



# HUMANITARIAN ACTION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



FOR ALL  
WOMEN  
AND GIRLS



# HUMANITARIAN ACTION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

**UN Women**

Geneva Office, November 2025



# OUR DONORS

UN Women's achievements outlined in this report were made possible thanks to the generous contributions of our strategic funding partners. We extend our sincere gratitude to the following donors who provided UN Women with regular (core) and other (non-core) resources in support of gender-responsive humanitarian action:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, BHP Foundation, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, European Union, Finland, Fondo Colombia en Paz, France, Germany, Govern de les Illes Balears, Iceland, Ibero-American General Secretariat, India, Inter-American Development Bank, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office, New Zealand, Norway, Office for the Special Coordination for Development - Sahel United Nations Office at Nairobi, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Nations

Development Programme, United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office Partners Gateway, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Central Emergency Relief Fund, United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, United Nations Resident Coordinators Office, United States of America, UN Women National Committees, Uruguay, Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

Front cover: Salama, a beneficiary of UN Women's humanitarian assistance at Saada and Salaam gathering site in Port Sudan, Sudan.  
Photo credit: UN Women/Ekram Hamad Fadlalla

Back inside cover: Kuda Mariam, an internally displaced woman who fled Boko Haram violence near the Nigeria border, rebuilt her life with support from the UN Women empowerment centre—now thriving as a businesswoman and devoted mother in Mora. Cameroon, Photo Credit: Ryan Brown

# FOREWORD

In 2024, humanitarian needs reached unprecedented levels, with almost 300 million people requiring assistance worldwide. Women and girls, already facing entrenched inequalities, bore a disproportionate share of the burden. For UN Women, this was not only a call to respond, but a call to ensure that humanitarian action became more gender-responsive, accountable, and transformative.

Throughout the year, UN Women strengthened its leadership in Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) coordination, ensuring that humanitarian responses integrated gender analysis and addressed the specific needs of women, girls, men, boys, and gender-diverse people. We reached 5.3 million crisis affected people, including 1.13 million directly (80 per cent women and girls), with humanitarian assistance and services across 43 countries. We partnered with 1,270 organizations led by women or focused on women's rights, equipping them with funding and expertise to accelerate community-led action

UN Women also advanced innovative approaches to humanitarian action. By promoting anticipatory action, gender-responsive cash and voucher assistance, and inclusive post-disaster needs assessments, we helped shift the system from reaction to prevention, reducing risks and losses for the most vulnerable. These approaches contributed to both immediate relief and long-term resilience, consistent with the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

Donor support was central to these achievements. Flexible and predictable funding allowed UN Women to respond swiftly to crises in Afghanistan, Sudan, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Ukraine, and beyond, while also ensuring that women's voices shaped recovery strategies. Yet the funding gap for gender-responsive humanitarian action remains stark: only a fraction of appeals targeting women and girls receive adequate resources.

This report emerges at a critical juncture for the humanitarian system. Unprecedented funding cuts, combined with escalating global needs, demand fundamental reform to ensure the humanitarian architecture can effectively serve crisis-affected populations, particularly women and girls who face the greatest vulnerabilities yet demonstrate extraordinary leadership.

UN Women will continue holding the humanitarian system accountable to deliver on its commitments to gender equality while advocating for enhanced participation as well as increased predictable funding for local women-led organizations (WLOs). Our vision remains clear: a reformed humanitarian system that delivers quality assistance meeting women's and girls' specific needs while ensuring equal power and resources flow to women as leaders and frontline responders.

Working alongside our partners across the UN system, government agencies, civil society organizations, and women's rights movements, we are committed to building more localized, gender-transformative, and equitable humanitarian responses. The stakes have never been higher, but neither has our resolve to ensure no woman or girl is left behind in crisis.

