



Start Fund Involvement in 'Under the Radar' Crises: *An External Analysis*

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Executive Summary

This report, one of a series of externally commissioned 'learning reviews', aims to support the Start Fund's definition of 'under the radar' crises and the application of the term in Start Fund processes. Following an analysis of a range of relevant tools designed to rank or simply catalogue emergencies, it was revealed that the term, 'under the radar' is not an industry standard, nor does it have a standard definition or application. In and of itself, therefore, it is insufficiently precise to add any real value in technical discussions. Each tool or index which defines a variant of 'under the radar' emergencies uses a definition or methodology which is fit for its respective purpose. For the Start Fund, specifying the explicit purpose for which the term is going to be applied is a critical consideration.

The Start Fund currently applies the term 'under the radar', undefined, in two linked but distinct ways: firstly, in the context of decision making and secondly, in part, in respect of donor reporting. A review of existing Start Fund decision making processes shows that the term is already in use in decision making, although not applied in a way which is transparently consistent. Questions in existing Start guidance mirror indicators from ECHO's Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) Index and CERF's Underfunded Emergencies (UFE) methodology, but their use is informal in the sense that no specific thresholds, targets or objective criteria for comparison are applied. Clarity and the consistent use of the best available data would improve the process. It is important to note, however, that the contexts in which the Start Fund typically operates, as well as the speed at which it functions, mean that the expert judgement of partners and experienced representatives will continue to compensate for gaps in available information. For reporting purposes, Start looks to external, global indices

– ECHO's FCA in particular – to retrospectively compare alerts with the 'forgotten crisis' designation. Neither the end products of the FCA, nor CERF's UFE, match the specific requirement of the Start Fund. The raw, global level analyses undertaken by both CERF and ECHO, however, use specific indicators and thresholds which could be of value to Start in designing a specific 'global', under the radar filter. Overall, it is clear that a single definition, with consistent and quantifiable metrics, could be useful for both purposes.

In addition to a more precise definition, the Start Fund should consider the 'so what' question. Start has a limited amount of funding and needs to balance allocations across its two key niche functions (rapid funding to complement ongoing

“The raw, global level analyses undertaken by both CERF and ECHO, however, use specific indicators and thresholds which could be of value to Start in designing a specific 'global', under the radar filter.”

responses, and 'under the radar' emergencies), in addition to its other targets (including the crisis anticipation window). The Start Fund has no current prescription on the balance of funding between these functions. The Start team, therefore, also needs to consider the relevance of an 'under the radar' classification at the decision making stage. For example, does such a classification result in a weighting, or does Start Fund decide to apply an explicit proportion of funding to 'under the radar' crises? Ultimately, the Fund needs to discuss the balance between its two principal niches, as well as its other aspirations.

An analysis of Start Fund alerts from 2017, building on the analysis undertaken for the Fourth External Evaluation, identifies that

it is possible to group alerts into two broad categories: those which see the Fund acting as an explicit complement to an ongoing, functioning response; and those in which Start responds to crises which are thematically or geographically distinct from ongoing responses. This distinction, applied equally to international and locally-led responses forms the basis of a proposed key criterion and definition for 'under the radar' emergencies. In keeping with the desire for a single definition, which works for decision making and reporting, Start should consider an additional 'global' filter, which is to replicate the role of the external, global tools and indices currently used for reporting. The addition of both elements would most appropriately be applied through strengthened guidance for decision making.



HYGIENE SENSITIZATION SESSION IN DIFFA REGION IN MAY 2017
(ALERT 159 NIGER HEPATITIS). PHOTO CREDIT: CRS

Recommendations for the Start Fund:

1 Utilise a single definition of 'under the radar' for decision making and reporting. By necessity, this will include global and local elements.

The 'so what' question must be answered by Start Fund. If a crisis is categorised as 'under the radar' using a new definition, the question of balancing its two niches and other functions is important. A linear progression 'more funding to under the radar crises is better' must have a limit.

2 The Start Fund should initiate an internal discussion about the ideal balance between its functions.

Given the need to apply global and local considerations to any definition of 'under the radar' crisis, categorisation ought to give equal weight to national, and international response and coordination.

3 The Start Fund considers, as one basic criterion for its 'under the radar' definition,

“crises which are not the subject of, or linked geographically or thematically to, an active emergency response, whether or not emergency response capacity is coordinated by the respective, responsible government or the international system.”

In addition to this simple criterion, however, the Start Fund should apply an additional 'global' filter. In support of both decision making and reporting, it is important that a Start definition of 'under the radar' aligns with other tools and indices at the global level.

Indicators for such a filter are very likely to include those in similar categories to CERF and FCA. Funding (per capita) from global data (such as the Financial Tracking Service), vulnerability (INFORM) and possibly media attention if a suitably rapid assessment is possible.

4 The Start Network should work with ACAPS, ECHO and CERF to develop a set of global indicators (a simplified subset of those used by the FCA and UFE) which can be applied quickly and preferably mechanically / automatically in support of each alert. Scores against these indicators should form part of ACAPS' briefing notes. In addition to strengthened guidance, below.

As with the other indices and tools, however, the limitations of these indicators will be apparent. Available data, as above, is likely to be high level, aggregate and retrospective. It is also typical that data on any given country be national level and/or applicable to the main response in the country. By any definition, therefore, a score against such a set of indicators would be informative/indicative rather than definitive. It is likely, furthermore, that insufficient or no data, will be available for many of the small-scale, remote disasters, typically those in the 'silent' category.

5 Where crises are localised and/or 'silent' i.e. there is inadequate data on global indicators, Start should fall back on the simple criterion described above (in recommendation 4).



Section 1

Introduction

1.1 Goals, objectives and TOR for the study

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for this exercise poses a number of research goals, which are as follows:

- 1 (a) Establish a definition for what constitutes an 'under the radar' crisis that defines it more generally in regard to the humanitarian system at large as well as how it should relate specifically to the Start Fund mechanism and 'niche'.

(b) Establish a model for comparison; Identify which external 'under the radar' crisis indexes should and should not be used for comparisons at a global level.
- 2 Using the above definition and external indexes, map the extent to which the Start Fund currently relates to 'under the radar' crises, based on the proportion of its total alerts, activations and funding that go toward this crisis type, as well as the proportion to which it is alerted to and activates for 'under the radar' crises that are (and are not) recognised externally.
- 3 (a) Identify what obstacles exist within the internal structures of members (and their respective partners) that slow or prevent under the radar crisis from leading to alerts, and how our mechanism can help to overcome these obstacles.

(b) Identify how decision making (following the submission of an alert note) can improve to ensure better and more consistent decisions are made around 'under the radar' crises.
- 4 Identify what opportunities exist externally (with information providers like ACAPS and funding mechanisms like CERF) for sharing of 'under the radar' crises, with the aim of discovering more crises that may be suitable for our mechanism and helping leverage funding for 'under the radar' alerts we have or haven't activated (linked to our 'call for support' idea within the business case).

1.2 Definitions, terminology and methodologies

To provide a foundation for the research questions and before taking on issues specific to Start, this section takes an overview of resources and tools designed to rank or simply list / catalogue emergencies. Having undertaken a search of such tools, alert and ranking systems, those of relevance to this exercise include:

- **ECHO's Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) Index**
- **The Central Emergency Response Fund's (CERF) methodology for selecting Underfunded Emergencies (UFE)**
- **ACAPS weekly database of emergencies**
- **The Em-Dat database**
- **GDACs alert system**
- **CARE International (CARE) and the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) annual reports (via its affiliated partner IDMC)**
- **Harvard Humanitarian Initiative's nascent a research stream on 'under the radar' crises; with a loose categorisation (under development), which currently includes neglected, silent and urban emergencies**
- **Médecins Sans Frontières' (MSF) list of forgotten emergencies (no longer published)**

A cursory analysis of these tools reveals that they are produced for different audiences and with a range of objectives in mind. This section considers how the various tools or indices rank emergencies, the purpose behind them, the terminology and the methodology used, as well as the relationship between these elements.

ECHO'S FORGOTTEN CRISIS ASSESSMENT (FCA) INDEX

ECHO uses the term 'Forgotten Crisis' for its FCA and has a relatively rigorous methodology for its ranking. It is important to note that the term 'Forgotten Crisis', as used by ECHO, speaks specifically to the purpose of the ranking scale. In ECHO's own words,

'The Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) identifies serious humanitarian crisis situations (defined elsewhere by ECHO as 'severe, protracted humanitarian situations caused by natural disasters or armed conflicts) where the affected populations do not receive enough international aid or even none at all. These crises are characterised by low media coverage, a lack of donor interest (as measured through aid per capita) and a weak political commitment to solve the crisis, resulting in an insufficient presence of humanitarian actors.'¹

The purpose of the assessment is to allow ECHO to direct more of its available financial resources and attention to those crises which fit the definition.

The FCA index is produced annually and lists 'forgotten crises,' referring to countries in which the conflict or disaster situation has occurred in the previous calendar year or is ongoing. ECHO brings together three indicator sets in its classification of 'forgotten': vulnerability, media attention, funding; in addition to an expert local assessment.

The assessment of vulnerability (affected populations' level of need) has evolved. Previously, nine indicators were aggregated into a 'Vulnerability Index' with four, equally weighted categories (general situation in the country, displaced people, health of children under five, and other vulnerability factors).² More recently, vulnerability is measured according to the Index for Risk Management (known as

¹ 'Assessing needs, vulnerability and risk,' ECHO, last modified October 4, 2017, http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/needs-assessments_en

² 'Technical Note: Methodology for the Identification of Priority Countries for the European Commission Humanitarian Aid GNA and FCA, ECHO (December 2008), http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/strategy/methodology_2009_en.pdf, 7.

INFORM), a tool which provides extensive country level risk analysis using three dimensions: hazard and exposure, vulnerability and lack of coping capacity (See Annex 1 for methodology).

