

**DUTCH RELIEF ALLIANCE
2023 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT**



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1. FOREWORD



Tram Nguyen

Chair, Board of Directors
Dutch Relief Alliance

The year 2023 was a turbulent one, marked by unprecedented challenges and enormous changes for people in need and for humanitarian organisations. From earthquakes in Syria/Turkey and Afghanistan and other natural disasters exacerbated by climate change, to acute crises in Mozambique, Myanmar, Sudan, Libya, and Gaza, and protracted crises across many countries, the global humanitarian landscape continues to pose challenges to the lives and livelihoods of at least 300 million people in an increasingly challenging international context. Despite these challenges, the Dutch Relief Alliance has progressed in our mission to provide effective, efficient and impactful humanitarian assistance to people in need.

In 2023, the Dutch Relief Alliance implemented over 13 projects across 10 countries, providing lifesaving assistance to 3.3 million people. This annual report highlights the outcomes and impact of our joint responses in 2023 and the enormous commitment and resilience of the partners, teams and communities we work with.

The strength of the Dutch Relief Alliance lies in our unique model of partnership, bringing together 14 Dutch humanitarian organisations, and local partners, supported and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in delivering coordinated and impactful joint responses. In the year 2023, we took important steps to translate our vision of equitable partnerships into concrete action. As such, we prioritised locally led action and committed to mutual capacity strengthening, local (co)leadership, cost sharing, and risk sharing among local, national and international partners. Not only has this approach improved the effectiveness and impact of our interventions, but it continues to provide space for local partners and communities to anticipate and respond to future crises in a more equitable and sustainable way.

As we move forward, I am fully aware of the persistent and emerging challenges that lie ahead. The increased natural and man-made hazards, impaired by shrinking humanitarian access and breaches of international humanitarian law, continue to pose great insecurity for affected communities and humanitarian aid workers. Significant pressure on donor support and funding in the Netherlands and internationally is further clouding the future prospects for the global humanitarian landscape. Our alliance needs to continue to evolve, demand principled humanitarian assistance, innovate solutions and advocate for sustained solidarity.

With full confidence in our commitment and resilience amidst this challenging outlook, I extend my deepest gratitude – on behalf of the Dutch Relief Alliance – to all our partners and staff, to the Ministry, and to all who contributed to our mission in 2023. Together, we made significant progress in 2023, but our mission continues. Together, we will continue to transform lives and build a future where every individual can live with dignity, safety and hope.

Tram Nguyen

This is the Annual Report of the Dutch Relief Alliance for the 2023 reporting year

Colophon

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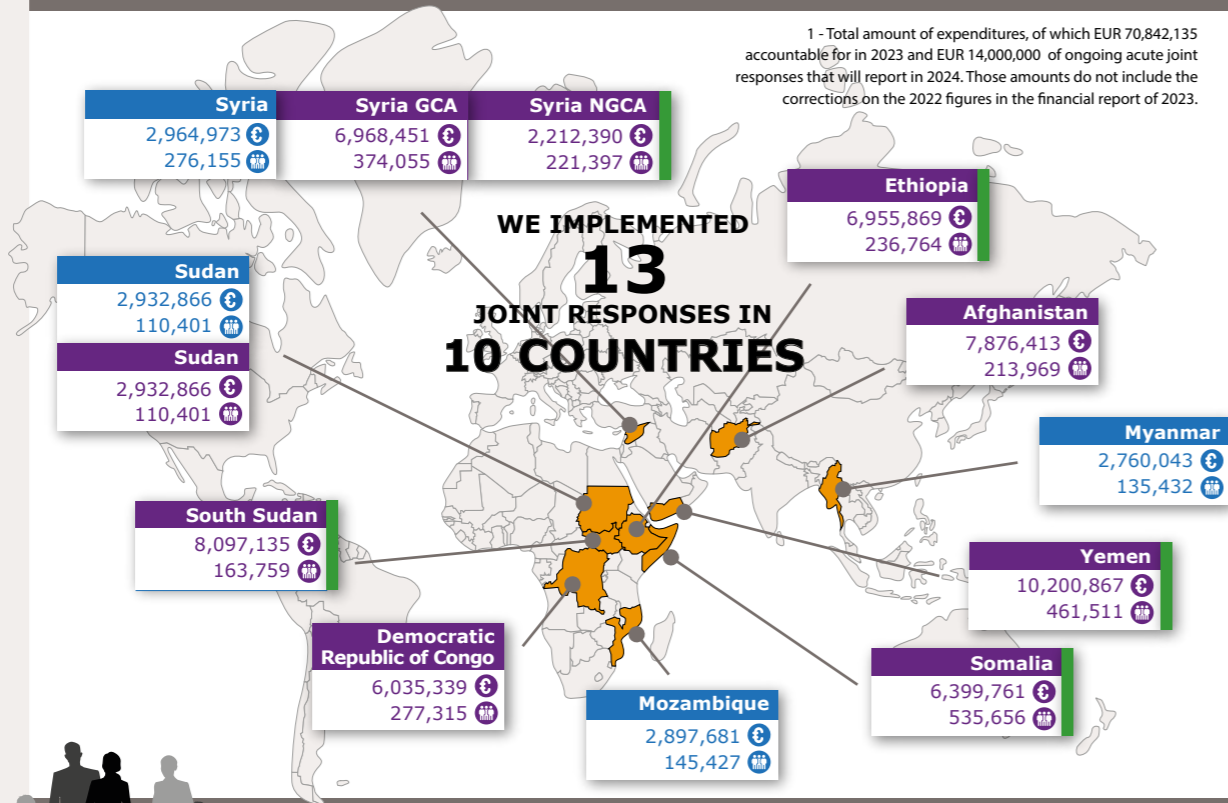
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2. 2023 - OUR ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF

We invested
EUR 84,842,135
in joint responses to acute and protracted crises¹

1 - Total amount of expenditures, of which EUR 70,842,135 accountable for in 2023 and EUR 14,000,000 of ongoing acute joint responses that will report in 2024. Those amounts do not include the corrections on the 2022 figures in the financial report of 2023.

TOTAL EXPENDITURES (incl. ACIRs ongoing in 2024): **84,842,135**
Acute Crisis Joint Responses: **11,555,563**
Protracted Crisis Joint Responses: **58,530,082**
Top up Innovation: **1,621,317**



**WE IMPLEMENTED
13
JOINT RESPONSES IN
10 COUNTRIES**

We reached
3.4 MILLION PEOPLE
with humanitarian assistance²

2 - Excluding acute joint responses running both in 2023 and 2024, that will be reporting in 2024. Including expenditures and people reached with Open Call innovation projects.

37.1%
TOTAL Local partner expenditures
31,795,833



In 2023, the Dutch Relief Alliance comprised **14 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS**

CARE Netherlands, Cordaid, Dorcas, Help a Child, Oxfam Novib, Plan International, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages, Stichting Vluchteling, Tearfund Netherlands, Terre des Hommes, War Child, World Vision, ZOA, with the support of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We worked together with
93 LOCAL PARTNERS

3. ABOUT THE DUTCH RELIEF ALLIANCE

The Dutch Relief Alliance is a coalition of 14 Dutch iNGOs that have joined forces to provide humanitarian assistance to people and communities worldwide. By aligning our efforts, we are able to respond to acute crises within 72 hours. Working in partnership with local NGOs and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we strive to enhance the impact of the humanitarian work undertaken by international, national and local NGOs.

The Dutch Relief Alliance was established in 2015 in response to an increase in the number of humanitarian crises worldwide, as for the people affected by these events.

Over the years, the Dutch Relief Alliance has delivered humanitarian aid to millions of people in over 50 crises worldwide, working together with more than 100 local organisations. The alliance has established itself as a global testing ground for the sector's engagement with the Grand Bargain Commitments and Core Humanitarian Standard, specifically with regard to themes like localisation, multiyear funding and programming, innovation, accountability and community engagement.

Our partners

Currently, 14 Dutch iNGOs participate in the Dutch Relief Alliance: CARE Netherlands, Cordaid, Dorcas, Help a Child, Oxfam Novib, Plan International, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages, Stichting Vluchteling, Tearfund, Terre des Hommes, War Child, World Vision Netherlands and ZOA. However, these organisations can only do this work with the help of local partners who are rooted in their unique societies and circumstances.

Our approach

The Dutch Relief Alliance partners coordinate their efforts in joint responses. These collective programmes, which are set up in response to both acute and protracted crises, focus on providing equitable humanitarian relief based on solid plans and proven approaches. Each joint response is unique – involving a distinct set of activities and participants – and is tailored to specific needs, challenges and capacities.

The alliance is backed by a support structure made up of rotating representatives of the participating iNGOs. This team manages long-term flexible funding and facilitates processes on the partners' behalf. The heart of our work is formed by our humanitarian mandate. Moreover, we increasingly incorporate elements of the nexus approach within our Protracted Crisis Joint Responses, moving towards a closer integration of humanitarian action with development activities.

1. [The Standard - CHS \(corehumanitarianstandard.org\)](https://www.corehumanitarianstandard.org/)

4. OUR STRATEGY

Locally led action is central to the Dutch Relief Alliance's strategy for 2022 – 2026. We aim to integrate the principles of the nexus into our work while maintaining a strong focus on our core humanitarian mission. We aspire to set a standard for positive reform within the sector through our approach to humanitarian action. In our communication and advocacy efforts, we emphasise the additional benefits of this approach.

In our multiyear strategy for 2022 – 2026², the alliance concentrates on four strategic objectives: Impact, Efficiency and Effectiveness, Quality, and Visibility and Evidence-Based Advocacy.



Our Strategy in Practice

In 2023, the Dutch Relief Alliance continued to make important strides in the implementation of our Strategy and Multi-Annual Plan. We sought feedback from stakeholders to sharpen our priorities and to ensure a realistic scope as we worked to strengthen local resilience in times of crisis. Our work elevated the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian system in general by championing a leading role for local actors and institutions. This chapter highlights key results and outcomes in the alliance's 2023 strategic objectives.

4.1 Impact for People in Need

In 2023, the alliance offered humanitarian assistance through nine Protracted Crisis Joint Responses (PCJRs) and eight Acute Crisis Joint Responses (ACJRs). Chapters 5 and 6 provide more information on these responses and their impact.

The 14 alliance partners prioritise a people-centred, gender-responsive approach in their collaborative programmes. In 2023, the alliance held several learning sessions on both gender-transformative programming and inclusion. Participants discussed Gender-Age Markers (GAM), Washington Group Disability Questions (WGQ) and adaptive programming, sparking ideas on how to better integrate these elements into the joint response designs. Furthermore, the Dutch Relief Alliance published a report on "Gender Programming in DRA", which compiles useful sources and guidelines for both gender-transformative programming and inclusion. These elements, which include sex, age and disability-disaggregated data (SADDD), were useful in 2023 when we designed the 2024 – 2026 PCJR.

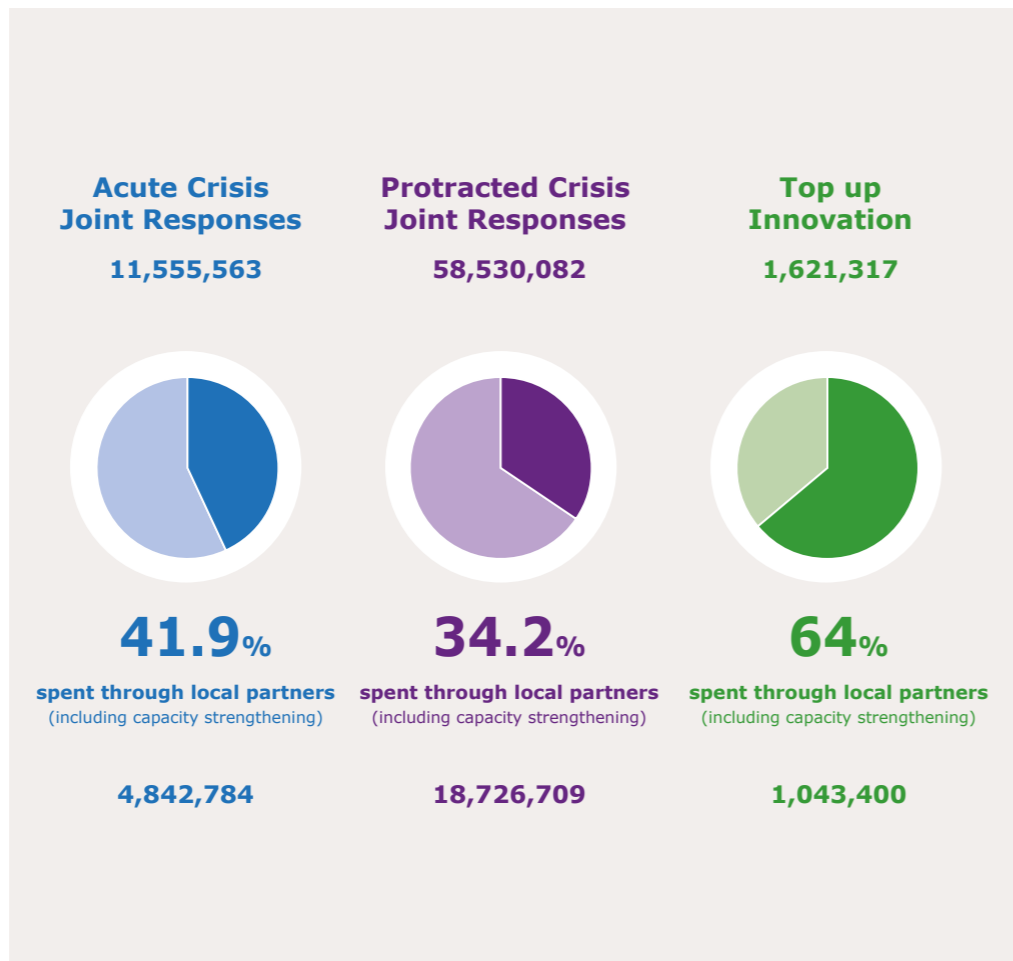
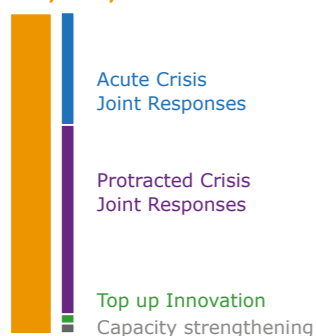
In 2023, the alliance implemented the DRA Fundraising Strategy to secure additional funding from diverse sources for multiyear programming through the efficient engagement of alliance partners (at both the joint response and global level), resulting in greater programmatic reach and impact. One outcome has been our partnership with the Wageningen Centre for Development and Innovation that focuses on research and trials in crop seed management in the humanitarian sector.



Total expenditures:
84,842,135
(incl ACJRs ongoing in 2024)

37.1%
 spent through local partners

Total Partner expenditures:
31,795,833



4.2 Equitable, Effective and Efficient Joint Responses

The Dutch Relief Alliance strongly supports local partners' spearheading of humanitarian preparedness and response programmes, contributing to equitable partnerships within its various joint responses. The guideline note for supporting locally led capacity strengthening was accepted early in 2023, resulting in local partners handling 37.10 % of joint response budgets, which include funding for local capacity strengthening. As last year, this exceeds once again the alliance's target of having 35 % of its budget handled by local partners by 2026. The local capacity strengthening initiative was implemented for ACJRs in 2023, and will extend to PCJRs in 2024 onwards. The guideline specifies that local partners receive and dedicate 5 % of their budget to the capacity strengthening of their choice. The year 2023 was the first in which the alliance implemented sharing a 6 % indirect cost rate with local partners in ACJRs; a practice to be expanded to PCJRs as well from 2024.

As part of our strategic commitment to localisation, in 2023 the alliance conducted a second local partner survey. The Local Advisory Group's involvement in the survey resulted in better local participation, with 51 of the 58 local partners in the PCJRs responding to the survey. The equitable nature of the partnership was rated by the local partners with a 7 on a scale of 10. An important achievement was the meaningful participation of local partners in decision-making, in particular in relation to project locations and sectors. Furthermore, with the aim of multiyear funding, we achieved a significant improvement in the duration of contracts, with fewer partners on short-term contracts and more on contracts of more than two years.

Another feature of 2023 has been the initiatives taken to promote co-leadership on the joint response level, which is strongly encouraged, by creating a safe space for equal collaboration through joint learning and sharing. To bring this on a higher level, a paper was published, researching co-leadership as it is implemented within the South Sudan and Afghanistan PCJRs, highlighting the achievements and challenges of this innovative approach. Furthermore, a MEAL practical guide was distributed for performing evaluations in joint responses, aiding in the formation of a learning alliance of best practices.

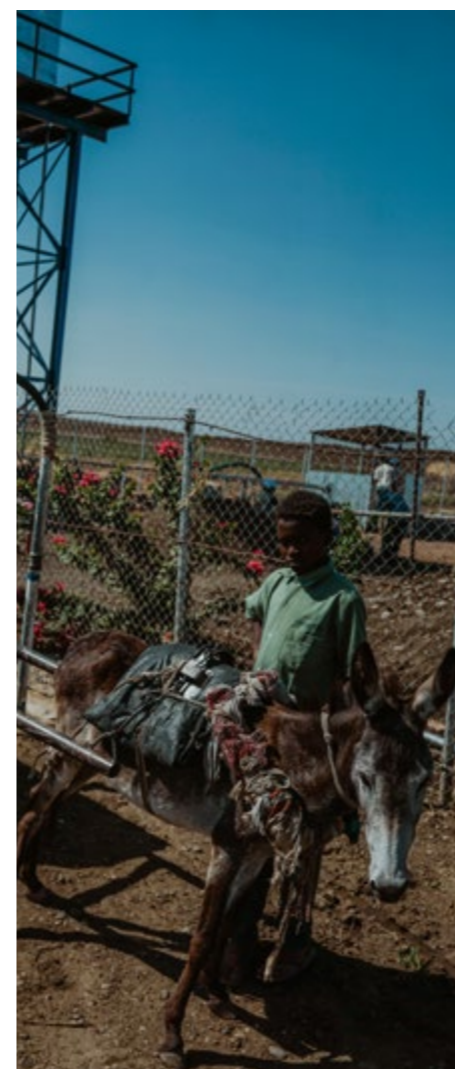
The Dutch Relief Alliance operates in the constantly changing environment of humanitarian aid. The governance structure should reflect the needs of these circumstances while meeting the goal of becoming an effective and efficient alliance. In 2023, the alliance reviewed its governance structure, recommending a revision of roles and responsibilities that will help improve the efficacy and efficiency of the alliance.

