

# Humanitarian Emergency Fund Annual Report 2024 – 2025



## Acknowledgements

This Annual Report provides an overview of work delivered during 2024/5 through the Scottish Government's Humanitarian Emergency Fund (HEF). The report has been produced by the Scottish Government in collaboration with the Disasters Emergency Committee and HEF Panel members.

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## Ministerial Foreword

**Angus Robertson,  
Cabinet Secretary for Constitution,  
External Affairs and Culture**



Millions of people around the world remain in great danger from climate change and violent, protracted conflicts which are themselves often exacerbated by progressively worsening global warming.

Global headlines remain dominated by conflicts in the Middle East, in particular Gaza, and the ongoing war in Ukraine. Tens of thousands of people have been killed, millions have been forced from their homes and millions more are in acute hunger, in desperate need of reliable humanitarian support. Efforts to tackle this injustice have been severely undermined by swingeing cuts to aid budgets by the United States and the UK government.

Despite pressures here at home, the Scottish Government remains committed to being a good global citizen, making sure Scotland plays its part in tackling the worst humanitarian crises, not only those that make the headlines, but also those lower profile crises where countless others are on the brink of survival.

That is the key aim of the Humanitarian Emergency Fund (HEF) with a commitment to spend at least £1 million each year, advised by 8 of Scotland's leading aid charities. In 2024-5 that figure was exceeded with £2.51 million released to HEF member charities over the year.

More than 30 percent of this was provided to four HEF members for their life saving operations in Sudan, Chad and South Sudan. Over 2 years of brutal civil war has made this the world's largest humanitarian crisis with more than 10 million now forced to survive away from their homes with a further 3 million now in makeshift camps across the country. The report details Islamic Relief's response in the Ghedaref region within Sudan, Tearfund's response in Chad to the West and Oxfam and Christian Aid's efforts in South Sudan.

In May 2024, Islamic Relief and Oxfam were funded to respond to devastating floods in Kenya. In August 2024, Christian Aid in Zimbabwe and SCIAF in Zambia were awarded funds to respond to drought related hunger crisis. In February 2025, Oxfam, Christian Aid and SCIAF received funding for a severe food crisis in Malawi as crops failed again due to a record shortage of rain.

Despite the severe challenges of getting aid supplies into Gaza, the Disaster Emergency Committee's 15 member charities have been able to adapt their responses to save lives. The DEC's Appeal was twice supported during the year with smaller proportionate sums awarded to Mercy Corps and SCIAF for related responses in Lebanon and Syria.

This report provides comprehensive details on the impact of these projects and how the Fund's expert members collaborate here in Scotland and around the world to improve the effectiveness of their work. You'll see that in many of this year's funded projects that direct cash transfers for the most vulnerable people are often the best way to provide efficient and speedy relief.

HEF funded charities are also working hard to shift power to local partners so they can bring their invaluable knowledge to get better results. These approaches demonstrate our shared commitment to be increasingly led by communities that are most affected by disasters, equalising the power imbalance whilst also fostering equality and human rights within humanitarian response.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

The United Nations (UN) has estimated that in 2025, 305 million people around the world require humanitarian assistance due to global escalating conflict and climate emergencies. The ongoing conflict in Sudan is driving ever greater humanitarian need, Syria has witnessed a political upheaval and subsequent instability and uncertainty, and the catastrophic human suffering in Gaza is at a critical level. Climate shocks and droughts across Southern and Eastern Africa, and extreme heatwaves in Southeast Asia, have exacerbated existing humanitarian needs for vulnerable communities.

The Humanitarian Emergency Fund (HEF) was set up by the Scottish Government in 2017 to ensure that its humanitarian funding is used effectively and transparently. The HEF awards a minimum of £1 million every year through an expert panel comprising representatives of eight Scottish humanitarian charities. The panel meets regularly to assess global crises and advise the Scottish Government where this funding can have the greatest impact. This enables the charities to respond swiftly and appropriately to both sudden onset emergencies as well as protracted crises. The HEF uses a rigorous peer review process to select the most appropriate projects. Supported by the Disasters Emergency Committee<sup>1</sup> which administers the Fund, this process brings greater accountability whilst also fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in humanitarian response.

