



# **HELP FIGHT FAMINE**

**THE URGENT CASE  
TO SAVE LIVES AT A  
TIME OF POLYCRISIS**

**MARCH 2023, VERSION 2. AUTHORED BY THE HELP FIGHT FAMINE ALLIANCE**

# Executive summary

The world is experiencing multiple crises, where the impacts of conflict, COVID-19, growing inequality and climate change are causing greater poverty and hardship.

Progress to eradicate extreme poverty has halted globally. Climate change fueled disasters and humanitarian crises are rising now and into the future.

The number of people needing life saving humanitarian aid is increasing. In 2023 it is forecast to be 339 million people, 65 million more than 2022.

In the Horn of Africa famine is imminent, with around 20.2 million children now facing the threat of severe hunger, thirst and disease, compared to 10 million in July.<sup>1</sup> One person is dying every 48 seconds in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia alone and the region is on the brink of famine.<sup>2</sup>

The UN has called for \$51.5 billion for life-saving support in 2023.

Globally, funding for humanitarian aid has fallen short by 44 percent over the last five years.

Wealthy countries are not meeting our moral obligation to the world's poorest people.

Australia is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, yet as a proportion of the size of our economy our humanitarian funding is amongst the lowest compared to other wealthy countries. In 2022, Australia gave just 0.01% of GDP to humanitarian aid. As a proportion of our economy that's half the New Zealand contribution, a quarter of Japan's and the UK's contribution, and one sixth of the United States contribution.

Australia has the opportunity to turn this around. We can rejoin our peers in stepping up to the challenge of our increasingly unstable world. We can save many lives and help prevent future hunger crises not only in our region, but across the world. It's the right thing to do.

---

1 UNICEF, 'More than twenty million children suffering in the Horn of Africa as drought intensifies – UNICEF - 22 December 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/more-twenty-million-children-suffering-horn-africa-drought-intensifies-unicef>

2 Oxfam International, 'One Person Likely Dying from Hunger Every 48 Seconds in Drought-Ravaged East Africa as World Again Fails to Heed Warnings', Oxfam International, 3 June 2022, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/one-person-likely-dying-hunger-every-48-seconds-drought-ravaged-east-africa-world>.

## Recommendations

In the 2023/24 budget, the Help Fight Famine Coalition is calling for:

- Urgent investment of a further \$110 million in a Famine Prevention Package to stop a catastrophe in the worst-affected hunger hotspots in the Horn of Africa, Yemen, Afghanistan and Syria
- An increase to the humanitarian assistance budget overall by:
  - › raising the annual allocation of the Humanitarian Emergency Fund to \$300 million, and
  - › investing \$200 million annually for Global Food Security to fight the root causes of hunger.
- A commitment to raise the aid budget to 0.5% of GNI and for this target to be locked in legislation, as a matter of urgency.

**“1 in every 23 people on the planet needs emergency assistance to survive.”**

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR THE  
COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

**“Australia’s humanitarian aid is low and has decreased over the past 10 years. Right now, we are falling well short of our peers in compassionate giving to save lives at times of crisis.”**

LYN MORGAIN, OXFAM AUSTRALIA



Saynab Dahir Mohamoud, Somaliland.  
© Jenna Farineau / ActionAid

**Saynab Dahir  
Mohamoud,  
chairperson for the  
Ceel-Hume women's  
group in Ceel-Hume,  
Somaliland.**

"I was a pastoralist and I managed my livestock. Now after the drought affected our livelihood source, we lost our livestock and migrated here. Then ActionAid collaborated with other NGOs here and they said since our other livelihood was lost, we will create together an alternative livelihood income so now we are farming."

"Now we have a lot of ideas and we are happy. Day after day the time becomes sweet and we are very happy."

# THE HUNGER AND POVERTY CRISIS

**“The largest global food crisis in modern history is unfolding, driven by conflict, climate shocks and the looming threat of global recession. Hundreds of millions of people are at risk of worsening hunger. Acute food insecurity is escalating, and by the end of 2022, at least 222 million people across 53 countries are expected to face acute food insecurity and need urgent assistance. Starvation is a very real risk for 45 million people in 37 countries.”** UN OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2023 <sup>3</sup>

In December 2022, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs released the 2023 Global Humanitarian Overview. The overview forecast a record 339 million people will need humanitarian aid and protection in 2023 — an increase of 65 million since the beginning of 2022. That is larger than the population of the United States. It also means 1 in every 23 people on the planet needs emergency assistance to survive.

Extreme inequality and poverty, conflict, droughts and floods, and escalating food and energy prices, accelerated by the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic, are together driving people to the edge.

Our progress to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 has halted, with women and girls suffering the most. With 90 million more people experiencing extreme poverty, the global goal of ending extreme poverty by 2030 is no longer achievable.<sup>4</sup>

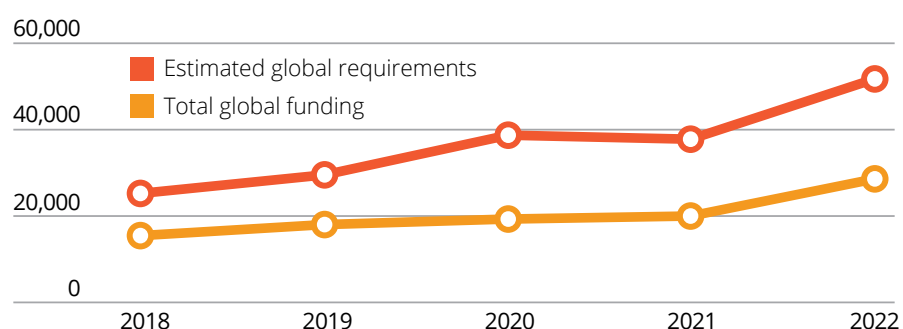
The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has called for US\$51.5 billion to bring life-saving support to 230 million of the most vulnerable people in 69 countries.<sup>5</sup>

