Government or to become the basis for any kind of public appeal, the document should provide the basis for discussion of priorities

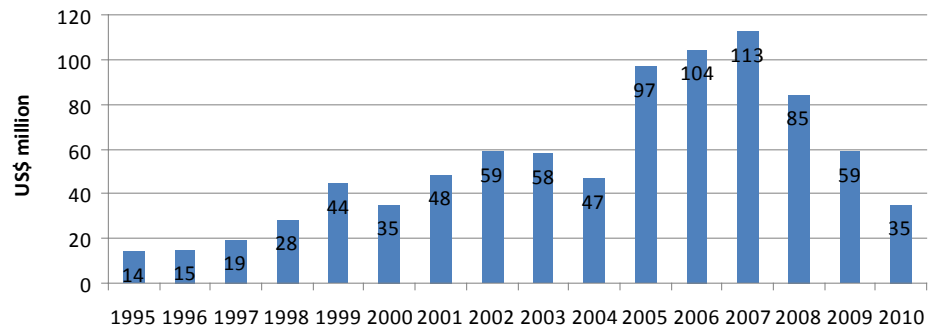
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## Humanitarian funding in Colombia

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In 2010, FTS reports that the CERF was the 4<sup>th</sup> largest donor to Colombia, the largest being the Government of Colombia itself (\$18.75 million.) The EC and Norway (\$14.92 million and \$7.7 million respectively) were listed as the second and third largest. A number of traditional donors to the international humanitarian system, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Canada, Switzerland and the Netherlands also made significant contributions (ranging from \$4.9 million to \$2.2 million.)

**Table 1. Total reported humanitarian funding to Colombia between 1995 and 2010**



**Source:** The Global Humanitarian Assistance report, found at <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/countryprofile/colombia>

Humanitarian funding to Colombia shows a sharp decline since its peak in 2007. Part of the fluctuation appears to be due to a shift in the channelling and reporting of USAID funding. The US remains a very significant donor to Colombia outside, however, of the international humanitarian system. Table 1 summarises total reported humanitarian funding to Colombia between 1995 and 2010.

As noted above, the government has its own defined structures for response. A fund raising campaign was launched in response to the winter floods made to the national ‘calamity fund’. The total Government funding, at the time of the field visit was reported to be in the vicinity of **US\$2,500 million**<sup>8</sup> (or \$2.5 billion) for four years. The bulk of the money (over \$15 billion) has been earmarked for recovery and reconstruction and \$1.3 billion for humanitarian response. There is no way of accurately tracking actual expenditure against this figure, however.

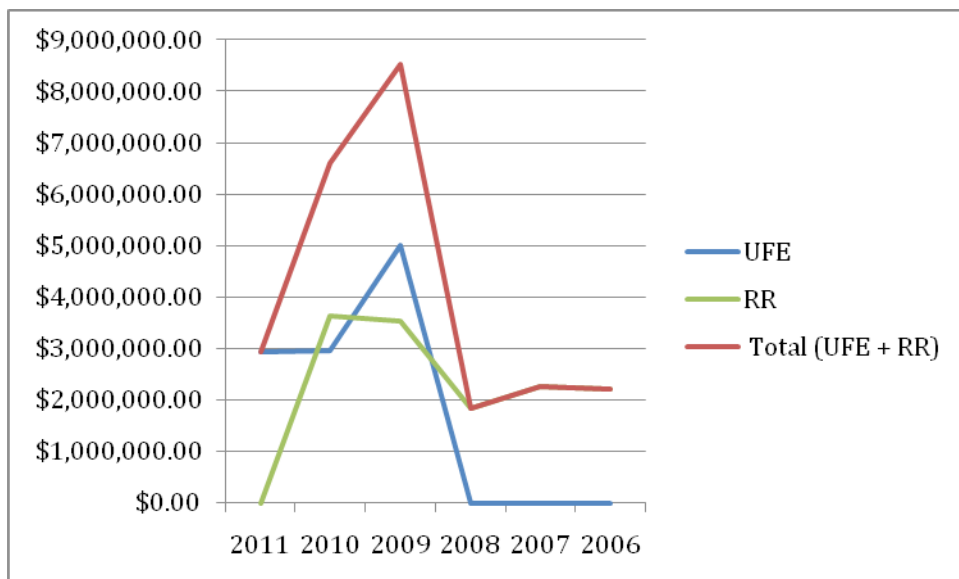
### **CERF funding to Colombia**

Colombia has received a total of \$24,386,471, from the CERF since its inception in 2006, making it the 21<sup>st</sup> largest recipient country, out of a list of 82. CERF funding to Colombia peaked in 2009 with total contributions of \$8.5 million, which included large contributions for winter floods through the RR and also through the UFE.

In 2010, Colombia received a total of \$6,607,366 from the CERF. The UFE provided \$2,966,946 at the very start of the year and \$3,640,647 from the RR widow at the end of the year, in response to the onset of ‘winter’ floods, which continued to affect the country at the time of the field visit.

<sup>8</sup> The flooding and the corresponding government response were headline news throughout the review visit. The most prominent national newspaper decried the efficiency of the response, reporting that over three months into the crisis, only 4 projects had been approved and funded from several hundred applications. One experienced respondent also urged caution in accepting Government claims of capacity at face value. They stated that while the finances were indeed in place, the response model was ideologically opposed to that of the international system; centred on private sector involvement and open to political influence.

