



Annex 2:

UNFPA humanitarian update, 2024

Progress in implementing the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

This annex contains the update of implementation of the humanitarian response interventions during 2024.

I. Overview

1. In 2024, the United Nations and partner organizations targeted around 198 million people in need across 77 countries, reflecting an approximate 9 per cent increase in the original number of people targeted for assistance.¹ UNFPA reached over 14.7 million people with sexual and reproductive health services and 6.7 million people with gender-based violence prevention and response, while supporting 4,489 health facilities and 1,673 safe spaces for women and girls across crisis-affected regions.
2. The year was marked by a notable growth in the number of humanitarian crises taking place, primarily driven by the intensification of war in both the occupied Palestinian territory and Lebanon, drought in Southern Africa, Hurricane Beryl in the Caribbean, and floods in Bangladesh, Nepal and Viet Nam. During the year, humanitarian requirements also increased in several countries, including Chad, Ethiopia, Somalia, Syria, and Ukraine. As these crises unfolded, women in affected regions continued to require access to maternal health and family planning services, while women and girls remained vulnerable to violence, including rape, requiring safety, medical, and psychosocial support.
3. At the heart of UNFPA's mission is a simple yet unwavering commitment: No woman should die giving life, and no woman or girl should live in fear of violence. Even in the most severe crises, where health and protection systems are strained or under attack, UNFPA remains resolute in ensuring that every woman and girl has access to dignified, life-saving care when they need it most.
4. In 2024, UNFPA faced a major funding shortfall, securing only 47 per cent of its humanitarian appeal — \$595.5 million of the \$1.3 billion required. Despite these constraints, critical support reached millions in need (see results snapshot below). However, the gap left countless women at risk of life-threatening pregnancy complications and denied survivors of gender-based violence essential care. Two-thirds of available funds were concentrated in just six crises, leaving over 50 other emergencies severely underfunded. Thirty-one crisis response plans received less than 25 per cent of their required funding, drastically limiting life-saving services in countries like Syria, Venezuela, Nigeria, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Haiti, and the DRC. All 12 of UNFPA's most underfunded crisis responses were in Africa, highlighting a stark and persistent funding gap for the region.
5. Across conflict zones, attacks on civilians, aid workers, and critical service points have escalated, constituting flagrant violations of international humanitarian law. In 2023 and 2024, such violations reached record levels, systematically destroying health and protection infrastructure, including hospitals, shelters, displacement camps, and safe spaces for women and girls. The targeting of these facilities has disproportionately affected women and girls, cutting them off from lifesaving services at a time when they are most vulnerable.
6. Climate change further deepens gender inequalities, as its effects disproportionately impact women and girls by collapsing health, education, and agricultural systems including increased food insecurity. Climate extremes can lead to devastating consequences, including increased risks of stillbirth, pre-term birth, and low birth weight, as well as rising levels of gender-based violence including child marriage.
7. The underfunding of global humanitarian responses has severely hindered efforts to meet the sexual and reproductive health and protection needs of women and girls. Both protracted and historically neglected crises face worsening funding shortfalls, undermining progress and threatening the safety and well-being of millions.

II. Results snapshot

8. In 2024, UNFPA's humanitarian response across 59 crisis-affected countries provided over 14.7 million people with reproductive health services and ensured that more than 6.7 million people received protection from gender-based violence. Despite unprecedented challenges, approximately 4,489 health facilities were equipped to deliver life-saving care, while more than 1,673 safe spaces offered refuge and empowerment for millions of women and girls. 153,360 people in crisis-affected settings were also reached with cash and voucher assistance that enabled them to access essential health services, gender-based violence support, and other critical needs.

