

CHAPTER 5.1

RESPONDING TO CHANGING CRISES

'We are happy to receive the assistance, but it cannot turn us self-reliant and can never cover all the needs.'

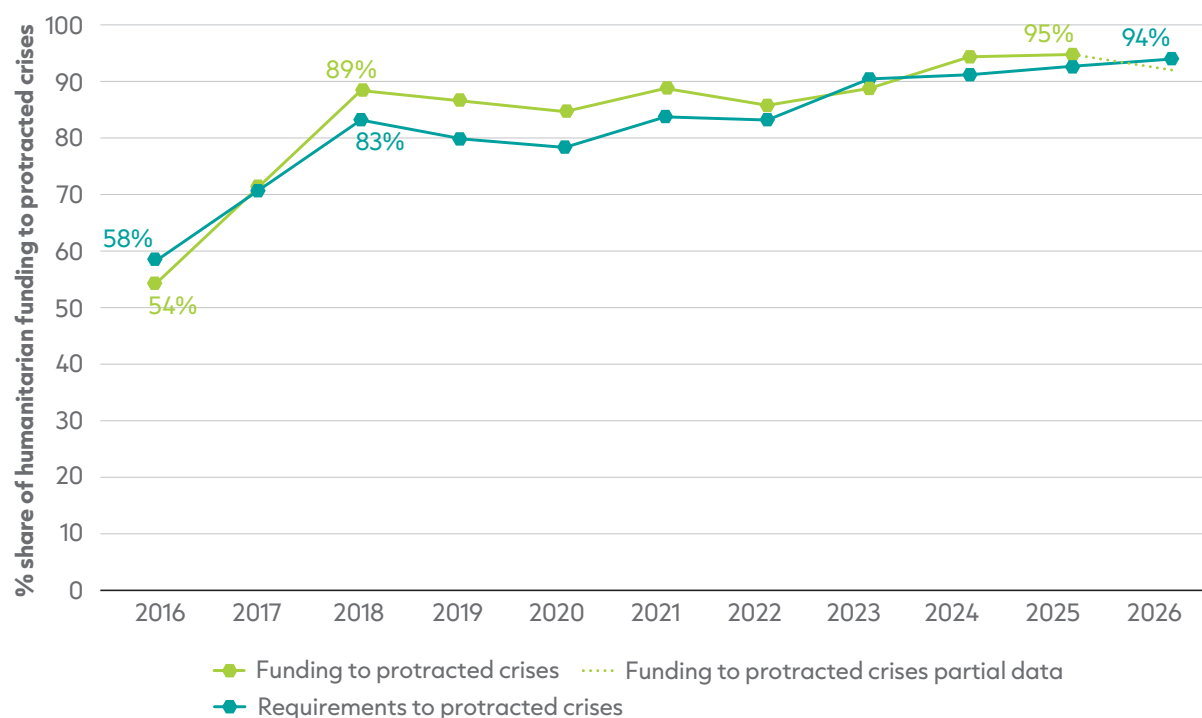
— Displaced person, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Conflict intensified and spread across the 2022–25 period, with crises lasting longer, affecting more civilians and generating more complex displacement patterns. The climate crisis compounded this – and will continue to increase humanitarian need over the next decade – underscoring the necessity to address the root causes of crisis and sustain engagement across humanitarian, development and peace (HDP) systems. Yet development, peace and climate finance faced simultaneous pressures, with total official development assistance (ODA) reducing by 23.1% in 2025. Disaster risk reduction (DRR), anticipatory action and some innovative financing mechanisms showed potential for better understanding and managing risks, but they were small-scale compared with aid financing. Local and national actors did some of the joined-up work the HDP nexus aspires to, but they were not well-resourced to sustain it; goals for reducing recurrent needs featured in many humanitarian response plans but attracted little funding. With humanitarian financing contracting and its remit narrowing to 'lifesaving', it is important to build bridges that connect development, climate and peace systems without simply adding another layer of bureaucracy.

The changing crisis landscape

Protracted crises (those lasting five or more years) dominated the humanitarian landscape over this SOHS period, accounting for a greater share of both needs and funding. Nearly all humanitarian funding for interagency appeals went to protracted crisis contexts – 95% in 2025 – almost identical to the 94% of all funding that is needed for protracted crisis contexts in 2026. While percentages upwards of 90% have been the norm since 2024, this was not always the case: in 2016, only 54% of funding went to protracted crisis contexts.ⁱ

ⁱ Based on the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS), the Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) dashboards and data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Figure 5.1: Percentage of funding and overall funding requirements of UN-coordinated appeals focused on protracted crisis contexts, 2016–2026

Source: OCHA FTS, Syria 3RP dashboards and UNHCR data.

Notes: Funding for 2026 is preliminary, as of May 2026. Contexts are considered in protracted crisis when they have had five or more years of consecutive humanitarian appeal, regional appeals are considered protracted when they have existed for five or more consecutive years. Funding and requirements considered not to a protracted crisis includes all funding and requirements under appeals reported by OCHA that have not existed for five or more consecutive years. This does not include global appeals, such as the global elements of the Covid-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan.



Protracted crises were characterised by high levels of displacement. Internally displaced people faced heightened protection risks, interrupted livelihoods, and inadequate and temporary shelter. An assessment of the humanitarian system's response to internal displacement found that little had changed over 30 years and that responses stayed in emergency mode long after the acute phase of crisis, contributing to people being stuck in 'limbo' with inadequate access to livelihood support, education, civil documentation and housing.¹ This contributed to higher mortality and worse health outcomes among internally displaced people than any other population group in humanitarian emergencies.² Compounding this, organisations largely excluded this population from decisions about their own situations; internally displaced people consistently prioritised safety of return, livelihood support and rights, but they reported that such support was unavailable and that they had little access to information about aid programmes or organisations' longer-term plans.

