



2019 annual report:

WHO CONTINGENCY FUND FOR EMERGENCIES

CFE CONTRIBUTORS 2018–2019



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FOREWORD



We are looking back on 2019 from a very different world.

Many things have been changed and will be changed by the global COVID-19 pandemic. This report is an important reminder that some things will stay the same.

There will always be new outbreaks and health emergencies for which we must remain vigilant and ready to respond. The Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE), now in its sixth year of operation, was established to help us do this and more.

The CFE has evolved into a flexible contingency fund that provides WHO with resources at the start of an emergency, allows WHO to scale up activities in response to an escalation in an ongoing crisis, and supports the continuity of critical, life-saving operations in the absence of specific funding.

This flexibility has seen the CFE play a key role in the response to the Ebola outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. From the start of the outbreak in 2018, the CFE was used to kick-start the response. Throughout 2019, the CFE has filled critical gaps in funding to sustain life-saving operations, and has been fundamental in ensuring a sustainable and effective response.

There have been very difficult moments. Civilians and health workers have lost their lives not just to the virus, but to violence. And WHO has mourned the loss of some of its own. Health workers and affected communities have sacrificed so much, but together we have beaten the virus. On 25 June 2020, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo declared the outbreak over, though we must stay alert to the threat of new outbreaks. The CFE ensured that we were able to keep going in the toughest of circumstances and keep helping those communities most in need.

In 2019, the CFE enabled WHO to respond to a diverse range of health emergencies. The CFE funded essential health operations in response to conflict in Libya; released funding within 24 hours following Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas and Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique; and supported preparedness and response activities to address the global measles outbreak. In all, the CFE released US\$ 83 million for 23 emergencies in 22 countries.

The Fund's success is made possible by the continued generosity of the donor community. In 2019, 16 Member States contributed a record US\$ 54 million to the CFE, and four new donors joined the list of contributors. We continue to look at ways to ensure that the CFE is sustainably funded and remains fit for purpose. The goal is a financing mechanism that continues to empower WHO to respond to the needs of affected countries swiftly and effectively.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder of the need to invest in resilient health systems so that all countries are prepared to respond to emergencies. Stronger health systems and universal health coverage are cornerstones of a healthier society, one where people not only survive, but thrive.

It is also a reminder that we need flexible resources in place to respond rapidly and effectively to emergencies. In this regard, the CFE is uniquely positioned in the ecosystem of health emergency financing mechanisms and remains a key investment in global health security. We call on your continued generosity to ensure that we can continue to serve the most vulnerable in a world where the relationship between solidarity and security has never been clearer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus'.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
WHO Director-General



WHO/N Alexander

▲ A woman in Beni, one of the areas worst affected by the Ebola virus disease outbreak in north-east Democratic Republic of the Congo, cares for her child at a health care facility. Women in Beni took a leadership role in explaining how to stop the spread of the disease.

OVERVIEW

About the WHO Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE)

The WHO Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE) was established in 2015 with a simple goal: enable WHO and its partners to take swift action to save lives. Donors contribute to the fund because they know that rapid, flexible funding is the key to a rapid and effective response to health emergencies.

As soon as a request comes in from the field, the CFE can release up to US\$500 000 immediately. Larger requests, subject to approval, can usually be released within 24 to 48 hours. The funding can be used to directly finance WHO response activities, personnel, and essential supplies, as well as funding some of the activities of implementing partners as part of a WHO operational plan.

The funds may be released rapidly, but they are subject to stringent oversight and robust accountability ensured by WHO's financial rules and regulations. Each new funding allocation is tracked through WHO's grant management system, with full financial reporting submitted to the World Health Assembly on an annual basis.