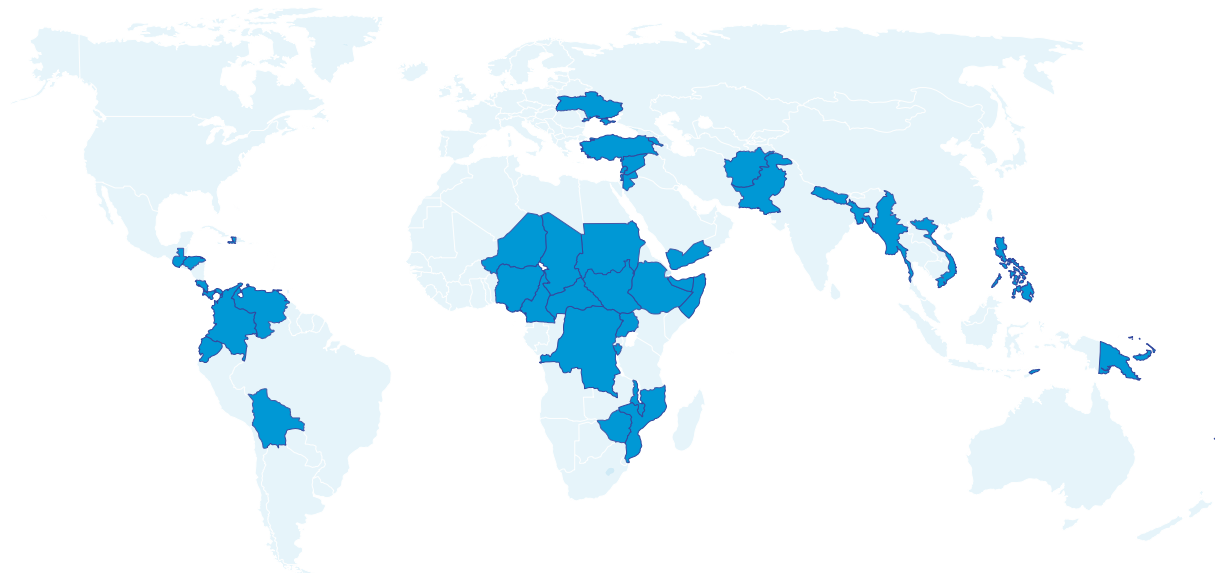
Sincerely,

**Sofia Calltorp**

Director Geneva Office and Chief of Humanitarian Action

# WHERE WE WORK

UN Women responded to the needs and priorities of crisis-affected women and girls in **43 countries** in 2024.



1

Afghanistan, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jordan, Lebanon, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

UN Women's humanitarian response **benefited 5.3 million people** indirectly and **1.13 million people** with UN Women-supported services in **43 humanitarian settings**, including on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) response, livelihoods, and women's leadership.



**764,791 women, 147,545 girls,**  
**165,721 men and 52,645 boys**

This figure also comprises 6,034 people (5,584 women, 438 girls, 2 men and 10 boys) who participated in UN Women Second Chance Education learning opportunities in 10 crisis-affected countries.

1 The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UN Women concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.



# HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## Overview

In 2024, nearly 300 million people required humanitarian assistance and protection globally<sup>2</sup>, with 123 million forcibly displaced worldwide<sup>3</sup>—numbers that underscore an unprecedented scale of human suffering driven by intensified conflicts, violence, political instability, economic hardships, environmental disasters and climate emergencies.

Women and girls bore the heaviest burden of these crises, facing disproportionate risks while simultaneously leading frontline responses in their communities. GBV surged in multiple crises in 2024, for example with thousands of cases recorded in Haiti and demand for GBV services rising sharply in Sudan (UN Women reports a 288 per cent rise in demand in late 2024).<sup>4</sup> In Gaza, by October 2024, roughly 46,300 pregnant women faced crisis-level hunger<sup>5</sup>, and in Sudan 64 per cent of female headed households faced food insecurity as compared to 48 per cent of male-headed households.<sup>6</sup> In Afghanistan, of the 23.7 million people in need in 2024, 77 per cent were women and children.<sup>7</sup>

## Operational Challenges

2024 was the deadliest year for humanitarian workers, with more than 383 killed<sup>8</sup>, severely constraining humanitarian access. In Gaza, the intensification of conflict led to more women and children being killed than in any equivalent period of conflict over the past two decades.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, increasing restrictions on women's rights in Afghanistan and Yemen significantly hindered humanitarian operations, forcing many WLOs to suspend operations.

The operational environment was further complicated by shrinking civic space for women human rights defenders, escalating attacks on humanitarian personnel, and deteriorating security across multiple contexts.

## Our Approach

Operating under our [Humanitarian Strategy 2022-2025](#) and guided by our triple mandate, UN Women leverages its unique position as the mandated lead agency for gender equality and women's empowerment, to drive systemic change across the humanitarian system. UN Women's role in humanitarian contexts is to identify and address the specific needs of crisis-affected women and girls in all their diversity.



A large number of returnees face dire conditions, spending cold nights without tents and proper food, Afghanistan. Photo credit: UN Women

2 <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2024-enarfres>

3 <https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends>

4 <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/haiti-situation-report-8-november-2024>

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/09/sudan-humanitarian-crisis-has-catastrophic-impact-for-women-and-girls-with-two-fold-increase-of-gender-based-violence>

5 <https://pmnch.who.int/news-and-events/news/item/04-10-2024-women-of-gaza-a-year-in-crisis>

6 <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/gender-alert-women-and-girls-of-sudan-fortitude-amid-the-flame-of-war-en.pdf>

7 <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/unhcr-afghanistan-women-and-girls-factsheet-october-2024>

8 <https://www.unocha.org/news/world-humanitarian-day-attacks-aid-workers-hit-another-record-humanitarians-call-urgent-action>

9 OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2025, <https://www.unocha.org/events/global-humanitarian-overview-2025>, page 8



Palestinian woman recounts the horrors of the war in Gaza and how displacement has become a reality, Occupied Palestinian Territory.  
Photo credit: UN Women / Suleiman Hajji

UN Women's humanitarian response in sudden onset emergencies and protracted crises is implemented through the Leadership, Empowerment, Access, and Protection in Humanitarian Coordination and Response (LEAP) Gender Equality Accelerator (GEA) which operates through two complementary pillars designed to maximize impact across the humanitarian system:

**Pillar I: Coordination.** UN Women provides gender expertise, leadership and support to inter-agency processes and coordination mechanisms to ensure the empowerment and protection of women and girls in line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Policy. This includes generating and contributing to timely gender data, assessments and analysis to inform humanitarian planning, prioritization and response, and providing technical expertise in inter-agency coordination for the advancement of gender equality commitments across clusters and sectors.