This comes off the back of a 45% funding shortfall in humanitarian aid in 2022 (as of 23 February 2023), and a consistent average shortfall of 44.35% over the last five years.<sup>6</sup>

Nowhere is the hunger crisis greater than in the Horn of Africa - made up of Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya in East Africa. Africa is enduring a fifth successive failed rainy season - the longest sequence of dry seasons ever recorded in the region<sup>7</sup>. The Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit is expecting an official famine declaration in Somalia between April and June 2023<sup>8</sup>. In Somalia approximately 8.3 million people face crisis, including 1.8 million children facing acute malnutrition. Despite this, humanitarian assistance is preparing to scale down in April due to insufficient funding.<sup>9</sup>

## FUNDING NEED VERSUS ACTUAL FUNDING PER YEAR (\$USD MILLIONS, AS OF FEB 23, 2023)

Source: OCHA, Operations: Inter-Agency Plans (accessed 23 February 2023)



3 UN OCHA, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023* (United Nations, 2022), p.4, <https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/books/9789210024136>.

4 Ibid.

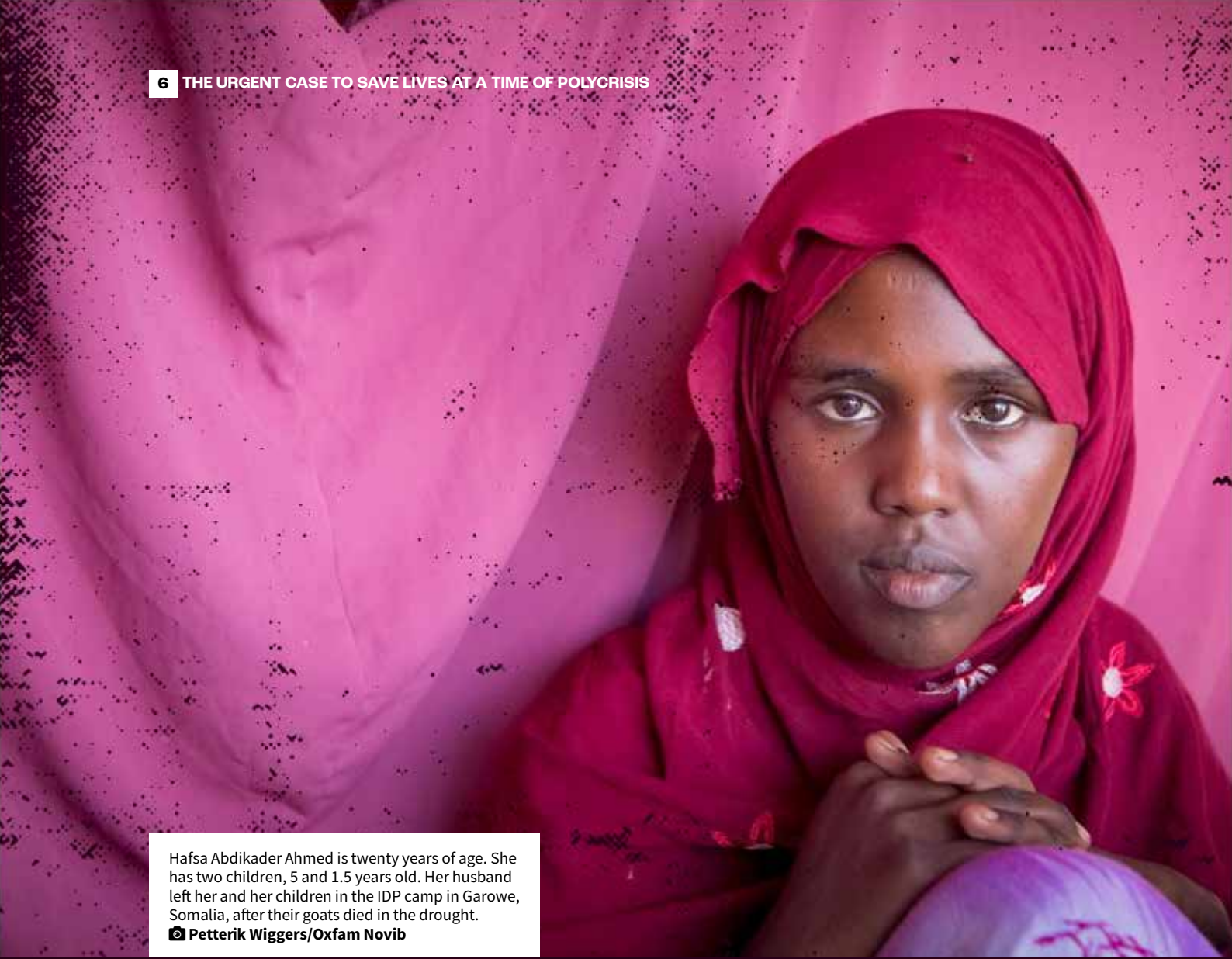
5 Ibid.

6 UN OCHA, 'Operations: Inter-Agency Plans', Humanitarian Action: Analysing needs and response, 2021, <https://humanitarianaction.info/overview/2022>.

7 Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), 'Horn of Africa | Famine Early Warning Systems Network', Horn of Africa, accessed 16 February 2023, <https://fewsn.net/horn-africa>.

8 Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit - Somalia (FSNAU), 'Home', FSNAU - FAO, December 2022, <https://fsnau.org/>.

9 FSNAU, Food Security and Nutrition Analysis - Somalia, 13 December 2022, <https://fsnau.org/in-focus/multi-partner-technical-release-updated-ipc-analysis-somalia-october-2022-june-2023-english>



Hafsa Abdikader Ahmed is twenty years of age. She has two children, 5 and 1.5 years old. Her husband left her and her children in the IDP camp in Garowe, Somalia, after their goats died in the drought.

