

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE



Child protection funding in emergencies

Introduction

For several years there has been concern within the field of child protection that funding of emergency response work is significantly lower than for other humanitarian sectors. In any emergency situation, children are particularly at risk of significant protection problems related to separation from families, abandonment, physical, psychological and sexual abuse, exploitation and neglect, and lack of access to critical rights and services such as health, shelter and education. The implications of lower levels of funding are that vital responses by UN humanitarian agencies and NGOs to these problems are severely reduced, further compromising the protection and survival of children in emergencies.

In 2008, the global Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) conducted the first review of reported funding for child protection emergency programmes, looking specifically at funding in 2007 provided through the CERF (Central Emergency Response Fund) or to projects included in Consolidated (CAPs) or Flash Appeals.¹ The findings suggested that child protection in emergencies was significantly and consistently underfunded² in comparison with other humanitarian sectors.³

This briefing paper presents the findings of a second review commissioned by the CPWG⁴ of child protection funding in emergencies. It analyses funding in 2008 and 2009, making comparisons with the first report, which analysed data from 2007. The purpose of this second review is to look at the overall trend in funding for child protection in the period 2007–2009 and to identify key patterns.

The methodology for both this review and the earlier study was desk-based research using data from the Financial Tracking Service (FTS).⁵ The FTS, managed by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), is a global, online, real-time database of humanitarian funding needs and international contributions. In addition to providing an overview of sources and total funding received per emergency, the FTS provides a series of records and tables that show, at project level, the amount of funding requested and received.

Limitations of the study included the sole use of the FTS as the data source for financing information. Although the FTS is the most comprehensive public data source on humanitarian funding, it does have limitations. First, it is a recording service that is only as good as the data posted and reported on it. Reporting on the FTS is done on a voluntary basis and relies on donors and recipient organisations reporting donations and requests, checking the information online and keeping it up to date. It is likely, therefore, that the FTS is not comprehensive and does not represent all humanitarian funding available. Second, child protection is not currently a category that is flagged on the FTS. Therefore, in order to isolate the child protection projects for analysis, the research team had to mine through all the protection sector project sheets and FTS data entries. There is, therefore, some level of subjectivity in the classification used. The data analysis is also constrained by gaps in reporting on the FTS for appeals relating to Democratic Republic of Congo.

Funding tracked through the FTS can include pooled funding (including CERF allocations) as well as direct, bilateral funding from donors. Since allocations provided through the CERF are also included in the CAPs and Flash Appeals they are not added together in the data presented, since that would be double-counting. However, the CERF was analysed separately to explore what proportion of CERF funding was targeted at child protection.

This briefing paper highlights the key findings of the review and makes comparisons with the 2007 funding analysis. For more detailed information, see the full report.

What is child protection in emergencies?

Child protection in emergencies is the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation of children and violence against children in emergencies.⁶ It covers those preventative and response actions taken to address particular experiences of children during and after an emergency.

The core areas of child protection programmatic activities include:

- identification of separated and unaccompanied children
- provision of interim care as well as family tracing and reunification
- establishment of child-friendly areas for children
- community messaging to prevent family separation, violence, exploitation and abuse
- gender-based violence interventions for children
- provision of psychosocial support
- reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups.

These activities require skilled expertise that only child protection practitioners can provide and that are not addressed by other protection actors, highlighting the importance of funding for child protection interventions.

Child protection in the cluster system

The FTS has classification categories that reflect the cluster groups within the humanitarian sector. As child protection is one of five areas of responsibility (AoRs) within the protection cluster, it falls under the protection/human rights/rule of law⁷ sector in the appeals and is not flagged as a sector of its own.⁸ Not all of these five AoRs are operational in every field-level response, and child protection and gender-based violence tend to be the most active. Of the 30 countries where the cluster approach has been implemented, 21 have a specific coordination mechanism for child protection, with either a focal point for child protection or a child protection sub cluster.

Key findings

Based on an analysis of the FTS data in 2008 and 2009, the following key findings have been observed:

I. Child protection is included in most humanitarian responses

In 2009, child protection projects were requested in all of the CAPs and Flash Appeals. In 2008, they were requested in all but one CAP (Liberia) and two Flash Appeals (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). By comparison, they were requested in 23 out of 30 appeals in 2007.

