Seventy-eighth session
Agenda item 72 (a)
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and
disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including
special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination
of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the
field of natural disasters, from relief to development

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 77/29,
in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to improve the
international response to natural disasters and to report thereon to the Assembly at its
seventy-eighth session. The report provides an overview of progress made and
outlines related trends, challenges and thematic issues. It concludes with
recommendations for further improvements. The period covered in the report is
1 January to 31 December 2022.

* The present document was submitted for processing after the deadline for reasons beyond the
control of the submitting office.
I. Year in review

A. Disaster data for 2022

1. The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection reached unprecedented levels in 2022, driven by the compounding impacts of the climate crisis, disasters, conflicts, continuing socioeconomic effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, rising inflation, food and energy crises and fiscal challenges. Major floods, tropical cyclones, droughts, heatwaves and earthquakes caused devastating loss of lives and livelihoods, food insecurity and displacement and hampered progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals for many affected countries. Disasters disproportionately affected women and girls, older persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, displaced persons, poor and other marginalized people and those living in small island developing States, the least developed countries and countries experiencing protracted conflicts and eroded their resilience to future shocks and stressors.

2. The mounting climate crisis is having catastrophic humanitarian consequences globally, evidenced in 2022 by the record-breaking prolonged drought in the Horn of Africa and the devastating flooding in Pakistan. Climate change poses an existential threat for humanity, in particular for some small island developing States. The climate crisis is fuelling the frequency, intensity and scale of disasters, aggravating food insecurity, accelerating ecological degradation, driving displacement, hindering poverty eradication efforts, worsening inequalities, affecting human rights, increasing protection risks and escalating competition over scarce natural resources.

3. Climate change continued on an alarming trajectory in 2022. The past eight years (2015–2022) were the warmest on record, despite the cooling effect of the 2020–2023 La Niña event. Greenhouse gas concentrations continued to increase in 2022, having reached record highs in 2021. Ocean heat content, sea-level rise and glacier melt surpassed previous records. Antarctic sea ice fell to its lowest extent on record.1

4. Food insecurity and the risk of famine reached historic levels. In 2022, nearly 258 million people across 58 countries and territories faced acute food insecurity2 and needed urgent assistance. Among them, some 35 million people across 39 countries and territories faced the risk of starvation. Extreme weather events were the primary driver of acute food insecurity for 56.8 million people in 12 countries, more than double the number of people (23.5 million people) in 8 countries in 2021.3

5. The extreme heatwave events of 2022 foreshadow a dangerous future. In the coming decades, heatwaves are predicted to meet and exceed human physiological and social limits in countries and regions that already have large-scale humanitarian needs and chronic vulnerability and are the least responsible for climate change. Children and older persons are disproportionately affected, with a higher risk of illness and death. Heatwaves can contribute to the breakdown of energy grids and food systems. Estimates indicate that limiting global warming to 1.5°C rather than 2°C could result in up to 420 million fewer people being frequently exposed to extreme heatwaves.4

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2 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and Cadre harmonisé (CH) Phase 3 or above.
6. For 2022, the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters recorded 412 disaster events, which affected 186 million people, caused 44,439 deaths and inflicted $223.8 billion in damage. Africa accounted for 66 per cent of the total number of people affected globally, a significant increase compared with the annual average of 9.3 per cent in the previous two decades (2002–2021). In comparison with the previous two decades, 2022 was above the annual average of 370 recorded events and of $187.7 billion in economic losses. Floods were the most common disaster type, followed by storms. Extreme temperature was the deadliest disaster type (16,416 deaths), while droughts affected the most people (107.4 million).\(^5\)

7. On current trends, by 2030 the world could face 560 disasters annually, a projected increase of 40 per cent during the lifetime of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, including a more than 30 per cent increase in droughts and a near tripling in the number of extreme temperature events from 2001.\(^6\) The INFORM Climate Change Risk Index estimates that, by 2050, more than 1.6 billion people may be exposed to major droughts, 300 million people to river floods and 70 million people to coastal floods, and more than half of the world’s population will be potentially at risk of malaria.\(^7\)

8. Disasters caused some 32.6 million internal displacements in 148 countries and territories in 2022, an increase of nearly 40 per cent from the 23.7 million displacements in 2021, and well above the annual average of 23.1 million displacements from 2012 to 2021, marking the highest figure in a decade. Weather-related disasters caused 98 per cent of those displacements, most of them in Asia. At least 8.7 million people in 88 countries and territories remained displaced owing to disasters as at the end of 2022, an increase from the 5.9 million people who remained displaced at the end of 2021.\(^8\) Displacement due to climate-related disasters and related food insecurity often led to families being splintered, the breakdown of community support systems, loss of assets and income and increased debt and heightened exposure to violence, gender-based violence, trafficking, exploitation and abuse.

B. Overview of disasters associated with natural hazards in 2022

9. In Pakistan, heavy monsoon rainfall and historic levels of flooding caused widespread devastation and casualties affecting more than 33 million people, leading to 1,700 deaths and triggering 8.2 million displacements, the largest disaster displacement event globally in the past 10 years. Some 20.6 million people required humanitarian assistance as the flooding damaged or destroyed more than 2.3 million homes and more than 34,000 schools, damaged 4.4 million acres of crop land and

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killed more than 800,000 head of livestock. Total damage and economic losses were estimated at $30 billion.

