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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and
disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including
special economic assistance**

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**Special economic, humanitarian and
disaster relief assistance**

Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report was prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution [46/182](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance. The report is also submitted in response to Assembly resolution [79/140](#) and Council resolution [2024/8](#). The period covered by the report is from 1 January to 31 December 2024.

The report contains an outline of measures taken to strengthen humanitarian coordination and response, information on humanitarian trends, challenges and recommendations, including in response to escalating humanitarian suffering due to conflicts and disasters.

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** The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline for technical reasons beyond the control of the submitting office.



I. Introduction

Overview of key trends

1. 2024 was a devastating year for hundreds of millions of people caught in humanitarian crises, which stretched the humanitarian system to its limits. The lack of respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law continued to pose challenges for delivering humanitarian assistance and protecting people in armed conflicts. Access to people in need became more difficult because of dangers to civilians and humanitarian workers. Access impediments and delays worsened and prolonged suffering.
2. Conflicts and violence were more entrenched and severe than at any point in recent history and inflicted enormous human suffering, from the Sudan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Ukraine, Yemen, the Occupied Palestinian Territory and beyond, along with rapidly escalating violence in Haiti. A protection crisis intensified, marked, in some instances, by the use of starvation and sexual violence as tactics of warfare, carried out with impunity.
3. By mid-2024, nearly 123 million people were forcibly displaced as a result of conflict and violence, marking the twelfth consecutive annual increase. Food insecurity and famine risk continued to grow in 2024. More than 290 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity in 53 countries and territories.¹
4. 2024 was the deadliest year on record for aid workers, with 380 killed.² Humanitarian and medical personnel were attacked, killed, threatened, abducted and harassed. Local staff suffered most of the casualties. Nevertheless, humanitarian personnel stayed and continued to deliver.
5. Disasters continued to grow in frequency and intensity, compounded by climate change and the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon, driving more food insecurity, displacement and diseases. 2024 was also the warmest year on record, marked by significant heatwaves in different regions.³ Owing to climate change, events such as the devastating Horn of Africa drought (2020–2023) are now at least 100 times more likely,⁴ along with the increasing likelihood and destructive power of major hurricanes, such as Hurricane Beryl in the Caribbean in 2024.
6. Women and children faced disproportionate impacts in humanitarian crises, including high levels of gender-based violence and mortality and systematic attacks on their rights. Approximately one in every six children in the world – some 473 million – were living in or fleeing conflict zones.⁵
7. In 2024, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners reached nearly 116 million people through United Nations-coordinated humanitarian responses. Despite the generosity of donors, just over 49 per cent of the \$49.47 billion required for humanitarian appeals was received (\$24.50 billion). Notwithstanding the tireless efforts of humanitarians to prioritize assistance, underfunding forced operations to be

¹ Food Security Information Network and Global Network Against Food Crises. *Global Report on Food Crises 2025* (Rome, 2025), available in May 2025.

² Aid Worker Security Database, www.aidworkersecurity.org/, accessed on 3 April 2025.

³ World Meteorological Organization (WMO), *State of the Global Climate 2024* (Geneva, 2025).

⁴ WMO, “Climate change made Horn of Africa drought and Mediterranean heat ‘100 times more likely’” (5 May 2023).

⁵ United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), “2024: devastating year for children in conflict zones”, available at www.unicef.ch/en/current/news/2024-12-27/not-new-normal-2024-one-worst-years-unicef-s-history-children-conflict.

scaled back, with enormous human costs.⁶ The United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund and country-based pooled funds delivered critical and rapid life-saving assistance.

8. In December 2024, the United Nations and humanitarian partners appealed for more than \$47 billion to assist nearly 190 million people across 72 countries in 2025.⁷ Rising needs and decreasing funding necessitate expanded and diversified partnerships and support and accelerated adaptation, innovation and efficiencies within the humanitarian system. The humanitarian system will do everything that it can to provide life-saving aid to those in urgent need and to ensure that the humanitarian response is as effective, prioritized, efficient, innovative and accountable as possible to continue to save lives and reduce suffering. As the United Nations reaches its eightieth anniversary, 2025 must be a turning point to renew solidarity for humanitarian action and the people we serve.

II. Overview of humanitarian emergencies

A. Complex emergencies

9. The United Nations and its partners responded to complex emergencies, including those in which violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law may have occurred, humanitarian access was impeded and protection of civilians remained a grave concern.

10. In the Sudan, the number of people in need grew by nearly 25 per cent during 2024, reaching 30.4 million. More than 24.6 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity, including at least 638,000 people in catastrophe (IPC phase 5) conditions. Ongoing hostilities continued to kill and injure civilians in large numbers, with further reports of widespread conflict-related sexual violence. More than 12.8 million people were forcibly displaced by mid-2024.

11. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, more than 30 million people required assistance, and it had among the highest numbers of food-insecure people worldwide. Armed conflicts in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo caused the third-largest internal displacement crisis in the world, with 6.4 million internally displaced persons.

12. In Afghanistan, 23.7 million people needed assistance. Approximately 15.8 million people faced acute food insecurity. All 34 provinces in Afghanistan were affected by at least one disaster, including earthquakes, droughts, floods and landslides.

13. In Ethiopia, 21.4 million people, including 3.2 million internally displaced persons, required humanitarian assistance owing to climate shocks, insecurity and outbreaks of infectious diseases.

14. In Burkina Faso, 6.3 million people required humanitarian assistance, including more than 2 million internally displaced people. Insecurity and violence, exacerbated by climate shocks, remained the primary drivers of humanitarian needs.