📷 Petterik Wiggers/Oxfam Novib

# Beyond Hunger The gendered impacts of the global hunger crisis

By Plan International

Through over 7000 surveys and interviews conducted in eight countries – Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Somalia and South Sudan – Plan International has revealed that the hunger crisis is exacerbating violence against girls and women, including sexual exploitation and child marriage.

The drought-stricken Horn of Africa is facing its worst crisis in 40 years, and the dire situation is taking a toll on girls and women. In Ethiopia, new data shows that child marriage has skyrocketed by 51 per cent in just one year, as families resort to this desperate measure to alleviate financial pressure. Girls and women also face a daily struggle

for survival as they are forced to travel up to 25 km in search of scarce drinking water, often at night, putting them at risk of sexual and physical violence.

“Unless international support is scaled up urgently, countless girls risk becoming invisible victims of this devastating hunger crisis,” said Dr. Unni Krishnan, Global Humanitarian Director at Plan International. “Hunger is a solvable problem, but urgent action is needed to stop this food crisis from becoming a full-blown famine which will hit children, especially girls, the hardest.”

# HUNGER HOTSPOTS

## Global Humanitarian Overview 2023<sup>10</sup>

### East and Southern Africa

These regions have the largest number of people in need - 76.8 million. This year there are ten countries and four regional plans with requirements of more than \$1 billion each.<sup>11</sup>

### Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia

In Eastern Africa, the longest and most severe drought in recent history is ravaging parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, and the situation is expected to worsen in 2023. Severe drought will affect at least 36.4 million people. At least 21 million people are projected to face high levels of acute food insecurity, and two districts in Somalia are at risk of famine.

More than 9.5 million livestock—which pastoralist families rely on for sustenance and livelihoods—have already died across the region, and many more are expected to perish in the months ahead.

The drought is driving alarming levels of malnutrition for children and women, threatening their lives and futures. About 5 million children are acutely malnourished in drought-affected areas, including about 1.4 million children who are severely acutely malnourished, and an estimated 1.3 million pregnant and breastfeeding women are acutely malnourished. In drought-affected areas, many women have sacrificed their own well-being and nutrition to care for their families.

Water insecurity has more than doubled with close to 24 million people now confronting dire water shortages. Drought has internally displaced over two million people and driven approximately 2.7 million children out of school, with an additional four million others at risk of dropping out.

### Afghanistan

A staggering two thirds of Afghanistan's population will need humanitarian assistance in 2023. The country will enter its third consecutive year of drought-like conditions and its second year of crippling economic decline, all while people have been unable to recover from the devastating impact of the recent earthquake and floods, and decades of conflict-driven vulnerability. It is estimated that a record 28.3 million people will need humanitarian and protection assistance in 2023, up from 24.4 million in 2022 and 18.4 million at the beginning of 2021.

### Yemen

Eight years into the conflict's escalation, the crisis in Yemen remains severe, with more than 21 million people needing humanitarian assistance. The conflict's protracted nature has resulted in economic collapse, increased poverty and the breakdown of national social protection systems, worsening the already alarming food insecurity situation.

### Syria

The country still has the largest number of internally displaced people in the world - 6.8 million people. In 2022, the key drivers of humanitarian need in Syria were related to conflict, economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, the water crisis and drought-like conditions.

The recent devastating earthquake has only deepened the humanitarian challenge in the north of the country.

<sup>10</sup> Figures in this box sourced from: UN OCHA, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023* <https://humanitarianaction.info/gho2023>

<sup>11</sup> UN OCHA, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023* (United Nations, 2022), p.5, <https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/books/9789210024136>.



Dead goat carcass. Wajir County, Kenya  
📷 Khadija Farah/Oxfam



## AREAS OF HUNGER 2022

<https://humanitarianaction.info/>



# THE STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE IN A FAMINE



**Abdulahi Farah Isse, 27 years old, is a pastoralist in Puntland, Somalia. His livestock is heavily affected by the drought, and he is worried about the future of his family.**

📷 Petterik Wiggers/Oxfam Novib

"I had about a hundred cattle before but now only 60 remain. With the last 5 months close to 40 have died.

There have been drought problems since I was born, but within my lifetime this is the worst drought I have ever experienced. I remember that when I grew up as a boy I remember we had a problem and we were losing cattle, but it's never been like this.

I am married with one wife, with three children.

This drought will definitely have an impact on them.

Our children need milk from the cows, which is a challenge now but we are trying to do our best so our people will survive.

I am very much worried for this drought and the near future. If these cattle all die the people will be at risk.

We depend on our livestock because we sell them for money (income), and also to get meat and milk from the cattle so if the cattle die those opportunities will be no longer available.

You have seen the situation yourself so you can easily understand what we need. We need food for the children, for the livestock.

It is not just for me, it's for all the people here. Many people are like me, they are in the same situation. Some have a better life than me, others are more vulnerable."

## Safia Osman a participant in Oxfam's Cash Transfer Programme and Water Sanitation and Hygiene Non Food Item in Badana, Kenya.

"My name is Safia Osman and I have 6 children. I am 30 years old and I am married. We are adversely affected by drought.

"We have no milk from livestock because there is no pasture. Cattle are dying and the orphan-calves depend on us to take care of them. Personally, I'm affected because the livestock we depend on to feed the family and cater for the school going children are gone. We were surviving on the little we received from the Merti Integrated Development Program. We are really stressed.

"Because of the drought, we can only afford one meal per day. And we mostly get the food on credit from kiosks. That's how our life is.

"We have no water, the little that comes from far is dirty. We received water containers. We also received some purifiers from Merti Integrated Development Program which made it possible for us to use the dirty water. In Badana, we received Ksh8,838 per month [equivalent to just over AUD\$100]. We used the money to buy food, pay school fees and buy school uniforms. We are surviving on that money from MID-P to escape death from hunger. It's our only hope.