10. In Bangladesh, the monsoon season caused the worst floods in 20 years, affecting nearly 7.2 million people. In the Philippines, tropical cyclones affected 9.6 million people and displaced 5.3 million people. Tropical Storm Megi (Agaton) caused 214 deaths, affected 2.3 million people and displaced more than 886,000 people. Tropical Storm Nalgae (Paeng) caused 164 deaths, affected 5.9 million people and displaced 3 million people. Tropical Storm Mulan and resulting flooding affected communities across South-East Asia, including in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand. Earthquakes affected more than 500,000 people and caused $48 million in infrastructure damage in the Philippines. In Afghanistan, an earthquake caused 1,036 deaths. In the Pacific, a volcanic eruption and subsequent tsunami affected 85,000 people (85 per cent of the total population) in Tonga. Droughts affected 120,000 people (the entire population) in Kiribati and 10,000 people (the entire population) in Tuvalu.

11. In the Horn of Africa, 36.4 million people in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya were affected by an unprecedented, protracted drought, including more than 22 million people enduring high levels of acute food insecurity. Consecutive harvests remained below average or failed, with more than 13 million head of livestock perishing. The drought exhausted household coping capacities and displaced 2.7 million people across the three countries in search of food, pasture, water and alternative livelihoods, with particularly devastating impacts for women and girls. In Uganda, drought caused 2,465 deaths.

12. Southern Africa was affected by multiple tropical weather systems. Madagascar experienced four tropical storms within 35 days. Tropical Storm Ana affected more than 542,000 people across Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Tropical Cyclone Gombe subsequently affected at least 736,000 people across Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique, while Tropical Depression Issa caused floods that led to 259 deaths in South Africa. The worst drought in 40 years in the Grand Sud region of Madagascar left more than 1.6 million people facing severe food insecurity, and 14,000 people experienced famine-like conditions.

13. In West and Central Africa, flooding affected more than 5.9 million people in 20 countries. Heavy rains and floods killed 946 people, injured 3,700 people and displaced 1.8 million people. Some 437,000 houses were destroyed in the region. In Chad, floods affected more than 1.4 million people and destroyed an estimated 465,000 hectares of farmland. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, heavy rains caused 169 deaths and affected 181,000 people in Kinshasa.

14. In Latin America and the Caribbean, climate-related and extreme weather shocks affected millions of people. Hurricane Julia affected 2.4 million people across El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, including in communities still recovering from the 2020 Hurricanes Eta and Iota. In Cuba, Hurricane Ian affected an estimated 3.2 million people. In South America, droughts linked to the La Niña event contributed to increasing food insecurity in Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Paraguay.

15. In Yemen, heavy rainfall and flooding affected approximately 517,000 people, caused 72 deaths, destroyed livelihoods and infrastructure, compounded food insecurity and aggravated the protection crisis.
C. Funding for disaster response in 2022

16. In 2022, nearly $10.4 billion was reported to the Financial Tracking Service of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for response operations in the context of disasters. This included United Nations-coordinated response plans and flash appeals in response to disasters in Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Pakistan, which received a total $757.7 million, as well as humanitarian response plans for protracted complex humanitarian crises that included significant humanitarian needs caused by disaster events in 2022 (e.g., Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Haiti, Somalia).

17. In 2022, the Central Emergency Response Fund allocated a record $266.1 million (36 per cent of its total allocations) for disaster responses that assisted 12 million people in 26 countries, the highest annual amount that it has allocated for this category of emergencies, which reflects the Fund’s increasingly important role in this area. The total included $157.1 million to respond in drought-affected countries (Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda), $78.2 million to respond to floods (Bangladesh, Chad, Colombia, Gambia, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Sudan and South Sudan), $18 million for earthquakes (Afghanistan and Haiti), $11.8 million for storms (Cuba, Madagascar, Mozambique and Vanuatu) and $1 million for volcanic eruptions (Tonga). Country-based pooled funds allocated an additional $274 million (23 per cent of total allocations), up from $166 million in 2021, in response to disasters, including in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia and the Sudan.

18. From 2006 to 2022, the Central Emergency Response Fund allocated nearly $2.2 billion to respond to climate shocks in 87 countries. From 2015 to 2022, country-based pooled funds allocated more than $726 million for responses to climate-related disasters, including more than $200 million to national and local actors.

II. Progress in strengthening disaster preparedness, response and resilience

A. Humanitarian implications of the climate crisis

19. The climate crisis is a humanitarian crisis. As humanitarian impacts of the climate crisis and resulting humanitarian needs continue to increase and overwhelm an already overstretched and underfunded humanitarian system, humanitarian actors are adapting to become significantly more effective, cost-efficient, agile, participatory, inclusive and forward-thinking.

20. The United Nations and humanitarian partners continue to play a crucial role in responding to and reducing the humanitarian impacts of climate-related disasters. In doing so, they are contributing to minimizing and addressing some of the devastating losses, damages and human suffering experienced by affected communities and countries on the front lines of the climate crisis, including through multisectoral rapid disaster response, preparedness and risk reduction, early warnings, early and anticipatory action, early recovery, adaptation and building resilience to future shocks.

21. The humanitarian system is continuing to scale up efforts to anticipate, prevent and reduce the impacts of disasters by strengthening risk analysis, vulnerability mapping, preparedness, forecasting, early warnings, early and anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection and resilient livelihoods and health systems in humanitarian contexts. The United Nations and international humanitarian
organizations continue to strengthen, reinforce and complement regional, national, local and community disaster preparedness and response capacities and activities. It is also vital that adequate funding reaches the most vulnerable communities and people in countries experiencing humanitarian emergencies and in fragile settings and addresses their needs. Humanitarian pooled funds play a key role in responding to and mitigating the humanitarian impacts of climate-related disasters to support the most vulnerable. In this regard, the Central Emergency Response Fund and country-based pooled funds are proven to be fast and effective, with a track record of coordinating and mobilizing funding at scale.

