

**Humanitarian  
Outcomes**

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

## **Final Report**

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

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# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
Transparent and inclusive CERF process .....	3
Support to humanitarian reform.....	4
Gap filling and timely response.....	4
Reporting and accountability .....	5
Recommendations.....	5
<b>Section 1. Introduction and the Bolivian Context</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Bolivian context .....	7
1.2 CERF funding in Bolivia .....	8
1.3 Humanitarian coordination.....	8
1.4 UN/INGO partnerships .....	10
1.5 Humanitarian donor profile in Bolivia .....	11
1.6 The stance of the Government of Bolivia on international assistance.....	11
<b>Section 2. Inclusiveness and Transparency of the Allocation Process</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Information management and the construction of CERF applications .....	13
2.2 Summary findings .....	14
<b>Section 3. Support to Humanitarian Reform and Response</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1 Support to humanitarian reform.....	16
3.2 Summary findings .....	17
<b>Section 4. Timeliness of CERF Funding</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1 Gap filling and timely, life saving response .....	18
4.2 Summary findings.....	21
<b>Section 5. Reporting and Accountability</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Section 6. Overarching Observations and Recommendations</b>	<b>23</b>
6.1 Recommendations.....	23
<b>Annex A. List of Interviewees</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Annex B. Study TOR</b>	<b>26</b>

# Executive Summary

The CERF has become a significant resource for natural disaster response and has been called upon frequently since its inception in 2006. The CERF was the largest humanitarian donor to Bolivia in 2010 and is the second largest to date in 2011. Although relations between humanitarian actors in the government, UN and INGOs are relatively open, the broader political context and the nature of funding flows mean that, in the event of a natural disaster, there is no single, jointly constructed response plan to which the CERF contributes. By extension, the CERF is not highly relevant to INGOs, given their access to alternative humanitarian funds. For UN Agencies and government, however, (‘technical’ ministries and sub national government in particular) it is recognised as highly important source of funding. The CERF is perceived to fill a number of gaps and there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that it was used for a range of important interventions for flood-affected populations in 2010, whether or not these interventions were the most time critical.

The range and nature of disaster risk in general mapped onto the low population density and poor infrastructure in Bolivia means that any response system that has to be invoked irregularly to trigger an external response is likely to be somewhat inefficient. Practical, operational, inter-agency disaster preparedness plans are required for at-risk areas. Risk reduction and community preparedness are on the agenda through DIPECHO and NGOs and UNICEF is working on a preparedness initiative. At the systemic level, however, many respondents were pessimistic, however, about the prospect of building specific government capacity for disaster preparedness. The significant challenges in developing stronger national systems make the CERF, in relative terms, an attractive resource. There also seems little real prospect of Bolivia receiving significantly more bilateral funds from traditional donors to the global humanitarian system and, as such, Bolivia looks set to continue to call upon the CERF. A major challenge for the fund within the specific context of Bolivia, therefore, is to distinguish between instances where the CERF adds genuine, ‘life saving’ value and where it is treated as an easy target in a resource scarce environment. Such a distinction could only realistically be made by the RC, as part of a more direct management role in the CERF process.

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## Transparent and inclusive CERF process

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UN agencies viewed CERF processes as transparent and inclusive and most welcomed the requirement to construct an appeal jointly. By and large, NGOs were satisfied that their information inputs were sought at ‘mesa’ level and that had been kept informed of progress via the ‘UNETE ampliado’. In this sense, they felt that most parts of the allocation process were reasonably *transparent*. Notwithstanding the existence of a national disaster management system in Bolivia (known as SISRADE), there was little sense of a joined up, response plan or operation of which CERF played a part. Ultimately, that the principle decision takers in CERF

process are UN Agencies, rather than clusters, or mesas goes against a key principle of the CERF.

UN agencies viewed CERF processes as transparent and inclusive and most welcomed the requirement to construct an appeal jointly. By and large, NGOs were satisfied that their information inputs were sought at ‘mesa’ level and that had been kept informed of progress via the ‘UNETE ampliado’. In this sense, they felt that most parts of the allocation process were reasonably *transparent*. Notwithstanding the existence of the SISRADE system, however, there was little sense of a joined up, response plan or operation of which CERF played a part. Ultimately, that the principle decision takers in CERF process are UN Agencies, rather than clusters, or mesas goes against a key principle of the CERF. Humanitarian reform more broadly and the CERF’s support to the set of initiatives, are covered in the section below.

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### Support to humanitarian reform

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As is the case in a number of countries where national disaster response systems are well defined (if not functioning to international standards) there is a degree of tension with international mechanisms. To the extent that humanitarian reform is aimed at strengthening partnerships and coordination platforms across the international system, it is bound to become part of this tension. ‘Clusterisation’ has been driven hard from the global level and HCs and OCHA have been told that is ‘non-negotiable’ for humanitarian responses. A standardised model for coordination cannot be brought into being at any cost, however, where sovereign governments perceive that their own systems are being duplicated or displaced. The system of ‘mesas de trabajo’ in Bolivia appears to be a reasonable working compromise. The absence of an inter-cluster mechanism is, however, problematic in terms of overall coordination, the logic model in the CERF’s PAF, and humanitarian reform more broadly. Although many respondents were positive about the way the CERF had strengthened intra-UN relations and relations between UN and government, this has **not** equated to strengthened humanitarian reform as globally understood.

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### Gap filling and timely response

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Although many respondents described the CERF process as ‘quick’ in general, a vocal minority thought that the entire process was too slow and cumbersome for the funds to facilitate a life saving response as per the original intent of the Fund. Especially when placed within the overall time-span<sup>1</sup> of the 2010 floods and subsequent response.

Across a range of partners, however, many could describe gaps that they thought had been filled by the CERF and government partners in particular, were vocal about what value the fund had added. One experienced respondent stated that ‘for

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<sup>1</sup> See section 4 below for a full description of timing issues in flood response. It is hard to construct a meaningful time-line at national level. Floods, although characterised as ‘rapid onset’, affect different communities over a course of a number of months and, as such, there is no single point of reference for measuring the speed of (or delays in) response.

better or worse' a 'norm' had developed where, in the event of a natural disaster, the whole system waited for the response of the CERF and took their own decisions in light of the CERF response. In relation to the challenges of improving national response systems through capacity building, or attracting contributions from new or existing humanitarian donors, a number of respondents described the CERF as a relatively easily accessible resource. Specifically within the Bolivian context, the Fund's value in filling gaps is clear to many, but simultaneously many acknowledge that it is in many ways an inappropriate tool for predictable and longer-term needs in the country. Although undoubtedly a challenging task to assemble, strengthened national capacities and longer term funding streams are required.