In the financial year April 2024 to March 2025, **£1.225 million<sup>2</sup>** was spent in 8 countries in response to four humanitarian crises. These were the Kenya flooding (May 2024), Southern Africa food crisis (August 2024), Middle East crisis (October 2024), and Sudan crisis (December 2024).

The Scottish Government allocated an extra **£1.285 million** in 2025 to top-up Zambia funding as part of the Southern Africa food crisis, additional funding to the DEC's Middle East appeal, further funding to Sudan and neighbouring countries, and funding for Malawi drought and food crisis. In total the Scottish Government provided **£2.51 million** of humanitarian funding through the HEF mechanism.

This report details the impact and key learning of the HEF responses in the past year, which are summarised below.

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<sup>1</sup>[Disaster Emergency Committee Website](#)

<sup>2</sup>Additional funding outside of the £1 million provided by Scottish Government as outlined below.

## 2024-2025

**£2.51 million**

Allocated

**15**

HEF projects

**10**

Countries

**158,007**

total people reached directly

**91,405**

females reached directly

**66,602**

Males reached directly

## 2017-2025 in numbers

**26**  
**countries**

**37**  
**activations**

**£4.7m**

DEC appeals

**£8.3m**

HEF projects

**£3.6m**

Additional  
humanitarian funding

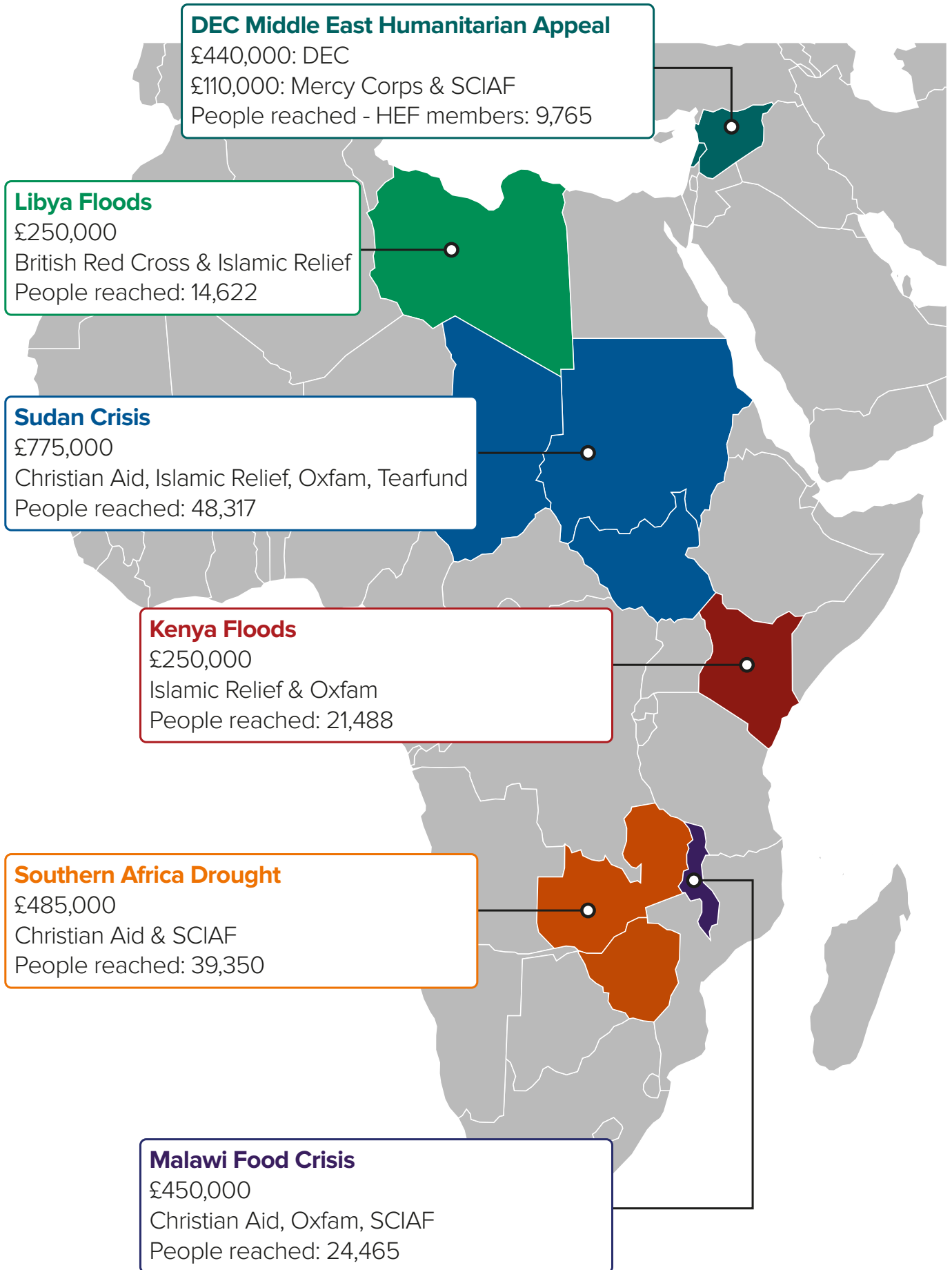
**£18.8m**

Total funds

**869,549**

Total people reached by HEF projects

Additional humanitarian funding refers to SG funding delivered outside the HEF process



## Acronyms

DEC: Disasters Emergency Committee

GBV: Gender-based violence

HEF: Humanitarian Emergency Fund

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

IDP: Internally Displaced Person

IFRC: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

NFI: Non-food items

PDM: Post-distribution monitoring survey

PHCC: Primary Health Care Centres

WASH: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

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## Section A. Introduction to HEF

### Background to the HEF

In 2017, the Scottish Government established a £1 million a year Humanitarian Emergency Fund (HEF) to respond to humanitarian emergencies. It comprises an expert Panel (HEF Panel) with representatives from eight leading humanitarian aid organisations based in Scotland. Funds from the HEF are allocated to crises that meet a range of criteria, based on recommendations from the HEF Panel, supported by the HEF Secretariat administered by the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC).