The climate crisis intensified the challenges of protracted crises. Of the 25 most climate-vulnerable countries, 19 were also fragile and conflict-affected situations, which typically lacked the capacity to prepare for, respond to or



rebuild between climate-related crises.³ In Somalia, Yemen and the Sahel, climate shocks compounded conflict and pushed people into successive food-insecurity crises.ⁱⁱ Some humanitarians concluded that the climate crisis demands a fundamental rethink of humanitarian practices. For example, Hugo Slim, author of *Humanitarianism 2.0: New Ethics for the Climate Emergency*, argued that protecting the natural world should be a core humanitarian concern; that impartiality should consider suffering across a universal crisis, rather than prioritising discrete emergencies; and that humanitarians should embrace anticipation and long-term adaptation alongside traditional emergency response.⁴



Climate risk generated new forms of humanitarian need for which the system had limited tools



Extreme heat in this period illustrated how climate risk generated new forms of humanitarian need for which the system had limited tools.⁵ Local organisations offered 'tangible, effective, and often low-cost strategies' to reduce humanitarian risk, such as adapting school calendars in South Sudan and establishing community cooling centres in Sibi, Pakistan.⁶ However, wider humanitarian engagement was still 'nascent';⁷ in India, for example,

early-warning systems that had achieved dramatic reductions in cyclone mortality were not adequately adapted for heat, and the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute reported that data on heat impacts remained scattered and insufficiently focused on the people most vulnerable to the impacts of extreme heat.⁸

The humanitarian system's mandate, funding architecture and planning cycles were not designed to handle recurrent or permanent displacement in which climate and conflict compounded across the same populations and contexts. Yet well before the 2025 prioritisation process, the system was using short-term emergency grants (12–18 months) in protracted crises that lasted a decade on average. ODI Global argued that the language of *lifesaving* and *emergency* obscured the operational reality that most of what the system was doing was sustaining, rather than saving, lives.⁹ Successive *State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS)* reports have documented the system's relative strength in responding to acute shocks, but protracted, climate-driven, repeated and predictable crises have come to dominate the caseload, and immediate emergency response has been insufficient. As humanitarian financing contracted and the sector's remit narrowed explicitly towards 'lifesaving' basics, important questions arose: Had the humanitarian system built effective bridges with the development, climate and peace systems – and were actors in those systems still present to engage with?



Protracted, climate-driven, repeated and predictable crises have come to dominate the caseload



ii Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 (Crisis), Phase 4 (Emergency) and Phase 5 (Catastrophe/Famine).



The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) five-year monitoring report of its 2019 recommendation on the HDP nexus found that Development Assistant Committee (DAC) members had developed new policies, strategies and modalities to make their development and humanitarian instruments more cohesive. Some had made internal structural changes to reduce silos and there was visible momentum, but OECD concluded that fundamental changes to response models and architecture were still required.¹⁰ Some practitioners emphasised that the main limitations were under-resourced national and local systems for basic services as well as the volume and the flexibility of development funding in protracted settings. This included politically complex contexts where development actors had withdrawn and humanitarians had filled gaps that humanitarian funding was not well-designed to address.

The financing landscape

Total ODA fell by 23.1% in real terms in 2025.¹¹ Across countries included in the *Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) 2025*, total non-humanitarian financing from DAC members in 2022–24 amounted to US\$256.6 billion,ⁱⁱⁱ most of which was development finance (81.0%) or peace finance (18.6%). Funding was highly concentrated: Ukraine alone accounted for US\$98.1 billion (38.2%). Climate finance often bypassed contexts affected by crisis (there were negligible levels of non-ODA climate finance),^{iv} and private capital tended not to reach crisis contexts.

Development funding again became the largest share of ODA to protracted crisis contexts in 2024. However, humanitarian funding exceeded development finance in seven of the most severe and long-running crises at several points during 2022–24. In the most extreme case – Syria – humanitarian funding accounted for 90% of all external financing; in Sudan, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Somalia and Yemen, it accounted for 38–58%, while climate finance across all five combined reached just US\$9.4 million.