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### Reporting and accountability

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Simply put, 'normal' UN Agency field monitoring systems are in place and although project monitoring/reporting is often adapted to the CERF format, the Fund has little impact on accountability mechanisms per se. No examples of impact evaluation or multi-sectoral evaluation which included CERF funded projects were brought up.

The CERF is a highly visible fund in Bolivia, government counterparts were generally aware at departmental level and below that they were working with CERF funds and reporting against them. The HC/RC's CERF report of 2010 is reasonably comprehensive in its analysis of 'lessons learned and suggestions for follow up', including a list of responsible entities. There is, however, no process for following up on these recommendations.

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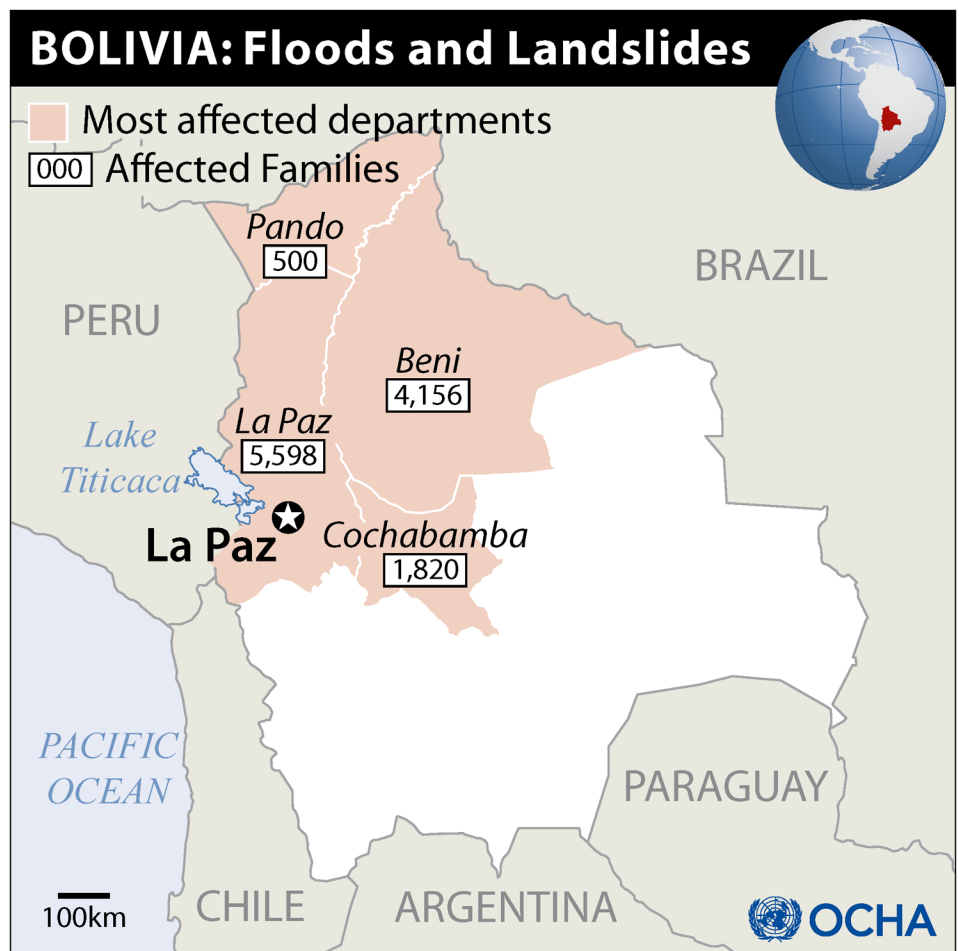
### Recommendations

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1. A geographically specific, cross-sectoral evaluation of one emergency response phase, including the use of CERF funds should be undertaken. The evaluation of impact of CERF funds on affected populations was beyond the scope of this exercise. There was, however, sufficient anecdotal evidence of positive impact to suggest that such an evaluation could serve as a useful advocacy tool, as well as being valuable in identifying operational lessons.
2. DRR programmes in general were not a specific focus of this study. It is evident, however, that across the humanitarian system as a whole, greater focus needs to be placed on very practical/operational efforts for disaster preparedness **as part of** disaster risk reduction efforts. For UN agencies in general, disaster preparedness needs to be included as a stronger element of ongoing programmes in order that funding (and additional staff time) is dedicated to the issue.
3. At global level, (for Bolivia and perhaps more broadly) the CERF may consider:
  - Agreeing in advance with the HC/OCHA 'trigger' levels for intervention by the CERF. This might encourage ongoing collection of data through the 'mesas' and reduce the time taken to 're-start' the data collection system in the event of natural disaster.

- Tracking (perhaps via the OCHA desk) the progress of disaster preparedness and the strengthening of national response systems. Some external pressure for the improvement of such systems may help to facilitate strengthening.
4. The HC/OCHA should give serious consideration to the construction of an Emergency Response Fund in Bolivia. The political space and the prospect of donor support would have to be gauged and advocacy could undoubtedly be required, but the model would offer a quicker alternative and a complement to CERF. The Columbia model offers a good starting point.
  5. A continuation of efforts to build the ‘mesas’ and other ‘reformed’ structures. In this respect, there should be concrete tie-ins with the ‘humanitarian reform’ project being funded by ‘COSUDE’.

Map of Bolivia



The map shows the wide extent of flooding in Bolivia as of March 2011. It also demonstrates the challenge of summarising the effects of flooding at a national level, given the relatively small numbers of affected families over huge and diverse geographical areas.