4.3 Quality, Learning and Innovation

The Dutch Relief Alliance aims for quality, learning and innovation to improve joint responses and strengthen humanitarian systems. Subscribing to the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) helps us to guarantee this quality. In 2023, all 14 alliance partners were confirmed through an independent verification office to have met all nine CHS commitments, in line with the CHS commitment each agency made in 2021. Another memorable moment was the alliance's involvement in a two-day tabletop exercise on risk sharing in Geneva with donors and representatives from humanitarian agencies such as the UN, ICRC and multiple iNGOs. The Dutch Relief Alliance was the only participant represented by members of both an international and a local organisation.

In 2024, we are looking forward to consolidating and further implementing the alliance's innovative approaches to localisation. Among these is the Risk Sharing Framework, which facilitates dialogue with all joint response partners around risk sharing. The framework, finalised in 2023, is being piloted in three PCJRs. The outcomes of the framework are anticipated in the second quarter of 2024, at which time they will be shared with other joint responses interested in the framework. These steps foster equitable partnerships in addition to innovative and improved joint responses.

Our alliance must continue to engage in innovation and learning, given the increasing demand for humanitarian aid globally, both in terms of the number of people affected and the emergence of new, severe crises. In a continuously changing setting, this can help us create new, efficient strategies to protect the effectiveness and caliber of our joint responses. To provide such a learning environment, the Dutch Relief Alliance hosted an annual learning week where joint response leads and country coordinators focused on quality assurance and best practices by delving into topics such as risk sharing, innovation and adaptive management. Other advancements of the alliance this year included improved monitoring of worldwide crises by using external data sources, and support to partners for the 2024 – 2026 PCJRs through updated financial guidelines.



4.4 Visibility and Influence

One of the strategic objectives of the Dutch Relief Alliance is to leverage visibility and influence for funding diversification, and humanitarian system change on quality funding and locally led action. One approach to increasing our visibility and influence has been to publish a magazine on our Grand Bargain commitments: Beyond 2.0, in which we elaborate on the steps we undertake in changing the humanitarian system. Furthermore, the Dutch Relief Alliance attended several forums and conferences to promote the partnership model, with the Local Advisory Group's representation at the European Humanitarian Forum as one of the highlights. Moreover, the alliance continued to improve its exposure, profile and influence by participating in several high-level meetings, such as one with Liesje Schreinemacher, the former Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, and Mark Rutte, the former Dutch Prime Minister.

Additionally, the alliance has been working in collaboration with several organisations, both nationally and internationally. Examples of this are the collaborative publication with Devex on Visual Story, and the KUNO humanitarian cafe, organised by the Dutch Relief Alliance, in which local partners were invited to speak about local leadership in humanitarian aid. Internationally the Dutch Relief Alliance attended the Response Innovation Lab Global Network Exchange in Kenya, which aids in using innovation as a tool for changing the humanitarian system. Lastly, the alliance increased its online presence on LinkedIn, updated its website and produced new visibility materials to expand its visibility. Altogether, these collaborations and opportunities for visibility and influence facilitate building a more effective and efficient humanitarian system in which equitable partnerships are key in obtaining those goals.



5. ACUTE CRISIS JOINT RESPONSES



5.1 The Acute Crisis Mechanism (ACM) *the ability to respond within 72 hours*

The Acute Crisis Mechanism covers those crises the DRA chooses to respond to that are not protracted crises (see Protracted Crisis Mechanism). Acute crises are defined as “new onset emergencies or a spike in on-going emergencies – inclusive of chronic emergencies”. The nature of an acute crisis can be severe and the response to humanitarian needs are necessarily swift, effective and contextualised. In an Acute Crisis Joint Response, the focus is on saving lives and delivering emergency assistance. The acute mechanism distinguishes between a sudden-onset crisis with a response timeframe of 72 hours, and a slow-onset crisis with a maximum response timeframe of three weeks. For 2023 joint responses, the applicable version of the ACM was dated December 2022, when a new version of the ACM was approved.

5.2 New Acute Crisis Joint Responses in 2023

Eight Acute Crisis Joint Responses were launched in 2023, two more than in 2022; they were funded from the 2023 Block Grant. Four joint responses were activated to respond to slow-onset crises and four for sudden-onset crises. Most of the acute responses in 2023 focused on natural disasters, whereas two joint response responded to armed conflicts.

The total budget for ACM in 2023 was EUR 21,500,000, including ICR and Management Cost divided amongst the eight approved Acute Crisis Joint Responses in 2023. This budget also included a movement of EUR 3 million from the 2024 ACM budget to the 2023 ACM budget for the Somalia floods response that was approved in December 2023.

This report covers the first four Acute Crisis Joint Responses of 2023 (Syria, Mozambique, Myanmar and Sudan), as the other four will only submit final reports after the finalisation of the 2023 annual report. Therefore, the other four will be reported in the 2024 annual report.

Overview of the Acute Crisis Joint Responses initiated in 2023

Country	Lead	Crisis Onset	Disaster	Amount Allocated EUR	Learning Exercise
Syria	ZOA	Sudden	Earthquake	3,000,000	Evaluation
Mozambique	Plan International	Slow	Tropical Storm	3,000,000	RRTR
Myanmar	CARE	Sudden	Cyclone	3,000,000	Evaluation
Sudan	Plan International	Slow	Armed Conflict	3,000,000	RRTR
Libya	Stichting Vluchteling	Sudden	Floods	2,500,000	Evaluation
Gaza	War Child	Sudden	Armed Conflict	7,000,000	RRTR
Afghanistan	Cordaid	Slow	Earthquake	2,000,000	RRTR
Somalia	Oxfam Novib	Slow	Floods	3,000,000	Evaluation

2023 ACM Annual Beneficiary Report

		Food Security & Livelihoods	Nutrition	WASH	Health	Shelter	Education	Multi-Purpose Cash	Protection	TOTAL
Syria JR	Target	40,250	0	32,544	24,000	9,060	0	6,850	7,400	99,266
	Reached	188,549	0	96,454	57,458	4,952	0	4,156	12,586	276,155
Mozambique JR	Target	15,750	0	84,056	0	6,000	8,413	0	5,788	97,701
	Reached	17,029	0	136,666	0	6,661	11,840	0	10,705	145,427
Myanmar JR	Target	3,000	0	109,509	0	26,818	0	23,875	0	121,284
	Reached	2,650	0	80,715	0	23,591	0	49,447	0	135,432
Sudan JR	Target	8,100	0	96,150	21,966	1,310	0	5,362	17,300	131,142
	Reached	9,146	0	85,796	34,856	1,572	0	5,436	18,915	110,401
Sector totals in 2023	Target	67,100	0	322,259	45,966	43,188	8,413	36,087	30,488	449,393
	Reached	217,374	0	399,631	92,314	36,776	11,840	59,039	42,206	667,415

5.3 General Observations

In 2023, the four reported Acute Crisis Joint Responses reached 667,415 people in need. This represents an increase of 218,022 people in need than the originally planned 449,393. Most of the difference comes from a combination of conservative planning and a better maximisation of resources. WASH, FSL and MPCA represented most of the sectoral support of the DRA under the 2023 ACM in terms of both funding allocation and reach. These sectors are also the traditional major sectors in DRA and represent the main sectors of expertise of the alliance.

5.4 Acute Crisis Joint Responses

In the next pages the four Acute Crises Joint Responses that reported in 2023 will be explained and explored.



5.4.1 Syria Earthquake Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
ZOA

Alliance partners:
Dorcas, Oxfam, Terre des Hommes, Save the Children, World Vision

Local Organisational Partners:
Adeso, GREDO, KAALO Aid and Development, PWDA, WASDA, WRRS

The Syrian ACJR focused on providing humanitarian aid to men, women, boys and girls affected by the Syrian earthquakes, with special attention to reaching elderly people and those with disabilities. Alliance partners targeted the most vulnerable people, including the many displaced persons. Experienced relief workers employed both individual assistance and community-based schemes in this lifesaving humanitarian response.

The Syrian ACJR actively responded in six areas of humanitarian need.

- **Food Security and Livelihoods** comprised interventions aimed at improving the availability of and access to food for people who were affected by the earthquakes.
- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)** activities focused on hygiene promotion and the provision of a safe water supply for an impressive number of people that was almost twice the number as was originally projected.
- **Health Services** professionals and their helpers provided lifesaving primary health care services to people with health care needs, reaching tens of thousands more people than originally projected.
- **Protection** interventions were aimed at the prevention of violence that people trying to survive chaotic and dangerous situations often are subject to, with special attention to child protection. Activities stressed teaching people how to protect themselves and the vulnerable people around them.
- **Shelter and Non-food Items** were distributed; individual household shelter was provided, rather than large group shelter. Again, far more people were helped than was originally planned.
- **Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)** was provided to thousands of people, with no conditions or restrictions mandated as to how they were to use the cash. People were free to decide what their most urgent needs were for the cash provided, giving them maximum control and dignity in this one area of their lives.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

Local partners collaborated closely with host government authorities at the local, governorate and national levels. Pre-existing engagement with other external organisations intensified during the acute response through the alliance's active participation in humanitarian coordination bodies and in sectoral meetings. Internal coordination among the joint response partners leveraged the strengths of each partner in terms of knowledge and expertise to deliver a more efficient and robust earthquake response. These efforts facilitated cross-learning and minimised duplication of efforts.

Alliance partners in the response placed special planning emphasis on localisation, the proof resting in the fact that 45 % of the response funding was placed in the hands of local partner organisations. These efforts resulted in increased access to people in need and increased ability to quickly respond, all due to our local partners' significant knowledge of the local context, including cultural sensitivity.

Challenges

No acute crisis joint response is without its challenges, and this was no exception. Challenges consisted of delayed approvals from authorities and data protection needs related to cash interventions. Like any widespread natural disaster, the people's needs changed quickly and constantly, not only from day to day, but even hour to hour in some cases, requiring relief workers to collaborate effectively and quickly to shift their interventions accordingly.

We want to note that not all of the dynamics in this response were hard or negative challenges; we welcomed an unexpected positive opportunity in exchange rate gains we received, due to a favourable exchange rate for earthquake-related interventions. These gains enabled partners to reach more people in need, as was noted earlier.

Lessons Learned

The need for referral mechanisms became very clear to avoid duplication of services and to ensure people's multiple needs were addressed through complementary services. **Feedback mechanisms** were of equal importance to keep the response on track. Once again we realised the high importance of having a **stock of essential items** readily available to respond swiftly at the time of a natural disaster, including medications for health clinics. Given the critical importance of our local partners, because of the depth of their reach into affected populations, we realised the need for a **local team that is well-prepared and well-trained** in disaster management, so that they're prepared to respond and adapt quickly. Such teams must be involved in planning, execution and evaluation of the outcome of activities. Finally, we felt the need for **psychosocial support** for both people affected by the disaster and for responding staff, due to the stress, fear, lack of safety, (political) sensitivities and general chaos of the situation.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned	Reached
🌾 Food Security & Livelihoods	40,250	188,549
💧 WASH	32,544	96,454
❤️ Health	24,000	57,458
🛡️ Protection	7,400	12,586
🏠 Shelter and Non-Food Items	9,060	4,952
💰 Multipurpose Cash Assistance	6,850	4,156
Total (without double counting)	99,266	276,155

Budget: EUR 3 million **Expenditure:** EUR 2,964,973

Programme period: 11 February 2023 – 10 August 2023

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:

EUR 1,453,206 (49 %)



49 %

5.4.2 The Mozambique Cyclone Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
Plan International

Alliance partners:
CARE Netherlands, Oxfam,
Save the Children, SOS
Children's Villages, Tearfund

Local Organisational Partners:
ADRA Mozambique, KULIMA,
NANA, Livaningo, Conselho
Cristao de Mocambique
(CCM) and AENA

The Mozambique Acute Crisis Joint Response (ACJR) targeted individuals affected by Cyclone Freddy, which hit the country on 24 February and again on 11 March in 2023, affecting almost a million people. The joint response had a particular focus on specific groups of vulnerable people. Priority was given to families headed by females and to widows, unaccompanied minors, child-headed households, persons with disabilities, elderly people, individuals with chronic illnesses and households living in precarious conditions.

The Mozambique ACJR actively responded in five areas of humanitarian need.

- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):** Efforts in this sector helped people access safe and sufficient water. By distributing hygiene products such as soap along with the safe water, public health risks were greatly reduced.
- **Emergency Shelter:** Thousands lost their homes during the cyclone. A great number of these people received emergency shelter provisions and essential non-food items to help them survive the initial crisis after the cyclone hit.
- **Food Security and Livelihoods:** In both Zambezia and Sofala provinces, the joint response programme contributed to short-term livelihood support for thousands of people affected by the cyclone. Efforts centred on the provision of resources to protect and start rebuilding livelihood assets.
- **Education:** Educational support centred on setting up schools and other educational spaces for children and youth, thousands of whom benefitted from these efforts. Providing a normalised educational setting is one of the most comforting and stabilising efforts for children who are experiencing major crisis.
- **Protection:** Protection interventions were aimed at the prevention of violence that people trying to survive chaotic and dangerous situations often are subject to, with special attention to child protection. Activities stressed teaching people how to protect themselves and the vulnerable people around them. In the Mozambique response, protection activities particularly focused on the provision of mental health and psychosocial support.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

Joint response partners focused particularly on **coordination with the government**. Good coordination with the district and community authorities helped in the implementation of activities, through minimising overlap, developing complementarity and prioritising the communities with the greatest needs, while respecting humanitarian principles.

Joint response partners **coordinated closely with the sector clusters and with the wider civil society** in general. They maintained strong coordination with other humanitarian actors present in the target districts, and most notably with the UN agencies and iNGOs that coordinated the sector clusters, allowing joint response members to target the available resources to the families most in need, thereby avoiding overlapping activities.

Coordination among the joint response partners was maintained through attending periodic coordination and update meetings, as well as conducting online meetings with partners working in the same target districts, enabling partners to adapt certain good practices learned from other joint response members.

Joint response actors placed strong emphasis on the localisation of the response. All Mozambique ACJR alliance members worked together with various local



partners/actors to ensure timely and effective implementation of programme activities. For example, CARE worked with a local NGO called ADRA, Oxfam worked with the local NGO called KULIMA, Plan International worked with NANA and Save the Children worked with AENA.

Challenges

One of the major challenges encountered by the joint response partners was the remoteness of the affected communities and the general road conditions. Another challenge centred around the process to select the project participants. Thankfully this was mitigated through strong collaboration with local authorities, community leaders, and the active involvement of affected persons in project implementation committees. Related to this was the challenge presented by the relatively limited number of persons the programme had resources to help compared to the number of people who were affected by Cyclone Freddy, and thus who were in need of help. And finally, an outbreak of cholera that resulted from the difficult hygiene circumstances brought on by the cyclone presented a notable challenge to the project staff and people affected.

Lessons Learned

The **active participation of affected persons** and local structures in the different steps of the project proved successful and should be replicated in future responses, since they guarantee participation, ownership, acceptance and accountability of those involved.

Community engagement and strong, well-functioning **accountability mechanisms** are key elements in building strong relationships of trust among the targeted population and the different humanitarian actors within a project, since they create transparency and trust and improve coordination.

Historically, the focus has been primarily on response permissions, with limited attention directed toward preparedness measures, but the heightened frequency of disasters underscores the imperative for humanitarian organisations to place greater emphasis on **preparedness and contingency planning**.

The joint response partners had the chance to exchange experiences and insights with other humanitarian actors, gaining exposure to diverse approaches aimed at increasing community engagement and ownership. The teams highly valued these chances for **cross-organisational learning and collaboration**.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned	Reached
Food Security & Livelihoods	15,750	17,029
WASH	84,056	136,666
Shelter and Non-Food Items	6,000	6,661
Education	8,413	11,840
Protection	5,788	10,705
Total (without double counting)	97,701	145,427

Budget: EUR 3 million **Expenditure:** EUR 2,897,681

Programme period: 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:
EUR 1,096,473 (38 %) ¹

¹ - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



38 %

5.4.3 The Myanmar Cyclone Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
CARE Netherlands

Alliance partners:
Oxfam Novib, Plan International, Save the Children, Stichting Vluchteling, Tearfund

Local Organisational Partners:
Karen Baptist Church, The Church of the Province of Myanmar (Anglican), Community Empowerment and Resilience Association, Yaung Chi Thit, Peace and Development Initiative-Kintha (PDI-Kintha), People For People, Phyu Sin Saydanar Action Group, Myanmar Heart Development Organization

Cyclone Mocha, which in May 2023 hit the North Indian Ocean, including Myanmar and parts of Bangladesh, was a powerful and deadly tropical cyclone. An estimated 7.9 million people lived in areas that experienced winds in excess of 90 kmph during the cyclone; 3.4 million of these people faced very destructive winds of more than 120 kmph. Of these, approximately 1.6 million people across five areas of Myanmar – Rakhine, Chin, Sagaing, Magway and Kachin – were affected by Cyclone Mocha and its aftermath. These areas were already experiencing high pre-existing vulnerability, with hundreds of thousands of people either homeless or living in damaged shelters and having limited access to safe water. These areas were already targeted for support under the existing 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan for Myanmar, which when the cyclone hit was already massively underfunded, with only 10 per cent of needed funding having been made available. A dramatic scale-up of funding was imperative to close the existing funding gap.

This joint response's approach was meticulously crafted to provide comprehensive, lifesaving support, reaching tens of thousands of affected people in priority areas of need: **food security and livelihoods; water, sanitation and hygiene; emergency shelter and multipurpose cash assistance.** Thus, this multifaceted response addressed not only the immediate needs of households for essential items, shelter materials and hygiene kits, but also emphasised awareness of the hygiene steps people needed to take to protect their health.

The most vulnerable people in need were prioritised in the distribution of this lifesaving aid. These criteria served as the basis for determining the target locations and households: female- and child-headed households; households with persons with disabilities, children under age 18, people over age 60; and households displaced/affected by Cyclone Mocha.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

The coordination efforts undertaken in this joint response had a significant impact on enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions. By collaborating closely with partner organisations, local authorities and community stakeholders, the project was able to pool resources, expertise and networks, resulting in a more comprehensive and coordinated response to Cyclone Mocha.

Coordination efforts facilitated the sharing of resources, including personnel, equipment and funding among partner organisations. This pooling of resources maximised efficiency and minimised a duplication of efforts.

Partner organisations such as Save the Children and Plan International implemented complementary interventions, leveraging each other's strengths

and expertise. For example, while one organisation focused on providing emergency shelter materials, the other focused on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions. This synergy ensured a more holistic response to the diverse needs of affected communities.

Building capacity and establishing effective communication with local implementing partners proved fruitful in achieving project deliverables, including monitoring, evaluation and data collection.

Meaningful community engagement was crucial for the project's success. The project demonstrated the importance of actively involving community members in decision-making processes, ensuring their needs and concerns were heard and addressed. This approach fostered ownership, trust and sustainability of interventions.

