

WHAT ARE POOLED FUNDS?

Pooled funds are multi-donor humanitarian financing mechanisms aiming to provide a flexible and response source of financing for emergencies. Pooled funding mechanisms, often managed by a fund manager or Secretariat, have received an increased investment from donors in recent years.

WHAT ARE SOME EXISTING POOLED FUNDS?



Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CERF IN 2016 TOTALED
US\$439
MILLION

Contributions to the CERF totaled US\$439 million in 2016. As of late 2016, the CERF is directly only accessible to UN agencies. NGOs can, however, access CERF funding through implementing partnerships with UN-agencies (For more information on NGO partnerships with the UN, see Topic Two...). In light of the Secretary General’s call at the World Humanitarian Summit to double annual CERF disbursements to US\$1 billion, many NGOs are calling for the CERF to become directly accessible to NGOs.

Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPF)

This briefing paper explains in further detail CBPFs, including the various processes and requirements NGOs must meet in order to access CBPFs.

CBPFs are a multi-donor humanitarian financing mechanism, established by the UNOCHA Emergency Response Coordinator. Increasingly both Government and private donors direct their contributions to CBPF, which was operational across 18 countries in 2016, and utilized in both sudden onset and protracted humanitarian crises.

CBPFs are accessible to UN agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

Referring to data analyzed in 2016, CBPFs were the largest source of direct funding for national and local NGOs. In 2015, CBPF disbursements totaled approximately US600 million. 60% of these funds were disbursed to NGOs, and within this allocation, 20% was disbursed to National NGOs, representing approximately US85 million. This figure represents more than half the amount of tracked funds received directly by national NGOs.

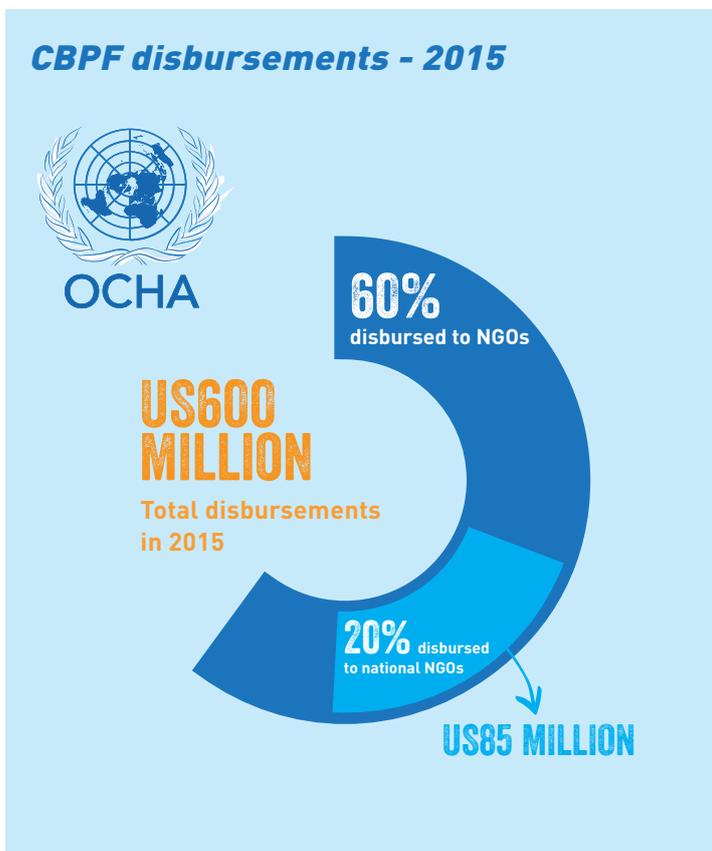
HOW CAN NGOS ACCESS CBPFs?

As CBPFs are managed at the country level, NGOs need to undergo an assessment processes in each country they are pursuing CBPFs. Capacity assessments for NGOs to access CBPFs are therefore not undertaken at the regional or global level.

NGOs can become partners in the specific countries by registering and undergoing a capacity and risk assessment by OCHA's Humanitarian Financing Unit. As part of this process, the NGO's institutional, managerial, financial and technical expertise is assessed and ranked by OCHA's country office within a 'high', 'medium', or 'low' risk classification.