A significant proportion of projects requested under the protection sector were for child protection. In 2009, 38% of all projects requested under the protection sector were child protection (either exclusively child protection projects or with significant child protection components), a fall from 53% in 2008. This demonstrates that child protection comprises a large part of programming for protection and in some years constitutes the majority of requests for protection funding.

2. Overall humanitarian funding is increasing year on year

As shown in Table 1, total funding for humanitarian programmes outlined in Consolidated and Flash Appeals, as reported on the FTS, almost doubled between 2007 and 2009.⁹

An exception to the general upward trend is the allocation of CERF funding, which increased by 22% between 2007 and 2008 (rising from \$351 million in 2007 to \$429 million in 2008), although it fell by 7% in 2009 (falling to \$397 million).¹⁰ This fluctuation is mostly a reflection of the amount of funding received by the CERF (\$453m in 2008 compared to \$391m in 2009).

3. Child protection funding increased from 2007 to 2008 but fell in 2009

Although humanitarian funding overall is growing, the same consistent trend is not seen in the child protection sector. While funding for child protection doubled between 2007 and 2008, it fell between 2008 and 2009 (see Table 1). Part of this fall is explained by a decrease in the number of project requests and estimated funding requirements for child protection between the two years. Between 2008 and 2009 the number of project requests for child protection, as reported on the FTS, fell by 4%

and the estimated requirement for child protection fell by 6%. This decrease in demand for child protection funding does not account for all of the fall, however, and it is not clear why child protection funding has decreased in this way.

For CERF funding specifically a different pattern is observed. CERF funding for child protection fell from \$6.5 million in 2007 to \$3.2 million in 2008, and then fell again to \$2.9 million in 2009. This goes against the trend of overall CERF funding, which increased in 2009 and then decreased in 2009. It is difficult to draw conclusions about child protection funding through CERF, as information about which CERF projects were proposed and rejected is not published. In addition, decisions about which projects are initially prioritised and selected are made at country level by the resident coordinator or humanitarian coordinator for proposal to the CERF for final approval.

4. Child protection is one of the least funded sectors

While the level of humanitarian funding overall is increasing, underfunding of emergency responses remains an unfortunate yet common reality. In this context, underfunding is defined as the difference between the amount of funds requested through project proposals and the amount of funds received.

Table 1: Estimated requirements and funding made available, all sectors compared to child protection, 2007, 2008 and 2009

Year	All sectors (US\$ millions)		Child protection (US\$ millions)	
	Estimated requirement	Funding received	Estimated requirement	Funding received
2007	5,142	3,719	68	30
2008	8,558	5,699	137	64
2009	10,381	7,064	129	41

In 2008 and 2009, just over two-thirds of total humanitarian funding requirements reported on the FTS across all sectors were funded, leaving around a third unfunded.

For the protection sector overall (including child protection) the level of underfunding is significant and above average for the sectors. However, the level of underfunding for child protection appears to be more pronounced. In 2009, only 32% of estimated total requirements were funded. In 2008, 47% of the total requirement was funded compared to 44% in 2007. If situated as a sector in its own right, child protection would have the second highest level of underfunding in 2009 after the education sector. It is also notable that in absolute terms, child protection receives a fraction of the amount of other sectors: for example, in 2009 the education sector received over US\$144 million, while child protection received only US\$41 million.

5. The underfunding of child protection is hidden

The level of underfunding for child protection appears to be more pronounced than for non-child protection areas of protection. In 2009, 32% of the total requirement for child protection was funded, compared with 45% of the total requirement for non-child protection areas of protection. Since publicly available data presents the protection sector as a whole, the relative underfunding of child protection is not discernable. This highlights the importance of identifying child protection as a separate sector in appeal and donor systems so that it can be clearly tracked and underfunding identified.