**Source:** Adapted from ReliefWeb ([http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/5D874C5A73A1C8C4852573BF00006807-wfp\\_FL\\_bol071224.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/5D874C5A73A1C8C4852573BF00006807-wfp_FL_bol071224.pdf))

# Section 1. Introduction and the Bolivian Context

This report is the result of an independent review of CERF funding in Bolivia. It is one of four country studies which make up part of the implementation of the Funds' Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF) for 2010. The findings are based on a field visit to Bolivia undertaken between May 15 and May 25, 2011 and a complementary review of documents related to the Bolivian context and CERF funding to Bolivia during 2010. The visit consisted of a series of interviews with those involved with CERF expenditure in 2010 and CERF allocations for 2011, including UN staff, officials of the Government of Bolivia and NGOs. In order to gather the views of government officials and other partners at sub-national levels, the visit also included a three-day visit to Santa Cruz and Trinidad, both capital cities of flood and drought affected 'departments'<sup>2</sup> in the low lying East of the country. The full TOR is at annex B. In keeping with the TOR and discussions with the CERF Secretariat, interviews were semi structured and based on an interview guide expanded from a template developed for a pilot study in Kenya in 2009. A full list of those interviewed is at Annex A. Sincere thanks are due to Lilian Reyes at OCHA in La Paz for organising a comprehensive itinerary and for friendly support throughout the field visit.

The introductions below aims to set the context specifically for the use of the CERF and, as such to introduce issues deemed of particular importance by respondents for this review. It does not set out to detail Government structures or the political context in Bolivia in a comprehensive fashion.

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## 1.1 Bolivian context

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Bolivia covers over a million square kilometres<sup>3</sup> and has a huge variety of geography from the 'Altiplano'<sup>4</sup> zone in the West to the tropical lowlands in the East (which form part of the Amazon Basin). The country is divided into nine semi-autonomous 'departments'. Each department is divided into municipalities, which vary greatly in size and in the capacity of governmental institutions. In relation to its scale, Bolivia has a very small population (approximately 10 million people) and a very low population density outside of the main cities. Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in the Americas and one of the most unequal.<sup>5</sup> Indigenous and rural populations have been excluded from political and economic power. The current government, in power since 2006, has set out to reverse this trend.<sup>6</sup>

Over the past 6 years, Bolivia has seen a concentration of natural disasters including major floods, landslides and an ongoing drought. The recent

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2 See context below.

3 Approximately 1.5 times the size of France.

4 Literally 'High Plane'

5 'Country Brief'; World Bank <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/LACEXT/BOLIVIAEXTN/0,,menuPK:322289~pagePK:141132~piPK:141107~theSitePK:322279,00.html>

6 Ibid

phenomena are generally attributed to intense occurrences of the ‘El Niño’ and ‘La Niña’ weather cycles.<sup>7</sup> Although the extent to which the severity or the frequency of disasters forms part of a longer trend is the subject of debate, many believe that in the context of climate change, a new pattern of frequent, extreme weather ‘events’ is being established. The massive variation in Bolivia’s geography, in conjunction with extreme weather, equates to a wide range of disaster risk which includes forest fires, intense frosts and hailstorms, in addition to floods, landslides and drought. The very low population density and higher levels of poverty in some rural zones add to the logistical challenge and cost per capita of relief efforts, as well as complicating assessment efforts.

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## 1.2 CERF funding in Bolivia

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The first allocation of CERF funding in 2010 was focused in the three departments of Santa Cruz (with capital of the same name), Beni (capital Trinidad) and Cochabamba. Beni is a low-lying department and, in particular, sees annual flooding of varying severity. Typically the flooding in Beni is slow onset in nature (and can be predicted in advance to a certain degree). In other areas and in parts of Beni, however, it brings geographically focussed flash flooding. In 2010, the UN reported that flooding affected 50,000 families including 7,000 forced to evacuate their homes and 3,000 living in temporary camps. Key humanitarian issues were those associated with forced displacement and flooding, including: shelter, water, protection, health, nutrition and education. CERF funding in late 2010 also went to a large drought affected area in the south of the country. The drought affected an area known as El Chaco, which cuts across departmental and national boundaries.

With the exception of 2009, Bolivia has received CERF funding every year since 2007, exclusively from the Rapid Response Window. CERF has funded projects to a total of US\$11,345,608, making Bolivia the 39th largest recipient of the Fund (out of 82 recipient countries).

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## 1.3 Humanitarian coordination

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Although co-ordination mechanisms are not the direct focus of this study, the CERF (as all pooled funding mechanisms, to a greater or lesser extent) uses them as core structures through which to make decisions on the geographical and sectoral allocation of funding.

Natural disaster response coordination sits within the broader system of the Government of Bolivia for risk reduction and response; known as ‘SISRADE’<sup>8</sup> and falling under the remit of the Vice Ministry of Civil Defence.<sup>9</sup> SISRADE’s

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7 ‘Poverty, vulnerability and climate change in Bolivia’; Oxfam <http://www.crid.or.cr/digitalizacion/pdf/eng/doc17736/doc17736-b.pdf>

8 Sistema de Reducción de Riesgos y Atención de Emergencias y/o Desastres - System for Risk Reduction and Emergency/Disaster Response

9 ‘Viceministerio de Defensa Civil’ – (VIDECCI)



central platforms are the emergency operations centres or ‘COE’s<sup>10</sup> which are convened, albeit with varying capacity, in each department and municipality. The highest platform for disaster response coordination is the ‘COE Nacional’, in La Paz.

Since 2009, and in keeping with humanitarian reform (and ‘model’ CERF allocation processes) there has been an attempt to create an IASC styled humanitarian country team (known as the ‘red humanitaria’<sup>11</sup>). Although the network has a large potential reach, the government sits as co-chair and the meetings have only been called with their full participation. Since the government has been reluctant to acknowledge the need for external help, as well as for practical reasons, the group has met very infrequently. Many respondents also felt that the government also perceived a tension between the network and the COE national, despite their distinct and complementary functions.

Again recognising variance in capacity, the ‘COE’s at each level are made up of representatives from the variety of technical ministries and the respective government departments with responsibilities related to disaster response. At departmental and national level, a technical working group sits for each response sector, known as ‘mesas de trabajo sectorales’.<sup>12</sup>

The long-standing intra-UN mechanism for disaster coordination is the ‘Equipo Técnico de Naciones Unidas para Emergencias’ or ‘UNETE’ (known in English as the ‘UNETT’—United Nations Emergency Technical Team.) Originally sitting at the technical level, this team was reported to now serve as a forum for UN Agency heads to discuss issues related to disasters. The UNETE also meets in an extended form, the ‘UNETE ampliado’ to include NGO representatives by invitation.