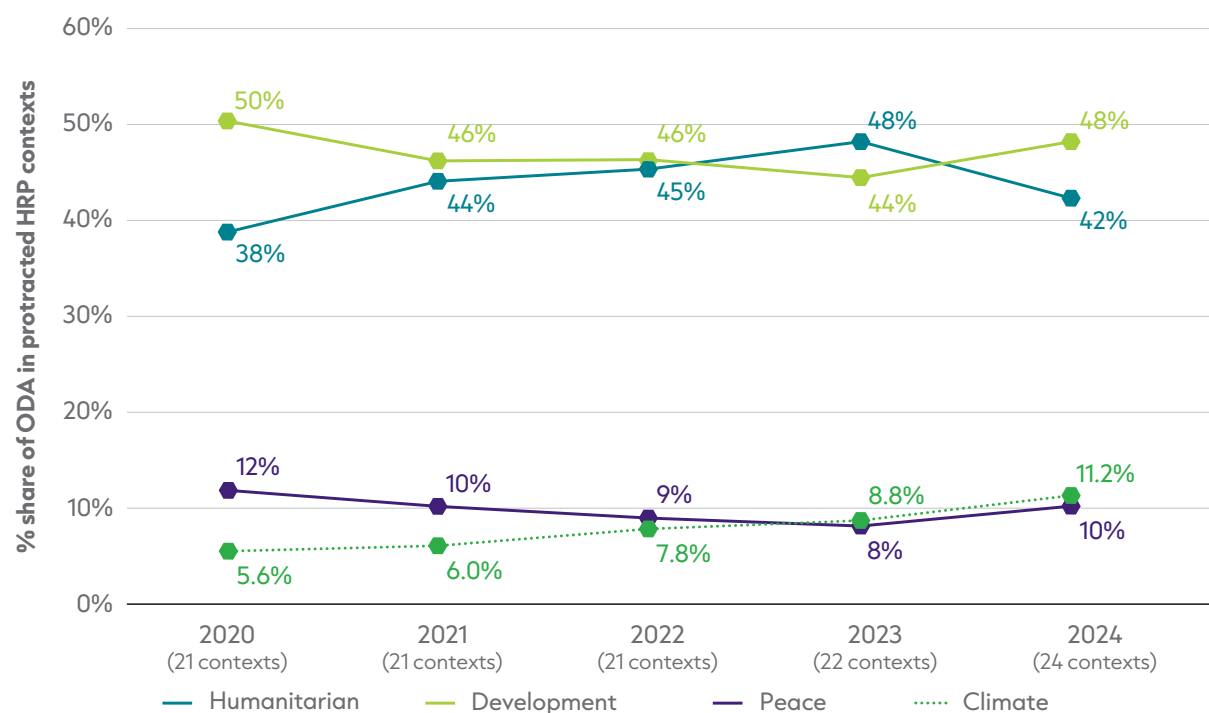
Humanitarian funding exceeded development finance in seven of the most severe and long-running crises

Where climate-marked ODA did reach GHO countries, it was generally not the primary objective of that funding. In 70.4% of the US\$30.3 billion that donors said was climate-related, climate was only a secondary objective; the funding was primarily for another sector (such as education or health).^v Double-counting between humanitarian and climate expenditure lines made it difficult to track this funding.¹²

iii Values in this 'The financing landscape' subsection on the composition of humanitarian financing stem from ALNAP-commissioned thematic analysis on HDP nexus and climate financing – see [Annex 1](#) for more information.

iv Accounting for 0.5% of total non-humanitarian financing from DAC members in 2022–24.

v DAC donor funding to *GHO 2025* countries (2022–24). Data coded as significant rather than principal using the Rio climate markers on ODA flows.

Figure 5.2: Share of ODA to development, humanitarian, peace and climate to protracted contexts (excluding Ukraine), 2020–2024

Source: Based on OECD DAC Common Reporting Standards (CRS).

Notes: Excludes Ukraine as a recipient in all years. Climate share is cross-cutting across other categories. Recipients vary between years. HRP = Humanitarian Response Plan. Ukraine meets the GHA definition of a protracted crisis but is excluded to give a clearer view of underlying trends across other protracted crisis contexts, given the scale of development funding allocated to Ukraine by DAC members since 2022.



In 2025, peace financing (low throughout the SOHS period) reached its second-lowest level since 2004 in contexts of 'high' or 'extreme fragility'.¹³ Considering all countries included in the GHO 2025, Ukraine absorbed 63.5% of peace finance (US\$30 billion) across 2022–24. In the 10 highest-ranking contexts within OECD's States of Fragility security dimension, peace accounted for just 15% of combined development and peace financing in 2024 – and there was no clear relationship between fragility ranking and financing volume. Again for the countries in the GHO 2025, the peace portfolio was dominated by funding for governance and public-sector support (87%); only 13% addressed drivers of conflict through activities such as conflict prevention, disarmament and demobilisation or security reform. Peacekeeping expenditure also declined by 16.9% across those countries between 2022 and 2024 (from US\$5.80 billion to US\$4.82 billion), driven mainly by the closure of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) that was deployed in that country over 2013–23.

Multilateral finance, debt and climate finance

Multilateral development bank (MDB) funding for the top-20 humanitarian crises tripled between 2014 and 2023 (from US\$3.5 billion to US\$10.3 billion).¹⁴



The World Bank's crisis-related instruments brought development finance closer to humanitarian contexts, and many practitioners saw potential in their ability to offer multiyear funding.^{vi} Over the period, the Window for Host Communities and Refugees^{vii} grew modestly, and a World Bank partnership with the UNHCR to support refugee-hosting costs broadened its reach, though by the end of the period this Window had dropped its commitment that at least 60% of eligible countries would make significant policy reforms on refugees.^{viii} The World Bank's Fragility, Conflict and Violence Envelope^{ix} also sought to provide additional financing to conflict settings.¹⁵

However, the form of MDB funding was a concern to some practitioners. For example, in 2025 61% of International Development Association (IDA) financing to humanitarian contexts took the form of loans rather than grants, meaning that countries already at risk of debt distress were, in effect, borrowing to meet basic needs.^x Practitioners also questioned whether MDB finance reached the people most affected by crisis, particularly as a draft refresh of the World Bank Fragility, Conflict and Violence strategy^{xi} centred on jobs, security and access to justice, rather than on safety nets.¹⁶

61% of IDA financing to humanitarian contexts were loans rather than grants – countries already at risk of debt distress were borrowing to meet basic needs