KEY FIGURES 2019

US\$ 83 million released

43 separate allocations for 23 emergencies in 22 countries

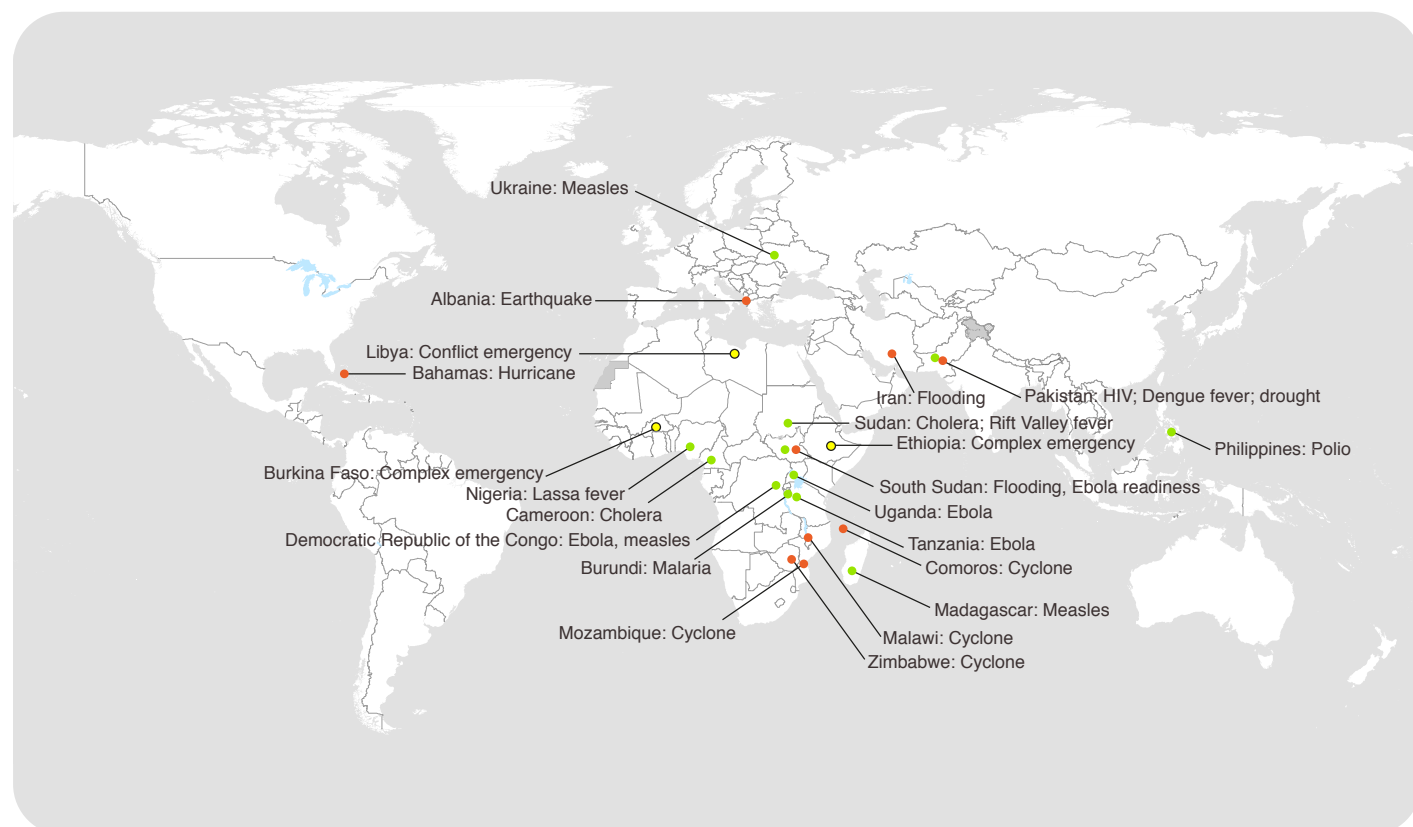
13 disease outbreaks

7 natural disasters

3 complex emergencies

84% of allocations released within 24 hours of request

Figure 1 CFE: overview of responses supported in 2019



- Infectious disease outbreak
- Complex emergency
- Natural disaster

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Data: World Health Organization

2019 overview: CFE in health emergencies

The CFE enabled WHO to mount rapid and sustained responses to 23 separate emergencies in 22 countries (figure 1) in 2019. A total of US\$83 million was released by the CFE, with US\$54 million implemented – both figures the highest totals since the CFE was launched.

In 2019, the CFE released 78% of allocations of US\$ 500 000 or less in 24 hours. 84% of all allocations – regardless of size – were released in 24 hours or less. The average release time for all allocations was just 36 hours.

