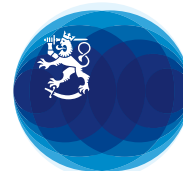


# EVALUATION

CATALYSING CHANGE: EVALUATION OF FINLAND'S  
HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE 2016–2022



Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland

Volume 1 • Main Report



Evaluation of Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation

2022/4



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This report can be downloaded through the home page of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs <https://um.fi/development-cooperation-evaluation-reports-comprehensive-evaluations>

Contact: [EVA-11@formin.fi](mailto:EVA-11@formin.fi)

ISBN 978-952-281-715-0

Layout: Grano

Cover photo: Dustin Go, NIRAS International Consulting



# EVALUATION

## EVALUATION OF FINNISH HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE 2016–2022

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**2022/4**

This evaluation was commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland to the consortium Particip-Niras. This report is the product of the authors, and responsibility for the accuracy of the data included in this report rests with the authors. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.



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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>3RP</b>	Syrian regional crisis Refugee and Resilience Response Plan
<b>CBPF</b>	Country Based Pooled Fund
<b>CERF</b>	Central Emergency Response Fund
<b>CHF</b>	Swiss Franc
<b>CMAM</b>	Community-based management of Acute Malnutrition
<b>COHAFA</b>	Council working party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
<b>DG ECHO</b>	European Commission Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUR</b>	Euro
<b>FCA</b>	FinnChurchAid
<b>FRC</b>	Finnish Red Cross
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian Response Plan
<b>IASC</b>	Inter Agency Standing Committee
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IHPs</b>	International Humanitarian Principles
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>JENA</b>	Joint Education Needs Assessment
<b>JRP</b>	Joint Response Plan
<b>KEO-70</b>	Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
<b>MOPAN</b>	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>SAM</b>	Severe Acute Malnutrition
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual- and Gender Based-Violence
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNDRR</b>	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNOCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
<b>USD</b>	US Dollar



<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>WHS</b>	World Humanitarian Summit





# Yhteenveto

Tässä raportissa esitelty riippumaton arviointi tehtiin Suomen humanitaarisen avun linjauksessa (2019) esitetyn suunnitelman mukaisesti. Arvioinnin tilasi Ulkoministeriön kehitysevaluoinnin yksikkö (EVA-11) ja se toteutettiin syyskuun 2021 ja kesäkuun 2022 välisenä aikana. Arviointi keskittyi erityisesti Ulkoministeriön humanitaarisen avun ja politiikan yksikön (KEO-70) hallinnoimaan apuun. Arviointi käsitteli Suomen humanitaarista apua vuodesta 2016 vuoden 2022 maaliskuuhun.

## 1. Arvioinnin tarkoitus, tavoitteet ja lähestymistapa

Riippumattoman arvioinnin tarkoituksena oli tukea Suomen humanitaarisen avun tuloksellisuutta.

Arvioinnin tavoitteet olivat:

- Tarkastella Suomen humanitaarisen avun tarkoituksenmukaisuutta suhteessa avun saajien tarpeisiin sekä humanitaarisen avun kytköstä kehitysyhteistyöhön ja rauhanrakentamiseen (ns. kolmoisneksus);
- Arvioida Suomen humanitaarisen avun linjauksen (Suomi humanitaarisen avun antajana, 2019) hyödyllisyyttä humanitaarisen avun ohjauksessa;
- Arvioida kumppanuuksien ja yhteistyön merkitystä Suomen humanitaarisessa avussa sekä määritellä, ovatko nykyiset kumppanuudet ja Suomen mahdollisuus vaikuttaa kumppaneihinsa parhaalla mahdollisella tasolla;
- Arvioida humanitaarisen avun johtamisen ja hallinnoinnin tuloksellisuutta sekä antaa suosituksia sen tehostamiseen; ja
- Arvioida humanitaarisen avun tuloksia avun saajien näkökulmasta.

Arvioinnin pohjana käytettiin ensisijaisesti tietolähteitä, jotka kattoivat Suomen humanitaarisen avun yleisesti, mutta sen osana myös tarkasteltiin erityisesti Etelä-Sudaniin, Bangladeshiin ja Syyrian kriisiin toimitettua humanitaarista apua. Arviointi tarkasteli Suomen humanitaarisen avun tarkoituksenmukaisuutta, tuloksellisuutta, tehokkuutta johtamisen ja hallinnon näkökulmasta, johdonmukaisuutta sekä kytkeytymistä muuhun apuun.

## 2. Arvioinnin keskeiset tulokset

Arvioinnin tiivistetyt tulokset ovat seuraavat:

**Tarkoituksenmukaisuus.** Suomen tavoite humanitaarisen avun tarveperustaisuudesta toteutuu sekä käytännön avustustoiminnassa että avun johtamisessa ja hallinnoinnissa. Suomen humanitaarinen apu on tarkoituksenmukaista sekä maantieteellisen jakautumisen että hyödynsaajien tarpeiden osalta. Suomi luottaa humanitaarisen avun kumppaneihinsa ja tekee rahoituspäätöksensä kumppanien tekemien tarvemäärittelyjen pohjalta, vaikka joidenkin avustuspäätösten kohdalla onkin havaittu myös sisäistä poliittista vaikuttamista.



Suomen humanitaarinen apu on pääsääntöisesti linjassa paikallisviranomaisten sekä kumppanien strategisten tavoitteiden kanssa. Suomen humanitaarinen toiminta perustuu vahvaan tahtotilaan ja on joustavaa. Suomen sitoumusta erityisesti sukupuolten tasa-arvon ja yhdenvertaisuuden periaatteiden edistämiseen arvostetaan kumppanien ja sidosryhmien keskuudessa. Humanitaariseen avustustyöhön käytettävissä oleva rahoitus ei kuitenkaan ole kasvanut samassa suhteessa avun tarpeiden kanssa, mikä asettaa haasteita sekä toiminnan tarkoituksenmukaisuuden ylläpitämiseksi että paineita painopisteiden selkeyttämiseksi. Rajanveto kehitysyhteistyön ja humanitaarisen avun välillä kaipaa selkeyttämistä ministeriön sisällä.

**Tuloksellisuus.** Vaikka Suomen humanitaarisen avun linjaus (2019) ohjaa avun tulosten seuraamiseen, tulosten raportoinnissa on parantamisen varaa. Ulkoministeriö edellyttää kumppaneiltaan tulosraportointia, mutta kumppanien raportointikäytännöissä on havaittu säännöllisiä puutteita. Tämä johtaa epätäydelliseen kokonaiskuvaan Suomen humanitaarisen avun saavutuksista ja sen haasteista.

Arvioinnin käytettävissä olleen tiedon perusteella konkreettisimpia humanitaarisen avun tuloksia on saavutettu perushyödykkeiden ja -palvelujen toimittamisessa ja siviilien suojelussa humanitaarisen kriisin koettelemilla tai uhkaamilla alueilla. Humanitaarisen avun koordinaation ja johdonmukaisuuden saralla Suomella on ollut tärkeä rooli joidenkin koordinaatiofoorumien vetäjänä, mutta muita yhteyksiä Suomen avun ja kansainvälisen koordinaatio-järjestelmän kehittämisen välillä ei arvioissa noussut esiin.

Selkeitä normatiivisia tuloksia voidaan nähdä avunantajien kesken käytävässä dialogissa. Suomi on näissä dialogeissa onnistunut edistämään erityisesti sukupuolten välistä tasa-arvoa ja vammaisten henkilöiden oikeuksia. Maatasolla tarkasteltuna tulokset näyttävät useinkin enemmän erilaisten yksittäisten tulosten ryppäinä kuin selkeinä kokonaisuuksina. Sielläkin Suomen vahva maine syrjimättömyyden edistäjänä käy ilmi tuloksista sukupuoleen perustuvan väkivallan ja äitiyskuolleisuuden vähentämisessä, tyttöjen ja naisten koulutusmahdollisuuksien edistämässä sekä naisten toimeentulon parantamisessa. Arviointi ei kuitenkaan löytänyt konkreettisia tuloksia maatasolla vammaisten henkilöiden oikeuksien edistämisestä.

Suomi ei ole erityisemmin panostanut humanitaarisen avun paikallisuuteen. Kansainvälisesti keskeisinä normatiivisina saavutuksina näyttävät Suomen humanitaarisen avun johtajuuteen liittyvät panostukset ja aktiivinen toimijuus koordinaatiofoorumien keulakuvana.

**Tehokkuus.** Tulokset osoittavat, ettei nykyinen hallintomalli parhaalla mahdollisella tavalla edistä Suomen kykyä mukautuvaan ohjaukseen ja toiminnan joustavaan sopeuttamiseen. Humanitaarisen avun ja politiikan yksikön haasteisiin lukeutuu tasapainottelu kumppaneiden kautta suunnatun avun ennakoitavuuden ja uusien apukohteiden rahoittamisen välillä. Käytössä olevat sisäiset järjestelmät ja prosessien raskaus yhdistettynä humanitaarisen avun yksikön rajallisiin henkilöstöresursseihin tunnistettiin toimintaa vaikeuttavina tekijöinä. Erityisesti haasteita on koettu vuoden jälkipuoliskolla rahoituksen- sekä yleishallinnon prosesseissa. Niiden myötä myös kumppanit ovat ajoittain kärsineet toivottua hitaammasta päätöksenteosta.

**Johdonmukaisuus.** Suomella on vahva normatiivinen ja strateginen sitoumus kansainväliseen, koordinoituun humanitaariseen avustustyöhön, ja se toimii aktiivisessa roolissa kansainvälisillä humanitaarisen avun foorumeilla. Keskeisinä vaikuttamisen kanavina toimivat muun muassa humanitaarisen ja ruoka-avun neuvostotyöryhmä (COHAFA), hyvän humanitaarisen avun periaatteiden toteutumista edistävä avunantajien yhteistyöfoorumi Good Humanitarian Donorship ja vammaisten henkilöiden oikeuksia ajavia järjestöjä edustava International Disability Alliance (IDA). Pyrkimys tukea kansainvälisen humanitaarisen avun johdonmukaisuutta ja koordinaatiota tuodaan esiin myös Suomen humanitaarisen avun linjauksessa (2019).



Huolimatta kansainvälisestä vaikuttamisesta, maatasolla Suomi näyttäytyy usein varsin matalan profiilin humanitaarisena toimijana. Suomen tunnettuus on rajallista jopa niissä maissa, joissa sillä on verrattain vahva läsnäolo. Suomen humanitaarisen avun toimintaa ei tunneta lainkaan maissa, joissa Suomella ei ole edustustoa.

Suomen pyrkimys tehokkaaseen ja koordinoituun kansainväliseen humanitaariseen apuun heijastuu myös sen valinnassa kanavoida valtaosa rahoituksesta monenkeskisiä kanavia pitkin, mikä muun muassa ulkoministeriön nykyisen henkilöresurssitilanteen huomioiden on asianmukainen valinta. Kansalaisyhteiskunnan toimijoiden tukeminen tunnistetaan arvokkaana osana Suomen toimijuutta, mutta nykyisessä henkilöresurssitilanteessa kansalaisjärjestöjen avustusten hallinnointi on ajoittain koettu raskaana ja sopeutuksia tällä saralla tarvitaan.

Suomelta humanitaarista apua vastaanottavien maiden määrä on ajan mittaan pysynyt suhteellisen vakiona, mutta maatason kumppanuuksien keskittyminen harvempiin yhteistyötahoihin näyttäytyy kasvavana suuntauksena.

Humanitaarista rahoitusta koskevien Grand Bargain -sitoumusten mukaisesti vähintään 30 % Suomen humanitaarisesta avusta annetaan enintään pehmeästi korvamerkittynä. Kumppanijärjestöt ovat arvostaneet tällaista rahoitusta. Suomi on keskeinen ja arvostettu YK:n keskitetyn hätäapurahaston (CERF) rahoittaja, vaikkakaan se ei vielä osallistu maakohtaisten, yhdistettyjen varojen (CBPF) rahastoihin. Humanitaarista työtä tekevien kansalaisjärjestöjen tukeminen on arvokasta, mutta vie paljon aikaa ja saattaa johtaa avun tehottomuuteen.

Vaikka sisäinen koordinaatio ja yhteistyö alueosastojen ja humanitaarisen avun ja politiikan yksikön välillä on parantunut, sen kehittämiseen on edelleen syytä panostaa.

**Kytkeä muuhun apuun.** Suomi on sitoutunut noudattamaan kansainvälisesti sovittuja hyvän humanitaarisen avun periaatteita. Sen lähestymistapa kumppaneihin on vahvasti luottamusperustainen, mikä yhdistettynä humanitaarisen avun yksikön henkilöresurssikysymyksiin jättää kumppanien tuntemuksen usein pintapuoliseksi. Hyvän humanitaarisen avun periaatteiden toteutumisen valvonta ja todentaminen kumppaneiden osalta onkin ulkoministeriölle usein haastavaa.

Humanitaarisen avun, rauhanrakentamisen ja kehitysyhteistyön kytkökset on huomioitu sekä strategian että käytännön tasolla, mikä käy ilmi Suomen joustavassa tavassa soveltaa humanitaarisen avun ja kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusta. Huolimatta virallisen ohjeistuksen puuttumisesta, kehitysyhteistyön, humanitaarisen avun ja rauhantien välisen yhteistyön johdonmukaisuutta ja täydentävyyttä vahvistavan kolmoisneksus-lähestymistavan toteuttamiseen on ryhdytty hiljalleen kiinnittämään huomiota myös hanketasolla.

Suomi kohdentaa humanitaarisen avun tarveperustaisuuden pohjalta. Kehitysyhteistyörahoituksen lisäksi Suomi kohdentaa kehityspoliittisen ohjelman mukaisesti oikeusperustaisuuden periaatetta noudattaen. Tämä asianmukainen jaottelu ei kuitenkaan ole täysin selvä koko ulkoministeriön henkilökunnalle, vaan se kaipaa lisää selkeyttä sisäisen ymmärryksen vahvistamiseksi ja tehokkaan päätöksenteon tueksi.

### 3. Johtopäätökset ja suositukset

Arvioinnin 17 keskeistä löydöstä ja näistä muodostetut kymmenen johtopäätöstä sekä kahdeksan suositusta on esitetty ”keskeiset löydökset, johtopäätökset ja suositukset” -taulukossa seuraavalla sivulla.



# Keskeiset löydökset, johtopäätökset ja suositukset

LÖYDÖKSET	JOHTOPÄÄTÖKSET	SUOSITUKSET
<p><u>Löydös 1:</u> Suomen tavoite humanitaarisen avun tarveperustaisuudesta toteutuu sekä humanitaarisessa toiminnassa että avun johtamisessa ja hallinnossa. Suomen humanitaarinen apu näyttäytyy yleisesti tarkoituksenmukaisena maa- ja aluekohdennuksensa sekä hyödynsaajien tarpeiden täyttämisen osalta. Suomi luottaa humanitaarisen avun kumppaneihinsa hyödynsaajien tarpeiden määrittelyssä, vaikka joidenkin avustuspäätösten kohdalla onkin havaittu myös sisäistä poliittista vaikuttamista.</p> <p><u>Löydös 2:</u> Suomen humanitaarinen apu on pääsääntöisesti linjassa paikallisviranomaisten sekä kumppanien strategisten tavoitteiden kanssa. Kumppanien ja sidosryhmien keskuudessa arvostetaan erityisesti sitoumusta erityisesti sukupuolten tasa-arvon ja yhdenvertaisuuden periaatteiden edistämiseen.</p>	<p>1. Suomen humanitaarinen apu on tarveperustaista ja pääosin linjassa avun strategisten painotusten kanssa, ja Suomi mukauttaa toimintaansa tarpeen mukaan.</p>	<p>1. <b>Keskitä</b> monenkeskisten järjestöjen kautta kanavoitava rahoitus rajatummalle määrälle toimijoita.</p> <p>2. <b>Kehitä</b> strategisempi lähestymistapa kansalaisyhteiskunnan toimijoiden kanssa toteutettavaan humanitaariseen apuun.</p> <p>3. <b>Omaksu ministeriön sisäinen yhtenäinen toimintamalli</b> neksus-lähestymistapaan ja maakohtaisten painopisteiden asettamiseen.</p> <p>4. <b>Toimeenpane</b> normatiiviset sitoumukset, määrittele ja julkista humanitaarisen avun temaattiset painopisteet sekä tarkastele niitä puolivuositain.</p> <p>5. <b>Jatka</b> YK:n keskitetyn hätäapurahaston rahoittamista ja <b>aloita</b> myös maakohtaisten korirahastojen tukeminen</p> <p>6. <b>Käännä Suomen humanitaarisen avun linjaus</b> englanniksi ja julkaise se, sekä päivitä sitä tarpeen mukaan.</p> <p>7. <b>Laadi</b> humanitaarisen avun tulosten ja saavutusten seurantaan soveltuva tuloskehikko.</p> <p>8. <b>Laadi</b> Suomen humanitaarisen linjauksen ja painopisteiden pohjalta humanitaarinen vaikuttamisstrategia ja tee se tunnetuksi keskeisten vaikutuskanavien (EU:n rakenteet, pysyvät edustustot ja suurlähetystöt) kautta kumppaneille.</p>
<p><u>Löydös 3:</u> Suomen humanitaarinen toimijuus perustuu vahvaan tahtotilaan. Se on joustavaa sekä pyrkii mukautumaan paikallisiin tarpeisiin. Humanitaariseen avustustyöhön kanavoitu rahoitus ei kuitenkaan ole kasvanut samassa suhteessa maailmanlaajuisten tarpeiden kanssa. Se asettaa haasteita toiminnan tarkoituksenmukaisuuden ylläpitämiselle ja luo paineita painopisteiden selkeyttämiselle.</p>	<p>2. Suomen humanitaarinen toimijuus on joustavaa, mutta avun tarkoituksenmukaisuuteen tulevaisuudessa liittyy riskejä.</p>	
<p><u>Löydös 4:</u> Vaikka Suomen humanitaarisen avun linjaus ohjaa avun tulosten mittaamiseen, tulosten raportoinnissa on parantamisen varaa. Ulkoministeriö edellyttää kumppaneiltaan tulosraportointia, mutta kumppanien raportointikäytänteissä on havaittu puutteita. Tämä johtaa epätäydelliseen kokonaiskuvaan Suomen humanitaarisen avun saavutuksista ja haasteista.</p>	<p>3. Toiminnalla on saavutettu erityisesti yksilöiden ja haavoittuvassa asemassa olevien ryhmien näkökulmasta arvokkaita, joskin osin pirstoutuneita ja säännönmukaisen tulosraportoinnin ulkopuolelle jääviä tuloksia. Kansainvälisen humanitaarisen järjestelmän parantamiseen liittyvät tulokset näyttävät yleisesti heikompina.</p>	



LÖYDÖKSET	JOHTOPÄÄTÖKSET	SUOSITUKSET
<p><u>Löydös 5:</u> Konkreettisimpia humanitaarisen avun tuloksia on saavutettu perushyödykkeiden ja -palvelujen toimittamisessa ja siviilien suojelussa humanitaarisen kriisin koettelemilla tai uhkaamilla alueilla. Maatasolla tarkasteltuna aikaansaadut tulokset näyttävät usein enemmänkin erilaisten yksittäisten tulosten ryppäinä kuin selkeinä kokonaisuuksina.</p> <p><u>Löydös 6:</u> Selkeitä normatiivisia tuloksia voidaan nähdä avunantajien kesken käytävässä dialogissa. Suomi on näissä dialogeissa onnistunut edistämään erityisesti sukupuolten välistä tasa-arvoa ja vammaisten henkilöiden oikeuksia. Arviointi ei kuitenkaan löytänyt maatasolla konkreettisia tuloksia vammaisten henkilöiden oikeuksien edistämiseksi. Suomi ei ole erityisemmin panostanut humanitaarisen avun paikallisuuteen.</p> <p><u>Löydös 7:</u> Humanitaarisen avun koordinaation ja johdonmukaisuuden saralla Suomella on ollut tärkeä rooli joidenkin koordinaatiofoorumien vetäjänä, mutta muita kytköksiä Suomen avun ja kansainvälisen koordinaatiojärjestelmän kehittämisen välillä ei arvioissa noussut esiin.</p>		
<p><u>Löydös 8:</u> Nykyinen humanitaarisen avun hallintomalli ei parhaalla mahdollisella tavalla edistä Suomen mukautuvaa ohjausta ja avun joustavuutta. Käytössä olevat sisäiset järjestelmät ja prosessien raskaus yhdistettynä humanitaarisen avun yksikön rajallisiin henkilöstöresursseihin tunnistettiin toimintaa vaikeuttavina tekijöinä.</p>	4. Kevyemmät hallintomenettelyt auttaisivat kohdentamaan humanitaarista apua yhä nopeammin ja tarveperustaisemmin.	
<p><u>Löydös 9:</u> Henkilöstöressurssien alimitoituksen vallitessa, haasteita on koettu erityisesti vuoden jälkipuoliskolla rahoituksen- sekä yleishallinnon prosesseissa. Niiden myötä myös kumppanit ovat ajoittain kärsineet toivottua hitaammasta päätöksenteosta.</p>	5. Humanitaarisen avun ja politiikan yksikön henkilöresurssit rajoittavat toiminnan tehokkuutta ja erityisesti toimia tarvitaan ulkoministeriön sisäisen yhteistyön edelleen kehittämiseksi.	
<p><u>Löydös 10:</u> Suomella on vahva normatiivinen ja strateginen sitoumus kansainväliseen, koordinoituun humanitaariseen avustustyöhön, ja se toimii aktiivisessa roolissa kansainvälisillä humanitaarisen avun foorumeilla. Keskeisiä vaikuttamisen kanavia ovat muun muassa humanitaarisen ja ruoka-avun neuvostotyöryhmä (COHAF), hyvän humanitaarisen avun periaatteiden toteutumista edistävä avunantajien yhteistyöfoorumi Good Humanitarian Donorship ja vammaisten henkilöiden oikeuksia ajavia järjestöjä edustava International Disability Alliance (IDA).</p>	6. Vaikka Suomella on vahvasti kansainvälinen humanitaarisen avun lähestymistapa, se ei ole saavuttanut vahvaa näkyvyyttä ja vaikuttamisen tasoa kansainvälisessä humanitaarisessa avussa.	
<p><u>Löydös 11:</u> Maatasolla tarkasteltuna Suomi näyttää usein varsin matalan profiilin humanitaarisena toimijana. Suomen tunnettuus on rajallista jopa niissä maissa joissa sillä on verrattain vahva läsnäolo. Suomen humanitaarisen avun toimintaa ei tunneta lainkaan niissä maissa, joissa Suomella ei ole edustustoa.</p>		



LÖYDÖKSET	JOHTOPÄÄTÖKSET	SUOSITUKSET
<p><u>Löydös 12:</u> Suomen pyrkimys tehokkaaseen ja koordinoituun kansainväliseen humanitaariseen apuun heijastuu myös sen valinnassa kanavoita valtaosa rahoituksesta monenvälisiä kanavia pitkin. Muun muassa ulkoministeriön nykyisen henkilöresurssitilanteen huomioiden tämä on asianmukainen valinta. Maatasolla kumppanuuksien keskittyminen harvempiin yhteistyötahoihin näyttäytyy kasvavana suuntauksena. Kansalaisyhteiskunnan toimijoiden tukeminen tunnistetaan arvokkaana osana Suomen toimijuutta, mutta nykyisessä henkilöresurssitilanteessa kansalaisjärjestöjen avustusten hallinnointi on ajoittain koettu raskaana ja sopeutuksia tällä saralla tarvitaan.</p> <p><u>Löydös 13:</u> Humanitaarista rahoitusta koskevien Grand Bargain -sitoumusten mukaisesti vähintään 30 % Suomen humanitaarisesta avusta annetaan enintään pehmeästi korvamerkittynä. Kumppanijärjestöt ovat arvostaneet tällaista rahoitusta. Suomi on keskeinen ja arvostettu YK:n keskitetyn hätäapurahaston (CERF) rahoittaja, vaikkakaan se ei vielä osallistu maakohtaisten, yhdistettyjen varojen (CBPF) rahastoihin. Humanitaarista työtä tekevien kansalaisjärjestöjen tukeminen on arvokasta, mutta vie paljon aikaa ja saattaa johtaa avun tehottomuuteen.</p>	<p>7. Suomen on syytä syventää monenkeskisten kumppaneiden ymmärrystään ja hoitaa kumppanuuksia kansalaisyhteiskunnan toimijoiden kanssa strategisemmin.</p>	
<p><u>Löydös 14:</u> Vaikka yhteistyö ulkoministeriön sisällä alueosastojen ja humanitaarisen avun ja politiikan yksikön välillä on parantunut, sisäisessä koordinaatiossa esiintyy edelleen puutteita.</p>	<p>8. Humanitaariseen apuun liittyviä tietopuutteita esiintyy ulkoministeriön sisällä merkittävässä määrin.</p>	
<p><u>Löydös 15:</u> Suomi on sitoutunut noudattamaan kansainvälisesti sovittuja hyvän humanitaarisen avun periaatteita. Sen lähestymistapa kumppaneihin on vahvasti luottamusperustainen, mikä yhdistettynä humanitaarisen avun yksikön henkilöresurssikysymyksiin jättää kumppanien tuntemuksen usein pintapuoliseksi. Hyvän humanitaarisen avun periaatteiden toteutumisen valvonta ja todentaminen kumppaneiden osalta onkin ulkoministeriölle usein haastavaa.</p>	<p>9. Suomi on vahvasti sitoutunut kansainvälisiin hyvän humanitaarisen avun periaatteisiin, mutta niiden käytännön toteutumisen varmistamiseen ja valvontaan liittyy kolmoisneksus-rahoituksen joustavasta käytöstä huolimatta haasteita.</p>	
<p><u>Löydös 16:</u> Humanitaarisen avun, rauhanrakentamisen ja kehitysyhteistyön kytkökset on huomioitu sekä strategian että käytännön tasolla, mikä käy ilmi Suomen joustavassa tavassa soveltaa humanitaarisen avun ja kehitysyhteistyön rahoitusta. Huolimatta virallisen ohjeistuksen puuttumisesta, kehitysyhteistyön, humanitaarisen avun ja rauhantien välisen yhteistyön johdonmukaisuutta ja täydentävyyttä vahvistavan kolmoisneksus -lähestymistavan toteuttamiseen on jo ryhdytty kiinnittämään huomiota.</p>		
<p><u>Löydös 17:</u> Suomi kohdentaa humanitaarisen avun tarveperustaisuuden pohjalta. Kehitysyhteistyörahoituksensa Suomi kohdentaa kehityspoliittisen ohjelman mukaisesti oikeusperustaisuuden periaatetta noudattaen. Tämä asianmukainen jaottelu ei kuitenkaan ole täysin selvä koko ulkoministeriön henkilökunnalle, vaan se kaipaa lisää selkeyttä sisäisen ymmärryksen vahvistamiseksi ja tehokkaan päätöksenteon tueksi.</p>	<p>10. Ennakoivampi ja strategisempi sisäinen yhteistyö auttaisi selventämään humanitaarisen ja kehitysrahoituksen erilaisia käyttötarkoituksia sekä niiden välisiä yhteyksiä.</p>	



# Sammanfattning

Den oberoende utvärderingen av Finlands humanitära bistånd presenterad i denna rapport var förutsedd i Finlands policy för humanitärt bistånd (2019) och beställdes av utvärderingsenheten (EVA-11) vid det finska utrikesministeriet (UM). Den genomfördes under perioden september 2021 till juni 2022. Utvärderingen fokuserade specifikt på biståndet som hanteras av enheten för humanitärt bistånd och politik (KEO-70).

## 1. Utvärderingens syfte, målsättning och tillvägagångssätt

Syftet med utvärderingen av Finlands humanitära bistånd 2016 – mars 2022 var att bidra till en effektivisering av det humanitära biståndet. De specifika målsättningarna var:

- Att göra en översyn av hur relevant det finländska humanitära biståndet 2016-mars 2022 var för den drabbade befolkningens behov och i fråga om kopplingar till utvecklings- och fredsinsatser (trippelnexus);
- Att bedöma vilken roll som Finlands policy för humanitärt bistånd (2019) har som vägledning för Finlands humanitära bistånd;
- Att bedöma hur partnerskap och samarbete fungerar inom det finländska humanitära biståndet och om den nuvarande balansen mellan partnerskap och omfattningen av finsk påverkan är optimal;
- Att bedöma systemen för hanteringen av humanitärt bistånd i ljuset av hur effektivt det har varit, och ge förslag på eventuella framtida förbättringar; och
- Att bedöma biståndets effektivitet med avseende på de resultat som uppnåtts för drabbade befolkningsgrupper.

Utvärderingen omfattade en analys av UM:s övergripande system, såväl som erfarenheterna av humanitärt bistånd i Sydsudan, Bangladesh samt för den regionala krisen skapad av konflikten in i Syrien.

Utvärderingen vägledades av fem utvärderingskriterier som bedömde (i) det finländska humanitära biståndets relevans gentemot de identifierade behoven, (ii) dess måluppfyllelse, (iii) dess effektivitet (i fråga om hantering), (iv) dess koherens och (v) dess koppling till internationella åtaganden och till andra former av samarbete.

## 2. Sammanfattning av utvärderingens resultat

Utvärderingens övergripande resultat var som följer:

**Relevans.** Finlands humanitära bistånd är i hög grad behovsbaserat, både i fråga om hur det hanteras och genomförs i praktiken. Stödet var relevant då det svarade mot geografiska behov och målgruppens behov, som partners fick förtroende att identifiera, även om interna politiska påtryckningar också förekom.



Finlands bistånd genomfördes i linje med nationella myndigheters och andra partners strategiska prioriteringar, och det fokus som gavs till jämställdhet och icke-diskriminering i policy-dialogen var mycket relevant och uppskattat. Det fanns dock inte alltid en tydlig gränsdragning mellan utvecklingsbistånd och humanitärt bistånd, åtminstone inte internt.

Det finländska humanitära biståndet har anpassats på ett ändamålsenligt sätt till behoven på plats. Ett starkt engagemang och flexibilitet har bidragit till detta. Den årliga ökningen av det humanitära biståndet har dock inte hållit jämna steg med de humanitära behoven globalt sett, vilket riskerar att göra biståndet mindre relevant, och lyfter fram frågan om ett tydligare fokus för Finlands framtida humanitära bistånd.

**Måluppfyllelse.** Även om den humanitära policyn ger vägledning för att mäta resultat är den faktiska resultatrapporteringen bristfällig. UM utgår från att rapporteringen från partners ska påvisa evidensbaserade resultat, men det är vida dokumenterat att så inte alltid är fallet. Följaktligen finns det begränsad, tillgänglig information om det humanitära biståndets resultat, och Finlands insatser (och tillkortakommanden) återspeglas inte fullt ut i tillgängliga data.

Granskningen av dokumenterade resultat visar att de mest påtagliga resultaten uppnåtts när det gäller tillhandahållande av grundläggande förnödenheter, tjänster och faciliteter till civilbefolkningen, och när det gäller att säkerställa skyddet av människor som drabbats eller hotas av en humanitär kris. Finland har spelat en ledande roll i vissa givarsamordningsforum, men det finns få andra direkta kopplingar mellan finskt bistånd och förbättrad humanitär samordning och koherens på systemnivå.

På landnivå var resultaten till stor del utspridda i "fickor" som inte var direkt kopplade till de övergripande mål för det finländska humanitära biståndet. Viktiga, normativa resultat har dock uppnåtts vad gäller jämställdhet, personer med funktionsvariation och humanitärt ledarskap.

Finland är känt för sitt fokus på icke-diskriminering, inklusive jämställdhet och personer med funktionsvariation. Detta återspeglas i resultatrapporteringen, som visar att det finländska biståndet har bidragit till att minska genusbaserat våld och mödradödlighet, samt att förbättra tillgången till utbildning för flickor/kvinnor och kvinnors försörjning. Resultat på landnivå relaterade till personer med funktionsvariation är dock ännu synliga.

Finland har inte gjort några särskilda ansträngningar eller satsningar på "lokalisera" biståndet. Resultat har framförallt uppnåtts vad gäller den normativa agendan inom jämställdhet och personer med funktionsvariation, och Finlands ledande roll inom humanitära samordningsforum.

**Effektivitet.** Finlands system för hantering av biståndet underlättar inte anpassning till förändringar i kontexten. När den humanitära enheten både försöker skapa förutsägbarhet för partners och tillgodose nya behov, befinner man sig ofta i en situation där man måste kringgå, snarare än får stöd av, interna system. De krav som ställs på den humanitära enheten i detta sammanhang står heller inte i proportion till befintliga resurser, och personalen befinner sig ofta under mycket stor press under andra halvåret när ytterligare medel vanligtvis anslås. Vissa partners har fått vänta länge på beslut om stöd, vilket tillskrivs de begränsade personalresurserna men även de tidskrävande administrativa processerna för medelshantering och tilldelning, som mer liknar de processer som tillämpas för långsiktigt utvecklingsamarbete.

**Koherens.** Finland har ett starkt internationellt engagemang på normativ och strategisk nivå. Finland har en ledande roll i flera viktiga forum/initiativ relaterade till humanitärt bistånd, inklusive





”Council working party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid” (COHAFA), ”Good Humanitarian Donorship” och ”International Disability Alliance”. Extern koherens är också en prioriterad fråga i den humanitära policyn.

På landnivå är Finland en relativt lågprofilerad aktör, även i de fall där den finska närvaron är stark. I sammanhang där Finland inte har någon direkt närvaro är dess prioriteringar inte allmänt kända.

Finlands engagemang för internationalism återspeglas i valet att använda multilaterala kanaler för huvuddelen av biståndet – ett lämpligt val med tanke på Finlands förutsättningar, inklusive befintligt humankapital. Finland fortsätter att stödja organisationer i det civila samhället, men anpassningar behöver göras för att minska tidsåtgången för hanteringen av detta stöd givet begränsade personalresurser. Medan antalet länder som tar emot finskt humanitärt bistånd har varit relativt konstant över tid finns det en tendens till partnerkoncentration på landnivå.

Finland lever upp till Grand Bargain-åtagandet att tillhandahålla minst 30 procent av det humanitära biståndet som icke-öronmärkt stöd eller ”mjukt” öronmärkt stöd, och partnerorganisationer upplever detta stöd som mycket värdefullt. Finland är en betydande och högt uppskattad givare till ”Central Emergency Response Fund” (CERF), men bidrar ännu inte till ”Country Based Pooled Funds” (CBPF), trots att detta utgör ett viktigt och effektivt instrument för mindre bidrag. Stöd till organisationer i det civila samhället är värdefullt, men tidskrävande, och kan vägas mot det resultat som uppnås, om det minskas på landnivå.

Även om den interna samordningen mellan de regionala enheterna och den humanitära enheten har förbättrats, finns det kvarvarande brister.

**Samhörighet.** Finland har ett omfattande engagemang i de viktigaste internationella forumen för de humanitära principerna, såsom initiativet ”Good Humanitarian Donorship”. Finlands förtroendebaserade förhållningssätt gentemot partners riskerar dock att leda till brister i det operativa genomförandet, särskilt då partnerorganisation har olika metoder, och det finns begränsningar, på grund av tidsbrist, för hur djup inblick personalen på den humanitära enheten kan få om partnerorganisationerna.

Finland tillämpar en strategi för humanitär-utveckling-freds-nexus både på strategisk och operativ nivå. Även om få projekt som finansieras genom humanitärt bistånd har ett uttalat nexus-fokus, och någon vägledning ännu inte finns tillgänglig, bidrar Finlands flexibilitet i genomförandet av humanitärt bistånd och utvecklingsbistånd till nexus i praktiken, med medel kan användas för att kombinera humanitära bistånd och utvecklingssamarbete.

Finlands humanitära bistånd har en behovsstyrd fördelning, medan utvecklingsbiståndet är rättighetsbaserat i enlighet med Finlands utvecklingspolitiska program. Det finns dock en begränsad intern förståelse för dessa begrepp inom den finska biståndssarkitekturen, och ingen tydlig åtskillnad görs. Tydligare definitioner som underlag för beslutsfattande kan hjälpa Finland att säkerställa att humanitärt bistånd och utvecklingsbistånd fördelas på ett lämpligt sätt.

### 3. Slutsatser och rekommendationer

Utvärderingen utmynnade i 17 resultat, följt av tio slutsatser och åtta rekommendationer som UM bör överväga i den framtida hanteringen av det humanitära biståndet. Dessa presenteras i tabellen med resultat, slutsatser och rekommendationer på nästa sida.



# Tabell med resultat, slutsatser och rekommendationer

RESULTAT	SLUTSATSER	REKOMMENDATIONER
<p><u>Resultat 1:</u> Finlands humanitära bistånd är i hög grad behovsbaserat, både i fråga om hur det hanteras och genomförs i praktiken. Stödet var relevant då det svarade mot geografiska behov och målgruppens behov, som partners fick förtroende att identifiera, även om interna politiska påtryckningar också förekom.</p> <p><u>Resultat 2:</u> Finlands bistånd genomfördes till stor del i linje med nationella myndigheters och andra partners strategiska prioriteringar, och det fokus som gavs till jämställdhet och icke-diskriminering i policy-dialogen var mycket relevant och uppskattat.</p>	<p>1. Finland fäster stor vikt vid humanitära behov, följer strategiska prioriteringar, och anpassar när det krävs.</p>	<p>1. <b>Rationalisera tilldelningen av medel</b> till ett mer begränsat antal multilaterala organisationer.</p> <p>2. <b>Inför en mer strategisk ansats</b> för stöd till civilsamhällets organisationer inom det humanitära biståndet.</p> <p>3. Inom ramen för nexus-metoden – och mot bakgrund av nya vägledningar – <b>inför ett gemensamt tillvägagångssätt</b> med regionala kontor för att fastställa biståndsprioriteringar på landnivå.</p> <p>4. <b>Operationalisera normativa åtaganden</b>, definiera och besluta om tematiska prioriteringar för humanitärt bistånd, som ses över vartannat år.</p> <p>5. <b>Fortsätt</b> att bidra till CERF men stöd även CBPF (lokala korgfonder).</p> <p>6. Översätt den humanitära policyn till engelska; publicera och uppdatera den.</p> <p>7. <b>Ta fram ett uniformt resultatramverk</b> för den humanitära policyn.</p> <p>8. <b>Ta fram en tydlig påverkansstrategi</b> för humanitärt bistånd, på basis av policyn och anpassad till finländska prioriteringar för internationalistiskt, behovsbaserat humanitärt bistånd, och integrera de tematiska prioriteringarna ovan. Genomför strategin med fokus på centrala påverkansaktörer t.ex. EU-strukturer, finska beskickningar och ambassader.</p>
<p><u>Resultat 3:</u> Det finländska humanitära biståndet har anpassats på ett ändamålsenligt sätt till behoven på plats. Ett starkt engagemang och flexibilitet har bidragit till detta. Den årliga ökningen av det humanitära biståndet har dock inte hållit jämna steg med de humanitära behoven globalt sett, vilket riskerar att göra biståndet mindre relevant, och lyfter fram frågan om ett tydligare fokus för Finlands framtida humanitära bistånd.</p>	<p>2. Finland är flexibelt, men det finns risk för att relevansen påverkas framöver.</p>	
<p><u>Resultat 4:</u> Även om den humanitära policyn ger vägledning för att mäta resultat är den faktiska resultatrapporteringen bristfällig. UM utgår från att rapporteringen från partners ska påvisa evidensbaserat resultat, men det är vida dokumenterat att så inte alltid är fallet. Följaktligen finns det begränsad, tillgänglig information om det humanitära biståndets resultat, och Finlands insatser (och tillkortakommanden) återspeglas inte fullt ut i tillgängliga data.</p> <p><u>Resultat 5:</u> De mest påtagliga resultaten har uppnåtts när det gäller tillhandahållande av grundläggande förnödenheter, tjänster och faciliteter till civilbefolkningen, och när det gäller att säkerställa skyddet av människor som drabbats eller hotas av en humanitär kris. På landnivå var resultaten till stor del utspridda i "fickor" som inte var direkt kopplade till tydliga och övergripande mål för det finländska humanitära biståndet.</p>	<p>3. Uppnådda resultat har betydelse för individer och utsatta grupper men är ibland utspridda och fångas inte upp av resultatrapportering. Resultaten i förhållande till en förbättring av det humanitära systemet har varit mindre betydande.</p>	



RESULTAT	SLUTSATSER	REKOMMENDATIONER
<p><u>Resultat 6:</u> Viktiga, normativa resultat har uppnåtts vad gäller jämställdhet, personer med funktionsvariation och humanitärt ledarskap. Resultat på landnivå relaterade till personer med funktionsvariation är dock ännu inte synliga, och Finland har inte gjort några särskilda ansträngningar eller satsningar på att "lokalisera" biståndet.</p> <p><u>Resultat 7:</u> Finland har spelat en ledande roll i vissa givarsamordningsforum, men det finns få andra direkta kopplingar mellan finskt bistånd och förbättrad humanitär samordning och koherens på systemnivå.</p>		
<p><u>Resultat 8:</u> Finlands system för hantering av biståndet underlättar inte anpassning till förändringar i kontexten. När den humanitära enheten både försöker skapa förutsägbarhet för partners och tillgodose nya behov, befinner man sig ofta i en situation där man måste kringgå, snarare än får stöd av, av interna system.</p>	4. Smidigare administrativa processer kan underlätta för Finland att snabbare anpassa sitt humanitära bistånd till nya behov.	
<p><u>Resultat 9:</u> Den humanitära enhetens personalresurser utgör en begränsning, och personalen befinner sig ofta under mycket stor press under andra halvåret. Vissa partners har fått vänta länge på beslut om stöd, vilket tillskrivs de begränsade personalresurserna och de tidskrävande administrativa processerna.</p>	5. Den humanitära enhetens knappa personalresurser utgör en särskild begränsning, och det finns utrymme för ett bättre internt samarbete.	
<p><u>Resultat 10:</u> Finland har ett starkt internationellt engagemang på normativ och strategisk nivå. Finland har en ledande roll i flera viktiga forum/initiativ relaterade till humanitärt bistånd, inklusive COHAFA, "Good Humanitarian Donorship" och "International Disability Alliance". Extern koherens är också en prioriterad fråga i den humanitära policyn.</p> <p><u>Resultat 11:</u> På landnivå är Finland en relativt lågprofilerad aktör, även i de fall där den finska närvaron är stark. I sammanhang där Finland inte har någon direkt närvaro är dess prioriteringar inte allmänt kända.</p>	6. Finland har en starkt internationalistisk ansats till sitt humanitära bistånd, men Finlands närvaro står inte i proportion till dess synlighet, inflytande och röst.	
<p><u>Resultat 12:</u> En ändamålsenlig mix av olika genomförandekanaler har uppnåtts givet Finlands förutsättningar. Det finns en tendens till partnerkoncentration på landnivå. Anpassningar bör göras för att begränsa tidsåtgången för hantering av stöd till organisationer i det civila samhället.</p> <p><u>Resultat 13:</u> Finland lever upp till Grand Bargain-åtagandet att tillhandahålla minst 30 procent av det humanitära biståndet som icke-öronmärkt stöd eller "mjukt" öronmärkt stöd, och partnerorganisationer upplever detta stöd som mycket värdefullt. Finland är en betydande och högt uppskattad givare till CERF, men bidrar ännu inte till CBPF, trots att dessa utgör ett värdefullt och effektivt instrument för mindre bidrag.</p>	7. Det finns utrymme för förbättringar vad gäller Finlands förståelse för multilaterala partners och ett mer strategiskt förhållningssätt till partnerskap med civilsamhällsorganisationer.	
<p><u>Resultat 14:</u> Även om den interna samordningen mellan den humanitära enheten och andra delar av UM förbättras, finns det kvarvarande brister.</p>	8. Det finns betydande interna kunskapsluckor om Finlands humanitära bistånd.	