**Table 2. Summary of CERF Allocations to Colombia between 2006 and First UFE Allocation in 2011**



**Source:** Data from CERF website:

<http://ochaonline.un.org/Default.aspx?alias=ochaonline.un.org/cerf>

Table 2 summarises CERF allocations to Colombia between 2006 and the first UFE allocation of 2011.

Of the \$6.6 million total in 2010 almost \$4 million of projects were reported as implemented directly by UN agencies/IOM, with \$2.642 million implemented through NGOs.<sup>9</sup>

Since 2009, OCHA in Colombia also hosts a relatively small Emergency Response Fund (ERF). The fund holds approximately US\$1.8 million in 2011. Major donors include Spain, Sweden and Norway. The ERF allocates grants only to NGOs for between \$50,000 and \$250,000 and is designed to fill gaps in response.<sup>10</sup> It aims to act at as local a level as possible, and to use community contributions where possible to multiply the effects of funding. The ERF uses a national Humanitarian Risk Index as part of the process of identifying key geographical areas for intervention. The Fund has oversight structures at country level including a technical committee to assess project proposals and an Advisory Board, chaired by the HC and including donors to the fund and the government of Colombia to oversee its use.

In summary, Colombia is a highly complex context for humanitarian operations and, consequently for the application of the CERF. As in many contexts, an ostensibly united international response system is present, working on the principle of response to need. Needs in Colombia, however, fall into two distinct categories, both of which have a distinct set of political sensitivities with central government and separate national response systems. The ‘normal’ challenges of implementing

<sup>9</sup> HC’s annual report 2010.

<sup>10</sup> ‘FRE/ERF Colombia: Lineamientos Generales. Fondo de Respuesta a Emergencias, FRE/ Emergency Response Fund ERF - [http://www.colombiassh.org/site/IMG/pdf/lineamientos\\_del\\_ERF\\_en\\_espanol\\_v01.pdf](http://www.colombiassh.org/site/IMG/pdf/lineamientos_del_ERF_en_espanol_v01.pdf)

humanitarian reform are, therefore, exacerbated as the international system struggles to create a space in which to undertake a somewhat autonomous response based on humanitarian principles, whilst acknowledging the right of the government to control activities. It is essential that the findings and recommendations of this review are viewed in light of key studies on coordination in Colombia and placed firmly in a context where coordination, as well as conflict, continues to evolve.

## Section 2. Inclusiveness and Transparency of the Allocation Process

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### National level

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The allocation process for CERF funding is not laid out in a public document for all partners. Consequently the majority of partners, including Government, NGOs and donors were unaware of precisely how allocation decisions are taken. In the case of an UFE allocation being announced, decision on the ‘top line’ priorities, either geographic or sectoral, is taken in the ‘CERF Task Force’. This group does not map directly to any standing coordination structure and is by invitation only. The ‘task force’ has been constituted of OCHA and UN agencies who have previously received CERF funds, and chaired by the HC. UNDP, UNFPA and FAO described having to argue their case for a seat at the table over the course of time, using the global agreed life saving criteria as justification (see life-saving response below). Under the current system for the UFE, the task force expands by invitation after the first round of decisions around allocation i.e. for discussions around implementation rather than strategy.

With a primary allocation process driven by UN agencies and allocating **relatively** small envelopes for relatively short<sup>11</sup> interventions, ‘calculus’ around geographical allocation of funding is not primarily based on an open and objective discussion around needs. The NGO position on this process was consistent. One stated clearly:

*There is no system for comparing needs across the country. Nor is there any system for putting this discussion on the table in an open fashion at national level.*

Many described existing UN agency presence as the primary criterion for deciding geographical allocations for both windows. From this perspective, the UFE in particular has, thus far, been used principally to ‘deepen’ existing UN operations; to expand operations into communities previously out of reach with existing funds and to get closer to beneficiary numbers outlined at the start of the year. UN agencies saw this as a logical and reasonable use of funds from the UFE. It is important to note that the first UFE for 2011 has been a clear departure from this pattern in that the CERF Task Force and HC have taken the decision to focus on one geographical area, Cordoba, on the basis that it is underserved by UN agencies and NGOs. As above ‘double affectation’ (by conflict and flooding) has also been used as a general principle for prioritising assistance. A few key actors are uncomfortable with this strategy. They consider that it is, in effect, a method of reaching conflict-affected populations whilst avoiding principle-based negotiations (and possible conflict) with government. A better strategy they feel, would be a deepening of presence for purely conflict affected groups (which they feel ought to be the focus of the UFE) and stronger advocacy with government.

Just as the UFE process has no guiding framework in the shape of a CAP, the RR window for the floods has no jointly constructed frame in the form of a Flash Appeal. In principle, OCHA recognises the importance of joint decision making

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<sup>11</sup> RR allocations are for a strict three-month duration. Although UFE allocations are for one year, this is still a relatively short period in the context of the context of Colombia.

with Government and consultation with NGOs and for natural disasters, a certain level of consultation has been undertaken with both. In the case of the late 2010 allocation, however, internal issues at the DGR meant that no genuine consultation was possible. DGR were happy that they had been informed of CERF RR allocations. NGOs stated that in the meetings leading up to the CERF submission, there was a higher degree of consultation and that the process was ‘a little more open’ than the previous 2010 UFE round.