Challenges

The project faced numerous challenges throughout its eight-month implementation period, primarily at the beginning of project due to access constraints and the volatile security situation. The State Administration Council (SAC) imposed restrictions on travel authorisations (TA) for aid actors, including local organisations, INGOs, and UN agencies. Although some TAs were eventually granted to local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), they were primarily for longer-term programming rather than emergency response. This restriction impacted to delay in the procurement process for WASH items, as suppliers from Yangon were unable to transport items and partners had to procure WASH items locally, which took time. This impacted the implementing partners, leading to delays in implementation.

Lessons Learned

We learned first-hand the critical importance of addressing communications challenges. Broken phone connections hindered communications and data collection from volunteers and Community Hygiene Workers. Contingency plans, such as sending data through trusted individuals or visiting nearby villages, were implemented to overcome these challenges.

Even more critical was the need to adapt to security challenges. Armed conflict between the Arakan Army and Myanmar Military led to the suspension of CERA's activities in Pauktaw villages. Flexibility and adaptation, such as transitioning from meeting WASH needs to meeting cash-for-food needs, were crucial in reaching people in need amidst conflict situations.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned	Reached
Food Security & Livelihoods	3,000	2,650
WASH	109,509	80,715
Shelter and Non-Food Items	26,818	23,591
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	23,875	49,447
Total (without double counting)	121,284	135,432

Budget: EUR 3 million **Expenditure:** EUR 2,760,042

Programme period: 26 May 2023 – 25 November 2023

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:
EUR 1,365,094 (49 %)



5.4.4 The Sudan Armed Conflict Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
Plan International

Alliance partners:
Save the Children, Stichting Vluchteling (partnered by International Rescue Committee), Tearfund (partnered by World Relief), World Vision, ZOA

Local Organisational Partners:
Alsawaid Alkhadara Organization (AAO), Organization for Voluntary Humanitarian Assistance Programme (ASSIST), Cafa Development Organization, CDF, Friends of Peace and Development (FPDO), HOPE, RAISE and SOS Sahel

In April 2023, a large-scale armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) broke out. The changing context and evolving new emergency situation in Sudan were described as a humanitarian catastrophe by the UN Secretary General. The scale and speed of the unfolding conflict was unprecedented in Sudan. The international community was concerned for the immediate and long-term impact on Sudan's population and the broader region. Before the crisis, Sudan already had 3.7 million displaced people. After the conflict started in April 2023, the figures of newly affected people more than doubled from 1 May to 9 May 2023. As of 18 July 2023, more than 2.6 million were internally displaced and 730,000 others had fled the country as refugees. The fighting led to 25 million people in need of aid and protection, including 14 million children.

Joint response partners' multisectoral lifesaving interventions reached tens of thousands of individuals in Sudan. Groups most at risk were prioritised in response efforts. Targeting of selected programme participants was disaggregated by gender, age and disability. The selection was also communicated with affected populations and host communities. The joint response ensured fair distribution among men, women, girls and boys, and especially people with disability. Moreover, joint response partners closely monitored changes in the context and remained sensitive to the needs of affected populations, applying changes and adaptations during the programme's implementation.

Specificities of the Response

The joint response contributed to the availability of, access to **food supplies, livelihood support and multipurpose cash distributions for people affected by the conflict**. These response contributed to household coping strategies.

The rapid response ensured **access to adequate safe water and sanitation services and facilitation of good hygiene practices**. The response also contributed to efforts to reduce the spread of cholera.

The response contributed to strengthening the provision of **critical health services** to a great number of people in need. Joint response partners delivered lifesaving basic primary health care services through interventions in Primary Health Centres (PHC), including catchment areas. Joint response partners also sourced **sufficient medical supplies** to keep four primary health care facilities and mobile health clinics operating.

Joint response partners provided **essential non-food items (NFIs)**, contributing to basic, safe and dignified **shelter**. This included the provision of cooking items, storage containers, utensils, sleeping mats, blankets and cleaning tools, as well as provision of mosquito netting for populations most at risk.

Protection interventions were also implemented to increase the well-being and sense of safety of affected populations.

Overall, the response contributed to households' ability to meet basic needs according to their priorities.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

Collaboration among joint response partners and joint ownership with diverse stakeholders was ensured through the design process, during kick-off

workshops attended by all the consortium partners and in regular coordination meetings. State-level meetings facilitated joint monitoring and engagement of other stakeholders such as the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), relevant ministries and local authorities. These coordination meetings were used for planning and to guarantee quality programming within the given timeline, as well as to avoid duplication and enhance collaborative impact. Collaboration helped avoid overlap and strengthened local coordination during programme implementation.

The joint response was led by Plan International, and co-led by ASSIST, a Sudanese NGO, in close coordination with the Response Task Force (RTF). The joint response leveraged the expertise of eight local/national NGO partners with a presence and solid track record in humanitarian response. Partners facilitated close coordination with state-level working groups, building on existing foundation practices of working with authorities and communities. The programme implemented the DRA cost-sharing principles, including ICR sharing with the partnering NGOs. A total of 32 % of the overall budget was implemented through local and national NGOs.

Challenges

The situation in country remained volatile during the response as constant changes in the context impacted operations and presented ongoing security challenges. While operations were initially suspended due to safety and security concerns, operations swiftly resumed. Humanitarian organisations actively explored operational and logistical alternatives and worked to expand operations.

Lessons Learned

The active involvement of community leaders and community representatives from among internally displaced population groups proved pivotal for identifying community needs, enhancing community mobilisation and improving the reach of the programme. Programme partners and participants greatly appreciated the possibility to apply changes and adaptations to the joint response plan. .

Partners leveraged prepositioned stock and used local suppliers to mitigate security challenges and delays during the transportation of materials.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned	Reached
Food Security & Livelihoods	8,100	9,146
WASH	96,150	85,796
Health	21,966	34,856
Protection	17,300	18,915
Shelter and Non-Food Items	1,310	1,572
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	5,362	5,436
Total (without double counting)	131,142	110,401

Budget: EUR 3 million **Expenditure:** EUR 2,932,866

Programme period: 13 June 2023 – 12 February 2024

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:
EUR 928,011 (32 %) ¹

1 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



32 %

5.5 A Closer Look: Malak's Story (Syria GCA)

My name is Malak, which means angel in Arabic. I was raised in a conservative Syrian family, preventing me from completing my studies. I am 44 years old now, but I got married when I was 17 and learned to take care of a herd of sheep and goats.

When the crisis hit and IS took control of the city of Aleppo, my family and I fled to the countryside and we started raising goats. Unfortunately, my husband got injured by a shell. So we had to return to the city for his medical treatment. We relied on aid and we had to sell all our belongings and livestock to survive.

With the liberation of Aleppo in 2017, our financial situation was still dire. Due to our difficult circumstances, I initially had to send my children to work in waste collection. But I couldn't bear watching them doing this work, so eventually I stopped this.

Then I had to make a very difficult decision: to make ends meet, I sold my wedding ring and my gold earrings that were so dear to me. I used the money to buy two goats. Through hard work and dedication, our goat business became successful, and we ended up owning 30 goats!

But then another disaster struck our life: my husband got imprisoned for two months. During this time, I had to do everything on my own. I had no choice but to be strong, as I was the only source of income for us. I was so happy when he was released!

Unfortunately, after his release, my husband was injured by a landmine while helping me with herding. At that time, we had to gradually sell the goats until three goats remained, as we needed funds for my husband's medical treatment, which involved several surgeries. I ended up being the sole breadwinner of the family again. Thankfully, these surgeries have allowed him to walk with crutches.

I was determined to improve the situation of my family. So I registered for a small projects grant funded by the Dutch Relief Alliance. I told them my business plan to make money through increasing our milk production and selling baby goats through livestock mating. The practical test I took was a piece of cake for me, since I had worked with livestock all my life. They were impressed by my extensive experience in livestock management and knowledge of how to care for them when they fell ill. As a bonus of my dedication and hard work, I was rewarded with five additional sheep.

Through successful breeding practices, very soon we doubled the number of our livestock. This was so encouraging for us, boosting our state of mind. Despite the bitter reality we are going through, I always stay optimistic with a smile, knowing that I am making progress towards a better life for my family!

'We relied on aid and we had to sell all our belongings and livestock to survive.'

'I always stay optimistic with a smile'



Malak looks with pride and affection on her small herd.

6. PROTRACTED CRISIS JOINT RESPONSES

6.1 The Protracted Crisis Mechanism

In addition to Acute Crisis Joint Responses, the Dutch Relief Alliance is also engaged in protracted crisis situations via multiyear Protracted Crisis Joint Responses. The Protracted Crisis Mechanism helps determine which humanitarian situations we respond to with a Protracted Crisis Joint Response, using the following criteria:

- The crisis has been ongoing for at least six months.
- The crisis takes place against the background of political and/or armed conflict, or a combination of conflict and recurring natural disasters. Moreover, the crisis cannot be traced back to single event but rather is caused by extended conflict, which has not necessarily occurred in the proposed country of implementation.
- The government in the affected area may be weak and/or ineffective, may have collapsed altogether or has possibly requested outside assistance in handling the crisis.
- Local need for humanitarian assistance has reached the emergency threshold in at least two sectors covered by the partners of the Dutch Relief Alliance.
- A relatively high percentage of the assistance provided (at least 10 % of the Official Development Assistance) is humanitarian assistance rather than development assistance..

The Protracted Crisis Joint Responses that started in 2022 continued until the end of 2023.

Budget Top-up in 2023

In 2023, the Dutch Relief Alliance increased the total budget by EUR 10 million, which was added to the originally committed budget of EUR 60 million. The alliance partners agreed to allocate an amount of EUR 3 million to one additional Acute Crisis Joint Response in 2023 and topped up the budget for Protracted Crisis Joint Responses in the 2022 – 2023 period with an extra EUR 6.84 million. This contributed to our overachieving set targets in all joint responses despite inflation, except in Sudan. The remaining EUR 160,000 was used for the humanitarian system strengthening and support budget in 2023. Along similar lines, for the years 2024 – 2026, a budget increase of EUR 15 million per year was incorporated. The year 2023 also saw a budget increase of EUR 5 million specifically for the Gaza Acute Crisis Joint Response.



Country	Lead	Joint Response Areas	People Targeted 2022 – 2023	People Reached* 2022 – 2023	People Reached 2023*
Afghanistan	Cordaid	Herat, Kandahar, Nangarhar	300,403	386,634	213,969
Democratic Republic of the Congo	World Vision	North Kivu, South Kivu	365,978	537,735	277,315
Ethiopia	SOS Villages	Amhara, Oromia, Tigray	439,043	458,035	236,764
Somalia	Oxfam Novib	Awdal, Banadir, Bari, Gedo, Lower Juba, Lower and Middle Shabelle, Mudug, Togdheer, Waqooyi Galbeed	500,261	793,581	421,416
South Sudan	Help a Child	Western and Northern Bahr-el-Ghazal, Unity, Upper Nile, Jonglei, Central Equatoria, Warrap	347,341	409,646	163,759
Sudan	Plan International	North and East Darfur, South and North Kordofan, Khartoum, Gaderef, White Nile	402,029	367,796	244,000
Syria (GCA)	ZOA	Aleppo, Idleb, Rural Damascus, Al-Hassakeh	372,745	602,649	374,055
Syria (NGCA)	War Child	Idleb, Aleppo, Hasakeh, Raqqa, Deir Ez Zor	188,421	358,498	221,397
Yemen	CARE Netherlands	Sa'ada, Hajjah, Sana'a, Taiz, Aden, Al Dhale'e, Dhamar, Al Mahwit, Lahj, Marib	537,397	810,303	461,511

* Excluding people reached in both 2022 and 2023



6.2 General Observations

The nine Protracted Crisis Joint Responses supported by the Dutch Relief Alliance in 2023 reached more than 2.6 million people in need. Over the 2022 – 2023 period, more than 4.7 million were reached, significantly more than the 3.5 million planned. We provided assistance in a number of sectors: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; Food Security and Livelihoods, Health, Nutrition, Education and Multipurpose Cash Assistance.

In several countries in 2023, the Dutch Relief Alliance had a Protracted Crisis Joint Response that was complemented with an Acute Crisis Joint Response, given sudden- or slow-onset increases in needs. This concerns the earthquakes affecting Syria (February 2023) and Afghanistan (October 2023), the outbreak of civil war in Sudan (April) and flooding in Somalia (November). Where smaller crises took place, the Protracted Crisis Joint Responses activated pre-incorporated crisis modifiers and made use of budget flexibility.

In 2023 the Dutch Relief Alliance joint responses continued to have a strong focus on localisation and collaboration with, and implementation through,

local partners. National and local actors are often well positioned to access the population in need and effectively respond within a variety of sectors. The year 2023 was the last of the 2022 – 2023 multiyear period and preparations were made for new Protracted Crisis Joint Responses. A redesign allowed for incorporation of new standard practices into the Protracted Crisis Joint Responses, such as the sharing of an indirect cost rate with local partners and the capacity strengthening budget being managed by a local partner.

After analysis, the same eight countries were prioritised for the new period 2024 – 2026, with new assessments and in-country design workshop standing as the basis for the redesigned interventions. The joint responses in Syria, Yemen and Ethiopia engaged external facilitation to establish and reinforce a collaborative needs-centric design approach that fostered equitable partnership.

6.3 Protracted Crisis Joint Responses

In the next pages the nine Protracted Crises Joint Responses will be explained and explored.



6.3.1 The Afghanistan Protracted Crisis Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
Cordaid

Alliance partners:
Save the Children, Stichting Vluchteling, Terre des Hommes, World Vision

Local Organisational Partners:
Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan, Organization of Human Welfare, Bu Ali Rehabilitation and Aid Network, Your Voice Organization

The Afghanistan Protracted Crisis Joint Response focuses on the basic needs of the most vulnerable populations in the provinces of Herat, Nangarhar and Kandahar by providing assistance in the areas of **food security and livelihoods; increasing access to water, sanitation, and hygiene; multipurpose cash assistance and health care**. The year 2023 saw a significant increase in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan. The response activities in 2023 contributed to reaching more people than was planned in the 2022 – 2023 period. There was variance in the levels of completion of the different activities due to contextual factors as well as choices by the de facto authorities in the country.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

As a result of intense joint response advocacy efforts on the national, provincial and district levels, and by promising to observe mahram regulations, partners secured (verbal) permission to work with female staff in our programme areas. This represented the most important collaborative and localisation success, with the greatest positive impact, during the entire year of effort.

During 2023 two additional local partners were added to the AFJR to ensure reach into important locations and to ensure complementarity with INGOs. Proactive engagement of local networks was essential in overcoming regulatory obstacles and engaging the required permissions.

Challenges

Some activities could not take place as planned as humanitarian organisations had to deal with unexpected changes from the de facto authorities. Particularly challenging was the ban on female staff working for NGOs from 24 December 2022 onwards.

The de facto authorities' decision to work from fixed health centres rather than with mobile teams and the allowance of the construction of new latrines and water supply systems, but no rehabilitations, were particularly impactful.

Due to the increased negative impact of low rain- and snowfall, water levels decreased, making impossible the installation of planned water pumps in some locations.

Specific contextual changes to be highlighted are the high influx of Afghans who were forced by Pakistan to return to their home country. They came into Kandahar and Nangarhar especially from September 2023 onwards.

Another significant challenge was the Herat earthquakes in October 2023. The AFJR responded to both with food, hygiene kits, winterisation kits and cash assistance, amongst others. Additional ACJR funds were used to respond to the Herat earthquakes.

Lessons Learned

A lesson we have learned over and over is the absolutely critical importance of having local female staff to work with women in need who are living in such a conservative culture. Female staff were essential to reaching women and children requiring assistance.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
🌾 Food Security & Livelihoods	32,200	71,994	53,230
💧 WASH	62,700	53,121	31,042
❤️ Health	207,232	199,032	71,425
💰 Multipurpose Cash Assistance	78,653	90,539	47,048
Total (without double counting)	300,403	386,634	213,969

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 12,272,705

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 7.876.413

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 12,087,857

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:
EUR 1,873,792 (24 %)²



1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023

2 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



6.3.2 The Democratic Republic of the Congo Protracted Crisis Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
World Vision

Alliance partners:
CARE Netherlands, Help a Child, Tearfund, War Child, World Vision

Local Organisational Partners:
Mavuno, Comité pour le Développement et Assistance Humanitaire, Eglise du Christ au Congo – Nord Kivu, Help Channel Congo, Centre de Formation et d'Action pour le Développement, Femmes Engagées pour la Promotion de la Santé Integral (female lead), Union des Femmes pour la Paix (female lead), Kujitegemea Action, Appui au Développement de l'Enfant en Détresse, Bureau d'Etudes et d'Appui Technique aux Initiatives Locales – Action for Living Together

The Democratic Republic of the Congo Protracted Crisis Joint Response was implemented across five health zones in the provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu. Over the past few decades, both provinces have suffered under recurring armed violence, which has led to widespread displacement, food insecurity, malnutrition, epidemics and protection issues.

In 2023, the DR Congo PCJR provided lifesaving humanitarian aid in the areas of **education, food security and livelihoods, protection, safe water and the provision of multipurpose cash and education.**

Despite many challenges related to access, inflation, natural disasters and epidemics, the DR Congo joint response in 2023 contributed to largely reaching and going beyond the objectives set for the 2022 – 2023 project period. Overachievements have been possible due to the fact that activities reached households that were larger in size than anticipated, because there were more participants in school classes than anticipated, and due to making use of the crisis modifier budget.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

The Dutch Relief Alliance's joint response in DR Congo closely coordinated and collaborated with local partners and focused on providing multisectoral assistance and sustainable solutions for vital, community-identified needs and protection issues.

Collaboration was key to an increased effectiveness and efficiency of the response. Consortium partners, for example, shared office space, harmonising approaches and shared experience and/or expertise with regards to community-based security focal points. Collaboration also ensured a cohesive response to emerging risks.

During 2023 local partners experienced significant capacity growth, for example, through the establishment and implementation of monitoring policies, which fostered increased professionalism and accountability.

Challenges

The year 2023 saw a continuation of a challenging security situation in eastern DR Congo, with an increase over the course of the year in the number of internally displaced persons to a record high of 6.38 million across the entire country. Clashes between M23 and FARDC, as well as other armed groups, continued. In August 2023, this resulted in protests against the presence of the United Nations forces across the country, who were accused of failing to prevent violence against civilians. In the background of these protests, youths in the Musienene zone threatened to disrupt the implementation of humanitarian projects, but the DRA joint response conducted a series of meetings with local authorities, the youth, and faith and community leaders to ensure continued access and implementation of the joint response.



Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) continues to be a major protection threat to women and girls in DR Congo. Different approaches, such as the Transforming Masculinity approach and local protection monitoring committees, were used to raise awareness, change behaviours and address SGBV cases within communities.

Lessons Learned

Once again, we learned that the key to successful intervention in DR Congo, and in any humanitarian response, is to rely to local community leaders to reach their own people. The facilitation of training sessions and sensitisation efforts were led by local gender champions and community leaders, which were essential in assuring a positive impact on the many challenges faced by these courageous people who have lived in crisis for so many years.

Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
Food Security & Livelihoods	23,470	46,303	12,877
WASH	231,387	278,035	24,809
Education	12,468	13,218	3,075
Protection	242,839	249,446	17,456
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	9,000	23,423	5,672
Total (without double counting)	365,978	537,735	277,315

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 12,383,908

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 6,035,339

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 12,215,470

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:

EUR 2,343,178 (39 %)²

1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023

2 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



6.3.3 The Ethiopia Protracted Crisis Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
SOS Children's Villages

Alliance partners:
Cordaid, Plan International, Stichting Vluchteling, Tearfund, Terre des Hommes

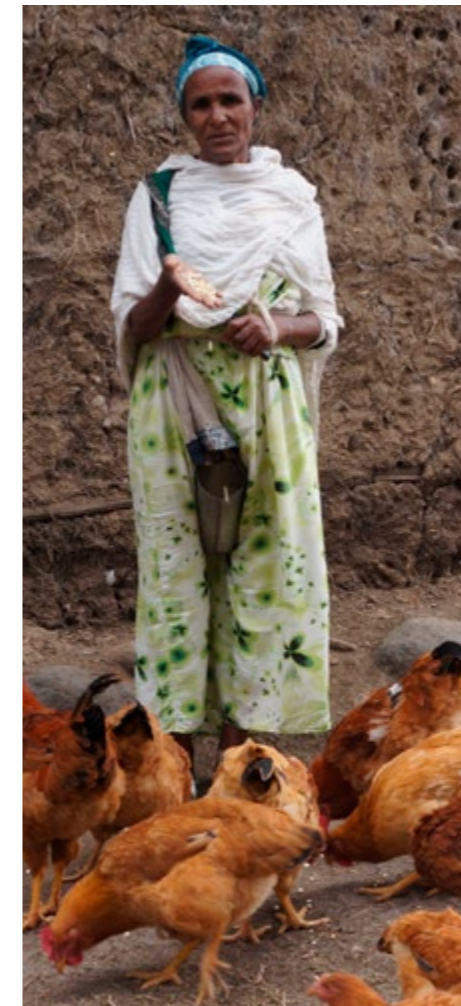
Local Organisational Partners:
Ethiopia Catholic Church Social Development Commission, Mothers and Children Multisectoral Development Organization, Tesfa Birhan Child and Family Development Organization, Action for Needy in Ethiopia, Ethiopia Kalehiwoit Church Development Commission, African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse, Neglect

Beginning in 2022, the Horn of Africa was affected by exceptionally severe drought and food insecurity. This led the Dutch Relief Alliance to set up an acute crisis joint response in Ethiopia, which was aimed at providing urgent humanitarian food assistance to communities in different regions. The regions worst hit by drought in Ethiopia were Somali Region (over 3.5 million people affected), Oromia Region (more than 3.4 million affected), Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (more than 1.1 million affected) and South West Ethiopia Peoples' Region (more than 200,000 people affected). In 2023, the protracted responses offered humanitarian assistance in the areas of **multipurposes cash; water, sanitation and hygiene; health services; food security and livelihoods; education in emergencies and protection.**

During 2023, the Ethiopia Protracted Crisis Joint Response continued to deliver humanitarian assistance in Amhara, Oromia and Tigray regions against the background of conflict, displacement and drought.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

Within the Ethiopia joint response, equitability of partnerships became a topic of dialogue for the programme coordination. This resulted in a larger and more consistent role for local organisations in preparation of the continued programme planned for 2024 – 2026. Partners indicated having benefitted from working together through the sharing of technical capacity and expertise, which saved resources and time, enhanced coordination and networking, and established complementary response and sharing of learning and experiences. Concrete examples consisted of sharing of office space and vehicles, joint participation in trainings, mentoring on the Sphere and Core Humanitarian Standard and learning on the use of the 121 Cash and Voucher Assistance Management Platform.



Challenges

Changes in the context affected response implementation, in particular in Amhara, where larger-scale armed conflict broke out in April 2023. The conflict led to high numbers of internally displaced people who faced **high protection risks** – injuries, psychological trauma and sexual violence were especially rampant.

These conflicts also severely disrupted the flow of commodities in and out of the region, causing **a significant price rise** for food commodities, fuel, construction materials, agricultural tools and transport costs. These price rises severely affected programme implementation for all partners.

Partners in Amhara faced regular and prolonged **communication blockages, roadblocks, strict checkpoints, restrictions of movements, banking- and transportation problems and frequent fully/partial closing of government institutions.** Partners were thus forced to suspend project implementation for more than two months. Despite these challenges, adaptive management and top-up funding, along with exchange rate gains, helped us to reach more people in the 2022 – 2023 than planned, to some extent with different activities than originally planned.

Lessons Learned

The experiences in this Ethiopian acute response reinforced yet again the lessons that a greater role by local organisations in planning and execution of the work assures a more effective and efficient outcome for the people in need, as does nimble adaption and flexibility on the part of programme managers in meeting the demands of an ever-changing context.

Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
Food Security & Livelihoods	52,985	78,053	50,634
WASH	299,632	234,829	72,332
Health	109,975	109,526	69,226
Protection	20,000	23,400	13,195
Education	9,124	11,472	3,461
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	37,190	56,263	27,284
Total (without double counting)	439,043	458,035	236,764

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 12,004,665

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 6,955,869²

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 11,895,657

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023: EUR 2,728,576 (39%)²⁻³

1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023

2 - Including budget top-up expenditures on innovation

3 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



39 %

6.3.4 The Somalia Protracted Crisis Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
Oxfam Novib

Alliance partners:
Help a Child (partnering with Medair), SOS Children's Villages, World Vision

Local Organisational Partners:
Dawa, KAALO Aid and Development, SAACID, Social Life and Agricultural Development Organization (SADO), Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC), Taakulo Somali Community, Vision Corps Initiative, Zamzam Foundation

Somalia is one of the hardest hit countries in the world when it comes to natural disasters and conflict challenges. An estimated 2.9 million persons are internally displaced and around 7.7 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. The key factors contributing to Somalia's humanitarian crisis are armed conflict, drought and flooding. Local resilience is eroded by increasingly frequent climate shocks and outbursts of violence and communities do not have enough time to recover in between. This has further depleted people's means of support and options for overcoming these pressures.

The Somalia Joint Response was set up to support women, men, girls and boys affected by climate-related disasters and/or armed conflict in this on-going humanitarian crisis. Four Dutch Relief Alliance partners worked together with local partners within an integrated response programme in 10 regions across the country: Awdal, Banadir, Bari, Gedo, Lower Juba, Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Mudug, Togdheer and Waqooyi Galbeed. The response focused on meeting the needs of people in the areas of **food security and livelihoods; water, sanitation and hygiene; health services and nutrition; protection, multipurpose cash assistance and emergency shelter.**

The protracted crisis joint response offered a combination of emergency humanitarian assistance and medium-term livelihoods support. In view of Somalia's complex security situation, protection was carefully integrated in the design of the joint response programme. The partners all paid due attention to protection mainstreaming, as well as engaging in stand-alone protection activities as part of the integrated approach.

In 2023, Somalia experienced the worst drought in decades, followed by the most extensive floods. Throughout 2023, millions of people experienced food insecurity (IPC phase 3, crisis and higher). Drought, flooding and conflict led to additional displacement in various regions across the country. IDP settlements continued to face the risk of eviction and/or flooding. In response, the Dutch Relief Alliance launched an acute crisis joint response with a budget of EUR 3M at the end of 2023, to be reported in 2024.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

Within the Somalia joint response, cross-learning visits and reflection workshops served as vital platforms for exchanging ideas and learning amongst partners. These exchanges helped establish referral pathways, leading to the integration of nutrition, cash and sanitation assistance in the same community.

In 2023, local partners of the Somalia joint response continued to play a role in the UN coordination by being part of the Humanitarian Country Team and having taken up the cash transfer value revision in the Cash Working Group.

Challenges

In this complicated context, the main challenges for the Somalia joint response were dealing with increasing humanitarian needs while simultaneously being confronted with **sharply rising costs** due to exchange rate differences, exemplified in a strong increase in the recommended cash for food transfer value from USD 70 to 130. The joint response was able to overcome these challenges and eventually expand its reach on relevant sectors through the use of top-up funding and activation of crisis modifiers. The crisis modifiers were instrumental in the successful response to displacement and flooding.

Lessons Learned

Somalia was one among many DRA programmes that benefitted significantly from an increased emphasis on localisation and increased dependency on the expertise of our local partners.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
Food Security & Livelihoods	14,840	29,532	16,966
Nutrition	228,480	263,872	149,632
WASH	206,488	404,808	304,848
Health	222,194	284,296	90,177
Shelter and Non-Food Items		28,218	28,218
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	13,980	24,775	11,269
Protection	42,172	56,819	22,200
Total (without double counting)	500,261	907,821	535,656

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 11,582,997

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 6,399,761²

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 11,583,323

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023: EUR 2,614,304 (41%)²⁻³

1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023

2 - Including budget top-up expenditures on innovation

3 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



6.3.5 The South Sudan Protracted Crisis Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
Save the Children

Alliance partners:
Tearfund, War Child, CARE, Dorcas, Help a Child, Plan International

Local Organisational Partners:
Mary Help Association, Women Development Group, Charity Empowerment Foundation, Universal Intervention and Development Organization, ACROSS, Women and Orphans Charitable Organization, Smile Again Africa Development Organization

In 2023 the humanitarian community in South Sudan estimated that over three-quarters of South Sudan's population was in need of humanitarian assistance, an increase of 500,000 people compared to 2022. Across the country intercommunal violence, displacement due to conflict and natural disasters and economic volatility exacerbated existing vulnerabilities. In addition, through the influx of over 500,000 refugees, the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Sudan had a profound impact on South Sudan, intensifying the demand for local resources and services and straining humanitarian operations.

Within this context, the South Sudan joint response provided relief in the sectors of **food security and livelihoods; health services and nutrition; water, sanitation and hygiene; protection and multipurpose cash distributions.** The joint response of the Dutch Relief Alliance in South Sudan involved eight Alliance partners working with seven local and national partners to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to some of the most vulnerable groups affected by the crises. The joint response intended to support the shift from direct humanitarian assistance to resilience by addressing the root causes of vulnerability and enabling affected communities to better overcome acute shocks and ongoing chronic stresses.

Joint response partner organisations responded (in part) to the challenges through extending the reach of their regular programming, making use of savings and top-ups as well as through applying crisis modifier funding.

The joint response targeted areas and communities most severely affected by the shocks and chronic stresses and aimed to provide lifesaving support, while also addressing the root causes of vulnerability by delivering a comprehensive multisectoral response.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

The South Sudan joint response further contributed to locally led humanitarian action. The localisation technical working group under the NGO forum created with the partnership of the joint response, was asked by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to produce the first South Sudan Country localisation

strategy. The joint response also recruited a co-lead from UNIDOR who engaged with the NGO forum and Localisation Technical Working Group to advocate for local actors' voices in humanitarian programmes. Meetings with donors such as the EU Delegation, FCDO, the Dutch Embassy, the German Development Cooperation, and others, facilitated direct engagement among national partners and donors, improving funding opportunities.

Challenges

The South Sudan joint response team participated in an extensive challenge-mapping exercise. Out of this study and exercise, major challenges were identified in the areas of **mental health, food security and livelihoods.** As a result, two innovation projects were launched in 2023. The SEEDS project addressed the critical gaps in mental health and psychosocial support in South Sudan through developing a South Sudan-specific, community-led approach.

Additionally, the BRAV (Building Resilience via the Agricultural Value Chain) project launched an innovative economic empowerment initiative with the aim to enhance food security and livelihoods, while also diversifying and increasing economic options for disadvantaged women and youth.

Lessons Learned

Our response team continuously engaged and consulted community members throughout the project cycle, and worked on locally led accountability through the joint Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) system, managed locally by joint response AAP officers trained in Juba on key system components and inclusion. Institutional capacity assessments of our joint response local and national partners revealed that improvements have been made since 2017, but highlighted **governance, financial management and resource sustainability** as ongoing issues. A mid-term meeting in 2023 recommended extending the contract durations of our joint response national partners, resulting in no contracts of less than one year and most extending to three years for the 2024 – 2026 programme period.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
🌾 Food Security & Livelihoods	130,000	136,143	31,923
🍴 Nutrition	42,670	57,431	29,915
💧 WASH	123,119	154,358	39,359
💰 Multipurpose Cash Assistance	6,300	10,381	5,719
🛡️ Protection	225,204	310,560	151,252
Total (without double counting)	347,341	409,646	163,759

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 14,433,708

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 8,097,135²

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 14,145,485

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023: EUR 2,982,031 (37%)²⁻³

1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023

2 - Including budget top-up expenditures on innovation

3 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



6.3.6 The Sudan Protracted Crisis Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:

Plan international

Alliance partners:

SOS Children's Villages, ZOA

Local Organisational

Partners:

Organization for Voluntary Humanitarian Assistance Programme (ASSIST), Friends of Peace and Development Organization (FPDO), National Humanitarian Aid (NAHA), Green Peace Association, Cafa Development Organization, Vet-Care Organisation (VCO), SOS Sahel, Emergency Relief Rehabilitation and Development Agency (ERRADA)

Sudan is and has long been a complex humanitarian setting due to numerous causes: political instability, localised violence, long-term and large-scale internal displacement, climate disruptions (drought and flooding) and the challenge of accommodating large numbers of refugees. Moreover, the country is caught up in a long-term economic crisis, with rampant inflation leading to record high numbers of people affected by food insecurity.

In 2023, Sudan faced significant political and humanitarian challenges. The year began with efforts to reach a political consensus to end the conflict, but in April, conflict again erupted between Sudan's military and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). This conflict strongly aggravated the humanitarian crisis, with 25 million people needing aid, including 14 million children. By the end of 2023, 4.5 million people were internally displaced, and 1.5 million had fled as refugees. Rising ethnic violence, especially in Darfur, raised genocidal concerns.

In the 2022 – 2023 Sudan joint response, partners worked together on responding to crises in the states North Darfur, East Darfur, South Kordofan, North Kordofan, Khartoum, Gaderef and White Nile. The response focused its humanitarian response in the areas of **protection; food security and livelihoods; water, sanitation and hygiene; emergency shelter and distribution of non-food items; education; multipurpose cash distribution and health services**. The activities focused on three main objectives: to protect people affected by conflict and disaster from violence, neglect and exploitation; to help local communities stabilise and become more resilient by providing resources required to protect and rebuild livelihood assets; and to combat gender-based violence by contributing to child protection and gender-equitable health care.

Health interventions targeted dengue fever, malaria and diarrhoeal outbreaks in White Nile. Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions included distributing hygiene kits, while protection efforts focused on family tracing and reunification for unaccompanied children. Food security interventions provided conditional cash support, and new shelter initiatives addressed the needs of newly displaced populations.

The crisis modifier was activated to scale up WASH and educational interventions, responding to the conflict and other crises like drought and flooding. This included emergency water trucking in North Darfur, non-food item distributions for displaced families in South Kordofan and flood responses in East Darfur and White Nile.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

Despite the complex challenges, the Sudan joint response emphasised localisation and local capacity strengthening. A core working group developed a localisation framework and action plan, fostering collaboration among international, national and community-based organisations. This approach enhanced response capacity and ensured a localised response, despite access restrictions and security challenges.

Challenges

The conflict in 2023 severely disrupted the Sudan joint response programme, impacting market functions, banking systems, telecommunications, and increasing security risks. These issues hindered programme implementation and widened service gaps. Community tensions grew as resources became scarce. In response, joint response partners reprogrammed interventions, added new locations such as White Nile, Al Jazirah and East Darfur, and modified delivery methods to meet emerging needs.

Lessons Learned

Working with local and national organisations is not only an external goal, it is inevitable in the contexts the Dutch Relief Alliance is working in. Especially in conflict-sensitive areas these organisations, which are deeply embedded in the communities, culture and physical circumstances, are essential in continuing our work in the most difficult situations. In this way it was possible, through trust-building with authorities and communities, for the joint response partners to maintain operations and demonstrate resilience in a complex and deteriorating situation.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
Food Security & Livelihoods	38,743	46,778	29,066
WASH	92,528	129,561	86,818
Health	76,453	17,390	16,996
Shelter and Non-Food Items	6,445	10,059	6,434
Education	4,675	1,298	570
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	4,200	5,758	1,846
Protection	197,147	168,201	114,940
Other	1,220	1,505	84
Total (without double counting)	402,029	385,8600	262,064

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 10,359,545

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 4,540,347

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 8,618,117

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023: EUR 1,084,987 (24 %) ²

1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023

2 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



24 %

6.3.7 The Syria Government-Controlled Areas Protracted Crisis Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
ZOA

Alliance partners:
Dorcas, Terre des Hommes,
Oxfam Novib

Local Organisational Partners:
The Department of Ecumenical Relations and Development (affiliated with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East), St. Ephrem Patriarchal Development Committee, Syrian Society for Social Development, Monastery of St James the Mutilated, Syrian Arab Red Crescent, several diaconal arms of churches (Presbyterian church, Nour al-Ihsan, Abnaa Al kalimah, Bethel, St. Georges, JRS)

The year 2023 was challenging once again for Syria. Hit by a heavy earthquake in February, the extremely poor economic and humanitarian situation got even worse, leaving the population of Syria in a desperate mood, but never hopeless. These challenges, together with hyperinflation, unemployment and poor health conditions, are leaving many Syrians food insecure and unable to make a proper living.

The Dutch Relief Alliance's joint response in Syria's government-controlled areas focused on a number of regions, including Aleppo, Idlib, Rural Damascus and Al-Hasakah. The programme was geared toward three key objectives:

1. providing lifesaving humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people in need,
2. helping prevent and mitigate protection risks and respond to a growing local need for protection in the affected areas, and
3. increasing the long-term resilience of the impacted communities by improving their access to economic opportunities and basic services.

The Syria GCA response successfully reached hundreds of thousands of people in need with vital assistance in **health services; food distributions; livelihood support; water, sanitation and hygiene services; multipurpose cash distributions; emergency shelter and protection services**, exceeding the originally targeted service delivery numbers.

