



Humanitarian Aid

Strengthened humanitarian assistance and protection to save lives and alleviate suffering

In 2024, humanitarian needs reached record levels, driven by the growing frequency and intensity of armed conflicts and climate change-induced extreme weather events. Around 300 million people worldwide required humanitarian assistance and protection, including over 117 million displaced from their homes. Despite rising needs, severe underfunding worsened. Sida's humanitarian funding enabled partners to reach nearly 116 million people with protection and life-saving assistance during the year. Sida allocated SEK 4.900 million to humanitarian efforts, corresponding to about 19 per cent of the total disbursement by Sida. Through an approach based on the Humanitarian Principles Sida allocated funding as per severity of acute needs in the world's largest and most complex humanitarian emergencies, such as Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Sudan and Yemen. In 2024, Sida worked with 17 strategic partners to deliver humanitarian assistance in 42 countries.



DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD

In 2024, around 300 million people worldwide needed humanitarian assistance, including over 117 million displaced from their homes. Conflict, climate-related disasters, and economic instability remained the primary drivers of these crises. Humanitarian needs reached record levels, fuelled by the growing frequency and intensity of armed conflicts, including violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and climate change-induced extreme weather events. Despite rising needs, severe underfunding worsened. Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) were implemented in 35 countries, but only an average of 46 per cent of the required funding was received. This funding gap undermined life-saving assistance and protection, forcing humanitarian actors to prioritize the most urgent needs, leaving millions without critical support or protection.

The year was marked by devastating conflicts in Gaza and Sudan, alongside protracted crises in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan and Yemen — among the largest and most complex humanitarian crises. Violations of IHL led to violence against civilians, obstruction of aid and the use of starvation as a weapon of war. Women and children were particularly vulnerable to conflict-related sexual violence and exploitation.¹ Climate change further exacerbated needs, driving hunger and displacement globally. In 2024, FAO and WFP identified 18 hunger hotspots, with Haiti, Mali, Palestine, South Sudan and Sudan, facing the highest risk of catastrophic food insecurity and famine due to conflict, violence, and displacement.²

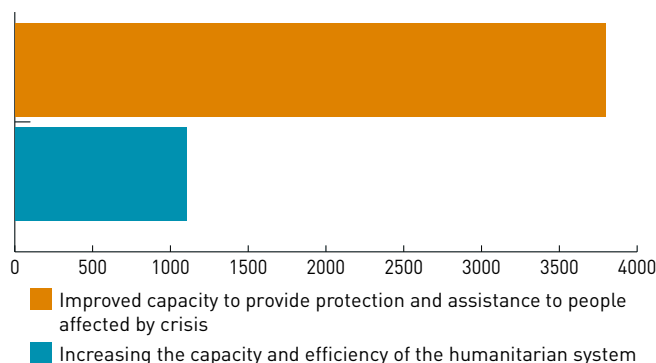
MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT

Sida's humanitarian aid is governed by the Swedish government strategy 2021–2025 with an overall aim of to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity for the benefit of people in need who have been, or are at risk of becoming, affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters or other disaster

situations. Accordingly humanitarian aid should be based on needs and carried out in line with the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. Sida works towards two main strategy goals: a) strengthened ability to provide protection and assistance to people affected by crises, and b) increased capacity and efficiency within the humanitarian system.³

In addition, Sida's humanitarian aid is framed by the Swedish Government's Aid Reform Agenda, adopted in 2023, where strengthened humanitarian aid is one of seven external objectives — specifically aiming to save lives and alleviate suffering.⁴ In line with this, Sida has integrated the reform agenda's direction into its Operational Strategy for 2024–2026 (Objective E7), which envisions Swedish humanitarian assistance and protection firmly grounded in needs-based priorities, international humanitarian law, and the humanitarian principles, while also working to increase humanitarian access, flexible funding as well as direct and indirect funding to local organisations.

FIGURE 1. DISBURSED FUNDS PER STRATEGIC GOAL CATEGORY IN 2024 (IN SEK MILLION)



¹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Global Humanitarian Overview 2024. Accessed 5 May 2025 at OCHAs homepage.

² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and World Food Programme, 2024. Hunger Hotspots: FAO–WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity (June–October 2024 outlook). Available at FAO homepage. Accessed 5 May 2025.

³ Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Strategy for Sweden's humanitarian aid provided through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) 2021–2025, Available at the Governmental homepage. Accessed 5 May 2025

⁴ Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Development Assistance For A New Era – Freedom, Empowerment And Sustainable Growth, December 2023, Available at the Governmental homepage. Accessed 5 May 2025

Results

SIDA'S SUPPORT

In 2024, Sida's humanitarian funding enabled partners to reach nearly 116 million people with protection and life-saving assistance. Sida disbursed SEK 4,900 million for humanitarian efforts, representing about 19 per cent of the total aid administered by Sida. The humanitarian work is built on strategic partnerships with 17 organizations from the UN system, civil society, and the Red Cross Movement, as well as with the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB).⁵ In line with the Humanitarian Strategy, Sida has promoted six priority areas during the year. These include the integration of protection and strengthened efforts to reduce the risk of violence and abuse against affected populations, an expanded response in hard-to-reach areas, and a stronger focus on needs-based prioritization. Sida has also worked to increase locally-led humanitarian response, promote more flexible and quality funding, and strengthen nexus collaboration in humanitarian contexts to bridge humanitarian assistance, development cooperation, and peacebuilding efforts. Aligned to the Grand Bargain, Sida also developed an approach to protect people against the impacts of climate shocks and other hazards through Anticipatory Action.⁶

In 2024, Sida's partners implemented humanitarian activities in 42 countries.⁷ Funding targeted people affected by crises in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan and Yemen — some of the most severe and complex humanitarian situations globally. Midway through 2024, Sida increased its humanitarian assistance and protection to additional crises where urgent needs had increased sharply, including Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Nigeria, Sudan and Zambia.⁸

Most of Sida's civil society partners can draw on flexible funding through its Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), bolstering the humanitarian community's capacity for rapid action. In 2024, Sida approved 83 RRM interventions in 28 countries, enabling partners to react promptly to sudden-onset crises or deteriorating situations. Similarly, Sida's multilateral partners and the International Committee of the Red Cross used flexible funding to scale up responses in 18 emergencies where needs intensified during the year.⁹

EXAMPLE: PROTECTING CHILDREN IN CONFLICT¹⁰

In Burkina Faso, Sida and UNICEF supported children affected by conflict with nutrition, health services, education, and psychosocial care following violence and abuse. UNICEF partners with local organizations closest to these children and their families enabling access to affected people in severely impacted and insecure areas that are often unreachable by conventional aid actors.

EXAMPLE: ANTICIPATORY ACTION AHEAD OF EXTREME WEATHER¹¹

By contributing to the IFRC's globally pooled fund the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), Sida helped avert the worst effects of an April 2024 heatwave in Bangladesh. When extreme temperatures were forecast, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society used DREF resources and targeted 123,700 of the most vulnerable households with early-warning messages, safe drinking water, cooling stations and multipurpose cash assistance.

FIGURE 2. ALLOCATION OF HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PER PARTNER IN 2024

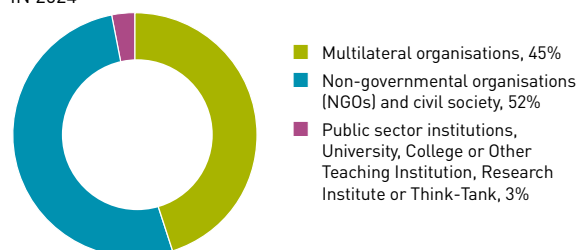
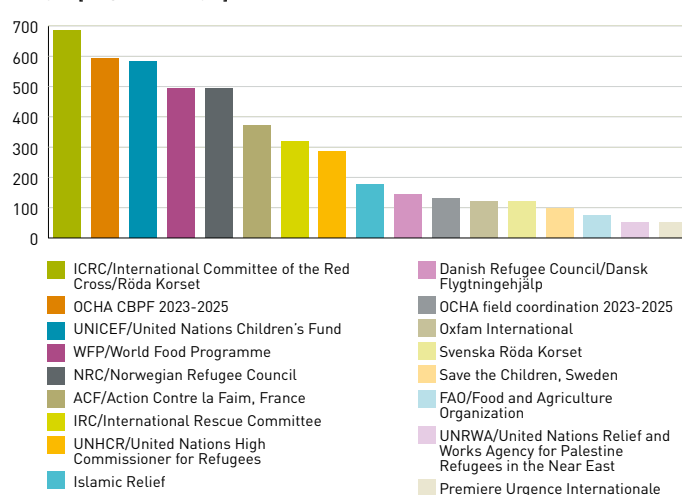


FIGURE 3. STRENGTHENING HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT TO SAVE LIVES AND ALLEVIATE SUFFERING DISBURSEMENTS IN 2024, BY GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION



FIGURE 4. AGREED AMOUNT PER STRATEGIC HUMANITARIAN PARTNER IN 2024 [IN SEK MILLION]



5 Sida, BISI report A16 Humanitarian. Accessed 24 June 2025.

6 Sida, Årsredovisning 2024, 2025

7 Sida, BISI report A16 Humanitarian. Accessed 24 June 2025.

8 Sida, Årsredovisning 2024, 2025

9 Sida, BISI report A16 Humanitarian. Accessed 24 June 2025.

10 UNICEF, 2025. Burkina Faso Humanitarian Situation Report No. 10: 1 January–31 December 2024. Available at UNICEF homepage. Accessed 5 May 2025.

11 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2024. New report: Climate change added an average of 26 days of extreme heat over last year. Press release, 28 May. Available at IFRC homepage. Accessed 5 May 2025.