Domestic revenue systems in protracted contexts were often too constrained to absorb the costs of humanitarian withdrawal, with tax-to-gross domestic product (GDP) ratios in several deprioritised contexts running well below regional averages.^{xii} Debt burdens compounded the financing gap in the contexts most dependent on external support. On average, countries facing protracted crises spent twice as much on government debt payments in 2024 as they did a decade earlier.¹⁷ In 2024, Sudan spent the highest proportion of government revenue on external debt payments (42%), followed by Cameroon (21%) and Nigeria (20%).¹⁸ Four countries (Ethiopia, Sudan, Malawi and Zimbabwe) were already in debt distress, and nine more were at high risk, meaning that 41% of *GHO 2025* countries faced severe constraints on domestic fiscal space.^{xiii} Countries with poor credit ratings that could not access concessional MDB finance increasingly turned to more expensive private creditors, including domestic commercial banks, to manage cashflow problems.¹⁹ Debt repayments left less money for health,

vi Including the Window for Host Communities and Refugees and the Crisis Response Window.

vii The World Bank Window for Host Communities and Refugees is a special financing mechanism that was launched in 2017 to help low-income countries manage large-scale refugee crises.

viii Such as granting refugees the right to work or access to national services (see Dempster and Ginn (2026) <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/world-banks-window-host-communities-and-refugees-successes-challenges-and-way-forward>).

ix A dedicated World Bank financing stream that provides additional resources to countries facing acute fragility, conflict or violence, on top of their regular country allocations. It aims to help these countries address the drivers and impacts of conflict.

x ALNAP-commissioned thematic analysis on HDP nexus and climate financing, see [Annex 1](#).

xi A dedicated World Bank strategy for finance to contexts that are fragile, affected by conflict and violent.

xii ALNAP-commissioned thematic analysis on HDP nexus and climate financing, see [Annex 1](#).

xiii ALNAP-commissioned thematic analysis on HDP nexus and climate financing, see [Annex 1](#).



education, social protection and climate adaptation,²⁰ raising questions about whether new debt-based financing mechanisms risked compounding problems.

Debt repayments left less money for health, education, social protection and climate adaptation

One promising development was the emergence of Climate-Resilient Debt Clauses (CRDCs): agreements that allowed countries to pause debt servicing for up to two years after a severe climate shock. At the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP28), five MDBs committed to incorporating CRDCs into future sovereign lending and 73 countries urged all creditors to adopt them

urgently.²¹ In 2024, St Vincent and the Grenadines was the first country to exercise a deferral, after Hurricane Beryl, and the World Bank increased the scope of CRDCs later that year to cover all natural hazards.²² However, CRDCs remained limited in coverage with only 14 of 45 eligible countries including them in loan agreements in 2024.²³

Climate finance was not always well-aligned with needs in protracted crisis contexts. For example, MDB climate finance that did reach GHO 2025 countries in 2024 was weighted towards mitigation (reducing future emissions) over adaptation (coping with existing climate impacts) – at 60.2% compared to 37.4%, respectively, with an additional 2.4% marked as both.^{xiv} Despite some commitments during this period,²⁴ analysis consistently found that ‘the more fragile a country is, the less adaptation finance it receives’.²⁵ Climate-finance institutions were designed for government counterparts with strong technical capacity; many conflict-affected states lacked the institutional bandwidth to navigate their complex application processes and meet fiduciary requirements.²⁶ Most humanitarian agencies remained outside the Green Climate Fund (GCF) architecture entirely, though the UN Development Programme (UNDP) was implementing early-warning systems projects²⁷ and the World Health Organization (WHO) completed the lengthy GCF accreditation in March 2026, opening a potential financing channel through health programming into humanitarian contexts.²⁸

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The Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage was the first formal international agreement to create a dedicated mechanism for climate-related loss and damage. Governments made initial pledges of approximately US\$789 million,

xiv ALNAP commissioned thematic analysis on HDP nexus and climate financing, see [Annex 1](#).



although only US\$348 million had been paid into the fund by mid-2025;²⁹ there were bureaucratic delays, barriers to converting pledges into actual financing and challenges developing an allocation approach that prioritised climate vulnerability.³⁰ The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) described the global situation as both 'underfinanced' and 'underprepared'.³¹

In January 2025, the United States withdrew from the Paris Agreement and rescinded US\$4 billion in pledges to climate funds,³² alongside wider reductions in finance. Before closing the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the US had accounted for nearly 10% of global climate finance.³³ Other wealthier countries did not fill the gap; indeed, several reduced their projected climate-finance delivery. These wealthier countries were highly unlikely to have met their pledge to double adaptation funding (to around US\$40 billion a year) by 2025.³⁴

New and alternative finance mechanisms

Efforts to link humanitarian and development funding were limited by both structural and political constraints. Earmarking by large donors continued to constrain flexibility, and 10 out of 11 Humanitarian Country Teams surveyed by the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) cited financing as the primary barrier to implementing the HDP approach.³⁵ Likewise, some aid practitioners we surveyed rated 'siloe funding' and 'short-term funding and planning' as barriers to the HDP approach, while senior practitioners and other respondents noted incompatible structures and a lack of coordination.

Grand Bargain 3.0 discussions identified the HDP nexus as a core theme and proposed joint funding windows and longer grant cycles.³⁶ Several donors made internal structural changes: Ireland established a dedicated unit to bring together the political and development-cooperation aspects of its peace and stability work;³⁷ in 2025, OECD assessed Switzerland's merger of its humanitarian and development units (reported in the *2022 SOHS*) as having enabled joined-up analysis and response to emerging and protracted crises, linking short and long-term programming;³⁸ and some Country-Based Pooled Funds began allowing allocations to support recovery and other longer-term activities, alongside immediate response. However, these small institutional shifts did not translate into measurably different financing approaches.