22. Considering the scale of this challenge, it is essential to increase complementarity and collaboration across humanitarian, development, climate, disaster risk reduction, peacebuilding and human rights activities to reduce need, risk and vulnerability and build resilience to climate shocks. This includes strengthening appropriate coherent and complementary linkages between humanitarian response plans, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, disaster risk reduction strategies and climate adaptation plans.

23. To date, more than 370 humanitarian organizations have joined the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations to address climate and environment crises, support those at risk and work with local partners to improve the environmental sustainability of humanitarian operations.

24. The narrow window in which to secure a liveable planet is closing fast. Ambitious and accelerated climate and environmental action to prevent the worst impacts and outcomes of climate change is a humanitarian priority. This requires deeper, faster and sustained emissions cuts to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 degree Celsius, coupled with significantly scaled-up investment in adaptation and resilience for the most vulnerable countries and communities commensurate with the level of current and projected risks and needs.

25. Adopted in December 2022 at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework recognizes the impact of climate change and disasters on biodiversity. It sets out a plan to, inter alia, increase the resilience of biodiversity through mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, and restore, maintain and enhance nature’s contributions to people, including protection from natural hazards and disasters.

26. Several outcomes and initiatives launched at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will help address the humanitarian impacts of climate change. The decisions to establish new funding arrangements and a fund on loss and damage and to set up a transitional committee to advise on the scope, governance arrangements and modalities of the new funding arrangements and the fund, together with the finalized institutional arrangements of the Santiago network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change to provide technical assistance to vulnerable countries, will advance action to avert, minimize and address loss and damage. The Sharm-el-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda sets out adaptation outcomes and is aimed at strengthening the resilience of 4 billion people through transformative actions in food and agriculture, water and nature, oceans and coastal systems, human settlements and infrastructure.

27. The aim of the Early Warnings for All initiative is to protect everyone on the planet through multi-hazard early warning systems by 2027. System-wide support for
the delivery of the initiative and its executive action plan, launched at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and co-led by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, working in close collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as well as the broader United Nations system and bilateral and multilateral development partners and financing institutions, private sector and civil society, will expand coverage and effectiveness across the early warning systems value chain. These include ensuring that all countries have access to reliable, understandable and relevant risk information; robust forecast and monitoring systems, including soft and hardware hydrological and meteorological services and infrastructure; timely and effective access to dissemination and communication of early warnings that are inclusive and people-centred; and support the translation of early warning information into timely anticipatory and early action in disaster preparedness and responses.

28. The Secretary-General’s acceleration agenda calls for leaders from government, business, finance, local authorities and civil society to increase ambition and acceleration action to rapidly close the emissions gap to keep the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement alive and deliver climate justice to those on the front lines of the climate crisis. This means: fast forwarding net zero timelines; making their current national climate plans 1.5°C compatible; more ambitious renewable energy targets; plans to phase out coal and other fossil fuels; ending oil and gas licensing; doubling adaptation finance as a first step towards devoting at least half of all climate finance to adaptation; delivering on the $100 billion goal; generously replenishing the Green Climate Fund; delivering early warnings for all by 2027; and the operationalization of the new loss and damage fund by the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Climate Ambition Summit, held on 20 September 2023, provided an opportunity for first movers and doers to present credible and concrete actions and plans to deliver the acceleration agenda.

29. Strong collective humanitarian engagement to support the Secretary General’s acceleration agenda is crucial. The humanitarian community must continue to amplify the voices, needs and priorities of people affected by disasters and the climate crisis and promote the essential role of the humanitarian sector in climate action and in minimizing and addressing loss and damage, which will be indispensable for the success of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and for mobilizing and accelerating ambitious climate action to support the most vulnerable.

30. The impacts of the climate crisis are most acutely felt in the poorest and most crisis-affected countries and communities but currently only a fraction of development and climate finance goes to such contexts and reaches the most vulnerable.

31. The Sustainable Development Goal stimulus and international financial reforms will help advance disaster-resilient and climate-resilient sustainable development. International financial institutions should adapt their approaches to incorporate long-term preventive measures, through systematic disaster risk reduction and resilience policies and frameworks and through significant scaling-up of investments for the most vulnerable and exposed communities and countries, including those in protracted and recurring humanitarian crisis. Investment in disaster risk reduction should be increased, in particular for the priority areas identified in the midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.
B. Major disaster responses in 2022: achievements, lessons learned and opportunities for strengthening preparedness and response

32. The responses to the drought in the Horn of Africa and the floods in Pakistan reinforced the urgency of strengthening preparedness, end-to-end early warning systems, anticipatory approaches and early action, rapid response, resilient recovery and risk-informed sustainable development. These experiences reinforce the importance of addressing the risks and vulnerabilities underlying humanitarian need in countries and communities exposed to climate-related disasters, in particular through significantly increased investment in disaster risk reduction, disaster-resilient infrastructure, livelihoods and assets and finance for adaptation, resilience and loss and damage.

Drought response in the Horn of Africa

33. In 2022, the Horn of Africa continued to endure an unprecedented, protracted drought, driven by five consecutive failed rainy seasons that were aggravated by climate change. Communities in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia faced acute food insecurity, malnutrition and risk of starvation, and their resilience continued to be battered by the severity and duration of the drought, which commenced in October 2020. This is the third major drought in the region since 2010. As the humanitarian situation deteriorated, the United Nations and partners scaled up a multisectoral humanitarian response, including food and nutrition assistance, health, water, sanitation, hygiene and protection, in staving off famine in 2022. The World Food Programme (WFP), for example, scaled up operations to reach 8.5 million people across the region with food and cash assistance. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) provided life-saving health-care services for more than 2 million children and women, treated nearly 1.3 million children under 5 for severe acute malnutrition and provided safe drinking water for almost 4.6 million people. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) delivered livelihoods assistance, including cash transfers, animal health support and feed distribution, to support more than 3.6 million people. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) more than tripled the number of people supported with camp coordination and management in Ethiopia and Somalia. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) scaled up multisectoral assistance and protection services in refugee camps.