**Pillar II: Service Delivery.** UN Women supports the specific needs of crisis-affected women and girls by

increasing their access to essential services and building their resilience, as well as strengthening countries' abilities for gender-responsive crisis response and recovery. UN Women provides gender-responsive service delivery to crisis-affected women and girls through unique multi-sectoral programmatic approaches, bringing together protection, livelihood and leadership interventions in crisis and displacement settings.

## Localization Through Women-Led Partnerships

UN Women amplifies women's voices and leadership in crisis response and recovery as a cross-cutting priority. Through building on its long-standing partnerships with local WLOs and networks, UN Women recognizes their irreplaceable role as first responders and advocates to ensure the rights of women and girls are safeguarded and regarded as central to the delivery of lifesaving humanitarian assistance.



# UN WOMEN'S COORDINATION WORK

## KEY RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

**76% of humanitarian cluster systems** in countries with UN Women presence received gender expertise.

**41 HNO/HRPs** and **7 RRP** plans were informed by UN Women's gender analysis.

**24 countries and regions'** joint and multi-sectoral needs assessments used UN Women's gender data.

**54 GIHA Working Groups** were led/co-led by UN Women, amplifying women-led organisations' voices.

**11,365 actors** trained on gender-responsive humanitarian action.

**16 UN Women Country Offices** secured gender as a standard HCT agenda item.

**28 UN Women Country Offices** saw clusters adjust priorities/programming/funding benefiting women.

## Country-level Coordination

In 2024, UN Women provided gender expertise and leadership to inter-agency processes, ensuring humanitarian responses addressed the specific needs and priorities of women and girls. This included supporting 40 Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) to implement the IASC Gender Policy and providing technical expertise on gender responsive programming across clusters and sectors in 76 per cent of countries where it had a presence. UN Women also led or co-led 54 GIHA Working Groups at national, sub-national, and regional levels, which provided leadership and technical support to ensure that planning, prioritization, and response identified and addressed the specific needs of crisis-affected women and girls. They also provided key entry points for local WLOs to engage with the humanitarian system, exercise their leadership, and influence decision-making.

In 2024, UN Women provided training on gender responsive humanitarian action to 11,365 humanitarian actors (8,075 women and 3,290 men), including cluster leads, government officials, and implementing partners across 36 humanitarian contexts. Overall, 1,648 organizations accessed GIHA training supported by UN Women.



Children receive basic literacy training at a Multi-Purpose Women's Centre, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.  
Photo credit: UN Women/Naimuzzaman Prince

UN Women also led in the collection of essential data and evidence to inform humanitarian planning and prioritization. In 2024, UN Women:

- 1. Provided technical expertise and support to joint and/or multi-sectoral needs assessments in 21 countries and 3 regions.**
- 2. Published gender analysis and/or gender alerts to inform Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs), Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), and Refugee Response Plans (RRPs) in 27 crisis-affected countries and regions.**
- 3. Developed over 40 gender-focused knowledge products, including Gender Alerts, in 21 countries and regions to influence humanitarian decision-making including in IASC priority countries like Sudan, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Lebanon and Afghanistan.**

#### COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN COORDINATION AND OPERATIONAL MANDATES IN HAITI

Through its GiHA coordination, UN Women supported the engagement of 72 local WLOs across ten departments in Haiti, strengthening their capacities and facilitating their participation in clusters and the HCT. A Rapid Gender Analysis was conducted to inform humanitarian programming and advocacy on the specific needs of women and girls.<sup>10</sup> In response, UN Women and partners provided cash assistance, food, protection kits, and psychosocial support to 238,284 internally displaced women and girls in Port-au-Prince, Cayes, and Artibonite—contributing to their empowerment and community resilience.



Syrian refugees in Ajloun Oasis Centre receive basic training in tailoring, Jordan. Photo credit: UN Women / Bashar Al-Jabari

#### ADVANCING GENDER-RESPONSIVE HUMANITARIAN PLANNING IN LEBANON THROUGH DATA

In Lebanon, sustained investment in gender data and analysis have resulted in more gender-responsive humanitarian planning and response which better integrate and address the specific needs of crisis-affected women and girls. Informed by UN Women's data products, including the Gender Statistical Profile for Lebanon<sup>11</sup> and Gender Alerts<sup>12</sup> as well as its contributions to coordinated inter-agency assessments<sup>13</sup>, the Lebanon Humanitarian Response Plan integrated robust gender analysis, a dedicated gender chapter, and gender data in over half the sectoral chapters. This, along with increased gender mainstreaming in other humanitarian products including Flash Appeals and Flash Updates, have increased the visibility and prioritization of women and girls' needs and preferences.



