

# The Secretary-General's **UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund**

APRIL 2020

**The United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund is a UN inter-agency fund mechanism established by the UN Secretary-General to help support low- and middle-income programme countries to respond to the pandemic and its impacts, including an unprecedented socio-economic shock. The Fund's assistance targets those most vulnerable to economic hardship and social disruption.**

The Fund contributes to financing the three objectives of the UN Secretary General's Call for Solidarity, a plea for global action to stop the COVID-19 pandemic and the suffering it has caused: (1) Tackle the health emergency; (2) Focus on the social impact, and the economic response and recovery; and (3) Help countries recover better. In particular, the Fund supports countries to implement the UN frameworks for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19 which focus on **shared responsibility, global solidarity and urgent action for people in need.**

**The financial requirements of the Fund are projected at US\$2 billion, with US\$1 billion needed in the first nine months of operation, noting that these requirements will be reviewed with the evolution of needs as a result of the pandemic.**

**The Fund complements the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s Consolidated Global Humanitarian Appeal for COVID-19.**

#### **FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS: US\$2 BILLION WITH US\$1 BILLION IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS**

##### **WINDOW 1: Enable Governments and Communities to suppress the transmission of the virus**

- Support countries to fully implement their National Plans for Combating COVID-19, helping them to close critical gaps, for example, pertaining to limiting transmission, the acquisition of essential equipment and supplies, scaling up country preparedness and response operations, and the payment of salaries and incentives to their healthcare and social workforce; and
- Assist non-health ministries and government agencies (such as the ministries of education, agriculture, women's empowerment, transport, interior, labour, social welfare, and public services), along with local governments, to maintain situation rooms and to provide critical services interrupted by COVID-19.

##### **WINDOW 2: Mitigate the Socio-economic Impact and safeguard people and their livelihoods**

- Enhance social protection mechanisms through immediate impact measures; scale-up cash transfers, insurance, food security, asset creation, and safety nets; and relieve the disproportionate burden of COVID-19 on women and children;
- Meet children's food and educational needs through school meal programmes and access to learning;
- Promote digital innovations that boost employment, support livelihoods, and improve the provision of social services in line with COVID-19 response measures.

##### **WINDOW 3: Recover Better**

- Strengthen and test national preparedness measures, inclusive of: integrated disease surveillance and response and community-based surveillance; maintenance of key services and a health-care workforce during crises; laboratory capacity; public procurement protocols and logistics; clear and targeted communications; cross-border collaboration; and national plans that include dedicated budget lines for funding preparedness;
- Invest in effective and innovative delivery of public services to achieve sustainable and inclusive economies that leave no-one behind and safeguard country SDG programmes from COVID-19-related setbacks.

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



**The Fund's coverage extends to all low- and middle- income programme countries and, in particular, those populations not included in the Global Humanitarian Appeal**, helping to safeguard their progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

It serves as an instrument UN Country Teams can leverage to support national governments and communities in meeting priorities and defining programming responses that assure their recovery and reach the poor and the vulnerable.

The UN COVID-19 MPTF builds on the lessons learned from the Ebola Response MPTF (2014-2018) and the Central Fund for Influenza Action (2008-2012). These Funds have demonstrated that a coordinated funding mechanism can strengthen the response to and recovery from infectious disease outbreaks.

The Fund aligns with the UN Development System Reform Agenda, offering a **cohesive UN System response** to national governments through a common financing mechanism, led by UN Resident Coordinators. It leverages the critical expertise and delivery capacities of UN entities, harnesses the resources of the public and private sectors, and offers whole-of-government

and whole-of-society approaches to help close gaps in National Plans for Combating COVID-19 and the global and regional responses. The Fund offers fast and flexible finance to meet shifting demands of a rapidly evolving global crisis.

The Fund operates under the overall leadership of the **UN Secretary-General** through his Designate for the COVID-19 MPTF, who serves as the Chair of the Advisory Committee. Working under the direct guidance of the Deputy Secretary-General/UNSDG Chair, the **Designate of the Secretary-General** for the COVID-19 MPTF provides oversight and strategic direction, leading the mobilization of resources, approving programmes for funding, and overseeing progress against expected results.

The **Advisory Committee** supports the Designate of the Secretary-General in the timely allocation and disbursement of donor resources and provide advice in the management of the Fund. It includes UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes that cover key sustainable development areas related to the COVID-19 response (UNDP, UNICEF, UNCTAD, UNFPA, WFP and ILO), up to five representatives of contributing partners, representatives of selected affected countries, and the five ex-officio members WHO, OCHA, UN Development Coordination Office (DCO), UNWOMEN and the MPTF Office.

## FEATURES OF A COORDINATED FUNDING INSTRUMENT

- A coherent UN System response that **links the global vision to country action** and channels resources through a common funding mechanism built on specific UN Agency mandates, operational strengths, programmatic offers and existing procedures;
- **Innovation and rapid data-driven solutions** with a whole-of-government approach;
- **Rapid resource allocation** enabling effective and prompt response;
- **Greater flexibility** – allowing actions that address needs of countries and governments across the humanitarian, recovery and development nexus;
- A **tested and successful model** that offers a transparent, accountable and cost-effective financial instrument with all fund information accessible on-line and in real-time;
- A **results-based management system** through which the Fund's contribution to the COVID-19 response can be monitored;
- **Mobilization of funding** from Member States, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, private companies, foundations and individuals;
- A **transparent and accountable pooling of resources that strengthens risk management** for all stakeholders; and
- Support for efforts in establishing a **global platform** that facilitates the work of the other partners and stakeholders in the fulfilment of the strategic objectives.

The **Fund Secretariat** provides technical and management support to the Designate of the Secretary-General, prepares the Fund strategy, rapid delivery and investment plans, manages calls for proposals, provides technical assessment of requests in line with strategic priorities of the Fund and evolving pandemic, monitors and reports on the Fund's programmatic performance, and communicates requirements and results.

**Recipient Organizations** (UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes) will undertake single-agency or joint proposals. Government entities and civil society organizations will access the Fund as implementing partners of Recipient UN Organizations.

**Administrative Agent** functions will be performed by the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office.

## CONTACT

### FOR STRATEGIC ISSUES

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