



Report

Humanitarian action on climate and conflict

Narratives, challenges and opportunities

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Cover photo: Women arriving at a camp for internally displaced persons near the town of Jowhar, Somalia. Credit: AU UN IST Photo/Tobin Jones.

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Executive summary

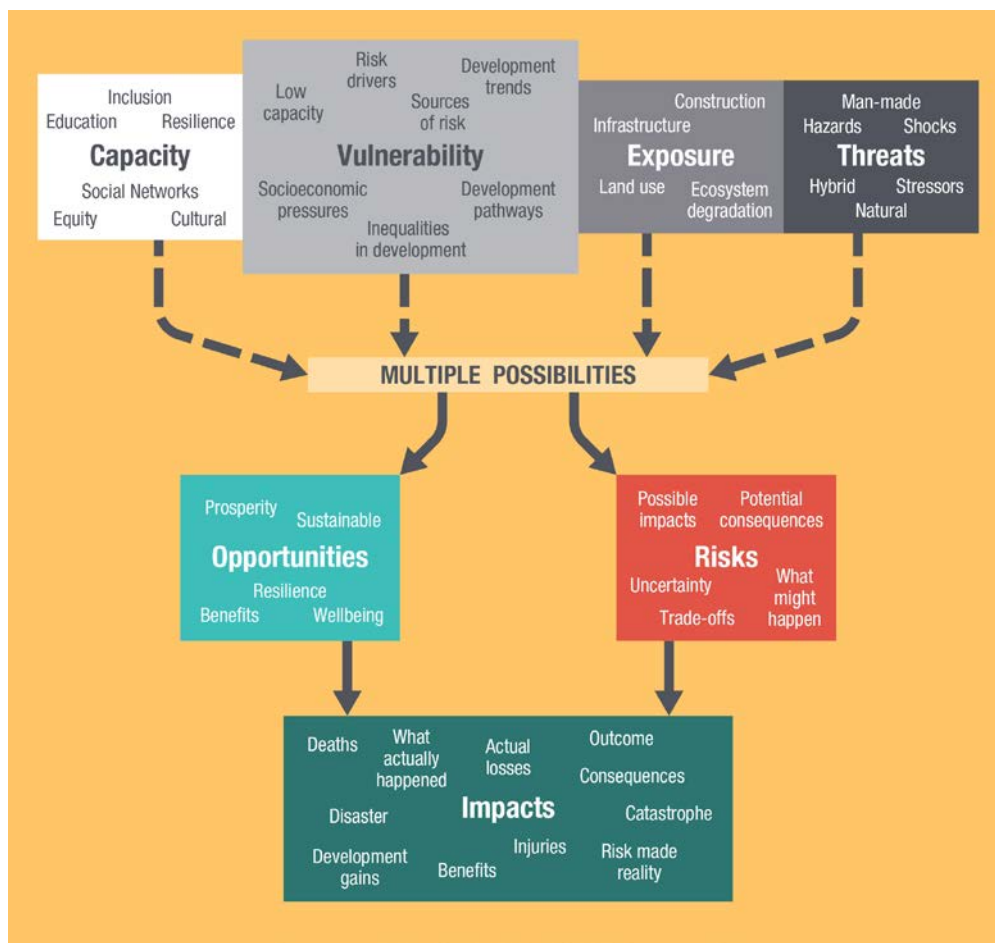
- The worsening impacts of climate variability and change on the world's most vulnerable people – including those in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCS) – put managing overlapping climate and conflict risks squarely within the humanitarian domain.
- Humanitarian actors are clear that there is no humanitarian solution to worsening climate impacts, and that significant increases in adaptation and resilience efforts in FCS are essential to prevent humanitarian crises from spiralling. But, in the absence of these investments, the humanitarian system is increasingly required to address climate impacts in these contexts; something it has neither the resources nor the skills to take on.
- Humanitarian actors have recently increased their focus on how to address the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities in FCS. There is a clear consensus on how humanitarian action should adapt: it needs to be more anticipatory, more balanced (between building resilience to and addressing impacts of crises), more collaborative and more local. But policy has moved faster than practice and most actors are still operating with a limited toolbox based on patchy evidence.
- Better collaboration with climate and development actors to build systemic, durable climate resilience is a clear goal but is impeded by several factors. These include the absence of climate and development actors from the most fragile settings, differing understanding of and priorities for climate action, and inconsistent donor positions.
- Greater efforts are needed to improve collaboration with other actors to maximise collective impact, translate policy priorities into effective programming, ensure coherence around funding, and identify and scale up successful approaches in FCS.

1 Introduction: climate change and humanitarian action

Vulnerable communities in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCS) are suffering some of the worst impacts of climate extremes, some of which are influenced by climate change. Fragility (weak governance, illegitimacy, corruption, socioeconomic inequality and political marginalisation) leads to underinvestment in infrastructure and service provision, inadequate environmental management and socioeconomic

underdevelopment. Conflict and violence often drive displacement, as well as further eroding assets, degrading natural resources, and disrupting livelihoods and food security (Brück and d’Errico, 2019). Fragility and conflict create high vulnerability to hazards, and leave individuals, households and communities less able to cope with and recover from climate impacts (Figure 1).

Figure 1 The impacts of any threat, including climate hazards, are determined by a person or system’s capacity, vulnerability and exposure

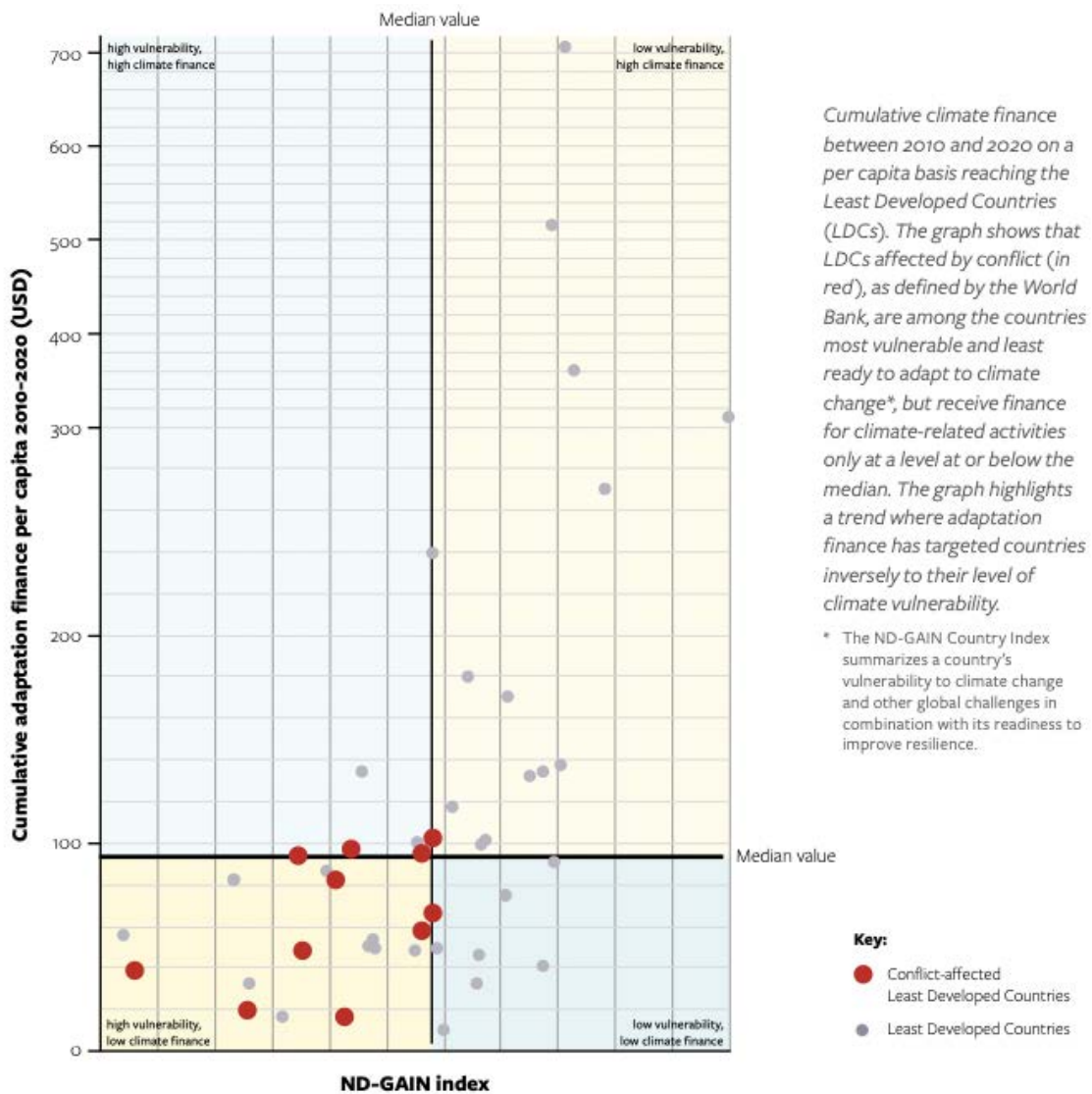


Source: Opitz-Stapleton et al. (2019)