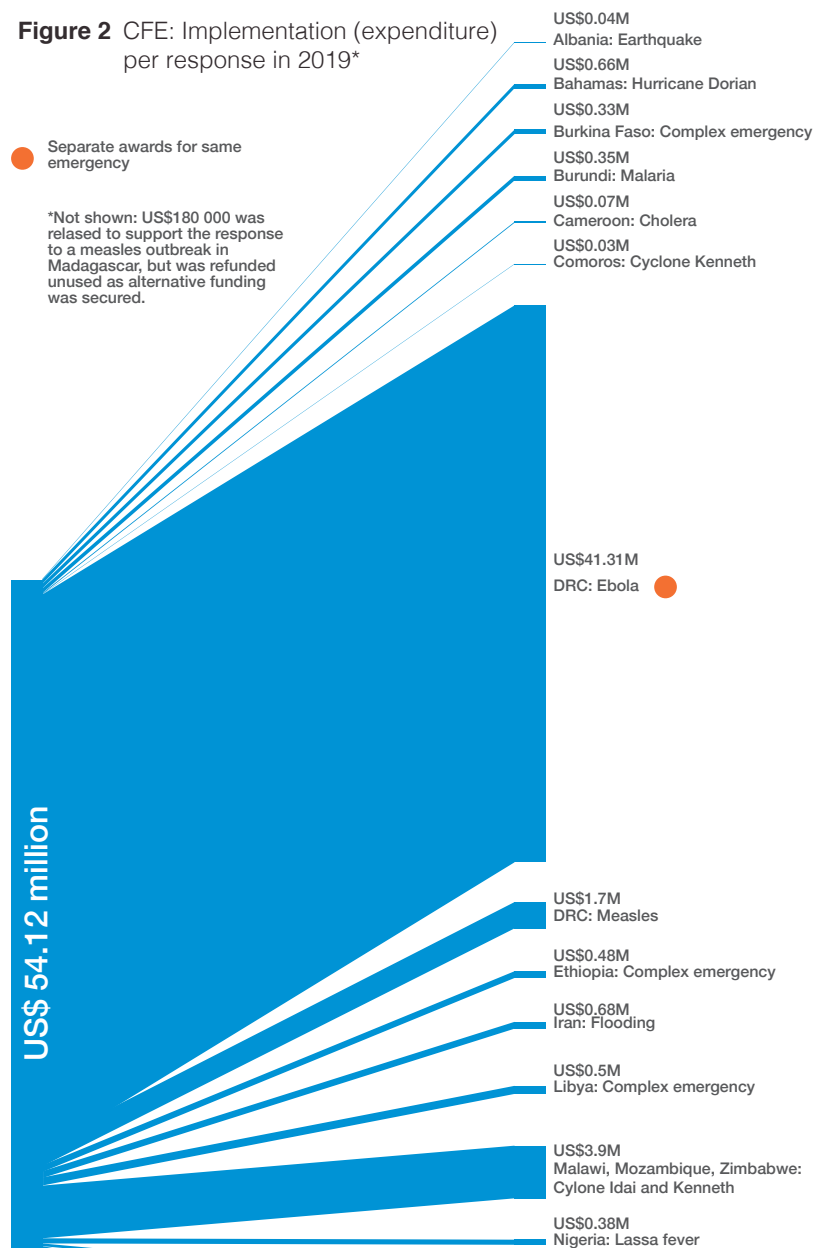
In some countries, such as Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Pakistan, CFE funding was used to support WHO's response to more than one emergency. Some emergencies, such as the Ebola outbreak in DRC, had a regional impact and affected more than one country. In all, at least one response required CFE support in every one of the six WHO regions (African Region, Region of the Americas, South-East Asia Region, European Region, Eastern Mediterranean Region, and the Western Pacific Region) in 2019.

The majority (13) of emergencies that required CFE support were infectious disease outbreaks, followed by natural disasters (seven), and complex emergencies (three).

Response activities in DRC received by far the most funding from the CFE during 2019 (figure 2).

In 2019, the CFE continued to play a life-saving role in the response to the Ebola outbreak in eastern DRC. The CFE was used to bridge funding gaps at critical junctures to ensure the continuity of operations. This minimized disruptions and saved lives. In total, the response to the Ebola virus disease outbreak in DRC was supported and enabled by US\$67.5 million released in ten tranches from the CFE throughout 2019, of which US\$41.3 was implemented and the remaining US\$26.2 million was refunded. This sustained support accounts

Figure 2 CFE: Implementation (expenditure) per response in 2019*



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