International NGO coordination has recently been brought under single consortium, currently chaired by Oxfam. The group builds from two initiatives: the Emergency Capacity Building project (ECB) and the Consortium of British Humanitarian Agencies (CBHA), both of which had active initiatives in Bolivia. Various sub-groups of this consortium, working with UN and municipal, departmental Government and UN partners, work on projects funded by ECHO, DIPECHO and other donors.

The ‘mesas’ act as the main interface for the international humanitarian system at the technical level. At the national level, the ‘mesas’ are synonymous with ‘clusters’. Seven sit with some regularity and some are ‘standing’ structures i.e. holding meetings whether or not an emergency response is underway. At the sub-national level, there are no standing emergency structures. Each ‘mesa’ works with the participation of Government as co-chair (although respondents were clear that the extent of engagement of all parties, including Government, varies significantly between the ‘mesas’. In some cases, stronger ‘mesas’ work essentially as extensions of government departments (for example in health, where the departmental

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10 Centros de Operaciones de Emergencia

11 Literally ‘Humanitarian Network’

12 Literally, ‘sectoral working tables’ or ‘groups’

health services or ‘SEDES’,<sup>13</sup> are in control of all health services, with some independent actors acting in full collaboration). Respondents suggested that the Government of Bolivia was insistent on utilising its own structures (and its own nomenclature) for emergency systems. As such, the term ‘mesas’ is preferred to ‘clusters’, although the range has expanded to match the recognised ‘cluster’ set. The respective strength of each sector’s national systems appears to be one key factor in how each ‘mesa’ handles CERF allocations.

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## 1.4 UN/INGO partnerships

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In comparison to many long-standing humanitarian crises where humanitarian reform is being implemented, the Government of Bolivia has *relatively* strong systems for emergency response and *some* strong technical ministries. In simple terms, this means that ‘normal’ dynamics of partnership between UN Agencies and INGOs that exist in long standing humanitarian contexts in Africa and other parts of the world cannot be taken for granted in Bolivia.

- In health (including the medical aspects of nutrition), the WHO acts wholly in support of the government. National health systems and structures function well but were described as having significantly less capacity to respond to emergencies which are not primarily health related (i.e. floods with secondary health consequences as opposed to disease outbreaks.)
- WASH, by contrast, operates as a ‘classic’ humanitarian cluster, with government participation at central level but relatively weak systems at field level. As such, the ‘mesa’, utilising tools from one of the stronger global clusters, is more grounded in the concept of UN/INGO partnership.
- The food ‘mesa’ contains WFP, government partners and NGOs at national and departmental level. The departmental ‘mesas’ were reportedly strong in a majority of departments. WFP tends to work alongside government partners to which it handed over standing feeding programmes. In protection, UNICEF described a functional ‘mesa’, bringing together government departments and INGOs.

Overall, and although performance remains uneven, the ‘mesas’ are seen as having improved since the large floods of 2007 and 2008.

This variety of partnership arrangements and strengths cut across the findings of the review, affecting information flows, needs assessment, operational planning and response. Clearly, in addition to these dynamics at national level, strong operational partnerships between UN agencies and NGOs exist in specific geographical areas and often at project level. These are often initiated around specific funding streams and are discussed further under ‘support to humanitarian reform’ below.

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13 Servicio Departamental de Salud

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## 1.5 Humanitarian donor profile in Bolivia

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OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) lists the CERF as the largest donor to Bolivia for emergencies in 2010,<sup>14</sup> contributing US\$4.49 million, or 47 per cent of all reported humanitarian funds. The only other major donor listed for 2010 is the European Commission through ECHO (US\$3.12 million and 33 per cent of humanitarian funds). USAID and DFID have no bilateral humanitarian funding streams in Bolivia. FTS figures rely on donors' own reporting and clearly there are gaps in the data. NGOs reported significant levels of funding from Spain and the Netherlands in 2010 and 2011, which do not appear on current FTS reports. Notwithstanding these possible omissions, it is unusual for the CERF to be the largest single source of humanitarian funding in any country. That there are two primary sources of humanitarian funding in Bolivia, one which cannot fund NGOs directly and another, ECHO,<sup>15</sup> which tends to fund through INGOs, makes for a dynamic which affects both coordination and operations. In simple terms, INGOs run operations which are tangibly independent from UN coordinated approaches, and collaborate when it makes 'tactical' sense for local operations.

Humanitarian funding figures also exclude bilateral contributions from neighbouring governments. Venezuela, Brazil, Cuba and Argentina were understood to be significant contributors to Bolivia, including its emergency response efforts, but no data is available on the use of this money for disaster response. The Government of Bolivia was reported to have announced US\$20 million for flood response during 2010. Several respondents were of the opinion that this money did not represent an additional resource, rather a portion of ongoing budgets at national, departmental and municipal level. For this reason, the full amount was not likely to be released given the drain that this would represent on the provision of normal services.

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## 1.6 The stance of the Government of Bolivia on international assistance

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The Government of Bolivia has a clear legal framework<sup>16</sup> for emergencies and has declared a number of emergencies at municipal, departmental and national level in the course of the past few years in keeping with this legislation. Respondents reported a growing reluctance, however, on the part of government, to either seek or accept international assistance through the 'global' relief system. Although floods and drought have affected significant numbers, the government has neither supported nor allowed a 'flash' appeal since 2007. CERF requests have been made only when the Government has acknowledged the need for assistance after lobbying on the part of the international relief actors in Bolivia. This has had implications for coordination and for timely response (see below).

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14 Bolivia Emergencies for 2010 - Total Funding per Donor in 2010 as of 13-May-2011: [http://fts.unocha.org/reports/daily/ocha\\_R24c\\_C25\\_Y2010\\_asof\\_1106020206.pdf](http://fts.unocha.org/reports/daily/ocha_R24c_C25_Y2010_asof_1106020206.pdf)

15 ECHO funding is open to registered partners, including INGOs, Red Cross and UN relief agencies. In Bolivia, the bulk of ECHO funding goes to INGOs.