Despite being among the contexts most vulnerable to the effects of weather and climate, FCS receive relatively low levels of resources for adaptation and building resilience to climate change. Global adaptation funding is woefully insufficient, with estimated adaptation needs outstripping available funding by between 10 and 18 times (UNEP, 2023). Most of this funding is not reaching the most climate-vulnerable countries:

in 2020, countries with high or very high climate vulnerability received less than one quarter of the adaptation funding per capita that flowed to low or very low vulnerability countries (Swithern, 2022). Figure 2 shows that, of the limited climate finance that reaches the least-developed countries (LDCs), countries in conflict are receiving a disproportionately small share.

Figure 2 Climate finance flows to LDCs versus LDCs affected by conflict (\$)



Source: ICRC et al. (2022)

Note: ND-GAIN = Notre Dame-Global Adaptation Index

Financing is not the only challenge: adaptation to climate impacts and risks through building climate resilience over the short, medium and long terms is challenging in even the most stable contexts and is significantly harder to achieve in FCS. International policy on risk reduction, including the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2015) and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (UNSIDR, 2015) have traditionally focused on contexts with stable governance (Arrighi et al., 2019). Evidence about what is effective in driving adaptation and building resilience in FCS is lacking (Grayson and Khouzam, 2023). Adaptation and development actors struggle to access and operate in the most fragile settings, in particular

among communities facing intersecting conflict and climate vulnerability (ICRC and NRC, 2023). The key sources of climate finance (vertical climate funds and multilateral development banks) are poorly set up for investment in volatile contexts; they often lack a risk appetite and political will to invest in interventions that are vulnerable to the impacts of conflict. But these hurdles must be overcome. ‘As conflicts and instability are often long-lasting, waiting for peace before addressing climate risks is not a viable option, and understanding pathways to climate change adaptation in conflict settings is critical’ (Grayson and Khouzam, 2023).

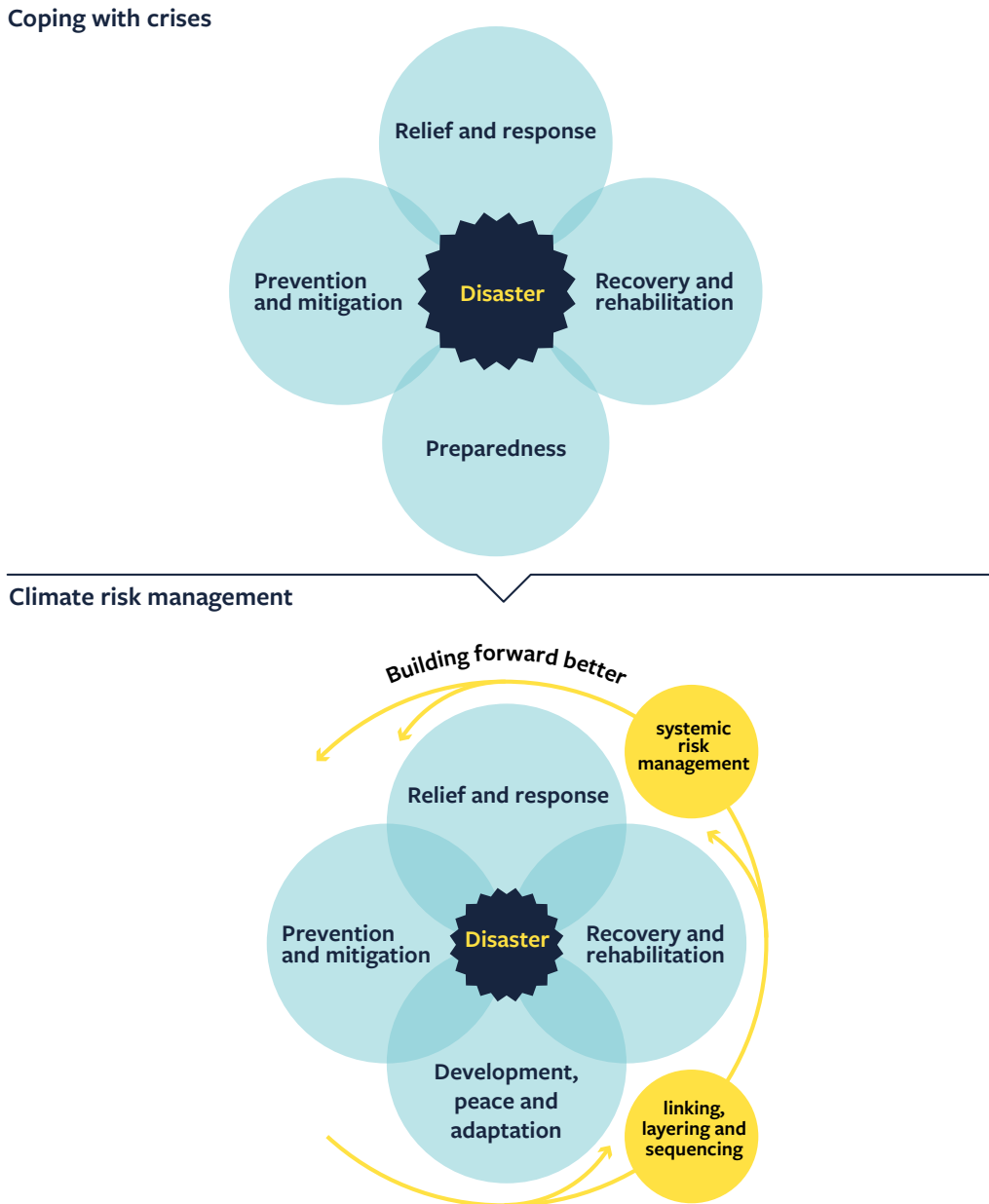
Box 1 What do humanitarian organisations mean by FCS?

Organisational definitions of fragility and conflict differ significantly. Some organisations focus on the needs of communities facing both violent conflict and climate impacts, some on the broader range of countries where institutional fragility reduces adaptive capacity to climate change, and others on refugee settings. This report focuses primarily on more complex settings, where fragility, violence and conflict overlap with climate impacts to create ‘wicked’ problems. However, the organisations that contributed to this research may refer to their policy and operations in FCS in general, covering an extremely broad spectrum, from the Marshall Islands to Sudan.

The need to accelerate climate action and climate finance in FCS is increasingly being recognised, notably in the COP28 *Declaration on climate, relief, recovery and peace*. This calls ‘for bolder collective action to build climate resilience at the scale and speed required in highly vulnerable countries and communities, particularly those threatened or affected by fragility or conflict, or facing severe humanitarian needs’ (UNFCCC, 2023). Increased funding and profound changes to ways of working across the international system are needed to realise this commitment. Central to this change is the recognition that no

single intervention can build climate resilience by itself. Building durable climate resilience in FCS requires multiple interventions by all actors, which are linked, layered and sequenced in ways that mutually reinforce each other at a variety of spatial scales. They also need to be informed by an understanding of the drivers of conflict and climate risks and how these risks may change over time (Opitz-Stapleton et al., 2023; see Figure 3). There are several significant barriers to working in this way (see section 3.3.1), which reduce the collective effectiveness of interventions for building systemic, durable climate resilience.