Figure 1: Proportion of total estimated requirement funded by sector, %, 2008 and 2009

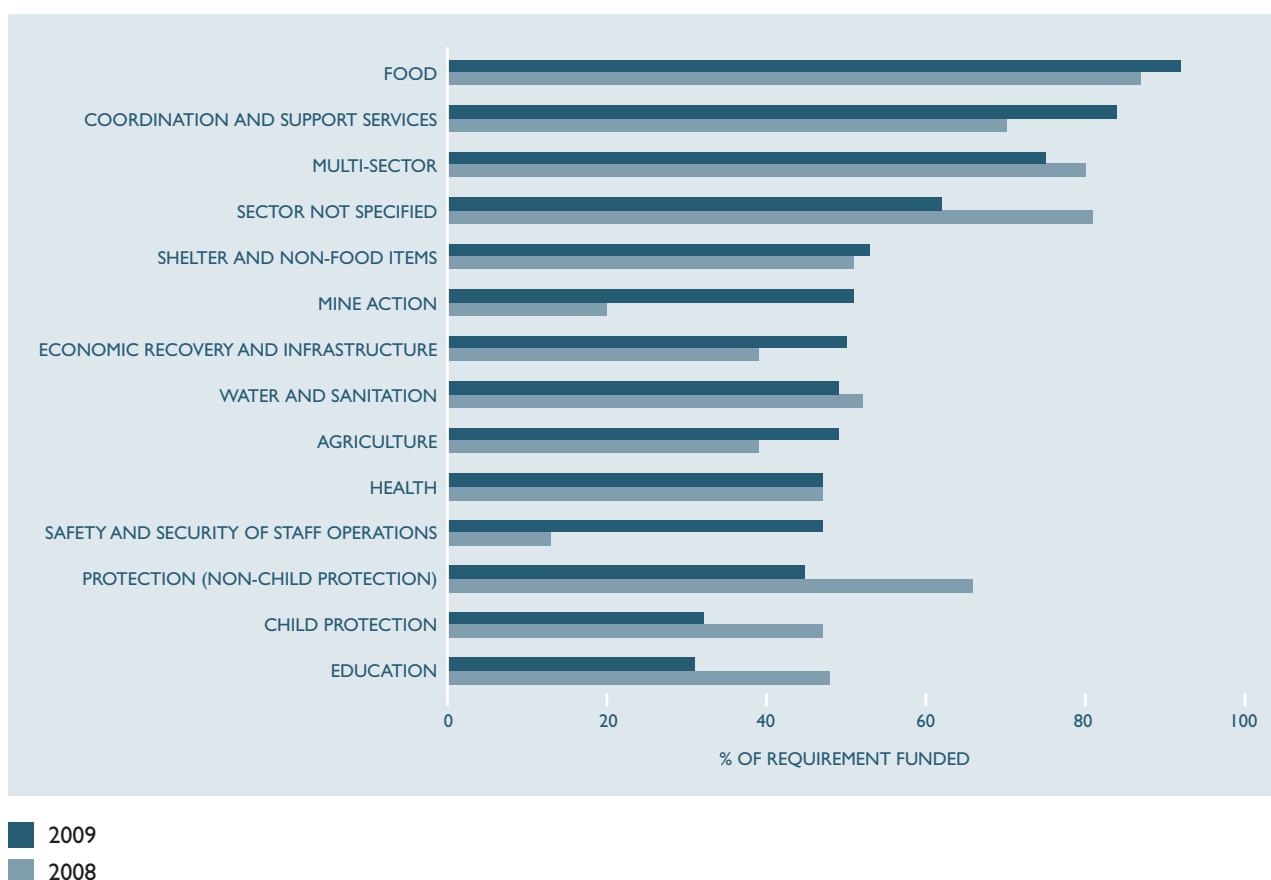


Table 2: Level of underfunding across all sectors, protection sector and child protection, %, 2007, 2008 and 2009

Year	% of requirement funded		
	All sectors	Protection (non-child protection)	Child protection
2007 ¹¹	72%	–	44%
2008	67%	66%	47%
2009	68%	45%	32%

6. Child protection projects have smaller budgets, on average, than other areas of protection

In 2009, the average (mean) child protection project request was US\$598,811, compared to US\$1,130,603 for projects in other areas of the protection sector.¹² This was a slight decrease from 2008.