15. In Cameroon, 3.4 million people required humanitarian assistance owing to conflict, disasters and epidemics.

⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2025* (2024).

⁷ Ibid.

16. In the Central African Republic, the number of people in need decreased from 3.4 million in 2023 to 2.8 million in 2024. Forty-six per cent of the population required humanitarian assistance. Insecurity and frequent disasters remained the main drivers of humanitarian needs.
17. In Chad, some 6 million people needed assistance, amid record-setting floods and worsening acute food insecurity. Chad received more than 723,000 Sudanese refugees and 222,000 Chadian returnees in 2024.
18. In Colombia, 8.3 million people required humanitarian assistance owing to ongoing armed conflict, disasters and the influx of refugees and migrants.
19. In Haiti, 5.5 million required humanitarian assistance as a result of insecurity, political instability and recurring disasters. Gang violence increased the number of internally displaced persons to 1 million.
20. In Lebanon, conflict and hostilities displaced nearly 900,000 people. Following the cessation of hostilities agreement in November, more than 870,000 people returned to their places of origin.
21. In Mali, 7.1 million people required humanitarian assistance. Conflict, insecurity and disasters remained drivers of needs.
22. In Mozambique, 3.5 million people required humanitarian assistance, including as a result of the re-emergence of conflict in Cabo Delgado, the effects of El Niño-induced drought and Cyclone Chido.
23. In Myanmar, 18.6 million people needed humanitarian assistance. More than 3.5 million people are internally displaced, a tenfold increase since 2021, owing to escalating fighting and compounded by extensive flooding.
24. In the Niger, some 4.5 million people required humanitarian assistance owing to the impact of insecurity, epidemics, food insecurity and floods.
25. In Nigeria, some 7.9 million people needed humanitarian assistance owing to growing food insecurity. Meanwhile, flooding affected 1.4 million people and displaced 730,000 individuals.
26. In Somalia, 6.9 million people needed assistance. Floods affected at least 268,000 people. At least 4.4 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity.
27. In South Sudan, 9 million people needed humanitarian assistance, fuelled by the conflict in the Sudan. By the end of the year, more than 900,000 refugees and returnees had crossed into the country.
28. In the Syrian Arab Republic, 16.7 million people required humanitarian assistance. An escalation in hostilities in November and December displaced 1.1 million people. More than 560,000 people fled hostilities in Lebanon, adding to the existing displacement crisis.
29. In Ukraine, some 14.6 million people required humanitarian assistance. Hostilities in front-line areas continued, and more people fled from high-risk areas to safer parts of the country and beyond. More than 10 million people have fled their homes, with 3.7 million internally displaced and nearly 6.1 million refugees.
30. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 7 million people needed humanitarian assistance because of economic, political and social challenges and recurrent disasters.
31. In Yemen, conflict and flooding left 18.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.

32. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the attacks by Hamas and other armed groups on Israel on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent war led to unprecedented levels of destruction and suffering. From 7 October 2023 to 31 December 2024, more than 45,500 Palestinians were killed⁸ and a further 108,000 injured, according to the Gaza Ministry of Health. In that same period, according to Israeli sources, some 1,600 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed in Israel and Gaza and some 8,000 injured, alongside 251 hostages taken on 7 October.⁹ In Gaza, 2.1 million people lacked access to sufficient shelter, food, life-saving medical services, clean water, education and livelihoods. By the end of 2024, some 1.9 million Palestinians had been displaced, many of them repeatedly.

B. Disasters associated with natural hazards

33. In southern Africa, the 2023/2024 El Niño event caused one of the worst droughts on record. Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe declared national disasters. Angola and Mozambique experienced severe impacts of drought, including high levels of food insecurity. At the end of the year, Tropical Cyclone Chido impacted Malawi and Mozambique.

34. Typhoon Yagi affected nearly 5 million people across Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Philippines experienced six tropical cyclones over four weeks, impacting more than 13 million people. A 7.3-magnitude earthquake in Vanuatu affected nearly a third of the population.

35. Across central and south America and the Caribbean, El Niño and unpredictable weather patterns caused droughts, wildfires and intense rainfall and disrupted agriculture. El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras each experienced rising humanitarian needs, with people in need numbering 1.1 million in El Salvador, 5.3 million in Guatemala and 2.8 million in Honduras.

36. In the Caribbean, the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season saw above-average activity, with 18 named storms. Hurricane Beryl, the earliest recorded category 5 storm, struck Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Jamaica and other Caribbean countries, affecting thousands in July.

III. Humanitarian response in 2024: key challenges

A. Armed conflicts

Respect for international humanitarian law

37. In 2024, escalating intensity of conflicts resulted in severe harm to civilians, widespread suffering and forced displacement. Civilians faced direct and indirect attacks, including aerial strikes. The destruction of civilian infrastructure was extensive, including that necessary for civilians' survival – such as homes, health facilities, water and sanitation, agriculture, electricity and telecommunication systems – and disrupting education. Hostilities hampered access to markets and livelihoods, devastated household and local economies, disrupted public and social protection services and caused contamination and degradation of ecosystems. They resulted in preventable deaths, acute food insecurity, forced displacement, famine conditions, malnutrition, untreated chronic illnesses, outbreaks of diseases such as

⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Reported impact snapshot: Gaza Strip", 31 December 2024.

⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Reported impact snapshot: Gaza Strip", 15 April 2025.

cholera, which was reported in 17 conflict-affected countries in 2024, and polio, rising child and maternal mortality, disrupted education and increased child labour.