Crisis modifiers were one of few approaches that showed promise for improving links between development and humanitarian activities within a single funding instrument. By embedding a contingency budget line in an existing development or humanitarian programme that could be triggered by a shock, they offered an entry point for an HDP approach and allowed more 'risk-conscious' programming.³⁹



For example, USAID employed crisis modifiers in Ethiopia.⁴⁰ In general, however, financial tracking instruments did not include crisis-modifier volumes; published evidence was also thin (though the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) argued that, in all likelihood, more were being used than were included in published evidence).⁴¹

Crisis modifiers were one of few approaches that showed promise for improving links between development and humanitarian activities

In response to the growing mismatch between a more protracted, more climate-driven crisis landscape and existing financing architecture, humanitarians increasingly explored a range of alternative financing mechanisms, with significant growth in pre-financing and trigger-based financing mechanisms for disasters. Pre-arranged finance reached US\$9.4 billion in 2024, though only 7% of that went to 'low-income' or 'fragile and conflict-affected' countries,⁴² and the Centre for Disaster Preparedness described 'an urgent need for more instruments tailored to those nations'.⁴³ However, there was also progress: the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) expanded its anticipatory-action portfolio⁴⁴ and four CERF frameworks were triggered in 2024 alone, which released US\$19.6 million ahead of floods in Bangladesh, Chad, Nepal and Niger.⁴⁵ In Bangladesh, funds reached 388,000 people five days before peak flood levels and were activated within 16 minutes of the trigger threshold being met.⁴⁶ Analysts described how such risk-based mechanisms could encourage organisations to better manage risk over time, rather than simply reacting to shocks.⁴⁷

Interest in insurance-based approaches to humanitarian financing also continued to grow over the period. There were large payouts from the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (US\$91.9 million to Jamaica in 2025)⁴⁸ and the African Risk Capacity (US\$84.8 million to African Union member states and humanitarian partners in 2024).^{xv} In Jamaica, for example, one regional disaster management agency told us that previous investments in DRR provided a 'base layer' for risk financing that included parametric insurance, contingent lines of credit and a catastrophe bond. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) also secured the first indemnity-insurance policy for the system, insuring the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund against funding exhaustion in years of exceptional need with contingency funding of US\$23 million.^{xvi} The policy was triggered for the first time in 2024, generating a CHF14.4 million payout (equivalent to approximately US\$16.4 million in 2024) that supported 31 operations.⁴⁹ Practitioners described these mechanisms as helping stabilise rapid-response capacity without needing to hold large idle reserves, but they emphasised the

xv Replica policy payouts (allowing humanitarian organisations to mirror and top up government insurance policies) to the World Food Programme (WFP), UNHCR and the Start Network totalled approximately US\$24.4 million (see ARC Ltd (2025) <https://arcltd.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/ARC-report-2024-English.pdf>).

xvi This was informed by the Danish Red Cross' Volcano Catastrophe Bond – the first humanitarian catastrophe bond listed on a stock exchange – which ran over 2021–24 (see IFRC (2023) <https://www.ifrc.org/press-release/ifrc-launches-groundbreaking-financial-mechanism-transform-disaster-response>).



challenge of ensuring triggers are designed to match communities' experience of disasters, as well as the need to invest in state and community engagement.

Other mechanisms explored in this SOHS period included blended finance (piloted through initiatives supported by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)),^{xvii} dedicated venture units^{xviii} and debt swaps.^{xix} Pilots were often expensive, slow to develop (often taking two to five years) and highly person-dependent, with insufficient legal expertise and country-level capacity. However, new units (such as the Humanitarian Innovative Finance Hub) facilitated knowledge-sharing, while private counterparts gained experience in working with humanitarian organisations and provided less risky mechanisms for partners lacking technical capacity.

International private capital did not always reach the highest-risk contexts, however. Private finance totalled US\$70 billion globally in 2023, of which an estimated 12% went to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and 6% to social sectors.⁵⁰ Private capital is generally invested where risks are lower and returns clearer. OECD noted that private finance has scarcely benefited those countries most in need, and that risk perceptions continue to deter investors.⁵¹

Some organisations saw opportunities for better coordination with diaspora remittances,⁵² which accounted for a high proportion of GDP in several crisis settings: 8.5% in Ukraine and 31% in Lebanon in 2023, for example.⁵³ A series of real-time reviews by Diaspora Emergency Action and Coordination (DEMAC) illustrated that diasporas offer early local intelligence, trusted networks and the capacity to act quickly.⁵⁴ In Lebanon, diaspora-led mobilisation was rapid but integration with formal coordination structures remained weak, and local organisations lacked strategies for proactive diaspora engagement.⁵⁵ Remittances mostly focused on individual households, rather than projects, although DEMAC was exploring pre-designed crowdfunding campaigns for anticipatory-action projects that could be activated against early-warning triggers.⁵⁶

Planning and coordination



'Even if you fix today's crisis, those people you've saved today will die in six months' time ... because we have failed to fix the biggest threat that exists. And I don't know that anyone's found a good way to have that conversation.' Climate expert and aid worker

xvii Blended finance combines grant funding with private investment.

xviii The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children and Mercy Corps have all established venture-capital funds to invest in social enterprises delivering essential products and services – including access to finance, energy, healthcare and education – in settings affected by crisis.

xix In a debt swap, a creditor agrees to reduce a country's debt in exchange for the debtor investing those freed-up resources in agreed social or environmental programmes.