The earthquake in early 2023 significantly impacted people in multiple governorates, necessitating the launch of additional response efforts in Aleppo, Idlib and Latakia to complement ongoing activities. Damage to infrastructure, disruptions in supply chains as well as the energy crisis further complicated humanitarian operations, prompting adaptations in planned activities and resource allocations. Despite these challenges, joint response members swiftly adapted, reallocating resources to prioritise emergency needs and to expand the programme's reach to additional affected individuals. In order to respond to all these needs, an additional Syria Earthquake Joint Response was initiated, topping up the budget and possibilities to respond. This specific acute crisis joint response is highlighted in section 5.4.1.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

The involvement of local partners remained pivotal throughout, contributing their contextual knowledge, community access and operational capabilities. Regular engagements and capacity-building initiatives strengthened our local partners' role in the joint response, ensuring effective implementation and sustainability of interventions.

Looking forward to 2024 – 2026, the Syria GCA response aims to deepen community engagement, optimise local partner contributions and enhance joint implementation strategies to maximise impact and sustainability.



Challenges

In 2023, the Syria joint response continued crucial humanitarian efforts despite significant challenges and dynamic changes in the Syrian context. The period was marked by a cholera outbreak, earthquakes, shifting control over territories, and severe socioeconomic strains, which collectively heightened the needs of affected populations.

Lessons Learned

The experience of the earthquake response underscored the importance of flexibility and readiness to adapt strategies in response to unforeseen crises. We gained valuable experience and learned valuable insights that reinforced the joint response team's commitment to delivering effective humanitarian aid in Syria's complex and volatile environment, ensuring to address immediate needs alongside building the resilience of affected communities.

Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
🌾 Food Security & Livelihoods	79,670	162,021	137,416
💧 WASH	144,700	286,026	127,306
❤️ Health	148,670	160,124	125,687
🏠 Shelter and Non-Food Items	1,160	1,160	1,160
💰 Multipurpose Cash Assistance	5,900	5,922	5,922
🛡️ Protection	43,172	48,628	37,603
Total (without double counting)	372,745	602,649	374,055

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 4,121,032

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 2,212,390²

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 4,121,031

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:

EUR 2,287,046 (33 %)²

1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023

2 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



6.3.8 The Syria Protracted Crisis Joint Response in Non-Government Controlled Areas



The humanitarian and protection situation in Syria remains highly complex. The crisis is compounded by over a decade of hostilities, protracted displacement and long-term repercussions such as the destruction of civilian infrastructure and humanitarian and human rights violations. Northwest Syria is hit frequently by armed violence, air strikes and shelling. In many cases, families in this region have been subjected to repeated displacement. The situation even worsened when especially northwest Syria was heavily struck by the February 2023 earthquake. Rescue activities and humanitarian access were very challenging in these remote and closed areas.

This Syria joint response focused its humanitarian activities in the areas of **education; protection; emergency shelter; water, sanitation and hygiene; health services and nutrition; food distributions and livelihoods and multipurpose cash assistance**. Despite a number of worsening hardships in northwest and northeast Syria, the Syria joint response generally achieved its targets while maintaining a strong focus on vulnerable groups such as women, children and internally displaced persons.

Following the 2023 earthquake, the joint response demonstrated adaptability and responsiveness. Top-up funding was used to scale up activities across sectors towards earthquake-affected people. Distribution of multipurpose cash was added to reinforce the humanitarian services provided in the area. Please see more on the specific earthquake response [in section 5.4.1](#).

Overall, the Syria joint response's strategic response to complex humanitarian crises in Syria demonstrated effective coordination, resilience and a commitment to sustainable impact. By addressing immediate needs while promoting long-term development, the programme continues to play a crucial role in supporting communities affected by prolonged conflict and natural disasters in the region.

Joint Response Lead:
War Child

Alliance partners:
War Child, with technical support by the International Rescue Committee, who also supported Independent Doctors Association (IDA), not a DRA implementing partner

Local Organisational Partners:
International Humanitarian Relief Association, Independent Doctors' Association, Ghiras al Nahda, Space of Peace, Humanitarian Initiative Association, Ashti Center for Building Peace, Dan for Relief and Development



Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

In addition to operational achievements, the Syrian joint response prioritised gender sensitivity through targeted interventions and capacity building. Recommendations from gender-focused consultations were implemented, including strengthening gender focal points within local organisations, institutionalising gender-sensitive practices and providing gender mainstreaming training across sectors such as education and health. These initiatives aimed to promote gender equality and inclusivity within the joint response's operations and partnerships.

An innovative pilot project in 2023 focused on **female youth empowerment** through local youth centres and vocational training, illustrating the joint response's commitment to addressing specific needs of vulnerable groups. This project not only delivered essential services but also promoted inclusive community integration and resilience among young women, addressing challenges like early marriage.

Challenges

In 2023, the Syria Non-Government-Controlled Areas Joint Response faced significant challenges, including economic downturns, cholera outbreaks and a devastating earthquake in February.

Lessons Learned

Throughout its operations this year, the Syria joint response upheld rigorous accountability standards, implementing child safeguarding measures and responsive feedback mechanisms across all interventions. **Continuous learning and adaptation** were facilitated through structured learning cycles, ensuring that lessons were systematically integrated into programme improvements.

Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
Food Security & Livelihoods		220	220
Nutrition	33,600	34,781	15,420
WASH	42,308	44,291	32,444
Health	92,614	244,689	151,679
Shelter and Non-Food Items	14,100	28,036	17,636
Education	2,134	3,336	853
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	3,660	3,145	3,145
Protection	18,568	22,849	9,806
Total (without double counting)	188,421	358,498	221,397

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 4,121,032

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 2,212,390²

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 4,121,031

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:

EUR 1,435,488 (65%)²⁺³

- 1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023
- 2 - Including budget top-up expenditures on innovation
- 3 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national



65 %

6.3.9 The Yemen Protracted Crisis Joint Response



Joint Response Lead:
CARE Netherlands

Alliance partners:
Save the Children, Cordaid, Dorcas, Oxfam Novib, Stichting Vluchteling, ZOA

Local Organisational Partners:
Attadamon Foundation for Development, Coalition of Humanitarian Relief, Diversity Foundation, Family Counseling and Development Foundation, International Training and Development Centre, International Rescue Committee, Sustainable Development Foundation, SPHEREYE Foundation, Yamaan Bena Charity for Human Development, Building Foundation for Development, Nabd Development and Evolution Organization

Yemen continues to undergo one of the worst humanitarian crises in its modern history. Years of conflict and severe economic decline have driven the country to the brink of disaster, exacerbating needs across every sector. An estimated 80 % of the Yemeni people – some 23.4 million people – require some form of humanitarian or protection assistance. Of this number, around 12.9 million are in acute need. The partners in the two-year Yemen Protracted Crisis Joint Response are working to provide lifesaving humanitarian assistance to people affected by ongoing violence, displacement and drought in nine governorates: Sa'adah, Hajjah, Sana'a, Taiz, Aden, Al-Daleh, Dhamar, Al-Mahwit and Lahij.

In 2023, Yemen faced ongoing insecurity due to conflict and climate change, including altered seasonal rainfall, substantive flooding, rising temperatures and persistent drought. The Yemen joint response continued its efforts in responding to food insecurity through **food distributions, supporting livelihoods, and providing humanitarian aid through providing services in water, sanitation and hygiene; health care and nutrition; distributions of multipurpose cash and in the latter part of the year, emergency shelter.**

As an example of the Yemen programme's adaptability, the focus was shifted from rehabilitating a large water scheme to constructing two rainwater harvesting tanks. This approach tackled difficult situations such as groundwater scarcity, the unsuitability of shallow wells for rehabilitation and high costs of solar pumping systems for large water schemes.

Emergency responses made use of the Crisis Modifier (CM), enabling the joint response to address the needs of host communities and internally

displaced persons (IDPs) affected by floods and a dust storm. The CM proved effective in managing unexpected shocks and risks, leading to plans for increased CM funding in the Yemen Joint Response 2024 – 2026. Combined top-up and CM funding in 2023 helped the programme achieve and expand its targets.

Collaboration and Localisation within the Joint Response

Programme staff made enormous efforts to address immediate needs sustainably, such as cash-for-work activities that combined skilled and unskilled labour, enhancing a transfer of local technical knowledge from the former to the latter workers.

Challenges

The country was hit with significant manmade challenges in the form of **conflict and major natural challenges** in the form of flooding. Despite these, the joint response partners adapted their plans and sometimes paused activities to ensure safety amidst security restrictions.

Humanitarian personnel – particularly female staff – faced the challenge of high security risks, with no significant improvement in the situation despite advocacy efforts.

Lessons Learned

Real-time review visits allowed partners to exchange experiences and learn from one another. Involving local partners throughout the project cycle ensured cultural sensitivity and community acceptance. Sharing Institutional Cost Recovery (ICR), partially implemented in 2023, will become mandatory in the next cycle, providing local partners with the necessary means to implement quality programmes.



Number of people we planned to reach, and actually reached, in 2023:

Sector	Planned 2022-2023	Reached 2022-2023	Reached 2023 ¹
Food Security & Livelihoods	26,590	30,208	17,406
Nutrition	1,521	2,008	2,008
WASH	133,241	184,124	83,908
Health	394,505	619,330	400,629
Shelter and Non-Food Items		2,158	2,158
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	41,782	43,938	18,643
Total (without double counting)	537,397	810,303	461,511

Budget 2022-2023: EUR 14,860,129

Expenditure of reporting period (2023): EUR 10,200,867²

Total expenditure over Programme period 2022-2023: EUR 14,733,874

Localisation – Spent through local/national partners in 2023:

EUR 3,404,333 (33 %)²⁻³

1 - Excluding people reached both in 2022 and 2023

2 - Including budget top-up expenditures on innovation

3 - Including costs for capacity strengthening of local/national partners



6.4 Innovation Open Call Projects 2022 – 2023: Making a Difference with Innovation

Innovation remains one of the core strategic objectives in the DRA strategy 2022 – 2026. The DRA is transitioning from innovation driven by an innovation fund (the DRA Innovation Fund (DIF) / 22 grants) to embedding of innovation in joint responses and placing joint responses at the centre of learning and innovation.

The Innovation Open Call process, Phase I, which was launched in 2022, gave substance to this transition. In this phase, six interested protracted crisis joint responses went through a “challenge-mapping” process, facilitated by the Response Innovation Lab (RIL) to identify the most pressing challenges/problems.

This challenge-mapping process was a requirement to qualify for Phase II: the Open Call funding opportunity. A budget of 1.8 million was available and six proposals were submitted for this.

These proposals adhered to a long list of guidelines and assessment criteria, in line with the DRA's core principles and vision on innovation. Below are examples of the most important criteria (not exhaustive):

- The projects should encourage a **locally led approach**, hence members were required to partner with at least one local JR partner;
- The innovation should be ready for **adaptation, pilot and/or scale phase** of their innovation journey and must include learning questions;
- The project must demonstrate commitment to **ethics, accountability and participation**; and
- The projects had to **be completed by December 2023**.

Of the six Open Call proposals submitted, the following five were funded and completed in 2023:



Challenge

Reaching people in need with humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia often still takes a lot of time, even when using cash transfers, a modality considered less time-consuming compared to in-kind distributions.

Innovation

The 121 Platform, an innovative cash and voucher assistance platform, intends to increase the timeliness of cash transfers by making the administrative process more (cost-)effective and efficient, especially through integrating the financial service provider (FSP) with the platform. Three Ethiopia Joint Response partners, two of whom were local partners, tested this platform in a real cash intervention, reaching 600 households with cash support.

Results/Lessons Learned

The partners experienced that the 121 Platform reduced time and mistakes, sped up the transfers to beneficiaries and increased cost effectiveness. The integration with one Financial Service Provider (FSP) was successful. Although the project faced some technical challenges and other FSP's are hesitant to integrate with the platform, users concluded that the 121 Platform is a useful tool that can improve future cash programming. Results were shared with joint response partners and with the Cash Working Group in Ethiopia.

Next Steps

In Phase II, Tearfund will integrate the 121 Platform into its cash programming activities to mitigate inefficiencies and reduce the likelihood of fraud. Phase II of the cash innovation aims to scale efficiencies gained under Phase I to reach new programme areas (i.e. geographic scale) and new partners (i.e. institutional scale).



6.4.2 Syria Non-Government-Control Area: “One-Stop-Shop” Female Youth Centres



Challenge

Youth are among the hardest hit by the ongoing conflict in Syria. Female youth face specific barriers in accessing technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and livelihood opportunities due to the lack of childcare and transportation and the prevailing gender norms. Not having access to TVET puts females into a more disadvantaged and vulnerable position than males, and risks perpetuating prevailing gender norms.

Innovation

In northern Syria, “One-Stop-Shop” female youth centres were developed in a participatory manner to address the barriers experienced by females. The centres focused on providing livelihood services with integration of protection for vulnerable female youth (ages 17 to 24) – including safe identification and referrals, case management, cash for protection and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).

Results/Lessons Learned

1. traditional and gender-stereotyped livelihoods programming was offered, whereas female youth participants were interested in less gender-stereotyped activities, provided they did not result in too much interaction with males,
2. programming focused more on gender empowerment and community engagement, rather than leading to income generation, and
3. an integrated package was crucial in supporting women’s greater self-confidence and removing barriers they faced in accessing economic opportunities.

Next Steps

Based on these learnings, Phase II of the pilot project has been designed and is currently being implemented.

6.4.3 Somalia: Climate-Resilient Green Fodder Production for Drought-Affected Pastoralists



Challenge

The longest and most severe drought in history has led to reduced availability of grazing land, presenting difficulties for pastoralists to find sufficient fodder for their livestock. This had led to a decline in livestock health and productivity, reduced household income and increased food insecurity.

Innovation

Hydroponic fodder production is a relatively new solution in Somalia for fodder production. Using hydroponic fodder production allows pastoralists to grow fodder using less water and land, and with faster growth, and has proven to be an effective alternative to traditional grazing practices. After a number of pilot projects, the innovation in this project was to use a participatory approach to roll out different hydroponic structures in a few districts.

Results/Lessons Learned

This methodology has resulted in a better understanding of the most effective methods to train pastoralists in the technical aspects of hydroponic production, which is needed to achieve greater adoption and a scale-up of hydroponic production in a sustainable manner.

Next Steps

Phase II will see sustainable scale-up of hydroponic fodder production through a participatory approach, with a specific focus on the most effective methods for training and capacity building, and the social and cultural factors that may affect adoption and long-term economic and environmental impacts.



6.4.4 South Sudan: Contextualising a Community-led, Child-focused Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Methodology to the South Sudan Context



Challenge

Conflict-torn South Sudan hosts a high prevalence of mental illness, a shortage of mental health professionals, inadequate infrastructure and biased perceptions of mental health and help-seeking behaviour. Despite this high prevalence of mental illness, appropriate mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) responses lack meaningful engagement with local communities. Government agencies and coordinated delivery of services are hampered by the associated stigma and lack of knowledge and skills on how to address mental health needs of the diverse population.

Innovation

This innovation project initiated the development of a toolkit in three affected communities using the Seeds approach, a community-led child protection approach that was adapted to the South Sudan context. Engagement and advocacy with targeted stakeholders and communities took place to ensure active learning from others and to inform its development.

Results/Lessons Learned

The project increased the feeling of positive community, a sense of more unity and better nurturing of their children. By carefully considering the South Sudanese context and incorporating the principles of community-led, child-focused MHPSS, effective interventions are possible to develop that promote the mental health and well-being of children. The main challenge was the short time frame for this community-led approach.

Next Steps

Building on these successes, Phase II will complete the contextualisation of the Seeds approach to South Sudan and compile an MHPSS toolkit that will be adopted as a resource by communities and humanitarian actors.



6.4.5 Yemen: Overcoming Barriers to Access Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Yemen through Digitalisation



Challenge

In Yemen, social stigma, a lack of services, and the challenge of travelling long distances are significant barriers to accessing MHPSS services. The ongoing conflict in Yemen has severely impacted the population, leading to a sharp rise in mental health issues, severely affecting individuals and communities' ability to cope, and often resulting in both acute and long-term dysfunction.

Innovation

To address these challenges, an innovative mobile digital MHPSS application was developed through a user-centric approach. The app's content was co-created with a diverse group of individuals to complement limited and overstretched MHPSS services. The goal was to provide accessible information and guidance on various mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression. Crucially, the app included a referral option for online consultations for those requiring specialised support. In addition, the app served as a crucial resource especially for youth and women facing mental health challenges posed by the ongoing conflict in Yemen.

Results/Lessons Learned

The project demonstrated the value of co-creation in the app development process. The engagement of broader public and self-help groups revealed the necessary content and the most effective delivery formats (visual and verbal). The app was successfully developed and delivered with five integrated prototype features that were based on user feedback and insights.

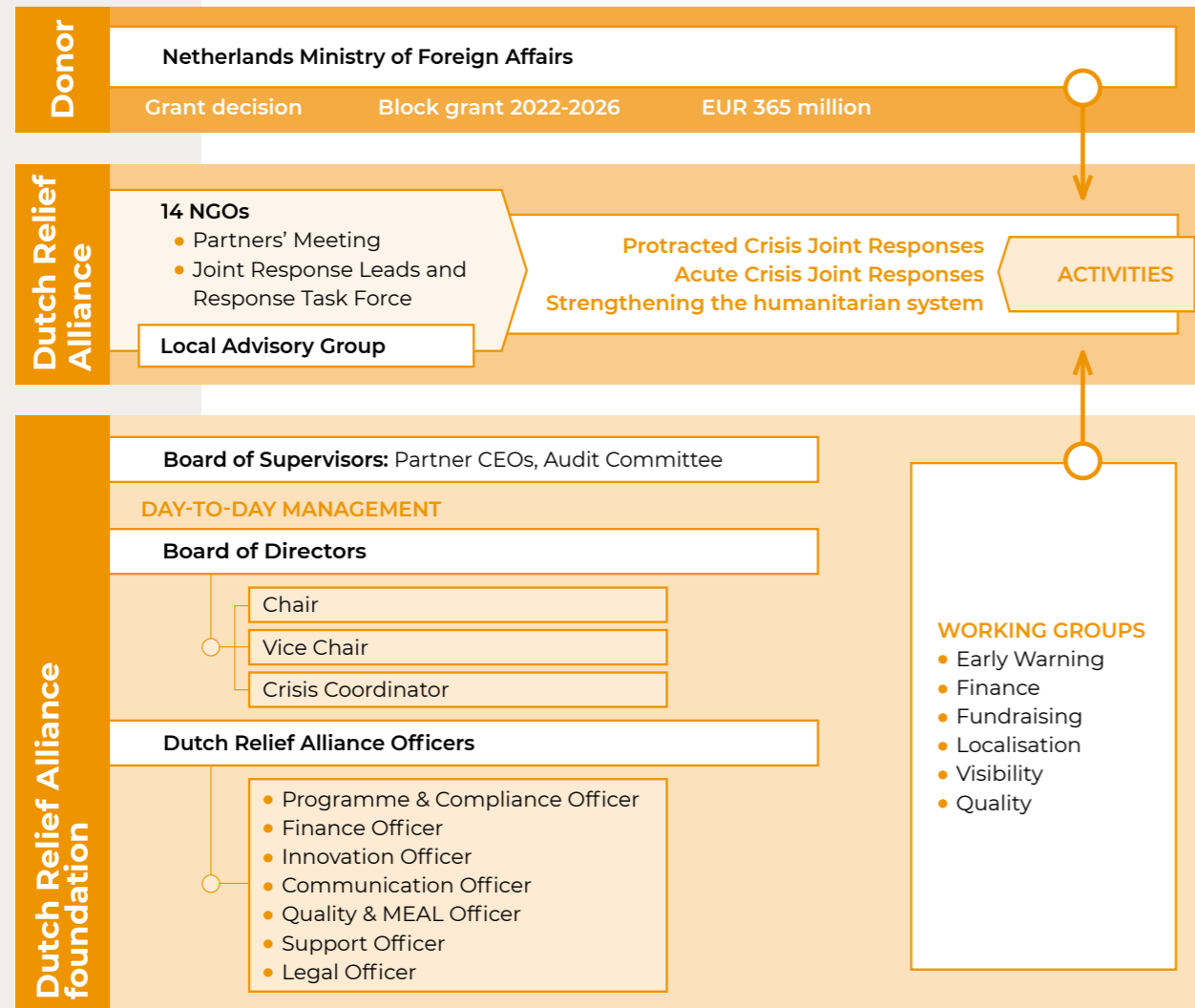
Next Steps

In phase II, the app will be scaled up to increase its reach and impact with a focus on expanding access to mental health services, particularly in rural areas with limited services. We plan to enhance user engagement by introducing gamified elements and personalised content, intensify community outreach efforts, and strengthen partnerships with local NGOs and health authorities to promote the app and bolster support networks.



7. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

7.1 Our Governance Structure



DRA Team, including Board of Directors (BoD) and Officers

In 2023, the DRA daily management consisted of the Board of Directors and a team of officers.

During the year, due to illness, the Crisis Coordinator role was temporarily held by an interim coordinator, and then transitioned to a new BoD officer by 1 September 2023. The DRA Board of Directors was composed of:

- **Chair:**
Arjen Joosse, seconded by World Vision,
- **Vice Chair:**
Tram Nguyen, seconded by CARE,
- **Crisis Coordinator:**
Ina Hogendoorn, seconded by ZOA, up to 15 June 2023, Rhonda Eikelboom, hosted by ZOA, as ad-interim Crisis Coordinator up to 30 August 2023, and succeeded by Anton van Wijk, seconded by Dorcas, from 1 September 2023.

The appointments of DRA Board of Director positions for 2023 were formalised by the DRA Board of Supervisors in 2022. In 2023, the DRA Board of Supervisors also formalised the appointment of Christel Sjauw-Koen-Fa-Mulder as the Vice Chair for 2024, to be seconded by Plan International.

Also, the DRA Board of Directors reestablished the appointment of an observer to the Board of Directors on behalf of the Block Grant Holder (Cordaid). Kees de Ruiter (Director Programmes, Cordaid) was confirmed as the observer for the Block Grant Holder, joining two meetings in 2023.

In 2023, the DRA Board of Directors convened the following meetings:

- 26 regular meetings of the Board of Directors, including two meetings with members of the DRA Local Advisory Group (LAG),
- 12 formal DRA Partners meetings,
- 12 formal and informal meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- 16 DRA team meetings, and one DRA team day focusing on team collaboration and dynamics,
- 1 General Assembly, with participants from DRA partners including local partners, DRA team and working groups, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and various external DRA stakeholders and contacts.

In 2023, the DRA team furthermore included nine officers:

- **Support Officer:**
Marlous Rottier, seconded by Tearfund,
- **Programme & Compliance Officer:**
Ignacio Arteché Prieto, seconded by Cordaid,
- **Finance Officer:**
Ninfoon Zoumaro-Djayoon, seconded by Cordaid,
- **Innovation Officer:**
Lisette Gotink, seconded by CARE,
- **Communication Officer:**
Else Lenselink, seconded by Plan International,
- **Quality & MEAL Officer:**
Maria Ulissi-Brown, seconded by War Child until April 2023 and subsequently split into two positions, with Eleni Diker, seconded by Oxfam Novib, as Quality Officer from 1 September 2023, and Mark van der Boon, seconded by Plan International as MEAL Officer from June 2023.
- **Integrity Officer:**
Dorien Boxhoorn, seconded by Stichting Vluchteling from 1 May 2023,
- **Legal Officer:**
Barber Dordregter, contracted as consultant by World Vision.

New appointments (for the Quality and MEAL Officers) took place based on the Terms of Reference as approved by DRA Partners and nominations received from DRA Partners, followed by interviews and appointment by the DRA Board of Directors.



The compensation schedule for these secondments followed the allocated number of days as per the approved DRA Support Budget. Overall, it was observed and noted that the available days for the DRA Board of Directors and Officers did not correspond with the time required for carrying out the roles and responsibilities as per DRA regulations and the various Terms of Reference, resulting in challenges with regard to workload and additional expenses for DRA Partners that were not compensated. This issue was again raised with the Board of Supervisors in April 2023, and also strongly suggested to be taken up with priority in the DRA Structure Review.

Furthermore, in 2023 the DRA consisted of the following Working Groups with Chairs and Co/Vice Chairs as indicated:

- **Early Warning Working Group:**
Eva van Iwaarden (Chair), seconded by Dorcas, and Laurens den Dulk (Vice Chair), seconded by Cordaid,
- **Finance Working Group:**
Sander Venema (Chair), seconded by Tearfund,
- **Fundraising Working Group:**
Petra Righetti (Chair), seconded by Oxfam Novib, and Helene Boeser (Vice Chair), seconded by War Child,
- **Localisation Working Group:**
Elsa van Zoest (Chair), seconded by Oxfam Novib, and Alycke de Haan-Slomp (Co-Chair), seconded by ZOA,
- **Quality Working Group:**
Maria Ulissi-Brown (Chair), seconded by War Child, succeeded by Eleni Diker (Chair), seconded by Oxfam Novib, and Janna de Jong (Vice Chair), seconded by Save the Children NL, succeeded by Mirian Wester (Vice Chair), seconded by Dorcas, and later Mark van der Boon (Vice Chair), seconded by Plan International,
- **Visibility Working Group:**
Paul van den Berg (Chair), seconded by Cordaid, and Else Lenselink (Vice Chair), seconded by Plan International.

In 2023, the DRA Board of Directors, Officers and Working Groups made significant progress in implementation of the DRA strategy and annual plan 2023 as outlined [in chapter 4](#).

DRA Board of Supervisors (BoS) and DRA Audit Committee

In 2023, the DRA Board of Supervisors (BoS) consisted of the following members:

	function (organisation)
Marco van der Graaf	chair (CEO, World Vision Netherlands)
Agnes Kroese	member (CEO, Dorcas)
Andries Schuttinga	member (CEO, Help a Child)
Arian Buurman	member (Managing Director, SOS Children's Villages Netherlands)
Benoit de Gryse	delegated member, on behalf of Tineke Ceelen (CEO, Stichting Vluchteling)
Edwin Visser	delegated member, on behalf of Chris Lukkien (CEO, ZOA)
Garance Reus-Deelder	member (CEO, Plan International in the Netherlands)
Kees Zevenbergen	member (CEO, Cordaid) until 1 July 2023, succeeded by Heleen van den Berg (CEO, Cordaid) from 1 November 2023
Martin Herlaar	member (Director Programmes, Tearfund) until 1 May 2023, succeeded by Guido de Vries (CEO, Tearfund)
Pepijn Gerrits	member (Director International Programmes, Oxfam Novib)
Pim Kraan	member (CEO, Save the Children Netherlands)
Ramin Shahzamani	member (CEO, War Child Netherlands) until 1 July 2023, succeeded by Ernst Suur (Managing Director, War Child Netherlands)
Reintje van Haeringen	member (CEO, CARE Netherlands)
Julie Verhaar	member (CEO, Terre des Hommes Netherlands)

Following DRA regulations, supported by the DRA Board of Directors, the DRA Board of Supervisors convened the following meetings:

- 4 informal meetings on strategic topics relevant for DRA Partner Executives,
- 4 formal meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (of which two meetings were with the DRA Local Advisory Group), on topics related to strategy and governance, including outlook on the humanitarian landscape and political context,
- 5 formal business meetings for regulatory and statutory matters requiring BoS approval.

In addition to the regular meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Board of Supervisors also met with the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation. Furthermore, throughout 2023 there were two additional meetings of a delegation of DRA BoS members with the Minister and one meeting with the Prime Minister.

The DRA Audit Committee carried out its mandate by the DRA Board of Supervisors to support with supervision of the financial management of the Foundation DRA. In 2023, the DRA Audit Committee consisted of the following members:

- **Chair:**
Marten Naaktgeboren, external (Strategic Portfolio Advisor, Achmea Investment Management),
- **Member:**
Thomas Pal, external (Senior Controller, Vitens Evides International),
- **Member:**
Sander Venema, seconded by Tearfund (also DRA Finance Working Group Chair),
- **Member:**
Marinke Barelds, seconded by ZOA (also DRA Finance Working Group member).

The DRA Audit Committee provided advice and recommendations on financial reporting and risk control concerning the annual financial report and annual accounts of the DRA. In 2023, the AuditCie met four times to monitor progress on the annual accounts and financial report, and to discuss optimisations in the financial processes of the DRA, including implementation of recommendations from the audit of annual accounts, and concluded the review and recommendations on the MFA audit protocols for the Foundation DRA and the joint responses.

DRA Partners including Joint Responses, Local Partners and Local Advisory Group

In 2023, the DRA consisted of 14 partners in the Netherlands, with an additional 93 local partners in the various joint responses.

Throughout 2023, the Partners participated in 15 new joint responses (related to nine Protracted Crises and six Acute Crises), each coordinated by Leads together with members of the Response Task Force, and with other joint response members including local partners. For more information, see relevant sections of this annual report.

The DRA Local Advisory Group has as its mandate to provide feedback and advice (solicited and unsolicited) on localisation at DRA overall level (mandated by DRA members) and to represent voices of local partners involved in DRA at the overall DRA level (mandated by Local Partners in the JRs who elect the LAG).

In 2023, the LAG met monthly, chaired by Shahida Suleiman from SSWC (Somalia) and with James Keah from UNIDOR (South Sudan) as Vice Chair. Additionally, the LAG had two meetings with the DRA Board of Directors, and also joined two meetings with the DRA Board of Supervisors together with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as a meeting with the Dutch Minister for Trade and Development Cooperation.



The composition of the Local Advisory Group in 2023 included the following members:

- **Chair, Member Somalia:**
Shahida Suleiman Ngotho, Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC),
- **Member Afghanistan JR:**
Khalil U Rahman, Organization of Human Welfare (OHW),
- **Member DR Congo:**
Paulin Bishakabalya Koker, Comité pour le Développement et Assistance Humanitaire (CODEVAH),
- **Member Ethiopia:**
Workayehu Bizu, African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN-Ethiopia),
- **Member South Sudan:**
James Keah, Universal Intervention and Development Organization (UNIDOR),
- **Member Sudan:**
Shamseldin Eisa, Friends of Peace and Development Organization (FPDO),
- **Member Syria GCA:**
Basheer Srour, Monastery of Saint James the Mutilated (MSJM),
- **Member Syria NGCA:**
Mahmoud Dallaloğlu, Independent Doctors Association (IDA, based in Turkey),
- **Member Yemen:**
Ula Khaled, Yamaan Foundation for Health and Social Development (YAMAAN).

7.2 Risk Management

For the evaluation of risk in 2023 it is important to reemphasise that the DRA Joint Responses and operations of DRA partners are implemented in fragile, volatile, hostile and therefore unpredictable contexts. Within the Dutch Relief Alliance we have continued to identify, monitor and mitigate risks in the following categories, both at Joint Response level (by Joint Response Leads and members, with supervision of the DRA Crisis Coordinator), and at the DRA overall level (by the DRA Board of Directors):

- **Security risk:** physical risk to individuals and assets from acts of war, violence and crime
- **Fiduciary risk:** the risk that money or materials are not used for intended purposes (e.g. fraud, theft or corruption)
- **Legal/compliance risk:** the risk that laws and relevant regulations are violated by the organisation or associated personnel
- **Operational risk:** the risk of technical or human error, or capacity deficits, leading to operational failure/inability to achieve objectives. Includes financial risk (the risk of unexpected fiscal outcomes or being unable to finance activities) as distinct from fiduciary risk
- **Information risk:** the risk of confidentiality breaches or data loss/theft
- **Reputational risk:** damage to the organisation's image and reputation that results in future harm or losses
- **Ethical risk:** the risk of harm caused by unethical behaviours, including sexual misconduct and exploitation, inadequate duty of care, or insufficient consideration of humanitarian principles



Joint Response Level

During the design phase of a JR, a comprehensive risk assessment is conducted. This includes detailing various risks within the specified categories, rating these risks in terms of impact and likelihood, and implementing measures to mitigate the identified risks. Throughout the implementation of joint response, risks are continuously monitored and reported through updated risk assessments, which cover materialised risks, changes in risks, and mitigation measures. These updates are included in mid-term and end reports and, if necessary, escalated to the Crisis Coordinator (and onward to the Board of Directors and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where required). Evaluation and learning exchange sessions provide opportunities for DRA partners to discuss frequently encountered risks. Additionally, innovative strategies are considered and applied to identify and mitigate risks.

DRA Overall Level

In addition to managing risks at the joint response level, risks at the overall DRA level are also addressed. These include the noted overstretched capacity of DRA members and process delays caused by complex approvals and the need for improvements in procedures and systems. The DRA Board of Directors and partners of the DRA work together to tackle these challenges and enhance their operations. Their goal is to fulfil their ambition of delivering timely, efficient and high-quality humanitarian responses through equitable partnerships and by strengthening the humanitarian system.

7.3 Reflections on the Functioning of the Foundation DRA

Based on earlier commitment by Partners, and based on various findings in 2022, the DRA Partners and Board of Directors tasked MDF Consultancy with a review of the structure and governance in 2023, including the functioning of the Alliance and the foundation. The findings related to the functioning of the Foundation DRA in 2022 are that the Dutch Relief Alliance and foundation are effectively managing the block grant, with a high sense of responsibility and accountability for quality. However, earlier structural changes have not yet contributed towards all intended goals, and various areas with potential value of improved effectiveness were identified, including for enhanced continuity and effectiveness of the foundation and alliance. The findings and recommendations as well as the management response of the DRA Board of Directors are available as a separate document. The DRA Board of Directors has commenced with the implementation of the various recommendations from the structural review.

7.4 Governance Bodies and Positions

Chair

The Chair of the Dutch Relief Alliance is responsible for the overall coordination of alliance activities and serves as the main point of contact for the alliance partners, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other stakeholders. The Chair oversees the implementation of the alliance's long-term strategy, working closely with the other members of the Board of Directors, i.e. the Vice Chair and the Crisis Coordinator. The Chair is functionally supported by a team of seven officers: the Support Officer, the Programme & Compliance Officer, the Finance Officer, the Innovation Officer, the Communication Officer, the Quality Officer, the MEAL Officer and the Legal Officer.

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair of the Dutch Relief Alliance supports the Chair in overall coordination and serves as a second point of contact for the alliance partners, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other stakeholders. The Vice Chair also supports the Chair with regard to the implementation of the alliance's long-term strategy, working closely with the other members of the Board of Directors, i.e. the Chair and the Crisis Coordinator. In addition, the Vice Chair is responsible for supervising interns at the Dutch Relief Alliance.

Crisis Coordinator

The Crisis Coordinator oversees the Dutch Relief Alliance's Protracted and Acute Crisis Joint Responses, manages coordination and interaction during individual joint responses and liaises with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition, the Crisis Coordinator ensures that the alliance's strategic objectives with respect to Impact, Quality, Efficiency and Effectiveness are integrated within the design, implementation and reporting of its joint responses. The Crisis Coordinator is supported by the Quality Officer and the MEAL Officer in the review of Acute and Protracted Crisis Joint Response proposals. The Crisis Coordinator offers guidance and support with regard to realising the alliance's strategic ambitions within joint responses and strengthening the impact of alliance collaborations.

Support Officer

The Support Officer supports the Board of Directors in the day-to-day management of the Dutch Relief Alliance and aligns and facilitates the flow of information among the partner organisations, the Board of Directors, the Working Groups, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other stakeholders.

Programme and Compliance Officer

The Programme & Compliance Officer oversees the contractual processes of all joint responses and manages control and compliance in the context of, among other things, annual plans, annual reports, deviations, contractual arrangements, revised proposals, changes and deviations. The officer ensures that joint responses conform to the relevant Crisis Mechanism and contributes to other activities that are geared toward increasing efficiency within the alliance.

Finance Officer

The Finance Officer oversees financial management and control within the Dutch Relief Alliance, which includes drawing up annual plans and liquidity requests, checking financial reports, consolidating annual financial reports and



managing the annual account and meta-audit of the foundation. The officer supports joint responses with regard to a range of financial matters, including the filing of documentation for auditing purposes.

Innovation Officer

The Innovation Officer contributes to the alliance's strategic and operational management regarding the fulfilment of its Innovation ambitions. In addition, the officer offers Joint Response Leads technical expertise in the design and scaling of innovations within joint response programmes and plays a critical role in safeguarding the quality, coherency and viability of innovation project investments, testing elements of the strategy and sharing learning within the alliance and the humanitarian sector as a whole.

Communication Officer

The Communication Officer oversees the alliance's communication with parties in the Netherlands (e.g. the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Dutch public and members of parliament) and with the international humanitarian sector, paying specific attention to the commitments set out in the Grand Bargain agreement. The Communication Officer works with the Visibility Working Group on the development of the alliance's Communication Plan and supports the Board of Directors, the Working Groups during joint responses in a variety of matters relating to communication.

Quality Officer and MEAL Officer

The Quality Officer and the MEAL Officer work with the Joint Response Leads to ensure that the design and implementation of Protracted and Acute Crisis Joint Responses are in line with the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) and the key priorities set out in the Dutch Relief Alliance's 2022 – 2026 Strategy. Both the Quality Officer and the MEAL Officer identify areas for improvement in the execution of processes and programmes, bearing responsibility for Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning and ensuring that the alliance has access to the systems and high-quality data required for measuring programme quality and progress in the fulfilment of its strategic ambitions.