RESULTAT	SLUTSATSER	REKOMMENDATIONER
<p><u>Resultat 15:</u> Finland har ett omfattande engagemang i de viktigaste internationella forumen för de humanitära principerna. Finlands förtroendebaserade förhållningssätt gentemot partners riskerar dock att ge upphov till brister i det operativa genomförandet.</p> <p><u>Resultat 16:</u> Finland har en nexus-ansats både på strategisk och operativ nivå. Även om få projekt som finansieras genom humanitärt bistånd har ett uttalat nexus-fokus, och någon fullständig vägledning ännu inte finns tillgänglig, bidrar Finlands flexibilitet in genomförandet av humanitärt bistånd och utvecklingsbistånd till nexus i praktiken, med medel som kan används för att kombinera humanitära bistånd och utvecklingssamarbete.</p>	<p>9. Finlands humanitära bistånd har kopplingar på policy-nivå till de humanitära principerna men det finns risker i genomförandet, samtidigt som Finland använder finansiering pragmatiskt för att hantera nexus-problematiken.</p>	
<p><u>Resultat 17:</u> Finlands humanitära bistånd har en behovsstyrd fördelning, medan utvecklingsbiståndet är rättighetsbaserat i enlighet med Finlands utvecklingspolitiska program. Det finns dock en begränsad intern förståelse för dessa begrepp inom den finska biståndssarkitekturen, och ingen tydlig åtskillnad görs.</p>	<p>10. Mer proaktivt och strategiskt samarbete internt kan bidra till att klargöra syften och användningen av humanitärt bistånd och utvecklingsbistånd.</p>	



# Summary

The independent evaluation was forecast in Finland's Humanitarian Policy (2019) and commissioned by the Evaluation Unit (EVA-11) of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA). It was conducted during the period September 2021 to June 2022. It focused specifically on Finland's humanitarian assistance managed by the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy (KEO-70).

## 1. Purpose, objectives and approach of the evaluation

The purpose of the Evaluation of Finland's Humanitarian assistance 2016–March 2022 was to help enhance the effectiveness of Finland's humanitarian assistance. Specific objectives were:

- To review the relevance of Finnish humanitarian assistance 2016–March 2022 in meeting the needs of affected populations, and in its interconnections with development and peace interventions (triple nexus);
- To assess the function and purpose of the 2019 Humanitarian Policy (“Suomi humanitaarisen avun antajana”) as a guiding instrument for Finnish humanitarian assistance;
- To assess the functioning of partnerships and cooperation in Finnish humanitarian assistance and whether the current balance of partnerships/scope of Finnish influencing is optimal;
- To assess the management arrangements for humanitarian assistance in light of its effectiveness and make proposals for any future improvements; and
- To assess the effectiveness of the assistance in delivering results for affected populations.

The evaluation drew evidence from across the corporate systems of MFA, as well as the experience of humanitarian assistance delivered in South Sudan, Bangladesh and to the Syrian regional crisis.

The evaluation was guided by five evaluation criteria which assessed (i) the relevance of Finnish humanitarian assistance to needs, (ii) its effectiveness, (iii) its efficiency (in terms of management), (iv) its coherence and (v) its connectedness to international commitments and to other forms of cooperation.

## 2. Summary evaluation results

The summarized results of the evaluation are:

**Relevance.** Finland's humanitarian assistance takes a strongly needs-based approach, which is operationalized in its management systems and operational practice. Assistance was relevant to geographical and beneficiary needs, with trust placed in partners to identify these needs, though instances of internal political pressure have been identified.



Finland's assistance was provided in alignment with the strategic aims of national authorities or other partners in the context, and its policy dialogue emphases of gender and non-discrimination were both highly relevant and highly valued. However, internally at least, the boundaries on the allocation of development and humanitarian assistance respectively were not always clear.

Finnish humanitarian assistance adapted appropriately to needs on the ground, supported by a culture of willingness and flexibility. However, its annual increases have not kept pace with global humanitarian requirements, raising risks for relevance going forward, and highlighting the issue of focus for Finland's future humanitarian assistance.

**Effectiveness.** While the Humanitarian Policy contains strategies for intended results measurement, these in reality do not deliver robust results reporting. MFA trusts its partners to provide evidence of results, but the shortcomings of this expectation have been widely documented. Consequently, little data is available to report on humanitarian results, and Finland's achievements (and under-achievements) of its humanitarian assistance are not fully reflected in available data.

From the snapshot of available results, most tangible results achievements have been delivered on the provision of basic commodities, services and facilities to civilian groups, and on ensuring the protection of people affected or threatened by a humanitarian crisis. Finland has played an important role in leading some co-ordination forums, but there are few other direct connections between Finnish assistance and improved humanitarian coordination and coherence at system level.

At country level results were largely 'pockets' of different achievements not geared to, nor delivering against, clear overarching Finnish goals for its humanitarian assistance. However, some significant normative level results have been delivered on gender equality, disability and humanitarian leadership.

Finland has a strong reputation for prioritising non-discrimination, including gender equality and disability concerns. This is reflected in results data, where its assistance has helped reduce Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and maternal mortality; enhance access to education for girls/women and improve livelihoods for women. Country-level results are not yet available related to disability, however.

Finland has not dedicated specific effort or drive towards the localization of aid. Its strongest normative achievements have occurred in gender equality and disability, and its leadership of humanitarian co-ordination forums.

**Efficiency.** Finland's 'adaptive capacity' is not proactively supported by its aid management systems. While it aims to combine some predictability for partners with responsiveness to emerging needs, Humanitarian Unit often finds itself navigating around, rather than being supported by, flexibility in the internal systems. The combination is also not commensurate with the limited human resourcing of the Humanitarian Unit staff, who often find themselves under very considerable pressure in the latter half of the year when additional resources often become available. Some partners had experienced slower than desirable decision-making, attributed also to limited human resourcing, as well as lengthy administrative processes for grant management and allocation, more akin to requirements for development funding.

**Coherence.** At normative and strategic level, Finland prioritises strong international engagement. It plays a leading role in some key forums/initiatives related to humanitarian assistance, including



the Council working party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA), Good Humanitarian Donorship and the International Disability Alliance. External coherence is also a priority of the Humanitarian Policy.

At the country level, Finland is a relatively low-profile actor, even where it has a strong country presence. In contexts where Finland has no direct presence, its priorities are unknown.

Finland reflects its commitment to internationalism in the choice to direct the bulk of its assistance through multilateral channels – an appropriate choice given its internal conditions, including human resources. It continues engagement with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), but adaptations are needed to the balance of time required for CSO grant management and limited human resources. Although the number of countries receiving Finnish humanitarian assistance has remained relatively constant over time, there is an increasing trend towards partner concentration at country level.

Finland adheres to Grand Bargain commitments, to provide at least 30% of its humanitarian assistance as unearmarked or softly earmarked resources, and these resources are highly valued by partner agencies. It is a major and highly valued contributor to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), but does not yet contribute to Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs), although these offer a valuable and efficient vehicle for smaller contributions. Support to CSOs is valuable, though time-consuming, and can present trade-offs with effectiveness if reduced at country level.

While internal co-ordination between Regional Unit desks and the Humanitarian Unit is improving, gaps remain.

**Connectedness.** Finland has extensive engagement with the key international forums for the humanitarian principles, such as the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative. However, Finland's trust-based approach to its partners risks leaving gaps in their operational application, particularly as partner approaches are diverse, and time constraints limit the depth of knowledge of organisations that Humanitarian Unit staff can realistically achieve.

Finland prioritises a humanitarian-development-peace 'nexus' approach both strategically and operationally. Although few projects funded through humanitarian assistance are explicit on their nexus commitments, and guidance is yet to issue, Finland's flexible application of humanitarian and development assistance reflects 'nexus' approaches in practice, with funding used to combine both humanitarian and development elements.

Finland's humanitarian assistance has been distributed on a 'needs' basis, while its development assistance adopts the rights-based ethos of Finland's Development Policy programme. However, the institutional separation of these concepts within the Finnish aid architecture is not well understood internally nor clearly delineated. More explicit and conscious definition and decision-making will help ensure that humanitarian and development assistance are appropriately deployed.

### 3. Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation generated 17 main findings, followed by ten conclusions and eight recommendations for MFA to consider in its future humanitarian action. These are presented in the Table of Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations in the overleaf.



# Table of Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><u>Finding 1:</u> Finland’s humanitarian assistance takes a strongly needs-based approach, which is operationalised in its management systems and operational practice. Assistance is relevant to geographical and beneficiary needs, with trust placed in partners to identify these needs, though instances of internal political pressure have been identified.</p> <p><u>Finding 2:</u> Finland’s assistance was mostly provided in alignment with the strategic aims of national authorities or other partners in the context, and its policy dialogue emphases of gender and non-discrimination were both highly relevant and highly valued.</p>	<p>1. Finland prioritises humanitarian needs, mostly aligns with strategic priorities, and adapts where necessary.</p>	<p>1. <b>Streamline allocations</b> to a more limited number of multilateral agencies.</p> <p>2. <b>Adopt a more strategic approach</b> to CSO engagement in humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>3. Under the framework of the nexus approach – and in the light of new guidance issuing – <b>adopt a collective approach</b> with Regional Desks to setting country priorities for assistance.</p>
<p><u>Finding 3:</u> Finnish humanitarian assistance adapted appropriately to needs on the ground, supported by a culture of willingness and flexibility. However, its annual increases have not kept pace with global humanitarian requirements, raising risks for relevance going forward, and highlighting the issue of focus in Finland’s future humanitarian assistance.</p>	<p>2. Finland is flexible, but there are risks of relevance going forward.</p>	<p>4. <b>Operationalise normative commitments</b>, define and promulgate thematic priorities for humanitarian assistance, reviewed on a bi-annual basis.</p>
<p><u>Finding 4:</u> The Humanitarian Policy contains strategies for results measurement, but these in reality do not deliver robust results reporting. MFA trusts its partners to provide evidence of results, but shortcomings have been widely documented. Finland’s achievements (and under-achievements) of its humanitarian assistance are not fully reflected in available data.</p> <p><u>Finding 5:</u> Most tangible results achievements have been delivered on the provision of basic commodities, services and facilities to civilian groups, and on ensuring the protection of people affected or threatened by a humanitarian crisis. At country level results are largely ‘pockets’ of different achievements not geared to, nor delivering against, clear overarching Finnish goals for its humanitarian assistance.</p> <p><u>Finding 6:</u> Some significant normative level results have been delivered on gender equality, disability and humanitarian leadership. Country-level results are not yet available related to disability, however; and Finland has not dedicated specific effort or drive towards the localization of aid.</p>	<p>3. Results generated are valuable for individuals and vulnerable groups but at times fragmented and not captured by results reporting. Results in improving the humanitarian system are weaker.</p>	<p>5. <b>Continue</b> contributions to the CERF but add the CBPFs.</p> <p>6. <b>Translate</b> the Humanitarian Policy into English; publicise and update it.</p> <p>7. <b>Develop a streamlined results framework</b> for the Humanitarian Policy.</p> <p>8. <b>Develop a clear humanitarian influencing strategy</b>, derived from the Policy and geared to Finnish priorities of internationalist, needs-based humanitarian assistance and integrating the thematic priorities above. Operationalise through key influencing points e.g. EU structures, Permanent Missions and Embassies.</p>





FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><u>Finding 7:</u> Finland has played an important role in leading some co-ordination forums, but there are few other direct connections between Finnish assistance and improved humanitarian coordination and coherence at system level.</p>		
<p><u>Finding 8:</u> Finland's 'adaptive capacity' is not proactively supported by its aid management systems. It aims to combine some predictability for partners with responsiveness to emerging needs, but Humanitarian Unit often finds itself navigating around, rather than supported by, flexibility in the internal systems.</p>	<p>4. More nimble administrative processes will help Finland align its humanitarian assistance more swiftly to emerging needs.</p>	
<p><u>Finding 9:</u> The limited human resourcing of the Humanitarian Unit poses constraints, with staff under very considerable pressure in the latter half of the year. Some partners had experienced slower than desirable decision-making, attributed also to limited human resourcing, and lengthy administrative processes.</p>	<p>5. Human resource constraints within the Humanitarian Unit particularly pose limitations and there is scope for greater internal collaboration.</p>	
<p><u>Finding 10:</u> At normative and strategic level, Finland prioritises strong international engagement. It plays a leading role in some key forums related to humanitarian assistance, including COHAFA, Good Humanitarian Donorship and the International Disability Alliance. External coherence is also a priority of the Humanitarian Policy.</p> <p><u>Finding 11:</u> At the country level, Finland is a relatively low-profile actor, even where it has a strong country presence. In contexts where Finland has no direct presence, its priorities are unknown.</p>	<p>6. Finland has a strongly internationalist approach to its humanitarian assistance but its presence is not matched by its visibility, influence and voice.</p>	
<p><u>Finding 12:</u> Finland adopts an appropriate balance of channels given its internal conditions, including human resources. There is an increasing trend towards partner concentration at country level. The balance of time required for CSO grant management and limited human resources, suggests adaptations needed.</p> <p><u>Finding 13:</u> Finland adheres to Grand Bargain commitments, to provide at least 30% of its humanitarian assistance as unearmarked or softly earmarked resources, and these resources are highly valued by partner agencies. It is a major and highly valued contributor to the CERF, though does not yet contribute to CBPF, although these offer a valuable and efficient vehicle for smaller contributions.</p>	<p>7. Finland has scope for a more rigorous understanding of its multilateral partners and a more strategic approach to its CSO partnerships.</p>	
<p><u>Finding 14:</u> While internal co-ordination between the Humanitarian Unit and other parts of MFA is improving, gaps remain.</p>	<p>8. There are significant internal knowledge gaps regarding Finland's humanitarian assistance.</p>	



FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><u>Finding 15:</u> Finland has extensive engagement with the key international forums for the humanitarian principles. However, Finland's trust-based approach to its partners risks leaving gaps in their operational application.</p> <p><u>Finding 16:</u> Finland prioritises a 'nexus' approach both strategically and operationally. Although few projects funded through humanitarian assistance are explicit on their nexus commitments, and full nexus guidance is yet to issue, Finland's flexible application of humanitarian and development assistance reflects 'nexus' approaches in practice, with funding used to combine both humanitarian and development elements.</p>	<p>9. Finland humanitarian assistance has policy level connections to the humanitarian principles but risks operational gaps, while it applies funding pragmatically to address nexus concerns.</p>	
<p><u>Finding 17:</u> Finland's humanitarian assistance has been distributed on a 'needs' basis, while its development assistance adopts the rights-based ethos of Finland's Development Policy programme. However, the institutional separation of these concepts within the Finnish aid architecture is not well understood nor clearly delineated.</p>	<p>10. More proactive and strategic internal collaboration will help clarify the purposes and use of humanitarian vs development funding.</p>	



# 1 Introduction

This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of an independent evaluation, commissioned by the Development Evaluation Unit of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA). **It assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency (in terms of management), coherence and connectedness of Finnish humanitarian assistance** during the period 2016-March 2022. The evaluation was forecast in Finland's Humanitarian Policy (MFA 2019b).

The evaluation's **purpose** is to help further enhance the effectiveness of the humanitarian assistance provided by Finland. Its specific **objectives** are:

- To review the relevance of Finnish humanitarian assistance 2016-March 2022 in meeting the needs of affected populations, and in its interconnections with development and peace interventions (triple nexus);
- To assess the function and purpose of the 2019 Humanitarian Policy as a guiding instrument for Finnish humanitarian assistance;
- To assess the functioning of partnerships and cooperation in Finnish humanitarian assistance and whether the current balance of partnerships/scope of Finnish influencing is optimal;
- To assess the management arrangements for humanitarian assistance in light of its effectiveness and make proposals for any future improvements; and
- To assess the effectiveness of the assistance in delivering results for affected populations (see also the evaluation's Terms of Reference in Annex 2).

The evaluation's main intended users are MFA's Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy, as well as other units in charge of core or programme funding of relevant multilateral organisations or Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Evaluation results will also inform MFA leadership, sector and policy advisers and Embassy staff in countries with humanitarian crises. Moreover, the evaluation may be used by Finland's humanitarian partners, such as multilateral agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

The evaluation focuses specifically on Finland's humanitarian assistance managed by the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy (KEO-70). It drew evidence from across the corporate systems of MFA, as well as the experience of humanitarian assistance delivered in South Sudan, Bangladesh and to the Syrian regional crisis. It was conducted during the period September 2021 to June 2022.

The following section presents the evaluation's questions, approach and methodology. Section 3 provides a context analysis of Finnish humanitarian assistance, and section 4 presents the evaluation's findings, structured along the evaluation criteria and evaluation questions. Conclusions are presented in sections 5, followed by recommendations in section 6.



## 2 Questions, Approach and Methodology

### 2.1 Evaluation questions and criteria

The evaluation used five evaluation criteria to guide enquiry against 14 evaluation questions (Table 1):

**Table 1 Evaluation questions and criteria**

EVALUATION CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS
How relevant was Finnish humanitarian assistance to needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent was Finland's humanitarian assistance relevant to the needs of beneficiaries, considering available resources?</li> <li>To what extent was the assistance relevant to the needs of key stakeholders, including government, civil society and others?</li> <li>To what extent did the assistance adapt appropriately over time, including in relation to changing humanitarian needs?</li> </ul>
How effective was Finnish humanitarian assistance 2016-March 2022?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What results for beneficiaries and other stakeholders were delivered by Finland's humanitarian assistance?</li> <li>What results were delivered for non-discrimination, including gender equality and the empowerment of women and persons with disabilities?</li> <li>To what extent has Finland supported the promotion of localization of aid?</li> <li>To what extent has Finland been able to influence and promote Finland's Humanitarian Policy priorities in the multilateral organisations or Finnish CSOs that are used to channel the humanitarian assistance?</li> </ul>
How efficient was Finnish humanitarian assistance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the management of humanitarian assistance flexible, adaptive and agile, and able to react appropriately to emerging crises?</li> </ul>
How coherent was Finnish humanitarian assistance?	<p>External</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance align with the strategic direction and priorities of its partners in the context?</li> </ul> <p>Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent does the current choice of funding channels contribute to the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, i.e. is Finland working with right partners, considering its Humanitarian Policy?</li> <li>To what extent has it been possible to establish synergies between different MFA cooperation modalities, i.e. international and national level partnerships of CSOs, International Non-Governmental Organisation (INGO) cooperation when transitioning from humanitarian aid to development cooperation or peacebuilding and vice-versa?</li> <li>Are the various aid and cooperation modalities within MFA sufficiently coordinated to avoid duplication?</li> </ul>



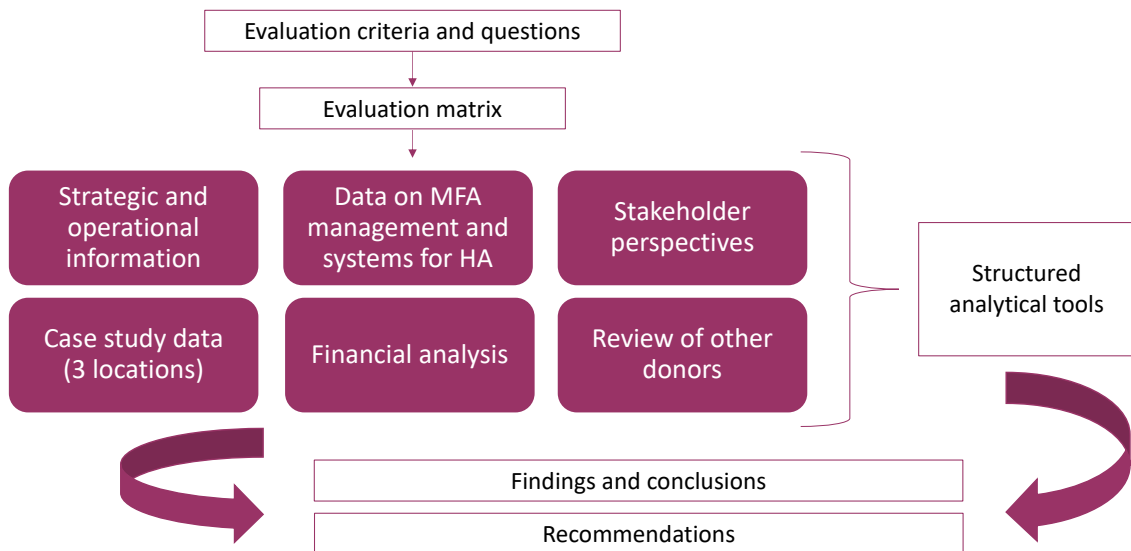
EVALUATION CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS
How connected was Finnish assistance to international commitments and to other forms of cooperation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance adhere to international commitments on the International Humanitarian Principles (IHPs) and Do No Harm?</li> <li>To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance establish links between humanitarian aid and development cooperation and/or peacebuilding efforts (the 'nexus')?</li> </ul>

## 2.2 Approach and Methodology

The full evaluation approach and methodology are provided in Annex 3. Overall, a highly structured and systematic approach was adopted, to ensure a high degree of traceability and transparency of evidence. The evaluation's design combined theory-based evaluation with elements of contribution analysis (Mayne 2001) and a utilisation-focused approach (Patton 2008). The evaluation developed and applied a logic model for Finland's humanitarian assistance, reflecting the aims of the 2019 Humanitarian Policy. It is presented in Figure 2.

Other key elements of the methodology included an Evaluation Matrix (see Annex 4), which acted as the analytical 'spine' of the evaluation; and structured tools for data gathering and analysis. Six 'evidence streams' were applied through a sequential approach, building the evidence base through progressively deeper analysis as the evaluation proceeded (Figure 1):

**Figure 1 Evaluation design**



Source: Evaluation team

Quantitative analysis of MFA statistics on Finnish humanitarian assistance was undertaken for the period 2016-2021, and preliminary 2022 figures added when they became available in March 2022. For 2021, while the level of disbursement in 2022 was 100%, registration of the exact use of all the funds was not yet complete at the time of writing, hence some 2021 funds remain registered as 'unspent.' Qualitative desk analysis was conducted of selection of 30 humanitarian

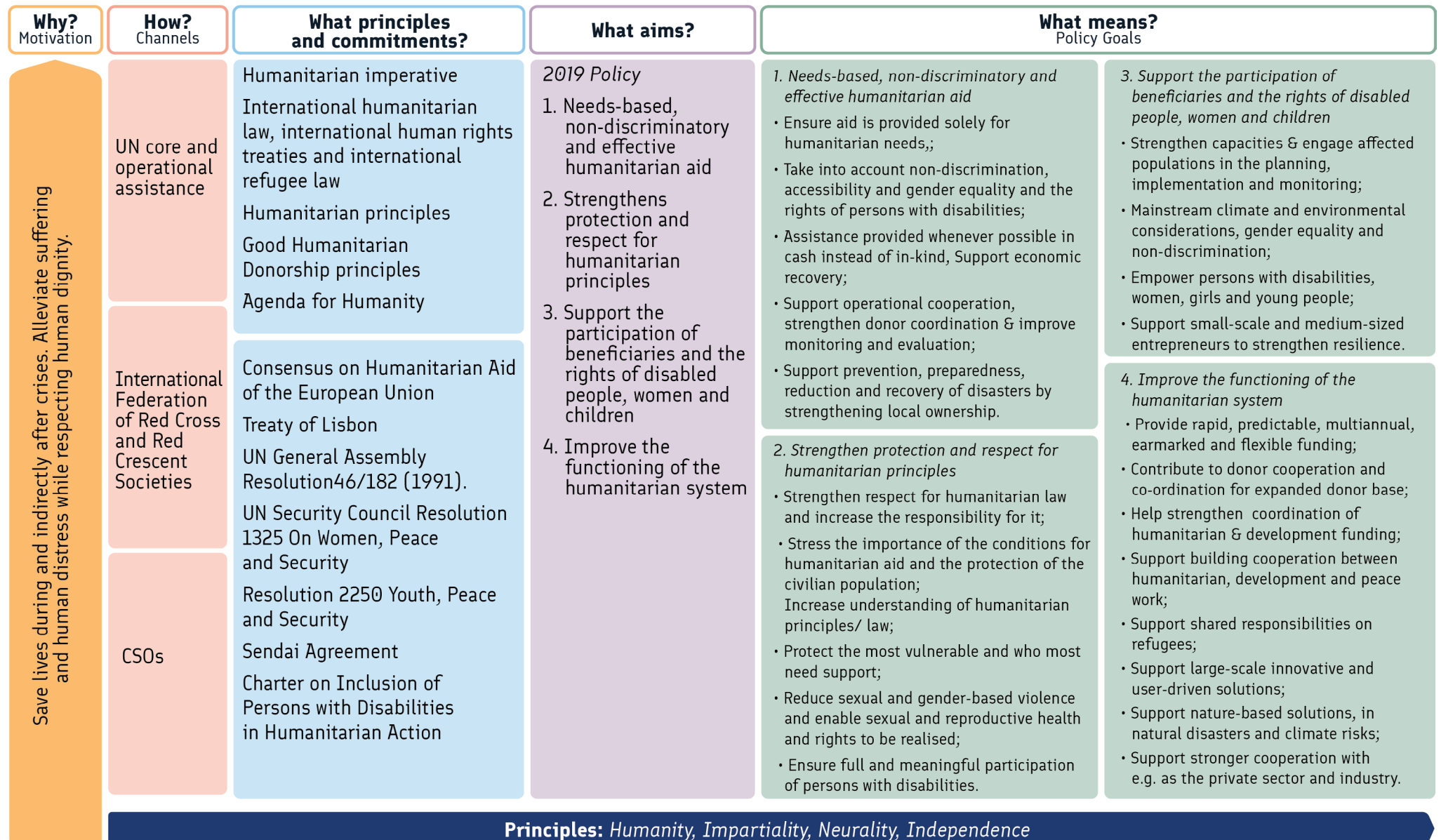


assistance interventions, selected for (i) the three identified operating contexts (Syrian regional crisis, Bangladesh and South Sudan) and (ii) scale of assistance within other settings (see Annex 5 for full detail). Analysis of Danish and Irish humanitarian assistance was also undertaken, to see if lessons could be learned.

Case study work was conducted in the three identified contexts by regionally based team members, with support from the international team. Findings from these case studies, which constitute contributory evidence streams to the overarching evaluation, can be found in Volume 2. A total of 121 stakeholders were interviewed, at the MFA in Helsinki (38), in Finnish Embassies (9) and with partners and stakeholders around the world (74). Findings and conclusions were validated with key MFA stakeholders through a workshop held in May 2022.



Figure 2 Logic model





## 2.3 Limitations

Limitations to the evaluation include:

- **Quantifying humanitarian assistance volumes:** The evaluation faced challenges in quantifying volumes of Finnish humanitarian assistance, with three different datasets presented. Accordingly, data from the Unit for Humanitarian Aid and Policy was utilised. As section 3.3 indicates, this is likely an underestimate of the actual volumes of assistance provided.
- **Data paucity:** The evaluation was heavily dependent on access to, and data from, partner humanitarian organisations (including planning and results data submitted to MFA especially). This was far from complete, although efforts were made to seek out data from partners, particularly in case studies, on Finnish-funded initiatives. In mitigation, available data was triangulated with stakeholder perspectives, and gaps have been transparently reported upon.

Results data for the study was limited, with Finland's own aggregated results reporting for its humanitarian assistance extremely limited, and the linking of results from multi-stakeholder initiatives with Finnish contributions, to Finland's allocations of humanitarian assistance, methodologically unfeasible. Results data were therefore based on a combination of project reports, reviews/evaluations, which could not be independently verified by the evaluation, triangulated by interview and other qualitative data. Results presented by the evaluation are therefore caveated accordingly. Limited data was available on the use of Finland's humanitarian assistance for peacebuilding.

- **Case studies:** The component case studies presented in Volume 2 do not comprise full evaluations of Finnish humanitarian assistance in the three contexts. Rather, they offer limited insights to the context, generated through a systematic approach, to inform the wider evaluative process.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the evaluation offers relevant and, it is hoped, useful, insights into Finnish humanitarian assistance in the period, with the aim of supporting learning for the future.



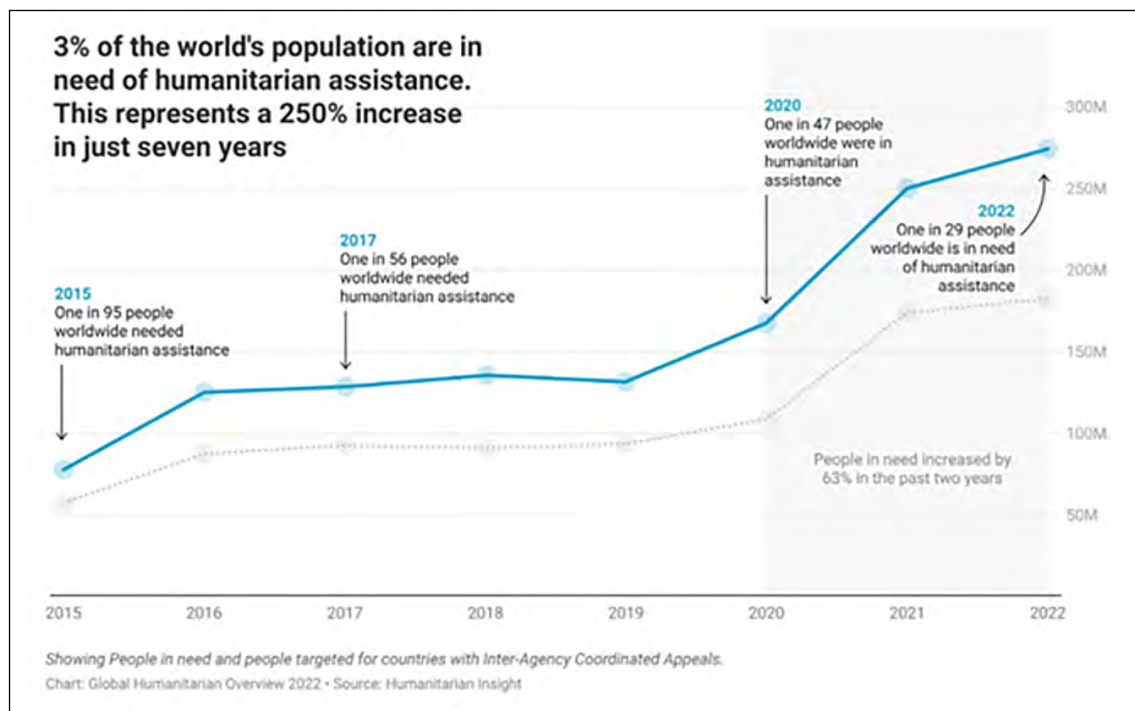


# 3 Context Analysis

## 3.1 International needs for humanitarian assistance

Demand for humanitarian assistance has increased significantly in the last ten years. With many protracted crises across the world continuing; needs following the COVID-19 pandemic rising; and new crises emerging, such as the conflict in Ukraine and its effects on global food security, the scale of needs is exceeding most previous estimations. In 2021, 235 million people needed humanitarian assistance and protection, or 1 in 33 people worldwide (UNOCHA 2021). **For 2022, 274 million people are assessed as in need of humanitarian assistance** (UNOCHA 2022a). Figure 3 illustrates the increases over the past decade.

Figure 3 Humanitarian needs 2012-2021



Source: UNOCHA 2022a

As of May 2022, a record 100 million people have been forcibly displaced across the world (UNHCR 2022b). Recent challenges include Ukraine, where over 6 million people have fled the country since February 2022 (UNHCR 2022a), and northern Ethiopia, where conflict has led to 20 million people to face an acute hunger crisis (WFP 2022b). In Afghanistan, state systems are close to collapse, and more than half the population faces acute hunger (WFP 2022a). In Myanmar, conflict and insecurity is intensifying an already acute humanitarian situation (UNOCHA 2022a). 2021 also saw 16 million people in 15 countries into acute food crisis due to extreme climatic and weather events (UNOCHA 2022b).

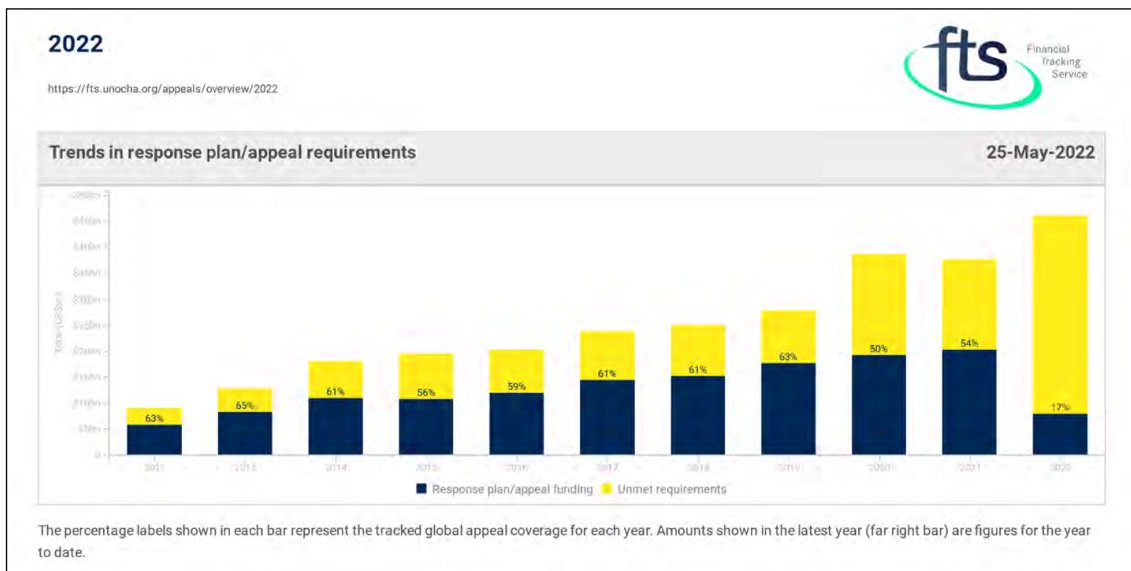


The COVID-19 pandemic has further strained an already overstretched humanitarian system. Challenges include:

- A historic economic decline, exacerbated by the global shutdowns of COVID-19 responses, is reversing the development gains of recent years (World Bank 2022);
- Conflicts remain a major driver of humanitarian needs, taking a heavy toll on civilian populations (UNOCHA 2022b);
- Hunger and food insecurity levels are at record levels, exacerbated by COVID-19, up to 283 million people likely to be acutely food insecure or at high risk in 2022 across 80 countries; (IMF 2020, World Bank 2020).

As humanitarian needs increase so do funding requirements. Global requests for humanitarian assistance have grown from USD 9.2 billion in 2012 to USD 41 billion requested for 2022 (UNOCHA 2022b). At the same time, however, the funding gap has steadily increased – from a USD 4.6 billion gap in 2012 to a USD 17 billion gap in 2021 (Figure 4).

**Figure 4 Humanitarian Funding Gap 2012-2022**



Source: UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service 2021 (as of 25.05.2022)



Regional needs and financial requirements vary significantly, as shown in Figure 5.

**Figure 5 Humanitarian needs per region**

Inter-Agency Coordinated Appeals: Overview per region				
Region	Appeals	People in need	People targeted	Requirements (US\$)
West and Central Africa	8	60.8 M	32.4 M	5.9 B
Regional Appeals	7	40.9 M	26.4 M	10.2 B
Middle East and North Africa	6	42.0 M	31.4 M	9.3 B
Latin America and the Caribbean	6	27.9 M	13.4 M	1.7 B
Eastern Europe	1	2.9 M	1.8 M	190.0 M
East and Southern Africa	7	61.2 M	48.9 M	8.5 B
Asia and the Pacific	2	38.8 M	28.3 M	5.3 B

Table: Global Humanitarian Overview 2022 • Source: [Financial Tracking Service](#) • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#) • [Download PDF](#)

Source: UNOCHA (2022b)

Vulnerabilities are intensified during humanitarian crises. 70% of women experience Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in humanitarian contexts compared with 35% worldwide. (UN Women 2022). Persons with disabilities form a much higher percentage of those in crisis-affected communities and are at higher risk of abuse and neglect (WHO and World Bank 2016; UN 2020a). Approximately 26 million older persons experience disasters each year and COVID-19 has increased the abuse and neglect of older persons around the world (UNDESA 2019, WHO 2020).

**International shifts** 2016 was the year of the World Humanitarian Summit. Since then, the global humanitarian system has seen a range of policy and strategic shifts, aimed at improving the coherence and effectiveness of humanitarian action.

The main international policy shifts in humanitarian assistance since 2016 include:

- *The World Humanitarian Summit* in May 2016 in Istanbul, which resulted in the internationally agreed *Agenda for Humanity* and the *Grand Bargain* initiative in support of reforming the humanitarian financing system. The Grand Bargain 2.0 framework was endorsed in June 2021 (IASC 2021);
- *UN Security Council resolution 2286 (2016)*, which committed the international community to the protection of the wounded and sick, medical personnel and humanitarian personnel in armed conflict (UN 2016);
- Also in 2016, the *New York Declaration for refugees and migrants*<sup>1</sup> paved the way for the succeeding global compacts on refugees and migrants (UNHCR 2016);
- The *Global Compact on Refugees* was approved by the General Assembly December 2018 (UNHCR 2018), and the first Global Refugee Forum held in December 2019;

<sup>1</sup> See <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/declaration>



- The *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* was approved by the UN General Assembly in January 2019 (IOM 2019);
- The 10th anniversary of the *European Consensus on Humanitarian Assistance (2017)* saw renewed commitments by member states;
- The *declaration of COVID-19 pandemic* in March 2020 resulted in General Assembly resolutions which identified international cooperation, multilateralism and solidarity as the only way for the world to effectively respond to global crises such as COVID-19, reaffirming the need to ensure the safe, timely and unhindered access of humanitarian and medical personnel responding to the COVID-19 pandemic (UN 2020b).

## 3.2 Finnish policy frameworks for humanitarian assistance 2016-current

Reflecting these international shifts, Finland's own humanitarian policy frameworks have also evolved over time. Key milestones are presented in Table 2. Figure 6 maps these policy frameworks against the wider international landscape:

**Table 2 Finland's policy frameworks for humanitarian assistance**

YEAR	KEY MILESTONES FOR FINLAND'S HUMANITARIAN POLICY FRAMEWORK
2012	The 2007 Humanitarian Aid policy updated in 2012.
2015	Use and principles regarding humanitarian assistance funding by the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy (KEO-70) elaborated in guidelines published in February 2015, concerning allocations for UN agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Finnish CSOs. Guidance note on Human Rights-based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation (MFA 2015) state that all Finnish development interventions must at minimum be human rights sensitive (though no specific reference to humanitarian assistance is made).
2016	Finland played an active role at the World Humanitarian Summit 2016 and committed to the summit outcomes (MFA 2016).
2017	Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy (MFA 2017) show a shift in emphasis concerning CSO partnerships in the humanitarian and development cooperation, with emphasis on the added value of Finnish CSOs in humanitarian action.
2018	Finland's National Action Plan 2018-2021 on Women, Peace and Security emphasises the role of women and girls in humanitarian environments (MFA 2018c). The Finnish Approach to Addressing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Development Cooperation and Policy (December 2018) references humanitarian contexts and programmes (MFA 2018b). Finland's National Action Plan 2018-2021 on Youth, Peace and Security published in August 2018 addressed the needs of young people in humanitarian contexts (MFA 2018a).

