



Humanitarian Aid

Strengthened humanitarian assistance and protection to save lives and alleviate suffering

The global humanitarian situation in 2025 was characterised by a growing number of challenges: protracted armed conflicts, increasing violations of international humanitarian law and other legal frameworks intended to protect civilians, and heightened obstacles to humanitarian access. At the same time, natural disasters and deteriorating socioeconomic conditions continued to affect already vulnerable groups severely.



Considering these highly complex circumstances, Swedish humanitarian assistance remained principled, needs-based, and flexible, delivering clear results. In 2025, Sida disbursed approximately SEK 4.6 billion in humanitarian aid, representing around 19 per cent of Sweden's total development assistance. Support was directed to some of the most complex and severe crises, including Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Palestine and Sudan, guided by Sweden's humanitarian allocation model, funding decisions are based on the severity of humanitarian needs.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD

In 2025, according to the UN, an estimated 305 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance. This includes 117 million forcibly displaced people, and three quarters of those displaced situated in countries exposed to climate-related hazards.¹ Despite escalating needs, global humanitarian funding declined to 2016 funding-levels. This forced the humanitarian system to hyper-prioritise the scope of targeted populations within Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) from 305 million to 178.7 million people in need. Of the USD 29 billion required to implement 42 HRPs, only USD 23.3 billion was secured by December 2025,² resulting in reaching only 114.4 million people – 38 per cent of those in need.³ Conflict remained the primary driver of displacement, further aggravated by climate shocks, persecution, and economic instability.

The UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) identified 16 hunger hotspots, with Sudan, Palestine, South Sudan, Mali, and Haiti (descending order) assessed as highest concern.⁴ Unseasonal flooding in East Africa and extreme heat across South Asia further strained vulnerable populations. Women and children continued to be disproportionately affected by protection concerns. Escalating conflicts increased grave violations⁵ against children, while women's and girls' exposure to gender-based violence grew alongside declining access to essential services.

FIGURE 1. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT

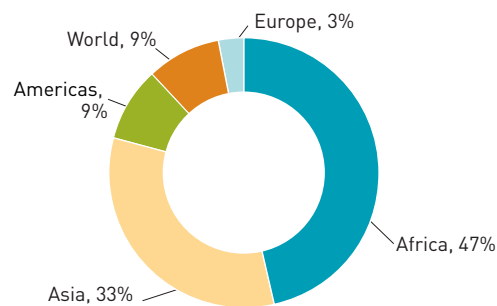
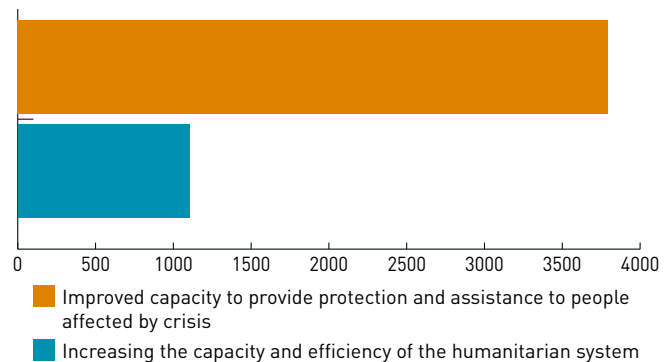


FIGURE 2. DISBURSED FUNDS PER STRATEGIC GOAL CATEGORY IN 2025 (IN SEK MILLION)



1 UNHCR, No Escape II – The way forward, 2025, p.6

2 Financial Tracking Service, FTS Quarterly Report_Oct-Nov-Dec 2025, p.1

3 OCHA, A hyper-prioritised Global Humanitarian Overview: the cruel math of aid cuts, 2025, p.20

4 FAO and WFP, Hunger Hotspots: FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity outlook (November 2024 to May 2025), 2025, p.vii.

5 UNICEF, Rethinking child protection in an age of disorder and uncertainty | Office of Strategy and Evidence Innocenti. Accessed 2023-03-27

Results

MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT

Sida's humanitarian aid in 2025 was guided by Sweden's Humanitarian Strategy 2021–2025 and the new Swedish Humanitarian Strategy 2025–2029.⁶ Both strategies aim to save lives, alleviate suffering, and uphold human dignity for people affected by crises. Humanitarian assistance is to be strictly needs-based and delivered in accordance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence. Each strategy includes two overarching goals: (a) strengthened capacity to provide protection and assistance to crisis-affected populations, and (b) increased efficiency within the humanitarian system. The new strategy maintains a strong emphasis on ensuring that humanitarian support is reserved for the most acute needs and implemented fully in line with humanitarian principles.

