

INDUCTION N

WELCOME TO THE START FUND

This brief outlines how your organisation can use and expand the Start Fund to build a more collaborative and innovative humanitarian system. It is just one of many introductions to help your organisation better understand how the Fund works, what to expect and how to actively participate.

IN THIS BRIEF YOU WILL LEARN...

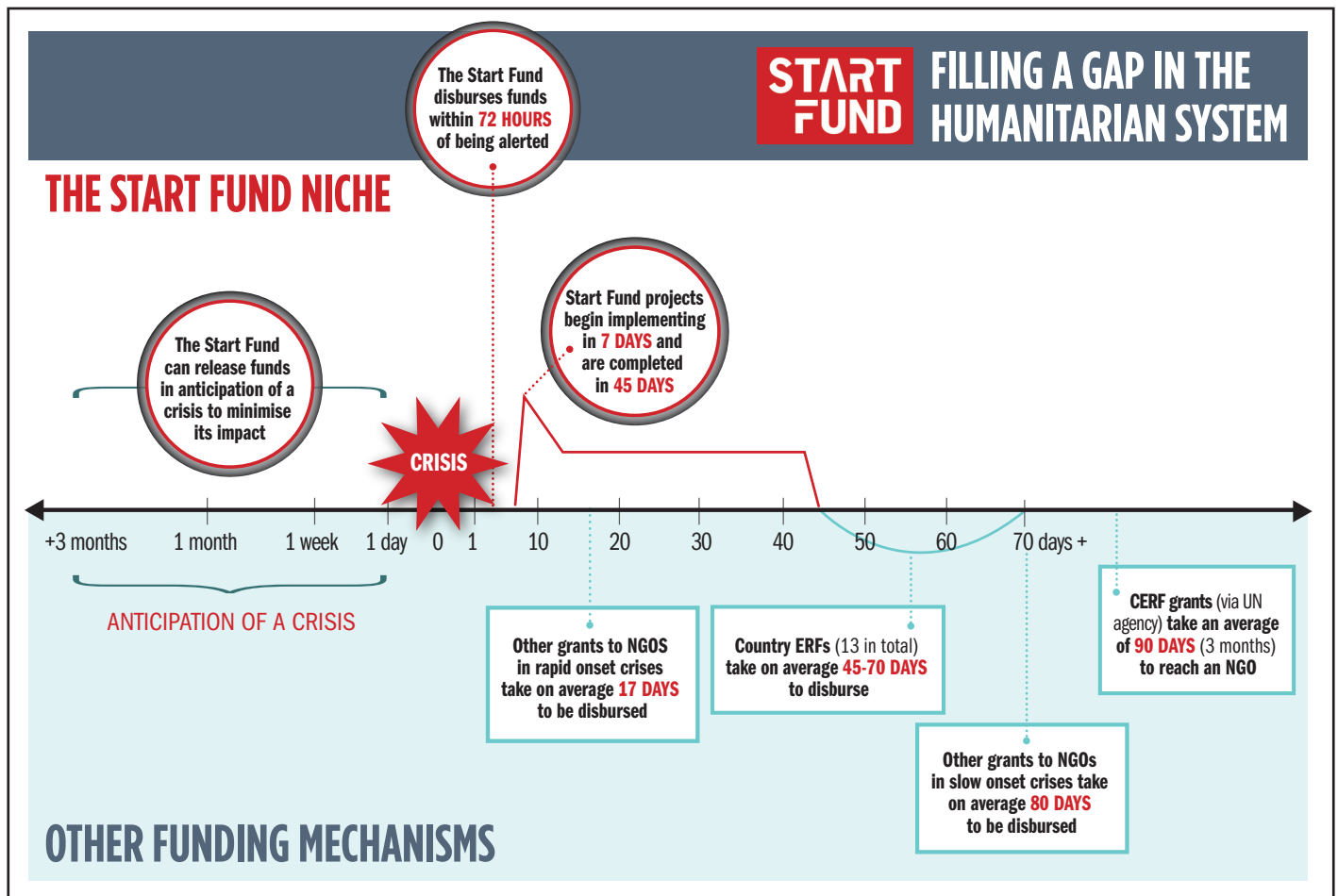
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WHAT IS THE START FUND?