Much like the CARE and NRC methodology, the second indicator speaks to media coverage and the underreporting of crises. By searching media articles for relevant keywords under four themes (conflict, security, humanitarian crisis and food security), the resulting ratio of articles indicates whether a country receives below average or higher than average media coverage and are scored accordingly.³

The third indicator refers to donor interest, measured by public aid per capita. More specifically, this is calculated by combining spending on development and humanitarian aid as provided by the OECD Development Assistance Committee and OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS).⁴

The final component is a local, qualitative assessment, conducted by ECHO experts and / or geographical units who can 'identify humanitarian crisis pockets and back up their proposals for actions with a needs assessment that is recent and comprehensive', with the aim of ensuring a balanced approach.⁵ This approach addresses the difficulty of relying on quantitative data to objectively reflect the crisis i.e. it deliberately brings together the global and the local.

Given the range of indicators in use, 'forgotten' is a 'catch-all' term for the FCA. To use the specific example of finance, a lack of funding (per capita of affected population) is one of the measurements used to define forgotten crises i.e. 'underfunded-ness' is one indicator for 'forgotten-ness'.

CERF UNDERFUNDED EMERGENCIES

One of CERF's primary objectives is to 'strengthen core elements of humanitarian response in underfunded crises'. In order to fulfil this objective, it uses the UFE window, providing funding twice a year to countries that have not attracted, or are unlikely to attract, sufficient funding. Unlike the Rapid Response Window (RRW), the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) makes the final selection of countries, including the allocation amount. This selection, while ultimately discretionary, is underpinned by a rigorous process.⁶

Countries are selected based on a quantitative analysis of humanitarian needs, funding levels, risk and vulnerability and qualitative data as provided by the Underfunded Emergencies Working Group (UFEWG). More specifically, the CERF Secretariat assesses the level of underfunding and severity of need among countries in two categories; those with a Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and those without (Non-HRP). Non-HRP countries are identified and recommended by the UFEWG. Available funding is then compared against requirements. The funding levels of HRP countries and recommended non-HRP countries are compared to the global average and those that fall below are considered for the UFE grant.⁷ Funding levels are compared in various ways. One important comparison involves the removal of the best-funded sector and best funded agency, in order to create a comparable picture.

For those countries which are considered underfunded, CERF then runs a comparison of risk, vulnerability and the severity of humanitarian needs. This exercise is undertaken using the CERF Index for Risk and Vulnerability (CIRV).⁸ The data included in this index derives from six standardised measures, accounting for the various factors affecting a humanitarian crisis:

³ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵ 'FCA or Forgotten Crisis Assessment,' ECHO, n.d., http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/financing_decisions/dgecho_strategy/fca.

⁶ 'CERF Underfunded Emergencies Window: Procedures and Criteria,' UNOCHA, January 1, 2010, https://www.unocha.org/cerf/sites/default/files/CERF/UFE_Guidelines_March_2010_Review_June_2011.pdf, 5.

⁷ 'CERF Underfunded Emergencies, Overview of Technical Methodology,' CERF, October 18, 2017, <http://www.unocha.org/cerf/resources/how-apply/underfunded-emergencies-0>, 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

- **Projected risk of increase in humanitarian needs (10% weighting)**
- **Food insecurity (10%);**
- **Prevalence of conflict (10%);**
- **Change in conflict intensity and conflict risk alerts (10%);**
- **Human rights violations (10%);**
- **INFORM (which includes 50 indicators) (50% weighting)**

Each of these elements is drawn from multiple data sources. As with ECHO's FCA, CERF's use of the term 'underfunded' speaks directly to part of its specific mandate – to direct funding to those countries which receive disproportionately low levels of support from humanitarian aid donors.¹⁰ 'Underfunding' is the central concept for this 'window'¹¹ and a 'catch all' term in the similar fashion to 'forgotten' crises for ECHO i.e. the UFE methodology brings together crises with low levels of funding, *whatever the reason for the shortfall*.

CARE INTERNATIONAL & NRC

Two Start members, CARE International (hereby referred to as CARE) and NRC (via its affiliated IDMC) publish annual reports on this topic. Both reports rank emergencies; CARE's report focuses on 'silent' or 'under-reported' crises, NRC's on 'forgotten displacement'. The use of the terms 'silent' and 'forgotten' in these cases are taken as synonymous with a lack of media attention. The primary purpose of both is to bring them back to global attention i.e. as advocacy pieces.

CARE's methodology focuses entirely on the underreporting of humanitarian crises. Through the media monitoring services of Meltwater Group, crises are first filtered by scale (at least one million affected people), then analysed to determine the extent of international media coverage they received. Crises with the least number of articles with mentions are classified as being underreported.¹² Limitations of this approach include the initial, relatively large filter¹³ for scale, and the limited ability to analyse multiple languages.

Using similar criteria to CARE, NRC focuses on the most neglected displacement crises.¹⁴ After analysing crises with more than 100,000 displaced people, the list was narrowed by looking at the following factors: lack of media attention (results also delivered by the Meltwater Group); lack of political will (from both domestic armed groups and the international community); and lack of economic support.¹⁵

More specifically, when assessing for lack of media coverage, NRC wanted to ensure there was a comparison between attention and the size of the crisis as this is often not proportional. Therefore, the potential reach of relevant articles was divided by the number of displaced persons. 'Political will' was measured by determining whether a peace process was in existence or being developed; and the lack thereof indicated the opposite effect. Lastly, the percentage of needs covered within a humanitarian appeal was used to measure economic support.

ACAPS

As a research-based organisation, the primary objective is to provide evidence-based analysis of current humanitarian crises and the corresponding needs. The information notes developed by ACAPS are used by the Start Fund to help better inform decision making for alert activation and allocation meetings. While their index does not specifically aim to highlight these 'under the radar' crises, they provide weekly products on countries in which they have identified as a priority based on the level of severity. The four categories consist of: severe humanitarian crisis, humanitarian crisis, situation of concern and no severity.¹⁶ Determining how countries are categorised is dependent on two factors: 'the percentage of the population in need of assistance due to recent or protracted disasters' and 'the level of access humanitarian organisations have to the affected area and population'.¹⁷ This prioritisation essentially speaks to two key concepts; what is the

¹⁰ For this reason, CERF's UFE is referred to a 'balancing instrument' in the humanitarian system.

¹¹ The CERF's larger window is used for 'Rapid Response', which provides funding in 3 types of circumstances: sudden-onset emergencies, when there is rapid or significant deterioration of an existing situation, or during time-critical interventions.

¹² The list of underreported countries consist of: Peru, Central African Republic, Lake Chad Basin, Vietnam, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Burundi, Eritrea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

¹³ The Start Fund often focuses on crises in which less than 1 million people are affected.

¹⁴ This list consist of: the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, Nigeria, Yemen, Palestine, Ukraine, Myanmar and Somalia

¹⁵ 'The world's most neglected displacement crises,' NRC, June 1, 2017, https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/briefing-notes/neglected-conflicts/2016_neglected-list-nrc_hr.pdf, 2.

¹⁶ 'Weekly prioritisation: Methodology brief' ACAPS, n.d., https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/resources/files/160415_acaps_prioritisation_methodology_brief.pdf, 1.

¹⁷ 'Methodology,' ACAPS, n.d., <https://www.acaps.org/methodology>.



AMANULLAH, 60, DISPLACED BY VIOLENCE IN ALMAR DISTRICT IN JANUARY 2017 (ALERT 135 AFGHANISTAN DISPLACEMENT). PHOTO CREDIT: NRC/ENAYATULLAH AZAD

impact of the crisis and what are the underlying vulnerabilities. To measure these vulnerabilities, ACAPS looks to displacement and the number of refugees and IDPs present in the country (a year before the crisis), the Human Development Index, and the under-five mortality rate, which helps reflect on social, economic and environment conditions.¹⁸

EM-DAT

The Emergency Events Database, otherwise known as EM-DAT, comes from the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), which is based out of the Université Catholique de Louvain. Since 1973, this global database has focused primarily on identifying natural disasters such as, earthquakes, floods and droughts, with the aim to 'assist humanitarian action' and 'rationalize decision making for disaster preparedness'.¹⁹ A disaster is defined as being, 'a situation or event, which overwhelms local capacity, necessitating a request to national or international level for external assistance [and] an unforeseen and often sudden event that causes great damage, destruction and human suffering'.²⁰ For a disaster to be recorded, it must fulfill one of the following criteria: 10 or more people dead; 100 or more people affected; the declaration of a state of emergency or a call for international assistance.²¹ While the EM-DAT does not explicitly highlight crises seen as 'under the radar' it is worth acknowledging how aspects of their criteria overlap with the Start Fund's guiding questions, reinforcing its importance.

HARVARD HUMANITARIAN INITIATIVE

Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI) is at the beginning of a research arc on 'under the radar' crises. An article which pre-empted the research identifies three crisis types: 'neglected', 'silent' and 'urban'.²² 'Neglected' in this instance, resonates with the media-centred definitions of CARE's 'under-reported' crisis paper. It includes, for example, disasters which feature briefly in international news media, but from which public

¹⁸ 'Weekly prioritisation,' ACAPS, 2.

¹⁹ 'EM-DAT frequently asked questions,' Centre for Research on Epidemiology of Disasters, n.d., <http://www.emdat.be/frequently-asked-questions>.

²⁰ 'EM-DAT Glossary,' Centre for Research on Epidemiology of Disasters, n.d., <http://www.emdat.be/Glossary>.

²¹ 'EM-DAT frequently asked questions.'

²² Tilly Alcayna, 'What You Need to Know About 'Silent Crises'' TIME, last modified December 26, 2017, <http://time.com/5079545/what-to-know-silent-crises/>.

attention quickly fades while large populations remain affected. 'Silent' crises in this respect are distinct. HHI's ²³ loose definition draws on work from IFRC and UNISDR around typically small scale, weather-related disasters (often linked to climate change). Specifically, these crises are linked to the concept of 'extensive risk' ²⁴ i.e. disasters with low severity but high frequency.²⁵ UNISDR's Global Assessment Report (2015) also defines such crises in terms of scale (less than 30 people killed, and/or less than 600 houses destroyed).