Port Sudan Alazhri Gathering Site and Distribution, Sudan. Photo credit: UN Women / James Ochweri

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/07/addressing-haitian-womens-particular-needs-through-their-leadership-role>

<sup>11</sup> <https://lebanon.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/05/gender-statistical-profile-2024-lebanon>

<sup>12</sup> [GENDER ALERT: GENDER AND DISPLACEMENT IN LEBANON AT THE JUNCTURE OF THE CEASEFIRE](#) | Publications | UN Women – Lebanon  
[Gender Alert – On the Frontlines: Women-Led Organizations Central to Lebanon's Crisis Response](#) | Publications | UN Women – Lebanon

<sup>13</sup> [Multi-Sector Needs Assessment 2023 Gender Snapshot: Lebanese Households in Lebanon](#) | Publications | UN Women – Lebanon

### INVESTMENTS IN GENDER DATA IN SUDAN

In December 2024, as the crisis in Sudan continued to deepen, UN Women published a [Gender Alert](#) on the impact of the conflict on women and girls drawing on primary data analysis conducted by OCHA, IOM and other UN agencies. An estimated 6.7 million people -women, girls, men and boys- were estimated to be at risk of gender-based violence with documented cases of mass and systemic rape highlighting the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war.

### ADVANCING GIHA COORDINATION THROUGH A FOCUS ON DATA AND SUB-NATIONAL STRUCTURES IN NIGER

UN Women Niger revitalized the national Gender and Humanitarian Action Thematic Group (GTGH) and established four sub-national GiHA coordination hubs in Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua, and Niamey. These groups regularly convened local WLOs, NGOs, UN Agencies, and Government Offices enhancing local gender expertise, coordination, and integration of gender priorities into the humanitarian response.

Furthermore, the GTGH conducted a gender analysis to assess the impact of economic sanctions –imposed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on women's groups following the military coup in July 2023. These efforts led to increased use of gender-disaggregated data and the gender marker in humanitarian projects included in the 2025 HNRP.



Flood response in Kalehe, DRC. Photo credit: UN Women / Ryan Brown

## Global-level Coordination

In 2024, as co-chair of IASC Gender Reference Group, UN Women, together with co-chair CARE International, led the process to update the [2024-2028 IASC Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action](#), strengthening accountability across the humanitarian system to advance gender equality commitments.

**The Updated IASC Gender Policy (2024-2028)** outlines renewed standards for gender equality in humanitarian action across IASC priority contexts. It:

- Accounts for the complexity of the **intersectional and specific needs** of crisis-affected women, girls, men, and boys.
- Places a specific emphasis on **promoting women's leadership and contributions** across the humanitarian response.
- Formalizes the role of **GiHA Working Groups** as inter-agency platforms for advancing coordinated gender integration into the response.
- **Tasks country level humanitarian leadership - the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and HCT - supported by the GiHA Working Group** and other GiHA Advisory Capacity to review their performance against the policy's commitments and standards, as monitored by the gender accountability framework and to take any corrective action as necessary.

In 2024, UN Women also adjusted the IASC **Gender Accountability Framework (GAF)** mechanism so that country-level monitoring is undertaken and owned at the local level. Led by the GiHA Working Groups, the GAF now develops a country-level snapshot which provides the basis for developing a set of localized, actionable recommendations to present to the HC and HCT for improved compliance going forward. These snapshots are also consolidated to create a global GAF dashboard, to give a system-wide overview of successes and ongoing gaps and challenges.



# UN WOMEN'S SERVICE DELIVERY

## KEY RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

In 2024, **1,130,702 people**, including **764,791 women**, **147,545 girls**, **165,721 men** and **52,645 boys** accessed UN Women-supported services in humanitarian settings, including GBV response, livelihood and women's leadership.

An additional **5,382,639 people** benefited indirectly.

A total of **6,034 people** (5,584 women, 438 girls, 2 men, 10 boys) in 10 crisis-affected countries participated in UN Women Second Chance Education learning opportunities.

**347 safe spaces and women's empowerment centres** were managed or supported by UN Women in **30 countries**.

Due to its distinctive positioning in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls across humanitarian-development-peace contexts, UN Women's operational response is rooted in pre-existing partnerships with national and local actors and expands beyond immediate humanitarian assistance to cover early recovery and resilience building interventions. These are part of a broader continuum of programming that aims to support national systems to be more gender responsive and resilient, to address the drivers of conflict and crisis, and to empower women to be self-reliant and drive their own recovery.