As above, the Inter Cluster Mission report of 2010 reports an uneven and relatively weak application of the cluster system. Respondents in Bogotá were clear that national clusters, as yet, served no real strategic purpose and even the more functional clusters had not had the allocation of CERF funding, from either window, as an agenda item for an open discussion amongst partners.<sup>12</sup>

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### Local level

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Once the geographical allocations have been made for the UFE, consultations over implementation have taken place at the level of the ‘local humanitarian teams’. In El Charco, UN agencies described a process of joint implementation planning, once a CERF allocation had been communicated to them. While there was no overarching joint needs assessment, field missions were organised between small groups of UN agencies and a meeting, led by OCHA, was held to discussion prioritisation. UN agencies at the local level felt that the CERF had strengthened the local humanitarian team, which contains Red Cross and INGOs, although almost all implementation was done through either local government or community groups. The agencies consistently reported joint planning for individual projects, rather than a joint implementation strategy but stressed that during the implementation phase, joint working was becoming common practice.

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### Stakeholder perceptions

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#### *UN perceptions*

By and large, UN Agencies expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the processes for both windows, considering them to be transparent and open. Senior staff reported challenging negotiations in the initial phase of each process, and there was not universal agreement with all decisions taken by the HC. That said, even if not finally agreeing with decisions that had been made, all were pragmatic in accepting them and felt that they had been part of a process. FAO and UNDP felt that CERF task force had been open only to those agencies which received funding from the initial rounds of CERF funding and those with a more obvious claim to humanitarian funding. They expressed a sense of having had to work their way into the CERF task force, arguing their case using the life saving criteria. WFP argued that the money should not be spread too thinly.

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<sup>12</sup> Although the HCT has been used as a forum through which to invite potential partners after the initial allocation decisions by the CERF Task Force/HC.

OCHA acknowledges the need to improve NGO participation. In the case of the 2011 UFE, NGO partners were invited, via the HCT and **after** the initial decision to focus on a limited geographical area, to discuss strategy for implementation and operational partnerships.

### *NGO perceptions*

NGOs consider the initial allocation process by the HC and the CERF Task Force to be absolutely non-transparent and something over which they have no influence. One NGO described being asked to implement CERF funding because the agency with funds could not implement in time; another described working jointly on programme design, only to have the agency turn to other partners for implementation. Generally speaking the Colombian context is one in which local partners, notably local government and local Catholic Diocese, are strong and have considerable resources, often enabling them to partner with UN agencies at a lower financial margin than international NGOs. That said, and as in many contexts, quality of operational entities, both national and international varies from region to region and decisions need to be carefully considered at local level.

### *Donor/government perceptions*

Country-based donors felt that the CERF was largely a non-transparent process. Although there is no reason why they ought to play an explicit part in allocation decisions, there was a general consensus that information on the use of the CERF at country-level was weak. Whilst donors to the ERF sat on its advisory board and felt informed and part of decision making there was no such transparent process around the CERF.

With respect to both windows, government officials at the central level stated that whilst there was some degree of consultation, the UN planning process around the CERF was seen as *'too independent'* and that the UN had to *'do a better job of explaining what they do.'* The model for the ERF was seen as preferable, with government participation in a 'steering group'. The use of the CERF was seen as an indication that Colombia was viewed as a 'crisis state'. All in all, the relationship was not seen as a genuine partnership in which all language from both sides was suitably *'respectful'*.

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## Summary findings

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Simply put, the UN agencies in Colombia view the CERF (especially the UFE) as a proprietary funding channel. To date, the initial geographical and sectoral priorities for allocation of each cluster round have been taken in an ad hoc group, the 'CERF Task Force'. Until 2011, the CERF Task Force has consisted of UN Agencies who were recipients of the very first allocations of CERF funding (and more recently includes UNDP, UNFPA and UNIFEM, after they made a successful case for inclusion using the 'life-saving' criteria). As such, the initial allocation decisions at



national level has been very much Agency, rather than cluster driven and partnership has been very much a secondary consideration.

The absence at the national level of a CAP-like instrument has also been one factor in undermining the prospect of a more open allocation process. The production of such a plan is a key priority in the Inter-cluster mission report. The CERF report for Colombia in 2010, prepared by OCHA on behalf of the RC/HC, also notes that such a plan is urgently required and should serve as the basis for allocation decisions in the future. The ERF and its allocation mechanisms were not a specific focus of this study. A cursory analysis, however, suggests that the allocation and management structures of the ERF contain a number of features which could improve the openness of the CERF process. An oversight structure, which includes donor representation could be used to support the HC in his oversight role.

## Section 3. Support to Humanitarian Reform and Response

As outlined above, UN reports dating back to 2006 describe humanitarian coordination in Colombia has having yet to reach a point where the clusters have achieved a ‘critical mass’, either of functionality or influence. Almost unanimously, respondents were highly appreciative of the role of OCHA and its current team. That said, many described ongoing, operational coordination as weak. The clear majority view was that OCHA provides the framework in which coordination could take place, but that operation decision-making remains driven primarily by internal process on the part of both UN Agencies and NGOs and bilateral relationships with donors. Although some clusters are meeting regularly and two national clusters now have dedicated coordinators, even the best were described as ‘information sharing groups’, with no tangible role in needs assessment, operational decision-making, monitoring or evaluation. Even in the clusters which met regularly, there was reportedly ‘no discussion of the CERF as an operational instrument.’ NGOs did recall meetings where information had been shared about the CERF and the ‘opportunity to be an implementer.’