### Aims and objectives of the HEF

#### The aim of the HEF is to

Provide immediate and effective assistance to reduce the threat of life and wellbeing (e.g., hunger, disease, or death) for a large number of a population caused by disasters, disease, or conflict.

In addition, the HEF should:

- Build public awareness in Scotland of humanitarian crises and raise additional funding.
- Demonstrate the Scottish Government's role as a responsible global citizen with a vested interest in responding to global humanitarian challenges.
- Bring enhanced transparency and predictability to the SG's emergency funding.

#### How the Fund is activated

The Fund is activated in one of two ways:

- **Stream 1:** Funds are awarded by Scottish Ministers after a UK-wide humanitarian appeal is launched by the Disasters Emergency Committee. Smaller sums can also be released to Scottish-based organisations who are part of the HEF Panel but are not part of the UK's DEC coalition via this channel.
- **Stream 2:** When a UK-wide DEC appeal is not immediately anticipated but a crisis, often a protracted crisis, meets the Fund's activation criteria, then projects can be approved by Scottish Ministers for funding after a competitive, peer-reviewed process amongst all HEF Panel members.

## Section B. HEF Achievements in 2024/5

In 2024 and 2025, the HEF prioritised addressing global emergencies by using funding from the Scottish Government to support a variety of humanitarian crises, from conflict and refugee responses, droughts, food crises, and flooding. This section details the achievements of the HEF Panel with Scottish Government funding across 2024 to 2025, by crisis and HEF panel member.

### Impact of HEF Funds

In 2024 to 2025, the HEF reached **158,007** people, including **91,405** females and **66,602** males<sup>3</sup>.

Panel members supported some of the most vulnerable communities impacted by conflict, displacement, and climate shocks, through swift and timely interventions, prioritising women and girls, and those with disabilities. HEF funded programmes worked closely through local partners wherever possible, and contributed to strengthening existing community networks and structures, as well as promoting collaboration through community-led approaches and consultation in programme design.

