This document offers background information on the CERF application templates and provides guidance to applicants on how to draft the allocation strategy and project proposals for an overall smooth and efficient application process. This guidance applies to regular, standard CERF projects – for special, non-standard allocations, details may vary and need to be agreed with the CERF secretariat.

Structure of CERF application templates

− CERF templates are tailored for the two different CERF windows: **Rapid Response (RR)** and **Underfunded Emergencies (UFE)**. Kindly ensure to use the correct template, respectively.

− CERF templates cover **information on two levels** through different word documents: The **allocation level** (strategy) and the **project level** (project).

− The **allocation strategy** addresses the strategic and operational framework for the overall CERF allocation to a specific emergency response and is to be consolidated by a selected CERF focal point on the field level.

− For both CERF funding windows, applicants need to submit a **first outline of the planned allocation** for review by the CERF secretariat ("**initial request**" for Rapid Response or "**prioritization strategy**" for Underfunded Emergencies"). **Unless otherwise instructed, agencies should** not **start developing project proposals before the CERF secretariat provided feedback on this outline.**

− **UFE prioritization strategies** includes both the strategic and operational prioritization in two separate documents. **RR initial requests** are based on the allocation strategy template and only the **green** parts need to be filled in (the **red** parts are completed later when the RC/HC submits the full application including the projects to CERF; please follow the guidance text in the template document to learn which information is required at what stage).

− **Project proposals** are developed by agencies. Individual project proposals should corroborate the overall inter-sectoral response strategy and CERF's scope of assistance as explained in the allocation prioritization and should complement to each other. Synergies, complementarity and joint activities should be highlighted in the respective project proposal as well as in the allocation prioritization.

− All application documents will be uploaded to the **CERF's internal Grant Management System (GMS)** for a comprehensive review process. To enable this, some fields in the templates are blocked from editing the format should not be altered, changed or modified in any way, nor should it be copied to another Word document.

Details of individual sections of the CERF project proposal

Section 1: General Information

Sectors: Ensure that each sector is listed on page 1 (single- vs. multiple sector projects). One beneficiary table and at least one output (with corresponding indicators/activities) is needed per sector.

Project start date: The **standard start date** of a CERF-funded projects is the date of **disbursement of funds by CERF**, which can be viewed through the **allocation module** on the CERF website. If an agency has begun expending funds before the disbursement of CERF funds, it may opt for an **early start date of a maximum of six weeks** prior to the disbursement date but not before the onset of the emergency. Agencies are encouraged to make use of this option, in particular for sudden-onset emergencies. **Early start dates are available for projects under both CERF funding windows.**

Project duration: From the (early) start date the duration is **6 months for Rapid Response** projects and **12 months for Underfunded Emergency** projects. **Non-standard allocations** with **special project durations** need to be approved by the CERF secretariat (special templates may be required). All project activities must be completed within the set project period, including those of implementing partners. These may include recruitment and contracting of all staff under the project, procurement and provision of all goods and services, project launch including necessary partnership arrangements and project closure (if relevant). **Financial closure** may take place after the project end date, but as early as possible; these may include payments to consultants or vendors and fulfillment of commitments for unpaid services or goods. No back charging is permitted after the project end date.

Total funds required for agency's response to current emergency: For **rapid response requests**, this refers to the funding requirements of the requesting agency in the **prioritized sector(s) for the current emergency** that the rapid response window intends to address (in case of complex or protracted crisis, please refers to the specific emergency or to the new emergency response phase only). For **underfunded emergency requests**, this refers to the agency's funding requirements for the corresponding activities in the **Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) or other humanitarian plan**. If an HRP exists, use the project requirement. Where no HRP exists, 'total project requirement' should reflect the funding requirements of the requesting agency for its humanitarian programme in the prioritized sector(s).