At the national level, UN agencies were positive about the extent to which the CERF has created incentives for joint working amongst themselves (especially using the UFE window). They also thought that the CERF strengthened the role of the HC, in line with humanitarian reform. Two respondents stated that UN Agencies privately asserted their ‘right’ to a proportion of CERF funding, on the basis that their headquarter’s participation in the underfunded country selection process had been instrumental in the decision to make an allocation from the UFE to Colombia.

NGOs saw little or no operational impact of the CERF in terms of humanitarian reform at the national level. There was recognition by NGOs, however, of the CERF as an important source of funding for the UN and its value in bringing UN Agencies together to discuss operations:

*I certainly don’t want to sound negative. The CERF is a valuable tool and I support its use in Colombia. But it’s valuable for the UN Agencies, not for us.*

At the local level, there was a great deal of positive feedback, again predominantly from UN agencies. The introduction of local humanitarian teams, modelled on the IASC /HCT was a recommendation of the Inter Cluster mission. In El Charco, UN agencies were solidly of the opinion that the CERF had consolidated the positive effects of the local humanitarian team and increased collaboration in both strategy and implementation. The inter-agency mission following up CERF funding in Chocó in 2009 – 10 supports these observations. The mission report<sup>13</sup> finds that Agencies had made joint decisions on communities in which to intervene, using agreed criteria. Implementation, most of which undertaken through local authorities was not perfectly coordinated but there were positive examples of intentionally complementary activities.

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13 Informe de Misión Interagencial Balance CERF UFE – Quibdó (2009-10), OCHA – 11 April 2011.

In relation to a different part of the Pacific coastal region, Cauca, one NGO stated that the local humanitarian team had brought a genuine degree of collaboration, but that this had been undermined by the element of competition introduced by the CERF allocation.

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### Summary findings

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In respect of humanitarian reform, the findings of the review are very consistent with those of the inter-cluster mission of 2010. In a challenging political environment and with questionable levels of support from all stakeholders, clusters were uneven in operational capacity at the start of 2010 and had little operational influence. Placed in this context, the CERF alone provides too small an incentive to strengthen the role of the clusters.

As noted throughout, it is important to acknowledge some improvements in the 2011 process and serious efforts by OCHA to implement the findings of the Inter Cluster mission report. The CERF report for 2010, prepared by OCHA and submitted on behalf of the HC/RC at the end of 2010, also recognises the need:

- to open the allocation process;
- to finalise the Common Humanitarian Framework, using the existing Needs Analysis Framework and the 2010 Position Paper elaborated in 2010;
- to utilise the sectoral plans that should serve as the basis for future CERF requests/allocations

## Section 4. Timeliness of CERF Funding

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### Gap filling and timely, life saving response

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#### *Timely response*

For the UFE in 2010, the RH/HC, via OCHA, responded on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2010 to the ERC's offer of an under funded grant to Colombia. Initial Agency submissions were received in New York on 24<sup>th</sup> February and final submissions between 19<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Cash was disbursed against these submissions between 7<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April. The average time between receipt of the final submissions and decisions by the ERC was 3 working days (inclusive). This is faster than the PAF benchmark, set at 5 working days for the UFE, although one project required 7 working days from final submission to decision. For the Rapid Response window in 2010, initial submissions were received in New York on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and finals between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2010. Cash was disbursed against these submissions between 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of December. The average time between receipt of the final submissions and decisions by the ERC was 3 working days (inclusive). This meets the PAF performance benchmark, set at 3 working days for the RR. The 2010 report from the RC/HC does not report dates of onward transfer of funds from UN Agencies to CERF from partners. Only one 'no-cost extension' was sought from the RR window. Although appropriately classified as rapid response, flooding clearly affects different communities over a relatively long period of time and it is impossible to create a meaningful timeline against which to measure speed of response for the whole country. There was a general perception that the CERF Secretariat had processed submissions in a timely fashion but that viewed against the span of the whole flooding cycle, the international response, including the submission to the CERF, had been slow to mobilise.

It was only possible to interview two INGO partners during the visit, both from the UFE. Diakonie reported significant delays with a collaborative agreement with FAO through the UFE. They reported that initial discussions had taken place in February of 2010 and that negotiations around the implementation and the sub-grant had taken until August of the same year. Once agreement had been reached, the contract and funding transfer took a further four months to appear. Both parties described relations at working level as good, but Diakonie felt that FAO was not sufficiently empowered at country level to negotiate such agreements and that significant delays were incurred through the process of clearing decisions and other bureaucracy in Rome.

A number of actors noted the potential tension between a transparency and inclusiveness of process with speed. There was a general consensus that the construction of the 2011 submission, in a bid to be properly consultative, involved too many rounds of meetings and was too slow overall. Even those who disagreed with the rationale of utilising the UFE 2011 in one location felt that the decision on the part of the HC had foreshortened the negotiation process in a positive fashion.

UNFPA stated that it was impractical to begin new partnerships with CERF funding, either for national or international actors. It is impossible to shortcut normal procedures, which require proper auditing and capacity checking. One INGO stated that for the under funded window, an offer to implement had come once it became apparent to one UN agency that they would be unable to implement within the allotted timeframe without additional capacity. Partnership was, in effect ‘an afterthought’ based on the requirement to spend funds within the allotted time rather than strategy.

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### Gap filling responses

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As noted in the introduction, the coastal areas of Colombia are logistically challenging, accessible often only by boat, many with security issues and overall, coverage is perceived to be low, with many needs going un-addressed. As noted above, the government’s lack of response capacity despite its apparently sufficient funding is also perceived to create a ‘political’ gap in donors’ willingness to apply more funding in Colombia. One UN respondent summed up the situation when discussing whether or not there was a growing reliance on the CERF, she stated *‘No. But nor is there is there an expectation that we will be less under-funded next year.’* In this context, therefore, CERF was perceived to have played a role in filling large operational gaps.