Cash programming continues to be a priority for humanitarian agencies and their local partners, as it offers a dignified and flexible form of support and assistance. By empowering people to purchase exactly what they need, cash-based interventions enable personal agency and autonomy, whilst also stimulating local markets and supporting the livelihoods of affected communities. This approach not only meets immediate and urgent needs but also contributes to longer-term economic resilience and recovery.

More broadly, the HEF Panel has collaborated to ensure that agencies with the appropriate reach and trusted access to communities are well positioned to deliver timely and effective support to those in need. Through this coordinated effort, the Panel has meaningfully supported the Scottish Government's international development objectives of shifting power and decision making to the global South and prioritising and integrating gender-focused interventions into humanitarian programming.

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<sup>3</sup>Headline figures include people directly reached through a HEF funded programme. This means a person, group, or organisation that has been directly supported through delivery of goods or services which includes but is not limited to food, non-food items (NFIs), drinking water, temporary shelter, or participated in activities like vocational training, recreational activities, or attendance at safe spaces. This includes anyone who can be identified individually. When cash or food is delivered, then the whole household can be considered as direct beneficiaries, with the assumption that all will benefit from the assistance provided to the head of the household.

## Responses

### Libya Flooding – September 2023

**14,622** people (7,495 f / 7,127 m) reached directly

**£250,000** allocated to British Red Cross and Islamic Relief Worldwide

These projects were outlined in the [2023-2024 HEF annual report](#), but were not completed before publication. They are included in the total number of people supported by the HEF in the past financial year, although the money allocated was from the previous period. This activation amount was £250,000, with British Red Cross and Islamic Relief being awarded £125,000 each.

In September 2023, Storm Daniel hit north-eastern Libya, bringing high winds and sudden, heavy rainfall. The storm affected heavily populated areas with flash flooding with destruction or damage of homes, and water and sewage systems. More than 4,000 were reported to have died, and over 10,000 people were missing. Nearly two years on, humanitarian needs remain extremely high, with the floods having left a lasting impact on vulnerable populations and communities, affecting their ability to cope with future climate shocks.

**The British Red Cross** was awarded £125,000 for their health response and provided a supply of essential medical equipment such as ultrasound and diagnostic tools for a primary healthcare centre in Derna. 10,000 people were helped by this funding, which greatly helped their recovery and quality of life after the floods. These items were chosen based on a needs assessment, where it was found there was a critical need in the health facility for diagnostic tools, which were specifically acute in the aftermath of the flooding, due to the ongoing risk and effects of water-borne diseases, sexual and reproductive health needs, and support required for obstetrics and gynaecology. British Red Cross's work, through their partner Libya Red Crescent Society (LRCS), has had a significant effect on the community's healthcare system, which was severely disrupted by the disaster. Restoring its partial operations by supplying essential equipment and tools has enabled affected populations to regain access to vital and appropriate healthcare services, greatly improving their quality of life and post-disaster recovery.

**Islamic Relief** received £125,000 to support several schools in Derna. Pupils experiencing trauma and loss were given psychosocial support kits containing stationery and colouring items as well as recreational activities, school clubs, and education kits. The project reached 4,622 children and 914 teachers to support their learning and development long after the programme ended. The programme faced some challenges; for example, there was a delay in the distribution of the education materials due to a lengthy approvals process from the local authorities to carry out the activity.

To mitigate this, Islamic Relief, through their local partner, met with local authorities to discuss the delays and seek approval. As the project was pivoted from food to education support, and was therefore implemented later in the response, a crucial gap was able to be filled in terms of the longer-term needs of children in flood-affected areas. The interventions enabled continued and thorough support for those who had experienced disrupted education.

### **Kenya Floods – May 2024**

**21,488** people (11,240 f /10,248 m) reached directly  
**£250,000** allocated to Islamic Relief and Oxfam

In May 2024, heavy rains exacerbated by the El Niño<sup>4</sup> effect led to more than 300,000 people being affected by floods. More than 300 people were reported to have died with hundreds of thousands forced from their homes. Farmland was swamped and crops damaged, making food shortages even worse and deepening the existing humanitarian crisis. This activation amount was £250,000, with Oxfam and Islamic Relief being awarded £125,000 respectively.