Total funds received for agency's response to current emergency: Indicate the amount received against the total indicated in section above. Where an HRP or relevant flash appeal/response plan exists, this should be identical to what is recorded on the Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

Total CERF funds requested for this project proposal: The total CERF funds requested should not be 100 per cent of the total funds requested, for **CERF funding should be complemented by other funding sources**. Normally, CERF contributes to a limited amount of the agency's total response requirement to jump-start the most time-critical, life-saving elements of the emergency response.

Section 2: Project Overview

Project summary:

− Be concise and summarise key statistics and information that underpin your proposal. Don't repeat what's already included in the allocation prioritization (e.g. a general overview of the crisis and overall needs).

− Who are the **target beneficiaries** of the project (who, where, how many) and how are they identified, based on what criteria? Highlight any particular groups of concern.

− What are the **specific outputs and planned activities** of the project? How will they address the humanitarian needs identified in the section above?

Beneficiary table (people targeted):

− Provide the **estimated number of project beneficiaries** by gender, age group and category (do not use number of households or not percentage of targeted people).

− Only include individuals in the table who will **directly** receive goods or services from the CERF-funded project.

− The population benefitting **indirectly** from this CERF funding (e.g. from awareness/ information campaigns, broadcasting activities, support for logistics and stockpiling expansion of service delivery capacity, etc.) should not be included in the tables but the agency may choose to quantify and describe the additional beneficiaries of the project in the narrative section "Persons indirectly targeted by the project".

− "Other affected people" includes people affected by natural disaster or conflict who have not been displaced and are not hosting refugees, IDPs or returnees.

− Ensure that totals are correct and that figures tally with information on planned activities in the results framework and budget.

− Estimates for persons with disabilities are sufficient but don't leave this blank.

Results Framework (Log Frame):

− The results framework should provide an overview of **key deliverables and results expected** for the CERF-funded component of agencies' response. It is not meant to serve as or replace agencies' own fully developed project log-frames. The results framework should provide a complete, self-explanatory overview of the project.

− It should reflect the beneficiaries listed above, all implementing partners (under activities), and be in line with the budget.

− The **project objective** describes the overall objective to which the project will contribute.

− **Outputs** are direct and measurable products and results of activities. Indicate the output(s) to be expected upon completion of the CERF project. All outputs must be specific and achievable within the CERF project timeframe. If CERF funds are supporting only a portion of a larger project that cannot be logically separated out, please prorate the outputs and targets to provide the indicative CERF contribution to the overall results.

- For projects covering **multiple sectors**, please include **at least one output per sector**.

- **Per project include a minimum of one and a maximum of five outputs.** The template proposes five output tables, irrelevant output tables may be deleted. Insert/delete lines for indicators and activities within a table as necessary, but please do not break one output table into two or more tables and do not merge several outputs into one table.

- Focus on meaningful **SMART indicators**[1]. Use the agreed cluster indicators in an HRP if possible or use corporate standard indicators (no need to develop custom indicators).

- For **indicator targets provide numbers only** (no text) and use number of people <u>not</u> number of households. Ensure a clear link between indicator targets and the beneficiary table (e.g. total project beneficiaries = indicators 1a + 1b + 2c). When you provide a percentage as a target, also provide the absolute figure where applicable.

- **Activities** are actions performed to achieve the outputs and outcome, such as the delivery of goods and services. Describe the activities for each output to be carried out under this CERF grant and who (the agency and/or implementing partners) is responsible for implementing each activity.

- **Separate specific activities**, such as procurement and distribution, so that the timeline for sequenced activities is clear for the subsequent implementation calendar.

- If the project has a GBV, enhanced AAP or CVA component, or targets people with disabilities, insert related outputs and/or indicators and activities in the results framework.

Implementation Calendar (Rapid Response only):
- Indicate the planned timeline for the implementation of each activity under planned outputs by highlighting corresponding cells in the calendar (each cell represents one week). Add/delete lines for outputs and activities as necessary; they must mirror those of the results framework above.