¹ UN OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2025

9. In Sudan, where over 11.6 million people were internally displaced as of late 2024, UNFPA collaborated with local and women-led organizations to train health workers, midwives, and frontline responders, enhancing the quality of services and strengthening community resilience. In Gaza, where over 70,000 women were pregnant in early 2024 and faced the risk of unsafe childbirth amid a collapsing health system, UNFPA established containerized health facilities to provide emergency obstetric care, equipped with inter-agency reproductive health kits containing essential medicines, equipment, and clean delivery supplies. In West and Central Africa, where catastrophic floods affected 7.5 million people across 18 countries, UNFPA-deployed humanitarian midwives who were among the few lifelines for pregnant women stranded without access to healthcare. In Afghanistan, more than 260 UNFPA-supported mobile health teams provided life-saving sexual and reproductive health services to thousands of women and girls in remote areas, and over 44,000 pregnant women received support to safely deliver their babies.

10. To meet these escalating needs, UNFPA transformed its crisis response, increasing speed and reach to support women and girls in disaster-affected areas. In 2024, UNFPA launched the Global Emergency Response Team, a specialized group of humanitarian experts deployable within hours of a crisis. As first responders, team members support crisis response planning, ensuring the needs of women and girls remain a priority. The team includes specialists in gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health, mental health, logistics, crisis communications, humanitarian access, and operations. Since its inception, GERT has been deployed to crises in Chad, Sudan, the Caribbean, Lebanon, Syria and Gaza, providing strategic, programmatic, and logistical support. In Sudan, the team strengthened sexual and reproductive health coordination, while in Chad, it contributed to cross-border response efforts. In the initial stages of the Gaza response, the GERT played a key role in coordination, needs assessment, and service mapping to address gender-based violence. Following Hurricane Beryl in the Caribbean, the team focused on capacity-building for government and civil society, improving crisis response for gender-based violence prevention.

11. Complementing the GERT, UNFPA leverages an extensive network of over 600 pre-screened experts across essential humanitarian fields through its Surge Response Roster and Standby partnerships. The Surge Team set a new deployment record, dispatching 192 humanitarian experts across 34 countries to provide critical support in some of the world's most urgent and complex emergencies.

12. Preparedness remained central to UNFPA's humanitarian operations, with a strong focus on anticipatory action, translating early warnings into timely, strategic responses. Prepositioning of essential supplies played a critical role in ensuring that life-saving commodities were available before crises escalated. UNFPA invested in strengthening the humanitarian capacities of its Supply Chain Management Unit, enhancing its ability to rapidly deploy reproductive health kits, dignity kits, and medical equipment to high-risk areas. This readiness helped minimize delays, reduce suffering, and support a swift scale-up of services when emergencies struck.

Results Snapshot	
Sexual and Reproductive Health	
14.7 million	People reached with sexual and reproductive health services
4.6 million	People accessed family planning
2.6 million	Adolescents and youth reached with services
1.2 million	Women assisted in delivering babies safely

4,489	Health facilities supported
73,552	Women and girls reached with cash and voucher assistance
1,073	Mobile clinics supported
14,889	Personnel trained on MISIP
Gender-Based Violence	
6.7 million	People reached with gender-based violence prevention/response services
895,936	Dignity kits distributed
50,239	Women and girls reached with cash assistance
26,119	Front-line workers trained on gender-based violence
1,673	Safe spaces for women and girls supported
416	Youth-friendly spaces supported

13. Cash and voucher assistance programming was expanded and strengthened, increasing women's control over their lives, enabling life-saving access to vital health services, and helping them escape gender-based violence. In 2024, UNFPA delivered over 60 per cent of cash interventions through local and national partners and 40 per cent of all CVA funds via UN collaborations in crisis-affected countries. In countries like Niger and Yemen, these programmes supported women to access essential services and recover from disasters, while anticipatory cash disbursements in Bangladesh and Nepal helped pregnant women maintain their access to sexual and reproductive health services despite local floods. Through this approach, in 2024, 64 per cent of countries managing humanitarian responses received technical support to consider, design and implement CVA integrated into gender-based violence case management and sexual and reproductive health programming, and 44 per cent implemented CVA in emergency responses. Strengthened collaboration with local and national actors in humanitarian efforts, with an emphasis on local and national women-led organization, ensured that community leaders — those closest to the crisis — were empowered to drive response efforts. In its 2022-2025 strategic plan, UNFPA committed to providing up to 43 per cent of its humanitarian funding to local and national organizations by 2025.