34. Insecurity impeded expansion of humanitarian operations in some areas. Funding and the response ramped up significantly in the second half of 2022. By the end of 2022, more than 20.2 million drought-affected people had been reached with at least one form of humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia (11.2 million), Somalia (7.3 million) and Kenya (1.7 million). This included nearly 14.6 million people reached with food assistance (cash and in-kind), more than 7.6 million people received access to health care, more than 4.1 million children and pregnant and lactating women accessed nutrition services, and more than 7.7 million people were supported with water, sanitation and hygiene services. Ultimately, the scale of needs outpaced the response. By the end of 2022, nearly $3 billion, or 70 per cent, of the $4.2 billion required had been received, with most of the funding from a single donor.

35. In Somalia, an Inter-Agency Standing Committee humanitarian system-wide scale-up was activated in response to increasing needs in August 2022. The scale-up rallied collaborative response efforts by the Government, the United Nations, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local communities to avert famine projected for late 2022. The humanitarian country team scaled up response around five subnational response hubs in the areas of highest needs and developed a minimum support package and a first-line response framework focused
on hard-to-reach areas and people at heightened risk. Area humanitarian coordination groups were established in priority areas to support coordination close to the point of delivery. Food assistance doubled to reach 4.4 million people monthly in Somalia, including by leveraging the national shock-responsive safety net, reaching more than 500,000 malnourished children and women each month with lifesaving nutritional support, including through school meals.

36. In Ethiopia, an Inter-Agency Standing Committee humanitarian system-wide scale-up initially activated for northern Ethiopia in April 2021 was extended to cover drought-affected areas. The scale-up bolstered operational capacity and presence, reinforced the centrality of protection and ensured that strengthened coordination, analysis and advocacy were focused on the most affected areas.

37. Humanitarian pooled funds provided a critical lifeline for scaling up emergency assistance in 2022. The Central Emergency Response Fund allocated $41 million for Somalia, $22 million for Ethiopia, $10 million for Kenya and $2 million for Djibouti. The Somalia Humanitarian Fund allocated a total $71 million, including more than 61 per cent disbursed to local and national NGOs, to mitigate drought-induced displacement and scale up life-saving operations to assist 1.3 million people. The Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund allocated $62 million to respond to the humanitarian needs of underserved and hard-to-reach communities.

38. Although the response succeeded in averting famine and mitigating acute food insecurity across the region, it remains essential to scale up and sustain multisectoral assistance and protection and funding for the response. As at May 2023, more than 2.7 million people had been displaced by the drought, 25 million people were living with daily household water insecurity, more than 13 million head of livestock had died, and an estimated 2.7 million children were out of school owing to drought, with an additional 4.1 million children at risk of dropping out. While improved rains in early 2023 began to ease the worst drought impacts, the resulting flooding caused additional humanitarian needs and response requirements. With more flooding expected later in 2023, including owing to El Niño, strengthened preparedness and flexibility to adapt and deliver a rapid response is vital.

39. The drought and food insecurity crisis in the Horn of Africa reveal gender-specific risks and impacts that disproportionately affect women and girls. As food insecurity increases, women and girls are at greatest risk of hunger and rights violations, including gender-based violence such as sexual violence, exploitation and abuse, intimate partner violence and child marriage. Girls are at highest risk of school dropout. Women’s organizations are indispensable to response and should receive increased support and funding, and a special focus should be on strengthening their full and meaningful participation and inclusion in humanitarian coordination and decision-making. Greater funding for programming to prevent, mitigate and respond to gender-based violence and robust gender analysis and sex- and age-disaggregated data should be systematically incorporated into programming across all sectors. Lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services is of considerable concern. Moreover, women’s livelihoods and economic independence should be advanced.10

40. The response provides valuable lessons. Early action and anticipatory approaches should be further strengthened and expanded. Cash assistance, including anticipatory cash transfers, enabled affected people to meet their priority needs, and complementarity with shock-responsive social safety nets should be further enhanced. While food assistance is critical for saving lives and keeping acute food insecurity

below the famine threshold, improving the humanitarian situation requires a scaled-up multisectoral response, with sufficient funding, especially for health, nutrition, protection, water, sanitation and hygiene assistance to address needs comprehensively. National and local responders have a crucial role in reaching and assisting vulnerable people, which should be reinforced through support to the localization of humanitarian assistance and resilience-building activities, including by strengthening capacities and increasing direct funding for national and local NGOs, including local women-led organizations.

41. The role of the United Nations Famine Prevention and Response Coordinator, appointed in November 2022, has been vital in coordinating United Nations system-wide efforts to strengthen the response to drought, risk of famine and rising food insecurity in the Horn of Africa and beyond, including through greater collaboration and complementarity across humanitarian and development activities and with international financial institutions and affected countries.

42. The frequency and severity of droughts in the Horn of Africa, and in other regions, has eroded community resilience and ability to recover between shocks. Humanitarian assistance and protection should be complemented by increased development assistance, including medium and longer-term activities that reduce risks and vulnerability and strengthen resilience, especially in agriculture, livelihoods and social protection. Climate finance should be significantly increased for vulnerable and affected countries and communities to help them adapt and become more resilient to future climate shocks. Development assistance and climate finance should reach the people, areas and sectors most in need, especially in fragile and conflict-affected settings. International financial institutions have a key role in enabling preventive actions and lasting solutions.