There was good progress in joint analysis and planning in several contexts. OECD's aforementioned five-year review found structural changes in context analysis;⁵⁷ for example, joint assessment exercises were undertaken in food security crises in Venezuela, Haiti, Chad, Sudan, Somalia, Syria and Pakistan.⁵⁸ UNDP and UNHCR launched a Global Collaboration Framework for Inclusion and Solutions (2023–25), which aimed to increase joint assessments, establish common standards and 'combine innovations with data to scale up successful solutions'.⁵⁹ A World Bank–UNHCR Joint Data Centre on Forced Displacement generated socioeconomic data⁶⁰ and supported at least one national census to integrate issues affecting internally displaced people into their data analysis.⁶¹

Collective outcomes (jointly envisioned results agreed among humanitarian, peace and development actors, with timeframes of three to five years) were common but tended to focus on immediate needs rather than underlying drivers. Case studies warned that they risked creating a new, parallel layer of planning,⁶² and practitioners told us that a mismatch between the centralised architecture of the humanitarian system and the state-led frameworks for most development work, as well as different organisational skillsets and cultures (for example, between clusters and MDBs), led to disconnects in HDP discussions at country level. The OECD five-year review tracked self-reported processes (such as collective outcomes) rather than whether needs, risks or vulnerability had reduced; evaluations were inconsistent in what they measured;⁶³ and some practitioners said much of what was described as 'the nexus' was simply a relabelling of existing practices.



A mismatch between the centralised architecture of the humanitarian system and the state-led frameworks for most development work led to disconnects in HDP discussions at country level



Positive examples of coordination in Iraq and Uganda were attributed to 'strong government ownership, donor interest and existing country coordination'.⁶⁴ In Ukraine, there were large-scale joint assessments; the EU4Recovery framework addressed livelihood, service delivery and social-cohesion needs simultaneously;⁶⁵ and staff from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) told us the European Union (EU) accession process created political will and financing for childcare, education and social protection reforms that had previously failed. Globally, however, only 40% of aid practitioners we surveyed reported 'excellent' or 'good' government involvement in humanitarian activities.



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Some organisations proposed area-based coordination as a way to improve coordination for the HDP nexus. A practitioner account in Mali described how it allowed joint planning between the MINUSMA, Malian defence and security forces, UN agencies and international NGOs (INGOs). This secured humanitarian access to Mondoro (central Mali) and enabled health needs assessment, thereby contributing to reduced mortality from preventable diseases.⁶⁶ Area-based pilots also supported HDP coordination in some parts of Yemen,⁶⁷ Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo,⁶⁸ but these did not reliably translate into joined-up implementation across the HDP nexus (see also [Chapter 2.2](#)).

Programming

Progress on the nexus was the lowest-rated performance measure in our aid-practitioner survey: only 28% of respondents rated it 'excellent' or 'good' in 2025 (compared with 27% in our 2022 survey). The gap between institutions was wide: 49% of surveyed local and national NGO (L/NNGO) staff rated progress positively, compared to just 21% of INGO staff and 10% of UN staff. People we spoke to suggested this may reflect different conceptions of the nexus itself.

For example, IASC mapping found that local actors defined progress in terms of community-level integrated programming rather than formal coordination processes.⁶⁹ Indeed, local and national actors often pieced together humanitarian and longer-term development programming⁷⁰ even in the most severe crises: from local food-production cooperatives in Gaza to community-led DRR initiatives in Myanmar (see [Chapter 2.2](#)).

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There were several larger-scale examples of joint programming in this period. The Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen programme brought together food security, livelihoods, climate-resilience and social-cohesion activities across eight governorates; among 47,000 households, the Food Consumption Score (an indicator of household food security) increased by 26–53%, reliance on humanitarian aid fell by 48%, and 70% of communities reported stronger social cohesion.⁷¹ Overall, however, the inclusion of civil society, L/NNGOs and local government in top-down nexus policy and programming was weak. An OECD review found that putting people at the centre often remained a generic ambition in programming,⁷² and a review of nexus evaluations from 2018 to mid-2022 found that only 4% referenced locally or nationally led approaches.⁷³

Evaluations in Ethiopia, Somalia, Afghanistan and Yemen consistently revealed that HRP goals to reduce recurrent need were largely unmet. There were some successes – for example, support to government bodies for rebuilding water infrastructure rather



than trucking in Haiti,⁷⁴ early support for the agricultural sector in Afghanistan,⁷⁵ and implementation of 'peace-supportive approaches' in a food-systems project in Sudan⁷⁶ – as well as attempts to harmonise national social safety-net mechanisms with humanitarian cash distribution.⁷⁷ Overall, however, humanitarian 'lifesaving' approaches consistently 'took precedence when crises escalated'.⁷⁸ Recurring problems included underfunding livelihoods, land-ownership issues, an absence of coherent linkages to social protection systems (see [Chapter 2.2](#)), short-term funding, separate budgets, and conflicting understandings of the nexus among and between HDP actors.⁷⁹ The Somalia Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) concluded that 'the humanitarian response did little to contribute to livelihoods and resilience of affected people'.⁸⁰



Where the nexus did achieve results, they were most visible in DRR and anticipatory action