Figure 3 Building forward better to support systemic, durable climate resilience requires stronger linking and sequencing of a variety of risk-informed interventions



Source: Opitz-Stapleton et al. (2023)

Humanitarian actors are clear that there is no humanitarian solution to climate change, but in the absence of increased adaptation investments and with a limited presence of climate and development actors in fragile contexts the humanitarian sector is increasingly left to pick up the pieces. This puts additional pressure on a system that is already under serious strain and

that is under-resourced, under-prepared and ill-equipped to take on this role. While humanitarian actors are adept at short-term crisis response, moving beyond their core mandates to contribute to community resilience, strengthen preparedness and address protracted crises challenge current humanitarian funding, skillsets and ways of working (Obrecht et al., 2022).

In recent years, many humanitarian organisations have recognised that managing the worsening impacts of climate change requires significant shifts in the way emergency relief is planned, funded and implemented. This particularly relates to the need to anticipate and respond earlier to climate-triggered disasters, strengthen preparedness and prevention, and support building the resilience of crisis-affected communities (ICRC and IFRC, 2021; IASC, 2023a). Policy focus has so far moved faster than operations, which often fail to adapt to rapidly changing needs and contexts. There is a lack of clarity on what building climate resilience means and what is effective in doing so, as well as defining the optimum contribution of humanitarian action to broader climate-resilient development.

The worsening impacts of climate change on the world's most vulnerable people place managing climate and conflict risks squarely within the humanitarian domain. How humanitarian actors are approaching these challenges matters, both for the effectiveness of emergency response and

for broader climate action in FCS. This report looks at how humanitarian actors are setting out their roles, examining their emerging approaches to addressing and reducing climate hazard-triggered needs in FCS, and linking with the work of other actors. It does this by analysing the joint policy commitments on climate of humanitarian organisations, more than 15 individual strategy documents, and the responses gained through interviews with 20 humanitarian practitioners and external experts. Quotes or material from these interviews are referenced as 'Key informant interview (KII X)', with each interviewee represented by a number to provide anonymity.

The report sets out the key humanitarian approaches to climate and conflict in shared principles, programmatic approaches and ways of working. It then identifies the key tensions within these narratives and approaches that need to be resolved to ensure the contribution of humanitarian action to building climate-resilient development in FCS is maximised.

2 Increased humanitarian focus on climate change

Despite addressing the growing impacts of climate hazards over many years, humanitarian actors have been relatively slow to define their roles in responding to the risks and impacts of climate change. As climate impacts batter the communities already experiencing humanitarian crises, addressing this issue has become a critical topic.

The 2024 *Global humanitarian overview* placed climate as the second major driver of humanitarian need after conflict: ‘the climate crisis is spiralling, leaving a trail of destruction in its path. It is expected that 2023 will be the hottest year on record with concurrent climate disasters, from Tropical Cyclone Freddy in Southern Africa to the wildfires in Europe and the devastation wrought by Storm Daniel in Libya’ (UNOCHA, 2024a). New system-wide initiatives to advance and focus on this topic include the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations and its newly established Secretariat; a formal working group convened under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which will shortly publish a climate roadmap setting out operational considerations for humanitarian organisations in engaging with climate; and the appointment of the IASC Climate Crisis Coordinator for the El Niño/La Niña response.

With the humanitarian system already struggling to keep pace (just 41% of identified needs were met in 2023 according to UNOCHA’s Financial

Tracking Service; UNOCHA FTS, nd), climate hazards are pushing it to breaking point. From 2015 to 2030, a 40% increase in the number of annual disaster events is projected (UNDRR, 2022), which some estimate will lead to a doubling of the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance by mid-century (IFRC, 2019). Already it is clear that ‘insufficient development and climate financing in countries and communities most at risk of crises places pressure on humanitarian actors and budgets’ (UNOCHA, 2023). The 2024 Global Humanitarian Appeal for the first time called for less funding than the previous year:¹ ‘not because there is no need, [but] because we have had to prioritize urgent life-saving need as our core business’ (UNOCHA, 2024b). But efforts to refocus humanitarian aid on its core mandate of immediate lifesaving activities pull in the opposite direction to emerging climate-humanitarian policy (e.g. ICRC and IFRC, 2021, which calls for emergency aid to focus on supporting communities’ climate resilience alongside responding to crisis impacts).

Humanitarian actors are present in places where violent conflict and climate hazards interact to exert the most devastating impacts on lives and livelihoods. They see these impacts first hand. Most organisations emphasise the compounding impacts of climate and conflict on the most vulnerable people, in particular the impacts on food security, health, water, displacement and livelihoods. There is a growing recognition that

¹ Humanitarian appeals have increased in size by almost 30 times since 2000, from \$2 billion in 2000 to \$56 billion in 2023. While this reflects growing needs, it is also due to a gradual increase in the scope of humanitarian assistance.

Box 2 ‘Humanitarian’ is a broad category

The category of ‘humanitarian’ organisations is not clear; it encompasses those with a strict lifesaving mandate alongside broad and multi-mandate agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The options and funding modalities available to humanitarian actors to allow them to contribute to building durable climate resilience differ significantly. Local actors are more adept than international actors at working across the humanitarian–peace–development–climate nexus because the communities in which they are embedded are facing these multidimensional challenges. It is challenging to talk about a single humanitarian narrative or strategy on climate and conflict, although recent shared and system-wide policy statements and commitments (IASC, 2023a; ICRC and IFRC, 2021; REAP, 2023) set out several shared beliefs and approaches.

fragility and conflict magnify climate vulnerabilities and natural resource degradation. Some humanitarian actors conclude that ‘it is no longer sufficient to address climate change and conflict separately, as if they are somehow disconnected global challenges’ (Mercy Corps, 2023), but most continue to treat climate and conflict as separate operational issues (see section 3.2.3).

Humanitarian actors recognise that they are not best placed to address the challenge of climate resilience in fragile settings. But the longstanding presence of humanitarian actors in many fragile settings and the dominance of humanitarian funding over other types of assistance in these settings mean that: ‘Increasingly, humanitarians are being called upon to respond to climate shocks in conflict settings. This demand recognizes humanitarians’ experience and technical knowledge of operating and directing funding towards places that are unstable, affected by conflict, or outside of state control. Humanitarians are limited by their mandate and expertise, however, and alone, they are neither able nor should they be expected to meet the increasing scale and urgency of climate adaptation needs

in a world where many areas are experiencing “a permanent crisis without an endpoint”. (ICRC et al., 2022).

Humanitarian actors recognise the need to work more effectively with others across the climate risk management spectrum to deliver climate resilience, but in fragile settings there are barriers in practice, including the limited presence of other actors in areas of highest need, differing priorities and understandings of vulnerability and resilience, and donors’ funding and policy silos (see section 3.3.1).

To date, the policy focus on the role of humanitarian response in contributing to climate risk management has outstripped operational progress. Humanitarian actors apply a limited set of tools – many of which have their proof of concept in more stable settings – to address climate impacts in fragile settings. Concerns include the following (explored more fully in section 3.2).

- Programming approaches that have been shown to be effective in stable or less complex settings are being applied in fragile contexts and to places facing multiple intersecting crises without due consideration of the difference in contexts and needs.
- Resilience programming approaches that have been shown to be ineffective in building resilience (those with only short-term impacts on living standards) are being scaled up and replicated due to poor information management; humanitarian organisations are not effectively documenting, sharing and building evidence on which interventions are most effective in building resilience in which contexts.
- Positive evolutions in approaches, such as anticipatory action, are being implemented in highly technical and standardised ways that limit their efficacy in FCS.
- Humanitarian actors have tended to focus on the programmes and parts of the climate risk

management spectrum within their control (e.g. anticipatory action), and this has limited their focus on and openness to effective collaboration, reducing the effectiveness of approaches that work best when embedded within a broader disaster risk reduction spectrum.