**Flood response in Pakistan**

43. Given the significant scale of humanitarian impact of the August 2022 floods in Pakistan, the ensuing response and recovery were a high priority for global solidarity and support. This included a visit by the Secretary-General and the Emergency Relief Coordinator, to provide practical support, and the joint launch of the flood response plan by the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations in Islamabad and Geneva in August 2022. The Secretary-General and the Government of Pakistan co-convened the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan in January 2023 and called for the mobilization of a financial package for longer-term recovery and reconstruction. In addition, in October 2022, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 77/1, entitled “Solidarity with and support for the Government and people of Pakistan and strengthening of emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the wake of the recent devastating floods”.

44. The response has highlighted the importance of strong national capacity and leadership and complementary international support. The United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs supported coordination between national authorities and humanitarian organizations at all levels, including through rapid surge deployments to augment existing United Nations capacities. The humanitarian country team and national authorities conducted joint multisectoral rapid needs assessments to inform the preparation of the flood response plan and support resource mobilization.

45. The Central Emergency Response Fund demonstrated its key role in rapid resource mobilization to save lives and reduce suffering. At the onset of the disaster, the Fund allocated a total $10 million to enable United Nations agencies and partners to jump start their responses and provide life-saving multisectoral assistance to 238,000 of the most affected people. The Fund subsequently allocated an additional
$6.5 million to assist 481,000 people by addressing nutrition, medical and shelter needs among women and children.

46. Pakistan mobilized quickly, with its National Disaster Management Fund allocating $10 million for initial national response activities. The Benazir Income Support Programme provided one-time cash payments to nearly 2.8 million affected households, in particular women-headed households, to help meet their needs and support recovery. As at May 2023, the Government, supported by the World Bank, had distributed $306 million in cash assistance.

47. The Government’s national registry played a critical role in rapidly identifying affected people, assessing needs and targeting assistance. To support the Government-led response, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs produced a comprehensive district-level data collection tool and online dashboard to support the mapping of humanitarian response activities and areas reached.

48. By June 2023, the United Nations and partners had reached 7.9 million of the 9.5 million people targeted for assistance in the flood response plan. These included: 7.3 million people reached with food and agriculture assistance; nearly 4.2 million people provided with essential health care, including sexual and reproductive health services; nearly 3.5 million people who received shelter assistance; more than 2.1 million people supported with protection, including gender-based violence prevention and response services; child-friendly spaces and mental health and psychosocial support; more than 1.3 million people reached with nutrition assistance; more than 2.5 million people provided with water, sanitation and hygiene assistance; and 410,000 people provided with education support. The sectors prioritized under the Plan and the assistance delivered corresponded to the priority needs of affected people identified by needs assessments and through community feedback.

49. Despite physical access challenges due to floodwater levels and damage to infrastructure, the pre-positioning of relief items, boats and pumps across the country in humanitarian response facilities, set up by the World Food Programme (WFP) and managed by national authorities, enabled rapid delivery of assistance in many locations. The logistics sector provided support, including to national authorities, with incoming relief cargo handling and transportation of relief items, resulting from strong coordination, supply chain management and operational presence.

50. Domestic measures that maintained and expedited supply chains and movement of goods, services and personnel were invaluable in enabling an effective response. The declaration of a national emergency eased procurement regulations, enabling humanitarian organizations to procure relief items through local markets and avoid regional supply chain challenges.

51. The response underscored the importance of effective community feedback mechanisms to adapt programming and strengthen accountability to affected people.

52. Informed by lessons and recommendations from the flood response, the humanitarian country team continued to strengthen collaboration and coordination with the national disaster management authorities to enhance preparedness for future disasters. An inter-agency contingency planning process was initiated, involving different disaster scenarios with strengthened standard operating procedures and essential preparedness actions to be completed ahead of the 2023 monsoon season. In addition, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse networks were operationalized. Increased investment in disaster risk assessments and vulnerability mapping and in pre-positioning relief items at scale in strategic locations, including at the local level, are also essential.

53. Strengthening end-to-end early warning systems, evacuation plans and provision of information to affected people through different context-specific
channels to facilitate decision-making are crucial preparedness actions in disaster-prone areas. These efforts should be coupled with investment in disaster-resilient infrastructure, including the construction and strengthening of flood prevention infrastructure and emergency shelters, considering that embankments, levees and floodwalls helped mitigate the impact of the flooding in some locations.

54. The government-led Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework was launched in December 2022, informed by the findings of the post-disaster needs assessment, covering activities under strategic objectives to restore livelihoods, economic opportunities, basic services and physical infrastructure, ensure social inclusion and participation and enhance governance and the capacities of State institutions in disaster and climate risk management. Building on initial early recovery activities, UNDP launched the Flood Recovery Programme in December 2022 to advance the transition from relief to resilient and sustainable recovery and meet recovery needs, as a complement to the Framework and aligned with its strategic objectives.

55. Strong connectivity and complementarity of the Flood Response Plan with the Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework has been important to ensure access to basic services, including for millions of people who still lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities. In this regard, the humanitarian country team identified critical areas for continued focus and prioritization, including nutrition, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, protection, community outreach and engagement and accountability to affected people. Even during the immediate response phase, many agencies reinforced resilience and supported early transition to recovery and development. For instance, FAO distributed fertilizer and climate-adaptive seeds for the planting season, supported agricultural land rehabilitation and protected livestock assets. The role of the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator in leveraging the support of international financial institutions and facilitating and coordinating humanitarian-development collaboration on resilience-building and the transition from relief to development remains essential.