As above, there was a general consensus that most thought that RR projects were slow to be submitted and as a result, were slow to be implemented. It was also frequently noted, however, that CERF funded projects represented pockets of activity against a general inability of government to mobilise. For both windows, projects were often not perceived to fill gaps in the areas of most critical need, but to utilise funds pragmatically to deepen or expand existing activities. Especially amongst UN Agencies, this was felt to be appropriate in the context of the UFE. Again the exception to this rule has been the use of the 2011 UFE to focus on Cordoba, an area almost un-served by UN agencies. Whilst this decision has been questioned on the level of absolute needs, most agree that it is a reasonable, strategic decision. One NGO said: *‘It’s not the area where there is the most need. But, yes, the money can have an impact there...’* ‘Certainly one part of the decision to use the money in Cordoba was the desire to leverage greater funding for the area in the future, to sustain operations started with relatively small amounts of CERF funding.

The CERF was cited as having been used successfully as a tool to leverage other resources (FAO cited complementary funding by ECHO in El Charco). More often, however, it was perceived as being used as a lever for access or other types of influence, and importantly so. Particularly, Agencies cited examples of relatively small amounts of money allowing them to enter into discussions with local government and other partners and influence existing programmes, thereby creating an operational effect well beyond the capacity of the CERF allocation.

In the health sector in El Charco, government officials acknowledged the importance of the WHO intervention with CERF funds in ‘re-connecting’ the local

system with central mechanisms, in a location that serves as a 'hub' for displaced and disadvantaged populations. Following the period of insecurity in the area, a number of key positions had not been filled and had 'lapsed'. CERF funds were utilised to fill these posts with Ministry of Health staff, as well as providing additional outreach support. Once the vacancies were filled, the positions were re-established within the national structure, and five months after the CERF funding had finished, the centre remained at full strength. The CERF had also enabled the purchase of a motor-launch, subsequently donated to the Ministry of Health, which was now used on a permanent basis as a means to access remote communities.

Again in El Charco, a set of meetings was held with an Afro-Colombian community that had benefited from assistance through FAO in emergency food production, WFP in school feeding and WHO through the extension of health services. Community leaders were appreciative of the support and felt that critical gaps were being filled. Their primary concern, however, was the resumption of longer-term programmes which might allow them to return to a self-sufficient state. They presented strong statements about their desire to implement programmes directly and to take the full benefit from programmes, allowing community members to receive employment opportunities, rather than intermediaries.

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### Life saving responses

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An assessment of impact of CERF projects is beyond the scope of this report. Many respondents felt that interventions made with CERF resources had been life-saving, in terms of the life-saving criteria utilised by the CERF. UNDP and UNFPA acknowledged that some of their work, such as cash-for-work, was harder to reconcile with the 'life-saving' theme of the CERF and the obvious association with intervention for acute, life threatening needs in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. In these sectors, respondents were grateful that the discussions had taken place at the global level during the construction of the CERF criteria. They felt strongly that their sectors were highly relevant to the flood response and that the pre-inclusion of their sectors and clear criteria had ultimately enabled them to argue for their part in the CERF task force and the latest submissions. Again in El Charco, government health staff described how the extension of critical services into remote and insecure areas, especially for pregnant women and children had reduced risk and saved lives. There was consensus among the UN Agencies that CERF processes had been followed and that the life-saving criteria had been appropriately applied to the Colombian context.

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### Summary findings

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For both the windows, the CERF met performance targets. For the RR, while there was a consensus that international response was slow overall, when seen against the whole arc of the floods, there was recognition of the importance of the interventions, especially given the absence of a rapid or effective response by government in isolated areas. For the UFE, where timing is perceived to be

less of an issue, one significant delay was reported in arranging a sub-contracting arrangement with an INGO. The majority of partnership arrangements are with local entities and little data is available on the timing of these arrangements.

The coastal areas on Colombia, especially the Pacific Coast, are perceived to be underserved. The CERF goes some way to filling this gap in service provision and is perceived as important. As noted in the previous section, UN Agencies tend to use the UFE to deepen their presence in areas where they have projects running with other funding sources. Anecdotal evidence from Agencies and partners in El Charco suggests that the Fund was used successfully to fill programmatic gaps and to expand the coverage of key services.

## Section 5. Reporting and Accountability

On an ongoing basis, normal UN Agency field monitoring systems are in place, modified for CERF reporting requirements. UN Agencies, government counterparts and NGOs described a variety of internal reporting mechanisms, normally based on outputs.

Although little genuinely collaborative implementation of CERF funded projects was noted in the interviews, the inter-agency follow up of CERF funding in Chocó (between UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, FAO, WHO and OCHA) backs up many of the findings throughout the visit. The mission report<sup>14</sup> found that, most projects had met their stated outputs. As noted above, there was a reasonable degree of collaboration in choosing beneficiary populations before turning projects over to (predominantly) local authorities for implementation. This follow-up visit, which was not trying to measure impact, found that in general, UN Agency presence on the ground was too light and that both projects and partners required more focused attention. Funding constraints and partnership norms in Colombia mean that this basic dynamic is unlikely to alter. In the context of the CERF and Colombia more broadly, this highlights the need for stronger systems to evaluate results beyond the level of outputs. Although inter-agency field missions are perceived to be expensive and challenging to organise, the Chocó visit sets a useful precedent. Such visits undoubtedly add value, on the assumption that **there is genuine intent to follow up on results and lessons identified**. Another, such mission has been proposed for El Charco and postponed for security reasons.