- Insert the actual calendar months instead of "Month 1", etc.

- Especially after sudden-onset disasters, assistance should reach affected people as soon as possible, and in most cases agencies should complete most activities within the first 3 months of the project.

Section 3: Implementation and Coordination Arrangements

Implementation: Provide **brief responses** to all questions, if appliable, and focus on the areas considered **most challenging** for the successful implementation of this project.

Coordination: Briefly, highlight all synergies and complementary actions under this project and especially focus on the coordination at sector/cluster inter-sector/cluster level.

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[1] **SMART** indicators are: **Specific**, to avoid differing interpretations; **Measurable**, to allow monitoring and evaluation; **Appropriate** to the problem statement; **Realistic** and achievable; **Time-bound**, indicating a specific period of time during which the results will be achieved, which must fall within the CERF implementation period.

Section 4: Effective programming (cross-cutting Issues)

ERC four priorities: The ERC identified four chronically underfunded priority areas in the humanitarian context and recommends that they should systematically and effectively addressed throughout all CERF allocations in addition to the needs-based assessment. These areas are: (1) Support for women and girls (including tackling gender-based violence, reproductive health and empowerment); (2) Targeting people with disabilities; (3) Education in protracted crises; (4) Other aspects of protection. Please indicate how the **cross-cutting issues and the ERC's four priorities** will be addressed throughout project activities and focus on the **intended impact** wherever possible.

AAP and PSEA: Highlight options for engagements, access to feedback loops and other mechanisms for all affected people (across gender and age). As mechanisms will rarely be created anew for specific project activities, please briefly elaborate on how **pre-existing mechanisms** pertain to this project. Focus on PwD, people who are illiterate and marginalized groups.

GAM code: Before using the project assessment tool, please consult **IASC GAM information sheet** and/or a GenCap expert.

PwD: If project targets people with disabilities, this needs to be reflected in the project summary section, the beneficiary table and the results framework.

CVA (cash and voucher assistance):
− Refers to all programs where cash or vouchers for goods or services is directly provided to beneficiaries. In the context of humanitarian assistance, the term is used to refer to the provision of cash or vouchers given to individuals, household or community recipients; not to governments or other state actors.

− CERF encourages the use of cash transfers as a modality, particularly multi-purpose cash. If the project includes CVA, briefly explain how (type of transfer, number of beneficiaries etc.), and highlight any linkages with existing social protecting mechanisms. If the project does not envisage CVA as a modality, briefly clarify why.

− **"Specified CVA activity"** refers to the different modalities and methods of transfer (via cash transfer, voucher, ecard, etc.). Ensure that the activity number from the results framework is referenced here.

− Select the **sector/cluster** that the CVA activity is aiming to address. This should be the same sector as the CVA activity is listed under in the **results framework**.

− Include the **total amount of the cash being transferred to beneficiaries per activity**. The amount should not include related costs for the cash transfer, such financial service provider (FSP) fees or distribution costs.

− Select "**restricted**" if the transfer has certain parameters for the redemption of the assistance (i.e. specific vendors or to access pre-determined goods/services like agricultural inputs. Select "**unrestricted**" if the transfer allows the recipients to select any items (i.e. multipurpose cash).

Details on the separate budget sheet of the CERF project proposal (in Excel)

Overall Guidance

‒ Each CERF project proposal must include a budget which details the costs to be funded by CERF and which strictly adheres to the CERF budget template and budget guidelines (see below). The CERF budget template is in line with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) budget categories.

‒ The budget should reflect activities described in the project narrative. Budgets should be designed taking into consideration the CERF-approved implementation period of the project (maximum six months for rapid response grants and around nine months for underfunded emergencies grants).

‒ Wherever possible and relevant, please provide sufficiently detailed breakdown of items (unit, quantity, unit costs, % charged to CERF) for each budget line for the CERF component of the project. Where a breakdown of unit, quantity and unit cost is impractical or irrelevant, please provide total amount of the item, along with sufficient description of cost elements.