The Start Fund is a multi-donor pooled rapid response fund that disperses money in 72 hours. It is collectively owned and managed by the Start Network Members. It was designed to fill gaps in the humanitarian funding architecture in three main areas:

- ◆ **Response to small to medium scale emergencies that often receive little funding;**
- ◆ **Early response to slow-onset crises to protect at-risk communities;**
- ◆ **Fast response to both rapid-onset crises and spikes in chronic humanitarian crises.**

The Fund currently has an annual disbursement of £6 million (GBP). By July 2015, since its launch on 1st April 2014, the Start Fund has been alerted to 37 crises. The Membership has collectively responded to 26 crises worldwide, reaching an estimated 1.2 million crisis affected people. For more information on the Start Fund's scope and reach, see [the Start Fund Report](#) published in May 2015.



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE FUND

Membership to the Start Network automatically gives your organisation access to the Start Fund, enabling your organisation to respond to small to medium scale crises around the world. This will require investment to ensure that your organisation can identify and alert the Fund. The timeframe of the Start Fund is faster than other mechanisms, and therefore requires your staff to be knowledgeable and ready to contribute.

With the other 23 Members (by end 2015), your organisation is responsible for the stewardship of the Start Fund through:

1

Information sharing and strategic input to each and every alert raised to the Fund

2

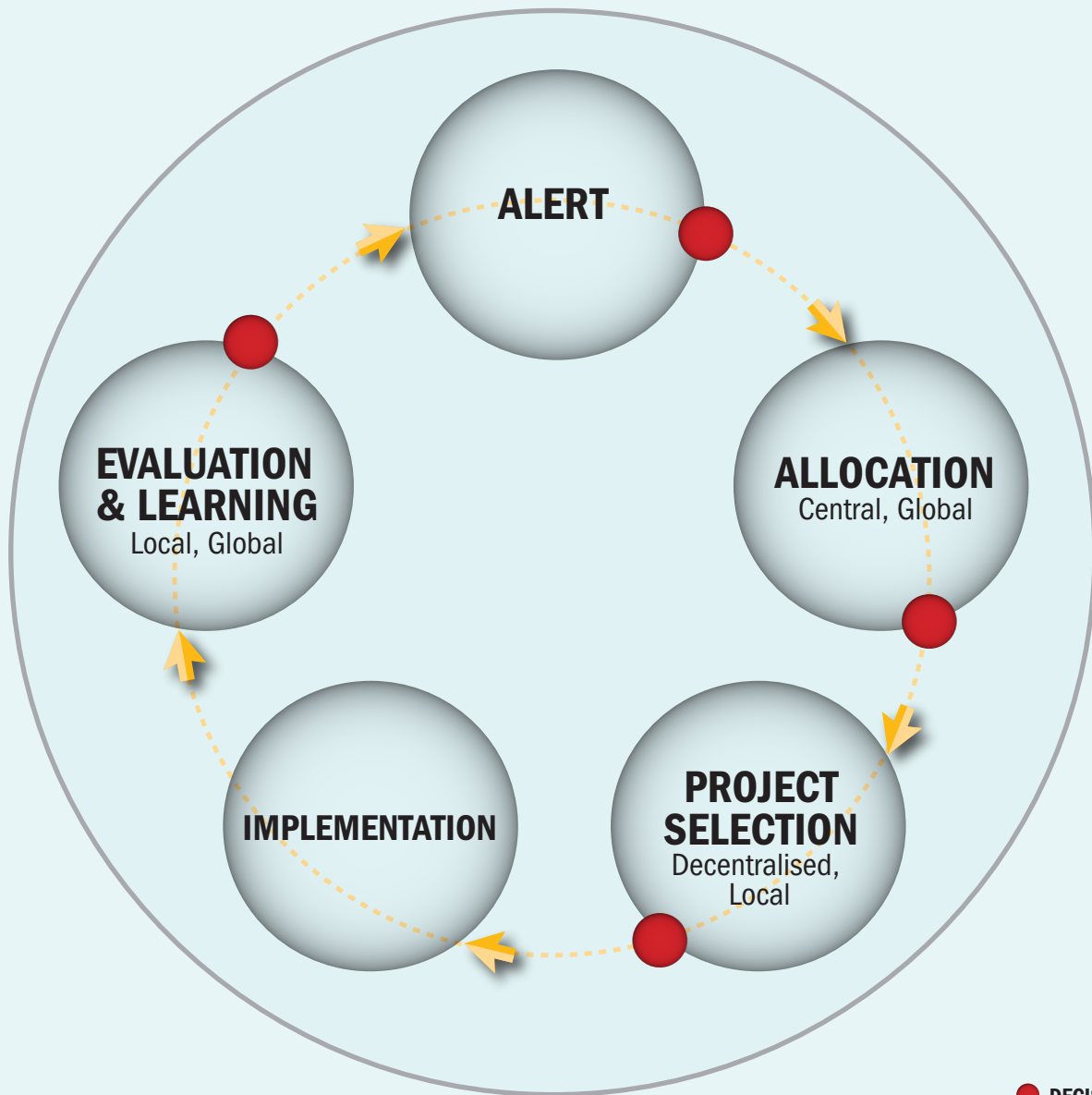
Participation in the Start Fund Committee.

