

Spanish Cooperation's Humanitarian Action Strategy 2019-2026



GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO DE ASUNTOS EXTERIORES, UNIÓN EUROPEA Y COOPERACIÓN



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PROLOGUE

The image features a solid green background with a subtle gradient. A dark green, diagonal shape, resembling a stylized hill or a folded piece of paper, is positioned in the lower half of the frame. The word "PROLOGUE" is centered at the top in a white, sans-serif font.

A new, consensus-based Humanitarian Strategy for the next eight years

It gives us great satisfaction to be completing a process which began just over two years ago when, following the World Humanitarian Summit held in Istanbul and the adoption of the *Grand Bargain* in 2016, evaluation of the 2007 Humanitarian Strategy was begun to obtain a snapshot of Spain's humanitarian action at that exact point in time. This evaluation was published at the beginning of 2018 and the decision was made at that juncture to begin the process of drawing up Spanish Cooperation's new Humanitarian Strategy 2019-2026.

After a year's labours, we are now concluding this consultation and writing process, which has been carried out as expansively as possible with the aim of incorporating contributions from the largest possible number of Spanish Cooperation's actors (including decentralized cooperation, civil society, universities, and the General State Administration).

In the new Humanitarian Strategy 2019-2026, which has been revised to incorporate a multilateralist and Europeanist approach, key aspects of the *Grand Bargain* such as resilience and the humanitarian-development nexus, localization and cash transfers have been reinforced. Ambitious commitments have been assumed in relation to gender equality and respect for human rights and non-discrimination on any grounds, in addition to the intention of developing a national humanitarian diplomacy plan, while the text also reaffirms humanitarian principles and humanitarian assistance's original mandate of "saving lives".

Moreover, this new Strategy reaffirms a response that will continue to be defined by humanitarian needs, while adopting a strategic commitment to forgotten crises, which Spain has been promoting in the sphere of the United Nations and of the European Union. In addition, greater emphasis has been placed on the importance of quality and knowledge management and the standardisation of procedures and instruments among all those involved in Spain's humanitarian action.

Lastly, the Government and other actors have committed to allocating 10% of Official Development Assistance to humanitarian assistance, in line with what is already common practice among other donors.

This new strategy, drawn up in a consensus-based and participative manner, brings us closer to the goal of making humanitarian action a matter of State policy, with the consensus of the different actors and political parties, in the same spirit that in recent years has guided the collaboration agreement between AECID and Spain's Autonomous Communities on humanitarian matters, revised in 2018. This text thus reflects the work that all the actors of Spanish Cooperation and the Government have undertaken in this field, providing a strategic response to the sensitivity and unwavering commitment of Spanish society to humanitarian issues over the years.

Lastly, we would like to acknowledge the —often challenging— work that humanitarian workers and sector professionals carry out in particularly complex situations, whether at our offices or in the field.

Madrid, 28 February 2019

Juan Pablo de Laiglesia y González de Peredo

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1. Introduction

1. Introduction

In 2007, the preparation process for various sector strategies included the approval of Spanish Development Cooperation's first Humanitarian Action Strategy (HAS), which has served since then as Spanish Cooperation's basic handbook on this topic (State Secretariat for International Cooperation [SECI], 2007). This Strategy was assessed in 2017/2018 and its results, presented publicly, include some useful proposals and considerations for future work (Directorate-General for Sustainable Development Policy [DGPOLDES], 2018). Similarly, the various Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Peer Reviews of Spanish Cooperation—the most recent of which was carried out in 2016—have included sections on humanitarian action with some pertinent recommendations (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2016). The formulation of a new HAS thus begins a new planning cycle, which is dovetailed with the previous HAS, and is based on the evaluation of experience gained from the preceding cycle and on some of the lessons learned from it.

In the past decade, moreover, significant changes have taken place in the humanitarian sphere. These changes were accelerated yet further by the first World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) held in Istanbul in May 2016. Although it could not explore all the themes in depth, the Summit served to put some of the most relevant themes for the humanitarian system on the table, as well as to emphasize the necessary relationship between the humanitarian agenda (the Agenda for Humanity) and other agendas, and most particularly with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Similarly, the WHS proposed specific commitments, such as those included in the Grand Bargain (GB), which have been undertaken by Spanish Cooperation. It can thus be understood that, having accepted the interdependence and constant change that characterize today's globalized world, the international community is trying to renew its commitments and

approaches in order to tackle the challenges it faces with greater effectiveness.

On the basis of the results of the WHS, the measures adopted by different international bodies and some of the national humanitarian strategies that countries such as ours have since been implementing, we need to identify certain elements connected to those which the HAS, *inter alia*, seeks to offer a response. The current types of crises facing the international community, characterized by their complexity and lengthy duration, require better coordination of all the instruments that seek to address them. The goal to leave no one behind is, in short, a challenge both for humanitarian actors and for actors in the fields of development, human rights and peacebuilding.

1.1. Methodology for formulating the Strategy

The formulation of this Strategy was coordinated by the Directorate-General for Sustainable Development Policy (DGPOLDES) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation (MAEUEC) with the collaboration of the Institute of Studies on Conflicts and Humanitarian Action (IECAH) in a participative process that aimed to involve all of Spanish Cooperation's actors. The Humanitarian Action Office (HAO) of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) played a fundamental role in its formulation. The process also entailed an in-depth analysis of the strategies of other countries¹ and doctrine documents.

1.2. Scope of the Strategy: relationship to the 5th Master Plan

Spanish Cooperation's Humanitarian Action Strategy (HAS) is included in section 4.4 of Spanish Cooperation's 5th Master Plan (2018-2021). It is the first sector strategic document to be approved following the implementation of the 5th Master Plan and seeks to focus the humanitarian work of all of Spanish Cooperation's actors so that their contribution to international

¹ Analysis has been conducted of the HAS and of the strategic documents incorporating HAS of the United Kingdom, France, Norway, Germany, Australia, Hungary, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, Estonia, the Czech Republic and the United States, as well as the benchmark documents of the European Commission.

efforts to support individuals and populations affected by conflicts and disasters is improved and increased².

Spanish Cooperation's HAS seeks to boost the humanitarian action of all of Spanish Cooperation's actors to integrate it coherently with the efforts of the international community, adapting it to recent international trends and commitments, and seeking the opportune synergies with other spheres of cooperation, thus improving its quality, effectiveness and impact.

² Following the WHS some Spanish Cooperation actors, in particular several of Spain's Autonomous Communities, have prepared strategic documents on humanitarian action that are linked to the international trends that emerged as a result of the WHS.

2. Humanitarian action in a complex international context

2. Humanitarian action in a complex international context

2.1. A changing international scenario: some key factors

Since Spanish Cooperation's previous HAS was approved in 2007 there have been significant changes in the international scenario that have affected the role played by humanitarian action. The humanitarian impact of some of these changes is very apparent: According to the United Nations the number of people needing humanitarian assistance amounts to 131.7 million (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], 2019).

The publication of the first HAS was promptly followed by an acute deterioration in the economic crisis

which had started to make itself noticed that same year. A direct outcome of this was the rise in the number of unfunded UN appeals, despite a slight increase in humanitarian action funds. Similarly, and without it having been possible to carry out essential reforms in the global governance system, the number of refugees and displaced persons has risen, as has the inequality gap, both at the international level and within many countries.

As a result of all of the above, a number of factors have accumulated which humanitarian actors must take into consideration to avoid counterproductive impacts on their own agendas and principles, and to adapt their capacities as quickly as possible to the new environment. These factors include:

01.

New types of violent conflict

- Increase in the complexity and number of inter-State conflicts
- Other situations of violence (OSV) not recognized as traditional armed conflicts, but with serious humanitarian consequences
- Grey-zone conflicts
- Increase in intra-State conflicts

02.

Increase in the duration of crises

- Risk of becoming "forgotten crises" to which the international community no longer pays attention
- Decrease in the effectiveness of assistance due to crises becoming long-term
- Humanitarian assistance faces the challenge of sustaining its action over time and of being trapped in situations for which this is not the right response

03.