As with needs assessment, a number of agencies suggested that the CERF secretariat consider allowing greater levels of funding for M+E. Colombia covers a huge area and there is no dedicated or ‘subsidised’ humanitarian air service or transportation network. This means that the cost of dedicated monitoring missions from Bogotá is prohibitively expensive.

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### Summary findings

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There was no evidence that the vertical reporting and monitoring is inadequate, but it is possible to say that the CERF has had little operational impact on monitoring or evaluation. As with the technical processes involved in putting together CERF submissions, there was a general sense that UN Agencies had become accustomed to CERF process and had time to match it to internal systems. Asked specifically about possible improvements to reporting systems or process, no specific, constructive criticism was forthcoming. The inter-agency mission in Chocó sets a valuable precedent for inter-agency follow up. Ideally, the context of improved joint planning and needs assessment, as part of the Common Humanitarian Framework, joint needs assessment would be part of a joint management framework.

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<sup>14</sup> Informe de Misión Interagencial Balance CERF UFE – Quibdó (2009-10), OCHA – 11 April 2011.



## Section 6. Recommendations

1. In keeping with the findings of the Inter Cluster mission report and the CERF annual report of 2010, CERF UFE allocation needs to be taken in light of the evolving Common Humanitarian Framework and a cluster and inter-cluster based process. Whether or not this leads ultimately to a greater proportion of funds being implemented through INGOs, an open and inclusive discussion of geographical and sectoral priorities is required to launch the process. The more that this process is based on joint needs assessment, the better.
2. Greater complementarity should be sought between processes for the ERF and CERF. As is practiced in some other countries where two pooled funding mechanisms operate, both looking at priority needs, joint mechanisms, either formal or informal could be instituted.
3. Whilst standard monitoring and reporting mechanisms are in place, evaluation mechanisms need to be strengthened in general:
  - In a context where national partners are implementing a high proportion of CERF projects and oversight is relatively light on the ground, UN agencies should follow up projects more rigorously as a matter of course.
  - Whilst the CERF is only ever likely to provide partial and short term funding, the HC, via OCHA use the Fund as a lever to institutionalise joint working on evaluation.

## Annex A. Full List of Those Interviewed

Anriane Kalonjit, Delegada CAL  
Atle Solberg, Country Director, NRC  
Andrea Naletto, Director de Programa, Consejo Noruego  
Para Refugiados  
Fernando Lazcano Espinoza, Representante Adjunto, a.i.,  
UNICEF  
Miriam R. De Figueroa, Representative, UNICEF  
Omar Horacio Rincón, Jefe de Infraestructura, OIM  
Marcelo Pisani, Chief of Mission, OIM  
Tania Cooper Patriota, Representative, UNFPA  
Christophe Beney, Jefe de Delegación, CICR  
Praveen Agrawal, Representante, WFP  
Manuela Angel, Oficial de Programas, WFP  
Michele Poletto, External Relations Officer, UNHCR  
Terry Morel, Representative, UNHCR  
Bruno Moro, Coordinador Residente Humanitario y  
Representante Residente de PNUD  
Juan Chaves, ERF Manager, OCHA  
Gianni Morelli, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA  
María José Torres Macho, Head of Office, OCHA  
Luz Angela Bernal Medina, Oficial Nacional de Programas,  
Confederación Suiza

Luis Fernando Amaya Ortíz, Coordinador Nacional de  
Emergencias y Rehabilitación, FAO  
Fernando Andrés Mosquera Navia, Coordinador FAO  
Nariño  
María Paula Martínez, Development Officer, Government  
of Canada  
Renske Hertroys, Segundo Secretario, Reino de los Países  
Bajos  
Fernando Rey Yébenes, Coordinador General Adjunto,  
Embajada de España en Colombia  
Jose Luis Barreino, Director CES, Oxfam  
Dra. Ana Cristina Noguiera, Representante, Organización  
Panamericana de la Salud  
Xavier Hernández, Programme Officer, Poverty and  
Sustainable Development, UNDP  
Silvia Rucks, Directora de País, UNDP  
Maria Mercedes Duque, Coordinadora Programas, Diakonie  
Katastrophenhilfe  
Omar Andrés Guevara Gómez, Director Oficina Local  
Cauca, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe

# Annex B. TOR

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## Independent Review of the Value Added of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in Colombia, Bolivia, Ethiopia and Myanmar

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### Terms of Reference

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#### 1. Background to the CERF and Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF)

It is widely recognized that the key strengths of the CERF lie in its ability to respond quickly and in the relatively high degree of flexibility it affords users compared with other sources of humanitarian funding. Member States and private donors require appropriate assurances that the considerable funds involved are managed appropriately and meaningful results are being achieved. The ERC function is charged with a formal fiduciary responsibility over the proper use of CERF funds, and relies upon the CERF Secretariat to assist with the proper discharge of these responsibilities. In this context, the development of a PAF for the CERF is regarded as an effective tool.