Legal Officer

The Legal Officer offers legal advice and recommendations at the request of the Dutch Relief Alliance's Board of Directors, Support Officer or Working Groups. The officer develops and updates legal documents in line with the requirements established by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Relief Alliance's governing documents.

Working Groups

Finance Working Group

The Finance Working Group monitors the budgets of the Dutch Relief Alliance and individual joint responses. In addition, it develops custom financial management tools that are tailored to the needs of the joint responses. Within the working group, the Finance Task Force assesses financial risks in general and provides technical financial support where required.

Quality Working Group

The Quality Working Group works to improve the execution and quality of joint response activities and align them with the Dutch Relief Alliance's strategic priorities and the milestones of the Multiyear Plan.

Fundraising Working Group

The Fundraising Working Groups supports joint responses by identifying opportunities to work with third parties, and supports the Dutch Relief Alliance and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs by developing and taking advantage of funding opportunities within the EU Delegated Cooperation aid delivery mechanism.

Visibility Working Group

The Visibility Working Group is made up of various communication and advocacy experts who work to increase the visibility of the Dutch Relief Alliance's activities and broader advocacy themes. The Working Group supports the alliance's efforts to draw attention to specific crises and increase its transparency vis-à-vis the Dutch government, the general public and people in the affected areas.

Localisation Working Group

The Localisation Working Group supports and facilitates the partner organisations in their collaborative promotion of locally led action in joint response areas, as well as the Dutch Relief Alliance's collaboration with the Local Advisory Group.

Early Warning Working Group

The Early Warning Working Group monitors, identifies and prioritises emerging humanitarian crises and formulates recommendations with regard to possible joint responses under the Acute Crisis Mechanism, where appropriate.

Board of Supervisors

The Dutch Relief Alliance's Board of Supervisors is made up of the respective CEOs of the participating partner organisations – or an executive director nominated by the relevant CEO. The Board of Supervisors is responsible for approving the alliance's governance framework and strategy. In addition, the Board fulfils a non-executive role in mandating and supervising the Dutch Relief Alliance's activities. The Board of Supervisors has a statutory and regulatory position within both the alliance foundation and the Dutch Relief Alliance itself. The Board of Supervisors appoints and oversees the Dutch Relief Alliance's Board of Directors. In principle, the Board of Supervisors is chaired by the same partner organisation that delegates the Chair of the Dutch Relief Alliance's Board of Directors.

Dutch Relief Alliance Partners

In 2023, the Alliance consisted of 14 Dutch partner organisations (the Dutch Relief Alliance partners), each of which has signed the Dutch Relief Alliance Partnership Agreement. The partners are the alliance's primary stakeholders. They determine the alliance's course – in line with its regulations – through a variety of procedures, including decision-making, endorsement and procuring information from other parties within the Dutch Relief Alliance network (e.g. via delegated representatives, voting, Partners' Meetings, etc.). According to Article 6.1 of the Dutch Relief Alliance Regulations, the Partners' Meeting provides a means to discuss general issues that relate to the alliance at a higher level: 'The Partners will meet at least once every quarter in a regular Partners Meeting to discuss issues such as the performance of the DRA in general, the partnership process, on-going joint responses and other relevant issues, and take decisions when necessary.'

Joint Response Lead / Joint Response Task Force

Within each of the alliance's joint responses, the lead organisation is represented by a Lead Coordinator in the Netherlands and a Joint Response Country Coordinator in the country where the joint response is being implemented.

The **Lead Coordinator** is responsible for overall compliance, serves as the main liaison between the joint response and the Dutch Relief Alliance foundation and puts the Dutch Relief Alliance's policy into practice. He or she is supported by Working Groups, which provide structure and a framework for the Joint Response Country Coordinator and the joint response's Dutch and local partners to work within. The Lead Coordinator is mandated to hold the Joint Response Country Coordinator and the Joint Response's Dutch and local partners accountable for fulfilling the agreed-upon responsibilities and quality standards.

In the affected region itself, the Joint Response **Country Coordinator** is mandated to coordinate, oversee and monitor the local implementation of the joint response and its overall quality. The Joint Response Country Coordinator takes proactive measures to keep the joint response on course and provides coordination and a supportive structure and environment for all parties involved. The Joint Response Country Coordinator takes the lead in the implementation of joint activities.

The lead organisation can decide to appoint a co-lead (co-coordinator) delegated by one of the local partner organisations.

The Joint Response Country Coordinator is mandated to hold the joint response's Dutch and local partners accountable for fulfilling the agreed-upon responsibilities. In addition, the Joint Response Country Coordinator is mandated to hold the Dutch Joint Response Lead accountable with regard to the agreed-upon responsibilities.

The main decision-making body within the joint response is the **Response Task Force**. It is formed by the Lead Coordinator and the representatives of two other joint response partners (Dutch or local). It is the Dutch Relief Alliance's ambition to have at least one local representative sit on each Task Force. The Joint Response Task Forces are expected to take parties' common interest into account and at the very least consult all joint response partners (Dutch and local) before taking any decisions.

While the Joint Response Country Coordinator does sit in on the Task Force meetings and is expected to offer advice and recommendations, he or she does not participate in its votes. The Task Force decides on and approves the guidelines for the Joint Response's design and final proposal, as well as the possible allocation of contingency funds and other matters as they present themselves.

The Joint Response Task Force can decide to delegate its decision-making to a body at the country level. In preparation for this step, the Task Force needs to specify in writing the nature of its decision (mandate) and which decision-making model (majority voting/consensus) is to be adopted.



Advisory Entities

Local Advisory Group

The Local Advisory Group (LAG) is mandated by the 14 partner iNGOs in the Netherlands to provide feedback and advice (both solicited and unsolicited) regarding localisation at the alliance level. In addition, the Local Advisory Group is mandated by the local partners participating in joint responses to represent them within the broader alliance organisation.

Within each joint response, LAG members serve as the main contact for localisation information and support. This means they are also mandated to provide advice (both solicited and unsolicited) regarding localisation in consultation with, and where appropriate on behalf of, the local joint response partners. The LAG convenes on a monthly basis. It also meets twice a year separately with the Board of Directors, and twice a year with both the Board of Directors and the Board of Supervisors.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee supervises the financial management of the Dutch Relief Alliance foundation and advises the Board of Directors and Board of Supervisors on finance reporting, risk management in relation to the alliance's annual financial report and annual accounts and other pertinent matters.

The Audit Committee meets at least three times a year to evaluate audit recommendations (including recommendations that come out of the audit of annual accounts), monitor progress made in their implementation and formulate recommendations with respect to the audit protocols for the Dutch Relief Alliance foundation and the joint responses. The committee issues advice to the Board of Directors based on its conclusions, and informs the Board of Supervisors of its recommendations in writing.

8. INTEGRITY

The Dutch Relief Alliance and our partners are highly committed to eradicating and countering sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse in our work and our organisations. In 2018, the DRA Integrity Guidance Note was developed and adopted. It includes a policy with a set of minimum standards for the PSEA, taking into account the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), reporting requirements and commitment on capacity building on PSEA within the joint responses. In 2022, the Integrity Guidance Note was revised and resulted in a new version from 4 December 2022. This version also included the revised formats for incident notification and final reports. The revision was approved by MFA and was applicable from 4 December 2022 onwards. DRA also decided to use Guidance Note report formats for all type of incidents.

Each partner in the Dutch Relief Alliance has the responsibility to ensure that its own policies, processes, actions and partner staff comply with this Guidance Note. Each partner has chain responsibility towards consultants, implementing parties, contracted parties and other third parties with whom it has cooperative arrangements involving DRA funds to comply with the Guidance Note. Partners have chain responsibility to assess, train and monitor third parties' compliance with the Guidance Note. For more information, see annex DRA Integrity Guidance Note.

The Guidance Note prescribes when and how (suspicion) of misconduct or other types of incidents needs to be reported to MFA. In 2023, four incidents were reported to FDRA and MFA, from which three were related to financial misconduct and one related to child safeguarding. Two incidents were reported under Protracted Crisis Joint Responses and two under Acute Crisis Joint Responses.

Since 2020 and with prior adaptations to Dutch law, DRA also adheres to the Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme (MDS). The scheme facilitates the sharing of misconduct data between employers. The scheme consists of two main commitments:

1. A commitment to systematically check with previous employers about any SEA issues relating to potential new hires (to cover a period of at least the five years preceding the request);
2. A commitment to respond systematically to such checks from others. It enables hiring organisations to get better references to make a well-informed hiring decision.

Incidents reported in 2023

Joint Response	Mechanism	Year	Type
Afghanistan	Protracted	2023	Child safeguarding case
Pakistan	Acute	2022	Financial misconduct
South Sudan	Protracted	2023	Financial misconduct
Myanmar	Acute	2023	Financial misconduct





ANNEX A FINANCIAL REPORT 2023

All financial amounts in this report are in euro

1 2023 Consolidated Financial Report

	Actuals 2022	Budget 2023	Actuals 2023	Balance 2023	Deviation 2023
1 Direct costs for protracted crisis joint responses					
1.1 Direct costs for protracted crisis joint responses	35,563,255	55,735,337	53,331,779	2,403,558	4 %
1.2 Direct costs for innovation top ups	163,944	1,657,656	1,479,792	177,864	11 %
Total direct costs protracted crisis joint responses	35,727,199	57,392,993	54,811,571	2,581,422	4 %
2 Management costs protracted crisis joint responses					
2.1 Indirect cost rate (8 % of (total costs - management costs))	3,106,712	4,990,696	4,760,439	230,257	5 %
2.2 Management costs (1 % of total costs)	372,984	649,416	579,390	70,026	11 %
Total Management cost protracted crisis joint responses	3,479,695	5,640,112	5,339,830	300,283	5 %
TOTAL PROTRACTED CRISIS JOINT RESPONSES ¹	39,206,894	63,033,105	60,151,401	2,881,705	5 %
3 Direct costs for acute crisis joint responses					
3.1 Direct costs for acute crisis joint responses	15,888,388	24,004,652	23,274,989	729,663	3 %
Total direct costs for acute crisis joint responses	15,888,388	24,004,652	23,274,989	729,663	3 %
4 Management cost acute crisis joint responses					
4.1 Indirect cost rate (8 % of (total costs - management costs))	1,381,600	2,087,360	2,023,912	63,448	5 %
4.2 Management costs (1 % of total costs)	174,444	263,556	255,544	8,011	5 %
Total Management cost acute crisis joint responses	1,556,044	2,350,916	2,279,456	71,460	3 %
TOTAL ACUTE CRISIS JOINT RESPONSES ²	17,444,432	26,355,568	25,554,445	801,123	3 %
5 Costs for strengthening humanitarian system					
5.1 Annual costs Foundation DRA	916,922	1,269,402	1,141,779	127,623	10 %
5.2 Annual running costs Block Grant Holder	4,916	11,244	10,000	1,244	11 %
TOTAL COSTS FOR STRENGTHENING HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM ³	921,838	1,280,646	1,151,778	128,868	10 %
GRAND TOTAL ⁴	57,573,163	90,669,320	86,857,624	3,811,695	4 %
Received budget from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2023	70,000,000		75,242,484		
Budget Balance per 31 December 2023	12,426,837		-11,615,140		

Footnotes:

1. This underspending mainly included the balance from the innovation open call projects and the balance from the Sudan Protracted Crisis Joint Response.
2. Joint responses saved on general costs by sharing with other projects. Myanmar faced security challenges, so redirected some activities, which led to some underspending.
3. This underspending includes the 2023 reporting costs made in 2024
4. Despite the volatile security contexts, difficult access to some project areas, procurement challenges and challenges regarding local government approvals, the DRA partners managed to spend and get maximum humanitarian benefit of 96 % of the overall budget.

The consolidated financial report shows a total deviation of 4 % compared to the Foundation DRA budget 2023. From this balance of EUR 3,811,695:

EUR 2,881,705 is being carried to 2024 for the continuation of the protracted crisis joint response activities

EUR 801,123 will be used to fund new Acute Crisis Joint Responses

EUR 128,868 is carried over to 2024 to top up the support costs of the Foundation DRA and the Block Grant Holder

Continued - Overview Joint Responses and Support Budget Contracts

Contracts Support Budget	Lead organisation	Starting Date	End Date	Contract Amount	Payments 2022	Payments 2023	Type of Audit Report	Amount Audit Report	Expenditures DRA Annual Report 2022	Expenditures DRA Annual Report 2023	Reimburse to Foundation DRA in 2023	Reimburse to Foundation DRA in 2023	Balance Contract vs Payment	Balance Contract vs Expenditure
BGH Support Costs	Cordaid	01.01.2022	31.12.2026	1,087,276	197,100	200,121	cos 800	118,848	118,848	244,620			690,055	78,252
Communication and Visibility	Cordaid	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	115,813	122,800	2,500	cos 800	117,838	117,838		9,487		0	4,962
BoD, Support, and Learning Event Costs	Tearfund	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	221,920	221,920		cos 800	231,616	231,616				-	-
BoD Vice Chair	World Vision	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	57,700	57,700		cos 800	57,700	57,700				-	-
Crisis Coordinator BoD and Localisation Working Group	ZOA	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	63,450	63,450		cos 800	63,451	63,451				-	-1
Quality and MEAL Support	War Child	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	83,164	83,164		cos 800	83,164	83,164				-	0
Innovation Management and Support	CARE	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	58,800	58,800		cos 800	57,078	57,078			1,722	-	-
Localisation Working Group	Oxfam Novib	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	48,800	48,800		cos 800	48,705	48,705			95	-	-
Localisation Working Group	Save the Children	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	15,150	15,150		Exemption	12,650	12,650			2500	-	-
Early Warning Working Group	Dorcas	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	7,100	-	7,100	cos 800	6,600	6,600			500	-	-
Communication Officer	Plan International	15.11.2022	31.12.2023	40,864	40,864		NA			40,864			-	-
Office and General Costs Foundation DRA		01.01.2022	31.12.2022		45,399		FS	124,188	124,188				-	-
Support Budget 2022				1,800,037	955,147	209,721	-	921,838	921,838	285,484	9,487	4,817	690,055	83,213
Visibility and Early Warning WGs	Cordaid	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	81,958		81,958	cos 800	81,958		81,958			-	-0
BoD, strategy, governance, and Learning Event Costs	World Vision	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	287,506		287,506	cos 800	212,549		212,549			-0	74,957
BoD Vice Chair and Innovation Management and Support	CARE	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	170,783		169,683				154,792			1,100	15,991
Crisis Coordinator, Early Warning and Quality WGs	Dorcas	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	41,600		41,600	NA			41,600			-	-
Quality, Localisation, Fundraising WGs and Learning Event	Oxfam Novib	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	52,020		52,020	NA			45,062			-	6,958
Legal and Support Officers and Finance WG	Tearfund	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	82,275		82,275	cos 800	83,089		83,089			-0	-814
Top up for overspending in 2022	Tearfund	01.01.2022	31.12.2022	9,696		9,696	included in the audit 2022							
Integrity Focal Point	Stichting Vluchteling	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	4,692		4,692	NA			2,933			-	1,759
Crisis Coordinator, Localisation WG and others	ZOA	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	113,421		78,694	cos 800	88,544		88,544			34,727	-9,850
Quality & MEAL Officer and Fundraising WG	War Child	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	35,813		35,813	NA			34,040			-	1,773
Communication and Meal Officers	Plan International	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	32,998		32,998	NA			32,998			-	-0
PCM Coordinator	Save the Children	01.01.2023	31.12.2023	7,038		7,038	NA			7,038			-	-
Office and General Costs Foundation DRA		01.01.2023	31.12.2023			116,113	FS	81,691		81,691				
Support Budget 2023				919,799	-	1,000,086	-	547,832	-	866,295	-	-	35,826	90,774
Total Support Budget				2,719,836	955,147	1,209,807	-	1,469,669	921,838	1,151,778	9,487	4,817	725,881	173,987
Grand Total				289,924,178	70,186,340	74,019,112	-	129,850,245	57,573,162	86,857,625	9,487	291,370	145,889,724	3,470,758
Total payments to DRA Partners					70,140,941	73,902,999								
Received from MFA					70,000,000	75,242,484								
Reimbursement DRA partners					9,487	291,370								
Balance receipts from MFA vs Payments by the DRA					-176,852	1,514,742								

Footnotes:

1. An ineligible amount of EUR 1,892 was reported to the Foundation DRA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and deducted from the 2023 expenditures.
2. Sudan and Yemen PCJRs 2022-2023: The financial statement included in the 4400N Report of factual findings Reports a mix of project expenditures and committed contract amounts. To assure that only actual expenditures are reported, the individual 800/805 audited expenditures of the consortium partners and project leads have been added to the total expenditure amounts reported for the Sudan and Yemen Protracted Crisis Joint Responses.
3. An ineligible amount of EUR 6,833.07 was reported to the Foundation DRA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and deducted from the 2023 expenditures.
4. The reported expenditure amount includes a correction in the actual audit Costs of the 2022-2023 Afghanistan Protracted Crisis Joint Response.
5. PCJR Contracts 2024 - 2026: These responses all started in 2024, but the contracts were signed in 2023 to avoid delays in implementation; therefore, the contract amounts are included in this 2023 DRA annual impact report, but the interventions will be accounted for in the 2024-2026 annual impact reports. From the nine 2024-2026 PCJRs, only South Sudan is not mentioned as this contract was signed in 2024.

2.2 Grant Division per Partner

DRA Partners	Budget 2023	Total Expenditures 2023	Balance 2023
CARE	7,575,986	7,412,136	163,851
Tearfund	6,354,251	6,349,343	4,907
Stichting Vluchteling	4,737,536	4,628,337	109,199
Save the Children	7,346,347	7,193,329	153,017
Oxfam Novib	8,751,998	8,741,977	10,021
Cordaid	6,962,779	6,648,764	314,015
Block Grant Holder (Cordaid)	247,987	244,620	3,368
Dorcas	4,764,909	4,563,048	201,861
War Child	6,528,350	6,508,098	20,252
ZOA	6,684,832	5,642,260	1,042,571
World Vision	7,259,539	7,051,951	207,588
Plan International	7,827,612	7,343,577	484,035
SOS Children's Villages	5,468,455	4,900,313	568,142
Terre des Hommes	5,440,150	5,424,859	15,290
Help a Child	4,181,830	4,123,321	58,509
Foundation DRA	81,691	81,691	-
TOTAL	90,214,251	86,857,625	3,356,626

Note:

- The Acute Crisis Joint Responses and Open Call Innovation Projects (partial) funds that were underspending in 2022 were not yet allocated in 2023, and therefore not included in the DRA Partner budgets.