The Committee manages the overall evolution and operation of the Fund – and each Committee representative either participates or delegates strategic decision-making in the allocation, project selection, and learning & evaluation stages of each alert to the Fund.

As such, your organisation will need to participate and contribute throughout the decision-making points of the Fund. Note that during July to September 2015 the Start Fund is currently launching a **new management and governance structure** to coincide with more Members joining the Start Network and in anticipation of a growing Fund disbursement pot. New Members, along with the current Members, are being inducted into this process over the coming months. The Network has a target of September 2015 for launching the new structure.

PARTICIPATI N

PARTICIPATING IN THE START FUND



The next few sections provide an overview of a Member's participation in the Fund – more in-depth briefings will be provided. For an overview of the Start Fund, please see this two page brief on [What is the Start Fund](#) or [The Start Fund Report](#) (long). An updated version of the 'Start Fund Handbook' (a full overview of the Fund) will be available in the final quarter of 2015.

HOW TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE

The Start Fund mechanism is built on “alerts” being raised to the Fund. This is simply when a Member or group of Members identify a crisis that they think is fit for Start Funds. From this point – an alert cycle begins – where information is shared and decisions are made on whether to release Funds, and if so, which projects to select. This all happens in 72 hours.

PRINCIPLES WHEN PARTICIPATING

- ◆ **The Start Fund was created so that NGOs could collectively make decisions on the basis of needs alone, and respond quickly to under the radar emergencies around the world.**
- ◆ **A defining principle held by all Members is that the collective long-term benefits should always outweigh short-term individual agency financial benefit.**
- ◆ **That means that Members participate in the Fund for the collective benefit of the humanitarian system - only those best able to respond do so. Members may not always access funding for a particular response. Yet there is trust within the Membership that by not competing and collaborating – everyone benefits from better responses – most importantly, those affected by crises.**
- ◆ **Part of this is ensuring that all decisions and actions are transparent. The Start Fund constantly learns and adapts – and needs the Membership to share its successes and failures to continually learn.**

**MEMBERS PARTICIPATE
IN THE FUND FOR THE
COLLECTIVE BENEFIT OF THE
HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM
- ONLY THOSE BEST ABLE
TO RESPOND DO SO**

ALERT TIMELINE

CRISIS ALERT

ANY MEMBER AGENCY CAN RAISE AN ALERT FOR A NEW CRISIS BY SUBMITTING AN ALERT NOTE

DAY 1

MEMBER AGENCY SURVEY

MEMBER AGENCIES FILL IN A SURVEY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFO AND STATE WHETHER THEY SUPPORT OR OPPOSE A START FUND RESPONSE