Paragraph 19 of General Assembly Resolution 60/124 calls for “the establishment of an appropriate reporting and accountability mechanism to ensure that the funds allocated through the Fund are used in the most efficient, effective and transparent manner possible.” Consequently, the CERF Advisory Group at its meeting on 12 October 2006 called for the development of a Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF). In addition, the 2008 CERF Two-year Evaluation gave as Key Recommendation 4: “The multiple lines of accountability for CERF need to be clarified, in consultation with the UN Controller and the operational agencies, to specify the roles of each actor.” In response, the CERF Secretariat worked on developing a PAF, a first draft was circulated in 2009 and a PAF adopted in 2010.

The CERF PAF proposes, among other things, the introduction of independent reviews to be conducted annually within a sample of three to five countries as determined by the ERC. The CERF Advisory Group supported the inclusion of such an independent country-

level mechanism. Following a pilot review conducted in Kenya in early 2010, the CERF AG met on 1 July and endorsed the PAF. Further studies took place in late 2010 in Chad, Mauritania and Sri Lanka.

#### 2. Scope and Purpose

The main purpose of the present country-level review will be to assess the value added of CERF operations in Colombia, Bolivia, Ethiopia and Myanmar during 2010.

A major aim of the review will be to provide the ERC with an appropriate level of assurance around the achievement of key performance benchmarks and planned results for the CERF mechanism. The review will also include recommendations aimed at improving operational aspects of the CERF and may also identify relevant policy issues which need to be addressed at a global level.

#### 3. Key issues

The critical overriding question on which assurance is sought by the ERC is: **Have CERF operations in the country successfully added value to the broader humanitarian endeavour?**

Using the PAF indicator sets, assurances will be sought around the following specific broad areas of concern to the ERC:

1. *CERF processes are achieving key management benchmarks in that:*
  - CERF submissions are based on an inclusive planning process and adhere to established quality criteria.
  - Transparent systems are in place for correct allocation, efficient flow and use of CERF by agencies.
  - Adequate monitoring and evaluation systems are in place at the agency level for measuring and reporting on results.

2. *There are reasonable grounds to believe that CERF operations favour the following results:*

- CERF consolidates humanitarian reform by empowering the RC/HC and enhancing the quality of coordination within the cluster approach and across clusters.
- CERF facilitates adequate coverage, eliminates gaps and facilitates an effective division of labour among humanitarian (especially smaller) actors.
- CERF contributes to a more timely response to needs.
- CERF favours the delivery of relevant life-saving actions at critical moments.

4. *Review methodology*

During the PAF development process, UN agencies emphasized that the formal assessment of agency performance vis-à-vis CERF-funded activities remains the prerogative of recipient agencies via their own internal oversight procedures (internal performance reporting, audit and evaluation etc.). The review approach will therefore be designed in a manner which avoids duplication with such procedures and meets only the immediate assurance needs of the ERC in relation to the PAF.

Recognizing that CERF funds are often co-mingled with other donor funds by agencies and that the in-depth assessment of beneficiary-level impact is formally the charge of recipient agencies, the review will not attempt to link beneficiary-level changes to CERF activity, except where recipient agencies already have this data. The review mechanism will not seek to provide comprehensive coverage linked to detailed narratives and contextual analysis around how and why results are being achieved. Rather it will focus instead on providing an assurance around issues of the Fund's operational impact.

Key components of the methodology will include a rapid desk review and field visits by the consultants to Bolivia, Colombia, Ethiopia and Myanmar, including interviews with key stakeholders. The analytical approach will be deliberately kept rapid and light.

Prior to leaving each country, the Consultant will leave with the RC/HC a short analytical report consisting of a series of short observations and recommendations in relation to the key assurance issues identified above. The RC/HC,

together with the HCT, will subsequently be requested to provide a “management response” to the recommendations contained in the report.

**Desk review.** A quantitative analysis will be conducted on the data, reports and files available at the HQ and Country level. These include:

- Funding data, including funding from sources other than the CERF (e.g. OCHA's Financial Tracking System);
- Timelines on sums requested, allocated from CERF database;
- CERF country-level reports on context, needs, status of implementation, activities, results and lessons learned;
- CERF meeting minutes at HQ and country-level and notifications of application decisions;
- CERF Project files at HQ and country-level.

**Semi-structured interviews** at country level will include: RC/HC, Cluster leads, Heads of Agencies, I/NGO partner implementing CERF projects and those without access to CERF funds, host government, donors. Interviews will also take place with selected CERF Secretariat staff to get further background and perspective. UN Agencies and IOM will be asked to provide relevant documents and indicate interview partners to facilitate the review.

**Select project site visits.** These may be included as appropriate and time permitting to help provide some limited anecdotal information regarding the use of funding at the affected population level and can provide a field-level snapshot and some direct contact with affected populations.

**In-country briefings** will be used as learning opportunities to discuss and validate the findings, explore possible recommendations and further refine the analytical approaches.

5. *Proposed consultants*

It is anticipated that two consultants will be required, one to prepare the reviews for Bolivia and Colombia and one to draft those for Ethiopia and Myanmar. The consultants will be independent and not have been previously involved with any aspects of the country-level operations being reviewed. He/she should have the following skills:

- Expertise in UN humanitarian reform & financing and knowledge of the CAP and Flash Appeal process;
- Expertise and extensive experience in humanitarian evaluation;
- Expertise in analyzing financial data in tandem with other types of information;
- Expertise in project management and implementation;
- Knowledge, including field experience with a broad range of humanitarian actors, such as UN agencies, Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, local government disaster response structures and systems, and NGOs;
- Fluency in written and spoken English and ability to work in Spanish required (for Bolivia and Colombia only.)
- Familiarity with complex emergency and natural disaster settings.