MSF

MSF ceased production of their 'forgotten' emergencies list approximately two years²⁶ ago. The list was originally intended to be of operational value i.e. to aid decision making. It became apparent, however, that the list in that specific form and with a flexible, multifaceted and subjective definition of 'forgotten' crises, was of greater value for advocacy. The definition was multifaceted in the sense that senior managers at MSF included disasters from a range of 'types' which might be considered 'forgotten' in any given year. These included crises which were not, or had ceased to be, frequently referenced in the international media; those which were not given attention by mainstream donors for explicitly political reasons; those which were wilfully ignored by the responsible government (typically when the 'host' government would be expected to lead the response).

Before going on to look in more detail at the intersection of the above methodologies and definitions with the processes of the Start Fund, the following specific issues are worthy of note.

Global vs. local lenses

'Radar' is a colloquial term with no formal, technical meaning or application; typically used as a metaphor for a combination of global alert mechanisms, global media and donor attention. The media-based methodologies which refer to 'neglected' and 'forgotten' emergencies tend to focus on the attention of global media and mainstream donors. As noted throughout Start's literature and the Start Fund Fourth External Evaluation (referred to hereafter as 'the Fourth External Evaluation'), Start operates in part as a global instrument and in part as a local fund. The latter varies according to the strength of the in-country Start network, Bangladesh being the furthest developed and formalised. The Fourth External Evaluation also focused on the relationship between the Start Fund and the formal, international response system. A significant proportion of alerts, however, took place in countries with no significant international response or response architecture. In some instances, emergencies which would likely be categorised as 'off the radar' in the global sense, are the subject of significant national media attention and large scale, government-led responses. Responding to gaps and shortfalls in such cases is part of the Start Fund's core business. The key takeaway from this early analysis is the need to consider both global and local dimensions.

Synergies between ECHO's FCA and the CERF UFE methodologies and the Start Fund

The methods applied for ECHO's FCA and CERF's UFE do resonate in some ways with the Start Fund and its processes (summarised below). In both cases, the FCA and UFE methodologies aim to support funding decisions. Specifically, they aim to provide guidance for a window or proportion of funding which acts as a balance to a 'primary' funding stream. In the case of ECHO, the FCA is used in combination with the Global Needs Assessment (GNA), an estimate of relative levels of need across all ongoing crises using the best available data. In this case, the FCA and GNA combined provide ECHO with a framework for 'ensuring compliance with the principles of impartiality and independence...' across the totality of its funding. The CERF divides its funding in keeping with its specific mandate: two thirds of funding goes through the rapid response window,²⁷ to crises with emerging needs (new emergencies or spikes in existing contexts). Both the RRW and the UFE windows fund projects (in accordance) with life-saving criteria. Both have a clear resonance with the Start Fund, which has two recognised niches: directly complementing (gap filling) in mainstream responses, as well as delivering to small and medium scale crises.

²³ Interview

²⁴ 'Intensive and extensive risk,' Prevention Web, last modified November 12, 2015, <https://www.preventionweb.net/risk/intensive-extensive-risk>.

²⁵ Extensive risk is the antithesis of intensive risk i.e. high severity but low frequency disasters, such as large tsunamis and / or earthquakes.

²⁶ Interview with MSF

The CERF UFE process has other synergies with the Start Fund, most notably that it is a 'member-based' system (albeit with a different set of members). The main points of divergence, however, are that:

- CERF's UFE selection criteria results in the selection of a relatively small number of under-funded countries, rather than crises. In a separate phase, the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators (RC/HCs) in these countries are offered the choice to select life-saving projects within their country contexts. This could be seen as analogous with Start's distinct allocation and project selection processes.
- The UFE window of the CERF undertakes two allocations per year. This is fundamentally different from the 'rolling' nature of the Start Fund against which alerts can be raised at any time. A rolling 'system' precludes an in-depth comparison of emergencies every time an alert is made.

The FCA and CERF both have global and local inputs into decision making. Both begin with a global level analysis based on the best available data. There is a recognition, however, that this data tends not to be current enough to support operational decision making, as well as being aggregate / macro level data.²⁸ As above, both methodologies rely on multiple sets of indicators and take an aggregate score across this range to give a numerical value to each crisis to allow ranking. Both utilise the INFORM vulnerability risk framework as one key indicator set in this respect. In the case of the FCA, a local / national level assessment is provided by in-country or regional experts, which feeds into the classification. In the case of CERF's UFE, local inputs from members of the UFEWG form part of the original country selection (i.e. steering the search in the first phase). Unlike the Start Fund, neither index specifies an average length of time for the decision making process. Given that these are bi-annual rounds, however, timeliness is more important than speed. Previous CERF UFE funding rounds indicate that the process can run over the course of several months; from the first stage of country selection to final selection and ensuing announcement by the ERC.

In conclusion, the tools and definitions above can be placed into the following loose categories.

- The ECHO and CERF each speak directly to their specific, respective purposes. Both, however, have significant similarities and they immediately appear to offer potential value for the Start Fund in terms of their focus on supporting consistent, operational decision making. Although the ultimate outputs of FCA and are not consistently of value to the Start Fund, the initial, global analysis which forms the data analysis component of each could be tailored to be of specific relevance to Start. This idea is discussed in more detail below.
- The INGO initiatives, including CARE, NRC and the discontinued MSF work, have value principally for advocacy or raising awareness and tend to take a global view. To this end, the methodologies at work tend to be less detailed.
- ACAPs, Em-Dat and GDACs. Each of these tools lists or pushes alerts for disasters, and each uses a certain classification. None of the three, however, uses 'under the radar' or any such variant.
- The HHI research is yet to start in earnest and is an outlier in the sense that it aims to provide an academic classification with practical value.

Each of these categories above, and the HHI definition, add some value for the Start Fund. Overall, however, they reveal that there is no standard definition for 'under the radar' crises. Indeed, 'under the radar' is not a term which is applied frequently or consistently across the sector. However, it is clear that the term 'under the radar', in and of itself, is not sufficiently precise to add any real value for operational decision making. For the Start Fund, there are critical considerations in developing a definition for internal usage: (a) to consider the specific purpose of the term and (b) to consider both the global and local dimensions.

²⁷ 'Applying for rapid response grants,' CERF, n.d., <http://www.unocha.org/cerf/resources/how-apply/rapid-response-o>.

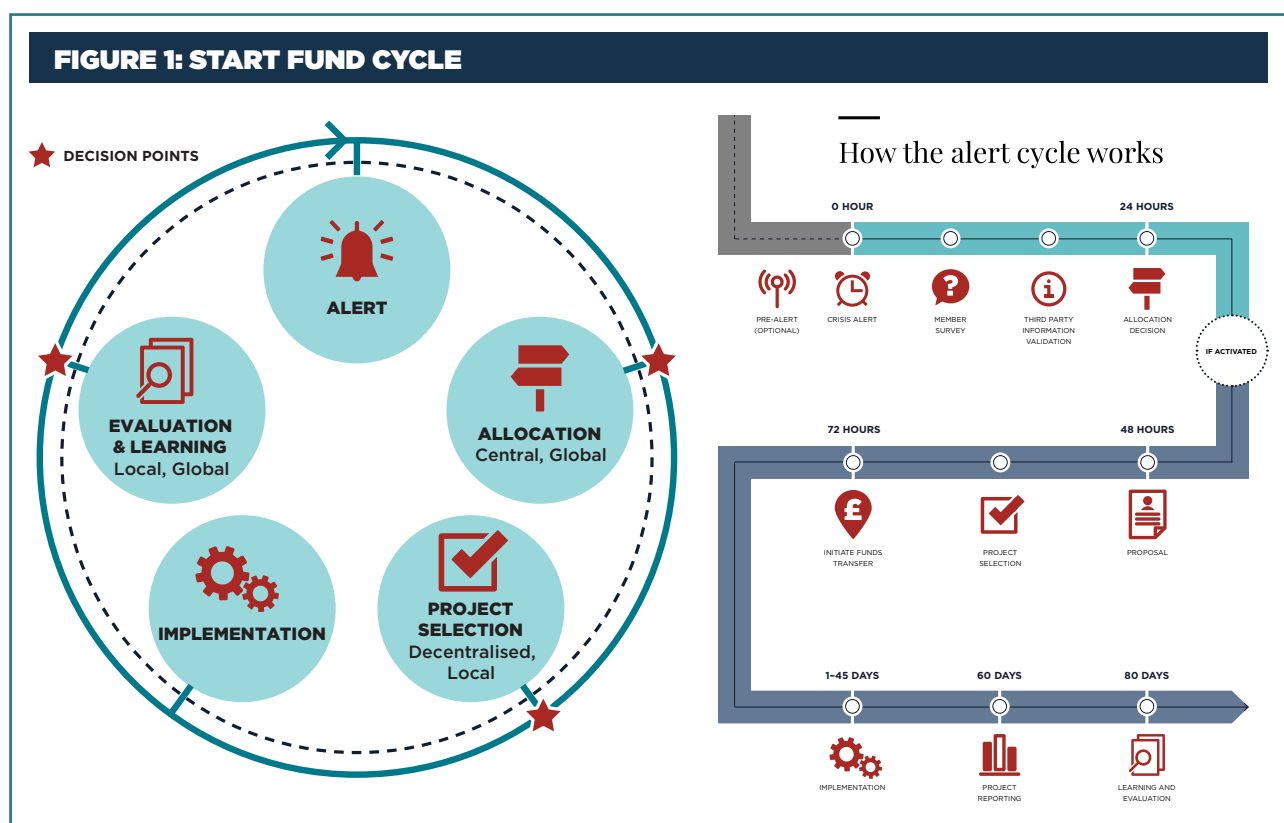
²⁸ The Start Fund's experience with a third-party information supplier was characterised by the same challenge. Funding data in particular, tends to be collated at the country level and is available, at best, for the previous financial year. This offers a very high-level guide as to what funding might be.

1.3 The Start Fund methodology and a prospective definition for 'under the radar'

In order to frame the Start specific questions, this section summarises and recaps the relevant sections of the Fourth External Evaluation and looks in more detail at the most relevant processes of the Start Fund. situation in the country, displaced people, health of children under five, and other vulnerability factors).

