

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 channelling of RRM funds. [Sida's guiding principles](#) is strongly guiding SMC in the assessment of RRM proposals.

For information on the RRM project cycle and application process, see the document [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 disasters and human-made crises. Humanitarian assistance responds to an 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.

Purpose of RRM

According to Sida “the purpose of the RRM is to enable a needs-based and fast humanitarian response immediately after a severe sudden onset humanitarian crisis or after a severe deterioration of an ongoing crisis. The RRM can, in certain circumstances, also be utilised as a result of a change in humanitarian access.”¹ RRM funding is therefore not suitable for early recovery and DRR interventions.

Generally, a severe deterioration of an ongoing crisis refers to slow onset disasters.

Sudden and slow onset disasters

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

¹ Sida Guiding Principles – Rapid Response Mechanism

Sudden Onset Disasters

Sudden onset disasters are triggered by a hazardous event and usually the result of natural events such as wind storms, floods, wild fires, landslides, avalanches, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. 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. 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 a human-made disaster.

SMC's system for RRM funding

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

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

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 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 and the urgency of the disaster.
- The government's/state's 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 members' 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 related needs) 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 situations, it is also important to argue for the geographical focus of the intervention.