**How to use this guidance:** This note will help you create stronger CI Emergency Response Fund (ERF) proposals, that lead to better designed, higher impact CI ERF projects. As the CI ERF proposal is often one of the first written in a response, going through this process and using this guidance will also help you write better proposals to other donors.

The guidance draws on the experiences of CEG and Sector Specialist teams in evaluating ERF proposals in recent years, and the findings of a 2016 review of WASH content in ERF proposals.

Quality and presentation of needs assessment results

* **Concentrate needs assessment on the sector(s) that is the focus of the proposal**, e.g. provide WASH assessment results for a WASH project. If a multi-sector needs assessment has been undertaken, it’s useful to annex this to the proposal, but extract the relevant sector findings for the needs assessment description.
* In the absence of a full assessment, offices are encouraged to report “good enough” needs assessment data in the proposal. At a minimum needs assessment should be **timely** and **relevant** to the proposed response. It should show ***why*** you have included the activities you are planning. As more detailed data emerges this can be updated in subsequent proposals.
* For clarity, the project overview / needs assessment (Section 3a in the ERF template) and the project description (3b) should be clearly separated and their content made explicit (with **needs assessment content for each sector of response**).

Detailing of practical gender mainstreaming actions

* The proposal narrative should be based on needs assessment and gender analysis. For clarity and to ensure effective consideration of gender and vulnerability, **practical actions on mainstreaming must also be included in the main proposal narrative**, and **assessment findings on gender** dimensions should also be noted in the project overview (3a) and summary of the urgent humanitarian need (1a).
* The CO Gender in Brief (GIB) document should also be referenced and attached to the proposal – if there is no GIB then it should be a priority to get one drafted with the support of the Gender in Emergencies team.

Reference to CHS and SPHERE, or other humanitarian standards

* The project description must refer where applicable to **international humanitarian standards such as SPHERE**, **and CHS** to demonstrate that activities are planned in accordance with established best practice. If activities will not meet SPHERE indicators, an explanation for this should be provided.
* If you’re unsure about what standards you should apply, please contact the appropriate sector specialist support (WASH team, shelter team etc.).

Clarity of proposal

* **Clearly state the proposed sectors of the intervention**, based on the outcomes you are seeking to achieve, not the modalities. Non-Food Items and cash are modalities, not sectors. Justify the choices of sector with reference to the needs assessment, office capacity, latest Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) and other relevant factors, *especially* if a core sector with high needs has not been selected.
* **Present proposed activities clearly**, each under the heading of the relevant core sector, and including the proposed timeframe that the support will be provided for (for example distribution of chlorine tablets for 30 days).
* It is good practice to **include a simple logframe** to illustrate how activities are linked to outputs and outcomes, and to demonstrate clarity on indicators and monitoring.
* **Detail target beneficiary numbers** per sector(s) or activities of the proposal, with an overall project target which doesn’t double count across activities.
* If the proposal is part of a larger response which will include other activities, funding from other donors and perhaps cover a longer timeframe, clarify how the ERF activities will fit into this wider program.

Budgeting

* Calculate activity budgets **based on the number of people reached by the activity and the time that the support will be provided for**. Present budget lines for different activities separately.
* If the proposal is covering multiple sectors, the **budget for activity lines should be detailed according to each sectors**. This will help if the proposal is given to other donors who might only be interested in funding one sector in particular.

Technical Support Needs

* The proposal narrative, or the covering email, should note where technical support (RHC, CIM, Sector teams etc.) has been sought during preparation of the proposal. **Requirements for technical support** during the implementation of the project should also be detailed in Sections 1b and 3a of the narrative.

Quality aspects relevant to individual sectors

WASH

* A WASH proposal must take into consideration **water, sanitation *and* hygiene promotion needs** (‘comprehensive’ WASH). If only parts of a WASH response are proposed in the ERF, please note how other WASH needs will be addressed – perhaps through other CARE funding, or by different agencies. The usual preference for the Global WASH Cluster and donors is for one agency to work on all WASH in a particular location, not for activities to be divided between different NGOs.
* Ensure **hygiene kit distributions are accompanied by complimentary hygiene promotion activities** to ensure hygiene items are used correctly, and that they fulfil the needs of the affected population. In the proposal **provide a breakdown of hygiene kit contents** to ensure value for money of the project budget, and to demonstrate that SPHERE indicators for basic hygiene kit contents are being met.
* For logistical, financial and environmental reasons, and in line with sectoral best practice, **the ERF will not support purchase of bottled water** as a WASH intervention. In the rare cases where this is seen as an option, please discuss the WASH team to discuss the situation and possible alternatives.
* Streamline the WASH response by **ensuring that multiple approaches for one part of WASH (e.g. water) are not proposed** which could lead to duplication of effort. For example, don’t propose water trucking and distribution of chlorine tablets.

Shelter

* Use the [Emergency Shelter Gender Marker Tip-sheet](http://minerva.care.ca/livelink1/livelink.exe/fetch/-3386146/3386153/3425898/1.0_Shelter_Gender_Marker_Tipsheets.pdf?nodeid=5077463&vernum=-2) to guide your programme decision and ERF proposal writing.
* Emergency shelter kits are usually more appropriate and cost-effective than tents. Consult the emergency shelter team before choosing to distribute tents. Emergency shelter kits should include a minimum of 2 4x6m tarpaulins per household, plus rope and appropriate fixings and tools. Framing materials should only be included if they cannot be locally procured, preferably by households themselves. Distribution of kits must be done with basic training on how to use the kits.
* Kits of household non-food items must be sufficient to allow individual sleeping arrangements. It is not acceptable to assume people in a household can share blankets or sleeping mats/mattresses.

Food Security and Livelihoods

Add

Sexual and Maternal Health Rights

* Ensure SRH proposal has sexual and reproductive health service elements as outlined in the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for reproductive health in humanitarian settings, e.g. EmOC services, RH Coordination, preventing unwanted pregnancies, Prevention and treatment of HIV/STI, and clinical management of rape (CMR), where capacity exists
* Identification of an SRHE point person for coordinating SRHE activities with other stakeholders and the cluster system. This is essential for maximizing reach of SRHE services for equity of services to all segments of the population who may be marginalized for geographic, socio-cultural or socio-economic reasons.
* Clear efforts should be made to move SRH in emergency response to a more sustained recovery intervention with elements of moving to a more comprehensive reproductive health services where capacity building, training and refurbishment of clinical facilities are important hall marks
* Community engagement activities for SRH with elements of community education on SRH services and its availability is discussed to maximize service utilization and to ensure SRH services are designed reflective of the voices of the people.

References

* CARE Emergency Toolkit (available at [www.careemergencytoolkit.org/](http://www.careemergencytoolkit.org/))
* ACAPS and ECB (2014) Humanitarian Needs Assessment: The Good Enough Guide <http://www.alnap.org/resource/19416>
* CARE International (2014) Gender in Emergencies Guidance Note: Gender Marker <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/file/view/GIE+Guidance+Note-Gender+Marker.pdf>
* CARE (2013) WASH Gender Marker Tipsheet <http://water.care2share.wikispaces.net/WASH+in+Emergencies>