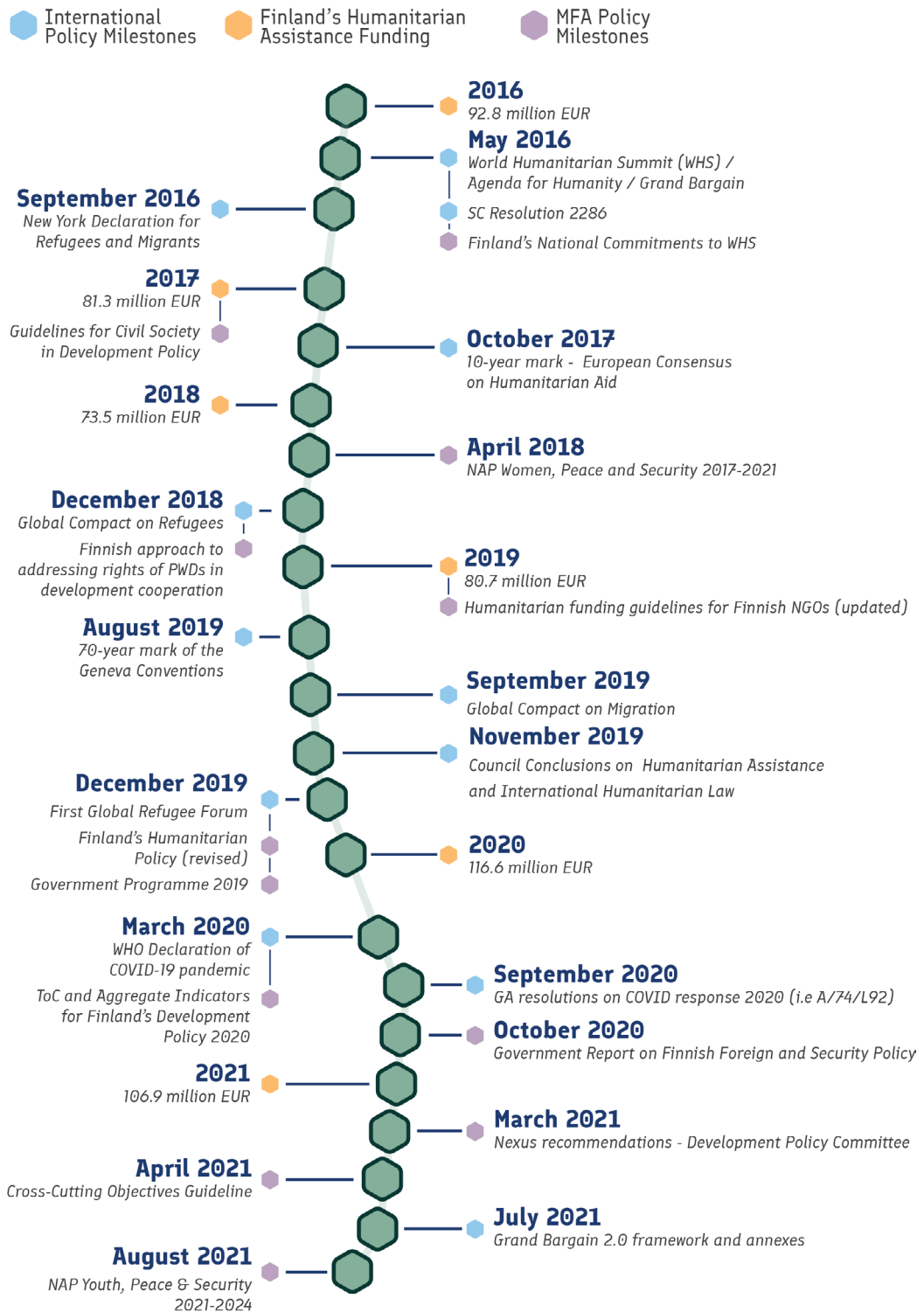


YEAR	KEY MILESTONES FOR FINLAND'S HUMANITARIAN POLICY FRAMEWORK
2019	<p>Humanitarian Policy 2019 (MFA 2019) acknowledges Finland's commitments to the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (2007, updated in 2017), UN Resolution 46/182 (1991) and UN Security Council resolutions concerning youth and women in peace and security (S/RES 1325 and 2250). It states that Finland's humanitarian assistance follows the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship<sup>2</sup> and considers the Sendai framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR); is needs-based and objective.</p> <p>Application instructions concerning humanitarian assistance for Finnish CSOs updated.</p> <p>Government Programme 2019 (June/December) acknowledges the need for flexibility in humanitarian funding and commit to increase the level of humanitarian funding during the programme period of the sitting government.</p> <p>Council Conclusions on Humanitarian Assistance and International Humanitarian Law adopted.</p>
2020	<p>Theories of Change and Aggregate Indicators for Finland's Development policy, also covering humanitarian assistance, published in March 2020 (MFA 2020a).</p> <p>Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy considers the implications of humanitarian contexts for foreign and security policy, and the need for coordination in the peacebuilding, humanitarian aid and development cooperation spheres.</p>
2021	<p>Guideline for Crosscutting Objectives in the Finnish Development Policy published in April 2021 to further support integration of human rights and the cross-cutting objectives to all relevant results management systems.</p> <p>Recommendations relating to the Development, Humanitarian and Peace nexus presented by the Development Policy Steering Committee (Kehityspoliittinen ohjausryhmä) (MFA 2021b).</p>

2 <https://www.ghdinitiative.org/ghd/gns/principles-good-practice-of-ghd/principles-good-practice-ghd.html>



Figure 6 Global policy shifts and Finnish policy decisions



Source: Evaluation team



## Finland's Humanitarian Policies

Finland's humanitarian support is based on international humanitarian law, human rights treaties and refugee law, as well as the humanitarian principles adopted by the United Nations (MFA 2019b). The key principles, objectives, channels and priorities guiding Finnish humanitarian action have been successively delineated since 2021 (Table 3). Annex 6 provides a full comparison.

**Table 3 Objectives of Finnish humanitarian aid policies**

2012 HUMANITARIAN POLICY GOALS	2019 HUMANITARIAN POLICY GUIDELINES
<p>Goal 1: Finland is a responsible, timely and predictable donor</p> <p>Goal 2: An effective, well-led and coordinated international humanitarian assistance system</p> <p>Goal 3: Support is channelled through capable and experienced non-governmental organisations</p> <p>Goal 4: Humanitarian principles are known and adhered to</p>	<p>Finnish humanitarian assistance is needs-based, non-discriminatory and effective</p> <p>Finland strengthens protection and respect for humanitarian principles</p> <p>Finland supports the participation of beneficiaries and the rights of persons with disabilities, women and children</p> <p>Finland improves the functioning of the humanitarian system'</p>

Source: MFA 2012 and 2019b

The policies represent a continuation in five key areas of Finnish humanitarian policy:

- Both policies direct Finnish humanitarian assistance to the poorest countries and the most vulnerable people. Both are also clear that Finland's support is based on global emergency aid appeals, and dependent on a reliable situation analysis;
- Objectives of climate resilience, gender equality and non-discrimination (called 'reduction of inequality' in the 2012 policy) are embedded in both policies;
- Both policies reflect a focus on transition and linkage to development;
- DRR is incorporated across both policies;
- Across both policies, Finland expresses its intention to be actively involved strengthening the humanitarian system, by taking an active part in donor dialogue and coordination, and by advocating for the broadening of the donor base.

The aims of the 2019 policy are however more strategic in nature and, arguably, more ambitious than those of the 2012 policy, focusing on wider gains to the humanitarian system. New areas of emphasis include:

- While the 2012 policy also adopted a sector-focused approach,<sup>3</sup> the 2019 policy in the main does not identify specific sectors for allocations, apart from an opening Ministerial statement emphasising education in protracted crises and emphasis on sexual and reproductive health rights, below;

<sup>3</sup> Emphasis on sectors including food and nutrition assistance, water and sanitation, health, protection, emergency shelters, non-food-items, education, agriculture and the recovery of livelihoods (MFA 2012)



- Improving the status of persons with disabilities in emergencies, and the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls are highlighted in the 2019 policy;
- The 2019 Policy also aims that at least 10% of Finnish development cooperation is allocated for humanitarian aid.

MFA stakeholders also indicated the wish for Finland to be 'visible' as a donor in its humanitarian assistance.

### 3.3 Finnish humanitarian assistance volumes 2016-2021

**Data challenges:** The evaluation encountered some significant data challenges, most notably on quantifying the exact volume of annual Finnish humanitarian assistance allocations (see section 2.3 and Annex 3). Data provided by the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy does not fully cohere with that available on OpenAid.fi, which at the time was not available in an interpretable form to the evaluation team.<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, interviews for the evaluation indicated that some development financing, where contextual events made it impossible to channel to partners as planned, were shifted to humanitarian assistance. For example:

- For Ethiopia in 2021, the outbreak of conflict in Tigray meant that allocated development funding could not be disbursed through government systems, or to development-focused activities. Approximately EUR 9 million was therefore disbursed through the Humanitarian Unit to humanitarian partners in Ethiopia. Similarly, in Afghanistan in 2021, at least EUR 10 million was reallocated, at the time of the Taliban takeover, for the same reasons.
- The reallocation of this money – under conditions of great pressure at the time – meant that some of it was recorded as humanitarian assistance, and some as development. MFA staff in both Regional Departments and the Humanitarian Unit were clear that, under pressure at the time, the actual recording of assistance within MFA systems often depended, very pragmatically, on 'who had the time.'

At the same time, some development money is allocated to agencies which conduct both humanitarian and development assistance activities, but not always with the knowledge/awareness of the Humanitarian Assistance and Policy Unit. The humanitarian work of some CSOs who receive programme-based aid for example, or direct funding to UNICEF, are also not represented in humanitarian aid figures.

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<sup>4</sup> The discrepancy possibly arises from the Humanitarian Policy commitment of an additional allocation of 10% of development financing for humanitarian use by Regional Departments.





There are thus four main categories of Finnish humanitarian assistance:

1. Humanitarian assistance allocated and recorded by the Humanitarian Assistance and Policy Unit;
2. Development financing re-allocated due to contextual events as humanitarian assistance but which may or may not be recorded as such;
3. Development financing which may be allocated and recorded as ‘development’ assistance but used by partner agencies to address humanitarian needs on the ground;
4. Core funding to double or triple mandated agencies who conduct humanitarian work but which is handled by other departments.

Since the latter three are not definitively quantifiable under Finnish aid recording systems, the evaluation has utilised the first category, money allocated and record by the Humanitarian Assistance and Policy Unit, as the unit of analysis for the evaluation. However, it is important to note – and this is the first major finding of the evaluation – that **these volumes are an understatement of Finnish humanitarian assistance in reality**. While it has not been feasible to robustly quantify the figures in excess of these volumes, the numbers presented in this report should be taken as the **minimum volume**.

### 3.3.1 Finland’s global profile as an humanitarian donor

The OECD 2020 reports that in 2020, Finland provided 0.47% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as development assistance, above the OECD average of 0.32%. This earned Finland a place as the 11th largest donor in terms of GDP% among the OECD countries, or 18th in absolute terms (OECD 2021). Against the ‘0.7%’ commitment, in recent years Finland has consistently contributed 0.4 to 0.5% of GDP (MFA 2021c).

**Finland was also one of only three donors globally to have increased its humanitarian contributions above 30% from 2019-2020 (Table 4).**

**Table 4 Increases in humanitarian assistance 2019-2020 (top 10 donors)**

COUNTRY	2019 (USD MILLION)	2020 (USD MILLION)	% CHANGE, 2019–2020
Switzerland	410	657	60%
Belgium	305	422	38%
Finland	131	176	34%
Germany	2,891	3,716	29%
Netherlands	613	772	26%
Spain	263	332	26%
Italy	438	511	17%
EU institutions*	2,247	2,605	16%
United States	8,326	8,903	6.9%
Turkey**	7,587	8,036	5.9%

Source: *Development Initiatives 2021*



### 3.3.2 Volumes of Finnish humanitarian assistance

From 2016 to 2020, Finnish total development assistance volumes amounted to around EUR 1 billion annually. The year 2018 was an exception with slightly less, at EUR 834 million (Table 5).

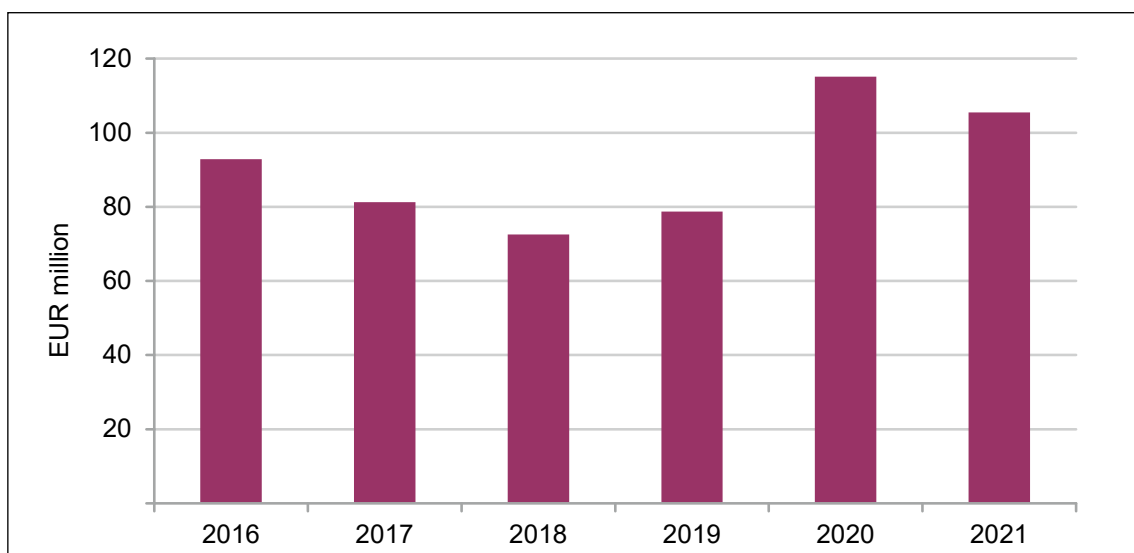
**Table 5 Finnish development assistance disbursement including humanitarian 2016-2021**

YEAR	TOTAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (EUR MILLION)	OF WHICH HUMANITARIAN (EUR MILLION)	% HUMANITARIAN
2016	956	93	9.7
2017	961	81	8.4
2018	834	72	8.6
2019	1.010	79	7.8
2020	1.121	115	10.2
2021	1.214	105	8.6

Source: Finland's development cooperation appropriations and disbursements 1989–2021<sup>5</sup>

From 2016 to 2021, Finland contributed a total of EUR 546 million in humanitarian assistance (Figure 7). From 2016 to 2019 it provided between EUR 73 and 93 million annually, with a marked increase to a record EUR 115 million in 2020 and EUR 105 million in 2021. Annual humanitarian assistance constituted close to 10% of Finland's total development assistance as per the requirements in the 2019 Policy.

**Figure 7 Humanitarian assistance 2016-2021**



Source: OECD DAC statistics

5 <https://um.fi/documents/35732/0/Tilastoliite+2021%2C+osa1+en.pdf/943e02a8-9771-54ad-e3b5-50352be25108?t=1649772783645>



By May 2022, Finland had approved EUR 94.8 million for humanitarian assistance for the year 2022, of which EUR 19.7 million remained unallocated. Since more humanitarian funding can be approved before the end of the year, it is unfeasible currently to determine how 2022 will compare with previous years, except to say that more funds have been allocated than in 2018 and earlier, but less than in 2020 and 2021.

The geographical spread, organisational and sector level allocations of Finnish humanitarian aid are available in Annex 8.

### 3.3.3 Finnish humanitarian assistance relative to other donors

Analysis sought to assess Finnish humanitarian assistance in relation to that of Denmark and Ireland. Both are larger donors: from 2016 to 2021, for example, Ireland provided 30% more humanitarian aid than Finland, whereas Denmark gave almost four times as much (UNOCHA 2022b).

Analysis finds that, with its 30% additional humanitarian assistance, Ireland supports almost three times as many organisations (81 to Finland’s 28, 2016-2021, with the total number of organisations supported staying broadly flat), while Denmark, with its four times larger humanitarian budget, has supported 96 organisations over the same time period. However, Denmark is showing an increasing trend towards concentration, from 50 organisations in 2016 to 39 in 2021 (Table 6).

**Table 6 Finland, Ireland and Denmark allocations to organisations 2016-2021**

YEAR	NUMBER OF RECIPIENT ORGANISATIONS			RELATIVE TO FINLAND (MULTIPLIER)	
	FINLAND	IRELAND	DENMARK	IRELAND	DENMARK
2016	18	49	50	2.7	2.8
2017	16	47	48	2.9	3.0
2018	17	42	34	2.5	2.0
2019	18	46	44	2.6	2.4
2020	21	46	36	2.2	1.7
2021	18	51	39	2.8	2.2
Total	28	81	96	2.9	3.4

Source: UNOCHA Financial Tracking System



Geographically, Denmark is more concentrated than Finland, giving four times as much humanitarian aid but only to twice as many countries. Ireland is a little more geographically spread than Finland, supporting twice as many as countries with 30% more budget (Table 7).

**Table 7 Destination countries 2016-2021**

YEAR	NUMBER OF RECIPIENT COUNTRIES			RELATIVE TO FINLAND (MULTIPLIER)	
	FINLAND	IRELAND	DENMARK	IRELAND	DENMARK
2016	23	32	54	1.4	2.3
2017	22	35	57	1.6	2.6
2018	20	39	43	2.0	2.2
2019	23	41	45	1.8	2.0
2020	28	49	73	1.8	2.6
2021	24	38	43	1.6	1.8
Total	43	67	96	1.6	2.2

Source: UNOCHA Financial Tracking System

Overall, therefore, the major distinctions are: (i) Denmark's increasing trend towards concentration of organisations and its greater geographical concentration and (ii) Ireland's greater dispersion of assistance.

### 3.4 Humanitarian Unit structures and staffing

The Humanitarian Unit is located within the MFA's Development Policy Unit. It is composed of six persons:

- Director of Unit (roving diplomat)
- Deputy Humanitarian Director/Desk Officer (roving diplomat): leading on UN humanitarian coordination (including UNOCHA and Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)), Good Humanitarian Donorship and international humanitarian law;
- Senior Humanitarian Advisor (until May 2022); permanent position, leading on technical humanitarian aid issues;
- First Secretary/Desk officer (roving diplomat), leading on EU humanitarian assistance, UNDRR, Regional follow-up: Africa;
- Counsellor/Desk Officer (roving diplomat); leading on UN refugee organisations, the Middle East, Refugee Issues, UNHCR, UNRWA, Regional follow-up for the Middle East;
- Counsellor/ Desk Officer (roving diplomat); leading on Finnish CSOs, WFP, Red Cross (International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Finnish Red Cross (FRC)), Regional follow-up: Asia, Latin America, Oceania.



Since 2018 the Ambassador for Migration has also sat within the Unit, and as of 2020 the Ambassador for Disability Inclusion. In 2019 the Unit also had temporary support during Finland's EU presidency.

Two aspects are notable regarding the Unit's composition:

1. The staff is largely composed of career diplomats rather than humanitarian aid specialists, with only the Senior Adviser holding specialist humanitarian expertise. This has meant considerable technical and operational reliance on the Senior Adviser in question. The current incumbent left the Unit as of May 2022.
2. There is an extremely high turnover of staff in the Unit. Analysis of internal staffing figures shows a maximum of two year duration for nearly all staff, and more usually one year to eighteen months.

The staffing profile of the Unit has a significant effect on the management and delivery of humanitarian assistance, as the evaluation explains.



## 4 Findings

### 4.1 How relevant was Finnish humanitarian assistance to needs?

#### Key findings

Finding 1: Finland's humanitarian assistance takes a strongly needs-based approach, which is operationalised in its management systems and operational practice. Assistance is relevant to geographical and beneficiary needs, with trust placed in partners to identify these needs, though instances of internal political pressure have been identified.

Finding 2: Finland's assistance was provided in alignment with the strategic aims of national authorities or other partners in the context, and its policy dialogue emphasises of gender and non-discrimination were both highly relevant and highly valued.

Finding 3: Finnish humanitarian assistance adapted appropriately to needs on the ground, supported by a culture of willingness and flexibility. However, its annual increases have not kept pace with global humanitarian requirements, raising risks for relevance going forward, and highlighting the issue of focus in Finland's future humanitarian assistance.

#### 4.1.1 To what extent was Finland's humanitarian assistance relevant to the needs of beneficiaries, considering available resources?

'Needs' and 'beneficiaries' are highly context-specific within the world of humanitarian assistance. Key ingredients of ensuring relevance to needs include: A sound analytical basis for the assistance; strategies to ensure alignment with identified needs; and adaptation when conditions change (OECD 2016; MFA 2014). This section of the evaluation assesses how humanitarian assistance has addressed these dimensions.

**The Humanitarian Policy adopts a flexible approach to needs.** The Humanitarian Policy prioritises a needs-based approach. It commits to ensuring that '*aid is provided solely for humanitarian needs, not on the basis of political, military or economic motives*'. The Policy is not prescriptive on geography or targeted groups, but wishes to ensure that '*Non-discrimination, accessibility and gender equality and the rights of persons with disabilities are taken into account within funded organisations' policies and operations.*' (MFA 2019b).



**Geographical needs are appropriately targeted.** Finland does not pre-determine geographically the contexts it will target with its humanitarian assistance, though it aims for a broad balance to address both major and underfunded crises in allocations each year (MFA pers. comm. 2022). However, the mapping of assistance over the 36 countries 2016–2021, and 13 countries in 2022, indicates *geographically relevant* assistance in relation to humanitarian needs. Specifically:

- When mapped against Global Humanitarian Needs Overviews for the period (UNOCHA 2016–2021), proportions allocated are broadly in line with global humanitarian needs over the period, with the quarter to countries in Africa 2016–2021 reflecting for example encompassing crises in South Sudan, Somalia and the Sahel region. The 21% allocated to the Middle East over the period addresses the Syrian regional crisis and Yemen, with the lower amounts allocated to Asia comprising assistance targeted to e.g. the Rohingya crisis. The high volumes in 2022 allocated to Ukraine also indicate geographical relevance.
- The 9% of Finnish humanitarian assistance provided through the CERF since 2016 – with Finland being one of the CERF’s top 10 donors over the period, and the 11<sup>th</sup> largest as of May 2022 (UN, May 2022), equalling annually around 1–2% of the total CERF funding – also allows its contributions to be targeted where needs are greatest, since UNOCHA allocates the funding according to two windows: (i) rapid response and (ii) underfunded crises, such as the Central African Republic and North East Nigeria.

For its bilateral development co-operation, Finland has 16 ‘partner countries’ (MFA 2022); of these, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Nepal, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the Syrian regional crisis also receive humanitarian assistance. Ukraine is also a partner country and a recipient of humanitarian assistance. Geographical targeting within wider Development Policy, therefore, also encompasses humanitarian operating contexts.

While Finland adopts a responsive approach to needs, some other bilateral donors set geographical priorities in advance. Ireland, for example, applies a structured annual process to decide where it will intervene (Box 1).



### Box 1 Ireland's approach to Making Decisions on Who, What and Where to Fund

Ireland's humanitarian assistance is directed to where needs are greatest, with particular emphasis on targeting forgotten and silent emergencies. Ireland's Development Cooperation Division carries out an annual 'categorisation of need' assessment which identifies the highest priority humanitarian crises by country or region.

Ireland draws on a variety of sources of information to develop a categorisation of geographic priorities. These sources include:

- 1) UN Strategic Response Plans and percentage funding level
- 2) UN needs assessment reports
- 3) NGO early warning and needs assessment reports
- 4) Famine Early Warning Systems Network
- 5) Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED)
- 6) EU Vulnerability Index
- 7) DG ECHO Global Needs Assessment and Forgotten Crises
- 8) Global Hunger Index
- 9) UNICEF Multi-Indicator Cluster Surveys
- 10) DG ECHO Daily Flash Updates
- 11) UNOCHA situation reports and updates
- 12) Internal monitoring reports

Based on an analysis of this information, Ireland develops a categorisation matrix of geographic priorities on an annual basis to guide funding decisions across the humanitarian portfolio. This is done at the end of each calendar year and is regularly updated throughout the year, as the global humanitarian situation is constantly evolving.

This process helps ensure that Ireland's funding decisions are based on the most up-to-date information and remain focused on the most acute humanitarian crises, including forgotten and underfunded emergencies. The categorisation matrix is shared with partners.

*Source: Irish Aid 2015*

**Finland relies on partners to conduct beneficiary needs analysis.** As a small agency, which also has a highly trust-based ethos in its aid partnerships (MFA 2020b) Finland expects its partners to conduct their own analysis of humanitarian needs at country level. For multilateral agencies, there is no formal requirement to demonstrate needs analyses, or process of verification to ensure that these are developed or implemented beyond review of corporate annual reports. However, for civil society partnerships, analysis of the context and associated needs is a core part of MFA application requirements.





Desk reviews reflected these different approaches. Of the sample of 16 civil society projects analysed, all applications presented detailed and extensive contextual analysis, often of particular areas or targeted groups. Often these were supplemented by wider (often UN) needs analyses in the context, such as Humanitarian Needs Overviews or similar (Box 2):

**Box 2 Example CSO needs analysis**

- In Myanmar, a Finnish Refugee Council project conducted a rapid needs assessment, and also referenced gender safety audits, as well as utilising the findings of the Myanmar Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020 in its application
  - In Bangladesh Cox’s Bazaar, a FinnChurchAid (FCA) project on Protection and Education for Adolescent Rohingya girls and Women used a wider range of sources to analyse needs, including the Mid Term Review of the Joint Response Plan, a Multi-sectoral needs assessment by UNHCR and the Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA).
  - In Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a Fida project on Humanitarian Assistance for Conflict-affected Populations applied a thorough joint needs assessment conducted by a local CSO partner together with diverse agencies including UNOCHA, UNHCR and InterSOS. The needs assessment was 48 pages long and its findings were summarised by the intended intervention areas as well as being annexed to the project application.
- Source: Evaluation team analysis of project data/interviews*

For multilateral partners, mainly the UN, Finland does not define priority groups for engagement, but rather expects that agencies will determine needs and deploy Finland’s assistance accordingly. Above the standard annual Humanitarian Needs Overviews, issued per country, UN agencies commonly conduct a wide range of vulnerability, food security and other assessments to inform their own – and partners’ – deployment of assistance. Examples of such analyses from the three case study contexts for this evaluation are presented in Table 8 and Box 3.

**Table 8 Needs analyses per context**

<b>SYRIA REGIONAL (ANNUAL)</b>	<b>BANGLADESH</b>	<b>SOUTH SUDAN</b>
UNOCHA Whole of Syria Operational Updates (monthly) Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian refugees (VASyr) (annual) REACH multi-sectoral needs assessments of Lebanese households (every 2 years) Situation analyses (monthly) UNICEF, WFP, UNOCHA WFP Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping assessments and Market Analyses (monthly) UNICEF Education Rapid Needs Assessment for displaced Syrian children (bi-annual)	Joint Multi-Sector Needs Assessment Rohingya Refugees (annual) Inter-sector Co-ordination Group Joint Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (2020) Inter-sector Co-ordination Group Joint Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (May 2021) COVID-19 Multi-Sectorial Anticipatory Impact and Needs Analysis (Needs Assessment Working group April 2020) Sector-specific assessments under the Inter Sectoral Co-ordination Group (annual or more frequently)	Humanitarian Needs Overviews (annual) FCA assessments in areas of need (when developing proposals) WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (quarterly) UNHCR Protection Needs Assessments UNHCR Vulnerability Screening and Return Intentions assessments (when relevant, last done in one location in January 2021) Cluster assessments (annual or as needs arise)

*Source: Evaluation case studies*



### Box 3 Needs analysis in South Sudan

All Finnish partners in South Sudan are highly experienced and trusted partners, and all confirmed that the support provided is aligned with needs. During interviews all partners were able to explain how needs were assessed at national level through the clusters and feeding into the Humanitarian Needs Overviews, and into the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).

Partners also conduct their own specific assessments when required. Examples include: an FCA needs assessment conducted in the intended area of implementation; WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), and UNHCR's Vulnerability Screening and Return Intentions surveys. All partners except ICRC also participate in relevant clusters (Food Security, Protection, Food Security and Livelihood, and Education), and through these receive up-to-date information on beneficiary needs.

*Source: Country case study: South Sudan*

Some other bilateral actors conduct their own humanitarian context analyses. Sida, for example, prepares annual crisis analyses, such as that for the Syria regional crisis and Lebanon.<sup>6</sup>

**Finland has good contextual knowledge where country presence exists.** The presence of a Finnish Embassy in a context deepens its knowledge of humanitarian concerns. In Lebanon, for example, from where the Syrian regional crisis response is managed, Embassy staff in interview showed extensive knowledge of the contextual dynamics of the crisis and awareness of the main sources available. The Embassy also benefits from an experienced humanitarian/ development specialist with knowledge of conflict-affected situations. Embassy staff also make regular trips to Finnish funded interventions in the region, including inside Syria, which offer insight into conditions on the ground (though see section 4.2.1 for limitations to these missions). In this context, partners interviewed considered Finnish contextual knowledge to be well-informed.

For South Sudan and Bangladesh, however, where Finland has no Embassies in-country, the picture is different. For South Sudan, no individuals within MFA had familiarity with the country's humanitarian context or an overview of Finland's portfolio in the country. For Bangladesh, with support to humanitarian needs within Cox's Bazar managed from the Embassy in India, the Embassy had limited opportunities to follow up Bangladesh and humanitarian interventions in particular, also because of the constant staff-turn over.

**Finland's humanitarian assistance targets relevant affected populations.** The Humanitarian Policy identifies the broad categories of non-discrimination, accessibility and gender equality and persons with disabilities as priority groups for intervention (MFA 2019b). Analysis of interventions and case study indicates that Finland's assistance has targeted some of the most vulnerable groups within particular crises and contexts. In particular, CSO interventions often targeted very specific vulnerabilities, which might not otherwise be identified through broader needs assessments. Finland's assistance is valuable here in reaching 'those most left behind'. Example groups targeted across the portfolio are presented in Box 4.

6 E.g. <https://cdn.sida.se/app/uploads/2021/03/04141806/HCA-Syria-crisis-and-Lebanon-2022.pdf>, <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/multi-sector-needs-assessment-msna-key-findings-livelihoods-march-2022>



#### Box 4 Example groups targeted

##### Syria regional response

- Fida – out of school children in three specific governates; Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees;
- UNFPA – victims of GBV; women lacking access to sexual and reproductive healthcare;
- ICRC - IDPs, youth, Female Headed Households, persons with disabilities, those with illness or healthcare issues arising from the conflict;
- Save the children - IDPs, returnees or refugees facing extreme economic deprivation;
- UNFPA – girls, children, youth, gender and sexual minorities;
- UNICEF - female and child victims of the conflict;
- UNHCR - women and girls, the elderly, persons with disabilities;

##### South Sudan

- WFP: School children, pregnant and lactating women, IDPs, returnees and refugees.
- UNHCR: Victims of Sexual- and Gender Based-Violence (SGBV), IDPs, returnees and refugees.
- ICRC: Persons with disabilities, people requiring health assistance, including psychosocial support, pregnant and lactating women, Victims of SGBV, detainees, IDPs, returnees.
- FCA: School children, female-headed households, the elderly, persons with disabilities, IDPs, returnees.

##### Bangladesh

- FCA: Rohingya refugee women and girls
- FRC: Victims of SGBV

##### Myanmar

- Finnish Refugee Council: Vulnerable women and girls, IDPs and host communities

##### Somalia

- Save the Children: Vulnerable households including children and women, persons with disabilities, IDP and host communities
- Persons, including children with disabilities; people with HIV, orphans, minors, victims of sexual violence, widows/widowers.

*Source: Evaluation team analysis of project data, triangulated with interviews*



**There is limited disaggregation of beneficiary needs in reporting.** While Finland's CSO guideline (2019) require reporting to analyse beneficiary groups and provide a table for this purpose, Finland places no requirement on its multilateral partners for disaggregated reporting by vulnerability categories. Partners interviewed confirmed this, though noted Finland's ongoing concern for gender and disability issues. Reporting was variable, however, with only four CSO projects analysed providing disaggregated data by women and girls/persons with disabilities. Multilateral partners such as UNHCR and WFP do provide, at corporate level, disaggregated reporting by gender categories of male/female, and in the case of UNHCR also by refugee/IDP categories, though reporting for disability is not yet systematic.

**Partners use analysis to inform programmatic targeting.** Across the Finnish humanitarian assistance analysed, where needs assessments had been conducted or were available, in both CSO and multilateral interventions, the analysis was in all cases well-linked into intervention designs. For example, in the Syria regional response, an ICRC proposal to support health, water and sanitation, livelihoods and food security inside Syria presented a clear analysis of vulnerability categories; these same lists of targeted groups were reflected in the project design and later its evaluation. In Bangladesh, educational needs assessment data informed FinnChurchAid's (FCA) design emphasis on gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights within its initiative targeting protection and education for adolescent Rohingya girls and women in Cox's Bazar.

**Humanitarian assistance has experienced some political pressure.** The geographic allocation of humanitarian assistance has also been shaped by political pressure, particularly at ministerial level. Four examples arise:

- (i) A CSO in 2021 when, on receiving less than the full volume anticipated, made direct ministerial contact. Humanitarian Unit staff were subsequently asked to 'find money' for the organisation, which was subsequently provided;
- (ii) The Humanitarian Unit was directed to find money, in 2021, to cover the cost of COVID-19 medical supplies for Italy. Italy is not on the list of OECD states of those in receipt of development or humanitarian assistance (OECD 2022) and the decision was described as being made under considerable political pressure; despite civil service objections; and in haste (MFA 2022; pers. comm. April 2022). The provision of humanitarian assistance from one EU state to another also undermines the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, which points out that '*EU humanitarian aid is not a crisis management tool*' (EU 2022);
- (iii) With the advent of the Ukraine crisis in 2022, the Humanitarian Unit was directed to provide assistance there – which meant putting other priorities, for which funding had already been allocated, aside;
- (iv) Donor conferences, which occur throughout the year and where political commitments made can disrupt the delicate balance Humanitarian Unit has sought in its funding allocations at the start of the year.

These challenges highlight the real-world dilemmas of humanitarian assistance when it meets foreign policy considerations. They represent challenging decisions for all involved; from the political need to sustain support for, and external relations within, a humanitarian crisis in another country; to the humanitarian imperative to avert human suffering '*wherever it is found*.' While it would be naïve to attempt to separate the two in a government administration, the challenges for the



Humanitarian Unit in trying to balance structured pre-emptive planning with later ad-hoc demands has placed significant demands on its team in recent years.

**Targeting is a major question for relevance in future.** Going forward, with an increasing number of humanitarian crises globally, alongside a continual proliferation of protracted crises, the limited scale of Finland's assistance when set against global needs in 2022 of USD 41 billion (UNOCHA 2022a) does raise the question of where and how Finland's contributions can be optimally targeted. Much here depends on external factors – such as the global direction of humanitarian funding – but also on how individual crises evolve over time. In Syria, for example, Finnish contributions have been shrinking proportionally alongside the growing needs and increased contributions from donors such as the United States and United Kingdom (see case study report). Thus, the issue of *focus* comes into view, further explored throughout this report.

#### 4.1.2 To what extent was the assistance relevant to the needs of key stakeholders, including government, civil society and others?

**Finland is strategically aligned with wider humanitarian plans in some contexts, but has potential gaps in others.** The humanitarian contexts into which Finnish humanitarian assistance is delivered all have - at country/context level at least – strong potential conditions for strategic relevance. Many – but not all<sup>7</sup> – of the 36 contexts into which Finnish humanitarian assistance has been delivered 2016-2021 are governed by humanitarian response plans, such as the Syrian regional crisis Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) or the Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya emergency in Bangladesh.

While these plans provide the collective intent for the humanitarian response, their breadth does not necessarily strategically guide humanitarian assistance. For example, within the Syrian regional crisis, the 3RP and its associated analyses provide internationally accepted identification of needs, while its breadth of scope, and alignment with national policy priorities in all affected countries, means that the policy and strategic relevance of actors engaging with the plan, occurs almost by definition.

Where Finland does make a strategic statement for specific contexts guiding its humanitarian assistance, it does explicitly gear this to the wider strategic frameworks in place. Its Regional Strategy for humanitarian and development assistance to the Syrian crisis 2021-2024 for example states that *'Finland's humanitarian and development assistance to the crisis contributes particularly to wider peacebuilding efforts and to building resilience'* which are core aims of the multi-stakeholder 3RP (MFA 2021). With 63.5% of Finland's total resources for the crisis allocated to the multilateral agencies whose operations take place mainly via the 3RP, alignment with the wider process is virtually guaranteed.

In most humanitarian contexts, Finland lacks such a strategic statement at country/context level. Here, as for example in South Sudan and Bangladesh, strategic alignment cannot be assured. In South Sudan, for example, the limited knowledge and oversight of the portfolio within MFA meant that alignment was happening on the basis of partner trust, with no guarantee of, at country level,

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<sup>7</sup> Exceptions include Kenya, Rwanda, India, Indonesia, Eswatini



- a) gearing to overall strategic needs of the Humanitarian Needs Overview for South Sudan and
- b) avoiding duplication among interventions of needs targeting.

**Finland’s humanitarian assistance is aligned with national strategies and plans.** Both project and context analysis found that, in most cases where the assistance was geographically targeted, Finland’s assistance was also aligned with relevant national strategies and plans. Analysis of all 30 projects indicated such alignment, while case study analysis found alignment in Bangladesh, South Sudan and the Syrian regional crisis, as per Table 9. No areas of misalignment were found.

**Table 9 Alignment with strategies and plans**

STRATEGIES AND THEIR OBJECTIVES	KEY INTERVENTIONS
<b>Syrian regional crisis</b>	
<p>Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeting vulnerable populations</li> <li>• Supporting service provision through national systems</li> </ul> <p>Lebanon Emergency Response Plan (ERP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directing community support to support the most vulnerable children to ensure continued learning.</li> </ul> <p>Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening program design and implementation to be more relevant to the needs and to reach the most vulnerable and contribute to contribute to the enhancement of the resilience of both beneficiaries and Systems.</li> <li>• Ensure meeting the protection needs of Syrian refugees and meeting the needs of vulnerable Jordanians impacted by Syria crisis.</li> <li>• Support national systems to maintain providing quality services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributions to WFP and UNFPA operations inside Syria until 2019, which were both firmly grounded in the 3RP and the HRP for Syria</li> <li>• Fida project 2019-2021 on Improved Education and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Conflict-Affected Children in Syria, Daar’a governate, forms part of Education cluster activities for the HRP co-led by UNOCHA and UNICEF</li> <li>• Contributions every year to the ICRC in the areas of health, WASH, livelihoods, food security etc, which have formed part of the ICRC appeal for Syria.</li> </ul>
<b>Bangladesh, Rohingya crisis</b>	
<p>HRP 2017-2018 / Joint Response Plan thereafter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring provision of life-saving basic assistance in settlements, camps and host communities</li> </ul> <p>Joint Education Needs Assessment (annual)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strengthening immediate access to equitable learning opportunities, in a safe and protective environment, for crisis-affected refugee and host community children and youth (3-24 years)</li> </ul> <p>Cox’s Bazaar GBV Sub-Sector Strategy (2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributions to HRP/Joint Response Plan (JRP) healthcare priorities through the FRC emergency healthcare project</li> <li>• Contributions to the JENA through the FCA project on education by targeting neglected age group of 15 – 24 years, and women and girls specifically; also support to GBV as per the JRP</li> <li>• Contributions to the GBV Strategy through FCA project’s provision of protection and psycho-social support to GBV survivors and linked basic literacy, numeracy and life skills.</li> </ul>



STRATEGIES AND THEIR OBJECTIVES	KEY INTERVENTIONS
South Sudan, supporting humanitarian needs	
HRP Priorities 2016-2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food security</li> <li>• Health needs</li> <li>• Protection for displaced persons</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• WASH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of Finnish humanitarian support to South Sudan is non-project specific.</li> <li>• Contributions every year to food security through support to food distribution by WFP and ICRC, as well as through support to FCA for provision of cash and agricultural inputs in 2017, and cash and livelihood support in 2018.</li> <li>• Continued yearly support to hospitals and health clinics through ICRC.</li> <li>• UNHCR and ICRC is providing continued support to protection of IDPs, refugees, host communities, detainees, as well as the general population.</li> <li>• FCA supported construction of temporary schools and provision of learning materials in 2016.</li> </ul>

Source: Evaluation case studies

However, in South Sudan, the limited oversight of the portfolio meant that any such alignment was incidental, rather than deliberate. Given the scale of needs in South Sudan, and the limited nature of Finland's contributions, misalignment would be almost impossible— but nonetheless, a more structured and deliberative approach to both decision-making and oversight would support optimum relevance of the assistance.

**There are positive external perceptions of relevance.** All stakeholders interviewed in case study contexts considered that the Finnish priorities, including the focus on education, resilience, peacebuilding and supporting women and persons with disabilities, were highly relevant to support humanitarian needs in the context. For example, in Syria, Finland was considered to align its assistance with some of the key vulnerabilities of the affected population, such as gender and persons with disabilities. In Bangladesh, stakeholders considered that Finnish humanitarian assistance addressed the gaps in service provision in health, education and protection in Cox's Bazar, as well as targeting the most vulnerable women and girls.

**Finland's policy dialogue priorities are relevant.** Finland's main policy dialogue priorities on humanitarian assistance were consistently understood by stakeholders to be the enhancement of women's rights, and the rights of children and persons with disabilities. *'We always know they are going to raise these.'* All partners considered these priorities to be appropriate to addressing humanitarian needs, whether globally or within humanitarian contexts, with no areas of dissonance identified. The emphasis on disability was considered especially important as a previously unprioritized area.

Finland is considered by partners to have a strong capacity and reputation for its gender work, linked to its long history of prioritising gender concerns in both its development and humanitarian assistance. Finland's advocacy on gender issues had actively introduced a 'gender lens' for example to UNICEF's education programming inside Syria where Finland's partners emphasised that Finland can play a significant role in leveraging other actors to engage here, given its strong reputational capital as an humanitarian donor. UNRWA praised the consistency and regularity of the Finnish voice on gender.



**Finland provides humanitarian assistance in co-ordination with (but not through) national systems and structures.** Being governed by the principles of independence and impartiality, humanitarian assistance is usually functionally independent from national systems and structures. However, the increasing volume of protracted crises globally has complicated this issue, with increasing allocations of humanitarian assistance globally directed through national or, more commonly, joint national and multilateral assistance channels, such as for education in emergencies initiatives.

The evaluation has found that Finnish humanitarian assistance has retained these lines of distinction. While funded humanitarian assistance initiatives, such as a Fida education project inside Syria or the FCA education and GBV project in Bangladesh, were *co-ordinated* with relevant actors (here the Syrian Directorates of Education at governorate level and the government-led health systems in Cox's Bazar), but not directly implemented through them, its *development* assistance, where used for an humanitarian purpose, such as the UNICEF No Lost Generation initiative, is implemented directly through the national education systems of host countries (Lebanon and Jordan). Maintaining lines of distinction for humanitarian and development assistance respectively, has helped distinguish the respective purposes of the assistance.