14. In 2024, UNFPA remained steadfast in meeting its localization commitments. Final figures show that in 2024, at least 42.6 per cent of UNFPA's humanitarian funding was implemented by local and national actors — 42.1 per cent of which were women-led organizations (38% in 2023). This brings UNFPA very close to its Strategic Plan target of directing 43 per cent of humanitarian funding to local and national partners.

15. In 2024, UNFPA reaffirmed its commitment to accountability to affected people (AAP) by strengthening its people-centered approach to humanitarian response. Central to this effort was the development of global AAP guidance, initiated in 2024, which builds on the work of Country Offices to establish systems that elevate the voices of crisis-affected communities, especially women, girls, people with disabilities, indigenous populations, and youth. This guidance ensures that their perspectives and priorities shape the design, delivery, and evaluation of humanitarian programmes. UNFPA also supported collective, inter-

agency approaches to AAP, recognizing that meaningful engagement must be coordinated across the humanitarian system. In 2024, the organization led or co-led AAP initiatives in diverse contexts — from Afghanistan to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria to the Philippines — helping to embed accountability and community participation at the heart of humanitarian action.

III. Humanitarian priorities

16. Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination

- (a) *Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility*: In 2024, an estimated 86 million people were in need of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response services. UNFPA led the global coordination of GBV efforts in emergencies, supporting mechanisms in 32 crisis-affected countries and facilitating collaboration among more than 2,100 international and local organizations — half of which were women-led. This coordination is critical to ensuring survivors receive timely, safe, and confidential care, including medical, psychosocial, and legal support. However, persistent funding shortfalls threaten to dismantle this life-saving infrastructure, leaving millions without protection or assistance. GBV prevention and response is not optional but essential to the health, dignity, and resilience of crisis-affected communities. To strengthen these efforts, the GBV AoR partnered with the Global Protection Cluster in 2024 to develop a shared protection risk framework, integrating GBV risks into broader protection analyses and response strategies. The AoR also introduced a new blended learning programme and launched a global competency framework for GBV coordinators and information management specialists, which will help standardize and enhance the quality of GBV coordination worldwide.
- (b) *Sexual and Reproductive Health Task Team*: UNFPA ensures sexual and reproductive health coordination in humanitarian responses by implementing the Minimum Initial Service Package for Sexual and Reproductive Health (MISP) to reduce maternal and newborn mortality, prevent sexual violence, curb HIV transmission, and provide contraception. UNFPA facilitates MISP implementation through essential supplies, high-quality services, and capacity-building, prioritizing emergency obstetric care, long-acting contraception, prevention of sexually transmitted infections, and clinical management of rape. In 2024, UNFPA further strengthened sexual and reproductive health coordination by advancing the work of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Task Team, established in 2022 within the Global Health Cluster. The team launched specialized training and coaching programmes to enhance coordinators' capacity, improving life-saving sexual and reproductive health interventions in emergencies. A key 2024 achievement was the development and piloting of a standardized, competency-based curriculum to enhance effectiveness in crisis response, particularly in MISP implementation. The Sexual and Reproductive Health Task Team also created a harmonized inter-agency curriculum for frontline healthcare workers on clinical management of rape and intimate partner violence and identified best practices for integrating sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence coordination in emergencies.