Weakening of the frameworks for protecting victims of armed conflicts and forced migration

- Systematic violation of protection frameworks. Increase in the number of violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL).
- Problems of acceptance, access, protection and security of humanitarian personnel

04.**Changes in the pattern of disasters**

- Increasingly unpredictable, recurrent, extreme and harmful
- Impacts of climate change
- Increase in risk factors due to new threats and vulnerabilities

05.**Chronic State fragility—with States becoming incapable of guaranteeing the most basic rights**

- Failure of States to meet their responsibilities. Loss of the monopoly on the use of force, and the consequent emergence of parallel groups

06.**Extension of instability beyond borders**

- Risk of national crises becoming regional problems

07.**Increase in the scale and complexity of the phenomena of migration**

- Record numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons
- Inadequate legal and political frameworks and little political will to change them
- New causes of forced displacement: environmental displacement

08.**Urbanization of crises in the Global South**

- Urban nuclei not under the control of local and national authorities
- Increase in the risks faced by the population

09.**Increasingly complex global risks and threats**

- Rise in the number of multi-threat situations which transcend traditional responses
- Need for enduring multi-dimensional global responses

2.2. An inadequate international response

In this scenario—in which humanitarian needs have indisputably increased—the international response is frequently insufficient. The humanitarian sector’s capacity to adapt falls short of what the situation

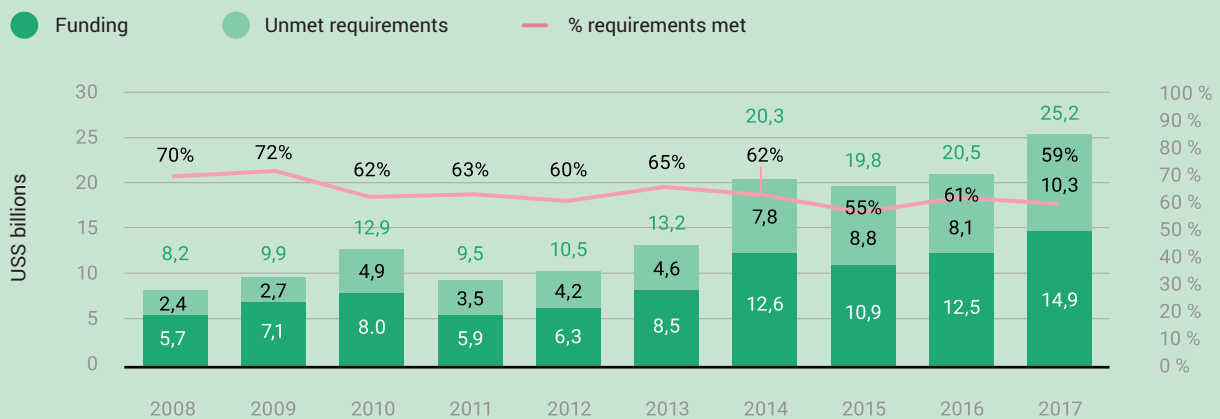
demands, thus widening the humanitarian gap. Despite the upturn in international funding of humanitarian action, the even greater rise in humanitarian needs has resulted in lower coverage of UN-coordinated appeals.

Figure 1. Funding of UN-coordinated appeals

Notes: 2012 data includes the Syria Regional Response Plan (3RP) monitored by UNHCR. 2015 data does not include the Yemen Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan.

To avoid double counting of the regional appeals with the country appeals in 2015, the Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan does not include the Democratic Republic of the Congo

component, the Central African Republic (CAR) Regional Refugee Response Plan only includes the Republic of Congo component, and the Nigeria Regional Refugee Response Plan does not include any country component. 2016 and 2017 data does not include regional appeals tracked via UNHCR (CAR and Yemen in 2016; South Sudan, Burundi and Nigeria in 2016 and 2017). Data is in current prices.



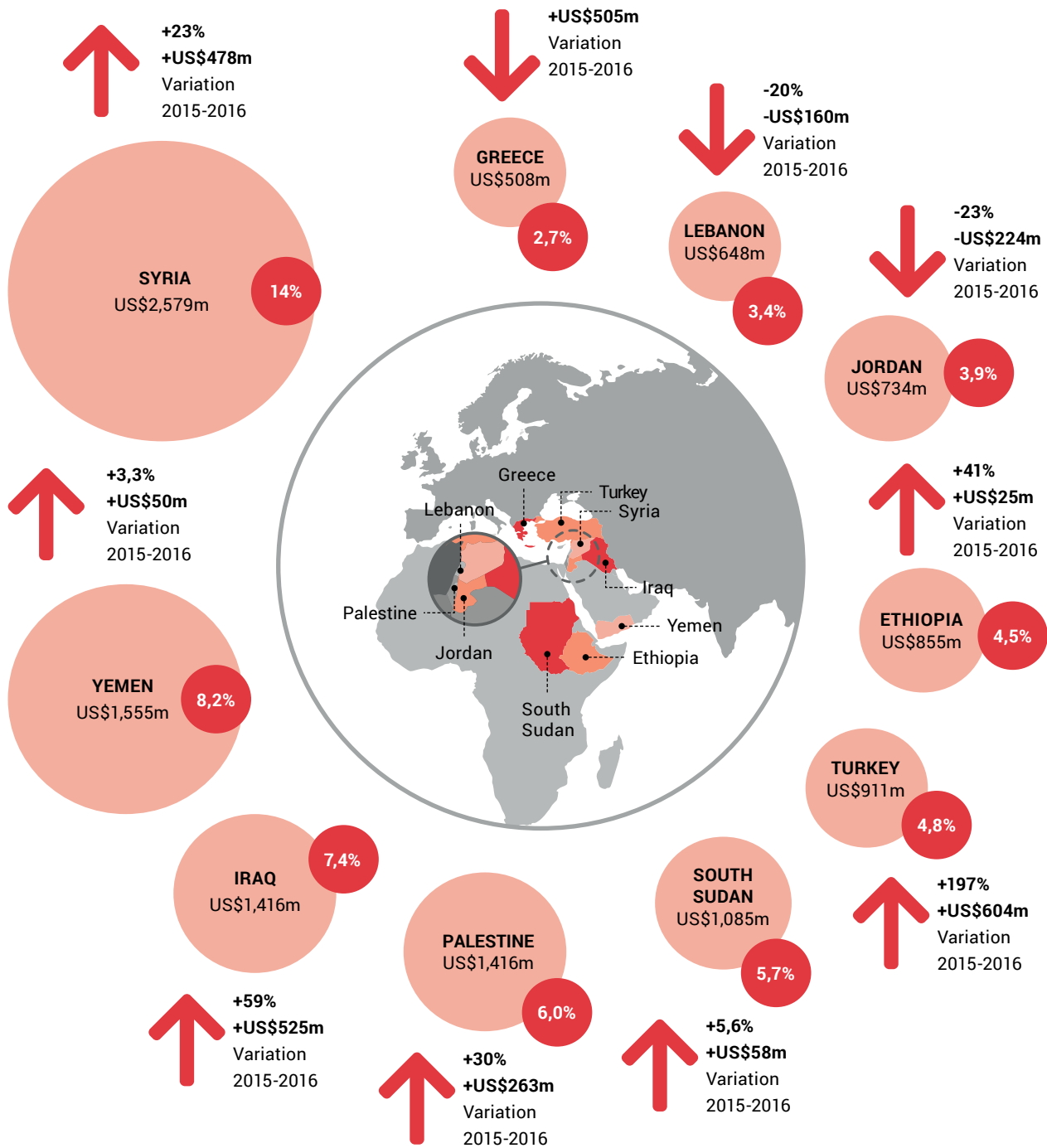
Source: Development Initiatives based on data from the OECD-DAC’s FTS and from UNHCR

The following characteristics have been observed among the donors:

- **Limitations regarding the allocation of resources in proportion to need.** There are contexts in which there are too many actors and others in which there are almost none (MSF, 2014). 145 countries received international humanitarian

action funds in 2016, but 10 of them absorbed 60% of the total funds. From the European Union’s perspective, it is significant that of the countries listed on DG-ECHO’s Forgotten Crisis Index, only one is included among the 10 largest recipients of assistance (Development Initiatives, 2018).

Figure 2: The 10 largest recipients of international humanitarian assistance, 2016



% of Total Humanitarian Action assigned by country

Source: Development Initiatives based on data from the OECD DAC's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

- **Concentration among a small number of donors.** In 2016, 97% of the total volume of international humanitarian assistance was provided by 20 governments, 16 of them from Western countries.
- **Increased involvement of other actors in the humanitarian sphere,** including developed countries that are not members of the OECD DAC, Southern countries and private actors, such as companies. These new actors still represent a small proportion of the total, even though they play a key role in some specific crises. In certain cases, humanitarian principles are not a core feature of their efforts, whether because they are not considered fundamental, or due to a lack of awareness.
- **Risk of politicizing** aid in a framework in which humanitarian goals co-exist alongside development, peace and security agendas.
- **Problems concerning access to and limitations on independent, principled humanitarianism** in increasingly complex and volatile contexts, where the rules of war are systematically violated.

The most socially aware donors, including Spain, have attempted to address these challenges. Initiatives such as the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) Initiative of 2004, the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid of 2008, the OECD DAC's advances on humanitarian issues, the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and –most particularly– the Agenda for Humanity agreed at the 2016 WHS and the commitments of the Grand Bargain, reflect the efforts made by certain States in this regard.