It is not possible from this analysis to say whether the smaller size of child protection projects is of note. Possible explanations are that practitioner aspirations may be too low, donor expectations may promote smaller budgets, or the nature of child protection interventions means that costs are lower. Further research is needed to determine the implications of this.

7. Many child protection projects are less than 50% funded

In 2009, nearly two-thirds of child protection projects received zero funding, as reported on the FTS. This was a deterioration of the funding situation from 2008, when just under half of child protection projects were reported (on the FTS) to be completely unfunded. Across 2008 and 2009, a higher proportion of child protection projects received no funding, as compared with other areas of the protection sector.

In addition, the FTS data shows that even when projects receive funding it is often at a very low level relative to the estimated requirement. In 2009, of the 75 child protection projects that received funding, 24 were funded to 50% or less of the project requirement.

8. Significant underfunding may negatively affect the quality or scale of child protection projects

This partial funding of child protection projects and the severe underfunding of the child protection sector in general is of great concern. If many projects receive less than half of what they request, it suggests that in some cases either the quality or coverage of child protection responses will suffer, unless additional funds can be found from other donors or from the requesting organisation. For an example of this, see the case study from Kenya below. Since child protection projects have smaller budgets on average than other sectors, this impact could be exacerbated.

Although most child protection agencies work to similar standards, the child protection sector has yet to agree interagency minimum standards for child protection responses, such as appropriate staffing numbers and ratios for key emergency child protection work. This is a significant gap, as without minimum standards there is little to ensure

Table 3: Distribution of funding across child protection projects and other areas of the protection and human rights of law sector, 2008 and 2009

% of requirement funded	2008		2009	
	Child protection	Protection (non-child protection)	Child protection	Protection (non-child protection)
No funding	46%	42%	65%	59%
50% or less	18%	16%	11%	5%
More than 50%	27%	35%	17%	23%
No requirement recorded ¹³	9%	7%	8%	13%
N (total projects)	224 projects	200 projects	215 projects	346 projects

that where projects are underfunded they are implemented only at a scale where quality can be ensured. The development of minimum standards for child protection would also be a valuable tool for highlighting where critical child protection needs are not being met.

9. Some programmatic areas of child protection are particularly underfunded

Trafficking, migration and child labour were particularly underfunded areas of child protection in 2008 and 2009. Although more than 21 project requests were made over the two years in these programmatic areas, only four projects in total received funding. It is not possible from this analysis to determine why these areas of child protection attract less funding relative to other areas. However, it is of note since, as the Haiti earthquake response clearly demonstrated, they are important responses for protecting children in emergencies. While the largest number of child protection projects submitted in 2009 were related to gender-based violence responses, only just over 20% of the total estimated requirement for these projects was funded.

10. Donors exhibit considerable differences in funding child protection

Bilateral government donors were the biggest source of funding for child protection, accounting for 50% of funds provided in 2008 and 70% in 2009. However, funding from government donors decreased by 6% between 2008 and 2009, while funding through the pooled mechanisms fell more significantly. In particular, funds through the Sudan Work Plan halved between 2008 and 2009.

The largest single donor to child protection in 2009, as recorded on the FTS, was the US government, accounting for just over US\$13 million and nearly a third of overall funding. The Common Humanitarian Fund was the second biggest donor in 2009. It provided US\$4.3 million, just under 10% of the overall funding for child protection.

One observation from this analysis is that over the last two years the largest donors to child protection have not been the same as the largest donors to humanitarian appeals overall. While this demonstrates a positive commitment to child protection from the institutional donors shown

The impact of insufficient funding on essential child protection programmes in Dadaab, Kenya

Save the Children has been running a child protection programme in the Dadaab Refugee Camp in Kenya since late 2006. It includes child-friendly spaces, children's clubs, child welfare committees and a foster parents association. The children assisted through this programme include unaccompanied minors, child survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and children at risk of trafficking and the worst forms of child labour. In order to reach 24,000 vulnerable children, the programme requirements are roughly US\$2 million per year. No single donor has come forward to fund the entire programme; instead, three separate donors provide funding for different elements of the programme. Funding has only ever been given in yearly or part-yearly increments and new project proposals must be submitted every year, making planning and sustainability a challenge and reporting laborious.