38. The catastrophic impact of armed conflict on civilians was driven by widespread disregard by parties of their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The perpetration of mass atrocities, indiscriminate attacks on civilians, the targeting of civilian infrastructure and the use of starvation and sexual violence were observed.

Humanitarian access

39. Access constraints severely impeded the timely delivery of assistance and protection to vulnerable people, exacerbated humanitarian needs, endangered the safety and well-being of affected communities, increased operational costs and reduced effectiveness. Impediments included insecurity and direct attacks on humanitarian personnel, premises and assets, bureaucratic and administrative impediments and damaged infrastructure.

40. Arbitrary restrictions and denial of humanitarian assistance imposed by parties to conflict in violation of international humanitarian law were prevalent, most often leaving children, women, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other vulnerable groups without adequate assistance and protection.

41. The United Nations and its humanitarian partners employed strategic, coordinated approaches to enable lifesaving assistance in an increasingly complex environment. This included humanitarian access working groups, led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to support humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian country teams and assist humanitarian access negotiations, including on expanding access routes, boosting the flow of aid and facilitating the movement of affected people.

42. Civil-military coordination was crucial in facilitating humanitarian operations and promoting compliance with international humanitarian law. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs engaged with regional organizations with military mandates or disaster response roles, including the African Union Commission, the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), contributing to training and technical advising on humanitarian matters.

Protecting humanitarian personnel and assets

43. In 2024, the unprecedented number of 380 aid workers were reported killed, with hundreds more injured, threatened, kidnapped, harassed or arbitrarily detained.¹⁰ Local humanitarian staff were especially impacted. The Security Council, in its resolution 2730 (2024), and the Secretary-General, in his related recommendations (S/2024/852), called upon Member States and parties to the conflict to reaffirm commitments to international law, comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, adopt measures to avoid harm to humanitarian personnel, premises and assets and ensure accountability for violations. Strengthening the safety and security of local personnel, including addressing specific risks faced by women-led organizations, are critical components in these efforts.

¹⁰ Aid Worker Security Database, www.aidworkersecurity.org/ (accessed on 3 April 2025).

Protecting medical care in conflict

44. Healthcare remained under severe threat in humanitarian situations. In 2024, the World Health Organization (WHO) documented more than 1,617 attacks impacting healthcare facilities, personnel and resources across 16 complex emergencies, resulting in more than 900 deaths and 1,700 injuries, with the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Ukraine, Lebanon and the Sudan most affected.¹¹ Hospitals, clinics and ambulances were frequently bombed, looted or significantly obstructed from delivering essential medical services. The criminalization of medical care, including through detentions, prosecutions and harassment of health workers providing impartial medical assistance, continued in some contexts. Attacks impacting healthcare contributed to disease outbreaks, exacerbated severe malnutrition and increased mortality. Healthcare workers and patients must be respected and protected at all times, in particular in humanitarian situations where health systems are already under strain. Healthcare supplies, transport and facilities must be respected and protected in all circumstances.

Impact of urban warfare on civilians

45. The widespread use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas resulted in catastrophic civilian casualties, the destruction of critical infrastructure and the collapse of essential services, including water, sanitation, healthcare and education.

46. In 2024, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas remained one of the greatest threats to civilians. Globally, civilian casualties from explosive weapons increased by an estimated 67 per cent compared with 2023, with a total of 61,353 killed and injured.¹²

B. Climate crisis

47. Extreme weather events, including heatwaves, drought and cyclones in Southern Africa and the Americas and floods in the Sahel, increased in frequency and intensity, compounded by climate change and the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon. 2024 was confirmed as the hottest year on record. The past 10 years (2015–2024) were the warmest on record. The 2024 global average temperature was projected as 1.55 (±0.13) °C above the pre-industrial level. Atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases continued to increase. Ocean heat was the highest recorded. Sea level rise accelerated owing to warmer waters and worsening glacier and ice-sheet melt.¹³ In 2024, 372 climate- and weather-related disasters were recorded, affecting nearly 167 million people and causing 15,955 deaths.¹⁴

48. Humanitarian organizations continued to strengthen efforts to anticipate, adapt and respond to the humanitarian impacts of the climate crisis. For example, in 2024 alone, the Central Emergency Response Fund supported 31 countries, with \$203.5 million in extreme weather and climate-related allocations helping to assist 11 million people. This represents more than 35 per cent of the Fund's total funding in 2024. During the year, one third of the Fund's climate-related funding (\$67.2 million) was disbursed for early responses, such as those supported to mitigate impacts of the

¹¹ World Health Organization, (WHO), Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care, <https://extranet.who.int/sssa/LeftMenu/Index.aspx>, accessed on 5 March 2025.

¹² Action on Armed Violence, "Explosive Violence Monitor 2024: initial data", 2024.

¹³ WMO, *State of the Global Climate 2024* (2025).

¹⁴ Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Emergency Events Database, <https://public.emdat.be>, accessed on 12 March 2025.

2023/2024 El Niño/La Niña event and for anticipatory frameworks triggered by extreme weather events. In addition, the Fund released \$10.5 million in dedicated funding to support nine countries with urgent humanitarian needs, while enhancing the climate resilience and adaptive capacities of affected communities through additional funding received through its Climate Action Account.