17. Humanitarian Operational Capacity

- (a) *Scaling up emergency responses*: UNFPA's Policy and Procedures for Emergency Response was launched in 2024 to provide a structured, strategic framework for responding swiftly to sudden onset emergencies and escalating protracted crises. The policy, which came into effect on 1 March 2025, outlines specific roles, responsibilities and time-bound deliverables across UNFPA so that life-saving interventions are implemented effectively and aligned with its mandate. The procedures offer greater flexibility to respond to needs and formalize a "no regrets" approach, enabling fast, agile and coordinated responses that prioritize immediate action, even under conditions of uncertainty, to meet urgent needs.
- (b) *Essential supplies*: In 2024, UNFPA delivered 18,000 Inter-Agency Emergency Reproductive Health Kits to 39 countries, valued at \$10.1 million, ensuring access to lifesaving reproductive health and gender-based violence response services in crisis settings. By maintaining prepositioned stockpiles and strengthening supply chain logistics, UNFPA enabled rapid delivery of medical supplies, mobile clinics, ambulances, and essential non-food items to even the most remote and hard-to-reach areas. To enhance emergency response capacity, UNFPA scaled up the deployment of container clinics, solar-powered generators, and refrigerated

storage for health facilities, while also equipping teams with critical security assets. In collaboration with WHO and inter-agency partners, UNFPA led the revision of the Inter-Agency Emergency Reproductive Health Kits, incorporating updated WHO guidelines and expert input to ensure their adaptability to diverse humanitarian contexts. These enhanced kits are set for distribution by late 2025, reinforcing UNFPA's commitment to providing rapid, effective, and resilient health and protection services in emergencies.

- (c) *Flexible humanitarian financing:* In 2024, UNFPA's Humanitarian Thematic Fund remained critical for rapid, flexible, and life-saving emergency responses, particularly in underfunded crises. As UNFPA's most adaptable funding mechanism, the Humanitarian Thematic Fund enabled multi-year financing for humanitarian interventions, preparedness, and the integration of development efforts. Crucially, UNFPA thematic funds provided urgent bridge support, allowing UNFPA to act as a provider of last resort while mobilizing additional resources. Interim figures indicate that in 2024, the HTF supported 37 UNFPA country and regional offices with over \$46.1 million, making resources available to meet immediate needs while fostering resilience and sustainable recovery. Funding from the Humanitarian Thematic Fund complements the allocations from UNFPA's core-funded Emergency Fund, which allocated \$11.3 million in flexible funding to 33 regional and country offices, bringing the number of offices benefiting from one or both flexible funding mechanisms to 50, with a total allocation of \$57.4 million.

18. Humanitarian Programme

- (a) *Availability and accessibility of services for sexual and reproductive health:* In 2024, UNFPA remained dedicated to ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health services. This included implementing the Minimum Initial Services Package (MISP) for sexual and reproductive health, aimed at ensuring that rapid, life-saving sexual and reproductive health services are available at the onset of a humanitarian crisis. Throughout the year, UNFPA integrated sexual and reproductive health into all phases of humanitarian responses and enhanced coordination efforts to strengthen the links between these essential services.
- (b) *Gender-based violence prevention, mitigation, and response:* In 2024, UNFPA expanded gender-based violence prevention, mitigation and response from the onset of emergencies, integrating life-saving, high-quality multisectoral services to enhance protection and empowerment for women and girls. That year, UNFPA launched its first two-year Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) strategy, with implementation across humanitarian operations planned for 2025 to protect displaced populations from sexual exploitation and abuse. To further strengthen humanitarian response, UNFPA harmonized technical resources, refined case management and safe space guidance, and promoted safe, ethical, and survivor-centered data management in line with global standards.
- (c) *Preparedness and anticipatory action:* UNFPA prioritized prevention, emergency preparedness, and anticipatory action to mitigate the rising impact of humanitarian crises. Investments in early interventions, MISP readiness assessments, and health system resilience reduced disaster-related losses, safeguarded essential services, and improved maternal and infant health outcomes in emergencies. Recognizing the disproportionate impact of conflict and climate disasters on women and girls, UNFPA is scaling up anticipatory actions and finalizing corporate anticipatory action guidelines. These guidelines will strengthen technical, programmatic, and operational capacities, enabling UNFPA to support governments and country teams in mitigating the effects of predictable natural hazards like floods, droughts, and hurricanes. Moreover, as part of its gender-responsive disaster risk reduction efforts, UNFPA co-led the development of the Gender Action Plan for the Sendai Framework, ensuring that disaster risk policies address sexual and reproductive health needs and strengthen gender-based violence prevention and response.
- (d) *Cash and voucher assistance:* UNFPA expanded cash and voucher assistance programmes to ensure dignified access to essential sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services in humanitarian settings. By scaling up flexible, needs-based financial assistance, UNFPA empowered women, girls, and marginalized groups, enabling them to seek critical healthcare and protection services on their own terms. To enhance effectiveness and reach,