"I urge those giving us this aid to continue helping us since the drought is still here with us."



# ESCALATING CONFLICT AND SECURITY RISKS

One of the driving forces behind hunger is conflict. Sixty percent of the world's hungry live in conflict zones<sup>12</sup>. Food insecurity increases when fighting drives people from their homes, lands and jobs, and cuts off food supply routes and humanitarian relief. Hunger can also drive conflict. Rising food prices directly contributed to the social unrest which sparked the Arab Spring in 2010<sup>13</sup> and Sri Lankan collapse in 2022<sup>14</sup>.

Conflict also impacts global food systems. East Africa and Yemen depend on Russia & Ukraine for much of their wheat imports<sup>15</sup>. The conflict between these countries has exacerbated food shortages and price rises in Somalia.

The Horn of Africa is among the most conflict-affected regions of the world. Violent conflict and insecurity were the principal drivers of food insecurity in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan<sup>16</sup>. The combination of conflict with climate change induced drought and global food price rises has escalated the crisis in this region to the dire situation we see today.

Australia is now in one of the most contested geostrategic environments since WWII. Rising costs of living, conflict, climate change, foreign interference, disinformation, misinformation and loss of civic spaces are increasing instability. Trust has been declining.

Australia's contribution to these solutions, given our values, interests, and middle-power status in the Indo-Pacific, is unique and vital.

Sustained increases to the humanitarian and aid budgets are critical to Australia's ability to build trusted relationships and to manage risks. Diplomacy and defence investment is not enough. Strategic financial assistance is crucial in combating imminent threats to the stability of our region and the world.



12 World Food Program, 'Fact sheet Hunger & conflict', <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000099172/download/>

13 America Security Project, 'The Arab Spring and World Food Prices', <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05961>

14 East Asia Forum, 'Sri Lanka's disastrous 2022 ends with a sliver of optimism', <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2023/01/13/sri-lankas-disastrous-2022-ends-with-a-silver-of-optimism/>

15 International Rescue Committee, 'Russia halting Ukraine grain exports will most heavily hit those already facing extreme hunger, warns IRC', <https://www.rescue.org/press-release/russia-halting-ukraine-grain-exports-will-most-heavily-hit-those-already-facing>

16 SIPRI, 'Food Insecurity in Africa: Drivers and Solutions - January 2023', <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/food-insecurity-africa-drivers-and-solutions>

# THIS POLYCRISIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

Currently the world is beset by a polycrisis where inequality and poverty are made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict, climate change and the rising cost of living. According to the World Bank, global income inequality has risen for the first time in two-and-a-half decades.<sup>17</sup>

Now and into the future, climate change will be the key driver of humanitarian disasters and ecosystem collapse, which will have flow on effects including mass migration, conflict, supply chain collapses, rising poverty and global instability<sup>18</sup>.

Already temperatures have risen 1.1 degrees. This has resulted in once-in-a-decade droughts becoming almost twice as likely and supercharging hunger in climate-vulnerable hotspots around the world.<sup>19</sup> Drought has been a particular feature in the Horn of Africa for the last 10 years, worsening year-by-year in severity and frequency. Coupled with conflict and human rights abuses, at least 17.8 million people in the Horn of Africa have been internally displaced, destabilising governments and communities, and elevating the number of people who are starving.<sup>20</sup>

In Pakistan, in just one catastrophic flood event in 2022, 33 million people were flood affected, over 1300 people lost their lives, 1.7 million homes were damaged or destroyed, and 6.4 million people required humanitarian assistance<sup>21</sup>.

The humanitarian funds required to respond to climate change related extreme weather events like floods and drought is now eight times higher than 20 years ago. Average annual extreme weather related humanitarian funding appeals rose to an average of USD\$15.5 billion between 2019-2021, 819% higher than 2000-2002<sup>22</sup>.

Disturbingly, over the past five years nearly half of appeal requirements have gone unmet, resulting in an estimated funding shortfall of \$28–\$33bn<sup>23</sup>.

This is only the beginning. Climate change is expected to push up to 132 million people into poverty over the coming decade.<sup>24</sup>

Our collective political failure to tackle inequality, climate change and conflict mean that millions of men, women and children will suffer and humanitarian needs will only grow.

17 World Bank, 'Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2022: Correcting Course' (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2022), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/37739/9781464818936.pdf>.

18 World Economic Forum, 'The Global Risks Report 2023', Insight Report (Geneva: World Economic Forum, January 2023), [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Global\\_Risks\\_Report\\_2023.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2023.pdf).

19 Tracy Carty and Lyndsay Walsh, 'Footing the Bill: Fair Finance for Loss and Damage in an Era of Escalating Climate Impacts', Briefing Paper (Oxfam International, 7 June 2022), <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/handle/10546/621382>.

20 Help Fight Famine, 'The Global Good Solution: Conflict and Climate-Proofing World Supply' (Help Fight Famine, 2022), [https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/62ccc7bc4277a72c1bf1f874/6376fde49c7f618146337faa\\_HFF%20Global%20Food%20Solution%20v03.pdf](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/62ccc7bc4277a72c1bf1f874/6376fde49c7f618146337faa_HFF%20Global%20Food%20Solution%20v03.pdf).

21 USAID, 'Pakistan - Floods Fact Sheet #3, Fiscal Year (FY) 2022', Situation Report (United States: USAID, 7 September 2022), <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/pakistan-floods-fact-sheet-3-fiscal-year-fy-2022>.

22 Carty and Walsh, Footing the Bill.

23 Ibid.

24 Bramka Arga Jafino et al., *Revised Estimates of the Impact of Climate Change on Extreme Poverty by 2030* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-9417>.

# HELP FIGHT FAMINE: OUR COLLECTIVE CHALLENGE

Our collective challenge is stark. More people are food deprived and starving than ever before in history. Progress to end extreme poverty has halted. We face an escalating number and intensity of disasters across the world now and into the future, many fuelled by climate change.