- Without integration with long-term planning and climate risk, humanitarian programming risks contributing to maladaptation; for example, by incentivising people to remain in areas and engaged in livelihoods that may soon become untenable.

Increased engagement in the climate space presents a huge opportunity to reshape the humanitarian role in contributing to climate-resilient development in the most fragile contexts. But it also comes with the risk that humanitarian actors see climate as ‘a new funding opportunity but not a new operational reality’ (KII 3) (see section 3.1.2).

3 Humanitarian approaches to addressing climate-driven needs in FCS

Several consistent messages and approaches emerge from across humanitarian policy and strategy on addressing climate-driven needs in FCS. These include key shared principles, key programmatic responses, and shared ways of working.

3.1 Key shared principles

Two central principles emerge across the policy commitments and individual strategies of humanitarian organisations.

- There is no humanitarian solution to the humanitarian impacts of climate change: more adaptation and resilience action is needed to prevent crises from spiralling.
- A radical increase in climate finance to and in FCS is needed urgently.

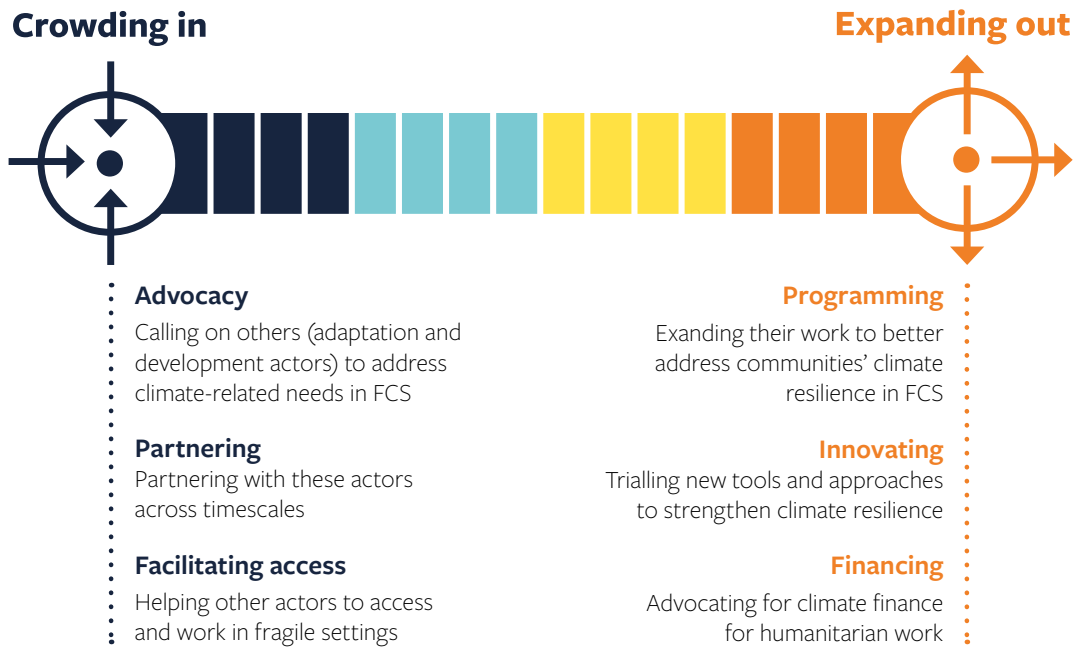
3.1.1 There is no humanitarian solution to the climate crisis

Humanitarian organisations are clear and consistent that ‘there is no humanitarian solution to the climate crisis’ (IASC, 2023a) or its impacts. They are vocal in calling for more action on resilience and adaptation – in FCS in particular – to prevent climate hazards from becoming humanitarian crises. ‘Humanitarian assistance cannot be the entire solution; we need to share the load. It’s time for much more development and other financial investments in fragile settings and marginalized communities’ (UNOCHA, 2024a.)

There is clear consensus that doing this ‘will require major new investments and commitments from a range of political, economic, scientific, development and peacebuilding actors’ (IASC, 2023a), and that humanitarians, working more closely with these partners, have a role to play in preparedness for and response to disasters, as well as building communities’ resilience to climate shocks. Humanitarian actors also play a key role in advocating for legal frameworks to adapt to reflect changing needs, including ensuring the protection of climate migrants, for example.

Different organisations are better placed to address different parts of the climate risk management spectrum, from highly structural adaptation and prevention efforts to anticipatory action to deal with residual risk. Humanitarians play a small but critical role, but organisations vary on where they think that role begins and ends. Agencies fall along a spectrum (Fig. 4). At one end, there are those who make the case that unless large-scale development and adaptation action is leveraged in the contexts in which they operate, the communities they serve will be in a significantly worse position. These therefore focus their efforts on crowding others into fragile contexts while remaining more focused on traditional, lifesaving humanitarian action. At the other end are those who see an urgent need to bolster the resilience of the communities they work with. These therefore focus more on how they can contribute through their own operations.

Figure 4 Humanitarian actors differ in their approaches to accelerating climate action in FCS



Source: authors

3.1.2 A radical increase in resources is required in FCS

Humanitarian actors have been clear advocates for additional climate financing in the most fragile contexts. The COP28 *Declaration on climate, relief, recovery and peace* (UNFCCC, 2023) includes a commitment to increase flows of climate finance to fragile contexts, strengthen the partnerships and collective action needed to build climate resilience, and invest in climate adaptation programming that supports the most vulnerable ‘with the aim to yield cumulative increases in the adaptive capacity, recovery, and resilience of people and communities’.

There are positive early signals that action is following intent, but funding is still lacking. Climate finance actors are increasingly seized by the need to increase flows of adaptation finance to the most vulnerable settings; the Green Climate Fund’s latest strategy, for example, includes the

commitment to ‘work with partners to reach fragile and conflict-affected areas’ (GCF, 2023). This has so far not been followed by a major mobilisation of resources. Overall financial commitments at COP28 fell far short of needs, with just \$792 million committed to the new loss and damage fund, covering just 0.2% of the estimated \$400 billion in annual losses from climate disasters (Richards et al., 2023) and just \$61 billion in additional adaptation finance, also falling far short of the estimated \$215 billion required annually (UNEP, 2023).

Humanitarians disagree over where and how climate finance for FCS should flow, with divergence over the role humanitarian actors see for themselves in delivering it. An increase in humanitarian engagement with climate has come at the same time as a sharp reduction in humanitarian budgets, leading to the risk that humanitarian actors will aggressively pursue climate finance to fill gaps in existing programming

rather than only in cases where they are genuinely best placed to deliver climate action. Despite the limited scale of climate finance currently made available for humanitarian response, there is a risk that if donors start to channel existing climate finance commitments through the humanitarian system, the resources available to both humanitarian and climate actors may shrink, with funding available for ‘core’, non-climate humanitarian activities squeezed, and that provided for adaptation and sustainable development reduced. The opening of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) Climate Action Account² and significant humanitarian engagement in the creation of the Loss and Damage Fund are welcomed by some as evidence of humanitarians stepping up to deliver climate action in the toughest settings. But others see a risk that this will incentivise humanitarian actors to pursue the financial opportunity without serious consideration of the programmatic realities and challenges of meeting and reducing needs in climate-vulnerable settings.

While the humanitarian system is being required to respond to more frequent climate hazards with a shrinking pot of resources, interviewees were clear that additional finance alone will not solve the problem of how humanitarian work can contribute more effectively to climate-resilient development. ‘We shouldn’t be focused on accessing new money but on using existing money better,’ (KII 3) one interviewee argued. While humanitarian actors are consistent in making the case that they are an effective channel for some climate finance in fragile settings, they do not yet

have a convincing case for how they can best use these resources to build climate resilience in these contexts.