2.3. Challenges following the approval of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS): the need for coherence between international agendas

The WHS helped to raise international awareness of humanitarian issues by underscoring the specific nature of this field in a scenario dominated by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. Other agendas, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Declaration and the Climate Change Agenda, and the Global Compacts on Migrants and Refugees, as well as the humanitarian agenda that stemmed from the WHS, are also being taken into consideration. The Summit also contributed to clarifying the specific characteristics of humanitarian action in the combined national and international efforts to combat vulnerability, poverty and the consequences of conflicts, with particular reference to situations of inequality and violence against women and girls. While the need to identify complementarities and synergies between the humanitarian agenda, the development agenda and other agendas is clear, the challenges in this regard are significant.

- How to highlight the importance **of the humanitarian agenda** with respect to other agendas.
- Need to develop **the components of the SDGs most closely linked to humanitarian action.**
- Pertinence of maintaining **principled humanitarian action with an approach based on both rights and needs.**

From a practical perspective, the approval of the Agenda for Humanity and of the Grand Bargain—signed by Spain following the WHS—represent clear advances which must serve as guidelines for Spanish Cooperation, requiring it to establish mechanisms for monitoring and documenting compliance.

Summary of Grand Bargain commitments

1. Greater transparency
2. More support and funding tools to local and national responders (localization)
3. Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming
4. Reduce duplication and management costs
5. Improve joint and impartial needs assessment
6. A Participation Revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives.
7. Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding
8. Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions
9. Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements
10. Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors

2.4. Improving quality and accountability in the humanitarian sector

If the Grand Bargain, like the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative before it, reflects a concern for effectiveness as regards the better use of resources by donors, other initiatives in the humanitarian sector are attempting to address the issue of quality from a viewpoint that is more closely linked to the work on the ground, encompassing the perspectives of the rights-holders themselves. Quality initiatives—initiatives aimed at guaranteeing the positive impact of the actions and thus improving accountability—have always occupied a key space in the sector. Because of the specific characteristics and challenges faced by humanitarian action—access to the populations affected, rapid needs assessment, coordination of actors, and the role of logistics, among others—the tools developed over the past few decades have been focused on these concerns and on quality management processes.

Figure 3: Main milestones regarding quality and accountability in the humanitarian sector

1994. Code of Conduct promoted by the Red Cross Movement and NGOs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines common questions and criteria regarding aspects linked to the principles and values of humanitarian action
1995. People In Aid Code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on human resources
1997. Sphere Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most widespread initiative. Known for the Sphere Handbook • Includes the moral bases, the legal instruments that must be considered in humanitarian action, and the minimum standards that define a quality response
1999. Quality COMPASS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First quality assurance method specifically designed for NGOs focused on processes
2003. HAP International
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantees project quality through accountability to the affected populations
2014. CHS - Core Humanitarian Standard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the fundamental aspects of quality, accountable, principled humanitarian action that places the individuals and communities affected by crisis at the heart of its undertakings
2018. New edition of the Sphere Handbook
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains the fundamentals while adapting to the changing environment

In December 2014 —after a lengthy process that began with the creation of the Joint Standards Initiative (JSI), led by Sphere, HAP International and People in Aid— the **Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)** was launched. This initiative represented a significant step forward in terms of quality management in the humanitarian field (CHS Alliance, Groupe URD and the Sphere Project, 2015).

The CHS is based on nine criteria, combined with a series of commitments formulated by the organizations, as a desirable framework for a quality response. These constitute the main guidelines of the Standard and each one expresses several key actions together with the necessary institutional responsibilities.

Figure 4: The Core Humanitarian Standard



The launch of the CHS represents an opportunity for the humanitarian sector, simplifying the panorama by providing a common basis for multiple tools and approaches aimed at improving quality and accountability. It also represents an opportunity for the different agents of Spanish Cooperation.

3. Spain's humanitarian action: key points

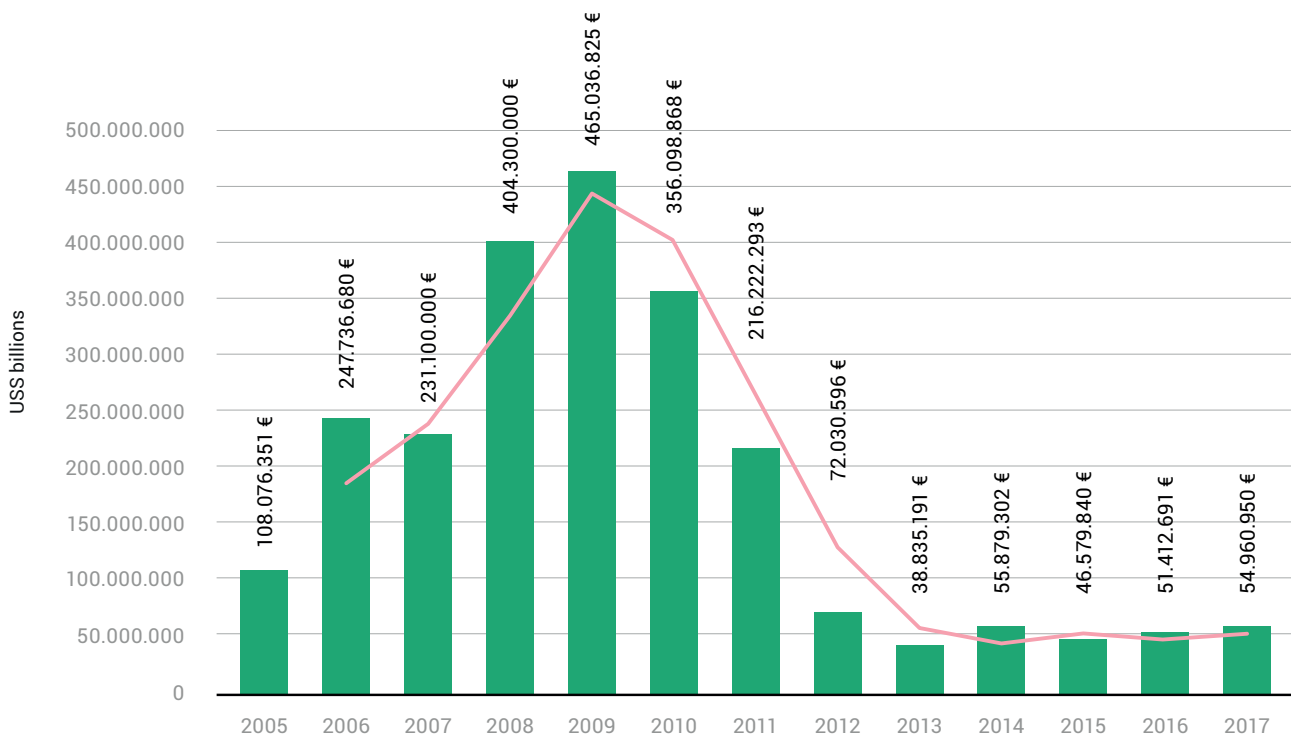
3. Spain's humanitarian action: key points

Since the approval of Spanish Cooperation's HAS in 2007, Spain's humanitarian action has evolved in response to changes in the international panorama, respecting the legal frameworks on which it is based, and the international commitments undertaken. Spanish humanitarian action has achieved a certain degree of consolidation in the international system, despite the administrative limitations imposed by Spanish law.

3.1. General panorama

After several boom years in which Spanish humanitarian action laid its foundations, the significant drop in funding, particularly between 2010 and 2013 – in which it fell by 90% – had a notable impact on the Spanish humanitarian system. This downward trend has now ended and we are seeing a slight increase in funding.

Figure 5: Spanish humanitarian action, 2005-2017



Source: Prepared by the authors based on data provided by DGPOLDES

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation is the actor which manages most of the funds allocated to humanitarian action by the General State Administration, and the main body responsible for implementing these funds is AECID's HAO. Other actors that have traditionally managed some of these resources, however limited in amount, are the Ministry of Defence and, occasionally, the

Ministry of Economy and Business. In the years of the economic crisis, decentralized cooperation decreased its contribution significantly, but in recent years it has regained momentum, once again becoming a major actor in the Spanish panorama.

During the years in which the previous Strategy was implemented, over half of the funds were channelled

through international bodies, primarily UN agencies. NGOs channelled approximately 28%, and the public sector, 15%.

Sub-Saharan Africa was the region to which, on average, the greatest volume of funds was allocated, although in recent years the Mediterranean area and the Arab world have become the largest recipients due to the Syrian crisis.

The distinctly reactive nature that has predominated in Spanish humanitarian action has endured, with emergency assistance constituting the main component of aid, even though most of this funding has been aimed at chronic crises.