**Islamic Relief's** £125,000 project delivered multi-purpose cash transfers to 1,200 families in Garissa County, one of the worst affected areas. 200 Community champions were also given training to raise awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) to reach their communities. The cash support helped people to rebuild their livelihoods with the GBV training changing community dynamics to promote long lasting improvement in multi-generational gender equality. The funds that the HEF provided for this response resulted in immediate relief and resilience strengthening for the targeted community. Islamic Relief were able to provide a means for families to purchase essential items according to their specific needs, when they needed it most. The cash assistance empowered the affected community, ensuring an efficient and dignified recovery process. Empowering GBV champions through targeted training has strengthened community resilience by increasing awareness around gender-based violence, thereby fostering a safer environment.

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<sup>4</sup>El Niño is part of the natural climate phenomenon called the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and can be identified by warmer-than-usual sea surface temperatures in the tropical eastern Pacific. Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-64192508>

**Oxfam** also received £125,000 to help informal settlements in Nairobi County. Oxfam and their local partner Wangu Kanja Foundation (WFK) provided a one-month multi-purpose cash assistance intervention to 1,445 families most affected by the floods. It helped them buy food and meet other urgent basic needs.

Oxfam also provided safe water and better hygiene through distributing

tokens for prepaid water dispensers. They also provided GBV support for vulnerable people in the community.



**Picture credit: Oxfam. Picture caption: Weremasia Osebe selling food outside her house.**

Weremasia, a mother of three and grandmother to four moved here after the house they lived in was demolished soon after flooding started. Apart from being an elderly person, Weremasia was diagnosed with diabetes almost 2 years ago and was admitted for a year at the Kenyatta National Hospital. Before the illness, Weremasia used to sell vegetables at the Kangemi market, and her business was doing very well. She continued to do so albeit in smaller scale just outside her house until the floods set her back and she had to recalibrate. With the cash transfer from Oxfam, Weremasia restocked vegetables, and she strictly sells the same food stuff the doctors recommend for her diet so that she can cook some of it on days she does not sell everything. These include butternut squash/butternut pumpkin, potatoes, bell pepper, ginger, garlic, onions, tomatoes, bananas, and thorn melon.

### **Southern Africa Crisis – August 2024**

**39,350** people (25,347 f / 14,003 m) reached directly

**£485,000** allocated to Christian Aid and SCIAF

In July and August 2024, Southern Africa - primarily Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Mozambique - was experiencing an acute food crisis caused by a poor harvest and record low rainfall on top of existing climate shocks. 25 million people across the four countries were acutely short of food as well as experiencing water shortages, increasing the risk of disease and deaths of livestock. The Scottish Government granted £350,000 in total, with Christian Aid and SCIAF being awarded £175,000 respectively for their responses. In January 2025, the Scottish Government provided an additional £135,000 for SCIAF's Zambia programme, to further bolster their interventions, bringing the total support for this crisis to £485,000.

In Zimbabwe, **Christian Aid** provided vouchers for food parcels and awareness raising on gender-based violence. The project exceeded targets, reaching 10,141 of the people most affected. Those who were reached also reported to Christian Aid that there was a noticeable increase in their energy levels, allowing them to resume their



livelihood activities, settle food-related debts, and re-enrol their children in school. Sithandazile, who was supported by Christian Aid, said, "Before this assistance, I worried every day about how I would feed my children. Now, I can focus on working without the fear of going to bed hungry. This support has given me hope and dignity."

**Picture credit: Christian Aid. Picture caption: Sithandazile Mabhena happy to receive her food vouchers**



In Zambia, **SCIAF's** initial £175,000 project in August 2024 aimed to give cash transfers to 1,500 households for basic needs. An additional £135,000 of funding in January 2025 meant the project more than doubled its impact, with 4,350 households reached with critical support. Ndubu Muchima is a mother of seven (four daughters and three sons) who faced the challenge of providing for her family amidst the devastating aftermath of the drought. Ndubu received monthly cash transfers of 600 Zambian Kwacha over a six-month period. The cash transfers became the lifeline Ndubu desperately

needed. Beyond the financial relief, the intervention brought Ndubu something intangible yet invaluable: dignity and confidence.