1.3.1 Summary overview of the Start Fund's decision making process

As illustrated below (Figure 1), the process by which the Start Fund decides to make allocations includes several steps in two stages. The first stage begins when a Start member(s) identifies a crisis and submits an 'alert note' to the Start team. This note is relayed to the Start Network and all available members complete an alert survey. An allocation decision is then undertaken by either the Start Fund Committee or the Start team. This decision is based on information provided in the alert note, results from the member survey and briefing of the crisis and context (as provided by ACAPS). In the event of a positive decision (known as an 'activation'), an appropriate funding amount is chosen. The second stage is project selection. Start members engaged in each respective emergency submit proposals. Funds are awarded by an in-country, standing decision making group, or by nominated, country-based representatives of Start members or partners. Start's target for this process is a 72-hour window, with project implementation limited under most circumstances to 45 days.



Source: Start Fund Handbook

While the speed of decision making is arguably the Fund's most recognised attribute, it also strives to ensure that decision making is informed, collective, decentralised and transparent. Each of these elements is important in Start decision making. The Fourth External Evaluation notes that the Start Fund shares a number of key characteristics with other pooled funding mechanisms. The Fund sets itself very tight deadlines for decision making and there is a natural tension between the speed at which decisions are made and the extent to which they can easily be collaborative. The Start Fund also aims to make decisions at a very early stage in some emergencies (or spikes in protracted crises), a point in time where information is typically at its most limited.

Guidance for the decision making process comes in the form of the Start Fund Handbook and, since 2016, a list of 'core considerations and critical questions' for decision makers (discussed in detail below). This list of 'critical questions', which was jointly compiled by the Start Team and the Start Fund Committee Rota leads, includes elements from other definitions of 'forgotten' crises (these elements are highlighted with a * below).

FIGURE 1: START FUND CYCLE

DOES THE ALERT MEET ONE OR MORE OF THE CRISIS PROFILES FOR WHICH THE START FUND HAS BEEN DESIGNED?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Underfunded small to medium scale crises* ● Forecasts of impending crises ● Spikes in chronic humanitarian crises Timing of alert
TIMING OF ALERT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The duration from beginning of the crisis to the alert being raised - what impact does the timing of the alert have on the ability of a Start Fund activation to make a positive impact?
GOVERNMENT CAPACITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does the national government have the capacity to respond to the crisis?* ● Has the Government issued a call for international assistance?*
OTHER CURRENT RESPONSES AND FUNDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What actors are responding to this crisis?* ● How well resourced are the humanitarian and development requirements in-country?* ● Are any other funds being made available for this response?*
POTENTIAL FUTURE RESPONSES OR FUNDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What actors are likely or have potential to respond to this crisis? ● Are other funding sources likely to become available quickly? If so, how will a 45-day response fit into wider funding becoming available?
CRISIS PROFILE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has the crisis been reported in the international or regional media?*
CLEAR GAPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are there clear gaps in response identified? By sector, by geography or by group of affected people?
45-DAY PROJECT(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is a response of 45 days appropriate for a positive impact on the crisis?
COVERAGE RATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What coverage rate might be achieved with a Start Fund allocation? (Can a relatively small injection of funds have an impact on the crisis?)
DISBURSEMENT POT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the current status of the Start Fund disbursement pot? ● When is the next donor contribution to the pot expected? ● How strategic would it be to use funds for this crisis?
EXTERNAL INFORMATION SOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do the briefing documents corroborate the information set out in the alert note and/or Membership survey responses?

Interviews and notes from allocation decision meetings show that guidance, including these critical questions, are discussed amongst members. At times, they are important determinants in decisions around activation and funding; particularly, discussions on funding levels and formal requests for international assistance. These questions were designed as guidance, rather than as a 'box-ticking' exercise. The same notes and interviews make it clear that there is no structured or consistent process through which these questions are addressed systematically; nor are there a consistent set of parameters, indicators or triggers used.²⁹ The Start Fund's experience with a third-party information supplier was characterised by the same challenge. Funding data in particular, tends to be collated at the country level and is available, at best, for the previous financial year. This offers a very high-level guide as to what funding might be. This does not suggest, however, that Start process is poorly managed or necessarily inconsistent. The role of experienced Committee members is seen as key;³⁰ in particular, interviewees noted that each Rota lead brought their own style. In addition, however, it was noted that the meetings take on different characteristics depending on the respective Rota lead. In a sense this is part and parcel of Start Fund decision making being a 'human', peer-to-peer process.

The term 'under the radar' is not used in current guidance, nor in critical questions. In decision making meetings, however, the term is used regularly, and an informal determination of whether or a not a crisis can be considered 'under the radar' is a factor that affects the likelihood of activation or funding.³¹ It is clear that if the Start fund is to use the term, 'under- the radar' more formally, as part of decision making, than the definition and the processes applied to reach this classification ought to be demonstrably transparent and consistent.

1.3.2 The 'Fourth External Evaluation': key findings

The Fourth External Evaluation noted that, in the eyes of both Start members and donors, the Fund has two defining niches:³²

- **'The ability to complement other funding mechanisms and funding streams by virtue of being faster to act,**
- **Its specific intent to deliver funding to under-served/neglected emergencies...'**³³

The Fourth External Evaluation also used a loose categorisation of emergencies, focusing on the relationship between Start funded interventions and the 'mainstream', UN-led response in any given context. The research focused on a sample of alerts from 020 through 170, dividing them into the following three categories:

- 1. Activations where the Start Fund responds to fill a gap in time, prior to the activation of other funding 'mainstream' funding instruments (typically, the CERF, Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) or other emergency response mechanisms).**
- 2. Activations where the Start Fund responds to a gap in coverage i.e. in a country context with a standing UN Appeal / response but in a geographically distinct area.**
- 3. Activations in countries where the UN has no standing appeal for assistance.**

The Evaluation acknowledged that these categories themselves were not clear cut and grey areas exist in categorisation.

²⁹ These conclusions were also drawn from an upcoming learning product on decision making within the Start Fund. Here it was agreed that 'allocation meetings do not formally address the guidance questions and decisions are made on the basis of voting - where what is important to one decision-maker may be different to what is important to another.'

³⁰ The Fourth External Evaluation noted that these individuals are 'seen as embodying institutional knowledge as well as the original spirit and principles of the Fund as a global public good.'

³¹ 14/48 or 29% of activated alerts were referred to as 'under the radar' during the decision making process

³² The Start Fund has a number of additional functions beyond these two niches, most notably the 'Crisis Anticipation Window'. After conducting the analysis, the intersection between 'under the radar' crises and the Start Fund's Crisis Anticipation Window remained unclear.

³³ In addition, donors saw the Start Fund as a means for them to support the 'localisation' element of the Grand Bargain.

The presence of a 'mainstream' international response is clear in cases where the UN's coordination architecture (typically OCHA office, cluster-based coordination system, CBPFs) has a clear and significant footprint. In other instances, the presence is less well defined, particularly in countries where the host government is unwilling to make a formal appeal for assistance, which would trigger a full OCHA presence and for some donors, internal mechanisms which unlock humanitarian funding. Alerts were placed in this category, however, on the basis of a significant presence of UN humanitarian agencies and international partners undertaking a coordinated response. This categorisation takes no consideration of the global media or funding-based definitions of forgotten or neglected crises i.e. category 1 in the Evaluation included Start funded responses in the Central African Republic (CAR) which were directly in support of the mainstream response. CAR is consistently placed on lists of forgotten or neglected crises on the basis by virtue of the crisis being little reported in the western media and the HRP being typically underfunded.

Category 2 builds from category 1. The basis of use of a separate category came directly from the review of Start alerts. Although relatively few in number, the initial sample contained a discrete set of emergencies which occurred in countries with a mainstream response which were disconnected either thematically, by geography or both. For example, there is a large, UN-coordinated response to ongoing conflict in Eastern DRC. Alerts were raised for new displacement caused by this same conflict. Even though Start filled a financial gap for new activities, the response would clearly be folded into the ongoing coordinated effort at some point. As such, these alerts were placed in Category 1. Similarly, new disease outbreaks or emergency health responses related to this conflict response would be placed in Category 1. Category 2 was created for new emergencies which were beyond the reach, scope or attention of the mainstream response. Examples included one nascent and unrelated conflict in a distinct geographical area of DRC, and two disease outbreaks in different parts of the country again.

Category 3 was created in mind of the specific thrust of the Evaluation, the relationship between Start and the mainstream / UN-led humanitarian system. Alerts in this category included all of those in countries with government-led responses, whether or not the Start funded projects were directly complementary to government efforts i.e. gap filling in the same sense as category 1, or responding to relatively isolated crises, as in category 2 above.

The use of these three categories alone appears inadequate as a basis for defining 'under the radar' crisis for the Start Fund. As noted throughout the Fourth External Evaluation, the Start Fund is an instrument which has attributes of both global and local funding mechanisms. By some definitions, the absence of an international response, including the information which would typically be generated by the coordination mechanisms in these responses, might place a significant proportion of Start alerts into the 'under the radar' category. The Start Network, however, aspires to transform into a 'network of networks', supported by local funding structures. It is evident that a working definition of 'under the radar' crises for the Start Fund cannot take a purely global stance. Some crises, which are 'under the international radar', inevitably loom large at the national level and elicit a response from the respective government, INGO and NNGO partners as well as UN agencies (whether or not the latter has permanent representation from their emergency branches).

In conclusion, it is possible to say that the Start Fund considers a range of questions which are similar to those used by ECHO's FCA, CERF's UFE and others. It does so, however, in a manner which is not wholly or transparently consistent. The application of questions is very informal in the sense that no specific thresholds, targets or objective criteria for comparison are applied. It is important to note that the nature of Start process is 'human'. The nature of the contexts in which the Start Fund typically operates, as well as the speed at which it operates, mean that decisions will never be based on data alone; data will never be sufficiently complete, up to date or disaggregated. The expert judgement of partners and experienced representatives will continue to compensate for gaps in available information.

Start is looking to define 'under the radar' crises for its own internal usage, therefore, both definition and application should be done with specific and consistent intent. The term is in common use in decision making meetings, and numerous elements of other definitions already appear in existing guidance. It would be appropriate to combine and strengthen these elements within guidance i.e. to have a new version of the existing guidance, include and define the term 'under the radar,' and to ensure that the definition and the relevance of the definition are clear. Whichever definition Start settles upon will need to be fit for purpose in crises which do not feature on the global 'radar', yet have active, ongoing, locally-led responses.