**There is a need for internal clarity on distinctions between the basis of humanitarian and development assistance.** At the same time, it is unclear that these distinctions are the result of deliberate strategy on the part of Finland. MFA stakeholders, when interviewed, indicated that the re-allocation of some development assistance for humanitarian use was recorded as either form of assistance *'based on who had the time.'* Moreover, some interviewees were not able to clearly articulate the different rules governing humanitarian and development assistance respectively. This raises the issue of the need for clarity on the different aims and uses of humanitarian and development assistance; the respective rules which govern them; and whether and why humanitarian or development assistance respectively is the appropriate tool to be deployed in a particular context.

#### 4.1.3 To what extent did the assistance adapt appropriately over time, including in relation to changing humanitarian needs?

**Global context.** The humanitarian landscape has evolved significantly since 2016. While previous crises, such as in Syria, Yemen, Central African Republic, Somalia and of the Rohingya population in Bangladesh continue in protracted status, new events – such as in Ethiopia and Ukraine – have come to the fore. The advent of COVID-19 has further complicated the humanitarian landscape.

Yet even within the so-called 'protracted' crises, dynamics are constantly evolving. For example, in the Middle East region, the political and economic crisis in Lebanon since 2019 has affected the international response to the Syrian regional crisis, with Lebanon itself now in need of emergency assistance. Afghanistan continues to require extensive humanitarian assistance, with development assistance currently unfeasible. In such dynamic environments, remaining consistently 'relevant' over time is a challenge for all international partners, including Finland.

**The Humanitarian Policy and relevant strategies are sufficiently broad to encompass adaptation.** The Humanitarian Policy is sufficiently broad to encompass adaptation and recognises that shifts and changes – often rapid – are a constant feature of the humanitarian landscape. Its prioritisation of the 'needs basis' under the humanitarian imperative, reflects this breadth of scope.

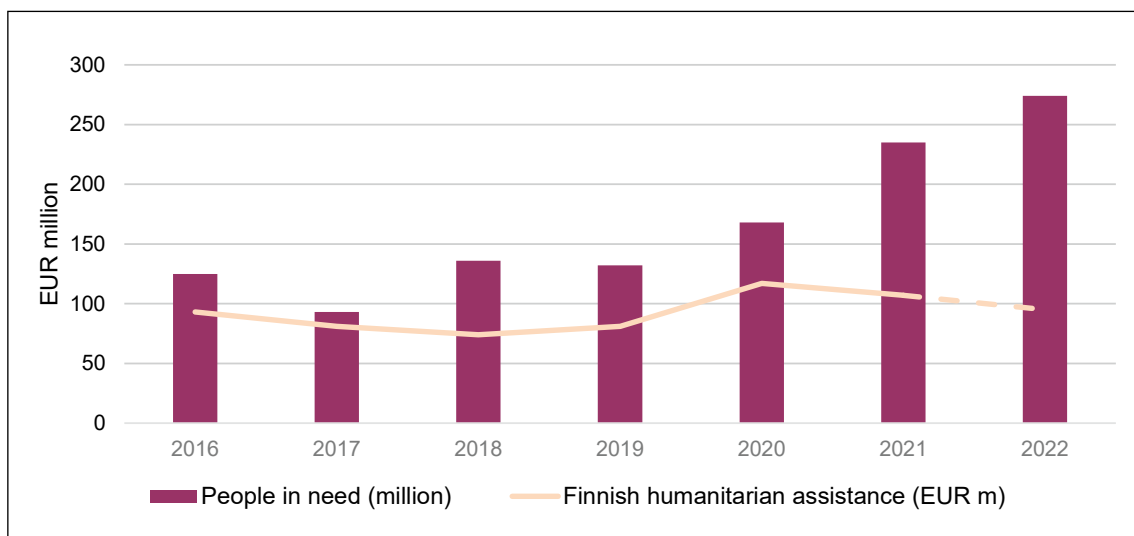




Where Finland's country/regional strategies encompass humanitarian assistance, such as for Somalia, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the Syrian regional crisis - case study has found that, in large part also due to their breadth, the Strategies both reflect and encompass change in the prevailing humanitarian environment. The sole exception identified was for the Syrian regional crisis where the deepening of the economic and political crisis in Lebanon since 2019 was, perhaps surprisingly, not referenced in the 2021-2024 Regional Strategy. Similarly, some CSOs indicated that guidelines for humanitarian assistance grant application were broad, and that desk officers' individual interpretations of the guidelines could vary – and were then subject to change on movement of personnel.

**The growth in Finnish humanitarian assistance has not kept pace with global needs over time.** The year-on-year growth in Finland's humanitarian assistance also reflects some adaptation to global needs – though perhaps not as extensively as might be expected given global expansion in needs. Overall, as per Table 5, humanitarian assistance grew slightly from 9.7% of Finnish development assistance (EUR 93 million) in 2016 to 10.2% (EUR 115m) in 2020 though reduced to 8.6% (EUR 105 million) in 2021. Yet as Figure 8 shows below, global funding requirements have consistently expanded to a much higher level over time. This raises risks for the continued relevance of Finnish humanitarian assistance over time.

**Figure 8 Finnish humanitarian assistance vs global needs 2016-2022**



Source: OECD statistics/UNOCHA Global Humanitarian Overviews 2016-2022

At the same time, the profile of Finnish humanitarian assistance has changed. Following major cuts in 2015, assistance allocated to multilateral agencies increased from below EUR 60 million annually in 2017-2019 to EUR 85.5 million in 2020 but fell back again to EUR 53 million in 2021<sup>8</sup>. MFA stakeholders attributed the period of increase partly to the rise in complex crises, where multilateral partners - including the CERF - were best placed to engage, but also partly to the need for reduced MFA administrative burdens – essential for a comparatively small staff with high turnover levels (see section 4.3 on efficiency).

8 It should be noted that the use of 2021 funds have not all been registered so the figure for 2021 is likely to increase.



**The assistance provided adapts well on the ground.** Operationally, Finnish-funded humanitarian initiatives mostly provided evidence of sound strategic and programmatic adaptation to conditions on the ground. Of 13 projects which included relevant data, at least 9/13 showed evidence of adaptation to context, with the remainder indicating the intention to use finance flexibly if conditions changed. Evidence from multilateral and CSO projects in the three case studies also found strong adaptation to needs. **CSOs were unanimous that MFA is flexible and ready to adapt where changing needs or contextual factors require it.** Box 5 provides examples of adaptation:

#### Box 5 Adaptive capacity on the ground

- Funding to UNHCR, WFP and ICRC for the Syrian regional crisis and South Sudan, which indicated the intention for flexible use according to needs on the ground;
- A Save the Children project in Iraq revised target beneficiary figures and cash contributions based on market studies conducted;
- A Fida education initiative inside Syria adapted to work more comprehensively with local governates when a local partnership was interrupted;
- Adjustments made to UNICEF, ICRC and UN Women programming for the Lebanon country crisis;
- In all contexts: Changes to expenditure profiles to adjust for COVID-19 conditions, with partners reporting willingness on the part of Finnish MFA representatives here.

*Source: Evaluation team analysis of project data/evaluation case studies.*

The assessment of Finland's response to COVID-19 similarly found Finland's response to the pandemic to be flexible and adaptive in practice (MFA 2022). However, some constraints to adaptation were also identified. For CSOs, if the remaining grant period is three months or less, there is little possibility to amend implementation. The time scheduling of Finnish financial allocations also does not always cohere with contextual conditions on the ground – for example, in South Sudan, the provision of grant assistance in March and April annually is out of sync with the timing of the agricultural calendar, and with the requirements to preposition food and other types of supplies before the onset of the rains in May.

**MFA has a culture of willingness to adapt.** Most external stakeholders indicated appreciation for Finland's willingness and openness to adjustment when conditions require it. *'They are very open to us, not like some donors.... They see the rationale for changes, and they are willing to do what they can to address it.'* *'They help us where they can, but we know that sometimes they are constrained by their systems.'* While some CSOs observed a reduction in MFA's openness over the last two years, overall Finland's 'approachability' as a donor was seen as a highly valued and extremely scarce commodity in the current donor landscape. The reputational capital generated by this flexibility is highly valuable; partners considered that, although Finnish contributions were comparatively small in relation to humanitarian needs, this was to some extent 'outweighed' by their flexibility, which was not always available elsewhere.



## 4.2 How effective was Finnish humanitarian assistance 2016-March 2022?

This section of the evaluation assesses the achievements made by Finland's humanitarian assistance in supporting the delivery of results. It reviews the practice of assessing results in Finland's humanitarian assistance; the role of the Humanitarian Policy in framing project and programme results; the results achieved for beneficiaries and key stakeholders, including those for non-discrimination and climate change; and the role of different aid modalities in supporting the achievement of results.

### Key findings

Finding 4: While the Humanitarian Policy contains strategies for intended results measurement, these in reality do not deliver robust results reporting. MFA trusts its partners to provide evidence of results, but shortcomings here have been widely documented. Little data is available to report on humanitarian results, and Finland's achievements (and under-achievements) of its humanitarian assistance are not fully reflected in available data.

Finding 5: Most tangible results achievements have been delivered on the provision of basic commodities, services and facilities to civilian groups, and on ensuring the protection of people affected or threatened by a humanitarian crisis. At country level results are largely 'pockets' of different achievements not geared to, nor delivering against, clear overarching Finnish goals for its humanitarian assistance.

Finding 6: Some significant normative level results have been delivered on gender equality, disability and humanitarian leadership. Country-level results are not yet available related to disability, however; and Finland has not dedicated specific effort or drive towards the localization of aid.

Finding 7: Finland has played an important role in leading some co-ordination forums, but there are few other direct connections between Finnish assistance and improved humanitarian coordination and coherence at system level.

### 4.2.1 Assessing results from Finland's humanitarian assistance

Finland's Humanitarian Policy does not contain a results measurement strategy, but rather states that *'Finland will receive information on the effectiveness of the assistance through peer reviews by the OECD Development Assistance Committee, through the MOPAN network, which assesses the performance of multilateral organisations, and by carrying out joint evaluations with other donors'* Other monitoring strategies cited are the use of *'field trips'*, and *'joint reporting, monitoring and evaluation practices'* (MFA 2019b)



**The performance monitoring strategies within the Humanitarian Policy are not realised in practice.** In practice, these strategies do not translate into real-world performance monitoring. Specifically:

- MOPAN reports provide insight into organizational effectiveness, but humanitarian/ development effectiveness is only based on secondary documentary analysis, which relies on the agency having a strategically, functionally and behaviourally independent evaluation function plus an appropriate volume of evaluation reports (MOPAN 2020);
- Finland has to date conducted only one joint evaluation of humanitarian or multilateral/ CSO partners, participating in the joint evaluation of the protection of the rights of refugees during the COVID-19 pandemic;<sup>9</sup>
- 'Field trips' often called 'monitoring missions' in fact do not 'monitor' interventions, at best they provide some insight into specific initiatives which Finland funds (see Box 6).

#### **Box 6 'Monitoring missions' in the Syrian regional crisis**

In the Syrian regional crisis, Finnish Embassy representatives were praised by external partners as one of the few Embassies which actually visit implementation sites inside Syria. However, interviewees also noted risks to relevance associated with MFA 'monitoring' visits to Finnish funded projects. In reality, these visits do not 'monitor' (in the results-based management sense of the term) projects. Rather, they provide Ministry personnel with an opportunity for insight into how specific interventions fully or partly funded by Finland are playing out on the ground, as well as a chance to gather intelligence on the specific context and situations of vulnerable populations.

Where such missions are considered in this light, they can be both informative and useful to enhancing Finland's understanding of contextual conditions. The risk raised, however, was of MFA learning from one specific initiative being generalised to the wider context, when in fact the conditions of the crisis are highly localised.

*Source: Data from Syrian regional crisis case study*

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9 <https://www.covid19-evaluation-coalition.org/evaluating-the-response/rights-of-refugees-and-covid.htm>



**Limited data is available to report on humanitarian results.** These limitations mean that little tangible data is available to report on humanitarian results:

- Finland's aggregated Development Policy indicators contain a section on humanitarian results (MFA 2020a), which comprises a set of three outcomes and associated outputs. The results framework itself is linked to (but not explicitly derived from) the Humanitarian Policy. It is logical and coherent, but its outcomes are very broad, and it contains indicators rather than explicit results targets.
- Moreover, data gathered against the results framework depends on individual MFA officers selecting the relevant indicators when they save data in the system. Guidance on how to do this has not been provided by the Ministry to date, and inputting the data is extremely time-consuming. Results data also does not encompass the development co-operation applied for humanitarian purposes described in section 3.3. above. Thus, the data generated is scant, with many gaps and inconsistencies. It is effectively unusable for results reporting.
- Where Finland's humanitarian assistance is also used in a partner country which receives development assistance –for example Somalia, Afghanistan and the Syrian regional crisis - Country /Regional Strategies have results frameworks attached. Annual results reports are generated for internal use; however, these do not always encompass humanitarian assistance.

**Partner results frameworks and reporting are of variable quality.** As documented elsewhere (MFA 2020b, 2022), MFA places a high level of trust in its partners to provide evidence of results as part of adhering to Good Humanitarian Donorship principles (Good Humanitarian Donorship 2022). Multilateral agencies use their own reporting systems; Finland relies on MOPAN reports (see above), agency Annual Reports (management information) and independent evaluations where these are available. However, reviews and assessments have shown shortcomings in the evaluation functions of some of the major humanitarian agencies such as UNHCR and IOM (see MOPAN 2019a; MOPAN 2019b).

Finnish-funded CSOs are required to report on grant-funded activity in terms of results; the quality of both results frameworks and data generated is highly variable. Challenges included:

- Terminology confusions, with e.g. inputs being labelled as outputs, outcome statements being insufficiently results-oriented and output data reported as outcome or impact level;
- Activities being interpreted and treated as results;
- Confused or limited vertical/ horizontal logic;
- Unclear assumptions, which are often key for responding in humanitarian situations, and results reporting reflecting the lack of attention to these assumptions;
- A lack of specific targets, and/or a lack of clarity on the basis from which targets are derived.



**There is little availability of project-level results data.** In common with findings from other MFA evaluations (MFA 2019a), the evaluation found only 6/30 sample projects for which evidence of results reporting was available.<sup>10</sup>

To an extent, this reflects the nature of humanitarian assistance; for UN and many CSO partners, for example, consolidated results reporting occurs through Headquarter level processes. Moreover, where initiatives are multi-donor – as commonly the case in the Syrian regional crisis response for example – or where an initiative in one country forms part of a multi-country approach, such as the multi-country support to UNHCR for Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, DRC and Nigeria, results reporting is consolidated, rather than being linked to one specific contribution or specified in a single country.

For humanitarian interventions, a linear ‘Results-Based Management-style’ model of result reporting is also rarely relevant. Aside from internal capacity challenges, the inherent volatility and dynamism of humanitarian environments renders the setting of for example ‘impact level’ results, and planned achievement against them, both unfeasible and arguably inappropriate. This view was reflected in interviews both with MFA staff – particularly some of those working directly with humanitarian assistance in affected countries – and with implementing partners.

**Finland’s achievements (and under-achievements) of its humanitarian assistance are not reflected within its – very scant– results reporting.** However, the highly flexible approach adopted by Finland to results reporting, and the fact that, to date, humanitarian results are, where available, only at intervention/organisation level, does raise issues of both accountability and the visibility of humanitarian assistance within MFA reporting. Just as the full scope of Finland’s humanitarian assistance is not reflected in its statistics alone (section 3.1) so its results and achievements, as well as any under-achievements, are not currently captured within results reporting. Box 7 provides an example from Denmark.

#### **Box 7 Results reporting in Denmark**

In Denmark, where humanitarian results reporting takes place through four-year agreements with NGOs – with combined reporting on humanitarian and development results – the following are required:

- Narrative account for progress, achieved results and major deviations related the summary results framework agreed with the MFA and major deviations in relation to initially agreed annual budget;
- Updated summary results framework illustrating progress overall (on track);
- Examples (cases) illustrating progress/results.

*Source: Danida 2021*

<sup>10</sup> Noting that 2021 reports for CSO projects were not yet available at the time of analysis



## 4.2.2 What results for beneficiaries and other stakeholders were delivered by Finland's humanitarian assistance?

Given the extremely limited data available, the achievements of Finnish humanitarian assistance have been assessed by the evaluation in terms of progress towards the intended humanitarian results set out within the Aggregated Indicators of the Development Policy.

**Data limitations.** Given the limited results data available, the evaluation has only been able to capture achievements reflected by case studies and available within other project reports, with normative results separately captured below. The evaluation was unable to verify/triangulate individual results through e.g. visits to individual projects, and the strong propensity to report on activities rather than results at project level (section 4.2.i above) constrained higher-level results reporting. Accordingly, the main evidence base applied is results reports from partners where available, self-assessments, triangulated by interviews with implementing partners and MFA staff. More detail is available in the Case Study reports in Volume 2 of this report.

The results below (Table 10) present therefore **only a snapshot, rather than a comprehensive overview of results achieved** by Finnish humanitarian assistance. However, as is clear from the results:

- Most of the tangible results achievements – in this limited sample at least – occur against Outcome 1 on the provision of basic commodities, services and facilities to civilian groups, and Outcome 2 on ensuring the protection of all people affected or threatened by a humanitarian crisis.
- There is little tangible evidence against Outcome 3 on Improving humanitarian coordination and coherence, and none that can be robustly linked to Finnish assistance.



**Table 10 Results reporting**

OUTCOME/ OUTPUTS	INDICATOR	SNAPSHOT OF RESULTS ACHIEVED BY PROGRAMMES/OPERATIONS
Outcome 1. Civilian population has access to basic commodities, services and facilities		
1.1 Access to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health is facilitated.	Number of civilians/ proportion of affected population provided with improved access to food, health commodities, healthcare services, potable water and hygiene items, disaggregated by sex, age and disability.	<p><b>Bangladesh:</b> FRC supplied over 50,000 out-patient visits of whom 45% were female; hospital admissions were provided to 174 patients (F 52%, M 48%); 640 deliveries were managed; 71% of these were complicated deliveries; 2,852 surgeries and surgical procedures were performed.</p> <p><b>South Sudan:</b> In 2019, WFP reached a total of 4.8 million people with food and cash assistance. WFP also provided meals for almost 500,000 school children resulting in a 2.5% enrolment increase, including a six percent increase in girls' retention in selected schools. In 2020, ICRC with Finnish support through the FRC, assisted over 350,000 people with food supplies and over 250,000 people with household items. ICRC also supported 23 health centres and three hospitals while the FRC additionally supported the operation with technical experts in health and with material support.</p> <p><b>Syria:</b> ICRC supported an average of over 0.5 million people with access to healthcare in 2020; 1.2 million people with essential items; and 1.3 million with hygiene kits. Support to the ICRC resulted in rehabilitation of 26 Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) health facilities and 255,940 people supported out of target of 450,000, with the variance against target due to population movement/contextual volatility.</p> <p><b>Ethiopia:</b> UNICEF screened 10,224 IDP children for early identification and referral to Community-based management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) sites, treating 2,500 children for Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), and treating 2,882 children suffering from SAM with medical complications. 200 health workers were trained on the new SAM treatment guidelines, resulting in improved management and treatment of children suffering from SAM. UNICEF fully supported 3,463 outpatient CMAM sites and 458 inpatient facilities in Amhara region in addition to 456 outpatient CMAM sites and 37 inpatient facilities with the registration books</p>
1.2 The right of every child to learning and personal development is facilitated.	Number of children whose access to education has been facilitated.	<p><b>Bangladesh:</b> FCA literacy, numeracy and life skills intervention benefitted 560 women and girls (target 160), skills development 88 women and girls; parenting and early childhood pilots benefited 201 children and 135 caregivers.</p> <p><b>South Sudan:</b> FCA constructed five blocks of classrooms and provided training materials to 4,100 children and 60 teachers.</p> <p><b>Syria:</b> (<i>development funding</i>) Main contributions came through the UNICEF-led No Lost Generation (NLG) Initiative. An independent evaluation of the NLG initiative in 2019 found that the NLG positively influenced funding levels, especially earlier in the response and in relation to youth and adolescent programming later in the response. However, it never had the mechanisms to directly influence the scope or quality of programming and so its influence there was minimal.</p>
1.3 Access to decent living conditions and to a safe, clean and healthy space is provided.	Number of civilians/ proportion of affected population whose access to energy commodities and utilities, shelter, housing and related commodities, household items and sanitation facilities and services improved.	<p><b>Syria:</b> UNHCR 2017-2020 supported annually an average of 3.5 million Persons of Concern, both IDPs and refugees with basic needs support both inside and outside Syria. In 2020, it provided over \$246 million in cash assistance for 1.5 million Syrian refugees and winterization support for 761,089 people. 1.4 million Syrian refugees and IDPs reached with core relief items. 288,780 Syrian individuals received emergency shelter. <b>South Sudan:</b> UNHCR, in 2020, provided shelter and non-food item support to 8,100 people. The percentage of refugees and asylum seekers living in adequate dwellings increased from 39% to 100%, and the percentage of IDPs in adequate dwellings increased from 10% to 21%.</p>





OUTCOME/ OUTPUTS	INDICATOR	SNAPSHOT OF RESULTS ACHIEVED BY PROGRAMMES/OPERATIONS
1.4 Access to work and a productive and socially engaged life is maintained or recreated	Number of civilians/ proportion of affected population whose access to productive assets and inputs for agricultural and/ or non-agricultural activities, transport services and communication commodities have been improved.	<b>South Sudan:</b> In 2017, FCA restored food security and livelihood coping capacities for 1,620 vulnerable households. WFP in 2019 supported improvements in 19,000 smallholder farmers' productivity and incomes. WFP supported construction and maintenance of roads and bridges aiming facilitate households' access to markets and basic services; completing construction of 28 km of feeder roads and a 120 m bridge. WFP also assisted nearly 600,000 people to improve their self-sufficiency and resilience to future shocks. In 2020, UNHCR provided 4,000 refugees and asylum seekers with agricultural inputs to enhance staple crop production, leading to a yield of about 450kg/feddan (~ 1 acre). An additional 2,160 households were supported to boost vegetable production and enhance nutritional status of the households.
Outcome 2. The protection of all people affected or threatened by a humanitarian crisis is assured		
2.1 Civilian population is protected from violence, exploitation and abuse.	Number of persons affected by crises with facilitated access to essential protection services (including Psychosocial Support Services (PSS), Legal assistance, GBV, Mine victim assistance, etc.) and individual protection assistance (incl. cash and material assistance).	<p><b>South Sudan:</b> In 2017, ICRC united 150 families, of which 98 were children. ICRC also provided assistive devices and rehabilitative services to 3,200 persons with disabilities from three centres and promoted the social inclusion of persons with disabilities through sports. ICRC also supported twelve health centres and ten hospitals. For refugees and asylum seekers, UNHCR were able to ensure that all known SGBV survivors received appropriate support compared to 75% at the beginning of the year. 60 unaccompanied children and 645 separated children were identified and placed in appropriate care.</p> <p><b>Iraq:</b> Support to Save the Children in Iraq over-achieved against targets of improving children's conditions in terms of food, clothed, and violence/neglect/exploitation reduced.</p> <p><b>Somalia:</b> Save the Children overachieved its target with a total of 687 children (364 boys and 323 girls) accessing case management services. Beneficiaries with acceptable Food Consumption Scores increased by 32 percentage points, 885 households were reached with basic needs food and non-food items.</p> <p><b>Syria:</b> In 2020, UNFPA reported that, as of August 2020, the organisation had reached over 1.6 million people inside Syria with sexual and reproductive health services; provided 62,042 consultations on family planning; provided 556,214 ante-natal care consultations; reached 650,835 people with GBV services; provided 349,071 Dignity Kits; provided 14,721 people with GBV case management</p> <p><b>Bangladesh:</b> Results reported by UNHCR as of 31 December, 2019: 819,787 of distinct refugees registered on an individual basis whose data has been updated; 13,512 of PoC receiving legal assistance; 78 of community groups supported (Community self-management); 2,040 of refugees with disabilities receiving specific support; 1,314 of unaccompanied and separated refugee children identified and documented</p> <p><b>Also:</b> 16,623 beneficiaries reached through GBV activities, reported by FCA; 4,280 of reported SGBV incidents for which survivors received psychosocial counselling.</p>
2.2 Inequality and discrimination is combatted	Proportion of humanitarian organisations, supported by Finland, with appropriate policies in place and the ability to report on their activities by disaggregating information as per the Age, Gender and Disability (AGD) approach.	Of those organisations supported by Finland's humanitarian assistance: DG ECHO status CSOs align with the requirements; WFP, UNOCHA, UNHCR and UNICEF have policies supporting gender equality; WFP has a Disability Inclusion RoadMap 2021 though a 2021 update to its Executive Board signalled ongoing gaps in operationalisation (WFP 2021); UNHCR has an Age, Gender and Diversity Policy, currently under longitudinal evaluation (May 2022); UNICEF has a Gender Policy 2021-2030 and has produced research on the needs of children with disabilities (UNICEF 2022); UNFPA has a Gender Equality Strategy 2019-2021, currently under update, and a Disability inclusion Strategy 2022-025; UNOCHA has produced guidance on strengthening disability and gender inclusion in Humanitarian Needs Overviews and HRPs (UNOCHA 2022c).



OUTCOME/ OUTPUTS	INDICATOR	SNAPSHOT OF RESULTS ACHIEVED BY PROGRAMMES/OPERATIONS
Outcome 3. Humanitarian coordination and coherence is improved		
3.1 Relevant UN leadership is supported and empowered	Proportion of Finland's humanitarian financing provided as core funding.	Core funding constituted 30% of the total funding over 2016-2021. For 2022, until May, EUR 28 million has been allocated as core funding, equalling 30% of the preliminary 2022 funding.
3.2 Service delivery is transferred to non-humanitarian providers and/or local and state institutions as conditions permit.	Positive progress in the Grand Bargain workstream 2: more support and funding for local and national responders has been achieved and therefore localization efforts supported.	Little evidence of improved localisation or prioritisation by Finland of this (see section 4.2.4 below)
3.3 Improved understanding of disaster risk and its impact is developed globally, regionally, nationally & locally	Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local DRR strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030.	No data available within results reporting

Sources: Analysis conducted by evaluation team from programmatic and other documentation, and from case study



**At country level, Finnish assistance generates pockets of discrete humanitarian results rather than higher-level effects.** The results produced by the humanitarian assistance were largely ‘pockets’ of different achievements, generated by individual projects and programmes. Valuable in their own terms, they were nonetheless neither geared to, nor delivering against, clear overarching Finnish goals for its humanitarian assistance. This is discussed further in section 4.4 on Coherence, but overall, and as found elsewhere (MFA 2020b), results generated did not aggregate to ‘more than the sum of the parts’ to generate a cohesive set of overarching achievements for Finland at country level – even in the Syrian regional crisis, which is governed by an overarching Strategy. Documented elsewhere (e.g. MFA 2020b), this is particularly important in humanitarian situations and even more so in those effected by conflict and/or political instability (see OECD 2016, MFA 2020b).

**Normative results.** Normative level results are often intangible and frequently difficult to specify. However, Finland has demonstrated some tangible results in three main substantive areas as follows (Table 11).

**Table 11 Normative level results**

THEMATIC AREA	NORMATIVE LEVEL RESULTS
<b>Gender equality</b>	UNHCR, UNICEF and UNOCHA praise Finland for continued emphasis on gender equality, in co-ordination with Nordic partners and influencing in turn other donor partners to place pressure on agencies through governing bodies
<b>Disability</b>	Finland was a leading actor in developing the Charter on Disability Inclusion and the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines on Disability Inclusion. It co-chaired the humanitarian action working group of the Global Action on Disability network with UNICEF 2019-2020. It financially supported the IASC Reference Group on disability inclusion. Inclusion of disability within Humanitarian Needs Overviews in large part attributed to Finnish influence.
<b>Humanitarian leadership</b>	Presidency of COHAFA (2019) led to a paper – still under discussion – on the working modalities of COHAFA and their potential improvements; Convening pledging conferences for e.g. the Syrian regional crisis (2021), Afghanistan crisis (2020). Chairing the Group of Friends of DRR in Geneva 2019-20. Membership of CERF advisory group 2017-20. Acting as UNRWA subcommittee chair in Ramallah 2019. Membership of WFP executive board 2017 and 2019 <sup>11</sup> .

Source: Evaluation team analysis and interviews

<sup>11</sup> Finland and Norway reached an agreement to share an ECOSOC-elected seat, with Finland serving in 2017 and 2019 and Norway serving in 2018.



**Finland has a limited voice in some wider forums.** In particular, Finland's leadership on disability inclusion and its professionalism during its Presidency of COHAFA were widely praised by external interlocutors, with its efforts on disability in particular described as 'catalytic'. Overall, however, many felt that Finland's international profile as a 'good humanitarian donor' was out of sync with its normative results, with less 'voice' than its Nordic partners, for example. Some UN agencies felt that Finland had been 'quiet' in recent years on issues such as child protection, contrasting Finland here also with other Nordic donors.

**Factors impeding results.** Three main factors impeded the achievement of results within Finland's humanitarian assistance:

- *Dispersed activities:* In contexts where portfolios were comparatively dispersed, scope for results generation was also constrained. In Bangladesh and South Sudan, for example, results were fragmented and although they 'fell within' the relevant strategic frameworks for humanitarian assistance governing the context, they were not shaped by, or directly informing, these.
- *Staffing limitations:* The limited availability of human resources also had negative effects on results. While in Syria, the availability of an MFA development specialist in the Embassy with a strong humanitarian and conflict background provided substantive insight, Bangladesh and South Sudan both lacked any such expert MFA insight, meaning that partners took on the full responsibility of project implementation without any clear guidance from MFA.
- *Limited country level overview:* Where Finland lacks an Embassy or other country presence, MFA has little overview of Finnish-funded interventions in the context. South Sudan and Bangladesh for example lacked any cohesive overview or insight within MFA, meaning that the risk of duplication and/or fragmented results was accordingly much higher.

### 4.2.3 What results were delivered for non-discrimination, including gender equality and the empowerment of women and persons with disabilities?

Within MFA, results for non-discrimination, gender equality and climate change are considered Cross Cutting Objectives under Finland's Development Policy. The Humanitarian Policy's first objective is that assistance is 'Needs-based, *non-discriminatory*.' A focus on non-discrimination is particularly important in humanitarian crises where human rights violations may be frequent (OHCHR 2022).

**Finland has a strong reputation for prioritising non-discrimination.** The evaluation found that Finland is externally perceived as taking a strong and consistent stance on non-discrimination, including gender and disability issues. '*We know what they will raise; they raise it each time.*' This approach was praised by stakeholders (donors, UN, NGOs), as much for the consistency of the Finnish position as for its substantive content and strategic positioning. The issues are raised in annual consultations with humanitarian agencies as well as in regular NGO discussions and agencies stated that they appreciated the 'valuable reminder' by Finland on a regular basis.



Finland’s consistency here added to its external reputation as a committed donor, willing to push agendas which – while they might not be universally popular – are crucial to the ‘leave no-one behind’ agenda.

**There is variable presence of gender and non-discrimination in earmarked/project assistance.** Of 30 interventions analysed, 19 – 14/16 CSO and 5/14 multilateral interventions – included some analysis of and/or, strategies for gender equality (a mandated part of CSO applications). However, gender elements were commonly presented as the relatively blunt categorisation of ‘women and girls’. 6 CSO projects also included some reference to disability inclusion, though no projects contained a clear analysis of the needs of persons with disabilities, and none included clear strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

**Results have been delivered for women and girls.** It was not feasible to quantify the number of women and girls supported through Finnish humanitarian assistance. Instead, results areas against which progress has been identified are reflected in Table 12 below. Results were tangible – if inconsistent - for the advancement of women and girls, though largely concentrated around these blunt categories. Far fewer concrete results were available regarding persons with disabilities beyond the normative ones identified above.

**Table 12 Results for gender equality**

AREA	COUNTRY WHERE RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED	ACTORS
Reductions in GBV	Syria, Bangladesh, South Sudan	UNFPA, FCA, Save the Children and UNHCR
Reduced maternal mortality	Syria, Bangladesh	UNFPA, FCA and FRC
Enhanced access to education for girls/women	Bangladesh, Syria	UNICEF and FCA
Improved livelihoods for women	South Sudan	UNHCR and WFP

*Source: Evaluation case studies*

**Strong Finnish policy positions on disability are not yet reflected in tangible country-level results.** Finland has positioned itself at the centre of advocacy for persons with disabilities and has achieved several strong normative-level results in this area (see above). However, these have not yet filtered down to achieving country-level demonstrable results, or at least to the recording of these by humanitarian actors. External actors reflected this concern in interviews, stating that while Finland had provided valuable engagement at normative level, they had not seen tangible initiatives to support disability inclusion on the ground.

The inclusion of disability concerns within the UNOCHA-managed Humanitarian Needs Overviews – in which Finland’s advocacy was instrumental – does however hold promise of improved programmatic attention, and subsequent reporting, to come. To complete the results chain here, Finland will need to extend ‘beyond advocacy’ and into working to operationalise disability concerns within programmatic action.



#### 4.2.4 To what extent has Finland supported the promotion of localization of aid?

The 'localisation' agenda of the World Humanitarian Summit seeks to increase the volume of financing being directed through local humanitarian responders. Finland's humanitarian policy states that '*Cooperation with local actors must be prioritised, unless this is an obstacle to action in accordance with humanitarian principles*' (MFA 2019b).

**Finland has not proactively addressed the localisation agenda.** Case studies in all three contexts, alongside interviews with external stakeholders, found no active effort by Finland to promote the localisation of humanitarian aid. The matter was not raised in dialogue, and nor was it seen by stakeholders as a Finnish priority. Some financed actors – including all multilaterals, but also some Finnish CSOs– do direct financing through local partners, but this occurred mainly in response to implementation needs, rather than as a deliberate strategic/World Humanitarian Summit (WHS)-linked choice. Some projects, such as the FRC-run health initiative in Bangladesh, used MFA resources to finance expatriate input.

Finnish aid statistics do not specify the volumes of financing channelled through 'local' NGOs or other actors. However, with a growing trend towards funding the multilaterals, particularly in the growing number of complex crises, there is an increasing need for local capacity-strengthening, even in regions where capacity levels are high. This is one area where Finland might seek to increase its influencing and advocacy, as a small but potentially influential donor.

#### 4.2.5 To what extent has Finland been able to influence and promote Finland's Humanitarian Policy priorities in the multilateral organisations or Finnish CSOs that are used to channel the humanitarian assistance?

**The Humanitarian Policy is not known outside Finland.** Interviews with external stakeholders, both multilateral and CSO, found almost no knowledge of Finland's 2019 Humanitarian Policy. The Policy is not yet available in English, a major constraining factor.

Stakeholders were, however, aware of many of the priorities within the Policy, even if they did not make explicit linkages to the Policy itself. In large part, this was due to Finland's consistency on its policy priorities over time, with the Policy's emphasis on 'needs-based and non-discriminatory' assistance widely held to be the founding principles of Finnish humanitarian assistance.

Even within EU structures such as the COHAFSA, the Finnish Humanitarian Policy was not known. Although Finland's former presidency of COHAFSA was widely praised, interlocutors noted currently limited voice and influence, not helped by Finland's lack of humanitarian expertise within its Permanent Mission to the EU.

**There are few explicit linkages from the Policy to influencing.** As in previous MFA evaluations, (MFA 2019a), no clear linkages were found between Finland's humanitarian assistance and agency-specific multilateral influencing plans. Rather, the main interconnections between the influencing plans and agency engagement was through the policy priority of non-discrimination,



including gender equality and disability, above. Linkages to the Humanitarian Policy, however, were inexplicit at best.

**Where specialist resources exist, influence can be higher.** However, MFA's employment in Lebanon of a politically experienced Development Specialist managing both the development and humanitarian aspects of the portfolio was considered to have given it added 'weight' in engagement in policy forums in the Syrian regional crisis. As a complex operating environment, where separating humanitarian and political concerns is neither feasible nor realistic, this experience and expertise significantly enhanced Finland's reputational capital as a stakeholder in the regional aid architecture. It reflected a generally held sense by partners of Finland 'punching above its weight' as a small donor and reflected a widely-held perception of Finland as a committed actor and 'honest broker.' The converse was the case in Bangladesh and South Sudan, where Finland was unknown as a humanitarian actor and donor.

### 4.3 How efficient was Finnish humanitarian assistance?

This section of the report focuses on Finland's aid management systems. It assesses the degree to which the modality of delivery supported efficient delivery and the extent to which the flexibility of Finland's humanitarian assistance was supported by its aid management systems.

#### Key findings

**Finding 8:** Finland's 'adaptive capacity' is not proactively supported by its aid management systems. It aims to combine some predictability for partners with responsiveness to emerging needs, but Humanitarian Unit often finds itself navigating around, rather than supported by, flexibility in the internal systems.

**Finding 9:** The limited human resourcing of the Humanitarian Unit poses constraints, with staff under very considerable pressure in the latter half of the year. Some partners had experienced slower than desirable decision-making, attributed also to limited human resourcing.



### 4.3.1 Is the management of humanitarian assistance flexible, adaptive and agile, and able to react appropriately to emerging crises?

**MFA procedures provides limited room for flexibility but willingness to adapt.** The flexibility of humanitarian assistance is key to efficient adaptation when conditions change – as happens frequently in even protracted humanitarian crises. Although Finland’s internal procedures for its humanitarian assistance limit its flexibility for swift response, it is known and valued by its partners for both its flexibility and openness.

Finland’s aid management systems for its humanitarian assistance function on an annual allocation basis, with around 80% of the allocations for the year made by March. These early allocations for core funding particularly are extremely highly valued by partners, who see Finland as ‘one of the few on whom they can rely.’ *‘When the agreement comes early, we can programme that money quickly. This means it get to where it’s most needed swiftly.’* CSO interlocutors in particular cited the predictability of the MFA’s humanitarian funding as a value-added in itself.

The downside of this system, however, is that this leaves limited *guaranteed* resources for allocation in the year – just 20% of the annual budget. Finland also does not allow for contingency funds in its humanitarian allocations, nor a local fund managed by its Embassy.

Additional contributions may – and usually do – come forward, in several forms:

- As per section 3.3, where development financing is re-allocated as humanitarian assistance when conditions change; or
- From additional budgetary contributions, for example in the case of the EUR 42.6 million provided as humanitarian assistance for the COVID-19 response allocated in 2020, and the subsequent EUR 17 million provided in 2021 for the same purpose (MFA 2022).

These resources are not predictable, however, and often place considerable pressure on the Humanitarian Unit staff in the latter part of the year.

**Despite willingness, there are procedural constraints in the financial adaption of humanitarian assistance.** While praising Finland’s openness and ‘willingness to adapt’ (see section 4.1 above), interlocutors also noted some challenges in adapting agreements on humanitarian assistance when conditions changed. Although none met refusal, and all changes were eventually made, interlocutors noted that Helsinki-based decisions could take time, sometimes up to several weeks, particularly over the summer period, which from their perspective was relatively long. This was linked to the scant human resources of the MFA, above. Interviewees also cited an example when there was reluctance on behalf of the MFA to change the location of assistance, necessitated by conflict, because there was less than three months left of the contract.

**Using multilateral channels has supported efficiency.** Prioritisation of multilateral channels has also served Finland’s humanitarian assistance well from an efficiency perspective. With 90% of Finland’s annual humanitarian budget flowing through the multilateral system or the Red Cross movement (see 3.1 above), administrative burdens are accordingly lower. Delivering through UN





agencies has a financial overhead cost of around 7%, but also reduces the internal administrative burdens on Finland – important for a small agency. Early contributions in the year also allow agencies to programme efficiently, a factor highly valued and appreciated by multilateral agencies.

**Use of development finance has also supported humanitarian aims.** A further indication of Finland's flexibility and by extension its efficiency, is its openness to use development co-operation finance to address humanitarian needs when either (i) conditions change and the disbursement of development money is no longer feasible, as for example in Afghanistan in 2021 and/or (ii) the context comprises both humanitarian and development needs, as in Ethiopia and many protracted crises, as for example in the Syrian regional context and the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh.

Although it has not been feasible to robustly quantify the volume of financing reallocated this way, as per section 3.3. around EUR 9 million was reallocated in 2021 from development assistance intended for Ethiopia to humanitarian financing on the outbreak of conflict in Tigray, and for Afghanistan, around EUR 10 million was reallocated due to the takeover of the country by the Taliban in August of the same year. Although done for largely pragmatic purposes, the swift liaison between the Regional Desks and the Humanitarian Unit at times of pressure, and the subsequent rapid allocation of financing to humanitarian actors, did allow for efficient disbursement under highly demanding conditions. A further measure of flexibility is Finland's Programme-Based funding for CSOs, which although development programming, can be utilised for emergency response with pre-approval of the Unit for Civil Society.

**There are some internal inefficiencies in aid management.** Outside these extreme events, however, interlocutors noted that a more routine lack of cohesion approaches between interlocutors in Helsinki – that is, between the Regional Departments, Unit for Civil Society and the Humanitarian Unit, further discussed in section 4.4 - constrained efficiency overall. Some interlocutors, particularly CSOs, noted recent delays within Humanitarian Unit, and those who had the occasion to deal with multiple units of the Ministry concurrently felt more explicitly that co-ordination was not consistent. At times they found themselves explaining information twice or clarifying the position of one unit to another. Interlocutors also noted that as a small administration, Finland has more scope than many for a more joined-up approach which would support efficiency. Some external stakeholders, particularly CSOs, had also experienced slower than desirable responses for humanitarian contexts.

## 4.4 How coherent was Finnish humanitarian assistance?

This section of the report considers the external coherence of Finland's humanitarian assistance, including with international and EU humanitarian co-ordination forums, and the extent to which the assistance is internally joined-up with other forms of MFA assistance.



### Key findings

Finding 10: At normative and strategic level, Finland prioritises strong international engagement. It plays a leading role in some key forums related to humanitarian assistance, including COHAFA, Good Humanitarian Donorship and the International Disability Alliance. External coherence is also a priority of the Humanitarian Policy.

Finding 11: At the country level, Finland is a relatively low-profile actor, even where it has a strong country presence. In contexts where Finland has no direct presence, its priorities are unknown.