56. The scale of the disaster and resulting human suffering in Pakistan underscores the importance of significantly increased finance and support for climate adaptation, loss and damage, disaster risk reduction, resilience and climate-smart infrastructure and agriculture. Longer-term recovery and reconstruction will be required to restore the lives and livelihoods of affected people. It is imperative for donors and international financial institutions to follow up on pledges and commitments made at the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan and sustain multi-year support for the Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework and the country’s resilient recovery.

C. Anticipatory approaches

57. In 2022, United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners continued to develop and implement anticipatory approaches and early action to ensure more predictable, effective, efficient and earlier responses to predictable natural hazards and humanitarian needs. In 2022, there were 47 anticipatory action activations in 30 countries, which allocated $53.8 million to assist 3.6 million people. By the end of 2022, there were 70 anticipatory action frameworks active globally, covering 7.6 million people. 11

58. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continued to facilitate and finance coordinated, collective, multi-sector anticipatory action frameworks for disasters, using forecasts, pre-agreed actions and pre-arranged Central Emergency Response Fund financing to support vulnerable communities ahead of imminent disasters. These frameworks have played a key role in bringing anticipatory action to scale, moving beyond earlier project-based, single-actor initiatives.

59. In 2022, the Emergency Relief Coordinator endorsed four new frameworks (for drought in Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger, and for cholera in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), bringing the number of operational collective anticipatory action frameworks facilitated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to 10. During the year, the Central Emergency Response Fund disbursed $28.5 million in pre-arranged finance to address projected needs and assist 700,000 people through anticipatory action framework activations in South Sudan, Niger, Nepal and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

60. In South Sudan, imminent risk of major flooding in Unity State triggered the Central Emergency Response Fund to release $15 million, which was complemented by a $4 million allocation by the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund, for anticipatory and early action by 7 United Nations agencies and 15 national and international NGOs to help 320,000 people prepare for and withstand the forecasted disaster. Acting early enabled humanitarian partners to strengthen protective dikes around vital infrastructure to maintain access to services for communities, manage storm water during heavy rains, provide shelter support to displaced people living in informal settlements, make water and sanitation infrastructure flood-proof and provide health and nutrition services to avert a public health emergency.

61. In Niger, the trigger thresholds for the activation of the anticipatory action framework were reached when measuring stations and other data indicated that the first months of the rainy season were among the lowest in the past 30 years, with severe implications for food production. The Central Emergency Response Fund released $9.5 million to seven United Nations agencies, in collaboration with the Government and more than 15 national and international NGOs to prevent and mitigate the immediate impact of insufficient rainfall across food security, health, nutrition, protection and water, sanitation and hygiene sectors. WFP supported 48,000 smallholder farmers to increase water-harvesting activities, FAO supplied drought-resistant agricultural inputs to these farmers, and UNHCR strengthened social cohesion and protection monitoring. These activities also helped reduce negative coping strategies among affected people.

62. In Nepal, the anticipatory action framework was activated in October 2022. The Central Emergency Response Fund disbursed $3.2 million immediately after the flood threshold was reached in the Karnali River Basin. Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, United Nations agencies, the Nepal Red Cross Society and NGOs, in collaboration with the Government, conducted readiness activities, disseminated early warning messages to local communities, provided cash assistance to vulnerable households, facilitated access to essential services, mental health and psychosocial support and distributed dignity kits, relief packages and health kits.

63. In 2022, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the African Risk Capacity collaborated on a pilot to develop first-of-their-kind anticipatory insurance policies to mitigate projected crop loss due to drought in Malawi and Zambia. Premium costs for the anticipatory insurance policies will be lower than for traditional insurance and payout up to three months sooner against pre-agreed risk mitigation and response plans. The African Risk Capacity has also completed the technical design of similar products to mitigate livestock losses in Senegal and Niger.
In addition, the African Risk Capacity Replica insurance policies released $15.4 million for WFP drought responses in Burkina Faso, the Gambia and Mali.

Learning from pilot framework activations provided valuable lessons for further strengthening anticipatory action, including as part of humanitarian programme cycle and disaster risk management plans. Collective planning, targeting and pre-agreed actions should continue to be increased across sectors. Anticipatory action frameworks should be as flexible and agile as possible. Triggers for action and disbursement of funds should be enhanced and expanded, with continued investment in strengthening forecasting, early warning systems and data, including to increase lead times for appropriate actions. The use of existing funding mechanisms should be pursued, where possible. More flexible and predictable financing, including by pre-committing a proportion of humanitarian budgets for anticipatory action, should be increased. Development and climate finance should complement humanitarian funding mechanisms for early warning systems and anticipatory action.12

Growing evidence on the feasibility, impact and benefits of acting early have helped to expand the evidence base for anticipatory action and catalyse a shift towards a more forward-leaning humanitarian system. Continuing scale-up of anticipatory action is warranted owing to escalating disaster and climate risks and impacts.

D. Strengthening early warning, preparedness and global response mechanisms and reinforcing regional, national and local response capacities and activities

The disaster events of 2022 underscore the importance of continuing to strengthen disaster risk analysis, early warning systems and preparedness for response. In 2022, the United Nations strengthened regional, national and local response capacities and reinforced the coordination, complementarity and interoperability of international and national response efforts.

The Index for Risk Management (INFORM) initiative continued to produce tools to support a shared understanding of disaster risk, guide preparedness and response planning and investment in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.13 Its biannual Risk Index and monthly Severity Index measure and compare, respectively, the risk of new disasters and crises and the severity of existing disasters and crises. INFORM Climate Change provides projections of climate change impacts and future risk of disasters and humanitarian crises. INFORM Warning is being developed to provide aggregated quantified information on risks and potential impacts in the next 1–12 months to support preparedness and anticipatory action.