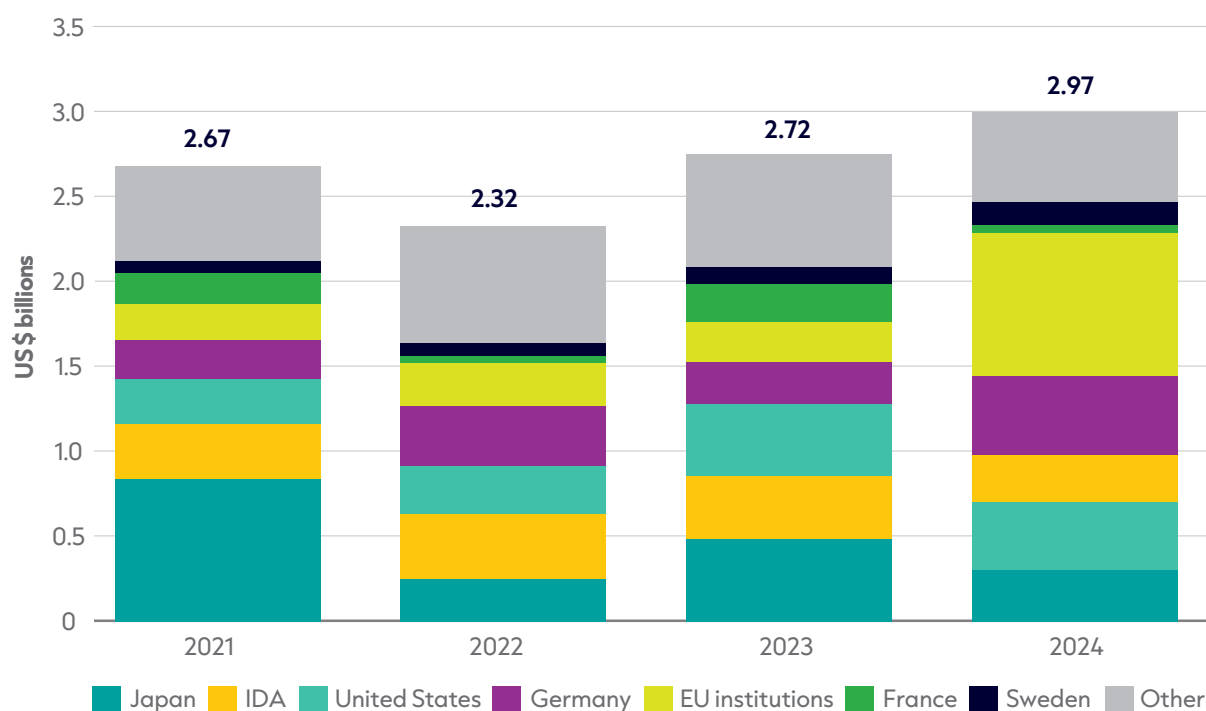
Where the nexus did achieve results, they were most visible in DRR and anticipatory action. In Bangladesh, for example – where there was sustained domestic investment in multilayered early-warning systems, cyclone shelters and climate education in schools, alongside NGO activities such as gender-inclusive volunteer

programmes⁸¹ – deaths fell by over 100-fold since the 1970s (despite increased climate risks). This established the country as a model for climate-adaptive humanitarian programming.⁸² When Cyclone Remal struck in May 2024, early warning and mass evacuation kept the death toll low, with around 807,000 people moved to 9,424 government shelters and 16 deaths recorded, even as the storm affected 4.6 million people⁸³ – though the effect on livelihoods remained, with around US\$90.7 million in crop losses and infrastructure damage estimated at US\$600 million.⁸⁴

Globally, the mid-term review⁸⁵ of the Sendai Framework for DRR (the primary global policy framework for reducing disaster risk) also identified areas of progress, including better tools for understanding climate–conflict intersections, some improvements in risk governance at the national and regional levels, and nascent DRR funds for conflict-affected settings. Overall, however, the mid-term review found that progress on developing strategies and frameworks has not been matched by implementation.

Between 2021 and 2024, approximately US\$10.7 billion was allocated globally for DRR and preparedness; this figure grew to US\$2.97 billion in 2024 – a 9% increase on 2023 levels. Five donors accounted for nearly 70% of all funding: Japan, EU institutions, the US, the IDA and Germany each contributed the equivalent of over US\$1 billion across the period. However, their trajectories diverged significantly: while Japan remained the largest single donor, its contributions fell from US\$830 million in 2021 to US\$304 million in 2024, whereas EU institutions more than tripled their funding to US\$829 million in 2024.^{xx}

xx Based on OECD DAC CRS data.

Figure 5.3: Volumes of humanitarian assistance for DRR and preparedness by donor, 2021–2024

Source: OECD DAC CRS data.

Notes: Volumes are based on disbursements data using purpose codes for disaster prevention and preparedness, as well as DRR. Projects which have a principal DRR marker or are picked up as having major DRR relevance by key word search and are allocated to emergency/humanitarian purpose codes are also included and considered projects with mainstreamed DRR.



Robust early-warning systems were central to many gains, providing the trigger mechanisms that allowed anticipatory funding to flow before climate events

Anticipatory action also grew steadily, reaching 1% of humanitarian funding in 2025, and the evidence base for it increased (see [Chapter 2.2](#)).⁸⁶ Robust early-warning systems were central to many gains, providing the trigger mechanisms that allowed anticipatory funding to flow before (rather than after) climate events.⁸⁷ The UN's Early Warnings for All initiative launched in 2022 and 60% of all countries had a multihazard early-warning system in place by the end of 2025, with Africa seeing the largest gains in the number of countries with early-warning systems.⁸⁸ Yet the popularity of

early warning as a relatively low-cost investment also contributed to significant fragmentation, with one senior humanitarian describing multiple parallel systems operating in the same contexts and limited coordination between them.