Finding 12: Finland adopts an appropriate balance of channels given its internal conditions, including human resources. There is an increasing trend towards partner concentration at country level. The balance of time required for CSO grant management and limited human resources, suggests adaptations needed.

Finding 13: Finland adheres to the Grand Bargain commitments of providing at least 30% of its humanitarian assistance as unearmarked or softly earmarked resources, and these resources are highly valued by partner agencies. It is a major and highly valued contributor to the CERF, though does not yet contribute to Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs), although these offer a valuable and efficient vehicle for smaller contributions.

Finding 14: While internal co-ordination between the Humanitarian Unit and other parts of MFA is improving, gaps remain.

#### 4.4.1 To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance align with the strategic direction and priorities of its partners in the context?

**At normative and strategic level, Finland has extensive engagement in international forums.** Finland's international outlook on humanitarian assistance is reflected in the Humanitarian Policy, which is centred around key international commitments on humanitarian action, including the EU Consensus, the Treaty of Lisbon and the Sendai framework. This perspective is central to Finland's view of its own role as a humanitarian actor. For a comparatively small agency, Finland is notably and proactively present in international co-ordination forums for humanitarian assistance, assuming leadership roles in several. External stakeholders praised both the professionalism and effectiveness of its engagement.

Table 13 reflects the major humanitarian-assistance related forums in which Finland has engaged since 2016.



**Table 13 Finland’s role in external forums**

DATE	FORUM	FINLAND’S ROLE
2016	World Humanitarian Summit	Co-chaired with Hungary the Western European and Other Group/Eastern European Group regional consultations. Finland was central to the adoption of the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (Humanitarian Disability Charter 2016; pers. comm 2022).
2019	COHAFA	Presidency during the year. Finland produced a well-appreciated paper on the working modalities of the Working Party, and its professionalism was praised by the COHAFA Secretariat. Council Conclusions on Humanitarian Assistance and International Humanitarian Law adopted 2019
Ongoing	International Disability Alliance	Finland supported the IASC Secretariat on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action and is closely engaged in events such as the Global Disability Summit of February 2022
Ongoing (2021-2023)	Good Humanitarian Donorship	Finland co-chairs with Belgium, and has prioritised systemic issues within the humanitarian system and donorship; counter-terrorism and restrictive measures on principled humanitarian action; protection including gender and disability; and quality humanitarian funding.

Source: Evaluation team data analysis and interviews

Finland has also hosted a wide range of international events related to humanitarian assistance through the years. For example, it hosted the Helsinki Conference on Supporting Syrians and the Region in 2017 which built on the World Humanitarian Summit and launched the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan for the years 2017 and 2018. Finland also organized the 2020 Afghanistan Conference together with the government of Afghanistan and the UN. It is also active in multilateral agency Executive Boards, such as for UNRWA, WFP and UNHCR.

**But it has limited visibility and voice.** External stakeholders characterised Finland’s engagement in these fora as: *‘committed’*, and *‘professional’*, despite its limited human resources. *‘If they are going to do something, they do it properly.’* However, external stakeholders also noted that Finland had limited ‘voice’ where they were not actively chairing or otherwise leading processes. *‘They are reliable and helpful, but not necessarily vocal’*. Beyond its COHAFA engagement in the EU, for example, Finland has no specialist humanitarian engagement within its Permanent Mission to the EU. In Geneva, its Permanent Mission to the UN is also staffed by a career diplomat rather than a humanitarian specialist.

**Finland engages in and supports close Nordic positioning.** Finland also engages closely with its Nordic partners in preparing consolidated positions, for example in submissions to agency governing bodies such as WFP and UNHCR, and in EU engagement through COHAFA. The Humanitarian Unit hold regular senior-level discussions with Nordic counterparts to ensure alignment, and when necessary, such as for the Ukraine and Afghanistan crises, such meetings are frequent, often once per week or more. Stakeholders in the three countries reviewed at case study level however did not identify such intensive co-ordination at operational level, with Embassy representatives in other Nordic countries being unsighted on the nature and content of Finnish assistance in the contexts.



**Finland does not operationally champion specific initiatives or causes.** Beyond its widely known normative emphasis on disability, however, Finland has not adopted a specific area to champion through tangible initiatives. Partner donors are more prominent in their leadership roles here: Denmark for example leads the global Call to Action on Protection from GBV in Emergencies; Germany and France are prominent in the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund; while Sweden is a leading actor in the 2022 Pledging Fund for Yemen. Finland’s normative emphasis in areas of its choice is not yet reflected in a dedicated initiative. Its relative ‘invisibility’ in this respect, particularly across its EU partners, was noted by external stakeholders.

**There is variable external coherence of Finnish humanitarian assistance operationally.** At humanitarian system level, ongoing reforms (UN 2018) place an increased emphasis on external coherence, a concern reflected in the 2017 EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. The three contexts of this study reflect these dynamics, with aid co-ordination mechanisms mature and functioning in all three (Table 14):

**Table 14 Aid co-ordination mechanisms in three sample contexts**

CONTEXT	FEATURES OF AID CO-ORDINATION
Syrian regional crisis	Regional Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP), updated annually, provides an overarching framework. Formalised co-ordination mechanisms are in place at all levels/across all themes of the aid architecture, organised around the Whole of Syria structure.
Bangladesh (Rohingya crisis)	Joint Response Plan provides overarching priorities, with sector analyses and plans below this addressing specific areas of need, such as the Joint Education Response Plan. Inter Sector Coordination Group is the main response forum, with sectoral co-ordination groups below this.
South Sudan	Annual HRPs in place: cluster system activated around sectors.

Source: *Evaluation case studies*

The 2019 Humanitarian Policy is cognisant of these dynamics, noting particularly the need to intensify cooperation between actors in the development of the ‘nexus’ approach (see section 4.5 below). More operationally, however, case study found different degrees of Finnish engagement in aid co-ordination structures. In the highly harmonised Syrian regional crisis, Finland’s Regional Strategy 2021-2024 (which combined development and humanitarian assistance) is explicit on its intent to participate in the collective response to the crisis, and lists, throughout its three impact areas and five strategic goals Finland’s role in joint initiatives. In practice, its Embassy presence in Lebanon allows for participation in relevant forums, for example in relation to EU co-ordination on the crisis or in the education sector working group. Even here, though, human resource constraints mean that Embassy staff must prioritise their engagement (pers. comm. 2022).

By contrast, in South Sudan and Bangladesh, Finland has no direct engagement in co-ordination forums, but rather trusts its partners to engage as appropriate. The case studies found this engagement operational in practice, with partners linked in to/engaging directly in relevant forums, including e.g. the Food Security Cluster in South Sudan and the Education Sub-Group in Bangladesh.



**Finland engages however in multi-stakeholder programming.** Finland also operationalises its international understanding of humanitarian assistance by playing a role in joint humanitarian programmes. Examples include:

- The multi-stakeholder No Lost Generation initiative in Syria;
- Save the Children's cash transfer initiative in Iraq, which forms part of the wider Non-Governmental Organization Coordination Committee's cash-related activities;
- UNDP's Sub Regional Facility for resilience, which runs across the Middle East.

While Finland's contributions are relatively small financially, external stakeholders indicated that they would commonly make early approaches to Finland if conditions changed, given its flexibility and openness (see section 4.1 above).

**Finland is a low-profile actor at country level.** However, although staff in the Humanitarian Unit raised visibility as an area where Finland would like to improve, across all contexts studied, Finland was considered a 'quiet' donor. Even in the Syrian regional crisis, where Finland does have the capacity to engage directly in co-ordination forums, other Embassies had limited knowledge of Finland's portfolio for the crisis, and felt that synergies were only partly explored and leveraged. In South Sudan, partners outside those directly funded by Finland had no knowledge of Finland as a donor, and Finland was not included on the regular donor email update, unlike other non-resident donors such as Denmark and Ireland. In Bangladesh, Finland's profile was similarly low, with actors such as UNHCR not being aware of the Finnish contribution received, and the Embassy in India not actively seeking out information on the humanitarian context in the country.

#### **4.4.2 To what extent does the current choice of funding channels contribute to the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, i.e. is Finland working with right partners, considering its Humanitarian Policy?**

**Finland has a clear commitment to multilateralism.** The Humanitarian Policy makes a commitment to channel assistance through UN organisations, the Red Cross movement and Finnish CSOs organisations that have obtained the partnership status of the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (MFA 2019). The bulk of Finland's humanitarian assistance – around 90% per year - is directed through multilateral agencies, a proportion which has remained relatively constant through the years (Table 15).



**Table 15 Allocations to partners 2016-2021**

	% ALLOCATED TO MULTI-LATERAL AGENCIES <sup>12</sup>	NUMBER OF MULTILATERAL AGENCY PARTNERS	% ALLOCATED TO NGOS	NUMBER OF NGO PARTNERS
2016	93%	7	7%	5
2017	92%	8	8%	5
2018	90%	9	10%	5
2019	89%	9	11%	5
2020	89%	10	11%	6
2021*	64%	10	10%	6

\*= Remainder not yet registered

Source: MFA statistics

So far, as of May 2022, funding has been allocated to 9 multilaterals and 5 NGOs.

**There are logical rationales for assistance channel.** Analysis of projects and the three case study countries finds logical rationales/opportunities for selecting either multilateral agencies or civil society partners for delivering humanitarian assistance across contexts (Table 16):

**Table 16 Rationales for assistance channel**

MODALITY	RATIONALE
Multilateral channel e.g. core contributions to UN agencies, 'soft earmarked' or earmarked interventions to particular contexts/ countries of concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabling outreach through large-scale programmes</li> <li>• Enhancing efficiency through scale, particularly given scant human resources</li> <li>• Allowing flexibility for swift reaction to changing needs</li> <li>• Supporting allocation according to humanitarian needs based on sound analysis</li> <li>• Alignment/harmonisation with key international/EU agreements among external actors e.g. 3RP for the Syrian regional crisis</li> <li>• Opportunities for dialogue/ information access e.g. the UNHCR USD 20 million 'club'</li> <li>• Shared risk-taking where humanitarian contexts are volatile and uncertain</li> </ul>
Civil society channel, most commonly dedicated projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to target a specific area or population covered by NGOs, such as persons with disabilities</li> <li>• Supporting public awareness in Finland of humanitarian work and its principles</li> <li>• Saving on UN overheads</li> <li>• Agility/adaptive capacity suited to volatile conditions</li> <li>• Scope to innovate or pilot</li> <li>• Closeness to the ground permits feedback to MFA on population conditions and concerns</li> </ul>

Source: Evaluation team

12 Includes Red Cross movement for brevity



**Assistance has used an appropriate balance of channels.** Given the scant human resources within the Humanitarian Unit, and the very high demands on Finland's limited humanitarian budget, as well as the choice to commit around 80% of the budget early in the year to support partner predictability, the balance of channels for the assistance is largely appropriate to support both efficiency and effectiveness, with some caveats. Specifically:

- Finland's choice to direct the bulk of its humanitarian assistance via the multilateral channel is validated by the evaluation. The rationales for engaging via the multilateral system set out in Table 16 and Box 8 help offset some of its disadvantages, including more layers of overhead when UN is sub-contracting work to others; reduced control over decision-making; and frequently cited poor quality (or uncertain) results reporting.
- CSOs are a major part of the political landscape in Finland and also play a valuable role in highlighting and advocating for particular humanitarian crises/affected populations. Interviews reported that they in many ways – and particularly given limited MFA human resources – play a valuable role in providing MFA with an 'ear to the ground'. They are therefore important strategic partners, though within the Humanitarian Unit, the human resources required to allocate and manage the assistance are intensive in relation to the volume of assistance received.

**Box 8 Allocations through multilateral agencies supporting efficiency and effectiveness**

In the Syrian regional crisis, for example, the UN manages the 3RP response for Syria and the region; it conducts most of the main analyses and has large-scale programmes in response to needs. Directing Finnish contributions mainly through these channels provides Finland with the ability to support the large-scale international response to the crisis without incurring – particularly important given its limited human resources – major administrative burdens (also appreciated by partners).

*Source: Syria regional case study*

However, the current spread of partners has two main drawbacks:

- Staff within the Humanitarian Unit are severely overstretched, with all managing several portfolios and, in some cases, up to eight different organisations. This necessarily limits their depth and recency of organisational knowledge, and inhibits their ability to respond as timely as would be desirable/focus engagement and influencing more deeply;
- Some agencies receive funding from multiple parts of MFA, and greater internal efficiency might be achieved through concentration of funding streams. UNFPA and UNICEF provide such examples; some CSO partners receiving humanitarian assistance also receive multi-year programme-based support, coordinated and managed by the Unit for Civil Society.



**Limited concentration at country level.** The number of allocations earmarked by humanitarian context has remained relatively stable over time, at between 17-22 contexts per year. These allocations are commonly made to specific partners for use in an agreed country context (Table 17).

**Table 17 Countries funded per year 2016-2021**

YEAR	NUMBER OF CONTEXTS/COUNTRIES
2016	19
2017	17
2018	16
2019	22
2020	21
2021	21
2022 (As of May 2022)	13

Source: MFA statistics

Within individual countries, however, case studies found a consistent trend towards partner concentration:

- In the Syrian regional crisis, in 2017, Finland funded nine partners, of which three were UN, one the ICRC and five were CSOs. By 2021, that had reduced to just three, all of which are multilateral – namely UNFPA, UNHCR and the Red Cross movement – although ‘nexus’ interventions, such as the No Lost Generation initiative through UNICEF, support to women and girls through UN Women and support to resilience activities through UNDP, continued to be funded with development co-operation.
- The number of partners in South Sudan (two multilateral, two CSO) reduced from four until 2019 to two in 2020 and 2021, and none as yet in 2022.
- In Bangladesh the three partners (one multilateral, two CSO) in 2016 also reduced to zero in 2022.

These reductions in geographical spread can pose political challenges, but also reflect the wider trend towards a more concentrated aid profile.

**Finland contributes significant proportions of highly-valued core and unearmarked funding.**

Finland adheres to Grand Bargain commitments to provide at least 30% of its assistance as core or unearmarked resources, for more predictable, multi-year, un-earmarked, flexible humanitarian funding in order to ensure greater efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of humanitarian action for affected people (WHS 2016). Allocating core resources allows finance to be allocated quickly on the basis of needs, a highly valued commodity for agencies who are often balancing earmarked contributions from different donor partners.

- During 2016-21, between EUR 26 and 33.5 million were allocated as core funding, a total of EUR 166.5 million (Table 18). Of this amount, WFP received EUR 50 million, UNHCR EUR 42 million, UNRWA EUR 32.5 million, OCHA 18 million, the Red Cross Movement EUR 17 million, and International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)





received EUR 7 million. Core funding constituted 30% of the total funding during 2016-2021.

- For 2022, until May, EUR 28 million has been allocated as core funding, equalling also 30%, to the same organisations.
- Finland contributes core/unearmarked resources at or above the threshold of privileged donor ‘clubs’ for UNHCR (USD 20 million annually) and the ICRC (Donor Support Group) (CHF 10 million) which provides access to key information and enables dialogue at a strategic level.

**Table 18 Core funding allocations 2016-2021**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Core funding (EUR million)	26	27	27	26.5	33.5	26.5

Source: MFA statistics

These resources are highly prized by receiving agencies for the predictability and flexibility they provide. Finland’s early core contributions in the year were particularly valued, with stakeholders commenting that this ‘*set Finland aside*’ from other donors and made it a particularly highly prized partner.

MFA’s CSO unit provides four-year programme-based funding for CSOs, while the Humanitarian Unit, as noted in section 3.3 above, has increased its timescale for humanitarian assistance grants to two years (though many CSOs noted their reluctance to apply for this, given the risk of losing other funding streams if successful). Other donors, however, have longer timeframes for their arrangements with CSO partners: Denmark, for example, has four-year CSO partnerships, which allow the flexibility necessary for partners to undertake humanitarian and development work according to their priorities.

**Finland is a valued contributor to the CERF but not yet CBPFs.** Finland is also a highly valued contributor to the CERF, being its 11<sup>th</sup> largest donor in 2022. Channelling humanitarian assistance through the CERF has several advantages for Finland: (i) it allows for allocation on a global needs basis, according to requests received (which are often for under-funded crises (UNOCHA 2022b)); (ii) it also allows Finland to contribute in an efficient and effective way to sudden-onset crises, particularly and (iii) It reduces the administrative burdens on Finland since the CERF is UNOCHA-administered.

However, Finland does not contribute to the UNOCHA-administered CBPFs. These are explicitly set up as instruments to facilitate smaller contributions to humanitarian crises, and to allow flexibility for allocation to areas of greatest need, with maximum efficiency. Contributing to CBPFs would likely provide little gain in terms of Finland’s visibility in terms of humanitarian donorship, but would offer benefits in terms of the needs base of the assistance and access to discussions around use of the CBPFs, as well as allowing greater realisation of Finland’s own priorities<sup>13</sup>.

13 In 2019, CERF outlined 4 priority areas that are generally underfunded. These were: (a) support for women and girls, including tackling GBV, reproductive health and empowerment; (b) programmes targeting persons with disabilities; (c) education in protracted crises; and (d) other aspects of protection.



A 2019 independent evaluation of the CERF found that CBPFs are fit for purpose to respond to the humanitarian crises of today – both in terms of funding neglected aspects of response, as well as providing life-saving assistance. They are also adaptable and able to accommodate changes in humanitarian priorities and program approaches. This includes a significant contribution to advancing Grand Bargain priorities (UNOCHA 2019).

**There is a need to strike the balance between multilateral and CSO funding.** Within some contexts, it is appropriate to structure aid delivery between both multilateral and CSO partners. CSOs consume a relatively small proportion (10% per year) of Finland’s humanitarian resources, but occupy a much larger share of the workload, with proposals needing to be assessed, reviewed, adjusted and approved. The increased threshold of CSO grants to EUR 400,000, and the possibility to apply for two-year funding, introduced in 2021, has sought to mitigate these demands to some extent.

However, if Finnish support to CSO humanitarian partners reduces within specific contexts, as for example in the Syrian regional crisis, it is important MFA is aware of potential trade-offs with effectiveness. CSOs are valuable agents in providing insight and information on conditions for beneficiaries on the ground, in a way that UN agencies cannot always offer. They play a particularly important role in a system where agency resources are highly stretched, and also offer scope for more detailed results reporting than can be achieved through multilateral agencies.

If Finland reduces its CSO humanitarian funding in some contexts it will be important for the Humanitarian Unit to sustain close links with CSOs funded through development assistance for two main reasons. Firstly, many ‘humanitarian’ or ‘development’-funded CSO interventions in fact span the two as per the ‘nexus’ (see section 4.5 below). Secondly, given its limited workforce, the MFA needs to avoid losing the sort of insight and experience that field-based CSOs can offer.

#### **4.4.3 Are the various aid and cooperation modalities within MFA sufficiently coordinated to avoid duplication?**

**Internal communication is improving but there are still some gaps.** Stakeholders across MFA agreed that communication across MFA departments and units was improving from a previously limited basis. Interlocutors in Helsinki agreed that engagement between the Humanitarian Unit and the Regional Desks had significantly increased from previously, though it tends to happen mainly at the time of consultations on the allocation of the annual Humanitarian Unit budget, rather than on an ongoing basis throughout the year. The Evaluation of Country Strategies in Fragile Situations (MFA 2020b) found similar changes. The communication between the Humanitarian Unit and Civil Society Unit is limited due to time constraints on both sides. The Humanitarian Unit has started to increase communication with *inter alia* the Security Policy Unit, the team working on International Humanitarian Law within the Justice Department, and the Mediation Team.

**There are few country-level synergies in Finnish humanitarian assistance.** At country level, however, gaps remain. Field-based Embassy staff in at least one country stated that they often did not know in advance which projects had been approved/were planned for implementation by Helsinki-based departments in ‘their’ country context. In common with previous studies, which have noted the ‘siloed’ nature of Finnish development and humanitarian assistance, (OECD 2017; MFA



2019a, MFA 2020b), the evaluation finds limited coherence across interventions funded by Finnish development or humanitarian assistance in the same setting. This applied even where humanitarian and development interventions were occurring in the same context and even where development assistance had been reprogrammed as humanitarian assistance. For example,

- Desk analysis of projects and interviews found few synergies between, and even limited mutual awareness of, Finnish-financed interventions. Interviewees were not aware of where other Finnish contributions were being allocated;
- Similarly, case studies found few synergies, with development interventions mostly financed and managed by Regional desks, and humanitarian assistance managed by the Humanitarian Unit once the initial allocations had been made. For example, in the regional Syria crisis, the UNICEF No Lost Generation initiative sits with the Regional Department, and Finland's contributions are overseen by them. By contrast, the Humanitarian Unit engages with UNFPA on its sexual and reproductive health/GBV activities; the two have few interconnections.

**Internal knowledge on humanitarian assistance is fragmented.** Interviews with MFA staff and with UN/CSO partners reinforced this finding. Few country- or Helsinki-based implementation partners had an awareness of the 'aggregate' level of profile of the totality of Finnish assistance in any given context, nor of individually Finnish-funded initiatives, with South Sudan and Bangladesh notable here. MFA staff in Embassies and in Helsinki noted that they do not always have a clear overview of the diverse forms of assistance provided from the different streams – though they also observed that this had improved over the last year. At Embassy level, some decisions taken by Helsinki were not always communicated fully in advance.

**There are some systemic constraints to internal coherence.** These challenges are far from new, but arise in part from the different motivations, incentives and intent of different MFA departments, and particularly the separate functions of humanitarian and development assistance. Yet as an increasing number of crises become protracted, these distinctions become more blurred, as section 4.5 below considers.

## 4.5 How connected was Finnish assistance to international commitments and to other forms of cooperation?

This section of the report assesses how Finnish humanitarian assistance has adhered to international commitments such as the Humanitarian Principles and Do No Harm, as well as the degree to which it has formed links with development co-operation in the environments it operates.



### Key findings

**Finding 15:** Finland has extensive engagement with the key international forums for the humanitarian principles, such as the Good Humanitarian Donorship forum. However, Finland's trust-based approach to its partners risks leaving gaps in their operational application, particularly as partner approaches are diverse, and time constraints limit the depth of knowledge of organisations that Humanitarian Unit staff can realistically achieve.

**Finding 16:** Finland prioritises a 'nexus' approach both strategically and operationally. Although few projects funded through humanitarian assistance are explicit on their nexus commitments, and full nexus guidance is yet to issue, Finland's flexible application of humanitarian and development assistance reflects 'nexus' approaches in practice, with funding used to combine both humanitarian and development elements.

**Finding 17:** Finland's humanitarian assistance has been distributed on a 'needs' basis, while its development assistance adopts the rights-based ethos of Finland's Development Policy programme. However, the institutional separation of these concepts within the Finnish aid architecture is not well understood nor clearly delineated.

#### 4.5.1 To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance adhere to international commitments on the Humanitarian Principles and Do No Harm?

Frameworks such as the Humanitarian Principles and Do No Harm provide powerful international standards for humanitarian assistance. However, they have proven far from straightforward for actors to uphold in increasingly complex operating environments, as several studies and evaluations have shown (WFP 2017, 2018).

**Finland has strong international engagement in the humanitarian principles but weaker reflection in programming.** Finland plays a significant role in the international forums for the humanitarian principles, not least its co-chairing of the Good Humanitarian Donorship forum. The Humanitarian Policy is very explicit on its commitment to the IHPs and to the rule of international humanitarian law. The importance of these principles is reflected in the profile of human resources within the Humanitarian Unit; one member of staff is specifically focused on issues of International Humanitarian Law.

However, as noted in section 4.1, Finnish aid management procedures place trust in its humanitarian partners to ensure their application. There are no explicit requirements for funded interventions or humanitarian partners to apply these concepts in any context, although for CSOs, the requirement under DG ECHO status is adherence to international humanitarian law and Sphere standards. The lack of explicitness is reflected in analysis of 30 projects and programmes, with reference to the IHPs and Do No Harm frameworks in only two of them. No humanitarian partners interviewed stated that Finland raises these concerns, or requests or requires adherence to the commitments.

**Finland is dependent on its partners for adherence to international standards.** However, Finland's partners have their own approaches to the upholding of the principles. CSO's adherence to



them relies on DG ECHO status, while UN humanitarian agencies' own guidelines require these to be addressed programmatically. However, independent evaluations and assessments have found strong policy frameworks not consistently implemented in practice (MOPAN 2019a, 2019b, 2021a). The 2018 evaluation of the WFP response to the Syrian regional crisis, for example, found no violations of the humanitarian principles, but a 'knowledge gap' on their application in the practical, contextualized humanitarian action of the response (WFP 2018). MOPAN assessments have also identified operational gaps in their application (MOPAN 2021a, 2021b).

**There are accountability gaps on adherence to the international standards.** The trust that Finland places in its partners to implement these commitments is reflective of its partnership-based ethos to humanitarian assistance, as for its development assistance more broadly. In the absence of a focus within policy dialogue and accountability frameworks, however, risk of weakened application in practice occurs. The extent to which Humanitarian Unit staff are 'stretched' across organisations and world in practice is a major contributory factor here, with time constraints limiting the depth of knowledge and degree of dialogue that can be conducted.

#### **4.5.2 To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance establish links between humanitarian aid and development cooperation and/or peacebuilding efforts (the 'nexus')?**

The Syrian regional crisis, in its protracted nature, arguably generated much of the international thinking around the 'nexus' approach and the need to support national systems of refugee-hosting countries gradually became clear. The issue was promulgated at the World Humanitarian Summit of 2016, being identified by stakeholders as a top priority and receiving more commitments than any other area. The resulting Agenda for Humanity, with its collective outcomes, drew heavily on learning from the crisis with regard to nexus concerns (UN 2016).

Closer to home for Finland, the European Consensus for Development and Council Conclusions on Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development Nexus provides a consolidated European position, noting that '*development cooperation and humanitarian assistance should be designed and delivered in a more complementary manner to respond earlier and more effectively to the dynamics of fragility, poverty and vulnerability.*' (EU 2017).

**Finland makes an explicit humanitarian commitment to triple nexus approaches.** Despite limited external awareness of it, the Humanitarian Policy states its commitment that Finnish assistance '*supports the building of channels of cooperation between humanitarian, development and peace work*' (MFA 2019b). MFA is shortly to issue guidance on the 'triple nexus' approach, with the emphasis on practical, operational support to Embassies and project management. Some CSO partners receiving humanitarian support have sought guidance from MFA on the issue. MFA staff in interviews were well-sighted on nexus concerns, and interested that Finnish interventions supported a nexus approach, particularly in protracted crises.

**There is diverse operational recognition of nexus concerns.** In some cases, Finland makes clear operational statements regarding nexus concerns. Syria's Regional Strategy 2021-2024 (MFA 2021a) for example states that '*... the promotion of a humanitarian-development-peace nexus to the crisis response is critical. Short-term humanitarian assistance and longer-term stabilization/development support need to be coordinated and integrated in an effective and holistic manner,*



*to ensure that the response contributes to the resilience of communities and societies that are hosting Syrian refugees*. This statement is accompanied by Strategic Goal 3 on *'The promotion of resilience building and strengthening the humanitarian development-peace nexus.'* Assistance strategies for Somalia and Ethiopia for the same period similarly prioritise nexus concerns.

**Implementation of 'nexus' approaches in practice is variable.** Explicit recognition of nexus concerns was limited among sample projects; of the 30 humanitarian projects analysed – including those in the Syrian regional response - only four raised nexus issues or articulated linkages with development concerns and even fewer with peace. Moreover, assessments and evaluations have signalled shortcomings in humanitarian agencies' treatment of these issues (MOPAN 2019b, 2021a; WFP 2018).

However, Finland's overall flexibility in its actual application of both humanitarian and development assistance on the ground, arguably reflects the use of humanitarian-development 'nexus' approaches in practice. Several Finnish initiatives in the Syrian regional crisis, funded through development assistance – such as support to UNICEF in the 'No Lost Generation' initiative and the work of UN Women on supporting Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanian women in Jordan – combine both humanitarian and development elements. Similarly, from the pure humanitarian perspective, Finland supports WFP which, while a pure humanitarian agency, also conducts resilience activities both within and outside Syria.

In such contexts, the distinctions between Finland's humanitarian and development co-operation were rarely recognised externally, with the assistance understood as 'Finnish support.' Stakeholders noted that longer funding timelines were often needed for nexus-aimed projects, but also reported that, in situations of protracted crisis, only very 'thin lines' exist between humanitarian and development co-operation, both strategically and practically on the ground. The distinction - institutionally separated within the MFA, as in most donor agencies – does not filter down operationally to ground-level concerns.

**Distinctions between 'needs based' and 'rights based' assistance are not always clear.** The flexible use of development and humanitarian funding however does raise the question of the different 'rules' governing the respective assistance types. The needs-based principle on which humanitarian assistance rests – so central to the Finnish Humanitarian Policy – does not always sit comfortably next to the rights-based ethos of much (and particularly Finland's) development assistance.

Moreover, the practical application of these rules in a protracted crisis is highly complex operationally, particularly where 'needs' and 'rights' may be conflated. An education for emergencies programme, for example, or a social protection programme which offers immediate livelihood support to those who cannot feed themselves, may require engagement with state systems. The boundaries between needs and rights may be difficult to separate in practice. Even within agencies with very specific humanitarian mandates, the boundaries are not always clearly drawn; UNHCR, for example, adopts a strongly rights-based approach in its protection work, while much of UNICEF's emergency work, as in the regional crisis, serves needs as well as rights. WFP undertakes resilience work, and engages increasingly on social protection, but does not adopt a rights-based approach. International Humanitarian Law, of which Finland is a strong promoter, is a fundamental expression of rights.



For Finland, therefore, under its current institutional separation, the critical element is a clear understanding of what the 'rules' governing each type of assistance are, and whether needs or rights are targeted, so that assistance can be appropriately deployed. Interviews across MFA indicated that the differences were known and recognised in theory, but that their application in practice – particularly at country level – was neither well understood nor clearly delineated. More explicit and conscious decision-making here will ensure that Finland's very valuable flexibility in its assistance, whether development or humanitarian, and its ability to work fluidly across funding streams, is used to maximum effect, while both humanitarian and development assistance are appropriately deployed.



## 5 Conclusions

### Summary narrative

This evaluation concludes that Finland has shown itself a conscientious and committed humanitarian donor in an increasingly complex – and increasingly politicised – humanitarian landscape. Its key strengths lie in its commitment to internationalism and its positive external reputation, arising from its consistent and predictable support and its policy-level support for gender equality and disability inclusion over time. Its Humanitarian Policy is a valuable instrument, though not widely known.

However, these strengths are not matched currently by either Finland's external voice or influence on partner agencies and on the humanitarian system as a whole. Adjustments are needed to bring these two elements into balance, mindful of Finland's constrained financial and human resources.

**Conclusion 1: Finland prioritises humanitarian needs, mostly aligns with strategic priorities and adapts where necessary.** Finland's partnership-based ethos places trust in its partners to identify geographical and beneficiary needs. It adopts a highly flexible approach to its resources, re-allocating development finance to humanitarian aims where conditions require it and permitting adaptation where needed. Its culture of willingness and its openness to partners are widely appreciated in a world of increasingly constrained, and increasingly demanding, donor action. It also mostly – but not completely – aligns with humanitarian strategies and plans on the ground.

**Conclusion 2: Finland is flexible, but there are risks of relevance going forward.** Annual increases in Finnish humanitarian assistance have not kept pace with global humanitarian requirements, raising risks for relevance going forward. Against a backdrop of extended protracted crises, with no end in sight, and growing global humanitarian needs, it is even more important that Finland's limited resources for humanitarian assistance are optimally deployed. Going forward, therefore, the issue of *focus* and *influence* are key.

**Conclusion 3: Results are valuable for individuals and vulnerable groups but at times fragmented and not captured by results reporting. Results in improving the humanitarian system are weaker.** Overall, the scope and breadth of Finland's humanitarian assistance is probably larger than its data indicates. Moreover, it very likely generates greater results than can be evidenced here. However, the absence of any clear results reporting mechanism constrains the demonstration of its achievements.

Finland's humanitarian assistance since 2016 has delivered results in key areas such as the provision of basic commodities, services and facilities to civilian groups, and ensuring the protection of people affected or threatened by a humanitarian crisis. It has also delivered some valuable results for gender equality in particular. However, it does not robustly measure the results generated, and consequently the achievements (and under-achievements) of its humanitarian assistance are not





fully captured within results reporting. Results also reflect ‘pockets’ of different achievements at country level and are, in some cases, fragmented.

**Conclusion 4: More nimble administrative procedures could help Finland align its humanitarian assistance more swiftly to emerging humanitarian needs.** Despite genuine efforts and a culture of willingness, Finland’s aid management systems do not support internal flexibility. The allocation of most of the budget early in the year is highly appreciated by partners, but then places the Humanitarian Unit in the challenging position of having to manage and allocate a) the remaining available funds alongside b) ad-hoc funding available either from Regional Units or from political allocations – and sometimes, c) address political requirements for funding allocations too. This constrains a fully responsive approach to assistance management. A more clearly articulated statement of priorities, regularly reviewed and widely shared, would offer a more structured model for assistance.

**Conclusion 5: Human resource constraints pose limitations and there is scope for greater internal collaboration.** The human resourcing of the Humanitarian Unit is also extremely stretched. This limits the capacity for oversight of the portfolio or the depth of knowledge of the organisations that can be supported. While internal engagement between the Regional and Humanitarian Units is increasing, given that several organisations are supported by both Units, there is scope for closer and deeper engagement, as well as with the Civil Society Unit, through the entry point of the ‘nexus’ approach.

**Conclusion 6: Finland has a strongly internationalist approach to its humanitarian assistance but its presence is not matched by its influence and voice.** Despite its limited human resources, Finland adopts a strongly international ethos to its humanitarian action, engaging widely – and sometimes leading in – many key humanitarian forums. This evaluation has found that Finland’s international engagement is not currently matched by its international influence. At country level, its visibility is often limited. Co-ordination within Nordic partners is frequent and harmonised positions are provided, but Finland’s own influence as a bilateral donor is not as prominent as its neighbours. Within the EU, where Finland has contributed – as for example to the 2019 Presidency of COHAFA – its professionalism is widely praised. However, it lacks a strong voice in wider EU humanitarian affairs, not having specialist humanitarian representation within its Permanent Mission to the EU.

**Conclusion 7: Finland has scope for a more rigorous understanding of its multilateral partners and a more strategic approach to its CSO partnerships.** Channelling the bulk of its assistance through multilateral agencies and the CERF is an appropriate strategic choice for a small donor, given their greater capacity for outreach, scope to influence and reach those in immediate need. However, this should not blind Finland to their limitations, widely recorded in e.g. MOPAN assessments and independent evaluations. Constrained human resources prevent the depth of knowledge that might be optimal, and at the same time inform Finland’s influencing strategy. At the same time, engagement with CSOs – currently on a project basis – consumes disproportionate volumes of scant staff time and can arguably be conducted on a more strategic basis. CBPFs also present a valuable potential vehicle for channelling assistance and would help operationalise the localisation of humanitarian aid, a commitment which Finland has not yet prioritised despite its deep commitment to the Grand Bargain.

**Conclusion 8: There are significant internal knowledge gaps.** Oversight and knowledge of Finnish humanitarian action at country level is diverse and, arguably, insufficient. In contexts



where Finland has an Embassy, there is greater possibility of a portfolio-level overview. Where such presence is not available, however – the majority of contexts to which Finland delivers its humanitarian assistance – Finland has little awareness or overview of the delivery of its humanitarian assistance at country level. Its Humanitarian Policy is scarcely known outside Finland, and there is little awareness of it even within the MFA.

**Conclusion 9: Finland humanitarian assistance has policy level connections to the humanitarian principles but risks operational gaps, while it applies funding pragmatically to address nexus concerns.** Finland's prioritisation – and real-world operationalisation – of the 'nexus' approach sets it apart from many donors. Its smaller scale allows it to be flexible and pragmatic in its use of humanitarian and development assistance, particularly when crisis strikes. There is scope for greater systematisation here, within the framework of the nexus approach, to maximise the strengths and opportunities of both kinds of assistance. At the same time, more rigour is needed to ensure the application of humanitarian principles by partners.

**Conclusion 10: More proactive and strategic internal collaboration will help clarify the purposes and use of humanitarian vs development funding.** Finland's commendably pragmatic approach to financing needs with development or humanitarian funding has upheld the boundaries of the respective types of assistance. Going forwards however, with protracted crises ever-expanding alongside new events occurring, the risks of blurred boundaries – already prevalent within MFA – increases. Closer and more proactive engagement between the Humanitarian Unit and Regional colleagues will both help develop a more strategic approach to assistance, and, at the same time, help clarify the boundaries and complementarity of humanitarian and development assistance.

In the real world of complex problems, humanitarian assistance from a bilateral donor can rarely be held fully distinct from foreign policy considerations. While humanitarian budgets need to be defended to a sometimes-sceptical public, politicians cannot feasibly fully separate the humanitarian imperative from the demands of international relations. Yet political choices have operational effects, not least placing a strain on a slimly-staffed Humanitarian Unit which, having made delicately-balanced choices at the start of the annual cycle, finds itself trying to balance many demands and requests later in the year. Here too, a more structured approach, closely geared to defined intended results and with clarity on the boundaries of humanitarian and development assistance, may help reduce ad-hoc demands.

## Moving forwards

As Finland moves towards 2023 and onwards, therefore, where does it wish to *focus* its resources for greatest effect; and where does it wish to maximise its *influence* and *voice*? As a comparatively small donor, with strong commitment to the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles, Finland faces a difficult balance. It needs to somehow balance predictability with responsiveness to sudden-onset crises; providing highly-valued core resources with the ability to respond quickly at country level; and balancing the needs of large-scale crises – Ukraine, Yemen and Afghanistan for example – with the smaller, often 'forgotten' crises of *inter alia* Burundi, Central African Republic and Eswatini. It also needs to balance provision to multilateral agencies, who most commonly have the scale and 'reach' to serve large numbers of those in need, with its and valuable support to CSOs, who provide critical service delivery, insight and advocacy.



The recommendations which close this evaluation do not aim to provide solutions to these dilemmas, but rather offer suggestions for discussion. They are geared to building on Finland's demonstrated strengths; its internationalist approach, its conscientious and committed approach to those in need, while helping sharpen its resource use for the future, and to shape its influence as a force for good.



## 6 Recommendations

The following recommendations are presented for MFA consideration.

RECOMMENDATION	EXPLANATION/OPERATIONALISATION	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
1. Streamline allocations to a more limited number of multilateral agencies	Currently, Finland allocates its humanitarian assistance to agencies who also benefit from other units and departments of MFA. Finland's humanitarian assistance would be better focused on a smaller core group of agencies who adhere to Finland's strategic priorities for its assistance, with other MFA departments perhaps better placed to support agencies such as UNWRA, UNDRR, UNFPA and UNICEF.	Humanitarian Unit	2023 allocations
2. Adopt a more strategic approach to CSO engagement in humanitarian assistance	Extensive volumes of the Humanitarian Unit's time are consumed by managing CSO project level interventions. The Humanitarian Unit should work cohesively with the CSO Unit to prepare multi-year framework agreements to a common set of CSOs, with clear and transparent criteria for selection, and within which humanitarian and development assistance can be combined without projects needing to be defined in advance. Within these frameworks, directing humanitarian funding in part to 'underfunded' crises will allow Finland to meet this aspect of its Humanitarian Policy commitments.	Humanitarian s Unit and the CSO Unit	Discussions in 2022 for allocations in 2024
3. Under the framework of the nexus approach – and in the light of new guidance issuing – adopt a collective approach with Regional Desks to setting country priorities for assistance.	Finland already adopts a flexible approach to humanitarian and development assistance, while respecting the boundaries of assistance types. It should work cohesively with Regional Departments under the framework of the nexus to (i) define aims for Finnish development and humanitarian assistance in a given context and (ii) set allocations at the start of the year, leaving if appropriate a contingency for flexibility. This will also help promulgate both the Humanitarian Policy and the needs-based approach of humanitarian assistance.	Humanitarian Unit and Regional Desks	Discussions in 2022 for allocations in 2024
4. To operationalise normative commitments, define and promulgate thematic priorities for humanitarian assistance, reviewed on a bi-annual basis.	Some of Finland's normative priorities are not reflected in operational commitments -and thus, in tangible results. Finland should commit a part of its resources at the start of each year to thematic humanitarian priorities. These might include e.g. Disability Inclusion and School Feeding, given Finland's longstanding expertise and reputation in education. This will also support with proactive decision-making and help set boundaries around ad-hoc resource requests.	Humanitarian Unit in consultation with wider Development Policy Department management	Discussions in 2022 for 2023 resource allocations
5. Continue contributions to the CERF but add the CBPFs.	Finland is one of the CERF's top donors but does not yet contribute to the pooled funds. Its country-based visibility will be enhanced by engaging in CBPFs, which will also bring Finland's Embassy staff to the humanitarian 'table'. Since CSOs can also make CBPF applications, this will also enable Finland to maintain the profile of its CSO work, and support localisation aims, which have not been achieved to date.	Humanitarian Unit	2023 onwards



RECOMMENDATION	EXPLANATION/OPERATIONALISATION	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
6. Translate the Humanitarian Policy into English; publicise and update it.	The Humanitarian Policy is a sound instrument in itself but is not known outside MFA (or even widely inside it). Translating and disseminating the Policy; updating it where necessary - for example, reframing the 'at least 10%' of development financing able to be allocated to humanitarian priorities, as e.g. 'far closer alignment between development and humanitarian funding in light of nexus concerns'; and adding the thematic priorities above – will help make Finland's humanitarian positioning clear and explicit.	Humanitarian Unit	2022
7. Develop a light results framework for the Humanitarian Policy.	The Humanitarian Policy is not accompanied by any results monitoring mechanism. The aggregated indicators for humanitarian element of the wider Development Policy are complex, and data is not robustly collected against them. Using the Aggregated indicators as a basis, the Humanitarian Unit should develop a streamlined results framework, based on feasibly-collectable information, which will allow a) assessment of progress against the Policy and b) the demonstration of its results. These can also be included in the instructions to CSOs.	Humanitarian Unit	2022 for use in 2023
8. Develop a clear humanitarian influencing strategy, derived from the Policy and geared to Finnish priorities of internationalist, needs-based humanitarian assistance and integrating the thematic priorities above. Operationalise through key influencing points e.g. EU structures, Permanent Missions and Embassies.	Finland's positioning and effectiveness of its humanitarian assistance is not currently matched by its influence and voice. Developing a dedicated humanitarian influencing strategy will (i) help Finland define, in a more explicit way, its own humanitarian values and strengths as well as its entry points and (ii) ensure that that the Humanitarian Policy, as above, is more widely known and disseminated. To support the implementation of the strategy, Humanitarian Unit should request expertise for, and engagement in, Permanent Missions, for example to the EU.	Humanitarian Unit	2022 for implementation in 2023



## 7 Annexes

### Annex 1. The Evaluation Team

The evaluation was conducted by a four-person international team, supported by three regional experts to conducted interviews for case studies. Particip/NIRAS also supported the exercise through ongoing technical support and quality assurance.