3.2. Advances and limitations

In general, over these past few years, a number of **advances** have been made that have placed Spanish humanitarian action in the international panorama and have contributed to improving its quality:

- Creation of AECID's HAO with specialized personnel and the growing use of tools that improve the strategic and operational framework: context strategies, humanitarian actions, and emergency agreements.
- Increase in capacities and growing sector and operational specialization: START teams for health; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); and the gender approach.
- Recent emphasis on humanitarian diplomacy with promising results.
- Accumulated experience and concentration of the humanitarian sector in certain crises.

- Participative approach and positive response of the sector to improvement initiatives. Capacity for self-criticism.
- Approval, by decentralized cooperation, of strategic frameworks for action.
- Openness to learning of the sector.
- Growing presence of NGOs with extensive experience in humanitarian action. Sector specialization.
- Strong support of civil society and public opinion.

Some of the **limitations** to which the sector has traditionally been subject, and which make it difficult to bring the HAS into line with the principles of the WHS specified in the Grand Bargain are:

- A rigid and restrictive regulatory framework, especially as regards grants.
- Limitations inherent to policy coherence.
- Limited resources and the lack of a stable budget.
- The weakness of results-oriented monitoring and evaluation systems.
- The difficulty of institutionalized coordination between the different agents included in the Spanish public humanitarian sector.
- Lack of standardization of public funding instruments.
- Short-term funding.
- The need to strengthen access in conflict situations and to address security conditions.

4. The vision of humanitarian assistance on which the Strategy is based

4. The vision of humanitarian assistance on which the Strategy is based

Spanish Cooperation aims to provide principled assistance that promotes and is respectful of international legal frameworks and which contributes to global efforts focused on effectiveness and improving quality, both in emergency response and in protracted crises, and in prevention and rehabilitation efforts³.

The vision underlying Spanish Cooperation's humanitarian action is, therefore, broad in scope and confers the utmost importance on respect for humanitarian principles and the protection of the rights of people affected by disasters and/or conflicts.

In the framework of the general definition of official development assistance (ODA), humanitarian assistance is aid that is designed to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of crises. To be considered humanitarian, it must be consistent with the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

Humanitarian aid includes: disaster prevention and preparedness; the provision of shelter, food, water and sanitation, health services and other items of assistance for the benefit of affected people and to facilitate the return to normal lives and livelihoods; measures to promote and protect the safety, welfare and dignity of civilians and those no longer taking part in hostilities and rehabilitation, reconstruction and transition assistance while the emergency situation persists. Activities to protect the security of persons or property through the use or display of force are excluded.

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)

4.1. Cross-cutting approaches and aspects in humanitarian work⁴

Quality, effective humanitarian action must take into account certain approaches directing said action on a cross-cutting basis. Logically, there needs to be a balance between such approaches, depending on the specific context.

I. Rights-based approach

Humanitarian action has traditionally followed a **needs-based approach**, focused **on the criticality** of a given situation, even though protective actions address rights that have been violated. The rights-based approach is that in which the populations receiving assistance are not viewed as beneficiaries, but rather as holders of rights, thus shifting the focus from charity and handouts, to ideas of protection and social justice.

³ The 2007 Humanitarian Action Sector Strategy Document devotes a section to regulatory frameworks. It does not seem opportune on this occasion to devote so much attention to remembering them and we therefore only mention the essential. These can be consulted at: <http://www.aecid.es/ES/ah/publicaciones>

⁴ Based on other works of the IECAH, in particular on the "Estrategia humanitaria de la Comunidad Valenciana 2018-2022" [Humanitarian Strategy of the Autonomous Community of Valencia 2018-2022]. Spanish Cooperation's Gender Strategies in Development, Rights of the Child and Environmental Sustainability, in addition to the AECID's Guides on the Mainstreaming of Gender, Human Rights and the Environment, may be taken as a reference.

The regulatory basis of this approach is contained in the legal instruments of International Human Rights Law (IHRL), International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and the Law of refugees and forcibly displaced people.

Table 1: International legal framework relevant to humanitarian action

Basic International Legal Framework								
IHRL	International Bill of Human Rights, which encompasses:	Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and its two Optional Protocols	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Regional human rights treaties	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)	Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
IHL	Geneva Conventions (1949)	Additional Protocols (1977)	Other rules of the law of armed conflict (The Hague, etc.)					
Law of refugees and internally displaced people	United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951)		United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998)					

Source: Prepared by the authors

II. Gender, age and diversity approach

This is a broad approach, based initially on the gender approach and incorporating age (gender and age being the only two universal variables) and diversity. Diversity here is not only understood in terms of functionality, but more broadly as referring to all those social factors that give rise to degrees of discrimination or intersectionalities. In addition to gender (which includes gender identity and sexual orientation) and age, this approach includes, among others:

- Functional and/or mental diversity
- Economic level
- Level of education
- Civil status

- Membership of an ethnic, racial, religious, linguistic and/or social minority group
- Being an internally displaced person/a refugee or asylum seeker/a stateless person
- Rural/urban environment
- Being HIV positive, being albino, etc.
- Being an unaccompanied minor/orphan/adolescent head of household

The objective is for assistance and protection to reach all individuals, especially those who are most vulnerable. To achieve this goal, we will employ a dual strategy in which the gender, age and diversity approach is mainstreamed into all actions, but in which specific results are also identified.

Following the gender, age and diversity markers of the United Nations and the European Union, some of the essential steps in the mainstreaming of this approach could be summarized as follows:

- Conduct an analysis of gender, age and diversity before designing projects/programmes. This will require data which must at the very least be disaggregated by sex and age. All analyses and data must be disaggregated by sex and age both for consistency with the rights-based approach and the gender perspective, and for reasons of quality, evidence-based accountability, learning, and adaptive management capacity throughout the intervention.
- Assess and mitigate the risks arising from the context, and identify and prevent the possible risks of the actions of the project/programme.
- Use participative methodologies and a properly selected team that is sufficiently representative in terms of gender, age and diversity. Ensure the participation of women, girls, boys and the most vulnerable individuals, such as members of the LGT-BIAQ+ collective or people with physical and/or mental diversity. This is essential to guaranteeing that their needs and capacities are properly addressed, and that the aforementioned points are met.

On referring specifically to gender we must take into account its two facets in humanitarian action:

- 1) Sexual violence and gender violence, which must be included under the umbrella of protection.
- 2) Gender equality in humanitarian action, which comprises all actions aimed at achieving higher levels of equality, through empowerment, participation and the building and promotion of capacities.

The gender, age and diversity approach is an essential component for effective humanitarian action that adheres to its own principles and that leaves no one behind.

In line with Spanish Cooperation's Strategy for Children, Spanish humanitarian action responders must assess the impact of their interventions on the rights of boys and girls and the situation of risk in which they find themselves. Only by so doing can we guarantee the maximum protection of children and contribute to compliance with the two basic principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: prioritizing the best interests of boys and girls, and respecting the principle of non-discrimination.

III. Preventive, disaster risk reduction, and risk-informed approach⁵

The integration of DRR means that all actions must take existing risks into account and be based on an adequate assessment thereof.

A preventive and DRR approach in humanitarian action can be taken by ensuring that actions do not compound such risks, or that they reduce the risks identified for individuals and communities. Within the broad field of DRR, humanitarian action focuses particularly on disaster preparedness.

IV. Resilience approach

Beyond Spanish Cooperation's own DRR approach, the European Union and the OECD Development Assistance Committee consider it especially important to incorporate the resilience approach and the concepts on which it is based into cooperation actions and humanitarian assistance.

Spanish Cooperation's guidelines, *Construcción de Resiliencia para el Bienestar [Building Resilience for Well-being]* (DGPOLDES, 2018) define resilience as "the capacity of a system (individual, community, organization, State) to cope with external disruptions, in other words, the capacity to absorb negative impacts, to adapt thereto, and to transform itself so that the

⁵ The International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction has been advocating that this approach be implemented beyond the inclusion of certain DRR actions, especially those relating to disaster preparedness, as a component of humanitarian action.

risk of disaster can be eliminated.” Guideline no. 13 is that which refers most clearly to the humanitarian sphere, indicating that this approach “does not mean asking humanitarian actors to forget their obligation to make decisions in the short term, but to remind them of their obligation to contribute to the search for sustainable solutions in the medium and long terms.” That is to say, it is a comprehensive approach that considers the need to identify synergies between humanitarian and development interventions (the so-called humanitarian-peace-development nexus) provided that conditions so allow.

In practice it is a question of using tools to identify risks and vulnerabilities, employing a participative and inclusive, gender-sensitive, approach with a view to strengthening the safety and well-being of populations. One of the most widely recognized tools is ECHO’s resilience marker (2014) which favours the resilience approach in humanitarian action. Another tool which Spanish Cooperation is increasingly incorporating into its analyses and programming is the INFORM Index for Risk Management.