16 This includes the definition and functioning of SISRADE

Below national level, however, and within line ministries, government officials are often much more open about requesting, or acknowledging the need for assistance. Clearly the offer of additional resources is attractive at sub-national level when existing budgets are perceived to be tight and external programmes can clearly supplement direct programming. Government officials at national and departmental openly acknowledged tension between departments and national government where the departmental government was controlled by parties in opposition the national government. This sits in the context of the system of ‘autonomous’ departmental government which one respondent described as a positive initiative but ‘very much a work in process’.

In summary, a number of the overarching issues in Bolivia are related to the extent to which the Government is willing to accept that there is a role for a semi-autonomous response system that works on humanitarian principles. Obviously and by extension, the extent to which the UN system and International NGOs are willing and able to negotiate space for such a system is central to the functioning of the CERF. Respondents described the ‘red humanitaria’ as existing in permanent tension between the desire of the global humanitarian system to reform (and local recognition of the need to expand participation) and the desire of national government to retain control over response related issues. This is an overarching tension which permeates the analysis and findings of the whole review.

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

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### 2.1 Information management and the construction of CERF applications

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Bolivia has no CAP and, as above, **no** formal ‘flash’ appeal process was allowed for the floods in 2010. Respondents describe the initiation of a CERF ‘round’ as a largely informal process, beginning in the immediate aftermath of rapid onset events, or, at some point on the build up to floods or droughts when an alert is raised about their potential severity. In each case, an information gathering process is initiated, ending at the national level and informing, amongst other decisions related to response, the requirement for an application to the CERF.

According to the ‘SISRADE’, the flow of information ought to be clear. ‘COE’s at municipal and the department level are responsible for collecting data, coordinating at their respective levels and channelling information to the national level. The departmental COE then plays the same role in respect of the national COE. In reality, and in specific relation to the floods in 2010, respondents reported that this system worked only to a limited extent. Again recognising strengths in some sectors, the overarching governmental needs assessments process was perceived to be quite generic; relying on reports of ‘numbers of affected families’ from the municipal level and or reports of ‘damages’ (focussing on basic infrastructure such as schools, roads and bridges.) Government, UN and NGOs alike, were clear that municipality figures were prone to inflation and could not be used unverified. This information was supplemented by the international system, normally working in partnership with government structures to a greater or lesser extent. In sectors where partnerships and field presence is strong, such as food and agriculture, information was reported to flow relatively quickly to the central level in strong vertical channels.

In certain geographical areas, typically those perceived to be badly affected, with the highest population density and where INGOs or other UN partners had a strong field presence, government, single agency or cross-sectoral needs assessments were undertaken. Speaking in general about joint needs assessment over the years of CERF applications, NGOs tended to think that the situation was improving but that significant problems remained, predominantly with UN funding for such exercises and Agencies perceived interest in joint assessments. Although pro-actively seeking greater collaboration, INGOs were ultimately well placed to do assessments through their consortium structure. Results, however, are always shared; one respondent described them as a ‘free service’ to the broader system. Some ‘mesas’, obviously those with the lowest level of implementation capacity at the field level on an ongoing basis, struggled to raise figures for possible responses.

Overall, most INGOs were satisfied that, via the mesas, their views and their information were taken into consideration in construction of the CERF application. By and large, however, they did not feel part of a jointly constructed response plan into which the CERF made a contribution. Most viewed the key decision making processes around the CERF as ‘closed’ within the UNETT, albeit on the basis of information collated and summarised via the national ‘mesas’. Whilst acknowledging the relatively closed arrangement of the UNETT, Agency representatives stated

that they were working with knowledge brought from their ongoing participation with the ‘mesas’ and had undertaken further consultation through the ‘extended’ UNETT group. There is a general perception that the ‘red humanitaria’ is called too infrequently to play any operational function in respect of the CERF allocation.

Referring back to the description of partnerships above, a wide range of stances on CERF implementation was in evidence from UN Agency ‘co-leads’.

- Health: Although independent actors sit at the ‘mesa’, CERF funds have gone exclusively through WHO in support of government. In education, UNICEF cites a strong government control on the sector and stated that any attempt to pass CERF funds through NGOs would be refused.
- Water: In this ‘mesa’, UNICEF has taken an explicit decision to fund through NGO partners, rather than to take CERF money for itself, given a relatively weak government capacity. Although NGOs were very positive about the relationships that had been built in the ‘mesa’ over the last year, they felt that the CERF process did not reach the same level of inclusiveness.
- Food: In food WFP has a range of partners, by and large, they were happy with the level of inclusiveness at the national level.
- Protection: In terms of CERF implementation, there was no perceived need on the part of UNICEF to implement funds through INGOs, on the basis that they had access to sufficient funding through other channels.

INGOs consistently described having received ‘offers’ to implement CERF funds via bilateral phone calls from UN agencies, rather than as part of jointly constructed response plans. NGOs reported significant time lags between the information going into the system and ‘offers’ being made (see timely response below.) INGOs did offer positive examples of implementing CERF funded projects in coordination with those utilizing other funds. Others offered instances where the offer to implement CERF funds came too late to be of practical value.

Government officials at all levels described CERF processes as transparent. The senior level requested greater transparency over impact and the precise percentage of costs which were ultimately utilised for the direct benefit of affected populations. The head of COE in Santa Cruz was alone in stating that the CERF process, in keeping with most decisions had left out the departmental COE. This came as part of the general perception that too much was driven from the national level.

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## 2.2 Summary findings

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UN agencies viewed CERF processes as transparent and inclusive and most welcomed the requirement to construct an appeal jointly. By and large, NGOs were satisfied that their information inputs were sought at ‘mesa’ level and that had been kept informed of progress via the ‘UNETE ampliado’. In this sense, they felt that most parts of the allocation process were reasonably *transparent*. Notwithstanding the existence of the SISRADE system, however, there was little sense of a joined up, response plan or operation of which CERF played a part. Ultimately, that the principle decision takers in CERF process are UN Agencies, rather than clusters, or

mesas goes against a key principle of the CERF. Humanitarian reform more broadly and the CERF's support to the set of initiatives, are covered in the section below.

## Section 3. Support to Humanitarian Reform and Response

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### 3.1 Support to humanitarian reform

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In the context of the general tension between international and national response mechanisms identified by many actors, the challenge of making the ‘red humanitarian’ operational in Bolivia was clear. The CERF was not perceived to have strengthened the mechanism. Two experienced respondents stated that, as the CERF was not used specifically to leverage support for the ‘red humanitarian’, and ultimately strengthened the role of the UNETT, it *could* be considered to be acting against reform.