The team has long expertise in humanitarian assistance, and all team members have previously worked on Finnish evaluations. Key roles and responsibilities were as follows:

WHO	RESPONSIBILITIES
Team Lead Julia Betts	Overall team lead and management; methodology design; drafting of main outputs; Syrian regional crisis case study lead; responsible for analysis of WFP, CERF and UNHCR.
Senior Evaluator Erik Toft	Data management; supporting methodology design and drafting of main outputs; Ethiopia case study lead; responsible for analysis of Red Cross movement.
Senior Evaluator Raisa Venäläinen	Analysis of Finnish policy context; supporting methodology design and drafting of main outputs; Asia case study lead; responsible for analysis of UNRWA; leading analysis of Finnish CSOs.
Emerging Evaluator Saila Toikka	Supporting data analysis; supporting analysis of Finnish CSOs <sup>14</sup> ; supporting analysis of partner donors; supporting drafting of main outputs.
Regional Evaluator Rima Ramadan	Conduct of interviews, analysis and supporting drafting for the Syria regional case study
Regional Evaluator Foyzul Bari Himel	Conduct of interviews, analysis and supporting drafting for the Bangladesh case study
Country Evaluator Ariic David	Conduct of interviews, analysis and supporting drafting for the South Sudan case study
Service coordinator Sari Laaksonen	Overall management and quality assurance
Project manager Isabell Breunig	Overall management and quality assurance

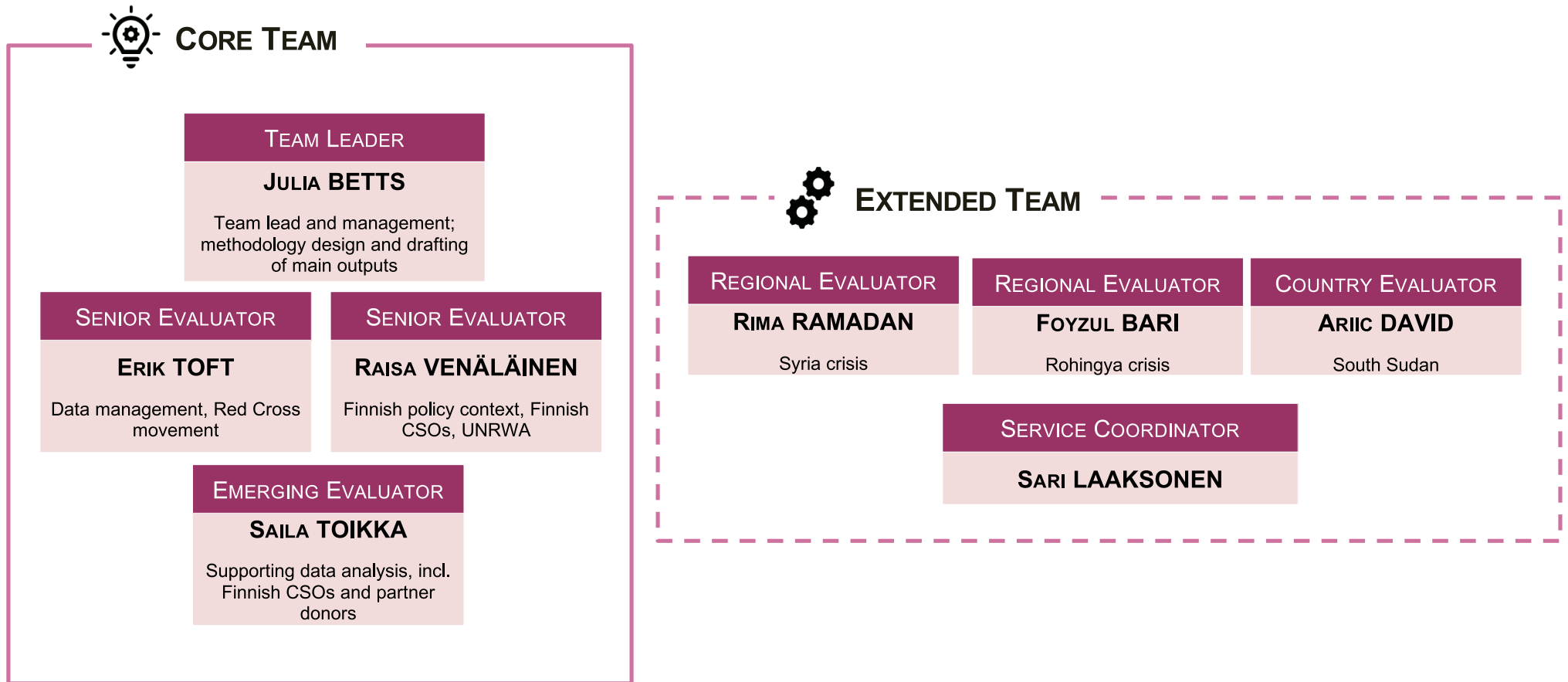
All team members contributed to the analysis and preparation of the final report.

Figure 9 shows the overall team structure, composition; and lines of responsibility.

<sup>14</sup> This team member has a professional relationship with FCA and therefore this organisation was not included in her portfolio of work.



Figure 9 Evaluation team structure and composition



Source: Evaluation team



## Annex 2. Terms of Reference



Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland

Version 19.10.2021

### Terms of Reference

#### Evaluation of Finland's Humanitarian Assistance

##### 1. Introduction and rationale

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) commissions an evaluation of Finland's humanitarian assistance, with a view to (i) enhancing the effectiveness of Finland's current humanitarian assistance, (ii) identifying potential ways to strengthen Finland's capacity to influence its partners in the thematic areas of the current humanitarian policy and (iii) enhancing Finland's humanitarian aid management processes. This evaluation is foreseen in Finland's Humanitarian Policy (Finland as a donor of humanitarian assistance, 2019).<sup>15</sup>

Humanitarian aid is an independent part of Finland's development policy and functions based on the humanitarian imperative.<sup>16</sup> Finland's humanitarian assistance is based on international humanitarian law, human rights treaties and refugee law, as well as humanitarian principles established by the United Nations (UN), such as humanity, equity, impartiality and independence. Finland's Humanitarian Policy states its commitment to complying with Good Humanitarian Donorship principles.<sup>17</sup>

This evaluation has both accountability and learning aims. For accountability, it aims to assess the achievements of humanitarian assistance in relation to the resources delivered, particularly for vulnerable populations and in terms of Finland's influence on partner agencies. For learning, it seeks to allow the MFA to learn lessons, both positive and negative, to enhance future performance.

The evaluation will identify the strengths and limitations of Finland's humanitarian assistance since 2019, and draw evidence-based conclusions. It will make recommendations for the future management of humanitarian assistance with a view to future improvement. The evaluation findings are expected to benefit the MFA's work in strengthening the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

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15 [https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161936/UJ\\_2019\\_01.pdf?sequence=4](https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161936/UJ_2019_01.pdf?sequence=4)

16 Assistance is given to those in need, regardless of, for example, race, religion or nationality. Aid is assessed solely on the basis of need and does not promote a political or religious perspective. Finnish Humanitarianism as a donor (MFA 2019)

17 Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative: <https://www.ghdinitiative.org/ghd/gns/home-page.htm>





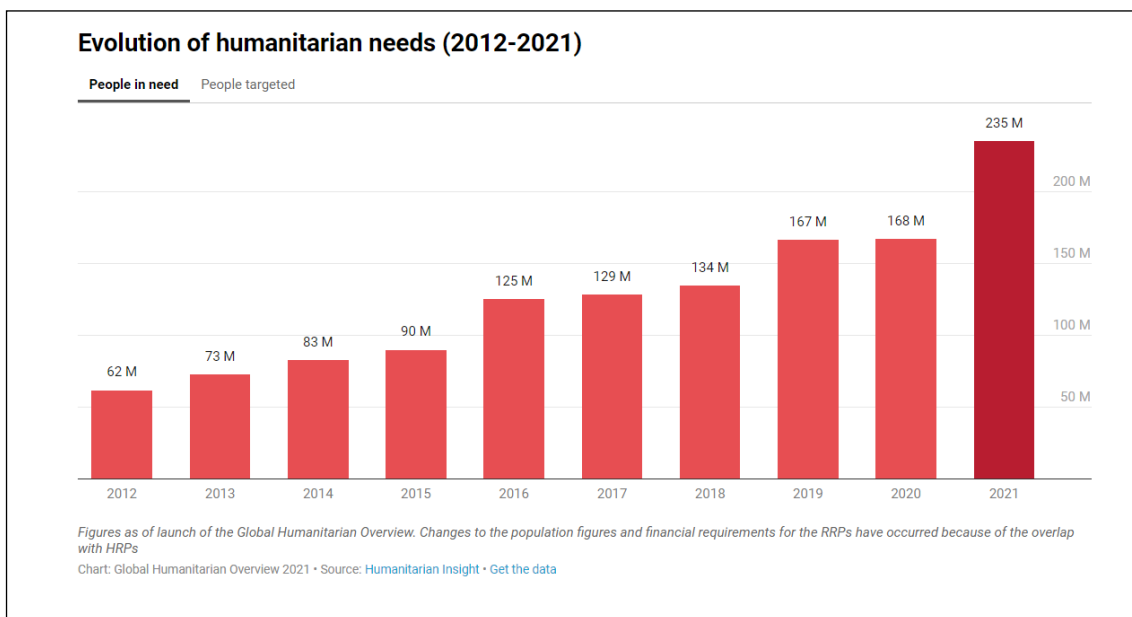
The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, connectedness and coverage of Finland’s humanitarian assistance over the agreed period. It will also assess its efficiency in the sense of aid management procedures. The evaluation will draw evidence from the experience of Finnish Humanitarian Assistance in three countries, to be selected for their different features, to draw wider findings and conclusions. It will cover the period 2016-current and be conducted by an independent evaluation team. The implementation of the evaluation will take place during the period November 2021-September 2022.

## 2. Context

### 2.1 Global context for humanitarian assistance

Demand for humanitarian assistance has increased significantly in recent years and is expected to continue to rise following the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, 235 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection, a number which has risen to 1 in 33 people worldwide. This is a significant increase from 1 in 45 in 2020, which was already the highest figure in decades (Figure 1).<sup>18</sup>

**Figure 1 Humanitarian needs 2012-2021**



Source: UNOCHA (2021) *Global Humanitarian Overview 2021*

18 UNOCHA (2021) *Global Humanitarian Overview 2021*.

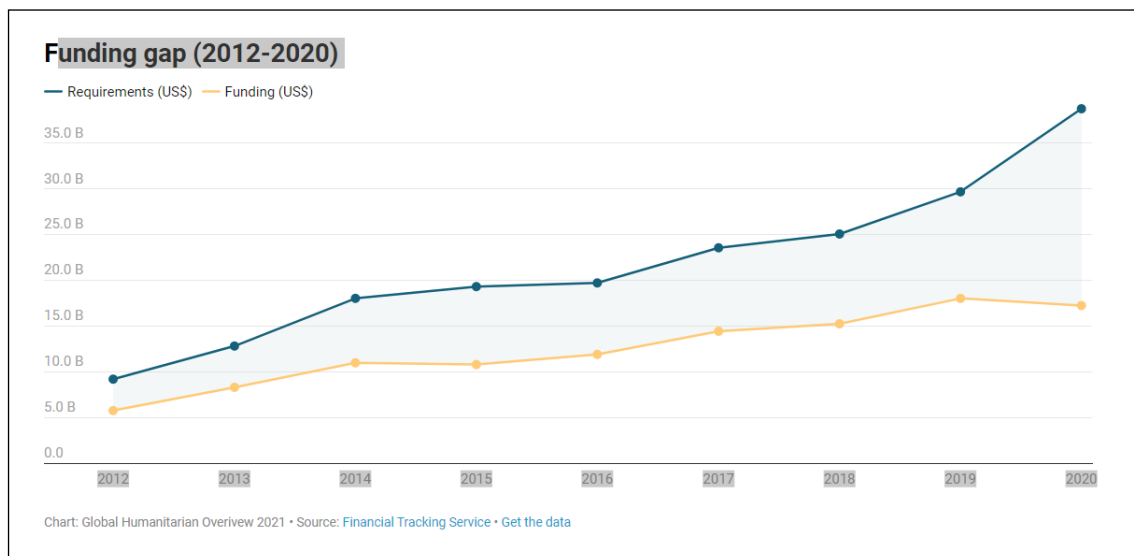


Current challenges in the global environment for humanitarian assistance include:

- A historic economic decline is reversing the development gains of recent years<sup>19</sup>
- Conflicts, which continue to take a heavy toll on civilian populations<sup>20</sup>
- Increased displacement, which is affecting millions<sup>21</sup>
- Increased food insecurity and hunger, exacerbated by COVID-19<sup>22</sup>
- Vulnerabilities being exacerbated by climate change<sup>23</sup>
- Increasing disease outbreaks, also creating increased vulnerabilities, poverty and hunger.<sup>24</sup>

As humanitarian needs increase, so do funding needs. Global requests for humanitarian assistance have grown from USD 9.2 billion in 2012 to USD 35 billion in 2021.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, however, the funding gap has steadily increased – from a \$4.6 billion gap in 2012 to a \$21.5 billion gap in 2020 (Figure 2):

**Figure 2 Humanitarian Funding Gap 2012-2020**



Source: UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service 2021

19 IMF (2020) World Economic Outlook Update October 2020; World Bank (2020) Poverty and Shared Prosperity, October 2020

20 UNSG (2020) Report of the UN Secretary-General on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, S/2020/366, 6 May 2020; Devex (2020) 'Lowcock: COVID-19 effects could deteriorate into 2021 and beyond, UN's Mark Lowcock says' – Devex interview, 21 September 2020

21 By the end of 2019, there were an estimated 50.8 million new and existing Internally Displaced Persons, including a record 45.7 million people displaced due to conflict and violence. January-June 2020 saw a further 14.6 million new displacements across 127 countries and territories. Conflict and violence triggered 4.8 million displacements, and disasters triggered 9.8 million. Most conflict-induced displacements took place in Africa and the Middle East, while the majority of disaster-induced displacements occurred in Asia. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2020) Internal displacement 2020: mid-year update, 23 September 2020

22 WFP (2020) Needs analysis informing WFP's Global Response Plan to COVID-19 – June 2020

23 Natural disasters triggered 24.9 million new displacements in 2019, the highest recorded figure since 2012. By 30 June 2020, 9.8 million people had been newly displaced by disasters. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2020) Internal displacement 2020: mid-year update, 23 September 2020; World Food Programme, (2021) 14 Facts Linking Climate, Disasters, and Hunger.

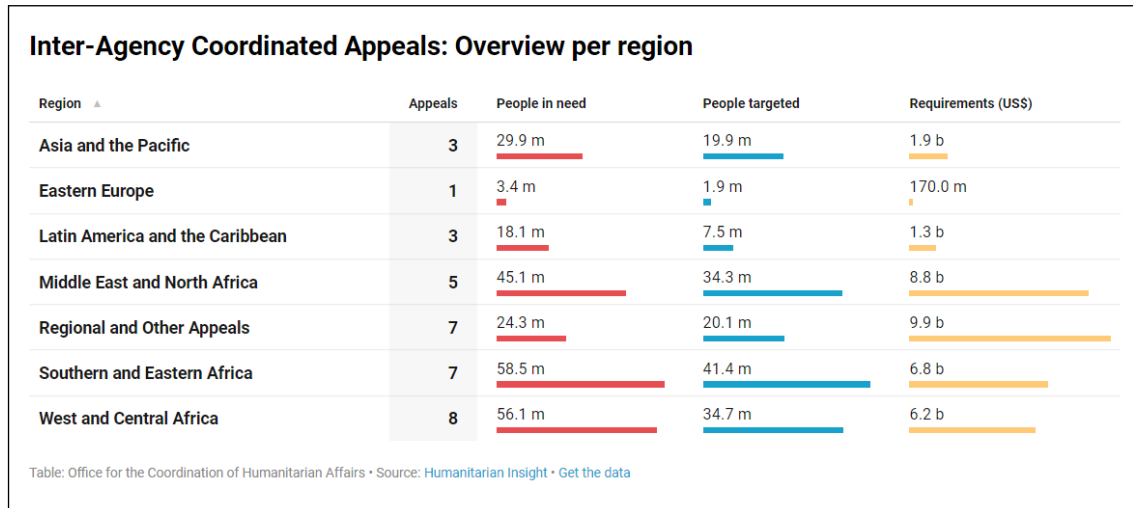
24 Disease outbreaks have increased since 2011, with an average annual growth of 6.9 per cent (Elsevier (2020) Global Research Trends in Infectious Disease, March 2020). Over the past five years, 94 per cent of the countries with inter-agency humanitarian appeals have recorded at least one disease outbreak ( WHO (2020) Global Health Observatory - Health Emergencies data from 2015-2019).

25 UNOCHA (2021) Inter-Agency Coordinated Appeals: Overview for 2021



Regional needs and financial requirements vary significantly, as shown in Figure 3:

**Figure 3 Regional needs, targeted and requirements**



Humanitarian contexts affect women more heavily: 70 per cent of women experience GBV in humanitarian contexts compared with 35 per cent worldwide.<sup>26</sup> Persons with disabilities form a much higher percentage of those in crisis-affected communities and are at higher risk of abuse and neglect.<sup>27</sup> Approximately 26 million older persons experience disasters each year, and COVID-19 has increased the abuse, and neglect of older persons around the world.<sup>28</sup>

## 2.2 Finnish policy context

Finland's humanitarian aid aims to save lives during and indirectly after crises, as well as to alleviate suffering and human distress while respecting human dignity.<sup>29</sup> It is based on three key principles:

- Ensure the needs base of humanitarian aid and the cost-effectiveness of operations;
- Strengthen humanitarian protection and respect for humanitarian principles and humanitarian law;
- Improve the functioning and effectiveness of the humanitarian system.<sup>30</sup>

Finland aims to be 'a principled, innovative, forward-looking, flexible, reliable and effective player in the international humanitarian system'.<sup>31</sup> According to its Humanitarian Policy, Finland's human-

26 ActionAid (2016) On the frontline: Catalyzing women's leadership in humanitarian action. UN (2020), Gender equality in the time of COVID-19.

27 WHO and World Bank (2016) World report on disability; UN (2020) Persons with disabilities in the context of internal displacement - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (A/HRC/44/41), 15 June 2020

28 UNDESA (2019) An inclusive response to older persons in humanitarian emergencies, December 2019; WHO (2020) COVID-19 and violence against older people, June 2020; UN (2020) Policy Brief: The impact of COVID-19 on older persons, May 2020.

29 Finnish Humanitarianism as a donor (MFA 2019)

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

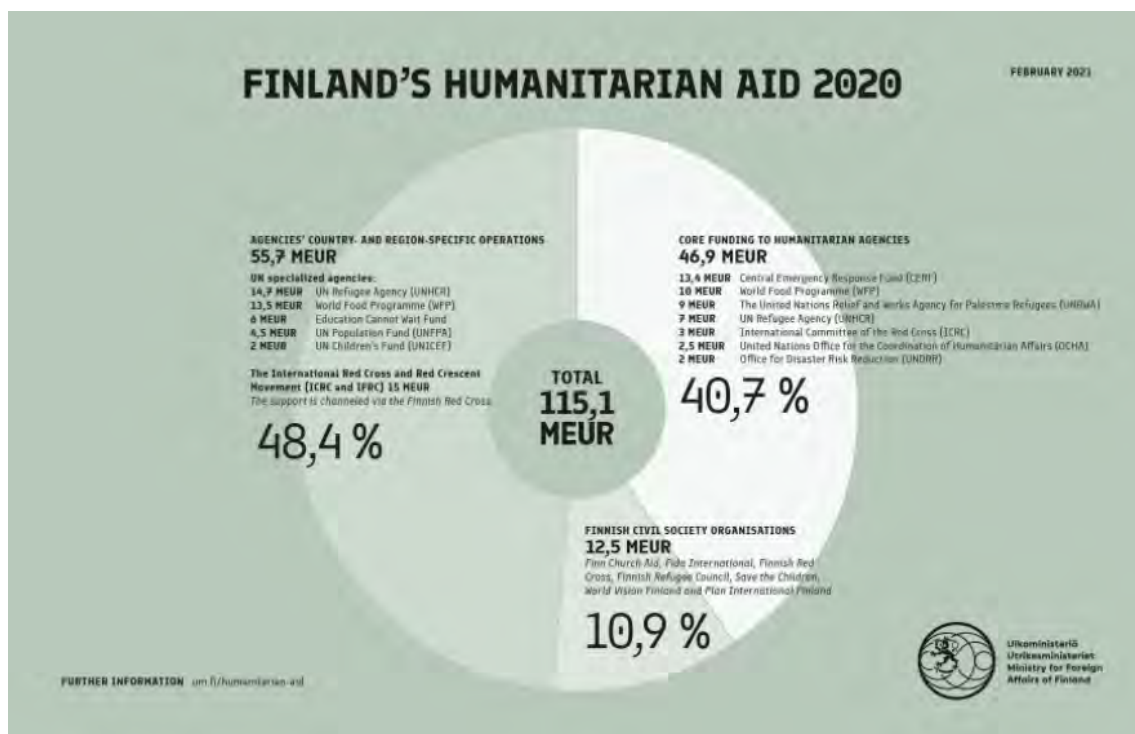


itarian aid is based on (i) global emergency aid appeals, (ii) a reliable analysis of the effects of the crisis and (iii) a needs assessment of protection and material assistance. The factors Finland considers in making an aid decision are:

- the extent of the crisis,
- the proportion of the population affected by it,
- the numbers of dead and sick,
- those in need of emergency aid and acutely malnourished children under the age of five.<sup>32</sup>

In 2020, Finland disbursed EUR 115 million in humanitarian assistance, with 41 per cent provided as core funding to UN humanitarian agencies and the CERF; EUR 55.7 million to country and region-specific operations (48 per cent) and EUR 12.5 million (11 per cent) to Finnish CSOs (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Finnish humanitarian assistance in 2020



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 2021

32 Suomi humanitaarisen avun antajana (MFA 2019)

Assistance focuses on the poorest and most fragile countries, with a high concentration in the Middle East region (Figure 5):

**Figure 5 Geographic distribution of humanitarian assistance**



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, February 2021

At a strategic level, Finland is committed to the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship<sup>33</sup> and the Grand Bargain initiative.<sup>34</sup> Finland also played a central role in the preparations of the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) s held in Istanbul in May 2016.<sup>35</sup>

Within the UN, Finland supports the work of Executive Boards of the agencies and organisations it finances. It also supports the UN’s current humanitarian aid reform whose goal is to create an efficient and well-coordinated international humanitarian aid system.

At the European level, Finland adheres to the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. It engages in humanitarian aid cooperation at the EU level and within the international donor community, working through the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA).

Finnish humanitarian assistance is channelled through UN organisations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement (channelled through ICRC and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) and through Finnish CSOs. Eligible CSOs are those which have signed a framework partnership agreement with the European Commission’s Directorate-General for

33 [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/23\\_principles\\_and\\_good\\_practice\\_of\\_humanitarian\\_donorship.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/23_principles_and_good_practice_of_humanitarian_donorship.pdf)

34 <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain>

35 [https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/finlands\\_national\\_commitments\\_at\\_the\\_world\\_humanitarian\\_summit/71a26b7d-fc4d-7d2b-19d0-298424014090?t=1525690607441](https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/finlands_national_commitments_at_the_world_humanitarian_summit/71a26b7d-fc4d-7d2b-19d0-298424014090?t=1525690607441)



Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO); in 2021, these comprise Fida International, FCA, Save the Children Finland, FRC, World Vision Finland and Plan International Finland. Finland is also committed to channelling annually around 10 per cent of its development aid appropriations for humanitarian aid directed to official development assistance recipient countries (ODA) in accordance with the Finnish Humanitarian Assistance policy.<sup>36</sup>

Finland's priority is that the needs of the persons in the most vulnerable situation – often children, women and persons with disabilities - will be identified, recognized and met when distributing the assistance and that the actions are localized to the extent possible. Finland also emphasizes cooperation between actors in the development nexus approach, which recognizes that the development of situations is not always a linear continuum, but that humanitarian needs, the conditions for development cooperation and the need for peace-making may exist in the same situation, at the same time.<sup>37</sup>

### 3. Purpose and objectives

The **purpose** of the evaluation is to help further **enhance the effectiveness** of the humanitarian assistance provided by Finland. To that end, the evaluation will identify the strengths and weaknesses of Finland's delivery model for its humanitarian assistance and cooperation arrangements, including the effectiveness and efficiency of its management arrangements.

The **specific objectives** of the evaluation are:

- To review the relevance of Finnish humanitarian assistance 2016-current in meeting the needs of affected populations, and in its interconnections with development and peace interventions
- To assess the function and purpose of the 2019 Humanitarian Policy as a guiding instrument for Finnish humanitarian assistance
- To assess the functioning of partnerships and cooperation in Finnish humanitarian assistance and whether the current balance of partnerships/scope of Finnish influencing is optimal;
- To assess the management arrangements for humanitarian assistance in light of its effectiveness and make proposals for any future improvements; and
- To assess the effectiveness of the assistance in delivering results for affected populations.

Relevant involved departments of MFA include primarily the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy, but also Regional Departments, the Political Department, which is in charge of issues relating to human rights, peacebuilding, peace mediation, civil and military crisis management, and MFA staff working in the Embassies liaising with multilateral organizations or in countries facing humanitarian crises. Sectoral and thematic policy advisers may also be engaged.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://um.fi/humanitarian-aid>

<sup>37</sup> Suomi humanitaarisen avun antajana (MFA 2019)



#### 4. Intended use of the evaluation

The results of the evaluation are expected to be used by the MFA to inform the decision-making and use of its humanitarian assistance, specifically in relation to maximizing the use of available human and financial resources, and including Finnish partnerships in priority areas. Its most immediate direct users are the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy, but it is expected to also be of use to:

- the leadership of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland,
- desk officers in charge of core or programme funding of multilateral organizations, regional departments and desk officers in charge of bilateral programmes
- Finnish non-governmental organizations involved in humanitarian action
- MFA staff working in the Embassies liaising with multilateral organizations or in the countries facing humanitarian crises as well as sectoral and thematic policy advisers.

#### 5. Results of previous evaluations

Finnish humanitarian assistance has not previously been evaluated in its entirety. However, several evaluations/reviews have touched on aspects of it or related concerns. These include:

- (2015) Evaluation of humanitarian mine action
- (2017) Evaluation of Finnish CSOs receiving programme-based humanitarian funding
- (2018) Evaluation of Forced Displacement and Finnish development policy
- (2018) Review of Human Rights-Based Approaches in Finnish Development Cooperation
- (2019) Evaluation of the Country Strategy instrument in fragile situations.

Additionally:

- The 2019 evaluation of Finnish Development Policy Influencing Activities in Multilateral Organisations included an assessment of funds provided to humanitarian-focused organisations;
- The assessment of the Finnish response to COVID-19 is currently ongoing and addresses aspects of Finnish humanitarian assistance to the crisis<sup>38</sup>

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38 Assessment of the Response of Finnish Development Policy and Cooperation to COVID-19 (2021) Terms of Reference



Key relevant findings and recommendations from available evaluations include:

- Insufficient flexibility and a weak framework for coherence between Finland's humanitarian and development policies and other policy 'pillars' such as peacebuilding and civilian crisis management<sup>39</sup>
- Similarly, limitations in framing projects around the nexus between humanitarian and development initiatives;<sup>40</sup>
- Significant gaps in Finland's bilateral and multi-bilateral assistance to some vulnerable populations - IDPs, those displaced to urban areas and climate change-induced displacement<sup>41</sup>
- The need for increased political economy analysis<sup>42</sup>
- Fragmented results and a lack of information on impact-level results<sup>43</sup>
- Increased use of Finland's reputational capital as a principled and neutral actor in fragile states to contribute to statebuilding and peacebuilding aims.<sup>44</sup>

The 2019 Evaluation on Forced Displacement and Finnish Development Policy, which included case studies on Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria/Iraq, stressed the need for appropriate policy guidance and changes in the programming of cooperation to support an integrated approach for humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. It advised strengthened internal linkages between humanitarian and development programming and budgeting, as well as reinforcing policy influence and complementarity with other donors/PIPs/programme and country strategies.<sup>45</sup>

The Evaluation of the Country Strategy Instrument in Fragile Situations found that Finland was considered a highly principled and neutral actor in fragile countries and contexts and that its policy dialogue priorities were appropriate and geared to state-building. Attention to the IHPs, Do No Harm and Accountability to Affected Populations within humanitarian assistance was however partner-dependent, with accordingly variable attention in programming. The evaluation recommended that the Country Strategy approach be explicitly conceptualized as a tool for adaptive management in fragile contexts, building links between humanitarian and development assistance.<sup>46</sup>

Additionally, a 2018 review to assess the evaluability of the human rights-based approach (HRBA) – which included humanitarian assistance projects - concluded that the plausibility of MFA interventions leading to intended HRBA results was medium to low, given the limited analysis of the wider human rights situation in recipient countries; little consideration of the factors that contribute

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39 Evaluation of Finnish CSOs receiving programme-based humanitarian funding (2017); Evaluation of the Country Strategy instrument in fragile situations (2019); Evaluation of Humanitarian Mine Action (2015); Evaluation of Forced Displacement and Finnish Development Policy (2018)

40 Evaluation of Finnish CSOs receiving programme-based humanitarian funding (2017); Evaluation of the Country Strategy instrument in fragile situations (2019); Evaluation of Humanitarian Mine Action (2015); Evaluation of Humanitarian Mine Action (2015); Evaluation of Forced Displacement and Finnish Development Policy (2018)

41 Evaluation of Forced Displacement and Finnish Development Policy (2018); Evaluation of the Country Strategy instrument in fragile situations (2019)

42 Evaluation of the Country Strategy instrument in fragile situations (2019); Evaluation of Humanitarian Mine Action (2015)

43 Evaluation of Finnish CSOs receiving programme-based humanitarian funding (2017); Evaluation of the Country Strategy instrument in fragile situations (2019)

44 Evaluation of the Country Strategy instrument in fragile situations (2019)

45 Evaluation of Forced Displacement and Finnish Development Policy (2018);

46 Evaluation of the Country Strategy instrument in fragile situations (2019)





to the infringement of rights and whether these are targeted by the MFA-supported intervention; and a lack of clarity on whether projects aimed to contribute to the recognition of rights holders and duty bearers/ their corresponding rights, responsibilities and obligations.<sup>47</sup>

The evaluation of the “Improvement of Women’s and Girls’ Rights in Finland’s Development Policy and Cooperation” found that Finland had contributed to good practices and lessons learnt for promoting gender equality across all aid modalities, including humanitarian assistance. It concluded that these strategies can inform policies and programming, e.g. through incorporation in gender analyses early in the programme planning. However, the evaluation identified also gaps in the prevailing gender Theory of Change, as well as in gender monitoring and evaluation capacity and systems.<sup>48</sup>

Finally, the assessment of Finland’s response to COVID-19 (ongoing) will assess the MFA’s adaptive capacity and its cooperation with other global actors during the pandemic.<sup>49</sup> It will review how flexibly the MFA acted e.g., in allocating funding between different funding channels, including development and humanitarian.

## 6. Scope

The final scope will be agreed upon during the inception phase based on a desk study of the existing documentation. Initially, however:

The evaluation will cover the period 2016-current since that is the date of the World Humanitarian Summit. Based on the review of corporate-level information, and case study assessment in selected countries, it will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency (in terms of management) coherence, connectedness and coverage of Finland’s humanitarian assistance in relevant contexts.

Humanitarian assistance is allocated to different organisations through varying channels. The evaluation will assess these channels from the perspective of their effectiveness in achieving results, and also from the perspective of the efficiency of their management. While it will not adopt a ‘value for money’ lens, it should provide indications of how Finland can maximise the humanitarian results of the resources it commits.

The evaluation should not aim to provide individual country-level evaluations of humanitarian assistance in selected contexts, which would be beyond its scope. Instead, country cases will provide evidence contributions to the overarching synthesis report, which will, in turn, generate overarching findings and recommendations. Country cases, while applying the overarching evaluation questions, should tailor their analysis for the country level, and produce Lessons/Implications to support country stakeholders in their subsequent programming, for example when transitioning from humanitarian assistance to development cooperation or where sudden onset crises lead to the suspension of development activities.

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47 Review of Human Rights-Based Approach in Finland’s Development Policy related to Forthcoming Evaluation (2018)

48 Evaluation of Women and Girls’ Rights in Finland’s Development Policy and cooperation (2018)

49 Terms of Reference, Assessment of the Response of Finnish Development Policy and Cooperation to COVID-19 (2021)



Finally, the evaluation should focus on the specific issues surrounding Finland's use of humanitarian assistance, drawing on the experience of the country cases. It should not seek to make general statements about Finland's cooperation as a whole, e.g. in more development-focused contexts.

## 7. Issues to be addressed and evaluation questions

The evaluation should apply the following criteria and questions. Evaluation criteria<sup>50</sup> should be specifically defined for the evaluation during the Inception Phase. Within case studies, the analysis should enable context-specific responses to the evaluation questions.

The overarching evaluation questions are as follows:

- Which are the successes, challenges and possible limitations in the management of Finnish humanitarian assistance vis a vis its objectives?
- What has Finland's assistance delivered in terms of results for humanitarian assistance?
- What influence does Finland have on the partner organisations through which it directs its assistance?

The evaluation sub-questions, aligned against key criteria, are as follows:

EVALUATION CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS
Relevance	<p>To what extent was Finland's humanitarian assistance relevant to the needs of beneficiaries, considering available resources?</p> <p>To what extent was the assistance relevant to the needs of key stakeholders, including government, civil society and others?</p> <p>To what extent did the assistance adapt appropriately over time, including in relation to changing humanitarian needs?</p>
Effectiveness	<p>What results for beneficiaries and other stakeholders were delivered by Finland's humanitarian assistance?</p> <p>What results were delivered for non-discrimination, including gender equality and the empowerment of women?</p> <p>To what extent has Finland supported the promotion of localization of aid?</p> <p>To what extent has Finland been able to influence and promote Finland's Humanitarian Policy priorities in the multilateral organizations or Finnish CSOs that are used to channel the humanitarian assistance?</p>
Efficiency	<p>Is the management of humanitarian assistance flexible, adaptive and agile, able to react appropriately to emerging crises?</p>

<sup>50</sup> OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria (currently under adaptation) and ALNAP Adaption of OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria for Humanitarian Action



EVALUATION CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS
Coherence (internal and external)	<p>External</p> <p>To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance align with the strategic direction and priorities of its partners in the context?</p> <p>To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance align with development assistance and/or conflict prevention/peacebuilding activities in the same context?</p> <p>Internal</p> <p>To what extent does the current choice of funding channels contribute to the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, i.e. is Finland working with the right partners, considering its Humanitarian Policy?</p> <p>To what extent has it been possible to establish synergies between different MFA cooperation modalities, i.e. international and national level partnerships of CSOs, INGO cooperation when transitioning from humanitarian aid to development cooperation or peacebuilding and vice-versa?</p> <p>Are the various aid and cooperation modalities within MFA sufficiently coordinated to avoid duplication?</p>
Connectedness	<p>To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance adhere to international commitments on the International Humanitarian Principles and Do No Harm?</p> <p>To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance establish links between humanitarian aid and development cooperation and/or peacebuilding efforts (the 'nexus')?</p>

## 8. General approach and methodology

The evaluation should be **theory-based**, seeking to define the theory of change for humanitarian assistance. It should generate an indicative theory of change or logic model based on Finland's Humanitarian Policy of 2019.

The evaluation should adopt a **mixed-method approach**, to be developed during the Inception Phase of the evaluation. This should combine quantitative and qualitative assessment methods, allowing for effective triangulation and verification of the evidence. Secondary sources will be used to generate results data. The evaluation design should demonstrate how triangulation of methods and multiple information sources will be used to generate findings, as reflected in an evaluation matrix. The evaluation design should also consider that much data, particularly on results, will rest with delivery partners such as multilateral organisations.

The design should pay attention to all **Finnish policy priorities**, including the do no harm principle to development and the humanitarian principles including non-discrimination and gender equality.

A **utilization-focused approach**: To support utility, the evaluation design process should prioritise engagement with MFA and the Reference Group of the evaluation. It should also engage with other ongoing exercises, such as the assessment of the COVID-19 response, to explore synergies and avoid any possible duplication or overlap.

Encompass the **triple nexus**: Along with the 'nexus' approach identified in the Humanitarian Policy, the 'humanitarian-development-peace nexus' approach requires cooperation between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation while also building links to conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. With much of Finland's humanitarian assistance directed through multilateral



agencies, the evaluation will need to encompass a focus on how its assistance supports coherence between these triple aims.

The **multilateral influencing** of Finland's policy priorities for its humanitarian assistance: The extent to which Finland has been able to advance policy priorities including human rights-based approaches, gender equality and the localization of humanitarian assistance are a priority for the evaluation. Adherence to the International Humanitarian Principles and Do No Harm edicts should also be included.

**Integrate ethical standards** The evaluation design should also adhere to all relevant ethical standards, including cultural sensitivity, and respect the confidentiality and anonymity of those interviewed.

In terms of the **evaluation process**: A mission to Helsinki will be required, to conduct interviews at the HQ level. Options for the conduct of country cases will be considered at the Inception stage, and – depending on COVID-19 restrictions – may take the form of either in-country missions or desk studies supported by remote interviews. Where cases are field-based, these will take the form of one-week country missions, and will focus on the overall Finnish portfolio of humanitarian assistance. To ensure that the field visits bring maximum value-added, desk study of documentation will be required before undertaking field missions.

The evaluation inception report should include a review of key documentation, the conceptual and theoretical basis of the evaluation, the indicative theory of change (which should be tested and refined through the evaluation process); the intended methodology; the evaluation matrix and tools; and fieldwork plan as well as the overall intended schedule for the evaluation.

## 8.1 Proposed methods

The key methods anticipated for the evaluation include:

**Desk review** of MFA documentation. The main document sources of information include the Humanitarian Policy and associated documentation; annual humanitarian assistance budget and expenditure data; and previous evaluations and studies, as well as policy influencing plans for/agreements with multilateral organizations, MFA reports and project/programme related material. Specific documents will be identified during the inception phase. Since some material is available only in Finnish, Finnish team members are an essential requirement for the evaluation. Desk review will draw on material already available e.g. elements of the multilateral influencing methodology developed by the 2019 evaluation of Finnish Development Policy Influencing Activities in Multilateral Organisations.

**Key stakeholder interviews** should include (i) the Reference Group for the evaluation (ii) staff and management from the Humanitarian Unit and other concerned departments and units in Helsinki; (iii) Regional desk officers; (iv) Embassy staff in countries identified for case study; (v) representatives of key multilateral and CSO organisations through which Finnish humanitarian assistance is channelled; and (vi) government representatives where feasible in the countries identified for the case study. The modality for interviews will depend on travel possibilities, but it is anticipated that interviews in Finland at least can be conducted on a face to face basis through missions. The inception phase will confirm the key stakeholders to be interviewed.



**Country cases.** The evaluation inception phase will identify a set of three cases for the evaluation. These will be purposively selected to identify a range of humanitarian contexts in which Finland's humanitarian assistance is delivered. Possible sampling parameters may include: (i) scale of Finland's engagement in relation to wider humanitarian support, (ii) nature of humanitarian context (conflict and/or natural-disaster affected, refugee/IDP populations, political economy features, etc) (iii) regional diversity (iv) delivery channels (multilateral/CSO). The country cases will be presented as additional data streams for the evaluation, rather than 'mini evaluations' in themselves.

**Lesson-learning from other humanitarian donors** to explore whether lessons are available on Finland on how comparatively small humanitarian donors maximise the use and influence of their humanitarian assistance

## 8.2 Data analysis

The following main elements should be included in data analysis:

- **Policy analysis** of the 2019 Humanitarian Policy and associated guidelines, to verify its alignment with international norms and standards for humanitarian assistance
- An assessment of humanitarian assistance **financial flows and commitments** over time, including to different partner types;
- **Programme analysis** to assess whether humanitarian funding decisions are aligned with the Humanitarian Policy and other Finnish policy priorities such as HRBAs and gender equality, as well as the International Humanitarian Principles and Do No Harm
- **Review of other small humanitarian donors** with a similar financing profile. Examples might include Ireland and/or Denmark.
- **Identification of good practices** to extract, distil and present areas of learning which can benefit MFA both in its programming of and partnerships for humanitarian assistance.

## 8.3 Potential limitations

Potential limitations to the evaluation include:

The channelling of humanitarian assistance through multilateral organisations and CSOs means that the evaluation will be heavily dependent on access to, and data from, these organisations (including planning and results data especially). Thus, the evaluation design will need to take account of possible data paucity.

Other potential limitations include

- The feasibility of fieldwork in volatile and challenging operating contexts, which may be affected by security risks and/or changing conditions under COVID-19
- Lack of stakeholder engagement, which is a common factor in highly demanding operating contexts



The Inception report should set out how these, and any other risks and limitations identified, will be addressed.

## 9. Evaluation process, timelines and deliverables

The evaluation will take place during 2021/2022. It began in August 2021 by nominating the reference group and launching the process for identifying Team Leader candidates and ends in September 2022. The evaluation follows the general phasing of the Evaluation Management Services (EMS) framework used by the Development Evaluation Unit (EVA-11). The timetable below is tentative, except for the final report.