V. Do no harm and conflict sensitivity approach

Considerations based on the do no harm principle must be incorporated into all humanitarian work, assessing the potential, unintended negative impacts of humanitarian action.

For its part, conflict sensitivity seeks to establish work methods and tools that assess the positive or negative impacts that humanitarian actions could have on the evolution of conflict situations. This approach may also contribute towards peacebuilding.

VI. Environmental approach

The relationship between the environment and humanitarian action⁶ can be analysed from several perspectives:

- How environmental impacts in the aftermath of a crisis can jeopardize the goals of a project, beyond the purely emergency stage, leaving behind degraded natural resources and greater vulnerability to future threats.
- How relief and early recovery operations can sometimes cause as much environmental damage as the crises to which they are a response.

Certain issues such as climate change, poor resource management, desertification, etc. are already producing humanitarian consequences. Other questions such as forced migration linked to environmental disasters or changes are current challenges for humanitarian action that will be greater in the future.

⁶ The Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit is a partnership that has proposed tools for incorporating environmental issues into the humanitarian sphere.

5. The Strategy's objective, strategic lines, results, priority actions, and results framework

5. The Strategy's objective, strategic lines, results, priority actions, and results framework

5.1. Objective

During the formulation process of the Strategy, and in the evaluation of the preceding HAS, it was suggested that the new HAS not only propose strategic lines and global guidelines for work in this sector, but that it should define results and indicators for future follow-up and evaluation.

To address this challenge, the Strategy is structured as follows:

One objective, three strategic lines, and within each one, several results broken down into priority actions and global indicators.

Objective of the Strategy

Contribute, through a response based on humanitarian principles and aligned with international commitments, to save and protect lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity before, during, and after humanitarian crises, improving quality and accountability.

5.2. Strategic lines, results, and priority actions

The objective of the Humanitarian Action Strategy has been developed along **three basic strategic lines**. **The first line focuses on protection and respect for legal frameworks and humanitarian principles**. This allows for the incorporation of issues linked to humanitarian diplomacy and, in general, the rights-based approach, as well as emphasizing respect for principles as a substantial component.

The second line is aimed at improving coherence. In the broadest sense, it makes it possible to address issues linked to **cohesion between instruments**, the humanitarian-peace-development nexus, linkage

to development cooperation actions, the resilience approach, but also issues of **coherence between the actions of different responders, and coordination**. It specifies some of the GB commitments.

The third line is more oriented towards instrumental aspects. It allows for the inclusion of the other GB commitments, as well as of **issues of quality, accountability, and evaluation**, which were stated as priorities in the evaluation of the former strategy.

Strategic line 1. Promotion of humanitarian principles, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and other legal frameworks with the aim of guaranteeing the protection and rights of persons affected by conflicts and disasters.

Result 1. Spain's humanitarian diplomacy has been reinforced.

Humanitarian diplomacy has been promoted as an essential aspect of Spain's humanitarian action at all levels. Humanitarian diplomacy has become a hallmark of Spanish cooperation and foreign action, and is recognized both nationally and internationally.

Spanish humanitarian diplomacy's commitment to humanitarian principles and international law is expressed, among other forms, through the promotion of humanitarian diplomacy in different international forums for influence and advocacy. The experience of recent years shows that achievements can be made, and that there is still room for improvement to intensify humanitarian diplomacy actions.

According to the DAC, for humanitarian action to be effective, donors must take on three roles: to do, to influence, and to advocate. Humanitarian diplomacy needs to develop the latter two dimensions (Scott, 2014).

Priority actions

- Define a Humanitarian Diplomacy Action Plan that specifies actions and strengthens Spain's leadership in issues such as: Resolution 2286; the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission, and other mechanisms for verifying or monitoring compliance with IHL; Women, Peace and Security (Resolution 1325, 2242 and the subsequent process⁷) or gender violence in emergencies. Also include in the Plan specific positions regarding certain crises, design actions to improve access, cut red tape for NGOs, offset the humanitarian impact of sanctions and counter-terrorism legislation, and improve the protection of humanitarian personnel. Moreover, activate and promote the work of Spain's International Humanitarian Law Committee.
- Uphold the commitments regarding protection of schools in conflict situations, encourage countries with which Spain has good relations to sign the Safe Schools Declaration, and promote measures for compliance of countries that have already signed. Intensify work with NGOs specializing in these matters.

Result 2. The incorporation of protection into Spain's humanitarian diplomacy has been strengthened.

The incorporation of protection components into the humanitarian action funded by Spanish Cooperation has been strengthened. Persons affected by crises and conflicts are at the centre of our action. This incorporation must pay particular attention to the gender approach (understood in its broadest sense; i.e., gender equality, sexual diversity and gender diversity), gender violence, age groups, children, education in emergencies, and population movements that generate humanitarian needs.

Humanitarian protection has assumed a greater role throughout Spanish Cooperation, and this should be continued and intensified, extending and prioritizing the incorporation of protection by the agents of Spanish humanitarian action. The focus on protection, recommended by the United Nations, should be increased in Spain's humanitarian action.

Priority actions

- Foster the incorporation of protection in Spanish Cooperation's calls for humanitarian projects or actions.
- Establish synergies with Spanish Cooperation's Strategy for Children and its 6 strategic lines⁸, as well as with Spanish Cooperation's Gender in Development Strategy.
- Mainstream actions aimed at protecting people in vulnerable situations, taking into account all relevant intersectionalities: ethnic, national, religious, sexual, social, and linguistic minorities, and any other minorities that may, in a humanitarian context, require special attention.
- Incorporate protection in the evaluation of humanitarian projects.
- Define lines of work for action against gender violence in humanitarian contexts.

Result 3. Work in forgotten crises has been strengthened.

In recent years, most humanitarian work has focused on areas of chronic conflict and also on OSV (other situations of violence). Spanish Cooperation is very active in some of these areas, such as the Saharawi refugee camps, the Mindanao conflict in

⁷ In Spain the WPS Agenda takes the shape of a specific Plan on Women and Peacebuilding (2009), and of the 2nd National WPS Plan (2017).

⁸ (1) guarantee the right to assistance, protection, education, and psychosocial support for children in humanitarian crises; (2) guarantee the nutritional protection of nursing babies, infants, and their mothers; (3) contribute to launching immunization strategies in emergencies; (4) ensure safe drinking water supply and the re-establishment of sanitation services to prevent fatal diseases for children; (5) prevent children from being recruited by armed forces, and contribute to their immediate liberation and reintegration into their community; and (6) promote children's participation in emergency contexts, as well as in the design of plans on prevention and risk reduction.

the Philippines, and what is known as the Northern Triangle of Central America, and it is facing challenges involving protection and access that have still not been resolved in situations of this nature.

Priority actions

- Promote strengthening the response of the international community and the European Union to what are called “forgotten crises”. Use the DG ECHO’s Forgotten Crisis Index in decision-making by Spanish Cooperation actors.
- Advance in the incorporation and use of working tools in conflict zones, especially in chronic crises, such as conflict sensitivity tools—conflict impact assessment—and the do no harm approach.
- Civil society will work in the development of analytical tools, approaches and working methods relating to the humanitarian impact of OSV.

Result 4. The effective mainstreaming of gender, age and diversity, as well as the rights of women, girls, and adolescent girls, into Spain’s humanitarian action, and Spain’s leadership in this regard, has been consolidated. By the end of the Strategy’s term, a feminist and transformative agenda for Spain’s humanitarian action has been consolidated.

Recently, the importance of incorporating the gender approach into humanitarian action has been highlighted, as well as the serious consequences and profound negative impacts of not doing so. Both the EU and the UN have agreed upon a comprehensive approach that understands that gender equality is a prerequisite for combating and reducing gender violence, and, at the same time, that gender inequality constitutes one of the greatest threats to peace and security. Therefore, initiatives such as the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, signed by Spain in 2017, and the Spotlight Initiative, advocate the need for this comprehensive approach, which cannot leave behind or postpone gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls, older women, and LGTBIAQ+ people, always taking into account the protection of sexual

and reproductive rights as a fundamental part of human rights.

Priority actions

- Promote greater mainstreaming of gender, age and diversity, generalizing the use of the gender-age marker throughout Spain’s humanitarian action. By the end of the strategy, its incorporation into any humanitarian project should be a requirement.
- Have a feminist interinstitutional policy for humanitarian action, with two of its guiding lines being gender equality/empowerment and combating sexual and gender violence in humanitarian contexts.
- Ensure, in line with the 2017 State pact against Gender Violence, a predictable minimum annual amount of one million euros specifically for gender equality actions and to prevent, mitigate and address gender violence in emergencies and humanitarian contexts.
- Strengthen the exchange and transfer of knowledge and experience, training, and capacity-building among civil society organizations, especially organizations of women, feminists, rights defenders, young people, and LGTBIAQ+ people, and the humanitarian community.
- Adopt the essential services package for survivors of gender violence, launched by the UNFPA in 2019.
- Ensure that NGOs and public administrations have specialists in gender and diversity for rapid deployment in emergencies, who can give advice and guarantee that the response team mainstreams this approach.