Meanwhile the world's biggest food traders have made record profits, and the billionaires involved in the food and agribusiness sector have seen their collective wealth increase by \$382bn (45%) since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>25</sup>.

Never before has inequality in global food systems been so brazen and heartbreaking.

High levels of hunger are not caused by a lack of food; farmers produce more than enough to feed the whole world. Despite adequate harvests and

healthy levels of food stocks, hunger has increased since 2017.<sup>26</sup> The problem is distribution of food and food being unattainable or unaffordable.

This extreme inequality, poverty and suffering is preventable. We have the tools to anticipate and the resources to respond to this worsening hunger. We must act with the speed and seriousness the crisis demands. We must tackle the long-standing failures in the global food system, rein in inequality, and meet the challenges of climate change and the polycrisis.



25 Oxfam International, 'Profiting from Pain: The Urgency of Taxing the Rich amid a Surge in Billionaire Wealth and a Global Cost-of-Living Crisis', Media Briefing, 23 May 2022, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/profitting-pain>.

26 FAO et al., *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021*, The State of the World (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb4474en>.

# AUSTRALIA'S FAIR SHARE OF FUNDING

Australia has an important part to play in fixing our global food system, reducing poverty and ending the hunger crisis.

OCHA has stated that in 2023 we need US\$51.5 billion in humanitarian funding to provide life saving aid to 230 million people. It's important that Australia pays its fair share of humanitarian funding to save lives.

Oxfam Australia has calculated Australia's fair share according to the belief that every country should contribute to humanitarian needs in accordance with wealth and ability to give. As the 14th largest economy in the world by GDP, Australia has a responsibility to lead action in preventing and responding to humanitarian

disasters. Accordingly, we calculate that Australia's fair share equates to \$1.149 billion dollars.

Currently, Australia's humanitarian assistance falls well short of our fair share.



# AUSTRALIA'S RECORD ON FUNDING

Among our peers, Australia has a poor record when it comes to humanitarian aid.

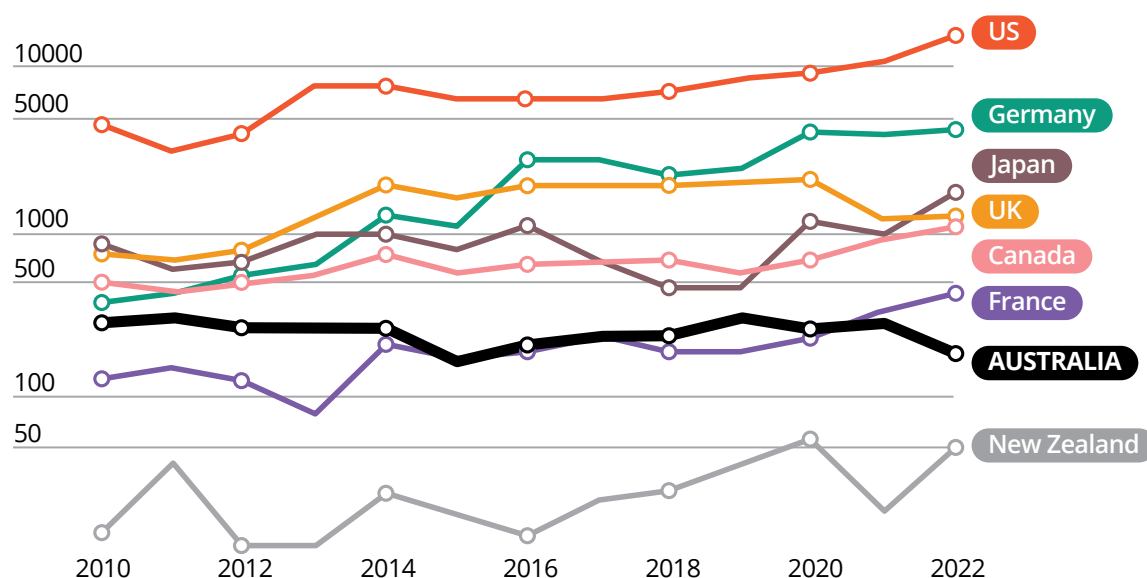
According to UN OCHA's real-time Financial Tracking Service (as of February 10, 2023), Australia ranked 16th among all other country donors in 2022, behind countries such as Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, and Saudi Arabia.<sup>27</sup> Since the last Horn of Africa crisis of 2011, Australia's humanitarian funding levels have remained low relative to other countries.<sup>28</sup> While OCHA data doesn't reflect all humanitarian funding given by these countries, it represents an important point of international comparison.

Using this OCHA data we calculate that Australia's humanitarian funding in 2022 represents one-hundredth of a percent of its GDP. Proportional to the size of their economies, the UK gave four times more and New Zealand, two times more than Australia in the same

year. By these standards, the scale of Australia's humanitarian funding is unacceptably low.

If we consider Australia's full humanitarian contributions according to government data<sup>29</sup>, we can see that Australia's humanitarian funding spiked in response to the Somalia famine in 2011, then remained stagnant for several years and has increased in the past three years. While this increase is very welcome, as a proportion of the size of our economy our funding still remains low compared to other wealthy countries for our compassionate responses to global disasters. Australia has the opportunity to step up, to save lives and prevent further cascading crises by investing early as disasters and conflicts unfold.

**TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PER YEAR SINCE 2010 (\$ MILLIONS USD, AS OF FEBRUARY 10 2023 )**



Source: OCHA Financial Tracking Service (accessed February 10, 2023)

27 International Monetary Fund, 'World Economic Outlook (October 2022)', accessed 10 February 2023, <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/datasets/WEQ>.