UN Agencies tended to feel that the CERF had strengthened the ‘mesas’. Most NGOs were reasonably happy with the nature of ongoing relations with UN agencies via the ‘mesas’, but found them short of the genuine operational partnerships which could facilitate a rapid and joint emergency response. In this sense, they did not consider the CERF sufficient to strengthen these relationships. One stated that if the spirit of operational partnership were more deeply engrained through strengthened, more practical disaster preparedness planning, the CERF process itself would be faster and might then serve to strengthen relations further.

As above, in respect of the CERF leveraging joint working practices, the most positive feedback came from UN Agency staff members, who consistently reported that the CERF has a positive impact in encouraging joint planning amongst the Agencies themselves. Several, however, commented that joint implementation was at a significantly lower level than joint planning.

Consistently, Government officials thought that the CERF strengthened relations between themselves and the UN system. The one exception, as above, was in the Departmental COE in Santa Cruz, who felt that an opportunity had been missed to strengthen relations at the departmental level in respect of food distributions and using resources in a complementary fashion. Specific examples of joint working and the filling of capacity gaps with CERF funding are covered in section 4, below, under technical and capacity gaps.

The HC/RC is not perceived to play a hands-on role in the CERF, leaving the decisions clearly with the UNETT. She is, however, seen as playing a critical role in negotiating with government at the highest level in advocating for the need for international assistance. The CERF is seen as critical in this respect in that it allows her to come ‘to the table’ with a tangible offer of assistance. In this sense, the CERF is seen as strengthening the role of the HC, but specifically in relation to the government, rather than the broader humanitarian system.

Most actors were very positive about the relatively recent addition of one OCHA post in Bolivia. Over and above the general coordination role, UN agency staff stated that OCHA acts as a vital conduit between the UN Country Team, the OCHA regional office and the CERF secretariat. This is perceived to smooth CERF processes and facilitate the application and reporting process. A project aimed at strengthening the ‘SISRADE’, funded by COSUDE, is due to begin during 2011.



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### 3.2 Summary findings

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In a number of countries where national disaster response systems are well defined, there is a degree of tension with international mechanisms. To the extent that humanitarian reform is aimed at strengthening partnerships and coordination platforms across the international system, it is bound to become part of this tension. ‘Clusterisation’ has been driven hard from the global level and HCs and OCHA have been told that is ‘non-negotiable’ for humanitarian responses. Completely standardised coordination structures cannot be brought into being at any cost, however, where sovereign governments perceive that their own systems are being displaced. The system of ‘mesas de trabajo’ in Bolivia appears to be a reasonable working compromise. The absence of an inter-cluster mechanism is, however, problematic in terms of overall coordination, the logic model in the CERF’s PAF, and humanitarian reform more broadly. Although many respondents were positive about the way the CERF had strengthened intra-UN relations and relations between UN and government, this has not equated to strengthened humanitarian reform as globally understood.

## Section 4. Timeliness of CERF Funding

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### 4.1 Gap filling and timely, life saving response

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A clear majority of actors perceived that the CERF **had** served to fill a gap of one type or another. A clear majority also thought that intervention with CERF resources had saved lives. These headlines, however, cover a wide range of perspectives.

#### *4.1.1 Timely response*

Although defined as a rapid ‘response’, the nature of the flooding in Bolivia means that it is hard to construct a precise timeline for the ‘whole’ event against which to measure performance in a meaningful fashion for all geographical areas and sectors. Beni was described as the worst affected department, but one in which the pattern of flooding progressed over the course of months. Most described ‘the floods’ as having begun in earnest in early January of 2010 and progressed over roughly a six-month period. The official CERF submission was received in New York on February 25, 2010 and money transferred to recipient Agencies between the March 12 and 17. Onward transfers to implementing NGO partners took place in early April in two cases and early June in others.

Data from the CERF Secretariat confirms that during 2010, on average, submissions from Bolivia were processed within reasonable time frames. Recalling that Bolivia has only requested funds from the ‘Rapid Response’ window, the CERF PAF sets a benchmark of 3 working days for the period between final Agency submission and approval from the ERC. In the case of the floods in early 2010, the average for Bolivian submissions was 5 days and for the drought in late 2010, 10 days (an average of 7 days overall). Only one submission, a proposal from WHO in April of 2010 for control of disease ‘vectors’ and other aspects of health support to camped populations, showed any significant delay (in this case a 25 day delay between the signing of an LOU and the disbursement of the grant).

As discussed throughout the report, the nature of the humanitarian system in Bolivia means that, for a variety of reasons, UN agencies do not often implement through INGOs. In the HC/RC report on the use of the CERF, only US\$40, 596 is stated as being transferred to NGOs, in a total of four grants. This represents less than 2 per cent of CERF funds. A number of issues were raised in respect of the timeliness of response, specifically in relation to implementation by INGO partners. Given the relatively small amount that was transferred, many of the issues relate to delays in the whole CERF cycle and how more could have been done in partnership, had the overall process been faster and more focussed on operational partnership.

As outlined above, NGOs felt, in broad terms, that they were consulted in the construction of CERF application. However, the process of negotiating with government at central level to accept a CERF application and the submission itself were relatively closed processes in comparison. This led to a significant time lag between information inputs by NGOs and ‘offers’ to implement with CERF

funding, during which time relatively little ongoing dialogue was reported. Whilst the CERF submission was being processed and negotiated, INGOs and government, utilising other funding sources (in addition to UN Agencies with access to internal response funds) and in a variety of partnership arrangements began relief operations. A number of NGOs reported that by the time ‘offers’ came through, needs (both operational requirements as well as the profile of requirements on the ground) had changed significantly. This affected ‘new’ requests to implement by UN agencies, as well as circumstances where projects had been jointly prepared.