A displaced Palestinian woman carrying her newborn daughter in the camps inside Shohada Al-Aqsa hospital, Occupied Palestinian Territory. Photo credit: UN Women / Samar Abu Elouf

## ASSISTING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN WAR-TORN GAZA THROUGH LOCAL WLOS

Amidst the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, where over 1 million women and girls are affected by the conflict, **UN Women reached 205,697 women and girls with life-saving protection services and livelihood opportunities critical for their self-reliance and resilience.**

Through partnerships with five local WLOs, UN Women reached women and girls in the hardest-hit areas with GBV services, psychosocial support, dignity kits, cash-for-work opportunities and direct cash assistance. UN Women also supported safe spaces managed by local WLOs where women and girls received assistance, recovered, and convened to create local support networks. Where possible, essential items were sourced from local markets to ensure the response contributed to the local economy and strengthened community resilience. This localized approach enabled UN Women and partners to deliver support to women and girls in the face of unimaginable challenges.

In 2024, through its LEAP GEA, UN Women supported over 1.13 million people, including 912,336 crisis-affected and displaced women and girls directly and more than 5.3 million people indirectly across 43 countries, including in the world's largest emergencies such as in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Afghanistan, Sudan, DRC, and Haiti. UN Women's programming focused on reaching women and girls with specific vulnerabilities, such as heads of female headed households, women with disabilities and other groups at risk.

## DREAM AND ACHIEVE INITIATIVE

In Ukraine and Poland, UN Women supported over 30,000 displaced and crisis affected women and girls with comprehensive protection, livelihood, and empowerment support through country level programming and Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund allocations. One of these initiatives - the Dream and Achieve initiative - was implemented in partnership with Impact Force NGO and the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine. It enhanced access to livelihoods and financial resilience of 80 displaced women, including women with disabilities, caregivers, single mothers, and young mothers, by equipping them with entrepreneurial and digital skills relevant to the digital economy, mentoring sessions, and startup packages.

### SUPPORTING DISPLACED WOMEN IN MALI TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES THROUGH LIVELIHOODS SUPPORT

UN Women Mali implemented interventions to help internally displaced women access livelihoods and become economically empowered through context adaptive income-generating activities. In 2024, UN Women Mali supported nearly 15,000 women and girls with comprehensive protection and livelihood services and reached an additional 65,055 beneficiaries indirectly. Through a specific project, over 1,000 women -members of 66 local women's groups in Bamako, Ségou, Mopti, Gao, Ansongo and Ménaka- established their businesses following the provision of emergency assistance and income generating kits.



Displaced Ukrainian woman opened her own flower shop following training and support provided by UN Women, Ukraine.  
Photo credit: NGO 'Fund Professional Development' / Tetyana Topchy

### FOSTERING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN RESPONSE TO THE HUMAN MOBILITY CRISIS

Responding to the regional human mobility crisis in Central and South America was a key priority of UN Women's work. Through its **"Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access, and Protection in Human Mobility Crisis in Central America (known as 'Journeys') Programme"**<sup>14</sup>, UN Women promoted the meaningful participation of women, including Indigenous and Afro-descendant women and their organizations in humanitarian action and post-crisis recovery in Costa Rica, Panama and Honduras, facilitating community-based approaches that strengthen protection systems and inclusive local governance. As a result, 82 percent of the over 20,000 women and girls benefitting from this program reported feeling safer across human mobility corridors in Central America, and 63 percent took on leadership roles in their communities. This innovative initiative has allowed UN Women to consolidate a highly specialized and comprehensive model for responding to human mobility that bridges the humanitarian and peace agendas.

### OLENA'S STORY

When Olena was forced to leave her native Bakhmut due to shelling, she lost not only her home. She also lost the business she had devoted eight years to — growing ornamental and fruit plants. Yet her dream to live surrounded by greenery and to revive her beloved work proved stronger.

Today, she is building **GREENBAKHMUT** — a nursery specializing in hardy seedlings. A container at the market in Kharkiv, an Instagram page, the opening of a new sales point, cooperation with landscape projects — all this became possible with the support of the Dream and Achieve project team. Olena admits that before joining the project, she didn't know how to manage accounting and felt hesitant to speak to an audience. Today, she manages finances, hires employees, orders advertising from bloggers, and confidently runs her business. "My business was registered and functioning, but I can say that only now it has truly started working for me."

<sup>14</sup> [Japan and UN Women Promote Attention at the Borders of Honduras to the Situation of Women in Human Mobility | UN Women – Americas and the Caribbean](#)



# COMMITMENTS TO THE LOCALIZATION AGENDA

## KEY RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

**1,270 local WLOs** across **39 humanitarian contexts** increased their capacities to meaningfully participate in humanitarian and refugee coordination mechanisms.

**654 local WLOs** successfully engaged in humanitarian and refugee coordination mechanisms.

**785 local WLOs** across **31 countries** provided critical information, goods, and services to crisis-affected women and girls through UN Women's support financial and technical support.