efforts focused on strengthening partnerships with local organizations, integrating digital payment solutions, and ensuring gender-responsive, survivor-centered interventions.

- (e) *People-centred approaches*: UNFPA prioritized people-centered humanitarian action, ensuring inclusive, accountable, and gender-sensitive responses that address the needs of women, girls, LGBTQI+ individuals, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups. A key focus remained on empowering young people and adolescents, recognizing them as essential partners in humanitarian response. Through over 350 youth-friendly spaces, along with skills training programmes and leadership opportunities, UNFPA empowered young people to play an active role in crisis response, recovery, and long-term resilience.

IV. Looking Ahead

19. Amid the humanitarian reset initiated by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, UNFPA remains unwavering in its commitment to placing the rights, health, and safety of women and girls at the heart of crisis response. As new systems and approaches take shape, UNFPA is working to ensure that the needs of women and girls are not only included but prioritized — particularly life-saving services that directly address their unique vulnerabilities in emergencies. With an estimated 92 million people in need of gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response and 11 million pregnant women requiring humanitarian aid in 2025, UNFPA will continue to stand firm in its responsibility to serve those most at risk — even when others cannot or will not. Through integrated GBV and sexual and SRH programming, UNFPA will keep delivering vital support where it is needed most.

20. UNFPA is preparing its new Strategic Plan for 2026-2029, which includes a strategically focused humanitarian output and a greater integration of humanitarian approaches across all outputs with the aim to strengthen humanitarian development nexus approaches. The updated humanitarian output will focus on enhancing humanitarian leadership capacity, coordination, and emergency preparedness.

21. As a dual mandated agency, UNFPA is focused on working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, linking short-term humanitarian assistance with efforts that address the root causes of crises and support longer-term well-being, peace and stability.

22. To meet the urgent and growing needs of women and girls, UNFPA is prioritizing agility over bureaucracy, strengthening local leadership, and ensuring that humanitarian action is not only delivered — but driven — by affected communities themselves. With a strong focus on supporting localized, women-led, and youth-led organizations, UNFPA is working to shift power and resources closer to those most in need. In this moment of global transformation, UNFPA remains steadfast in its mission: to deliver bold, inclusive, and life-saving support that protects the health, rights, and dignity of women and girls in every crisis.

23. Strengthening localized and community-driven responses will be central, with increased investment in women-led, youth-led, and national organizations, ensuring that humanitarian efforts remain closer to affected populations and resilient amid protracted crises.

24. As crises intensify, UNFPA will enhance emergency preparedness and implement minimum preparedness actions to minimize suffering before escalation. Anticipatory action and needs-driven decision-making will be critical.

25. Recognizing the widening humanitarian funding gap, UNFPA will advocate for predictable, multi-year, and flexible financing mechanisms to ensure the continuity of life-saving sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence programmes. Efforts will include engagement with new financial actors, partnerships with the private sector, and public advocacy campaigns to mobilize global solidarity and bridge funding gaps left by traditional donors.

26. Furthermore, UNFPA will reinforce efforts to protect humanitarian action. Clear and compelling communication will highlight the impact of humanitarian work and the consequences of inaction, centering the voices of affected communities rather than institutional narratives. By remaining bold, agile, and united, UNFPA will continue to lead humanitarian action that is principled, effective, and transformative, ensuring that women, girls, and marginalized communities receive the support they need in times of crisis.