**Picture credit: SCIAF. Picture caption: Ndubu receives cash assistance.**

## **Middle East Crisis – October 2024**

**9,765** people (5,148 f / 4,617 m) reached directly<sup>5</sup>

**£110,000** allocated to Mercy Corps and SCIAF (£50,000 followed by a further £60,000)

**£440,000** total funding for the DEC's Appeal

In October 2024, the Scottish Government supported the DEC's Middle East Humanitarian Appeal with £200,000 from HEF's Stream one allocation, with an additional £50,000 shared by Mercy Corps and SCIAF for projects in Lebanon. In January 2025, a further £240,000 was donated to the DEC Appeal, with £60,000 extra funding again shared by Mercy Corps and SCIAF (£30,000 respectively). As of 18<sup>th</sup> July, the DEC appeal has raised £47.4 million.

**Mercy Corps** used its first tranche of funding for displaced communities in southern Lebanon. 569 displaced and host families were given cold weather kits of thermal fleece blankets and woollen socks to help cope with the harsh winter weather, especially those without shelter. The second tranche of funding was used in Syria with more than 1,500 people being given flexible cash support (\$120 per household). The money was used to help people with blast wounds, those with disabilities, and others who have experienced gender-based violence. A family who received support through the MPCA programme utilised the money to repay debts incurred from medical treatment and purchase essential items for their daughter who suffers from brain damage. This assistance helped ease the family's financial strain. With the father earning only \$10 a day and frequently missing work to care for his daughter, the support helped cover urgent needs that would otherwise remain unmet. "We used the grant to cover part of the debts from our daughter's treatment and bought diapers and health supplies we couldn't afford before. This support wasn't just money – it made us feel we're not alone, that someone cares about my daughter's life and our daily struggle" said Abir, the mother.

**SCIAF** also supported communities in Lebanon, with vital medical supplies and food. The conflict had greatly increased health risks to people forced from their homes. With their extra funding, SCIAF were able to provide a total of 288 medical consultations, 48 diagnostic tests and more than 1,900 food parcels for 765 families most in need of support. One woman who sought out support after being injured and losing her leg to amputation stated, "I am deeply grateful to Caritas for their unwavering support. Not only did they help me with my physical health, but they also gave me the psychological support I needed to heal. I truly feel that their care has made a significant difference in my life, and I now have hope for a brighter future."

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<sup>5</sup> HEF Panel member reach figures are shown as reach is reported directly in relation to the funding disbursed through the HEF mechanism to SCIAF and Mercy Corps. Regarding the DEC contribution, as this is a wider appeal, reach figures according to amount directly provided by the Scottish Government is not reported on.

## **Sudan Crisis – December 2024**

**48,317** people (28,416 f / 19,901 m) reached directly

**£775,000** allocated to Christian Aid, Islamic Relief, Oxfam, and Tearfund

The brutal civil war that erupted in Sudan in April 2023 has created one of the world's largest humanitarian crisis. The conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has killed tens of thousands of people, forced millions from their homes and has devastated critical infrastructure. In December 2024, 11 million people had been displaced, including 3 million refugees and returnees who had fled to neighbouring countries. The total activation amount was £375,000, with Christian Aid, Islamic Relief, and Tearfund receiving £125,000 respectively to support Sudan and neighbouring countries. In January 2025, the Scottish Government provided a further £400,000, with £100,000 being provided to Christian Aid, Islamic Relief, and Tearfund, with Oxfam also being granted £100,000 for their previous HEF funded programme in 2023 in South Sudan. This brought the total support to £775,000.

**Christian Aid** worked with its local partner Coalition for Humanity (CH) in South Sudan's Wedweil settlement camp and host communities to support 2,000 refugees and 4,239 returnees with the original grant, and a further 2,262 refugees and 4,992 returnees with the top up funding. The cash distributions enabled affected communities meet their basic needs and assisted to reduce reliance on harmful coping mechanisms. In addition, the project reached over 3,000 people with awareness raising sessions on GBV prevention, PSEA training, and case management services provided to 41 survivors. The psychosocial support provided those impacted with the tools and resources to promote healing and resilience.