The inclusion and meaningful participation of women and their organizations in humanitarian planning, decision-making, and response is a key catalyst for humanitarian system-wide adoption and implementation of gender-responsive localization commitments as outlined in the IASC Gender Policy and the Grand Bargain.

UN Women has established partnerships with women-led and women's rights organizations and movements, national women's machineries and institutional gender mechanisms, and women leaders from different walks of life, which are at the core of its humanitarian action across the two pillars.

UN Women partners with them to amplify women's voices, leadership, and agency in humanitarian coordination and response, and to deliver services to the most hard-to-reach women and girls in conflict and crisis. Furthermore, UN Women advocates across the humanitarian system for increased inclusion of local WLOs and supports their access to funding.

In 2024, UN Women provided training, tools and resources to 1,270 local WLOs across 38 emergency contexts, enhancing their capacities to participate in humanitarian and refugee coordination mechanisms. As a result of this, along with UN Women's advocacy efforts, 654 local WLOs successfully engaged in these mechanisms, contributing with their expertise and insights to humanitarian planning, implementation, monitoring, and decision-making.



Displaced women running their restaurant in Rubkona following support from UN Women, South Sudan.  
Photo credit: UN Women / James Ochweri

## Increased WLO Participation in Humanitarian Decision Making Structures

UN Women's work has resulted in increased inclusion of local WLOs in humanitarian decision-making structures. In 2024, key achievements included:

- **11 HCTs** included local WLOs in their membership, with notable progress in **Myanmar, Somalia, Yemen, and Ukraine**, supported by UN Women's technical assistance and advocacy.
- In **Afghanistan and North-West Syria**, HCTs sought strategic guidance from **UN Women-supported Women's Advisory Groups**, ensuring grassroots women's voices shaped gender-responsive humanitarian action.
- **11 national-level GiHA Working Groups** were co-chaired by local WLOs, including in **Afghanistan, Haiti, Lebanon, Venezuela, Ukraine and Guatemala**, reinforcing local women's leadership in coordination platforms. These efforts have strengthened gender-responsive planning and accountability, ensuring that the needs and priorities of crisis-affected women and girls are reflected in humanitarian strategies and plans.



Local WLOs meet in Central African Republic.  
Photo credit: UN Photo/Leila Thiam

### ELEVATING WOMEN-LED CRISIS RESPONSE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

The Asia-Pacific Regional Office focused on strengthening the participation and highlighting contributions of women's organizations to humanitarian and crisis response. Through the Asia-Pacific Regional GiHA Working Group, UN Women collaborated with OCHA and UNICEF to develop the [WE Respond Dashboard](#). The first of its kind, this dashboard provides a comprehensive overview of over 100 women-, girl-, and LGBTQI+ focused organizations engaged in humanitarian action across the Asia-Pacific region at local, national, and regional levels. This has contributed to improved coordination among these organizations and with other humanitarian actors, increased understanding of the specific needs of crisis-affected women, girls, and other sexual and /or gender minorities, and promoted the participation of marginalized groups in crisis preparedness, response, and recovery.

### ENHANCING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN REFUGEE CAMPS IN COX'S BAZAR

UN Women, as chair of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG), led the agreement to scale up women's leadership initiatives across the 33 refugee camps in **Cox's Bazar**, building on proven practices and strengthening support for Rohingya women-led networks. In support of this initiative, UN Women conducted a mapping of over 600 women leaders across the camps, with the findings informing the (ongoing) development of a comprehensive Gender-Responsive Leadership Strategy to be finalized in 2025. In parallel, the UN Women Gender Field Officers facilitated regular dialogues and discussions in six targeted camps between 180 Rohingya women leaders and camp management authorities. This led to the inclusion of gender-specific agenda items in all 120 camp management meetings in the respective camps, addressing the critical issues and priorities raised by women: for example, ending child marriage, camp insecurities, safety risks and community tensions, gender-based violence, and movement restrictions as well as harassment of women and girls. As a result, practical steps were taken to improve the safety of WASH facilities through installing lighting, and to raise awareness on the importance of education for adolescent girls.



## Expanding Access to Humanitarian Funding for Local WLOs

UN Women efforts have strengthened the role of local women's organizations in crisis response, improved access to flexible funding, and advanced localization in line with Grand Bargain commitments. For example, in Ethiopia, UN Women's advocacy led to:

- **13 new WLOs becoming eligible** for the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund (EHF)
- **1 WLO appointed to the EHF Advisory Board**
- **25per cent** of national NGO EHF recipients were WLOs

### NEW ALLOCATIONS FOR LOCAL WOMEN-LED ORGANIZATIONS IN MYANMAR

In **Myanmar**, the GiHA Working Group's strong partnership with the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) resulted in an increased allocation of USD 1 million for women led/women's rights organizations, and the placement of two WLOs in the MHF Advisory Group.