#### 6. *Management and support*

The review will be managed by the CERF Secretariat, who will identify country-level focal points to support the review mission. Their responsibilities will include:

- Provide necessary administrative, coordination and logistical support to the consultants;
- Facilitate the consultants' access to specific information or expertise necessary to perform the assessment;
- Monitor and assess the quality of the review and its process;
- Ensure sufficient engagement by UNCT on initial findings prior to dissemination;
- When appropriate, recommend approval of final report;

- Disseminate final report; and
- Facilitate management response to the final report and subsequent follow up.

#### 7. *Deliverables*

The main output will be four concise reports in English to the ERC, through the CERF Secretariat, of no more than 20 pages each (excluding appendices) in an electronic version plus an Executive Summary (up to two pages). The reports will be structured in the form of short observations and conclusions around the different assurance concerns linked to the PAF. The report will include, as appropriate, a set of specific, well targeted and action-oriented recommendations whose purpose should be to improve the performance of the CERF within the country or raising any policy issues. The annexes will include a brief description of the methods used and the tests performed and a list of persons interviewed.

#### 8. *Timeline*

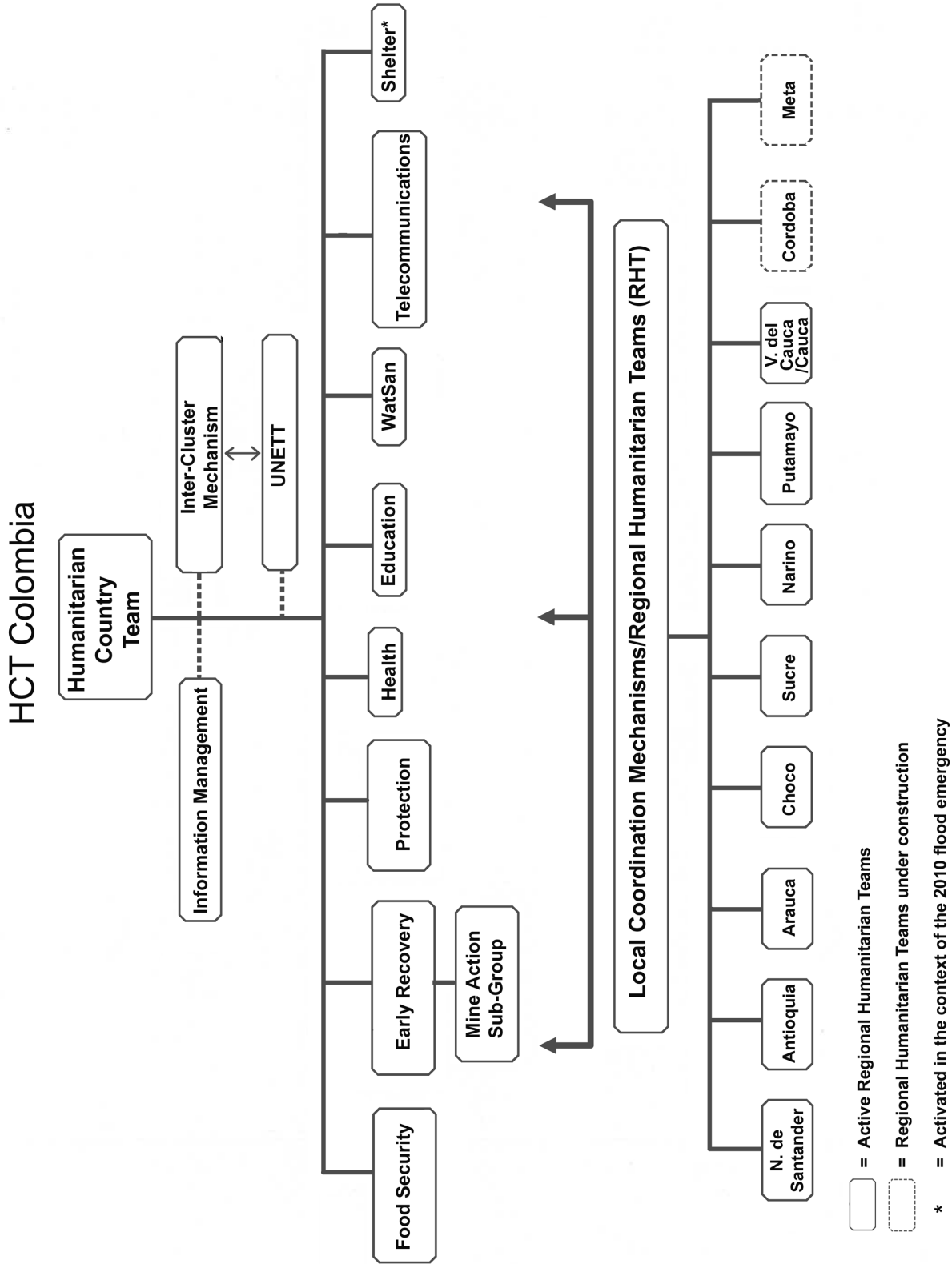
20 May: Draft of the three country reports submitted to CERF Secretariat.

15 June: Final version of reports submitted to CERF Secretariat

#### 9. *Contract length*

Seventeen days per study, 34 per consultant, 68 in total.

# Annex C. Organogram



# Humanitarian Outcomes

An independent team of professionals providing evidence-based analysis and policy consultations to governments and international organisations on their humanitarian response efforts.

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