Data from the HC’s annual CERF report to the CERF shows that 4 projects were implemented through NGOs in 2010:

- For 2 projects via IOM (emergency shelter and NFI provision), a first tranche of funding was transferred to 2 partners 40 days after disbursement from the CERF (17 March to 26 April).
- For 1 project through UNICEF (emergency water and sanitation) funds were forwarded to the partner OXFAM – FUNDEPCO 87 days after disbursement from the CERF (12 March to 7 June).
- For the fourth project, in health and attributed to a partner ‘CIES’, money was also forwarded in early June, approximately 3 months after the CERF distributed payments to Agencies. The channelling agency, however, is unclear in the CERF summary data.

Reflecting on the longer history of implementing CERF allocations, a number of NGOs recalled receiving either specific inputs (or money for inputs) which were no longer relevant by the time that operations could begin. This was particularly the case for time critical inputs such as temporary shelters and emergency water supplies.

Government officials in the departmental ‘COEs’ for both Santa Cruz and Beni were positive about the timing of the CERF response. At this level, they placed a particular focus on highly ‘visible’ inputs, in particular food, shelter and health. In these areas, specifically medicines and food, CERF funding was clearly seen as providing the opportunity for government and WFP to run down available stocks in the knowledge that further resources were on their way. As such, the CERF was clearly perceived to have enabled a time critical response, even though cash transfers had not taken place.

Many actors felt that the process of information gathering and decision-making at the system level took too long. This was perceived to be due to a lack of operational capacity or strong partnerships at field level on the part of some UN agencies and their respective ‘mesas’. This led to what were perceived as significant delays in coming to final agreement on the ‘numbers’ of population/families affected, from which an overall response and a CERF request could be constructed. In this respect, several respondents acknowledged the obvious tension between inclusive and transparent allocation processes and speed. WFP openly acknowledged that they felt that urgent time was lost in producing inter-cluster summary figures when their own sector figures were available relatively quickly, and offered a reasonable basis on which to construct a CERF submission. Clearly, at a central level, the government’s

general reluctance to seek external assistance has been a significant factor in delaying the CERF process overall. Whilst being largely positive about the role of the HC/RC in negotiating with central government in respect of the CERF, many actors felt that the CERF needed to be a more autonomous mechanism and that a submission ought to be run on the basis of ‘informing’ the government of decisions based on humanitarian principles.

#### *4.1.2 Gaps in capacity and financing*

Government officials provided some clear examples of how they perceived the CERF had filled critical gaps in their response systems.

A representative from the SEDES in Santa Cruz described how the CERF had enabled the government health system to:

- Hire a consultant to rapidly complete epidemiological data sets for affected municipalities, as well as shelters and camps (although limitations on resources allowed for a response in only three municipalities, prioritised from 19 affected)
- Expand health services to shelters and camps
- Supply essential drugs, tailored to the emergency response.

Where sectoral links were strong at the departmental level, again in health and food in particular, the CERF was seen as bringing more power to the departmental authorities:

- In giving them a stronger voice with national authorities
- In providing an autonomous funding channel, countering a perceived political imbalance in funding to the departments.

#### *4.1.3 Lifesaving responses?*

The CERF was perceived by the majority of actors to have saved lives, either directly or by reducing the risk of future loss of life through intervention.

There were two groups of views around the issue:

- By the admission of some sectors in Bolivia, there are those where ‘life saving’ is harder to reconcile with ‘acute’ humanitarian need in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, such as education and protection. In these sectors, respondents were grateful that the discussions had taken place at the global level during the construction of the CERF’s ‘life saving criteria’. They felt strongly that their sectors were highly relevant to the flood response and that the pre-inclusion of their sectors and clear criteria had enabled them to argue for their part in the submission.
- A second group of respondents did, however, take the question in relation to their own perception of why the CERF was originally created, to respond in a very immediate sense to very acute needs where lives were threatened and response was time critical. They argued that the CERF may have saved lives in Bolivia, but not in the way it was originally intended.

The perception of government across sectors was positive in this respect. At departmental level, they described instances in health, nutrition and agriculture where gaps had been filled in such a way that lives and livelihoods were saved.

#### *4.1.4 Filling a political gap?*

When asked specifically whether or not the CERF had filled critical gaps, a number of respondents stated that the CERF filled a ‘political rather than financial’ gap. The ‘gap’ here is generally perceived to exist between the central government’s statement of their capacity to respond and the actual scale of need. For some, this was also a gap between donors desire to allocate additional resources based either on the governments stance on emergencies, or relations more generally. For others this was a ‘technical’ or even conceptual gap, in that natural disasters in Bolivia are sufficiently predictable, and the country sufficiently well resourced, to resolve these issues through structural/developmental means (essentially the need for a greater emphasis on ‘risk reduction’ more broadly and disaster preparedness as a specific element therein.) As noted above, however, there was a general consensus that the outlook for preparedness was not optimistic. The relatively recent decision to place sole responsibility for disaster response with the Vice Ministry of Civil Defence was perceived as problematic. In particular, staff turnover had increased dramatically and senior staff were often former military officer at the end of their careers. This constant cycle leads to significant challenges of developing relationships and building capacity.

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## **4.2 Summary findings**

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Although many respondents described the CERF process as ‘quick’ in general, a vocal minority thought that the whole process was too slow and cumbersome for the funds to be considered truly life-saving as per its original intent, especially when placed within the overall time-span of the 2010 floods and subsequent response.

Across a range of partners, however, many could describe gaps that they thought had been filled by the CERF and government partners in particular, were vocal about what value the fund had added.

One experienced respondent stated that ‘for better or worse’ a ‘norm’ had developed where, in the event of a natural disaster, the whole system waited for the response of the CERF and took their own decisions in light of the CERF response. In relation to the challenges of improving national response systems through capacity building, or attracting contributions from new or existing humanitarian donors, a number of respondents described the CERF as ‘truthfully, ‘easy money’. Its value in filling gaps is clear to many, but simultaneously many acknowledge that the fund is in many ways an inappropriate tool for some needs in this context and will always be inadequate.

## Section 5. Reporting and Accountability

Are adequate monitoring and evaluation systems in place?

In simple terms, normal UN Agency field monitoring systems are in place. UN Agencies listed a range of mainly internal tools and accountability mechanisms. There was a very high level of visibility of the CERF. Counterparts were aware at departmental level and below that they were working with CERF funds and reporting against them. This is reflected in the reporting from WFO partner PISAE.