Format:
‒ For thousands separator, please use a comma "," rather than space or ".", e.g. "1,234";

‒ The figures in the column "Total (USD)" should be rounded to the nearest dollar;

‒ No need to add $ sign in front of the amounts in "Unit Cost" and "Total (USD)" columns.

Budget Structure:

Section	A	Staffing
	B	Supplies, Commodities, Materials → cash-transfers are typically included here
	C	Equipment
	D	Contractual services → cash-transfers fees are typically included here
	E	Travel
	F	Sub-grants to partners (government, NGOs, Red Cross/Crescent)
	G	General operating costs
	PSC	Project support costs → always 7%, except WFP/UNHCR = 6.5%

Budget rules (selected examples):

1. The figures in the column "Total (USD)" should be rounded to the nearest dollar:

Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost	Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost
One-time cash transfer to 10,000 people	10,000	**50.1075** ✗	One-time cash transfer to 10,000 people	10,000	**50.11** ✓

2. % charged to CERF:
- Must always be "n/a" for categories B-G (assume: CERF covers 100%)
- Can vary between 0-100% for category A

3. Consistency between budget line description vs. quantity/unit cost:

Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost	Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost
1 P4 programme staff for **9** months at **$10,000**/month	9	**12,000** ✗	1 P4 programme staff for **9** months at **$10,000**/month	9	**10,000** ✓

4. Ensure the budget line description explains the quantity and unit cost:

Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost	Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost
Monitoring	30	**150** ✗	3 staff to undertake 10 days of monitoring @DSA $150	30	**150** ✓

5. Explain how large unit costs are calculated:

Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost	Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost
Transfer to partner	1	150,000 ✗	Transfer to partner (World Vision) to carry out nutrition distributions for 10,000 women and children for 5 months @ $30,000/month	5	30,000 ✓

6. Make sure formulas are correct (row totals and category sub-totals) & do not change formulas.

7. Always provide staff grades:

Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost	Budget line	Quantity	Unit Cost
1 _ programme staff for 9 months at $10,000/month	9	12,000 ✗	1 P4 programme staff for 9 months at $10,000/month	9	10,000 ✓

Detailed guidance and examples:

Contents of Budget Lines	Guidance on Cost Breakdown				
A. Staff and Other Personnel Costs Please itemize costs of staff, consultants and other personnel recruited directly by the agency for project implementation. Indicate international or national staff, level, title, number and unit cost of each type of personnel. Staff and other personnel costs should be kept to the essentials for emergency response. Please indicate the percentage of dedication to CERF project for each person to determine total cost correctly.	**Description of Unit**	**Quantity**	**Unit Cost**	**% charged to CERF**	**Total**
• Include costs and entitlements of national and international staff and other project personnel contracted by the agency (such as temporary staff, daily workers and consultants) who are **directly** involved in the implementation of the project; • Subject to dedication to CERF project, a position should be cost-shared between CERF and UN agency, with indication of the % charged to CERF; • Itemize each national and international staff by function and level, as well as each consultant by function or expertise; • Do not include consultancies with firms (which should be under category D) or agreements with implementing partners (which should be under category F); • CERF does **not** fund Government staff salaries; • Keep staff and other personnel costs to the essentials for emergency response.	• Provide unit, quantity and unit cost by monthly or daily rates for each position; • Specify whether the rate is monthly or daily.				
Example: 2 P4 programme officers @ $10,000 per month each (CERF shares 50% cost) for 4 months to monitor food distribution	person-month	8	10,000	50%	40,000

Contents of Budget Lines	Guidance on Cost Breakdown				
B. Supplies, Commodities, Materials Please itemize costs of consumables to be purchased under the project, including associated transportation, freight, storage and distribution costs.	**Description of Unit**	**Quantity**	**Unit Cost**	**% charged to CERF**	**Total**
• Include procurement of consumable supplies for project implementation (e.g., medicines, food, non-food items, tents, seeds, tools, etc.); costs associated with the delivery, storage and distribution of consumable supplies procured by the project (e.g., transportation, freight, customs, insurance, warehousing and other logistical requirements); communications materials for training and awareness raising (e.g., posters, pamphlets), etc; • For cash transfers to beneficiaries implemented directly by UN agency, the cash transfers shall be budgeted under category B, while the associated contractual service fees should be under category D; • For cash transfers to beneficiaries implemented by Government partners or NGOs, both the cash transfers and the associated costs shall be budgeted under category F; • If a consumable is in the form of a kit, please briefly describe the content of the kit in the budget, or refer to the standard kit descriptions already agreed with CERF, or provide an annex.	• Provide unit, quantity and unit cost for each type of consumables to be purchased; • For lump sum lines, please describe the calculation.				
Example: Procurement of 2,000 MT cereals at $300 per MT	MT	2,000	300	n/a	600,000
Example: Medical Kit (see Annex for details)	Unit	20,000	50	n/a	1,000,000
Example: Transportation costs for Medical Kit (estimated at 10% of value)	%	1,000,000	10%	n/a	100,000
Example: One-time cash transfer directly implemented by XXX [UN agency name] to 500 beneficiaries at $100 per beneficiary	beneficiary	500	100	n/a	50,000

C. Equipment Please itemize costs of non-consumables to be purchased under the project.	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	% charged to CERF	Total
• Include procurement of non-consumable items for the benefit of project recipients (e.g., medical equipment, IT equipment for registration, etc.); • CERF generally does **not** fund the purchase of vehicles, heavy equipment or construction which is not of temporary nature; • Only equipment **directly** related to project implementation will be considered; equipment for agency's regular operations will **not** be accepted.	• Provide unit, quantity and unit cost for each type of equipment to be purchased.				
Example: Procurement of 2 desktops for IDP registration at $800 each	PC	2	800	n/a	1,600

D. Contractual Services Please itemize works and services of commercial nature to be contracted under the project. Please provide the names of contractors, if known.	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	% charged to CERF	Total
• Include works and services of a **commercial nature** that are contracted directly by the agency following procurement procedures (Note: Budget for Government partners or NGOs should be under category F); • Itemize and describe each work and service; • Provide the name of contractors, if known;	• Provide unit, quantity and unit cost for each contractor; • For each contractor, provide the amount of funds to be transferred, and a brief description of its role, outputs and a general breakdown of budget (Details of the budget may be presented in annexes).				
• For cash transfers to beneficiaries implemented directly by the UN agency, the associated contractual service fees, if any, are budgeted under category D, while the cash transfers shall be budgeted under category B.					
Example: XXXX [name of contractor]: Quality inspection service for 800 MT of cereals at $40 per MT	MT	800	40	n/a	32,000
Example: Contractual service fees to ABC bank for processing cash transfer to 10,000 beneficiaries at $1 per transaction	transaction	10,000	1	n/a	10,000
Example: Consulting firm XXX to undertake monitoring trips and prepare a project delivery status report at the total fee of $5,000	report	1	5,000	n/a	5,000