This spectrum of views has been particularly evident in discussions around funding loss and damage. Despite the agreement at COP28 to establish new funding arrangements for loss and damage (including a dedicated fund), the criteria for what this should cover and who should be eligible to receive funding are not yet clear. Focused humanitarian engagement in loss and damage was welcomed by many adaptation actors, who see humanitarian expertise in fragile settings as critical to establishing a fund that works for the most vulnerable. However, it was seen by others as a signal that the motivation for engagement was more financial than operational.

The IASC key messages on loss and damage are clear that humanitarian action should not be the focus of loss and damage financing but that it has a small role to play: ‘While there are limits to the typical scope of humanitarian action, it covers an important part of what is required to respond to aspects of loss and damage by contributing to closing some gaps’ (IASC, 2023b). Humanitarian actors are consistent in arguing that direct access for communities and local organisations should be the priority, but some also acknowledge that they may have a role to play in channelling this funding.

3.2 Key programmatic responses

A clear summary on how humanitarian organisations aim to work differently in addressing

² A financing window of CERF (managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) established in November 2023 to channel climate finance rapidly to anticipatory action and humanitarian assistance in response to climate-related disasters.

the climate challenge can be found in the *Climate and environment charter*. Through this, signatories commit to:

reduce risks and vulnerability to shocks, stresses and longer-term changes through an increased focus on climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and anticipatory action. Across all of our work, including preparedness, response and recovery, we will consider and address changing climate and environmental risks in rural and urban settings. Our programmes and operations will be based on sound risk analyses, informed by the best available short-, medium- and longer-term climate and environmental science and data, and by local and indigenous knowledge (ICRC and IFRC, 2021).

Three programmatic approaches in particular are emphasised across operational strategies: anticipatory action, building resilience, and better integration of climate and conflict risk into planning and programming. Preparedness and supporting social protection systems are also emphasised to a lesser extent but are not covered in detail in this paper.

3.2.1 Anticipatory action

The key point of emphasis in many humanitarian climate policies concerns the need to anticipate

weather- and climate-related hazards through early warning information, and for this information to trigger anticipatory or earlier disaster responses that help save lives and livelihoods more effectively than traditional post-facto responses. This approach requires a rewiring of the humanitarian financing system to privilege pre-arranged or forecast-based financing and a rethink on how humanitarian action is planned and executed ‘by leading a shift from reacting to hazards to acting ahead of them’ (Anticipation Hub, nd). The Getting Ahead of Disasters Charter commits humanitarian and development organisations and their donors to act and commit finance before disasters strike, as well as to work more effectively across silos. There have been widespread calls to scale up this approach and even to move to a system of anticipatory action as a default, with significant policy and financial commitments including the ambition that ‘the humanitarian system should be as anticipatory as possible and only as reactive as necessary’ (UNOCHA, 2021).

Anticipatory action allows earlier, faster and more cost-effective response to disasters, enabling crisis-affected households to have more options for coping with the impacts of a shock. Assistance can be disbursed more quickly³ and at lower cost,⁴ with earlier assistance reducing the impacts of

3 Anticipatory action enabled assistance to be disbursed in Ethiopia three months earlier than when using normal CERF mechanisms (CERF, 2021).

4 In Bangladesh, procuring and distributing aid before floods peaked allowed the United Nations Population Fund to save 12% in costs, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to reach 10% more people (CERF, 2020a).

a shock and resulting in reduced humanitarian need,⁵ fewer negative coping strategies⁶ and reduced asset losses.⁷

However, there are several concerns regarding the ways in which the concept of anticipatory action is being translated into programming. Interviewees stated: it ‘has taken on a life of its own – marketed as the one thing that will save us all’ (KII 12); ‘is understood in very different ways by different actors’ (KII 1); ‘has turned into something far too narrow, technical and algorithm-driven’ (KII 13); and ‘has been applied in contexts where it just doesn’t work’ (KII 5). While most humanitarian actors agree that anticipatory action should be part of a suite of tools aimed at preventing, responding to and recovering from climate impacts, there are differences in how organisations approach this, with some concerns that anticipatory action is being presented as a standalone tool to combat climate impacts.

The overall strength of the evidence base on anticipatory action is contested, with a sense that:

early studies on anticipatory action have placed most emphasis on producing evidence for advocacy and to drive donor investment... with less emphasis on scientific rigour and lesson-learning... More attention should now be paid to analysis that could drive improvements in programming and implementation, and care should be taken to also focus on those

interventions whose results are less easy to measure. This will improve the credibility of these evaluations (Weingärtner et al., 2020).

Several organisations also draw an explicit link between anticipatory action and building communities’ resilience, arguing that earlier response helps to protect livelihoods and assets, with long-term impacts on recovery and wellbeing. While evidence presented in support of this claim shows positive impacts, it does not amount to robust evidence of increased resilience over the long term. Most studies find that impacts are short-lived (Easton-Calabria et al., 2023) and that ‘more evidence is needed to better understand its longer-term impacts, especially how acting early contributes to building the resilience of households and communities’ (Rahaman, 2022). It is also notable that these results come mainly from stable contexts with relatively predictable disasters and, as recent research shows, cannot be easily translated into more fragile and complex settings (Levine et al., 2023).

While there is reasonable evidence to show that anticipatory action can be effective in stable contexts facing predictable and regular crises, some recent evidence suggests that it has no significant application in ‘wicked crises’ (Levine et al., 2023). Where data from conflict-affected contexts exists, this suggests that conflict lessens the positive impact of aid received (Easton-Calabria et al., 2023), and that anticipatory action tends to be focused on single hazards, which can limit its effectiveness in contexts facing multiple hazards (Scott, 2022). There are clear challenges

5 In Somalia in 2020, anticipatory action is credited with preventing 500,000 people from falling into extreme food insecurity (CERF, 2020b).

6 In Bangladesh, fewer girls whose families received an anticipatory cash transfer dropped out of school than non-recipients (Pople et al., 2021).

7 In the same study in Bangladesh, recipients lost fewer assets and were able to restart agricultural production sooner than non-recipients (Pople et al., 2021).

in operationalising anticipatory action in contexts lacking strong forecasting capacity (Chaves-Gonzales et al., 2022).

While anticipatory action is a critical tool in the climate risk management spectrum, it should not be understood as a lever for building long-term climate resilience, nor as a standalone response to climate variability and change that can be separated from broader disaster risk reduction investments. More robust evidence is needed to aid understanding of the role of anticipatory action in more complex and fragile settings.

3.2.2 Resilience programming

The importance of supporting vulnerable communities' resilience to climate risks is emphasised strongly by all humanitarian organisations, but there is no consistent definition of what resilience means, whose role it is, how external actors can support and work with communities' own efforts to build resilience, what activities can contribute to it and over what timescale, what is the most effective level of engagement, and even whether it is a useful concept at all (Levine, 2022). This enables a wide range of actions to be counted as 'building resilience' over the short and longer terms, from cash transfers delivered a few days before a shock to training farmers in climate-smart asset creation and agriculture techniques.

Organisations differ significantly in defining the humanitarian role in and contribution to building resilience (noting that this will differ between contexts and sectors), and how resilience should be measured. The evidence on the contribution of humanitarian activities to community resilience is extremely limited (in large part because these data are not systematically collected after the close of humanitarian projects) and the little evidence

that does exist is not shared across agencies or reflected in programme design. Despite resilience being highly context specific, similar projects are regularly replicated across contexts, even when rigorous evidence for their effectiveness in building community resilience in any context does not exist. The innovation required to identify approaches that are effective in supporting climate resilience in different contexts is lacking in many cases.

Many organisations commit to 'strike a better balance between responding to rising needs, and proactively reducing and adapting to the risks that the climate and environmental crises already pose and will continue to generate' (ICRC and IFRC, 2021). Under this umbrella are efforts to increase adaptation, which for humanitarian organisations 'means working to decrease the harm that the changing climate may pose to people' (ICRC and IFRC, 2021) and to build vulnerable communities' resilience to climate change, which is defined variously by different organisations.