49. Progress was made in enhancing access to early warning information and translating that into early action to protect lives and support communities most affected by the climate crisis. Spearheaded by the Early Warnings for All initiative, 108 countries reported having a multi-hazard early warning system in 2024, compared with 52 countries in 2015. However, coverage remained low in vulnerable countries – 44 per cent of the least developed countries, 38 per cent of small island developing States and 63 per cent of landlocked developing countries reported having such systems.¹⁵ Accelerated efforts are required to ensure that these systems are in place and extended to communities in hard-to-reach areas.

50. Communities repeatedly affected by recurring climate-related disasters require rapid, fully funded humanitarian assistance, alongside sustained development and climate finance investments to adapt to these challenges. Climate finance and support should be significantly increased for vulnerable communities affected by disasters and conflict to build their resilience.

C. Food insecurity and famine

51. Armed conflict remained a key driver of acute food insecurity, disrupting food systems. Sixty-five per cent of acutely food-insecure people were located in fragile or conflict-affected situations. Economic and fiscal challenges and weather extremes contributed to acute food insecurity.¹⁶ Food security assistance accounted for a third of the total requested through humanitarian appeals in 2024.¹⁷

52. Food insecurity and famine risk grew again in 2024. More than 290 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity in 53 countries and territories. Thirty-five million people faced emergency levels of acute food insecurity (IPC phase 4) in 36 countries and/or territories, and almost 2 million people faced catastrophic levels (IPC phase 5) in 5 countries and/or territories.¹⁸ In the Sudan, famine (IPC phase 5), first reported near El Fasher in July 2024,¹⁹ was confirmed in five areas in December 2024. Famine was further projected in 10 areas from December 2024 to May 2025, with 17 more areas identified as being at risk of famine.²⁰ Throughout

¹⁵ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and WMO, *Global Status of Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems* (2024).

¹⁶ World Food Programme (WFP), “WFP 2025 Global Outlook”, available at www.wfp.org/publications/wfp-2025-global-outlook.

¹⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Financial Tracking Service, “Humanitarian aid contributions”, 2024.

¹⁸ Food Security Information Network and Global Network Against Food Crises. *Global Report on Food Crises 2025*.

¹⁹ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), Famine Review Committee, Combined review of: (i) the Famine Early Warning System Network IPC compatible analysis for IDP Camps in El Fasher, North Darfur; and (ii) the IPC Sudan Technical Working Group analysis of Zamzam Camp (North Darfur), Sudan – conclusions and recommendations, July 2024 (1 August 2024).

²⁰ IPC Famine Review Committee: Sudan, December 2024 – conclusions and recommendations, 24 December 2024.

2024, the acute food security situation in the Gaza Strip remained catastrophic, with a high and sustained risk of famine persisting across the entire Strip.²¹

53. The United Nations and humanitarian organizations scaled up whole-of-system efforts to address acute food insecurity. In the Sudan, the Famine Prevention Plan, a prioritized section within the overall humanitarian plan, mobilized a multisectoral approach combining emergency food assistance, cash transfers and agricultural support to prevent and mitigate famine risk and acute food insecurity, although severe access challenges impeded efforts. The Famine Prevention Plan reached close to 7 million people with some form of assistance by the end of the year.

D. Gender equality and rights of women and girls

54. In every humanitarian crisis, women and girls were disproportionately affected, with devastating consequences for their health, livelihoods, protection and access to and participation in humanitarian relief. Record numbers of female casualties, escalating sexual and gender-based violence and preventable maternal deaths made 2024 one of the most dangerous years for women and girls in conflict zones. Gender-based violence remained widespread, and underfunded services – at less than a third of requirements²² – left survivors without access to care. Almost 60 per cent of global maternal deaths occurred in humanitarian contexts in 2024.

55. Sexual and gender-based violence, including child marriage and trafficking, and risks of sexual exploitation and abuse surged. Access to education and critical health services eroded across crisis-affected regions, deepening societal barriers to women's and girls' opportunities and perpetuating cycles of poverty. In Afghanistan, more than 70 restrictive decrees issued since August 2021 have severely curtailed women's and girls' rights, making it the only country in the world that banned girls' education beyond the age of 11, impacting 1.5 million girls in 2024.

56. Despite challenges, progress was made in advancing women's leadership in humanitarian action. Across regions, women and women-led organizations played a critical role in driving effective humanitarian action and remained at the forefront of the response, from facilitating food distribution in South Sudan to leading community-based protection efforts in Haiti. Women's advisory groups were established in several humanitarian country teams, including in the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Afghanistan, ensuring women's direct role in decision-making. The country-based pooled funds and regional humanitarian pooled funds enhanced women-led organizations' involvement, with women-led organizations represented in 18 out of 21 funds and boards.

E. Centrality of protection

Protection in humanitarian response

57. The Global Protection Cluster estimated that 170 million people required protection, with all operations reporting identifying gender-based violence as the most concerning protection risk.²³ The United Nations and its partners strengthened community-based networks and early warning protection mechanisms, mobilized

²¹ IPC Famine Review Committee: Gaza Strip, June 2024 – conclusions and recommendations, 25 June 2024; and IPC Famine Review Committee alert: Gaza Strip, 8 November 2024.

²² See <https://fts.unocha.org/global-sectors/13/summary/2024>.

²³ Global Protection Cluster, "Global protection update", November 2024.

specialized teams to provide protection services and enhanced system-wide approaches.²⁴

58. The United Nations Agenda for Protection, launched in February 2024, reinforces the importance of protection underpinning all United Nations efforts, including its humanitarian work.