The case management element of the programme has been particularly difficult to fund, despite the fact that it provides direct assistance to some 1,750 children who are at risk of or survivors of rape, the worst forms of child labour, forced early marriage, trafficking and violence. In 2010, Save the Children was given two months' notice by its

donor that funding for case management would be cut by two-thirds due to a change in funding priorities. This meant that two-thirds of the staff providing essential support to children would be cut. As a result of this, there would be a drastic reduction in activities such as counselling children who have suffered abuses, sensitisation and mediation with parents and communities, referrals to ensure that the basic needs of unaccompanied and other vulnerable children for shelter and schooling are met, and screening of and support for foster parents.

Save the Children was faced with a choice of trying to continue the same programme with reduced funding, or reducing the number of children they could assist by two-thirds. If the programme continued with reduced funding the same number of children would still come for assistance, but the level of quality care and follow-up required could not be ensured. Save the Children finally decided to continue the same level of activities but instead reduce the life span of the programme from 12 to four months. If no additional funds are found at the end of the four months, the case management element of the programme will be eliminated and children living in the camp will no longer have a place they can turn to when they are at risk of being sexually abused, being forced into marriage or harmful labour or experiencing physical abuse.

in Figure 2 it also implies that a number of the largest institutional donors to humanitarian appeals are not funding child protection or are funding it to a very low level. For example, the UK government, which is a major humanitarian donor, is not reported on the FTS as directly funding child protection projects in any appeals at all in 2008 and only

at a low level in 2009. It is the case, however, that donors including the UK government fund global initiatives that support child protection field operations that are not reported on the FTS, such as rapid response teams and the global child protection coordinator position.

Table 4: Child protection funding by type of donor, US\$ millions, 2008 and 2009

Donor type	2008 US\$ millions	2009 US\$ millions
Government funding	32.64	30.75
Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) of which:	7.35	4.32
Central African Republic	0.27	0.21
DRC Humanitarian Action Plan	2.97	1.97
Sudan Work Plan	4.12	2.14
European Commission	4.13	2.60
Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)	3.21	2.87
Emergency Response Fund (ERF) of which:	0.47	0
Occupied Palestinian Territories	0.24	
Somalia	0.24	
Other donors ¹⁴	17.44	3.07
Total	65.24	43.61