28 UN OCHA, 'Home | Financial Tracking Service'.

29 DFAT, Australian Official Development Assistance Budget Summary October 2022-23, <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/portfolio-budget-statements/australian-official-development-assistance-budget-summary-october-2022-23#humanitarian>

# HOW AUSTRALIA COMPARES

According to OCHA data, Australia is lagging behind our peers in humanitarian support. As stated earlier, OCHA funding does not represent all humanitarian funding given by wealthy countries, but it does provide an important reference point for international comparison. If Australia stepped up our funding proportionate to our wealth, we could help meet the growing shortfall in humanitarian funding globally. .

## US

- The US gave USD \$46.69 per capita in humanitarian funding in 2022, while Australia gave USD \$7.53 per capita (that's 6 times less per capita compared to the United States)
- The US's humanitarian funding represented 0.06% of its GDP in 2022. Australia's humanitarian funding was just 0.01% of GDP

## UK

- The UK gave USD \$18.77 per capita in humanitarian funding in 2022, while Australia gave USD \$7.53 per capita (or: Australia gave almost 2 and half times less per capita than the UK)
- Australia's humanitarian funding in 2022 represents 0.01% of its GDP, whereas for the UK, its 0.04% (or: The United Kingdom, accounting for size in economy, gave four times more in humanitarian funding than Australia)

## New Zealand

- New Zealand gave USD \$9.59 per capita in humanitarian funding in 2022, while Australia gave USD \$7.53 per capita.
- New Zealand's humanitarian funding in 2022 represents 0.02% of its GDP, whereas for Australia its 0.01% of its GDP (or: New Zealand, when accounting for size in economy, gave twice as much in humanitarian funding as Australia)

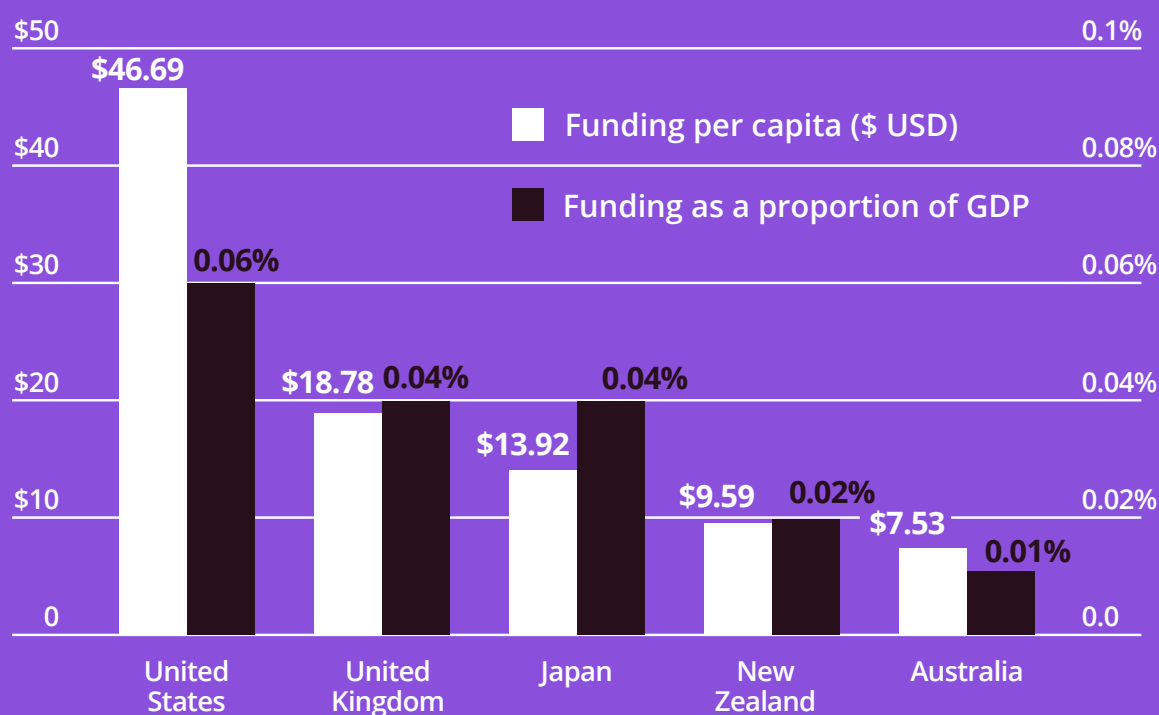
## Japan

- Japan gave USD \$13.92 per capita in humanitarian funding in 2022, while Australia gave USD \$7.53 per capita.
- Australia's humanitarian funding in 2022 represents 0.01% of its GDP, whereas for Japan its 0.04% of its GDP (or: Japan, when accounting for size in economy, gave four times as much in humanitarian funding as Australia)





### HUMANITARIAN FUNDING IN 2022 PER CAPITA AND AS A PROPORTION OF GDP (AS OF FEBRUARY 10 2023)



Source: UN OCHA, 'Home | Financial Tracking Service', Financial Tracking Service, accessed 10 February 2023, <https://fts.unocha.org/>; International Monetary Fund, 'World Economic Outlook (October 2022)', October 2022, <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/datasets/WEO>; OECD, 'Demography - Population', OECD Data, accessed 24 February 2023, <http://data.oecd.org/pop/population.htm>.

# DANGEROUS DELAYS, THE NEED TO ACT NOW

Delaying support to the Horn of Africa and other hunger hotspots comes at the price of men, women and children living on the brink. Australia cannot wait for famine to be declared. It needs to act now.

**“Many deaths could have been avoided with earlier action. Australia, along with other donors, needs to reflect on how to initiate responses before crises escalate.”<sup>30</sup>**

This is one of the sobering conclusions from a 2014 report authored by DFAT’s Office of Development Effectiveness, which evaluated Australia’s response to the HoA humanitarian crisis in 2011. Back then, Australia responded only in scale when the UN officially declared famine in Somalia in July, at which point the crisis was irreversibly severe and many thousands had died before funding was significantly increased.<sup>31</sup>

We welcome the AU\$40 million that Australia has committed thus far to the hunger crisis. It’s an important start. However, to match the severity and the scale of the crisis underway

in the Horn of Africa, the Help Fight Famine Coalition is seeking a further \$110 million.