**Islamic Relief** used two tranches of HEF funding to respond in the Gedaref region in Sudan, which had seen a huge influx of newly displaced people from Al Jazirah nearer the capital, Khartoum. More than 5,500 people were given multi-purpose cash assistance to buy food, transport, and other essential non-food items. 504 dignity kits were also given to more than 1,500 women and girls from target households. The kits were culturally appropriate and also included information about GBV. In this way, the kits served were practical purpose but also gave them crucial information for their protection.

**Oxfam** used their £100,000 grant to build on HEF funded work in 2023 in South Sudan. Many people were continuing to flee the conflict in Sudan by crossing into the Renk region and were in need of urgent support as they arrived in transit centres and neighbouring host communities. This additional funding has allowed Oxfam to expand their original cash response to help people in urgent need of food, shelter and clothing. Oxfam reached 1,932 households in total with this multi-purpose cash approach providing flexibility in a complex operating environment. Manal, a mother of three, had to flee Khartoum after the death of her husband, and arrived in Renk with her children, "I was fully dependent on my husband" Manal shared, "He was killed in the war... I became helpless. I have no hope; I have no money to travel anywhere else." The cash assistance Manal received from Oxfam provided much-needed relief. "With the money I received, I was able to buy some basic items like salt in the market, sugar, soap and even a dress for my child" she explained.



**Picture credit: Oxfam. Picture caption: A photo of Manal.**

**Tearfund** used their £225,000 grant to deliver a humanitarian response in eastern Chad, where ongoing conflict in Sudan has forced over 880,000 people to flee across the border in the past two years. This influx has placed intense pressure on vulnerable host communities and led to a sharp rise in humanitarian needs. In collaboration with its trusted local partner in the area, PEDC, Tearfund provided life-saving support to 2,701 families (14,626 people) in and around Zabout refugee camp in the Sila region, through unconditional cash transfers. A post-distribution survey revealed that 94% of recipients used the cash to buy food, confirming that the assistance directly addressed urgent survival needs.

Tearfund also used the grant funds to tackle gender-based violence (GBV) and the harmful social norms that fuel it. Through the Journey to Healing programme, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence received peer-led psychosocial support, helping them begin to process trauma, regain confidence, and rebuild their sense of purpose. These women then became peer mentors, leading weekly support groups that reached 100 other survivors.

In parallel, 60 camp and faith leaders were trained in Tearfund's Transforming Masculinities approach, encouraging reflection on harmful gender norms, promoting equality, and preventing GBV. Participants shared concrete actions they were taking — from escorting girls collecting firewood to modelling respectful behaviour at home.

Meanwhile, 40 Gender and Peace Champions facilitated community dialogues that engaged around 600 people in discussions about power, gender, and peace. Participants reported that these conversations sparked tangible behavioural changes. The Chief Imam of Zabout Camp reflected: “This is an important training that tells us the truth and protects us from harming each other and living peacefully.

If every family and head of household abides by these principles, gender-based violence will be reduced. Men will no longer beat their wives but accept them in love. It would translate to peace in the homes and the entire community”.

### **Malawi Crisis – February 2025**

**24,465** people (13,759 f / 10,706 m) reached directly  
**£450,000** allocated to Christian Aid, Oxfam, and SCIAF

Malawi has faced a long cycle of climate shocks, extreme flooding and more recently a prolonged drought worsened by the El-Nino effect which has damaged 44% of the national crop area. In early 2025, nearly 5.7 million people were estimated to be acutely short of food.

**Christian Aid** provided unconditional cash transfers to 2,425 of the most vulnerable households in the Neno district of Malawi. This support was particularly valuable for those who are often hardest hit by economic hardship and food insecurity, primarily women. The programme reached over 100 extra households than originally planned. This success came through close collaboration and coordination with local authorities, church groups, and traditional and religious leaders. One of the people reached was Kelita, “The assistance I received came at just the right time, I had reached a point of desperation” Kelita shares. “Taking care of three children alone and making sure they eat every day has been incredibly difficult. There were days when they returned from school expecting food, and I had nothing to give them. This support has allowed me to provide for my children, restoring my hope and dignity.”