### RECORD INCREASE IN AFGHANISTAN HUMANITARIAN FUND ALLOCATIONS TO WLOs

A ten-fold increase in funding to WLOs through the **Afghanistan** Humanitarian Fund (AHF), was the result of UN Women's sustained coordination and advocacy as the co-lead of the GiHA Working Group with the funding increasing from USD 250,000 in 2023 to USD 2.5 million in 2024. UN Women advocated for direct, flexible, and equitable funding for WLOs; produced gender data and knowledge products to inform humanitarian financing; and facilitated strategic engagement between WLOs, donors, and humanitarian leadership. This shift towards more localized humanitarian financing has helped sustain WLOs and strengthened efforts to reach crisis-affected women and girls in a more effective, efficient, and gender-responsive manner. This approach aligns with global commitments under the Grand Bargain and the humanitarian reset, which emphasize inclusive, cost-effective aid delivery amid shrinking budgets.



After losing her home in the Mount Nyiragongo eruption, Yvonne Makendo – a single mother and woman with a disability – holds a piece of fabric, symbolizing the new life she stitched together with support from UN Women, DRC.

Photo credit: UN Women / Ryan Brown

# PARTNERSHIPS TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT

## KEY RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

In 2024, UN Women worked with **17 other UN agencies** to deliver humanitarian response across **25 countries**. Our partners include UNHCR, UNICEF, OCHA, UNFPA, IOM, WFP, and UNDP.

Through active partnerships with **five standby partners** and **one donor partner**, **25 experts** were deployed to provide humanitarian surge support to **20 UN Women country offices**.

Through strategic collaboration with humanitarian partners, UN Women has expanded its reach to the most marginalized women and girls in crisis settings. To maximize its impact, UN Women works closely with other humanitarian actors and agencies like **OCHA, UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, and UNDP**, national and local government authorities as well as local WLOs. It contributes to shared priorities in humanitarian response plans and brings its coordination mandate and gender expertise to joint assessments and data analysis. UN Women also supports local WLOs through funding, technical assistance, advocacy, and capacity-building—helping them play a stronger role in humanitarian and refugee responses.

## Country-level Partnerships

In **Northern Mozambique**, UN Women's partnership with UNHCR facilitated access to the most vulnerable populations affected by crisis, including displaced women and girls living in resettlement camps. While UNHCR provided access and data collection capacity, UN Women provided technical support and gender expertise to ensure gender responsiveness of the data collection process and analysis.

In **Sudan**, UN Women partnered with the Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF) in support of livelihood opportunities and food security interventions targeting 25,000 of the most vulnerable women. Through **close collaboration with WFP and FAO**, UN Women not only supported the identification of most vulnerable beneficiaries to be addressed with priority (including pregnant and breast-feeding women and girls, female headed households, women survivors of GBV, and women and girls living with disability) but also provided technical know-how on the exact distribution modalities of food distribution and cash transfers.



Women share their opinions during a meeting at Alazhri Gathering Site, Sudan. Photo credit: UN Women / James Ochweri

## Regional-level Partnerships

**Strengthening Gender-Responsive Data in Refugee Response Through Interagency Collaboration.** As part of the Regional Information Management Working Group for the Ukraine Refugee Response, UN Women ECARO collaborated with UNHCR and other partners to ensure the systematic integration of gender analysis into interagency data products. This work focused on consolidating findings from the multi-sectoral needs assessments (MSNAs) conducted across seven host countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. UN Women's technical contributions helped shape four key interagency reports which reflect an intersectional and gender-sensitive approach, providing actionable recommendations for humanitarian actors in the region. In follow up a joint session was convened to review the initiative and a [Report](#) on lessons and recommendations was produced reinforcing the commitment to more inclusive, evidence-based programming.

### GLOBAL MOU WITH IOM

In October 2024, **UN Women signed a new global Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with International Organization for Migration (IOM)** outlining key areas of collaboration around gender responsive migration and humanitarian action including joint programming, gender data, policy development, and advocacy efforts to promote the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in displacement settings.

The MoU will contribute to gender-responsive migration governance, labour mobility, and humanitarian responses and advance our joint commitments to women's leadership and protection in crises.

## Global-level Partnerships

At the global level, **UN Women's partnership with OCHA** continued to deepen. OCHA was a key partner through the IASC Gender Reference Group, working closely with UN Women on the finalization of the updated IASC Gender Policy and Accountability Framework and the publication of the 2023 Gender Accountability Framework report later the same year. Moreover, two key secondments from OCHA's HQ to UN Women contributed to strengthening internal UN Women capacities on humanitarian action and strategic gender support to the HCT in Sudan.

## Standby Partners

To ensure that UN Women scale up and sustain its humanitarian response efforts in a timely manner, it **scaled up its partnerships with five standby partners** (NorCap, RedR Australia, Information Management and Mine Action Programs (iMMAP), the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), and Canadian National Database for Civilian Experts-CANADEM) and one donor partner - the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, United Kingdom (FCDO, UK). Standby partners boosted UN Women's human resource capacities in times of increased operational and programmatic needs through **the deployment of 25 pre-vetted experts to 20 UN Women Country Offices operating in humanitarian and complex settings.**



'The 'Smile of Hope' is run by AISHA, a UN Women partner and women-led-organization that provides case management and protection support for displaced female cancer patients. Standing together during a visit to assess women's needs are Reem Frainah, AISHA's director and Isadora de Moura, head of the UN Women Gaza sub-office, Occupied Palestinian Territory. Photo credit: UN Women/Sulaiman Hajji



# LOOKING FORWARD

Despite growing needs, the humanitarian system has undergone a dramatic and widespread contraction since the start of 2025, with deep consequential cuts to humanitarian aid announced by some of the world's largest donors. In early 2025, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) launched the Humanitarian Reset both as a response to constrained resources and a recognition that the humanitarian system needs to be more agile, accountable, and impactful. In the context of the reset, life-saving interventions have been hyper-prioritized, reducing the number of people targeted for assistance from 178 million to 114 million<sup>15</sup>. At the same time, coordination systems are being streamlined, and efforts are ongoing to transfer more power, funding and accountability to local partners.

The global budgetary cuts directly threaten progress on gender equality and women's empowerment in some of the world's most fragile contexts. Key risks include: the suspension or closing down of life-saving services for women and girls such as health and gender-based violence response; increases in vulnerabilities to violence and harmful coping strategies among crisis-affected women and girls; undermining the crucial leadership of women's organizations in crisis response; the dilution of gender-specific considerations in humanitarian response due to limited gender technical capacity and leadership; and backtracking on existing gender equality commitments more broadly.

Of particular concern is the fallout on women-led and women's rights organizations operating in crisis and conflict countries. A UN Women survey among 411 organizations in 44 countries conducted in March 2025 found that 47 per cent were expecting to shut down operations in the second half of 2025 if current conditions persist and 51

per cent reporting they had already been forced to suspend programming, with GBV, protection, livelihoods and multi-purpose cash assistance, and healthcare programmes the most affected.<sup>16</sup>

Guided by its triple mandate and IASC membership, UN Women will contribute to mitigating these risks in the context of both the Humanitarian Reset and the UN80 reform initiative.

As the agency mandated to provide leadership on Gender in Humanitarian Action, UN Women will continue to use the GAF to monitor systems level change and to sustain momentum and close existing gaps and challenges—particularly in data, resourcing, and inclusion of local women's organizations. It will continue to leverage its leading role at all levels of the IASC, including in the IASC Gender Reference Group and the GiHA Working Groups to guide the ongoing discussions and roll out of the humanitarian reset through a gender lens.

Furthermore, UN Women will continue its strategic advocacy efforts across the IASC and inter-agency platforms to position gender equality as fundamental to the reset and a prerequisite for principled and effective humanitarian action, including on safeguarding of essential services for women and girls; advancing women's equal and inclusive representation in decision-making at every level; and facilitating local WLO's access to humanitarian funding, including pooled fund mechanisms.

UN Women's work will continue to be guided by its Humanitarian Strategy and Core Commitments, as well as the LEAP GEA. UN Women will also seek to further enhance its collaboration with key partners such as IOM, WFP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, OCHA, and UNHCR.

<sup>15</sup> Humanitarian Action, A hyper-prioritized Global Humanitarian Overview 2025: the cruel maths of aid cuts, June 2025, <https://humanitarianaction.info/document/hyper-prioritized-global-humanitarian-overview-2025-cruel-math-aid-cuts>

<sup>16</sup> UN Women, At a Breaking Point: The Impact of Foreign Aid Cuts on Women's Organizations in Humanitarian Crises Worldwide, April 2025, (page 3) <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/05/at-a-breaking-point-the-impact-of-foreign-aid-cuts-on-womens-organizations-in-humanitarian-crises-worldwide>









# UN WOMEN EXISTS TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS.

As the lead UN entity on gender equality and secretariat of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, we shift laws, institutions, social behaviors and services to close the gender gap and build an equal world for all women and girls. Our partnerships with governments, women's movements and the private sector coupled with our coordination of the broader United Nations translate progress into lasting changes. We make strides forward for women and girls in four areas: leadership, economic empowerment, freedom from violence, and women, peace and security as well as humanitarian action. UN Women keeps the rights of women and girls at the centre of global progress – always, everywhere. Because gender equality is not just what we do. It is who we are.



220 East 42nd Street  
New York, New York 10017, USA

UN Women Geneva Office,  
Avenue Appia 20,  
1211 Geneva, Switzerland

[www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org)  
[www.facebook.com/unwomen](https://www.facebook.com/unwomen)  
[www.twitter.com/un\\_women](https://www.twitter.com/un_women)  
[www.youtube.com/unwomen](https://www.youtube.com/unwomen)  
[www.flickr.com/unwomen](https://www.flickr.com/unwomen)