Humanitarian organisations differ over who plays the primary role in supporting vulnerable communities' climate resilience. There is agreement that 'resilience is primarily a development problem' (KII 13) and that other actors should lead on building long-term climate resilience:

Humanitarian activities often help people survive in the short term through incremental adaptations of their livelihoods and by improving the sustainability and reliability of their access to essential services, including in places where the presence of government institutions is limited. This is important, but it is not sufficient to adequately help communities adapt to current and future climate impacts (Grayson and Khouzam, 2023).

There are several structural reasons, recognised by humanitarian agencies and donors, why humanitarian actors are not best placed to support community resilience. These relate to short project timeframes, a lack of long-term planning capacity, a focus on the community rather than institutional level, and a lack of collaboration with long-term development actors.

Most also stress that their activities play a key role:

Humanitarian assistance should contribute to community resilience, including to climate risks and threats. This imperative is particularly important in protracted crises and should come ahead of foreseeable shocks, where possible (UNOCHA, 2023).

Over the past decade, humanitarian programming designed to address individual and community resilience to shocks, both general and climate specific, has increased. For multi-mandate actors, more flexibility (mandate, resourcing, skills) exists to expand into resilience programming, accessing longer-term funding streams and growing internal expertise. But even these agencies tend to approach resilience programming through their own structures and systems rather than in more integrated ways.

There is also no agreement over how resilience should be measured. While the broad definition of resilience is shared, how this is measured in different contexts varies significantly between organisations, with actors measuring everything from self-reported resilience (versus a no-assistance baseline) to ecosystem impacts and the number of adaptive capacities created, with data collection over a variety of timescales. This is not exclusively a humanitarian challenge, with evidence suggesting it is impossible to quantify

resilience (Levine et al., 2012). But the absence of common metrics allows agencies ‘to collect success stories rather than evidence’ (KII 5), which then skews future resource allocation.

Humanitarian actors operate with a different understanding of resilience from most other actor groups, focusing on ability to withstand current and near-future climate hazards. Drivers of resilience are understood primarily at the individual and community levels, including nutrition and health status, livelihoods and assets. By contrast, climate and development actors support climate resilience with a focus on future vulnerability, intervening at the systems and community levels. Their approaches are focused on embedding disaster risk management and adaptation into (ideally) sustainable development at a variety of spatial and temporal scales. This difference in understanding can hamper efforts to work across actor groups, as seen in Somalia:

Without a collective understanding of “resilience”..., in terms of for whom, to what, and over what time frames and scales it is needed, it will be difficult to measure how interventions can contribute to a pathway that moves the country toward the vision of a climate-resilient future and, ultimately, climate-resilient development (ODI and CSS, 2024).

The evidence base on the contribution of humanitarian action to building short-, medium- and long-term resilience, including climate resilience, is extremely limited. This does not indicate that humanitarian programming lacks a long-term impact, but rather that this has not been captured systematically. This means humanitarian actors are ‘flying blind’ (KII 5) when it comes to programme design. What little evidence does exist shows that humanitarian resilience

programmes can have multiple benefits, including improving incomes (e.g. Frankenberger et al., 2019) and food consumption (e.g. Leavy et al., 2018), and providing a sense of agency and social networking opportunities (Leavy et al., 2018). However, these benefits rarely persist beyond the duration of the programme (e.g. Koclejda et al., 2019). Evidence also suggests that while resilience activities are most effective when they encompass a range of activities including nutrition, institutional strengthening, health, education, and water, sanitation and hygiene, most humanitarian resilience activities continue to focus squarely on livelihoods (e.g. Levine and Sida, 2019). There is also a risk that humanitarian action contributes to maladaptation by failing to account for long-term adaptation pathways resulting in, for example, incentivising people to remain in livelihoods that are becoming untenable (e.g. ICRC, 2020).⁸

There is limited innovation around and consideration of context-specific climate and conflict risks in resilience programming. The drivers of resilience vary significantly from place to place and therefore resilience programmes should be based on a deep understanding of dynamics in a particular community. The fact that resilience programming looks so similar across the world, therefore, ‘should be a cause for deep concern’ (Levine and Adam, 2024), suggesting that projects are being replicated without due consideration of underlying dynamics. Despite a growing emphasis at the policy level on identifying, supporting and upscaling communities’ resilience strategies, external one-size-fits-all resilience approaches are still regularly imposed on them. The humanitarian

system is also not learning effectively from the evidence that does exist on resilience. ‘The BRACED [Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters] programme evaluation taught us a lot about the interventions that are ineffective in building resilience... and yet we keep rolling them out’ (KII 14).

Donor funding structures and an overall reduction in humanitarian funding make resilience activities extremely challenging to finance. It has always been difficult to mobilise funding for humanitarian resilience activities⁹ and, as budgets tighten, many donors are putting pressure on humanitarian partners to focus on core, lifesaving activities. Some donors report that the ways in which budget lines are organised means that any project that has building resilience as a primary aim should be funded from the development and not the humanitarian budget, meaning some humanitarian partners are ineligible. They reflected that some of the most innovative humanitarian resilience efforts are ‘right at the limits of what we’re able to fund through existing humanitarian funding systems’ (KII 1).

This is a source of frustration for many agencies, who see this as pushing in the opposite direction to donor policies on working better across the nexus and strengthening climate resilience, and it leaves them with even less room to innovate and invest in resilience-building activities. Many organisations are making the case that significant investments in resilience and the safety nets that support this (social protection, insurance, resilient livelihoods) are needed now, particularly in FCS,

⁸ The authors are grateful to Paul Knox-Clarke for sharing his (unpublished) review of the evidence on resilience outcomes from humanitarian programming on which this section draws.

⁹ While resilience has no official ‘home’ in the humanitarian cluster structure, the Early Recovery sector – a close proxy – received just 19% of funding required in 2023, even less than the 35% of needs covered on average (UNOCHA FTS, nd).

to avoid becoming trapped in reactive mode and only able to carry out basic lifesaving activities as disasters become more frequent. However, others argue that while donor policies are coherent across different departments, separating resilience from lifesaving funding can in fact be positive, safeguarding against all crisis funding being subsumed into immediate response.

3.2.3 Better integration of climate and conflict risk into planning and programming

As above, despite increasing recognition of the linkages between climate change and conflict, most humanitarian organisations continue to treat these as separate operational challenges.

Humanitarian organisations place a growing emphasis on the importance of integrating climate risks into planning and programming. The *Climate and environment charter* commits that ‘to strengthen our collective capacity to reduce risks, anticipate crises, act early and ensure the sustainability of our activities, we will enhance our understanding of evolving short- and long-term climate and environmental risks and opportunities’ (ICRC and IFRC, 2021). Some humanitarian organisations reflect this commitment in their approaches, most notably the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), which has committed that by 2025, climate and environmental risks will be factored into all programmes and humanitarian operations (IFRC, 2023). Work by the Red Cross Climate Centre, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), World Food Programme and others has sought to bring insights more systematically from climate science into humanitarian planning and

operations, and work is reportedly under way to integrate climate projections into a number of country-level Humanitarian Response Plans.

However, long-term climate risks and projections are rarely taken into account. In many humanitarian contexts, interviewees reported this is because the long-term, joined-up analysis does not exist. Climate projections have not focused on the most vulnerable areas, and limited progress has been made in pulling together environmental, demographic, economic and other types of projections into a holistic basis for long-term planning. This is not the role of humanitarian actors, and without these long-term projections, humanitarian and other interventions have an increased risk of contributing to maladaptation.

Despite the growing focus on integrating climate risk into humanitarian action, conflict is still an afterthought: ‘we’re not yet looking at the conflict–climate nexus with the seriousness and long-termism required’ (KII 18). Conflict risks and ‘do no harm’ principles are still not considered regularly or integrated well, and where conflict risk assessments are conducted, these rarely inform overall programme planning and implementation. This mismatch in emphasis was recognised by several interviewees, for example: ‘This year I’ve seen a growing recognition of the need to knit humanitarians and climate actors together but no mention of where conflict and peacebuilding people fit’ (KII 4).