The evaluation consists of the following phases and will produce the respective deliverables. During the process, particular attention should be paid to strong inter-team coordination and information sharing within the team. Communication between the Evaluation Manager and Team Leader and the Evaluation Management Service (EMS) Coordinator is crucial. It is highlighted that a new phase is initiated only when the deliverables of the previous phase have been approved by the Evaluation Manager. The revised reports have to be accompanied by a table of received comments and responses to them.

The evaluation is divided into five phases. A summary of the deliverables defining each phase is listed here, with details and a tentative timeline below. The timeline below is indicative and will be finalized during the Inception Phase.

### Phase A: Planning phase: September 2021 (SO1)

- Preparation of the draft Terms of Reference for discussion with the Reference Group (RG)
- Deadline for the draft ToR: **25 October 2021**
- Finalization of the ToR and submission for approval (including commenting in writing by the Reference Group): **10 November 2021**

### Phase B: Start-up phase: November 2021 (SO2)

- Recruitment of the assessment team members
- Kick-off meeting with the Reference Group, **18 November 2021**

### Phase C: Inception phase: November- December 2021

- Submission of Draft Inception Report, **10 December**
- Inception meeting, **17 December 2021 (in the morning)**
- Submission of the Final Inception Report, **22 December 2021**



#### **Phase D: Implementation phase: January – mid-May 2022**

- Desk review and conduct of consultations virtually and in Finland, January - February 2022
- Country cases, February - March, 2022
- Visits to selected HUM partners (tbd), February-March, 2022
- Validation workshop (including internal FCR workshop), May 2022 (tbd) (Helsinki)

#### **Phase E: Reporting/Dissemination Phase: mid-May - September 2022**

- Draft Final Report submission, **early June 2022**
- Meeting on Draft Final Report (and commenting), **mid-June 2022**
- Final Report, **August 2022**
- Public Presentations, **September 2022.**

The language of all reports and possible other documents is English. The time needed for the commenting of different reports is 2 weeks. The timetables are tentative, except for the final reports.

- Planning Phase

The Development Evaluation Unit will finalize the ToR of the evaluation in consultation with the team leader.

The following meetings will be organized during the planning phase. Meetings can be face-to-face or video meetings.

- A planning meeting with the EMS coordinator on required services, especially the qualifications and skills of the team leader.
- A planning meeting with the team leader on evaluation approach and methodological requirements (with TL and EMS coordinator)
- A meeting for finalizing the ToR and identifying the skills and qualifications of the rest of the team (with TL and EMS Coordinator, liaison with the reference group)

**Deliverable:** The Team Leader will submit the draft ToR in liaison with the Evaluation Manager and the EMS Service Coordinator.

- Start-up Phase

The following meetings will be organized during the start-up phase:

**1. The administrative meeting** will be held online 18 November 2021. The purpose of the meeting is to go through the evaluation process, related practicalities and to build common understanding on the ToR and administrative arrangements. Agreed minutes will be prepared by the EMS consultant.



Participants in the administrative meeting: The Evaluation Manager and the Team Leader and the EMS coordinator of the Consultant.

**2. The start-up meeting with the reference group** will be held right before the administrative meeting and its purpose is to establish a community to enable dialogue and learning together as well as to get to know the evaluation team and the reference group. The purpose is also to provide the evaluation team with a general picture of the subject of the evaluation. The Team Leader/evaluation team will present its understanding of the evaluation, the initial approach of the evaluation and the evaluation questions.

Participants in the start-up meeting: the Evaluation Manager (responsible for inviting and chairing the session), reference group, Team Leader, evaluation team members and EMS coordinator of the Consultant.

Deliverables: Presentation of the approach and methodology by the Team Leader, Agreed minutes of the two meetings by the EMS consultant.

- Inception phase

The inception phase includes preliminary desk analysis and preparation of a detailed evaluation plan. The desk study includes preliminary context and document analysis based on existing evaluations, studies and other material as well as project documentation of the field case countries/regions and relevant influencing plans for multilateral organizations. It will also include mapping of humanitarian assistance and its channelling via partner organisations.

The Inception Report should include a draft work plan and a refined budget.

The inception report should consist of the desk study and evaluation plan which includes the following:

- context analysis
- initial findings and conclusions of the desk study (strategic level)
- constructed theory of change and analytical framework
- finalization of the methodology
- an evaluation matrix including evaluation questions, indicators, methods for data collection and analysis
- tentative implementation plan for stakeholder consultations with a clear division of work (participation, interview questions/guides/checklists, preliminary list of stakeholders and organizations to be contacted);
- final work plan and division of work between team members
- anticipated risks and limitations plus mitigation
- budget.





The draft inception report will be submitted by 10 December 2021. It will be discussed and the needed changes agreed in the inception meeting in December 2021, tentatively scheduled for 17 December, and to be held online.

Participants in the inception meeting: Evaluation Manager (EVA-11, responsible for inviting and chairing the session), reference group, Team Leader, evaluation team members, EMS coordinator of the Consultant, consortium Project Manager.

Venue: Helsinki

Deliverables: Inception report including the evaluation plan, desk study and the minutes of the inception meeting by the EMS Consultant

- Implementation phase

The implementation phase will take place from January – mid-May 2022. It will include visits to/ remote interviews with humanitarian partners in Finland/elsewhere and field visits to/desk study of selected case study countries. Country case study work should pay particular attention to the human rights-based approach, and to ensure that women, girls, children and easily marginalised groups will also participate (see UNEG guidelines). Data collection should also take place from sources outside the immediate stakeholders (e.g. statistics and comparison material). Where field missions are in-person, the consultancy team should organise a debriefing/validation workshop at the end of each country visit.

A validation meeting of the initial overall evaluation findings (not yet conclusions or recommendations) will be arranged during the first half of May 2022. The purpose of the validation meeting is to share initial findings and also validate them. The meeting may be in-person in Helsinki or online.

After the field visits and workshops, it is likely that further interviews and document study in Finland will still be needed to complement the information collected during the earlier phases.

Deliverables/meetings: At least (i) a debriefing/validation workshop supported by PowerPoint presentations on the preliminary results of each case study, and (ii) a validation meeting held either in Helsinki or remotely. Participants for (i) will include the case study team and MFA/Embassy of Finland representatives and (ii) Evaluation Unit, the reference group, other relevant staff/stakeholders, the Team Leader (responsible for chairing the session), team members and the EMS Coordinator

- Reporting and dissemination phase

The reporting and dissemination phase will take place May-mid-September 2022 and produce the final report. Dissemination of the results is organized during this phase.

The draft report will be delivered early June 2022. The report should be kept clear, concise and consistent. The report must follow writing instructions and template provided by MFA and it should contain inter alia the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. The logic between these elements should be clear and based on evidence.

The final draft report will be sent for a round of comments by the parties concerned. The purpose of the comments is only to correct any misunderstandings or factual errors. The time needed for commenting is 2 weeks.



The final draft report must include abstract and summaries (including the table on main findings, conclusions and recommendations). It must be of high and publishable quality. It must be ensured that the translations use commonly used terms in development cooperation. The consultant is responsible for the editing, proof-reading and quality control of the content and language.

The report will be finalised based on comments received and must be ready by end August 2022. The final report must include abstract and summaries (including the table on main findings, conclusions and recommendations) in Finnish, Swedish and English. The Finnish speaking senior evaluator will be responsible for Finnish translations of good quality. The final report will be delivered in Word-format with all the tables and pictures also separately in their original formats.

In addition, the MFA requires access to the evaluation team's interim evidence documents, e.g. completed matrices, although it is not expected that these should be of publishable quality. The MFA treats these documents as confidential if needed.

Deliverables: Final report (draft final report and final report) and methodological note by the quality assurance expert.

A management meeting on the final results will be organized in Helsinki tentatively in September 2022 and the Team Leader and the EMS Coordinator must be present in person.

A public presentation on the results will be organized on the same visit as the final management meeting. It is expected that at least the Team leader is present. It will be agreed later which other team members will participate.

Team leader and other team members will give a presentation of the findings in a public Webinar. Presentation can be delivered from distance. Only a sufficient internet connection is required.

The MFA will prepare a management response to the recommendations.

## 10. Expertise Required

One Team Leader level expert will be identified as the Team Leader of the whole evaluation. The Team Leader will lead the work and will be ultimately responsible for the deliverables. The evaluation team will work under the leadership of the Team Leader who carries the final responsibility of completing the evaluation.

The team should consist of a limited number of experts (3-4) covering the balanced coverage of the following knowledge/expertise areas:

- Knowledge of and experience with humanitarian assistance within the global policy environment
- Knowledge of MFA systems, approaches and working modalities
- Knowledge of multilateral agency humanitarian assistance, particularly the UN, and also CSOs
- Experience of working in humanitarian contexts, including fragile situations



- Relevant language skills including Finnish
- Knowledge of the IHPs, gender, protection and AAP

The team should be gender-balanced, and the competencies of the team members shall be complementary. Team members' previous collaboration is seen as a strong advantage.

If fieldwork is to be conducted, the EMS Coordinator will propose evaluators from the selected case study countries to include them into the evaluation team. The skills and experience of the proposed experts have to correspond or exceed the minimum requirements of the evaluation team members. The Evaluation Manager will approve the experts.

The competencies of the team members shall be complementary. All team members shall have fluency in English and at least one senior evaluator must have fluency in Finnish, because part of the documentation is available only in Finnish. MFA document material classified as restricted use (classified as IV levels in the MFA, or confidential in other organizations) cannot be saved, processed or transmitted by any cloud services or unsecured emails and google translators or other any other web-based translators cannot be used to translate these documents.

The Team Leader and the team have to be available until the reports have been approved by the Evaluation Manager, even when timetables change.

The evaluation team should consist of 3-4 international plus country experts (tbd). An emerging evaluator will be part of the evaluation team.

## **11. Quality assurance of the Consultant**

### **11.1 Internal quality assurance:**

The consortium implementing this evaluation will put in place a three-layer system of quality assurance for all products/reports: at the level of the Team Leader, through the EMSC&D, and in-house senior QA advisors.

The Consultant is in charge of the impeccable quality of English, Swedish and Finnish texts of the reports and related proofreading. The EMSC will be responsible for the good quality translations in Finnish. All deliverables shall be of publishable quality.

The evaluation team should do their best not to exceed the total length of 80 pages for the main evaluation report and prepare an executive summary that is publishable as a stand-alone document and that includes visualizations. A separate volume on annexes may be produced. It will be agreed upon during the inception phase which of the final deliverables are to be published. The inception report should also outline the structure of the main report and the planned contents of the annex(es).

The report should be kept clear, concise, and consistent. The report must follow the writing instructions and template provided by the MFA, and it should contain, among other things, the evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The logic between those should be clear and based on evidence.



The final draft report(s) will be sent for a round of comments by EVA-11. The purpose of the comments is only to correct any misunderstandings or factual errors.

## **11.2 External quality assurance:**

It should be noted that EVA-11 has contracted an internationally recognised expert as a Critical Friend (external peer reviewer) for the whole process. The person interacts directly with EVA-11 and provides expert opinions on the planning and implementation of the evaluations. EVA-11 may or may not integrate any such external advice as part of their overall feedback and management responses to the evaluation.

## **12. Management of the evaluation**

The evaluation is commissioned by the EVA-11. The Evaluation Manager of EVA-11 will be responsible for the overall management of the process. The Evaluation Manager will work closely with other units/departments of the MFA and other stakeholders in Finland and abroad.

This evaluation is managed through the EMS, and it will be conducted by an independent evaluation team recruited by the EMS service provider (Particip GmbH – Niras Finland Oy).

There will be one Management Team responsible for the overall coordination of the evaluation. This consists of the EVA-11 Evaluation Manager, the Team Leader, and the EMS Service Coordinator and/or Deputy Service Coordinator (EMSC&D).

A reference group for the evaluation will be established and chaired by the Evaluation Manager. The reference group is constituted to facilitate the participation of relevant stakeholders in the design and scoping of the evaluation, informing others about the progress of the evaluation, raising awareness of the different information needs, quality assurance throughout the process, and using and disseminating the evaluation results.

The mandate of the reference group is to provide quality assurance, advisory support, and inputs to the evaluation, e.g., through participating in the planning of the evaluation and commenting on deliverables of the Consultant. The reference group is critical in guaranteeing transparency, accountability, and credibility, as well as the use of the evaluation and validating the results.

The Team Leader will manage the evaluation team. This requires careful planning to ensure that a common, consistent approach is used to achieve comparability of the data gathered and the approach used in the analysis.

The Team Leader will develop a set of clear protocols for the team to use and will convene regular online team meetings to discuss the approach. Particular attention should be paid to strong inter-team coordination and information sharing within the team during the process.

The evaluation team is responsible for identifying relevant stakeholders to be interviewed and organising the interviews. The MFA and embassies will not organize these interviews or meetings on behalf of the evaluation team but will assist in identifying people and organizations to be included in the evaluation.



### **13. Budget**

The estimated maximum budget for this evaluation is EUR 305 000 including the contingency. Due to Covid-19 related limitations, the budget does not include travel costs, but should the situation improve, such expenses may be included later. The final budget will be decided during the Inception Phase.

### **14. Mandate**

The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organizations. However, it is not authorised to make any commitments on behalf of the Government of Finland or the Ministry. The evaluation team does not represent the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in any capacity.

All intellectual property rights to the result of the Service referred to in the Contract will be the exclusive property of the Ministry, including the right to make modifications and hand over material to a third party. The Ministry may publish the result under Creative Commons license to promote openness and public use of evaluation results.

### **15. Authorisation**

Helsinki, X.10.2021

Anu Saxén  
Director  
Development Evaluation Unit  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland



## Annex 3. Approach and Methodology

### Approach

**Evaluation criteria:** The evaluation applied the following criteria to guide analysis, contextualised and defined for the evaluation (Table 19):

**Table 19 Contextualised valuation criteria**

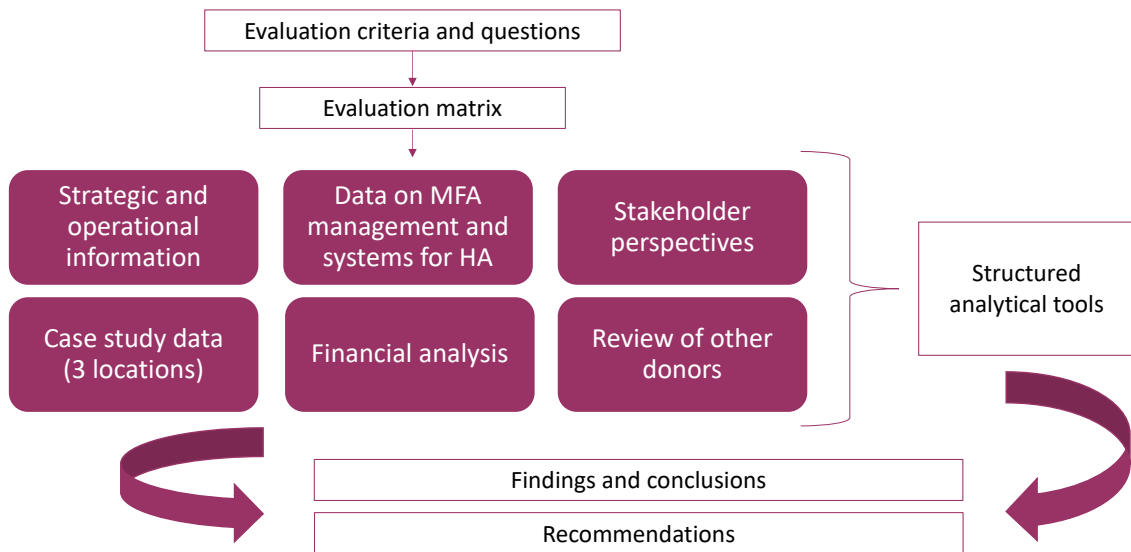
CRITERION	INTERPRETATION FOR THE EVALUATION
Relevance	The extent to which Finnish humanitarian assistance responded to local needs, including those of affected populations, and adapted to meet changing needs over time.
Effectiveness	The extent to which Finland's humanitarian assistance delivered its intended results, including for non-discrimination, encompassing gender equality and the empowerment of women, and promoted localization of aid. The extent to which Finnish humanitarian assistance has been influential in promoting Finnish policy priorities for humanitarian assistance.
Efficiency	The extent to which the management of Finnish humanitarian assistance has allowed it to react appropriately and in an agile way to crises
Coherence	The extent to which Finland's humanitarian assistance aligned with the assistance of partners. The extent to which the assistance was internally coherent, e.g. through choice of funding channels and other MFA cooperation modalities
Connectedness	The extent to which Finland's humanitarian assistance adhered to international humanitarian commitments and principles, and considered the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus

*Source: Evaluation team*

**Logic model and evaluation matrix:** To operationalise its theory-based approach (see Annex 1, Terms of Reference), it also developed the Logic model presented at Figure 2 of the evaluation report, and the evaluation Matrix presented at Annex 4. The matrix formed the main analytical 'spine' of the evaluation, against which all data was gathered and analysed. All other enquiry tools, such as structured tools for data gathering and analysis, below, were geared towards it.

**Evidence pillars:** The overall design of the evaluation was built on six 'evidence pillars' (Figure 10 below), which were combined through a mixed-methods approach. The model combined quantitative and qualitative data, set against the backdrop of the logic model, to answer the evaluation questions.

**Figure 10 Evidence pillars**



Source: Evaluation team

The data content of each evidence pillar was as follows:

**Pillar 1: Strategic and operational documentation:** This included a wide range of sources, from MFA’s policy frameworks for humanitarian assistance through to its annual plans and commitments to partners, as well as wider policy documentation on e.g. the nexus. It also encompassed on the wider national international policy frameworks that have guided Finland’s decisions on its humanitarian assistance, and the intersections between these. It also reviewed a sample of agreements between Finland and its key humanitarian partners (multilateral and CSO).

**Pillar 2: Institutional systems analysis** This pillar reviewed Finland’s systems, procedures and decision-making processes around its humanitarian assistance, as well as the guidance available for decision-making. It analysed the content of the two Finnish humanitarian policies and reviewed multilateral influencing plans for relevant humanitarian partner organisations. It sought to understand, why and on what basis Finland made its choices for humanitarian assistance during the period of review, and how it had accordingly translated these choices into programmatic engagement.

**Pillar 3: Stakeholder perspectives:** This was an important component of the methodology, to capture diverse views and understandings regarding how and why Finland has made its decisions on humanitarian assistance; the constraints it faces, and opportunities seized and/or missed. Most interviews took place remotely, even for case study countries, given travel restrictions at the time. Those interviewed included MFA staff, multilateral organisations and Finnish CSOs.

**Pillar 4: Case study data** Three case studies were conducted, of the Syrian regional emergency response (Middle East); South Sudan and Bangladesh. These were selected for (i) scale of Finnish assistance and diversity of portfolio in terms of implementing partner (ii) geographical diversity and (iii) differing humanitarian contexts. Ethiopia had originally been selected as a case study but was replaced with South Sudan due to (i) access and (ii) security concerns. Data collection in the case studies was conducted by the regional consultants, with many interviews conducted remotely even in-situ, given restrictions under COVID-19 regulations.



Finnish contributions to eight organisations were also studied in more depth. These comprised the five largest multilateral recipients of Finnish humanitarian assistance (WFP, UNHCR, CERF, the Red Cross movement and UNRWA), and three CSOs: FCA, Save the Children and Finnish Refugee Council. They were selected for diverse scale of support received; international vs local Finnish organisation; and different operational geographies. Interviews were conducted with donor relations officers for these organisations, to better understand Finnish influence, and analysis of multilateral influencing plans/financial agreements and a small sample of interventions funded by Finland analysed.

**Pillar 5: Financial data:** Although it took some time to confirm the availability of data, with three possible datasets presented, it was eventually agreed to use MFA Humanitarian Unit data as the most reliable indicator of Finland’s humanitarian assistance. This pillar comprised analysis of Finland’s overall humanitarian assistance in the time period, exploring patterns of investment over the period 2016-2021. It allowed the evaluation to track trends in investment by volume, partner, investment modality etc.

**Pillar 6: Learning from other donors** Although comparison or benchmarking with other humanitarian donor agencies was not appropriate given diverse approaches and volumes of assistance, Ireland and Denmark were identified for analysis, since they have broadly similar operating models. However, the scale of resources was so different that in the end, little additional value was gained.

## Data Collection Methods

The evaluation design applied a mixed-method approach. The use of structured tools was prioritised, to maximise validity and reliability. Methods included (Table 20).

**Table 20 Methods per evidence pillar**

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTATION
<p><i>Structured documentary analysis of core documentation</i> applying a structured tool geared to the Evaluation Matrix. As well as policy documents, this pillar mapped a sample of agreements between Finland and its key humanitarian partners (multilateral and CSO) for the ‘top five’ (UNHCR, WFP, the Red Cross movement, CERF and UNRWA) and a selection of CSOs (FCA, Save the Children and Finnish Refugee Council). Additional information included previous evaluations and studies.</p>
INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS REVIEW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Systematic documentary analysis using structured tools</i> of Finland’s systems, procedures and decision-making processes around its humanitarian assistance, as well as the guidance for funding allocations and knowledge management systems for understanding the performance of humanitarian partners internally. This pillar sought to understand the linkages between decision-making and information flows between Helsinki and humanitarian contexts in which Finnish Embassies are present as well as the role of the Permanent Mission of Finland in Geneva.</li> <li>• <i>Semi-structured interviews</i> were conducted, in-person or remotely of MFA staff, partners and other relevant stakeholders.</li> </ul>
STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES
<p><i>Semi-structured interviews were conducted</i>, either in-person or remotely of MFA staff, partners and other relevant stakeholders, of an agreed list of interlocutors. The evaluation particularly sought the perspectives of those outside MFA.</p>





## CASE STUDY

- *Structured documentary analysis of a total of 30 MFA humanitarian assistance projects, including within the three case studies (see Annex 5).* This analysis applied a structured tool geared to the Evaluation Matrix.,
- Case study in the three contexts included:
- *Semi-structured interviews* with key MFA staff (Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy and Regional Desks) and field-based partners including government partners; UN partners/officials, Finnish CSOs, the Red Cross, civil society partners and others;
- *Mapping the investment profile against* the timeline to note any changes in regard to relevance etc.;
- *Structured analysis* of documentation not available at central level.

## FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

*Quantitative analysis* was undertaken of the financial profile of the assistance, using MFA Humanitarian Unit statistics. Key parameters for analysis included: geographical allocation; partner allocation; sector; core or project assistance etc. The humanitarian assistance portfolio was analysed since 2016 to map trends and changes.

## LEARNING FROM OTHER AGENCIES

Analysis was conducted of humanitarian assistance profiles of Ireland and Denmark, to see if any useful lessons would emerge.

Source: Evaluation team

**Structured tools:** Data gathering applied structured tools, geared to the evaluation matrix. Data was plotted into the relevant tools, so that findings were generated based on sound and transparent evidence. This approach helped ensure that data was collected transparently and systematically, but also in a manner which was sensitive to context.

**Non-discrimination and supporting the most vulnerable:** Both Humanitarian Policies (2012 and 2019) stress Finland's emphasis on non-discrimination, including gender equality, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. The evaluation design reflected the emphasis placed by the policy frameworks on these concerns by:

- Reflecting these issues within the evaluation matrix (Annex 4);
- Embedding them into enquiry tools, analysis and reporting;
- Disaggregating data where feasible, by gender and social group where data was available e.g. from humanitarian partners.

**Analysis and validity:** The evaluation design sought to ensure external and internal validity in four ways:

1. By applying the Evaluation Matrix as the main analytical spine for the evaluation;
2. Through the use of structured tools, geared in turn to the evaluation matrix, to ensure systematic data collection;
3. Ensuring the use of triangulation mechanisms and meta-level analysis at synthesis stage;
4. Adopting a consultative approach, particularly vis-à-vis Humanitarian Unit, so that findings were well-grounded and reflective of the institutional context.



Specific analytical processes applied are presented in Table 21.

**Table 21 Analytical processes**

CASE STUDIES	META-ANALYSIS
<p>Patterns of Finland's contributions to humanitarian results, will be identified in relation to the logic model;</p> <p>Explanatory factors will be identified, particularly as they relate to decision making and results;</p> <p>When all the data is plotted into the analytical tools, common patterns, contradictions and areas of difference will be sought out and explored across cases (though they will not be directly compared);</p> <p>Findings will be calibrated to the strength of the evidence, with limitations or gaps transparently reported.</p>	<p>The evaluation team came together at analysis stage to ensure full consolidation of evidence against the evaluation matrix; and to confirm/debate emerging analytical themes.</p> <p>Findings at the different levels of the logic model were identified and tracked; and evidence gaps transparently reported.</p> <p>Triangulation methods included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Investigator triangulation</i>, or the use of different team members to explore the same aspect of the evaluation, particularly across the different contexts studied, to ensure that findings were fully endorsed by all team members rather than being the 'province' of one particular evaluator;</li> <li>• <i>Methodological triangulation</i> (the use of different methods to explore the same aspect, and the use of multiple sources of data).</li> <li>• Validation also took place through dialogue with key stakeholders, with findings tested and discussed with the evaluation's interlocutors (particularly Unit for Humanitarian Assistance and Policy), with at least two such meetings held.</li> </ul>

Source: *Evaluation team*

**Limitations:** The main limitations to the study, and their mitigation, was as follows;

- **Quantifying humanitarian assistance volumes:** The evaluation faced challenges in quantifying volumes of Finnish humanitarian assistance, with three different datasets presented. Accordingly, data from the Unit for Humanitarian Aid and Policy was utilised, and the evaluation report notes that this is likely an underestimate of the actual volumes of assistance provided.
- **Data paucity:** The evaluation was heavily dependent on access to, and data from, partner humanitarian organisations (including planning and results data submitted to MFA especially). This was far from complete, although efforts were made to seek out data from partners, particularly in case studies, on Finnish-funded initiatives. In mitigation, available data was triangulated with stakeholder perspectives, and gaps have been transparently reported upon.
- Results data for the study was limited, with Finland's own aggregated results reporting for its humanitarian assistance extremely limited, and the linking of results from multi-stakeholder initiatives with Finnish contributions, to Finland's allocations of humanitarian assistance, methodologically unfeasible. Results data were therefore based on a combination of project reports, reviews/evaluations, which could not be independently verified by the evaluation, triangulated by interview and other qualitative data. Results presented by the evaluation are therefore caveated accordingly.
- **Case studies:** The component case studies presented in Volume 2 do not comprise full evaluations of Finnish humanitarian assistance in the three contexts. Rather, they offer limited insights to the context, generated through a systematic approach, to inform the wider evaluative process.



## Annex 4. Evaluation Matrix

SUB-QUESTIONS	PROGRESS MARKERS	METHODS / ANALYSIS	DATA SOURCES	ANALYSIS/ TRIANGULATION
<b>1. How relevant was Finnish humanitarian assistance to needs?</b>				
<p>1.1 To what extent was Finland's humanitarian assistance relevant to the needs of beneficiaries, considering available resources?</p>	<p>Grant application procedures/ partnership agreements with MFA's humanitarian assistance require the presentation of robust needs analysis, disaggregated by gender/ vulnerable group</p> <p>Sample projects base their design on robust needs analysis, including disaggregation by vulnerable group, including gender</p> <p>Sample projects present evidence of appropriate differentiation in project design &amp; implementation according to different needs and contexts (e.g. gender)</p> <p>Decision-making is evidence-based and objective, applying only a needs-based rationale</p>	<p>Systematic documentary analysis of core financing agreements</p> <p>Desk review of sample projects</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff, particularly in Embassies</p> <p>Interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government/other relevant authorities, implementing partners)</p>	<p>MFA, department and unit-level plans, guidelines, memos, reports related to humanitarian assistance</p> <p>Financing reports and memos, datasets of humanitarian financial commitments and disbursements, if needed: minutes of decision-making meetings</p> <p>Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data, including interview sources</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ Embassies</p> <p>Feedback from humanitarian partners</p>
<p>1.2 To what extent was the assistance relevant to the needs of key stakeholders, including government, civil society and others?</p>	<p>Evidence of alignment with key international (and where relevant national) humanitarian response plans, such as UN HRPs and others</p> <p>Evidence of strategic engagement with other donor policies and plans, civil society partner country level policies and priorities in the context</p>	<p>Systematic documentary analysis of core financing agreements</p> <p>Desk review of sample projects</p> <p>Systematic analysis of contextually-based humanitarian response plans</p> <p>Systematic analysis of partner policies and plans, including those of donors, UN agencies and CSOs</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Humanitarian response plans at national/international level</p> <p>Project sample</p> <p>Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data, including interview sources</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ Embassies</p> <p>Feedback from in-case study partners including government/ national authority, civil society and others</p>



SUB-QUESTIONS	PROGRESS MARKERS	METHODS / ANALYSIS	DATA SOURCES	ANALYSIS/ TRIANGULATION
<p>1.3 To what extent did the assistance adapt appropriately over time, including in relation to changing humanitarian needs?</p>	<p>Evidence that humanitarian assistance has evolved in response to changing needs</p> <p>Evidence of adaptive capacity e.g. scaling up or down in response to changing needs</p>	<p>Mapping of context changes (e.g. conflict, sudden-onset disasters etc).</p> <p>Mapping of humanitarian aid volumes, trends and direction over time</p> <p>Systematic documentary analysis of core financing agreements</p> <p>Desk review of sample projects</p> <p>Annual performance reporting on humanitarian assistance by MFA and partners</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Humanitarian aid statistics</p> <p>Project sample</p> <p>Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p> <p>Annual reports by MFA on humanitarian assistance</p> <p>Annual reports by partners</p> <p>UN Humanitarian Needs Overviews/ HRP over time</p>	<p>Analysis of changing patterns of humanitarian assistance over time</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ Embassies</p> <p>Triangulation across data, including interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>
<p><b>2. How effective was Finland's humanitarian assistance?</b></p>				
<p>2.1 What results for beneficiaries and other stakeholders were delivered by Finland's humanitarian assistance?</p>	<p>Quality of results frameworks for the humanitarian assistance including internal logic, realism of intended objectives, clear pathways to achievement and feasible targets (policy and partner financing agreements)</p> <p>Achievement against objectives and intended results of the assistance</p> <p>Evidence of any unanticipated effects (positive, negative) particularly for vulnerable groups</p>	<p>Systematic documentary analysis of core financing agreements</p> <p>Desk review of sample projects</p> <p>Annual performance reporting on humanitarian assistance by MFA and partners</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Annual reports on humanitarian assistance</p> <p>Humanitarian aid statistics</p> <p>Project sample</p> <p>Annual reports by MFA on humanitarian assistance</p> <p>Annual reports by partners</p> <p>Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data</p> <p>Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ Embassies</p>



SUB-QUESTIONS	PROGRESS MARKERS	METHODS / ANALYSIS	DATA SOURCES	ANALYSIS/ TRIANGULATION
<p>2.2 What results were delivered for non-discrimination, including gender equality and the empowerment of women?</p>	<p>Recognition within humanitarian policy frameworks of targeting non-discrimination and gender equality</p> <p>Recognition of non-discrimination and gender equality within humanitarian assistance financing agreements/projects</p> <p>Evidence of achievement against humanitarian assistance objectives and intended results related to non-discrimination and gender equality</p>	<p>Systematic documentary analysis of core financing agreements</p> <p>Desk review of sample projects</p> <p>Annual performance reporting on humanitarian assistance by MFA and partners</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Annual reports on humanitarian assistance including Country Strategy annual reports</p> <p>Annual reports by partners</p> <p>Humanitarian aid statistics</p> <p>Project sample</p> <p>Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data</p> <p>Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ Embassies</p>
<p>2.3 To what extent has Finland supported the promotion of localization of aid?</p>	<p>Recognition within humanitarian policy frameworks of the importance of localisation</p> <p>Recognition of localisation as a priority within humanitarian assistance financing agreements/ projects</p> <p>Demonstrable localisation of aid by humanitarian partners</p>	<p>Systematic documentary analysis of core financing agreements</p> <p>Desk review of sample projects</p> <p>Annual performance reporting on humanitarian assistance by MFA and partners</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Annual reports on humanitarian assistance</p> <p>Annual reports by partners</p> <p>Project sample</p> <p>Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data</p> <p>Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ Embassies</p>
<p>2.4 To what extent has Finland been able to influence and promote Finland's Humanitarian Policy priorities in the multilateral organizations or Finnish CSOs that are used to channel the humanitarian assistance?</p>	<p>Evidence of Finnish humanitarian policy priorities reflected in partner strategies and plans</p> <p>Evidence of Finnish comparative advantage in humanitarian settings recognised by partners</p>	<p>Systematic documentary analysis of partner strategies and plans for humanitarian assistance</p> <p>Annual performance reporting on humanitarian assistance by MFA and partners</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners, particularly donor relations officers)</p>	<p>Partner humanitarian strategies and plans</p> <p>Annual reports by MFA and partners</p>	<p>Triangulation across data</p> <p>Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ Embassies</p>



SUB-QUESTIONS	PROGRESS MARKERS	METHODS / ANALYSIS	DATA SOURCES	ANALYSIS/ TRIANGULATION
<b>3. How efficient was Finnish humanitarian assistance?</b>				
3.1 Is the management of humanitarian assistance flexible, adaptive and agile, able to react appropriately to emerging crises?	Evidence of flexibility in planning and procedures to allow for adaptation Evidence of timely decisions and actions in response to changing needs in humanitarian situations	Institutional analysis of humanitarian aid management systems and procedures Analysis of decision-making processes Analysis of annual humanitarian budgets by month Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners, particularly donor relations officers)	MFA, department and unit-level plans, guidelines, memos, reports related to humanitarian assistance Financing reports and memo Minutes of decision-making meetings Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)	Triangulation across data Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners) Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ Embassies
<b>4. How coherent was Finnish humanitarian assistance?</b>				
4.1 To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance align with the strategic direction and priorities of its partners in the context?	Reference to/clear statement of alignment with plans and policies of other key donors/ international actors in the context Evidence of efforts to align humanitarian responses with that of humanitarian partners Evidence of alignment between relevant multilateral influencing plans and humanitarian assistance	Analysis of partner humanitarian response plans Analysis of key multilateral influencing plans Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)	Partner humanitarian strategies and plans Annual reports by MFA and partners	Triangulation across data Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners) Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ country locations



SUB-QUESTIONS	PROGRESS MARKERS	METHODS / ANALYSIS	DATA SOURCES	ANALYSIS/ TRIANGULATION
<p>4.2 To what extent does the current choice of funding channels contribute to the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, i.e. is Finland working with right partners, considering its Humanitarian Policy?</p>	<p>Evidence of partner profile alignment with the objectives of Finland's humanitarian policy (2019) Evidence of partner effectiveness and efficiency in humanitarian delivery (evaluative or institutional assessment)</p>	<p>Analysis of partnership profile of humanitarian assistance, and its proportions Analysis of partner policy and operational objectives for humanitarian assistance Analysis of partner performance and effectiveness in humanitarian delivery Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Partner humanitarian strategies and plans, including objectives Annual reports by MFA and partners Performance assessments of humanitarian partners e.g. MOPAN assessments and others Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data sources Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners) Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ country locations</p>
<p>4.3 To what extent has it been possible to establish synergies between different MFA cooperation modalities, i.e. international and national level partnerships of CSOs, INGO cooperation when transitioning from humanitarian aid to development cooperation or peacebuilding and vice-versa?</p>	<p>Evidence of decision-making to ensure synergies between cooperation modalities in transitioning of humanitarian assistance to development/ peacebuilding cooperation (or vice-versa according to context) Evidence of alignment of cooperation modalities in transition.</p>	<p>Analysis of different cooperation modalities across assistance streams (humanitarian, development, peacebuilding) Desk review of sample projects Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Mapping of cooperation modalities within humanitarian assistance Annual reports on humanitarian assistance and Country Strategy annual reports Project sample Annual reports by partners Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data sources Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners) Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ country locations</p>
<p>4.4 Are the various aid and cooperation modalities within MFA sufficiently coordinated to avoid duplication?</p>	<p>Evidence that aid cooperation modalities are aware of each other, and make efforts to coordinate Evidence of decision-making to ensure complementarity in cooperation modalities at Helsinki and in humanitarian settings Evidence of harmonised approaches rather than duplication</p>	<p>Analysis of different cooperation modalities across assistance streams (humanitarian, development, peacebuilding) Desk review of sample projects Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Mapping of cooperation modalities within humanitarian assistance Annual reports on humanitarian assistance and Country Strategy annual reports Project sample Annual reports by partners Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data sources Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners) Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ country locations</p>



SUB-QUESTIONS	PROGRESS MARKERS	METHODS / ANALYSIS	DATA SOURCES	ANALYSIS/ TRIANGULATION
<b>5. How connected was Finnish assistance to international commitments and to other forms of cooperation?</b>				
<p>5.1 To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance adhere to international commitments on IHPs and Do No Harm?</p>	<p>Evidence of a clear statement within humanitarian policies of the importance of adherence to the commitments on the IHPs, DNH and AAP</p> <p>Evidence that grant application processes/partnership agreements for projects financed by humanitarian assistance require adherence to commitments on the IHPs and DNH.</p> <p>Evidence that funded project designs take into account, and ensure adherence to, the commitments on the IHPs and DNH.</p>	<p>Systematic analysis of the humanitarian policies and associated documentation regarding the IHPs and DNH</p> <p>Desk review of sample projects</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Humanitarian policies</p> <p>MFA documentation/statements regarding adherence to the IHPs and DNH</p> <p>Annual reports on humanitarian assistance and Country Strategy annual reports</p> <p>Project sample</p> <p>Annual reports by partners</p> <p>Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data sources</p> <p>Mapping of results achieved against Finnish commitments to the IHPs and DNH</p> <p>Mapping presence of adherence to IHPs, DNH and AAP within humanitarian assistance</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ country locations</p> <p>Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>
<p>5.2 To what extent did Finland's humanitarian assistance establish links between humanitarian aid and development cooperation and/or peacebuilding efforts (the 'nexus')?</p>	<p>Evidence of recognition within the humanitarian policies of either the importance of linking assistance to longer-term peacebuilding/ development goals and/or (post-2017) the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus</p> <p>Evidence of efforts to align humanitarian assistance with Finland's development assistance to the country, as well as conflict prevention/peacebuilding activities</p> <p>Evidence that Finland's humanitarian assistance includes a significant proportion of projects which focus on longer-term peacebuilding/ development goals and/or (post-2017) the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus</p>	<p>Systematic analysis of humanitarian policies and associated documentation regarding longer-term peacebuilding/development goals and/or the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus</p> <p>Systematic documentary analysis of core financing agreements</p> <p>Desk review of sample projects</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with MFA staff in country and at Helsinki level</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>	<p>Humanitarian policies</p> <p>MFA documentation/statements regarding the 'triple nexus' including recent Guidance on the Nexus</p> <p>Annual reports on humanitarian assistance and Country Strategy annual reports</p> <p>Project sample</p> <p>Annual reports by partners</p> <p>Any relevant evaluations (MTR, MTE, final evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Triangulation across data sources</p> <p>Mapping of results achieved against Finnish statements/intentions on longer-term peacebuilding/ development goals and/or the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus</p> <p>Feedback from MFA staff in Helsinki/ country locations</p> <p>Feedback from key partners (UN agencies, donors, government, implementing partners)</p>





SUB-QUESTIONS	PROGRESS MARKERS	METHODS / ANALYSIS	DATA SOURCES	ANALYSIS/ TRIANGULATION
<b>Conclusions</b>				
<p>Synthesising and aggregating evidence from the above questions to generate overall conclusions on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and connectedness of Finnish humanitarian assistance</li><li>2. The role of the 2019 Humanitarian Policy as a guiding instrument for assistance</li><li>3. The functioning and balance of partnerships and cooperation in Finnish humanitarian assistance;</li><li>4. The effectiveness and efficiency of management arrangements for humanitarian assistance</li></ol>				



## Annex 5. List of projects analysed

COUNTRY	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER TYPE	SECTOR	YEAR
Bangladesh	FCA	NGO	Multi-sector	2018
Bangladesh	FCA	NGO	Protection - other	2019
Bangladesh	FCA	NGO	Protection - other	2020
Bangladesh	FRC/ICRC	Red Cross Movement	Health	2017
Bangladesh	FRC/ICRC	Red Cross Movement	Health	2018
Bangladesh	UNHCR	Multilateral	Protection - aid to displaced	2019
South Sudan	FRC/ICRC	Red Cross Movement	Multi-sector	2020
South Sudan	UNHCR	Multilateral	Protection - aid to displaced	2021
South Sudan	WFP	Multilateral	Food assistance	2019
South-Sudan	FCA	NGO	Education	2020
South Sudan	FRC/ICRC	Red Cross Movement	Protection - other	2019
South Sudan	FCA	NGO	Multi-sector	2018
Syria crisis	UNHCR	Multilateral	Non-earmarked to Syria	2021
Syria	FRC/ICRC	Red Cross Movement	Multi-sector	2020
Syria	WFP	Multilateral	Food assistance	2016
Syria	UNFPA	Multilateral	SGBV	2021
Syria	UNICEF	Multilateral	Multi-sector	2016
Iraq	Save the Children	NGO	Multi-sector	2017
Syria	Fida International	NGO	Education	2019
Iraq	Save the Children	NGO	Multi-sector	2018
Syria crisis (Syrian refugees in Jordan)	FCA	NGO	Education	2019
Somalia	Save the Children	NGO	Multi-sector	2021
Yemen	WFP	Multilateral	Food assistance	2020
DR Congo	Fida International	NGO	Multi-sector	2021



COUNTRY	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER TYPE	SECTOR	YEAR
Iraq	Save the Children	NGO	Multi-sector	2017
Afghanistan	FRC/ICRC	Red Cross Movement	Health	2021
OPT	UNRWA	Multilateral	Multi-sector	2021
Myanmar	Finnish Refugee Council	NGO	Protection (GBV)	2021
Ethiopia, Tigray	UNHCR	Multilateral	Protection - aid to displaced	2021
Ethiopia	UNICEF	Multilateral	Multi-sector	2020