E. Travel Please itemize travel costs of staff, consultants and other personnel for project implementation. Please provide the purpose, destination, number of travelers, transportation costs, number of days and DSA rate for the trips. Generally, except for international travel of surge personnel to the emergency, other international travel is discouraged.	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	% charged to CERF	Total
• Include travel costs of staff, consultants and other project personnel, such as airfare of international and local flights, daily subsistence allowance (DSA), hazard pay and other travel entitlements, as applicable; • Itemize by international and internal/national travel and indicate the purpose of the trips; • Generally, except for international travel of surge personnel to the emergency, other international travel is discouraged.	• For all travels, provide the purpose, destination (if known), number of tickets, transportation costs (such as airfare, train ticket cost etc.), number of days and DSA rate.				
Example: 3 staff to undertake 2 domestic trips each to location A to monitor food distribution, 5 days each trip at DSA rate of $100, airfare $400 per trip					
(a) Airfare	ticket	6	400	n/a	2,400
(b) DSA	day	30	100	n/a	3,000
Example: Travel costs to undertake needs assessment at XXX area					
(a) Rental of 1 car for 6 needs assessment trips at $200 per trip (Could also use other cost estimate methodology such as monthly rental per car x no. or cars x no. of months)	trip	6	200	n/a	1,200
(b) Fuel for the 6 needs assessment trips at average fuel consumption of $300 per trip (Could also use other cost estimate methodology such as cost per gallon x quantity of the fuel)	trip	6	300	n/a	1,800

	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	% charged to CERF	Total
carry out the services sub-contracted by the UN agency; direct operational cost necessary for delivery of services such as commodities, supplies, transportation; and other direct costs necessary to carry out the services/works for **this project** such as general operating and office running costs; • For cash transfers to beneficiaries implemented by Government partners or NGOs, both the cash transfers and the associated costs are budgeted under category F, and should be itemized; • Provide the names of potential partners, if known; • List Government partners first, to be followed by NGOs.					
Example: Government department XXX: Distribution of 800 MT of cereals at $100 per MT to 10,000 beneficiaries in locations A, B and C	MT	800	100	n/a	80,000
Example: NGO YYY: Deployment of 2 mobile health clinics at $5,000 each per month to location A for 6 months	mobile clinic-month	12	5,000	n/a	60,000
Example: NGO ZZZ: (a) Cash transfer to 1,000 households in location A and B at $100 per month per household for 3 months	household-month	3,000	100	n/a	300,000
(b) Cash distribution costs at $1 per transaction for 3,000 transactions (1,000 households, with 1 transaction per household per month for 3 months)	transaction	3,000	1	n/a	3,000

F. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts Please provide breakdown by implementing partners (typically Government partners and NGOs). Please provide the name of partners, if known. For each partner, please provide a brief description of its role and a general breakdown of budget.	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	% charged to CERF	Total
• Include agency's transfers and grants to implementing partners – normally of a **non-commercial nature** – through sub-granting procedures for project implementation. Entities receiving sub-grants could be Government partners, international NGOs, local NGOs or other non-commercial entities; • Costs allowed to be incurred by partners include: cost of personnel recruited by the implementing partner to	• Provide unit, quantity and unit cost for each implementing partner; • For each partner, provide the amount of funds to be transferred and a description of its role, outputs and a general breakdown of budget (Note: Details of the budget may be presented in annexes).				

G. General Operating and Other Direct Costs Please include general operating expenses and other costs directly required for project implementation. CERF does not fund recurrent costs of regular agency operations and programmes.	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	% charged to CERF	Total
• Include general operating costs **directly** related to project implementation, such as office rental, stationery and supplies, utilities (telecommunications, internet, etc.) and rental of vehicles; • For office rent, please indicate office locations; • For training, please properly break down budget by category. For example, for a training which involves hiring a consultant to design and deliver the training, and procuring conference package, the consultant cost should be under category A, and the conference cost should be under category D; • CERF does **not** fund recurrent costs for regular agency operations, such as regular agency security costs, costs associated with MOSS compliance, or contributions to UN common services; • Include other costs that cannot be mapped to the expense categories of A through F above.	• Provide unit, quantity and unit cost for each line item.				
Example: Office rental at location XXX at $1,000 per month for 3 months	month	3	1,000	n/a	3,000
Total Project Direct Costs	This is the sum of budget categories A through G.				
Indirect Project Support Costs (PSC)					
• Include PSC at headquarters, regional or country level.	Should not exceed 7% of total project **direct** costs.				
Total CERF Project Budget	Sum up total project direct costs and indirect project support costs (PSC).				