This risk classification determines the various control mechanisms and processes the NGO must follow if it accesses CBPFs – relating to the number of grants the NGO can manage; the level of disbursement; the length of grants; and the subsequent monitoring and reporting requirements.

NGOs should undergo this capacity assessment process, which can take some time to finalise, before submitting a specific project proposal.



WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION ON CBPFs?

OCHA has developed Grant Management System, which includes a standard platform for recipients of CBPFs: <https://gms.unocha.org/>

Through this platform, partners submit assessment, proposals and reporting requirements into one consolidated system.

NGOs are also encouraged to orient themselves on the CBPF Global Guidelines. Developed in early 2015, these guidelines outline the principles, processes, tools and templates to follow:

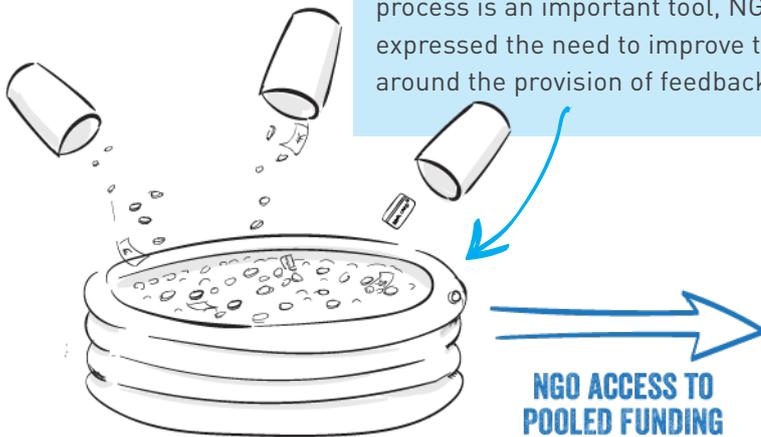
<http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/humanitarian-financing/cbpf-global-guidelines>

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WITH CBPFS

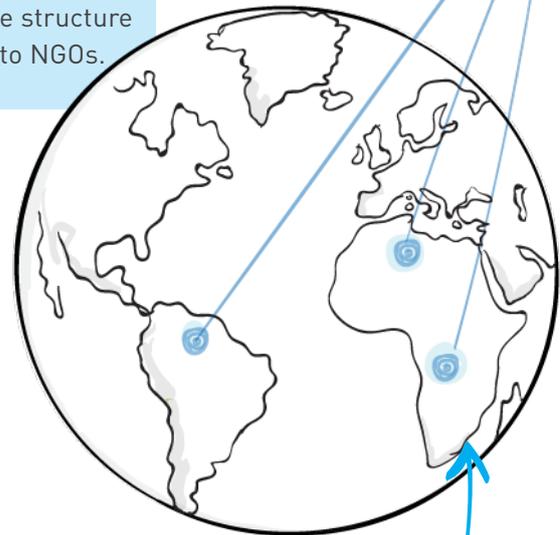
NGOs expressed a range of tips, challenges and lessons in engaging in CBPFs, including:

ACCESS:

Whilst the Partner Capacity Assessment process is an important tool, NGOs have expressed the need to improve the structure around the provision of feedback to NGOs.



COUNTRY LEVELS



SPEED:

The speed of disbursement is key for all humanitarian financing mechanisms. OCHA is committing to strengthen the timeliness of CBPF disbursements through setting a number of targets:

TARGET: 50 days to process applications for sudden onset disasters

TARGET: 85% of disbursements to be made within 10 days of final sign off

PROJECT MODIFICATIONS:

Changes more than 15% of project budget's require the approval of the Humanitarian Coordinator, a process which can take some time to finalise. Recent improvements in the CBPF guidelines (budget and template structure) have reduced the need for changes.

TIPS FOR NGOS IN ACCESSING AND NAVIGATING CBPFS:

- **Develop relationships:** Engage with the OCHA in-country team and the cluster mechanism.
- **Think bigger than just access to funding:** How else can you become involved in the CBPF mechanism? Are there seats available on the advisory board at the local level? Could you join, or do you have access to them? Are you communicating your program requirements to OCHA and engaging with the cluster system?
- **Engage with the NGO Dialogue Platform on CBPFs:** This platform was created to provide an opportunity for NGOs and OCHA to connect, share information and provide feedback on the CBPFs. NGOs can engage with this group to share any challenges experienced in engaging in CBPFs. The platform is open to all NGOs, and meets twice per year in addition to adhoc webinars and learning events.