1.4 How should the Start Fund define 'under the radar' crises and why?

Previous sections have identified that a range of definitions are utilised for 'under the radar' crises and that typically, definitions are tailored for the specific, respective purpose of the ranking or tool for which they were designed. Similarly, the Start Fund needs to be clear – in advance of clarifying its definition – how specifically it is going to be applied. Interviews and documentation suggest that the 'under the radar' classification is important to Start in two different ways; in decision making and in reporting. Two indicators in the Start Fund's draft performance log-frame with DFID³⁴ demonstrate the dual purpose of the 'under the radar' classification.

The first draft indicator asks Start to report the "percent of Start Fund alerts that are considered 'under the radar' crises"; the implication being that this characterisation is made at the decision making stage, requiring an 'internal' definition of 'under the radar'. The second asks for a report of the "percent of 'under the radar' crises that are reported externally at a global level that lead to Start Fund alerts". The implication here appears to be that an 'external' definition of 'under the radar' should also be applied as a means of focusing alerts as well as providing the basis for reporting.

In the case of the first indicator above, previous sections identify how the term 'under the radar' is already used informally in decision making and that elements of a possible definition appear throughout Start guidance. It is clear that an 'under the radar' designation strengthens the case for an alert being activated, if other conditions are met. In respect of the second indicator, it is not apparent that the Start Fund has proactively (or pre-emptively) referred to other tools in order to focus or trigger alerts. The draft logframe indicates that ECHO's FCA is seen as the most suitable. Comparisons with some of the tools identified above (notably the CERF UFE and ECHO FCA), as part of ad hoc pieces of analysis, have gone some way to address the reporting requirement retrospectively. The FCA and CERF's UFE methodology are both designed to support decision making proactively, in a similar fashion to the Start Fund. As above, however, both are 'bespoke' tools, and neither of their end results directly support the requirements of the Start Fund. As above, however, the initial high-level analysis and indicators used by both the FCA and UFE have the potential to support Start process. Overall, it is clear that a single definition, with consistent and quantifiable metrics, could be useful for both purposes.

A more precise definition and process, however, does not answer the 'so what' question. Both proposed DFID indicators have a typical linear progression i.e. the logframe expects a progressively higher annual report in each category. Since the Start Fund has a limited amount of funding to allocate across its two key niches, allocating more to 'under the radar crises' comes at the expense of its other core function. CERF, for example, is mandated to allocate a proportion of its funding to underfunded crises. The Start Fund has no such prescription. The Start Fund, therefore, also needs to consider the relevance of such a classification at the decision making stage. For example, if a crisis is characterised as 'under the radar', does it then receive a weighting; or does Start decide to apply an explicit proportion of funding to 'under the radar' crises? If a crisis is considered 'under the radar', Start can use the designation proactively, whether or not an alert is ultimately activated. Previous evaluations and learning exchanges have highlighted the extent to which Start members and partners' lack of awareness of the Start Fund at field level acts as a barrier to alerts being generated. Start could use an 'under the radar' designation to reach out proactively to Start members and partners at country, as well as donors and other funding instruments, to advocate for alerts and additional funding.³⁵ Ultimately, The Start Fund has to consider how it wants to balance its two principal niche functions, as well as its other aspirations. In addition, any definition of 'under the radar' which is applied by the Start Fund ought to give equal weight to international and national led response coordination and capacities.

A more precise definition and process, however, does not answer the 'so what' question. Both proposed

³⁴ In the design phase at the time of drafting this report, however, similar indicators have also been used in the past DFID logframe.

³⁵ This suggestion resonates with Start's nascent 'Call for Support' initiative



VEGETABLE SEED AND RICE DISTRIBUTION IN BAUCAU IN MAY 2017 (ALERT 158 TIMOR LESTE ANTICIPATION OF DROUGHT). PHOTO CREDIT: WORLD VISION

DFID indicators have a typical linear progression i.e. the logframe expects a progressively higher annual report in each category. Clearly, since Start has a limited amount of funding to allocate across its two key niches. CERF, for example, is mandated to allocate a proportion of its funding to underfunded crises. The Start Fund has no such prescription. The Fund, therefore, also needs to consider the relevance of such a classification at the decision making stage. For example, if a crisis is characterised as 'under the radar', does it then receive a weighting; or does Start decide to apply an explicit proportion of funding to 'under the radar' crises. How does the Fund want to balance its two principal niches, as well as its other aspirations? Any definition of 'under the radar' which is applied by the Start Fund ought to give equal weight to international and national led response coordination and capacities.

1.4.1 Defining 'under the radar' for the Start Fund

The TOR for this learning review suggested the application of the same categorisation of emergencies used in the Fourth External Evaluation. This approach specifically looked at the role of the Start Fund in relation to the 'mainstream' response system.³⁶ The following categories are designed to expand on those applied in that Evaluation. They define crises according to the presence of the international

³⁶ Typically, indices and tools which define 'under the radar' crises, or variations on that theme, begin with a list of 'all emergencies'. This classification proves useful, however, in creating a subset of crises to which the 'under the radar' definition may apply. Specifically, the categorisation from the Evaluation highlighted the significant role of the Start Fund in 'small and

medium' scale disasters, typically those in which the international system was absent. 'Small and medium' scale disasters is not a synonym for 'under the radar' crises, but the application of these categories was an obvious starting point in the design of an 'under the radar' definition.

response system, rather than disaster type. Within each of these two broad categories, however, they attempt to create a more appropriate balance between international and national response efforts, towards a definition of 'under the radar' crises.

- 1. Crises with a substantial international response architecture and a UN-led response:**
 - a) In which Start directly complements the main response. This includes filling gaps in time (by virtue of being faster to make decisions); immediate responses to new crises which are directly related to the main response e.g. new displacement in areas geographically proximate to the ongoing response, to which Start offers an immediate response before other funding instruments react.**
 - b) In which new crises emerge that are beyond the immediate purview of the ongoing response by virtue of being geographically and/or thematically distinct. Such crises are likely to be small scale, of low severity, remote or emerging.**
- 2. Crises with no (or no significant) international response architecture or a UN-led response:**
 - a) In which Start directly complements a government-led response. This includes filling gaps in time (by virtue of being faster to make decisions) in relation to a response or projected government response; immediate responses to new crises which are directly related to the main response; filling gaps in capacity in relation to an ongoing government response.**
 - b) In which new crises emerge which are beyond the immediate purview of the government response; by virtue of being geographically and or thematically distinct. Such crises are likely to be of small scale, low severity, remote or emerging. This includes instances in which the government is wilfully ignoring crises on political grounds and / or wilfully withholding support to certain groups or regions.**

In very simple terms, Start alerts to categories 1 and 2 a) see the Fund acting as an explicit complement to an ongoing, functioning response i.e. Start is acting in accordance with its first niche function. Categories 1 and 2 b) appear, in general terms, to fit one definition of 'under the radar' crises. One core criterion for an 'under the radar' definition, therefore, would be that crises are beyond the reach or attention of an ongoing emergency response; whether or not that response is internationally or locally-led.

The application of this criterion, however, only reduces the range of crises that might be considered 'under the radar'. In addition, Start should apply a 'global' filter, replicating the role of the global analysis undertaken by the FCA and CERF UFE. The table above applies no such filter. Alerts in Central African Republic, however are exceptions. These alerts are for projects which directly complement the UN-led system, clearly fitting into category 1 a) above. CAR, however, is consistently cited as receiving inadequate attention from mainstream donors and media and as being severely underfunded. For these reasons, the allocation meeting notes highlight the lack of funding and that none is likely to be forthcoming. The CAR alerts were placed in Category 1 b) as a result. The designation of CAR as severely underfunded is the application of one 'global' indicator used by CERF and ECHO. As above, it is clear that the end results of ECHO's FCA or CERF's UFE methodology would not consistently provide a suitable filter.

³⁷ As noted above, the Start Fund Anticipation Window sits somewhat apart in this case. This application of this criterion in the case of anticipation alerts adds no specific value to decision making.

1.4.2 Strengthening guidance around the concept of 'under the radar' crises

This section proposes enhancements to current guidance, principally the guidance note for decision makers. It proposes the addition of a section which asks, 'can this crisis be considered 'under the radar' and is ultimately an extension of the existing guidelines.

It also presumes that a variation of the global level analysis undertaken by the CERF UFE and / or ECHO can be applied to each Start Fund allocation. As a 'placeholder' this assumed amalgamation of the CERF and ECHO analysis is referred to below as 'global comparison indices'.

CAN THIS CRISIS BE CONSIDERED AS 'UNDER THE RADAR'? FOR SUCH A QUESTION, THE FOLLOWING MIGHT BE CONSIDERED:

- Does the affected country have an internationally-led or supported humanitarian response?
- Irrespective of whether or not there are standing UN-led coordination structures, or a UN or government led response: in country, is the specific crisis to which the alert relates, directly associated with an ongoing response i.e. is it reasonable to assume that an ongoing response will expand to incorporate to this distinct crisis?
- If yes to the above, then consider:
 - Has the UN and/or the responsible government formally recognised the specific crisis to which the alert is related? (i.e. declared a state of emergency or calamity)
 - Is there an active response to this specific crisis? What measures have been taken at the time of the alert?
 - What is the immediate response capacity (national or international)? Is the Start Fund filling a capacity gap in relation to a government response?
 - Is the crisis being wilfully ignored? Is it due to the political context?
- *Does the crisis register on the 'global filter' in terms of,
 - Scale / severity
 - Funding levels
 - INFORM / vulnerability
 - Media coverage

(*See recommendation 4 regarding specific thresholds and indicators.)

1.5 Conclusions and recommendations

The Start Fund currently appears to be utilising the term 'under the radar' in two similar, but distinct ways; one referring to decision making and the second, in part, to reporting. For reporting purposes, the Start Fund looks to external, global indices. None of these, however, meet its specific purpose.

RECOMMENDATION: utilise a single definition of 'under the radar' for decision making and reporting. By necessity, this will include global and local elements.