Some organisations are making the case for addressing climate and conflict risks in humanitarian action in more integrated ways (Grayson and Khouzam, 2023) and one NGO interviewed for this report carried out a conflict sensitivity review of their climate work. There

are also several efforts under way to support learning across the humanitarian system, including the Red Cross Climate Centre's research agenda on the intersection of climate and conflict, and ongoing efforts to adapt existing humanitarian tools to climate- and conflict-affected settings.¹⁰ Some donors also reported that they are adapting their systems to ensure that climate, conflict and humanitarian expertise and resources are deployed from the needs assessment stage of a crisis, to ensure a holistic response that considers both climate and conflict risks. But more focus is needed to ensure that humanitarian actors consistently factor conflict and climate risks and 'do no harm' principles into programme design and implementation.

3.2.4 Other approaches

Other approaches emphasised in humanitarian organisations' programmatic approaches to climate risk include better linking of humanitarian response to social protection systems and strengthening preparedness measures.

Expanding the reach of adaptive social protection schemes and ensuring they cover the most vulnerable is presented by some actors as 'one of the most critical opportunities in building resilience to climate change' (UNOCHA and IFRC, 2022). While the primary responsibility for building and operating social protection systems lies with countries/states, with funding and support coming primarily from development institutions, humanitarian actors can play a key role in ensuring that crisis-affected and

marginalised populations are covered by social protection systems. They can also work with and through social protection systems in the case of a shock to distribute emergency assistance to those affected, and this role has accelerated in recent years (CALP, 2023). This ensures assistance can be delivered at a lower cost than through separate and repeated emergency responses (Costella et al., 2021), and allows assistance to be scaled up rapidly (expanded to new people in new areas or transfers to existing recipients increased in case of more acute need). Evidence from some contexts suggests social protection payments can have long-term income-generation effects,¹¹ but in general, transfer values are too small to have significant impacts. In addition, there is little evidence on the efficacy of social protection in conflict contexts, and the impacts of protracted crises on the functioning of safety net systems (Sabates-Wheeler et al., 2021). There are also significant challenges associated with effectively linking humanitarian cash transfers and social protection systems in many contexts (CALP, 2023), including differing priorities and targeting criteria, data interoperability needs and humanitarian-government coordination obstacles.

Investing in preparedness can result in faster, more effective and cheaper response (Knox-Clarke, 2021), and getting disaster preparedness right can save thousands of lives.¹² But mobilising resources for preparedness is extremely challenging (UNOCHA and IFRC, 2022). Despite compelling evidence showing that preparedness is most effective when it is actioned in support

10 For example, Anticipation Hub's anticipatory action in conflict practitioners group.

11 For example, 25% of funds dispersed by Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme are invested in productive assets (PSNP, nd).

12 In Bangladesh, investment in disaster preparedness through early warning systems, communication campaigns and a network of cyclone shelters reduced cyclone-related deaths by over 100 times in 40 years, from 500,000 deaths in 1970 to 4,234 in 2007 (Haque et al., 2012).

of and jointly with communities, humanitarian preparedness efforts still largely impose standard preparedness solutions without meaningful consultation (Knox-Clarke, 2021).

3.3 Shared ways of working

Humanitarian actors highlight three main shifts required in their ways of working to address climate impacts and vulnerabilities. These are working better with other actors, an increased focus on local actors and approaches, and a greater commitment to system-wide learning.

3.3.1 Working better with other actors

Joint policy commitments place a strong emphasis on the need to work better with climate adaptation, development and other actors to deliver greater impact in climate-vulnerable settings. Most humanitarian organisations acknowledge that strengthening climate resilience in conflict-affected contexts cannot be achieved without improved cooperation with actors across the disaster risk reduction spectrum. The 2024 *Global humanitarian overview* states that increasing climate impacts and shrinking funding ‘has led humanitarian organisations to look more seriously at cooperation with other actors’ (UNOCHA, 2024a). The *Climate and environment charter* commits organisations to:

Work collaboratively across the humanitarian sector and beyond to strengthen climate and environmental action: We will enhance cooperation across the humanitarian system, in particular between local, national and international actors. We will also work with local and national authorities, environmental, development and human rights actors, international financial institutions, the private

sector, researchers, suppliers and donors to ensure a continuum of efforts to manage risks and to develop sustainable interventions. We will, notably, share our knowledge and insights to help shape people-centred, climate-resilient and inclusive development (ICRC and IFRC, 2021).

There is strong evidence to suggest that humanitarian interventions related to climate change are more effective when there are strong links between government and other actors (Knox-Clarke, 2021), and there are many indications of positive progress. Every humanitarian organisation interviewed for this report had good practice examples to share, for example the International Committee of the Red Cross collaboration with the Asian Development Bank on water systems in the Philippines (Grayson and Khouzam, 2023), World Bank support for resilient livelihoods for refugees in Chad, and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) collaboration with African Risk Capacity on resilience and preparedness across Africa. Humanitarian actors have a critical role to play as witnesses and advocates, and are in a strong position to catalyse broader action in the most fragile contexts: ‘We understand what needs to happen because we have the field presence in the worst-affected areas but don’t have the tools to do anything about them’ (KII 2).

These clear commitments to work more effectively with others are hampered in practice by several factors, listed below.

Limited presence of other actors in the most fragile settings

There are a number of obstacles to development actor engagement in fragile settings, including risk-averse funding mechanisms, security and access constraints, and a lack of political will to make

investments that are at high risk of disruption. In addition, in many conflict-affected contexts, the government is party to the conflict and therefore not well placed to deliver equitable support. ‘We’d ideally want humanitarian actors to pull back and focus on their lifesaving mandate while others come in,’ said one donor, ‘but in fragile contexts, humanitarians don’t have the skills or expertise to do adaptation well while development actors are too risk averse to work in the toughest places’ (KII 17).

Fragmented donor funding and policy structures

As above, many donors have separate humanitarian, development and peacebuilding policy departments and budget lines, and internal cooperation between relevant ministries and departments is hampered by organisational structures, timelines and processes. This policy incoherence is a major impediment to effective joint working among different actor groups and can incentivise opportunistic behaviour as humanitarian programming is dictated by funding opportunities rather than by evidence. Some donors express frustration that the holistic projects they know are needed, with concurrent action at the regional, institutional and community levels, are challenging to launch and fund because of the difficulties of working across these silos. The recent political focus on better joint working is positive, they say, but this has not demonstrably trickled down into ways of working. Some see a focus on increasing climate finance to fragile contexts as an opportunity to force more collaborative planning and programming.

Several governments have published strategies aiming to bring together climate efforts across ministries and government departments, and all donors interviewed for this report stressed that accelerating policy coherence among climate,

development, peacebuilding and humanitarian divisions is a major area of focus. Some argued that keeping humanitarian and development funding separate was a useful safeguard against all official development assistance getting subsumed under emergency response and made the case that donors’ policy coherence across climate, development, peacebuilding and humanitarian departments matters more than their funding structures.

Patchy coordination mechanisms

Efforts to bridge the humanitarian–peace–development nexus – joining up analysis of short- and long-term needs and working towards agreed collective outcomes – have been ongoing for some time but impacts to date appear limited. While ‘on the face of it, coordination of action in fragile and crisis-affected contexts should not be hard’ (Swithern and Schreiber, 2023), 75% of the humanitarian actors surveyed rated progress in strengthening the nexus as ‘fair’ or ‘poor’ (Obrecht et al., 2022). Some studies note more positive progress on joint planning and less on measuring progress against collective outcomes (IASC, 2021). Collective outcomes provide an important opportunity to drive closer working, but as currently configured – expressed in high-level terms without indicators or deadlines – their operational value in driving collective action may be limited (IASC, 2021). While recent evidence shows that climate change is being considered increasingly in nexus efforts in countries like Somalia (KII 21), this added dimension is likely to place further challenges on already stretched coordination efforts. The reach of these coordination mechanisms is limited, as the private sector is rarely engaged, and government, local actors and climate adaptation actors are inconsistently included (IASC, 2021). There is also a cost to engagement with coordination mechanisms, which many actors, especially

small-scale and local organisations, may perceive as outweighing the benefits (Switherm and Schreiber, 2023).