Sida's humanitarian aid is guided by the Swedish Government's Aid Reform Agenda, adopted in 2023.⁷ Its direction has been integrated into Sida's Operational Strategy for 2024–2026 (Objective E7). This framework envisions humanitarian assistance and protection that are firmly grounded in needs-based prioritisation, international humanitarian law, and humanitarian principles, while also advancing increased humanitarian access, flexible funding, and increased direct and indirect support to local actors.

Sida continued to advocate for key priorities in the humanitarian sector, including quality funding, strengthened protection – particularly protection from violence – and needs-based prioritisation of the most acute humanitarian needs. In line with the Grand Bargain commitments, Sida disbursed 80 per cent of its humanitarian funding early in the year to enable partners to respond rapidly to emerging and ongoing needs.⁸

SIDA PARTNERSHIP WITH EAST SOS: A LOCAL, WOMEN-LED ORGANISATION IN UKRAINE

East SOS operated two specialised transit centres in Dnipro, providing care and psychosocial support to elderly people, those with limited mobility, and persons with disabilities, who are some of most vulnerable groups affected by the war. Thousands of beneficiaries received social consultations and assistance with transitioning from temporary to permanent housing. The strong presence of East SOS in frontline areas and their role as coordinator ensures that humanitarian assistance reaches the elderly who cannot leave the frontline, while also reinforcing local capacities (Appraisal of contribution, Journal document: 24/000897-96).

6 Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Strategy for Sweden's humanitarian aid provided through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) 2021–2025, and Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Strategy for Sweden's humanitarian assistance 2025–2029, implemented from 1 October 2025.

7 Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Development Assistance For A New Era – Freedom, Empowerment And Sustainable Growth, December 2023.

8 Sida årsredovisning 2025, p.49 [Sida årsredovisning 2025](#).

SIDA'S SUPPORT

In 2025, Sida's humanitarian funding, together with contributions from other donors, enabled humanitarian partners to reach approximately 98 million people with protection and life-saving assistance. Sida disbursed SEK 4.6 billion for humanitarian efforts, representing around 19 per cent of Sida's total aid.

Sida's humanitarian work was based on 17 strategic partnerships with organisations across the UN system, civil society, and the Red Cross Movement, as well as the Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF). Additional organisations receiving humanitarian support include but are not limited to Diakonia and Start Network.

Sida's partners implemented humanitarian activities in 40 countries⁹ and was directed to some of the most severe and complex crises, including those in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Palestine, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.¹⁰

Approximately 77 per cent (SEK 3.6 billion) of Sida's humanitarian assistance was allocated to strengthening the capacity to provide protection and assistance to people affected by crises. The remaining 23 per cent (SEK 1.1 billion) was directed toward enhancing the capacity and efficiency of the humanitarian system.¹¹

In line with its commitment to flexible funding, nine of Sida's civil society partners accessed support through the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), enabling them to respond quickly to sudden onset emergencies or deteriorating situations in 23 countries through 78 RRM allocations.¹²

Sida also continued to advance the implementation of its approach to Anticipatory Action (AA). Through AA, partners provide timely support—such as cash assistance—before an expected disaster, allowing people at risk to take protective measures. This reduces the impact of crises, helps safeguard assets, and contributes to saving lives while decreasing overall humanitarian needs.¹³ Sida piloted a small number of civil society partners to use RRM funding for anticipatory action, resulting in two AA-RRMs—one in Ethiopia and one in Nigeria. By the end of 2025, Sida had provided direct support to two local organisations in Myanmar and Ukraine, as well as to a fund in Myanmar where 100 per cent of Sida's financing is allocated to local actors.¹⁴

9 Sida, BISI report A16 Humanitarian

10 Sida årsredovisning 2025, p.49 [Sida årsredovisning 2025](#)

11 Sida, BISI report A16 Humanitarian

12 Sida, BISI report A16 Humanitarian

13 Sida, Humanitarian Brief: Anticipatory Action, 2025

14 Uppföljning av strategi Sveriges humanitära bistånd genom Sida 2021–2025 kvartal 3 2025

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Visiting address: Rissneleden 110, 174 57 Sundbyberg

Postal address: Box 2025, SE-174 02 Sundbyberg, Sweden

Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64

E-mail: sida@sida.se Web: sida.se/en