**Picture credit: Christian Aid. Picture caption: a photo of Kelita.**

**Oxfam's** project successfully assisted 1,800 drought affected households (1,080 female headed) in Nsanje in Malawi. A one-off payment of MK 140,000 (£64.81) per household helped cover a much-needed gap in income for the most affected families. An Oxfam survey found that all of the recipients used the support to buy essential food, such as maize, cooking oil, and pulses.

**SCIAF**, through their partner CADECOM, built on earlier Scottish Government support to provide 2,805 households with cash support in three of the most badly affected districts Nsanje, Chikwawa and Balaka, The MK100,000 (£47) allocation per household successfully reached the most vulnerable groups, specifically female-headed households, older persons, and those with disabilities, and helped them buy urgently needed food. Idesi Ndalama, a single mother of four children explained, "The cash transfers I received helped start recovery while awaiting the harvest of maize and groundnuts from my fields".

## Section C. Thematic Highlights

### Localisation and Shifting Power South

#### Christian Aid – Southern Africa Food Crisis

Christian Aid demonstrated shifting power to the global South and supporting existing structures and the wider localisation agenda in numerous ways as part of their Southern Africa food response in Zimbabwe. Local partnerships were established, primarily with the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, where a memorandum of understanding was agreed, that outlined the roles of stakeholders, empowering local leadership and communities. The programme was designed with assistance and input from the affected community, starting with a rapid needs assessment. The community, along with local groups and stakeholders, were able to input and ensure that the design of the programme reflected their needs and priorities at that time.

Female empowerment was a key focus of Christian Aid's approach throughout the response, namely through ensuring that resources and decision-making power was directed to women in the community. This supported them to prioritise their needs and upheld a wider commitment to address gender inequality. Capacity strengthening was carried out that involved training of Gender and Accountability Focal Persons; individuals in the community who were equipped with the tools necessary to identify and address long-standing gender and safeguarding issues within the community, and direct women and girls to the appropriate resources and referral mechanisms, lasting long beyond the closure of the project.

### Gender-based Approaches

#### Oxfam – Kenya Floods

As highlighted in the Kenya Floods section, Oxfam prioritised cash support alongside GBV awareness raising and psychosocial support for their response in the affected community. Integrating a gender-based approach to the programme was imperative, due to the impact of the flooding creating a higher protection risk for women and girls through loss of homes and livelihoods and challenges in accessing appropriate healthcare services, including mental health support. Oxfam and their local partner were able to reach 150 survivors of GBV with essential services and support.

**Maryann Wanjiru, from Oxfam's partner, WFK, said:** "The counselling services were able to help these individuals to come to terms with what has happened, but also to be able to forge a clear way forward to restore themselves, restore their dignity, restore their business.

The medical services also came in handy, with the surge of cases of sexual and gender-based violence, but also looking at some of the physical injuries that people sustained while trying to rescue others and household items.”

Mirabel Otieno<sup>6</sup> was also displaced by the floods and the mother of three’s husband is missing. She said: “We were sleeping, and we heard people screaming. We went outside to check what was happening and we saw our neighbour’s house being carried by the floods. I ran back to the house to rescue my kids because they were sleeping. I lost everything and I was left alone to fend for my kids. I went to someone’s house, and he allowed us to stay for only one night. During the night, he tried to take advantage of me, and I refused, and I told him I just gave birth through C-Section. But he didn’t listen to me, he went ahead and took advantage of me. I was going through a lot, and I tried committing suicide. I started going for counselling for one hour, once per week. I don’t know where I would be if it wasn’t for the therapy. I want to improve my life and get a home of my own where my kids will be proud to bring their friends.”

This testimony and the integrated programme that Oxfam adopted highlights the importance of ensuring gender-based approaches and services are incorporated into all humanitarian response, as often women and girls are the most impacted. A gender-centred approach must be prioritised to ensure that interventions are effective and equitable, and through this, humanitarian actors can uphold the rights, safety, and dignity of women and girls, strengthening more inclusive communities in the long-term.

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<sup>6</sup>Name changed to protect identity



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