Partners, including Government officials at departmental level did refer to examples of joint monitoring and 'lessons learned' exercises. UNICEF referred to a 'joint evaluation platform' for the WASH cluster. Overall, however, no examples of cross-sectoral evaluation, or impact evaluation of any kind were mentioned. The HC/RC's CERF report of 2010 is reasonably comprehensive in its analysis of 'lessons learned and suggestions for follow up', including a list of responsible entities. There is, however, no process for following up on these recommendations.

When asked about reporting procedures, there was a consensus that the formats were both reasonably and sufficiently detailed. In keeping with other feedback on CERF process, there was a sense that after several years of dealing with CERF systems, there was a high level of familiarity and comfort. Despite prompting for specific feedback on possible improvements in either reporting formats, the submission process, none was offered.

## Section 6. Overarching Observations and Recommendations

The CERF has become a significant resource in Bolivia and is called upon frequently. Whilst not highly relevant to INGOs, given their access to alternative humanitarian funds, the UN and parts of government recognise it as important. It is perceived to fill a number of gaps and there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that it was used for a range of successful interventions for flood-affected populations in 2010, whether or not these interventions were the most time critical. The range and nature of disaster risk in general mapped onto the low population density and infrastructure in Bolivia means that any system that has to be invoked irregularly to trigger an external response is likely to be somewhat inefficient. Stronger national systems are required.

Risk reduction and community preparedness are on the agenda through DIPECHO and NGOs, and UNICEF has a plan under development. At the systemic level, however, many respondents were pessimistic, however, about the prospect of building specific government capacity for disaster preparedness. The significant challenges in developing stronger national systems make the CERF, in relative terms, an attractive resource. There also seems little real prospect of Bolivia receiving significantly more bilateral funds from 'traditional' donors to the global humanitarian system. As Bolivia looks set to continue to call upon the CERF, a major challenge for the Fund going forward is to distinguish between instances where funding adds genuine, life saving value and where it is treated as an easy resource in an resource scarce environment.

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### 6.1 Recommendations

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1. A geographically specific, cross-sectoral evaluation of one emergency response phase, including the use of CERF funds should be undertaken. The impact of CERF funds on affected populations was beyond the scope of this exercise. There was, however, sufficient anecdotal evidence of positive impact to suggest that such an evaluation could serve as a useful advocacy tool, as well as being valuable in identifying operational lessons.
2. DRR programmes in general were not a specific focus of this study. It is evident, however, that across the humanitarian system as a whole, greater focus needs to be placed on very practical/operational efforts for disaster preparedness **as part of disaster risk reduction efforts**. Disaster preparedness needs to be included as a stronger element of ongoing programmes in order that funding (and additional staff time) is dedicated to the issue.
3. At global level, (for Bolivia and perhaps more broadly) the CERF may consider:
  - Agreeing in advance with the HC/OCHA 'trigger' levels for intervention by the CERF. This might encourage ongoing collection of data through the 'mesas' and reduce the time taken to 're-start' the data collection system in the event of natural disaster.
  - Tracking (perhaps via the OCHA desk) the progress of disaster preparedness and the strengthening of national response systems. Some

external pressure for the improvement of such systems may help to facilitate strengthening.

4. The HC/OCHA should give serious consideration to the construction of an Emergency Response Fund in Bolivia. The political space and the prospect of donor support would have to be gauged and advocacy could undoubtedly be required, but the model would offer a quicker alternative and a complement to CERF. The Columbia model offers a good starting point.
5. A continuation of efforts to build the ‘mesas’ and other ‘reformed’ structures. In this respect, there should be concrete tie-ins with the ‘humanitarian reform’ project being funded by ‘COSUDE’.



## Annex A. List of Interviewees

Hernán G. Tuco Ayma, Viceministro de Defensa Civil  
Antonia Miranda Melgar, Coordinador Centro de Operaciones de Emergencia Departamental – COED, Gobierno Autónomo Departamental  
Sebastian Eugster, Director Residente Adjunto para Ayuda Humanitaria, Confederación Suiza  
Carlos A. Jiménez Peñaranda, Administrador, FAO  
Einstein Henry Tejada Vélez, Coordinador Nacional, FAO  
Ludwig Guendel, Deputy Representative, UNICEF  
Didier Vergés, Coordinador de base Santa Cruz, Accion Contra el Hambre  
Dr. Christian Darras, Representante de OPS/OMS, Organización Panamericana de la Salud  
Dr. Jorge Terán, Profesional Nacional en Control y Mitigación de Desastres, Organización Panamericana de la Salud  
Dr. Carlos A. Hurtado, Responsable Emergencias, SEDES, Santa Cruz  
Ing. Ricardo Torres Ruiz, Asesor en Salud Ambiental, Organización Panamericana de la Salud  
Dr. Percy Halkyer, Profesional Nacional PAI, Organización Panamericana de la Salud  
Francisco Guachalla, Emergency Officer, UNICEF  
Ivette Sandino, Chief of Health and Nutrition, UNICEF  
Jaime Nadal Roig, Representante en Bolivia, UNFPA  
Rocío Chaín, Oficial de Programas, UNDP  
Sergio Alvez, WFP  
Lilian Reyes Pando, Asesora Nacional para Respuesta a Desastres, OCHA  
Yoriko Yasukawa, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator  
PISAE team, Santa Cruz (Implementing partner for WFP)  
Richard Arana Rodriguez, IOM Trinidad  
Nicky Rosendo Rivero Suarez, IOM Trinidad  
Ing. Felix Fernández Bustos, Oficial Nacional de Medios de Vida y Emergencias, Save the Children  
Nancy Gutiérrez C., Humanitarian Aid Manager, World Vision  
Roger Quiroga B., Coordinador Gestión de Riesgos y Adaptación, Oxfam GB  
Dr. Ruben Gonzalez, Jefe, UNIDAD NAL. Socorro y Desastres, Red Cross Bolivia

# Annex B. Study TOR

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

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### Terms of Reference

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

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

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

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

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

#### 2. Scope and Purpose

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

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

#### 3. Key issues

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

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

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

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

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

#### 4. *Review methodology*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### 5. *Proposed consultants*

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

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

#### 6. *Management and support*

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

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

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

#### 7. *Deliverables*

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

#### 8. *Timeline*

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

15 June: Final version of reports submitted to CERF Secretariat

#### 9. *Contract length*

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

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