Result 5. Spanish society’s sensitivity towards humanitarian issues, and its knowledge of and commitment to humanitarian action, highlighting its relevance on the international scene and key role in conflicts and disasters, have been promoted.

Citizen support is essential in maintaining public development cooperation policies, and most especially humanitarian action policies. On many occasions, the Spanish people have shown their potential for solidarity, even though the recent economic crisis does seem to have had an impact. Refreshing ties with Spanish society through education, knowledge, and awareness-raising is key during the current period.

Priority actions

- Launch information and awareness-raising actions involving humanitarian action, with particular reference to certain scenarios, in collaboration with the other Spanish Cooperation actors.
- Promote agreements with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and their counterparts in Spain's Autonomous Communities to launch educational actions and more general awareness-raising actions relating to humanitarian action.
- Incorporating components on dissemination, education and advocacy for humanitarian action projects will be positively considered.

Strategic line 2. Improvement of Spanish humanitarian action's comprehensive response to crises and its connection to the Spanish Cooperation system, respecting its specific characteristics and independence.

Result 6. Humanitarian action has been coordinated with Spanish Cooperation's other instruments, especially its action in chronic and protracted crises, including prevention elements and linkage to development.

It is ensured that Spanish Cooperation's instruments and modalities use risk-informed methods and resilience approaches, value the humanitarian-peace-development nexus in line with the recommendation approved by the DAC (OECD, 2019), and incorporate do no harm action. Significant advances have taken place as regards fulfilling the Grand Bargain, particularly in

"enhancing engagement between humanitarian and development actors".

Priority actions

- Promote shared diagnoses between development cooperation actors and humanitarian action actors in fragile countries.
- Foster the use of the multi-year funding system for protracted chronic emergencies.
- Establish the necessary methodology to ensure that humanitarian action projects carry out an analysis of threats, risks, vulnerabilities and their causes, in a DRR (disaster risk reduction) framework.
- Approve strategies/plans in countries with chronic or protracted crises where Spanish Cooperation is focusing its efforts, incorporating long-term action strategies, and actions aimed at resilience, fostering local capacity-building, and identifying possible links between humanitarian actors and development actors.
- Systematically incorporate exit strategies into humanitarian action projects.
- Design, and discuss with the other actors, action mechanisms addressing protracted crises that intensify relations with other institutions and enable medium- to long-term funding.

Result 7. Spanish humanitarian action's response capacity in emergencies has been consolidated, coordination mechanisms have been improved, and clear action procedures have been established for all actors involved, both public and private.

In this regard, the launching of the Spanish Technical Aid Response Teams (START) and their accreditation by the WHO is a milestone in Spanish Cooperation's capacity-building in emergency response, and an advance in interinstitutional coordination. The consolidation of these and other Spanish humanitarian action mechanisms, providing them with experience and evaluating their performance, is a requirement for the next period.

Priority actions

- Improve coordination of the START team with the cluster system and establish focal points to make this coordination operational in each emergency.
- Create a capacity-building programme for emergency response mechanisms, updated annually on the basis of evaluations of the emergencies addressed.
- Activate an interministerial coordination mechanism.
- Foster coordination mechanisms for shared emergency response between AECID, Spain's Autonomous Communities, and other actors.
- Increase the co-funding percentage for humanitarian interventions among Spanish Cooperation actors.
- Strengthen work in sectors where Spanish Cooperation has more developed capacities: health, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), education in emergencies, children, and transfers in cash and vouchers.

Result 8. Spanish humanitarian action's commitment to multilateral humanitarian efforts has been strengthened.

Spain's humanitarian action has always struck a balance between the different bilateral, multilateral or multi-bilateral funding components and mechanisms, even though the economic crisis affected certain multilateral contributions. In addition to reinstating said contributions, it is advisable for Spain to maintain its presence and its advocacy capacity in the entire humanitarian system.

Priority actions

- Maintain steady support for the OCHA and the ICRC, enabling Spain to play an active role in both organizations' donor groups.
- Increase, in proportion with the rise in funds allocated to humanitarian action, the allocation to the CERF and to other multilateral or unearmarked mechanisms.

- Promote, among all the public actors of Spain's humanitarian action, the exchange of information about decisions regarding funding for international organizations, seeking common criteria and possible synergies.
- Strengthen the participation of Spanish NGOs as implementing partners of the principal United Nations humanitarian agencies.

Strategic line 3. Adaptation of the means and instruments to the new international trends and commitments (Grand Bargain) in the sector, to improve Spanish humanitarian action's quality and accountability.

Result 9. Significant advances have been made in fulfilment of the Grand Bargain, especially as regards:

- 10.1. Localization.
- 10.2. Cash-based responses.
- 10.3. Multi-year planning and funding.
- 10.4. Fostering participation.
- 10.5. Reduction of earmarked contributions.

As mentioned previously, fulfilment of the GB commitments is a horizon for progress. Spanish Cooperation's humanitarian action has already begun to make serious efforts on some of the commitments, but there is still room for improvement. In any case, it is worth highlighting that consensus among Spanish Cooperation's humanitarian actors on the need to advance as regards the GB during this period is practically unanimous.

Priority actions

- Promote the incorporation of the GB throughout Spanish Cooperation's planning and accountability procedures, adapting it to the specific characteristics of each actor.

- Regularly disseminate user-friendly data on humanitarian action projects through Spanish humanitarian action's websites. Improve the information on InfoAOD (Spain's ODA Information System)
- Dedicate an increasing percentage of Spain's humanitarian action to supporting local actors. Efforts will also be made to ensure the leadership of local and national actors in humanitarian responses, fostering the transfer of capacities and resources to the local population and their organizations, and always with respect for humanitarian principles.
- Promote, among all cooperation actors, knowledge and progressive use of assistance in cash and vouchers in humanitarian action, reaching the commitment of 15% of total ODA in 2022, and 18% in 2026.
- Favour an increase in multi-year planning and funding.
- Guarantee that the needs assessments of projects presented are based on shared analyses with the participation of the OCHA, the IASC, the cluster system, etc.
- Guarantee the participation of the affected populations in Spain's humanitarian actions, ensuring fulfilment of commitments 3, 4 and 5 of the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS).
- Ensure participation, especially by women and groups suffering discrimination, as an important criterion to be taken into account by all funders of Spanish Cooperation when evaluating proposals.
- Gradually reduce earmarked funding.
- Promote the use of harmonized reporting mechanisms among funders of Spain's humanitarian action.
- Monitor the commitments undertaken by Spanish Cooperation in the GB framework, and provide

systematic information on progress. This monitoring should be carried out by all public Spanish humanitarian actors and NGOs.

Result 10. Spanish humanitarian action's resources have been increased to at least 10% of Spain's ODA in 2022.

Advances throughout Spain's humanitarian action in terms of professionalism, international presence, use of more efficient mechanisms, and humanitarian diplomacy, have been conditioned by the reduction in the economic resources allocated to this sphere of cooperation since 2012. The current political and economic situation should make it possible to reinstate to a certain extent—and this has already begun—the amounts allocated to humanitarian action both in global terms and, especially, in the percentage with regard to total ODA.

Priority actions

- Gradually increase the funds allocated by Spanish Cooperation to humanitarian action, in line with the increase in funds for ODA.
- Establish a distribution of humanitarian action funds in accordance with DAC criteria, maintaining a percentage of funds for NGOs of between 20% and 30% of humanitarian assistance.
- Guarantee that the accounting and calculation mechanisms are in accordance with those established by the DAC.
- Have the necessary technical and human resources to provide appropriate and timely information on the funding of Spain's humanitarian action.

Result 11. The quality and accountability of Spain's humanitarian action has been improved.

In recent years, the humanitarian sector has defined international reference frameworks for improving the quality of assistance to communities affected by disasters and/or armed conflicts (the GB and the CHS).

Spanish Cooperation's humanitarian action is being improved by the fostering of the use of the CHS, as well as of other initiatives for quality and improvement (Sphere, the International Network for Education in Emergencies, and other members of the Humanitarian Standards Partnership group). Regular systematic evaluations are carried out, aimed at learning and at accountability. Stable mechanisms for accountability to all of the actors, the affected populations and the general public have been consolidated.