Despite being a stated priority in Grand Bargain 3.0 discussions and in the OECD recommendation, climate was rarely integrated into humanitarian planning. In a



review of nexus evaluations between 2018 and 2022, climate was a meaningful element in only six of 90 evaluations.⁸⁹ Joint analysis frameworks rarely incorporated climate data in ways that informed programming decisions, and the skills and data needed for climate-sensitive planning were absent from most Humanitarian Country Team structures.

The proportion of ODA directed to peace in all GHO countries (including in Ukraine) fell slightly in this period (from 19.4% in 2022 to 17.0% in 2024),^{xxi} while a 'segmented mindset' prevented actors from forging links.⁹⁰ Diplomats and mediators did not often draw on humanitarian or development analysis, and the peace pillar lagged behind – despite its inclusion at policy level.⁹¹ The original recommendation to establish the HDP nexus described the peace pillar broadly, spanning community-level social cohesion, political dialogue and institution-building, and the diplomatic and security efforts that shape the conditions for peace.⁹² In practice, humanitarians often saw peace-building as community-level social cohesion and sometimes failed to engage with diplomatic and security actors, which some practitioners attributed to discomfort working alongside them.

Despite being a stated priority in Grand Bargain 3.0 discussions and in the OECD recommendation, climate was rarely integrated into humanitarian planning

Local organisations continued to invest in community-level conflict resolution,⁹³ but this was often invisible to the formal system and under-resourced.⁹⁴ For example, we spoke to aid workers in Myanmar who undertook de facto peace work, including community mediation and social-cohesion programming, with neither formal recognition nor resourcing from the international system. In Sudan, as formal courts and state institutions ceased to function, communities developed their own mechanisms to resolve family and custody disputes (see [Chapter 3.3](#)).

When the humanitarian system exits

The number of crises classified as 'protracted' rose from 19 of 43 (44%) in 2016 to 35 of 46 (76%) in 2025, and this contributed to the challenge of humanitarian exits.⁹⁵ Several evaluations identified the absence of exit strategies as a core failing of humanitarian response in protracted crises.⁹⁶ Where exit strategies existed, they largely involved planned linkages with development and peace initiatives, coordination with national and local governments, and plans to build local capacity;⁹⁷ however, these plans did not always materialise.⁹⁸ Humanitarians' expectations about transitions were often mismatched with how both development actors and states functioned, and evaluations called for more efforts to form

xxi Not all data for 2025 was available at the time of analysis.



partnerships that would promote transitions.⁹⁹ In some cases, a senior practitioner explained, humanitarian service-delivery standards exceeded those of other existing government or NGO services, which also made exits difficult.

A synthesis of IAHE evaluations from the period concluded that, in many contexts, a viable model for longer-term recovery proved hard to identify, difficult for donors and international financial institutions to support, and too high-risk for private-sector investors.¹⁰⁰ It also noted that many policies and processes in the system were designed around sudden-onset disasters – which, by the study period, accounted for less than 10% of humanitarian spend – and they assumed a state-supporting role that donors and agencies were reluctant to play.¹⁰¹

The 2026 Humanitarian Programme Cycle introduced a formal requirement for HRPs to consider transitions – both geographic (actors stepping back from specific areas) and sectoral (clusters standing down).¹⁰² Under the Reset, humanitarian agencies within IASC agreed on eight crisis settings where they would speed up the wind-down of the formal humanitarian coordination system,¹⁰³ making those settings a test of how exit planning will actually work in practice. In principle, transition means the state assuming responsibility for the services

the international system has been providing. Yet the financing picture suggests few of these governments were positioned to do so. Across the eight contexts, total ODA disbursements in 2022–24 reached US\$49.2 billion, most of which was development finance (77.5%); humanitarian finance accounted for only 11.5%.^{xxii} However, the simultaneous contraction of humanitarian and development funding risks leaving growing numbers of people without assistance – with the impact falling hardest in protracted crisis contexts where alternative provision is weakest.¹⁰⁴



The simultaneous contraction of humanitarian and development funding risks leaving growing numbers of people without assistance



We spoke to aid workers in Myanmar who undertook de facto peace work, with neither formal recognition nor resourcing from the international system



xxii ALNAP commissioned thematic analysis on HDP nexus and climate financing, see [Annex 1](#).



Conclusion

This SOHS period ended with conflict intensifying and spreading and with the climate crisis compounding humanitarian need. ODA contracted and support was skewed by political priorities. Innovative financing offered promising new ways to engage with risks, but it was small-scale. The HDP nexus provided a policy space for discussion and progress on joint planning, yet not a step-change in practice. The peace pillar of the nexus lagged behind development: ODA for conflict prevention fell, the peace pillar was poorly understood by many humanitarians, and community-level conflict resolution was under-resourced. Ultimately, sustainable responses over 2022–2025 depended on states having both the fiscal space and institutional capacity to deliver. Yet in many contexts, government complicity in crises, decades of aid provided in parallel to public services, and mounting debt burdens left authorities unable – or unwilling – to absorb the costs of humanitarian withdrawal.



Ultimately, sustainable responses over 2022–2025 depended on states having both the fiscal space and institutional capacity to deliver





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