Child protection

59. Children bore the brunt of multiplying and escalating crises, facing unprecedented levels of violence and rights violations. Grave violations committed against children in armed conflict rose by 21 per cent in 2023, including recruitment and use, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals and denial of humanitarian access. Attacks on schools reached their highest level in 10 years in 2023, and an estimated 52 million children in countries affected by conflict were out of school. Some 40 per cent of unvaccinated and under-vaccinated children live in these contexts.

60. Children suffered increased displacement from their homes and communities – often numerous times. At the end of 2023, nearly 50 million children were displaced as a result of conflict, violence and disasters – accounting for 40 per cent of all displaced people globally.²⁵ Children faced a wide range of protection risks at every stage of their displacement.

61. The United Nations and its partners provided support, including education, reintegration programmes for children affected by armed conflict, psychosocial support, birth registration capacities and mine risk education.²⁶

Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse

62. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee accelerated the implementation of its protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment strategy.²⁷ Progress was made in bolstering capacities in high-risk contexts through the inter-agency protection from sexual exploitation and abuse capacity project, with experts deployed to nine high-risk contexts.²⁸ The Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs launched a help desk to provide on-demand technical support.

F. Displacement

63. Millions of people were forced to flee within their countries owing to armed conflict, generalized violence, climate-related disasters or human rights violations or abuses. The number of forcibly displaced people has more than doubled over the past decade, surpassing 123 million by June 2024. This includes more than 72 million

²⁴ Global Protection Cluster, “High-level humanitarian donors briefing note: the state of protection in 2024”, 1 October 2024.

²⁵ UNICEF, “Humanitarian action for children 2025: overview” (2024).

²⁶ Ibid.; and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Global Appeal 2025”, 2024.

²⁷ Inter-Agency Standing Committee, “IASC vision and strategy: protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment 2022–2026”.

²⁸ Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Somalia, the Sudan, Haiti, Myanmar, Colombia, Mali, Burkina Faso.

internally displaced persons, of whom 7.7 million were disaster displaced. The global refugee population reached a record 43.7 million by mid-2024.²⁹

64. Climate-related disasters continued to exacerbate vulnerabilities faced by internally displaced persons and refugees and complicated efforts to advance durable solutions. Seventy-five per cent of all forcibly displaced people – more than 90 million people – lived in countries with high-to-extreme exposure to climate-related hazards. Nearly half of the world's displaced people suffer the consequences of both conflict and climate change, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Lebanon, Myanmar, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.³⁰

65. Addressing and resolving issues of forced displacement and statelessness, including through the provision of protection and efforts to advance durable solutions, remained critical to reducing humanitarian needs. Strengthening access to essential services for displaced people and host communities remained crucial.

G. New technologies and innovation

66. Artificial intelligence-driven analytics were used to analyse trends, detect emerging humanitarian challenges and provide early warnings. For example, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs collaborated with the Government of the Philippines and other partners to create models using artificial intelligence algorithms that predict the percentage of damaged buildings by municipality in the event of a typhoon, which trigger anticipatory action and pre-arranged funding. Efforts continued to work with other countries on similar approaches.

67. The World Food Programme, Oxford University, Climate Prediction and Applications Centre of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Governments of Kenya and Ethiopia and the private sector collaborated to use artificial intelligence to enhance weather forecasting and improve early warning systems, helping communities in the Horn of Africa better anticipate extreme weather events and protect lives and livelihoods.

68. Advances were underpinned by improved access to data through open platforms such as the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX). Launched in June 2024, HDX Signals in the Centre for Humanitarian Data of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs monitored key data sets to support automated alert capabilities when significant negative changes are detected. HDX Signals supported the Central Emergency Response Fund in allocating more than \$22 million, accelerating funding and aid distribution and saving time and money in crisis response.

69. Deeper integration of artificial intelligence into the humanitarian sector presents opportunities and challenges to ensure that advances are leveraged safely, ethically and effectively, including in relation to cybersecurity, privacy erosion and misinformation and disinformation.

H. Adverse consequences of counter-terrorism measures

70. Member States made progress in implementing humanitarian exemptions established by the Security Council in its resolutions [2615 \(2021\)](#) and [2664 \(2022\)](#) in

²⁹ UNHCR, “Mid-year trends 2024”.

³⁰ UNHCR, “No escape: on the frontlines of climate change, conflict and forced displacement”, 2024.

domestic legislation, and many introduced exemptions to their autonomous sanctions. Security Council resolution [2761 \(2024\)](#), in which the Council maintained these exemptions in its ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions regime, provided further predictability for humanitarian operations.

71. In some situations, counter-terrorism measures, anti-money-laundering legislation and some sanctions adopted by States and regional organizations impacted humanitarian supply chains and exposed humanitarian organizations and personnel, their suppliers, banks and service providers to legal risks.

IV. Humanitarian response: developments in operations and coordination

A. Improving humanitarian coordination and response

72. In 2024, strengthening and adapting humanitarian coordination mechanisms remained a priority to ensure effective, agile and people-centred responses amid evolving crises.

73. System-wide scale-ups were activated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee for Lebanon, the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic to bolster response capacities. Humanitarian coordination structures were reviewed in countries such as Chad, Ethiopia and Mozambique to enhance effectiveness.

74. In highly volatile environments such as Lebanon, the Sudan and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, coordination mechanisms were further adapted to remain flexible and responsive to dynamic operational challenges. Efforts to increase coordination capacities through area-based approaches were expanded, including in Somalia and Ukraine, supporting more localized humanitarian action.