Priority actions

- Disseminate and give training to Spanish Cooperation actors on the use of international initiatives on quality and accountability, with particular leadership and participation of the CONGDE (Coordinating Body for NGOs).
- Implement, throughout the sector, project and programme evaluations focused on learning, fostering the use of agreed criteria (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance [ALNAP]).
- Incorporate accountability specialists in Spanish Cooperation's operational deployments (for example: START teams).
- Organize specific and mandatory training activities on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).
- Spanish Cooperation actors will strengthen their codes of ethics or of conduct to prevent possible abuses.
- Carry out a joint evaluation, by decentralized cooperation, in a context to which a significant percentage of funds from this type of actor has been directed.
- Decentralized cooperation actors, in coordination with AECID and civil society, will undertake measures to harmonize procedures, and instruments for funding, monitoring and reporting.

Framework for analysing compliance with has objectives

Approaches and cross-cutting aspects

Rights-based approach	Gender, age and diversity approach	Preventive, DRR and risk-informed approach	Resilience approach	Do no harm and conflict sensitivity approach	Environmental approach
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General objective: Contribute, through a response based on humanitarian principles and aligned with international commitments, to save and protect lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity before, during, and after humanitarian crises, improving quality and accountability.

STRATEGIC LINES I

Strategic Lines
Promotion of humanitarian principles; International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and other legal frameworks with the aim of guaranteeing the protection and the rights of those affected by conflicts and disasters

R1. Spain's humanitarian diplomacy has been reinforced.

R6. Humanitarian action has been coordinated with Spanish Cooperation's other instruments, especially its action in chronic and protracted crises, including prevention elements and linkage to development.

R9. Significant advances have been made in fulfilment of the Grand Bargain, especially as regards:

- 10.1. Localization.
- 10.2. Cash-based responses.
- 10.3. Multi-year planning and funding.
- 10.4. Fostering participation.
- 10.5. Reduction of earmarked contributions.

Results

R2. The incorporation of protection into Spain's humanitarian diplomacy has been strengthened.

R7. Spanish humanitarian action's response capacity in emergencies has been consolidated, coordination mechanisms have been improved, and clear action procedures have been established for all actors involved, both public and private.

R10. Spanish humanitarian action's resources have been increased to at least 10% of Spain's ODA in 2022.

R3. Work in forgotten crises has been strengthened.

R8. Spanish humanitarian action's commitment to multilateral humanitarian efforts has been strengthened.

R11. The quality and accountability of Spain's humanitarian action has been improved.

STRATEGIC LINES II

Improvement of Spanish humanitarian action's comprehensive response to crises and its connection to the Spanish Cooperation system, respecting its specific characteristics and independence.

STRATEGIC LINES III

Adaptation of the means and instruments to the new international trends and commitments (Grand Bargain) in the sector, to improve Spanish humanitarian action's quality and accountability.

R4. The effective mainstreaming of gender, age and diversity, as well as the rights of women, girls, and adolescent girls, into Spain's humanitarian action, and Spain's leadership in this regard, has been consolidated.

Results

R5. Spanish society's sensitivity towards humanitarian issues, and its knowledge of and commitment to humanitarian action, highlighting its relevance on the international scene and key role in conflicts and disasters, have been promoted.

RESULTS 1

1. Define a Humanitarian Diplomacy Action Plan that strengthens Spain's leadership in issues such as: Resolution 2286; verification mechanisms and IHL research; Women, peace and security and gender violence in emergencies. Also include in the Plan specific positions regarding certain crises, design actions to improve access, cut red tape for NGOs, offset the humanitarian impact of sanctions and counterterrorism legislation, and improve the protection of humanitarian personnel. Moreover, activate and promote the work of Spain's International Humanitarian Law Committee.

Priority actions

2. Uphold commitments regarding protection of schools in conflict situations. Advocacy and compliance in the Safe Schools Declaration.

RESULTS 6

1. Promote shared diagnoses between development cooperation actors and humanitarian action actors in fragile countries (GB4, GB5).
2. Foster the use of the multi-year funding system for protracted chronic emergencies (GB7).
3. Establish the necessary methodology to ensure that humanitarian action projects carry out an analysis of threats, risks, vulnerabilities and their causes, in a DRR framework.
4. Approve strategies/plans in countries with chronic or protracted crises where Spanish Cooperation is focusing its efforts, incorporating long-term action strategies, and actions aimed at resilience, fostering local capacity-building, and identifying possible links between humanitarian actors and development actors (GB10).
5. Systematically incorporate exit strategies into humanitarian action projects (GB10).

RESULTS 9

1. Promote the incorporation of the GB throughout Spanish Cooperation's planning and accountability procedures.
2. Regularly disseminate user-friendly data on humanitarian action projects through Spanish humanitarian action's websites. Improve the information on InfoAOD (Spain's ODA Information System) (GB1).
3. Dedicate an increasing percentage of Spain's humanitarian action to supporting local actors (GB6). Efforts will also be made to ensure the leadership of local and national actors in humanitarian responses, fostering the transfer of capacities and resources to the local population and their organizations, and always with respect for humanitarian principles.
4. Promote, among all cooperation actors, knowledge and progressive use of assistance in cash and vouchers in humanitarian action, reaching the commitment of 15% of total ODA in 2022, and 18% in 2026 (GB3).
5. Favour an increase in multi-year planning and funding (GB7).

RESULTS 1

RESULTS 6

6. Design, and discuss with the other actors, action mechanisms addressing protracted crises that intensify relations with the other institutions and enable medium- to long-term funding (GB10).

RESULTS 9

6. Guarantee that the needs assessments of projects presented are based on shared analyses with the participation of the OCHA, the IASC, the cluster system, etc. (GB5).
7. Guarantee the participation of the affected populations in Spain's humanitarian actions (CHS4, CHS5) (GB6).
8. Ensure participation as an important criterion to be taken into account by all funders of Spanish Cooperation when evaluating proposals (GB6).
9. Gradually reduce earmarked funding (GB8).
10. Promote the use of harmonized reporting mechanisms among funders of Spain's humanitarian action (GB9).
11. Monitor the commitments undertaken by Spanish Cooperation in the GB framework, and systematically provide progress reports (GB1)

Priority actions

RESULTS 2	RESULTS 7	RESULTS 10
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foster the incorporation of protection in Spanish Cooperation's calls for humanitarian projects or actions. 2. Establish synergies with Spanish Cooperation's Strategy for Children and its 6 strategic lines, as well as with Spanish Cooperation's Gender in Development Strategy. 3. Mainstream actions aimed at protecting people in vulnerable situations, taking into account all relevant inter-sectionalities. 4. Incorporate protection into the evaluation of humanitarian projects. 5. Define lines of work for action against gender violence in humanitarian contexts. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve coordination of the START team with the cluster system and establish focal points to make this coordination operational in each emergency. 2. Create a capacity-building programme for emergency responses. 3. Activate an interministerial coordination mechanism (GB4). 4. Foster coordination mechanisms for shared emergency response between AECID, Spain's Autonomous Communities, and other actors (GB4). 5. Increase the co-funding percentage for humanitarian interventions among Spanish Cooperation actors (GB4). 6. Strengthen work in sectors where Spanish Cooperation has more developed capacities: WASH, education in emergencies, children, and transfers in cash and vouchers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gradually increase the funds allocated by Spanish Cooperation to humanitarian action, in line with the increase in funds for ODA. 2. Establish a distribution of humanitarian action funds in accordance with DAC criteria, maintaining a percentage of funds for NGOs of between 20% and 30% of humanitarian assistance. 3. Guarantee that the accounting and calculation mechanisms are in accordance with those established by the DAC (GB1). 4. Have the necessary technical and human resources to provide appropriate and timely information on the funding of Spain's humanitarian action (GB1).
<p>Priority actions</p>		

RESULTS 3

1. Promote strengthening the response of the international community and the European Union to what are called "forgotten crises". Use DG ECHO's Forgotten Crisis Assessment Index in decision-making.
2. Advance in the incorporation and use of working tools in conflict zones, especially in chronic crises, such as conflict sensitivity tools, conflict impact assessment, and the do no harm approach.
3. Civil society will work in the development of analytical tools, approaches and working methods relating to the humanitarian impact of OSV.

Priority actions

RESULTS 8

1. Maintain steady support for the OCHA and the ICRC, enabling Spain to play an active role in both organizations' donor groups.
2. Increase allocations to CERF, and to other multilateral or unearmarked mechanisms.
3. Promote, among all the public actors of Spain's humanitarian action, the exchange of information about decisions regarding funding for international organizations, seeking common criteria and possible synergies.
4. Strengthen the participation of Spanish NGOs as implementing partners of the principal United Nations humanitarian agencies.