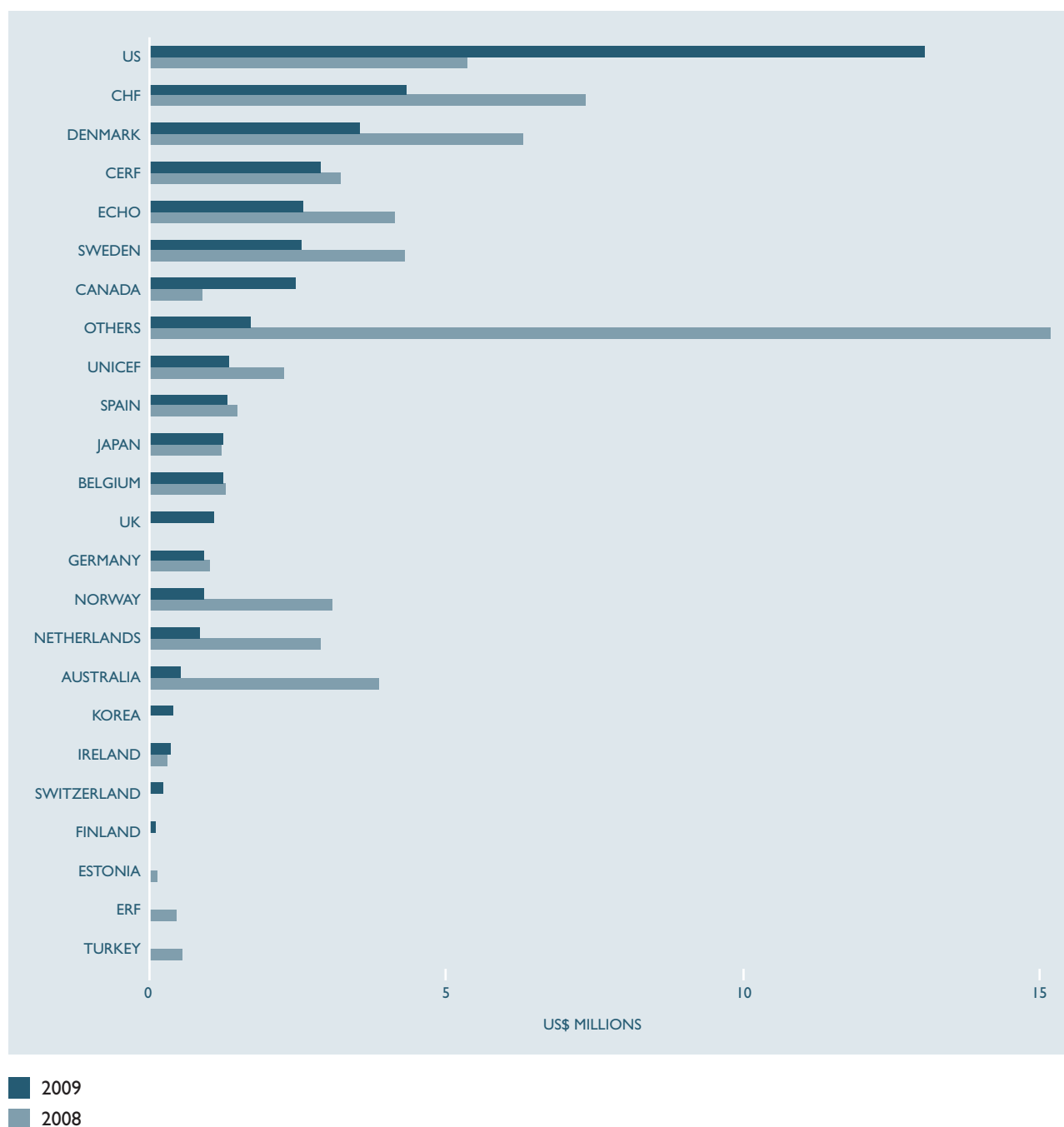
Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of this research suggest that humanitarian funding of child protection between 2007 and 2009 has been inconsistent, despite significant requests and requirements made for child protection programmatic work. In addition, the analysis shows that the child protection sector is underfunded relative to the majority of other sectors and relative to the protection sector in which it is located. There are characteristics of child protection funding that require further research, including the small absolute value of child protection projects relative to other programmatic areas of the protection sector.

The following recommendations are made in light of these findings and in response to the methodological challenges faced in undertaking this analysis.

In order to enable the provision of high-quality child protection responses in emergencies, **donors** should:

- fund child protection responses in emergencies, since currently most of the largest humanitarian donors are not funding child protection or only funding it to a very low level
- prioritise funding the full requirements of child protection projects rather than spreading funds across several projects, which are then only partially funded, since one of the effects of partial funding is that projects may remain underfunded and quality or coverage may fall

Figure 2: Child protection funding by donor, US\$ millions, 2008 and 2009

- coordinate their funding for child protection so that the child protection sector is not disproportionately underfunded
- identify child protection as a separately coded sector in their systems to enable clear tracking of child protection funding, as it is currently difficult to assess the overall level of commitment to child protection.

In order to improve the transparency and ease of tracking child protection funding, **OCHA, through the CAP section and the CERF Secretariat**,¹⁵ should:

- develop a coding system that allows each of the five areas of responsibility of the protection sector to be separately identified in the FTS, so that requirements and funding for child protection projects are clearly visible and extractable
- ensure that all NGOs at field level are aware of the appeals process and the importance of engaging with it
- ensure that the process of applying for and receiving CERF funds is transparent and that a system is developed for tracking and making public the total number of CERF applications, including those not accepted for funding.

There are several issues that the **child protection sector** should address to make itself more attractive to donors so that emergency child protection programmes are funded and resourced adequately enough to address the urgent needs of children.

- The sector should agree and adopt interagency minimum standards for child protection in emergencies to ensure good-quality programming at all levels of funding.