75. The roll-out of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee cash coordination model was completed in 2024, with 40 humanitarian operations implementing its core principles, aimed at enhancing the cost-effectiveness and impact for affected people and accountability for cash-based assistance. The model introduced greater predictability and transparency in the use of cash and voucher assistance and multipurpose cash, strengthening planning, funding and reporting across the humanitarian programme cycle. Cash assistance instead of in-kind assistance provided impact and efficiencies, when feasible and aligned with people's expressed preferences.

76. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued to work together on good practices at the country level to promote the streamlining, complementarity and effectiveness of coordination arrangements in mixed settings where a humanitarian coordinator has been appointed and a UNHCR-led refugee operation is under way, in line with the 2014 joint note of UNHCR and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on mixed situations, as well as to present the totality of humanitarian requirements around the world – in both Inter-Agency Standing Committee and refugee response settings – in the *Global Humanitarian Overview*.

77. In the 2025 *Global Humanitarian Overview*, launched on 4 December 2024, the United Nations and humanitarian partners requested \$47 billion to assist 190 million people across 72 countries, with 62 per cent of more than 2,000 partners being local or national humanitarian organizations. Ongoing efforts to lighten and strengthen the humanitarian programme cycle yielded progress, with the time taken to complete the process reduced and robust discussions and decisions taken as to what to include

within coordinated appeals and/or plans. The implementation of Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework 2.0 enhanced multisectoral needs analysis, supporting humanitarian country teams in prioritizing life-saving assistance for the people who needed it most. Ongoing efforts are aimed at strengthening the monitoring of response impacts and effectiveness, as well as ensuring that community feedback and engagement drives planning and response adjustments.

78. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and humanitarian partners, will continue to strengthen coordination and effective emergency humanitarian responses and enhance efficiency and the prioritization of humanitarian assistance, building on extensive efforts in recent years and in the light of the global funding gap, which has significantly widened. This is to ensure that global humanitarian efforts remain as effective, efficient, nimble and innovative as possible, while reducing duplication and reinforcing collective operational capacities, in order to save lives and alleviate suffering in humanitarian emergencies as reflected in the humanitarian reset.³¹

79. The Emergency Relief Coordinator will continue to provide leadership and work with humanitarian coordinators to protect, promote and coordinate emergency relief efforts, with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and in coordination with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and other key humanitarian partners. Where a humanitarian coordinator is not designated, the Emergency Relief Coordinator will continue to provide leadership and work with United Nations resident coordinators to coordinate emergency response in the event of a sudden onset disaster or emergency and enable a nimble and streamlined response. Furthermore, the Emergency Relief Coordinator will continue to promote local and regional relief capacities, including working with regional organizations, national authorities and local humanitarian organizations and expedite collective community engagement to strengthen response.

B. Emergency preparedness and response

80. By the end of the year, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Emergency Response Preparedness approach had been implemented or updated in more than 90 per cent of high- and very high-risk contexts to anticipate and respond to humanitarian crises more effectively. The approach is aligned with the humanitarian programme cycle, ensuring that preparedness actions are embedded in contingency planning, needs assessments and response frameworks.

81. In 2024, global response mechanisms coordinated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continued to mobilize partners and specialized expertise in support of emergency preparedness and response. United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams were deployed to Yemen (sinking of *MV Rubymar*), Vanuatu (earthquake) and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada and Jamaica (Hurricane Beryl).

82. The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group strengthened readiness of urban search and rescue teams globally, including through eight International Search and Rescue Advisory Group external classifications and reclassifications, international earthquake response exercises in Ecuador, Pakistan and Tunisia and the development of a flood response roster.

³¹ The humanitarian reset: Emergency Relief Coordinator letter to Inter-Agency Standing Committee Principals, 11 March 2025.

83. The standby partnership programme deployed 65 experts to new and escalating humanitarian emergencies and to situations where specific expertise, including in information management and civil-military coordination was required, for an average of seven months. Experts deployed to support 24 humanitarian operations, including in Inter-Agency Standing Committee scale-up emergencies in Lebanon and the Sudan.

84. The United Nations and international humanitarian partners supported the operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency and, through the humanitarian coordination forum, facilitated coordinated, principled humanitarian action and reinforced the humanitarian leadership role of the African Union in preventing, preparing for and responding to disasters and other humanitarian emergencies in Africa. The United Nations worked with different regional and subregional organizations, including ASEAN and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and SADC, to strengthen emergency preparedness, enhance civil-military coordination and support regional disaster response mechanisms.

C. Optimizing humanitarian financing

Trends in humanitarian funding

85. Despite a slight improvement in the funding percentage in 2024 (49.5 per cent) compared with 45 per cent in 2023, the overall funding gap remained significant, with only \$24.50 billion received against \$49.47 billion requested.³²

86. Underfunding of United Nations-coordinated humanitarian appeals had devastating immediate consequences for people affected by crises, disproportionately impacting the most vulnerable groups, including women, children and displaced persons.³³ Funding cuts pushed millions towards starvation and left some at risk of death, as in Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Emergency health services were decimated, leaving millions without access to essential care. Protection services, in particular for women and girls, were reduced, while protection risks and needs escalated. Access to clean water, sanitation and safe shelter diminished, increasing risks of disease outbreaks and exposure to harsh environmental conditions. Curtailed access to education deprived children of their futures. Underfunding eroded community resilience and undermined recovery and development. This was particularly dire in protracted crises, where humanitarian organizations provide a lifeline for affected people.