RESULTS 11

1. Disseminate and give training to Spanish Cooperation actors on the use of international initiatives on quality and accountability, with particular leadership and participation of the CONGDE (Coordinating Body for NGOs).
2. Implement, throughout the sector, project and programme evaluations focused on learning, fostering the use of agreed criteria (ALNAP).
3. Incorporate accountability specialists in Spanish Cooperation's operational deployments.
4. Organize specific and mandatory training activities on PSEA.
5. Spanish Cooperation actors will strengthen their codes of ethics or of conduct to prevent possible abuses.
6. Carry out a joint evaluation, by decentralized cooperation, in a context to which a significant percentage of funds from this type of actor has been directed (GB1).
7. Decentralized cooperation actors, in coordination with AECID and civil society, will undertake measures to harmonize procedures, and instruments for funding, monitoring and reporting.

RESULTS 4

1. Promote greater mainstreaming of gender, age and diversity (i.e., generalizing the use of the gender marker throughout Spain's humanitarian action).
2. Have a feminist interinstitutional policy for humanitarian action.
3. Ensure a predictable minimum annual amount of 1 million euros for Spain's humanitarian gender-focused interventions.
4. Strengthen the exchange and transfer of knowledge and experience between civil society organizations.
5. Adopt the essential services package for survivors of gender violence, launched by the UNFPA in 2019.
6. Ensure that NGOs and public administrations have specialists in gender and diversity for rapid deployment in emergencies, who can give advice and guarantee that the response team mainstr

RESULTS 5

- Launch information and awareness-raising actions involving humanitarian action, with special reference to certain scenarios, in collaboration with the other Spanish Cooperation actors.
 - Promote agreements with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and their counterparts in Spain's Autonomous Communities to launch educational actions and more general awareness-raising actions relating to humanitarian action.
 - Incorporate components on dissemination, education and advocacy for humanitarian action projects.
-

STRATEGIC LINES I	RESULTS 7	STRATEGIC LINES III
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposals presented at relevant national or international forums. Resolutions, agreements, or other kinds of specific positions reached with the participation of Spanish humanitarian diplomacy. - Percentage of projects that incorporate protection actions. Percentage of specific protection projects. - Project funding for forgotten crises as a percentage of Spain's total humanitarian action. - Percentage of projects funded receiving a positive score on their respective gender and age markers (DG-ECHO and/or IASC). - Agreements with educational institutions at the central, regional, and local levels. - Amount of humanitarian action programmes and projects that include awareness-raising. <p>Key performance indicators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of projects funded that have a positive score on the DG-ECHO resilience marker. - Number of common diagnoses between actors from development cooperation and from humanitarian action in fragile situations. - Number of emergencies in which START teams have been deployed. - Analysis of percentages of funding through different channels and comparison with donors similar to us. - Number of actors participating in approved emergency response systems. - Number of actors participating in approved protected crisis response mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of the percentage of humanitarian action funds for: localization; transfers in cash and vouchers. - Humanitarian action as a percentage of total ODA. - Percentage of earmarked funds, at the beginning and end of the Strategy. - Number of awareness-raising and training activities on humanitarian quality initiatives. - Number of humanitarian action actors who harmonize their procedures for presenting projects and use standardized forms.

5.3. A Strategy for regions where Spanish Cooperation can have greater added value

Spanish humanitarian action, deeply committed to the international aid system, advocates improving coordination among donors, and will focus on those situations where needs and vulnerabilities are greatest. Likewise, Spain will make sure that it works in those situations where it has experience, a necessary condition for guaranteeing the do no harm principle. Given recent developments in Spanish Cooperation, Spanish humanitarian action has focused on forgotten crises, as well as others —be they sudden or protracted— in which it has the accumulated experience that

provides added value compared with working in other situations.

The 5th Master Plan establishes some guidelines in this regard, such as: “Lastly, as part of the progressive increase in Spanish ODA, priority will be given to humanitarian aid and greater participation by decentralized official cooperation will be promoted.” Likewise, the intention is to continue with a certain amount of concentration, establishing biannual Situation Strategies in certain crisis scenarios. These geographically focused humanitarian action planning documents, which to date have been used with good results by the HAO, could be shared and used generally throughout Spanish Cooperation.

6. An operational and practical strategy involving all Spanish Cooperation actors

6. An operational and practical strategy involving all Spanish Cooperation actors

The Strategy arose out of consultations with traditional cooperation actors, and most of these proposals were made with them and taking them into account. There is a strikingly high level of consensus among all government and non-government actors. Their slight discrepancies concern the relationship between the humanitarian agenda and the development and peacebuilding agendas, and the limits of said relationship.

Therefore, this document aims to serve as a framework for Spain's humanitarian action, implementing and specifying the commitments made by the Spanish State in international forums. In line with the current trends addressed at the World Humanitarian Summit, the Strategy is open to incorporating other sectors that could provide added value in mobilizing solidarity towards affected persons. This collaboration does not necessarily have to be financial; it can also involve leveraging the knowledge generated by actors such as the private sector as regards logistics or new technologies, as well as any other useful sector. The participation of these actors should be stepped up in the future, in a manner consistent with

humanitarian principles and their regulatory frameworks, especially in those regions where companies could have certain work experience, as long as it is not in conflict with human rights or humanitarian values.

The previous sections have included some of the priority actions for different operational results. One of the characteristics of Spanish humanitarian action is the large number of actors that it encompasses. With the passing of time, each actor has defined a series of crisis response instruments. A direct result of this has been the proliferation of different instruments with different characteristics, a consequence of each administration's legal and administrative needs. It is necessary to move forward in the harmonization of these instruments, analysing each one's appropriateness for the different kinds of crises in which humanitarian action is carried out, as well as the special characteristics of each actor.

Specifying the most appropriate funding instruments for humanitarian assistance, in line with what was agreed in the Grand Bargain, represents a challenge for Spanish Cooperation as a whole, which must be addressed during the Strategy's implementation period.

7. An accountable Strategy

7. An accountable Strategy

For this Strategy to be truly operational and to guide the work of State humanitarian actors, it must be accountable to all of the stakeholders, including the general public. To this end, it is necessary to guarantee appropriate accountability mechanisms for humanitarian actors and interest groups involved in the Strategy.

In the humanitarian sphere, as we have seen when analysing debates on quality, accountability proposals have shown some special characteristics regarding development cooperation in general. Noteworthy among them is the emphasis on accountability to the populations and communities impacted by the crises, which should be our horizon.

Together with this, the implications of incorporating the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) proposals into the humanitarian sphere should be studied.

7.1. Monitoring system: Indicators

The global indicators system proposed above will be used for continuous monitoring of the Strategy.

7.2. Evaluation within the framework of the Strategy

Evaluation is a crucial tool, both for accountability—with an eye not only to funders, but above all, to the affected populations and the general public—and for organizations' international improvement.

Spanish Cooperation actors as a whole are advised to strengthen their mechanisms for monitoring, follow-up, and evaluation, independently of the external evaluations that bodies may carry out or require.

Moreover, it is recommended that the present Strategy be evaluated at least twice:

- An internal mid-term review in four years, in order to make any necessary adjustments.
- A final evaluation at the end of the Strategy's eight-year period, making it possible to measure the degree of compliance with the objectives and results established.

AECID and some Spanish think tanks and NGOs are members of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP), and have contributed to disseminating their methodologies, best practices, and manuals. This work should be continued and, the presence of Spanish Cooperation in these kinds of networks should be promoted.

7.3. Knowledge management

Knowledge management is important in every public policy, but in such a changing environment as humanitarian assistance, knowledge management is of the essence in order to generate lessons learned that will enable better responses to future crises. Spanish Cooperation, and especially the CONGDE, has capacities in this regard, and certain universities, think tanks (the few specializing in this field in Spain), and NGOs, among other institutions, have carried out actions involving research, training and analysis, which must continue in the future.

8. Budgetary framework

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The results framework establishes the commitment to dedicating **10% of Spain's ODA to humanitarian action** during the implementation period, in line with what is already habitual among the other donors. Since this commitment is the total of all possible contributions by all public actors, its fulfilment requires significant coordination efforts.

9. Acronyms

Acronyms

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation	LRRD	Linking relief, rehabilitation and development
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance	MAEUEC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation
CERF	Central Emergency Response fund	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard	NGDO	Non-Governmental Development Organization
CONGDE	Coordinating Body for NGOs	OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
DG-ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations	ODA	Official Development Assistance
DRR	Disaster risk reduction	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
FTS	Financial Tracking Service	OSV	Other situations of violence
GHD	Good Humanitarian Donorship	PSEA	Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse
HAO	AECID's Humanitarian Action Office	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
HAS	Humanitarian Action Strategy	SGCID	Secretariat-General for International Development Cooperation
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative	WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross		
IECAH	Institute of Studies on Conflicts and Humanitarian Action		
IHL	International Humanitarian Law		
IHRL	International Human Rights Law		
JSI	Joint Standards Initiative		
LGTBIAQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersexual, asexual, queer		

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