- All agencies in the sector should include all child protection projects in the appeals and report funding received on the FTS to ensure an accurate representation of child protection requirements and funding. They should also adopt a standardised terminology for key child protection interventions in funding proposals to ensure clearer tracking of funding.
- Field-level child protection sub-clusters should ensure, together with Protection Clusters and OCHA at field level, that child protection projects are clearly visible in and extractable from the response plans of CAPs and Flash Appeals to enable tracking and ensure the issues and needs are clearly outlined.
- The sector should conduct further research to identify whether the smaller size of child protection budgets is a reflection of lower costs or if it is due to other reasons, such as low level of ambition among practitioners or constraints created by donor expectations. This research should include an analysis of cost effectiveness compared to other areas of protection and the education sector. It might also be of benefit to look separately at donors' perceptions of child protection within the humanitarian sector to understand why some donors do not fund child protection and to encourage donors to increase funding to emergency child protection work.

Bibliography

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Financial Tracking Service information
<http://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=search-customsearch>

Central Emergency Response Fund information
<http://ochaonline.un.org/cerf/CERFHome/tabid/1705/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Notes

¹ For more detailed information on humanitarian funding mechanisms, see the information leaflet produced by the NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project at <http://www.ngosandhumanitarianreform.org>

² In this context, underfunded is understood as the difference between the amount of funds requested through project proposals and the amount of funds received.

³ *Child Protection Funding: An Analysis of CERF, FLASH Appeals and CAP in 2007*, CPWG, 2008

⁴ This report was written by Sarah Lilley, Johanna MacVeigh, Christine McCormick and Misty Buswell of Save the Children.

⁵ <http://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=search-customsearch>

⁶ This definition of child protection in emergencies is taken from the draft definitions paper of the Inter-Agency Global Child Protection Working Group, May 2010.

⁷ In this report, the protection/humanitarian rights/rule of law sector will be referred to as the protection sector, in line with commonly used humanitarian terminology.

⁸ The five areas of operation within the protection sector are: child protection, GBV (gender-based violence), rule of law, land, housing and property and mine action.

⁹ http://fts.unocha.org/reports/daily/ocha_r30_y2009___1005121025.pdf

¹⁰ <http://ochaonline.un.org/cerf/CERFFigures/tabid/1924/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

¹¹ In 2007, 44% of total requests for child protection were funded. The comparative analysis for other areas of protection was not undertaken in the 2007 data review.

¹² This analysis does not include project requests made for the DRC, as this data is not available on the FTS.

¹³ Requirements for funding of projects in the DRC were not recorded on the FTS for 2008 and 2009.

¹⁴ The category 'other donors' contains funding for which the donor is not recorded accurately on the FTS, either because the donor is not specified or because it is some form of carry-over funding.

¹⁵ The CAP section within OCHA is responsible for managing the appeals process and FTS.

This report was commissioned by the Child Protection Working Group of the Global Protection Cluster. It was written by Sarah Lilley, Johanna MacVeigh, Christine McCormick and Misty Buswell of Save the Children.

The full report is available at <http://onerresponse.info/GlobalClusters/Protection/CP>

The Child Protection Working Group (CPWG), which is one of the areas of responsibility of the Global Protection Cluster, takes responsibility for coordinating the work of the Cluster in the area of child protection. This includes ensuring a more predictable, accountable and effective child protection response in emergency situations by supporting field-level child protection clusters and leading global-level advocacy, standard- and policy-setting, capacity building and development of tools.

The CPWG brings together non-governmental organisations, United Nations agencies and other international actors working on an equal basis in line with the Principles of Partnership, endorsed by the Global Humanitarian Platform. Participants include Childfund, Columbia University's Care and Protection of Children in Crisis-Affected Countries Learning Network, the Danish Refugee Council, Heartland Alliance, the International Committee of the Red Cross (observer), the International Displacement Monitoring Centre / Norwegian Refugee Council, the International Rescue Committee, the International Institute for Child Rights and Development, the International Labour Organization, the Keeping Children Safe Coalition, Plan International, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, War Child Holland, War Child UK, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, and World Vision International.

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