The 'so what' question must be answered by the Start Fund. If a crisis is categorised as 'under the radar' using a new definition, the question of balancing its two niche and other functions is important. A linear progression 'more funding to under the radar crises is better' must have a limit.

RECOMMENDATION: The Start Fund should initiate an internal discussion about the ideal balance between its functions i.e. the two key niche functions: rapid funding to complement ongoing responses, small to medium or 'under the radar' emergencies, as well as the crisis anticipation window and other initiatives.

Given the need to apply global and local considerations to any definition of 'under the radar' crisis, categorisation ought to give equal weight to national, and international response and coordination.

RECOMMENDATION: The Start Fund considers, as one basic criterion for its 'under the radar' definition, "crises which are not the subject of, or linked geographically or thematically to, an active emergency response, whether or not emergency response capacity is coordinated by the respective, responsible government or the international system."³⁷

In addition to this simple criterion, however, the Start Fund should apply an additional 'global' filter. In support of both decision making and reporting, it is important that a Start definition of 'under the radar' aligns with other tools and indices at the global level.

Indicators for such a filter are very likely to include those in similar categories to CERF and FCA. Funding (per capita) from global data (such as the FTS), vulnerability (INFORM) and possibly media attention if a suitably rapid assessment is possible.

RECOMMENDATION: The Start Network should work with ACAPS, ECHO and CERF to develop a set of global indicators (a simplified subset of those used by the FCA and UFE) which can be applied quickly and preferably mechanically / automatically in support of each alert. Scores against these indicators should form part of ACAPS' briefing notes. In addition to strengthened guidance, below.

As with the other indices and tools, however, the limitations of these indicators will be apparent. Available data, as above, is likely to be high level, aggregate and retrospective. It is also typical that data on any given country be national level and/or applicable to the main response in the country. By any definition, therefore, a score against such a set of indicators would be informative/indicative rather than definitive. It is likely, furthermore, that insufficient or no data, will be available for many of the small-scale, remote disasters, typically those in the 'silent' category. This theory is borne out to a certain extent by Figure 2 (below) and the analysis which follows.

RECOMMENDATION: Where crises are localised and / or 'silent' i.e. there is inadequate data on global indicators, Start should fall back on the simple criterion described above.

A decorative graphic consisting of a series of small, light blue squares arranged in a curved arc, starting from the bottom left and curving towards the top right, located in the bottom right quadrant of the page.

Section 2

Analysis

This section aims to address the second part of the research:

‘Using the above definition and external indexes, map the extent to which the Start Fund currently relates to ‘under the radar’ crises, based on the proportion of its total alerts, activations and funding that go toward this crisis type, as well as the proportion to which it is alerted to and activates for ‘under the radar’ crises that are (and are not) recognised externally.’

2.1 Start alerts to ‘under the radar’ crises

The analysis which follows is based on a review of all alerts from 2017 (alert range 134-199), using qualitative data from alert notes, allocation meetings minutes, ACAPS briefing notes, as well as quantitative data provided by the Start Fund MEAL team. Figure 2, which follows, divides all activated alerts according to the categorisation outlined in the section above. Columns 1 c) and 2 c) and d) include those alerts that fall into the ‘under the radar’ category after applying the criterion above.

FIGURE 2: ALERT CATEGORISATION FOR ALL ACTIVATED ALERTS IN 2017

1 COUNTRIES WITH AN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE			2 COUNTRIES WITHOUT AN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE			
(a) Crises where Start fills a gap in time (through speed of response)	(b) Start responds to new crises that are in proximity to the main response	(c) Crises which are distinct and beyond the purview of an ongoing response	(a) Crises where Start fills a gap in time (in relation to a government response)	(b) Crises in which Start fills a gap in capacity to the main response	(c) Crises in which there is no government response based on scale or severity	(d) Crises in which the government is wilfully ignoring the issue on political grounds
162 Yemen	198 DRC ♦♦	135 Afghanistan ♦	134 Philippines	136 Zimbabwe	161 Pakistan ♦	146 Sri Lanka
168 South Sudan		142 DRC ♦♦	150 Peru ♦	138 Bangladesh		158 Timor-Leste
173 Tajikistan		144 Malawi	155 Colombia	147 Zimbabwe		
174 Niger		145 Mongolia	165 Philippines ♦	149 Ecuador		
175 Kenya		148 Afghanistan ♦	169 Mexico	151 Togo		
199 Afghanistan ♦		156 Mali ♦♦♦	170 El Salvador	179 Sierra Leone		
		159 Niger ♦	171 Ethiopia	181 Nepal		
		160 DRC ♦	172 India	189 Gambia		
		163 CAR ♦♦♦	180 India	192 Zambia		
		184 CAR ♦♦	186 Mexico	195 Vietnam ♦		
		187 Nigeria ♦	191 Vanuatu	Bangladesh (B001, B002, B003)		
		194 DRC ♦	193 Vietnam ♦			
			197 Albania			

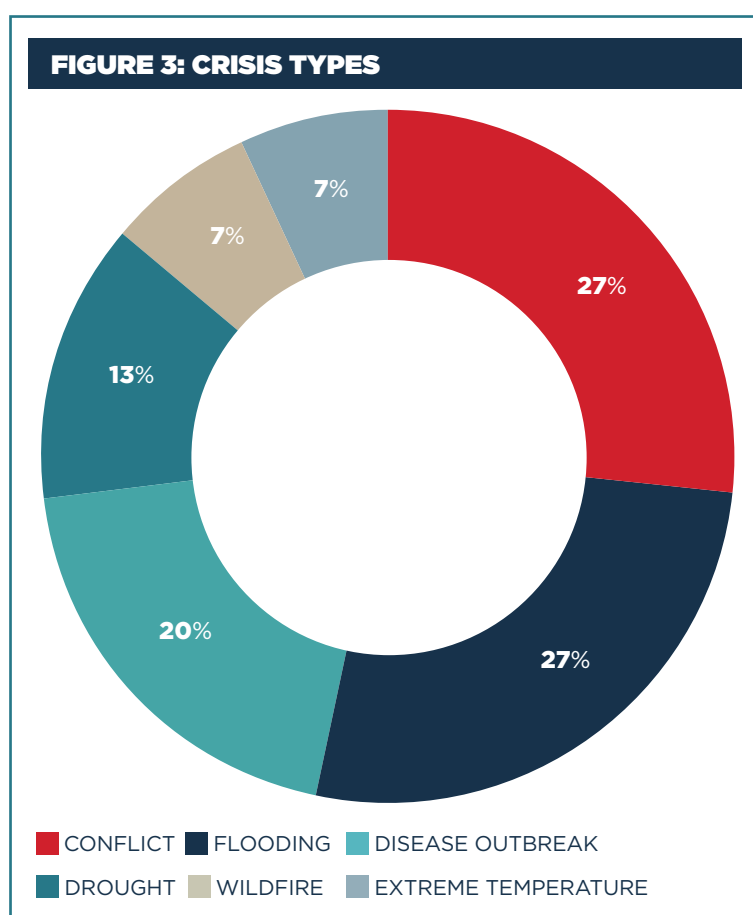
Note: 188 MEXICO & GUATEMALA was NOT included as it sits within a grey area. The reason being, one country (Guatemala) could fit the definition of being ‘under the radar,’ but not Mexico. However, considering these crises were grouped into one alert, they are unable to be classified separately.

Additional Note: 187 NIGERIA was a conflicting example. It represented a crisis in which the Start Fund primarily responded to a lack of capacity on the part of the government and had less to do with rapid response or geographic proximity; therefore, did not fit any one category. However, it was ultimately deemed ‘under the radar’ after applying the ‘global’ filter as it lacked present and future funding, received little media attention or donor interest. In addition, Nigeria is recognised by the CERF as being a UFE country.

Based on the above categorisation of alerts, several conclusions can be drawn in terms of funding, crisis type and how often Start Fund is alerted to externally recognised 'under the radar' crises.

- Using the criteria established, 15/48 (31%) activated alerts³⁸ would be considered 'under the radar'. In total, the Fund has awarded £11,269,071 GBP for 2017 alerts, however, 'under the radar' crises accounted for 23% of those funds (£2,531,211 GBP).
- There is a broad correlation between the 'under the radar' criterion above and those on global tools and indices, only for those alerts in countries with internationally-led responses. Very few alerts in countries with no international response feature on global level lists of 'under the radar' crises. This phenomenon has been borne out historically, in cases where ACAPS has been unable to produce briefing notes as a result of inadequate information at global level.

Alerts in Figure 2 can also be grouped by crisis type. Dissecting the 'under the radar' list by crisis type³⁹ (Figure 3, below) shows that the majority are conflict/displacement related, or flooding disasters.



³⁸ This excludes alert 200 and alert 202, which were not included in the analysis. Also, crises described as 'displacement' were added to the category of 'conflict.'

³⁹ Each category consist of the following alerts: conflict (alerts 135, 142, 156, 163), flooding (alerts 144, 148, 184, 187), disease outbreak (alerts 159, 160, 194), drought (alerts 146, 158), extreme temperature (alert 145) and wildfire (alert 161)

2.2 Application of the new 'under the radar' definition/criteria

After applying the new crisis categorisation to all activated alerts in the sample, specific examples emerge to help contextualise the effectiveness of the Start Fund as a funding mechanism responding to 'under the radar' crises.

ALERTS IN COUNTRIES WITH AN INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

ALERT 142 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) is a distinct example. Alert 142 was in response to a nascent conflict and initially small-scale displacement in Kasai province. DRC had an existing Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP); response efforts, however, were focused on the conflict in Eastern DRC. The HRP did not cover Kasai. The crisis was geographically distinct and the conflict unrelated to that in the East and the activities of Start members' local partners initiated the attention of the Start Fund and the international system. The initial Start Fund Alert predated a CERF application⁴⁰. The Start Fund acted as a bridging mechanism assisting Start members as they awaited more sustainable funding. At the time of the first engagement of Start members, this crisis would fit the 'under the radar' designation.