ALLOCATION DECISION

AN ALLOCATION DECISION IS MADE ON WHETHER TO ACTIVATE THE FUND AND THE AMOUNT

24hrs

APPLICATION

AGENCIES ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT PROJECT PROPOSALS WITHIN 24 HOURS OF THE DECISION

DAY 2

48hrs

PROJECT SELECTION

PROJECT PROPOSALS ARE CHOSEN USING PEER-REVIEW BY A LOCAL PROJECT SELECTION COMMITTEE WHERE POSSIBLE

DAY 3

72hrs

FUNDS TRANSFERRED

SUCCESSFUL AGENCIES ARE IMMEDIATELY NOTIFIED AND FUNDS REACH THEM WITHIN 24 HOURS

IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECTS BEGIN IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN 7 DAYS AND FINISH IN 45 DAYS.

45 days

REPORTING

AGENCIES REPORT 15 DAYS AFTER THE PROJECT ENDS

60 days

LEARNING

ALL PROJECTS ARE PEER-REVIEWED TO IDENTIFY ACTIONABLE LEARNING. EACH PROJECT CAN ALSO ACCESS AN ADDITIONAL 1% OF THE PROJECT BUDGET TO CONDUCT LEARNING ACTIVITIES.

90 days

SHARING INFORMATION AND RAISING AN ALERT

PRE-ALERT INFORMATION SHARING

We are currently testing a platform for agencies to share information prior to alerting the Fund for a crisis. This is primarily used as information sharing in the early stages of a crisis, when agencies are unsure whether the crisis is fit for the Start Fund. This currently takes place on [Wordpress](#) and Skype.

There is no timeframe for this stage, however, please keep in mind the timeliness of an alert to respond to a crisis – the Fund is a rapid response mechanism. Sharing information also happens at point of the survey, and it is not necessary to always put information on the platform before alerting the Fund.

The Start Fund is incorporating new mechanisms to be more anticipatory, and therefore, please

consider using the platform or alerting the Fund for when your organisation has information on an impending crisis (for instance, mounting political violence or onset of a storm).

In the past, alerts have come in later than they could have been raised to have an early impact on a crisis. This is often because in-country staff do not have knowledge of the Start Fund to raise an alert earlier, or Members are hesitating due to imperfect information. We encourage you to reach out to your in-country staff to brief them on the Start Fund, preferably before or in the early stages of a crisis occurring. The information needed to raise an alert is just enough information to understand the value added of the Start Fund – what are the gaps and how are others responding.

Please let the Start Team know if you are considering raising an alert, as we can help guide in the timing of an alert:
startfund@savethechildren.org.uk

ALERTING THE FUND

In the event of a crisis, any Start Network Member can alert the Start Fund and trigger an allocation decision. This is done by filling out an alert template, which is then sent to the Start Team (Startfund@savethechildren.org.uk). The main purpose of the alert note is to provide an overview of a crisis and the value added that the Start Fund might have by allocating funds. Members should be proactive in discussing and raising an alert to the team quickly when they hear of disasters which the Start Fund is best suited.

The Fund is open 7 days a week. However, please note the time of the week when an alert is raised. To keep to the 72 hour deadline, if the Fund is alerted after Wednesday, this means that field teams will need to work on the weekends to either write proposals or participate in project selection. Please be timely with alerts so that, when possible, this can be avoided.

The Start Team is available at all times to answer questions on alerts and can help in the crafting or reviewing of alert notes. Members are encouraged to inform the Start Team when they are considering an alert to discuss details and timeframe of the alert.

PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY

After an alert is raised, all agencies participate in a survey to feed information into the allocation decision for a crisis. This is an opportunity for all Members to i) add any relevant information an organisation has on a crisis ii) share their operational capacity for this crisis and iii) contribute to the strategic decision of the Fund (i.e. should the Fund be activated, for how much, and who should make the decision (Start Fund Committee Rota or Start Team)?). This is also a moment where agencies should nominate volunteers for taking part in the project selection process. Even if your agency is not present in a country, it is critical for each agency to participate in the survey.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- ◆ [Alert note template](#)
- ◆ [Example alert note templates](#)
- ◆ [Survey questions](#)
(Note responses can only be submitted online)
- ◆ [Example survey results](#)

THE FUND IS OPEN
7 DAYS A WEEK

PARTICIPATING IN ALERT DECISION MAKING

PARTICIPATING IN ALLOCATION DECISIONS

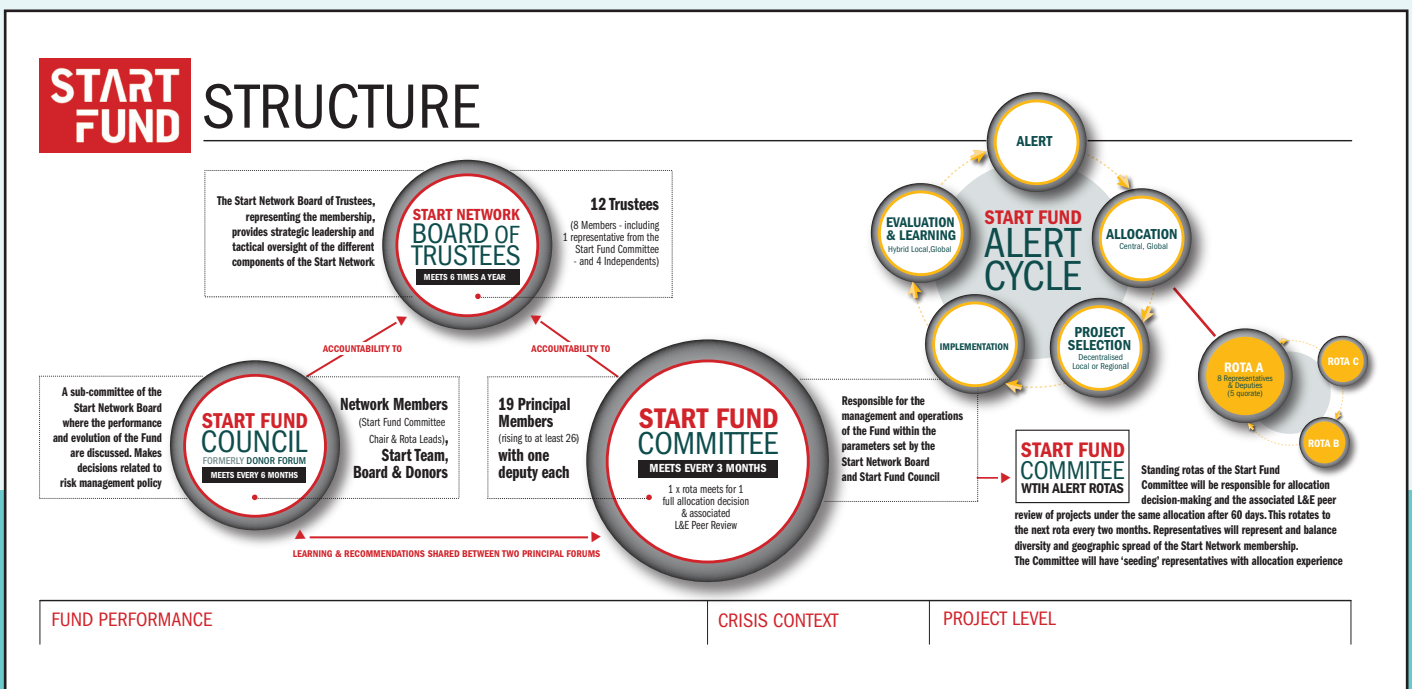
Allocation decisions determine whether a crisis fits the niche of the Start Fund and, if applicable, how much should be allocated. This is based on several information sources: the alert note, the survey responses, and third party briefing notes on the crisis and financing.