87. Overreliance on a limited number of donors continued. Fully funded global appeals remain essential for effective humanitarian action in 2025. The humanitarian community is working to broaden the donor base, involve the private sector and work more effectively with international financial institutions. For example, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs collaborated with international financial institutions to promote development and resilience investments in some contexts while managing and responding to crisis risks, including better-coordinated use of pre-arranged disaster risk financing.

³² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Financial Tracking Service, “Humanitarian aid contributions”, 2024, accessed on 8 April 2025.

³³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “*Global Humanitarian Overview 2025*” (2024).

Humanitarian pooled funds

88. In 2024, donors contributed \$1.72 billion to humanitarian pooled funds managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Central Emergency Response Fund and regional and country-based pooled funds.³⁴ Together, these funds allocated \$1.51 billion to humanitarian partners across 51 countries and territories – \$575 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund and \$935 million from 16 country-based pooled funds and 2 regional pooled funds. The funds enabled rapid, flexible, efficient, prioritized humanitarian responses to save lives and alleviate suffering.

89. When humanitarian pooled funds resources were provided in the same contexts, humanitarian coordinators at the country level ensured that resources were used in a complementary and coherent manner to engage the comparative advantages of each and maximize joint impact. For instance, the Sudan humanitarian response plan, which was the largest recipient of the pooled funds in 2024, received a total of \$247 million through the complementary use of allocations from the Central Emergency Response Fund and the Sudan Humanitarian Fund to ensure sustained humanitarian action.

D. Advancing anticipatory approaches

90. The United Nations remains the largest contributor of anticipatory financing. In 2024, total pre-arranged financing through Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-managed pooled funds alone increased by 39 per cent, reaching \$133.8 million. In 2024, the Central Emergency Response Fund committed a record \$123 million in funding across 20 anticipatory action frameworks in 17 countries.³⁵ Four frameworks were activated for floods, enabling timely assistance based on national early warning systems.

91. In Bangladesh, \$6.2 million in pre-arranged funding was released within 16 minutes of early warnings, enabling assistance to more than 388,000 people within five days ahead of flooding. In Nepal, \$3.4 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund was released within six minutes following monsoon rains in the Koshi River basin. In Chad, ahead of catastrophic floods, \$5 million enabled assistance including cash support, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), food and seeds. In the Niger, \$5 million was allocated after flood forecasts. People in both countries were reached with early warning messages to increase preparedness and save lives.

92. The United Nations and the Government of Ethiopia jointly launched an appeal for anticipatory action ahead of a predicted La Niña-induced drought in parts of the country, garnering \$18 million (\$10 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund and \$7 million from the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund).

93. Country-based pooled funds increasingly employed forecasting and early warning mechanisms to proactively address predictable hazards. Inter alia, the funds in Nigeria and Somalia were activated in anticipation of potential flooding, including El Niño-driven hazards. Other humanitarian pooled funds, such as the Disaster Response Emergency Fund of the International Federation of Red Crescent Societies, and partner co-financing complemented these efforts.

³⁴ A/79/327; <https://cerf.un.org/>; Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Pooled Funds Data Hub, <https://pfddata.unocha.org/>.

³⁵ See https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/CERF_AA_Portfolio_Update.pdf.

E. Humanitarian-development collaboration and linkages to peace

94. Humanitarian, development and peace actors continued to collaborate to reduce risk, vulnerabilities and need and advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Development Coordination Office, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the United Nations Development Programme served as the co-chairs of the Joint Steering Committee, which continued to identify and address systematic challenges, to support country leadership in enhancing coherence and complementarity.

95. The 2025–2026 Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean, launched by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with host Governments, brought together 230 humanitarian and development partners, including the World Bank, to address the needs of refugees and migrants, while strengthening host communities and promoting resilience through investments in livelihoods, education, protection and health services. In Somalia, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Resident Coordinator's Office, with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, conducted a joint risk analysis with humanitarian and development partners to inform the humanitarian programme cycle and the development of a new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

96. Peace operations and programming supported by the Peacebuilding Fund continued to support inclusive political processes, reconciliation initiatives and State institutions aimed at fostering sustainable peace and addressing root causes of conflict that drive humanitarian need.

97. It remained urgent for development actors, donors, multilateral development banks and international financial institutions to reassess their organizational risk appetite and engage in conflict and climate-affected contexts. Increasing investments from international financial institutions and multilateral development banks to such contexts helps to build basic services systems, including systems for food security, health, education, water and sanitation, shock-responsive social protection to support communities and national and subnational institutions.

98. Development investments and support for locally led solutions, in consultation with affected local communities, in particular those furthest behind, remained crucial. There is a need for development actors and bilateral and multilateral donors to accelerate efforts to better align their investments with humanitarian assistance to strengthen complementary action in support of vulnerable people and protect development gains.

F. Accountability to affected populations

99. In 2024, the Collective Accountability to Affected People Framework³⁶ of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee guided efforts to strengthen community engagement and ensure that affected people actively participated in humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, inter alia. In Afghanistan, the inter-agency Community Voices and Accountability Platform and System-wide Accountability

³⁶ Inter-Agency Standing Committee, "Inter-Agency Standing Committee Collective Accountability to Affected People Framework", 2023.

Monitoring provided humanitarian partners with evidence of affected people's needs, accessibility and protection concerns to improve the quality of assistance provided.