Multi-hazard early warning systems have been central to reducing disaster risk and mortality. However, in 2022, only 21 of the least developed countries and 12 small island developing States reported having multi-hazard early warning systems under target G of the Sendai Framework, on the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems.14 That is why the Secretary-General launched the Early Warnings for All initiative in 2022, with a vision that every person on Earth is protected by effective early warning systems by 2027. As part of the Secretary-General’s acceleration agenda, the initiative is a key contribution to delivering climate

justice to those at the front lines of the climate crisis. It aligns with the priorities of the Paris Agreement and supports key provisions of the Sendai Framework, in particular target G. It also contributes to delivering the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Contributing to this goal, the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative, supported by WMO, the Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, added 111 million people in 15 countries under the coverage of new early warning and forecasting services in 2022. New national and regional projects launched in 2022 will eventually provide enhanced weather and climate services and early warning coverage for 282 million people in Malawi, Central Africa and the Greater Horn of Africa. The adoption of the strategic regional multi-hazard early warning road map in the Caribbean will reinforce regional systems and capacities. In 2022, the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative and the Global Climate Fund initiated collaboration to accelerate climate finance for strengthening early warning systems in the least developed countries and small island developing States. A foundational element and delivery mechanism for the Early Warnings for All initiative, the Systematic Observations Financing Facility aims to close the climate and weather observations data gap in countries with the most severe shortfalls in observations, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, with long-term financial and technical assistance. The Facility will support more than 60 countries in 2023, including all 30 countries for fast-track implementation of the Early Warnings for All initiative.

69. In 2022, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Global El Niño Southern Oscillation Analysis Cell continued to monitor and issue analysis on humanitarian risks associated with La Niña conditions in priority countries and regions. Informed by the analysis, the United Nations, humanitarian partners and Governments initiated early action, preparedness measures and response activities, including advocacy on the Horn of Africa drought, a state of emergency declaration for flooding in Colombia and contingency planning for drought in Afghanistan.

70. In Central America, informed by preparedness and response lessons from 2020 Hurricanes Eta and Iota, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and partners supported national authorities in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua in preparing for and responding to Hurricane Julia, including by pre-positioning relief items, strengthening national capacities in damage assessments and identifying and assisting affected people. Disaster simulation exercises co-led by the Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Office helped test and strengthen disaster response and coordination capacities in the region.

71. In the Caribbean, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs developed a situational awareness overview that validated baseline data on vulnerabilities in the region to inform hurricane preparedness activities. The Office also supported the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency’s online information platform GeoCRIS with the integration of datasets from the Humanitarian Data Exchange as the common baseline and preliminary data for strengthening disaster risk analysis and management. In Barbados, WFP, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and national authorities began building a logistics hub and training centre, which will support air and sea operations and serve as a pre-positioning and response centre for rapid deployments to support disaster responses in the region.

72. In Asia-Pacific, the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) continued to strengthen response preparedness. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination system supported the ASEAN Emergency Response and
Assessment Team induction course and rapid assessment and information management training to strengthen the interoperability and complementarity of global and regional coordination and response mechanisms. UNFPA, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and UNICEF continued support to ASEAN on gender and social inclusion, including on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

73. The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group organized the Asia-Pacific earthquake response exercise in Indonesia in September 2022 and the Africa-Europe-Middle East earthquake response experience in Türkiye in October 2022. These exercises brought together international organizations, national authorities and international urban search and rescue teams to test and review disaster response capacities and coordination mechanisms.

74. In 2022, United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination system teams deployed to calls for support from disaster-affected countries, including an oil spill in Peru, tropical cyclones Batsirai and Emnati in Madagascar, an earthquake in Afghanistan, floods in the Gambia and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and a drought in Paraguay. United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination system members deployed to provide specialized expertise in disaster preparedness and response as part of the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative missions to support disaster and climate risk management capacity diagnosis in Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives and the United Republic of Tanzania.

75. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee deployed senior advisers through its Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap) and Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap) to work with protection sectors and clusters and strengthen protection and gender programming and outcomes in disasters. In response to the floods in Pakistan, GenCap deployed to support the engagement of women and local organizations in planning, while ProCap deployed to advise the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and humanitarian country team in addressing protection risks associated with disaster displacement and in advocacy on birth registrations, needs of persons with disabilities, voluntary returns and other settlement plans of flood-affected people. In Burundi, ProCap supported humanitarian country team efforts to strengthen the centrality of protection, disability inclusion and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse in recurring climate-induced disasters. In Honduras, GenCap supported the humanitarian country team, its gender focal point network and national authorities by piloting a guide on gender inclusion to strengthen preparedness for the hurricane season.

E. Disaster displacement

76. The 32.6 million internal displacements triggered by disasters in 2022 emphasize the need to strengthen concrete actions to prevent, mitigate and respond to growing disaster displacement. More than two thirds of all refugees originate from highly climate-vulnerable countries. Globally, 8.7 million people remained displaced owing to disasters at the end of 2022, which underscores the need to sustain assistance and protection beyond the immediate response phase and advance durable solutions. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons and Operational Guidelines on the Protection of Persons in Situations of

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15 UNHCR Climate Action Strategic Plan.
Natural Disasters remain central guidance for effective responses to disaster displacement.

77. Understanding the scale, patterns and dynamics of current and future of disaster displacement is essential. Large-scale displacement triggered by the floods in Pakistan highlighted the importance of adapting assistance and protection to displaced persons both for camp settings and informal sites and for urban and rural contexts. The drought in the Horn of Africa underscored the need to address the interaction of climate, drought, food insecurity, displacement patterns and protection risks as well as environmental policies on, inter alia, land restoration, afforestation and sustainable usage of freshwater sources.