For more information, NGOs can contact: cbpf-ngo@un.org

THE START FUND

The START Fund, an initiative of the START network, is a multi-donor, NGO managed rapid response funding mechanism. The START fund, with key donors including DFID, ECHO, Irish Aid and the Netherlands, **provides humanitarian funding within 72 hours for projects up to 45 days' in duration.**

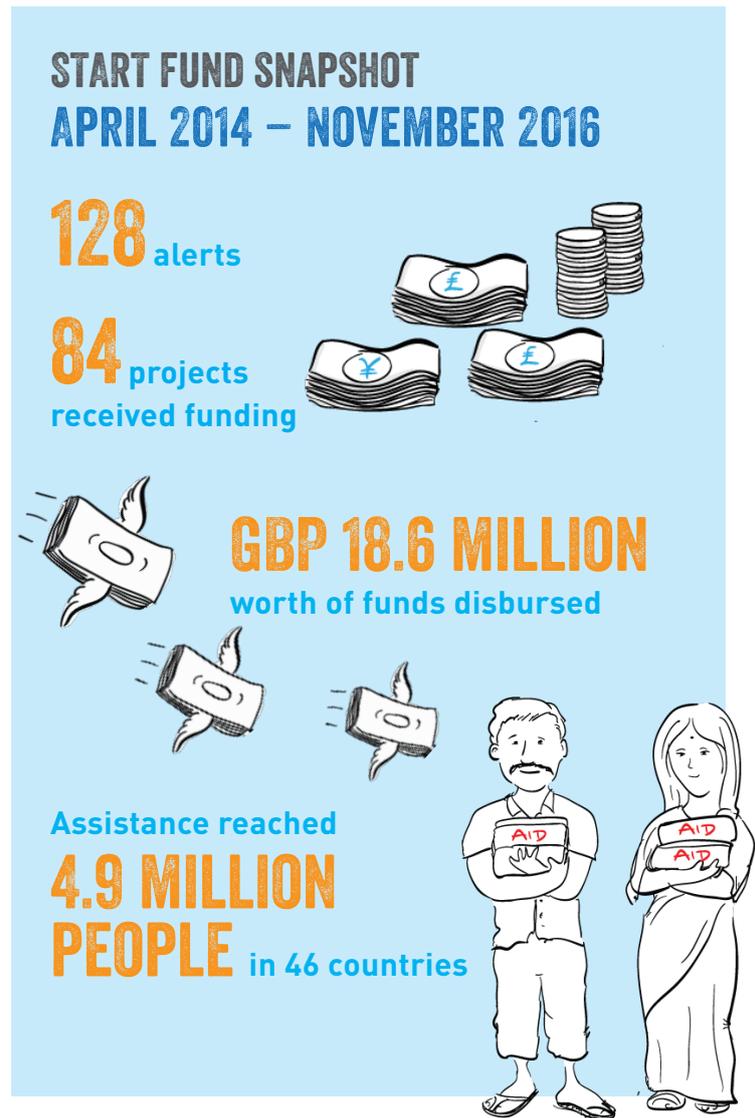
The START fund is collectively managed by the START network members, and is targeted towards three types of emergencies:

- Underfunded small to medium scale emergencies
- Spikes in chronic emergencies
- Forecasts of impending emergencies.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The START fund follows a clear process, which includes:

- A member of the network alerts the Fund of an emergency requiring support
- A decision is made by the Fund on whether to provide funds, and how much
- Members are given 24 hours to submit proposals, which are reviewed by members in country
- Once approvals have been given, project implementation begins within 7 days and finished by 45 days
- Following the conclusion of the project, members come together to take-stock and identify lessons for future alerts.



How can NGOs access the START fund?

NGOs don't need to be a member to access the start fund.

They can do this through partnering with any of the 42 members of the network

NGOs interested in working with START network or to learn more about membership, please contact Cem Gurkan

cem.gurkan@startnetwork.org

Or startfund@startnetwork.org for specific information on the START fund.



LEARN MORE: Visit www.icvanetwork.org for the webinar, video, further information and references.

JOIN ICVA: Contribute to Working Groups, Tavsks Teams and Humanitarian Financing Policy Development.