In the new Fund management structure, allocation decisions will be made by at least five Start Fund Committee representatives. The Committee is divided into three rotas and each one is on duty for eight weeks at a time. Each organisation needs to make their lead representative or their deputy(ies) available to participate in their designated rota. These representatives participate in an individual

capacity, and do not represent the views of their organisation, but provide input as a humanitarian expert. Decision making can also be delegated to the Start Team for decisions that are considered “uncomplicated” and lower risk, and therefore a lighter process can be used. There is not yet a defined criteria when this lighter process is used.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- ◆ [Past allocation decision documents](#) (including minutes, ACAPS briefings, and Development Initiatives)



PARTICIPATING IN LOCAL PROJECT SELECTION

If a Start Fund allocation is agreed, the selection of projects is delegated by the Start Fund Committee to Network Member staff who are closest to the location of the crisis, whenever this is possible.

After an allocation decision is made, a local project selection committee is formed in the country or region where a crisis has taken place. Whether submitting an application to the Start Fund or not, all Members can nominate volunteers to participate in project selection decisions locally.

Project selection nominees should work in the country or region, be at a senior level, equivalent to a Country Director or head of humanitarian team, and be able to read proposals and participate in project selection meeting within a 24 hour period.

Nominees participate in an individual capacity, and do not represent the views of their organisation. Each organisation is required to brief these volunteers before the meeting.

STANDING PROJECT SELECTION COMMITTEES

In 2015, the Start Fund will be rolling out a process where Members' staff in countries and regions are invited to join a project selection 'roster'. These standing project selection committees will be established in countries with a high frequency of crises that can be alerted to the Fund. The purpose is to allow for fast, consistent and robust decision making, and the ability to maximise learning which can be fed back into Start Fund processes and future project selection in the region. The first one is being piloted in Nigeria in August 2015.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- ◆ [Project selection guidance note](#)
- ◆ [Project selection meeting documents](#)

**NOMINEES
PARTICIPATE IN AN
INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY,
AND DO NOT REPRESENT
THE VIEWS OF THEIR
ORGANISATION**

WRITING APPLICATIONS AND REPORTING

If the fund is activated, all Members are able to apply to respond to the crisis with projects of 45 days. A short application is completed in 24 hours after an allocation decision – which are then selected by a local project selection committee.

If selected, projects begin implementation in 7 days. Reporting is required after 60 days.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- ◆ [Application template](#)
- ◆ [Application examples](#)
- ◆ [Project report template](#)
- ◆ [Project report examples](#)

IF SELECTED,
PROJECTS BEGIN
IMPLEMENTATION IN
7 DAYS

LEARNING AND EVALUATION

Learning is critical to the Start Fund – the Fund is constantly seeking to be better.

All projects can access an optional 1% budget to conduct activities to improve the evidence base for lessons learned about implementing rapid response projects, the impact of beneficiary influence or other areas that are central to the Start Fund.

In order to support greater mutual understanding of the challenges, successes and evolution of each response. After each activation, Start Fund project implementing organisations and the Start Fund Committee rota that made the allocation decision will participate in a peer review. This is a conversation based approach that happens after all projects submit their report.

By the final quarter of 2015, the Fund will roll out project report cards, where the L&E Peer Review process generates scores for projects. These will only be used internally to share project level learning across agencies and to improve responses in the future.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- ◆ [Past learning and evaluation peer review minutes](#)
- ◆ [Questions for Accessing the Additional 1% Learning Budget](#)
- ◆ [Additional 1% Learning Budget Case Studies](#)

**Learning is critical to the Start Fund –
the Fund is constantly seeking to be better**

HELP US GET BETTER

◆ RESPOND TO CRISES BEFORE THEY HAPPEN

Trends in alerts over the last year have created a demand for new processes that allow the Fund to be more anticipatory. By September 2015, the Start Fund will be trialling a new anticipation mechanism – allowing for the Start Fund to be alerted before a crisis occurs to minimise its potential impact on a population. Over the next three to six months, the Fund will test and review how these additional procedures enhance the Fund's ability to respond earlier.