ALERT 198 DRC was in response to rapid displacement in Beni, North Kivu; a region with significant humanitarian presence due to the ongoing conflict. As the conflict in Kasai became increasingly urgent, resources initially allocated to North and South Kivu were redirected, leaving a funding gap. No intervention at the time was addressing the needs of this population and there were concerns as to whether further funding was a possibility; all despite it being a level 3 emergency⁴¹. According to the designation above, the crisis in Beni would not be considered 'under the radar', given its proximity and direct relation to the main response.

ALERT 148 AFGHANISTAN referred to severe flooding and displacement in an area with complex humanitarian needs, yet no existing INGO consortium or rapid response mechanism. Due to a limited presence of actors and a vulnerable population of IDPs and returnees, this crisis called for a Start Fund intervention on the premise of being a geographically distinct, underfunded emergency; thereby suitably defined as an 'under the radar' crisis. On the contrary, alert 199 referred to displacement in the Northern region of the Sar-i Pul province. With children accounting for 57 percent of the displaced population, needs would only increase as the crisis coincided with the beginning of a harsh winter. Yet, unlike alert 148, there was an existing humanitarian response in this region. The NRC in particular, would only be able to support 50 percent of the anticipated target population through the ECHO-funded Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM). The alert was raised to account for the other half of unmet needs. This drew some reservations from Start members (two with operational presence) who noted further ERM funding would become available in the next month and could address the remaining needs of a seemingly small-scale crisis. However, the alert was activated with full support from the Committee based on its suitability in terms of need, scale and timeliness. This example is significant in that Start members noted that the 'forgotten' crisis label could not be applied, rather, the Start Fund's 'complementary' niche function was a better fit.

In **ALERT 156 MALI**, the Start Fund responding to intercommunal conflict and displacement in a region often considered to 'fall outside the scope of emergency responses'. Earlier in the year, OCHA and other actors had been responding to the crisis, including forming a coordination committee, but conditions had since deteriorated, and funding depleted. With the CERF allocating funds to different regions and no available or anticipated funding, this crisis was seen as existing 'beneath the radar of the traditional crisis response funding mechanisms.'⁴²

⁴⁰ 142 DRC alert note, states that the CERF application through the RRW would cover 30 per cent of needs

⁴¹ As declared by the UN's
⁴² 156 Mali alert note

The Start Fund was also alerted to a large-scale cholera outbreak in **YEMEN (ALERT 162)** – a country with active conflict affecting millions. With 11,000 suspected cases and over 4000 in Sana'a alone, the deteriorating healthcare system would be unable to control the outbreak. The Yemen Humanitarian Fund had been activated, but donor funds could take weeks to process. One alerting agency noted having an ongoing ECHO project, however, a lack of available resources prevented the programmes continuation. The likelihood of future funding was high, but as ACAPS notes, 'a significant injection of funds is required to manage a cholera outbreak on this scale'.⁴³ Recognising this crisis was 'not forgotten,' the Start Fund Committee activated the alert based on filling a gap in time.

ALERT 163 CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR) is a unique example calls attention to a spike in a chronic crisis that is objectively 'neglected'. In the absence of a stable government, humanitarian organisations for years have been operating in this country and at times, the conflict has received media attention, but generally it is considered 'under-reported'. In this particular case, there had been no evidence of humanitarian assistance reaching the affected population and at the time of the alert, only 16 percent of overall required funding had been allocated.⁴⁴ It was considered 'highly unlikely' to attract the attention of donor funds, at least in the short-term, and the country-based pooled fund (known as the CAR Common Humanitarian Fund) was under review. The Start Fund was considered an 'appropriate' response as it could interject funding to an underfunded crisis with life-saving needs. This crisis, therefore, was designated as 'under the radar'. The application of a global filter, as above, may result in all crises in CAR being given this designation.

CRISES IN COUNTRIES WITHOUT AN INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Within this category, there are a number of examples which do not fit the 'under the radar' mould. In **ALERT 181 NEPAL**, heavy monsoon rain that began in August, caused flooding and landslides in 32 out of 75 districts. The Ministry of Home Affairs led the response efforts by creating a task force, organising search and rescue operations, as well as providing cash assistance to families affected by the flood. The alerting agencies, however, noted that 'relief support has been slow, and gaps remain'.⁴⁵ The Nepal Government initially barred INGOs from distributing relief items citing the 'one door policy'.⁴⁵ Following media pressure and the recognising the scale of need, this policy was rescinded. No official requests were made to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), but CERF funding was activated in response to the flooding in August. The significance, therefore, stems from it being a crisis in which there was a government-led response, but a lack of resources or institutional capacity to reach affected communities led to a Start funded intervention.

In other instances, Start funding was primarily used as a rapid response mechanism; the complementary niche of the Fund. These are instances in which Start behaved similar to the CERF RRW, by responding to unmet needs from a sudden on-set emergency, but also sought to complement a government-led response. Alert 186 Mexico, saw Tropical Storm 'Lidia' make landfall in the Baja California Peninsula affecting almost 60,000 people across five municipalities. Although the Government of Mexico quickly deploying the Civil Protection to evacuate the area and provide supplies, much of these resources were directed towards urban cities and tourist locations. This left marginalised, low-income communities in the Southern part of the state without aid; despite having experienced major damage. This lack of support is not uncommon as in 2014, when Hurricane Odile hit, the Mexican Government prioritised its response in the urban areas, only reaching smaller, more vulnerable communities post factum. It is within these crises that Start finds strategic value in their capacity as a rapid funding instrument.

In **ALERT 003 (FROM START FUND BANGLADESH)**, a Monsoon caused heavy flooding affecting 20 out of 64 districts across Bangladesh. Flooding is an annual occurrence in Bangladesh but, this crisis was considered a spike due to its scale and severity level. The government responded by allocating funds (31 million BDT) and providing cash assistance and food provisions. However, needs were much

⁴³ ACAPS briefing note
⁴⁴ 163 CAR allocation meeting minutes

⁴⁵ Government policy adopted to prevent NGOs from distributing relief materials; instead it must only go through the District Disaster Relief Committee

higher and would only have an estimated 50 percent reach. Beyond this limited government support, no other responses had been initiated. Local government did welcome efforts alongside them, but without making an official appeal. Given this is the third monsoon of the year, humanitarian organisations had exhausted their contingency budgets. Some Start member agencies used internal funds, but overall no new funding was announced, and it would take time to secure more. The Fund was ultimately activated on the basis of being both speedy, and complementary to the government response.

In **ALERT 193 VIETNAM**, flash floods were noted as causing 'the most severe flooding situation in a decade'.⁴⁶ Having previously experienced flooding the month prior, the affected communities were still in a vulnerable state of disaster recovery. With no anticipated humanitarian funding, and no declaration of emergency by the Government – whose only response had been for infrastructural damage – the Start Fund activated this alert. There was some hesitation from members as it was unclear what governmental capacity existed, but ultimately, it was regarded as a crisis with little media attention and in need of funding. Similarly, in **ALERT 195**, a Typhoon made landfall in **VIETNAM**. With little humanitarian support from government and donors, this crisis was referred to by the Start Fund Committee as being an 'overlooked and under-resourced emergency.' Both circumstances are not unfamiliar, however. CARE recognised Vietnam as having some of the most underreported crises in 2017; in addition to being a disaster-prone country with 70 percent of the population at risk of experiencing natural disasters.⁴⁷ Despite this, both crises would not be deemed 'under the radar' as the Start Fund responded to gaps in the ongoing response.

THE FOLLOWING ALERTS IDENTIFY CRISES IN COUNTRIES THAT HAVE NO EXISTING INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE BUT WOULD BE DEEMED 'UNDER THE RADAR' USING THE ABOVE CRITERIA.

In **ALERT 146**, the Start Fund responded to a severe drought in **SRI LANKA**. Low rainfall and decreased crop yields led to a food and water shortage. This affected mostly rural and poor families who are particularly dependent on agriculture as their source of livelihood. No longer able to support themselves, these families resorted to negative coping strategies. The government, with support from WFP, was planning to provide compensation to the affected families. However, there were concerns as it had not yet been determined how many beneficiaries would be receiving assistance, nor when it would be distributed. In addition, no donor funding was available as they were awaiting an international appeal. The problem, however is, 'historically, the government response to drought has been very poor and it is not advisable to wait for a government declaration'. In addition, with upcoming local elections the government would 'prefer' not to bring light to the crisis. This concern for political implications, as opposed to providing objective relief, is grounds for defining this crisis as 'under the radar.'

Since 2015, Timor-Leste has been experiencing a severe drought caused by El Niño. Considering the country suffers from high food insecurity (fourth worst in the Global Hunger Index)⁴⁹, anticipatory alert 158 was raised as conditions were expected to escalate heading into the dry season. In the previous year, the government had failed to declare the drought a disaster leading to reduced donor contributions. As a result, international organisations were concerned of a repeat experience as the government had yet to declare an emergency for the present crisis. These concerns were only exacerbated by 2017 being an election year. The reason being the norm following political change is, 'an extended period of re-establishing key positions and ministries, which could distract the government from a slow onset emergency situation and reduce their capacity to respond at the national level.' As with alert 146, the political circumstances of the country establishes the reasoning to identify this crisis as 'under the radar' as the behaviour of the Government indicates an element of wilful ignorance.

In **ALERT 161**, the Start Fund responded to a fire in **PAKISTAN** that coincided with a spike in an ongoing drought. Compared to other Start responses, this was one of the more small-scale, localised crises, having affected 300 families (1,214 people). District government had initially provided support with

⁴⁶ 193 Vietnam alert note

⁴⁷ 'Suffering in Silence: The 10 most under-reported humanitarian crises of 2017,' CARE International, January 22, 2018, https://www.care-international.org/files/files/publications/Suffering_In_Silence_WEB.pdf, 9.

⁴⁸ 146 Sri Lanka alert note

⁴⁹ 158 Timor-Leste alert note



temporary shelter, but there were still unmet life-saving needs. No donor funding was anticipated or readily available and appeals for assistance were made only by INGOs; not Provincial or District government. The Start Fund Committee unanimously agreed to allocate funding believing this crisis fit the criteria of being 'under the radar' and 'underfunded'. When applying the new definition, this crisis sits within a grey area. While the initial response was government-led, the lack of capacity provided some foundation for triggering a Start alert i.e. placing it in category 2 b). On the other hand, due to being a localised, low-severity disaster, it was unlikely to receive support beyond the district level and was, therefore, included in the under the radar classification in Figure 2.