With all signs pointing to a looming famine crisis in the region right now, Australia must take heed of its own report recommendations, the combined calls of civil society<sup>32</sup> and the international community at-large, and act now.

## Doubling our Humanitarian Emergency Fund

Today, Australia’s Humanitarian Emergency Fund is just \$150 million annually. With the escalating severity and frequency of crises now and into the future, the Help Fight Famine Coalition is calling for a doubling of this fund to save lives in distaster, hunger and conflict zones across the world.

An increase in funding of just \$150 million per annum would have a very small impact on our budget, but would be invaluable in saving lives.

This boosted Humanitarian Emergency fund should be new, flexible, multi-year, and delivered fastly and efficiently to local communities.

30 Lewis Sida et al., ‘Australia’s Response to the Horn of Africa Humanitarian Crisis, 2011’ (Canberra: Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1 June 2014), p.7, <https://apo.org.au/node/53313>.

31 Ibid., p. 25.

32 Emily Farr et al., ‘Dangerous Delay 2: The Cost of Inaction’, Briefing Paper (Oxfam International, Save the Children, 2022), <http://hdl.handle.net/10546/621373>.



Amina Jama Ismail, 40 year-old mother from Hidhinta, Somaliland.  
 © Daniel Jukes/ActionAid

**Amina Jama Ismail, 40, is a mother of 8 who lives in the community of Xidhinta. The drought has become the biggest issue the community is facing. Since the community doesn't rear livestock, they rely on agriculture. There is currently no production because of a lack of rain.**

In addition to selling milk from her livestock, Amina is completely dependent on her farm. When there is rain, the land can produce many crops. But this year there was no rain and she's lost her entire livelihood. Her community's biggest needs are water and food assistance. She said: "There are many people who can't cook tonight and many others who can't get water because water sources are far from them. So water and food are the most needed elements."

When asked whether or not women are more worried about the drought than men, Amina shared: "The biggest burden is on women, but men don't know that. Women stay at home and keep the children safe, while the men go to the village and eat Khat. They will come late at night and go back to the village in the morning, so the burden is on the mother. Men do not know if their wives have managed to get some food, if the children went to school, or the livestock are well. All of this is on her."

Since joining a women's group facilitated by ActionAid, Amina has felt a positive change. She now feels like she has greater opportunities to provide for her family and access assistance in times of drought.

# NO ONE SHOULD STARVE IN A WORLD OF PLENTY

## Australia's opportunity to be a leader in fixing the global food system.

We can create a food system that is sustainable, resilient to climate and conflict shocks, and realises everyone's right to food, while reducing inequality and poverty. Australia can lead the way in tackling the root causes of the global hunger crisis through investing long-term in a targeted plan for Global Food Security. The new International Development Policy offers the opportunity to direct this targeted plan with a strong focus on food security, climate, gender and anticipatory action based on forecasts and risk analysis.

Foreseeable shocks to the food system do not have to spark famine. There is enough food in the world to meet everyone's needs<sup>33</sup>. The problem is distribution of food and food being unattainable or unaffordable. We must invest in preventative measures that strengthen systems and build local resilience, such as social safety nets, climate adaptation projects, disaster risk reduction, and peacebuilding programs.

All funding should prioritise local responses to save lives. Supporting local food production, protecting the poorest, and making food available are critical. More support should be directed to farmers and agricultural workers to expand sustainable domestic and local food production. This would reduce dependence on international markets, which exposes countries to supply disruptions and price fluctuations. It is essential that small-scale farmers in low-income countries are supported in having more access to funding, infrastructure, inputs and markets, and that their land rights are protected<sup>34</sup>.

Australia has the skills and resources to be a global leader. Australia has developed agricultural innovation systems based on climate extremes like floods, bushfires, droughts and cyclones. First Nations people have specific and valuable knowledge, having managed the often arid landscapes of Australia for tens of thousands of years. This expertise can help equip other countries with the skills they need to adapt. As a wealthy middle power country, Australia also has the diplomatic tools to influence like minded partner nations and take steps to conflict and climate-proof food systems.

In May 2022, the G7 and the World Bank launched the Global Alliance for Food Security, to catalyse an immediate and concerted response to the unfolding global hunger crisis. Australia can play its part in this effort in critical global hunger spots and in our region.

The Help Fight Famine Coalition is calling for an annual \$200 million investment in a Food Security Strategy to invest in prevention activities to help stop hunger crises from emerging.



33 FAO et al., *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021*.

34 Marc Cohen et al., 'Fixing Our Food: Debunking 10 Myths about the Global Food System and What Drives Hunger', Briefing Paper (Oxfam International, 8 September 2022), <https://doi.org/10.21201/2022.9394>.



Somalia resilience program, Kalsheekh, Sanaag region, Somalia. October 2022  
© Ahmed Osman/Oxfam

**Abdirisak Ahmed is the chairman of the Kalsheikh District Farmers Cooperative.**

He is inside one of the greenhouses Oxfam built in the village so that the locals, primarily pastoralists, can learn farming skills to diversify their income sources. The program also provided seeds, a solar pump, and a water tank.

This project is also financed through the Somalia resilience program (SOMREP) with the overall goal of increasing the resilience of chronically vulnerable Somali people, households, communities, and systems to climatic shocks and other related risks in targeted pastoral, agro-pastoral, coastal, and peri-urban livelihood zones by 2023.

# INCREASING AUSTRALIA'S AID TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE CENTURY

To help prevent humanitarian crises from arising, to meet the challenge of climate change and conflicts, and to turn back the tide of growing inequality and poverty, Australia needs a generous and stable aid program.