## Annex 6. Comparison of MFA Humanitarian Policies

GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF FINNISH HUMANITARIAN AID 2012 AND 2019	
2012	2019
<p><b>Goal 1: Finland is a responsible, timely and predictable donor</b></p> <p>Finland is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• channelling approximately 10% of the annual development cooperation budget to humanitarian assistance, and allocating funds to the poorest developing countries, based on need.</li> <li>• being a predictable, flexible and timely donor, and to further expediting the funding process.</li> <li>• channelling the majority of the humanitarian funding at the beginning of the year, based on the Consolidated Appeal Process.</li> <li>• concluding the main funding allocation process and the related payments within the first quarter of the year, and in the case of sudden-onset emergencies, making the required funding decisions within three days of receiving the appeal</li> </ul>	<p><b>Needs-based, non-discriminatory and effective Humanitarian Aid</b></p> <p>Finland's support is targeted at countries whose humanitarian situation has been assessed. Finland bears its responsibility as a donor, ensuring predictable and rapid funding, which is a basic precondition for effective humanitarian aid.</p> <p>Finland wants to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance is provided only for humanitarian purposes, not on basis of political, military or economic incentives;</li> <li>• Humanitarian organizations funded by Finland take into account non-discrimination, accessibility, gender equality and rights of persons with disabilities in their operations and ensure that humanitarian also respond to the needs of the gendered needs and needs of persons with disabilities and people of all ages;</li> <li>• Assistance is provided to beneficiaries whenever possible in cash instead of in-kind assistance so that those in need can acquire goods and services they need by themselves. This enhances the economic recovery in the region and increase the number of indirect beneficiaries;</li> <li>• Finland's activities contribute to supporting operational cooperation, strengthening donor coordination and improving the monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian aid;</li> <li>• Finnish Aid supports, as far as possible, the prevention, preparedness, DRR and recovery by strengthening local capacity. The compatibility of relief, recovery and development will be strengthened as well coordinating with other actions enhancing capabilities of communities and reducing vulnerability.</li> </ul>



## GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF FINNISH HUMANITARIAN AID 2012 AND 2019

2012	2019
<p><b>Goal 2: An effective, well-led and coordinated international humanitarian assistance system</b></p> <p>Finland is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• taking an active part in the donor dialogue and coordination and advocating for the broadening of the donor base.</li> <li>• promoting harmonised reporting, monitoring and evaluation practices and agencies' active reporting on the implementation of the humanitarian reform.</li> <li>• strengthening the position of humanitarian coordinators and improving system-wide accountability.</li> <li>• advocating for agencies' joint needs assessments.</li> <li>• promoting the effectiveness of the cluster approach and intercluster coordination among agencies.</li> <li>• preparing an annual plan to determine the key humanitarian reform related objectives and messages to be promoted in the governing bodies of aid organisations and other fora.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Finland supports the participation of beneficiaries and the rights of persons with disabilities, women and children.</b></p> <p>Finland's goal is that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The capacity of duty bearers to prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises is improved and ensure that beneficiaries are adequately involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and impact assessment of humanitarian action;</li> <li>• Humanitarian organizations and other actors mainstream climate and environmental aspects, gender equality and non-discrimination in their actions. In addition, these operators should pay special attention to the needs and rights of the most vulnerable, such as persons with disabilities, children, young people and women;</li> <li>• Operators pay special attention to persons with disabilities, women, girls and empowering young people and others who are easily discriminated;</li> <li>• Maintain livelihood and businesses opportunities in crisis affected areas, by restoration or creation, and enabling small and medium-sized entrepreneurship which would strengthen the self-reliance of the population and society. In support of livelihoods and entrepreneurship, emphasis is placed on promoting the livelihoods of specific groups, such as persons with disabilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal 3: Support is channelled through capable and experienced non-governmental organisations</b></p> <p>Finland is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advocating Finnish NGOs with significant experience of humanitarian assistance to gain DG ECHO's partnership status.</li> <li>• making participation in UN coordination and - in the case of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement exchange of information as a precondition of support.</li> <li>• enhancing exchange of information between the Ministry and NGOs through regular dialogue.</li> <li>• supporting genuine partnerships between the UN organisations and NGOs and the expedient transfer of funds from UN organisations to NGOs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Finland strengthens protection and respect for humanitarian principles</b></p> <p>Finland's aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strengthen respect for and accountability of humanitarian law;</li> <li>• emphasize the importance of protection of conditions and under which humanitarian aid operates and the protection of the civilian population and to increase discussion and understanding of humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law and their practical implications;</li> <li>• target protection especially for the most vulnerable; and who need support the most;</li> <li>• reduce SGBV and enable the realization of rights to sexual and reproductive health;</li> <li>• ensure the full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in all phases of humanitarian assistance.</li> </ul>



## GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF FINNISH HUMANITARIAN AID 2012 AND 2019

2012	2019
<p><b>Goal 4: Humanitarian principles are known and adhered to</b></p> <p>Finland is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actively promoting the principles of international humanitarian law, humanitarian space and the protection of civilians.</li> <li>supporting the ratification and implementation of international agreements concerning the position of IDPs and refugees, such as the Kampala Convention of the African Union.</li> <li>adhering to the UN guidelines on the use of military and civil defence assets in humanitarian aid operations and promoting greater awareness of them.</li> <li>strengthening awareness of international humanitarian law through training and communication.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Finland is intensifying the operation of the humanitarian system</b></p> <p>As a funding agency, Finland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides rapid, predictable, multi-annual, non-earmarked and flexible humanitarian funding that enhances the effectiveness and efficiency, transparency, timeliness and accountability of humanitarian aid;</li> <li>Advocates actively in the donor forums and thereby contributes to strengthening donor coordination, and expansion of the donor base;</li> <li>Through its own activities, Finland is committed to strengthening the coordination of humanitarian aid and development cooperation, for example by supporting joint situation analysis, needs assessment, planning, risk management and decision-making;</li> <li>Supports the establishment of cooperation for humanitarian work, development cooperation and between peace work (triple nexus);</li> <li>Supports the sharing of responsibilities on refugee issues in the line with the Global Compact on Refugees;</li> <li>Supports innovative and user - driven solutions.</li> <li>Supports the development and use of nature-based solutions, in particular for preparing for and recovering from natural disasters and climate risks;</li> <li>Supports stronger cooperation between humanitarian and development actors as well cooperation with private sector and industry to develop innovative solutions.</li> </ul>



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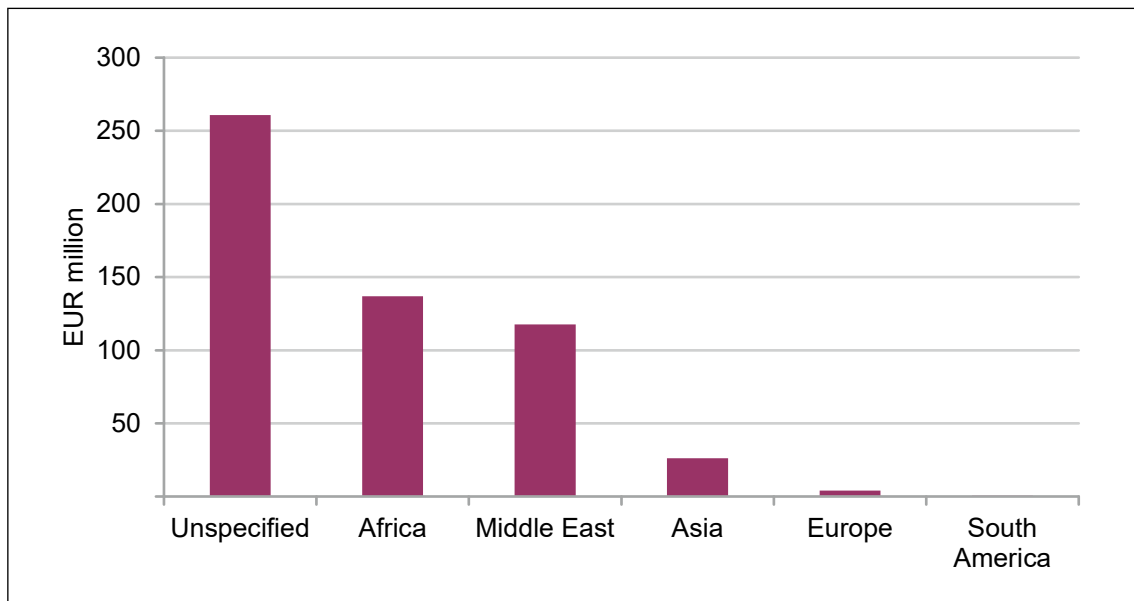


## Annex 8. Details on allocation of Finnish Humanitarian Aid

### Geographical spread of Finnish humanitarian assistance

More than 40% of the 2016-2021 Finnish humanitarian assistance is provided as core funding to partner humanitarian agencies funding to CERF and other purposes for which no country is specified. Regionally, a quarter is given to countries in Africa and a little less to the Middle East (21%). Asia has received less than 5% and other continents negligible amounts (Figure 11).

**Figure 11 Regional allocations of humanitarian assistance 2016-2021**

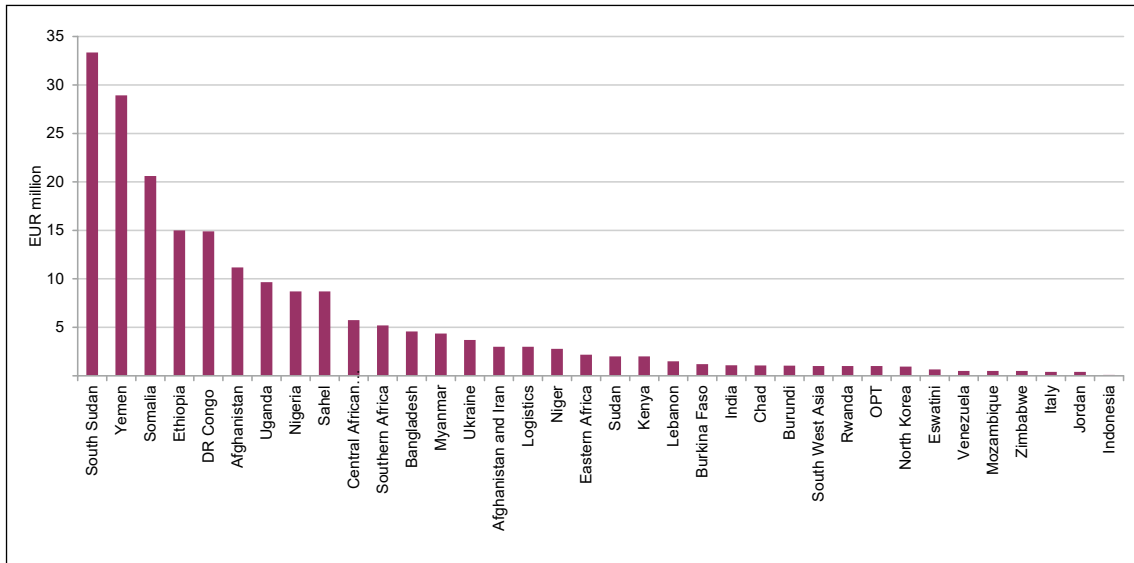


Source: MFA statistics

During 2016-2021, excluding 'unspecified' (core/CERF and allocations for e.g. monitoring and reporting) the assistance spread over 36 countries (Figure 12). The Syria regional crisis received almost 16% of the total humanitarian funding, followed by South Sudan, Yemen, and Somalia with 6, 5 and 4% respectively.



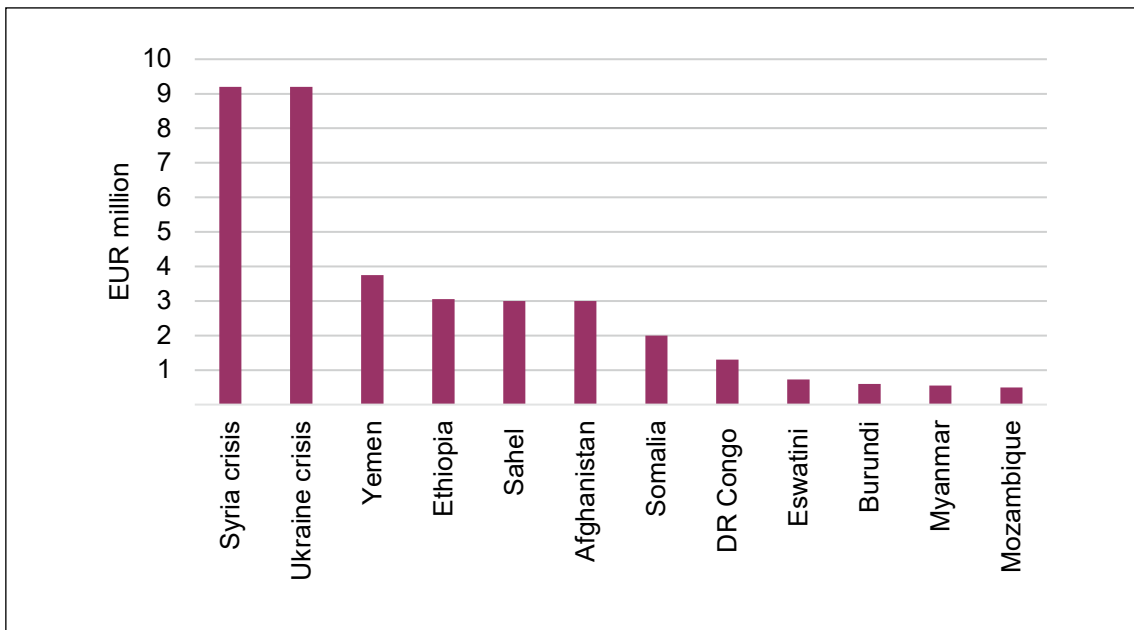
**Figure 12 Humanitarian allocations to contexts 2016-2021**



Source: MFA statistics

As of May 2022, allocations had been made to 12 countries/crises (Figure 13).

**Figure 13 2022 Humanitarian allocations to contexts 2022 (as of May 2022)**

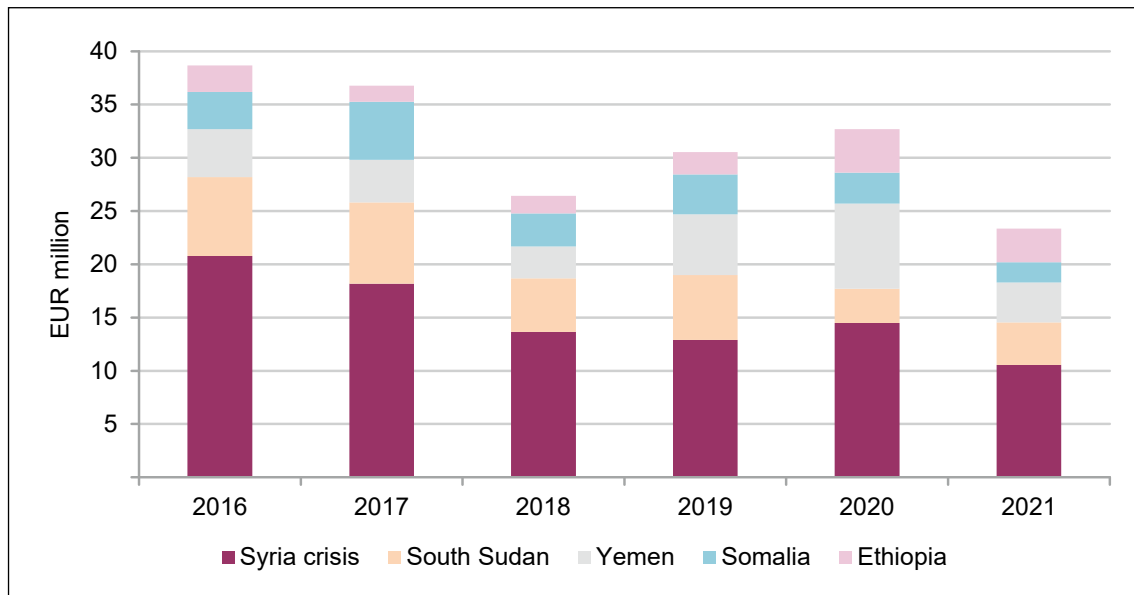


Source: MFA statistics

The five biggest recipient countries by year 2016-2021 show only small variations over the years. Funding to the Syria crisis increased slightly in 2020 with a little less to South Sudan that year, but more to Yemen (Figure 14).



**Figure 14 Five largest geographical recipients 2016-2021**



Source: MFA statistics

As of May 2022, the Syrian regional crisis so far was allocated a little more (EUR 9.2 million) than in 2021 (EUR 8.7 million), but less than previous years where the Syria crisis received between EUR 13 and EUR 20 million 2016-2021. The Ukraine crisis is also a main recipient for 2022, with EUR 9.2 million allocated as of May 2022, including EUR 1 million for Moldova for the first-time receiving funding in 2022 (see also Figure 13).

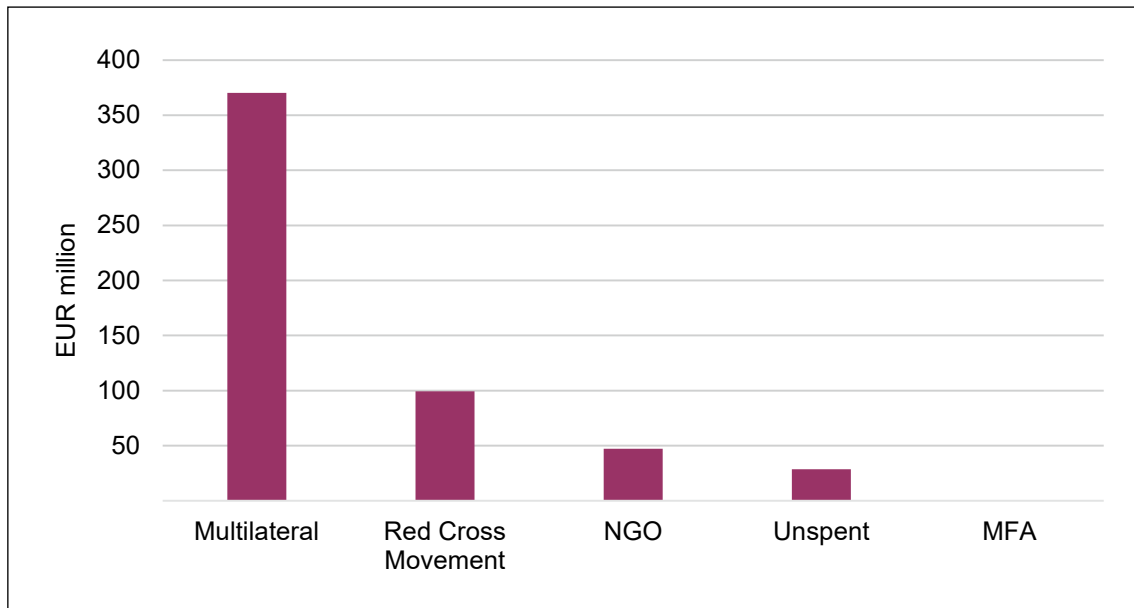
## Organisations receiving humanitarian assistance

By far the largest proportion of funding (68%) 2016-2021 was allocated to multilateral organisations, mainly the UN. Almost a fifth (18%) of the total funding was allocated to the Red Cross movement (Figure 15).<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> In this analysis, support to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is merged as support to Red Cross movement.



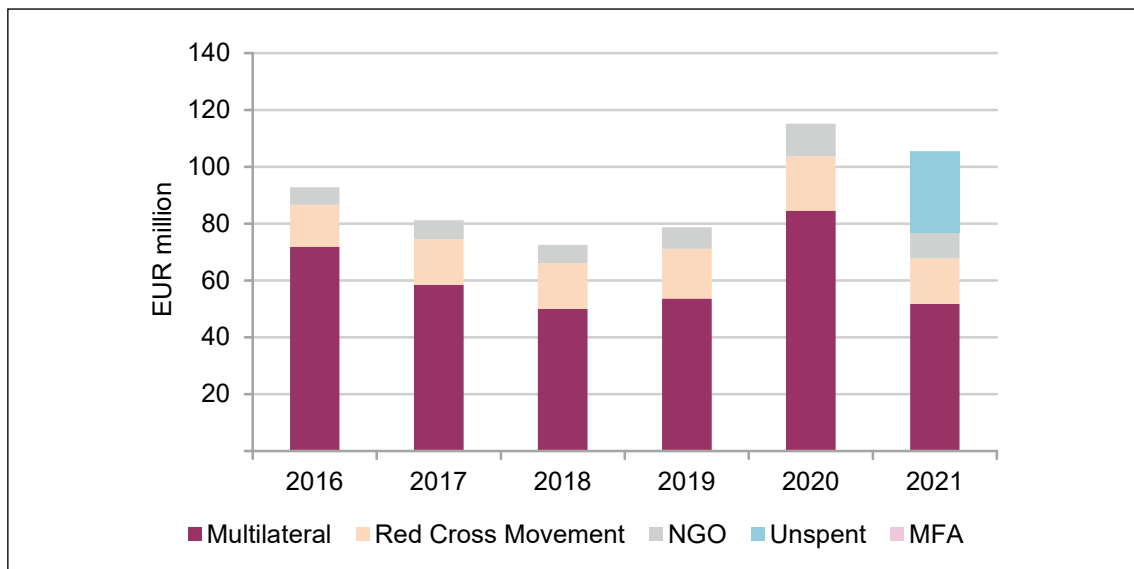
**Figure 15 Allocations per organisation type 2016-2021**



Source: MFA statistics

There have been no major changes to this pattern from 2016-2021, as shown in Figure 16 below (though a relatively large proportion remained registered as unspent funds<sup>52</sup>).

**Figure 16 Annual allocations by organisation type 2016-2021**



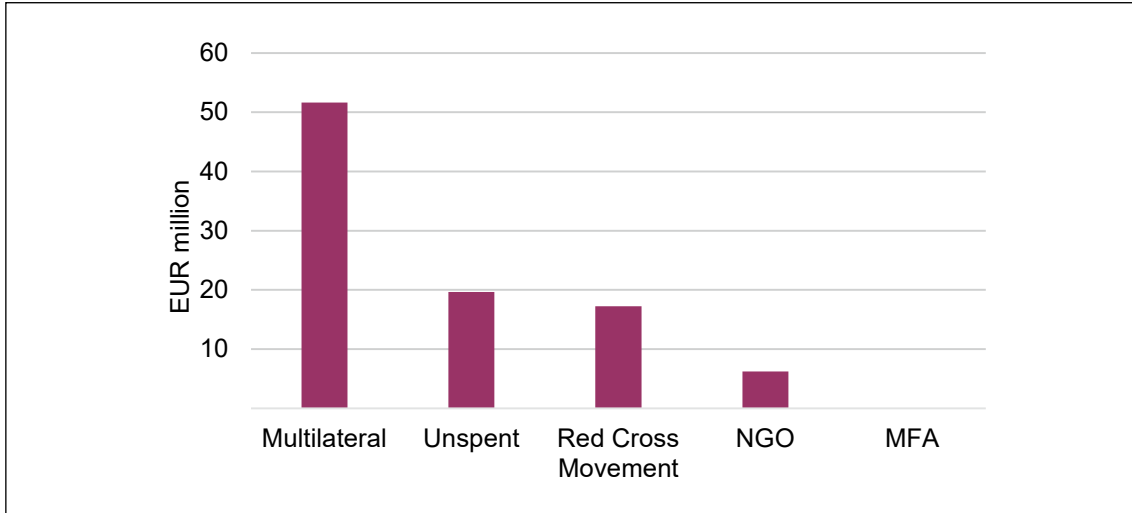
Source: MFA statistics

<sup>52</sup> While the level of disbursements for 2021 is 100%, it takes some months for the exact use of the humanitarian allocations to be registered.



The largest type of recipient for 2022 (May 2022) is multilateral organisations, followed by unspent funds and the Red Cross Movement (Figure 17).

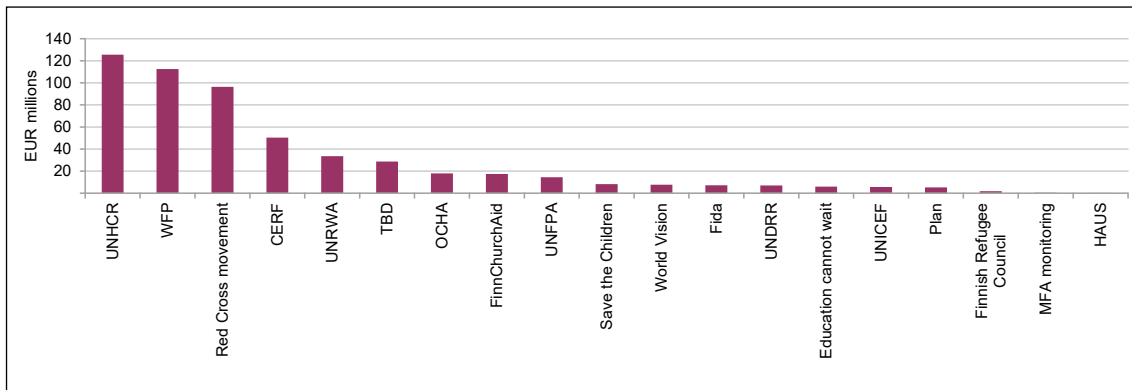
**Figure 17 Allocations by recipient type 2022 (as of May 2022)**



Source: MFA statistics

**Largest recipients.** As per Figure 18 below, UNHCR, WFP, and the Red Cross movement are by far the largest recipients of Finland’s humanitarian assistance, together receiving 60% of the total assistance 2016-2021.

**Figure 18 Humanitarian assistance distribution by organisation 2016-2021**



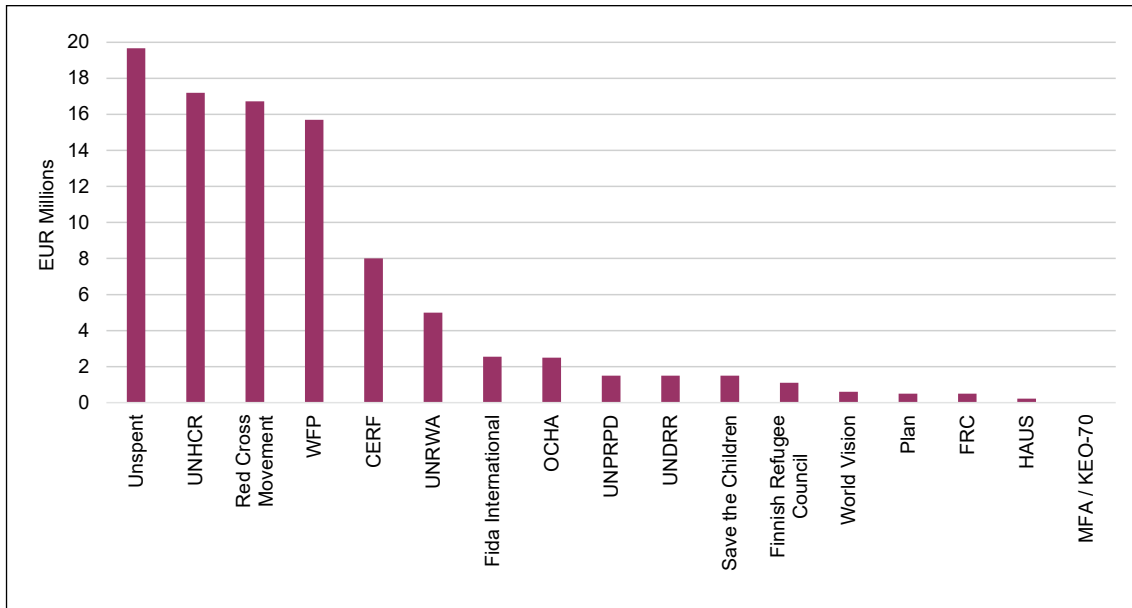
Source: MFA statistics. TBD = unallocated for 2021

In 2022 so far, the picture is largely the same (Figure 19). UNHCR, Red Cross Movement, WFP, CERF and UNRWA occupy the top-five slots with minor changes amongst them.





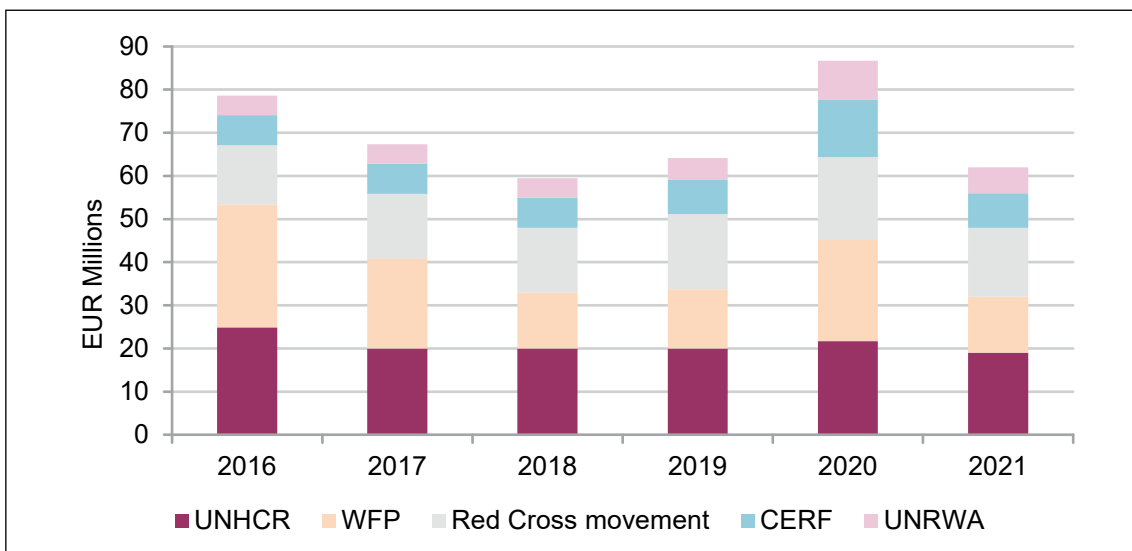
**Figure 19 Allocations by organisation 2022 (as of May 2022)**



Source: MFA statistics.

Assistance to the top-five recipients over the years reflect no major changes (Figure 20). Minor changes include additional core funding to WFP in 2017 and 2020 and to UNRWA in 2020.

**Figure 20 Assistance to the top five multilateral organisations 2016-2021**



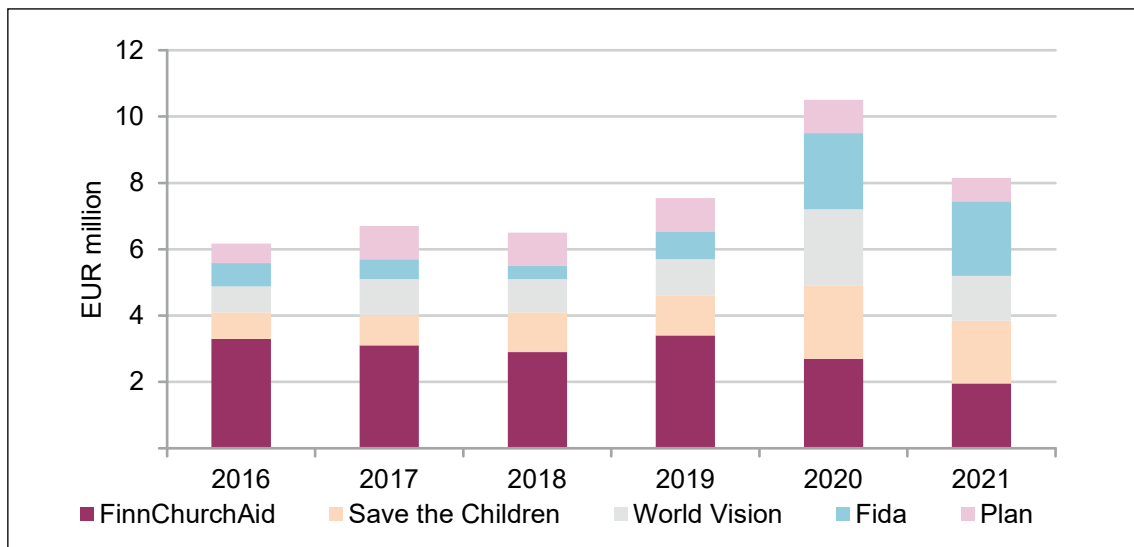
Source: MFA statistics

**CSOs.** The main NGO recipient is FCA. Since 2016 it has received EUR 17.4 million, or 3% (EUR 8.2 million) of the total humanitarian funding. Next is Save the Children with approximately half this amount. The third largest NGO to receive funding is World Vision, with EUR 7.6 million or 1.4% of the total funding (see Figure 21).



In terms of trends, FCA's annual funding reduced from around EUR 3 million in previous years to EUR 2 million in 2021, with no allocation made in 2022. Finnish Refugee Council began receiving funding in 2020, to a volume of a little less than EUR 1 million annually in 2020 and 2021, and a small increase to EUR 1.1 million in 2022. During 2016-2021 the top-five NGOs received 8% (EUR 45 million) of the total humanitarian funding, while the top-five multilaterals received a total of 75% (EUR 413 million). As of May 2022, Fida International is the largest CSO recipient so far in 2022, with EUR 2.5 million, followed by Save the Children with 1.5 million, and with World Vision and Plan receiving EUR 600,000 and EUR 500,000, respectively.

**Figure 21 Assistance to the top-five NGOs 2016-2021**



Source: MFA statistics

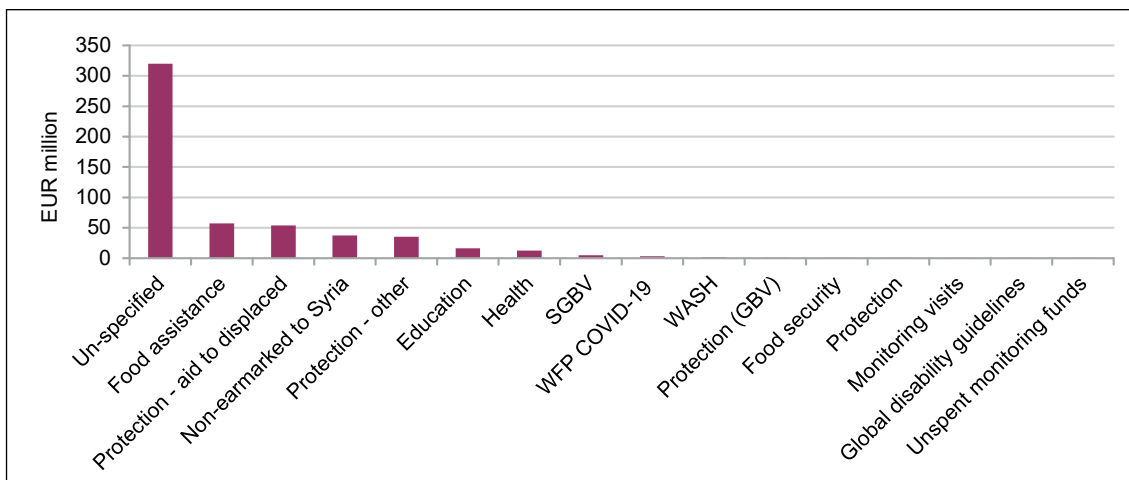
## Sectoral distribution

More than half of the humanitarian assistance (59%) is 'unspecified'<sup>53</sup>. Allocations 2016-2021 were relatively equitably distributed across sectors, with the two main specific sectors being Food Assistance and Protection to displaced people, each with around 10% of the funding. Next was unspecified funding to Syria, and protection to 'other groups' (beyond internally displaced). Following this, education, health and SGBV sectors received between 1-3% of funding each (see Figure 22).

<sup>53</sup> Includes core funding, multi-sectoral, unspent, and Emergency Response Unit deployment. Multi-sectoral is included here as data does not allow distinction between each of the sectors in such programmes.



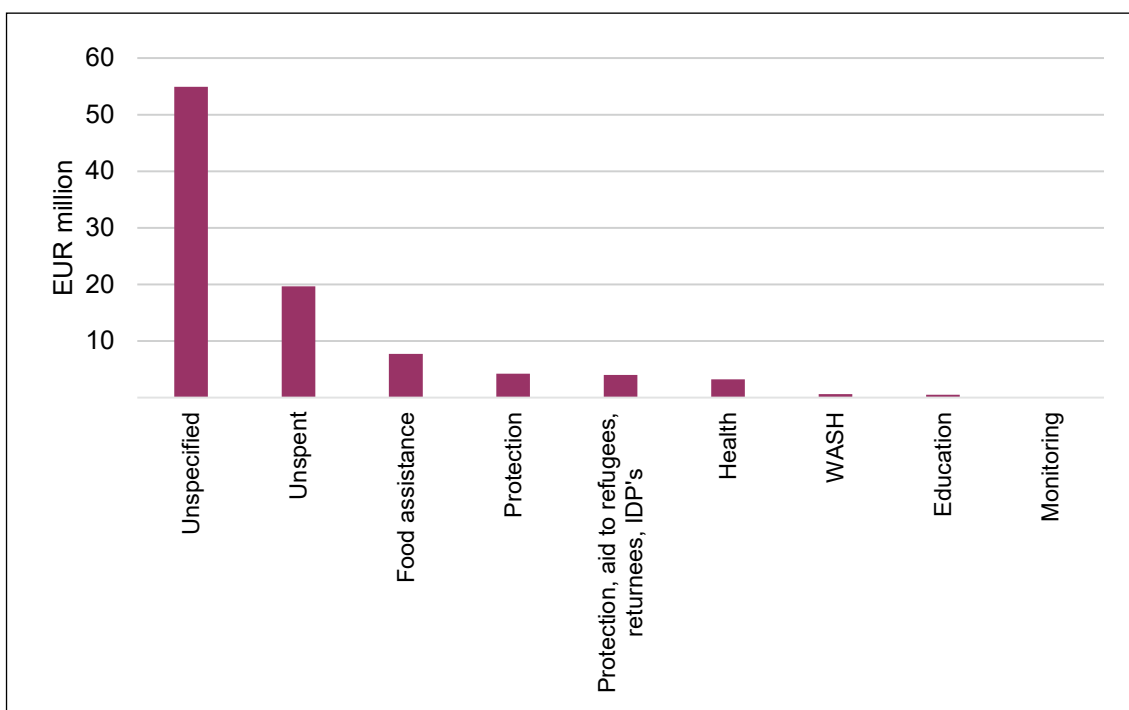
**Figure 22 Sectoral distribution of assistance 2016-2021**



Source: MFA statistics

For 2022, the sectoral pattern as of May 2022 is similar (Figure 23). Unspecified allocations, including core funding and multi-sectoral funding, is by far the main sector, followed by food assistance and protection.

**Figure 23 2022 Allocations by sector 2022 (as of May 2022)**



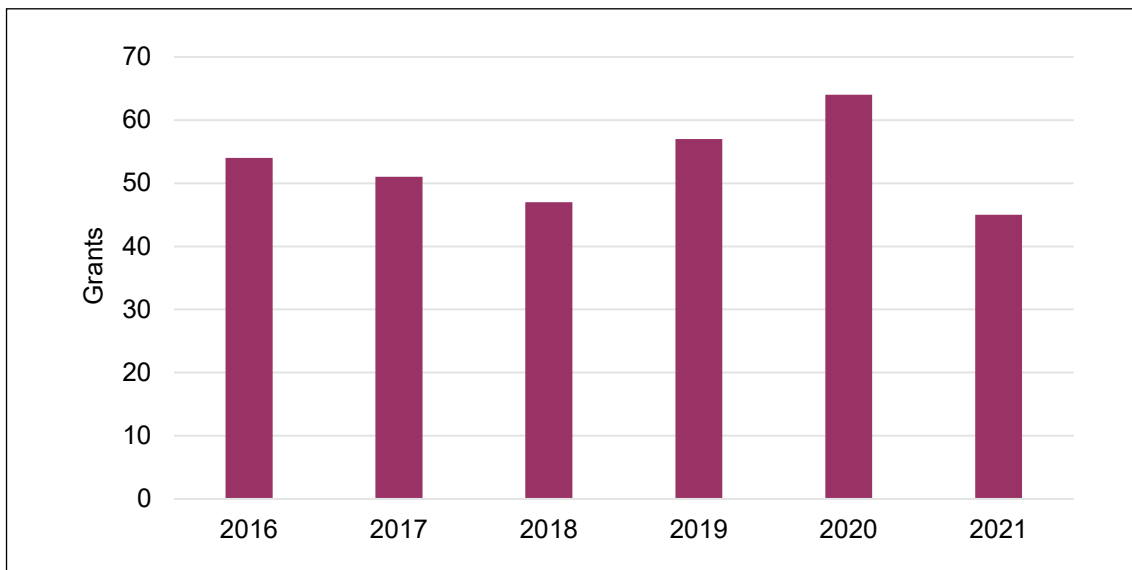
Source: MFA statistics



## Disbursement

The number of grant disbursements over the years 2016-2021 remained largely stable, with a small increase in 2020 (to 65), which was also the year with the highest allocation.<sup>54</sup> Other years the number of annual disbursements ranged between 46 and 58 (see Figure 24). There are no indications, therefore, of any changes to the administrative burden. 2022 has seen 36 disbursements as of May, which is less than previous years, but which can be assumed to increase given that almost EUR 20 million remains in unspent funds.

**Figure 24 Grant disbursements 2016-2021**



Source: MFA statistics

In 2021, the Humanitarian Unit increased the minimum threshold of CSO grants to EUR 400,000, and the possibility to apply for two-year funding. This sought to (i) reduce concerns of Finnish MFA funding being used solely as ‘seed money’ to attract other grants, such as from DG ECHO; (ii) reduce bureaucratic burdens on the Humanitarian Unit and (iii) allow for more extended funding cycles in line with realistic project timelines, particularly in protracted crises (personal communication April 2022). During 2016-2021 there were only 25 allocations to CSOs with a value less than EUR 400,000, out of more than 150 allocations to CSOs, including to FRC, all of which were provided 2016-2019.

<sup>54</sup> In 2020, an additional EUR 42.5 million was allocated as humanitarian funding, of which 24.5 was part of a larger development allocation of EUR 100 million package to the MFA for support to the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis and to promote Finnish exports.



# VOLUME 1 • MAIN REPORT



Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland