

SMC's guidelines for Rapid Response Mechanism

Through the strategic partnership with Sida, SMC and the member organisations have access to the Rapid Response Mechanism. This document governs SMC's handling of the funding and priorities for channeling of RRM funds.

For RRM information on the project cycle and application process, see the following [Project Cycle RRM](#).

Definitions of Humanitarian assistance

Humanitarian assistance is the aid and action designed to save lives, alleviate suffering, maintain and protect human dignity during and in the aftermath of natural disaster and man-made crises. Humanitarian assistance responds to immediate crisis and is a short-term support for people in severe need. Humanitarian assistance should be governed by the key humanitarian principles of: humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

Definition of RRM

Sida can support humanitarian interventions after a sudden onset crises or when an existing crises deteriorates. Sida defines RRM as: *"The purpose of the RRM is to facilitate rapid, life-saving interventions in the very first phase of the humanitarian response, or if the situation drastically deteriorates."*¹ RRM funding is therefore not suitable for early recovery and DRR interventions.

Generally, the first phase of humanitarian response refers to rapid onset disasters and a situation that drastically deteriorates relates to slow onset disasters.

Sudden and slow onset disasters

This section is intended to provide some guidance on how to understand the difference between sudden and slow onset disasters.

Sudden Onset Disasters

Sudden onset disasters is triggered by a hazardous event and usually the result of natural events such as wind storms, floods, wild fires, landslides, avalanches,

¹ see [Guidelines for Sida support for Humanitarian Action through Civil Society Organisations](#)

earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.² Such natural disasters arrive rapidly and in some cases with no warning (such as earthquakes). Armed conflicts that erupt suddenly are also considered a rapid onset disaster. In addition, sudden access to areas plagued by armed conflict and which has had generally poor access, can also be considered as a rapid onset situation, and eligible for RRM.

Slow Onset Disasters

A slow onset disaster does not necessarily emerge from a single, distinct event; it rather emerges gradually over time and is based on a number of different events.³ Frequently, droughts are given as an example of a typical slow onset disaster. Climate change, environmental degradation and desertification are even more slow onset events, but can and should be considered as disasters in terms of the damage and disruption to lives that they may or indeed already do create. The deterioration of a political conflict into armed conflict can also often be characterised as a slow onset event. This kind of event is generally referred to as manmade disasters.

SMC's system for RRM funding

SMC's role and responsibility is to decide which RRM interventions to present to Sida. Sida is the final decision making body and SMC is responsible for presenting relevant interventions.

SMC will give priority to sudden onset disasters and rapidly deteriorating situations.

SMC makes a periodical allocation of its RRM budget and will basically release 1/3 of the total budget during the first quarter, 1/3 during the second quarter and 1/3 during the last two quarters. Exceptions can be made in the case of sudden onset disasters.

Maximum budget for a RRM operation is normally 1,5 million SEK, but might be higher depending on circumstances. The member organization has to justify and motivate why a higher budget is needed.

SMC priorities - RRM funding

The following factors are guiding SMC in the assessment of RRM interventions:

- OECD [DAC list](#) is governing the valid countries. Least Developed Countries and Other Low Income Countries are prioritized for humanitarian assistance. Support to lower middle income countries and upper middle income countries might occur, however it demands special circumstances and

² For more information see <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology>

³ For more information see <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology> and https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OCHA_OPB_SlowOnsetEmergencies190411.pdf

- justification (such as the magnitude of the disaster, government international appeals for funding and a strong comparative advantage from the partner).
- Lifesaving and the humanitarian needs in the country / area. SMC will assess the extent to which the intervention is lifesaving in the suggested intervention and the urgency of the disaster.
 - The government/state own capacity and resources to handle the situation. SMC will assess to what extent the government lacks resources to respond and/if there is an international appeal for funding. SMC will also assess the response from the international and national community.
 - A recent and coordinated needs assessment, covering the area of operation, done by the local partner or in coordination with other humanitarian actors. SMC will assess the needs assessment and the relevance (humanitarian needs in relation to the project design) of the suggested intervention.
 - Coordination with other humanitarian authorities and humanitarian actors on different levels (national, regional and local) such as UN led Humanitarian Cluster systems and government structures.
 - Organisational capacity to respond, manage and report. SMC will assess member and partners previous experience and current capacity to respond. Generally, the assessment will be made based on member and partner organisations capacity assessments.
 - SMC will assess the comparative advantages such as the strength of local presence, thematic expertise and access of the response.
 - The following sources will be used: ACAPs, OCHA (HNO and HRP), FEWSNET, Sida HCA, ECHO (HIP) and partner's needs assessment.

Justification for RRM intervention responding to a slow onset disaster

RRM is primarily designed for sudden onset disasters. SMC expects a clear and concrete justification to be able to give priority to an RRM based on a deteriorating situation. If there are chronic humanitarian needs (such as drought) in the area of intervention, it is important that the applicant provide clear argument for why the present needs are more severe than an average year and show why the RRM intervention is needed (using Fewsnets, Reliefweb, ACAPS, OCHA, country needs assessment or own needs assessments). In such situation it is also important to argue for the geographical focus of the intervention.

Major interventions and RRM

If a sudden onset disaster occurs, or if a slow onset disaster is worsening, in the same geographical area as an ongoing major intervention is implemented, the SMC member organization is expected to assess possibilities to revise the ongoing major intervention.