100. The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy continued to make progress in embedding disability inclusion across humanitarian operations. Collective commitments, including the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee *Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action* shaped efforts to ensure that the needs and priorities of persons with disabilities were more integrated into humanitarian planning and data analysis. In 2024, all humanitarian needs overviews, humanitarian response plans and humanitarian needs and response plans included data disaggregated by sex, age and disability for people in need, demonstrating progress in factoring sex, age and disability data collection and analysis into the humanitarian programme cycle.³⁷

G. Reinforcing local action

101. Local and national actors are often the first responders and essential partners in humanitarian response, bringing critical understanding of local contexts and tailored solutions.

102. The country-based pooled funds and regional humanitarian pooled funds were essential instruments in supporting local and national front-line responders, including women-led organizations. In 2024, the Funds solidified their work as key drivers of localized humanitarian action by directly allocating funding to 295 local and national organizations. This represents 47 per cent of all funding recipients – the largest share ever. An additional \$84 million (10 per cent) was subgranted to local and national actors through other country-based pooled fund and regional humanitarian pooled fund partners. The funds developed localization strategies which outlined priority actions to advance support to local actors in the provision of humanitarian assistance. Approximately one quarter of the Central Emergency Response Fund's underfunded emergencies funding was indirectly allocated to national and local actors, a significant increase from a historical average of 15 per cent. Other United Nations funding mechanisms have reported continued progress, such as the United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, 24 per cent of whose civil society organization recipients were led by forcibly displaced women.

103. UNHCR and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies reported that 43 stakeholders and more than \$105 million were mobilized to support more than 620 local organizations in 2024 under the multi-stakeholder pledge on advancing localization in displacement and statelessness responses.

H. Mental health and psychosocial support

104. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings supported surge deployments and joint missions to support response in the Central African Republic, Chad, Lebanon, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Türkiye, Ukraine, Yemen and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. By the end of 2024, mental health and psychosocial support coordination mechanisms were established in 90 per cent of United Nations-coordinated humanitarian operations. The number of rostered inter-agency mental health and psychosocial support experts doubled.

³⁷ Thirty-one humanitarian needs overviews, humanitarian response plans and humanitarian needs and response plans published by the end of April 2024 were reviewed.

105. There was a growing need for mental health and psychosocial support for humanitarian staff operating in the most challenging settings, many of whom were national and local staff whose families and communities were affected by humanitarian crises.

V. Recommendations

106. On the basis of the foregoing, the Secretary-General recommends the following:

(a) Member States, parties to conflict and humanitarian organizations should promote and ensure full respect for and adherence to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence to ensure that people in need receive humanitarian assistance without discrimination or interference;

(b) Member States and parties to conflict must comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, international human rights law and international refugee law, including with respect to the protection of civilians, to respect and protect humanitarian and medical personnel, to respect and protect medical facilities and to hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes and to act on Security Council resolution [2730 \(2024\)](#) and the Secretary-General's related recommendations;

(c) Member States and parties to conflict must allow and facilitate rapid, unhindered, safe and sustained access to and for impartial humanitarian relief, including medical care, at scale, and remove impediments to access;

(d) Parties to conflict must not attack, destroy, remove or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. They must protect critical civilian infrastructure and not deprive civilians of food, water and sanitation, medical supplies, electricity and fuel required for their survival;

(e) Member States and parties to conflict should take urgent steps to prevent famine, to end the use of starvation as a method of warfare and to scale up actions for immediate food security, nutrition, healthcare, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and protection, while addressing the root causes of food crises;

(f) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations should advance and protect the rights of women and girls in humanitarian action, including scaling up prevention and mitigation of and response to sexual and gender-based violence, and ensure that local women's organizations are represented in humanitarian decision-making, and provide them with adequate and flexible funding;

(g) Member States and parties to conflict are called upon to refrain from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, where civilian harm may be expected; and Member States should advance the implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas;

(h) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors should protect the rights and respond to the needs of internally displaced persons in accordance with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and strengthen efforts to achieve durable solutions and address root causes of forced and protracted displacement in line with the Secretary-General's Action Agenda;

(i) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations should bring to scale mental health and psychosocial support for affected populations; and for humanitarian personnel, including local and national staff, operating in high-stress environments;

(j) Member States and the private sector are called upon to significantly increase timely and predictable financial and other forms of support to fully fund humanitarian response plans, noting that failure to act risks devastating consequences for millions of people whose survival depends on sustained international support and funding; and to further diversify the donor base and other partnerships, including scaling up innovative and anticipatory financing mechanisms; and to support the Secretary-General's Central Emergency Response Fund to reach the funding target of \$1 billion in 2025, marking the twentieth anniversary of the creation of the Fund by the General Assembly, as well as to support regional and country-based pooled funds, which are faster, more efficient and more effective funding instruments for responding to humanitarian needs and saving lives;

(k) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations should scale up their efforts to prevent, mitigate and respond to disasters, including the adverse effects of climate change in humanitarian emergencies, and accelerate adaptation and resilience-building efforts through humanitarian preparedness and response;

(l) Member States, the United Nations, humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts should continue to strengthen partnerships, including by development donors, international financial institutions and multilateral development banks increasing financing in contexts of vulnerability to support the transition from relief to development and invest in the longer-term systems for the provision of essential services, and humanitarian donors increasing funding for principled humanitarian action;

(m) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations should enhance collaboration with regional and subregional organizations to maximize synergies in humanitarian response, in particular by strengthening coordination, sharing best practices and leveraging regional capacities for disaster preparedness, response and recovery;

(n) Member States should take concrete measures to fulfil their respective commitments in the Pact for the Future, many of which are reflected in the above recommendations, with support from the United Nations system.