Continued - Grant Division per Partner per Joint Response

Acute Crisis Joint Response (Starting Year)	Help a Child			Foundation DRA		
	Budget	Total Expenditures	Balance	Budget	Total Expenditures	Balance
Syria Earthquake (2023)			-			-
Mozambique Cyclone (2023)			-			-
Myanmar Cyclone (2023)			-			-
Sudan Conflict (2023)			-			-
Libya Floods (2023)			-			-
Gaza Conflict (2023) incl 5M addendum			-			-
Afghanistan Herat Earthquakes (2023)			-			-
Somalia Floods (2023)	480,150	480,150	-			-
Pakistan Floods (2022)			-			-
Somalia Bay Region (2022)			-			-
Total Acute Crisis Joint Responses	480,150	480,150	-	-	-	-
Protracted Crisis Joint Response 2022/2023 (incl. Innovation top up)						
Syria Non-Government Controlled Area			-			-
Syria Government Controlled Area			-			-
Yemen			-			-
South Sudan	1,190,650	1,146,232	44,418,6			-
Sudan			-			-
Afghanistan			-			-
Democratic Republic of Congo	1,012,973	998,883	14,089,9			-
Somalia	1,498,056	1,498,056	0,3			-
Ethiopia			-			-
Challenge Mapping in Joint Responses 2022			-			-
Total Protracted Crisis Joint Responses	3,701,680	3,643,171	58,509	-	-	-
Cost for Strengthening Humanitarian System				81691,32	81,691	0
TOTAL	4,181,830	4,123,321	58,509	81,691	81,691	-

Acute Crisis Joint Response (Starting Year)	TOTAL		
	Budget	Total Expenditures	Balance
Syria Earthquake (2023)	3.000.000	2.964.973	35.027
Mozambique Cyclone (2023)	3.000.000	2.897.682	102.318
Myanmar Cyclone (2023)	3.000.001	2.760.043	239.958
Sudan Conflict (2023)	3.000.000	2.932.866	67.134
Libya Floods (2023)	2.000.000	2.000.000	-
Gaza Conflict (2023) incl 5M addendum	7.000.000	7.000.000	-0
Afghanistan Herat Earthquakes (2023)	2.000.000	2.000.000	-
Somalia Floods (2023)	3.000.000	3.000.000	-
Pakistan Floods (2022)	-	-1.892	1.892
Somalia Bay Region (2022)	-	775	-775
Total Acute Crisis Joint Responses	26.000.001	25.554.447	445.554
Protracted Crisis Joint Response 2022/2023 (incl. Innovation top up)			
Syria Non-Government Controlled Area	2.212.391	2.212.390	1
Syria Government Controlled Area	7.095.018	6.968.451	126.567
Yemen	10.327.121	10.200.867	126.254
South Sudan	8.392.191	8.097.134	295.057
Sudan	7.164.581	5.423.159	1.741.422
Afghanistan	8.074.215	7.876.412	197.802
Democratic Republic of Congo	6.203.775	6.035.339	168.437
Somalia	6.399.436	6.399.761	-325
Ethiopia	7.064.876	6.955.869	109.007
Challenge Mapping in Joint Responses 2022	-	-17.982	-
Total Protracted Crisis Joint Responses	62.933.604	60.151.400	2.764.223
Cost for Strengthening Humanitarian System	1.280.646	1.151.778	128.868
TOTAL	90.214.251	86.857.625	3.338.644



2.4 Overview of Joint Responses Expenditures 2023 through Local and National NGOs

Acute Crisis Joint Responses (Starting Year)	Lead Organization	Starting Date	End Date	Total Expenditures 2023	A Local Implementing Direct Partners Expenditures	B Local Partners ICR	C Capacity Strengthening Local Partners and Local Actors (From Consolidated Budget)	D Localization including Capacity Strengthening Local Actors (from Joint expenditures)	TOTAL (A+B+C+D) spent directly by Local Partners and by DRA Partners for the Capacity Strengthening of Local Partners	Percentage
Syria Earthquake (2023)	ZOA	11.02.2023	10.08.2023	2,964,973	1,437,205	13,329	2,672		1,453,206	49 %
Mozambique Cyclone (2023)	Plan International	01.04.2023	30.09.2023	2,897,681	1,004,673	70,207	15,409	6,184	1,096,473	38 %
Myanmar Cyclone (2023)	CARE	26.05.2023	25.11.2023	2,760,043	1,265,744	87,998	11,352		1,365,094	49 %
Sudan Conflict (2023)	Plan International	13.06.2023	12.02.2024	2,932,866	856,656	43,002	19,101	9,252	928,011	32 %
Libya Floods (2023) ¹	Stichting Vluchteling	17.09.2023	16.03.2024	2,000,000	335,375	20,123	28,781		384,279	19 %
Gaza Conflict (2023) incl 5M addendum ¹	War Child	14.10.2023	13.07.2024	7,000,000	3,443,687	222,915	15,799	4,000	3,686,401	53 %
Afghanistan Herat Earthquakes (2023) ¹	Cordaid	25.10.2023	24.04.2024	2,000,000	841,780	40,083	2,000		883,863	44 %
Somalia Floods (2023) ¹	Oxfam Novib	19.12.2023	18.06.2024	3,000,000	1,151,675	73,842	19,255		1,244,772	41 %
Pakistan Floods (2022)	CARE	18.09.2022	17.03.2023	-1,892						
Somalia Bay Region (2022)	World Vision	01.10.2022	31.03.2023	775						
Total Acute Crisis Joint Responses 2023				25,554,446	10,336,795	571,499	114,369	19,436	11,042,099	43.21 %

Protracted Crisis Joint Responses 2022/2023	Lead Organization	Starting Date	End Date	Total Expenditures 2023	A Local Implementing Direct Partners Expenditures	B Local Partners ICR	C Capacity Strengthening Local Partners and Local Actors (From Consolidated Budget)	D Localization including Capacity Strengthening Local Actors (from Joint expenditures)	TOTAL (A+B+C+D) spent directly by Local Partners and by DRA Partners for the Capacity Strengthening of Local Partners	Percentage
Syria Non-Government Controlled Area	War Child	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	1,865,170	1,184,119			19,420	1,203,540	65 %
Syria Government Controlled Area	ZOA	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	6,968,451	2,199,019	12,654	66,250	9,123	2,287,046	33 %
Yemen	CARE	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	9,920,130	3,114,319	67,045	4,612	151,154	3,337,130	34 %
South Sudan	Save the Children	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	7,765,800	2,450,410		39,259	300,932	2,790,601	36 %
Sudan	Plan International	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	5,423,157	989,908	29,958	18,759	46,361	1,084,987	20 %
Afghanistan	Cordaid	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	7,876,413	1,844,336	29,456			1,873,792	24 %
Democratic Republic of Congo	World Vision	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	6,035,339	2,152,186		66,478	124,514	2,343,178	39 %
Somalia	Oxfam Novib	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	6,024,377	2,124,569	56,535	66,635	34,883	2,282,623	38 %
Ethiopia	SOS Children's Villages	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	6,651,245	2,429,966	42,228		35,245	2,507,439	38 %
Sub total Protracted Crisis 2023				58,530,083	18,488,832	237,877	261,993	721,632	19,710,335	33.68%

Innovation Open Call Top Up Protracted Crisis Joint Responses 2022/2023	Lead Organization	Starting Date	End Date	Total Expenditures 2023	A Local Implementing Direct Partners Expenditures	B Local Partners ICR	C Capacity Strengthening Local Partners and Local Actors (From Consolidated Budget)	D Localization including Capacity Strengthening Local Actors (from Joint expenditures)	TOTAL (A+B+C+D) spent directly by Local Partners and by DRA Partners for the Capacity Strengthening of Local Partners	Percentage
Syria Non-Government Controlled Area	War Child	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	347,220	231,949				231,949	67 %
Yemen	CARE	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	280,737	62,506	4,697			67,203	24 %
South Sudan	Save the Children	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	331,335	191,430				191,430	58 %
Somalia	Oxfam Novib	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	375,384	317,861	13,820			331,681	88 %
Ethiopia	SOS Children's Villages	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	304,623	208,848	12,289			221,137	73 %
Challenge Mapping in Joint Responses 2022 correction	World Vision			-17,982						
Total Innovation Open Call Top Up 2023				1,621,317	1,012,594	30,806	-	-	1,043,400	64 %

Grand Total Joint Responses				85,705,846	29,838,221	840,183	376,362	741,068	31,795,834	37.10 %
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Footnote:

- Libya Floods, Gaza Conflict, Afghanistan Herat Earthquakes and Somalia Floods Acute Crisis Joint Responses started in 2023 are still ongoing and therefore have not yet reported, hence included on budget base.

This overview includes:

- EUR 30,678,404 Directly spent by local implementing partners, representing 35.79 % of the 2023 total Joint Response expenditures.
- EUR 1,117,430 Spent by DRA partners for the capacity strengthening of the local implementing partners, representing 1.30 % of the 2023 total Joint Response expenditures. Hence a total of EUR 31,795,834 is spent by the joint responses through local implementing partners and for the capacity strengthening of local partners, representing in total 37.10 % of the total Joint Responses Expenditures in 2023



Overview Strengthening the Humanitarian System (support budget)

Notes table 3:

1. The balance reported here for 2023 also includes Block Grant Holder expenses incurred in 2024, and unused funding for a crisis coordinator.
2. This budget item was underspent because this learning event took place during Learning Week, so expenses for this event were included under the Learning Week budget item.
3. This budget items were underspent because an evaluation originally planned for 2023 did not take place until 2024. Also, a government structure review started in 2023 continued into 2024, as did a study of DRA's use of and added value of data that will guide the use of D4D IATI support.
4. Costs related to the annual reporting 2023 incurred in 2024.
5. The year 2023 was a busy one for the DRA, and especially for the Board of Directors, due to the organisational structure review, the Gaza crisis and also to unexpected staff turnover. In anticipation of these factors, the DRA revised its 2023 budget. Nonetheless, the (partial) carry over of some 2023 activities into 2024 led to an underspending of even the revised 2023 budget.

3 Overview of Strengthening the Humanitarian System (Support Budget)

Support positions	Revised Support Budget 2023	Expenditures 2023	Balance 2023	Deviations 2023
Chair BoD	103,224	103,224	-	
Vice Chair BoD	75,072	80,025	-4,953	
Crisis Coordinator BoD ZOA	68,816	33,996	34,820	
Crisis Coordinator BoD Dorcas	25,024	27,524	-2,500	
Support Officer	66,757	66,757	-	
Programme & Compliance Officer	101,811	77,978	23,834	
Financial Officer	81,843	81,076	767	
Quality Officer War Child	28,621	28,622	-1	
MEAL Officer	16,422	18,092	-1,670	
Quality officer Oxfam Novib	14,076	9,431	4,645	
Quality Officer remaining	8,915		8,915	
Communication Officer	55,707	55,770	-63	
Legal Officer	21,382	21,676	-294	
Innovation officer	82,110	69,354	12,756	
Integrity Focal Person	4,692	2,933	1,759	
Subtotal 1	754,473	676,459	78,014	10 %
Working Groups (WG)				
Localisation WG				
· Chair	23,460	25,622	-2,162	
· Travel & Events	8,160	7,255	905	
· External support partnership survey	2,000	2,844	-844	
Finance WG				
· Chair	11,730	10,146	1,584	
Fundraising WG				
· Chair	18,768	22,488	-3,720	
· Travel & Events	5,100	50	5,050	
Visibility WG				
· Chair	28,152	30,859	-2,707	
· Materials/publications	30,600	31,687	-1,087	
· Website	3,060	1,396	1,664	
· Advocacy & comms	15,300	12,578	2,722	
Early Warning WG				
· Chair	9,384	9,402	-18	
Quality Working Group				
· Vice-Chair	7,038	7,038	-	
· Learning events 2	8,160		8,160	
Subtotal	170,912	161,365	9,547	6 %
Other costs				
Annual Accounts/Meta Audit	86,170	78,623	7,547	
Audit costs support GA	20,000	22,417	-2,417	
External Evaluation 3	20,000	-	20,000	
Banking Costs	1,977	-269	2,246	
Audit Committee	5,630	3,636	1,994	
Local Advisory Group	2,760		2,760	
Accounting	22,085	12,863	9,222	
External Expertise & advise	8,160	7,433	727	
Support DRA strategy ambition3				
· DRA governance support	40,000	19,844	20,156	
· Strengthening humanitarian system	20,000	8,470	11,530	
Innovation Support	10,000	2,913	7,087	
Innovation Support (Q hosting Learning Lisette)	1,100		1,100	
Learning week	19,068	15,641	3,427	
Learning week (top up Narcissa Panaite)	7,038	5,817	1,221	
Travel	16,000	14,942	1,058	
PM & BoS meetings	8,000	8,532	-532	
Miscellaneous PCM Coordinator Anne	7,038	7,038	-	
D4D - IATI support 3	57,815		57,815	
DRA Use and Added Value of Data 3	2,815	528	2,287	
Miscellaneous Intern Tearfund	2,112	4,510	-2,398	
Miscellaneous Intern World Vision	10,500	6,198	4,302	
Miscellaneous	12,021	1,856	10,165	
Miscellaneous Crisis Coordinator Rhonda/Else Lotte	18,167	28,296	-10,129	
DIO Insurance	3,060	2,360	701	
Subtotal	401,517	251,646	149,871	37 %
BGH COST:				
· Running cost BGH	11,244	10,000	1,244	
· BGH overhead	61,745	52,310	9,436	
Subtotal 4	72,989	62,309	10,680	15 %
GRAND TOTAL 5	1,399,891	1,151,779	248,112	18 %

4 Report on Cash and Voucher Assistance

	Lead Organization	Starting date	End date	Total JR Expenditures 2023	Cash transfers Expenditures 2023	Percentage
Acute Crisis Joint Responses (Starting Year)						
Syria Earthquake (2023)	ZOA	11.02.2023	10.08.2023	2,964,973	308,959	10 %
Mozambique Cyclone (2023)	Plan International	01.04.2023	30.09.2023	2,897,681	160,484	6 %
Myanmar Cyclone (2023)	CARE	26.05.2023	25.11.2023	2,760,043	920,116	33 %
Sudan Conflict (2023)	Plan International	13.06.2023	12.02.2024	2,932,866	418,790	14 %
Libya Floods (2023) ¹	Stichting Vluchteling	17.09.2023	16.03.2024	2,000,000	140,750	7 %
Gaza Conflict (2023) incl 5M addendum ¹	War Child	14.10.2023	13.07.2024	7,000,000	76,789	1 %
Afghanistan Herat Earthquakes (2023) ¹	Cordaid	25.10.2023	24.04.2024	2,000,000	541,867	27 %
Somalia Floods (2023) ¹	Oxfam Novib	19.12.2023	18.06.2024	3,000,000	310,892	10 %
Pakistan Floods (2022)	CARE	18.09.2022	17.03.2023	-1,892		
Somalia Bay Region (2022)	World Vision	01.10.2022	31.03.2023	775		
Total Acute Crisis 2023				25,554,446	2,878,646	11.26%
Protracted Crisis Joint Responses 2022/2023						
Syria Non-Government Controlled Area	War Child	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	1,865,170	106,005	6 %
Syria Government Controlled Area	ZOA	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	6,968,451	920,457	13 %
Yemen	CARE	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	9,920,130	1,642,378	17 %
South Sudan	Save the Children	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	7,765,800	228,251	3 %
Sudan	Plan International	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	5,423,157	186,991	3 %
Afghanistan	Cordaid	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	7,876,413	1,786,966	23 %
Democratic Republic of Congo	World Vision	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	6,035,339	81,232	1 %
Somalia	Oxfam Novib	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	6,024,484	427,465	7 %
Ethiopia	SOS Children's Villages	01.01.2022	31.12.2023	6,651,245	695,086	10 %
Total Protracted Crisis Joint Responses 2023 (excl. Innovation)				58,530,189	6,074,831	10.38 %
Innovation Open Call Top Up Protracted Crisis Joint Responses 2022/2023						
Syria Non-Government Controlled Area	War Child	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	347,220	35,696	10 %
Yemen	CARE	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	280,737		0 %
South Sudan	Save the Children	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	331,335		0 %
Somalia	Oxfam Novib	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	375,277		0 %
Ethiopia	SOS Children's Villages	01.06.2023	31.12.2023	304,623		0 %
Challenge Mapping in Joint Responses 2022 correction	World Vision			-17,982		
Total Innovation Open Call Top Up 2023				1,621,210	35,696	2 %
GRAND TOTAL JOINT RESPONSES ²				85,705,846	8,989,173	10.49 %

Footnotes:

- Libya Floods, Gaza Conflict, Afghanistan Herat Earthquakes and Somalia Floods Acute Crisis Joint Responses started in 2023 are still ongoing and therefore have not yet reported, hence included on budget base. Those Joint Responses will be corrected upon actuals in the 2024 annual report.
- A total amount of EUR 8,989,173 spent on Cash Assistance in 2023, which is 10.49 % of the total Joint Responses expenditures

ANNEX B ABBREVIATIONS

ACM	Acute Crisis Mechanism
AFGJR	Afghanistan Joint Response
BoD	Board of Directors
BGH	Block Grant Holder
BGM	Block Grant Manager
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CM	Crisis Modifier
DRA	Dutch Relief Alliance
DRAC	DRA Committee
DRCJR	Democratic Republic of Congo Joint Response
EJR	Ethiopia Joint Response
EWTF	Early Warning Task Force
FARDC	Armed Forces DRC (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo)
FCPA	Fragile Context Programme Approach
FDRA	Foundation Dutch Relief Alliance
FSL	Food Security and Livelihoods
GZAJR	Gaza Joint Response
HEJR	Herat Joint Response
HEA	Health
ICR	Indirect Cost Recovery
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IWG	Innovation Working Group
JB	Joint Budget
JR	Joint Response
LAG	Local Advisory Group
LIBJR	Libya Joint Response
LWG	Localisation Working Group
MAP	Multi-annual Plan
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOZJR	Mozambique Joint Response
MPCA	Multipurpose Cash Assistance
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MYMJR	Myanmar Joint Response
NCE	No Cost Extension
NFIs	Non-Food Items
NUT	Nutrition
PCM	Protracted Crisis Mechanism
PSEA	Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
QWG	Quality Working Group
RTF	Response Task Force
RTR	Real Time Review
RRTR	Rapid Real Time Review
SC	Support Costs
SDNJR	Sudan Joint Response
SOMJR	Somalia Joint Response
SOMFJR	Somalia Floods Joint Response
SSJR	South Sudan Joint Response
SYJR GCA	Syria Government Controlled Area Joint Response
SYEJR	Syria Earthquake Joint Response
SYJR NGCA	Syria Non-Government Controlled Area Joint Response
TA	Travel Approval
TF	Task Force
UN	United Nations
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WG	Working Group
YNMJR	Yemen Joint Response

DUTCH RELIEF ALLIANCE