After a decade of funding being stripped out of aid, Australia's aid program has dropped to just 0.2% of Gross National Income in 2022-23. Australia was the tenth richest country in the OECD in 2020, yet our contribution falls well short of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) average for ODA/GNI of 0.32% in 2020<sup>35</sup>.

The Help Fight Famine Coalition notes Labor's previous commitment and its current ALP National Policy Platform position to reach for an aid target of 0.5% of GNI. We also welcome the new \$1.4 billion investment over the forward estimates in the October 22 budget. This is a strategic reset that will prevent our aid budget dropping further over the forward estimates.

In this 2023/24 budget, the Help Fight Famine Coalition is calling for the Albanese Government to recommit to this 0.5% of GNI target, and to legislate a pathway to achieving the target as a matter of urgency.

Raising Australia's aid budget is critical for creating a more secure and prosperous region that can adapt to the challenges of the polycrisis and climate change.



35 ACFID, '2022-23 Federal Budget | Facts & Figures', <https://acfid.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2022-2023-ACFID-Budget-Analysis.pdf>.

# REFERENCES

- ACFID. '2022-23 Federal Budget | Facts & Figures'. 2022. <https://acfid.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2022-2023-ACFID-Budget-Analysis.pdf>.
- Carty, Tracy, and Lyndsay Walsh. 'Footing the Bill: Fair Finance for Loss and Damage in an Era of Escalating Climate Impacts'. Briefing Paper. Oxfam International, 7 June 2022. <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/handle/10546/621382>.
- Cohen, Marc, Guillaume Compain, Thierry Kesteloot, Madelon Meijer, Eric Munoz, Simon Murtagh, Hanna Saarinen, and Nout van der Vaart. 'Fixing Our Food: Debunking 10 Myths about the Global Food System and What Drives Hunger'. Briefing Paper. Oxfam International, 8 September 2022. <https://doi.org/10.21201/2022.9394>.
- Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET). 'Horn of Africa | Famine Early Warning Systems Network'. Horn of Africa. Accessed 16 February 2023. <https://fewsn.net/horn-africa>.
- FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021*. The State of the World. FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb4474en>.
- Farr, Emily, Leah Finnegan, Joanne Grace, and Mathew Truscott. 'Dangerous Delay 2: The Cost of Inaction'. Briefing Paper. Oxfam International, Save the Children, 2022. <http://hdl.handle.net/10546/621373>.
- Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit - Somalia (FSNAU). 'Home'. FSNAU - FAO, December 2022. <https://fsnau.org/>.
- Grudnoff, Matt. 'Rich Man's World'. The Australia Institute, 17 February 2022. <https://australiainstitute.org.au/report/rich-mans-world-gender-distribution-of-the-stage-3-tax-cuts/>.
- Help Fight Famine. 'The Global Good Solution: Conflict and Climate-Proofing World Supply'. Help Fight Famine, 2022. [https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/62ccc7bc4277a72c1bf1f874/6376fde49c7f618146337faa\\_HFF%20Global%20Food%20Solution%20v03.pdf](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/62ccc7bc4277a72c1bf1f874/6376fde49c7f618146337faa_HFF%20Global%20Food%20Solution%20v03.pdf).
- International Monetary Fund. 'World Economic Outlook (October 2022)', October 2022. <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/datasets/WE0>.
- Jafino, Bramka Arga, Brian Walsh, Julie Rozenberg, and Stephane Hallegatte. *Revised Estimates of the Impact of Climate Change on Extreme Poverty by 2030*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-9417>.
- OECD. 'Demography - Population'. OECD Data. Accessed 24 February 2023. <http://data.oecd.org/pop/population.htm>.
- Oxfam International. 'One Person Likely Dying from Hunger Every 48 Seconds in Drought-Ravaged East Africa as World Again Fails to Heed Warnings'. Oxfam International, 3 June 2022. <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/one-person-likely-dying-hunger-every-48-seconds-drought-ravaged-east-africa-world>.
- . 'Profiting from Pain: The Urgency of Taxing the Rich amid a Surge in Billionaire Wealth and a Global Cost-of-Living Crisis'. Media Briefing, 23 May 2022. <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/profitting-pain>.
- Sida, Lewis, Hugo Slim, Karen Ovington, Deborah Clifton, Joyce Njagi, Anais Resseguier, and Shams Tazi. 'Australia's Response to the Horn of Africa Humanitarian Crisis, 2011'. Canberra: Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1 June 2014. <https://apo.org.au/node/53313>.
- The Australia Institute. 'Australian Fossil Fuel Subsidies Surge to \$11.6 Billion in 2021-22'. The Australia Institute, 27 March 2022. <https://australiainstitute.org.au/post/australian-fossil-fuel-subsidies-surge-to-11-6-billion-in-2021-22/>.
- UN OCHA. *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023*. United Nations, 2022. <https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/books/9789210024136>.
- . 'Home | Financial Tracking Service'. Financial Tracking Service. Accessed 10 February 2023. <https://fts.unocha.org/>.
- . 'Operations: Inter-Agency Plans'. Humanitarian Action: Analysing needs and response, 2021. <https://humanitarianaction.info/overview/2022>.
- USAID. 'Pakistan - Floods Fact Sheet #3, Fiscal Year (FY) 2022'. Situation Report. United States: USAID, 7 September 2022. <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/pakistan-floods-fact-sheet-3-fiscal-year-fy-2022>.
- World Bank. 'Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2022: Correcting Course'. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2022. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/37739/9781464818936.pdf>.
- World Economic Forum. 'The Global Risks Report 2023'. Insight Report. Geneva: World Economic Forum, January 2023. [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Global\\_Risks\\_Report\\_2023.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2023.pdf).

# HELP FIGHT FAMINE

## HELP FIGHT FAMINE ALLIANCE