78. In June 2022, the Secretary-General launched his action agenda on internal displacement, which includes commitments on preventing and responding to displacement in the context of disasters and climate change, including supporting the Task Force on Displacement under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage and working with Governments to ensure that disaster displacement risks and associated protection needs are systematically considered in policies, strategies and plans.

79. Enhanced collection, analysis and use of data on disaster displacement is essential, in line with the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics. In 2022, IOM and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs co-chaired the global task force on data on solutions to internal displacement, which examined opportunities and barriers related to the use of data.

80. The Human Rights Council, recognizing that the human rights implications of the adverse impact of climate change affect individuals and communities around the world, including migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, established the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change in 2021 and appointed the first mandate holder in 2022.16

81. Regional frameworks and national legislation can help Member States to meet their obligation to protect, respect and fulfil the human rights of people who are displaced and cross international borders in the context of disasters and climate change, regardless of their status. Consultations commenced in 2022 on a draft Pacific regional framework on climate mobility. Argentina introduced a special humanitarian visa programme for nationals and residents of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean who are displaced across borders in the context of disasters and require assistance and protection. Supported by the Platform on Disaster Displacement, the Governments of Colombia and Ecuador held a cross-border disaster displacement simulation exercise to strengthen preparedness and binational communication protocols and decision-making and coordination mechanisms.

82. Climate adaptation has a key role in addressing disaster displacement. IOM is piloting guidance for Governments on incorporating human mobility into national adaptation plans, including in the Marshall Islands, Peru, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan.

16 Human Rights Council resolution 48/14.
III. Recommendations

83. On the basis of the present report, I recommend that Member States, the United Nations, humanitarian and development organizations and other relevant stakeholders:

(a) Continue to strengthen actions to anticipate, prevent, mitigate and address disaster and climate risks and impacts and reinforce regional, national and local capacities and community resilience, including with increased funding;

(b) Strengthen efforts to reduce the underlying drivers of humanitarian needs, risk and vulnerability by increasing finance and support for sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, resilience and climate adaptation and ensure that finance and assistance reaches countries and communities that are most vulnerable and exposed to natural hazards, including those in protracted and recurring humanitarian crises;

(c) Continue to strengthen support to Member States and regional organizations in developing and strengthening disaster preparedness plans, including pre-positioning relief items at scale in strategic locations and disaster response simulation exercises to test and review response capacities and operational readiness;

(d) Ease regulatory measures to facilitate and expedite the transit and management of international relief consignments and passage of humanitarian personnel during disasters and procurement of essential relief items through local markets;

(e) Continue to develop and strengthen multi-hazard early warning systems and weather and climate services and their use to enhance disaster preparedness and early and anticipatory action;

(f) Support the implementation of my Early Warnings for All initiative and its Executive Action Plan to ensure that everyone is protected by multi-hazard early warning systems by 2027, as part of my acceleration agenda to deliver climate justice to those on the front line of the climate crisis;

(g) Continue to scale up collective anticipatory action, including pre-arranged financing, and to develop and enhance the design and effectiveness of anticipatory action frameworks, applying lessons learned and best practices;

(h) Continue to strengthen the interoperability of global, regional and national humanitarian coordination mechanisms and response mechanisms;

(i) Fully fund humanitarian response plans and flash appeals for disaster responses to strengthen the effectiveness, reach, sustainability and timely delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection to affected people in need;

(j) Scale up support to the Central Emergency Response Fund, country-based and regional pooled funds in responding to and mitigating the humanitarian impacts of climate-related disasters, including enabling anticipatory action and early and rapid responses, to save lives and alleviate the suffering of vulnerable and affected people, and continue efforts to further strengthen their role, contribution and impact in this regard;

(k) Strengthen the capacities of Member States to assess disaster impacts and develop recovery plans prior to disasters to ensure readiness for resilient recovery based on build back better principles;
(l) Continue to strengthen transition from relief to development, including resilience-building actions, and the complementarity, coherence and sustainability of humanitarian assistance, development assistance, disaster risk reduction and climate action in this regard;

(m) Continue to urgently strengthen and finance efforts to prevent and address, food insecurity, malnutrition and the risk of famine, including as drivers of displacement and protection risks, and their underlying causes related to disasters and the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation, including by significantly and urgently scaling up multisectoral humanitarian assistance and protection, anticipatory approaches, and by improving collaboration and complementarity of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities to strengthen resilience, including with international financial institutions;

(n) Strengthen the use of cash assistance, including anticipatory cash transfers, in disaster preparedness and response, and enhance its complementarity with social safety nets to enable affected people to meet priority needs and strengthen their resilience;

(o) Strengthen international humanitarian assistance to complement and reinforce local and national humanitarian organizations and build the resilience of local communities and responders;

(p) Strengthen humanitarian system-wide accountability to affected people and strengthen their meaningful participation in the planning, coordination, decision-making and implementation of disaster preparedness and response, including through the use of community feedback mechanisms;

(q) Continue to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and ensure their full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in preparedness, response and early recovery planning and decision-making, including through increased funding to and systematic partnerships with local women’s organizations;

(r) Continue to strengthen efforts to prevent, mitigate and respond to protection risks and needs in disasters, including gender-based violence, child protection, trafficking, discrimination, exploitation and abuse, and ensure the centrality of protection and effective protection outcomes in disasters, including by ensuring adequate funding for prevention, mitigation and response to gender-based violence, incorporating a protection perspective into disaster risk management, reinforcing protection capacities in surge mechanisms and enhancing the provision of essential services to survivors of gender-based violence and children at risk;

(s) Strengthen assistance and protection as well as the search for solutions to persons displaced by disasters, including by implementing the Secretary-General’s Action Agenda on Internal Displacement.