◆ GET MORE COMMUNITY INFLUENCE

Inherently, the Start Fund as a fast and flexible mechanism allows for it to be responsive to the needs of crisis-affected people. However, over the next year, the Start Fund will be looking at ways to increase community influence in decision making. Part of this will be putting in place a process by which agencies can access a second tranche of funding after implementation, if they are able to prove that communities influenced the decision to request further funding.

◆ ALERT THE FUND FOR SMALLER SCALE CRISES

The Start Fund was set up to reach small to medium crises that are under the radar of the international system. At this time, the Start Fund average activation is around £250,000 – with an alert being raised on average once every 12 days. Ideally, the Start Fund would be alerted more frequently – several times a week – for smaller crises (around £50,000) where the Network can evidence how a Start Fund allocation can influence the course of a crisis. We need our Members to be better able to identify and alert for crises – and ensure processes are light to allow for more crises to be easily moved through the alert cycle.

◆ LEARN AND GATHER EVIDENCE

The Start Fund is only as good as the evidence it produces. Gathering evidence of the Fund's impact at both the project and response level are critical to the Start Fund. Members can help by working together at the response level to understand this impact through the 1% learning and participating in Start Fund evaluations.

◆ EXPAND OUR REACH

The Start Fund needs to reach scale to achieve a greater impact. Along with more donors, the Fund needs to be more international in its representation and have a greater reach in the countries in which our Members work. Outreach from Members is critical to this.

HOW WE COMMUNICATE

FOR EACH ALERT, YOU CAN EXPECT THREE EMAILS.

1

The first email is the first information on the alert – with the alert note and Member survey. It will include the time in which a survey must be completed (12 hours later).

2

The second is an update on whether the Fund was activated and if so, what amount of funding was allocated. If applicable, it will include time when applications are due (24 hours later).

3

The third email will summarise the project selection decision. These emails are also forwarded to our donors and supporters.

Please provide us the emails and mobile phone numbers of those that you think should be on this distribution list.

Start Fund Committee representatives will receive periodic **“Start Fund Updates”** which include recent news, documents to review, useful materials, a tracker on each agencies participation in the Start Fund, and stats on alerts so far. [For past updates, see here.](#)

GETTING SUPPORT

The Start Fund Team supports the Start Fund Committee in managing the processes and governance of the Start Fund.

There is a generic Start Fund email address, **startfund@savethechildren.org.uk**, which is used, read and responded to by all of the Start Fund Team (Caroline, Annemarie, and Kat). Please do contact or reply to this email, and someone will promptly reply.

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(on maternity leave from September 2015 - cover to be announced)

**Please feel free to contact any of the Start Fund Team
should you have any questions**

LEARNING MORE

We will be holding briefings over the coming months and will be regularly updating our website:
www.start-network.org.

There are also some important documents that you should have to hand.

- ◆ [What is the Start Fund](#)
- ◆ [The Start Fund Handbook](#) (currently being updated)
- ◆ [The Start Fund Report](#)
- ◆ [The 2014 Start Fund Evaluation](#)
- ◆ [Alert Documents for New Members](#)

FURTHER INDUCTIONS

The Start Team will be organising several ways in which your organisation can learn more about the Start Network over the coming months.

◆ INDIVIDUAL ORGANISATION INDUCTIONS

The Start Team is available for briefings tailored to each organisation, general to the Start Network or specific to the Start Fund or Start Build. These can either be virtual or face to face to face at your office.

◆ START NETWORK DELEGATIONS

Each new Member can be visited by delegation of Start Network staff and stakeholders. This will be a chance for your staff to learn more about the Start Network, but also a chance for the Start Network to learn more about your organisation and the humanitarian space you operate in.

◆ BUDDY SYSTEM

Each new Member will have the opportunity to pair up with an existing Member. Let us know if your organisation would like to be paired up with another Start Network Member. This will provide new Members with another line of communication to ask questions and learn more about the Start Network. It will also provide current Members the opportunity to learn more about your organisation and ways of working.

We have set loose timelines for these inductions, but do let us know your schedule and what would work best for your team to learn more.



INDUCTION PACK 2015