Country-level action is widely seen to be more effective in catalysing joint planning and working than global-level policy frameworks. When governments, local communities, development actors and the private sector come together to plan ahead of a crisis or to collaborate on a specific project this can be an effective way to build trust, define roles and responsibilities, and ensure effective joint action before, during and after a crisis. Anticipatory action was indicated by several informants as an important channel for catalysing such joint planning and working.

Different temporal and spatial focuses, and different understanding of vulnerability and competition over resources

Different actors' varying timescales and points of engagement, as well as fundamentally different priorities and problem analysis, can make agreeing on priorities challenging and lead to frustration. As above, humanitarian actors operate with an understanding of climate resilience and vulnerability that differs from most others across the climate risk management spectrum, looking at individual- and community-level drivers such as nutrition and health indicators, livelihoods and assets. This drives very different approaches and prioritisation, and can mean that working on integrated programming approaches and with other actor groups involves engaging with an entirely different worldview. Differing priorities create fierce competition over scarce resources:

While the overall aims of development, humanitarian and peacebuilding actors might be similar, we have fundamentally different priorities, and the reality is there are difficult

trade-offs. Do we spend our scarce resource on ensuring the very poorest have food to eat or on ensuring young men have employment opportunities to disincentivise them taking up arms? We shouldn't assume we all want exactly the same things (KII 17).

3.3.2 Increased focus on local action

Humanitarian actors recognise that local communities and civil society represent the first line of defence in both climate and conflict shocks, and that the role of external responders should be primarily to support the existing bases of resilience in communities, which include markets, social networks, knowledge and coping strategies. They advocate for an emphasis on local action, which includes the following.

More direct funding to local responders and the community

Humanitarian organisations have committed to ensure that local institutions, authorities and communities have better access to decision-making over where and how finances are allocated, programmes are designed, and progress is monitored and achieved (ICRC and IFRC, 2021). But despite a concerted push to localise the humanitarian sector over many years, and the 'Grand Bargain' commitment to allocate 25% of all funding as directly as possible to local and national actors, progress has been limited. Amounts of funding provided directly to national or local organisations have actually decreased, from 2.8% of total humanitarian assistance in 2017 to 1.2% in 2021 (Development Initiatives, 2022). While local actors undertake most humanitarian response activities, with 70% of funding going to international NGOs being passed to local actors, 'for the most part local and national NGOs continue to operate as sub-contractors, with limited influence' (Obrecht et al., 2022). Climate change will necessitate local actors

playing a greater role in global disaster response, as more frequent and concurrent crises limit the ability of international actors to cover all responses. But whether this will equate to a more equitable distribution of funding and decision-making power remains unclear.

An emphasis on supporting the basis of resilience in communities

The Climate Charter recognises that ‘Local actors and communities are the first responders to climate and environment shocks and are best placed to assess their needs’ (ICRC and IFRC, 2021). This is reflected in operational strategies, with some organisations developing tools to ensure that local risks and capacities are considered in humanitarian response.¹³ Some evidence suggests that vulnerable communities are excluded from, and not consulted in, state-led efforts to build climate resilience (Ground Truth Solutions et al., 2023). Humanitarians have been supportive of efforts by adaptation actors (notably through the ‘locally led adaptation’ agenda) to refocus adaptation programming at the community level and increase vulnerable communities’ influence over how adaptation resources are spent. The humanitarian presence in affected communities provides a basis for actors to help counter the focus on bilateral and state-led assistance, and ensure the most marginalised are included in climate adaptation strategies. A real gap remains between the intention to identify and build on locally led approaches and how humanitarian programming functions in practice, which continues to be predominantly ‘top down’.

However, some argue that since ‘individuals themselves cannot meaningfully be expected to adapt to climate change’ (Optiz-Stapleton et al., 2023), putting too much emphasis on the local level

without integrating this with broader adaptation is the wrong approach. Small-scale livelihoods or asset transfers should not be presented as making an individual or a community more climate resilient. While individual and community-level support to help cope with climate shocks is a critical piece of the puzzle, systems-level change – creating opportunities and protections for people based on their long-term needs and aspirations (including economic opportunity, access to basic services and markets, and legal protections) rather than just on their immediate vulnerabilities – is needed to build durable climate resilience. Both must happen in parallel, in ways that support and engage with each other.

3.3.3 Increased commitment to system-wide learning

Humanitarian organisations recognise this is an emerging area of work and that emphasis should be placed on innovation, understanding what works and expanding the evidence base. Several studies underscore the need for a renewed focus on and rigour around the use of learning and evidence in this space: Organisations should:

learn by documenting and analysing actions aimed at strengthening the resilience of people and systems to climate risks in the most unstable environments that are climate- and conflict-sensitive, and adequately address vulnerabilities (Grayson and Khouzam, 2023).

They also emphasise the importance of understanding communities’ experiences and using them to influence climate policy, which is largely focused on the national and institutional levels.

¹³ For example, the IFRC Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment.

The commitment to learning and evidence is not always reflected in organisations' approaches where evidence is being used selectively and more to secure donor funding than to accelerate system-wide learning (e.g. Weingärtner et al., 2020). Local perspectives on effectiveness are rarely considered. A revolution is needed in the

way organisations approach innovation, learning and evidence, shifting from a treatment of evidence as largely proprietary and for a donor audience, to evidence as a public good that should be used to accelerate system-wide learning about effective action to address climate impacts.

4 Key tensions in how humanitarians think about and address climate-driven needs in FCS

Figure 5 Key tensions in climate action in FCS



5 Policy recommendations

5.1 Improving collaboration with other actors to maximise collective impact

While there is clear commitment to improve collaboration with other key actor groups, several impediments exist in practice. Humanitarian organisations should step up their roles as advocates for increased climate action in FCS and strengthen their efforts towards partnership, bringing development and climate actors into the areas of greatest need, as well as ensuring legal frameworks reflect changing needs and realities (including climate-related displacement or migration). Country-level aid coordination structures should adapt to support this action, and opportunities to bring different actor groups together around concrete risks and programmes should be actively sought and pursued. Clarity is needed on where humanitarian actors are best placed to contribute to climate risk management in different contexts (what elements of vulnerability and climate risk, for whom and at what scales) and how this differs from and intersects with the roles of other actors.

5.2 Translating policy priorities into effective programming

Humanitarian organisations are clear that new approaches are needed, and efforts are under way to adapt programming to support vulnerable communities through climate shocks and long-term impacts. Emerging humanitarian–climate policy is relatively clear on humanitarians’ unique role in addressing needs in the context of climate change; more evidence and innovation are now needed to translate these broad policy positions to the operational level. Renewed focus is required on

how the critical short-term interventions required to help vulnerable communities cope with and reduce the impacts of near-term climate hazards can support efforts to build systemic resilience over the short, medium and long terms. The humanitarian system should seek to draw clearer lines around the optimal humanitarian contribution to building climate resilience (what it is and is not), recognising that this will differ by context, sector and the climate risks particular to the context.

5.3 Ensuring coherence around funding

Humanitarian actors have advocated for climate finance in FCS and should maintain pressure to see resources committed and funding processes adapted in line with policy commitments. More clarity is needed among humanitarian actors on how these resources should be channelled most effectively, considering the need to maximise available finance for adaptation and development as well as for humanitarian response. Where climate finance flows through the humanitarian system this should be additional to, and not displace, core humanitarian funding. Donors should make every effort to ensure policy coherence across relevant departments and ensure their funding approaches support rather than hinder joined-up and mutually reinforcing efforts across actor groups in FCS, being careful not to incentivise poor programmatic choices.

5.4 Identifying and scaling up approaches that work

Humanitarian organisations are sincerely invested in understanding what works to reduce and address the impacts of climate variability and

change on the world's most vulnerable people. But more support for and rigour around evidence and learning is required, particularly around whether and how preparedness, anticipatory action and resilience programming can be

effective in FCS. A new approach to evidence is needed to accelerate system-wide learning on the approaches that are most effective in addressing the climate challenge in FCS.

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