2.3 Conclusions

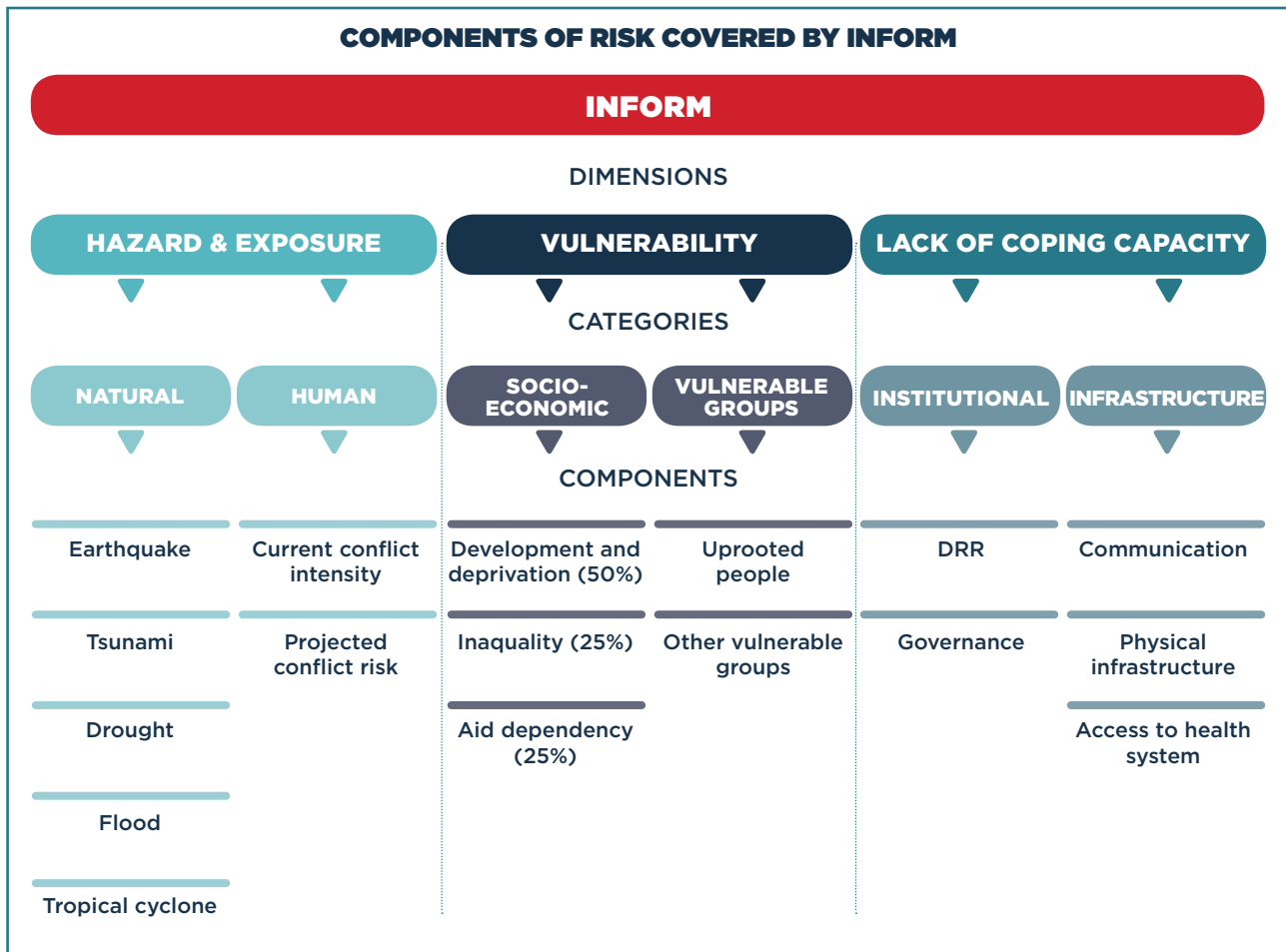
Ultimately, the application of a potential definition of 'under the radar' to this sample of Start Fund alerts is informative. The prospective definition from section 1 appears to have value as well as offer a workable solution. There is also a degree of correlation between alerts which had previously been noted as 'under the radar' in allocation meetings, and those which fit the current definition. It is impossible, however, to remove subjectivity from the categorisation of alerts, as many exist in somewhat 'grey' areas. The application of a global filter, with standard thresholds and criteria (as above), may add a small number of alerts to the 'under the radar' classification, but the number is unlikely to be very significant.



Annexes

Annex 1

INFORM Index Methodology



Source: <http://www.inform-index.org/Portals/0/InfoRM/2018/INFORM2018-WithCovers.pdf?ver=2018-03-02-142126-597>

Annex 2

INFORM Indicators

CATEGORY	COMPONENT	INDICATOR	YEAR	UNIT	PROVIDER
NATURAL	Earthquake	Physical exposure to earthquake MMI VI	1997	Average annual population exposed per country	GSHAP
	Earthquake	Physical exposure to earthquake MMI VIII	1997	Average annual population exposed per country	GSHAP
	Flood	Physical exposure to Flood	2015	Average annual population exposed per country	UNISDR, Global Risk Assessment 2015
	Tsunami	Physical exposure to Tsunami	2015	Average annual population exposed per country	UNISDR, Global Risk Assessment 2015
	Tropical Cyclone	Physical exposure to Cyclone SS1	2015	Average annual population exposed per country	UNISDR, Global Risk Assessment 2015
	Tropical Cyclone	Physical exposure to Cyclone SS3	2015	Average annual population exposed per country	UNISDR, Global Risk Assessment 2015
	Tropical Cyclone	Physical exposure to Cyclone Surge	2015	Average annual population exposed per country	UNISDR, Global Risk Assessment 2015
	Drought	Total affected by Drought	1989-2014	Average annual population exposed per country	EM-DAT, CRED
	Drought	Frequency of drought events	1989-2014	Average annual population exposed per country	EM-DAT, CRED
	Drought	Agriculture drought probability	1983-2013	Average annual population exposed per country	ASIS, FAO
HUMAN	Current Conflicts Intensity	Current High Violent Conflict Intensity Score	2014	Index	Conflict Barometer, Heidelberg Institute
	Projected Conflict Risk	GCRI Internal Conflict Score	2015	Index	JRC
SOCIAL - ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY	Poverty & Development	Human Development Index	2013	Index	UNDP, Human Development Report
	Poverty & Development	Multidimensional Poverty Index	2012	Index	UNDP, Human Development Report
	Inequality	Gender Inequality Index	2013	Index	UNDP, Human Development Report
	Inequality	Income Gini coefficient	2003-2013	Index	World Bank
	Economical Dependency	Humanitarian Aid (FTS)	2012-2014	USD	OCHA, FTS
	Economical Dependency	Development Aid (ODA)	2011-2012	USD Million	OECD, DAC
	Economical Dependency	Net ODA received (% of GNI)	2012	% of GNI	World Bank
VULNERABLE GROUPS	Uprooted People	Refugees by country of asylum	2015	Number	UNHCR
	Uprooted People	Internally displaced persons (IDPs)	2015	Number	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
	Uprooted People	Returned Refugees	2014	Number	UNHCR
	Other Vulnerable Groups	Tuberculosis prevalence	2012	per 100,000 people	WHO, Global Health Observatory Data Repository
	Other Vulnerable Groups	Estimated number of people living with (>15) rate HIV - Adult	2012	%	WHO, Global Health Observatory Data Repository
	Other Vulnerable Groups	Malaria death rate	2012	per 100,000 people	WHO, Global Health Observatory Data Repository

INFORM Indicators

CATEGORY	COMPONENT	INDICATOR	YEAR	UNIT	PROVIDER
VULNERABLE GROUPS	Other Vulnerable Groups	Mortality rate, under-5	2013	per 1,000 live births	UNICEF
	Other Vulnerable Groups	U5 Under weight	2012	%	UNICEF
	Other Vulnerable Groups	People affected by Natural Disasters	2013-2015	Number	EM-DAT, CRED
	Other Vulnerable Groups	Average Dietary Energy Supply Adequacy	2014-2016	%	FAO
	Other Vulnerable Groups	Prevalence of Undernourishment	2014-2016	%	FAO
	Other Vulnerable Groups	Domestic Food Price Level Index	2014	Index	FAO
	Other Vulnerable Groups	Domestic Food Price Volatility Index	2014	Index	FAO
INSTITUTIONAL	Governance	Governance Effectiveness	2013	Index	World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators
	Governance	Corruption Perception Index	2014	Index	Transparency International
	DRR implementation	HFA Scores Last recent	2007-2015 Index	Index	ISDR
INFRASTRUCTURE	Communication	Adult literacy rate	2005-2013	%	UNESCO
	Communication	Access to electricity	2012	%	World Bank
	Communication	Internet users	2014	%	World Bank
	Communication	Mobile cellular subscriptions	2014	per 100 people	World Bank
	Physical Connectivity	Improved sanitation facilities (% of population with access)	2015	%	World Bank
	Physical Connectivity	Improved water source (% of population with access)	2015	%	World Bank
	Physical Connectivity	Road density	2014	km of road per 100sqkm	OpenStreetMap
	Access to health care	Physicians Density	2008-2014	per 1,000 people	WHO, Global Health Observatory Data Repository
	Access to health care	One-year-olds fully immunized against measles	2014	%	WHO, Global Health Observatory Data Repository
	Access to health care	Health expenditure per capita	2013	current int USD PPP	WHO, Global Health Observatory Data Repository
OTHER	General	Population density	2014	People per sq km	OakRidge National Laboratory
	General	Population	2014	Number	World Bank
	General	GDP per capita PPP int USD	2015	current int USD PPP	IMF International Monetary Fund

Source: <http://www.inform-index.org/portals/o/inform/2016/Guidance%20Note%20-%20Interpreting%20and%20Applying%20the%20INFORM%20Global%20Model.pdf>

START NETWORK

